

# PARISH OF SOUTH KNAPDALE.\*

PRESBYTERY OF INVERARY, SYNOD OF ARGYLE.

THE REV. ALEXANDER MACKENZIE, MINISTER.

## I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—IN Gaelic “Knap” means hill, and “Dail” a plain, a field, or a dale. “Knapdale,” therefore, signifies a *district of country composed of hills and dales.*

The name is derived from, and is very descriptive of, the appearance of that part of the country of which South Knapdale forms a portion. The district of Knapdale is divided into two parishes, the one north, the other south, to distinguish them according to their relative geographical position.

*Boundaries.*—South Knapdale is bounded on the north by North Knapdale; on the north-east, by Kilmichael Glassery, and Lochgilphead; on the east and south-east, by Lochfine, East Loch Tarbert, the isthmus of Tarbert, and West Loch Tarbert; on the south by the parish of Kilberry; and on the west, by the Sound of Jura.

*Extent.*—From Dail on the north-east, to Barnellan on the south-east, the length, by following the line of the public road, is about 24 miles. From Lochfine to Lochsween, the breadth of the parish is about 10 miles, so that the superficial extent may be computed at 240 square miles; of this surface, however, a space of 80 square miles or thereby is occupied by Lochcaolisport, leaving an area of about 160 square miles. As there has been no regular survey of the parish, this is merely an approximation to the true extent.

*Topographical Appearances.*—The surface of the parish is extremely hilly, approaching rather to the mountainous. The hill of Lliabh Goail, which extends from Inverneill to Barnellan, a distance of twelve miles, is the highest in the parish. The view from its summit is varied, extensive, and interesting. No

\* Drawn up by the late incumbent, the Rev. Duncan Rankin.

smooth or undulating outline meets the eye at any point, but all is sharp, rugged, and abrupt. The many lochs and arms of the sea give a character to the whole, which no inland view can ever possess. The mouth of the Clyde, the Kyles of Bute, the Sound of Kilbrannan, the North Channel towards Ireland, West Loch Tarbert, the Sound of Jura, Lochcaolisport, and Lochfine are distinctly visible from the top of Lliabh Gaoil; and yet so completely is the distance occupied by the islands which are interspersed in every direction, that the Atlantic is nowhere visible.

Turn the eye to any point you choose, and the prospect from the top of this hill is most extensive; Bute with the Cumbray Isles, and the coast of Ayrshire are seen in one direction; Arran with its splintered peaks is a most conspicuous object; Kintyre is visible throughout its whole extent; Ireland with the Isle of Rathlin, are so distinctly seen, that few people would believe them to be fifty miles distant. The northern parts of Ireland appear high, and in exact keeping with the other objects around; Gigha, and the little isles at the point of Knap come next; Isla, as seen from this hill, has not a striking appearance, but its neighbour, Jura, amply makes up for its deficiencies; Scarba appears, what it is in reality, a high mountain rising at once from the sea; Mull is seen very high, and there is a bolder swell about its mountains than those of Arran, which gives it a grander appearance. Ben Cruachan and Ben Lomond are boldly in relief, as well as many of the Perthshire mountains, the tops of which are clearly seen from Lliabh Gaoil. Other hills of less height and interest run parallel with Lliabh Gaoil, and are separated from one another by deep and well-sheltered dales.

The extent of arable land bears but a small proportion to the pasture, and is very much intersected by hills and marshy grounds. With regard to the pasture in the valleys, it is very good; but towards the summits of the hills, it becomes rather coarse and scanty.

*Hydrography.*—There are five or six lakes in the parish, most of which abound with salmon trout of good quality and flavour. These lakes, however, add very little beauty or interest to the landscape, as, with the exception of one or two, they are not to be seen, except from the summits of the highest hills in the parish. The parish abounds with rivers and streamlets, all of which are fordable in summer. During the floods of winter, the larger ones

in many parts are impassable, and even the smallest assumes a formidable appearance. Most of them afford some amusement to the angler, but the best trouting streams are the Ormsary and Lochhead rivers. Such of them as pass in the direction of the principal roads, have bridges thrown over them.

Lochcaolisport is an arm of the Atlantic, which intersects the western part of the parish for five or six miles. The western shore of the loch is bold, abrupt, and rocky; the eastern side rises gradually from the water's edge; and both sides are richly clothed with copsewood. There are several beautiful bays in the loch, which afford safe anchorage. The best anchorage, however, is at the head of the loch, within Ellanfada. This island affords shelter from the heavy swells occasioned by the south-west gales. From the northern blast, the anchorage is protected by the amphitheatre of hills which surround the head of the loch. The water is shallow, and the beach extends a considerable distance from high-water mark, and is still receding. This appears from a stratum of shell-land, which is met with in the glebe about two feet under the surface. The same stratum is distinctly seen on the banks of the Lochhead river. By an artificial embankment, a considerable addition might be made to the arable lands of Ballaghreamhragan, and Clachbreck, the properties of Mr Campbell of Ormsary and Mr Campbell of Kilberry respectively. There are several islets in the loch and on the coast off the point of Knap,—Ellan-fada, already mentioned, Ellan-na-muick, and Lea-Ellan. Close to the point of Knap there is a rock, on which the M'Millan's charter to the lands of Knap is said to have been engraved in Celtic characters. Of this no trace now remains, nor do the M'Millans possess any part of the lands of Knap. To the south-west of the point of Knap, there is a dangerous sunk rock called Bow-Knap, the top of which is seen at low-water during spring-tides. Near the coast, on the north-west side, is Ellan-na-leek. All these are the property of Duncan Campbell, Esq. of Ross. There are also Ellan-more, Ellan-na-gambna, and Core-Ellan, the property of Neil Malcolm, Esq. of Poltalloch. All these islands are famed for the quality of the beef and mutton produced by them. In this loch, a great variety of fish is caught, viz. salmon, trout, haddock, whiting, sethe, ling, skate, turbot, halibut, flounders, sole, &c. The John Dory is occasionally caught in it. Formerly herrings regularly frequented the loch, but, for some years past, they have mostly deserted it. When they do appear,

they remain but a very short time, disappointing the hopes of the fishermen. For some seasons, there had been a salmon-fishery at Corie. It was found not to pay, and has been given up. The quality of the salmon was excellent. Mussels are found in great abundance, but are not of a good quality, and are used only for bait. Oysters are found in small quantities. A few cockles, limpets, and spout-fish, are also to be found about the shores of the loch.

*Woods.*—There is a considerable extent of ground under wood, both natural and planted. The plantations consist of larch, Scotch spruce, and silver firs, ash, beech, plane, and willow of many kinds. The natural and indigenous trees are chiefly oak, ash, birch, hazel, and holly, &c. The natural wood is both ornamental and useful,—useful for its timber and bark, and also because of the shelter it affords wintering cattle.

There is a good deal of young plantation put down, which, in process of time, will tend much to beautify the landscape, and increase the value of property. The oldest, largest, and finest trees are to be seen at Achindarroch, Inverneill, and Harmore. The young plantations at Ormsary are very extensive, and (except on the tops of the hills) very thriving. When Mr Campbell completes his plan of continuing them to the shore on the south, and laying down some clumps to the north of the house, Ormsary will be one of the best sheltered and beautiful places of residence to be met with. There is an excellent garden and tasteful shrubbery near the mansion. The old garden, now forming part of the shrubbery, was, in the days of yore, from its productiveness, called the orchard of Caoliside.

*Botany.*—All the principal residences in the parish have their gardens, their flower-plots, and shrubberies, in which may be seen the ordinary flowers and plants, both indigenous and exotic. The rarest plants noticed in the parish are the following, viz.

Nuphar pumila	Cotyledon Umbilicus	Rumex maritimus
Nymphaea alba	Lobelia Dortmanna	Samolus Valerandi
Epipactis ensifolia	Parnassia palustris	Drosera Anglica
Listera Nidus-Avis	Pinguicula Lusitanica	———— rotundifolia
———— cordata	———— vulgaris	Saxifraga stellaris
Corallorhiza innata	Hypericum Androsæmum	Chrysosplenium alternifolium
Habenaria bifolia	———— quadrangulum	———— oppositifolium
Pyrola media	Convolvulus sepium	Alchemilla alpina
Hypericum elodes	Circea lutetiana	———— vulgaris
Anagallis tenella	Lythrum salicaria	Saxifraga azoides
Lycopus Europæus	Aster trifolium	
Jasione montana	Crithmum maritimum	

*Zoology.*—There is nothing remarkable in the zoology of this

parish. Roe deer, hares, and the common sorts of game are found in it. Pheasants have been lately introduced, and are increasing. Immense flocks of widgeons annually visit Lochcaolisport, and remain from the month of October till the month of April. In severe winters, a few swans are seen in the loch, and remain for some time.

*Insects.*—The rarer insects found in the parish are the following, viz.

*Circumdila campestris*  
*Carabus nitens*  
 ——— *glabratus*  
 ——— *avensis*  
 ——— *clathratus*  
*Tachypus Andreae*  
*Nicrophagus humator*

*Geotrupes sylvaticus*  
*Phylopertha horticola*  
*Celasus aurata*  
*Lamia textor*  
*Elater Heloseiceus*  
*Lampyrus noctiluca*  
*Donacia micans*

*Helodes Philandrii*  
*Helops pallidus*  
*Aloptrus trigultatus*  
*Rhagium bifasciatum*  
*Eliosiocampa nustria*  
*Xerene hastata*  
*Ptychopoda marginata, &c.*

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

The district of Knapdale appears to have been originally in possession of two clans, now nearly extinct in that quarter, the MacMillans and the MacNeills.

Professor Skene, in his work on the Highlands of Scotland, states, that the greater part of South Knapdale was possessed by a branch of the clan Gille Mhaoil, where their chief was known by the name of MacMillan of Knap; and though the family is now extinct, many records of their former power are still to be found in the district. One of the towers of that fine ancient edifice, Castle Sween, in North Knapdale, bears the name of MacMillan's Tower; and there is a stone cross in the old churchyard of Kilmory Knap, upwards of twelve feet high, richly sculptured, which has upon one side the representation of a Highland chief engaged in hunting the deer, with the following inscription in ancient Saxon characters underneath the figure: "Hæc est Cruz Alexandre MacMillan."

In later times, the Campbells had possession of the principal parts of Knapdale, and were chiefly retainers of the family of Argyle.

*Land-owners.*—The land-owners of the parish are, Duncan Campbell, Esq. of Inverneill and Knap; Alexander Campbell, Esq. of Achindarroch; John Graham Campbell, Esq. of Shirvain; William A. Campbell, Esq. of Ormsary; John Campbell, Esq. of Stonefield; Lachlan M'Neill Campbell, Esq. of Kintarbert and Drimdrissaig; John Campbell, Esq. of Kilberry; William Campbell, Esq. of Dunmore; Neill Malcolm, Esq. of Poltalloch; the heirs of Sir Charles M'Donald Lockhart of Largie; William

Furlong, Esq. of Erines. Three of these, viz. Alexander Campbell, Esq. of Achindarroch, William A. Campbell, Esq. of Ormsary, and William Furlong, Esq. of Erines, are resident, and occupy plain substantial mansions. The house of Achindarroch is situated on the banks of the Crinan Canal; the grounds about it have been tastefully laid out by John MacNeill, Esq. of Oakfield, the former proprietor; and we have no doubt the beauty of the place will be greatly enhanced under the skilful management of the present public spirited proprietor. There are good substantial mansions on the properties of Inverneill, Erines, Ormsary, and Drimdrissaig. Mr Campbell of Stonefield has built a large and elegant house at Barmore in this parish.

*Parochial Registers.*—Registers of births and marriages have been kept in the parish since 1771; though entries appear to have been correctly made, the book containing the registrations has not been well taken care of, some of the leaves having been lost, and the whole much sullied. Since the appointment of the present incumbent in 1806, every attention has been paid to them.

*Antiquities.*—At one time, there were the remains of seven ancient chapels to be found in this parish; now there are but three to be seen, one in Ellan-more-vic-O'Charmaig, one at Kilmory Knap, and one at Cove. The chapel in Ellanmore was built by MacO'Charmaig, an ancient proprietor of this island; it is arched over and covered with flags, and, notwithstanding its antiquity, is in a wonderful state of preservation. Within the chapel in a recess in the wall, is a stone coffin, in which the remains of the priests are said to have been deposited. The figure of a naked man is cut on the lid of the coffin; the coffin, also, for ages, served the saint as a treasury, and this, perhaps, might have been the purpose for which it was at first intended. Till of late, not a stranger set foot on the island, who did not conciliate the favour of the saint, by dropping a small coin into a chink between the lid of the coffin and its side. On an eminence not far off, is a pedestal, with a cross and the figure of a naked man; and near to the cross is a cave, which, as tradition says, at one time produced wonderful effects upon such as had the hardihood to enter it. It seems now to have lost its wonderful properties, as people seem to go into it, without dreading any fatal consequences. Saint Cormaig also founded the church of Kilvie O'Charmaig, the mother church of the two Knapdales; and after a life spent in acts of piety and devotion, he was buried in his native island. His tomb,



and 600. That of the district attached to the mission of Tarbert might be from 600 to 700 souls.

The Gaelic is the language generally spoken throughout the parish. Most of the young people understand the English, as greater pains are taken with them in school, and as it is now more generally used than formerly. Many of the youth are in the practice of resorting to the low country for service. Divine service is always conducted in English and Gaelic.

#### IV.—INDUSTRY.

As the soil of this parish is not very productive, and as the climate is cold and variable from its nearness to the Atlantic Ocean, the occupiers of land find it more convenient and profitable, and less expensive, to convert some of their inferior arable to sheep walks, and pasture for black-cattle; and consequently the number of persons employed in agriculture is comparatively small. The possessions are generally so small, that the tenants and their families are able to perform all the labour requisite, without the necessity of engaging servants or labourers to assist them. The black-cattle are of the West Highland breed, and in the larger stocks are of the best quality. At the cattle shows in the district of Argyle, prizes have been frequently awarded to proprietors and tenants connected with this parish. The sheep are of the black-faced kind, which are found to suit the climate and rough pasture of this parish, better than the Cheviot or any other breed, and the store-masters pay particular attention to improving their stocks.

The crops usually cultivated are, oats, bear or barley, pease, beans, turnip, and potatoes. Clover and rye-grass are sown with barley and oats after potatoes. The culture of potatoes is well understood, and much attended to. It was found impossible to obtain such returns of the quantities sown or planted, as could be of any use in a statistical point of view. The returns are, oats, 3; bear or barley, 6; potatoes, 10; in a few instances they have been equal to 20. A considerable quantity of this valuable root is annually exported, from the price of which the tenants pay a part of their rents. In winter, there are great quantities of tangle cast ashore all along the coast of Lochcaolisport, which is carefully collected for land intended for potatoes and bear.

There are belonging to the parish between forty and fifty boats, employed in the herring fishery on Lochfine. Each boat is manned by three of a crew, and may be worth, nets and all, about L. 60 or L. 70 each. Some of the new boats, which are partially

decked, and larger than the old ones, cost L. 120 Sterling before they are fully equipped with masts, sails, anchors, nets, and cordage. In favourable fishing seasons, they make at an average L. 70 Sterling; but, from their improvident habits, and occasional failures in the fishings, and expense of keeping their boats and tackling in repair, the fishermen are generally very poor. In many instances, they are very indolent; and when the fishing fails they are quite unfit and disinclined to engage in any other kind of labour.

*Rent.*—The average rent of land per acre may be stated at 1s. The average rate of grazing a cow per year may be estimated at L. 2, and of a sheep, 4s. on the hill pasture. The average rent per acre may be thought very low, but it will be recollected that the proportion of moor pasture in this parish is much greater than in any of the surrounding parishes; at the low rate of 1s. per acre, the parish would yield a rental of L. 5371 Sterling or thereby.

*Dwelling-houses of Tenants.*—On some of the larger properties, the houses of the tenantry have been much improved, and substantial farm-steadings erected for them. At Lochhead, the property of Mr Campbell of Shirvain, there is an excellent dwelling-house, with a new and complete set of slated offices, and a thrashing-mill, worked by water (the only one in the parish). At Ballyheamhragan, the property of Mr Campbell of Ormsary, there is a slated dwelling-house and offices, built by the proprietor. He and Mr Campbell of Kintarbert have built several comfortable cottages, which have separate sleeping apartments; an accommodation which the old cot houses do not afford. It is a vast improvement, and conduces to the health, comfort, delicacy, and morals of the people. It is hoped that this example will be followed.

#### V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

*Crinan Canal.*\*—The Crinan Canal was undertaken and commenced under the auspices of John Duke of Argyle, (in which, I think, Breadalbane acquiesced,) who obtained reports, surveys, and estimates from the late Sir John Rennie, civil-engineer, favourable to the execution of the work, in connection with nautical reports from Captain Joseph Huddart; the result of which was the formation of a Company under an Act passed in 1793, authorizing the formation of the canal, and which accordingly was commenced that year.

\* This part of the Account furnished by William Thomson, Esq. Ardriassaig.

The course of the canal from where it unites with the sea in the Lochgilp branch of Lochfine, passes for about two and a-half miles about due north, for the most part along the shore of South Knapdale on Lochgilp, and from thence it continues to skirt the parish in a north-west direction for two and a half miles farther, passing through the vale of Dail, which forms the summit level of the canal; and where it forms the march between South Knapdale and Glassary parish, the remaining four miles of the canal passes along, and for the most part forms the north boundary of North Knapdale along the shore of Inner Loch Crinan, till it enters the sea at Crinan. The whole extent is nine miles. The lochs are fifteen in number, eight of eight feet rise, ascending from Lochgilp to the summit of the canal, and seven on the west side of the summit of nine feet rise, falling down to Loch Crinan. The two lochs at the Crinan entrance are 108 feet long by 27 feet wide, all the others are 96 feet long by 24 feet wide, the increased dimensions of the former being with the view of admitting vessels to a projected graving dock never carried into effect. Depth of water in the canal is only required and maintained at 10 feet, but 12 feet might be carried.

The canal is principally supplied with water by two small reservoirs, of about six acres each, in the parish of North Knapdale, and by six principal reservoirs, all marching between the parishes of North and South Knapdale—varying in depth from eight to twenty-five feet, and in extent from fifteen to forty-five acres each; and the whole so arranged by natural and artificial means, that the water is directed to waste from the one to the other, until all are full, and ultimately to send the overplus water to Loch-Sween in the Sound of Jura, which formerly found its way to Lochfine and Loch Crinan. The rise and fall of tide at Ardrissaig is eight to nine feet during neaps, and from ten to twelve feet during springs. At Crinan, the rise and fall during neap-tides is only four to six feet, and during springs, six to eight feet. The level of high water at Crinan is three to four feet higher than the level of high water at Ardrissaig. High water at Ardrissaig at full and change of the moon takes place at twelve noon, and at Crinan four hours later.

The more immediate object of the Crinan Canal was to enable the coasting and fishing trade of the West Highlands and the Clyde to avoid the dangerous and circuitous route by the Mull of Kintyre, in their mutual intercourse; a matter of no small importance, not only as regards the preservation of life and property, but

in facilitating the intercourse between a manufacturing and mercantile community, with a great extent of isolated coast and country in the West Highlands, much to their mutual benefit. Had the execution of the canal been limited to these views, it would not only have realized all that at the time ought to have been anticipated from it, but in all probability would have produced at least some part of that pecuniary benefit to the subscribers, to which they were entitled; but in place of limiting the dimensions and consequent expense of the canal to the above legitimate object, it entered into the speculation of a number of those who embarked in it, to form the canal sufficiently capacious, to admit the Baltic and West India trade,—a view that was begun to be acted on, and subsequently departed from, but in a degree that, while it produced a canal inadequate to the enlarged view, a canal was at same time produced, larger than necessary for the local and more legitimate objects of the undertaking, and which, from the imperfect or incomplete execution of some parts, could not be taken full advantage of, even had the trade required it; and this consequently led to an expense which has burdened and embarrassed the canal ever since, an embarrassment, no doubt, much increased by natural difficulties in the execution of the work, leaving nothing to the subscribers but the merit of conferring an important public benefit at their individual and private expense.

The stock of the Company was intended to consist of 2400 shares of L. 50 each, creating a stock of L. 120,000, which was subscribed for to the extent of 1963 shares, equal L. 108,150; but ultimately, from the withdrawal and forfeiture of shares, they settled down to a capital of L. 92,550, in 1851 shares of L. 50 each, a great part of which were obtained within the county and other places in the west of Scotland, and the remainder were filled up from England. Many of the former may be considered to have derived some benefit in return for their subscriptions in the improved value of property adjacent to, and to the westward of the canal; but to all others their subscriptions have produced nothing. After experiencing difficulties from natural causes impeding and increasing the expense of the work so as to lead to pecuniary difficulties, which probably again affected the due and proper execution of the work, the canal was opened for the passage of vessels, incomplete as it then was, in the month of July 1801, to effect which a loan was obtained in 1799 from the Barons of Exchequer in Scotland, of L.25,000, on an assignment of the tolls

of the canal in security. And in the same year in which it was opened (1801,) a farther loan of L.9810 was raised among a number of the original subscribers on transferable securities, bearing interest at the rate of five per cent. per annum, on none of which has the interest been paid or the capital liquidated.

In January 1805, an accident occurred creating an interruption to the canal, and leading to an expense in repair, by the pressure of water in the canal blowing up a part of the canal embankment passing through a moss on the estate of Oakfield, which led to an application to Government for a further loan of L. 25,000; which was obtained from the Exchequer in England that same year, and was expended in repairing this damage, or rather in altering the course of the canal for about a quarter of a mile into firmer grounds,—forming a freestone pier at Ardrissaig, the eastern entrance to the canal,—strengthening and otherwise securing an embankment at Bellanach Bay, in the west tract of the canal, which, from the soft, silty foundation on which it is formed, had greatly subsided,—securing an increased supply of water with which the canal had previously been very inadequately supplied,—and on other improvements which the work stood in need of. In January 1811, another serious accident occurred by the breaking down of the embankment of a recently formed reservoir, which occasioned serious damage to the lock-gates, embankments, and other works on the canal adjoining the summit level, which was flooded and injured to a great extent, and for the repair of which L. 5000 was applied for and obtained from government; but this proving inadequate, and all other sources having failed, a credit of L.2000 to L.3000 was obtained from bankers in Glasgow, on the private security of the Duke of Argyle and his late brother, who, with the disinterested liberality inherent in that noble family, came forward on this occasion to secure the benefit of the former expenditure to the public, and which loan, it is inferred, has been paid by and remains a debt due to the Argyle family.

The above presents a view of the state and pecuniary circumstances of the Crinan Canal, down to 1814, when the Company was burdened with a debt of L.67,810, exclusive of interest. It was under these circumstances that the writer's connection with the canal in 1814 took place; and shortly after, he took an opportunity to draw up a Report for the governor and directors, which detailed the state of the canal, and pointed out the repairs and improvements that appeared to be required to render it more secure, effi-

cient, and better adapted to the trade than it had hitherto proved. This led to a renewed application to Government for farther aid, and to an Act in 1816, empowering the Barons of Exchequer in Scotland to advance the sum of L.19,300, to repair and improve the state of the canal; but which sum Government saw proper to direct to be expended, under the management of the Commissioners for the Caledonian Canal. Previous to the expenditure of this sum, means were, in 1815 and 1816, adopted to renew the embankment of Glen Clachaig, which had occasioned the damage in 1811, and to enlarge other reservoir embankments, so as to increase the supply of water, previously very inadequate. The expenditure of the grant of L.19,300 took place in 1817, under the direction of the late Thomas Telford, Esq. civil-engineer, principally by contract; and included an extensive repair and renewal of lock-gates, cutting down acute rocky bends, and straightening portions of the banks, new bridges of cast iron, with a breakwater to enlarge and increase the shelter and extent of harbour at Ardrissaig, &c. Afterwards, by order of the Treasury, the pecuniary affairs of the canal were placed under control of the Barons of Exchequer at Edinburgh, to whom all accounts and vouchers are statedly forwarded,—while the management of the canal is by the same authority confided to the Commissioners for the Caledonian Canal, to whom stated monthly and all other reports are made and instructions received, regarding the work and the management of the canal.

After the above repair, the annual revenue of the canal has been sufficient for its support, and for improvements and renewal of works; still the canal requires and admits of improvement, which, under the pecuniary circumstances in which it is seen to be placed, can only be effected at the public expense. The average annual outlay on the canal for ten years preceding 1839, in salaries and wages of officers, lock-keepers, and others, and in furnishings and labour for ordinary repairs, is L.1254, 12s. 1d.; and for extraordinary works, being improvements and important renewals of decayed works, L.570, 0s. 6d.; besides which, upwards of L.2000 of previous reserved revenue was expended in extraordinary repairs in 1835, and upwards of L.1000 in 1837 for a new steam-boat pier and slip in the harbour of Ardrissaig.

The canal was originally formed of larger dimensions than the trade which could be reasonably expected to take advantage of it, required; but the change which has since taken place in the

coasting trade of the country by the introduction of steam navigation, renders it now much too small; and when the trade between Clyde and the north-east of Scotland through the Caledonian Canal, which passes through the Crinan Canal, is viewed in connection with the trade of the Crinan Canal between Clyde and the extensive range of coast and country, islands, &c. of the West Highlands, an enlargement of the Crinan Canal on public grounds is certainly much called for. The number of passengers conveyed through the Crinan Canal by steam-packets has increased from 2400 in 1820, to 21,406 in 1837, notwithstanding the impediments which stand in the way of this trade, and which have been partially removed during the past season, by the introduction of a passage-boat on the canal, which greatly promotes the speed of the passage between Greenock and Oban, and Inverness.

The local benefit which has accrued from this canal is also deserving of notice. At the harbour of Ardrissaig, a village of respectable appearance, and containing a population of about 400, has grown up since the canal commenced; the resident feuars and other inhabitants of which, attracted by the canal and the harbour, are supported principally by the Lochfine herring fishing, and by the general resort of travellers by steam-packets frequenting this harbour from the Clyde. During the fishing season, there are at times upwards of 100 fishing-boats frequenting the harbour, and in summer there are usually two, sometimes three steam-boats daily from Glasgow, conveying goods and passengers to and from the adjacent country, with a daily boat, and frequently two during winter. The number of passengers who are landed and shipped at Ardrissaig throughout the year, exclusive of those passing through the canal, is estimated from pretty correct data to be at present about 24,000; and the cattle, sheep; and lambs shipped here are also considerable. Both Ardrissaig and Lochgilphead owe their rise and present circumstances to the fostering care and interest which John M'Neill, Esq., late of Oakfield, with his late father (whose property these villages were) took in promoting the interests of individuals, and of the communities of these places.

The average annual amount of revenue derived from the Crinan Canal from 1st January 1802, to 31st December 1816, inclusive, is L.999, 11s. 4½d.; and from 1st January 1818, to 31st December 1838, inclusive, L.1770, 17s. 1½d.; and as it may be inte-

resting to observe the number and tonnage, &c. of vessels passing, and the sources of revenue derived from the canal, there is subjoined a statement exhibiting these particulars on an average of seventeen years, down to 31st December 1838.

From the year 1822 to the year 1838, both inclusive, seventeen years: number of boats, 340; vessels, 1006; tonnage, 33,545.

Dues from slates,	L.269	12	11½
coals,	216	9	6½
fishing trade,	195	16	1½
boats,	162	12	10
general goods,	170	11	11½
kelp,	36	4	4
barks,	21	10	1
steam-boats,	399	19	1
vessels in ballast,	142	7	7
harbour and wharf,	111	0	11
Rents,	37	17	5
Total,	L.1764	2	10

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The ancient name of the parishes of North and South Knapdale when united, was Kilvicocharmaig. They were disjoined about the year 1730. By the deed of disjunction the minister of this parish was appointed to preach alternately at Achoish and Inverneill, and every sixth Sunday at Tarbert. About the year 1775, a mission was established at Tarbert by the Committee for the management of the Royal Bounty, comprehending the south part of South Knapdale, and the north part of the parish of Kilcalmonell. A church was then built at Tarbert, and a missionary appointed to preach there every Sabbath. Thus (except during vacancies) the minister of South Knapdale was relieved from preaching at that station. But in terms of the deed of disjunction, he continued to officiate alternately at Inverneill and Achoish until the year 1829, when, in consequence of the annexation of the north part of the parish to the *quoad sacra* parish of Lochgilphead, and the smallness of the congregation that was to attend public worship at Inverneill, he was directed and authorized by the Presbytery to preach there every third Sabbath, and at Achoish two Sabbaths successively.

There are two churches in the parish, the one at Achoish near the manse, the other at Inverneill, six miles distant. The road between the two churches is excessively hilly, ill lined, and not kept in good repair. Both churches were built about the same time, in the year 1775. A few years ago, they were seated, and are in tolerable repair. Including the communion table seats, they contain 250 sitters each. In the church at Achoish, there are no

galleries. A gallery in the west end would be a great accommodation, for though on ordinary occasions there is sufficient room for the congregation, yet in summer the church is sometimes crowded, and the hearers feel uncomfortable. The expense of erecting a gallery would be but trifling.

In the church of Inverneill, there is room enough and to spare. In the year 1828, a government church was built at Lochgilphead, and a district of this parish including Ardrissaig, and the farms to the north of it, were annexed to that *quoad sacra* parish. The inhabitants of that district now attend public worship at Lochgilphead. There are about thirty families within a reasonable distance of Inverneill. On the west side of Inverneill hill, there are about 180 communicants, and on the east side attached to Inverneill district, about 20. Within that section of the parish annexed to the mission of Tarbert, there are about 120 communicants.

The manse, offices, and garden wall were built in the year 1808, soon after the admission of the present incumbent. Having been built by contract, and no person appointed to superintend the work while in progress, the walls of the manse were found to admit damp during the winter season; they have lately undergone a repair; but the evil has not been remedied. The minister is authorized by the heritors to give any partial repair that may be occasionally required for the manse, offices, and churches.

The glebe is about fourteen acres in extent. By draining and clearing away brushwood, nearly the whole is rendered arable. The soil is partly mossy and partly sandy. During the storms of winter, it is liable to be flooded by the high tides, and the overflowing of the river, which forms the southern boundary. By these inundations, the parts that had been under green crops (potatoes or turnips) the preceding season are much injured. To make the stipend L.150, with L.8, 6s. 8d. Sterling for communion elements, the minister draws L.13, 6s. 10d. Sterling from Exchequer. The crown is patron, and the incumbents who have officiated in the parish since its disjunction from North Knapdale, have been, 1. Mr Patrick Pollock; 2. Mr Hugh Campbell; 3. Mr Daniel Hyndman; 4. Mr Duncan Rankin, who was admitted on the 26th November 1806; 5. Mr Alexander Mackenzie, the present incumbent.

*Education.*—There are five permanent schools in the parish, four of which are parochial, and one on the General Assembly's Scheme. Besides these, there are occasionally, during the winter

season, some side schools taught by young men who are both paid and maintained by the parents of such children as may attend them. At present, there are about 300 attending the different schools. The branches taught are, English and Gaelic, reading, writing, arithmetic, and book-keeping. At two of the schools, Latin, geography, and navigation are taught. At all the schools the Scriptures are daily read, and the children are taught to translate portions of them from Gaelic to English, and *vice versa*. They are also taught the Shorter Catechism.

As the maximum salary is allowed and divided among the four parochial teachers, the heritors do not consider themselves bound to provide either dwelling-house or school-house for any of them. Two of the teachers have no accommodation whatever. Of the other two, one has a school-house; and for his dwelling-house and cow's grass, and small patch of ground which yields him potatoes and meal for his family, and fodder for his cow, he pays a moderate rent. The other has a school-house; but the dwelling-house he occupies he was obliged to build at his own expense.

The teacher employed by the General Assembly's Committee has a good dwelling-house, school-house, croft, and cow's grass, barn and byre provided for him by Mrs Campbell of Ormsary,—a lady who pays the greatest attention to the temporal and spiritual wants of the poor.

*Poor and Parochial Funds.*—The average number of poor on the roll is about 20. This is exclusive of those residing in the district of the parish annexed *quoad sacra* to Lochgilphead. The annual amount of contributions for their relief is from L.20 to L.25 Sterling, arising from collections in the church, and fines for delinquencies. This sum, minus salaries for session, presbytery, and synod clerks, is divided among the poor twice a year. One distribution is made annually after the communion, and the other about the beginning of January. The funeral expenses of the poor are paid out of this fund; occasional aid is afforded to such as from bad health or any other misfortune may stand in need of relief, though they are not on the roll. From the failure of the potato crop in 1837, and scarcity of 1839, the heritors voluntarily contributed in each of these years L.25 for the relief of the poor.

*Roads.*—The road from Daill, the north-eastern extremity of the parish, to Bernellan, on the south, is excellent, and always kept in the best possible state of repair. This road for the distance of ten or twelve miles is called the *Lliabh Gaoid* road, from its

leading along the eastern base of the range of hills which occupies the space between Lochfane and Lochcaolisport, and is known by the name of the forest, or bill of Lliabh Gaoil. Before the opening of this road, the district of Kintyre was quite insulated from the rest of Argyleshire. The only path by which any communication between the two places could be maintained, was almost quite impassable. It ran along hills and dales, which were intersected by water courses without any bridges. In summer, these waters were fordable, but in winter the attempt to cross them was both difficult and dangerous.

The Lliabh Gaoil road, which was so useful before the introduction of steam, and conferred such a boon on the country generally, and on Kintyre particularly, was obtained through the instrumentality of Sheriff Campbell, one of the ancestors of the present family of Stonefield. The line was surveyed by an English engineer. It is said that he attempted to travel over the ground; but the rocks were so precipitous, the ferns so gigantic, the Englishman so unwieldy, and so unaccustomed to travel such rough grounds, that, after much tumbling and scrambling, he was obliged to betake himself to his boat, and finish his survey by rowing along the shore. On arriving at Barmore House, the residence of Sheriff Campbell, he remarked to the Sheriff, that it was quite a hopeless thing to attempt opening a road along the projected line, that it was an undertaking fit for the Empress Catherine of Russia, and not fit for private individuals. The Sheriff ordered his clerk or treasurer to pay the English surveyor for his trouble, and, with that determination and resolution which so much characterized that gentleman, the Sheriff set about the mighty task of opening the Lliabh Gaoil road, and persevered till it was finished. It is one of the best lined roads in the county; and, whether for the purpose of pleasure or of utility, it is one of the most interesting roads imaginable. Since the introduction of steam, it is now much less frequented than formerly; but still, it is extremely serviceable, as forming the only inland channel of communication between the peninsula of Kintyre and the other parts of Argyleshire.

*Market Town.*—There are no market-towns in the parish. At Ardrissaig, the eastern entrance of the Crinan Canal, there is a village of considerable size. The village of Tarbert is partly situated within the parish. In this village, the inhabitants of the south end of the parish can be supplied with such articles as they

require to purchase. Here, also, they find a ready market for any thing they have to dispose of, partly to supply the wants of the villagers, and partly for exportation to Glasgow. It is to Lochgilphead, a large village in the parish of Kilmichael Glassary, that the inhabitants of the north end of the parish repair for disposing of fowls, eggs, butter, &c., and for purchasing tea, sugar, dye stuffs, &c.

*Means of Communication.*—In summer, no less than three steam-vessels arrive and depart daily to and from Glasgow and the intermediate ports on the Clyde. During winter, there is a daily arrival and departure of at least one steamer. The communication with Oban, Fort-William, and Inverness, as well as Tobermory, Strontian, and the Isle of Skye; also from West Lochtarbert to Jura and Islay, is regular, cheap, and convenient.

To and from Lochgilphead, the post-town nearest to the north and west districts of the parish, the post arrives and departs daily to and from Inverary. Shortly after the arrival of the mail from Inverary at Lochgilphead, it was, till lately, despatched by land to Tarbert, the post-town most convenient for the inhabitants of the south end of the parish. Now, the mail is forwarded by steam from Ardrissaig to Tarbert, and *vice versa*. Thus, a link is struck out of the chain of communication by land,—a circumstance which occasions much inconvenience to many in the parish, not only to those near the line of road from Ardrissaig to Tarbert, but also to all residing at the western side of the parish, nor is there any saving to the revenue. It is expected, however, that, upon a representation being made to the proper quarter, this anomaly will be remedied, and that the mail will be forwarded as formerly by land, between the offices of Tarbert and Lochgilphead, and *vice versa*.

*Inns.*—On the western side of this parish, along Lochcaolisport, there is but one public-house, which is all that is necessary. On the eastern side, at Ardrissaig, and that part of the mission of Tarbert connected with this parish, the number is much greater.

*Fuel.*—The fuel chiefly used is peat. On the eastern side of the parish, coals are very generally used. They are procured from Glasgow and Ardrossan, and the general price is about 14s. per ton.

*Savings Bank.*—By the exertions of Mr Campbell of Achindarroch, Sir John P. Orde of Kilmory, and other gentlemen connected with the district, a Savings bank was established at

Lochgilthead in August last, for the benefit of that village and country adjacent. Deposits to the amount of several hundred pounds have already been made, but it is much to be regretted that those for whom the bank was intended, should be so tardy in availing themselves of its provisions and advantages.

#### MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

Since 1794, the date of the last Statistical Account, the value of lands has increased very much in this parish, owing principally to the high price that is obtained for black-cattle, sheep, and wool. The rental in 1792, was L.1003 Sterling; in 1796, it was L.2395 Sterling; in 1840, it was considerably above L.4000 Sterling. The lands have been much improved during that period by draining, enclosing and clearing away brushwood; but a great deal of land still remains in a state of nature, which is capable of great improvement, and on which capital might be profitably laid out.

The non-residence of heritors is a great bar to the improvement of this parish; of eleven there are at present only three resident heritors.

It would be a great improvement, and an incalculable advantage to the people, to have the church at Inverneill removed to Ardrisraig, and that section of the parish erected into a separate parish, with a suitable endowment; or, if this cannot be speedily obtained, to have it erected into a mission station, and placed under the superintendence of an ordained missionary. The erection of the district of Knap, and the portion of the parish of North Knapdale thereunto contiguous, into a parish, with the suitable machinery, would also be a most desirable object. It is much to be regretted that the lower orders enjoy the comforts of life in so scanty a measure. Pauperism is daily increasing. This may be ascribed in a great degree to early and imprudent marriages. Such marriages are greatly encouraged by the practice of giving a house, and the planting of a couple of barrels of potatoes, free of any pecuniary rent, but exacting services from the cottar, every day, and at any season of the year when it may be required. The system of subsetting land is not yet discontinued.

*Drawn up 1840.*