

N U M B E R X I X .

P A R I S H O F K I R K M A I D E N .

By the Rev. Mr ROBERT CALLANDER.

Situation, Extent, &c.

THIS parish is in the county of Wigton, presbytery of Stranraer, and synod of Galloway. It is bounded on the north by Stonnykirk parish; from which, to the southernmost point, or the Mull of Galloway, it is about 10 miles long; on the west it is bounded by the Irish Sea; on the east by the Bay of Glenluce; and is about 2 miles broad. The general appearance of the parish is hilly. Most of the flat grounds produce good crops of corn.

Bays, &c.—Mary-Port, thought to be called so in honour of the Virgin Mary, is a small bay on the eastern shore, which is thought a safe anchoring place when the wind blows from the west. But Drumore, where ships of burden frequently put in, in bad weather, is the safest of any in the parish. Besides these there are Curgie and Kilstay Bay. There was once a pier at the Bay of Port Neffock; but it is now in ruins. This would be a commodious place for shipping, if a good harbour were built. Ships anchor with safety when the weather is stormy from the east. On this shore, towards the south, in the warm season of the year, there is a va-

riety of marine plants growing at the foot, and on the cliffs of the rocks. There is a sea weed, of which a considerable quantity of kelp is made. Samphire grows in considerable plenty, and is gathered for pickling. In going from West Tarbert to the point of Mull, there rises a very bold and elevated coast. It is about the extent of a mile, and projects itself as the boundary between the Irish Sea and the Bay of Luce. In a high westerly wind, a prodigious swell and weight of sea rolls around that point. It is awfully grand. Here the sea has formed caverns, which are rendered dreadful by a setting in tide and a strong westerly wind. The noise is like loud clap of thunder. On the extremity of the point in a fine day, there is a charming prospect of the north of England, Isle of Man, Ireland, &c. Ships pass and repass this point from England, Ireland, and the west of Scotland. There have been several wrecks. It seems to be a proper situation for a light-house. There is abundance of fish every where on the coast, of good quality and great variety. The shell-fish, oysters and lobsters, are very good of their kind.

Produce, &c.—This parish abounds in corn and cattle. Potatoes and other vegetables are plentiful. The farmers lay their account with paying one half of their rent by the sale of cattle, and the other half by corn. Barley and oats thrive in this soil and climate, and their quantity is considerable. The farmers export annually between 200 and 300 bolls, Linlithgow measure. The boll of barley sells this year (1790) at 13 s.; oats at 10 s. 6 d. per boll. The Winchester bushel of barley will weigh, at an average, about 46 or 47 lbs. English. The farmers are industrious, and are making improvements, by liming, &c. The rent of any farm does not exceed L. 150 *per annum*. A farm of the best ground
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the farm of the Muhl. It was supposed to have been dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The present one is more central, and was built A. D. 1633. The Earl of Stair is patron. There are two other heritors; but only one of them resides. The stipend has not yet been augmented, and is only 55 l. 10 s. without any victual. The glebe is considerably short of being legal. At the public school, English, writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, navigation, and a little Latin, are taught. The salary is 100 merks, and L. 2 : 8 : 0 Sterling, for educating 12 poor boys, out of a mortified fund. English is taught at 1 s. the quarter; writing and arithmetic at 1 s. 6 d. .. With the emoluments of precentor and session-clerk, the income will not exceed L. 17 or L. 18 Sterling. Near the northern extremity of the parish is another school; the salary about a guinea, and L. 1 : 12 : 0 Sterling for teaching 8 poor boys, out of the same mortified fund. There is generally a third school, without salary, in winter, at the southern extremity of the parish. In both these last, education is at 1 s. the quarter; and the masters have the privilege of going about with the scholars, and lodging with their parents. The number of the scholars at the three schools, taken together, may be about 120.

Poor.—The poor belonging to this parish are well provided. Besides the ordinary collections, there are the following funds. Mr Andrew M^r Murray merchant in London left L. 100, the yearly interest of which is to be applied to the benefit of the schoolmaster, for educating 20 poor boys, natives of this parish. The late Andrew M^r Dowal, Esq; Lord Bankton, one of the Judges of the Court of Session, left to the poor of this parish L. 100. The yearly interest is divided among them. The late William Adair, Esq; of Flixton, left to the poor L. 400, 3 per cent. consol. annuity. . . These
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three gentlemen were born in this parish, and have left a memorial worthy of record.

Price of Labour and Provisions, &c.—Servants wages have risen a third within these few years. Female servants, who got 20 s. per half year now get 30 s. or more; male servants, who formerly got L. 2, or L. 2 : 10 : 0 per half year, now get L. 3 : 3 : 0, or L. 3 : 10 : 0; some get L. 4. A day labourer's wages is 6 d. with, and 10 d. or 1 s without victuals. The price of poultry is pretty reasonable; butcher meat is 2½ d. per lb. when plentiful; when scarce, it rises considerably. There is no market nearer than Stranraer. The ale-houses in this parish were numerous till of late; but the new regulation of licensing the houses of persons of a fair character, it is to be hoped, will be attended with the happiest consequences. There are three of these houses licensed in this parish.

Miscellaneous Observations.—There is plenty of whin-stone in the parish. The slate quarries are thought valuable, if properly wrought. A good deal of the slate is sent to market. There are several caves, curiosities of their kind; in one of them there is a petrifying water, which drops from the roof. In another on the eastern shore, according to tradition, a hermit lived. The fuel here is peat and turf; and these are scarce, as much of the moor ground has been converted into arable land. The winter is generally moderate. The air is reckoned very wholesome. More flax is raised than formerly; and the ground is proper for it. A lint-mill erected in the parish would be a farther encouragement. The farmers bring their lime from Whitehaven or Ireland, and pay 1 s. 2 d. per Carlisle bushel, which is three Winchester bushels. The trustees are making every exertion to put the high-

high-roads in good order. The fund arises from every householder, except the poor, paying 1 s. 8 d. a-year, and every farm 15 s. for the 100 pounds Scots valuation. Plantations of trees do not thrive well here; the keen air blowing from the sea checking their growth.

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