

PARISH OF GLENELG.

PRESBYTERY OF LOHCARRON, SYNOD OF GLENELG.

THE REV. ALEXANDER BEITH, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—GLENELG is the ancient and modern name, derived from or compounded of *Gleann* and *seilg*, or *gleann* and *elid*; in the former case signifying *the valley of hunting*, in the latter *the valley of the roe*,—both equally appropriate, whether meant to be descriptive of the regular and extensive sweep of the mountains, or of the rich verdure and covert by which they are distinguished.

Extent, Boundaries.—The parish is about 20 miles in length, and the same nearly in breadth, bounded on the N. E. and E. by the parish of Glensheal, county of Ross; on the S. E. and S. by Glegarry and Lochaber; on the S. W. by lake Morar, separating it from Ardnamurchan; and on the W. and N. W. by the sound of Sleat, separating it from the Isle of Skye. The coast runs nearly from N. to S. and, excepting in the bay of Glenelg, and within the lochs or arms of the sea hereafter to be mentioned, where good anchoring ground is to be met with, is generally high and rocky.

Climate, &c.—In common with other parts of the north-west coast of Scotland, Glenelg is remarkable for the quantity of rain which falls at all seasons of the year. The prevailing winds are the west and south-west, which convey the clouds from the Atlantic heavily laden with treasures, which are most plentifully dispensed by them as they travel along and come in contact with the summits of our lofty mountains. Our severest gales are from those quarters, and are in winter, especially at night, accompanied by frequent peals of terrific thunder. North-east, east and south-east winds bring dry weather, particularly the two latter; but they are of rare occurrence. Our storms usually commence with a strong, gusty, but dry, gale from the south-east, which after a time almost instantaneously veers to the south-west; from which quarter it rages with fury, accompanied with torrents of incessant rain. The usual prognostic of those storms is the low and sullen flight of the sea birds

through the valleys into the interior of the country, as if they retreated from the advance of a resistless enemy. Notwithstanding the excessive moisture of the climate the inhabitants of the country are singularly healthy.

Hydrography.—The parish is intersected by two arms of the sea, Loch Hourn and Lochnevis, and is thus divided into three districts, Glenelg Proper, Knodyart, and North Morar. Loch Hourn is navigable for twenty miles, being about five broad at the entrance, which breadth it retains for about one-half its extent, when, for the remainder, it contracts into less than half this: Lochnevis also extends about twenty miles, being in point of breadth much of the same description as the former. Both are remarkable for the romantic beauty of the scenery of their coasts, especially Loch-Hourn. The mountains rise from their margin, and are covered with wood.

As in all parts of the Highlands, so here many fresh water lakes are to be met with, supplied with trout; but nothing in the natural history of any of them requires particular notice. The same remark applies to the rivers which, along the coast, empty themselves into the friths.

Soil, &c.—The soil in Glenelg Proper is loamy and fertile, notwithstanding the quantity of rain which falls. By this, however, the average weight of the grain is necessarily much deteriorated; yet it is no unusual thing for the common *bear* or *big* to weigh fifty pounds imperial bushel, and Flemish oats forty-eight pounds. In the district of Knodyart the soil is much lighter, but good crops are raised, with the advantage of a harvest always two weeks earlier than in Glenelg Proper.

Mineralogy.—Beds of limestone are met with in various parts of the parish, but it is burned neither for building nor for agricultural purposes. This may be accounted for by the rock being of a very hard description, and by the want of suitable fuel. Peat would hardly suffice for the purpose, and the expense of coals, it is supposed, would be greater than the benefit derived from the use of lime could compensate. An excellent substitute is found in the shells; it abounds on the coast, and is obtained at the expense of the conveyance. Plumbago also is to be met with in considerable quantity. The rocks of this parish, as Professor Jameson informs us, are chiefly gneiss, with subordinate mica slate, quartz rock, hornblende rock, granite, syenite, and serpentine. The serpentine af-

fords veins of asbestos and also of amianthus; actynolite, zoisite, and tremolite occur in other rocks.

Fishings.—The sea along the coast, and the various lochs branching off from it, have long been famed for the number and quality of herrings frequenting them; but, of late years, the fishing has failed, as on all the west coast of Scotland, to the impoverishment of a large population who subsisted by it. Other fish are caught to the extent used by those employed in taking them, and the supply required by the country,—the prevalent kinds being ling and cod; but few, if any, are exported.

Wood.—A considerable quantity of natural oak, ash, birch, alder, &c. grows in the glens and on the sides of the mountains, which overhang the lochs by which the parish is intersected. One or two instances, on a small scale, of plantations made at a remote period, also show that hard woods generally, but the ash and plane particularly, are the trees most congenial to the soil and climate. About twenty years ago, considerable tracts of land were laid under larch, pine, and spruce, intermingled with oak and ash, by Mr Bruce, then proprietor of Glenelg Proper, all which have grown well. As these plantations have been laid out with admirable taste, they add in a great degree to the beauty of scenery, otherwise of a high order. Mr Bruce, at the same time, expended a considerable sum of money in the formation of an orchard near the opening of the larger glen of the district, which he sheltered from the prevailing winds by quick growing wood, and supplied with every description of fruit tree, and of rare and valuable plant: but, being secured only by a temporary dry stone dike, and common thorn hedge, and he himself ceasing soon after to reside in the country, it became a prey to depredators of various kinds, and consequently suffered loss. Still, however, the large fruit trees, especially the pear and plum, yield good crops; and the orchard, even thus wasted, with its magnificent beech hedge running throughout its whole length—for one-half the way being double, so as to form a sheltered and shaded walk of considerable extent—and with its parallel lines of graceful silver firs closely planted, running across its whole breadth,—constitutes a striking object in the scenery of this, one of the first of Highland glens.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Land-owners.—The landowners of the parish are three in number: The Right Honourable Baron Glenelg of Glenelg, present Secretary of State for the Colonies, proprietor of Glenelg Proper,

bounded on the north by Ross-shire, on the south by Loch Hourne; Æneas Ranaldson Macdonell, Esq. of Clanranald and Glengarry, proprietor of Knodyart, bounded on the north by Loch-Hourne, on the south by Lochnevis; and T. A. Fraser, Esq. of Lovat, proprietor of North Morar, bounded on the north by Lochnevis, and on the south by Lake Morar.

Eminent Men.—Lord Glenelg, late Mr Charles Grant, eminent no less for his literary taste than for his talents and success as a statesman, both being graced and sanctified by his unostentatious and unfeigned piety, has a place in the history of his country, as one of those great men who, in the capacity of rulers, have been raised up in the time of her need. The early period in his public life, at which he was called to take a share in the councils of the nation,—the anxiety of each successive government to secure the benefit of his valuable services,—shews the estimation in which he has been uniformly held by those best able to judge of his character; and the master-hand with which he has conducted each department of the state entrusted to his care, with his consequent progressive advancement in public confidence, proves that he has not been overrated. His Lordship's Parliamentary career has been from the beginning connected with Inverness-shire, first, as the Representative of that district of burghs of which Inverness is the principal, and subsequently, of the county,—on the death of his father, whom he succeeded,—until his elevation to the Peerage. The services he has rendered his country are well known. For three years, he held the Secretaryship of Ireland, which country he governed with great prudence and popularity. In the course of this period he obtained for Ireland, the benefit of measures which it required no ordinary sagacity to devise, boldness to advocate, and labour to carry into effect. As President of the Board of Trade, at a subsequent period, it fell to him to introduce that measure for the protection of the corn interests (the most intricate of subjects) which still forms the law of the kingdom, on a point so important,—none better to supersede it having hitherto been devised. As head of another department, it also fell to him to prepare and bring forward the new law for our East India dominions,—an act affecting so large a portion of the human race, and which, in the face of opposing interests and able adversaries, was passed, without any change in its material parts, with general approbation. And in his new and extended sphere, similar important and beneficial results may well be anticipated, from the exercise of his

high and energetic talents, the influence of which will not ultimately prove the less availing that, from natural taste, the notoriety of public exhibition seems to be avoided rather than courted by him.

Antiquities.— Under this head the parish can boast of the most entire specimens, in the southern parts of the Highlands, of the ancient *Beorgs, Burghs, or Dunes*, usually called *Pictish Towers*. They are two in number, and situated near each other in Glenbeg, the smaller of the two valleys to which the name Glenelg belongs in common. The foundation and ruins of a third are also seen in this, and part of the materials of what must have been two more, in the larger, valley or Glenmore. Affording too convenient a supply of useful stones for modern architecture, scarcely one-half of the original building, even of the most entire, remains; whilst of the others little else is to be found than that portion of the materials which it would have been useless to remove. They are all situated at no great distance from the sea, and, it has been alleged, decidedly within the ancient Scandinavian boundary. The height of those of which a portion remains is about 30 feet; but they probably were several feet higher. The diameter within walls is also about 30 feet, but above 50 outside, or over walls. Within, the building is perpendicular, but the external wall is curved, bulging out at top after the form, but not to the extent, of the Eddyston Light-house. This, with their circular shape, and their having no opening on the outside wall, (the building, though without mortar of any kind, being, at the same time, so closely jointed that no footing could have been had in any attempt at scaling,) shows that the "towers" certainly were places of refuge and defence. The walls are double, and exceed 10 feet in thickness. Between or within the walls are tiers of galleries, respectively about 6 feet high and $2\frac{1}{2}$ wide. One of the *dunes* which we describe has four such tiers, of the dimensions stated, one over the other. The second has only two whose dimensions approach this, the higher galleries contracting almost to a single wall. The access to the galleries was by openings, left for the purpose, inside the *dune*, about 3 feet wide, and 5 high,—the communication of each tier with the other being by an aperture in the floor above, or rather by a gap in the large flags which, stretching across both walls, bind the building firmly together, and form the floor of each successive gallery. The external entrance to these places of refuge and defence was by a very low door, close to the ground, to pass through which it is necessary to creep on the hands and knees.

As this entrance still remains, in the case of one of the *dunes*, it is evident, from the construction, that a single stone dropped, after the manner of a *portcullis*, from the opening between the double walls, must have formed a barrier which no intruder could force. In some instances of similar erections, the external entrance is said to have been subterraneous; and it is true that a passage of this kind from one of the Glenelg towers was shut up a few years ago, by the farmers in the neighbourhood, the loss which they sustained by sheep and cattle falling into it having led to this. The passage never was explored by any of the existing generation; but the tradition is, that it communicated both with the neighbouring river and the *second* tower.

It is probable that the dwelling-houses of the inhabitants, in the troublous times which gave origin to the structures which we have attempted to describe, were erected close by the *burghs* or *dunes*, and that when the lighting of the beacons on the neighbouring mountains, gave intimation of the approach of an enemy, or his descent on the coast, they forsook their habitations, conveyed their moveable property, with provisions, within the walls of the fortress, if not always kept there, and, having previously driven their cattle off from the coast, or dispersed them over the mountains, awaited the event or prepared for defence. The protection afforded by such strongholds, usually built upon eminences, must have been considerable. The galleries described above provided perfect shelter for women and children, from arrows and other missiles, which might be thrown into the fort; for they do not seem to have been roofed over. The form of the *dune* precluded the prospect of capture by scaling: whilst from the summit, where, from the projecting stones which remain, it is evident there must have been some description of platform, the besieged could hurl destruction on the enemy who, either by this means or the battering-ram, sought their ruin. From the construction of the castles, and the nature of the assaults made by the predatory adventurers, for defence against whom they were intended, it must have seldom occurred that they were taken by an enemy, unless by surprise. The generally received opinion of their origin is, that they were not the workmanship of any purely Celtic tribe, there being many circumstances to render it probable that they were erected by the Danes or Norwegians. It is necessary only to state further, that the stones, large and small, with which those of Glenelg are built, were conveyed a distance of more than a mile, from a neighbouring mountain, of which the

proof is,—the traces of the transportation afforded by those dropped by the way.

The tradition accounting for the erection of the *dunes* is sufficiently wild. According to this, they were built by two giants, of stature and strength so immense, that one placing himself at a convenient distance, between the mountain from which the materials were quarried, and the site on which the *dunes* are reared, handed the stones to his companion, who without further trouble, constructed the fabrics in all the magnitude in which, it is said, they once appeared. As evidence and illustration of the powers of this Titanic race, a huge rock, of at least fifty tons, is shown as a missile which the one brother hurled at the other, on an occasion when detected by him, in the act of carrying off from his castle the fire which he had left on the hearth on going forth to the chase. The straits of Kyle *Rhea* and Kyle *Akin*, separating Skye at two points from the mainland, are said to bear their names, because their usual mode of passage was by leaping over them. In confirmation of the whole history, their place of sepulture, for they perished in war at last, was long shown and is still distinguished by the name of “*Imear nam Fear Móra.*” That we may be accurate in our history, it may be proper to add, that one account bears, that *Rhea* perished by drowning, according to the following distich:—

*Lèum gach Fear air ceann a shleagh,
Is dhuirich Mac Rhea 'sa chaol.*

—The “barrow” or *tumulus* distinguished by the foregoing name is situated in a little plain near Kyle Rhea. Superstition had long attached sacredness to the spot, and predicted wrath from above on the intruder who, with unhallowed hands, should force it to reveal its secret. Several years ago, however, a party of gentlemen connected with the country resolved to brave the danger; and proceeded, but with selection of a cloudless day, to put tradition to the test. For a time all went well; but their task was only half completed and the wished-for discovery but half made, when the sky became suddenly overcast, and a thunder storm of unusual character compelled them to desist, and to restore matters, so far as might be, to their previous condition. They had, however, in their search come upon two sarcophagi, formed of large flags, containing the remains of human skeletons, imbedded in the finest sand, of most extraordinary size. The bones on being exposed to the air, soon crumbled into dust; but an idea of their dimensions is well given by an eye-witness, who states, that when the under jaw-bone of one of the skeletons was

applied around the lower part of the face of a very large and fat man present, it could so be held without touching him; being at the extreme points nearly twelve inches apart. The circumstances attending the exhumation long secured to "Imear nam Fear Móra" an immunity denied to the adjacent locality. But the lapse of time brought it at last into the occupation of those, who were strangers to the impression produced by such a cause. An attempt was made to subdue the stubborn soil. Warnings of most portentous cast were given, but the sturdy agriculturist, nothing daunted, pursued his task, and the traces of the peaceful plough have now rendered it difficult to point out the site of the "gigantic heroes' resting-place."

Mansion-House.—The only mansion-house in the parish, is that of Inverie, on Glengarry's Knodyart property, where he now resides. It is beautifully situated on the banks of Lochnevis, and was built by the late Colonel Macdonell, father of the present proprietor, who has been described as the last of that class of Highland Chiefs, of whom he formed so perfect a specimen in all his feelings and habits. The house is remarkable, inasmuch as the two principal rooms are finished with strong wattle work from the floor to the roof-tree, for there is no ceiling. The *couples* which support the fabric are of native fir, of great strength and size, also rising from the ground and meeting in massive arches over-head. The floor is of clay and hard sand, the whole finishing being truly Celtic, and in excellent keeping with the tartans which grace its hospitable and accomplished inmates.

In Knodyart and Glenelg Proper, there are several large and comfortable houses, occupied by extensive sheep-farmers. Of those the principal are at Barrisdale, Beolary, and Ellanreach. The last especially is commodious, well finished, and finely situated near the sea.

III.—POPULATION.

Population in 1801,	.	2834
1811,	.	2611
1821,	.	2807
1831,	.	2874

The ancient population must have been very considerable, probably double at least of what it is now. The decrease is to be accounted for solely by emigration; for to such an extent has this prevailed, that America too rejoices in a Glenelg, with a population, at least equal to that which the parent parish still possesses. This emigration was at first of necessity and not of choice. The

letting of large tracts of land to single individuals caused the original banishment of the hardy and numerous race, who had for so many generations possessed the soil. This class of emigrants did not quit their native shores empty-handed. On the contrary, they carried with them the means of procuring a comfortable home beyond the Atlantic. The population which remained consisted of those who were too poor to follow, and of a few others, who, willing to forego some advantages for the privilege of residing in their much loved native land, tried to content themselves with sadly reduced possessions, until, finding that thus they were losing their all, and induced by the flattering tidings which reached them from the western continent, they too, though in different circumstances from their predecessors, bade farewell to a country, to which they had clung till they could do so no longer. Of this description of inhabitants few (that is, not more than a dozen families,) are left behind; and of those, as they are able to effect their object, occasional families take their flight to what they consider a happier shore. Besides the tacksmen of the large possessions into which the country has been divided,—four of whom possess Glenelg Proper, and about as many more the other districts,—besides them and the shepherds and servants whom they require, the population consists of those who dwell in villages near the sea;—divided into two classes,—such as possess from one acre, to perhaps six of arable ground, and the grazing of from one to three cows, and others who have nothing but the cottage that shelters them, who depend on the kindness of neighbours for patches of ground for potatoes, and supply all their other wants by fishing, and such work as they may obtain at home or abroad. It is but fair to remark, that the banishment of the original population, and the throwing of the country into a few large possessions, took place long before the time of the present race of proprietors, so that, whether matter of regret or satisfaction, to them belongs neither the blame nor praise. Whatever the views of political economists on this interesting topic, as to the nation's loss or gain, it is impossible not to contemplate it in reference to those exiles themselves, and, in doing this, not to lament, especially, over the injury sustained by them in a moral point of view. Amidst the plenty for their bodily support which they enjoy in America, they dwell there in a barren wilderness as to provision for their souls. Deprived of the ordinances of religion, or but scantily and occasionally supplied, deprived also of the means of instruction for their children, the many careless

and indifferent who go thither become confirmed in their spiritual deadness, whilst those of them who quit their native land under more serious impressions, also yield to the secularising influence of such an order of things; and though *they* retain their integrity, and hold fast their profession in their day, yet, leaving no successors, the harps which for a time had awakened echoes, that previously enjoyed an unbroken sleep, are at last hung upon the willows, and the Songs of Zion cease to be heard by the streams of the foreign land! How worthy this subject of the consideration of a patriotic and parental Legislature! Nay, how imperative that the thousands who yearly go to swell the population of our growing colony, should not be left to perish for the lack of knowledge!

Number of families in the parish,	511
chiefly employed in agriculture,	211
in trade, manufactures, or handicraft,	61

Language.—Glenelg being a purely Highland district, the language spoken is almost exclusively Gaelic. A few individuals understand a little English, and are able to speak it; but Gaelic is the language in which all business is transacted, and will probably long continue to be so. Here, as throughout the whole Highlands, there exists the greatest ambition for the acquirement of English. Without it, it is well known there is little probability of advancing in the world; but from the system pursued in our schools, the progress hitherto made in introducing English has been limited indeed. The disadvantages under which our Highland population labour in acquiring knowledge from this cause, are unspeakable; and it were well worthy of those whose attention is now directed to the subject of training *teachers* for the duties of their important office, to take into consideration the obstacle which has to be overcome in reference to our Highland youth, and to devise the mode by which this may be fairly expected to be done. The simple reading of English is easily taught; but the difficulty lies in making this language the medium of communication with the minds of our youth. If children who understand English require what is called the *intellectual system*, *i. e.* the translation of complex into simple terms, Highlanders require a double translation; this, and also the second rendering into their mother tongue; and all, moreover, with the aim of ultimately substituting the more for the less perfect language.

With ordinary advantages the population of this parish might certainly be much raised in the scale of intelligence, being naturally remarkably acute, shrewd, and active. With this character,

and enjoying the facilities which they do in the more remote districts, it is not to be wondered that smuggling should prevail to some extent, in the pursuit of which their ingenuity and activity are so much called into exercise.

Amidst all their disadvantages they are contented, and upon the whole comparatively comfortable,—there being nothing in their circumstances to prevent their possessing that happiness which is the fruit of, and can exist only in connection with, the influence of the blessings of the gospel.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—The climate of the north-west coast of Scotland generally unfits it for the purposes of agriculture. In Glenelg such quantities of rain fall, and at all seasons, that an agriculturist might calculate on losing almost every fourth crop. This, and the small comparative amount of arable land, plainly point it out as adapted for pasture,—the farmer having in this line only the prospect of success,—sheep pasture, too, principally; as the arable land could not afford sufficient supply of winter provender for any other description of stock. Yet few districts of this coast, if any, equal Glenelg as to the quantity of arable land and the richness of soil. We cannot be wrong in estimating the number of acres in the whole parish that are occasionally in tillage, or might be, at about 1000. There are probably about 2000 acres under wood. The wealth of the country, however, consists in the luxuriance of its pasture. This remark applies to Knodyart and Morar, in common with Glenelg Proper, but especially to the last. Good rents are consequently paid; the average rent of grazing for a cow or ox being L. 2 Sterling for the season, and of pasture for a ewe or full-grown sheep, 3s. The black-cattle are generally of the pure Highland breed, kept free of all southern taint with extreme care. The old black-faced sheep stocks are rapidly disappearing before the white-faced or Cheviot, which are found uniformly more hardy, and, from the superior quality of their wool, vastly more profitable than the other description. Much attention is paid to the improvement of sheep stock, which soon finds its reward in the increased prices obtained for the various sorts disposed of, as well as for the wool. From the character of the climate, smearing with tar and butter is universally practised, so that *white* wool is not at all known among us. Every advantage, as might be naturally expected, is afforded the sheep-farmer as to the duration of his lease, which is seldom, if ever, under nineteen years. The requisite fences and buildings

for the management of this description of stock are in every case fully granted ; indeed, every facility is afforded both for rearing and improving.

Produce.—The average gross amount of raw produce raised in the parish may be stated as follows :

Grain of all kinds,	L. 1000
Potatoes,	650
Hay,	585
Pasture of black-cattle and sheep, at L. 2 for cow or ox, and at 9s. for a ewe or full-grown sheep,	7900
Gardens and orchards,	50
Annual fellings and thinning of woods,	200
Herring fishery,	250
	L. 10635
Total yearly value of raw produce raised,	

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Means of Communication, &c.—The nearest market-town is Inverness, which is at the same time the county town, and situated at the distance of about seventy miles. The means of communication are good, inasmuch as the Parliamentary road into the Isle of Skye passes through the principal glen to the ferry of Kyle Rhea. This road, leading from Glensheal into Glenelg, over the stupendous pass of Mām Rataan, is excellent,—the bridges across the various mountain streams being of the best construction, and always preserved in good repair.

The Kirkton of Glenelg can boast of being a village of some extent, having the principal street of slated houses, and displaying the attractions of some well-stocked shops. The bay upon which the village is built affords good anchorage with south-east, east, and north-east wind ; but the safest harbour with all winds is upon the opposite coast of Skye, and at the distance of one or two miles. The whole appearance of Kirkton is truly picturesque, including, as it does, the church, factor's residence, and street already alluded to, with its numerous train of straw-covered cottages, interspersed with various kinds of ornamental trees, surmounted by a thriving planting of fir that towers majestically over it, and having lines of trees along the various roads that lead from it. All this, combined with the beauty of the extensive bay and back-ground, has procured for Kirkton, from the lovers of fine scenery, much admiration. Under the head of villages may also be mentioned Arnisdale, possessing a population of 600, and situated at the southern extremity of the district of Glenelg Proper, on the banks of Loch Hourne. The Alpine scenery of this locality owes nothing to art. Its native grandeur, however, more than compensates this neglect.

In this extensive parish there is no post-office. Lochalsh, in the county of Ross, and, by the high road, at the distance of twenty

miles from Glenelg, is the post-town. Thither we send, in the meantime, at our own expense, by the ferry of Loch Duich; but it is expected that representations which have lately been made in the proper quarter, may lead to speedy improvement in this department.*

Ecclesiastical State.—It has been already noticed that the church is situated close by Kirkton, consequently in the northern extremity of the parish; in fact, it is within two miles of the boundary of the neighbouring parish of Glensheal. The population of the Glenelg district comprises nearly two-thirds of the whole parish, and is, with the exception of a few families, exclusively Protestant. It is divided between the northern and southern extremities, in the proportions of 1100 souls to the former, and 700 to the latter. Arnisdale, the capital of the latter, is distant from the church and school-house at least thirteen miles, consequently can derive very little benefit from either. The distribution of the population, and not any error in placing the church, thus renders it the place of religious assembly merely of one section of the parish. Situated as it is, it accommodates the largest division; built any where else, it either would accommodate a smaller proportion, or none at all. The former would be the case had it been erected at Arnisdale; the latter had it been placed at an intermediate point, with the view of serving both extremities of the district, as, from the distance and difficulty of access on each hand, seldom could any, and never the weak and infirm, come up to the house of God. The accommodation afforded by the church has accordingly never exceeded what is required for the northern section of the Glenelg district, with its population of 1100, as it never contained more than from 300 to 400 sittings. About six years ago, it underwent a thorough repair, and now affords, so far as it goes, very comfortable accommodation. The attendance on public worship is always good; and the average number of communicants for the whole parish is about 200.

The two districts of Knodyart and Morar, bounded and separated as already described, have a population, with few exceptions, entirely Catholic. To this portion of the parish the Committee of the General Assembly for the management of the Royal Bounty has, for a number of years, assigned a missionary,—the order of his services being, that he preach two successive Sabbaths at two different points in Knodyart, and the third at Arnisdale. From this

* Since the foregoing was written, a *penny-post*, three times a week, has been established from Lochalsh by the above route.

arrangement, in connection with the distance of the parish church, Arnisdale, with its large Protestant population, is truly inadequately supplied with the means of grace. Its circumstances, and also those of Knodyart, have been brought under the notice of the Religious Instruction Commission and of the General Assembly's Church Extension Committee; and it may be safely averred, that no station in Scotland can prefer a stronger claim, or come more clearly under the description of destitution, to the removal of which the Government and our church have, we trust, now resolved to apply their energies.

In the Knodyart and Morar districts two Catholic priests officiate, supported exclusively by the fees raised for their services. In the former there is a chapel, if the half dilapidated and straw-covered hut, which serves as a place of worship, may be dignified with that name; in the latter another is in course of erection. The attendance at the first, from the dimensions of the house, can never exceed 100. For Knodyart the Honourable the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, three years ago, granted an annual sum of L. 8 in support of a catechist; but as grants in such circumstances, by this Society, are made on the condition of an equivalent being provided by those benefited, that an adequate provision may be secured, this bounty has not hitherto been made available.

The present manse of Glenelg was built four years ago. It is situated at a distance of more than a mile from the church, and a little way beyond the entrance of the larger glen. Of considerable extent, and handsome structure, from the commanding situation in which it stands, and in full view of the sea, it forms a striking object in connection with the surrounding exquisite scenery. The glebe, if it may be called by this name, is of great extent; being above 360 acres, 50 of which nearly are good arable, the remainder being pasture; and all this, exclusive of a shealing, at the distance of a few miles, calculated to be large enough for the pasture of a hundred sheep. The farm of Buarblach, of which this forms the description, constitutes the glebe, under the burden of an annual rent paid to the proprietor, of L. 19, 0s. 7d. Sterling; and became so under the following circumstances: Subsequently to the Rebellion of 1715, Government resolved to erect in this part of the county a fort or barracks, the remains of which are still extant, and the proprietor of Glenelg, the M'Leod of the day, being in London at the time, sold for the purpose the portion of land on which the building stands, and grounds to a considerable extent

around. In these, however, were included the original glebe; in lieu of which, in a subsequent arrangement with the presbytery, the farm of Buarblach, burdened as above, was given by regular deed, inserted in the records, to the incumbent of the parish in all time to come. At the period of the transaction, it was no more than a fair equivalent, but the increase in the value of land since makes the glebe an important addition to the income of the minister. The teinds of the parish are exhausted, and the heritors, having resigned them on the occasion of the last augmentation, the stipend is fixed at the annual sum of L. 237, 7s. 9½d. Sterling.

Education.—We have at present five schools: one parochial, and four from the Edinburgh Gaelic School Society. The parochial school is situated at a short distance from the manse; has a salary of L. 30 Sterling, with the legal accommodations, and a large attendance of scholars, too poor to pay almost anything. The branches taught are, English and Gaelic reading, writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, and sometimes Latin. Though the full legal accommodations are provided for the schoolmaster, not L. 5 a year are drawn in the shape of school fees. The principle applied in selecting the situation for the church has also been applied in the case of the school-house. Not only is it in the northern portion of the Glenelg district, so as to be useless to Arnisdale, Knodyart, and Morar, but, in addition to this, there being no central point between the two glens, which form this northern portion, convenient for the children of both, it has been placed within the reach of the chief population, viz. near the opening of the larger glen, where it can easily be attended by 200 scholars. Its distance from Glenbeg is thus three miles, from Arnisdale fourteen, from Knodyart eighteen and a broad ferry, and from Morar twenty, and two such ferries. In short, it is convenient only to about a fourth of the whole population. The immense deficiency in the means of education has hitherto been met solely by the Gaelic School Society,—a society which it is impossible to mention without rendering it the tribute of our gratitude for the unspeakable benefit it has conferred on so large a portion of the Highlands. Glenelg owes it much. But the schools established by this society being circulating, and their object limited to teaching to read the scriptures in Gaelic, however valuable, considering the character of the people for whom they are intended, they cannot be held to be a sufficient substitute for parochial schools. Three additional parochial schools at least, we require, one for Arnisdale, one for Knodyart, one for Morar; and besides these,

there are several situations within our wide bounds which would still plead for such valuable aid as we now derive from the patriotic and Christian society to which allusion has been made.

The prevalence of Catholicism in the southern districts of the parish declares the necessity of some measure for the supply of the means of instruction; the want of which has, doubtless, principally maintained the ascendancy of that form of religion there and elsewhere. Though the gospel be preached within the reach of Catholics they will not hear; it is a virtue, in their esteem, so to act; and if at any time they be enticed to give their bodily presence, they come so panoplied in ignorance and prejudice, that of them it may be literally said, "they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear, and will not hearken to the voice of charmers charming never so wisely." If, however, this ignorance and prejudice were removed, might we not expect another character? If the way were thus prepared through the means of instruction, might we not expect that the gospel would have free course and be glorified among them, hopeless though their case at present seems?

The number of the young betwixt six and fifteen years of age who can neither read nor write may be reckoned, for the whole parish, at 100; the number of persons upwards of fifteen years, in similar circumstances, at 900.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The number of poor on the roll is about 40,—being thus small, from the circumstance that the Catholics never have applied for any portion of the funds. The benefit to the other poor from this cause is more than counterbalanced by the fact, that no proclamation of banns in the case of Catholic marriages ever takes place at the parish church, and consequently no payment of the ordinary dues to us.

The only funds possessed by the parish are the collections at the church doors, the fees for the proclamation of banns, exclusive of what fall to the share of the session-clerk and beadle; and the mulcts or fines that are imposed by the kirk-session for various delinquencies which come within their jurisdiction. The whole never amounts to more than L. 20 Sterling per annum, subject to payment of a small salary to the precentor, stationery for the clerk, and part of the expense incurred on the interment of paupers. The average sum allotted to each person receiving aid is consequently small, not exceeding 8s. annually; which is thankfully received, and never asked nor allotted, save in cases absolutely requiring it. Of the district of Glenelg Proper, it has long been a distinction that few travel from it as beggars into other quar-

ters, and that those who require aid come not to their neighbours who are able to give, as common beggars, to receive from day to day, or from week to week, a miserable pittance; but on some few occasions, in course of the year, when they know it will be both convenient and agreeable to bestow the required boon. It follows that the poor among us are comparatively well provided for, upon the whole, without the aid of any public assessment, and purely from the inexhaustible and grateful source of private benevolence. The truly parental leniency of the proprietor produces in a great degree this happy result.

Fairs.—In this parish are held three fairs; to correspond with the great fairs in the south; in the months of May, July, and September respectively.

Inns.—The number of inns is three.

Fuel.—The only fuel is peat or turf, excepting that a few of the more wealthy sheep-farmers burn a proportion of coals imported, at considerable expense, from Clyde, and sometimes from Liverpool.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The most striking variation betwixt the present state of the parish and that which existed at the time of the last Statistical Account, consists in its being opened up by the road which runs through it; and by the hebdomadal visits of a steam-boat, regularly paid, save during the stormy months of winter. By these means we have learned that there is a world beyond Glenelg. The Chinese-like self-preference which once existed, accompanied by a contempt of those, who, less fortunate than we, had been ordained to draw breath first in some other district, is passing away, and giving place to a more enlightened, a more rational, and Christian feeling. Since the period alluded to, also, the large farm system has come more fully into operation, and its evils have been developed. By it the country has been bereaved of her worthiest children, and, in the exaltation of a few individuals, thousands are doomed to poverty. The ease to the land-owner in securing the returns of his property can be no compensation for this evil; and, difficult though the re-establishment of another order of things may now be, the gradual breaking up of the present system, and engaging the energies of the population who now live without an object, in that line of industry to which they have been accustomed, which they understand and love, seems to be the improvement that religion, patriotism, and sound policy demand in behalf of so large, so valuable and important a portion of the community.

January 1836.