

NUMBER XXV.

PARISH OF CRAILING.

(COUNTY OF ROXBURGH.)

*By the Rev. MR. DAVID BROWN.**Situation, Extent, and Surface.*

THIS parish is situated in the county of Roxburgh, in the presbytery of Jedburgh, and synod of Merse and Teviotdale. In the records of presbytery it is called, the united parishes of Crailing, Nisbet, and Spital. Crailing and Nisbet were distinct parishes, and Spital is said to have been an hospital, belonging to the abbey at Ancrum. The time of annexation is very antient. It is of a circular form, near 4 English miles in diameter. The river Teviot flows eastward, in beautiful windings, through its centre *, where it is joined by the Oxnam from the south, nearly at right angles.

About three fourths of the parish are arable land, very rich and fertile. The haughs, about a mile broad, in the middle of the parish, are of a deep loamy dry soil. Towards the south, the

* The centre of the parish is 13 miles from Hawick, 7 from Kelso, and 45 from Edinburgh.

the ground rises gradually from the valley; the soil becomes of a sharper, and more stoney kind, and then runs out into sheep pasture. On the southern boundary there are considerable plantations of wood; mostly fir, except on the banks of the Oxnam, where there is a quantity of timber, of various sorts, along the borders of a small and romantic glen; in the bottom of which, there is a flat of rich pasture. The river winds through it, but occasionally touches high and steep rocks, partly covered with natural wood. At the foot of this glen, are situated, Crailing house on one side of the Oxnam, and the manse on the other. This spot is well adapted for beautiful pleasure grounds; in the keeping up, and improving of which, the present proprietor is at considerable pains and expence. The grounds, on the south side of the parish, are mostly inclosed and subdivided with hedges, and rows of trees.

The north side of the parish contains little haugh land, the ground beginning to rise more immediately from the river. The soil is rich and dry, fit for any crop. On the northern boundary, there is a considerable extent of sheep pasture, in which, there is a beautiful green hill, called *Pcnelbeugh*, the only one in the parish. The grounds on that side, though interspersed with a few clumps of fir trees, are mostly open; except towards the west, at Spital, now called Mount-teviot, where there are large inclosures, with hedge rows and belts of planting, and a considerable quantity of full grown timber.

This parish is a small portion, but, at the same time, the lowest, warmest, and most fertile, of that beautiful tract of corn country, on the banks of the Teviot, 20 miles in length, from Hawick to Kelso, which is commonly known by the name of Teviotdale.

Climate, &c.—The climate is dry and wholesome. No diseases are peculiar to the parish; and the people are generally long lived. One man died a few years ago, who was said to be 106. At present there are several persons in the parish about 80, and likely still to see many years.—There is a circumstance, which may be mentioned here, as a proof of the mildness of the climate, and fineness of the soil of this parish, which took place in the late attempt, that was made to cultivate tobacco in Scotland: In one season, a tenant, in this district, drew L. 115 for tobacco plants, and afterwards raised a crop on 12 or 13 acres, which he sold upon the ground, for L. 320; but an act of parliament intervening, (the policy, or the justice of which, need not here be entered into,) the purchaser was unable to fulfil his bargain, and the farmer was compelled to dispose of his tobacco to Government, at only 4 d. per pound; at which rate, it brought him only L. 104. It appeared, from the trials made at that time, that tobacco would thrive well in the southern parts of Scotland.

Rent of the Parish.—The valued rent is L. 8733 Scots. The real amounts to about L. 2500 sterling. The rent of the best land in the parish, is L. 1 : 10 per English acre. The land, in general, is let, not by the acre, but in the lump.

Number of Proprietors, Tenants, &c.—There are two great and one small proprietor, or feuer in the parish. One of these, Mr Hunter of Crailing, resides at his country seat during the summer. Mount-teviot-lodge, (a seat of the Marquis of Lothian,) has not been occupied by the family for some time past. There are four farmers, who pay L. 100; other four, upwards of L. 200, one L. 300 *per annum*; besides

a number of smaller tenants. But there is not now in the parish, above one-third of the number, that there were 40 years ago.

Population.—The population of the country part of the parish, has, of late years, greatly diminished, owing to the monopoly of farms. But, on the whole, the increase is considerable, when compared with the report made to Dr Webster, in 1755, where it is stated, at only 387 souls. The number of persons, at present, in the parish, by actual enumeration, are as follows :

Of the Established Church	-	-	280
Their children, under 10 years of age, or there-			
by	-	-	172
			<hr/> 452
Seceders	-	-	130
Their children	-	-	90
			<hr/> 220
			<hr/>
Total in the parish			672

The proportion of Seceders has been much about the same for many years.

The following is a statement, extracted from the parish register, of the births, marriages, and deaths, for the last ten years :

Abstract

Abstract of Births, Marriages, and Deaths.

Years.	Births.	Marriages.	Deaths.
1781	10	7	10
1782	18	10	14
1783	13	5	5
1784	24	4	2
1785	15	5	4
1786	22	5	1
1787	14	7	3
1788	18	5	7
1789	16	3	2
1790	13	9	7
	163	60	55
Yearly aver. near	16	6	5

The list of deaths is not very exact, as no record has been kept, of persons belonging to this, who have been buried in other parishes.

State of Agriculture.—It is believed, that there is not, in any part of the kingdom, a better system of agriculture. No expence is spared in procuring manure. Marle is got at Eckford, one mile distant; but lime is brought from Northumberland, about 23 miles. And one of the most considerable farmers in the parish, is this year making trial of gypsum, or plaister of Paris, which has, of late, been much recommended. The marle is sold so high, that lime is reckoned cheaper, notwithstanding the distance of carriage. The turnip, and every species of drill husbandry, is carried on here in the highest

highest perfection. The plowmen of this parish, have, at no competition, been excelled in the neatness of their work; and the farmers are remarkable for keeping capital horses, and equipping them to the best advantage. No sight can be more delightful, to one who is fond of a country life, than to survey the rich haughs of Crailing, and the fields of Nisbet, in a fine morning, during the best seasons, for the toils of agriculture.

Crops.—This parish produces a great proportion of wheat, besides all the other kinds of grain of the best quality. The culture of turnips is much attended to, and with great success. They are generally eaten by sheep on the fields. The sheep are inclosed by nets, made for the purpose; by means of which, 400 or 500 are confined within the bounds of 4 or 5 English acres at a time, till the turnips are all consumed. The ground being well prepared for the turnips, and thoroughly cleaned while the crop is upon it, the necessity of summer fallowing is precluded, and is, therefore, seldom practised in this parish. The sheep leave the ground richly manured, and wheat is generally sown upon fields thus prepared, any time before Christmas. There are, upon an average, about 220 acres of turnip annually consumed in this parish, by sheep from neighbouring parishes, and from the English border, which are thereby thoroughly fed for the market, to the number of about 2200, allowing 10 sheep to an acre. Such turnips, as are not consumed in this way, (which are not a few,) are given, by the farmers, to their young stock, both of cattle and sheep. The turnips, that are late of being consumed, are succeeded by a crop of barley, which is frequently accompanied with grass-seeds. The crops of this parish, and of Eckford to the east, are generally more early, than even those of the Lothians.

Price

Price of Labour.—The average wages of a man-servant, living in the house, are about L. 7; those of a woman about L. 3:10. The wages of men-labourers, furnishing their own meat, are 10d. a day, from Martinmas to Candlemas, and 1s the rest of the year, except in time of harvest, when they are somewhat higher. The wages of women are, at turnip-weeding, and other farm-work, in summer, 7d a day, and at shearing in harvest, 1s, furnishing their own victuals.

Carts and Ploughs.—There are 48 carts and 44 ploughs. The ploughs are of Small's construction; and though all made in the parish, they are not inferior to his manufacture. They are always drawn by a pair of horses, and one man both drives and holds the plough.

Animals, Fish, &c.—There are about 140 horses and 350 black cattle in the parish. The stock of sheep is about 2400. The breed is between the best border ewes, and Bakewell's and Culley's tups. The lambs, for some years past, have sold at from 8s to 11s a head; the wool is all laid, and sells at about 86s per stone of 24 English lb. from 3 to 8 fleeces go to the stone. Such is the attention here paid to the culture of sheep, that many are bred and reared even on the best grounds:

The rivers Teviot and Oxnam, already mentioned, abound with great variety of trout. Vast numbers of sea trout come up in summer and autumn, and afford excellent sport to the angler. There are some pike of a large size in the back-waters or deserted channels of the Teviot. There are a great many grilse, and some salmon in that river.

Mineral Spring.—The only thing of the kind in the parish, and that even scarcely worth mentioning, is a small spring near the manse, within a few yards of the minister's well, of
which

which the common people talk very highly, as a cure for the cholic.

Villages.—There are three villages in the parish, viz. Crailing, and Upper and Nether Nisbet. But, indeed, they scarcely deserve the name of villages, being inhabited only by such labourers and tradesmen, as are necessary for the purposes of the neighbouring farmers.

Ecclesiastical State of the Parish.—The present church and manse were built about 35 years ago. The church is small, but handsome, well finished, and in good repair. It stands remote from all other buildings, on a small eminence near the south bank of the Teviot, where that river is joined by the Oxnam, which is about the centre of the parish. When this church was built, the church of Nisbet was thrown down, and not a vestige of it now remains. The hospital and chapel at Spital were long ago demolished, and even the burying-ground there has been totally abandoned for many years. Nothing but a few tomb stones now mark the place, and these are almost grown over with trees and weeds. But the burying-ground at Nisbet is still used, by all the Nisbet and Spital side of the parish.—There are no remains of the old church of Crailing, which stood within a few yards of Crailing house; but the parishioners on Crailing side, and some also, who have left the parish, still insist upon using the old burying-ground, although the proprietor of Crailing has, in lieu of it, given them an ample space around the new church; and although their late minister set them an example, by erecting there a tomb for himself some years before he died.—The manse stands upon the old site of Crailing manse, nearly about half a mile south from the present church. The king is patron. The living consists of 85 bolls of meal, and a little more than 75 bolls of barley, Linlith-

gow measure. The minister is titelar of the vicarage tithes, consisting of lambs, wool, lint, hemp, hay, &c. which he lets at present for L. 30 : 10 sterling. It is believed they may be rented considerably higher. There is likewise a glebe of 9 acres and 17 poles English, and a manse, &c. all which are in value according to the rate of the times.

There is no dissenting meeting-house in the parish. The Seceders here are accommodated at Jedburgh, which is about 3 miles distant.

State of the Schools.—There are two established schools in the parish, viz. one at Crailing, and one at Nisbet. The schoolmaster of Crailing has L. 5 : 11 1 $\frac{1}{7}$, as salary, and about L. 3, as being parish and session clerk. He has also the interest of money, left by bonds for his use, to the amount of L.^s 3 : 15 *per annum*. The schoolmaster of Nisbet has L. 2 : 15 : 6 $\frac{2}{7}$, as salary, and 10s for collecting the poor's rates of the barony of Nisbet. The school-fees are very small, being, for English, 1s. per quarter, for English and writing, 1s 6d. and for English, writing, and arithmetic, 2s 6d. The annual average number of scholars, for the last 6 years, has been 48 at Crailing school, and 36 at Nisbet.

State of the Poor.—They are supported by poor's rates. It is found, by written records, that, between 30 and 40 years ago, the poor in this parish, in number about 8 persons, were supported, or relieved in their own houses, for about L. 14 sterling *per annum*. Of late years, about 14 persons, at an average, have been maintained in the same way, for L. 27 *per annum*.

Roads, Bridges, and Boats.—The turnpike road on the south banks of the Teviot, betwixt Hawick and Kelso, passes through
this

this parish. The other roads are kept in repair by statute money. There is a bridge over the Oxnam, near the manse, which is the only one in the parish. It was built about 20 years ago, by subscription, and is still in good repair; it will no doubt be upheld by the turnpike funds.—The nearest bridge over the Teviot, is that at Ancrum, a short way above. But, for the conveniency of the parish, the heritors uphold a boat, and pay a boatman. To this they are bound, on account of the annexation of Nisbet and Spital to the church of Crailing; and on Sundays no fare is exacted, from persons attending the parish church.

Antiquities.—A Roman road or caufeway passed through the west part of this parish, the traces of which are still to be seen. There are also vestiges of two encampments on the top of Penelheugh; and that they belonged to the Romans, we are led to conjecture, from their vicinity to that road. One of them seems to have been strongly fortified, and though now totally demolished, it still retains the name of the Castle.—The site of it is very high, and commands a most extensive prospect; taking in at once all the windings of the Teviot from Hawick to Kelso, and part of the several beautiful streams which join it in that course. The whole county of Berwick is also seen from it, and a part of the German ocean. The view is bounded on the south by the lofty mountains of Cheviot, and, on the north, by the Lammermuir hills.

Nisbet is noted, by tradition, for being a strong-hold of some of the antient marauders of the border. Many persons are yet living, who remember the ruins of two strong towers at the village of Nether Nisbet, and stones of excellent workmanship are still dug up from time to time. It also deserves to be mentioned, on account of its antiquity, and the singularity of its tenure; that the proprietor of the barony of Crai-

ling is bound to furnish, a guard of his own vassals, for the circuit Court of Justiciary, when it meets at Jedburgh. On this account, there is annexed, to that barony, the property of some acres of land at Lanton, in the parish of Jedburgh, which is called the Crowner's lands.

Disadvantages.—It is a disadvantage, to which the lowest haughs of the parish are liable, that the rivers sometimes swell to such a height, as to carry off either the corns when cut, or the manure, when lying on the surface, and thus to destroy the labours of the farmer. What renders these floods more destructive is, that they are often unexpected, and sudden, by great rains falling in the distant mountains, when no symptoms are perceived by the inhabitants of this, and of the neighbouring vallies.

But the chief and general disadvantage of this parish, is, the distance from coal, and the great expence of land carriage, on that and all other commodities. Although a considerable quantity of fire-wood is annually sold at Crailing plantations, yet it is generally thought, that coals are the cheapest fuel. They are brought from Etal in Glendale, and from Rychester on Reid water, a branch of the Tyne, both in Northumberland, and both distant about 23 miles. But still it is some comfort to observe, that these coals are of a very excellent quality.

Means of Improvement—The improvements of this parish, and of the neighbouring districts in general, have been very rapid for some years, owing to the establishment of turnpike roads, and to the great success in the culture of turnip; and it is hoped, that there will soon be an easy communication with the German ocean, by means of the proposed canal. If that should take place, it will necessarily lead to the establishment of manufactures, and thereby increase the population, extend the improvements, and double the value of estates in this part of the kingdom.

NUMBER