

PARISH OF CLYNE.*

PRESBYTERY OF DORNOCH, SYNOD OF SUTHERLAND AND
CAITHNESS.

THE REV. GEORGE MACKAY, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE etymology of the name of this parish is not correctly known; and though there are various conjectures on this point, not one of them seems in any degree satisfactory.

Extent and Boundaries.—The figure of the parish is irregular; in length it extends from the east coast of the county into the interior to the summit of Ben Ormin, a distance of about 24 miles from south-east to north-west; its breadth on the coast side is 4 miles, and varies from 6 to 8 miles inland. It is bounded on the south-west by the parish of Golspie; on the west by Rogart; on the north by Kildonan; on the north-east by Loth, and on the south-east by the German ocean.

Topographical Appearances.—The interior is in many parts very picturesque, being distinguished from the more tame scenery along the coast, by a variety of mountains, glens, and lakes, and adorned by natural and planted woods. The prospect is much admired, when entering the glen at Killean. The Carrol Rock, an abrupt precipice overhanging Loch Brora,—Ben Clibrig, Ben Ormin, and Ben Horn, at once break on the view, which, with the reflection in the lake of the rock of Carrol, and the sloping sides of the hills covered with plantations and natural woods, present a singular and magnificent panorama.

About nine miles from the coast, Strath Brora divides into two valleys of a still more upland character, at a place called Ascoile. The one to the left is skirted with many clumps and a few extensive ranges of natural wood; and the other valley, or rather glen, to the north is wild and deep. At this point also, the parish assumes a more sterile and Highland aspect, being of a bleak and heathy character, with extensive ranges of moors and moss, intersected by

* Drawn up by George Gunn, Esq. of Rhives.

numerous small rivulets; and still more inland, several lofty hills, forming part of the high and stormy centre range of Sutherland mountains, mark the boundaries of the parish to the west and north. Greatly different from this elevated district, the low grounds of the parish along the sea-coast contain well-cultivated farms, surrounded by several townships occupied by small tenants, and composed of neat stone cottages,—these farms connected together by excellent and well kept roads, which intersect the cultivated parts of the parish in all directions. The elevation of two of the highest mountains above the level of the sea, as ascertained by measurement, is as follows,—Ben Ormin 2306 feet; Ben Horn 1712 feet.

The only cave deserving notice is a small one of peculiar construction above the Bridge of Brora; it seems to have been formed by the action of the water on a soft portion of the rock, before the river became imbedded in its present low level.

The coast is low and sandy, and has a breadth of sand hills extending about a quarter of a mile from the shore, and covered with bent, and where not broken, with rich pasture. This sandy belt is succeeded by the arable land occupied by the lotters or small tenants, and the fine farms of Inver Brora and Clynelish; and behind them are the hills of the interior division.

Temperature.—Along the sea coast, the weather is the same as in the neighbouring parishes, with the exception, perhaps, of the parish of Golspie, which is better sheltered by plantations, and not so exposed to storms from the mountains in the centre of the county as the low grounds of this parish are, when the wind blows down the opening of Strath Brora. The north-west gales blow with great force down this strath, the high hills on each side forming a natural funnel, and the blasts spread along the low grounds, often causing much injury to the crops. The soil being of a light, sharp, gravelly quality, occasional long droughts materially affect vegetation; but it revives rapidly on being refreshed by the copious showers, which seldom fail to come in time to save it.

The climate may be considered on the whole excellent, of which the healthy appearance and the longevity of the people furnish the best demonstration. The prevailing winds are east or north-east, west or south-west. The east wind is sometimes damp, cold, and penetrating, and the west wind excessively violent.

Hydrography.—Loch Brora is the principal sheet of water in the parish. It is about four miles long, and varies from a quarter to half-a-mile in breadth, being contracted at two points, and has

the appearance of three lakes when seen from a short distance. Extensive fir plantations on each side, with the bold precipitous Carrol rock, and the mansion-house and offices of Kilcalmkill, form a beautiful and interesting scene in fine weather.

There is a small island near the lower end of Loch Brora, of which Sir Robert Gordon says, in his History of the Earldom of Sutherland, that "the Erle of Southerland hes a delectable habitation, and pleasant for hunting of red-deer and roes in the woods on both sides of the loch. This island is distant thrie or four myles from the burgh of Broray."

Among the smaller lakes, Loch Tubernach, north of Clyne church, and the source of the Clyne Milton Burn, was, at one time, famous for large trout of superior flavour; but they have fallen off in quality, of late years.

The river Brora has its source in the forest of Ben Clibrig, and, passing through a part of Rogart, it enters this parish about two miles above Sciberscross, and joins the Black Water a mile below that place. This latter river rises in Ben Ormin, and runs through a long extent of deep moors, which give a dark tinge to the water, and from which it no doubt derives its name. It receives several tributaries in its course, and runs down a deep rocky channel for about five miles before its junction with the Brora, when the united streams flow through rich meadows for half-a-mile, and fall into Loch Brora.

There is a cascade on the Black Water, near Balnakyle, very magnificent when the river is in flood; and another still more striking and romantic at Kilcalmkill, which is visited by most tourists; also a cascade well worthy of notice on a small burn near the manse of Clyne, where the water falls into a deep ravine over a rock sixty feet high.

Geology and Mineralogy.—Sir Humphry Davy, when he visited this county in 1812, left a manuscript at Dunrobin Castle, describing the mineral productions of part of Sutherland, wherein he stated, with reference to this parish, "that the secondary rocks occupy but a small space, and are probably incumbent on the red sandstone or breccia; that they occur in regular strata, but their arrangement is very much disturbed. They appear to have been originally deposited or formed parallel to the horizon; but in most places, this parallelism has been disturbed either by the subsidence or elevation of parts of the strata, so that there are frequent faults or abruptions of the different rocks, which have given to the different parts of the strata different inclinations."

“ The true secondary strata of Sutherland occupy an extent of six or seven miles, filling up a sort of basin between the transition hills in the neighbourhood of Dunrobin, and those in the parish of Loth. The upper stratum is a sandstone of different degrees of hardness, and composed of silicious sand, cemented by silicious matter. Below this, occurs an aluminous shale, containing pyritous matter, carbonaceous matter, the remains of marine animals, and of land vegetables. Beneath this shale, or rather alternating with it, a stratum occurs, containing, in some of its parts, calcareous matter, and passing into limestone; but in general consisting of a silicious sand, agglutinated by calcareous cement. The coal measures occupy the lowest part of this secondary district which has been explored.”

Coal had been worked near the mouth of the River Brora so far back as 1573, in the time of Lady Jane Gordon, Countess of Sutherland, and at various subsequent periods; but that work was abandoned many years ago. The late Duke of Sutherland, with the munificence which characterized all his improvements, expended L. 16,000 in sinking a new pit, and for the necessary buildings, on the north side of the river, half a mile above the bridge, where a seam was found from 3 feet 2 inches to 3 feet 8 inches thick, at a depth of 250 feet from the surface. The coal was conveyed to the harbour on a railway 800 yards in length. Four large salt-pans were also erected, which cost L. 3327, and the salt produced proved of very superior quality.

Limestone is found in small detached portions in various places on the banks of the River Brora, from the harbour upwards. It contains no magnesian earth, and is adulterated only with aluminous and silicious earths, and oxide of iron. A specimen of it was examined by Sir Humphry Davy, from a rock about 100 yards above the Weir: 20 grains contained 17.3 grains of carbonate of lime.*

Zoology.—The animals of this parish are common to most other parts of the county. They are, the red-deer, roe, fox, wild-cat, polecat, martin, and the stoat or weasel, which becomes white in winter, the lesser brown stoat, the brown otter, mole, common mouse, field-mouse, lesser field-mouse, Alpine hare, common hare, common gray rabbit, Muscovy rat. At no distant period, it was the general belief that rats could not exist in the county, and Suther-

* We understand more detailed accounts of the geology of this parish than that given above, have been laid before the Wernerian Society by Professor Jameson, and by Messrs Murchison and Sedgwick before the Geological Society.

land earth was frequently taken to other countries, under the impression of its efficacy in driving them from any place where the earth might be deposited. But a vessel being wrecked near Kintradwell about thirty years ago, dispelled the delusion, and introduced the Muscovy rat, which has since multiplied, and spread in every direction. The red-deer have become very numerous since the plantations on the banks of Loch Brora have grown up to afford them cover and shelter. Some of these noble animals attain a great size, and are often seen congregated in herds. Lord Francis Egerton killed one of the stags at this place in 1838, which weighed upwards of eighteen stones Dutch weight; and it is believed that some of them are now much larger. The foxes and other animals of prey were at one time very destructive to stock; but the farmers entered into an association and hired fox-hunters, by whose exertions they were nearly extirpated; at least they were so much thinned, as not again to become very formidable.

One hundred and fifty different kinds of birds frequent the parish, the most remarkable of which are, the white-tailed eagle, ring-tailed eagle, peregrine falcon, buzzard, hawk, wild swan, wild goose, blackcock, grouse, ptarmigan.

The fishes in Loch Brora are, salmon, grilse, salmon trout, char, common trout. The salmon begin to ascend the river in condition to spawn about the middle of August; the grilse a fortnight later. They begin to spawn about the 1st of October, and descend as kelts or spent fish in February. The smelts go down in March, continuing to do so till the end of May. The grilses commence their ascent in May, varying it from the beginning till the end of the month, according as the season may be early or late.

The fishes caught on the shores are, cod, ling, haddock, skate, turbot, halibut, flounder, whiting, mackerel, mullets, millers, gurnards. The shell-fish are, lobsters, partons or crabs.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Sir Robert Gordon's Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland, of which there is an old manuscript copy in the library at Dunrobin Castle, contains many notices of this parish, but chiefly descriptive of the ancient feuds and combats which used to distract the country at that period, and is too voluminous to be inserted here.

The chief historical event of importance which has taken place since the publication of the former report, is the change in the occupation of the parish, by the removal of the small tenants from the

interior to the coast side, and which, with its consequences on the comforts and habits of the inhabitants, will be noticed hereafter.

A correct map of the county of Sutherland, on a scale of one inch to a mile, was completed a few years since at the expense of the late Duke of Sutherland; from which it appears that the surface of this parish contains 103 square miles, or 65,000 acres imperial measure.

The Duke of Sutherland is sole land-owner of the parish. The property of Kilcalmbill, which belonged for about 300 years to the Gordons of Carrol, a highly respectable family connected with the Gordon branch of the Earls of Sutherland, was purchased by the late Duke about thirty years ago; also detached portions of the estate of Uppat, lying in Clyne; the place of Uppat, afterwards purchased by his Grace, being in the parish of Golspie.

Parochial Registers.—There is no trace of any parochial register being kept farther back than the year 1706, and even for some time thereafter the strictest accuracy has not been observed.

Antiquities.—This parish is not remarkable for much that deserves the notice of the antiquarian, and the few scattered remnants that can be traced are greatly dilapidated. *Castle Cole*, one of those towers once so common in the north, is, however, worthy of particular notice. It is perhaps the most entire of what are called Pictish towers, in this part of Scotland, excepting that of Dornadilla, in Strathmore, in the parish of Durness. It is situated on the east side of the Black Water, about two miles above its junction with the Brora, and must have been held an impregnable place of defence in its day. The opposite bank is a precipice of 70 feet. The river running rapidly over a rocky channel, renders it inaccessible on three sides, and the narrow neck which connects it with the east bank seems to have been protected by a ditch. The building is oblong; the walls 11 feet thick, without lime or mortar; the diameter inside 22 feet; the only part of the walls now standing is on the south and east sides, about 12 feet high; the door, 5 feet high, 3 feet wide, is in this part of the building facing the south. There is a space in the wall, on the east side of this entrance, which can be traced round the building, and its height would only admit of people to lie or creep in it. This tower must have been the stronghold of the chieftain or of the tribe; and the remains of a line of watch-towers, to give warning of any hostile approach, may still be traced to the coast.

Craig Bar, on the south side of Loch Brora, is thus noticed in the former Statistical Report. "It is a steep and rocky precipice,

fortified with a ditch of circumvallation, every way inaccessible, but by a narrow neck of land between it and a neighbouring hill; it contains about eight acres of land, and could be easily defended against any number of assailants." An ancient cemetery at Kilcalmkill, marks where the heroes of those days rest. The grave of the chief, in which large human bones were found, is yet distinguished by four stones and a cover. Various tumuli lie scattered over the interior, marking their battle-grounds, and where the slain were buried; but their names and their deeds have passed into oblivion.

The next object of antiquity is an artificial island in Loch Bro-ra, already alluded to, and which has been correctly described as below, in a note to the former Report.*

III.—POPULATION.

The population of the parish has varied little since the year 1792, owing to the change which has taken place in the system of farming, the glens and interior being converted into sheep-walks; the inhabitants being removed to the sea coast, and some of them having emigrated to North America. The coal-works commenced in 1812, and caused a considerable increase of the population, which appeared by the census taken in 1821; and as they ceased to be worked in 1828, the number decreased previous to the next census in 1831.

By the census taken in 1792, the population was	1660
1801,	1643
1811,	1639
1821,	1874
1831,	1711
1840,	1756

* "The figure of the island is an oblong square, consisting of two inferior squares of 70 feet diameter. It was divided into two parts; one-half appropriated for lodgings in time of war; the other half laid out for the advantage of a garden. The walls are still pretty high, and ascend perpendicularly from the surface of the water, without a vestige of the island behind them, and are only accessible by two stairs which front the south and east; so that with plenty of stores and the fishing of the loch, abounding with salmon, trout, and eel, the place was rendered impregnable when properly defended. Among many reports of the good purposes of this island, there is one traditional story repeated with pleasure by the inhabitants to this day. They tell that, on a certain occasion, the neighbourhood was suddenly invaded by a numerous army of Caithness men, which they were not prepared to resist. Upon this occasion they fled to the island for an asylum, where they were secure from the assaults of the enemy. Upon this, the invaders were so enraged, that they attempted damming up the narrow mouth of the loch, at which the river breaks out, and had made such progress in the work, that the islanders were obliged to take to their boats in the night time, to accomplish their escape; but, being pursued, they would have all perished, had it not been for the seasonable assistance of the clan Gun, who had marched from Strathulie upon hearing of the danger of their countrymen. The Caithness men, in consequence of this assistance, met with a total defeat; and the part of the river or loch, at which they had been employed, retains to this day the name of Daman or Davan, which signifies a dam."

The number of families in the parish is 385, and they may be distinguished as follows :

Male heads of families,	255
Female heads of families,	130
	385
Bachelors above 50 years of age,	7
Unmarried women above 50 years of age,	39
Insane males,	0
Insane females,	5
Males under 15 years,	293
Females under 15 years,	282
Males betwixt 15 and 30 years,	175
Females betwixt 15 and 30 years,	213
Males betwixt 30 and 50 years,	149
Females betwixt 30 and 50 years,	180
Males betwixt 50 and 70 years,	115
Females betwixt 50 and 70 years,	196
Males upwards of 70 years,	47
Females upwards of 70 years,	55

The language usually spoken among the labouring classes is Gaelic ; but, owing to the more general intercourse with the south country, and the increase of education, it has certainly lost ground since the date of the former report, and, as most of the young people now attend school and receive at least the rudiments of education, it bids fair to be altogether unknown at no very distant period.

The inhabitants of this parish do not devote much of their time to popular games and amusements ; and the few remnants of the merry olden times are fast passing from among them. The bagpipe is never heard except at weddings, and on Christmas and New-Year's Days. Their only game is the *shinny*, which they play with spirit during the holidays, and they then lay their clubs aside till the return of the same period next year. There is nothing distinctive in their habits, appearance, or personal qualities. They intermarry with the inhabitants of the other parishes on the coast-side ; and, consequently, form one community of the same general quality and customs. Their habits are cleanly, and their style of dress, when prepared for church on Sunday, is not surpassed by that of any assembled congregation of the same class of people in the south country. Straw bonnets are becoming general ; and no young damsel is seen without a neatly made cap, her hair tastefully braided, and her dress formed after the latest imported fashion. A great change this, from the time when they were clad in coarse, homespun, woollen stuff, and little regard was paid to appearance or cleanliness.

Though the peasantry cannot procure the same quantity of animal food, and of the produce of the dairy, as when they lived in

the interior and occupied a greater extent of land, they enjoy in general an abundant and varied supply at all seasons of the year. There is no family without some land, and few but keep one or more cows and a pig. Their lots of land supply potatoes, some meal, and other necessaries. The more industrious secure a store of herrings and other fish; purchase some sheep or a cow, and kill a pig for winter food. Therefore, it may confidently be said, that, on the whole, they enjoy, in a reasonable degree, the comforts and advantages of society; and their cheerful industrious habits are the best criterion of their being contented with their situation and circumstances.

They have acquired, in common with the people of the country, a taste for evangelical preaching, and cherish a warm attachment towards the Established Church. No Dissenting preacher has attempted to gain a footing in the parish; and it would be in vain, so long as the present able and zealous minister continues to possess the confidence and affections of his people. There is neither a professed Dissenter nor Roman Catholic in the parish; and, what may seem extraordinary, there is not one of the latter persuasion among the natives of the county, in a population of 26,000 souls. Though the country people are but little educated, they will soon discover an error in doctrine, and can quote scripture in support of their arguments with surprising readiness and accuracy. They are not fanatical nor given to prejudice, if directed by a clergyman whom they respect; and a mutual esteem and attachment is soon established betwixt the pastor and his flock, such as is described in the early and purer days of our church.

The poor here are more numerous in proportion to the population than in the adjoining parishes of Loth and Golspie, and the inhabitants generally are not in such good circumstances as in these parishes, which is thus accounted for:—when the tenants were removed from the interior of the country to the coast-side, the poor belonging to this and other parts of the estate, and those who were unable or unwilling to occupy and improve lots of land, settled in the vicinity of the coal-pits, where they were insured abundance of fuel, without pay or trouble; and living among men in the regular receipt of high wages, they were sure to obtain a share of these earnings; but when the works ceased, they enjoyed no such advantages, and, being thrown on their own resources, they soon became a burden on the community. On the other hand, the people of Loth are enriched by the herring-fishing, and the high price paid

for their labour in the rapidly rising village of Helmsdale. Golspie is a community of tradesmen, labourers, and fishers, kept in constant employment by the establishments of Dunrobin, and of the neighbouring extensive arable farms.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—This parish contains 65,000 square acres, of which a very small portion indeed is under cultivation; the rest being generally high and irreclaimable hill-pasture. It is not easy to state with accuracy the extent of land in tillage, but it cannot be under 1400 acres imperial measure, three-fourths of which has been trenched from the barren waste by the settlers from the hills, and what was formerly under the plough greatly improved. There being 385 families, and as these occupy from one to four acres, we may safely fix the extent possessed by the cottars on an average at nearly two acres each, making in round numbers 730, exclusive of the following principal farms:—Clynelish, 235; Inver-Brora, 210; East Brora, 75; Kilcalmkill, 60; Clynekirkton and Glebe, 40; Clynemilton, 33; Achrimsdale Park, 17—total 1400. The six farms here enumerated have comfortable dwelling-houses and complete offices, sufficient for every purpose. They are enclosed and subdivided with neat and substantial stone fences, thoroughly drained, and cultivated, strictly according to the most approved system of modern husbandry, producing luxuriant crops of barley, oats, and turnips. No wheat is raised, the soil not being considered suited for it. The average rent of the old arable land is about L. 1, 5s. per acre, and the tenant becomes bound to improve all corners of fields, and such portions of the adjoining moor-ground as is conditioned for on the commencement or renewal of his lease. The duration of the leases is for nineteen years. The wages to male-servants from L. 8 to L. 10; females from L. 3 to L. 5 annually; labourers 1s. 6d. per day; and there is seldom any difference made in the winter season, from their being then more exposed to inclement weather.

The parish is entirely laid out in sheep-walks, excepting the above arable farms, and the ground occupied by the small tenants. The stock is pure Cheviot, and the utmost attention being paid to the improvement of the sheep by the present judicious and experienced tenants, they deservedly command the highest prices at market, and carry the first prizes in competition with the stock of other counties. The total number of sheep is from 10,000 to 11,000; the rent averaging 2s. 6d. each. There is of other stock,

about 300 horses, 250 cows, 300 other cattle, and 300 pigs. Goats were at one time numerous, but they have now quite disappeared.

When the small tenants were removed from the interior, lots were marked off for each of them, containing in every instance from a quarter to an acre of old land, and to this was added about two acres of moor-ground, which they were to improve. Not only has this condition been implemented in most cases, but the adjoining lands have been trenched, and now produce rich crops of corn and potatoes. There was scarcely a cart or a plough among the small tenants in the parish forty years ago. It can now boast of 258 carts and 240 ploughs, all made by native tradesmen, on the most approved principles. At that date, there was scarcely a regularly bred tradesman in the parish. They now abound; and there may be reckoned five stone masons, nine house-carpenters, twelve dike-builders, three blacksmiths, nine tailors, twelve shoemakers, three cartwrights, besides journeymen and apprentices.

There are several clumps of natural wood on the banks of Loch Brora, consisting of common and weeping birch, bird-cherry, alders, a variety of poplars, some old detached oak trees, and about 150 acres of thriving fir plantations at Kilcalmhill; and on the opposite side of the loch, which contributes greatly to the beauty of that magnificent lake,—also 50 acres of fir-plantation at Clynelish; but owing to the bad quality of the soil, and its exposure to the sea-blast, it has not kept pace with the other woods in the parish. The plantations are thinned regularly, sufficiently enclosed, and care is taken to prevent trespass by cattle, or other injury to them.

Quarries.—There are two freestone quarries, which have been extensively worked of late years for domestic purposes, and for exportation; one below Spouty, near the sea, of a soft, friable, sandy quality, not much used, except for the small country cottages, the other at Branbury hill, near Clynelish, a remarkably compact, hard, silicious freestone, beautifully white, and highly valued for its durability. It contains many very perfect petrifications of trees, fishes, and various forms of shells, which are much prized by the scientific travellers who visit the country.

Fisheries.—The river Brora is famous for the number and quality of its salmon, and when in proper condition, is one of the best angling streams in the north. It is fished for behoof of the proprietors, and the produce sold to a company at a stipulated rate

per pound. The rent may be stated at L. 300 a year. Some boats have been engaged at Brora in the herring-fishing, and with tolerable success. There are three boats' crews of regular fishers, who keep the neighbourhood abundantly supplied,—often selling a large cod for 2d., a skate from 4d. to 6d., and sometimes from 20 to 40 haddocks for 6d. But the other inhabitants have not taken to the sea, as was expected, and they are more inclined to occupy their time in cultivating their lands,—excepting during the herring-fishing season, when they are all engaged in it, at Brora or Helmsdale.

Kelp was formerly manufactured on the shores; but this has been discontinued since the fall in the value of that article at market, and the tenants are allowed the free use of the sea-ware as manure for their land.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Market-Town, &c.—Dornoch is the nearest market-town, being distant about thirteen miles from the confines of the parish; but half-yearly markets are held in Golspie, only four miles distant, in June and October. Brora is the only village, and contains 280 inhabitants.

Means of Communication.—When the former report was published, there was not a mile of road fit for a carriage, and Brora could boast of the only bridge in the county. It has probably long enjoyed this advantage, and its name may have been derived from the Danish word *Brora*, a *bridge*, or from *brugh*, a *borough*. Now, the country is intersected in every direction with the finest roads in the kingdom, there being in this parish alone about thirty miles of road, and fifteen bridges of the most perfect construction, and always kept in the best order. No toll-dues are exacted in this county,—which is justly prized as a great advantage over our neighbours. Brora being a sub-post-office, a neat receiving-house was built by subscription from the inhabitants, and the Mail-Coach, drawn by two horses, passes and repasses daily. A pier was constructed at the harbour, at the sole expense of the late Duke of Sutherland, when the coal and salt works were in operation, and which affords secure shelter to coasting vessels.

Ecclesiastical State.—The parish church, which is the only place of public worship, is conveniently situated in the centre of the population, the whole inhabitants, with the exception of the dwellings of shepherds, being within less than three miles of it. It was built about the year 1770; and enlarged and thoroughly repaired thirteen years ago. It may contain from 800 to 1000 individu-

als. The sittings are free, as is the case all over the Duke of Sutherland's property, in this county and in Ross-shire. The manse, which was built about the same time with the church, has also received an addition, and it is now a handsome and commodious residence. The glebe contains 12 acres of rich soil. The hill rights belonging to it were lately exchanged for an equivalent of arable land, which is admitted to be far more convenient and advantageous for the minister. The stipend is 93 quarters barley, and L. 23 in money, including the allowance for communion elements. The average number of communicants is 65.

A catechist is paid by voluntary contributions from the people. He perambulates the parish frequently, visiting every family, and is a most useful and important assistant to the minister.

Collections are made periodically for the Inverness Infirmary, the four Assembly schemes, and other public charities, amounting in all to from L. 12 to L. 20.

Education.—There are two regular schools, exclusive of private teachers,—the parish school, and one in the Doll, which is supported by the Glasgow Auxiliary Gaelic School Society. The ordinary branches of education are taught. From the number and position of the population, the minister considers two additional schools necessary,—one at Brora, and the other at Badinellan. The parochial teacher has the maximum salary, and L. 2 Sterling in compensation for a garden. The fees are very moderate and not well paid, seldom exceeding L. 12. His accommodation is comfortable, and on a sufficiently liberal scale. Most of the rising generation attend school for some period of the year, and are so far in the way of receiving the benefits arising from a moral and religious education. There is also a female school at Brora, endowed by the Duke of Sutherland, where girls are taught to sew, make their own dresses, and other needle-work.

Library.—A circulating library was established, some years ago, among the families on the coast side, which is still in active operation, and by means of which they have access to the newest publications for payment of a few shillings annually.

Charitable Institutions.—There are no public charitable institutions in this parish, nor have the poor the benefit of any charitable bequests; consequently, they are dependent for their subsistence on the generosity of the landlord—the liberality of their neighbours who are in better circumstances, and the pittance afforded them from the proceeds of the parochial contributions.

The annual collections at the church amount to L.20 and upwards; and, besides a regular donation of L.6 from the Noble proprietor, there are extra collections, when the parishioners of all ranks contribute liberally.

The paupers on the roll are about 120, and the average allowance to each may be stated at 5s. In seasons of scarcity, the poor go about in the parish, and seldom leave it; but it is absolute necessity that compels them to go beyond their own threshold, for relief from others.

A Savings Bank was established for the whole county about six years ago, and a branch of it is in each parish. Considerable sums were deposited, and the institution has already been of incalculable advantage to the community, affording, during the late pressing seasons, a relief from the savings of more prosperous times.

Markets.—A market is held at Brora in the month of October, which is attended by the people of this and the neighbouring parishes. Shopkeepers come from a distance, and erect tents to display their commodities, and they usually meet with a ready sale. A great many cattle and horses change owners, it being the last market of the season. The five inns in the village used to be crowded on this occasion, besides a great many tents in the market for the retail of whisky; but the Total Abstinence Societies, which have been formed of late, have had a miraculous effect in improving the tastes and habits of the people in this respect. There is not a third part of the spirits used now which were used formerly, and the innkeepers complain loudly that their calling is gone.

Fuel.—The ordinary fuel is peat procured from mosses in the close neighbourhood, and the fishers collect coke from the shore under flood-mark. Coal is imported, costing from 16s. to 18s. per ton, and its use among the wealthier class is much on the increase.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

There is no district of country in Scotland where such an entire change has taken place in the habits, character, and pursuits of the inhabitants, as in this and the other parts of the county forming the estate of Sutherland. They were quite a rural, a moral, and a happy population, inhabiting beautifully romantic and sequestered glens in the interior—far removed from the bustle of the world. Strangers to its allurements and luxuries, they passed their lives, generation following generation, in the same localities, but without ambition to better their circumstances, or a desire to improve

their possessions. All passed happily and without care, so long as the seasons proved propitious, and that the produce of their stock was sufficient to pay the landlord and to afford the means of subsistence on their simple fare; but when the winter storms lengthened into spring, and the mill-dew and the early frosts destroyed the hopes of the harvest, then indeed came the period of distress; and it is not too much to say that they suffered the very extreme of want, which often produced contagious fevers and other mortal diseases. This was submitted to, however, in silence and with pious resignation: no tumults nor risings against the constituted authorities, who they well knew could not ward off the general calamity. Thus situated, helpless and without resources, their only course was an appeal to the compassion of their natural protector, the landlord, and this was never done in vain. He required often to import meal equal in value to the rent of two or more years, and generally leaving a large balance never to be recovered. This state of things could not continue, while the rest of the world were moving ahead, and making rapid advances in improvement; consequently, the great and deeply important measure was resolved on to remove the population to the coast-side, where they would be placed near the sea—become fishermen or artificers, and thus be able to benefit by the many and inexhaustible resources which Providence has placed within their reach. At this time, there were but few bred tradesmen in the country. When a man found it necessary to renew his rude dwelling, he called the neighbours to his assistance, and it was only the work of a few days to complete it. Every man was his own carpenter, for few implements were required, and he had little to do with them. One blacksmith served a district. The shoemaker and the tailor migrated from house to house, receiving their victuals and a small pittance of wages in return for their labour. There was scarcely a cart or a plough in the country, excepting on the larger farms. No man thought of increasing or improving his tillage or pasture lands by trenching or draining. But let any one with an impartial and unprejudiced eye examine the present condition of the inhabitants. Their well-built and neatly kept cottages and enclosed gardens far exceed what many tacksmen in former days paying from L. 50 to L. 100 possessed. Every individual in the family has some resource in a trade or other manual labour—all is a stirring scene of industry and positive comfort. The father and the sons cultivate the lot, if not tradesmen; while the females are engaged with household work, or preparing nets for the next herring season.

Persons who are ignorant of the character of the Highlanders, and many who have never seen the country, have ventured to describe them as indolent, idle, and unprofitable members of the community. A more gross fallacy has never been uttered. They are a quiet, sober, brave, and a moral race; attached and confiding while kindly and honestly dealt by; but reserved, stern, and unbending as their mountain rocks, wherever they suspect injustice, or lose faith in the acts and professions of their superiors. The extensive and perfect improvements on the estate of Sutherland bear evidence of their activity, industry, and confidence in their landlord, when their energies are properly directed. Those who reside in the country can testify, that it is a rare occurrence to meet with an individual the worse of liquor, except occasionally at markets. The naval and military annals of the nation record their bravery, where they have distinguished themselves in many a desperate onset. The faithful labours of our clergy have been blessed by Providence in rendering them pious and moral; and their character may be summed up in these few words,—that they fear God and honour the Queen.

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