

STATISTICAL ACCOUNT

of

SCOTLAND.

PART VIII.

NUMBER I

PARISH OF DORNOCH.

(County of Sutherland - Presbytery of Dornoch - Synod of Sutherland and Caithness).

by the Rev. Mr. John Bethune.

Origin of the Name.

The town and parish of Dornoch derive their name from the Gaelic words Dorn-Eich, which signifies a horse's foot or hoof; concerning which the current tradition is as follows; About the year 1259, the Danes and Norwegians, having made a descent on this coast, were attacked by William, Thane or Earl of Sutherland, a quarter of a mile to the eastward of this town. Here the Danish general was slain, and his army beaten, and forced to retire to their ships, which were not far distant. The Thane of Sutherland greatly signalized himself upon this occasion; and appears, by his personal valour and exertion, to have contributed very much to determine the fate of the day. While he singled out the Danish general, and gallantly fought his way onward, the Thane being, by some accident, disarmed, seized the leg of a horse, which lay on the ground, and with that dispatched his adversary. In honour of this exploit, and of the weapon with which it was achieved, this place received the name of Dorneich, or Dornoch, as it is now called.*

Situation, Extent, Surface, Soil, Climates, Etc. - Dornoch is the presbytery seat; and, alternately with Thurso in Caithness, that of the synod. The burgh of Tain in Rossshire, stands on the south side of the frith, directly opposite to Dornoch; and three computed miles to the westward of both, where the frith becomes pretty narrow, is the Meikle Ferry, so called in contradistinction to another arm of the sea, called the Little Ferry. On each side of the former, there is a large boat for transporting carriages, horses, and other cattle; as also a yawl for the accommodation of foot passengers; but at the Little Ferry these are found on the seast side only. At this ferry, four hands serve; and the same number at each side of the Meikle Ferry. Frequent complaints are heard of both; an evil not peculiar to these ferries, nor likely to be remedied, until the property and disposal of such be vested in the public, instead of private proprietors, whose chief aim, naturally, is to have as high a rent as possible. This parish extends 9 miles from E. to W. along the coast of the frith of Dornoch; and from S. to N. or N.W. about 15 measured miles. It has a considerable extent of sea coast, not only upon the frith of Dornoch, but also on that of the Little Ferry, which runs about 4 miles up the country on the east side of the parish. The shores produce shell fish, particularly cockles and muscles but yield little other benefit to the inhabitants. The seaware is of little value. There is only one boat's crew of fishmen, who are neither skilful nor adventurous; they are therefore wretchedly poor, and of little or no advantage to the place; while others from Murray and Banff-shire, catch fish on this coast, and make money, by carrying away the cod, haddocks, skate, flounders, etc. At the Little Ferry, there is an excellent harbour, where ships lie in perfect security, after having got over a bar, which runs across the entrance. At high water, vessels of 500 tons burthen may enter here. At the shore of Dornoch, too, small vessels lie in safety, with tolerable weather, as well as near the Meikle Ferry; but a formidable bar stretches from the eastern point of the coast of Dornoch, almost quite over to the south side of the frith, called (from their incessant noise)

* This tradition is countenanced by the horse-shoe, which is still retained in the arms of the burgh. In memory of the fame event, a stone pillar was erected on the spot, supporting at the top a cross, encompassed by a circle, which went under the name of the Earl's Cross. Standing on a sandy hillock, it was gradually undermined by the winds; several years ago it tumbled down, and was broke to pieces; at present, only scattered fragments of it remain.

the Gizzing Briggs. The banks forming this bar, are not, however, so closely connected, but that vessels of considerable burthen (perhaps 300 tons) may enter, under the direction of a pilot. The shores are flat and sandy, and the lands contiguous to them generally level; but gradually elevated as they approach the hilly districts to the north. The soil is sandy; the prevalence of that quality decreasing in proportion to the distance from the shore. The higher grounds in culture, partake of moss; of the clay kind, there is little in the parish. The air here, is pure and falubrious, if we except the immediate vicinity of a large morass, extending from the town of Dornoch upwards of two miles to the westward, and lying along the county road. This has been a common. Some years ago, a scheme of dividion was formed, under the authority of the Court of Sesson: It was accordingly divided among the proprietors of the adjacent lands, and march stones set up; but still it lies undrained, and a nuisance, as before. Some feeble attempts have been made towards culture at the estern extremity of it.

River, Lakes, Animals, Minerals, Etc. - Besides the common domestic animals, foxes, badgers, pole-cats, hares, otters and rabbits are found in this parish; also eagles, hawks, muirfowl, woodcocks, patridges, plovers and snipes. The river of Evelicks, which falls into the sea near the Meikle Ferry, affords a few salmon and trouts. The hilly part of the parish contains 3 or 4 small lakes, in which a variety of trouts are found. The largest of these lakes may be about a mile long, and a quarter of a mile broad. One of them produces a fine red trout, which weighs from $\frac{1}{2}$ pound to $1\frac{1}{2}$ pound. The parish is not destitute of common stone quarries. At Embo there is one of free stone. There is no natural wood of any value. A great quantity of Moss Fir is found under ground: It serves for light to the poorer sort; and logs are sometimes dug up, which are used even in building. This sort of timber is remarkably durable. At both the Skibos there are thriving plantations of fir, though of no great extent. At evelicks, some appearances of coal have been observed; and about a mile to the N.W. of Dornoch is found a vey rich clay. It is extrememly hard to dig; the pick must go before the spade: It remains hard after exposure to the air; yet a very short carriage makes it run to the consistency of pitch. When used in bjilding, it takes an equal quantity of sand.

Agriculture and Produce. - The crops raised here, are oats, bear, pease, potatoes, and some beans and rye. About the year 1758, potatoes became a principal article of provision here. Now, they serve as the chief subsistence of the people during a third part of the year; with many for one half, and with some even for two thirds of the year.* There are no field tyrnips cultivated here; and foorce any sown grass raised, except in two or three places, the seats of men of property; which are also the only inclosures in the parish. Hence, the arable ground is, for the greater part, in constant tillage. It is therefore no wonder, that it yeilds poor cops, in return for much labour and expence. Lime is little known here, as a manure, The benefit of it is not understood; nor could it indeed be procured but ata heavy expence; for though there are shells, the tenants cannot afford to burn them. Towards the shore, the prevailing crops are bear and pease; in more inalnd farms, oats; and of the last, different kinds of white, and of small black oats and used, according to the various qualities and circumstances of the soil. The people find that great oats quickly degenerate in poor land; and while they admit that this is the more fruitful grain, still they contend, that the other is, on the whole, more productive, as being more numerous, and yielding more straw. The average returns of bear, may be from 5 to 6; of oats and pease, from 3 to 4. The two last are sown in April, and reaped, the pease, in the end of August, and the oats in September. The bear is sown in May, and ripe in August. After a good crop of potatoes, barley, without any additional manure, is expected, on the coast; but no oats, or very bad, after the barley, which is succeeded by pease; and the following season, the land is manured and sown with bear again. In the inalnd parts, oats are sown

* Many poor families, who rent no land, are accommodated by others with a spot for this useful root, for the sake of the dung, foot, or ashes which they lay upon it; and this, while it contributes essentially to the subsistence of the poorer sort, is also the most prevalent mode practised here for improving and meliorating the foil.

after potatoes. Some farms yield three or more crops of oats in succession; but the sandy soil along the coast, produces not, in general, any tolerable crop of that grain. Fallowing is not practised here, except on the few inclosed farms already alluded to. Scarce any land is plowed in autumn, and but little in winter; the prevailing opinion being, that early plowing or sowing, answers not with the light and open nature of the soil. Some small tenants, on the coast, sow no bear till about the 20th of May; and they are satisfied if but three weeks intervene betwixt the first and second plowings. In light soil, pease and sown before tilling, and then turned down by the plough; which seems to answer best, as by that mode, the scorching impressions of the sun and wind are most effectually resisted, and a greater degree of moisture preserved around the feed. Even bear is sometimes sown here in the same manner. This is the most extensively cultivated parish in the country, yet there is not an eight part of it in culture. It raises not, in ordinary seasons, much more corn than is sufficient for its inhabitants, including those of the burgh. More black cattle, however, are reared here, than the parish requires for the purposes of meat and labour; but not so many horses as the people employ. A few hogs are reared. In the lower parts of the parish there is little sheep pasture; in the hilly districts, flocks of these, and here and there, of goats, are kept; but neither considerable. The ardour for sheep farming has hardly yet commenced here. The precise proportions of land, in culture, pasture, etc., is not ascertained. The quantity of pasture grounds has been considerably reduced or destroyed; the farmer, by the gradual culture of small settlers; and the latter, by the general practice of cutting seal and divot, or turf*.

Heritors and Rent - The best arable ground is let at 20 s. per acre; This is chiefly inclosed, or in the vicinity of the burgh. Inferior ground lets at from 8 s. to 12 s. and the worst at 4 s. or even lower. The real rent may amount in all to about 1300 l. or 1400 l. Sterling. The Countess of Sutherland is the principal proprietor; besides whom there are four heritors, exclusive of the proprietors of small crofts contiguous to the burgh; of the last there are fix. None of the first class resides constantly, and but one has hitherto resided occasionally in the parish; another has lately built, and is expected to spend some portion of his time here.

Population. - Although the registers have not been regularly kept here, it is universally believed, that the population has increased within the last 30 years very considerably, to the extent, it is supposed, of at least 500. This increase is not to be ascribed to any addition from trade or manufactures; for except two hisky distilleries, and some slax spun by the women, no branch of trade whatever is cultivated here. The increased population can therefore only be accounted for from these causes; that the women are prolific, and that by the

* This drew a pleasant sally from an English gentleman, some years ago. Observing a herd of meagre cattle here, gleaning a scanty subsistence on a naked spot, while every cottage was built of seal, and thatched with divot, he sarcastically remarked, that "though Sutherland was not definite of stones, or grass, "the people chose to build their houses of the latter, and leave their cattle to "feed on the former!" This was fetting our management in a light abundantly laughable; yet, the poor people are not so much to blame, as it was natural for this facetious stranger to conceive. They are in general, very poor, and have but small holdings. They never experienced the advantage of substantial, or the comfort of commodious dwellings; and did the set a due value on such, they possess not the means of constructing them, and indeed have little encouragement for the undertaking. Small tenants have no leases here; little improvement, therefore, of any kind, can be expected. In justice to the proprietors, however, it must be added, that it is not their practice to remove the tenants wantonly.

subdivision of farms, and the advancing culture of small crofts and muir ground the people in general are encouraged to marry young. It may be added, that by the partial introduction of inoculation for the small-pox, and by the improved treatment of patients under that disease, which has of late years been pretty generally adopted, even by those who are not yet reconciled to inoculation itself, many lives have been saved, and other fatal disorders prevented. Since the return to Dr. Webster, however, in 1755, there has been a decrease upon the whole, as will appear upon inspecting the following table.

Statistical Table of the Parish of Dornoch.

Length in English miles,	9
Breadth,	6
Population in 1755	2780
, anno 1791*	2541
Decrease,	239
Average of births, for five years preceding 1791	53
of Marriages. †	12

*There may be upwards of 20 persons included in the above number, belonging to this parish, and occasionally residing in it, who make a practice of going yearly to the south of Scotland to work, during, at least, the summer and autumn. There is also included in the above enumeration, a district situated in the bosom of the parish of Rogart, containing 113 souls. There is no register of burials kept here, nor would it convey any satisfactory information if there were because many families continue to bury here, though they no longer reside in the parish; while others, now resident here, bury elsewhere.

† Abstract of Baptisms and Marriages, for five years preceding 1791

Years	Baptisms	Marriages
1786	70	19
1787	47	11
1788	56	10
1789	43	6
1790	48	16
	<u>264</u>	<u>62</u>

in the town of Dornoch,	500
" in the country,	1908
" in the district in Rogart	113
Number of families in the town,	86
" " in the country,	466
" " in Rogart district	24
members of the Established Church,	2427
" Seceders	1
" proprietors residing	6
" non-residing	5
" clergymen	1
Sheriff-depute and clerk	2
Number of writers or messengers	1
" of schoolmasters	1
" of farmers above 30 l. per annum	6
" of shopkeepers in the burgh	4
" of smiths	1
" of masons	1
" of house carpenters	3
" of poor in the parish, about	90
Annual income of the poor,	L. 7 0 0
Average of persons who have fettled in the parish from other counties	12
Number of ploughs	183
Real rent, anno 1791, in Sterling money, about L. 1400	0 0.

Diseases and Fuel - The diseases most prevalent here among females seem to be stomach and hysteric complaints; and among males, toothache, collics, rheumatic, and sciatic complaints. All these seem to arise from cold, poor diet, comfortless lodgings, and scarcity of fuel *. The common mode of providing for winter firing here, is peculiarly injurious of health. During the season, in which the poor people are employed in carrying it out of the hills, they go to the moss, or so far in their way towards it in the evening; lie out in the open air all night, and load their horses in the morning. The great distance, badness of the roads, weakness of their horses, and feantiness of pasture, impose this cruel necessity. There is no cart road to the moss, peat and turf being carried by means of an awkward apparatus, on the backs of smal, half-starved horses. In one or two districts of the parish, the people begin to see the absurdity of this practice, and have actually made some attempts towards a better within the last two years; but nothing like a competent road has yet been executed.

Roads and Bridges. - Nature has made the public roads here passable: they owe little to industry or police; the statute labour has occasionally been exacted, but it has not been applied with that constancy and vigour, which would render it efficient. A commutation of it appears to be now in contemplation, among the proprietors of this and some other northern counties. This parish is destitute of bridges; the want of one is particularly felt at the river of Evelicks, which is often not passable in winter. A piece of ground, in the vicinity of Dornoch, is said to have been destined by a former public spirited proprietor, for the purpose of upholding a bridge on this river, and to have been left by him, under the administration of the proprietor of a neighbouring estate. Whether there are any authentic documents extant, to establish this fact, is not known. At present, the field alluded to is held in property, in the same manner as the rest of the estate, with which it has been so long connected; the present proprietor having purchased the whole, without any reservation, from his predecessor.

Exclesiastical State. - There are no sectaries here, at least no avowed seceders from the established church; one man only, who is not a native of the parish, declines joining in the public religious services. The stipend is 80bolls of bear, and 700 marks Scotch, including communion elements. The glebe isconsiderably under the legal standard. The manse was built about 16 years ago, but was never substantially executed, or properly finished, and therefore stands in need of repairs. Three aisles of the ancient cathedral, form the present church; the fourth has been long in ruins. The church has undergone different repairs, and at a considerable expense. The Countess of Sutherland, is patron.¹ Most of the families, of any distinction, connected with

* There are no well authenticated instances of extraordinary longevity. Soem, however, live to the age of 80, and some 90 years.

¹ The family burying place is within the church. A neat monument has been erected over it to the memory of the last Earl and Countess of Sutherland, the parents of the present Countess, who both died in the flower of youth, within ten days of each other, at Bath, and were buried in one grave in the church at Holyrood-house, anno 1766. His Lordship had only attained the age of 32, and her Ladyship that of 26 years. This amiable pair were not less ennobled by their shining virtues, than by their high rank. Their humane dispositions and condescending manners had greatly endeared them to all orders of society. No wonder, the, that their untimely death was deeply felt, and universally deplored. The monument bears the following inscription, borrowed from David's affectionate lamentation over Saul and Jonathan:

"They were lovely and pleasant
"in their lives,
"And in their death, they were
"not divided.

the parish, continue to bury within the church*. In some measure to remedy this nuisance, the church was lofted some years ago, at the height of about seven feet from the ground. To this upper story, which is the present place of worship, the ascent is by stairs from without, the open area underneath still serving as a burying ground. Notwithstanding this improvement, which is a considerable one, the church is, from its vast extent and stupendous height, a very incompetent house of worship, being extremely cold and beyond the powers of an ordinary voice. †

*around the cathedral is the church-yard, without any fence, and in the centre of the burgh. It is the market place. The county road runs through it. Some years ago, the heritors of the parish and magistrates of the burgh, entered into a resolution to prohibit all farther burying there. A piece of ground, without the town, was accordingly marked out for that use. A day was fixed beyond which no person was to be admitted to the old ground, and public intimations to that purpose, repeatedly made. But the prejudices of the people prevailed, and the project was relinquished.

† Dornoch was formerly the seat of the Bishop of Caithness. The precise time of the erection of the see is not ascertained. Andrew, Bishop of Caithness, is witness to a donation by David I. to the monastery of Dunfermline. He was bishop here anno 1150, and is probably the first of whom there is any authentic account. In the 1222 was consecrated bishop here, Gilbert Murray; who, while yet a young man, and a canon of the church of Moray, greatly distinguished himself in behalf of the independence of the Scottish church. Attempts had been made to bring the clergy of that church, under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of York. The project was not only patronized by the King of England, but favoured by the Pope's legate, who held a convention on the subject at Northampton, in presence of the Kings of England and Scotland, anno 1176. Gilbert was one of the inferior clergy, who attended the Scottish bishops cited by the legate on this occasion. After the legate had addressed a speech to the convention, warmly recommending the measure in contemplation, a long silence ensued, the bishops of Scotland being intimidated by the legate's presence and authority. At length, † Gilbert Murray arose, and asserted the independence of his church, in terms of such manly determination, and vigorous eloquence as at once revived the courage of his associates, and extorted the applause of his adversaries; whereupon the legate, apprehending that he had spoken the prevailing sentiments of his country, broke up the assembly. The young orator was, on his return home, universally caressed, and afterwards promoted to the see of Caithness. He built the Cathedral of Dornoch; died at Scrabster, in Caithness, where the bishops had also a residence in 1245, and was afterwards canonized. A statue of him is still shewn in the church here, under the name of St. Gilbert; but it is not entire. The last bishop, Andrew Wood, was translated here from the isles, anno 1680; and remained till the Revolution in 1688. Writers tell us, that Dornoch was also the seat of one of the monasteries of the Trinity, or Red Friars, otherwise called Mathurines, from their houses at Paris dedicated to St. Mathurine. The great professed object of the institution of this order appears to have been the redemption of Christian captives; to which purpose a third part of their revenue is said to have been destined. "Tertia vere Pars," says their constitution, "reservetur ad redemptionem captivorum, qui sunt incarcerati, pro fide Christiana, a Paganis." Of 13 of these, which are said to have subsisted in Scotland at the Reformation, one was at Dornoch, founded in 1271 by Sir Patrick Murray. Not the smallest vestige of the building, however, can now be traced; the very site of it is unknown at this day. The lands belonging to the ministry of Berwick were given to this place, after that city had fallen into the hands of the English. Here stand the ruins of the bishop's castle, which appears to have been a stately and sumptuous edifice. About the year 1567, George Earl of Caithness, who claimed wardship of Alexander Earl of Sutherland, then a minor, had got the person of the latter into his possession. A tribe of Murrays, inhabiting this part of the country, who were firmly attached to the noble family of Sutherland, and beheld the conduct of Caithness with a jealous eye, contrived to get the minor conveyed from Caithness, and put under the protection of the Earl of Huntly. Caithness in revenge invaded this country, by his son John, who invested the town and Castle of Dornoch, of which the Murrays had possessed themselves. Several skirmishes took place with various success. The Murrays, no longer able to maintain the ground they had occupied retired to the castle. Upon this the master of Caithness burnt the town and cathedral; but still the besieged defended themselves in the castle for a month

longer. At length, however, they were obliged to capitulate, having undertaken to depart out of Sutherland within two months, and delivered three hostages into the hands of the conquerors. The Murrays fulfilled their engagement; yet the hostages were treacherously murdered.

Poor. - The poor's roll of this parish generally contains from 80 to 100 persons. There is no fund for their support but the Sunday collections raised in the church, and small fines occasionally arising from delinquencies. These collections scarce amount to 7 l. Sterling per annum; and even from that, small salaries are paid to the session-clerk and other parochial officers. Hence it is manifest, that the poor can derive from this source but little relief. They therefore collect their subsistence by wandering from place to place, and from parish to parish*.

Burgh. - Dornoch was erected into a royal burgh by a charter from Charles I. anno 1628. The council consists of 15, including the provost, 4 bailies, a dean of guild, and treasurer. By the constitution and practice of the burgh, 4 councillors are annually changed. This is one of five, which compose what is called the northern district of burghs. It has no landed property, nor any other source of revenue, besides the customs levied at six annual fairs held here, and which are on the decline, as indeed the place itself is in the last stage of decay. There is no other town or village in the parish, and this handsomely deserves the name. It contains only four merchant shops, such as they are. Here, and throughout the parish, there are several showmakers, taylor, shoemakers and smiths, scarce one of whom lives by these professions. As they excel in these, so are they but occasionally employed in them, being also farmers on a small scale. No conclusion therefore could be drawn from an accurate enumeration of them. The sheriff-substitute and sheriff-clerk of the county, and a messenger, also reside in the burgh; which has likewise a post-office and parochial school. But there is no physician, surgeon or apothecary in the town or parish.

Language. - The popular language is the Gaelic; from which also almost all the names of the places are manifestly derived. In that language, baile signifies a town. Hence, Tor-baile, Keri-baile, Ean-baile, Skia-baile, compounded of that word and others, signifying, mount, rock, fowl, wing; answering to the figure, situation, or other circumstances of these places respectively. Some places in the vicinity of the cathedral, are denominated from the offices of those who formerly held them; as, Croit'n 'Espig, Auchintreasurich, Auchintaunter; i.e. the bishop's, treasurer's and chanter's fields. One place, now modernized into Cyderhall, was anciently, and still is, in the Gaelic, called Shierra. This, according to a Danish gentleman, who lately visited this place, signified in the language of his country, goat whey quarters.

Character. - Petty frauds and offences against society are prevalent here as well as elsewhere; little disingenuities, pilferings, and wilful encroachments, are also committed; but the more daring and atrocious crimes are rarely heard of in this parish. The people here, cannot be called industrious; but they are tenacious and frugal of what they get. If they can but live without much exertion, they are content to live sparingly; and if they relax of their usual parsimony at fairs and other occasional meetings, they know how to make amends by habitual economy and abstemiousness. Upon the whole, they are a quiet, tractable sort of people, and under proper direction and encouragement, might be employed in manufactures, with advantage to themselves and to the country. Too numerous for necessary purposes of agriculture, they have, at present, no other object before them, to occupy their attention, to excite their industry. Their stature rather above the middle size. They are altogether unacquainted with the sea-faring life,

* In the year 1782, a severe dearth was experienced here; no lives, however, were lost from that cause, though many of the poorer sort endured extreme hardship. The managers for the Countess of Sutherland exerted themselves laudably for the supply and relief of the people. A great quantity of victual was imported into the country by her Ladyship's order, and at her expence. Some supply was also obtained from Government. A benevolent gentleman at Glasgow, a native of this country, sent a cargo to be sold, part of it at prime cost, and part of it to be distributed gratis among the poor.

nor do they discover any great ardour for the army, yet, when they do enter that service, they prove excellent soldiers. The sensible corps raised at different periods, in this country, furnished opportunities for ascertaining this fact. Every place where they have been quartered, will bear testimony to their good behaviour. They have approved themselves to be regular steady men, patient of discipline and subordination; sober and exemplary in their conduct, as soldiers and as men.

Proposed Improvements. - These may be comprehended under a few heads, viz. - the abolition of the partial, oppressive, and absurd tax on coals; - the granting of proper leases and other liberal conditions from landholders; - the introduction of manufactures, - and the establishment of judicious arrangements for the employment and support of the poor. Peats and turf are carried from so great a distance, as to occupy the time of those who have horses for the purpose, during a considerable portion of the summer and autumn. This proves a ruinous burthen to the tenants, who are obliged, on that account, to keep many more horses than the purposes of agriculture require; and although the making of roads and the use of carts, might in a good degree alleviate the evil, the remedy would be but partial, especially with regard to those who are situated farthest off from the hills. Of these, such as have few horses, or none, buy their firing at an extravagant rate from the others, and sometimes cannot procure it on any terms. Any manufacturers settled here, would stand, in this respect, in the like predicament. The poor, who cannot afford to buy, are in a miserable situation. They have to go a great way to collect burdens of whins, broom, etc; nor does the dry dung that lies scattered on the fields escape them. To meliorate the condition at once of the land and of the tenants, it is evident, that such very small possessions as many of them have, should not be permitted to exist. In the present state of the country, they would not furnish a comfortable subsistence, if they had them for nothing. There are, indeed, six large farms in the parish, from 30 l. to 80 l. Sterling, rent. There are also some others, of competent size, under the first mentioned sum: But many small tenants are crowded into one possession, and others settled on small detached portions, altogether inadequate to their support. Each of these has his plough, however poorly provided of cattle; it is but little service they are fit to perform, and that little they cannot do from the smallness of their holdings. The granting of long leases, to poor people, in these circumstances, appears not advisable, because they are not in a situation to avail themselves of them. Previous to leases, it would, perhaps, be expedient to provide otherwise for the supernumerary tenants, that the rest might be suitably accommodated: the aged should not be disturbed, but the younger supernumeraries (manufacturers being first introduced) might, some of them, be employed in these, and others in the service of the tenants. Many of the present tenants would make a good exchange by this; they would, as the hired servants of others, be better fed and clothed than they now are, and would at the same time be relieved from their present solicitude, and responsibility to the landlord. In fact, this is very much the case now among small tenants; the servant lodges and fares in every respect as well as his employer; the former receives his wages, while the latter is, perhaps, unable to pay his rent, or to furnish cattle for his yoke. Hereby, also, another difficulty under which the country labours, would probably be removed, viz. the difficulty of procuring servants; This is, in a great measure, owing to the endless division and subdivision of farms into trifling possessions, making almost every man a master. An intelligent, active, wealthy farmer, from an improved country, set down here and there, would exhibit an example, at once instructive and animating. Such a man, entering a competent farm, with a long lease and other suitable encouragements, would shew the people how to live, and how to acquire the means of living: Meanwhile, they having their possessions enlarged, and acquiring the skill, and adopting the practice of such a man, would, as their circumstances improved, build, inclose, etc., and being first taught and enabled, would, by and by, afford the proprietor a suitable rent. With regard to manufactures, the country contains a sufficient number of inhabitants, and might furnish proper materials for them. The prices of labour and provisions are, comparatively speaking, moderate, though both have advanced

considerably of late years.* Large tracts of ground in the neighbourhood, have lately been covered with sheep. Here is a foundation for the woollen manufacture. The soil here too, appears very favourable to the raising of flax. Small quantities are raised yearly; it grows well, but from unskilful management in watering, the want of a mill, and other difficulties, the profits are extremely precarious, and the whole process is so tedious and laborious, as now conducted, that little benefit is derived from it. To give manufactures, of any kind, a fair chance of success here, a company, composed of the proprietors of land, and professional men, should be formed; The latter only are fit to conduct such business; and without the protection, the influence, and co-operation of the former, they would have many obvious and serious difficulties to contend with. Nowhere can the poor be on a worse footing than here. The principal heritors do not reside in the parish, and therefore contribute nothing towards their support. Wandering from one parish, and from one county to another, the most needy are often overlooked from ignorance of their real circumstances, while on the other hand, impostors and sturdy beggars abuse the generosity and credulity of the public. It is to be wished that the poor were universally confined to their own parishes; that by assessments upon heritors, tenants, and others, in proportion to their several interests, holdings, and circumstances, a certain provision were made for their subsistence; and that employment were furnished them, suitable to the measures of strength and ability, which they may be found to possess. This last suggests an additional argument in favour of manufactures, as thereby the poor, at least many of them, would be made to contribute somewhat to their own support, and the public burthens proportionally alleviated. Upon some such plan, the condition of the poor would be greatly improved, the public relieved from incessant teasing and frequent imposition, and the burden fairly divided among all ranks and characters, in place of falling chiefly, or solely upon the humane and benevolent, and often those least able to bear it.

