

## NUMBER XIX.

## PARISH OF CRIECH.

(County of Sutherland.—Presbytery of Dornoch.—Synod of Sutherland and Caithness.)

By the Rev. Mr. GEORGE RAINY.

*Name, Situation and Extent.*

THE etymology of Criech is not perfectly known; it may signify the *bounding* parish, as it is the boundary betwixt Sutherland and Ross for a great way. It may also signify the *parish of woods or trees*. There is still a great deal of wood in it; but there was formerly much more; and some of the woods, being seen from the low country, may have given the name to the parish.—This, however, is but conjecture.

The parish is of very great extent. It is, perhaps, one of the largest in Scotland, running from E. to W. or N. W. from within 4 computed miles of the burgh of Dornoch on the E., to a few miles of the church of Allint, the parish on the W. coast. The length of it from E. to W. inhabited, is reckoned 24 computed miles; but the utmost bounds of the parish

parish stretch far into the hills and moors, lying between Crieck and the parish of Eddrachylis, and may be reckoned upwards of 40 measured miles. The breadth of the parish is very unequal. In some places it is but 2 miles broad: in some 5, and in the top of the parish, it may be from 5 to 10 miles broad, and upwards. The parish of Crieck lies on the N. of the Kyle or Frith of Tain, and the river Ockel. The Kyle flows about 11 miles above the church of Crieck: The river Ockel, discharging itself into the Kyle, separates it from the parish of Kincardine for 10 miles. The parish of Crieck lies opposite to the parish of Kincardine, but stretches about six miles farther eastward, opposite to the parish of Eddertown, separated from these parishes by the Kyle and the river Ockel. Its length may be seen to be very great, from examining any common map of Scotland.

*Soil.*—The soil of the parish is light and thin, except in the E. end of it, where there is deep loam; and some meadows on the Kyle, and the sides of rivers in the top of it. The arable land mostly lies on the Kyle side, on a hard gravel. In many places the gravel, when dug and mixed with dung, proves excellent manure. As the soil is thin, and lies exposed to the south, the harvest is in general very early, much more so, than in the low country, or in places farther to the south. There are hills and moors back from the Kyle, where the tenant's cattle are pastured in summer. The hills, for the most part, are covered with heath, with many interjacent spots of green grass, especially near small rivulets. The face of the parish is hilly. Perhaps, not a thirtieth part of the parish is cultivated.

*Climate and Distempers.*—The climate is very various. In the east end of the parish, it is as temperate as on the coast of Sutherland. While the weather is dry and good in the east

end, it may be stormy and very wet in the west part, where the hills are high and large. A difference of climate commonly takes place every 5 miles, the one farthest west being the worst; but even here some exception is to be observed. If the wind blows from the W. for any time, there is often rain in the east end of the parish, and if it blows from the E. there may be dry weather in the W., and *vice versa*. Sometimes the crop has sooner been ripe, cut down and got in, in the west part of the parish than in the east.

The climate, in general, is healthy, yet there have not been many examples of longevity for the last 20 years, though many live till they are past 70, and some till 80: there is one living at present 80, and another 84. Epidemical fevers sometimes occur, and prove mortal, according to the season of the year in which they take place. When fevers happen, they commonly spread, occasioned, perhaps, from the custom that prevails, of the neighbours coming to visit the sick persons, and staying long with them. If a person is sick, and there is appearance of danger, it is usual to see the small apartment crowded with neighbours and friends, many of whom must catch the infection. The rheumatism is become much more common of late than formerly. Several have been cut off by the consumption, and there are several persons now labouring under the cancer. The small pox and measles have sometimes proved very fatal. Inoculation for the small-pox has scarce been practised in this parish. A few have been inoculated this very spring for the small-pox, which have proved of the most favourable kind. It is difficult to say, to what the frequency of the rheumatism is to be ascribed. The people now are as well lodged, clothed and fed, as their forefathers. No difference in their diet has taken place for a considerable time past, except that the people live more on potatoes for a great part of the year; which, however, are esteemed

esteemed wholesome food. This parish, especially the west end of it, lies at a great distance from all medical assistance.

*Rivers, Fish and Lakes.*—The rivers in this parish are the *Shin* and the *Cafsly*, and the upper part of the parish is separated from that of Kincardine, by the river *Ockel*. The *Shin* issues from *Lochshin* in the parish of *Lairg*. It falls into the *Kyle*, or *Frith of Tain*, at *Invershin*, 5 miles above the church of *Criech*. The salmon on the river *Shin* are very large, and, after being on the river for some time, turn brackish. At an average, a salmon barrel contains about 20 or 30. There is, on this river, a cascade of a considerable height, and a deep pool below, into which the water falls from the rock. The fish, leaping to get over the cascade, fall back into a *creel*, or basket, and are killed. Most of the fish were in use to be caught in this way. The cascade is called *the Linn*. Cruives are erected this season on the river, which runs from N. to S. The length of the river from the S. to the *Kyle*, is about 5 miles. The *Cafsly*, issuing from the hills on the north west of the parish, runs S. and falls into the *Kyle* at *Rosehall*. The salmon on this river are small and white, and very tender. The river *Ockel* issues in part from the high hill of *Or-bein-mor-Affint*, whence it runs eastward, and falls into the *Kyle*, near the place where the *Cafsly* joins it. The salmon on this river are large and good. There are trouts in all of those waters. The fishermen can easily distinguish the salmon of all these rivers, as well as of other two that fall into the *Kyle*, from those of the *Kincardine* side. There are several lakes in the parish that abound in trouts, some of which are of a very good quality. The largest lakes are *Loch-migdol* and *Loch-elst*, each about 2 measured miles long. There are many others of a lesser size.

*Mineral*

*Mineral Springs, &c.*—There is only one mineral spring, which is near Rosehall, and rises within a few paces of the Kyle. It is impregnated with sulphur or iron, and it has been but little used, as it smells rank. There are traces of an iron work having been carried on in the hill immediately above it; and in the burn or rivulet above it, there is a vein of manganese. This vein, as far as yet discovered, is but small, but said to be of an excellent quality. Some of it has been examined by persons skilled in those matters.

*Hills.*—The whole parish is hilly.—A ridge of hills runs parallel to the Kyle, except where it is intercepted by rivers. The highest hill is in the western extremity of the parish, called *Beinmore Assint*, one part of which is in the parish of Criech, and the other side in the parish of Assint. Its sides are covered with grass and daisies. In some places it is very rocky, but affords excellent pasture for sheep, all the year round, except in winter,

*Woods.*—There is a great quantity of natural wood in this parish, consisting chiefly of oak and birch; but there is every probability, that there was much more formerly. Several oak woods have been cut down within these 30 years, some of them about ten years ago, and have yielded a large quantity of excellent bark. Some old oak woods have been cut down; and no under-growths have sprung up in their stead; but several young woods have been cut lately, and are growing again and in a thriving state. There are also considerable plantations of firs in different parts of the parish. The largest is at Rosehall, facing the S., of great extent, and in a very thriving condition.

*Moss.*—There is a great quantity of moss in the different hills and moors, much of it of excellent quality; and the  
moor

most part of the parish is well supplied with fuel from thence, except perhaps a few places lying at the greatest distance from the moss, and where the roads are very bad. In many mosses, there are roots of old fir trees dug up, which serve for light in the winter nights. From this, it would appear that the hills have formerly been covered with fir. Often large fir trees quite fresh and sound, and of considerable length, have been dug up, and when split, they are useful for rafters in building houses, and last very long.

*Sea Weed.*—There is very little sea weed for manuring the land. A very little kelp is made once in three years, on the shore of one estate. However, the small short sea weed is of use for feeding cattle in winter, and is reckoned very wholesome.

*Black Cattle.*—There is a great number of black cattle in the parish, every small tenant having his proportion, generally as many as his provender can support during the winter, if he is not in straitened circumstances. In that case, he takes cattle from others, who have more than they can feed, at the rate of 2s., 2s. 6d., or 3s., through the winter and spring, as provender is plentiful or scarce. The black cattle are mostly of a small hardy kind, and may now, at an average, fetch, when sold to drovers, from 2l. 10s. to 3l. Sterling. Some cattle, belonging to gentlemen, are of a larger size, and greater value, and may be a mean of mending the breed of cattle among the common people. The people depend principally on the black cattle for paying their rents.

*Horses and Sheep.*—The number of horses was taken a few years ago, and all the horses, young and old, amounted to 1531. There are several farms in the west end of the parish stocked

stocked with sheep. The number of sheep may amount to upwards of 4000, and is increasing. These sheep farms have diminished the number of inhabitants, as well as the number of black cattle and horses. The best of the wool sells at 12 s. the stone, 21 lbs. Scotch to the stone. Most of the small tenants have a few sheep of a small size, and badly woolled. Their widders, when fat, sell at 5 s. 6 d. and 6 s. 6 d. and sold some years ago at 3 s. 4 d. and 4 s. The sheep belonging to the small tenants, it is thought, suffer from their bad management. They put them up in a small hut, just large enough to contain their number, both summer and winter. This, in all probability, hurts them.

*Population.*—The return to Dr. Webster, of the state of the population, in 1755, was 1705. The number of the inhabitants on the whole, is much the same that it was 20 or 30 years ago, being in some places less, and in others more numerous than formerly. In the year 1772-3, several emigrated to America. Some farms have been conjoined, and a considerable number of inhabitants have been removed out of grounds turned into sheep walks. By all these means, the number of people have been considerably diminished in the western division of the parish; but in the eastern they are more numerous than before. The total number of catechisable persons, or those above 7 years of age, in spring 1791, came to 1384; so that adding the usual proportion of  $\frac{1}{4}$ , the total population may be stated at 1730 souls. There are very few bachelors, as the men, in general, marry young. There are very few married persons without children. The medium of children in each family is 5 or 6. The number of small tenants, eastward from the river Shin, for 9 computed miles, is about 150, besides people who have small crofts.

*Rent,*

*Rent, Cultivation and Proprietors.*—The valued rent of the parish is 2983 l. Scotch. The real rent may be upwards of 900 l. Sterling. The rent of the several salmon fishings, on the rivers and frith, may amount to 140 l. Sterling. Much of the arable land is dear. In some parts of the parish, the sowing of a boll of bear, (something more than a Scotch acre,) pays 1 l. Sterling. In many places the ground is fit only for small black oats, of which three crops are taken on such land, and then it is allowed to rest for 3, 4, or 5 years, after which it is cropped again. Very few experiments have been made, to ascertain how lime would answer with such ground. There are 8 proprietors in the parish, of whom only 1 resides constantly. One gentleman pays of rent 120 l. Sterling. One sheep farm is rented at 130 l.; but the majority of farms are possessed by small tenants.

*Crops and Produce.*—The chief crops are barley, white oats, small black oats, potatoes, and a very small quantity of pease. The oats are commonly sown in the last week of March, and beginning of April; in the few large farms, the oats are sown sooner, if the weather permits. They usually sow bear in the beginning of May. The people here are come into the practice of cultivating potatoes to a considerable amount, and find their account in it; they raise as many potatoes, as, at an average, may be sufficient to supply the place of bread for four or five months in the year. Some have them until June, and they commonly begin to use them the last week of August, and sometimes sooner. They have proved of the greatest benefit to this district. Even when victual is very scarce, and there is a great demand for bread, as soon as the potatoes are fit for food, the demand stops instantly. The parish produces, in tolerably good years, rather more victual than would be sufficient for supplying itself.—There are

fruit trees only in three or four gardens, which produce plentifully in some years.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—There is not one person in this parish, who does not belong to the established church. There was a missionary minister settled for upwards of 25 years, in the heights of the parishes of Creech and Kincardine, who preached every third Sabbath in the high grounds of Creech. He had a salary of 25*l.* Sterling, from his majesty's royal bounty, and of 7*l.* Sterling from the parishes. Fifteen computed miles of the parish of Creech were under this mission; but it was discontinued, and the salary removed, at Whitsunday 1789. by the Committee for managing the royal bounty, on account (as was said,) of the deficiency of the Society's funds; although the Committee had no other missionary in the bounds of the presbyteries of Dornoch or Tain, and although the extent of these two parishes, contiguous to each other in two different presbyteries, the number of the inhabitants, and their eager desire for the means of instruction, and for having the ordinances of the gospel administered among them, (on which they punctually attend,) pled loudly for the continuance of the mission. This would have been a great hardship on the people, as well as on the ministers of their parishes, had not the knowledge of the case excited the compassion and sympathy of Lady Ross Baillie; who, out of her own liberality, has appointed a permanent mission in this extensive district, with a better salary than was afforded by the Committee; together with large accommodations, that will render the station sufficiently comfortable.

The stipend of the established minister is 72 bolls of victual, one half oat meal and the other half bear; 25*l.* Sterling in money, and 1*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* Sterling for grass. The decret was obtained for the stipend in 1708. The parish can bear a great augmentation

augmentation, which is much needed, and it is hoped will be granted; living being now more than doubled, even in this corner, since the time this stipend was fixed. A new manse was built in 1780; and the church was built last Summer and is now finished.

*Poor.*—There are no funds for the poor, but the collections made at church, which are small and pitiful indeed, amounting only to 4l. or 5l. Sterling a year, and a very little for dues of the mort-cloth. The number of the poor on the roll, in the east division of the parish, is 37, and in the west 23; in all 50. They can scarce get more than what is necessary to buy shoes to them: Very few, however, of this number go about begging. Most of them earn in harvest and otherwise, as much as is necessary to support them; they commonly get, from some friend or neighbour, a little land for potatoes, which is of great service to them. If a person is quite poor, and unable to work at all, or diseased, the neighbours send in what is nearly sufficient; or some friend goes about among the tenants, and gets supplies for such an object. On very extraordinary emergencies, a collection is raised in the church.

*Scarcity in 1783-4.*—This parish, like others in the neighbourhood, was in great distress in Summer 1783 and 1784, especially in 1783. None however died for want. On several estates, the heritors procured victual to their tenants from time to time; the victual, sent by government, was distributed among most of the families of the parish. The poor were singularly indebted to a gentleman in Glasgow, of uncommon benevolence, who had lived in the parish when a boy, and who sent money, and five bolls of white pease, which were distributed among upwards of 80 persons, in proportion to their necessity. Some few removed with their families to the

shores abounding with cockles, &c. which were uncommonly plentiful that season, and supported them for some time. By these means the lives of the people were providentially preserved.

*Ferries and Roads.*—There are no bridges in this parish; but there are 4 or 5 ferries between it and that of Kincardine, which are crossed by *cobbles*, or yawls, and boats, that can ferry over two horses each, or more. The people in this parish and neighbourhood, have been amused from time to time with the hopes, that a bridge was to be built over the Kyle, at Culrain, about four miles above the church of Criech, at the expence of government. It would be of great advantage to the inhabitants of this district in particular, besides the emolument that would accrue to the community at large, if the public road around the ferries were brought this way by a bridge. Such a bridge would be particularly convenient for drovers; all the cattle driven to the south from Sutherland, Caithness, and Lord Reay's country, except the parish of Affint, having hitherto been obliged to cross the Kyle by swimming; which, when the weather is bad, and the Kyle much swelled by rains, hurts the cattle greatly, especially when the night following proves cold. Sometimes they refuse to swim, in which case they must be ferried over by the cobble. The people pretend to foretell, whether they shall have a good market or not, by their readiness to swim. The roads, in this extensive parish, are very bad; statute work is but seldom performed, which may be owing to this circumstance, that few heritors reside in it. The roads might easily be made good, as the bottom is hard and gravelly.

*Antiquities.*—Near the church, there is an obelisk, or high stone, 8 feet long and 4 feet broad, marked distinctly with the  
fign

sign of the cross. According to tradition, a Danish chief was interred here. On the top of the Dun of Criech, a hill of a great height above the level of the sea, and rather jetting out into the Frith, there are the remains of a rampart. The walls have been cemented with a vitrified stuff, something similar to the refuse of iron in a smith's forge. The cement is as hard as a rock. It is said, that this rampart was begun to be built, in the 12th century, by a *Paul M' Tier*, a branch of the noble family of Rofs. At the top of the Kyle, there is an old castle, supposed to have been a place where justice was formerly administered. This conjecture derives some plausibility from the name of the hill opposite to it, which is called *Curor na Croike, The hill of the gibbet* \*.

*Character.*—The people, for the most part, are regular and orderly, and behave inoffensively, and many of them in an exemplary manner †. It cannot indeed be said, that they are industrious, nor do they enjoy what would much prompt them thereto, as there are no manufactures carried on here. But what they want in point of industry, they make up by frugality. In some places, *whisky drinking* is rather too common, which is not easily avoided; as they are often employed in buying and selling cattle, and making other bargains, in the neighbourhood of several distilleries. Only one person has suffered for a capital crime within these 20 years; viz. for theft and house-breaking.

#### *Disadvantages.*

\* The names of places are almost all derived from the Gaelic. Some of them have references to combats betwixt the clans, as *Tudamtarbback, plentiful fall; Darecha, the end of the battle, &c.*

† The common people all speak Gaelic; but many can speak and understand English.

*Disadvantages.*—A local disadvantage, which the western division of the parish labours under, is, that, as much of the arable land and meadows lie along the sides of the Kyle, and the other rivers, they are subject to inundations every season of the year. The want of manufactures is a disadvantage, under which this parish formerly laboured, in common with the most of this country; though now, by the exertions of a respectable proprietor in the parish, a new scene is beginning to open itself to our view. To that circumstance it was in a great measure owing, that the people were not so industrious, as otherwise they would have been. Young lads, in the spring and summer, usually went in great numbers to the south, in search of employment. There, they got high wages, and returned in winter to their parents, or relations, somewhat in the stile of *gentlemen*, and were a burden on their friends the whole winter, until they set out again in spring. Some of them married in the south; others died, or were picked up by recruiting parties. Unmarried girls went to the south also for service, especially before harvest. It is not unreasonable to conclude, that these have been among the causes, of diminishing the number of inhabitants.

The only species of manufactory in these bounds, previous to the erecting the cotton mill, by Mr. Dempster and his partners, was the spinning linen yarn: This is but a very scanty earning. There are 4 or 5 persons in the parish, who give lint out to spin: one of these gets 10,000 spindles spun in a year; the others not near so much: But it is to be observed, that they give out lint to spin, to the people in the neighbouring parishes, as well as to the people of the parish itself: 4d, or 5d. is the most that a woman can earn in a day, and few earn so much by spinning.

*Modern Improvements.*—We shall conclude this paper with the observations of a distinguished British patriot, and a real friend to the happiness of society, (GEORGE DEMPSTER, Esq. of

of Dunnichen), who having purchased a considerable property in this and the adjoining parish, and having the management of another estate in this parish, acquired by his brother Captain DEMPSTER, has just begun to carry into practice some part of a plan, which appears to him well calculated for the improvement of a Highland estate. At Sir John Sinclair's express desire, his thoughts on this important subject, were lately communicated to the writer, in the following words.

*PLAN for improving the estates of SKIBO and PULROSSIE.*

These estates contain about 18,000 acres of land, extending from the point of Ardnacalk on the north bank of Dornock, westward to Port-Leak, being an extent of 12 or 14 miles. The bulk of the estate is hilly, but the hills are of no great height, seeming generally to rise about from 500 to 700 feet above the level of the Frith. There may be about 200 families living on these estates, with the exception of the *mains*, or house-farm, of each place. The farms are of small extent in regard to arable ground. They produce some corn and potatoes, hardly sufficient to maintain the families of the tenants. The tenants pay their rents by the sale of cattle, which are fed in their houses, on straw, through the winter, and pick up a miserable subsistence on the waste and common ground of the estate, during the summer. The whole of the present rent is from 700l. to 800l. a year, of which more than a fourth part is paid, by the two large farms belonging to the mains, or mansion-house. The estates furnish some wood, with which, and the swarded surface of the ground, cut into the form of large bricks, they make houses and offices for themselves, covering them with the same swarded turfs, cut thinner, and resembling  
 slates

flates in their form. Once in three years, all the earthy part of these houses is thrown on the dunghill, and new houses built again of the same materials. The cattle commonly occupy one end of the house, during the winter season. Some holes in the walls and roofs serve for windows and chimneys. An iron pot, for boiling their food, constitutes their principal furniture. Nothing can exceed the wretched appearance of these habitations. As to the occupations of the people, the women begin to earn a little money by spinning. The young men go early in the spring to the south country, and hire themselves for all kinds of country labour; towards harvest, many of the women also go the same way, to assist in cutting down and getting in the crop. They all return before winter, and are said to pass their time round good fires of peat, which the country every where furnishes, and to do very little work. In the south country, however, to which they go, they are remarked for their assiduity, and are said to be indefatigable in executing all manner of task work. Those, who remain at home, attend to the concerns of their corn, potatoes, and cattle, and to the providing of their fuel from the neighbouring peat mosses. The climate, near the banks of the Kyle, or Frith of Dornoch, ripens wheat, barley, oats, and pease; becoming gradually colder, as you recede therefrom, and ascend the hills, which are covered with heather, interspersed with coarse grass. The vallies among the hills, and the ground on the sides of the hills, appear to be capable of being cultivated; and there are many little rising grounds, some flat moors, and the face of some of the hills so bare and stoney, as to be fit for plantations only. It need hardly be mentioned, that the inhabitants are in general poor;—that is, possess little money or goods, except a stock of very indifferent cattle.

It is not the intention, therefore, of the proprietors, to exact, for some time, any increase of rents from these people; but,

but, on the contrary, to encourage them, by every possible means, to improve their little spots of land, to erect for themselves more comfortable houses, and to build them of more durable materials. On these estates, there are some stations remarkably well adapted for villages. They lie on the banks of the Kyle, which is a frith or arm of the sea, navigable for 7 miles, by vessels of a considerable burden, and for small craft, about 15 miles more. In all, this Frith is navigable for 24 miles. To give a beginning to these villages, a company is formed, consisting chiefly of Glasgow gentlemen, who have subscribed a capital of 3000 l. and made some progress in erecting a manufacture of spinning cotton by jennies, and of weaving their yarn. Instructed persons are sent from Glasgow to conduct the work, and to teach the natives of the country the arts of spinning and weaving. The town is lotted out, and some houses for weaving are in forwardness. Vessels of 50 tons burden can land their cargoes at this place.

A second village, two miles lower down the Kyle, is also lotted out, and a large warehouse already built. Here, the water is deep enough to receive any vessel, that can enter the Kyle, and come over the bar, (known by the name of the *Gixzen Brigs*,) at its mouth, on which there is 4 fathom water at spring tides, and 6 or 7 feet less at neap tides. Here also, a gentleman has undertaken to establish the weaving of linen, and to encourage the extension of the spinning of yarn all around the country. At both manufactures, apprentices will be instructed in the art of weaving, in order to introduce that art into the houses of the small tenants, as it is found already to be in the shires of Renfrew, Perth, Angus and Aberdeen. By these means, constant employment will be found for people of all ages and sexes, and a considerable market opened for the productions of the country.

That the people may have nothing to divert their attention from their own business, all the services performed by them and their cattle, to their superiors, are commuted into money; and tithing to the mills of the baronies is also abolished. Measures are taking to give the people secure possession, (for their own lives at least,) of their houses, gardens and arable lands, with full liberty to cultivate as much of the waste land as they please. Their cattle are suffered to pasture on the other waste lands, as long as they shall remain in a waste condition; but the proprietors reserve to themselves, the power of inclosing and planting all such parts of the waste lands, as are fit for no other purpose. Some plantations of this kind have been already made, and the trees seem to thrive very well on the lightest soils. The trees are principally the larch, the Scotch fir, and the birch, intermixed with beech and mountain ash. The rest of the waste land is open to every settler, who shall incline to cultivate them. Twenty or thirty new settlers have already exhibited strong proofs of what Highlanders can do, in the improvement of their own country, when secured in the enjoyment of the fruits of their labour. It may be worth while to mention the nature of this security. The first settlers may improve as much land as they find waste around them, for which they pay only 1 s. a-year during their lives. When they die, their heirs have the refusal of their father's possession, at an appraised value, to be fixed by arbitrators mutually chosen. This rent is invariable, till the next generation, when the valuation is to be repeated; and so on every generation. A little iron for tools, wood for their houses, and seed potatoes and corn, is furnished to them for the first 2 years. They are exempted from every species of personal service. Those, who have visited the mountainous countries of Switzerland, Wales and Norway, have seen what liberty and security can do, towards rendering them fertile. In addition to the general freedom

dom, which the inhabitants of this happy island enjoy, under our mild and durable constitution, the inhabitants of those estates will enjoy perfect security, as occupiers of land. That those advantages will lead them gradually to better their houses, to improve their lands, and to alter their own condition in every respect for the better, is beyond a doubt.

To calculate the advantages, which will in time accrue from this system, to the owners of 18,000 acres of land, on which it is introduced, would be no easy matter; but the following observations, will lead, perhaps, to the forming some idea of them. Land lets, for potatoe grounds and other purposes, round many towns in Scotland, at various rents, from 1*l.* upwards. Manufacturers in Lancashire, and in some of the counties of Scotland, pay for the little spots they occupy in the country, round their own houses, from 1*l.* to 4*l.* Sterling *per* acre. The cotton manufacture is said to have doubled the rents of Lancashire, within these last 20 years. The demand for wood is very great; and as all the woods on this estate, will be near a navigable frith, the wood will fetch the current price, and be liable to little deduction, from the facility of carrying it to market; while the practicability of being supplied with that article from the Baltic, is said to lessen yearly. The probable future value of these estates, cannot be easily ascertained; but, we know, that wherever industry has extended itself in Scotland, the rents of land have risen at least threefold, and much more in the neighbourhood of towns. It is to be observed, that this system is attended with no expence of any material consequence, except that part of it, which consists in planting the useles land; which, as it is considerable, (perhaps not less than 3*l.* per acre,) may either be omitted, or done on a smaller scale and by slow degrees, according to the faculty and inclination of the proprietor.

Shall we state none of the advantages, but those of a *pecuniary* nature? Is nothing to be set down, for the PLEASURE OF BEHOLDING THE PROGRESS OF THE PROSPERITY OF A COUNTRY? IS THE JOY OF SEEING TOWNS AND HOUSES ARISING AROUND YOU OF NO VALUE? NOR THE ULTIMATE BENEFIT DERIVED TO YOUR COUNTRY, BY ADDING TO IT, INDUSTRIOUS INHABITANTS AND CULTIVATED LAND; THRIVING TOWNS AND FLOURISHING MANUFACTURES? Is there no pleasure in beholding the growth of woods of one's own planting? nor in the success of a system, so intimately connected with the HAPPINESS OF PEOPLE PLACED BY PROVIDENCE UNDER OUR CARE? Some have thought, that it would be a fitter use for the Highlands, to convert them into sheep-walks. That it might be better for the people to cultivate sheep, instead of black cattle, is probably true. That the sheep is a hardier, and a more useful animal than the ox, may be true also. That the increase of rents, by converting cattle-breeding farms, into sheep-walks, would be more sudden, than by the system here suggested, is not to be disputed. But that the estates would ultimately become more valuable, is by no means so clear a proposition. Tracks of land, which have been converted into sheep farms, yield little more, at an average, than 1. Sterling, per 100 acres. This is indeed a better rent than before. But how contemptible must this rent appear, when compared with an estate occupied by industrious manufacturers, and abounding in large woods of the finest fir, birch, and other trees? It is to be observed too, that there is a certain incompatibility between sheep, and people and trees. No care can protect new plantations from the depredations of sheep; they overleap every fence, and elude the utmost vigilance of the shepherd. The leaves of trees are their favourite food in summer; and the bark is their medicine, as well as food in winter. The lower grounds

grounds, now occupied by people, must be reserved for the food and shelter of the flock in winter; and this circumstance seems to form the chief incompatibility, between sheep and people. This argument will have the greatest weight, with those, whose observation or inquiries may have led them, to compare the mountainous parts of Spain, appropriated to sheep-walks, with the mountains of Switzerland and Wales, occupied by free and industrious inhabitants. The comparison is not to be made by units or decimals; for the advantage of men instead of sheep, are as thousands to one. As the understanding, industry and ingenuity of man, in a state of freedom, are superior to those of the brute creation, so is the value of an estate inhabited by mankind, to one occupied by sheep.

It is true, the people need not be driven out of the country, because sheep are introduced into it. Villages may be built for them, where they might be employed in manufactures. Let me ask, has that been the case? and let me doubt a little of the success of villages by compulsion. It is one thing to build a village, to which people may resort if they choose it, and another to drive them from the country into villages, where they must starve, unless they change at once their manners, their habits, and their occupations. How much better would it be, gradually to introduce spinning wheels and looms into their houses, than to drive them from their houses, their gardens, and their little fields? Besides, are men as advantageously placed in villages, for cultivating the soil, as when dispersed over every corner of the estate? Towns are said to thrive in proportion to the populousness of the country around them. It is by a mutual exchange of commodities, that both towns, and the country around, mutually support one another. To conclude, it is neither by feeding black cattle nor sheep, in the Highlands, that that country can be improved, but by the introduction of arts and  
agriculture.

agriculture. The first will increase the number and wealth of the people; the latter will augment the quantity of the production of the soil, both for the maintenance of people and cattle. But neither arts nor agriculture can prosper, unless the inhabitants are secure in the tenure, by which they occupy the spots on which they live. Good laws, a vigorous execution of them, feus, and long leases, are the great sources of the prosperity of every country, of Highland, as well as of more fertile and champaign countries. Try the question by this test. Let us ask ourselves, if the Highlands of Scotland, possess at present those sources of improvement and wealth? To these indeed must be superadded, on the part of government, good roads made at the public expence; for no mountainous country can be completely improved, till it be made accessible by good roads, the expence of which, its inhabitants are unable to defray.

As this is THE FIRST ATTEMPT to introduce the MANUFACTURE of SPINNING and WEAVING COTTON into the HIGHLANDS, the names of the PARTNERS of this NEW COMPANY deserve to be mentioned. The reader will observe, that public spirit is the motive by which most of the partners have been induced to embark their property in an undertaking, which may prove highly advantageous to the Highlanders, and particularly so to the proprietors of the above and other contiguous estates; but never, probably, will prove so profitable to the other partners, as undertakings of this kind, situated more immediately under their own eye. Each share in this company is one hundred pounds Sterling. The capital is 3000l.,—and the partners are

Mr.

	Shares.
Mr. David Dale of Glasgow, - -	2
Mr. George M'Intosh of do. - -	2
Mr. William Robertson of do. - -	1
Mr. James Robertson of do. - -	1
Mr. Andrew Robertson of do. - -	1
Mr. Robert Dunmore of do. - -	1
Mr. Robert Bogle of Baldowie, do. -	1
Mr. Robert Mackie of do. - -	1
Mr. William Gillespie of do. - -	1
Mr. John Mackenzie of London, - -	1
Mr. Dougal Gilchrist of Hospidale, -	1
Mr. William Monro of Achanny, - -	1
Mr. John Frazer, factor to Lord Gower, -	1
Mr. Benjamin Ross of Tain, - -	1
Mr. Scott of Dunninauld, M. P. - -	1
Captain James Rattray of Arthurstone, -	1
Mr. John Ramsay, acting manager, -	1
Captain J. H. Dempster of Polrossie, -	2
Mr. Dempster of Dannichen, - -	2
	<hr/>
	23
Vacant, - - - -	7
	<hr/>
	30 of 100l.

It may be proper to add, that Mr. Alexander Morison of Dundee, is the person who proposes establishing the linen manufacture in the county of Sutherland.

NUMBER