

NUMBER XXXVI.

PARISH OF DUNBAR,

(COUNTY OF HADDINGTON.)

*By the Rev. Mr GEORGE BRUCE.**Name, Situation, Surface and Prospect.*

THE parish takes its name from the town; and the name of the town, *Dunbar*, or *Barodunum* according to Buchanan, is probably derived from some eminent hero of antiquity of the name of Bar, whose place of residence it was.—It is situated in the county of Haddington, in the provincial Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, and is the seat of the presbytery of Dunbar. It is about 9 miles in length along the coast, from E. to W. and, at a medium, nearly 2 miles in breadth.—The face of the country is pleasant, rising gradually and moderately, for the most part, from a low coast. It forms a very agreeable landscape, the back ground of which, in every direction, exhibits a variety of striking objects. Eastward is St Ebb's Head, with a bold and high coast;—to the S. the rising hills on the skirts of Lammermuir, and the high grounds
of

of Whittingham;—westward, are Dumbender Law, Garleton Hills, and North-Berwick Law; and on the N. the Bass, the Isle of May, the Frith of Forth, the coast of Fife, and the lofty mountains of Angus.

Soil.—The soil is rich, and the parish of Dunbar is perhaps the most fertile spot in East Lothian, which is the most fruitful province in North Britain. It is partly a rich loam, partly clay, and partly a light mould. It is well cultivated, and produces great crops, chiefly wheat, barley and beans, but little oats, and less rye. Rich crops of broad clover and rye-grass are raised, and the land answers well for turnips and potatoes. Sea-ware is much used for manure, and with good success. Limestone is got in the E. end of the parish, and there are draw kilns for burning lime, which is used by the farmers, and sold to those in the neighbourhood. The fields are inclosed, some with stone walls, some with thorn hedges; and some of them are still open. The greater part of the land is dry, and the seasons are early.

Rent, Proprietors, &c.—The land is, in general, high rented. The burgh acres give from L. 4 Sterling to above five guineas the English acre, and considerable farms from 30s. to two guineas. The land is divided among 7 great heritors, (of whom 3 reside in the parish,) and about the same number of very small ones. There are 30 great farmers, who pay of rent from L. 60 to L. 600 Sterling. They are generally opulent and respectable. There are 7 or 8 small ones. There is one grazier, who deals to a considerable extent, in breeding and feeding for the butcher market. A good many cattle are stall-fed, and sheep are fattened with turnips. The valued rent of the parish is L. 16,953 Scotch, and the real rent about L. 8000 Sterling.

ling. The Duke of Roxburgh has a small house at Broxmouth, pleasantly situated. Sir Peter Warrander has Lochend. Nineware belongs to Mr Hamilton of Bangour, and Belton to Mr Hay. Mr Anderson has a small house beautifully situated at Winterfield, from the summer house of which there is a delightful prospect, very extensive, and much diversified. The Earl of Lauderdale has built a very elegant house at the W. end of Dunbar.

Villages, Rivers, Mills, &c.—There are five villages in the parish, *viz.* Belhaven, within the royalty, West Barns, Hedderwick, East Barns, and Pinkerton.—There are two rivers; both have their source in Lammermuir hills. The largest of these is the Tyne, which, after a pretty long course, empties itself into the Frith of Forth at Tynninghame. There the tide flows about two miles, and has destroyed on both sides of the river several acres of good land, which Dutch skill and industry would have preserved. The other river is the Biel, which runs by Whittinghame, the Bield, Belton, and West Barns, and empties itself into the Frith at Bielmouth. On this river, at the village of West Barns, a cotton and flax mill is just now begun to be erected, from which we have great expectations. The cotton manufacture is at present one of the most flourishing and useful branches of commerce in Britain. It employs a number of hands, and especially young people. This mill is a new thing in this county, and, if it succeeds, will be a great blessing to this corner. It is generally esteemed a patriotic attempt, and has the good wishes of every person of public spirit.—At West Barns, there are flour mills of the best sort, where a considerable quantity of wheat and barley is manufactured. There are three other corn mills in the parish. To these mills, the town and some estates in the country are thirled; a wretched piece of police!
Thirlage

Thirlage to a mill, and all kinds of feudal servitude to the landlord, are extremely inconvenient to the farmer, and hostile to all improvements. Indeed, these Gothic customs are justly falling into disuse among the sensible part of the gentlemen in Scotland.

Population.—By an accurate survey, in the present year, (1792), it appears, that there are 3700 inhabitants in the parish, of all ages. The return to Dr Webster, in 1755, amounting only to 3281, there is consequently an increase of 419 souls. The following is an abstract from the session register, of births, marriages, and burials for the last 10 years :

	Births.	Marriages.	Burials.
1782	68	29	58
1783	77	32	39
1784	97	26	42
1785	98	22	43
1786	68	19	43
1787	81	21	42
1788	79	24	32
1789	85	21	32
1790	80	23	64
1791	79	27	54

This account is pretty accurate, in respect of marriages and burials, but is considerably deficient in regard to births, as many neglect to get the names of their children entered in the public register. If any regulation could be made to supply this defect, and to enable the session-clerk to keep the parish register exact, and to oblige him to give in annually to some public office, a true list, signed also by the minister, of all the births, marriages, and burials, which have happened in the parish for that year; it would ascertain the population of every particular parish, as well as of Scotland in general; and might answer many valuable national purposes.

Burgh.

Burgh.—Dunbar is a royal burgh, erected by a charter from King David II. about the middle of the 14th century. It is centrally situated between Edinburgh and Berwick upon Tweed, being 27 miles distant from each. It stands on a moderate eminence, and a dry bottom. The principal street is broad and well aired, and the houses are much improved of late, and make a very genteel appearance. There are in the town, two large inns for the accommodation of travellers. At some distance, among the rocks, there is a retired place for sea-bathing, with a room to undress. The town is remarkably healthy, as is the parish in general. There are many instances of longevity, of persons who have arrived to the age of 80 or 90 years, and upwards. It is exposed to cold and sharp winds, from the east and north, chiefly in spring. The town of Dunbar is supplied with plenty of good soft water, conveyed in leaden pipes from the distance of above two miles. This was done in 1766, at a considerable expence; and the merit of this great benefit is due to the public spirit of the magistrates, who were then in office, and in which they were assisted by the liberal contributions of the inhabitants. On that occasion the streets were new paved. In 1758, a piece of ground was allotted for a washing green, and inclosed with a hedge, and a drying house erected on it.—The government of Dunbar is by a Provost, three Bailies, a Treasurer, and 15 Councillors. The revenue, amounts to about L. 500 Sterling a-year. Dunbar, with Haddington, North Berwick, Jedburgh, and Lauder, send one member to Parliament. The usual unhappy effects of borough-jobbing at elections, are, intemperance, political enmity, and neglect of business. Though Dunbar has not been quite exempted from these evils, it has suffered as little, in this respect, perhaps,

haps, as any royal burgh in Scotland. If our members for burghs would exert themselves to advance, not only the public good of the nation, but also some material concern of the towns, which they represent, they would found an interest on real merit, which would be more solid, as well as more honourable, than that which is founded on election dinners, expensive entertainments, and drunkenness. These serve only to debauch the morals of the inhabitants, and to hurt the families of those very persons, whose friendship they wish to secure. There are in Dunbar, no fewer than 46 licensed alehouses, where low-priced spirits are retailed, and, where the execrable custom of dram-drinking is practised. This we may justly pronounce to be the bane of all good, and the source of all ill; the ruin of health and morals, and of all domestic duty and comfort; the reproach of man, and the disgrace of woman.

Harbour and Shipping.—The harbour was originally at Belhaven. The east pier of the present harbour was begun in the time of *Cromwell's* protectorship, to the expence of which *Oliver* granted L. 300, as appears by a letter of General Monk from Dalkeith. For a long time after that period, the harbour continued very imperfect, capable of containing only a few small vessels. Early in the present century, it was enlarged and deepened, by digging into the solid rock, 8 feet deep at an average; and at the same time very commodious quays were built. This was a work of incredible labour and expence, and reflects no small honour on those who had the management of public affairs at that time. In reality it was the most capital improvement of the place, and the very *making* of the town and its trade. The harbour, though very safe, is still but small, and of difficult access. There was lately a new pier

pier built on the rock, that forms the west side of the entry, to the expence of which the Convention of Royal Burghs gave L.600 Sterling. The harbour is defended by a battery mounting twelve guns, 9, 12, and 18 pounders. Very lately a large and convenient dry dock was built.

The following is a list of the shipping, belonging to Dunbar, with the tonnage, and number of sailors :

Ships.	Tons.	Men.
8	408	33—employed in the coasting trade,
8	1097	67—in foreign trade,
2	675	50—in the whale-fishing trade.
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18	2180	150

Fisheries.—There are 12 fishing boats for white fish and lobsters, which employ about 40 men. There is a custom-house, in which there are a collector and comptroller, a land surveyor, a tide surveyor, 4 tide-waiters, and a custom-house boat, with 7 men belonging to it.—The ships belonging to the East Lothian and Merse fishing Company, are stationed at Dunbar. They were once 5 in number, but are now reduced to 2. This Company was established in 1752, and has continued with various success. It is the oldest of the kind in Britain, and, upon the whole, has been the most successful.—The herring fishery was formerly more considerable and regular. It is of great benefit to the town, and to all the country round; but, for several years past, it has become very precarious and uncertain.

Trade and Manufactures.—The corn trade is the most considerable branch. It is sold, chiefly by samples, in the weekly market, which is held every Thursday.

Subjoined

Subjoined is a list of grain, &c. exported in the year 1791, and shipped at Dunbar :

	Quarters.	Brought over	Quarters.
			8316½
Wheat, -	2568½	Oat-meal, -	862
Flour, - -	515½	Barley-meal,	71
Barley, -	1814	Beans, -	940
Malt, -	2999½	Pease, -	162
Oats, -	419		
	<hr/>	Total	<hr/> 10,351½
Carry over	8316½		

Split pease and beans, 23 tons ; hulled barley 118 tons. About 8000 bolls of barley are malted yearly. Dunbar malt is famous for its quality, being remarkably well made. Above 6000 tons of coals, are landed annually at Dunbar. The price of coals is between 5 s. 6 d. and 6 s. 6 d. *per* boll, which weighs 11½ cwt.—There is a very fine ropery at Dunbar, where there are employed from 20 to 30 men ; and another new one at West Barns. The cordage manufactured is above 100 tons annually.—Kelp, in a small quantity, is made on the coast.—Soap and starch are manufactured in the town and neighbourhood.

Church.—The fabric of the church is very old, and the form of it is very bad for an auditory. It is built exactly in the form of a cross. The body of it is 100 feet long, and it is only 24 feet wide within the walls. It was founded *anno* 1392, by George Earl of March, for a Dean, an Archpriest, and 8 Prebendaries. These were named from their several respective prebends, or benefices ; *viz.* Dunbar, Pinkerton, Belton, Spot, Pitcox, Linton, Dunse, and Chirnside. The patronage fell to the Crown, by the forfeiture of the Earl of March. The Duke of Roxburgh is

the present patron, and is titular of the tithes, which are very considerable in this parish.—The church, till lately, was, in the inside especially, one of the worst, and most inconvenient, perhaps in Scotland. The floor was sunk below the ground without, which made it always damp and cold. It was repaired by the heritors in 1779, floored with deal, and ceiled in the roof. A part of the long body was cut off, by a partition, as useless, and it was regularly seated; so that it now looks clean and neat, the quire only remaining unaltered.—There were two monasteries in the parish, both founded by Patrick Earl of March: One of *Red Friars*, in 1218, the other of *White Friars*, in 1263.—The living at present consists of 23 bolls wheat, 65 bolls barley, 23 bolls oats, and 7 bolls pease, with L. 34 Sterling. A decret of mere locality, without any augmentation, was obtained in absence of the minister in the year 1767. There is a very good manse, which was built in 1776. The glebe consists of 5 English acres. There is no grafs.—There are two Seceding Societies in the parish; a Burgher meeting in Dunbar, and an Antiburgher one in East Barns. Their congregations are made up of a collection of people from all the parishes in the neighbourhood.

Schools.—There are 3 schools in Dunbar, a grammar school, a mathematical and an English one. The masters of these schools have each a house and genteel salary. They are chosen and paid by the town. This parish never had a parochial school till 1790, when one was settled by the heritors, (with a salary of L. 8 : 6 : 8 Sterling,) at West Barns, where it was much wanted, to accommodate the inhabitants of the west end of the parish, which is populous, containing about 800 inhabitants. There is a private school in East Barns with a salary,

salary, being the interest of L. 100 Sterling, mortgaged for that purpose by Mr William Hume, late farmer in that village. To this schoolmaster the family of Spot gives a house and garden *gratis*. The importance of a parochial school seems not sufficiently attended to. The moral principles, and future usefulness, of the lower class of people, depend very much upon their early education. This was the sense of the Legislature, when the law established a school, with a legal salary, in every parish in Scotland. Notwithstanding which, it is but too evident, that the schoolmaster, however valuable a member of society he may be, is often neglected, and ill used. How dishonourable to grudge and withhold from so useful an officer, the small pittance which the law has assigned, as the wages of severe labour and attendance! How unjust, when it is considered, that the schoolmaster's salary is no part of the heritor's property; for when an estate is purchased, that salary is deducted from the rental. The heritor, in that case, is only a trustee, and when he refuses or declines to pay his proportion, he keeps money in his pocket, which does not in fact belong to him, but to another.

Poor.—The number of poor is very great, as is the case in all country towns, especially such as are sea-ports. The frequent misfortunes, happening to seafaring people, often throw whole families of helpless children on the charitable funds. This indeed affords an opportunity of showing Christian benevolence, and the true Christian will readily embrace all such opportunities. To rear up orphans, destitute of friends, and to make them useful members of society,—to feed the hungry, and clothe the naked,—to support the aged, and relieve the distresses of the widow, will gratify the feelings of humanity, and, at the same time, fulfil

fil the duties of that religion which we all profess. The provision for the poor is an annual assessment, by the heritors, according to their valued rents, in a joint meeting with the minister and elders.—The town pays a sixth part of this assessment; the remainder is paid, one half by the heritors, and the other half by their tenants. To this are added, the weekly collections at the church, and the profits arising from the mortcloths and a hearse. There is also the interest of a small mortification of L. 83 : 6 : 8 Sterling. All these sums are intrusted to the minister and kirk-session, as the fittest persons to judge and proportion the supplies according to the necessities of the poor*.

Antiquities.—The venerable ruins of the castle of Dunbar, are justly esteemed a remarkable piece of antiquity. There is no history nor tradition to fix the date of this building, or to point out the person by whom it was erected. Camden narrates, that *Gospatrick*, Earl of Northumberland, retiring into Scotland from the Norman Conquest, was honoured by Malcolm Canmore with the castle of Dunbar, and earldom of March, and that his posterity afterwards took the surname of Dunbar. King Edward II. of England, escaped to this castle, (then in the hands of the English), after the battle of Bannockburn, and thence fled to Berwick in a fisherman's boat. It has been large, and built on several rocks, within the sea-mark. It was exceeding strong, and before the use of artillery, quite impregnable.

* During the scarcity in the years 1782 and 1783, a considerable sum was subscribed by the inhabitants for the relief of the poor in the town, with which a quantity of oat meal was bought, and sold out at the reduced price of 1 s. the peck, when the current price was sometimes 2 s. 6d. The country heritors supplied their poor, each in his own estate.

pregnable. In some old records, it is called Earl Patrick's *Strong House*. It was always esteemed a place of importance, and the key to Scotland on the S. E. border. Dunbar was, for many years, during the cruel wars between the two nations, the scene of much action and bloodshed. The town was frequently ravaged and burnt. The castle was often besieged, and sometimes bravely defended; particularly *anno* 1336, when under the government of a lady, called, *Black Agnes of Dunbar*, the wife of Patrick Earl of March, and the sister of Randolph Earl of Murray. This manly heroine, in the absence of her husband, by her vigilance and military courage, forced Lord Montague to raise the siege, and leave the country. To this castle, Earl Bothwell fled, and left the unfortunate Queen Mary in the hands of the associated Lords at Carberryhill. It was taken afterwards from Bothwell's dependents, by the Earl of Murray, the Regent of Scotland, and demolished, and the artillery was carried to Edinburgh, by order of the Parliament.

Within the parish of Dunbar, lies a part of Down Hill, famous for the encampment of General Leslie, with the Scotch army, before their defeat at the battle of Dunbar. This battle was fought in the low grounds, E. from Broxmouth. At Broxmouth, there is a mount of earth, which still retains the name of *Cromwell's Mount*. At the church yard, there is an elegant monument, with a fine marble statue, erected *anno* 1610, to the memory of George, the last Earl of Dunbar, and Lord High Treasurer of Scotland. In the church yard, there are two grave-stones, marking out the burial place of two officers of the castle; they are nicely cut, with Latin inscriptions in Saxon characters; the date of the one is MCCCL. and of the other MCCCLI.

Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous Observations.—There is but little wood, which makes the country look naked. The land is thought too valuable to admit of much planting. About Broxmouth there are some large and venerable old trees. On the Links of West Barns, there is a small young plantation, and a very fine situation for a house. The post road runs from E. to W. the whole length of the parish, and is kept in good repair. There are two toll bars, one at the Kirk Hill, east from Dunbar, and the other on the west side, at Belhaven. There are four bridges maintained by the county. The cross roads are kept in good order by the statute labour.—The expence in drefs, in furniture of the house, and in the table, is greatly increased from what was the mode half a century ago. This is indeed the case in general throughout every part of Scotland, in proportion to the progress of refinement and wealth, in the present advanced period of society. The yearly wages of a man-servant in a family is 7 guineas, or $7\frac{1}{2}$ guineas, and a woman-servant gets 3 guineas; a day-labourer, 1 s. a-day, and a woman for working in the fields, 6 d.; a gardener 1 s. 2 d.; a mason or carpenter, 1 s. 8 d. In harvest, the corn is cut down by day-labourers, and their wages vary according to circumstances, such as the weather, the number of reapers in the market to be hired, &c.—There is a good butcher market in Dunbar; beef and mutton bring 4 d. or $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. pork and lamb in proportion. White fish are scarce and dear; salmon is brought from Berwick. A hen sells for 1 s. a duck for 10 d.; a goose for 2 s. 6 d. a turkey for 3 s. 6 d. or 4 s.; eggs, from 5 d. to 7 d. a-dozen; a lobster for 6 d.; butter, $9\frac{1}{2}$ a-pound, cheese, 5 d.; potatoes and herrings furnish a great part of the poor peoples subsistence.

The grand and important question, *What can be done to better the condition of the people?* remains to be answered.

Improve

Improve the morals of the people, seems to be the best reply. Found their virtue on its true basis, *Religion*. Not on metaphysical speculation, but on the plain, capital, and universally allowed principles of Religion. *Improve the manners of the great*: Let those of distinguished rank assume a *public* profession of religion, and countenance it by their example. This would have a leading influence on the great body of the people. It would be a cheap and easy antidote against anarchy and disorder. This seems to be the true secret of government, the best bulwark of the state, as well as the surest means to advance the happiness of any particular district. Good morals are of more consequence to individuals, as well as to a state, than great wealth; nor should the latter be coveted, unless it can be obtained without injury to the former.

N U M.