

ISLAND OF ISLAY.
UNITED PARISHES OF
KILLARROW AND KILMENY.

PRESBYTERY OF ISLAY AND JURA, SYNOD OF ARGYLE.

THE REV. ALEXANDER STEWART, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—KILLARROW took its name from St Marrow, whose cell or burying-place was in the parish : and Kilmeny has doubtless had a similar derivation. Killarrow is now frequently called Bowmore ; the old church at Killarrow having been thrown down, and the present church built at the village of Bowmore.

Extent, &c.—The parish is of great extent, being seventeen or eighteen miles long, and eight broad. The lands are generally low ; the hills are not very high, nor rocky, but covered with heath and fern. The river Luggan, where there is a salmon fishing, is one of the largest in the district, emptying itself into a bay of the same name, in the south corner of the parish. The river of Killarrow runs a great way in the country, and empties itself into the bay or harbour of Lochendaal, which harbour runs from the Mull of Islay and the Runn's Point, about 12 miles to the pleasure grounds of the proprietor, Walter Frederick Campbell, Esq. It is an excellent harbour for shipping, is very much resorted to, and of late more than ever ; as the proprietor has built a fine quay at the village of Bowmore.

Soil, &c.—The soil varies in most of the farms. The farmers plough too much ground. Mr Campbell has improved large tracts of moor ground, within view of his own house, which lies about three English miles from the village ; and, from his method of cultivation, they have produced large crops. He spares neither pains nor expense ; and in this respect, several of his tenants attempt to imitate him.

Climate, &c.—The air is generally moist. The prevailing winds are the west and south-west.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Parochial Registers.—There are four parochial registers,—1st, Marriage register, commencing November 15, 1789; 2d, Baptism register, commencing November 17, 1789; 3d, List of poor, and state of poor's funds, commencing June 13, 1819; 4th, Kirk-session minute-book, commencing March 6, 1823; all regularly kept from the respective dates of their commencement. Anything previous to these dates consisted of mere scraps.

Land-owners.—W. F. Campbell, Esq. of Islay, is the sole proprietor.

Mansion-house.—The only one in the parish is Islay House.

Antiquities.—About the beginning of the seventeenth century, the feuds which had long subsisted between the Macdonalds of Islay and the Macleans of Mull, ended in the transference of the inheritance of the island to the Campbells of Argyle.

“The remains of the strongholds of the Macdonalds, in Islay, are the following. In Loch Finlaggan, a lake about three miles in circumference, three miles from Port Askaig, and a mile off the road to Loch-in-Daal, on the right hand, on an islet, are the ruins of their principal castle or palace and chapel; and on an adjoining island the Macdonald council held their meetings. There are traces of a pier, and of the habitations of the guards on the shore. A large stone was, till no very distant period, to be seen, on which Macdonald stood when crowned, by the Bishop of Argyle, King of the Isles. On an island, in a similar lake, Loch Guirm, to the west of Loch-in-Daal, are the remains of a strong square fort, with round corner towers; and towards the head of Loch-in-Daal, on the same side, are vestiges of another dwelling and pier.

“On Freuch Isle, in the Sound, are the ruins of Claig Castle, a square tower, defended by a deeper ditch, which at once served as a prison and a protection to the passage. At Laggavoulin Bay, an inlet on the east coast, and on the opposite side to the village, on a large peninsular rock, stands part of the walls of a round substantial stone burgh or tower, protected on the land side by a thick earthen mound. It is called Dun Naomhaig, or Duni-yaig. There are ruins of several houses beyond the mound, separated from the main building by a strong wall. This may have been a Danish structure, subsequently used by the Macdonalds. There are remains of several such strongholds

in the same quarter. The ruins of one are to be seen on an inland hill, Dun Borreraig, with walls twelve feet thick, and fifty-two feet in diameter inside, and having a stone seat two feet high round the area. As usual, there is a gallery in the midst of the wall. Another had occupied the summit of Dun Aidh, a large, high, and almost inaccessible rock near the Mull."

III.—POPULATION.

Amount of population in 1811,	-	4635
1821,	-	5778
1831,	-	7105
1841,	-	7341

In Bowmore village, per census.

	1841,	Total.	Males.	Females.
Country part of the parish,	-	1274	607	667
	-	2753	1331	1822
Total population of Killarrow, inclusive of Kilmeny, 1841,	4027	1938	2489	

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—

The number of acres, either cultivated or occasionally in tillage, is 15,000, Scots measure.

About 18,000 acres are constantly waste or in pasture.

A large proportion of these 18,000 acres might be cultivated with a profitable application of capital.

The present proprietor has planted to a large extent, and continues to do so. There were few or no planted trees, till he succeeded to the property. About 1000 acres may be stated as under young thriving wood. Hard-wood grows best.

Rent.—Arable land may be stated at from 15s. to L.1 per acre; grass land from 1s. to L.1. The farms are not let by measurement.

The real rental of the parish is L.8400.

The pasture lands have been much improved of late years by surface drains. Furrow-draining has also been carried on in the arable land. A tile-work has lately been erected for making drain-tiles. In short, the tenants are encouraged in every way to improve their lands by draining and liming,—the landlord bearing the expense, in most cases, of opening the drains.

A local Agricultural Society has been established for some years, and prizes are awarded for the improvement of the breed of black-cattle and sheep, and for the encouragement of green crop husbandry among the small tenants.

The only manufacture is distilling, which is carried on to a considerable extent in the island. There are three distilleries in this parish,—Lossit, Talant, and Bowmore, producing above

60,000 gallons among them. The whisky of the island being very much famed for its fine quality, commands the highest price in the market.

Fishing.—There are no regular fishings in this parish. Salmon and all kinds of white fish are abundant on the coast. Fishing, however, has never been carried on as a trade; but Mr Campbell is now treating for letting the salmon fishings.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Ecclesiastical State.—The stipend is L.150, with L.5 for communion elements, in Bowmore. That of the minister of Kilmeny parliamentary church, is L.120. There are also *quoad sacra* parliamentary churches at Oa and Portnahaven, endowed with the usual stipend of L.120.

The manse was built about the beginning of the present century. It is a comfortable house and in good repair.

Education.—There is a parochial school in Bowmore, and a parliamentary school in Kilmeny parish. Two Gaelic Society schools are at present in Bowmore parish. There is a female school near Bridgend, to the teacher of which, besides accommodations, Mrs Campbell of Islay gives a salary of L. 12 per annum. There are, besides, about a dozen of adventure schools throughout the parishes, almost all of them of a temporary nature, not generally taught during summer months, and generally inefficient. Two permanent additional schools are much required. The parochial schoolmaster has the maximum salary. Schoolmaster fees about L. 25 per annum. House and glebe worth about L. 12. The teacher is also session-clerk; and Mr Campbell of Islay has allowed him, in addition to salary, a gratuity of L.9, 7s. 4d. per annum. The salary of the parliamentary schoolmaster of Ballygrant, parish of Kilmeny, is L.35 per annum.

Poor.—The average number of poor is 45. Thirteen of them have as nearly as possible an average of 2s. per week, and the remaining 32 occasional poor may be said to have about L. 20 a-year dispensed among them. Average annual amount of contributions, about L.70; from church collections, about L.60; from legacies, L.10. Mr Campbell of Islay, when the session are short of funds, supplies what meal or money is required for the poor.

April 1843.