

PARISH OF KILTARLITY.

PRESBYTERY OF INVERNESS, SYNOD OF MORAY.

THE REV. C. FRASER, MINISTER.*

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

WHAT now forms the parish of Kiltarlity consisted formerly of two parishes, Convinth and Kiltarlity. The date of their union is not known.

Name.—It is supposed that the name Kiltarlity is derived from Gaelic words signifying the place of sepulture of *Tarrail*. But of the individual named *Tarrail*, nothing is known. It may be noticed, however, that there is a stone, known, for time immemorial, by the appellation of *Clach Tarrail* (*Tarrail's stone*), still pointed out as that which covers his grave. This stone lies about half-a-mile south-west from the old churchyard of Kiltarlity. Another account of the origin of the name is, that the parsonage of Kiltarlity being dedicated to St Thalargus, the burial-ground surrounding the church was called *Cille Thalargus*, and, hence, by corruption, the name *Kiltarlity*. The name Convinth is supposed to be derived from two Gaelic words, *Conna Bheathach* (a ravenous animal); and tradition says that this district obtained the name in consequence of a wild boar having long infested and committed great havoc therein.

Extent.—This is considered among the largest parishes in the Highlands. From the north-east boundary to the north-west extremity, the distance is calculated at about 45 miles. The Parliamentary road which intersects the parish from east to west is upwards of 40 miles; the breadth of the parish is small in proportion to its great length, being, upon an average, only about six miles.

Boundaries.—Kiltarlity is bounded by the united parishes of Urquhart and Glenmorrison on the south and south-west; by Glenshiel on the west; by Kintail on the north-west; by Kilmorack on the north; Kirkhill on the east; and by the parish of Inverness on the south-east. The whole northern part is bounded by Kilmorack,

* Drawn up by Mr John Fraser, Kiltarlity manse.

The Davoch of Erchless and Annat, on the north side of the river Beauly, belong to this parish; and another Davoch, consisting of three farms, called the Crochails, on the south side of the river Glass, belongs to the parish of Kilmorack: but, with the above exceptions, Loch-Affarie, Loch-na-luire, and Loch-beinnemhian, together with the rivers Glass and Beauly, constitute the march between the parishes of Kiltarlity and Kilmorack.

Topographical Appearances.—There are hills on each side of the River Glass along the whole of its course: and, with the exception of a low-lying country, of about nine square miles at its eastern extremity, the parish is composed of hilly and rocky ground, intersected by valleys and glens, the most considerable of which are Strathglass and Glenconvinth. The hills and mountains in this parish are not remarkably high; probably the highest amongst them is Aonach Sassan, (English Hill), on the property of William Fraser, Esq. of Culbockie. It is estimated at about 2000 feet above the level of the sea. They generally present a roughly rounded outline; few, if any, ascending in the form of peaks. They range from east to west, and from south-east to north-west. Indeed, by far the greater part of the surface of the parish is very rugged and rocky. In the western portion, many of the rocks are inaccessible to human tread, and are inhabited by goats, which have become so wild, that their owners are under the necessity of shooting, ere they can take them. The presence of these creatures gives much additional interest to the solemn grandeur of the surrounding scenery. On ledges of these high rocks, eagles form their eyries and rear their young in defiance of the attempts sometimes made by shepherds to dislodge them. The peregrine falcon, formerly so much prized by the falconer for its docility and courage; the fork or salmon-tailed kite, the kestrel, and the raven, dwell among the cliffs and ravines. Few places in the Highlands of Scotland can vie with Strathglass in romantic beauty and grandeur. The black and barren appearance of the rugged and towering mountains on either side, although happily relieved in many places by the presence of a considerable quantity of birch, hazel, and natural fir, contrasts well with the fertility and loveliness of the smiling vale below, through which the river Glass gently wends its serpentine course over a bed of purest sand, glistening like a silver thread in the light of a summer sun, and ever and anon concealed from view by the intervening foliage of a fringe of alder, mountain-ash, and weeping-birch, by which its banks are ornamented. So gently, indeed, does the river flow in many places, that a current is scarcely at all

perceptible, and its unrippled surface reflects, as from a mirror, the gaunt and hoary rocks which overlook it, and which seem as if placed sentry there for the purpose of preserving the peaceful and rustic scene below from the assault of conflicting elements or the intrusion of unhallowed strife. This romantic strath affords great attractions to tourists, many of whom visit it in the summer season. Gentlemen's seats are not numerous, but, the situations being generally very well chosen, they tend much to enliven the appearance of the country. The most prominent and remarkable amongst them is a lofty turretted building called Erchless Castle. It is said to have been built in the fifteenth century, but is still in a state of excellent repair, and is kept up as the family mansion of "The Chisholm," chief of that ilk. It overlooks a noble park, studded with venerable aged-looking trees, among which are some of the remains of the old Caledonian forest. Besides a very considerable quantity of natural timber, there have been about 1000 acres in the neighbourhood of Erchless, planted with larch, oak, ash, elm, beech, plane-tree, Scotch fir, chesnut, &c. and all this has been done within the last twenty-four years.

Of The Chisholm's property in this parish, there are about 750 imperial acres of arable land kept in regular cultivation. The hill ground was never measured, so that the number of acres cannot be stated. The real rent of the property belonging to him in this parish, is about L. 1036.

At Fasnacoil, (which is upwards of twenty miles from where Beauly falls into the sea,) the river Deaothack* joins the Glass. This river is about forty feet in breadth, and from three to six feet in depth; the stream is very rapid, and its course runs from west to east. It takes its rise from some springs and rivulets in the hills on the south side of Strathglass, and is upwards of twelve miles in length. The fishing upon it is very indifferent, consisting only of small trout and eels. For about four miles of the extent of this small river, there is a continuous succession of rapids and cascades, the most remarkable of which is Plodda Fall, situated about a mile and a half to the westward of Guisachan House. The proprietor, William Fraser, Esq. of Culbockie, has been at considerable expense in forming a pleasure-walk along the banks of this river, which possesses all the attractions which the most fanciful disposition of rock and wood can contribute. The wood along the banks consists of old magnificent Scotch firs interspersed with oak and birch, which add much to the effect of the scenery, in

* A Gaelic word signifying that it occasionally becomes dry.

itself of a most grand and imposing nature. Some of the firs here measure from 14 to 16 feet in circumference, and are upwards of 60 feet in height. About 400 yards from Guisachan House, which is a large and elegant mansion, surrounded by verdant lawns, there is a beautiful fall of water, well worthy of note. The stream is precipitated over a ledge of rock about 70 feet high into a circular basin of considerable dimensions, forming a deep dark linn, which, together with the very romantic ravine through which the water escapes, is overhung by many species of wood, exhibiting the most luxuriant foliage, and in some cases very fantastic vegetation—the productions of an uncommonly fertile soil, watered by the spray which is continually falling around them. Indeed, none but those who have visited this romantic spot can form any idea of the varied scenery presented to their observation. The soil is as rich as any in the Lothians, and there is about the place altogether a pleasant air of comfort and neatness, which is greatly enhanced by the striking contrast it presents to the steep mountains and rugged wilds with which it is environed. The venerable and worthy proprietor of this estate has evinced great taste in improving its natural beauties, and has taken advantage of the capabilities of the soil by introducing the most approved system of modern agriculture to a district, which, though now nearly able to maintain itself without having recourse to the importation of corn from other parts of the country, was, until within a few years ago, inhabited by a wild, irregular, poverty-stricken people, among whom the demoralising practice of illicit distillation prevailed to a very great extent, favoured and encouraged as it was, by the inaccessible nature of the surrounding country. Happily, however, these days are now gone by, and, owing to the judicious measures adopted by the proprietors for the encouragement of industry and the promotion of education, a great and beneficial change has been effected, not only on the appearance of the country, but on the habits and dispositions of the peasantry of Strathglass, who now, though perhaps, indeed, more excitable in temperament and less regularly industrious than their neighbours in the lower part of the parish, are, upon the whole, happy and contented with their lot in life; and, in their bearing towards strangers, as well as in their intercourse with one another, evince a high degree of native politeness and hospitality,—while, at the same time, their almost uniformly respectful demeanour towards superiors is a pleasant trait in their character, which recommends them to the notice,

and secures the good will of all who may have occasion to sojourn in these parts.

On the Glass, about a mile above Fasnacoil, there is a fall of water about 30 feet high, called Easnambroc, from the number of badgers which frequent the sandy soil in its neighbourhood. At Invercannich, about four miles further down than Fasnacoil, the river Cannich enters the Glass, and this river is again joined by the river Farrar, in front of The Chisholm's seat, and assumes the name of the Beauly for the rest of its course. Two excellent bridges cross these rivers about a mile above their junction; and near that which crosses the Farrar, and which is strongly built with granite, stands the house of Struy, the seat of an ancient and respectable branch of the clan Fraser, whose representative is the next in succession, as heir of entail, to the estates of Lovat, after the present chief, and the heirs-male of his body. The rivers Cannich and Farrar flow through districts of the parish of Kilmorack. The Beauly is the most considerable stream in the parish, and, though not navigable further than the village of Beauly, about a mile and a-half above where it falls into the sea, it is of considerable use as a means of transporting timber to where it can be conveniently shipped for exportation. The distance from the point of confluence between the rivers Farrar and Glass to the Beauly Firth, is about nine miles. To account for the fact that the fishing of this river belongs altogether to Lord Lovat, though proceeding through great part of the estates of conterminous proprietors, it is said that Simon Lord Lovat, on the occasion of the family possession being forfeited after the Rebellion in 1715, requested his friend, the Duke of Gordon, who was then in favour at Court, to present a petition, which he had drawn out, to the king. The Duke did so, and it was found, on perusing its contents, that Lord Lovat's request was so modest and withal so strange, that the king, highly amused with the supposed eccentricity which dictated it, immediately gave orders that it should be granted. His request was that "one lea rig behind the castle might be given to him and his heirs in perpetuity." The lea rig is said to have meant the river. The revenue to the Noble proprietor from this source alone is very considerable, being stated to be rented at nearly L. 2000 per annum. The fishing of it gives employment to twelve men.

About four miles below Erchless, the river leads to a small rustic hamlet called Wester Eskadale, on an eminence above which, though half-concealed by birch trees, appear the white walls and

pinnacles of a neat Roman Catholic Chapel, erected a few years ago by Lord Lovat at a considerable expense. Half-a-mile to the east of the chapel, the elegant mansion of Eskadale appears amid plantations and cultivated fields, and commands an extensive view of the Strath. On the opposite side of the river, and under the brow of a wooded hill, is the house of Aigas, a property which has lately been acquired by purchase and added to the other possessions of the family of Chisholm of Chisholm. Immediately below this, the river is divided into two streams, which, again uniting a little further down, enclose a very romantic piece of ground called the Island of Aigas. On this island, which is beautifully wooded with a profusion of oaks and weeping-birches, there has been lately erected, at the expense of the Right Honorable Lord Lovat, a very elegant mansion of the Elizabethan style of architecture; in which Messrs Hay Allan Stuart, said to be the only descendants of the unfortunate Prince Charles Edward, at present reside. These gentlemen have fitted it up in imitation of the style in which Highland chieftains were wont to decorate their rooms in times of yore.

" Their spacious rooms are hung around with pikes and guns and bows,
And swords and bucklers, which have stood against old Scotland's foes,
And there in state they move about in kilt and tartan hose;
They quaff their quaichs of usquebaugh, and give poor men their brose,
Like true-bred Highland gentlemen, who love the olden time."

Eilean Aigas, as this island is generally called, is about three-quarters of a mile in length, and its banks rise abruptly to a pretty considerable height from the rocky channel of the river, which, at the lower end, forms a set of small but beautiful cascades. This place forms the eastern confines of the valley of Strathglass; and the river, now dashing along in an impetuous torrent, is widely different in its aspect from the sluggish stream it appeared above. It plunges through a rocky channel at the bottom of a deep ravine, called the Dream or Druidhm, a place much famed for its romantic scenery. In some places, rocks ascend to a considerable elevation from the middle of the channel, and one of them, owing to its conical figure, is called the Sugar Loaf. In other places, the river subsides into deep dark linn, while the rocks give way to green banks, small parts of which have been cultivated: on both sides, the mountains are very steep and rugged, but their harshness is much redeemed by woods of birch and fir, with which they are clothed. The breadth of the valley is scarcely a quarter of a mile, and the roads on either side are at a very considerable height above the bed of the river, which is fringed all along with oak, weeping birches, and alders. The road on the north, or Kil-

morack side, is that generally used by travellers, and is confessedly one of the most romantic drives in the Highlands. On a conspicuous mountain on the south side, are the remains of a vitrified structure, called Dunfion. Near this, the river enters a chasm between high precipitous cliffs, and cuts a narrow passage through masses of red sandstone and conglomerate,—so narrow, indeed, in some places, that a man in dry seasons can almost leap across. A little onwards, the foaming torrent rushes tumultuously over a ledge of rock, forming what is called the Upper Fall of Kilmorack. It is about 10 or 12 feet in height, and is received into a capacious basin of hard rock; in the sides of which, fantastic caves and boiling caldrons have been formed by the action of the turbulent fluid. The summits of the rocks on either side of this deep ravine are hardly stone-cast distance asunder, and are ornamented with the light airy foliage of the birch and wild cherry; while a little lower down, many weatherworn stunted trees of different kinds, growing out of fissures in the face of the almost perpendicular rock, rear up their gnarled and fantastic forms in defiance of the impetuosity of the wind. For a considerable way up from the stream, there is no vegetation of any kind to cover the barren nakedness of the rocks, with the exception of a thin sprinkling of marsh mallows and wild geraniums. In some sheltered nooks, however, luxuriant festoons of ivy and honeysuckle give evidence that these plants have been nurtured in a congenial soil. At a little distance below the upper fall, the river, emancipated from its confinement, glides on smoothly and majestically in a broad stream over a large surface of rock, inequalities in which soon cause it to diverge into several different channels. The rock here comes to an abrupt termination across the whole expanse of the river, which is very broad at this part; and these different streams, falling from off the rock upon a bed of large rough stones, form what are called the Lower Falls of Kilmorack. These are only about 8 or 10 feet in height.

It is a very interesting sight to witness the persevering efforts of salmon to spring over these falls. Many succeed in the attempt, but it is not thought worth the expense to fish the river with nets beyond the falls. The former Lovats were in the habit of amusing their guests with a very novel spectacle, viz. salmon leaping, of their own accord, into a kettleful of boiling water, where they were speedily cooked for the purpose of satiating the appetites as well as the curiosity of the beholders. Marvellous though it may appear, this extraordinary exhibition was easily effected. It was ob-

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served that the fish, in their attempts to clear the Upper Fall, were frequently driven back by the force of the current, and thrown upon a particular rock near the foot, whence they dropped into their native element. Advantage was taken of this well-known fact, and the fish so falling were secured by laying branches of trees on the rock, in such a way as to prevent their sliding back into the river; and the idea of lighting a fire upon the rock and suspending a kettle over it was afterwards suggested to some fertile fancy. No recognized means are now resorted to for taking fish at this place, though poachers may sometimes be observed standing on the brink of the fall, and holding in their hands long poles with hooks or *cliques* attached to their ends, wherewith they often succeed in seizing the salmon in their attempts to spring over the cascades. There is a cruive on one of the lower falls, whereby a number of fish are intercepted in their progress to the spawning grounds. There is also another cruive about a mile further down the river, extending from side to side.

On the point of a rock on the south side, and overlooking the falls, there has been erected, at the expense of the Right Honourable Lady Lovat, an elegant seat surmounted by a small dome, with miniature turrets, and having its floor causewayed with small stones of various colours, to represent different figures. A pleasant shady walk, ornamented not only by numerous birches, but with rhododendrons and evergreens planted by Lord Lovat, serves to facilitate the approach of the tourist to this romantic spot, and conducts him along the Dream to the island of Aigas. In some parts of it, the spectator is apt to feel dizzy while contemplating the foaming water struggling through the deep abyss; while, far below, he sees the daw, the ring-dove, and the kestrel harmoniously dwelling together, and, undisturbed by the overpowering din of the cataract, busily engaged in constructing their nests in the holes and clefts of the rock. The garden belonging to the minister of Kilmorack is picturesquely situated on a rock overhanging the north side, on a crag, at the utmost verge of which, there is a fine summer-house, also fitted up by Lady Lovat, in a style corresponding with the cupola already alluded to, on the opposite side.

Hydrography.—The number of lakes in the parish is very great. The largest and most remarkable for their surrounding scenery are Loch Affarie, Lochnaluire, and Lochbeinnemhian. The romantic grandeur of this section of the parish will bear comparison with that of any part of the Highlands of Scotland. The hills and mountains on either side are ornamented by the presence of

birch, mountain-ash, and magnificent firs, relics of the old Caledonian forest. These lakes are very deep, and abound in various kinds of small trout. Loch Affaric is about seven miles in length by one in breadth; Lochnaluire is three miles by one-half; and Lochbeinnemhian, four miles by one. These lakes are joined together by the river Glass, which takes its rise from Loch Affaric, and thence proceeds through the other two lakes, and a considerable part of the country beyond them in a south-easterly direction. Near Guisachan, however, it takes a different course, and follows the bottom of the valley of Strathglass, which lies in a line from west to east.

Probably the best trout in any lake in the parish is that found in Loch Bruiach, which lies somewhat more than four miles due west from the parish church, and is about three miles in circumference. There are said to be no less than seven different species of trout found in this loch. A great number of the finest char are caught here in September, when they repair to the shallows for spawning. A small loch, called Lochgarbhreachd, about a quarter of a mile to the west of Loch Bruiach, affords excellent sport, though the trout are smaller and inferior in flavour to those caught in the latter. In Loch Neattie, which is about a mile and a-half from Loch Bruiach, there is abundance of pike. Lochgorm, Lochnambreadearg, and Lochcarnabattan, are, among others too numerous to mention, considered excellent for angling, though some of them require that a person should be able to cast the line skilfully, owing to the quantity of reeds growing on their margins.

Geology.—The higher and more inland portions of this parish consist of gneiss and granite rocks, chiefly the former, which is frequently traversed by various granite veins of various sizes and different ages, being united to the great central masses of gneiss which constitute the bulk of Inverness-shire. The ridges declining towards the north, however, are skirted and overlain by deposits of the

* In speaking of these lakes, the Messrs Anderson of Inverness, in their ingenious and valuable work entitled "Guide to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland," eloquently but justly remark, that "they are surrounded by the relics of an enormous pine forest; their islands and their shores are almost impervious from the crowded stems of the trees; and the far-famed scenery of Loch Catrine and the Trossachs sinks into insignificance when contrasted with the similar assemblage of rock, wood, and water displayed in this neighbourhood, on a scale so much more extended and magnificent.—The dun deer of the forest here, in the centre of the isle, where hunters there are none, have marshalled themselves in great numbers: the eagle builds his eyrie unmolested, and soars aloft sole lord of the high and wild squire which rise up from the west coast, and which bewilder the senses of the spectator by their multitude and utter blackness and sterility."

old red sandstone, which compose the great basin of the Moray Frith, and which here rests unconformably on the primary strata. Spurs of the gneiss and granite frequently cut across the sandstone, thus rendering the scenery more rough and picturesque than it would otherwise be, while the softer rock gives rise to exceedingly beautiful and fertile valleys between them. The sandstone also appears at one time to have risen high above the older rocks, for, in the south-western parts of the parish, bordering on that of Urquhart, there are very high detached rounded caps and summits, as well as extensive ridges of the old red conglomerate, which, on passing through Glenconvinth, show themselves to have been at one time united both to the Moray Frith basin, and also to the great central deposit of sandstone at Mealfourvie near Loch Ness. Indications of extensive denudation everywhere exist; and, underneath the highest conglomerate summits, are a series of dark and deep lakes or tarns, which here, as elsewhere in this neighbourhood, are most numerous near the line of junction of the crystalline with the arenaceous deposits. The small formation of serpentine behind Polmally in Glenurquhart stretches upwards towards the confines of Kiltarlity, and numerous beds of primary granular limestone exist in the district, none of which, however, are extensively worked, it being a matter of general belief, though whether on good grounds I know not, that foreign lime produces a better effect on land than that manufactured from stone found in the same district as the land on which it is used. The most thriving woods and plantations are situated on the sandstone ridges, or on the gravel beds and terraces which extend from their bases to the river Beaully.

Specimens of asbestos and rock-crystal are often met with in the hills.

There are no mines in this parish, although the taste and colour of many of the springs indicate the presence of iron ore. It is believed that a mine was once worked in the Mains of Strathglass, but there is no certainty as to where it was situated or what the mineral found was, though it most probably was plumbago, of the same quality as that found in the parish of Kilmorack, and which has not as yet been very productive.

In the upper part of the district of Strathglass, at Cugie, on the property of Guisachan, there is a cave of considerable dimensions; the access to it is very narrow, owing to the propinquity of two shelving rocks. Another cave, in a glen called Corriedow, on the western extremity of the parish, is said to have afforded refuge

to the unfortunate Prince Charles Edward Stuart for some days. There is a cave in the rocks of Easter Main of considerable size.

Soil.—The soil in the parish is, generally speaking, thin and light. There is not much good land throughout the whole of it. The most of the soil is of a reddish colour and very hard. It is found to be very difficult to trench it, from the number of stones which it contains, and it requires a great quantity of lime and manure ere a good crop can be raised from it. The expense of taking in new land may be estimated at about L. 12 per acre, but this includes liming, clearing it of stones, &c. The expense of trenching it is generally about L. 8 per acre. There is always some compensation given to the tenant, by the proprietor, for reclaimed land. The eastern or lower part of the parish is more fertile than the upper, where, owing to the mossy nature of the soil, the crops at an early stage of their growth acquire a purplish sickly appearance. This parish suffers much in a dry season, from the natural dryness of the soil, as well as from the small supply of moisture in the air. The average rent of arable land in the parish may be stated at L. 1, 10s. per acre.

Zoology.—The quadrupeds are such as are common to the neighbouring parishes. The hedgehog and squirrel have not yet reached this district. The cross-bill breeds in the pine forests, and remains during the whole year.—The fishes in the lakes and rivers are such as are common to this part of the country, and require no particular enumeration.

Botany.—*Plants found in the parish of Kiltarlity.*—

Veronica alpina	Galium montanum	Solanum Dulcamara
Anagallis	Plantago major	Erythraea centaureum
Chainædrys	Alchemilla vulgaris	Hedera Helix
Pinguicula vulgaris	alpina	Vinca minor
Lemna minor	Ilex anguifolium	Ulmus campestris
Anthoxanthum odoratum	Sagina procumbens	Gentiana campestris
Valeriana officinalis	Myosotis palustris	Sanicula Europea
Iris Pseudacorus	Anchusa sempervirens	Viburnum Lantana
Scirpus cespitosus	Pulmonaria officinalis	Sambucus Ebulus
Eriophorum alpinum	Symphytum tuberosum	Statice Armeria
vaginatum	Echium vulgare	Parnassia pelustris
angustifolium	Primula vulgaris	Drosera rotundifolia
Nardus stricta	farinosa	Myosurus minimis
Phleum pratense	Menyanthes trifoliata	Galanthus nivalis
Arundo Phragmites	Lysimachia vulgaris	Hyacinthus non-scriptus
Briza media	Anagalis arvensis	Convallaria majalis
Hordeum pratense	Azalea procumbens	Luzula maxima
Montia fontana	Campanula rapunculoides	pilosa
Scabiosa succisa	Viola canina	Oxyria reniformis
Asperula odorata	tricolor	Rumex aquatilis
Galium verum	Verbascum Thapsus	Alisma Plantago

- Trientalis Europæa
 Epilobium angustifolium
 Vaccinium myrtillus
 vitis-Idææ
 oxycoccos
 Erica cinerea
 Tetralix
 Calluna vulgaris
 Polygonum bistorta
 viviparum
 Adoxa moschatellina
 Arbutus alpina
 uva ursi
 Pyrola rotundifolia
 media
 minor
 Chrysosplenium oppositifolium
 Saxifraga nivalis
 aizoides
 granulata
 hypnoides
 Silene inflata
 Stellaria nemorum
 holostea
 Arenaria verna
 Sedum Telephium
 album
 Oxalis Acetosella
 Lychnis Flos cuculi
 dioica
 Spergula arvensis
 Agrimonia Eupatoria
 Reseda luteola
 Euphorbia peplus
 Sempervivum tectorum
 Prunus padus
 Cratægus Oxyacantha
 Spirea ulmaria
 Rosa rubiginosa
 canina
 Rubus idæus
 fruticosus
 saxatilis
 Chamaemorus
 Fragaria vesca
 Potentilla anserina
 Tormentilla officinale
 Geum urbanum
 Dryas octopetala
 Comarum palustre
 Nymphaea alba
 Nuphar lutea
 Anemone nemorosa
 Thalictrum alpinum
 Ranunculus aquatilis
 flammula
 repens
 Caltha palustris
 Ajuga reptans
 Mentha hirsuta
 Glechoma hederacea
 Lamium album
 Ballota nigra
 Thymus serpyllum
 Prunella vulgaris
 Euphrasia officinalis
 Melampyrum pratense
 Lathræa squamaria
 Pedicularis palustris
 Scrophularia aquatica
 Digitalis purpurea
 Thlaspi arvense
 Cardamine pratensis
 hirsuta
 Arabis hispida
 Thaliana
 Nasturtium officinale
 amphibium
 Sinapis arvensis
 Geranium sylvaticum
 Robertianum
 Malva sylvestris
 Fumaria officinalis
 capreolata
 Polygala vulgaris
 Genista scoparia
 Anglica
 Ulex Europæus
 Ononis arvensis
 Orobus tuberosus
 sylvaticus
 Lathyrus pratensis
 Vicia sylvatica
 cracca
 lutea
 Trifolium officinale
 repens
 pratense
 minus
 Lotus corniculatus
 Hypericum perforatum
 humifusum
 pulchrum
 Elodes
 Leontodon Taraxacum
 Hieracium alpinum
 pilosella
 Arctium Lappa
 Carduus nutans
 Marianus
 Onopordum acanthium
 Tanacetum vulgare
 Gnaphalium dioicum
 sylvaticum
 Tussilago farfara
 Senecio vulgaris
 viscosus
 sylvaticus
 aquaticus
 Bellis perennis
 Chrysanthemum Leucanthemum
 Chrysanthemum segetum
 Pyrethrum Parthenium
 Matricaria chamomilla
 Achillea Ptarmica
 Millefolium
 Centaurea nigra
 cyanus
 Orchis morio
 mascula
 latifolia
 maculata
 Gymnadenia conopsea
 Habenaria albida
 bifolia
 Listera ovata
 cordata
 nidus avis
 Zannichellia palustris
 Callitriche aquatica
 Sparganium ramosum
 simplex
 natans
 Carex dioica
 stellulata
 panicea
 Alnus glutinosus
 Urtica urens
 dioica
 Quercus robur
 Fagus sylvatica
 Betula alba
 Carpinus Betulus
 Corylus avellana
 Pinus sylvestris
 Salix rubra
 nigra
 herbacea
 arenaria
 repens
 cinerea
 viminalis
 Empetrum nigrum
 Myrica gale
 Populus alba
 Rhodiola rosea
 Mercurialis perennis
 Juniperus communis
 Taxus baccata
 FRANK.
 Polypodium vulgare
 Aspidium lonchitis
 Thelypteris
 dilatatum
 Asplenium viride
 ruta muraria
 Scolopendrium vulgare
 Pteris crispa
 Blechnum boreale
 Hymenophyllum Tunbridgensis
 Botrychium Lunaria
 Lycopodium clavatum
 alpinum
 selago
 Equisetum arvense
 palustre
 Mosses.
 Sphagnum obtusifolium

Sphagnum acutifolium	Hypnum riparium	Hypnum nitens
Polytrichum undulatum	undulatum	alopecurum
Tortula muralis	medium	striatum
Didymodon purpureum	molle	palustre
Funaria hygrometrica	stramineum	
Orthotrichum anomalum	rufescens	

Wood.—Strathglass, of old, was mostly altogether covered with wood, of which, with the exception of the forest of Cugie, on the property of Guisachan, but few living remains now exist throughout the parish, though traces of it are everywhere to be met with in the peat mosses, where the poorer peasantry dig up great numbers of the trunks, which, being very resinous, afford them a cheap and tolerably good light, during the long winter evenings. Some of the old firs in the forest of Cugie are immensely large, being between sixty and seventy feet in height, and sixteen feet in girth. The Protector Cromwell used a great quantity of timber from Strathglass, in the construction of his fortifications at Inverness, and, in fact, until within late years, wood was the only article exported from the parish, many parts of which, owing to the gravelly nature of the soil, seem peculiarly adapted for its growth. Larch thrives amazingly, and it is not uncommon to find specimens of this valuable wood, which, at forty years of age, measure 30, and at fifteen years, measure 12 cubic feet; and a blemish is rarely found in this kind of timber. The ash, though slow in arriving at maturity, is of excellent quality. Natural fir fetches at the rate of 1s. 6d. per cubic foot when manufactured; planted fir, 6d per cubic foot not manufactured; do. do. 1s. per do. when manufactured; ash and oak generally sell at 2s. per cubic foot in the tree; birch for barrel staves fetches L. 4, 4s. per thousand; elm, beech, and plane tree, sell at 1s. 6d. per cubic foot in the tree; birch and oak bark average L. 6 per ton.

The common Scotch fir is not planted so much as formerly, the preference being now decidedly in favour of larch, as not only more marketable but of quicker growth.

There are many new plantations in the parish, and the different heritors, of late years, pay much more attention than they were wont to do, to periodical and regular thinnings, being convinced that the value of their woods is much increased by this process.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Parochial Registers.—The only public records of any kind kept in the parish, are those of births and marriages. The former begins in 1714, and the latter in 1812; but though the former was kept for the whole of the period since 1714, it is to be regretted

that the entries were not by any means regularly made, and this circumstance is probably as much owing to a strong prejudice which obtained against it in the minds of the people, as from any remissness or neglect on the part of the clerk.

Antiquities.—There are many Druidical remains in the parish, and also some vitrified forts (supposed by most people to be where beacon fires used to be lighted in ancient times): but I am not aware that any thing of a peculiarly interesting nature has ever been discovered in or about them. There are three or four of the “Druidical temples” within a mile of the parish church.

Mansion-houses.—Beaufort Castle, the residence of the Right Honourable Lord Lovat, is a large and commodious but very plain-looking building, having been originally intended only as a residence for the Government factor, during the time that the Lovat estate lay under forfeiture; and, although the present chief of the clan Fraser, some time ago, had it in contemplation to erect a more magnificent habitation, the project appears to have been abandoned, at least for the present. It stands on the site of the old fortress of Beaufort or Downie; and mention is made of it in Scottish story, so early as the era of Alexander I., when it sustained a regular siege by the royal troops, and the trenches then made are still visible. It was also seized by Oliver Cromwell, and the citadel blown up; and immediately after the battle at Culloden, it was burnt and razed to the ground by the Duke of Cumberland’s army, and the flames of the conflagration were witnessed by Simon, Lord Lovat, from a high mountain near Loch Muilie, in Glenstrathfarrar, in which is a small island, whither he and a few faithful adherents had retreated. The accommodations of the fortress, at this time, appear to have been very limited indeed; for Lord Lovat, as related by his own chronicler, “received company and dined with them in the same room in which he slept. His lady’s sole apartment was her bedchamber, and the only provision for lodging the domestics and the numerous herd of retainers was a quantity of straw on the four lower rooms of the tower; sometimes above 400 persons were kennelled here.” It is said, that the present is the twelfth edifice which has been erected on the same site, and, indeed, a more eligible and delightful situation could not be pitched upon for the chieftain’s residence. It commands an extensive view of the whole of the Aird or Fraser country, and the Beauly Frith. In front of the mansion, there are extensive parks, studded with large trees of various kinds, and a very considerable

extent of the ground in the vicinity of the castle has been tastefully laid out as a rosary and flower-garden by the Right Honourable Lady Lovat.

Family of Fraser of Lovat.—Before the Frasers came into possession of them, the estates of Lovat, as also a great part of Stratherrick and Abertarff, belonged to a very powerful family of the name of Bizzet. The Frasers appear to have come to Inverness-shire about the end of the thirteenth century, from the counties of Peebles and Tweeddale, in the former or latter of which the ruins of their principal residence, Castle Fraser, may still be seen. The prevalence of the name Fraser in this district is accounted for, by a tradition that the Bizzets were induced, from various motives, to assume it instead of their own, on the occasion of the accession of the Fraser family to the estate. Be that as it may, there are certainly hardly any Bizzets now to be met with in this country.

The late Mr Fraser of Lovat died without issue, and the property (an entailed one) descended to a distant branch, possessing the estate of Strichen in Aberdeenshire. The present proprietor is the principal heritor of this parish, and was raised to the Peerage in 1837. He also possesses extensive lands in several of the surrounding parishes, and is much esteemed by his tenantry as a kind and considerate landlord. The family resides almost always in the country, and his Lordship, by annually expending immense sums in improving and adorning his estate, provides employment for a great number of the peasantry, who, were this not the case, might be obliged to migrate elsewhere in search of a livelihood. At the same time that the fact speaks volumes for the unostentatious charity, and active benevolence of Lady Lovat, it is very gratifying to have it to state, that the more necessitous of the poor in the parish are, by the directions and at the expense of this amiable lady, liberally supplied with nourishing food and warm clothing, and the best steps adopted for having their other wants relieved so soon as made known. The number of poor privately comforted in this way is very considerable.

The present family of Lovat professes the Roman Catholic religion, and Lady Lovat is descended of one of the oldest and highest Roman Catholic families in England, being daughter to Lord Stafford.

Belladrum.—About a mile southward from Beaufort, lies the elegant mansion house of Belladrum. It is about three or four hundred

yards from the public road, which here serves as the boundary between the two estates; but the numerous trees in the surrounding pleasure-grounds are so disposed, that the passing traveller can hardly catch a glimpse of it. The house is quite a modern one, and is furnished in a most splendid manner. It was built at a very considerable expense by the late proprietor, James Fraser, Esq., who also erected in the neighbourhood a farm-steading of corresponding magnificence. The property was purchased by John Stewart, Esq. of Carnousie, for the sum of L. 80,000. For a great many years past, much care has been observed in laying out the grounds and woods in the neighbourhood. The gardens, orchards, and shrubberies, together with the hot-houses and green-houses, are admirably kept, and evidences of a superior taste are every where discernible. A great part of the property is covered with valuable timber, consisting principally of Scotch fir and larch. The portions already disposed of and cut down have yielded a handsome sum to the present owner, who pays much attention to the thinning and proper management of his forests; and by his directions, the blanks caused by the cutting are in the course of being planted with timber of a different sort from that which formerly grew on the same soil. The rental of the Belladrum estate is supposed to be about L. 1600; and a considerable part of it is considered to be improvable. The most of it, however, consists of hilly pasture ground, abounding in various sorts of game, as roe, hare, black-game, grouse, partridge, &c. The lakes and marshes on the property, though not much worth for the angling to be got on them, are resorted to by various kinds of water-fowl. The number of acres on this estate is 4300, being composed of about 700 acres of arable, 2600 acres of pasture, and about 1000 acres under wood. Mr Stewart and his family generally reside for some months in the year at Belladrum, where their warm and active benevolence command the esteem and respect of all around them.

III.—POPULATION.

Population in 1801,	-	2588
1811,	-	2601
1821,	-	2429
1831,	-	2715
1841,	-	2881—males, 1829; females, 1552.

The number of inhabited houses is 630.

By a census taken under the direction of the minister, in 1837, the population was estimated at 2669.

KILTARLITY.

499.

Belonging to the Established Church,	-	-	2186
Do. do. of the poor and working classes,	1736		
Belonging to other denominations,	-	-	483
Do do. of the poor and working classes,	870		
Total in the parish of the poor and working population,	-	2106	
Do. those in affluent or comfortable circumstances,	553		
		<u>2669</u>	<u>2669</u>

Thus showing that fully three-fourths of the entire population were, at that time, of the poor or labouring classes, and I am of opinion that the proportions are still about the same. The only Dissenters in the parish are Roman Catholics.

The language usually spoken is the Gaelic, but it is losing ground rapidly.

IV.—INDUSTRY

Labourers receive from 1s. to 1s. 6d., and tradesmen from 2s. to 3s. per day. Women earn 1s. per day during the harvest season, but only receive from 6d. to 9d. per day for field labour, during the rest of the year. Farm-servants, besides a fair allowance of victual and fuel, receive from L. 8 to L. 12 per annum, according to their character and qualifications. Housemaids and other female domestics receive, on an average, from L. 3 to L. 4 per annum; few of them obtain so much as L. 4, 10s.

Agriculture has made rapid progress here within the last twenty years, and due attention is now paid to liming, draining, and the most approved rotation in cropping.

To illustrate the rapid change which has taken place in Strathglass within the last few years, I may mention that about eight years ago, when the existing leases were granted, the arable land would not average above 10s. per acre; but now that such effective measures have been resorted to for the prevention of smuggling, the same land may be considered worth at least L. 1 per acre.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

The nearest post-office is at the village of Beaully, which is about two miles from the eastern boundary of the parish, but there is a runner who daily traverses a great part of the parish, and leaves the letters at central receiving-houses.

Ecclesiastical State.—The parish church, which was built in 1829, is only about three miles from the eastern extremity of the parish, so that, unless the mission comprehended the district of Strathglass, its situation might be justly considered as extremely inconvenient for the parishioners at large. It is built on the same

foundation as the former church, which was erected in 1763, and, being on a rising ground in the midst of a clump of tall trees, its position is much admired. The surrounding ground has not been long in use as a place of sepulture,—the late incumbent, Dr Bayne, having been the first who was interred in it. The number of sittings in the church is about 800.

The late Chisholm of Chisholm, who represented this county in Parliament for several years, and who was likewise much and deservedly esteemed, not only for his exemplary piety, but for his consistent and zealous support of the cause of Protestantism, shortly before his death built at Erchless a very neat church in connection with the Establishment. In this church, which is capable of accommodating about 400 people, there is preaching regularly, the services of a clergyman being secured and paid for by The Chisholm, whose liberality in this as well as in many other respects, is worthy of much commendation. The sittings in these churches are all free. The parishioners are decidedly a church-going people, and the several places of worship are respectably attended.

The manse is very large and commodious, and was built in 1838. The glebe is also extensive, being nearly equal to 50 acres, but it is not valuable, the soil being very thin and poor. Upwards of the half of it is arable, and the annual value of the whole may be nearly L. 30.

The stipend is L. 204, 10s. 8½d. in money; 17 bolls, 1 firloft, and three pecks of oatmeal; and 19 bolls, 1 peck, and 1 lippy, of barley, including allowance for communion elements. The value of the victual part varies according to the fiars prices; but the stipend may be estimated at about L. 240, and it is wholly derivable from parsonage-teinds. The only privilege which the incumbent has, is that of cutting peats.

The mission of Strathglass, to which reference is made above, comprehends not only the upper portion of the parish of Kiltarlity, but also that of Kilmorack, and the missionary preaches at three different stations. His income is about L. 80, of which he receives L. 60 from the Committee on the Royal Bounty, and the other L. 20 are contributed by his hearers. Nearly one-half of the population of the mission district belongs to the Roman Catholic faith.

A Roman Catholic congregation has been established in the parish, for about fifteen or sixteen years, and consists of from 700

to 800 individuals, of whom, however, a large proportion belongs to other parishes.

There is a catechist in the parish, who is supported by voluntary contribution.

The number of communicants belonging to the Establishment is about 120.*

Poor.—The average amount annually expended on the poor is about L. 25, of which sum there arises from church collections about L. 16. The number of individuals deriving aid from the poor's roll is 77.

The people have the greatest repugnance to apply for parochial aid, and there are many instances where they have submitted to the most abject penury and distress, rather than incur the degradation of becoming mendicants, or even soliciting such trifling assistance as the parochial funds could afford to give them.

Education.—The number of schools in this parish is seven, and the branches generally taught in them are, reading, writing, and arithmetic, though in one or two of them a boy occasionally may be found studying the dead languages. The people appear to be alive to the benefits of a plain common education. There are no parts of the parish so distant as to prevent attendance at one or other of the schools. The average number in each is as follows:

Kiltarlity, parish school,	80
Mauld, do.	40
Knockfin, do.	40
Fanellan, Assembly school,	70
Bog, supported by individual subscription,	40
Glencovinth, do do.	60
Female school at Kiltarlity, endowed by the Right Honourable Lady Lovat,	30

Average number of children in the parish attending school, 360

The salary of the teacher in the principal parish school, (which is that of Kiltarlity,) is L. 25, 16s., and the fees may amount to from L.15 to L.20 annually. The scale of fees is much the same in the whole of these schools. The salary in each of the other two parochial schools, which have only been recently established, is L.12, 18s.; but The Chisholm has liberally made up their salaries to L. 25. The continuance of this boon, however, is quite voluntary on the part of The Chisholm, though it is not likely that

* *Patron.*—Lord Lovat had the patronage of this as well as many other parishes, in his gift, until about four years ago, when he transferred this right of presentation to Hercules Scott, Esq. Professor of Moral Philosophy at King's College of Aberdeen. It is supposed that this was done in order to do away with any objections which might arise, in consequence of Lord Lovat's exercising his right of presentation, he being of a different persuasion.

it will be withdrawn, so long as he is satisfied that the duties of the offices are efficiently discharged.

The female school was erected about twelve years ago by Lady Lovat, who gives the mistress a salary of L.15 per annum. The want of such a school as this was much felt, and it has been productive of great good. The building is a very neat and tasteful structure, and, besides the school-room, includes ample accommodation for the teacher.

Inns.—There are only two or three inns in the whole parish, and even these are of an inferior description, and not much frequented. Whisky is the principal liquor retailed; malt liquor being seldom called for, and, indeed, not often to be had, if required.

Fuel.—The fuel in general use is peat, and no charge whatever is made by the land-owners for the privilege of cutting it, which has been exercised, for time immemorial, by the tenantry and cottars on the several properties. English coal is also used by those who can afford to purchase it, and abundance of this mineral can generally be got at Beauly, at prices varying from 1s. 8d. to 2s. per barrel.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

Generally, and in conclusion, I may remark that in Strathglass, sheep-farming is carried on to a considerable extent, and that with less risk than in most other Highland districts, owing to the excellent shelter which is afforded to the flocks in winter, by the natural wood, with which the sheep-walks abound. The leases, for the most part, are too short to induce the tenantry to incur the expense of planting, and the proprietors are only now becoming aware of the immense importance of warmth and shelter to almost all kinds of animals. Not half so much is lost by vermin now as formerly, owing to the number of keepers employed to preserve the game; and, from the same cause, that grouse and ptarmigan are rapidly increasing in number, few of the sheep or lambs are lost, and the rents, as a necessary consequence, must soon improve and amply repay the proprietors for the expense to which they may be put.

It is matter of pride among the natives of the parish to have it in their power to say that, among the resident heritors, there are the honoured chieftains of two ancient and most respectable Highland clans.

December 1841.