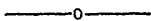


such like, yet they did not show so formidable either in England or Scotland as many of them had bragged they would. This year, however, the Government wished to take this part of the census on a more accurate principle, by including in the returns the religious profession of every family. I suppose they never dreamed that any objection would be made, for they knew that such a question was asked in most of the European States, and of the Colonies. But the Dissenters had an invincible repugnance to having the true state of their numbers made known; and as they, in general, support the present Government, they forced it to give way on the point. Even the Free Church and other Scotch Dissenters who have so often boasted of their numbers, petitioned Parliament against the obnoxious clause; as if a man's religious profession were a secret that he must keep to himself for fear of being persecuted. Churchmen, on the contrary, were all in favor of the clause, because they only wished to know the truth. However, since it is not to be inquired into at present, it is well that it should be clearly seen which party is and which is not anxious that it should be known.



NOTES OF MY TOUR IN THE WEST HIGHLANDS.

(Continued.)

Oban is, as it were, the umbilicus, the great centre of the West Highlands. It is a definite stage at which tourists aim, and thence they ray off in all directions,—for Staffa and Iona, for Inverary, for the Caledonian Canal, or for any other place, civilized or uncivilized. Consequently it consists of a great many hotels, and a few houses and churches: and during the summer months it can boast of the presence of more lords and ladies and swells than any other place in Britain. While the steamer waits, I would advise every one to take a run up the heights at the back of the town: for we get a view of the Lorn country, of islands, and of sea, that will repay any amount of trouble. There to the right, forming one headland of the bay are the grounds and ruins of Dunolly Castle,—more picturesque spot is not to be seen. Farther north, is Dunstaffnage, in older times a royal castle; and from there far into the country, the misty hills of Lock Etive side. If you had time, you should certainly go to see Dunstaffnage, and the Falls of Lora, a singular sea—cataract, only seen to advantage at low water, when Loch Etive pours itself over a ledge of rock with a magnificent sweep. To the east, your background is Craachan Ben, coming sheer down upon the Loch and river Aue, and flowing the tremendous pass of Bunawe, the dread wildness of which is relieved only by the copse on the side of Cruichen. Some of my readers have

surely been under this shadow of the grand Ben. If they have not, they have at least heard its accent, for Mr. Sinclair's parish was Muckairn, or as I wish it had been called, Bunawe. Some of the people there could not understand what use Mr. Sinclair's Gaelic would be to him in America; surely the people out there speak American! Some what like the good Scotch woman in Glasgow, who was amazed on learning that I had been born in America; "that's extraor'nar," she observed, "for ye speak as weel as mysel."

And now, if you please, we will leave Oban behind, and make for the Sound of Mull. We pass the lighthouse on the green island of Lismore; better however not to pass it straightway, but to go on shore if you can. The minister, Mr. McGregor, will receive you with Highland hospitality, and there are several things worth seeing. There's a view from the lighthouse; old Danish ruins and round forts; what was till very lately a Roman Catholic seminary for the manufacture of priests, and also the single convert from Presbyterianism, which their educational machinery made in Lismore. Macaulay's grandfather was once minister of the island, and a tombstone marks the spot where his bones lie. Had this been China, this obisire would now be spoken of as Lord Macaulay; for instead of ennobling the descendants of their peers, the Chinese make a patent of nobility to confer the same title on the ancestors of each mandarin; for this very good reason, that the mandarin's son may be a blockhead, whereas his forbears must have been excellent people to have produced such a worthy descendant. Indeed it was to his forbears and to his Scotch blood, that the late Lord Macaulay owed most of the qualities which made him famous. More's the pity then that he sought to 'foul his own nest' by unworthily slandering both the Highlands and Highlanders!

It's a bonnie spot Lismore, and its little lochs abound in very fine trout. As I believe it is exclusively limestone, it is clothed almost the whole year round in a soft, fresh green, which contrasts strikingly with the stern hills of Appin opposite, and huge Ben Nevis, which blocks up the northward view. The islanders, with few exceptions, belong to the Church of Scotland; but there is now a Free Church in Appin, since the coming in of a new heritor who imported a number of Free Churchmen from Barra. I have been sometimes astonished in travelling through the West Highlands, to find so many ministers Perthshire men; and their Gaelic seems to suit admirably. Thus in the Presbytery of Mull, more than half of the ministers I am told are from Perthshire. In the old Drudical days too, there would seem to have been a similar union and communion. At least, I have discovered in the centre of Skye, and in Blair-Athole memorial stones with exactly similar lines, mathematical figures