

of 1790 and 1791, they hardly distilled 300 bolls; and bought, each succeeding year, above 2000 bolls of meal at a very high rate, and their seed potatoes at 5 s. *per barrel* *.

Wood.—It plainly appears that wood formerly grew in this parish, when thinly inhabited and fewer cattle reared. Frequently large pieces of trees are found in melfes; though now there is not a tree in it, nor is it probable that upon trial any would thrive in it, the situation being so far in the ocean and without shelter. There are, indeed, some small twigs 2 or 3 feet long growing in Coll, which is better sheltered than Tiry. Elspalters rife the height of a wall, and berry bushes thrive when sheltered in gardens. The laird of Coll planted a large garden. The berry bushes thrive in it, but the young trees, though promising at first, soon discover that this is not their climate.

The Duke of Argyll supplies his tenants *gratis* with timber out of his woods on the side of Lochfinart, 60 or 70 miles off; yet it often becomes a dangerous and dear purchase, requiring the hire of boats and hands for a fortnight or upwards. The dampness of the air, and blowing of sand, upon many of the houses, soon rot the roofs, and make the demand frequent and expensive.

Waters,

* The boll of barley sells from 16 s. to 1 l. and small oats at half these prices. Potatoes from 1 s. to 2 s. 6 d. *per barrel*. The gentlemen rear so well, and the small tenants have so few cattle, that very little butter or cheese is made; 24 lb. English of each fell at 18 s.; beef from 1 l. 10 s. to 2 l. *per barrel*; fresh fizeable cod at 3 d.; ling 6 d.; swine from 5 s. to 10 s.; sheep from 4 s. to 6 s.; hens and ducks 6 d.; and live cows from 1 l. 6 s. to 3 l. 10 s. Having no fixed markets of any kind in the parish, nor way to lend to them, we labour under this great disadvantage, that, when we abound, we get no articles sold, and when we must buy, it is commonly at the highest rate: When provisions are too cheap, it is not so much owing to the great abundance as to the want of a market.

Waters, Mills, &c.—Though there be a great number of brooks, Tiry mills seldom can be wrought for want of water or sufficient falls, above five or six months yearly. This makes it necessary, either to send our grain at a great expence to other countries, or use querns or hand-mills. By the lowest calculation, the work of 50 women is yearly lost at grinding. This, with the great loss of grain, which we experience, the loss of other labour, time, and expences, amounts yearly to several hundred pounds Sterling. But there is now expectation of a wind-mill *.

Minerals.

* It is remarkable that at the heads of creeks and bays, there are frequently banks formed of small round stones covered with earth, seemingly formed by the violence of the sea, though now far above high water mark.

There is a plain, called the Reef, near the center of Tiry, reckoned by travellers a very great curiosity. It is almost a pentagon of 1200 Scotch acres, with a sandy bottom mostly covered with black earth ten inches deep, a beautiful carpet variegated with flowers. It seems to have been gained from the sea; the work of ages. The part next the shore has received considerable additions within the present generation. It has three curved green banks, each about two feet high, upon which it appears the sea had formerly beat. Between these banks, the ground is surprisingly plain. The greatest height above high water mark is about six feet, except a small green hill near the center, nine feet higher. The whole Reef is a common untouched by a plough. Upon the top of this hill, looking backwards from under the arm, all the objects upon the plain are seen inverted. This plain is bounded on one side by Faohail, or a small channel with a meandering current, so smooth that the motion is scarcely perceptible. It branches towards the head, which is within one third of a mile to the other shore. When swelled with rain and a high spring tide, being without a bridge, it greatly obstructs travellers. Here there is some danger of the island being cut in two, to prevent which a barricade of stone and earth was raised on the opposite shore, in one part; and the violent storms have raised a high bank of round stones in another; yet the impetuous surge sometimes baffles the whole. There is the like danger near the west end of Coll among the sand banks.