

Terrific Hurricane – Tenement Blown Down

Yesterday's hurricane as experienced at Oban was, as far as wind pressure is concerned, the storm of this generation. The November storm was slight in comparison to it, and had the tide been so high as on the 22nd of November last we would have had another and a sadder tale to tell. As it is, the destruction caused is considerable. When reports from outlying and exposed islands are to hand the story will be a melancholy one. On Thursday the weather was more or less unsettled, and strong gusts blew from the west all through the night; but towards the morning the wind strengthened, and up to noon yesterday, when the hurricane may be said to have attained its greatest pressure, the alarm created by the gale was most marked and apparent. George street in Oban had the appearance of a besieged town. All the shops, with but few exceptions, had their windows fastened up with shutters, while the street was strewn with the debris from the house tops. The Bay was a perfect seething mass of white-water. Blinding spray was dashed up over the piers and into the streets adjacent to the shore. At times only was the shoreline of Kerrera visible, the driving foam from the billows that invaded our land-locked bay rendering a sight of the opposite coast impossible. In the midst of this hurricane the new steamer, Claymore, made her maiden trip such an experience she might never again come through. After weathering "the Mull" on a night like Thursday it is unnecessary to say that the Claymore has proved herself to be a trustworthy sea-boat. One was only sorry to see such a noble vessel out in such a storm, just as one would be chagrined to see the noble work of the sculptor or painter in the possession of Vandals. The Claymore was visited at the North Pier, where she lay for several hours, by many towns people. But the pitching of the steamer detracted from the pleasure of the visit- a visit made all the more pleasanter of the visit by the kind attentions of Mr Brown, Mr MacBrayne's representative here. Shortly before 2 o'clock the Claymore steamed off to Tobermory in the teeth of the hurricane of wind never, surely, steamer left Oban in. The vessel was getting chafed, however, at the pier, which in turn was in danger of being injured materially by the great weight against it, for the wind was almost broadside on. However, a further stay of ten minutes would have caught up the passengers and mail bags from the south, as the Claymore was just heading past Dunolly when the train arrived. This would have been all the more convenient, seeing the mail steamers Pioneer and Mountaineer did not, and indeed, could not, make their usual runs. A large barque anchored near Mr Dunn Pattison's house, on the east side of Kerrera sound, held on, though fears were expressed for her safety, and at one time it did look as if she would drift. On the shore the destruction has been considerable. One of the Provost Menzies' fine new tenements of shops and houses, in course of erection in Breadalbane Place, and all but ready for the roof, has been blown down. The loss will amount to several hundred pounds. The proprietor had all the houses let for the forthcoming Whitsunday term. The utmost sympathy is felt for Mr Menzies by those who are aware of his loss, and to those who are only now made aware of it, and who are at same time acquainted with that gentleman, we are sure the intelligence will not be at all "good news," however interesting. The fabric so rudely overturned was the continuation of a row of fine shops and houses, with some pretensions to architectural beauty, as street architecture now goes, and was three storeys in height. Unfortunately, the builder was not so far advanced as to be ready for the binding timbers of the roof, and so the erection was put down in detail. First, the north gable fell, shortly after noon yesterday; then the side wall next the street. Joists, bricks, and mortar, stone and cement block up the thoroughfare. A small portion of the front of the Hydropathic has been carried away, but this is nothing to speak of considering the exposed nature of the site. Indeed, the contractors has cause for congratulation that the building has escaped so well. Windows all over the town have been stove in as if

they were filled in the gauze instead of plate glass. A window in the Great Western Hotel was blown out; but this is so general an effect it is referred to as but a trifling casualty. Sheds, palings, and everything of a visible erection which partook of a temporary nature have been strewn all over the town and district. Our own printing office got stripped of slates, especially that portion of the roof facing the bay, and for a short time, during the machining of the first edition yesterday part of the case room had to be vacated on account of the rain coming through. Besides, there was no little danger to the men from flying slates which were hurled through the large roof lights, and some to the printing and folding machines, going at a high rate of speed, and not made to impress slates or glass with the "thought that breathe or the words that burn." Up to late last night the tempest continued with but slight signs of abatement, reaping, we have no doubt, a fearful harvest all over these parts from sea and land.