

## PARISH OF CALLANDER.

PRESBYTERY OF DUNBLANE, SYNOD OF PERTH AND STIRLING.

THE REV. P. ROBERTSON, MINISTER.

### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—CALLANDER is generally supposed to be derived from the Gaelic names *Calladh*, signifying a ferry, and *sraid*, the way leading to the ferry, by which is meant the ferry across the river Teath, a little below the place where the present bridge stands.

*Extent, &c.*—From east to west, the parish extends about 16 miles. In many places, it is very narrow, varying from one to six miles. A range of the Grampian mountains bounds the parish on the north and north-west.

*Topographical Appearances.*—The most conspicuous mountain is Benledi, contracted for *Beinn-le-Dia*, the hill of God. This name was probably given to the mountain by the Druids, who had a temple on the summit of it, where the inhabitants in the vicinity assembled for devotion once a-year, and it is said that this meeting continued three days. The height of Benledi is 2863 feet above the level of the sea. The view from the summit is very fine. To the east is seen the Frith of Forth as far as the eye can reach; towards the south, the Frith of Clyde and the hills of Arran; and to the north and west is a splendid view of the Grampians, one rising higher than another. Benledi stands about two miles west of Callander, and adds much to the beauty and grandeur of the surrounding scenery. The next mountain to be noticed, is Stuaic-a-chroin, which in the east is seen between Benledi and Benvorlich, and makes a respectable appearance among the Grampians; it is 3171 feet above the level of the sea. Uamh-mhor, from the Gaelic words, *uamh* signifying a cave, and *mor* or *mhor* great, may be mentioned also among our higher hills. Tradition says, that in the cave of this pile banditti took up their residence, and plundered the neighbourhood, until in self-defence the tenants were obliged to rise in arms and extirpate them. Such practices were very common in the Highlands, in those feudal times when the law was set at defiance. We

ought not to omit mentioning a very picturesque hill, which rises above the village of Callander, and which, by having been planted a few years ago by Lord Willoughby de Eresby, contributes much to the beauty of the village. The principal valley in this parish is that in which the village is situated, bounded on the west by Benledi: on the north, by the romantic Crag of Callander and hills of Leney, through which the river Teath meanders with its richly wooded banks. The valley may be about 40 feet above the level of the sea.

*Climate, &c.*—The temperature of the atmosphere is considered mild, from the shelter afforded by the surrounding hills. In winter the thermometer commonly stands about  $35^{\circ}$ ; for a few days, last winter, it stood at  $24^{\circ}$ ; in the spring months it commonly stands at  $40^{\circ}$ ; in summer at  $75^{\circ}$ ; and in autumn, it varies considerably. The prevailing wind is from the north-west. But during April and May, the periodical east wind blows, and being generally attended with drought, it is conducive at this season to the operations of the farmer. The climate is reckoned healthy; and the prevalent diseases are those chiefly induced by changes of temperature.

From the position of the parish, its appearance partakes of all the variety of the Highland scenery. The valleys become gradually more narrow, and in many places are almost shut in by lofty ridges. The rivers find a difficult passage, and are often formed into basins and lakes. Upon two sides of Benledi, viz. the north and south, lie two different sheets of water, the former called Loch Lubnag, and the latter Loch Venachoir, each about four miles in length, and both equidistant from Callander about two miles. Pursuing these valleys and lakes still farther on to the westward, we find each of them connected with two lochs; those to the north-west, called Loch Veoil, and Loch Doin, lie in the parish of Balquhider, while the two lakes to the south-west belong to this parish. They are connected with each other by a considerable river; and that which we approach after passing Loch Venachoir, (the Lake of the Fair Valley,) is called Loch Achray, (or the Lake of the Field of Devotion.) The scenery here is most picturesque. Advancing a little further, you enter the Trosachs, and have a view of Loch Catharine.

*Loch Catharine, &c.*—This is the largest and most interesting of the lochs; it is nearly ten miles in length, terminating at Glengyle, which is also the extreme point of the parish. This lake and mountain scenery is so celebrated, as to render any description of it here un-

necessary. It was for the first time brought to public notice in the Statistical Account of the parish written by the minister in 1791, and since then by Sir Walter Scott's beautiful poem, the "Lady of the Lake." The tourist ought to approach it from the eastward, whence he is introduced to it, as it were, step by step. He ought to walk as far as the Wooded Island, about two miles from the inn, where it is presumed he has secured a couple of men to row his boat. Opposite to the island, he will direct the men to wait him with the boat at a well known peninsular promontory, from which he will pass to the island,—where Lord Willoughby has erected a hut corresponding exactly to the description of the rustic bower, given in the first Canto of the Lady of the Lake. He will then row to a bluff rock, called the Drumbeg, upon the north shore, and follow the pathway to the top of it; after which, he will cross the lake to what was formerly called *Coir-nan-urishin*, or the goblin's cave, but which is now dismantled of its shading wood; and then return to the boat-house, visiting by the way a lovely little bay, from which the river takes its departure.

*Rivers.*—The river which flows out of Loch Venachoir on the south side of Benledi, called in Gaelic, *Eas-gobhain*, (the waterfall or cataract of the Smith,) and that which comes from Loch Lubnaig on the north side, called also in Gaelic, *Garbh-uisge*, the rough or rugged river, together with a variety of mountain streams which flow into them,—unite about half a mile above the bridge of Callander, and form the river which is called the Teath or warm river, probably from the circumstance of its having mountains on each side, and its banks fringed with wood. \* Standing upon the bridge of Callander, you have one of the finest views that can well be imagined. Upon the north, is the village with the church in its centre, immediately behind which, is the bold projecting Crag of Callander. In the north-west, you see the Pass of Leney, covered with the wood natural to the country. Immediately in front, is the majestic Benledi, and the river Teath sweeping along through a rich and extensive meadow,—while on the south stand hills of various altitudes. The scene is truly grand, particularly in time of hay-making, when the people are scattered over the meadow, and when many human voices are heard chanting some national air. Besides the river Teath, which runs through the centre of the vale, there is another river of considerable size, at the eastern boundary of the parish, which rises at the base of *Stuic-a-chroin*, and after running several miles among the hills, and receiving additional strength

from tributary streams, makes its way through a most romantic glen between Brackland and Auchinlaich. This spot is much resorted to, from the notice taken of it by tourists; and for the accommodation of the public, a secure bridge has been thrown across the chasm. Upon a small scale, nothing can exceed the wild grandeur of the scene, and nobody can pass the bridge of Brackland without some feeling of apprehension. This and the pass of Leney are the only approximation to waterfalls in the parish. At this bridge, the river takes the name of Keltie, and after skirting the Lawn of Cambusmore, falls into the Teath in front of that mansion, about a mile and a half below Callander.

*Geology and Mineralogy.*—Lime abounds in this parish, a quarry of which is regularly wrought, and supplies not only the farmers in the neighbourhood, but many farmers in the stewartry of Monteath, who prefer this lime to that which is to be had at the shore of Stirling. The limestone is of a very beautiful colour and superior quality. The ground of it is a deep blue, intersected with streaks of pure white. The farmers have learned the advantage of using it, by the superior crops produced by this stimulus when judiciously applied to the land. Some of them make a compost of lime, earth, and manure, which produces excellent crops. The direction of the strata is commonly from north-east to south-west. There are also slate-quarries wrought in the parish; one on the farm of Aney, the property of Mr Stirling of Keir; another at the base of Benledi, the property of Mr Urquhart of Kerinloch; and a few years ago, a slate quarry was wrought on the farm of Lanrick, the property of General Sir George Murray. The slate, particularly when the quarry has been wrought for some time, is of a blue colour and very durable. The plum-puddingstone abounds in this neighbourhood, and commonly runs parallel with the limestone and slate, but at some distance from both. It is the chief material used for building. There is also a chain of gray freestone, which lies across the parish, in the same direction of south-west and north-east, which is very hard and durable, and answers well for building and covering drains. The soil is of a light gravelly nature, but has been greatly improved of late by draining. The example held out by the proprietors in this respect has been successfully followed by their tenantry, and the assistance given by opening drains, &c. is a great encouragement to an industrious tenant to go on improving his farm.

*Zoology.*—We have here the Highland pony and the draught

horse; the breed of horses has been very much improved of late, both in this and in the neighbouring parishes,—as has also the breed of black-cattle. This improvement is owing in a great measure to the encouragement given by the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, not only in establishing general exhibitions of stock of all kinds, but in distributing premiums for the best, and also by district shows, one of which has been held for several years past in this parish. The breed of sheep upon our hills is of the black-faced kind, while the Cheviot and the Leicester are fed upon the low grounds. Roes are to be found in the woods. Lord Willoughby has a forest of red-deer at Glenartney, near the confines of this parish, which are sometimes seen traversing this neighbourhood, particularly in winter. Hares, rabbits, and foxes are numerous; the latter often commit sad depredations among the sheep and game. Wild cats, badgers, &c. are also found. Such places as the Glen of Brackland and the Trosachs afford shelter and security to these destructive animals. We have here the grouse, black-cock, the ptarmigan, the partridge, the pheasant, the snipe, and plover. Wild ducks and other water-fowl abound, and not unfrequently the eagle is seen soaring in the heavens, or perched on the pinnacle of a rock in the Trosachs.

Our lakes, and rivers, and mountain streams, abound in trout, salmon, pike, eel, perch, char, and other small fish.

*Botany.*—The oak, the ash, alder, Scotch fir, birch, plane, holly, hazel, and the willow, grow spontaneously. The oak is valuable, and is cut commonly every sixteen or twenty years, and the bark sold to the tanners. The proprietors pay great attention to their oak woods, and some of them are beautifying the appearance of the country by rich and extensive plantations of Scotch fir, larch, spruce, plane, elm, beech, lime, chestnuts, poplar, and other trees. There are some trees which have grown to a good size, mostly of hard wood, and some Scotch fir. On the glebe are still remaining full grown trees, planted by the Earl of Callander about the year 1596; and a venerable hawthorn in front of the manse, with its branches curiously entwined, is still in full vigour. The most common shrubs which grow upon the higher grounds are broom, whins and heath of the usual kinds. Of the heath, the Highlanders in former times made a dye, first by boiling woollen cloth with alum, and then with the tops of heath, which produced an orange-colour. It has been used too in tanning leather. Juniper grows in all soils and situations, and of different sizes. The

berries are three years in ripening, and upon the same bush they may be seen in their different stages. The juniper is esteemed a good antiscorbutic.\*

The grasses to be met with are the ryegrass, red, white, crow-foot clover, scirpus or rush grass, eriophorum or cotton-grass, alopecurus or fox-tail; with rib-grass, water-cress, thyme, mint, cow parsnep, chickweed, and wood sorrel. There abound here also digitalis, solanum or nightshade, hemlock, nettle, thistle, dandelion, mugwort, mallow, filices or ferns. These last are much used in the Highlands for thatching houses, and endure for many years. When used for thatch, the fern is pulled out of the earth by the root. It is also used for making manure, and when cut green and properly dried, both horses and cows eat it.

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

*Village.*—The village of Callander is built upon feus held of the family of Perth. To each feu is attached an acre or two of land, for which the feuar pays about L. 1, 10s. per acre, or from that to L. 3, according to the quality of the soil. The houses are built substantially with stone and lime, and covered with slate. The street is wide, and regularly cleaned and repaired. There is an abundant supply of excellent water in different parts of the village, conducted in leaden pipes, the original expense of which was defrayed by Lady Willoughby, who has done much to add to the neatness of the village and the comfort of its inhabitants. Through Callander passes the principal road to the Western Highlands by Lochearnhead, Tyn-drum, and Black-mount; and from this place, there are several other roads branching out in different directions.

*Antiquities.*—About a mile west of Callander, there are the remains of a fortification on the top of a hill, called *Dun bo chais-til*, the hill of the castle. This must have been a place of considerable strength; the face of the hill is perpendicular, rising to the height of about 300 feet, and quite inaccessible on the south. The gateway and three tiers of ditches and mounds are distinct upon the top. The mounds are strengthened with large stones, and within was a sunk well, which has been filled up, as cattle were liable to fall into it. From the summit of this hill, there is an extensive prospect, particularly to the east; the

\* I have heard it said, that when the plague was in Scotland and had reached Callander, the people to the westward at Bridge of Turk, where this plant abounds, were in the habit, two or three times every day, of setting fire to a quantity of juniper. Whether this prevented contagion or not, I know not, but the plague did not reach them.

approach of an enemy might be seen many miles off, and the people of the country would thereby have time to arm themselves and take shelter in this stronghold. In the plain of Bochartle, and in the immediate vicinity of this fortification, is an artificial bank of earth and stone, which perhaps was erected for the purpose of reducing this fort; but we have no authentic record on this subject. In Loch Catherine is an island, which the inhabitants in Strathgartney used for the like purpose. When aware of the approach of an enemy, the most valuable possessions, with the women and children, were immediately conveyed to it. Then the men armed themselves and took possession of the passes and defiles of the Trosachs, to prevent the advance of the enemy. Dr Robertson, late minister of the parish, in a sketch of the scenery of Callander and the Trosachs, gives the following account:—"In one of the defiles of this bye-road, the men of the country at that time hung upon the rear of the invading enemy, and shot one of Cromwell's men, whose grave marks the scene of action, and gives name to the pass (*Bealach an duine*, the pass or defile of the man). In revenge of this insult, the soldiers resolved to plunder the island, and, with this intention, one of the party swam in to fetch the boat to his comrades, who stood on the shore in full view of all that was to pass—but, just as the soldier had got to the nearest point of the island, one of the women severed his head from his body. The hostile party seeing this disaster, made the best of their way out of their perilous situation."

There are still seen at the manse, the remains of the Castle of Callander, which, with the adjoining lands belonged to the Earl of Callander. It consisted of a square strong building of considerable height. The property was forfeited in the reign of James I. or II. of Scotland, and passed to Livingstone, who was created Earl of Callander and Linlithgow. This person probably repaired the castle, after his accession to the earldom, as a stone is still preserved in the walls of the manse, bearing his initials and those of his lady, A. L. E. H. 1596. We find the remains of another fortification on the farm of Achinlaich, the property of Mr Buchanan of Arnprior. The hill is planted, and the ditch and mound on the top have been thus preserved, and are still very distinct. It was probably used for the like purposes as that on the Dun of Bochartle. There is a beautiful circular mount adjoining the church-yard of Callander called *Tom-ma-Chessaig*, the hill of St Kessaig, who was the tutelar saint

of this place. A market is still held here, annually, in the month of March, which goes by the name of *Feill-ma-Chessaig*, i. e. the festival of St Kessaig. There is a similar tumultus, about half a mile west, at a place called Little Leney, where was a chapel of old, and which is still used as a burying-place. There is only one turnpike road in the parish leading from Callander to the West Highlands. The other roads in the parish are kept in repair, by money raised from the tenants, who are assessed according to their rents and the extent of their farms, and also from such others as are able to pay. The money thus collected is laid out by commissioners in repairing roads and bridges. There is a new line of road in progress from Kippen to Callander by Thornhill, which, when completed, will be of essential benefit to this place, as it will open up to us a direct communication with the farmers in the Frews, who have been in the habit of supplying this place with hay, &c.

### III.—POPULATION.

The population in 1755, was	1750
1772,	1700
1787,	1860
1791,	2100
1811,	2042
1821,	2031
1831,	1909

In 1831 the inhabited houses were,	-	-	-	316
Families occupying these houses,	-	-	-	441
Families chiefly employed in agriculture,	-	-	-	89
trade, manufactures, and handicraft,	-	-	-	167

Several individuals of independent fortune reside within the bounds of the parish; and during summer and autumn, families come here from large towns, and take lodgings for a few months. There are eleven heritors, only two of whom are resident. Captain Houston Stewart lately purchased the property of Gart, upon which he has erected a splendid and commodious mansion-house, and is now engaged in laying out the grounds, in improving the soil, and in beautifying the place, which lies along the north banks of the Teath. Both the English and Gaelic languages are spoken in the parish, and divine worship on Sabbath is performed in both. The name of almost every farm and hill is derived from the Gaelic. The Highland dress is not so generally worn as it was forty years ago.

The people are in general well-informed, intelligent, sober in their habits, kind and affectionate in their dispositions, and upon the whole, moral, religious, and well disposed.

## IV.—INDUSTRY.

*Agriculture.*—The pasturage of this parish is adapted for the rearing of black cattle and sheep. The attention of the tenants is therefore turned to this object, and many of them cultivate no more of their low grounds than what will serve to raise meal and potatoes, for the consumption of the family. There are, however, farms in the parish which are entirely arable, and these are in general well managed. A regular rotation in cropping is attended to, and green crops are becoming common. The farmer finds the advantage of this, not only as the means of pulverizing and ameliorating the soil, but as of essential benefit in rearing young stock, which enables him to pay his rent when the price of grain is low as at present. A considerable quantity of waste land has been improved and brought into cultivation within the last twenty years, and the draining of wet and *sputy* land has rapidly increased, in some instances at the expense of the landlord, and in others at that of the tenant himself.

*Leases.*—The general duration of the leases of arable farms is from thirteen to nineteen years; and of sheep farms, from nine to thirteen. The style of farm-houses has been much improved of late; many of them are comfortable and covered with slate. Were the farms more subdivided with sufficient inclosures, the industrious tenant would be more encouraged in going on with his improvements. Oats are sown about the 22d of March. Potatoes planted about the end of April. Barley and turnips are sown in the middle of May. Very little flax is now raised in this parish. The kinds of oats sown are the Flemish, the Cupar-grange, the Hopetoun, and the Blainslie. The straw of the Cupar-grange is reckoned the best for feeding cattle, but the others are earlier and more productive, particularly the Flemish. The smooth barley is preferred to the rough bearded sort, and fetches a better price in the market. The barley sells at 19s. 3d. per imperial boll; the oats and oat meal at 14s. 6d. the boll of 140 lbs. avoirdupois imperial weight.

The valued rent of the parish is L. 3278, 10s.

## V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

*Means of Communication.*—The village of Callander has its advantages. There is here a daily post; a coach that runs to and returns from, Stirling every lawful day in summer, and twice a-week in winter. Post-chaises and cars are to be had for hire, and there are regular carriers to Edinburgh, Stirling, and Glasgow.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The church is situated in the centre of the village, and is a neat building, with a spire and bell. It was built about the year 1773, and seated to contain 800. The seats are divided among the different heritors, according to their valued rents, and by them portioned out among their tenants. The manse was built in the same year. An addition was given to the present incumbent in 1810; and the former manse repaired at the same time. It is a comfortable, convenient house, delightfully situated on the banks of the Teath. The glebe contains about 11 acres of very good land. There are no free teinds in the parish. The present stipend, as fixed by a scheme of locality in 1817, is 97 bolls, 1 peck, 1 lippy of meal, 48 bolls, 2 firlots, 2 lippies barley, and L. 72, 14s. 2½d. of money. Divine service in the church is generally well attended; but the extent of the parish renders it necessary that it should be performed at other stations as well as in the parish church. Hence it is customary for the minister to preach occasionally at Bridge of Turk, about six miles from this—and also upon the side of Loch Catharine, at a greater distance. The number of communicants may be about 700. Number of Episcopalians, 2; Seceders, 4; Independents about 16; Roman Catholics, 6. The people are attached to the Church of Scotland. The average amount of collections at the church is in summer L. 1, 10s., and in winter L. 1, which collections are distributed among the poor of the parish.

*Education.*—There are a parochial school, and two others upon the establishment of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge.—In the parochial school, the following branches are taught: Latin, Greek, mathematics, arithmetic, book-keeping, mensuration, English, Gaelic, and writing. In the school at Bridge of Turk, there are taught, Latin, English, Gaelic, arithmetic, writing; and the other school is for sewing, reading, writing, arithmetic, and English grammar. The parochial schoolmaster's salary is the maximum, and the school fees may average from L. 30 to L. 40 per annum. The salary paid by the Society to the teacher at Bridge of Turk is L. 15; the school fees may be about L. 1, 10s. The teacher of the sewing and reading school has a salary of L. 6. Much praise is due to the excellent Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge; but for it, thousands in the Highlands would have been deprived of the means of instruction. The people are alive to the benefits of education. All in this parish have the means of instruction, and all from six years and upwards can read. A very visible

change in the conduct, morals, &c. of the people has taken place, since the facilities of education were increased.

*Libraries.*—There are three libraries in the parish supported by subscription, consisting of Histories, Travels, Religious publications, &c., and the books are lent out upon paying a small sum quarterly or yearly.

*Poor and Parochial Funds.*—The regular poor upon the roll amount to about 45. The funds from which they are alimented, are the collections in the church, with the interest of L. 200, amounting in all to between L. 70 and L. 80. These funds are managed by the kirk-session. On emergencies, the heritors make a voluntary contribution to assist the kirk-session funds. Much is done privately in this way by the family of Perth, who not only give money, but a regular supply of meal, clothing and coals, to a number of poor. Besides this, there are several opulent resident individuals who are very liberal in their donations, and when applied to in any cases of peculiar distress, cheerfully contribute to alleviate the sufferings of the indigent.

*Fairs.*—There are several fairs held in the parish, one in the month of May for black-cattle, sheep and horses. This fair is called Cockhill, from its being held upon a hill of that name. The stance for the market is given free by Mr Hunter, the proprietor of the lands. Another very considerable market is held in March, called *Peill ma Chessaig*. There are also two or three smaller fairs for the sale of lambs, hiring of reapers, and the transaction of country business.

*Inns.*—Callander forms a regular stage on the road from Stirling to the West Highlands. Owing to this, as well as to the Trosachs being in the parish, it is much frequented by travellers, for whose accommodation a large inn was built some years ago, to which an addition has been made this year. There are other inns in the village, and one on the banks of Loch Achray, near Loch Catharine.

*Fuel.*—Owing to the improvement in the roads, coal is much more generally used as fuel, than it was twenty years ago; and although it is carried from Bannockburn, a distance of eighteen miles, it is found to be cheaper than the making and carrying of turf or peat. The latter, however, is still much used, and found about a mile from Callander.

#### MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

There is a marked improvement in the state of this parish since the former Statistical Account was written, particularly in husbandry.

Rich crops of oats, barley, turnips, and potatoes, may be seen growing upon places, which, a few years ago, were covered with barren heath, or so swampy that the cattle could not get access to the few tufts of grass that might appear here and there. Still there remains much to be done, a great deal of land is to be seen lying waste, and in a state of nature, which at a little expense might be brought into cultivation, and abundantly repay all trouble and outlay.

The attention paid by graziers to the breed of cattle has greatly promoted improvement in this respect, and several farms in the parish are noted for the excellence of stock, both of black cattle and sheep. Great attention is paid to the smearing of sheep in the beginning of winter, and selecting proper places in the low country for the wintering of the hogs, so that both the carcass of the animal, and quality of the wool are benefited thereby. The wool is sent to Bannockburn, Glasgow, and Liverpool, and bought by the carpet-manufacturers. Although much has been done by some of the proprietors in the way of planting, there is still a great deal of waste land unfit for tillage, which, if planted, would both beautify the face of the country, and enhance the value of property. Considerable improvement has taken place within these few years in the management of the police of the country; yet there are many crimes allowed to pass with impunity. Would it not tend much to diminish crime if there were fewer licenses granted for selling spirits, and more attention paid to the character of the persons to whom licenses are given?

*November 1837.*