

PARISH OF JURA.

PRESBYTERY OF ISLAY AND JURA, SYNOD OF ARGYLE.

THE REV. ALEXANDER KENNEDY, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE original designation of the parish was Kilearnadale and Kilchattan, names of burying-grounds in Jura and Colonsay. It comprehends seven inhabited islands, viz. Jura, Colonsay, Oronsay, Scarba, Lunga, Belnahua, Garvelloch, or Holy Islands. The islands of Gigha and Cara were disjoined from this parish about 100 years ago, and the disjunction of Colonsay and Oronsay was at the same time in contemplation; a committee of the presbytery of Kintyre, including several gentlemen acquainted with the localities, having been appointed to give in a report to the presbytery. This was done, but no ulterior steps were taken towards the disjunction of these islands from the parish of Jura. Jura signifies the island of Red Deer, from *Deera*, a red deer, and *I*, an island. It still retains its ancient character, its deer being inferior in point of size and other qualities to none in Scotland. The number at present on the island is from 400 to 500.

Extent.—The island of Jura from Freughilein below Jura House, to Breacan's Cave in Kenuachdrach, is 36 miles in length; its mean breadth is 7 miles. A sound, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles in breadth, called the Gulf of Corryvrecan, separates it from the island of Scarba, which lies to the north of Jura. Scarba is 3 miles in length, and nearly the same in breadth, containing a surface of about 6 miles square. The island of Lunga, separated from Scarba by an estuary named "Bealach a Chumhainn Ghlais," contains a surface of about three miles square. The Garvelloch, or Holy Islands, are remarkable for having been once the residence of the monks of Iona. The remains of what appears to have been a dwelling-house and chapel, with a cemetery or burying-ground attached, are still extant. Here also is a marble quarry, which had been wrought at some distant period: a specimen of the quality of the marble may be seen at Inverary Castle. These islands are now valuable solely

on account of the excellence of their pasture, and the shelter they afford for sheep and black-cattle. They yield an annual rent of L.150 Sterling to Mr Campbell of Jura.

Belnahua, about one mile in circumference, is almost a barren rock, valuable on account of its slate quarry. It contains a population of 150 souls, and is the property of Mr John Stevenson, Oban.

Topographical Appearances.—The island of Jura presents to the eye a rough and rugged appearance: its conical mountains, called the Paps of Jura, are seen from a great distance, and form conspicuous land-marks to mariners. These mountains are three in number; their names are “Beinn a Chaolais, Beinn an Oir, and Beinn Shianta;” their difference in height above the level of the sea is trifling. Beinn an Oir, considered to be the highest, is about 2700 feet high. The whole population, with but few exceptions, reside on the east side of the island, where considerable agricultural improvements have lately been made, the west side presenting in its whole length a bold, rocky, and rugged aspect. Upon this side of the island, there are at least fifty of the most magnificent caves which can be met with in any part of Scotland, the least of them capable of furnishing comfortable and dry lodging to the traveller.

The largest of these, Uaghlamaich, is, at its opening facing the Atlantic Ocean, 33 feet in height, and contains an area of 1312 square yards; its beautifully arched roof scarcely admits a drop of water. Its floor is level and dry; amid the raging of the highest tempest, scarcely a breath of wind stirs within it. The opening of this splendid cave is about 38 feet above the level of the sea. There are other caves spacious in their dimensions, and comfortable in their accommodation: two of them are called corpachs, *i. e.* places where the inhabitants of Jura and other countries, on their way to Oransay and Iona to bury their dead, were in the habit of depositing the corpses of their friends, until a favourable opportunity of prosecuting their voyage to Iona and Oransay occurred. One of these corpachs is in Rhuintalen, opposite to Colonsay: the other, called the corpach of I Columkill, is several miles to the north-east, along the coast.

The island of Jura has ever been proverbial for the longevity of its inhabitants. Instances are on record of many who attained the advanced age of 100 years, in the full possession of their faculties until the last.



Hydrography.—The number of moor lochs in this island has never been, I believe, ascertained: such of them as the writer has seen, abound with trout of excellent quality and flavour. The streams which issue from these lochs, form, in their progress to the sea, rivers of considerable depth and volume, the whole of them well stocked with trout and salmon. The principal rivers in Jura, are, first, the Knockbreck river, where Mr Campbell of Jura, the proprietor, has established a salmon fishery. The next in point of depth and volume is Avin Lussa, passing through the property of Captain M'Neill, younger of Colonsay, which also abounds with trout and salmon.

Corran river, about two miles from the manse of Jura, takes its rise from the countless clear springs that issue from the conical mountains of Jura. It receives in its progress the streams of Loch an Debe, Loch na Cloiche, &c. and empties itself into the sea below Corran House. In addition to these there is a variety of streams bearing the same character, in reference to trout and salmon: they fall, with the exception of one or two, into the sea on the east side of Jura.

Coryvrechan.—Betwixt the north point of Jura and the island of Scarba is the famous whirlpool of Coryvrechan.* There are also in the neighbourhood many smaller and dangerous whirlpools, and rapid currents. The following account of Coryvrechan is taken from MacCulloch's Highlands and Western Isles.

“The hazards of the Coryvrechan are of the same nature as those of the other narrow channels of the Western Islands, as well

* According to a tradition still believed in the Hebrides, Corryvreachkan, or the Caldron of Breachkan, received its name from a Scandinavian Prince, who, during a visit to Scotland, became enamoured of a Princess of the Isles, and sought her for his bride. Her wily father, dreading the consequences of the connection, but fearful to offend the King of Lochlin, gave his consent to their marriage, on condition that Breachkan should prove his skill and prowess by anchoring his bark for three days and three nights in the whirlpool. Too fond or too proud to shrink from the danger, he proceeded to Lochlin to make preparations for the enterprise. Having consulted the sages of his native land, he was directed to provide himself with three cables, one of hemp, one of wool, and one of woman's hair. The first two were easily procured; and the beauty of his person, his renown as a warrior, and the courtesy of his manners had so endeared him to the damsels of his country, that they cut off their own hair to make the third, on which his safety was ultimately to depend; for the purity of female innocence gave it power to resist even the force of the waves. Thus provided, the Prince set sail from Lochlin and anchored in the gulf. The first day the hempen cable broke; the second day the woollen cable parted. There still remained the gift of the daughters of Lochlin. The third day came; the time had nearly expired; his hopes were high; his triumph was almost achieved; but some frail fair one had contributed her flaxen locks; the last hope failed, and the bark was overwhelmed. The Prince's body was dragged ashore by a faithful dog, and carried to a cave that still bears his name, in which the old men point out a little cairn, where tradition says the body of Breachkan was interred. From that time, as the legend tells, the whirlpool was called Corrivreachkan.

as of the Pentland Firth; and if greater, they may still be avoided, with similar precautions. But as this passage is seldom used by boats, and never by vessels, it has received, in addition to the exaggeration, the further ill character which attends all untried dangers. Had it been as necessary a channel as the Kyle Rich or Hoy Mouth, we should have heard far less of its horrors. Like those of the Mahlström, they shrink before the boldness of a fair examination. The leading cause of the turbulence of the sea here, is the narrowness of this passage, with the constraint thus produced in the tide-wave. To this must be added a pyramidal rock, rising with a rapid acclivity from the bottom, which is about a hundred fathoms deep, to within fifteen of the surface. The Mahlström is indebted for its whirlpools, to a rock precisely similar, at twenty fathoms. The course of the tide-stream is thus diverted, so as to assume numerous intricate directions, as in the Pentland Firth; while a counter-current or eddy being also produced, chiefly on the Scarba side, the return of this into the main stream, produces those gyrations, resembling the wells of Swona and Stroma, which romance has magnified into a whirlpool capable of swallowing ships. One of these appears more conspicuous than the others; but, in smooth water, the whole stream is full of those whirling eddies so common in all similar tide-straits.

“ When there are wind and sea both, and more particularly when the former is opposed to the swell, or to the tide, or to both, the danger then becomes real, as the water then breaks high and short in every direction, and with frightful violence. It is this short, breaking sea which might swallow up a vessel, unless every thing were well secured on deck; not the whirlpools, which only impede the steerage. One vessel only, a foreigner, is remembered to have passed inadvertently through it at an improper time. From the alarm of the crew, she lost steerage, and became unmanageable; but was thrown out into the eddy, and carried away, unharmed, along the Jura shore. I have seen both Hoy Mouth and Coryvrechan in gales of wind of equal violence: and, if I mistake not, the former was fully as terrific an object as the latter. The flood-tide runs through this gulph from the eastward; and though the rapidity cannot be twelve miles in an hour, as it has been computed, it must be very considerable. The violence of the sea is also greatest with the flood, because of the general opposition of the western swell. In neap-tides, there is an hour or more of repose at the change; and, in springs, about half as much.

At those times, and in moderate weather, even small boats may pass through without difficulty."

Geology.—The prevailing rocks belong to the primitive class. The formations are mica-slate and quartz-rock, occasionally traversed by veins of trap or whinstone and quartz.

Zoology.—Game, in all its varieties, abounds in Jura from the stately red deer to the humble snipe. The hills abound with red grouse, ptarmigan, green and grey plover, black-cock, and woodcock, in their season. Hares are numerous; pheasants and coveys of partridges, which have been lately introduced, are occasionally seen. Teal and wild ducks of every kind and name known to the writer, including the large Scotch and eider-duck, frequent our bays and our lakes. There are several flocks of wild-geese which haunt about Loch Tarbert. There are two kinds of eagles, the sea and the golden eagle. Martins, polecats, badgers, and foxes, *et hoc genus omne*, if they ever did exist, are now extinct in this parish. Otters are numerous about the small Isles of Jura and the unfrequented shores of Tarbert.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Land-owners and Heritors.—Colin Campbell, Esq. of Jura, is proprietor of all the island, excepting the property of Ardlussa, in the northern part of the island, which belongs to Captain M'Neill, younger of Colonsay.

Parochial Registers.—The earliest entry in these registers is dated January 1810. Those prior to that date were lost. The poor's funds register bears the same date. From that period they have been regularly kept, with an addition since the year 1825, of an obituary and register of discipline, in which the proceedings of the kirk-session are recorded. The register of births and marriages in Colonsay bears an older date.

Antiquities.—It were an endless task to enumerate the tumuli or cairns which are to be met with in this parish, by each of which "hangs a tale." Stones of immense magnitude, requiring the united efforts of such a number of men as could gather about them, to raise and place them in the perpendicular position in which they are now found, meet the eye, even in the most remote and unfrequented parts of the parish. The greatest number, however, are near the shore, and in the neighbourhood of safe landing places. The account given of them by the inhabitants is, that they are commemorative of feuds and battles between rival clans; but these traditions are often so much at variance with each other,

that, without any written record to guide him, the writer finds the attempt would be fruitless to remove the obscurity in which they are involved.

In digging the foundation of Lagg Inn some years ago, several stone-coffins were discovered, each containing calcined or half-burnt bones. In forming the line of road from Lagg to Feolin Ferry, many urns were met with by the workmen, each of them containing what appeared to be ashes. About fifty years ago, a number of silver coins, of the reign of Charles I., was discovered on the farm of Sannaig in Jura. The value of this hoard, deposited only eighteen inches below the surface, could never be ascertained, the strictest secrecy having been maintained by the fortunate finder, who lost no time in converting it into modern currency. Specimens of these coins may now, or might lately be seen at Jura House.

A few years ago, there was found in a peat moss on the farm of Ardfarnal, (five feet below the surface,) a complete specimen of the Caledonian Club, or *Bacuil*—(*Latine Baculum.*) From its form and shape, it must have been a very formidable weapon, a powerful *argumentum baculinum*, when wielded by an offended Highlander.

The ruins of many chapels are still extant in this island; their names, Kilmorie, Kilchianaig, Kilchattan, and Killearnadale, furnish indications of their having been built at a period, when the saints in the Romish calendar were held in higher repute than they are, at the present time, in the parish of Jura and Colonsay.

III.—POPULATION.

Amount in 1801,	.	2007
1811,	.	1943
1821,	.	2228
1831,	.	2205
1841,	.	2299

The population of this parish is scattered over an immense surface. The people are separated from each other by gulfs, broad ferries, and dangerous estuaries, including the Linne Tharsing, Gulfs of Corivreckan and Bealach a Chumhainn Ghlais, dividing Scarba from the Island of Lunga. It is an amiable feature in the character of the parishioners, that, throughout the length and breadth of a parish of such extent, the minister, in his domiciliary visits, is hailed and welcomed in every family with the utmost cordiality; that his diets of visiting, catechizing, and preaching have been regularly attended; that even in the remotest districts and islands, his appeal on behalf of the moral and religious instruction of their children has been readily responded to, by

the parents themselves, in poor circumstances, hiring teachers for the winter and spring months.

By a census taken in 1835, the island of

Jura contained, males, 598 ; females, 630 ; total, 1228			
Scarba, 25 23 48			
Lunga, 10 14 24			
Belnahua, 77 74 151			
Colonsay and Oronsay, 830			
Garvelloch or Holy Island, 7			
	Total,		2297

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Improvements and Modern Buildings.—Since the publication of the former Statistical Account, much has been done in the way of turning waste and pasture lands to the very best advantage. Considerable sums of money have been expended in making sheep drains in hill and dale, by which means several extensive tracts of land, where nothing but stunted heath, sprits, and underwood was to be seen, now present an improved surface clothed with a verdant covering. Bridges have been constructed, comfortable farmsteadings erected; and throughout the whole extent of the parish, sunk fences with whin, black and hazel thorn hedges, substantial and well built stone dikes, judiciously laid out, now intersect the Island of Jura. Judging from the progress already made, and from the zeal displayed by the principal proprietors in this work, it may not be too much to expect that, in a short time, the yearly value of the lands may be much enhanced, and the landlords amply remunerated for their outlays. Among the recently erected buildings in this parish, may be reckoned the additions made to the mansion-house of Jura,—a complete set of offices and coach-houses, and a splendid mausoleum in the churchyard of Killearnadale, all designed and executed by Mr Burn, architect, of Edinburgh. On the property of Ardlussa in Jura, which belongs to Captain M'Neill, an elegant and comfortable mansion, with offices, has been built by his brother, the Right Hon. Dupcan M'Neill, Lord Advocate of Scotland, in a situation of great beauty, adorned by banks of natural wood, extending several miles, and by recent plantations of forest trees. A great deal has been done by the proprietor towards improving the property, not only at Ardlussa House, but by a large extent of hill-draining.

Live-Stock.—Horses, though generally small in size, are exceedingly hardy and active. The breed of black cattle, the staple commodity of the country, is considered to be superior: it is reared solely for the market, at which it meets a ready sale; much attention is therefore paid by landlord and tenant to the

improvement of it, the payment of their rents being made to depend upon the produce of their cattle; but few of the tenants send corn to the mill, the produce of their harvest, (bear and potatoes excepted,) being for the most part expended upon their stock, during the months of winter and spring. There are from 1000 to 1200 head of black-cattle annually sold out of the Island of Jura, one-half of these by the tenants; average value, L. 5 Sterling. The other half consists of four-year-old stots and heifers, sold by Mr Campbell of Jura, and Captain M'Neill, younger of Colonsay; average value at the present prices, L. 10 Sterling. Previous to the year 1800, the Island of Jura was stocked with the small white-faced Highland breed of sheep, which was highly valued on account of the flavour of the mutton, and the superior quality of the wool; at that time, the black-faced breed was introduced, which in its turn is likely to give place to Cheviots, now prospering in the extensive tenement of Tarbert.

The quantity of grain annually sown in Jura may fluctuate between 400 and 500 bolls of oats, and from 80 to 100 bolls of bear.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Harbours.—There are two good road steads in the Island of Jura. *Daillghall* in Jura, or Lowlandman's Bay, is a capacious basin, two and a-half miles in circumference; its depth of water from five to six fathoms; its entrance, which is at the south end, is in breadth above 570 yards. The other harbour in Jura is formed by four islands, and has thence obtained the appellation of Small Isles Harbour; it is considered safe and convenient; depth of water from four to six fathoms; it is furnished with a substantial quay. Besides these, there are several inferior road-steads.

Villages.—Miltown, including Craighouse, is the only place possessing the character of a village in Jura. There is a corn-mill and smithy. Weavers, shoemakers, and other tradesmen, have of late years taken up their abode in it. Craighouse inn was rebuilt and enlarged about nine years ago; and a distillery, capable of producing 720 gallons of whisky per week, was erected by Mr Campbell of Jura about the same time.

Ecclesiastical State.—There are two parish churches, one in Jura and the other in Colonsay. The parish church of Jura, built about sixty-three years ago, was at first roofed in, furnished with doors and windows, seated in part, but never fully finished. For many years during the writer's incumbency, it was allowed to fall into a miserable state of disrepair. It is now otherwise, con-

siderable sums of money having been expended upon it in the course of the last year. A spacious vestry, a gallery and comfortable apartment for the accommodation of the Jura family, were furnished, chiefly at the expense of Mr Campbell of Jura. The passages were paved with freestone slabs from the quarry of Airdantallin near Oban. The interior of the church in Jura now exhibits such an air of comfort and elegance, as is surpassed by no other in the islands of Argyle. The sittings in both churches are free.

A new manse and office-houses, with garden wall, were built last year, and are now occupied by the minister.

The extent of the glebe is about nine acres Scotch measure. The soil, though poor, is not unproductive, the crops being forced by means of enormous quantities of sea-ware annually heaped upon it. Calculating by the average value of land in its neighbourhood, its value may be stated at L.10 per annum.

The stipend is L.200, burdened with the payment of L.50. yearly for an assistant in the island of Colonsay. The teinds are understood to be exhausted. The stipends are paid in money,—L.69 by the Exchequer, the remainder by the heritors. Divine service in the church is generally well attended, many coming from distances of ten, twelve, and sixteen miles.

Education.—The maximum salary is divided among three parochial teachers, two in Jura and one in Colonsay. The defect in the act 1803 anent parochial schoolmasters is, in this parish, amply provided against by the liberality of the principal heritor, Mr Campbell of Jura, who has expended a large sum of money in the erection of two commodious school-rooms, with accommodation for the teachers and their families. He has also allotted to each a garden and a small pendicle of land, sufficient to maintain a cow and to grow potatoes to serve their families. There are besides, two schools upon the establishment of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, one in Colonsay, and the other in Jura. There are also three unendowed schools in the parish. Average income of the teachers, L.12 per annum. The number of scholars attending all the schools, 347.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The number at present upon the poor's roll is 22. They are divided into three classes, and relief proportioned to their necessities is afforded them. The amount collected at the church, for the last four years, varies from L.12 to L.14 Sterling.

Mr Campbell of Jura, about four years ago, acted in the most liberal and exemplary manner towards the poor resident upon his property in the parish. At that time, he invested the sum of L.260 in the purchase of shares in the Edinburgh Gas Light Company (old stock,) which yields at present a yearly dividend of L.7, 10s. He has also, by liberal donations to the Royal Infirmary and Asylum of Glasgow, made these benevolent institutions accessible to every poor and distressed patient residing on his property. Whatever additional sum is given for the support of the poor is supplied by voluntary contribution.

Time was, and the period is not far distant, when a noble spirit of independence pervaded even the lowest and the most indigent class of the inhabitants of this parish; when application for parochial relief was considered by poor individuals as degrading. The writer is sorry to say, that this spirit seems to be fast dying away.

Means of Communication.—There are three established ferries in the Island of Jura, each of them furnished with quays, and what is usually denominated slips, to facilitate the shipping and landing of cattle. Two of these communicate with the mainland. There is the ferry at Kenuachdrach, to Craignish; the ferry of Lagg, to North Knapdale; the ferry of Feolin, at the Sound of Islay, situated at the south end of Jura, and directly opposite to Portaskaig, in Islay. From Feolin Ferry to that of Lagg, (a distance of seventeen miles) there is a Government road, which is kept in the best state of repair, and is of incalculable advantage to the island. Of late years, the attention of Mr Campbell of Jura has been directed to the advantages resulting from the erection of bridges, and the construction of roads leading to the principal farms on his property; and good substantial roads, equaling the Government road, are either now finished or in progress.

The mail from Edinburgh, Glasgow, and other places is conveyed over the Sound of Jura, and landed at Lagg, thence by a runner to Feolin Ferry, at the Sound of Islay. Letters from London arrive here in the short space of four days. There is a sub-office or receiving-house for letters at Lagg.

Inns and Public-Houses.—There are two licensed public-houses in Jura. Only a small proportion of the means of the parishioners is now expended in the deleterious practice of dram-drinking, and in spirituous liquors. Weddings, funerals, and pub-

lic meetings, which at one period exhibited scenes of revelry and drunkenness in this parish, are now conducted in such a way, as to show a decided improvement in the habits of the people. Illicit distillation of whisky and other kinds of smuggling, which at one time were carried on to an alarming extent, are now all but suppressed.

October 1843.

COLONSAY AND ORANSAY.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THESE islands form one island when the tide retires, but are separated at flood-tide by an arm of the sea a mile broad, where it is usually crossed. At the point where they approach nearest, the islands are not above 100 yards apart. By the Highlanders, the name of Eilean tarsuing is given to the whole island, and it is so called with reference to its apparent position to the eye of the mariner, (tarsuing meaning in Gaelic oblique); but the two islands are generally known under the names of Colonsay and Oransay. These names are evidently Scandinavian, and signify the islands of St Columba and St Oran, a companion of St Columba's, well-known to tradition. Previously to the occupation of the Western Islands by the Scandinavians, the larger island, (if not both,) seems to have been called Hymba. There is an old tradition, that St Columba had an establishment in Colonsay before he went to Iona; and as Adomnan, in his life of St Columba, frequently mentions Hymba as the name of an island in which the saint resided before he went to Iona, and that Ernanus, the Oran of tradition, was the first Abbot of the monastery he established there; and as the smaller island is called the island of St Oran, and the old church in Colonsay was called Killoran, or Church of Oran, there seems little doubt of the identity. Colonsay may therefore boast of being the first of the Western Islands in which the Christian church was established.

Extent.—The Islands of Colonsay and Oransay are from the southern end of Oransay to the northern of Colonsay, about 12 miles long and from 1 to 3 broad; the superficial contents are about 9000 Scotch acres, of which one-third are meadow or arable ground.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Land-owners.—John M'Neill, Esq. of Colonsay, is proprietor of both islands. The M'Neills have now been in possession of these islands for nearly 150 years,—Doual M'Neill, the first proprietor of that name, having received them from the Duke of Argyll in exchange for property in South Knapdale. The old possessors were the M'Duffies or M'Phies of Colonsay, who possessed it under the Lords of the Isles. The last of them, viz. Malcolm M'Duffy of Colonsay, was put to death by Gillespie M'Donald, commonly called Colkitto, whose family possessed the island for two generations.

Mansion-houses.—There are two mansion-houses. That of Killoran, in Colonsay, was built in 1722, on the site of the old Culdee establishment there: the present laird of Colonsay has added two wings, making a most comfortable house for the accommodation of a large family. The mansion-house at Oransay was built in 1772, and is a commodious dwelling-house.

Antiquities.—There is in these islands one of the most extensive and interesting remains of the monastic establishments in the Western Isles, viz. the ruins of the priory of Oransay. There was a Culdee establishment in the island, and, as we have reason to think, the first founded by St Columba. The priory of Oransay was founded by the Lord of the Isles, and filled with regular canons brought from the Abbey of Holyrood, upon which abbey it was dependent. With the exception of those at Iona, these are by far the finest of the ecclesiastical remains in the West Highlands. There is a church in which the tombstones of the ancient possessors of the islands are to be seen, considerable remains of the cloisters and of the monastic buildings usually attached to it, and near the church an ancient cross, part of the inscription on which is still legible, and contains the words, "Hæc est Crux Colini Prior. Orisoi obiit M.DX.:::" The ruins are close to the mansion-house, and form a venerable and interesting feature in a scene of wild and solitary beauty.

In a loch in Colonsay, there are the ruins of an old castle or fort upon an island in the middle of it, and to this stronghold the lairds of Colonsay used to retire, when threatened with danger.

III.—POPULATION.

By the census taken in 1835 the population amounted to 839.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Improvements.—There are, perhaps, few estates in Scotland on
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which so much has been done in improvement, (and that by the exertions of one individual alone,) as the estate of Colonsay. The present proprietor, Mr M'Neill of Colonsay, (who retains the greater portion of the island in his own hands,) has not only turned the land formerly in tillage to the best account, but he has also reclaimed a vast extent of moors, hills, and peat mosses from a state of absolute waste to that of productive soil. He has introduced the improved system of husbandry, in the utmost latitude of the expression, into Colonsay, and his crops are among the best in the West of Scotland. Of late years he has drained a great extent of meadow land, and every year more of the barren land has been brought into cultivation, and several thousand roods of stone dikes have been built.

No roads were made in Colonsay till the present proprietor commenced them, and the island is now intersected by an excellent road, made entirely at his expense, with the aid of the statute labour. Mr M'Neill has thus, by judicious, persevering, and well-directed efforts, not only brought his estate into a high condition of cultivation and productiveness, but he has likewise much improved the condition of the small crofters, and afforded constant occupation to a numerous and comfortable population.

In addition to this, Mr M'Neill has much improved his stock of black-cattle, and brought them to a degree of excellence which has never been surpassed. By good management and great attention to breeding, his stock are now the best in the market. The bulls bear a very high value for breeding, and have sold for L.200. He breeds about 200 calves yearly, and winters about 1000 head of black-cattle. The principal exports, besides cattle, are bear and potatoes. Of the latter, Mr M'Neill raises about 1000 bolls (4000 sacks) annually.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Harbours.—There is an excellent harbour in Colonsay, called Portnafeamin, where a substantial quay has been built by the proprietor, and from which a good road leads into the island. Rise and fall of tide fits it for repairing vessels of considerable burthen, and it is considered the best harbour for this purpose in the Hebrides. There are also two good road-steads; one called Stursanaic and the other Cgulismore. Cod-fishing is carried on to a considerable extent by the people of the island, and its banks are frequented by the fishing boats of Islay, Gigha, and Kintire. The flat fish on the banks nearer the shore is also abundant and of the best quality.

Mr M'Neill has planted a considerable extent of ground; and the forest trees, especially the elm, ash, and sycamore, are in a very thriving condition. The alder trees about the garden at Colonsay House have attained a size unequalled in any of the neighbouring islands.

Ecclesiastical State.—The islands of Colonsay and Oransay have not been ecclesiastically separated from the rest of the parish, but there is a permanent assistant at Colonsay, who was placed there by the exertions of the present proprietor in 1833. There is a good church, and the proprietor furnishes the assistant with a house and garden and other accommodations.

Inns, &c.—Near the harbour is a small but neat inn; and, at a short distance, the smithy.

February 1844.