

PARISH OF BOLTON.

PRESBYTERY OF HADDINGTON, SYNOD OF LOTHIAN AND
TWEEDDALE.

THE REV. JOHN ABERNETHY, A. M. MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

THE etymology of the name of this parish is quite uncertain.

Extent, &c.—It extends in length nearly 6 miles, and its medium breadth may be $1\frac{1}{4}$ mile. Its figure is extremely irregular, and could not be easily described without a map. It is bounded on the north-west, north, and east by the parish of Haddington, which is separated from it on the east and north-east for about three miles, by what is called the Gifford, or the Bolton, or the Coalston water, after the parishes, or properties through which it runs; on the south, by Yester parish; and on the west and north-west, by the parishes of Humbie and Salton.

There are no mountain ranges in this parish, and scarcely anything that can be called a hill, the highest ridges being all under the plough, or capable of being so. The surface, however, is agree-

ably diversified by undulating elevations; and everywhere has abundant declivity for thoroughly draining the soil.

Hydrography.—The parish is abundantly supplied with spring water, with the exception, perhaps, of two farms. The principal stream is the one already mentioned, as constituting the greater part of the boundary between this parish and that of Haddington. It is a small rapid river, which has its principal sources in the Lammermuir hills, but is fed by various tributary streamlets in its course downwards. After running through the grounds of Yester, Eaglescarnie, Dalgourie, Bolton, Coalston, and Lennoxlove, it joins the Tyne in the grounds of the latter place, about a mile west from Haddington.

This beautiful stream is well stocked with trout, and throughout the greater part of its course its banks are adorned with plantations of wood. Some of the trees are very fine.

The only other rivulet worthy of notice is the Birns Water, which also rises in the Lammermuir hills, and forms the boundary between this parish and that of Humbie. It holds on its course downwards between the parishes of Humbie and Pencaitland on the one hand, and that of Salton on the other, till it unites with the Tyne in the grounds of Mr Fletcher of Salton. At the point of junction with the Tyne, it is rather the larger of the two.

Meteorology.—On this head nothing need be added to what has been already stated in the other accounts of the district. Like that of the surrounding parishes, the climate is very salubrious. A good many instances of longevity occur in the register of deaths. There are several such instances at present, and about five years ago, one woman died in the hundred and fifth year of her age.

Geology and Mineralogy.—On this head almost nothing can at present be said; as there is not an open quarry in the whole parish. The strata are to a small extent exposed by the action of the river first mentioned. In part of its course may be seen a sort of coarse sandstone nearly horizontal. Limestone might probably be found, as it occurs very near the boundaries, in the parishes of Salton and Yester. Boulders are met with, when the soil is opened up by drains or otherwise; and it is probable, have been of frequent occurrence, but have been broken up for economical purposes. Any that the writer has examined are of very compact greenstone, no body of which is known to exist within a very considerable distance.

The soil is all arable, and is all under the plough, excepting

what is covered by wood, which is also capable of cultivation, and a few inconsiderable patches on the sides of the streams.

There is a tract extending from Morham Muir through part of the parishes of Morham, Haddington, Yester, Bolton, Salton, and Humbie, the soil of which is of a very inferior quality, being generally a cold thin clay on a tilly subsoil. Part of this tract has been originally covered by heath, as is evident from what is still to be seen in the woods. The soil of the rest of the parish is generally good—a fertile clay with some inconsiderable exceptions; and has been brought into a very productive state by the improved system of cultivation which has long prevailed in this district.

Botany.—In the different plantations are found all the ordinary species of forest trees. Eaglescarnie, which is well wooded, has fine old timber on its grounds, and, in particular, some Spanish chestnuts of large size near the house. In these woods the principal native plants of any note occur; among which may be noticed, as not so common, *Listera nidus avis*, and *Campanula rapunculoides*. *Silva pratensis* is seen in considerable abundance.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

It is stated by Chalmers in his *Caledonia*, Vol. ii. p. 437, &c. “that the manor of Bolton was early enjoyed by the St Hilaries, who were succeeded by William de Vetereponte, who married Emma de St Hilary. Notwithstanding the terrible disasters of the succession war, in which, as we learn from Rymer and Prynne, this family was involved, yet was Bolton, with lands in other districts, enjoyed by it under Robert I. and David II. In the reign of James II. it belonged to George, Lord Haliburton of Dirleton. It was at length acquired by Patrick Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, after a long suit in Parliament with Marion, the Lady of Bolton,” (in which his principles and character appear to great disadvantage.) “In 1526 and 1543, Bolton was in possession of a cadet of his family, by the name of Hepburn of Bolton. In January 1568, John Hepburn of Bolton was executed, as the associate of the Earl of Bothwell, his chief, in the murder of Darnley. The manor of Bolton, thus forfeited, was given to William Maitland, the well known Secretary Lethington. It was confirmed to the Earl of Lauderdale in 1621. Richard, Earl of Lauderdale, who died about the year 1693, sold the barony of Bolton, and even the ancient inheritance of Lethington, to Sir Thomas Livingston, who was created Viscount Teviot in 1696; and Sir Thomas transferred the whole to Walter, Master of Blantyre, afterwards Lord Blan-

tyre, in 1702, in whose family the property remains." The money for this purchase was left by Frances Teresa Stuart, Duchess of Richmond and Lennox, who was grand-daughter of the first Lord Blantyre. The name was by this Lady's will changed from Lethington to Lennoxlove, not certainly a happy change so far as the sound is concerned.

Land-owners.—The only residing heritor in this parish is the Honourable General Patrick Stuart, Commander of the Forces in Scotland, whose place of residence is Eaglescarnie, pleasantly situated near the stream already mentioned. Eaglescarnie was for several centuries the residence of a branch of the Haliburtons, Lords of Dirleton. In 1747, Patrick Lindesay, Esq. of the Lindesays of Kirkforthar, (descended from the Lords Lindsay of the Byres), married Margaret, daughter and heiress of Thomas Haliburton, Esq. of Eaglescarnie, and she being heir of line, Patrick Lindesay, Esq. was designed by that title. Their eldest daughter, Katharine, married Alexander, tenth Lord Blantyre; and the Honourable General Patrick Stuart, before-mentioned, is their second son, and acquired the estate of Eaglescarnie by a deed of entail of his grandfather, Patrick Lindesay. The other land-owners in the parish, are, Lord Blantyre, the Marquis of Tweeddale, the Earl of Dalhousie, Lord Sinclair, Fletcher of Salton, Bogue of Kirkland, and Grant of Pilmuir.

Parochial Registers—These consist of several volumes, the earliest of which commences anno 1641. They comprehend the records of the kirk-session and registers of baptisms, marriages and deaths. The register of deaths has not been very regularly kept, and the first volume of the records is a good deal tarnished.

Antiquities.—Chalmers, in his *Caledonia*, Vol. ii. p. 404, says, "The most prominent objects which next attract the antiquarian eye, are the hill-forts of the earliest people. Of this nature, probably, is the camp in Bolton parish, comprehending five or six acres, and is called Chesters." In Vol. i. p. 163, 164, he says, "from St Abb's-head, along the coast, no Roman camp has yet been discovered, whatever antiquarians may have supposed."

Chalmers is certainly incorrect in this conjecture and assertion. The camp in Bolton-muir, though now greatly defaced, has evidently been quadrangular, whereas the British strengths, it is believed, were almost uniformly circular, unless when unavoidably otherwise, from the nature of the situation, which is not the case here, as the ground is level, bounded on one side only by a ravine

of no great depth. Although there be no known remains of Roman roads in East Lothian, this is no evidence that there may not have been such. In a country so early and so completely cultivated as East Lothian, such roads must long since have disappeared, excepting in so far as their direction coincided with the existing roads. It is hardly conceivable that a people, so shrewd and able as the Romans were, who so long occupied the best parts of Britain, and who had such large armies to maintain, should have overlooked so fertile a district as this is. Besides, the great Roman road by Lauder, Channelkirk and Soutra-hill, considerable remains of which are still visible in the less cultivated portions of its tract, passed along close by the district of East Lothian, and in its progress over Soutra-hill, commanded a most magnificent and extensive prospect of almost the whole of its surface. No one who knows the history of the Romans can suppose it possible that this could have escaped their notice, or that they did not take advantage of the supplies which such a district was capable of affording them. To secure these supplies, they must have had stations at proper intervals. Two of these, at least, it is believed, are still to be seen. The late intelligent Mr Sangster of Humbie pronounces the fort on the lands of Whitburgh to have been a Roman castellum. It is only a short distance east from the itinerary station of Curry on the Gore Water, the Curia of the Romans. The camp in Bolton parish is distant from this fort somewhere about six miles. The very name Chesters seems to indicate a Roman origin. This name, which occurs so often, both singly, as in the present instance, and in composition, as in the names *Tadcaster*, *Worcester*, *Manchester*, &c. is certainly a corrupt on of the Roman *Castra*, and points out many of the military stations of that remarkable people.

There is now no vestige of the remains of a mansion on the manor of Bolton, mentioned in the former Statistical Account; but the field on which it stood is still called the Orchard Park.

III.—POPULATION.

In 1755, the population amounted to	359
1791, - - - - -	285
1801, - - - - -	252
1811, - - - - -	265
1821, - - - - -	315
1831, - - - - -	392
1835, males 158; females, 165;	323
Average of births, - - - - -	6½
of marriages, - - - - -	1½
of deaths, - - - - -	3

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Population under 15 years of age, -	64	61	125
between 15 and 30, -	40	44	84
30 and 50, -	34	37	71
50 and 70, -	17	19	36
upwards of 70, -	3	4	7
	158	165	323
Proprietors of land of the yearly value of L. 50 and upwards, -			8
Number of families chiefly employed in agriculture, -			67

During the three years preceding the date of this report, there was one illegitimate birth in the parish.

Manufactories.—There is one manufactory for smith-work, one for rural carpentry, and one corn and barley-mill, belonging to three families, and employing six or seven individuals. There is no tailor, no shoemaker, and no public-house.

There are no insane persons at present in the parish, and none deaf and dumb, or blind.* It is not believed that there are any who engage in poaching or smuggling.

As Bolton is an entirely agricultural parish, and none encouraged to reside in it but such as are necessary for agricultural purposes, the trifling increase or decrease of the population in different years is owing to the state of agriculture, and to the state of the families, as to numbers, which are perpetually fluctuating, in consequence of the frequent changes of residence from one parish to another. The same cause accounts, to a certain extent, for the fluctuation in the proportions between the male and the female portions of the population.

But there is another point of view of much more importance, in regard to the influence which these frequent changes are calculated to have on character and morals. Those who are frequently shifting their places of residence can never feel themselves identified with the views and interests of any neighbourhood, nor fully experience the salutary influence of its institutions. In reference to the causes of these frequent changes, is it not deserving the serious consideration of all parties concerned, whether they sufficiently cherish that reciprocal sympathy and regard for each others interests, which is so productive of good in every relation,—and whether there be a proper distinction made by those who have

* Since this was written one case of insanity has occurred. This person is under the care of her relatives, who receive for her from the parish L. 12 per annum. There is also a case of blindness. This young man is at present, at an expense of five shillings a week to the parish, supported in the Edinburgh Asylum for the Blind, with a view to his being instructed in some art by which he may be enabled to support himself.

the power, between the conscientious and well-behaved, and those who are otherwise?

In some of the other parochial accounts, attention has been earnestly called to the very inadequate accommodation provided in the houses of the most numerous class of our population, which is far from being propitious to their morals or their comfort. Nothing, surely, but the awakening of attention to the subject, is necessary to bring about some amelioration. It cannot be doubted that there are many who only require to have the matter brought prominently under their notice, to induce them to abate this crying evil. If there should be others indifferent or hostile to any alteration for the better, they might be influenced to change their views, by the example of those who have the good of their fellow-creatures more at heart.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.

Number of Scottish acres under cultivation, rated at 30 $\frac{1}{2}$ ploughgates, -	2101
in permanent pasture, - - - - -	55
under wood, - - - - -	295
	Total, 2451

Rent of Land.—The average rent per acre is L. 1, 6s. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., the grain rents being calculated by the average of the medium fiars of wheat for the seven years ending with 1834.

The highest rent is seven bushels of wheat, and the lowest, three bushels at the medium fiars, with a maximum of L. 3, 10s. per imperial quarter, and no minimum. There might also be quoted in one case, a maximum of L. 3, 4s. and a minimum of L. 2, 4s. The total rent is L. 2888, 1s. 6d.; the valued rent, Scottish money, L. 2437, 12s. 7d.

Produce.—

Calculating the prices of grain of all kinds at the medium fiars for the average of the seven years ending with 1834, the produce is about	L. 7709	15	0
Produce of green crops, hay and pasture, and of the cattle, horses, and sheep fed on these, as nearly as can be estimated, about	-	2115	7* 0
Produce from the thinnings, &c. of the woods, about	-	300	0 0
	Total,	L. 10,125	2 0

It is unnecessary to notice the other particulars under this head, as they differ in nothing from the statements in the accounts of the neighbouring parishes already published.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Market-Town.—There is no town or village in the parish. The

* The produce from the green crops, hay, and pasture, is given in one sum, because these crops are generally consumed on the farm, and the value of each separately cannot be easily ascertained.

nearest market-town is Haddington, distant nearly two miles from the lower part of the parish, and two miles and three-quarters from the church. Besides what is sold in Haddington, a considerable part of the produce is carried to the Dalkeith and Edinburgh markets.

Means of Communication.—The great road from London to Edinburgh by Haddington passes within the distance specified in the last particular. The road from Edinburgh to Dunse, by Tranent, Pencaitland, Salton, Yester, and across the Lammermuir Hills, traverses the parish near the centre, where it is narrowest, being there scarcely a mile in breadth. There is another road tolerably good for a considerable part of its length, which crosses that last mentioned nearly at right angles, and runs through the whole length of the parish. Several of the statute labour roads are in a rather indifferent state of repair. There is no post-office in the parish. It is accommodated by the office at Haddington, and part of the upper part of the parish by that at West Salton.

Ecclesiastical State.—William de Vetereponte, before-mentioned, granted the church of Bolton, with its lands, tithes, and pertinents to the canons of Holyrood; and this gift was confirmed by a charter of William the Lion. It remained in the hands of the canons of Holyrood till the Reformation. In 1633, the epoch of the Episcopate of Edinburgh, it was annexed to the newly created bishoprick, which was itself subverted in 1641. In the ancient taxatio, the church of Bolton was rated at the inconsiderable value of 20 merks.*

The present church was built in 1809. It is a handsome building in what has been called, whether properly or not, the modern Gothic style, with a square tower at the western end. It can accommodate nearly 300 sitters, and, consequently, is larger than is necessary for the population. The situation is very inconvenient for the upper part of the parish, being near its lower extremity. The manse was built a few years before the church; is suitable to the parish, and in good repair.

The glebe contains 6.286 acres, and was let during the greater part of the writer's incumbency for L. 25; but is not worth so much now. The stipend is the minimum, with L. 8, 8s. 10½d. in name of grass mail and communion elements, though now quite inadequate for both purposes.

* Caledonia, Vol. ii. p. 531.

The whole population is connected with the Established Church, with the exception of one family, which is Episcopalian, and a very few individuals, who are Seceders.* The average number of communicants for the last fifteen years is 119.

There has been contributed for a number of years past, upwards of L. 10 Sterling a year for religious and charitable purposes.

Ministers of Bolton.—Mr Andrew Simson, vicar and exhorter, November 1567; Mr James Carmichael, minister of Haddington, Bolton, Estantefurd, and St Martin's Kirk in the Nungaitt, 1574, resigned Bolton about 1586; William Balfour, reader at Bolton, 1574; Mr James Lamb, admitted September 1587, died 1640; Mr John Courtie or Courtane, admitted 1640; Mr James Nairn, admitted 1662; Mr Walter Paterson, admitted November 23, 1665, outed for refusing the test, 1681; Mr John Sinclair, admitted November 30, 1682, continued after the Revolution, and died 1705; Mr William Hamilton, admitted May 11, 1708, died May 1743; Mr John Hamilton, admitted 1744, died February 14, 1797; Mr Alexander Brunton, admitted September 28, 1797, translated to New Greyfriars', Edinburgh, in 1803; Mr Andrew Stewart, admitted April 26, 1804, translated to Erskine, 1815; Mr John Abernethy, admitted May 14, 1816.

Education.—The parochial school is the only one in the parish, and it would be quite sufficient for the population if it were not for the localities already alluded to. Those children who are at too great a distance from the parish school are accommodated at schools in the neighbouring parishes. The branches taught are those common to all parish schools, with geography, mathematics, Latin, French, and occasionally Greek, all which are efficiently taught by Mr Young, the present master. The school-fees are the same with those already reported in the accounts of the neighbouring parishes. The salary is the maximum, or L. 34, 4s. 5d. The school-fees may amount to nearly L. 40, besides the other emoluments commonly attached to this office, which in so small a parish do not amount to much. Besides the salary and school fees, the master has a salary of L. 3, 3s. as session-clerk, and five per cent. as heritors' clerk on the money levied for roads and assessments for the poor, which amounts to about L. 3. His fees for registering births and marriages, and for certificates, scarcely amount to L. 1 per annum. The legal accommodations

* Since the above was written, three Dissenting and one Roman Catholic family have come to the parish.

for the master are provided. The dwelling-house has just undergone extensive repairs. The school-house was built a few years ago, and is very neat, substantial, and commodious. The school is well attended. The present teacher has had upwards of 100 scholars in winter. The average attendance is about 72. But this school cannot in future be expected to attract so many children, as some of the adjoining parishes are now better appointed in teachers than they were during the greater portion of the period to which the above statement refers. It is not believed that there are any above six years of age who cannot read more or less accurately, and few who cannot also write. The parents, in general, seem anxious to have their children educated according to their circumstances, although in some cases they are not kept sufficiently long at school, nor so regularly as is necessary.

There is, besides the week-day school, one on the Sabbath, exclusively for religious instruction; and a more advanced class taught in the minister's house on the Sabbath evenings.

Libraries.—There is a small parochial library; and for a good many years past, there has been stationed here one division of the Itinerating Libraries, established by Mr Samuel Brown of Haddington.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of persons receiving parochial aid for the last ten years is $4\frac{7}{10}$, nearly one in every 70. The allowance to each for a year is from L. 3, 5s. to L. 3, 18s., although in extraordinary cases more is given. The average expenditure for the last seven years has been L. 26, 8s.; but this includes several small fees, for which there is no other provision. The income to meet this arises from the weekly collections, the interest of L. 120 of accumulations, the hire for a hearse and mortcloths, and an assessment averaging for the above period L. 8, 13s. 2½d. per annum.

Our experience here accords with that of all the parishes where recourse has been had to assessments for any length of time,—namely, a diminishing reluctance to apply for parochial aid, and less of that honourable and amiable anxiety in children to share their gains in promoting the comfort of their aged parents, who submitted to many privations on their account, before they were able to provide for themselves. It must, however, in justice be recorded, that there are honourable and laudable exceptions to this common remark. There are some children who struggle hard, and submit cheerfully to many privations, for the sake of their aged

parents, and whom nothing but dire necessity could induce to allow those so dear to them to become dependent on foreign aid.

Besides the above provision for the poor, the late benevolent ladies, Katharine Lady Blantyre, and her sister, Miss Lindesay of Eaglescarnie, left L. 100 each,—or, after deducting the legacy-duty, L. 180, for the relief of persons in distress, the interest to be given irrespective of the ordinary allowance. This has been hitherto expended in affording occasional relief, in supplying coals, and in paying the school fees of children whose parents stand in need of such aid.

Fuel.—This district is abundantly supplied with coals from Penston, Pencaitland, and Huntlaw, which are within a moderate distance from every part of the parish.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

In the former Statistical Account of this parish, it is stated that there were about 150 acres in wheat,—there are now nearly 300 : That ploughmen had ordinarily L. 14 Sterling a-year,—now they have from L. 23 to L. 25. The rent is stated to have been L. 1400,—it is now about double that sum ; and during the high war prices it was considerably more.

Great attention has long been applied to that first of agricultural improvements—draining ; and much money has been expended on it. Still, owing to the difficulty of the soil ; many farms were but imperfectly drained. The new system, however, called the frequent drain system or furrow draining, bids fair to bring this operation to perfection, and to alter almost entirely the character of many farms. This system is carried on at present with great spirit in this neighbourhood. It must be a great addition to the durability of these drains, when the tiles are covered with gravel, or small stones, which is not always done.

Drawn up November 1836. Revised November 1838.