

Statistical Account.

NUMBER V.

PARISH OF THE ABBEY OF PAISLEY.

(County of Renfrew.—Presbytery of Paisley.—Synod of Glasgow and Ayr.)

By the Reverend Mr ROBERT BOOG.

Situation and Extent.

THE parish of Paisley is in length, from east to west, about nine miles, varying in breadth from half a mile to about three. Till 1736, the parish extended over the town of Paisley; but an additional church at that time becoming necessary, the town was erected into a separate parish; and the original parish has, since that period, been distinguished by the name of the *Abbey parish*, or, more properly, *the parish of the Abbey of Paisley*.

No satisfactory etymology has hitherto occurred of the name *Paisley*. The following has been suggested by a good Gaelic scholar; "A ridge of rocks that runs across the river, and forms a beautiful cascade, would, prior to the building of the town, be undoubtedly the most striking object that this place would present. The brow or face of a rock is, in Gaelic, *Pais-licht*. A church in front of the rock would be the church in *Pais-licht*. A church did stand here previous to 1160; it is named in the foundation charter *Ecclesia de Pafelet*, Latinized, in the records of the monastery, *Pasletum*, an easy derivative from *Pais-licht*, in all probability the original of the modern *Paisley*."

Surface

Surface and Soil.—It is generally of a gently waving surface, frequently swelling, especially in the neighbourhood of Paisley, into beautiful little eminences. A considerable part of it to the north of the town is a perfect level, having been anciently mofs, extending in the year 1719, when a survey of it was made, to about 300 acres; but now reduced to about 130 by the operation of burning, which, in dry seasons, is still carried on with success. The south part of the parish rises into a tract of hilly ground, known by the name of *Paisley* or *Stanley Braes*. The greatest elevation to which these grounds rise in this parish is about 680 feet above flood-mark at Paisley. Part of them is mofs and heath, but the bulk of them is good sheep pasture, and even a considerable part of them arable. The soil of the parish, as may be expected in such an extensive district, varies. It is in general thin, with a bottom of gravel, more frequently of till, very retentive of moisture. In the flat grounds, and along the banks of the rivers, it is rich and fertile; less so, thinner, and more stony, as it rises to the south.

Air and Diseases.—The air is moist, a necessary consequence of the prevailing south-west winds, which, coming loaded with vapour from the Atlantic, produce frequent and heavy rains. The effects of this moist atmosphere appear in rheumatisms, quinsys, pneumonic ailments, and all the tribe of inflammatory disorders. Upon the whole, however, this parish, and even the neighbouring town, cannot be said to be unhealthy. Contagions, indeed, at times visit this as other places, which run their usual course as epidemics; but none are remembered of any uncommon violence, except a pleurisy in summer 1771, and which, contrary to the received opinion, was truly epidemic. There are no disorders that can be said to be endemic, unless scrophula is to be excepted, which

which is still but too common. This has been ascribed to the water used by the inhabitants in Paisley: It more probably proceeded from, it certainly was greatly aggravated by, poor living, and by the damp shops which were necessary for the linen manufacture; for, since silk-weaving became the general employment, and increase of trade has introduced better living, this disorder is less frequent. From the same causes probably it is that swelled and sore legs, once extremely common here, are now but rarely met with. Dysentery raged with great violence in 1765; since that time it has been scarcely complained of. Nervous fevers at times appear, but they are neither very general nor uncommonly fatal. It is to be apprehended, that the confinement and sedentary posture of the weaver, and the laborious life of the bleacher, are frequent causes of consumptive complaints. Intermittents, which, from the damp air, and adjoining moss, might be expected to be common, are not so much as known.

Water.—The water in Paisley and the suburbs is but indifferent; and there is scarce any thing more wanted for the convenience and comfort of the inhabitants than a plentiful supply of good spring water. But now, that every spring and rill is occupied and become valuable property, this is scarcely to be hoped for.

Rivers.—Besides the Black Cart, which, rising in Castle Semple Loch, partly bounds the parish on the north, and the rivulet Lovern, which marks it on the south-east, the parish is watered by the river White Cart. It rises in the high grounds about Kilbride, and, entering this parish from the east, flows in a pretty direct westerly course towards the town. After forming a beautiful fall at Seedhill-mill, it turns northerly, and, about a mile below the town, enters
Renfrew

Renfrew parish, and joins the river Gryfe at Inchigan bridge. In the Cart are found perch, trout, flounders, and braises, or gilt-heads, but none of them in any considerable quantities, owing, no doubt, in a great degree to the bleachfields, print-fields, and a copperas work upon the banks of the river. As for the fine large pearls once found in this river, and which, according to our old historians, had been noticed by the most eminent jewellers in Europe, they have long disappeared, and the river has become a more certain source of wealth by its utility to an industrious and manufacturing neighbourhood. Of several smaller rivulets in the parish, none are so considerable from their size as to merit notice. Covered, however, as their banks every where are with thread, lawns, or muslins, they have all become highly valuable to their proprietors, and of great importance to the country.—The river White Cart was, by direction of the Magistrates of Paisley, surveyed by Mr Whitworth in 1786. He reported, that, by removing some rocks and shoals in the river, a depth of seven feet of water might be obtained in ordinary spring-tides; and, as the channel is but shallow under Inchigan-bridge, as it could not be easily or safely deepened there, and as, at any rate, vessels with standing masts could not pass under the arches, he proposed to avoid that part of the navigation by means of a navigable canal, which should leave the river a little above, and join it again below the bridge. The expence of the whole, including a draw-bridge across the canal, was estimated at 1900 l. The plan being approved of, an act of Parliament was obtained, empowering the Magistrates and other trustees to carry on the work, and ~~defray~~ the expence by a tonnage of eight-pence *per ton upon* all vessels navigating the Cart, with an exception in favour of those loaded with coal. The work is now completed, but at an expence of about 4000 l. The navigation is greatly improved,
but

but not to the degree that was expected; and probably, to obtain an unobstructed passage at all times to and from Paisley, some further operations upon the river and canal will still be necessary. The tonnage lets at present for 155 l. But, from Whitsunday 1792 to that term 1793, it has been let for 250 l. Paisley has derived considerable advantages from the completing of the great canal between Forth and Clyde. The great and increasing demand for Baltic goods have rendered that navigation of more consequence to Paisley than it was perhaps at first supposed it would be. But, to give this place the full benefit of it, a branch would be necessary from the great canal to the Clyde, to terminate as nearly opposite to the mouth of Paisley river as the ground would permit. Perhaps it could not be brought nearer than Newshot Isle. The distance at this place between the canal and the Clyde is but about one third of a mile; its elevation above the level of the river nearly 22 feet. Two locks would therefore be necessary, and from these the chief expence of the work would arise. The advantages, however, would be great. The navigation would be shortened no less than five miles for vessels and rafts of wood coming to Paisley. Two days would be saved each trip to the proprietors of goods. The bulky articles of corn, wood, iron, coal, ashes, soap waste, &c. &c. which are intended for Paisley, Kilbarchan, Johnstoun, Beith, Houston, Neilstoun, &c. would be brought to Paisley by water-carriage, instead of being landed at Port-Dundas, and sent from thence by land-carriage. The manufacturers of Paisley might send a great part of their goods from their warehouses immediately by water-carriage to London and other places. A considerable increase of tonnage would arise to the proprietors of the great canal, and many important advantages to an extensive and populous tract of country.

Woods.

Woods.—There are no woods of any great extent in the parish; perhaps about 140 acres of natural oak, ash, birch, plane, &c. may be the amount of the whole, upon three or four different estates. The Forest of Paisley exists only in ancient records. Walter, Great Steward of Scotland, by the charter of foundation of the monastery of Paisley, grants to the monks “Decimas de omnibus terris infra *Forestum* suum de Pasleto.” In Prynne’s Collections, we meet with “John le Hunter de la foreste de Pasly.” And, in 1460 and 1524, the tenant of Dunskaith-wood, in the immediate neighbourhood of the town, is bound by the abbot “Custodire sylvam et sustentare fossas circa dictam sylvam.” The names of Woodside, Oakshawside, and Oakshawhead, are the only traces that remain of those woods.

Roads.—The only turnpike-road in the parish is that running through it from east to west. Of late years, it has been kept in very good repair. The others, which depend upon the statute labour, are in a very indifferent state. This, it is hoped, will be remedied by a bill to be brought into Parliament next session for making some new turnpike-roads, converting the statute work into money, and regulating the application of it.

Mines and Minerals.—There are five coal-mines at present wrought in the parish. That at Hurlet, belonging to the Earl of Glasgow; Quarreltown, to Mr Houstoun of Johnstoun; Achinloadmont, to Mr Fulton of Achinloadmont; Nutshiel, to Mr Dunlop of Househill; and one lately opened in the lands of Newton, the property of Mr Spiers of Elderlie. Of these, the two first merit particular notice.—The Hurlet or Hawkhead coal lies about three miles south-east from Paisley. It is a stratum 5 feet 3 inches thick, declining

dipping eastward, with a dip about one foot in seven. This valuable seam has been wrought, it is supposed, for considerably more than 200 years. In 1634, there were five miners employed; of late there have been from 20 to 30; and the yearly produce, on an average of 20 years, is about 10,000 tons. Inflammable and fixed air are met with in this mine; but the pits are so well ventilated, there being a complete communication between shafts half a mile distant, that, tho' accidents sometimes have happened, they are not frequent. It is well ascertained, that fire has been generated in these mines, and among the coals upon the hills, by the martial pyrites with which they abound.—The coal at Quarreltown is one of the most extraordinary masses of that mineral in Britain. It consists, in effect, of five contiguous strata. The thickness of the whole, measured at right angles to the surface of the strata, is upwards of 50 feet; but as, in some places, the seam forms a very considerable angle with the horizon, the thickness of the whole in these places, measured vertically, is about 15 fathoms. In consequence of this great depth, it is worked in different floors or storeys. Till of late, the work was carried on *horizontally* from the shaft, so as successively to intersect all the five strata: At present, the mine pursues the same stratum, rising with it. In the former mode of working, there were five several floors or storeys; in the present, there are only three; the first, third, and fifth stratum being wrought, and afterwards so much of the second and fourth as may be done with safety.—It is difficult to convey a clear idea of the manner in which this singular mass of coal lies. In a field of about 15 acres, it is found to dip in several different directions. At least, conceiving a nearly circular area of those contents, the coal, from the north, the east, and south quarters of that circle, dips pretty uniformly towards the centre. This, however, is, in some measure,

measure, interrupted by several hitches, at one of which the mass of coal is suddenly thrown up about 50 feet, at another about 30. These hitches interrupt not only the direction, but the degree of the dip. On one side of the first mentioned hitch, it is about one foot in three; on the other side, only one in six. Some years ago this coal took fire; and the pillars giving way, the ground sunk, and left the surface in a very rugged state. The excellent judgment and persevering industry of the proprietor have surmounted many difficulties that have occurred in working this valuable coal. It now employs about 30 pick-men; and there are commonly 12 or 14 horses below ground. The produce some years has been not less than twenty thousand tons.

Free stone quarries abound in the parish. The stone in most of them is of a good quality, lies near the surface, and generally dips towards the east. A quarry of coarse granite or blue whin, in what was formerly the Abbey garden, affords excellent materials for paving the streets. A stone, here called *Osmond Stone*, found on the tops of the hills in this and the adjoining parish of Nielston, is used for hearths of ovens; but the Inverary stone is preferred to it.—We have several lime-stone quarries. That at Stanley, the property of the Earl of Glasgow, merits the examination of the curious. An enormous rock, projecting from the brow of a hill, contains the limestone lying in a mass of about ten feet thick, and dipping towards a centre, like the Quarreltown coal. Several mines have been driven into the rock; and these meeting in the heart of it, present a very singular piece of subterranean scenery. The limestone at Blackhall, the property of Sir Michael Stewart, is also wrought by mining, but not without danger, having only a clay roof. The Hurlet lime lies in a stratum three feet thick, incumbent on the seam of coal. After the coal is dug out, the limestone is blown

down with gun-powder, about one half being left to support the strata above.

Fossils.—Fossil shells, and other marine *exuviae*, are found in great quantities in all our lime quarries; such as entrochi, which are numerous; anomiae, both with the perforated and entire beak; gryphites; milliperes; fungites; several varieties of peftens, and many others, which do not exist in their natural state upon our shores. All these abound in the lime-quarry at Floors, the property of Mr Houstoun of Johnstoun, and are generally found contained in a stratum of white clay immediately incumbent on the lime. Corals and shells have been found in sinking the shafts for the Hawkhead coal; the former in detached pieces of limestone, a few feet from the surface; the latter involved in the mass of schistus immediately over the coal, and at a depth of not less than 160 feet. Among these are the ortho-ceratites, turbinated cochleae, and several species of bivalves; all of them retaining their original form, and shining like the marcasite in common slate.—In sinking a shaft for that coal in 1786, the several strata occurred as follows:

	<i>Feet.</i>	<i>In.</i>
1. Earth and clay	42	0
2. Sand and gravel	8	0
3. Schistus or till, with some thin strata of lime and iron stone	105	0
4. Limestone	3	0
5. Schistus, of an aluminous quality	3	1
6. Coal	5	3
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	166	4

In the limestone, No. 4. crystals of calcareous spar are found: They are deposited in open crevices, the sides of which are lined

lined with them. Rhomboidal spar, both opaque and transparent, is also met with. The schistus, No. 5. is extremely hard; but, when lying in a dry place, as in the waste of the coal-pit, it gradually decomposes, and acquires a flacky appearance. It is a beautiful vitriolic efflorescence, perfectly resembling plume alum, but seems to have more of the vitriolated *iron* than vitriolated *clay*. In this stratum of schistus, and in the stratum of coal, pyrites abound so much, that native copper is sometimes found. They lie not in any regular bed, but interspersed through the stratum, and are separated from the coal by the workmen. They are employed in a copperas or green vitriol manufacture, established at Hurler in 1753 by a company from Liverpool.—A bituminous substance is found both in the lime and whin-stone quarries. It drops in a fluid state from the limestone at Blackhall. In that at Hurler it is found solid; sometimes so indurated as to be brittle; sometimes so soft as to cut with a knife; in either state highly inflammable.

Figured Stones.—At Harelaw, a farm belonging to the Earl of Glasgow, are found stones in considerable quantities, with well defined vegetable impressions. The impressions are upon a concave surface, and evidently formed by its application to the convexity of a stem or branch of a tree. In some specimens, they present the appearance of a kind of rhomboidal network; in others, that of regular indentations, nearly resembling what we may conceive would be retained by a soft body from its application to the cone of the fir-tree. A body of a compressed cylindrical form, which has communicated these impressions, is sometimes found: It is figured upon the surface in a manner corresponding to these indentations: And, though no plant precisely resembling it is now known in this country, it is evidently a portion of a petrified branch
or

of small trunk of a tree. The stones thus marked are commonly free-stone; sometimes, but more rarely, iron-stone. Vegetable impressions have also been observed upon the pyrites of the Hawkhead coal *.

Husbandry.—The husbandry of this parish, as of all the west of Scotland, was, about the middle of this century, in a most unprosperous state. The indigent circumstances of the farmers, their indolent habits, the want of roads, of wheel-carriages, and proper implements of husbandry, all conspired to obstruct the improvement of the soil. Till about 1770, lime, coal, grain, &c. were generally conveyed on horse-back. The old servitudes of carriages, kail labour, thirlage, &c. still existed, with many practices discouraging to the farmer, and strongly marking the languid state of agriculture. The spirit of improvement, however, which, about that time, appeared in Scotland, reached Renfrewshire; and a very favourable change has now taken place. The introduction of artificial grasses, and the culture of potatoes, have produced a more diligent and accurate husbandry, and banished the pernicious distinction of croft and outfield †. Before 1766, there was scarce any hay sown; and the natural grass hay then sold at 3d. per stone. The general price of hay, of late years, has been 5d. or 6d.; at present it is no less than 9d. Potatoes, about 40 or 50 years ago, were brought in boats from Kintyre to Paisley market. About 30 years ago, farmers

* The particulars relative to the mineralogy of the parish have been chiefly communicated by the ingenious Mr John Wilson, factor to the Earl of Glasgow.

† The distinction between croft and outfield prevailed very generally in the old and imperfect husbandry of Scotland. The *croft*, consisting of a few acres nearest the farm house, was perpetually in crop, and received the whole manure of the farm. The *outfield* was the open pasture land, which was occasionally plowed in patches for oats till they were exhausted, and then left to rest.

farmers began pretty generally to cultivate them in the field. No crops, it is probable, have proved more profitable to the farmer than these.—The scheme of farming most commonly followed is,—oats out of lee,—beans and pease,—barley with clovers and grass seeds. After one crop of hay, the field is generally pastured for three or four years, and then broke up with the oats. Little wheat is sown, but rather more of late than formerly. Rye, flax, and turnip, are but very little cultivated; hemp not at all. Oats are sown in March, more generally in April: Barley from about the 20th of May to the 10th of June: Wheat in September or October, either after fallow, after potatoes, or out of lee. Lime is commonly applied upon the lee for the oats; dung and manure to barley and wheat. The old Scots plough is generally used, many farmers having a prejudice against the chain-plough, as less fit to overcome the impediments to tillage with which much of the soil in this neighbourhood abounds. It has, however, of late been introduced with success, with the improvement of a cast-iron mould-board. The crop, in general, is got in in September and October; sometimes, as was the case this season, (1791) not till the beginning of November. In 1781, it was all in in August, and was one of the best known. In 1782, the harvest was not finished till the very end of November; and, during that month, there were considerable falls of snow.

Rent.—The valued rent of the parish is 11,944 l. 13 s. 4 d. Scots; the real rent 9700 l. Sterling, belonging to 30 landed proprietors, 15 of whom possess each above 100 l. Scots of valuation. The rent of the best arable land is about 2 guineas *per acre*; something more in the immediate neighbourhood of Paisley. The best pasture ground brings about 30 s. *per acre*. Lands of inferior quality from 12 to 20 s.; and the
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high pasture ground about 5 s. Garden grounds around the town let at about 5 l. *per acre*. Till within these few years past, a great proportion of the garden-stuffs used in Paisley was brought from Glasgow. The number of farms seems rather diminishing, but not in any great degree. Their extent is, in general, from 40 to 100 acres. Few farmers pay more than 120 l. *per annum* of rent; the most of them about 50 l. or 60 l. All of them are sufficiently sensible of the advantages of an inclosed farm, and willingly pay $7\frac{1}{2}$ *per cent.* to the proprietor for money laid out in that species of improvement. In consequence of this, the parish is all inclosed either with hedges or stone dykes.

Farmers.—Though the rise of rents has been great, most of them having been doubled within the last 30 years, yet the farmers are more independent; they pay their rents more regularly, live better, and are better cloathed than formerly, the effect, no doubt, of a more vigorous and successful husbandry. Still, however, they are far, very far from enjoying the comforts of life in the degree to which such an industrious and valuable order of men are entitled. The prices of grain, their chief commodity, do not rise; and if, in consequence of the greater wealth and population which the manufactures have introduced, their cheese, butter, and eggs, bring a higher price, this is probably more than counterbalanced by another effect of the same cause, the immoderate rise upon servants wages. A little more regard to the interest of the farmer will not, perhaps, be found so very inconsistent with that of the manufacturer as seems to have been imagined of late, when all this part of the country was in a flame during the dependance of the corn-bill, the operation of which not one in a thousand understood. The number

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of farmers in the parish is about 140; of ploughs, 148; horses, 507.

Servitudes.—The ancient servitudes, so oppressive and harassing to the farmer, are almost entirely abolished. The only one of any consequence that remains is that of thirlage. The Abbey Mill exacts from most of the lands thirled to it a multure of the one and twentieth peck, besides dues to the servants of the Mill. This Mill, let by the abböt and convent about A. D. 1500 for four chalders eleven bolls of meal, and one chalder malt, yearly, pays at present a rent of 432 l. Another mill in the neighbourhood lets at 220 l.

Manufactures.—The manufactures carried on in this parish are, the weaving of silk gauze, muslins, lawns, cotton stuffs, and thread gauze, in all their varieties; thread making, cotton spinning, bleaching, callicoe printing; the making of candles, white soap, black soap, and starch. An account of the rise, progress, present state, and produce of the principal manufactures, is communicated from the town of Paisley. We subjoin their present state in this parish.

In the various weaving branches there were employed at Whitfunday 1791, in the suburbs of Paisley, 1108 looms, which, added to 2494 employed in the town, gives 3602 in all. But it is to be observed, that the extent to which the weaving branches are carried on by the manufacturers in Paisley, is not to be judged of from the number of looms in the town and suburbs. Besides about 150 in the country part of the parish, there are great numbers employed by them in the villages of Nielstoun, Bar-head, Beith, Dalry, Kilwinning, &c. &c. In 1744, when all the business was confined to the town and suburbs, there were 867 looms at work.—The thread making employs 9 mills, which, added

to 128 employed in Paisley, makes 137 in all. The number in 1744 was 93. The spinning of cotton was introduced into this parish in 1783. The principal seat of that manufacture is at Johnstoun, a neat and regularly built village about three miles west from Paisley, upon the estate of Mr Houston of Johnstoun. The feuing of that village was begun in 1782, and it contained at Whitsunday last 293 families, or 1434 souls. There are five companies established in it for cotton spinning. Two of these carry on their principal operations by water-machinery. In the two mills employed in them, there are going at present 11,672 spindles; but, when the whole machinery in both shall be compleated, there will be 22,572. The number of persons, young and old, at present employed in both mills is 660. There are besides about 120 spinning Jeenies employed throughout the parish; but the number is daily increasing; and, when the machinery is compleated which the buildings already erected are calculated to contain, there will be about 150 Jeenies, exclusive of those in the two great mills. The number of persons employed in this branch at present is, in all, about 1020.

It is painful to think, that a manufacture which gives employment to so many hands, and which may be a source of great wealth to individuals, may be productive of very unhappy effects upon both the health and morals of the children employed in it. This there is some reason to apprehend. The numbers that are brought together, especially in the larger mills, the confinement, the breathing of an air loaded with the dust and downy particles of the cotton, and contaminated with the effluvia of rancid oil rising from the machinery, must prove hurtful, in a high degree, to the delicate and tender lungs of children. Add to this, that mills which produce the water-twist are kept going day and night; and children must be had who are willing to work through
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the night, and sleep during the day. Tempted by the wages, parents send their children to this employment at a very early age, when they have got little or no education; and the close confinement deprives them of the opportunity of acquiring more. Ignorance, disease, and mortality, are but too likely to prove the effects of this manufacture, if carried on by unfeeling and selfish men. The characters of the gentlemen engaged in it in this neighbourhood give reason to hope, that every method will be employed which humanity and good sense can suggest to prevent these evils.

The bleaching business in this parish is carried on to a very considerable extent. There are 10 fields for whitening muslins and lawns, and about as many for thread, almost wholly employed by the manufacturers in Paisley. About 300 persons are at work in this branch of business, of whom about 240 are women, who are hired for the season.

A soap and candle manufacture pays about 2000 l. of duty *per annum* to Government, and has, in some years, paid upwards of 3000 l. A black and hard soap manufacture, 4500 l. *per annum*. The starch manufacture is but lately established.

The distillery business is to be mentioned under this head; it has for some time past been carried on to a great extent, and the spirit manufactured in great perfection. A considerable quantity of it is exported, but too much of it is consumed at home. Dram drinking is common; alehouses numerous. They are the resort of the vagrant, the idle, and the profligate; they gradually become a snare to the sober and industrious, and are producing the worst effects upon the health, the morals, and domestic comfort of the people. This growing evil might, in some measure, be stopped, by limiting the number of alehouses, and imposing some restraints as to the

hours during which they should be kept open. The justices have power to do so. The steady exertion of these powers is what is wanting.

There has for some years past been a very considerable importation of goods from the Baltic. The many and large buildings erecting for the cotton spinning have produced a great demand for wood and iron; the bleaching and soap-making, for tallow and ashes.

Prices of Labour and Provisions.—Oat-meal, best quality, 17 s 4 d. *per* boll; milk cow, 8 l.; beef and mutton, 6 d. *per* lib.; chicken, 6 d.; hen, 1 s. 6 d.; fresh butter, 10 d.; cheese, 4½ d.; eggs, *per* dozen, 5 d. to 9 d.; salmon, *per* lib. 6 d. to 16 d.; potatoes, *per* boll, 10 s.; day-labourer, 16 d. to 18 d.; mason, 2 s. to 2 s. 3 d.; maid servant, half year, 2 l.; best farm servant, yearly, 10 l.; an industrious weaver will make from 25 s. to 30 s. *per* week; a man at bleaching from 6 s. to 9 s.; a woman from 4 s. 6 d. to 9 s.

Medium prices of the best oat-meal for 28 years past.

1762 to 1768,	-	L. 0 16 8
1769 — 1775,	-	0 16 5 ⁷
1776 — 1782,	-	0 15 7½
1783 — 1789,	-	0 16 5½

Thus it appears, that, though the price of provisions is high, the price of labour bears its full proportion to it, and enables the labourer to provide sufficiently for his family. A journeyman-weaver in Paisley that is moderately industrious and economical, to which character, indeed, there are but too many exceptions, can bring up his family with ease, and afford to live in a manner far above that of very decent farmers. Children can have employment at the age of nine or ten. The prospect of a family, and its attendant expences, is no discouragement to marriage: Hence, in general, they

marry

marry young; and probably both births and marriages will be found to bear as high a proportion to the number of inhabitants in this as in most districts.

	<i>Families.</i>	<i>Souls.</i>
<i>Population</i> in 1695, - - -	435	
———— in 1755, - - -		2509
———— in 1781, - - -	1536	
———— in 1791, - - -	2255	10792
In the country part - - -	870	4689
In the suburbs of the town - - -	1385	6103
The numbers in Paisley town being	3232	13800
The total of town and suburbs, without the country part, was at Whitfunday 1791 - - - - -	4617	19903

Since Whitfunday 1791, when the numbers stood as above, there has been an addition of some hundreds to the town and suburbs.

Of the above number 10,792, the present population of the parish, there are 5259 males, and 5533 females. If the proportion of females appear large, it is to be ascribed to the number of women employed in the bleaching business, which is the reason also why, in some of the districts, the number of souls is so great in proportion to the families, the persons employed in the field being reckoned part of the bleacher's family.

There are 4197 persons below 15 years of age, 6455 between 15 and 70, and 140 above 70. In the suburbs, there is, above the age of 70, one in 84.76; in the country, one in 68.95.

In 579 families, a portion of the country part of the parish, there are 48 bachelor housekeepers, and 531 married couples. Among these, there have been 2211 births. The average of births,

births, therefore, to each married couple is 4.16. In 1385 families in the suburbs, there are 111 bachelor housekeepers, and 1274 married couples. Among these there have been 5470 births. The average to each married couple is 4.29.

The number of souls to each family in the country is 5.38; to each family in the town and suburbs, is 4.31. In the year 1744, this last was only 4.01, a change to be ascribed probably to families keeping a greater number of servants now than formerly.

Of servants, household and labouring, male and female, there are 970. This number includes the persons employed in the bleachfields. Excluding these, there may be about 415 household, and 255 labouring servants.

The Births and Marriages for the last 50 years are :

<i>Period.</i>	<i>Births.</i>	<i>Marriages.</i>
1741 to 1750,	669	177
1751 — 1760,	932	348
1761 — 1770,	1179	399
1771 — 1780,	1561	590
1781 — 1790,	3109	987
1791,	405	132

The proportion between the births of last year and whole population is as one to 27.14; and between the marriages and population as one to 81.75.

The Deaths in this parish cannot be accurately ascertained, the inhabitants in the Town and Abbey parishes burying indiscriminately in the several church-yards. But the whole number of burials in the two parishes during the last 15 years is as follows :

1777, 335	1779, 306	1781, 358
1778, 273	1780, 404	1782, 360
		1783,

1783, 534	1786, 590	1789, 487
1784, 411	1787, 504	1790, 600
1785, 350	1788, 443	1791, 599

The inhabitants of the two parishes amounting to 24,592; therefore the proportion between the deaths of last year and the population over the whole district of town and country, is as one to 40.98.

In the ten years, 1771 ——— 1780, the deaths to the births over the whole district are as one to 1.46. In the ten years, 1781 ——— 1790, the deaths to the births are as one to 1.54.

To a place furnishing such variety of employment, there will be a considerable influx of inhabitants from other parts of the country. There are a few from England, more from Ireland, a great number from Ayrshire, and probably still more from the Highlands. Their numbers have not been ascertained. If they may be judged of from the degree in which the actual population exceeds the annual births multiplied by 26, there will be about 260 in the Abbey parish, and 930 in the town.

In the enumeration that has been made of this parish, 1770 persons are marked as seceding from the established Church. If those only are reckoned Seceders who have themselves made choice of their religious profession, the number will be considerably fewer. If *all* the children of seceding parents are to be counted Seceders, the numbers will be somewhat more. In this last manner were the returns from the several districts in this parish *generally* made. The above number includes dissenters of every denomination: They are mostly Burghers, Antiburghers, and members of the Relief Congregations. There are two sects of Independents, some Cameronians, a very few of the Episcopal persuasion, and perhaps two or three Papists. The Burgher-Seceders, and
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the two sects of Independents, have each a place of meeting in the parish.

Church and School.—The stipend of this parish was originally 16 chalders of meal; but, in 1641, Mr Calvert, then minister, agreed to give to a second, or colleague minister, five chalders, and “that according to the act of the High Commission,” and one chalder provided the entrant should be agreeable to the presbytery, the parish, and himself. Several augmentations have been made to the original stipend of this charge; so that now it consists of eight chalders of meal, 16l. 13s. 4d. Sterling of money, and 4l. 3s. 4d. for communion elements. There is no house or glebe belongs to it. The stipend of the first charge is ten chalders of meal, 4l. 13s. 4d. for communion elements, with a manse and glebe. The glebe lets for 10l. The manse was built in 1712, has had several repairs, got a pretty complete one in 1783, and is now a tolerably commodious house, though inferior to some manses lately built in the neighbourhood. The Marquis of Abercorn is patron of both livings.

The schoolmaster of the town of Paisley was, before the disjunction of the town, considered as the parish schoolmaster. Since that time, there has been no established schoolmaster in the parish, though there are many private teachers and well frequented schools.

Abbey.—A particular account of the Abbey of Paisley would fill many pages. It was founded as a priory for monks of the order of Clugni about the year 1160 by Walter great Steward of Scotland. It was afterwards raised to the rank of an abbacy; and the lands belonging to it were by Robert II. erected into a regality, under the jurisdiction of the abbot. After the Reformation, the abbacy was secularized

zed by the Pope in favour of Lord Claud Hamilton, third son of the Duke of Chatelherault, in reward of his steady adherence to the cause of Queen Mary; and, in 1588, it was by the King and Parliament erected into a temporal lordship, and Lord Claud was created Lord Paisley. The revenues of the abbacy were very considerable: They consisted of the teinds of twenty-eight different parishes, with the property of the lordships of Paisley, of Kilpatrick in Dunbartonshire, and of Monkton in Ayrshire, extending each to a hundred merk land; and the forty pound land of Glen in Lochwinnoch; with the lands of Achengown, Grange, &c. and a considerable detached property in different parts of the kingdom. All this property, with the patronage of the several churches, fell to Lord Claud Hamilton, last abbot of Paisley. It continued in that family till 1653, when his grandson James Earl of Abercorn sold the lordship of Paisley to the Earl of Angus, who next year sold it to William Lord Cochran, Kilpatrick to Sir John Hamiltoun of Orbistoun, Monkton to Lord Bargenny, and Glen to Lord Semple and others. Great part of the lordship of Paisley was, at different times, sold off by the family of Dundonald; and what remained of it was in 1764 repurchased by the late Earl of Abercorn. The fabric of the Abbey owed much of its magnificence to Abbot George Schaw, who, about 1484, enlarged and beautified the building, surrounding the church, the precincts of the convent, the gardens, and a small deer-park, with a noble wall of hewn free-stone. The Abbey was, after the Reformation, successively the seat of the Earls of Abercorn and Dundonald. The late Earl of Dundonald demolished the ancient gateway, and, by feuing off the immediately adjoining grounds for building, entirely changed the appearance of the place. As it was thus rendered totally unfit for a family residence, it has since that time been let out into separate dwellings, and
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is now in a very mean and almost ruinous state. The wall stood almost entire till 1781, when the garden being feued off for building upon, by the late Earl of Abercorn, the wall was sold to the feuers, and the stones of it employed in their houses.

Poor.—The poor of the parish are numerous, a necessary consequence of the extensive manufactures, and of the ready employment afforded to labourers of every description. In 1776-77-78, the sum expended for the relief of the poor amounted, on an average, to 71 l. 11 s. yearly. In 1779-80-81, to 85 l. 7 s. In 1782-83-84, to 136 l. 12 s. In 1785-86-87, to 238 l. 3 s. In 1788-89-90, to 381 l. And, in 1791, to 440 l. 3 s. Of this sum 284 l. was paid to the poor upon the parish roll; about 46 l. was distributed in occasional charity; about 74 l. was applied for the maintenance of foundlings and deserted children; and 36 l. for clothing, house rents, school wages, burials, and such incidental expences. The small pittance allowed in the beginning of these periods to the inrolled poor, in a place where all the articles of living are dear, could scarcely be called an aliment. It was from 2 s. to 10 s. *per* quarter; the average, to each person, being about 5 s. At present, the allowance is from 4 s. to 26 s. *per* quarter; the average being 12 s. 7 d. The number of inrolled poor is between 90 and 100.

Till 1785, the poor were supported by the collections at the church door; by the interest of some donations in the management of the kirk session; by the dues for the proclamation of banns of marriage, and a small sum arising from the use of the mort cloths. At that period it was proposed to put a stop to the practice of vagrant begging, and as for that end it was necessary to provide for the support of the poor in their houses, a parochial assessment was resolved upon,

a measure the more reasonable and necessary in this parish, as among the many affluent landholders belonging to it, only one or two who resided within the parish, did ever contribute any thing for the maintainance of the poor. The first assessment was 152 l. from which sum it soon rose to 415 l.; but this, like other taxes, is not completely effective. It has stood at that sum for the last three years; and if the attention that has hitherto been given to the management be continued, and the same care taken to admit no improper objects on charity, it is hoped there will be no necessity, for some time, to impose a greater. The collections amount to about 80 l. yearly; the dues of proclamation 18 l.; mortcloths, 11 l.; and the interests of money, with a trifling sum arising from fines imposed by the kirk session, about 15 l. The produce of the whole funds is thrown into one sum, and distributed by the kirk session, and 21 overseers, chosen equally from the heritors, farmers, and householders. A small salary is paid for collecting the assessment, and paying out the money, the only expence that attends the management. The mode of assessment and distribution is so similar to that in the parish of Jedburgh, that the minute differences are not worth noticing.

Besides these parochial funds for the relief of the poor, there is a considerable subscription yearly to the Paisley Dispensary, an institution that has subsisted since 1786, and been attended with very happy effects among the lower classes of the industrious inhabitants of this place. The yearly amount of the subscription to that charity, from the town and suburbs, has been about 130 l.

Various societies are formed among the journeymen weavers, for the relief of those members who, by age or sickness, are incapacitated for work. Sunday schools, though upon a small scale, have been lately established, both in the

town of Paisley and Abbey parish : Institutions that have become highly necessary since the introduction of the cotton spinning, which engages children before they have got almost any education of any kind, and which occupies them from morning to night throughout the week.

Occasional collections are made for the poor in seasons of scarcity, or times of particular distress. And to the honour of the more affluent inhabitants of the town and Abbey parish, let it be acknowledged, that every plan to supply the wants, or mitigate the distresses of the indigent or destitute, has always met with their hearty concurrence, and most liberal support.

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