

ISLAND OF ISLAY,  
PARISH OF KILCHOMAN.\*  
PRESBYTERY OF ISLAY, SYNOD OF ARGYLE.

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I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—ACCORDING to tradition, Kilchoman has obtained its name from being the burying-place of Chomanus, who is supposed to have come from the monastery of Iona to establish the Gospel in Islay. The parish is situated on the west side of the island of Islay.

*Extent.—Boundaries.*—Its length is 20 miles. It averages about 5 miles in breadth, and contains about 100 square miles. At a former period, it was an island, and it is still nearly surrounded by the sea, there being only a space of about one mile between the high-water mark of Lochindaal, and that of Lochgruinard. These arms, with the intervening space, formed, till two farms were annexed to it, the boundary on the south, south-east, and east sides. From the north-east point to the south-west extremity, it presents a line of coast, extending thirty miles, to the unobstructed swell of the Atlantic Ocean. Each end of the parish terminates in a point; and at each point, there is a small island, separated from the mainland by a narrow channel.

Near to the south-west point, an undulating ridge of hills rises, which runs in a north-eastern direction until it terminates with a gentle slope in the level ground below Sunderland House. To the north of this flat it again rises, but with a somewhat lower elevation, and may be traced until it dips into the sea at Ardnave. The highest hill of this ridge does not exceed 500 feet. With an elevation so small, there can be no deep valleys; and the flats are either covered with moss or formed into lakes, some of which are within the range of a former level of the ocean.

A great part of the coast is bold and precipitous. The east side abounds with creeks, yet the general feature of the shore is rocky. From the point of the Rinns to the point of Ardnave, the coast is

\* Communicated by the Rev. Alex. Cameron, late minister of the parish.

rugged, in many places with high perpendicular cliffs, and with a few bays, where fishing-boats are kept; but, from the incessant heaving of the Atlantic, they must be hauled above the high-water mark. The largest bay is that of Kilchoman. It is about a mile in length, with a south-western aspect; but, being without headlands, it offers little or no shelter.

Lochgruinard, on the north-east side, runs inland about four miles. A great part of it is dry at low-water, and is a place of safety for small vessels. There is a bar, but with sufficient depth in the channel, which is rather intricate.

Lochindaal, which forms the eastern boundary, is of considerable extent. At its entrance, between the point of the Rinns and the Mull of Oa, it is eight miles broad; and it is twelve miles in length. It forms a good roadstead, and is much frequented by shipping during the stormy season.

*Meteorology.*—The temperature of the atmosphere is mild. Neither the extreme heat of summer nor the intense cold of winter is felt here. The prevailing winds are west and south-west. The heaviest rains fall with the wind at south-east, south, and south-west. Whenever it veers round to the west and north-west, the weather becomes showery, and clears up.

The climate is mild, but may be called damp. The chief difficulty which the agriculturist has to contend with arises from the heavy gales of autumn. In places not exposed to their influence, luxuriant crops may be grown, and delicate plants successfully cultivated. The climate is also favourable to the duration of human life. Persons who lived temperately have attained to a good old age; yet, as illicit distillation prevailed so generally, few men have passed the meridian of life without contracting diseases incident to free indulgence in ardent spirits, many of whom are cut off suddenly by inflammatory diseases; but, from the suppression of smuggling, these diseases are abating in intensity.

*Hydrography.*—The only frith that needs be mentioned is the one that separates Isle-Orsay from the point of the Rinns. It is less than half a mile in breadth. At certain states of the tide the current, which runs northward for ten hours and a-half, is very rapid; for an hour and a-half it runs in the contrary direction; while, outside the island, the set and run of the tide are regular.

At the village of Portnahaven there is a strong chalybeate spring. There are several lakes. The largest is Lochgorum, which covers 600 acres. Its depth is from five to seven feet. It

abounds in small trout; and, from the extent of surface which it exposes to atmospheric influence, and from the smallness of the streams flowing into it, its water is nearly as light and pure as distilled water.

The only stream approaching in size to a river, flowed into Lochgruinar. But the late proprietor, Mr Campbell of Shawfield, conceived the idea of embanking a large portion of the head of this estuary, which made it necessary to cut a channel of about a mile and a-half in extent for this river, and thereby turn its course into Lochindaal. From that time, it ceased to be a salmon stream; and the few sea-trout which frequent it, ascend only in the end of autumn.

*Geology.*—The prevailing rock is clay slate alternating with greywacke and thin beds of quartz rock. The inclination is to the east, and the dip varies considerably in different places, from the almost horizontal to the vertical. The strata are occasionally intersected by beds of basalt, greenstone, and porphyry.

At Sanaig, on the north-west coast, the clay slate is seen to alternate with fine-grained greywacke slate in a bed of upwards of 100 feet in depth, and over this is placed a thick bed of quartz rock. Here a series of cliffs, nearly perpendicular, occurs, extending a distance of above two miles: it is full of deep fissures and caverns, which afford every facility for obtaining a satisfactory view of the stratification.

At Octofad, on the south-east side, the clay slate alternates with gneiss. This stratification may be traced for several miles, and round the point of the Rinns northwards, on the western side, till beyond the farm of Lossit. Both rocks are well defined, and do not appear in any instance to pass into one another. The clay slate retains its strongly-marked blue colour, while the gneiss is of a dingy red or brown colour. In several parts of the west coast, where the rocks assume a precipitous form, they show great derangement in their stratification; the strata generally retain an almost horizontal position, yet many masses have been so far displaced as to exhibit a perpendicular stratification. No limestone has been discovered; but, as if to compensate the agriculturist for this want, every creek and bay contains inexhaustible beds of broken shells, intermixed with particles of clay slate and quartz.

Every description of soil may be found in this extensive parish. From the point of the Rinns, on the west shore of Lochindaal, there is a succession of low rock and rich alluvial land, terminat-

ing in the mossy flat below Sunderland House. This tract, extending twelve miles, has a south-eastern aspect, with a gentle slope, and being in a great measure sheltered by the rising ground to the west, is very fertile and safe for any kind of crop. In many parts it has been partially drained; but, being chiefly in the hands of tenants, who do not possess skill enough to avail themselves of their facilities, the land, from exhaustion, and the non-observance of rotation in cropping, is comparatively unproductive. The western side presents a less favourable aspect, and a less productive soil. The arable land is generally at a higher elevation, forming a sort of table land on the top of a high rocky coast. From the frequent, and heavy gales, crops raised here are more uncertain; but the land is well adapted for pasture.

Slate of a good colour and quality are made at Kilchiaran. The quarry is now wrought to a great extent.

The parish is divided into two unequal parts by a flat, which consists of several hundred acres, narrow in the middle, but expanding at each end. At the east end, it extends to the head of Lochgruinard in one direction, and to Lochindaal in another, at an elevation little above the high-water mark. At the west end it communicates with the Atlantic in the bays of Kilchoman, Saligo, and Sanaig, having the high lands of Coull, Smaal, and Sanaig between them. Through this valley the sea must have made a full sweep, at some period beyond the era of authentic history. It is now covered with moss, varying in depth from three to nine feet. Below this is a bed of gravel and sand, containing such marine shells as are still to be found on the shores of the adjacent bays. Underneath this stratum lies a bed of strong blue clay, in which no animal remains have been discovered. Where the bed of gravel is of moderate thickness, and partially mixed with clay, large trees are exposed to view, lying in various directions; and where the moss has been removed, many roots may be seen *in situ*, giving rise to the supposition, that the trees were broken over at the former surface of the ground.

To the north of this valley the land is less elevated. It undulates without rising high, or forming valleys, until it terminates at the point of Ardnave. The west side of this point is comparatively unproductive, from want of drainage. Nevertheless, the soil in certain localities is good, consisting of a thin bed of moss, interspersed with clay and sand, lying on a bed of claystone rock. The east side of this point is well adapted for cultivation or pas-

ture. Lochgruinard, which forms the boundary of this point, covered more land at a former period than it does now, and the process of filling up seems to be progressing. We have already alluded to the reclaiming of a portion of the head of the loch by the late proprietor. This he partly effected, by raising an embankment to keep off the tide, and partly by directing the course of the river which discharged its waters into it, by a new channel into Lochindaal. Drains of sufficient depth and extent were formed to receive the surface water, and to contain the streamlets which fall from the ground adjacent, during the period of full tide. The outlet of these drains is secured with a sluice, which opens and shuts by the pressure of the water. Several hundred acres of rich loam, incumbent on a bed of shells and clay, yielding abundant crops, have been by these means redeemed. The part of this basin that was above the reach of the tide, and farthest removed from the bank of the river, is deeply covered with moss.

*Zoology.*—The Dean Munro, in his account of the Hebrides, has noticed that Lochgruinard abounded with seals. In the summer and autumn, a few may still be seen, though their number is evidently decreasing. Otters are found about the lakes and shores, and the whole coast abounds with various kinds of fish. Cod, ling, coal-fish, turbot, soles, and plaice, are in their season caught on the different banks. Shoals of herrings are annually seen on the coast, and at times some enter Lochindaal, but do not remain so long as to become a source of profit to the fishermen who live on its shores. Oysters, mussels, buckies, cockles, limpets, lobsters, and crabs, are to be had on various parts of the coast. In the months of May, June, and July, the people use mussels and cockles to a considerable extent as articles of food; the crabs and limpets, with a species of worm found in the bays, are sought after by the fishermen for baiting their hooks.

The insects most destructive to vegetation are, a small fly that attacks the young shoots of the turnip; a caterpillar, that feeds on the gooseberry and white currant bushes; and a small aphid, that fastens on the fruit-trees and hedges. A strong infusion of hellebore sprinkled on the bushes, arrests the progress of the caterpillar, and a weak solution of soap is equally fatal to the aphid.

Flocks of wild geese, barnacles, teal, and widgeon, with woodcock and swans, take up their abode in the marshes and open waters during the winter months. In summer, the lapwing, the

swallow, the landrail, and the cuckoo, form the chief birds of passage.

The native birds are, the heron, grouse, black-game, snipe, plover, various species of the bunting and finches, the thrush, blackbird, and the starling. The Cornish chuff, and myriads of wild pigeons occupy the rocks and the caverns along the shore. The birds of prey are, the raven, the hooded crow, and the hawk; eagles are seen at times, but they have ceased to breed here. Of sea birds, there are various species of the gull, Scotch duck, and cormorants. Hares are numerous, and the sandy downs abound with rabbits.

*Botany.*—The variety of plants is not numerous. A great proportion of the highest land is covered with short heath and coarse herbage. Red and white clover, with the common grasses, cover the finer pastures. The marshes contain the water lily, buckbean, and hemlock, and the lakes are generally fringed with bulrushes. Sea-kale grows on the islands of Ardnave. The buckbean and hemlock are used medicinally. From the appearance of the marshes, it is obvious that, at some remote period, trees grew abundantly, notwithstanding their being exposed to the unbroken force of the Atlantic gales. Man does not seem to have done much to promote the growth of timber, though soil and climate concur to favour it, in every spot sheltered from the prevailing winds. The interior of the island contains a few plantations of recent formation, to which the present proprietor is adding extensively. About Sunderland House, the plantations are promising in situations naturally unfavourable. The growth is always vigorous; and were a sufficient breadth planted, and well inclosed, wood might be made to grow both for ornament, and for use.

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

The writer is not aware that any written record of the civil transactions of this parish is extant. But, from a fort, or place of defence being found almost on every promontory, or rock difficult of access, and on the islands of the several lakes, one may safely conjecture that, at some period of its history, it formed the theatre of many a sharp conflict. It was long in the hands of the Danes and Norwegians, and many places still retain their Scandinavian names. In more recent times, it formed part of the possessions of the Macdonalds, Lords of the Isles, the site of whose palace is now occupied by the manse and garden. Their right was challenged in the year 1588. A hostile party of the Macleans

from Mull, who effected a landing, were met by the Macdonalds on the side of Lochgruinard, when a bloody, and to the Macleans, a disastrous, battle was fought. Their leader fell in the action, his followers gave way, a party of whom took refuge in the church of Kilnave, at a little distance from the field of battle. To this asylum they were pursued by the victorious Macdonalds, who, setting fire to the church, and at the same time preventing the escape of the Macleans, effected their destruction with the building, which stands to this day a roofless monument of the event. Maclean's body was buried in the church of Kilchoman; but, by a partial change in the site of the new church, his grave-stone is outside, and close by the south-east corner.

*Land-owners.*—Walter F. Campbell of Islay, M. P.; Walter Campbell of Sunderland; Colin Campbell of Balinaby.

*Parochial Registers.*—These have been kept in this parish only since 1822. For several years a register of marriages and baptisms was regularly kept; but since the Parliamentary churches, with the districts annexed, were erected into parishes *quoad sacra*, the minister at Portnahaven baptizes and marries without having the names of parties entered in the parish register.

*Antiquities.*—A very handsome cross stands in the churchyard. On one side is a representation of the Saviour on the cross, with an illegible inscription underneath. On the other is a beautifully cut Runic knot. Its history is unknown.

There are five churches in ruins in the parish; to each of these a burying-ground is attached, some of which are used as such to this day. At one or two of them there is a cross, and the fonts are in their original position. One of these ruins is on Island-nave, at the north point of the parish, and distant from it about one mile. To this a very extensive burying-ground is attached. The grave-stones are made of clay slate, handsomely formed, many of them beautifully cut, and several with figures in relief. These mark the resting-place of persons of some note in their day, but of whom no other memorial is known.

There are also several obelisks. The one on the hill near Balinaby house is the largest; it bears no mark of sculpture; it is 18 feet above the surface. Above forty years ago, Captain Burgess of the *Savage Sloop of War*, with a party of his crew, dug up part of the sand-hill near it, where they found one or two swords, a pike-head, and many human bones. The arms they carried away: the ground has since lain undisturbed.

There are several points along the coast detached by deep ravines and fissures, which render them almost inaccessible. To approach them by water was a perilous undertaking, and where access on the land side could be conceived possible, they were fortified by walls strongly built of stones, laid regularly, but without mortar.

Buildings of the same description are found on the different lakes and on the top of several conical hills. In one instance, on the farm of Smaal, a mound and ditch formed the means of defence. Tradition has assigned these to the period when the Danes had partial possession of the island.

Two gold ornaments of a singular description were found lately near to Sunderland House, under a large stone, which evidently at one time stood erect, but had fallen down, and which, in the process of levelling and trenching for agricultural purposes, was blasted and removed. In the black mould which it covered, were found a broad fluted ring of the size of an armlet, and a bar or rod, bent in a semicircular form, the ends of which are rounded out into a cup-like hollow. It would appear by a paper published lately by Sir William Betham, that they are some of the gold ring money of the Celts, and that similar ones have frequently been found in Ireland. Mr Campbell carried them to London, where it was ascertained that they were very pure gold. They weighed  $22\frac{1}{2}$  sovereigns. They are now in his possession.

During the last ten years, several stone coffins were discovered in the conical hills below Sunderland Farm: they were in length from  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 feet, from 20 inches to 2 feet wide, and from 16 to 18 inches deep. They were formed of slabs of the clay slate of the district. Some contained one or two urns of rudely formed unbaked clay; others contained skulls, and other human bones.

*Modern Buildings.*—The mansion-house of Mr Campbell of Sunderland was built about twenty years ago, when he retired from the E.I.C. service. The situation is an elevated declivity, a mile distant from the shore of Lochindaal. The place chosen was covered with strong heath, and the low ground was an unproductive marsh. The heath has given place to thriving plantations and luxuriant crops, and thorough drainage has converted the morass into good pasture land.

The Commissioners of the Northern Lights erected, in 1824, a lighthouse on Isle Orsay, at the point of the Rinns. This erection, and the houses and offices for the keepers, have been built in a substantial and commodious manner.

A Parliamentary church and manse have been built at Portnahaven; an entire village at Port Charlotte, with an extensive distillery. Port Wymss, another village in the neighbourhood of Portnahaven, has recently sprung into existence. Within the same period, several substantial farm-houses, with suitable offices, have been erected by the proprietors.

### III.—POPULATION.

The state of the population is as follows:—

In 1801,	2050
1811,	3131
1821,	3966
1831,	4822
1841,	4505

Gaelic is the language universally spoken by the natives in their intercourse with one another. The English language is very generally understood; and from the number of families and individuals from the low country settled in the parish, it is much spoken. In proportion as the natives are becoming more enlightened by education, the Gaelic is decidedly losing ground.'

The custom which obtained of assembling neighbours and kindred, to attend at funerals, marriages, and baptisms, led to many, and grievous irregularities. This of late years has been giving place to a more orderly, and decorous mode of conducting funerals. At marriages, it is nearly discontinued, and at christenings entirely so.

In their personal and domestic habits the people are not cleanly. In many instances, the cattle occupy the same apartment with the family; and though fond of dress, and of appearing well attired when they go abroad, at home they are slovenly. Their ordinary food is potatoes, with milk and fish. During a great part of the year, very little oatmeal is consumed. In their culinary arrangements, there is great want of economy. They are improvident in the use of their food, and wasteful of their clothing.

As a people, they are shrewd, fond of gossip and story-telling; there is amongst them a strong bias to cunning, and a want of truthfulness. Of the grown-up population the majority are unable to read;—their minds are, therefore, comparatively uninformed,—and it cannot be said that they are either a moral, or a religious people; and from the influence which their confirmed habits are producing on the rising generation, who are receiving a moral and religious education, a very immediate and decided change is scarcely to be expected. Till of late years, illicit distillation was universal; this

led to the neglect of field labour, and to the destruction of the social virtues.

#### IV.—INDUSTRY.

Extent of Kilchoman parish in imperial standard acres, as nearly as it has been ascertained, is		50,000
Cultivated,	4,500	
That may be cultivated,	20,000	
Wood,	20	
In pasture,	25,480	
		50,000

The average rent of arable land is about 11s. per acre; grazing of a cow for the year, 40s.; and of a sheep, 3s.

Male farm-servants are paid at from L.8 to L.10, with food and lodging; or, in lieu of these, an allowance in meal, potatoes, milk, or the keep of a cow, and a house and fuel. Female servants are paid at from L.3 to L.6 per annum.

In spring, summer, and autumn, day-labourers are paid from 1s. 2d. to 1s. 4d., in winter, 1s. In winter, work is generally done by contract, and at prices which enable an expert labourer to earn from 1s. 3d. to 1s. 6d. Carpenters and masons are paid from 2s. to 2s. 6d.

*Live-Stock.*—The cattle are chiefly of the West Highland breed. Great attention has been paid to this description of stock by the proprietors, and by several of the tenants. Various means are being used for effecting this purpose, such as selecting the best bulls, raising green food for winter keep, and improving the herbage on the pastures by draining, ditching, and inclosing. A good deal has been done in these respects; but in comparison of what may be done, such improvements may be said to be only in their infancy. So far as draining and fencing have been carried into effect, the produce has, in many instances, been more than doubled; and where the land is generally so wet, and in so humid a climate, a vast extent of moss and of unproductive marshes may be made available for feeding stock. The stock in the possession of the small tenants is of a very inferior description. It has greatly deteriorated of late years,—the partial failure of the potatoes had greatly diminished the quantity and quality of their food in winter, and the limited sales which they were able to make during the low rate of the markets, compelled them to dispose of the best of their young stock to meet their augmented rental; this produced a pernicious effect upon their stock, and a ruinous one upon their means.

The sheep kept, with the exception of one or two lots of the

black-faced breed, are of a very ordinary kind,—being chiefly in the hands of small tenants, who keep them as an overstock, and they are so badly managed as not to prove a source of profit.

*Husbandry.*—The duration of leases is for nineteen years. To such tenants as know the value of land, and are in possession of capital and enterprise, it may be said, that the conditions of the leases are decidedly favourable.

The farms are generally let to a number of tenants who live together on one spot, cultivating the arable on the runrig system, grazing the pasture land in common. A change in this system is being effected, though it still obtains to a considerable extent, and must continue to endure till the end of the current leases, where all the parties do not concur in making a regular subdivision. The obstacles which this mode of holding land presents to persons of skill and industry, in clearing and improving their lands, need not be detailed here ;—to say that the system obtains is enough to suggest them to every enlightened, and intelligent mind.

*Farm-Buildings.*—The farm-buildings, and stone dikes are for the most part the property of the tenants occupying the farms. In some instances, they are kept in a state of thorough repair, though generally this corresponds with the means possessed by the occupants, and with their ideas of order, comfort, and economy.

The principal improvements which have recently been made, have been effected by Mr Campbell of Sunderland, whose place of residence and landed property are situated in this parish. He considers that, within the last twenty years, by enclosing, draining, and otherwise improving waste land, he has more than tripled the original value of his property. In cultivating moss, he has the water taken off by open and wedge drains ; the surface is then delved and levelled ; shell-sand is spread on it at the rate of eight tons the imperial acre, and it is then manured for potatoes, or sown down with oats and grass seeds. What, previous to these operations, produced only heather, or very coarse herbage, has now become a close green sward. Many hundred acres have been improved after this manner, and the operation is still in regular progress. The pasture land he has had surface-drained and sanded at the rate of eight tons per acre.

The increased value obtained from drainage on crop and pasture land appears to be pretty generally understood by the tenantry, some of whom have been exerting themselves to render

their farms more productive; but on the whole, there is great lack of capital, industry, and enterprise among them. One spirited young man from Ayrshire entered lately into an extensive farm, and has commenced with the most promising and encouraging results,—furrow draining the strong clay land, which constitutes the chief part of his arable.

*Fisheries.*—During the summer and autumn, the people of Portnahaven occupy themselves in fishing cod, ling, and coal-fish, which they cure and dispose of at a high rate, in the Irish market. As every farm has its creek and its boats, a great quantity of fish is taken for supporting their families; but, except at Portnahaven, they do not fish for the market, nor even for the maintenance of their own families, to the extent to which it might be carried. Being partly fishers and partly agriculturists, they pursue neither vocation with proper energy.

*Produce.*—The average gross amount and value of raw produce yearly raised in the parish, as nearly as can be ascertained, is as follows:

4116 quarters barley, at 26s.,	L.5950	16	0
4802 do. oats, at 18s.,	4921	16	0
50,880 barrels of potatoes, at 2s.,	5888	0	0
40,000 stones rye grass hay, at 6d.,	1000	0	0
12,000 do. meadow hay, at 4d.,	200	0	0
2,500 tons turnips, at 8s.,	1000	0	0
Peas and beans,	150	0	0
2,058 cows kept, at 40s.,	4106	0	0
2,744 sheep, at 3s.,	411	12	0
Fish,	1000	0	0
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	L.23,428	4	0

There is an extensive distillery at Port-Charlotte, which, from having passed through a number of hands for the last few years, has not been kept in regular operation.

The people manufacture cloth for their own use, though, from the high price of wool, and the difficulty of procuring it, much use is made of cotton fabrics by the working classes.

#### V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

*Villages.*—There are three villages in the parish,—Portnahaven, Port-Wymss, and Port-Charlotte. The first two are partly fishing and partly agricultural villages; the latter is entirely agricultural.

*Means of Communication.*—There are twelve miles of a Parliamentary line of road in the parish, and thirty-four miles of statute labour road, all kept in a state of good repair. With three exceptions, the public road passes through every farm in the parish.

Bowmore, the nearest market-town, is twelve miles distant. The post-office is at Bridgend, nine miles distant. The letters are brought thence by a private runner. The mail is received and despatched four times weekly,—twice by a steam packet, and twice through Jura by the ferries.

Portnahaven is the only place where a vessel of any draught of water can be kept, and even there only during settled weather. In stormy weather, the swell of the ocean breaks in with such tremendous force and violence, that no vessel can ride with safety, and the fishing-boats, which are of the size and description used at Newhaven, must be hauled up on the beach.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The church is built in a central situation, being about nine miles from the most distant part of the population. It is, however, inconveniently situated for the great part of the parishioners who are located near to each extremity, and, on the east side, at a distance of five miles from the church. In winter the attendance is necessarily limited; but, in favourable weather, the number who attend is considerable. The church affords accommodation for about 700. The sittings are all free.

The church and manse were built in the years 1825 and 1826. They are handsome and commodious, substantially built, well finished, and are kept in a state of good repair. The glebe consists of 26 acres, and may be worth from L.12 to L.15. The stipend is the minimum.

There is a Parliamentary church at Portnahaven. Two additional churches are much wanted,—one at Port-Charlotte, with a population of about 800 within two miles of it, and all above five from the parish church; another at the head of Lochgruinar, where the population is about 900, and all within three miles of the proposed site, and all above five miles from the parish church. A church here would accommodate a part of the population of Killarrow and Kilmeny, who are from seven to nine miles distant from their respective churches, and would be within three miles of a church at Gruinar.

The average number of communicants is about 240. There are eleven elders in the parish. There is an Independent chapel at Port-Charlotte; but, there being only ten families of Dissenters in the parish, the congregation is small.

The church collections for religious and charitable purposes average from L.12 to L.15 per annum.

*Education.*—Besides the parochial school, which is very ineffi-

ciently taught, there are two schools on the General Assembly's Scheme,—one supported by the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,—one by the Edinburgh Gaelic School Society,—and six schools taught by persons on their own adventure. During the winter half-year, these schools are numerous attended. The branches taught are of the most ordinary description. None of the teachers received a classical education. The rates of payment per quarter are 1s. 6d., 2s., 2s. 6d., and 3s. 6d. The young people are all taught to read,—the boys to write and figure. The salary of parochial teacher is L.25, with house and allowance for garden. There are six Sunday schools, which are well attended. Of the grown-up part of the population, above one-half are unable to read. They are, however, alive to the benefits of education, and make considerable exertions to get the children instructed. The change produced by the more general diffusion of education is perceptible in the conduct of the younger part of the population, which contrasts strongly, in some respects, with that of persons of middle age.

*Poor.*—The average number of persons receiving parochial relief, including regular and occasional poor, is about 25. The sum paid to each per annum varies from 5s. to L.1, 10s. The funds for their support arise from collections in the church—from part of the fee paid on publication of bans—from mortcloth dues—from interest of a small sum in stock—and from fines recovered by the kirk-session from delinquents. The applicants for relief are infirm aged persons, whose means of support have failed, and whose relations are either dead or in indigent circumstances. Relief is occasionally afforded to widows having young children. A feeling of independence still obtains, and it is considered a degradation to have one's relatives partially supported by the parish. The wants of the poor are frequently supplied by neighbours. The parish finds bedding when necessary; food and fuel are easily procured, and it is rarely any house-rent is exacted. The kirk-session have the privilege of recommending patients to the Royal Infirmary at Glasgow.

*Inns.*—There are seven public houses; three of these are kept by respectable persons who are in the habit of lodging travellers. The other four being mere tipping houses, are a great public nuisance, and exercise a pernicious influence on the morals of the people.

*Fuel.*—Peat is the chief fuel used. Coal is preferred by some, which may be brought from Glasgow at a freight of 5s. per ton.

#### MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

At the time the former Statistical Account was written, flax was cultivated to some extent; when prepared, it was spun by the females into fine yarn, for the market; but the superiority of the flax imported from the Baltic, with the more general application of machinery, has entirely superseded this branch of domestic economy. A great improvement has taken place in the facilities of communication. A powerful steam packet plies regularly between the island and Tarbert. Districts almost inaccessible are now opened up by means of good roads; but the houses and mode of living appear to have undergone no great change. The alteration in the habits of the people has arisen, it is to be feared, more from the compulsory suppression of smuggling, than from their own conviction of its evil effects, for were the restraints which are imposed by law removed, it would in all probability become as prevalent as at any former period. One class of tenants were from the extent of land occupied by them, and from their better education, at that time very influential, but are now nearly extinct. They held extensive tracts of the best pasture on very reasonable terms, which, during war, when prices were high, placed them in comparative affluence; but unfortunately their prosperity became the cause of their ruin. They adopted the style and expensive habits of landed proprietors; and when, after the peace, the markets fell, they did not alter their habits to meet the change in their circumstances, and they have been since compelled to give place to strangers, and to a class of tenants of more economical habits. A dislike to continuous labour prevails extensively among the working-classes. The inquiry, then, is, How is this to be changed? As their natural wants do not seem to be sufficiently stimulating to produce a change, a more efficient moral influence, by means of the force of education on the female mind, must be brought to bear on the general character.

In the year 1825, only 1 in every 22½ of the females above sixteen years of age knew the letters of the alphabet. As the feelings and habits of the young are necessarily formed to a great degree by females, it is reasonable to suppose that the impressions which they communicate, modify the character of the future man. When their mind is so totally unenlightened with the knowledge

of Divine things, they cannot convey correct ideas of moral obligation, or of relative duties, or of the place which personal labour holds in the scheme of God's moral government. Idly disposed, and exhibiting a conduct governed by prejudices handed down from past generations, they not only do not contribute to the means of supporting the family, but they do not use judiciously or economically what is committed to their trust, nor easily adopt the suggestions of persons who are better informed. It is anticipated, that, as these habits and feelings give way to the force of Scriptural education, the comfort, morals, and happiness of the labouring classes will be promoted.

*Drawn up in 1839.*

*Revised 1844.*

## ISLAND OF ISLAY.

### PARISH OF KILDALTON.

PRESBYTERY OF ISLAY, SYNOD OF ARGYLE.

THE REV. ARCHIBALD MACTAVISH, MINISTER.

#### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—TRADITION says that this parish derives its name from a step-son of one of the Macdonalds of the Isles, a young man of great promise, who was killed in early life, and who was buried in the parish church. Kildaltan, or Kildalta, signifies the burying-place of a step-son or foster-son.

*Extent, &c.*—The parish extends along the south-east side of the Island of Islay. It is about 24 miles in length, and 7 in breadth. It is bounded on the north-east by the Sound of Islay, and on the south-west, by the Atlantic Ocean. The centre of the parish is nearly of an equal breadth, but it becomes considerably narrower towards each end. There is a range of hills extending along the centre in a parallel course with the sides, which gradually become higher as they approach the Sound of Islay. Their height, as far as I understand, has never been ascertained. Benvigory