

# UNITED PARISHES OF CROY AND DALCROSS.

PRESBYTERY OF NAIRNE, SYNOD OF MORAY.

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## I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—THE precise signification of Croy cannot be determined. The name is found in Holland, Belgium, and Brittany; and in these countries, the etymon may be ascertained. The word most analogous to it in the Celtic language is *cruadh* (hard),—which is descriptive of its physical features, these consisting of a long continuous ridge of hard mortar, covered with dry stunted heath, extending through its whole length, and from its summit level, at about 300 feet above the level of the sea, slightly declining to the east. Dalcross, *Dealganross*, is from the Gaelic words, *Dal aig ceann Rois*, signifying “the dale at the end of the ravine,”—which is accurately descriptive of the locality. The date of the union is uncertain; but from charters in the family of Inches, it must have taken place between the year 1446 and 1500. Dalcross of old formed a part of the Lordship of Lovat, and is all situated in the county of Inverness; Croy is partly situated in the county of Inverness and partly in Nairne; but so confused and commingled are the boundaries, that they are not to be easily determined.

*Boundaries.*—These are so irregular, that, without a diagram, no correct idea of them can be conveyed. From five miles to the east of the church, the form resembles an irregular parallelogram, with offsets to the south of the River Nairne, its natural boundary. From two miles west from the church, the parish stretches to the south for about nine miles, where it meets the northern summit of the Strathdearn mountains; whence it gradually descends, forming every imaginable angle and sinuosity in a south-west direction, where it meets the River Nairne nearly opposite the church of Daviot. About five miles to the west from the parish church and

near Culloden Field, the parish is intersected, for some hundred yards, by the parishes of Petty and Daviot. From this point, it extends for about three miles, where it is again intersected by the parishes of Inverness and Daviot; whence it extends in a south-west direction, and terminates in a point at the junction of the parishes of Dunlichity. The extreme length from the north-east of *Blarna Fiadh*, (Deer's Forest), to the south-west of Culduthel Moor, is upwards of twenty miles, and average breadth about three and a half miles; the whole contents being about 44,800 Imperial, or 35,471 Scots acres.

*Soil.*—In the eastern division of the parish the soil is of every description; but scarcely two continuous acres can be found of the same nature and quality. Here sand, there compact mortar; here the finest vegetable mould, there cold and wet, a ferruginous crust from an inch to three inches in thickness, which, though exposed to the atmosphere, undergoes no change. Trench-ploughing has not been tried; without which, thorough draining would be of no avail, as surface water is found stagnant within a few inches of drains made with skill and care. In the centre of the parish, whatever might have been the original quality of the soil, by long and skilful cultivation, it is reduced to the finest mould, particularly the estate of Croy. The same may be said of the estate of Dalcross. Though the greater part is still under the most wretched system of husbandry, the soil is of a rich vegetable mould, from two to three feet in depth, with a gentle declivity, so that no water in any season can lie on the surface.

Between Dalcross and the western district of the parish, called Leys, there are about 1700 acres of moor nearly level; the soil is composed of sand, mortar, and clay, with here and there some oxide of iron, with a fine southern exposure,—and, susceptible of improvement to arable land; or a plantation of oaks, larch, and fir. The soil of the Leys is of various kinds, but, for the most part, is rather siliceous, if not gravelly, incumbent on strata of red sandstone. The upper end of Inches in this district forms an exception; the soil is found to be exceedingly rich, consisting of a whitish mould, composed of alumina and silica, with a portion of calcareous and vegetable matter. To the northward, the alumina and vegetable matter gradually disappear, and give place to the silex and oxide of iron. Along the south banks of the River Nairne, soil is generally light and gravelly, but fertile under proper management. Culdoich

and Daltulich are rich and incumbent on a species of schistus, and though with a high and northern exposure, bear luxuriant crops.

*Geology and Mineralogy.*—The geology of the parish is rather monotonous. The whole of the level track of country to the north of the Grampians consists of granite, gneiss, old red-sandstone, lias, unconsolidated beds of clay and gravel, &c. Though granite belongs to no particular ore in the north of Scotland, it happens to underlie all the other rocks. Gneiss is next in order of succession, and then old red sandstone. When granite appears at the surface, it forms the loftiest mountains; gneiss, the next most elevated,—while the old red sandstone seldom rises higher than gently sloping ridges. This parish does not extend so far south as the line where the granite appears. The southern localities comprehend part of a longitudinal range of gneiss strata, which present a high degree of inclination. This range is, for the most part, covered with heath, and to the south of it, bare granite crags may be seen bounding the prospect, while to the north, old red sandstone may be traced under woods and cultivated fields. The ridge of gneiss to which we have referred, constitutes the rising lands to the south of the parish, and consists principally of granite worn down by water and deposited in lamina at the bottom of the ocean. Its elevation was evidently the result of the upbursting of the southern masses of granite, either in a fluid or solid state; but no such mode of elevation will explain the present position of the sandstone, which must have been deposited after the appearance of the primary hills above the sea, as is evident from the rolled fragments which it contains; accordingly, we find the sandstone lying unconformably on the gneiss—the opposite of the position of the gneiss in relation to the granite. Immediately to the north of the gneiss ridge, is the valley of the River Nairn, the southern side of which is very remarkable for what are termed parallel roads. The term is inapplicable to the terraces in this locality, for they are nowhere perfectly parallel in the lines of their longitudinal extension, neither are they horizontal—a fact which, with many others, shows that they were not left by retiring waters, but heaved from below by violent action. They run along the flanks of the ridge of gneiss previously adverted to, at an altitude of 500 or 600 feet above the Moray Frith, and have no corresponding marks on the north side of the valley, which is comparatively low. They frequently pass into one another, merge into hillocks and waved tracks of gravel, and present other numerous appearances which

clearly demonstrate their marine origin. They follow the slight inclination of the valley of the Nairn, and of the plateau of sandstone on the north, but have no angular relation to the gneiss ridge on the south,—indicating that they were thrown out of the sea by the same convulsive movement which elevated the sandstone. That they are upheaved beaches does not admit of a doubt, and the mode of their original formation is equally obvious. The rains of the atmosphere, and the tides, waves, and currents of the sea are incessantly wearing down lines of coast, and depositing the detritus at high water-mark in the shape of a terrace. This terrace is thrown up by an earthquake, another is formed at the lower level by a similar process, and is destined to undergo emersion in its turn. This is the actual economy of the earth, and there can be little doubt but the same laws prevailed at the period of the formation of the terraces under notice. That the whole of the parish was under the sea, appears from the shape of the surface; where soft gravel or sand occurs, it is there, undulated like the bosom of the deep during a severe tempest, and frequently rises into conical mounds, apparently the result of vertical agency at the confluence of currents on tides.

*Old Red Sandstone.*—The old red sandstone is nowhere much exposed, but it probably consists, as in adjacent localities, of strata of conglomerate cornstone, limestone, and fine quartzose sandstone. It forms a very extraordinary plateau to the north of the valley of the Nairn, which extends all the way from the south-west part of the parish of Dores, along Loch Ness, to a short distance from the town of Nairn, in length about 34 miles. This plateau presents from the summit level at Culduthel moor, a very gentle inclination towards the east, and nearly the same to the west, probably no more than a few yards in a mile; the whole being covered by thick beds of gravel and sometimes *lias*, which are all along, with part of the sandstone, exposed by the river on the south. No ichthyolites of determined character have been found in the parish.

*Lias.*—Liasitic limestone of a blue colour, and clays have been found in several insulated localities in the north of Scotland, such as at Ethie, on the north side of the Moray Frith. To the east of Clava, we likewise discovered a detached portion of that formation: the lime has been burnt for economical purposes. No ammonites have been found, but septaria, or ironstone are numerous, and mistaken for organisms.

*Unconsolidated Strata.*—Above the last-mentioned rock, nu-

merous thick beds of gravel, sand, &c. occur, which present a very enigmatical spectacle to the eye of the geologist. From what has been stated, we consider it evident that they were formed under the sea; but the absence of organic remains leaves us in the dark regarding the period of their formation. They are probably equivalent to the English and continental oolitic cretaceous and tertiary strata; a supposition which is strengthened by the occurrence of certain organic remains similar to those in Morayshire. There are several quarries of excellent freestone in different parts, particularly on the estate of Inches, which chiefly supplies the town of Inverness; its formation is north by west, and south by east, for the most part in nearly a horizontal position, in some places upheld to an angle of from  $25^{\circ}$  to  $30^{\circ}$ . They are obviously Neptunian, the top strata being grey, or new red sandstone, the substrata grey sandstone, streaked with red and white quartz. There are many erratic boulders on the surface and in the subsoil. One may be mentioned particularly, lying on a plain surface, 24 feet in length, 18 in height, and 38 across, the largest plum-pudding-stone in the country, and none similar within at least ten miles. Its form is nearly an oblong square, and it is 560 tons in weight.

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

*Antiquities.*—In draining a lake at the east end of the parish, an artificial mound appeared within a few yards of the shore, about 60 feet in circumference, and 5 in height. It was formed of alternate strata of stones, earth, and oak; piles of oak being driven in the ground, were kept strongly fixed by transverse beams of smaller size. Over these were round stones, and on the surface some inches of fine black mould. Some fragments of brass rings, pieces of potteries, and the bolt of a lock, of no ordinary size, were found on the mound.

At about 100 yards distance, there is a circle of large piles of oak, driven deep in the earth, apparently the commencement of a second mound; but for what purpose they were intended, it is impossible to conjecture. They could not be places of defence, as the one finished was so near the edge of the lake, and completely commanded by the opposite rising bank. While draining the lake by cutting a deep canal, oaks of gigantic size were found more than twenty feet below the surface, as sound as the day they were overwhelmed by water, sand, and gravel. At the same time, a canoe of most beautiful workmanship was found, which some modern

Goth has since cut down for mean and servile purposes. The writer of this Account having employed some men to cut down a mortar bank, discovered, about six feet from the surface, several pieces of wood, from two to four inches square, the lamina being quite distinct; but, when exposed to the atmosphere, they soon crumbled into dust. So compact was the mortar, that an able-bodied man could not, with his mattock, penetrate more than two or three inches at a time; and the bank had not the least appearance of any change since its original formation. To the west of the church, there is a large grey stone, called *clach na seanaish*, that is, "the listening stone," commemorative of those barbarous deeds which too frequently disgrace the memory of our ancestors. The Cummings, conceiving they had received some offence from the Mackintoshes, were determined to be revenged, and, concealing their bloody purpose, invited the Mackintoshes to the Castle of Rait, where all animosities should be buried in oblivion at the festive board. One of the Cummings, from compunction of conscience, or regard for one of the intended victims, sent private notice to one of the Mackintoshes to meet him at the grey stone, to which, addressing himself in the audience of his friend, he disclosed the bloody and treacherous intentions of his clan. The Mackintoshes being thus made aware of the design of the rendezvous, nothing daunted, repaired to the castle at the appointed hour, and, before the Cummings could give the signal for attack, each Mackintosh plunged a dagger in the bosom of a Cumming, and only saved the life of the man who communicated the treachery to the grey stone.

Of old, and before the records of the kingdom, there were extensive forests of oak, birch, fir, and hazel, which have been converted into moss in some places upwards of twenty feet deep,—one of these, *Blarna Fiadgh*, (Deer's Forest), shows what the language then was, and the use to which the forest was appropriated. In a moss 400 feet above the level of the sea, oaks of extraordinary size are dug up, some of them measuring from 50 to 60 feet, and of proportional thickness; and even at the height of 800 feet, where the parish joins the Strathdearn Hills, large blocks of fir are found, where now, from cold and storm, the dwarf willow can scarcely raise its downy and lowly head. When the mountain torrent sweeps away its bank or forms a new ravine, fir blocks are seen in different alternate strata, clearly indicating that the formation of these vast layers of sand and gravel could not have

been occasioned by the same catastrophe, and at the same time. From the great length and straightness of the oaks and firs, it is evident that the forests must have been very dense, and the westerly winds not so prevalent and strong as at present; for were it possible for an oak to grow now on these grounds, it must be at an angle of 45°, so much changed is the climate and constitution. There have been several coins found along the banks of the Nairn, probably dropped by the Royal troops on their march to Culloden, and of the reigns of James I. and Charles.

*Druidical Circles.*—About four miles south of the church is Clava, in Gaelic *Clavalag*, remarkable for its many Druidical circles and cairns. The place is the most dreary and bleak the imagination can conceive—dark stunted heath, without any other vegetation whatever. These circles vary from 140 to 12 yards in circumference, and many appear not finished; five of them are of very considerable size.

Four of them have been diverted from their original design and converted into cairns of remembrance of either good or evil. Mrs General Campbell, Kilravock Castle, lately caused one of them to be cleared of the stones, following a passage from the second circle to the centre, where a circular convex chamber, 12 feet in diameter, and about 10 feet in height, was discovered. There was no cement used in building, and the materials were of the very rudest description. In the centre of this singular building, and a few inches from the surface, there was found a vase bedded in blue clay, containing ashes and calcined bones.\*

With regard to the period when these circles were formed, or how long they were resorted to as places of devotion or administration of justice, it is now vain to inquire. One thing is certain, that they were formed ages prior to the cairns, and converted into cairns when the original cause of their erection passed away. It may be that these cairns were raised to the memory of a Druid consigned to a revered circle. This is more rational than to suppose that they were raised to perpetuate the infamy of criminals. In the present acceptance of the word, they are expressive of respect and affection for a departed friend, as *cuididh mi clack ad charn*, though it is granted that some Druidical expressions still lingering among us, counte-

\* The following fact is remarkable; in the ensuing spring, young shoots of rasps grew up luxuriantly on the very spot from which the urn was dug, so that the seeds or roots of the rasps must have lain in the ground beyond the action of the sun and atmosphere for probably 2000 years.

nance a very opposite inference, as *Is oil leam nach robh do luadh fo charn clach*, I wish your ashes were under a cairn; '*B' fhearr leam bhi fo charn chlach*, I would rather be an outlaw. Yet it can hardly be supposed that such care would have been taken of the ashes of criminals, as that succeeding ages would show such pious pains to perpetuate their memory. There is another Druidical circle of extraordinary dimensions, perfectly entire in Midleys, surrounded by a deep fosse. The stones are all of such prodigious size, that it is difficult even to imagine how, without the combination of great mechanical powers, they could be carried up the steep ascent.

*Records of Session.*—From 1640 to 1789, the parish records were kept with singular care. The collections for the poor, and texts of Scripture, regularly entered. The names and residences of the various delinquents, with inquisitorial minuteness, are all recorded, from 1640 to 1720, a period looked on by many as the golden age of the church. Whatever may have been the case elsewhere, this parish was certainly then ranked with every species of abomination. In the black catalogue, besides the sin of uncleanness, may be mentioned,—drying and grinding corn and killing salmon on the Sabbath; brawling, drunkenness, and fighting in Church; defamation of character; fightings at lykwakes; casting the sieve and the sheers; and not a few for endeavouring to compass their neighbour's death by charms, spells, and many kindred follies. The cutty-stool got little rest; and, so late as 1748, a thoughtless wight, on the death of his aged mother, on a Sabbath evening, called together his ungodly neighbours to testify his sorrow by a dance, which was continued with great glee until Monday morning, for which unseasonable and unseemly mirth, he and his fiddler had to appear in sober weeds for six consecutive Sabbaths, on the said *index expurgatorius*,—no doubt to the great edification of the congregation, as the records do not furnish a similar demonstration of sorrow till the present day.

The only event worthy to be recorded, is the battle of Culloden, fought 16th April 1746, on a bleak moor five miles south-west of the church. The particulars have been so often and so minutely, and by Chambers, so faithfully and circumstantially narrated, that hardly anything farther can be said. It may, however, be proper to observe, that there was one deed of such atrocious and execrable foulness, as can hardly find a parallel in the annals of the most bloody and ruthless tyrants of ancient or modern times, and which, though denied by the sycophants of the

court, is an incontrovertible fact: Early in the morning after the battle, orders were given by the Duke of Cumberland or General Hawley, *par ignobile fratrum*, to inspect the wounded and mangled, in whom there remained any symptoms of life, and collect them into two heaps, and apply a six pounder to each heap: yet, wonderful as it may appear, one Maciver, a private, (not an officer, as stated by Chambers,) though mutilated in several parts of his body, survived this massacre a dismal memorial of Cumberland's tender mercies. The man died near Beaully, about the year 1796, where many are still living, who may have known him; but to put the bloody deed beyond the shadow of doubt, the writer of this account knew for several years a John Reid, who fought that day in the second battalion of the Royal Scots, and heard from his lips, that he saw the cruel deed, and thanked God that he had nothing to do with the *black warh*. John fought at the battles of Dettingen and Fontenoy, and only died about the year 1807, in the 105th year of his age, and in the full enjoyment of all his mental faculties. He was a lively little man, and retained a correct and vivid-recollection of what he had seen and heard.

*Buildings.*—The Castle of Kilravock, built by permission of the Earl of Ross, stands upon a bluff rock, rising abruptly from a beautiful plain to the south of the castle, through which the river Nairn winds its way. At first, it consisted of a massive lofty tower with the usual appurtenances, to which, from time to time, additions, not in perfect keeping, have been made. Several of the apartments have been modernized and furnished in a splendid style, by the present occupant, Mrs General Campbell, who, with exquisite taste and judgment, has changed the appearance of the lawns, gardens, and pleasure grounds, levelling the undulations of the grounds, and, instead of stiff and formal angles in the alleys, substituting elegant curvatures. This venerable pile has been the residence of the Roses since 1460. This family, truly ancient and honourable, have been distinguished for ages in the north for every high and noble quality; and, with their name almost above any other in this part of the kingdom, is associated the memory of generous, noble, and patriotic deeds. The succession in this family did not once diverge to a collateral branch, for upwards of 600 years. The present proprietor, Hugh Rose, is the chief, and the nineteenth of his name, and twenty-fourth in lineal descent.

General Sir John Rose of Holm, a cadet of the family of Kil-

ravock, has an elegant modern mansion house in this parish: the property has been in the family since 1541.

Hugh Davidson, Esq. of Cantray, has lately erected an elegant mansion in a lawn, almost surrounded on the south by the river Nairn. The situation, though beautiful, is rather confined. Had the rising ground on the north been chosen for a site, the view would have been truly rich and variegated. Dalcross Castle was built by Lord Lovat, in the year 1621. The situation is singularly grand, commanding one of the most sublime and variegated scenes in the kingdom; one interrupted view from Malfourvonie to the Ord of Caithness, extending to about 120 miles. It was bought by Mackintosh of Mackintosh, about the year 1702, since which time it has been allowed to fall into decay. The walls are still perfectly entire, and, in the hands of a man of taste and judgment, might, at a comparatively little expense, be made one of the finest seats in the north, instead of an eye-sore to every one that passes by.

Leys Castle, a princely residence, built lately by Colonel Bailie, is all that wealth, skill, and taste could render it. It stands at an elevation of about 300 feet above the level of the sea, and commands a most extensive view of mountain, dale, wood, and water. The decorations correspond; and the grounds are laid out in the most scientific and tasteful manner.

### III.—POPULATION.

Amount of population in 1801,	.	1601
1811,	.	1456
1821,	.	1538
1831,	.	1664

In that part of the parish belonging to Inverness-shire, the number of males is 473; that of females, 543. In that part belonging to Nairnshire, the number of males is 323; that of females, 346. Total population of the parish on 7th June 1841, 1688, being an increase of 32, since 1831.

Number of families in 1831,	.	351
chiefly employed in agriculture,	.	159
in trade, manufactures, or handicraft,	.	63

*Manners and Circumstances of the People.*—Within the last twenty years, a remarkable change has taken place in the habits and dress of the people; even at so late a period, it was the boast of the housewife to clothe her husband and children, by the work of her own hands. Spindles have vanished, and spinning-wheels will soon be seen only in museums. Those who depend on the profits of their farms are generally poor, alleging that the rent of their lands is from 10 to 30 per cent. above a remunerating price,

the rent being regularly calculated to be all that can possibly be scraped together, after providing the humblest necessaries of life for the farmer. Be that as it may, that they live on the simplest fare, is an undeniable fact. Butcher-meat, except on very rare occasions, is unknown, and small beer a luxury. Poultry, butter, eggs, are all for the market. Of all the farmers in this extensive parish who pay L. 50, there are not more than six who occupy the farms of their fathers, and not more than ten of any description of tenants who are natives of the parish. Whatever the cause may be, it cannot be any desire of change on the part of the people, the reverse being their amiable characteristic; and, strange to say, such is the competition for small farms, of which this parish is chiefly composed, that, with many melancholy cases before their eyes, it is confidently believed there would be no decrease in the present rent rolls, were every farm in the parish out of lease.

#### IV.—INDUSTRY.

*Rent of Land.*—The valued rental, which in 1767 was L. 552, is now L. 3278, 14s. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.; and cessed property about L. 5400. Rental in 1764, L. 552.

*Improvements.*—The farmers of the district appear to follow no regular system of agriculture, and deprecate the least deviation from the ways of their fathers, as savouring of ignorance, pride, and novelty. The lands, overrun with weeds, seldom visited with manure, were forced to undergo a succession of from four to six white crops, and then the land, thus reduced to a *caput mortuum*, was kindly allowed to recover its exhausted strength by a rest from its labours for several years. To remove stones from the surface or to blast those under ground, which frequently broke their crazy and clumsy ploughs to pieces, or build enclosures, was truly in their estimation such novelties, as their fathers never heard of, and of course could not be endured. Such of their cattle as escaped starvation by want of provender in winter, were stunted in growth, and unfit for sale till late in the following season. Indeed these fathers were famous only for the elegant curvature of their ridges, which might well vie with Hogarth's lines of beauty; but whether these were the effects of ignorance or taste, it is hard to determine. It is not, however, to be supposed that this state of sloth and ignorance was confined to this particular district or parish.

With respect to enclosures, it appears that the Laird of Kilravock, about the year 1740, built some miles of stone dikes, to enclose an extensive plantation in this parish, and so substantially

was the work performed, that it is still serviceable; and it may be worth remarking, that these were the only stone dikes along the high road from Kilravock to Aberdeen. Fortunately at this time of profound ignorance, the estates of Cantray and Croy were purchased at a judicial sale about the year 1774, by Mr Davidson, a native of Delnies, in the parish of Nairn; a man of singular sagacity, of most active powers of mind and practical good sense. Mr Davidson succeeded, to the astonishment of his countrymen, in reclaiming from useless wastes, upwards of 500 acres, by the expensive process of trenching, draining, blasting rocks and boulders, enclosing with double stone dikes, and sheltering the fields with suitable beltings of trees. His grandson, the present proprietor, has little more to do than walk in his steps; and emulate the example of his honoured and patriotic ancestor, who lived to see his improvements yield more than 30 per cent. on the original outlay; while his tenants not only profited by his example, but shared the sympathies of a liberal minded and a fatherly landlord. But Mr Davidson, though the first, is not the only one who ought to be recorded in the annals of Croy, with gratitude, as the best friends of the country. Lachlan Mackintosh, Esq. of Raigmore, a native of Croy, having purchased five properties in the parishes of Croy, Daviot, and Inverness, containing many hundred acres of stunted heath, not capable of affording a scanty meal to as many sheep, commenced his extensive improvements, successfully overcoming obstacles, which only skill and capital, directed by his own characteristic energies, could surmount, and thus in a short time converting large tracts of barren moor into fields, yielding most luxuriant crops of wheat, oats, and barley, improving and adorning what formerly had been a useless waste. About ten years ago, a deputation from the Highland Society of Scotland reported, that, in bringing land into cultivation, in improving, planting, liming, enclosing, draining, and building farm-offices, they considered his improvements double in amount of those of any other proprietor in the country. And if such had been, and still are his exertions in improving the physical appearance of the country, much more worthy of notice have been his long-continued and disinterested exertions for its moral improvement; his name will be associated with every institution in the north, that tends to instruct the ignorant, assist the strugglings of merit, and alleviate the distresses of humanity. "Non ignota loquor."

General Sir John Rose of Holm has also contributed much to

the improvement of the parish, by bringing a large waste in the western division of the parish into arable land, judiciously divided, and substantially enclosed.

But beyond any other proprietor in the north, Arthur John Robertson, Esq. of Inches, is said to have effected the most extensive improvements within the shortest time, having brought into the highest state of cultivation, no less than 300 acres of moor, formerly wet, cold, and useless, the subdivisions being tastefully and judiciously surrounded with beltings of oak, ash, and elm. They are soon to be converted into permanent grass parks, and, having streams of the purest water introduced to each, will be found of great advantage; as there are no grass parks in that part of the country. Nor are these improvements confined to proprietors,—the farmers, nay, the very cottars begin to make such improvements, as their circumstances admit; and though much remains to be done, what has been done, will challenge comparison with any district in the north of Scotland.

Amidst so many and so great improvements, we cannot but observe with pain, that the beautiful and compact property of Dalcross should remain nearly in the same slovenly state in which it was, a hundred years ago.

*Planting.*—Few places in the north seem originally less indebted to nature than Croy; all her bounty consisted in dry stunted heath, and all her beauty, in some straggling allers along the banks of the Nairn. About 100 years ago, Hugh Rose, the thirteenth of that name, planted a considerable extent of moor to the north of the castle; and such was the state of the country and want of roads, that the fir plants were carried from Perth in creels, suspended from crook saddles. They have grown to a large size, and are of the best quality. It appears, however, that, in the same place, there had been a plantation of the Caledonian pine, some of which are still standing, and of uncommon dimensions, serving for years as landmarks to mariners in the Moray Frith. Their lateral branches equal, in size, to planted fir of forty years' growth. One lately cut down showed the venerable age of 180-years, and there are some remaining, apparently much more ancient; whereas, the fir of Canadian origin, now generally planted, seldom lives above 80 years, and, in most cases, shows, before that period, symptoms of decay. It were well that the seeds of our ancient forest pines were sown, as they are more congenial to our soil and climate. About the year 1776, Mr Davidson of Cantray planted about 300 acres on a useless

and arid waste, not worth 6d. per acre; the proceeds of which, being carefully marked from the time of thinning, till the whole was sold, about twelve years ago, were found to exceed the simple fee of that part of the Cantray property, yielding now about L.1000 of rent, by nearly double the original purchase price: besides, the moor, formerly useless, is now, by the foliage of the trees, converted into excellent pasture. Such a remarkable fact shows the benefit of planting waste ground. That venerable patriot, at various periods, planted nearly 1000 acres. Plantations were made to much the same extent, and much about the same time, by the late Mrs Elizabeth Rose of Kilravock,—a lady remarkable for all those graces and accomplishments that adorn the female character, as well as for high literary acquirements and practical good sense. The proprietors of Culloden, Holm, and Leys contributed their share in beautifying the country by planting; and lately, the proprietor of Inches has planted upwards of 400 acres with larch, oak, and other kinds of wood.

#### V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—As formerly stated, it cannot now be determined when the parishes of Croy and Dalcross were annexed; it is, however, certain, that, in the year 1226, Croy was a parsonage on which Moy or Strathdearn depended as vicarage, and cessed that year in L. 40 Scots for the entertainment of the Bishop of Moray and his court at the annual visitation. In 1128, the lands of Dalcross, with the patronage thereof, were annexed to the priory of Urquhart, founded three years before by David I.; and in 1343, the vicar of Dalcross, by order of the prior, was to officiate in the private chapel of Kilravock. The remains of Dalcross Church are nearly gone; not so much from the lapse of years, as from the blind zeal and incorrigible stupidity of the people of that district, who considered the building a relic of Popery; and never was the remark of the philosopher more truly verified than by those Anti-popish dilapidators, “*Nosmet ipsos noscere est difficillimum.*”

In the south of the parish, are the remains of a chapel dedicated to St Dorothy, who is mentioned in the Romish calendar as having suffered for the Faith, early in the fifth century. Be that as it may, it is highly probable that this chapel was built at the very earliest dawn of Christianity in these northern parts of the kingdom, while the people retained some lingering veneration for the place where their fathers bowed over the *cromleac* in the Druids’

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Fane, in the centre of which the Christian chapel was erected. There were other two chapels,—one at the east end of the parish, and the other at Galcantray ; so that few places were better supplied with the means of instruction.

The present church was built in 1767, and repaired in 1829 ; seated for 527. It is most inconveniently placed, nearly bordering on the parish of Petty ; but this inconvenience is, in some measure, obviated by the circumstance, that though the parish is upwards of twenty miles in length, there is not a point within it much more than three miles from some parish church. What a contrast to its spiritual destitution in 1567, when there was only one reader (Mr Vause,) for this and the extensive parish of Moy, whose yearly salary amounted to the sum of 13s. 4d. Sterling ! Since that year until 1823, there have been eight clergymen, the average incumbency of each being for thirty-two years. This account would be defective, were the name of the Reverend James Calder passed without notice. Of this truly good and eminent pastor of the parish, it is difficult to determine, whether he was most distinguished for his knowledge of the Scriptures, his unremitting zeal for the glory of God, or his singular success in preaching the Gospel of Christ. His manners were gentle, his charity unbounded, and his piety fervent. Genius, taste, and judgment directed his pulpit oratory ; and his powers of persuasion were proved by their uncommon success. This highly honoured servant of Christ entered into his rest on the 24th of December 1775, in the 64th year of his age, and 35th year of his ministry.

The stipend is 16 chalders, half meal, half barley, of Linlithgow bolls measure, according to the fiars prices of the county. Unappropriated teinds amount to L. 240, 4s. 10d.

*Education.*—The parish school has been very respectably attended for many years, where the modern branches of education are successfully taught on the most approved intellectual principles. The salary of the present teacher is the maximum, and the house accommodation reflects credit on all the heritors and factors connected with the parish.

*Poor.*—Average number of poor on the permanent roll, for the years 1835, 1836, and 1837, 37. Average amount of church collections in their behalf, for these years, L. 17, 11s. : of other contributions, L. 3, 6s. ; of mortifications, mortcloth dues, &c. L. 4, 15s.

*September 1841.*