

PARISH OF ROSSKEEN.

PRESBYTERY OF TAIN, SYNOD OF ROSS.

THE REV. DAVID CARMENT, A. M. MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—“THE name of this parish,” says the writer of the last Statistical Account, “seems to be derived from the Gaelic word *Coinneamh*, signifying a meeting or junction; and *Ross-coinneamh* may denote the place where the districts of Easter and Wester Ross join,—which is the western boundary of this parish, and where the inhabitants might occasionally assemble.”

Extent and Boundaries.—This parish is situated on the northern shore of the Frith of Cromarty. It is supposed to extend in length, from south-east to north-west, from 25 to 30 miles; its greatest breadth is about 12 miles. It is bounded on the east by the parish of Kilmuir; on the west by Alness; on the north by the parish of Kincardine and Edderton; and on the south by the Frith of Cromarty.

Topographical Appearances.—That part of the parish which lies along the coast, is level. The ground rises from the sea coast with a gentle acclivity, for a distance of about four miles; after which, it becomes hilly. The hills, however, are not in general of remarkable height. The highest is Cairn Coinneag. It is situated on the confines of the parish, where it borders on the north-west with Kincardine and Alness, and is supposed to be about

3000 feet above the level of the sea. In the interior of the parish, at a distance of about seven miles from the coast, there is a very extensive strath called Strathrusdale, used chiefly for sheep pasturage.

Meteorology, &c.—The climate is dry, temperate, and salubrious. The temperature in summer rarely exceeds 80° Fah. in the shade, and in winter it seldom falls below 14°. The climate sometimes varies a little in different parts of the parish, “for all kinds of farm-work can be carried on in the lower part of the parish, when in the heights the operations are interrupted by hard frost or a fall of snow.”

Hydrography.—This parish, as we have already mentioned, is situated on the northern shore of the Frith of Cromarty, and is bounded by it for a distance of nearly six miles. The frith finds entrance between the two hills known by the name of the Sutors of Cromarty, and runs up into the country a distance of about twenty miles, and is almost surrounded by an amphitheatre of hills, between which and the shore lies a well-wooded and fertile country. The scenery of the frith is remarkably fine. From the Ness of Invergordon, the spectator can, on a clear summer evening, obtain a view of rarely equalled beauty. Looking to the east, across the broad waters of the Moray Frith, “the finest water piece in Britain,” he can discern in the distance, skirting the horizon, the distinctly defined coast of Moray; nearer, he beholds the Sutors of Cromarty, uprearing themselves on either side of the gateway through which the waters of the Frith enter, and which, immediately within these natural barriers, expand into a broad and beautiful bay, with the sweetly situated town of Cromarty on the south side, and on the north a rich and fertile country, with a magnificent back-ground of hills. Turning his eyes westward, he sees the calm and peaceful frith stretching up farther than the eye can well reach, and bordered on the north side by a stripe of richly wooded and comparatively level country; in the distance may be perceived the mountain monarch Ben Wyvis, raising high into the clear blue air his snowy summit, and surrounded by a hundred ancient hills, like so many chiefs round their sovereign; while to the south-west, the view is bounded by the huge and many-peaked Ben Vaichard. The general depth of the frith is from 15 to 20 fathoms; it preserves this depth for 12 or 14 miles; but after that, it shoals considerably. It is navigable, however, at full tide, for vessels of considerable size, to its furthest extremity.

Lakes.—There are four fresh water lakes in this parish,—Lochs Achnacloich, Patavieg, Coinneag, and Charnac. None of them is of any great extent, the largest not exceeding half-a-mile in length. The only one of them which merits notice on account of its scenery, is Achnacloich. It is situated in a small but beautiful and secluded glen. At the lake's eastern extremity, there is a lovely sylvan amphitheatre, from whence a view can be commanded of almost unrivalled majesty. Standing in this sequestered spot, surrounded on three sides by wood, the spectator has immediately before him the quiet lake, bordered by its beautiful fringe of birch and alder; while, to the west, may be seen a wilderness of hills, stretching to an apparently interminable distance, and heaped together in seemingly chaotic confusion, Ben Wyvis with its "diadem of snow," proudly towering above them all.

Rivers.—The only stream of any magnitude connected with this parish, is the water of Alness, which forms the boundary between this and the neighbouring parish of Alness. It is a wild and romantic river, and will very amply repay the lover of the picturesque, for his trouble in visiting it. There is one place, in particular, on the banks of the river called Tollie, which is of surpassing beauty, and affords not a few scenes worthy of the painter or the poet.

The river of Balnagown, which falls into the bay of Nigg, has its source in this parish.

Geology and Mineralogy.—A large part of the parish is composed of that red sandstone referred by geologists to the *old red sandstone formation*. In the upper part of the parish, the soil is a clayey loam incumbent on the red sandstone, and containing a number of rolled blocks of coarse granite, gneiss, &c. In the lower part, the soil varies considerably, "being partly gravelly and light, partly loam, and some a deep and strong clay." In the middle of the parish, on the property of Culcairn, there is a very extensive bed of shell marl, amounting to perhaps from fifty to seventy acres. It is, however, little, if at all, used,—as lime, which is preferred, can be obtained easily, and at a moderate price. There are large tracts of moss in the parish, in which considerable quantities of fir and oak are found imbedded.

Zoology.—Of quadrupeds common to the parish, we may mention the red-deer (*Cervus elaphus*), the roe (*C. capreolus*), the fox (*Canis vulpes*), the badger (*Ursus meles*), the weasel (*Mustela vulgaris*), the marten (*M. foina*), the polecat (*M. putorius*), the ot-

ter (*M. lutra*), the wild cat (*Felis catus ferus*), the common hare (*Lepus timidus*), the alpine hare (*L. variabilis*), the rabbit (*L. cuniculus*), the mole (*Talpa Europea*), the bat (*Vespertilio*.)

Birds.—Of birds which either occasionally visit us, or are natives to the parish, we may mention the following: The royal or golden eagle (*Falco chrysaetos*), the peregrine or common falcon (*F. peregrinus*), the Iceland falcon (*F. islandicus*), the sparrowhawk (*F. nisus*), the glead (*F. milvus*), the hen-harrier (*F. cyaneus*), and several other varieties. The owl (*Strix flammea*), the raven (*Corvus corax*), the hooded, royston, or grey-crow (*C. cornix*), the rook (*C. frugilegus*), the jackdaw or daw (*C. monedula*), the magpie (*C. pica*), the starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), the greater butcher-bird (*Lanius excubitor*), the throstle or song-thrush (*Turdus musicus*), the fieldfare (*T. pilaris*), the blackbird (*T. merula*), the stonechat (*Motacilla rubicola*), the water wagtail (*M. alba*), the lark (*Alauda arvensis*), the bullfinch (*Loxia pyrrhula*), the chaffinch (*Fringilla cœlebs*), the goldfinch (*F. carduelis*), the cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*), the kingfisher (*Alcedo ispida*), the swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), the goat-sucker, fern-owl, or night jar (*Caprimulgus Europæus*), the wood-pigeon (*Columba palumbus*), the blackcock (*Tetrao tetrix*), the ptarmigan (*T. lagopus*), the moorfowl (*T. Scoticus*), the partridge (*T. perdix*), the plover (*Charadrius plumvialis*), the lapwing (*Tringa vanellus*), the heron (*Ardea cinerea*), the woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*), the curlew (*S. arquata*), the snipe (*S. gallinago*), the corncrake (*Rallus crex*), the sea-gull (*Larus canus*). Large flocks of wild geese and ducks used during the winter months to frequent the Frith, but of late years they have almost entirely disappeared. To what cause this is to be attributed we know not.

Fishes.—In the frith, are found cod, coal-fish, skate, flounders, and salmon. Of old, haddocks and whittings were also found, but they have for many years almost totally disappeared. This has led to the conjecture, that the bed of the frith is becoming gradually more muddy. Herring used also to enter the frith, but they have long ago totally deserted it. Of shell-fish, we may mention the cockle (*Cardium edule*), mussel (*Mytilus edulis*), limpet (*Patella vulgaris*), razor fish, &c. Very fine oysters (*Ostrea edulis*) are found by dredging.

Botany.—The parish possesses few, if any, rare plants. There are very extensive plantations, consisting chiefly of larch and Scottish firs; but the latter greatly predominate. There is also

a very considerable quantity of hard-wood, elm, beech, ash, oak, plane and lime trees, &c. besides natural woods of birch and alder. Altogether, there may be in the parish about 3000 acres under wood. On the estate of Ardross, the property of the Duke of Sutherland, there are some very noble trees. We may mention especially two magnificent oaks. Their dimensions are ; of the one, girth at base, 10 feet,—at 5 feet from the ground, 8 feet 4 : it rises beautifully straight, for about 25 feet, before it begins to taper much, and may be altogether from 50 to 70 feet in height. Of the other, girth at base, 11 feet 6 ; it preserves nearly the same thickness for 12 or 15 feet, and then branches off into two enormous arms. These trees are supposed to be about 300 years old, and are, of course, as yet in the prime of their age. We may mention also an uncommonly large fir tree, which measures round the base about 11 feet. At the height of a few feet from the ground, it branches off into a number of arms, each about the size of an ordinary tree. One of these large branches was singularly enough broken off a few winters ago, by the weight of a quantity of snow which had accumulated upon it. There are several other very fine firs, averaging 7 feet in girth, with the main stem rising 60 or 70 feet in height.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

*Historical Notices.**—In September of the year 1675, Mr

* *Sheep Insurrection, 1792.*—In summer 1792, some sheep-farmers in the parish of Ainess took upon them to pound, for an alleged trespass, the cattle of the Ardross tenants in this parish. The people collected in a body, in order to release the cattle, alleging that they were wrongously pounded, as the hills in question, on which their cattle were pasturing, had, from time immemorial, belonged to, and were in possession of, the tenantry of Ardross and Strathrusdale. The sheep-farmers rather imprudently met the people with fire-arms, supported by their shepherds and servants ; but they were instantly disarmed by the people of Ardross. An old man still living, a man then in the prime of life, and of great strength and stature, was the principal instrument in closing instantaneously with, and disarming the shepherds, before they could use their fire-arms, even if so inclined. The gentlemen shepherds were thus compelled to submit to the people, and to liberate the cattle. In the month of July of that year, and soon after the above affray had taken place, at a wedding in Strathrusdale, as the people's minds were irritated by the recent occurrence, and as the sheep-farming system was progressing in every corner of the North Highlands, and the people driven year after year from the fields of their fathers,—their minds were exasperated at what they deemed oppression, and thus were ready to adopt any course, however violent, which they foolishly thought would rid them of sheep and sheep-farmers. It was therefore resolved at this wedding, that messengers should be dispatched to every corner of the country, to raise the war-cry against sheep and sheep-farming. The people were easily excited in such a case, and they collected in great numbers, and were driving the sheep out of the country, when, after reaching the parish of Ainess, they were met by a party of the 42d Regiment, from Fort George, when they were compelled to disperse and seek safety in flight. Several of the persons concerned were apprehended afterwards, and tried before the Circuit Court at Inverness, in September 1792. There is one striking feature in this case, characteristic of a Highland mob, which strongly exemplifies their high moral principles, even when excited and roused by oppression to an illegal act ; no sheep was injured, no lamb was hurt, by overdriving.

M'Killigen, formerly minister of Fodderty in Wester Ross, celebrated the communion at Obsdale, in this parish, in the house of the Lady Dowager of Foulis. "There assisted him," says Wodrow, "Mr Hugh Anderson, minister of Cromarty, and Mr Alexander Fraser, minister at Teviot, afterwards at Abbotshall." There was, it appears, on this occasion "such a plentiful effusion of the spirit, that the eldest Christians there declared they had not been witnesses to the like." The ministers engaged in this solemnity experienced a remarkable preservation; for a party of soldiers was sent by Sir Roderick M'Kenzie of Findon, to apprehend Mr M'Killigen, who had rendered himself particularly obnoxious to those in power. "Expecting he would have dispensed the sacrament at Alness, the place of his residence, the party came thither, upon the Lord's day, and missing him, they fell a pillaging his orchard, which kept them so long, that before they could reach Obsdale, the forenoon's work was over, and upon notice given, the ministers retired. After the party went off, the ministers and people met again in the afternoon, and had no more disturbance." An old natural fir tree still marks the spot, and it is worthy of note, that the traditional account preserved in the parish of this event, accords in every particular with that given by Wodrow.

Eminent Men.—William Macintosh, the author of *Travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa*, and other literary works, was born at Newmore, in this parish, in the year 1738. He was the son of Lachlan Macintosh, a descendant of the family of Macintosh of Balnespick, in Badenoch, and of ——— Macpherson, of the same family as Sir John Macpherson, at one time Governor of India. This branch of the family of Macintosh had, however, been for some time settled in Ross-shire; and in Alness church-yard, the graves of John Macintosh and Janet Montgomery of Kiltearn his spouse, (the grandfather and grandmother of William Macintosh,) are still to be seen. William went, when young, to the West Indies, where he realized a considerable property,—but shortly after his return to Europe, about 1775, he embarked for the East Indies, where he resided for several years. He published a very amusing account of his travels and adventures in the East, which is remarkable as originally propounding, and foretelling the ultimate adoption of, almost all the theoretical views and precepts which have subsequently been carried into practice by various British statesmen in the administration of our East Indian possessions. This work was published in English anonymously, by Mr Macintosh; and it is

probably owing to this circumstance, that his name has failed to be associated, as it deserves, with the more enlightened views which have, from time to time, been adopted in the government of our eastern possessions. In the French translation of Mr Macintosh's Travels, his name, however, appears, and he is fully recognized as the author of the work. It is on this circumstance, that Mr Macintosh's claims to public notice chiefly rest. On his return from the East, Mr Macintosh took up his abode in the south of France; but, on the breaking out of the French Revolution, his house was attacked and sacked by the republicans, and the same fate awaited him at Avignon, in the Pope's states, where he had sought refuge, when the French forces invaded Italy. The cause of this hostility is not known; but it is not a little remarkable, that when Napoleon visited Erfurth, in 1808, he found Mr Macintosh, then far advanced in years, residing in Eisenach in Saxony; and the immediate result was his arrest and incarceration in a dungeon, till such time as the Corsican had departed from Germany. Mr Macintosh was, however, seized, in consequence, with an illness, which terminated his life in 1809.

George Macintosh, the younger brother of William, who was also born at Newmore, was destined by Providence to distinguish himself in a different field of exertion. In early life, he settled as a merchant in Glasgow, where he married a lady of the name of Moore, sister of Dr Moore, the author of *Zeluco* and other literary works of eminence, and the aunt of the celebrated General Sir John Moore. Mr Macintosh soon became conspicuous for industry and intelligence in the line of his business, and zealously devoted his talents and exertions to the promotion of those branches of manufacture, in which chemical science constitutes a distinguishing feature. He established in Glasgow the manufacture of a species of orcella or orseille, called cudbear, and introduced into Britain the branch of trade known as the Turkey or Adrianople red dye, and which has subsequently exerted so powerful an influence on our calico-printing and cotton-spinning establishments. But in treating of this his native parish, and that, too, a Highland parish, it is to Mr Macintosh's devotion to the cause of the Highlands and of Highlanders, which continued to animate and distinguish him through life, that the mind naturally reverts. The introduction of the improved system of farming into the Highlands, and in particular the system of sheep farming, soon opened, though indirectly, a field for the exercise of Mr Macintosh's be-

neficence and philanthropy. It is known that the emigration on an extensive scale, which resulted as a natural consequence from this change in Highland agriculture, was attended with sufferings, on the part of the emigrants, calculated to excite the sympathy even of indifferent observers. Numbers of the expatriated Highlanders flocked to Glasgow, where Mr Macintosh's bountiful assistance was never denied them, and where his counsel and advice, (of more value, probably, than mere pecuniary donations,) were in addition tendered with equal willingness and zeal. In obtaining for his destitute countrymen, occupation in the walks of commercial and manufacturing industry, both in his own employment, and in other and distant situations, he was equally indefatigable and successful. In the midst of these events, the war resulting from the French Revolution commenced; and Glasgow, under the influence of Mr George Macintosh, became the scene of recruiting for the army on an extensive scale, from amongst the numbers of the Highland emigrants. His correspondence, which is still preserved, indicates no less his kindly anxiety for the real welfare of his countrymen, than it does a high tone of public spirit and patriotic feeling; but what is perhaps equally gratifying, it demonstrates, as expressed by many public functionaries, and individuals of rank and character, that the government of the day was sensible of the services which he rendered to his country, and duly appreciated the same. When war recommenced in 1803, it was mainly through his exertions that the Glasgow Highland Volunteer Regiment was raised and organized; and when, about this time, the regiment of Canadian Fencibles, then stationed in Glasgow, evinced symptoms of mutiny, Mr Macintosh, at the desire of General Wemyss, then commanding the district, hastened to their quarters, and addressed the soldiers in their native tongue;—the effect was electrical.

“With such authority, the troubled host he swayed,”

that the corps, in the instant, returned to their duty. In the midst of this useful and honourable career, Mr Macintosh was snatched from society, in the summer of 1807. On his return from a journey into England, he was seized with illness at Moffat, where he expired in the sixty-ninth year of his age. His ashes repose at a distance from those of his fathers, in the cathedral burying-ground at Glasgow, in the tomb of the ancient family of Anderson of Dowhill, from which his wife was descended. On Sunday, the 9th of August 1807, as a tribute of respect to Mr Macintosh's memory,

the gentlemen of the Highland Society, and of the Gaelic Club of Glasgow, preceded by the Lord Provost and Magistrates, and the boys of the Highland Society, (one of the numerous charities which had flourished through his bountiful aid and protection,) walked in procession to St Andrew's Church in Glasgow, where an excellent and an appropriate sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr Ritchie, from the text, 112th Psalm, verse 2d, "He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor, his righteousness endureth for ever, his horn shall be exalted with honour."

Mr George Macintosh left, with other children, a son Charles Macintosh, who still survives. He is also a merchant in Glasgow, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of London. In the walk of chemical manufactures, his reputation is perhaps second to no individual in Europe. He is the inventor of the process for water-proofing fabrics, by the application of Indian rubber.

Land-owners.—The principal heritors are, the Duke of Sutherland; M^cLeod of Cadboll; M^cLeay of Newmore; Hugh Rose Ross of Glastullich and Cromarty; and M^cKenzie of Kin-craig.

Parochial Registers.—The registers of births and marriages both commence in 1781, and have been regularly kept.

Antiquities.—Under this head, it may be mentioned, that, in a field a little to the west of the church, there is a singular upright stone, somewhat in the form of an obelisk, called Clach a Mhearlich, *i. e.* the thief's stone,—which is evidently of very ancient date. Though in the midst of an arable field, it is most religiously preserved, no attempt being made to remove it, or alter its position. None even of the oldest inhabitants are acquainted with any distinct tradition, respecting its origin or intention; but, from the name, it is conjectured that some noted robber was buried beneath it. A few years ago, there were found, on the farm of Milncraig, in a bank of red gravel, about eight feet below the surface, two stone coffins. They contained, we believe, nothing but a few bones.—There are in this parish a number of cairns. Many of them have been greatly diminished in size, by the stones of which they were composed being taken away, and used in the erection of dikes, and other buildings. Some of them have been, by this means, gradually removed entirely. There is a very large one in the neighbourhood of Loch Achnacloich. It is surrounded by an outer circle, composed of stones, a few yards asunder, and measuring in circumference 130 yards. All around, there is a great

number of tumuli; but none of them have, so far as we know, been opened. In effecting some improvements, a few years ago, on the farm of Ardross, it was found necessary to remove one of these cairns; but the people had a tradition that "the plague was buried under it," and refused to touch it; and it was with no small difficulty, that they were at length induced to assist in its removal. On the summit of a wooded hill called Knock Navie, there is a cairn named Carna na Croiche, *i. e.* the cairn of the gallows. The tradition connected with it is, that some men who were travelling, being weary and faint with hunger, as they passed Achnacloch, stopped and asked the woman who had charge of the laird's dairy for some cheese and milk to allay their hunger, offering at the same time to pay for it. She, however, refused to give it; upon which, the men took it, laid down money for it, and went away. The women immediately informed the laird of the circumstance, who being a man of a fierce and savage disposition, sent after the travellers, brought them back and hanged them on the spot now marked by the cairn. In some of the cairns which were removed, skulls and bones of a very large size were found. One of these cairns bears the name of Carna nam Fiann, *i. e.* the cairn of the Fingalians. There are, also, several small enclosures, which appear to have been places of sepulture. The most perfect of these is of an oblong form, about twelve or fourteen feet long, and two or three feet in breadth. It consists of a large and massive flat stone placed upright at the head,—while on either side, there are three or four similar stones placed in a line, but none at the foot. It was, we believe, originally roofed over, the entrance being at the open end; but it was, several years ago, considerably injured by some masons, who wished to obtain the stones for building a house in the vicinity. There is no tradition connected with it: it is too old for tradition.

Modern Buildings.—We have few, if any, very modern erections which are worthy of notice. Invergordon Castle, a fine building, was some years ago destroyed by fire. The walls are still standing; but no attempt has been made to repair it, and the family reside in one of the wings. It is surrounded by very beautiful and extensive pleasure grounds.—There is a new, large, and very complete mill at Dalmore,—which contains a flour-mill, barley-mill, meal-mill, thrashing-mill, and saw-mill. There is also a saw-mill on the banks of the river Alness, which cuts annually a very considerable quantity of wood.

III.—POPULATION.

The population of the parish, as returned to Dr Webster in 1755, was	1958 souls.	
The population in	1801	2074
	1811	2390
	1821	2581
	1831	2916

According to an accurate private census taken a few years ago, the population was 3010. The difference between this and the Government census is easily accounted for by the fact, that the latter included those only who were on the spot, whilst the former included all who belonged to the parish, whether present or absent, and many of the parishioners go during the summer months to other places for work. In the country part of the parish, the population has decreased, while in the villages there has been a corresponding increase. This is to be attributed to the doing away of the middle class of tenants, and merging their small into large farms.

Number of the population residing in the village of Invergordon,	1000
Bridgend, -	276
Saltburn, -	300

Total residing in villages, -	1576
The yearly average of births for the last seven years was -	67
marriages, -	18

No accurate account of deaths can be given.

There are at present in the parish, insane, 1; fatuous, 10; blind, 2; deaf and dumb, 1.

Clans.—The principal clans in this parish are, the Rosses and Munroes. The number of John Rosses and Donald Munroes is quite astonishing, and might prove at first not a little perplexing to a stranger, until he became acquainted with the bynames or patronymicks which serve to distinguish them from each other.

The language generally spoken is the Gaelic, but it has decidedly lost ground within the last forty years. In the villages, especially, the English is making rapid progress.

Habits, Customs, &c. of the People.—The people seem to be very little addicted to games or amusements of any kind. Formerly there used to be a great turn out on new-year's-day, old style, for playing at shinty; but the practice has now almost totally died away.*

* Connected with this great Highland game, we may relate the following traditional story: Rather more than a century ago, it was the practice for the people to meet at Ardross, in the heights of the parish, on Sunday, to play at shinty. When Mr Bethune was settled as minister of the parish in 1717, this practice was one of the first things which caught his attention, and which he determined to put a stop to. The way he managed to do so, was this: There was a certain man noted for activity and strength, who was the chief and leader of the shinty players. Mr Bethune sent for this man, and proposed to make him an elder. The man was at first, naturally, not a little surprised at this proposition, but after some persuasion con-

It is remarkable, that the people here seem to have few, if any, ballads or old Gaelic songs, such as there are in other parts of the Highlands. The ordinary food of the peasantry is oatmeal and potatoes, chiefly the latter. The people are in general acute and intelligent, moral and attentive to the ordinances of religion. The Sabbath is well observed.—Smuggling is nearly extinct.—Poaching does not prevail to any extent.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture and Rural Economy.—The number of imperial acres in the parish under cultivation, is about 3900. The number of acres which never have been cultivated and remain constantly waste or in pasture, may be stated at 30,000. The number of acres under wood is about 3000. The extent of ground capable of improvement, with a profitable application of capital, is very limited, and is gradually being brought into tillage.

Rent of Land.—The average rent of arable land per acre, is about L. 1, 5s.; though some of it is as high as L. 2, 15s. The total rental of the parish may be stated at above L. 7000.

Rate of Wages.—Day-labourers receive 1s. per diem all the year round, and women 6d. except in harvest, when men receive 1s. 6d. and women 1s. Farm-servants receive in general per annum L. 6 in money, and six bolls of meal, besides potatoes and fuel.

Live-Stock.—There are various breeds in the parish of black-cattle, chiefly the Highland. Those kept for dairy purposes are, in many instances, Ayrshire and Buchan. Teeswater have also been introduced of late. There are annually grazed in the parish about 3500 sheep; of these, 3000 are Cheviot, the remainder black-faced. The Leicester breed have also been tried on a small scale on one farm, but, owing to the coldness of its soil, they have not thriven well. A considerable number of pigs is reared in the parish. There are also some goats in the heights. We may mention that there is a cattle-show, and also an exhibition of grain, held annually at Invergordon, when a number of premiums are awarded,—at the one, for the best specimens of the different kinds

sent to it. Upon his being, shortly afterwards, duly called to be an elder, Mr Bethune informed him of the various duties connected with his new office, and that he was especially bound to put a stop to the shinty playing on the Sabbath. The man promised to do so, and accordingly on the next Sabbath repaired to the playing ground, armed with a stout cudgel. He then declared to those assembled for their usual sport, that, if one of them dared to lift a shinty, he should forthwith feel the weight of his cudgel. The players, it is said thereupon quietly retired, and never afterwards met again on the Lord's day, for a like purpose.

of live-stock, and at the other, for the best samples of the different kinds of grain. These exhibitions cannot fail to be attended with the most beneficial effects.

Husbandry.—The general character of the husbandry pursued may be said to be the five years rotation. The land is, in general, in a high state of cultivation, and capable of little farther improvement. It is said, that about L. 12,000 has been, of late years, expended on one farm alone, Ardross, in liming, draining, &c.; and a very fine farm it now is. The general duration of leases is nineteen years. The farm buildings are, in most instances, of a very superior description. The improvement which the parish has undergone, within the last forty years, may be learned from the fact, that, according to the last Statistical Account, the rental was then only L. 2000, whereas it is now L. 6000 and upwards.

Quarry.—There is a fine quarry of red sandstone on the banks of the water of Alness.

Fisheries.—There are four stake-nets for the fishing of salmon in that part of the frith which bounds the parish; but, as may be guessed from the rent, which is only L. 45 per annum, they are not very productive. Salmon are also caught by means of cruives on the water of Alness, but not in any number.

Produce.—The gross amount of raw produce raised in the parish, as nearly as that can be ascertained, is as follows:

The wheat, barley, and oats in the following table, it is proper to mention, are set down at an average of the fiars prices for the last seven years.

Wheat, 400 acres, at 2½ quarters per acre, at L. 2, 8s. per quarter,	L. 2400
Barley, 400 do. at 3¼ quarters, at L. 1, 10s.	2250
Oats, 760 do. at 4¼ quarters, at L. 1, 1s.	3591
Grass, 1560, do at L. 1 per acre,	1560
Potatoes, 250, at L. 5,	1250
Pease, 100,	226
Turnips, 350 at L. 4,	1520
Fisheries,	55
Miscellaneous,	70

Total yearly value of raw produce raised, L. 12,921

Manufactures.—There are two hemp-manufactories in the parish, which together give employment to about 70 people, who receive each from 9s. to 12s. per week; besides the spinning, which occupies a great number of females, in the vicinity of the village of Invergordon.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Means of Communication.—There are, as has been already men-

tioned, three villages in this parish, the largest of which, Invergordon, contains 1000 inhabitants. It is equidistant from the burgh towns of Tain and Dingwall, and is altogether most centrally situated. Few places, indeed, seem to possess such natural advantages for becoming a place of trade and commerce. It enjoys the most ample means of communication, by means of coaches and steamers. The north and south mails pass daily through Invergordon. The Duchess of Sutherland, a new and magnificent steamer, plies once a fortnight to London, and a large sum has been already subscribed, for building another for the same station. The Brilliant steam-ship plies regularly, during the summer, once a week, between Invergordon and Inverness, Aberdeen and Leith; and the Velocity once a fortnight. A number of years ago, a boat-slip was erected at Invergordon, and a few years ago, a fine pier for large vessels was also erected. A wooden jetty was last year added to the pier, with a view to command ten feet water, at ebb-tide; but, from the absurd manner in which it has been constructed, it has, since its erection, been found to be of not the smallest use. A considerable quantity of grain is shipped annually at this port, for Leith and London; but we have been informed that, were it not that the shore dues are twice as high as at any other port, the amount shipped would perhaps be treble what it now is. It would certainly be for the benefit, both of the place and of the proprietor, were the shore dues reduced to a reasonable rate. We may mention, that, from the 8th March to 12th August 1836, 150 bullocks, and 746 sheep and lambs were shipped at Invergordon, by the London steamer for that port. There is also a harbour at Dalmore, at which a very considerable quantity of timber, chiefly fir, is annually shipped for the north of England. There are several roads of many miles extent, in this parish, all of them in excellent condition.

Ecclesiastical State.—The church is situated in the centre of the parish, and its situation is most convenient so far as population is concerned. The district of Ardross is, indeed, distant from the church; but the modern system of large farms has reduced the population greatly in that extensive Highland district, so that, where the prayers and praises of a pious peasantry were once heard echoing through the glens of their native hills, now, nothing is heard but the bleating of sheep or the bark of the shepherd's dog. But, of a population of rather more than 3000, about 2800 are within three or three and a-half miles of the parish church,—which to the hardy Highlander is only

a pleasant walk. The parish church, which is perhaps the most comfortable and commodious in the north of Scotland, was built in 1832, after a legal contest before the Court of Session for nearly two years, arising out of the opposition of a minority of the heritors, some of whom have since ceased to be heritors,—the late Duke of Sutherland having, a few years ago, purchased the far greater portion of the inland or Highland districts of the parish. The church is seated for 1360 persons, and may contain about 1600, if closely occupied. The attendance on the Sabbath may be reckoned at from 1200 to 1400. We have no Dissenters of any kind or class, if we except three individuals, who occasionally attend church. As for voluntaries we know nothing about them; they cannot vegetate here. The Highland soil does not seem favourable to the growth of voluntaryism. We do at times get a solitary importation from the south, but they do not thrive, and become quite quiescent after a few months residence in the north. We sometimes, too, are visited by a kind of itinerant Independents, who baptise the children of all and sundry who apply to them, whether the parents be church members or not. The population of Ardross, though removed, at a distance of from six to twelve miles, from the parish church, in general attend regularly, even in winter. The sittings are or ought to be free; but it is believed that the feuars in the different villages, do pay a small sum annually for their sittings,—which is not, however, given to the poor, as it is thought it should be. The manse was built in 1825, and is large and commodious. There are two small glebes, one adjoining the manse, of four English acres, of good and fertile soil,—the other is contiguous to the ruins of an old kirk, called Noinikil, (the cell or chapel of St Nivian), and consists of about an acre and a-half, in three different divisions, which are let by the minister to a tenant in the neighbourhood. How this glebe came to be so curtailed, cannot now be ascertained. There is no grass glebe,—which is felt to be a serious inconvenience; but the ministers of Rosskeen seem to have disliked litigation, and to have submitted to privations, rather than claim, at the risk of an expensive law-suit, what was their undoubted right.

The stipend is 16 chalders, half meal half barley, and L. 10 for communion elements. An augmentation was given in 1822, during the life of the late incumbent; but it was less than it would otherwise have been, from the cry of agricultural distress so called, which was particularly loud and lugubrious, at the period referred to; whereas, we have thought that a very simple remedy might be

found for that distress, without injuring the tenantry, or curtailing the stipends of the clergy, and that is by lowering the rents, as has lately been done by a Noble proprietor in this parish. But 16 chalders in 1822, and for some years after, were equal to 24 chalders for the last two or three years, and we have been simple enough to suppose, that the low price of grain furnishes an argument for the increase of the number of bolls awarded to the clergy, whose stipends have been so greatly reduced of late. Divine service is conducted in English and Gaelic. The ministers in this part of the country lecture and preach in Gaelic, each Lord's day, and also preach regularly an English sermon, that is, three discourses each Sabbath, except for a part of the winter season; and yet, we have cause to lament that real religion does not flourish, as might be expected where the truth is preached. The number of communicants is about 120. We have thus fewer communicants than our southern neighbours; but we are inclined to believe that we have both more religion, and more morality, and are more inclined to fear God, and honour the King, and less disposed to meddle with those who are given to change. But still, we must confess that there is a manifest departure, among all ranks, from that strictness and integrity, and genuine holiness, which in the olden time characterized the natives of our northern clime. We would pray for a revival of religion in every corner of our land.

There is an Association for religious purposes in this parish, which since its establishment, about thirteen years ago, has given upwards of L. 500 to various societies,—Bible, Missionary, and Educational.

Succession of Ministers.—It appears from the records of the presbytery of Tain, which commence in 1707, that the Episcopal incumbent of Rosskeen retained his living through the influence, as is supposed, of the Jacobitical gentry in the parish and neighbourhood. In the presbytery records, there is not even an allusion to the parish of Rosskeen, until the death of the Episcopalian incumbent in 1714; and then the parish is noticed, and active exertions made to secure a pious and efficient minister. The person chosen was Mr Daniel Bethune, minister of Ardersier, who was inducted into Rosskeen, on the 23d April 1717. He was a man eminently pious and successful in winning souls to Christ. He died the 16th March 1754. He was succeeded by his son, John Bethune, a man celebrated for his literary attainments, and honoured with the degree of D. D., a distinction which seldom falls to

the lot of Highland clergymen, owing, we suppose, to their superior modesty and self-denial, rather than to their inferior attainments, or because their metropolitan brethren are more ready to monopolize these honours than to bestow them on those who, when out of sight, are out of mind, except when a vote to promote a party or partial object is required. We have seen two volumes of philosophical essays on various subjects by Dr Bethune. He died the 15th April 1774. He was succeeded by Mr John Calder, minister at Weem, in Perthshire, who is said to have been singularly pious, and possessed of very popular talents. He was inducted on the 24th September 1775, and died 1st June 1783. Mr Thomas Urquhart was inducted 1st September 1784; died 17th May 1812. He was very much opposed at his induction, but is now generally said to have been a good and benevolent man, and of a meek and quiet disposition. Mr John Ross, minister of Logie Easter, was inducted 16th June 1813. He was a man of talent and sound evangelical views. He was translated to Rosskeen in his old age, much to the dissatisfaction of those he left, and of those among whom he was settled. He died 8th February 1824. Mr David Carment, the present incumbent, was translated from the New Gaelic Chapel, Duke Street, Glasgow, and admitted assistant and successor on the 14th March 1822.*

Education.—There are in the parish one parochial school, two supported by societies, and three by school fees, which are trifling, and also ill paid. The parochial schoolmaster has the maximum salary, and perhaps his fees do not exceed L. 3 per annum. There are also two Sabbath schools in the parish.

Library.—A parochial library has been lately established, and seems to be already in a flourishing state. It is hoped that it will be the means of creating gradually, among the humbler classes of our population, a greater taste for reading than at present exists, and of thus aiding in the diffusion of useful knowledge.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of persons receiving parochial aid, is 140. The annual amount of contributions for their relief, arising from church collections, mortcloth money, &c. is from L. 50 to L. 60. There is no assessment for the poor

* It is a curious fact, though sufficiently explained by what has been said above, that there is in this parish more than one person, who has seen every Presbyterian minister in it since the Revolution. The comfort which the present incumbent, when in rather a delicate state of health, some years ago, received from one of these octogenarians, was, that he had seen six ministers in Rosskeen, and very likely he would see the seventh.

in this part of the country, which lays often a heavy tax on the minister, especially when the heritors happen to be non-resident. Dr Whyte of Bombay, grandson of one of the former ministers of Rosskeen, left L. 2000 to the poor of the parish, the interest to be given, in certain specified proportions, to the modest poor.

In general, none except the miserably poor ever think of applying for parochial relief.

Fairs.—There are five fairs, held annually at Invergordon; in February, April, August, October, and December.

Inns.—There are no less than 24 inns and alehouses, 15 of which, by far too many, are in the village of Invergordon. Drunkenness can, however, by no means be imputed as a general vice, to the people.

Fuel.—The fuel used by the humbler classes is peats, of which abundance can be easily procured. By the wealthier inhabitants, coals (English) are used, as they can be obtained here at a very moderate price.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

In many respects, this parish has been improved within the last forty years; but the depopulation of the country by large farms, is a serious evil, and is likely to bring along with it consequences which the landed interest seem not to have contemplated. There is no longer an independent peasantry. The morals of the people are deteriorated by the loss of independence, and their spirits embittered by what they deem oppression. The ties which united master and tenant are severed; and when the time comes, to which we look forward with fearful anticipations, it will, we fear, be found, that an error has been committed, by grasping too much, at the risk of sooner or later losing all.

October 1838.