

UNITED PARISHES OF
KILCHRENAN AND DALAVICH.

PRESBYTERY OF LORN, SYNOD OF ARGYLE.

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I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Names.—THE names Kilchrenan and Dalavich are of Celtic etymology; the former signifying “the burying-place of Chrenan,” the tutelary saint of the parish, according to ancient tradition; the latter signifying “the field of Avich,” in allusion to a tract of level ground lying in the vicinity of a river called the Avich, and near one extremity of which flat the parish church is situated.

The parish is entirely inland, touching in no point upon the sea. It stretches along both sides of the well-known lake Loch-awe, which, with its numerous creeks and wooded islands, together with the mountain scenery around it, forms a landscape which probably exhibits as rich a combination of beauty and grandeur as is to be met with in the Highlands of Scotland. The land rises by a gradual ascent on the east side of the lake, four miles to the summit of a range of hills, called the Muir of Leckan; and on the west side by a similar ascent, four miles to the summit of another range, called the Mid-Muir. The Muir of Leckan is 24 miles in length, and lies in the division of Argyle. The Mid-Muir, also 24 miles long, lies in the

district of Lorn. The length of the parish is 15 miles, and the medium breadth 8.

The surface is much diversified with heights and hollows, intersected by numerous streams, all flowing into Lochawe. Near the shore of the lake, there is good natural pasture, much valuable wood, and some improvable moss.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Antiquities.—Opposite to, and in sight of, the parish church of Dalavich, lies the beautiful island of Inish-Channel, on which stands a majestic ruin of great antiquity, covered over with ivy, and which was for several centuries the chief residence of the family of Argyle. Near Inish-Channel lies Inish-errich. In this isle are the ruins of a chapel, together with an ancient burying-ground, still used as such. Not far from this is Eilean 'n tagart or Priest's Isle, so called from having been the residence of the priest. Lochavich, anciently called Lochluina, and which discharges itself into Lochawe by the stream or water of Avich already noticed, is a beautiful sheet of water, of a triangular form, about eight miles in circumference, full of trout, having one castle and several islands, the resort of gulls, cranes, water-eagles, and wild-ducks. Near this lake lay the scene of an ancient Celtic poem, translated by Dr Smith of Campbeltown, called Cathluina, or the conflict of Luina; and in the lake is an island, the scene of another poem, called Laoi Fraoich, or the Death of Fraoch. Many places in this neighbourhood are still called after the names of some of Ossian's heroes.

Parochial Registers.—The session records or minute books are from 1707 to 1731, and from 1755 to 1843. Register of births, from 1710 to 1723, and from 1751 to 1843. Registers of marriages, from 1707 to 1723, and from 1755 to 1843. Poor's roll book, from 1803 to 1843. Cash book, from 1788 to 1843. They have all been regularly kept since 1803.

Principal Land-owners.—These, with their valuations, are as follows :

The Marquis of Breadalbane,	L 51 7 6
Neill Malcolm, Esq. of Poltalloch,	73 2 9
Robert Campbell, Esq. of Sonachan,	25 17 11
Alexander Campbell, Esq. of Monzie,	15 5 0
N. B. The whole valued rent of both parishes,	230 13 9

Mansion Houses.—These are, Eridine House, the seat of Malcolm of Poltalloch; and Sonachan House, the seat of Campbell of Sonachan.

III.—POPULATION.

Amount of population in 1801,	.	1052
1811,	.	1098
1821,	.	1071
1831,	.	1096
1841,	.	894

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—Draining has been lately carried on to some extent.

Manufactures.—There is in the parish a work for the manufacture of pyroligneous acid, in connection with an extensive secret work, at Camlachie, in the suburbs of Glasgow. The work is conducted by Stewart Turnbull, Esq. Bonhill Place, Dumbartonshire, and is erected on the property of Mr Campbell of Sonachan, from whom Mr Turnbull has a lease of the ground on which it stands.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Ecclesiastical State.—The whole population belongs to the Established Church, with the exception of one family, consisting of two or three individuals. Teinds or victual stipend, 131 bolls, 1 firiot, oatmeal. Vicarage or money stipend, L.18, 13s. 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

The glebe is about 10 acres in extent; value, as returned in 1836, to the Religious Instruction Commissioners, about L. 11.

The manse was built in 1802. It is very damp, and falling much into decay.

Education.—There are three parochial schools, and at present two private ones. One additional school is required. Salary of Kilchrenan parochial schoolmaster, L.17, 2s.; salaries of the two Dalavich parochial teachers, L.17, 4s. 0 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.; L.17, 10s. Kilchrenan school-fees, L.3; Dalavich school-fees, L.10; L.7. The Kilchrenan parochial teacher has, besides the above, L.11, 10s., L.10 of which sum is the interest of mortified money for which he is bound to teach as many of the poorest of the children upon the Marquis of Breadalbane's property, as it will educate. The Dalavich parochial teachers have, besides the above, L. 1, 15s.; and L. 1 respectively.

Poor.—The average number of persons receiving parochial aid is 20. They receive on an average 12s. per annum. The average annual amount of contributions for their relief is L. 15, whereof L. 5 is from church collections, and L. 10 is the interest of mortified money.

Inns.—There are three inns. Their effects on the morals of the people are most injurious.

Libraries.—Two parochial libraries, one in each of the united

parishes, and consisting entirely of theological works, were established in 1832. The one consists wholly of Gaelic publications; the other contains both Gaelic and English works.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The practice of illicit distillation prevailed at one time to a very great extent. The present incumbent used every endeavour to put a stop to it, both by private and public remonstrance, and by the exercise of church discipline; but all his efforts proving fruitless, he had no alternative but to represent the matter to the Board of Excise, who effectually put it down in 1829. It has, however, of late, (but to a very slight extent) been resumed. He has always found it not merely to have a most demoralizing effect upon the parishioners—being the fruitful source of drunkenness, Sabbath desecration, and other vices, but to be most ruinous to the temporal interests of those engaged in it.

There are two churches, upwards of nine miles distant from each other, whereof the one was erected about seventy-two years ago, and the other a year thereafter. Both are in good repair, and comfortable. In each there is service every alternate Sabbath. Thus, all of the parishioners, (with the exception of a very small portion of them, who reside about half-way between the two churches, and who, although not legally entitled to sittings in both of them, yet in general avail themselves of the opportunity of attending both, which their local situation affords them,)—are deprived of the means of public worship and religious instruction to an extent which operates most injuriously on their moral and spiritual interests. The present incumbent occasionally preaches in both parishes on the same day; but from the distance, and the state of the roads, can do so but seldom.

The manse is situated between the two churches, being a mile distant from the one, and about eight miles from the other. It stands in a sweet and sequestered spot upon the summit of a slope close by the lake, embosomed in wood, the planting of the father and immediate predecessor of the present minister.

From a list of the parishes of Scotland, arranged under the heads of the presbyteries to which at the time they respectively belonged, appended to Dundas of Philipstown's Abridgement of the Acts of the General Assembly, it appears that the parish of Innishail, which borders upon that of Kilchrenan, was then annexed to it and Dalavich, and included along with them under the pastoral superintendence of one clergyman; and, moreover, that

all the three, with the parish of Clachan Dysart, generally and better known by its modern appellation Glenorchay, lay within the bounds of the Presbytery of Inverary. At what period Inishail was disunited from Kilchrenan and Dalavich, and conjoined with Clachan Dysart into one parochial charge; and at what period all of them were detached from the Presbytery of Inverary, and transferred to that of Lorn, the writer of this has not the means of ascertaining.

April 1843.