

N U M B E R XXV.

PARISH OF NEW OR EAST MONKLAND.

(*County of Lanark.—Presbytery of Hamilton.—Synod
of Glasgow and Ayr.*)

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Name, Situation, and Extent.

THE parishes of Old and New Monkland, were formerly united, under the general name of Monkland, from the Monks of Newbottle, to whom they originally belonged. But part of it being erected into a separate parish, about the year 1640, it was called *New Monkland*, and the other district *Old Monkland*, for distinction's sake. In most writings, however, the former is called *East Monkland*, from its being situated to the east of *Old Monkland*.—*East Monkland* is situated in that district or subdivision of Lanarkshire, called the *Middle Ward*, and is the most northerly parish in the county. It is about 10 miles in length, from east to west, and 7 in breadth about the middle, but narrower at both ends.

Surface, Soil, Agriculture, Produce, &c.—There is neither hill nor mountain in the whole district, although the greater part of it lies considerably above the level of the sea. The highest lands are in the middle of the parish, and run the whole length of it, from east to west, declining gently on each side to the rivers *Calder* and *Luggie*, which are its southern

southern and northern boundaries. The whole is a beautiful champaign country, agreeably diversified by vales and gentle risings. The eastern part of the parish is rather encumbered with moss.—The soil is various. The north and west parts of the parish are the best, consisting, generally, of a strong clay soil, and, when properly cultivated, yield good crops. The middle and east parts are of a mossy soil, and, in early seasons, yield good crops of oats and potatoes; but, in cold late seasons, seldom ripen well. Wheat, barley, pease, beans, oats, flax, clover, and rye-grass, are sown annually; but oats are the most general crop. Great quantities of flax are raised for sale, some years to the extent of above 100 acres. The flax is generally sown the second year after the lands are broken up from pasture, after a crop of oats or pease. An acre of ground let for flax, brings 5 l. or 6 l. Sterling of rent for that year. There are 114 ploughgates of land in the parish. The ploughgates differ greatly with regard to extent; but, on an average, may contain from 70 to 80 acres of arable land, besides pasture and moss, of which last there are some thousands of acres in the middle and eastern parts of the parish. The estates of Airdrie, Rothfolloch, Monkland, and Rochfoles, are greatly improved, well inclosed, and finely sheltered with large plantations of forest trees, which thrive well. The parish, in general, is inclosed with ditches and hedges of white thorn; but many of the hedges are bad, partly owing to want of care, and partly to the mossy soil of the higher grounds, where it is found, that thorns never thrive, and seldom live above 20 years. The best improved lands are occupied in pasture, and let yearly to graziers, for fattening sheep and black cattle. By this method, the lands are not only improved, but also bring more rent, than by letting them on leases. Manures of all kinds are rather expensive,

penfive. Lime * is the most general one. Ploughs of different kinds are used, but chiefly the Scotch plough, of a light construction, which is most commonly drawn by 2, sometimes 3 horses, it being now rare to see 4 horses yoked in one plough. From the high prices given for cattle, butter, and cheese, the farmers have of late turned their attention chiefly to the rearing young cows and horses, and improving the breed, in which they have made great progress. They now rear as fine draught horses and milk cows as any in Scotland. There are about 200 milk cows kept in the town of Airdrie, which not only supply the inhabitants with milk, but have greatly improved the neighbouring fields by their dung. Potatoes † are now become a general crop, and are used both for family use and feeding cattle. Turnip and cabbage husbandry are little practised, though the few trials made, have succeeded well. The management of the dairy is well understood, and carefully attended to. Cheese, equal to Stilton, (perhaps not inferior to Parmesan), is made by some families; but this superior kind is mostly made for private

* It is got from the lime-works in Cumbernauld parish; but the long carriage makes it very expensive. This, however, will be in some degree remedied, when the Monkland navigation is finished, (which it is expected to be in the course of next year), as lime will then be brought by water carriage. The most approved method of using lime, is to lay it on the surface some years before breaking up. This makes the pasture more valuable, and never fails to produce plentiful crops. A considerable quantity of dung is got at Airdrie, which sells as high as 20 d. and 2 s. the single cart-load.

† They answer the purpose well; but there is a prejudice against the culture of them, that they weaken and impoverish the land, although the very reverse is the fact, as it has been found, by every judicious inquirer, that potatoes, next to pease and turnips, are the most enriching crop that can be put on any soil. A disease in this valuable root has lately made its appearance, commonly called the *curled leaf*; but this disease chiefly affects potatoes planted in wet or low grounds.

vate use. From the vicinity of Glasgow, which is only 10 miles distant, every article the farmer can spare, finds a ready market and a high price.

Heritors and Rent.—There are above 100 heritors in the parish, besides the feuers of Airdrie after mentioned; and as the lands in general are farmed by the proprietors themselves, they are better cultivated than could be expected, if they were farmed by tenants on short leases. The principal heritors are Misses Isobel, Bethia, and Margaret Aitchison, of Rochfalloch and Airdrie, Andrew Stirling of Drumpellier, John Henry Cochrane of Rochfoles, James Dunlop of Garnkirk, Andrew Buchanan of Ardinconnal, William Hamilton of Wishaw, and John Nisbet of Cairnhill, Esquires, none of whom reside in the parish, but the Miss Aitchisons, and occasionally, Mr Cochrane.—The valued rent is 6822 l. 6 s. 8 d. Scotch. The real rent cannot be ascertained, as the greater part of the lands are possessed by the proprietors; but if the whole were rented, the lands might yield between 5000 l. and 6000 l. Sterling, and the houses in the town of Airdrie about 1000 l.

Ecclesiastical State.—The church was rebuilt in the year 1777. It is a very handsome country church, and contains 1200 people. The manse was built about 50 years ago, and lately got a complete reparation, with a new set of offices. The church, with the repairs of the manse, new school-house, and church-yard dike, cost near 1000 l. The heritors are patrons. The stipend is 8 chalders of oatmeal, or 128 bolls, and is paid by the College of Glasgow, who are titulars of the teinds, according to the fiars of the commissariat of Hamilton and Campsie. The minister is also allowed half a chalders of meal for communion elements. The glebe, manse,
and

and garden, are worth about 15 l. yearly. When oat-meal sells at 1 s. the peck, which is about the average price, the whole living is about 120 l. yearly. The stipend has never been augmented*. A very handsome chapel of ease was built last year for the accommodation of the town of Airdrie, by a voluntary subscription, and a meeting-house, for the people of the Burgher Association, was lately also built at Airdrie, although there are very few dissenters in the parish. Their congregation is therefore collected from neighbouring parishes.

Schools and Poor.—There is a public school at the parish church. The salary is 5 l. 11 s. 1½ d. with a school and dwelling-house, but no garden. This salary, being paid by more than 100 heritors, is scarcely worth collecting. The schoolmaster is also precentor and session clerk. The emoluments of these offices, though trifling, are better than the salary, but the whole is a shameful pittance in so wealthy a parish; and it is a disgrace to the country, that so useful a body of men are, in Scotland, so poorly provided for in general, and calls loudly for redress. There are generally two schools in the town of Airdrie; but as they have neither school-house nor salary, the teachers continue no longer than till a better place offers. If one penny upon the pound Scotch of valued rent, all over Scotland, were levied, along with the land-tax, and paid to the parochial schoolmasters, in addition to their present trifling salaries, it might make their

* The Reverend Mr PATRICK MAXWELL is the present incumbent; he was settled in the year 1760, and is married, but has no children. To the great concern of the parishioners, he has, for some time past, been in a bad state of health, which rendered him unfit to draw up the statistical account of the parish, and induced the writer hereof to undertake the task.

living more decent, and their usefulness more general. This could be levied without expence, and such a trifle would never be missed by the proprietors.—The number of poor on the parish roll, are between 40 and 50. The sum distributed among them, for some time past, is about 70 l. annually. The funds for supplying them do not exceed 100 l. the interest of which, with the collection at the church doors, mortcloths or pall-dues, proclamations of the banns of marriage, and an extraordinary collection on the first Sabbath of June yearly, has hitherto raised a sum equal to the yearly distribution. There are 4 different charitable societies in the town of Airdrie, who have about 500 l. of stock, and are very useful in supporting poor members. Their funds are well managed, and increasing yearly. If such societies were established in every parish, and properly conducted, they would be very beneficial, particularly in times of dearth, by laying out their stock for the purchase of grain, and selling it to the poor at prime cost, as was done here in the year 1783, upon the general failure of the preceding crop*.

Minerals and Mineral Springs.—Coal and iron-stone are, or may be found, almost in every farm. The Monkland coal has been long famed for the quality and richness of its seams. Twenty years ago, coal sold so low as 6 d. the cart load; but since the Monkland navigation was opened, it sells at 18 d. the

* There are few or no begging poor in the parish; but no place of the country is more pestered with vagrants and gypsies, as there is neither work-house, jail, nor resident magistrate in the parish. A set of respectable constables who understood, and could properly exercise, the ample powers committed to them, might be of great use, in cleaning the country of such vagrants; but as this office is generally filled by the most ignorant and worthless, they are become a nuisance instead of a benefit.

the cart, weighing 12 cwt. Excellent smithy coal, and blind coal for drying grain and malt, are found at Airdrie, and sell at 2 s. 6 d. the cart. On account of its superior quality, it is carried 20 miles and upwards round the country. Lime has been found in the north part of the parish, but is not wrought at present. There are plenty of free-stone quarries, and abundance of whin or moor-stones in every part of the parish. There are several mineral springs, chiefly of the chalybeate kind; but the one called Monkland Well, near Airdrie, is the most famous, and has long been used successfully, in all scorbutic, scrophulous, and other cutaneous cases, and in complaints of the stomach and eyes. About 40 years ago, it was frequented by the gay and fashionable from all quarters; but now only by the poor and lazie. But if the rich, who need a cure, knew the value of this water, they might find real advantage from it, at a small expence, in comparison of the English watering places, as every accommodation can be got in the neighbourhood at easy rates.

Roads, Bridges, &c — The roads were in a most wretched state, till the year 1772, when the county obtained an act of Parliament for commuting the statute work for money. Since that period, the roads are greatly improved, and a bridge built over almost every rivulet. The present contribution is 15 s. Sterling for each ploughgate of land, and 18 d. for each householder, which amounts to 100 l. or thereby, annually. This fund is managed in the best manner, and as there are plenty of excellent materials, few parishes in Scotland have such good roads. An act was obtained last session of Parliament, for making a turnpike road from Edinburgh to Glasgow, by Bathgate and Airdrie, the tract of which will run through this parish for many miles, and, when finished, will

will be of the greatest benefit to the country in general, and this parish in particular.

Population.—The village, or, as it is commonly called, the town of Airdrie*, is the only one in the parish, and stands near the south-west extremity, on a beautiful rising ground, between two small rivulets, regularly built, with wide streets, and extends near an English mile in length from east to west. It had very few inhabitants at the beginning of the present century; but they are much increased since. In the year 1760, there were only 300 examinable persons; in the year 1789 they amounted to 1100; and from an actual survey, taken this present year, (1792), there are 1762 souls in the town and suburbs. The number of souls, in the landward part of the parish, is not exactly known; but in the year 1789, there were found to be 1300 persons above 8 years of age, members of the church of Scotland, besides dissenters. Adding, therefore, these numbers together, with that of the children below 8 years of age, (who will amount to about 500 more), it is evident, that the population of the whole parish cannot be less than 3560, which is 847 more than it was 40 years ago, the return to Dr Webster, in 1755, being only 2713.

The following table will give a concise view of the state of the population, as well as of the different employments of the inhabitants:

Population

* It was, by act of Parliament, in the year 1695, erected into a market town, with the privilege of holding a weekly market on Tuesday, and two fairs annually, the one on the third Tuesday of May, and the other on the first Tuesday of November, O. S. A Lammas and Candlemas fair have been added to the number, but the two old fairs are best frequented.

Population Table of the Parish of New Monkland.

Population in 1792,	3560	Wrights,	-	-	21
----- anno 1755,	2713	Coopers,	-	-	2
	-----	Weavers,	-	-	227
Increase,	847	Shoemakers,	-	-	16
Average of births, for 3		Tailors,	-	-	13
years preceding 1792,	116	Butchers,	-	-	4
Ditto of deaths *,	60	Millers,	-	-	14
Ditto of marriages,	36	Bakers, including apprentices,			7
Inhabitants in Airdrie,	1762	Candlemakers,	-	-	2
----- in the country,	1800	Brewers,	-	-	3
Proprietors residing, above	95	Sadlers,	-	-	3
----- non-residing,	5	Clockmaker,	-	-	1
Clergyman,	-	Iron founder and servants,			3
Surgeons,	-	Stockingmakers,	-	-	25
Druggists,	-	Poor, on an average,			45
Writer,	-	Capital of their funds,			L. 100
Messengers,	-	Annual income and expen-			
Schoolmasters,	-	diture, about			L. 70
Farmers,	-	Exciseman,	-	-	1
Shopkeepers, grocers, and		Distillers and their servants,			9
victual dealers,	-	Tambourers, (children who			
Slaters,	-	flower muslin with the			
Masons,	-	tambour-needle),	-	-	202

Manufactures.

* There is no bill of mortality kept in the parish; but, from the account of the mort-cloth dues, the average number of deaths, for these 3 years past, is 45 yearly, buried at the parish church, besides those buried elsewhere, which may be reckoned about 15 more. The average of marriages, for the same period, is 36 yearly. The births are not all recorded; some parents neglect it to save the expence, and some, from religious scruples against the tax. The average number of baptisms, recorded for the last 3 years, is 96 *per annum*, but it is supposed that 20 more yearly are not recorded.

Manufactures.—The distillery of malt spirits, brewing of ale, malting, candle making, and iron founding, are the only manufactures of consequence carried on at Airdrie, as the weavers and tambourers are chiefly employed by Glasgow manufacturers. The distillery is carried on to a considerable amount, there being about 40,000 gallons of proof spirits made annually. It is allowed, by judges, that the malt spirits made at Airdrie are of a peculiar fine quality and flavour; and although a small quantity only is used here, there is a constant demand for it from every part of the country, and some of it is exported to America and the West Indies on account of its quality. There are 7 corn mills, 6 lint mills, and 3 sets of rollers for crushing malt. The thirlage is no great hardship here, as the multures are generally small. On that account, some proprietors of mills have allowed them to fall to ruin.

Character.—Considering the number of the inhabitants, and the want of magistrates, the morals of the people are much better than could be expected. None born in the parish have ever suffered either corporal or capital punishment. The people, in general, are hospitable and sober. Dissipation is only to be found among a few of the lower rank. They attend church regularly, and are generally very clean and well dressed. As every person, who chooses to work, finds employment, the trades people, in general, are in easy circumstances, and appear to be contented. Almost every tradesman is proprietor of a house and garden, which gives them a natural attachment to the place. The people of Airdrie seem to have a peculiar foible of keeping a great number of useless dogs, which are a nuisance to every passenger, and plainly points out the propriety of a tax being laid on these animals.

Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous Observations.—The parish is, on the whole, more beautiful than fertile. Its chief advantages are the plenty of coals and peats, water and free-stone, good roads, and cheap living; but one great disadvantage is, the distance from lime, which is the manure that answers the soil best. Another disadvantage is, that the College of Glasgow are titulars of the teinds, which are said to be mortified by an act of Parliament, and are therefore not saleable. This, and several neighbouring parishes, are therefore obliged, either to take leases of their teinds every 19 years, and to pay an arbitrary gratum to the college, or else to get them valued by a process before the Court of Session, which is attended with great expence. This calls loudly for redress, as it hurts the spirit of improving the lands, the College having a right to the fifth part of the rents, in case of a valuation. It would, therefore, be for the interest of these parishes, as well as of the College, to apply for an act of Parliament to make the teinds saleable, and to lay out the price upon lands for behoof of the College, by Commissioners appointed for that purpose; which would not only remedy this grievance, but secure the College revenue, encourage agriculture, and prevent many expensive processes between the College and the landholders. The parish, in general, is deemed healthy. No epidemical distempers are known here. Many persons now living are above 80 years of age, and 3 near 100. The small-pox is the most fatal disease, as inoculation, by some fatal prejudice, is not yet become general. Considering the prodigious number that Great Britain loses annually by this disease, a premium should be given by government, for some limited time, to encourage the general practice of inoculation, amongst the middling and lower ranks of people. It appears, that the ancient Celts or Gauls once inhabited this part of the country, as many places have Gaelic names, such as Roch-solloch,

folloch, Airdrie, Drumgray, Drumschioch, Ballochnie, &c. The only antiquity * worth remarking, is a large artificial cave, dug out of a bold rocky eminence, on the banks of the river Calder, in the estate of Monkland, in a most romantic and sequestered spot, and which seems to have been a very laborious undertaking. But whether it has been intended as an asylum in barbarous times, or the abode of the melancholy hermit, tradition is perfectly silent, although the former is most probable.

* There were also to be seen, a few years ago, the remains of a Roman Catholic chapel, at a place called Kipps, which was destroyed at the Reformation. At this chapel, the abbots of Newbottle held annual courts, for levying the rents and feus of the hundred pound land of the barony of Monkland, then belonging to the Abbey of Newbottle; but this venerable monument of antiquity is now demolished, a more than *ruffic* farmer having lately removed the walls, and turned the scite of it into a corn field. Upon a rising ground, there is still to be seen an upright granite stone, where it is said, in former times, they burnt those imaginary criminals, called witches.

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