

PARISH OF TORPHICHEN.

PRESBYTERY OF LINLITHGOW, SYNOD OF LOTHIAN & TWEEDDALE.

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I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE name of this parish is evidently Celtic in its origin; but etymologists are by no means agreed with regard to its true composition and meaning. The word *Tor* is unquestionably *hill*; but the latter part of the name is more doubtful. Some assert it to mean *ten*, and say that it refers to a range of hills in the vicinity having ten summits. The range, however, has not more than seven distinct summits; and the Gaelic word *fichead* means *twenty*, not *ten*, as they assume. The most probable derivation seems to be *Torfeochan*, or *the hill of the Ravens*. It may be regarded as some corroboration of this meaning that there is an estate in the neighbourhood of the village named *Craw hill*; and that the crest of the most extensive land proprietor in the parish is *a raven chained to a rock*, as if in allusion to the parochial name.

Boundaries, Extent, &c.—Torphichen is bounded on the east by Linlithgow; on the south by Bathgate, and part of Shotts; on the west by part of Shotts and New Monkland; and on the north by part of Slamannan and Muiravonside. Its greatest length is about 10 miles from east to west, and its greatest breadth about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles. In one part the breadth is less than a mile. It contains about 10,429.77 English acres; and about 16.30 square miles.

Topographical Aspect.—The eastern part of the parish is very agreeably diversified by a succession of woody elevations, sloping terraces, and cliffy ridges, as it ascends towards the higher range of hills by which it is divided from Bathgate and Linlithgow on the east. The ridge immediately above the village has a peculiarly picturesque appearance when viewed from the east, consisting of a succession of rounded summits swelling along wave after wave, as if some enormous ocean-tide had been suddenly changed to solid earth throughout the continuous sweep of all its billowy heav-

ings. The western side of this beautiful ridge slopes gradually down into softer undulations, in the midst of which are situated the village, the church, and the Preceptory of Torphichen. The district around the village is both fertile, and presents a pleasing and remarkable diversity of picturesque aspects, as viewed from various points, through clusters of woody ridges, and green trees, and craggy cliffs of trap, till it sinks away into the hollow through which flows the small stream, the Loggie. From thence it again ascends into a sort of bleak upland, composed chiefly of stoney elevations with a clayey subsoil, interspersed by long stripes and flats of heathery bogs, and wet marshes, covered deep with peat moss.

The highest hill in the parish is that central one of the Bathgate and Torphichen range, called Cairn-naple, or Cairn-paple, which is just included within the angle of its eastern boundary,—its height is stated to be 1498 feet. Towards the north the boundary-line skirts the base of Cockleroi (perhaps *Cachil-righ*, the *King's chair*), which is considerably lower; and includes Bowden-hill, which terminates the range in that direction. From the summit of any of these hills, especially *Cachil-righ*, may be obtained a prospect scarcely surpassed by any in Scotland for extent, beauty, and magnificence,—reaching from North Berwick Law to the distant cloud-crowned Ben Lomond, and including the view of Edinburgh with its castle, Salisbury Craigs, and Arthur's Seat, the bays and windings of the Forth, “studded with islets and alive with sails,”—the rich and varied scenery of the Fifeshire coast, with all its numerous villages and spires and towns,—the wavy outline and the deep indentations of the massy Ochils, the fertile carse-land of Falkirk, the gray towers of ancient Stirling, and the sky-piercing peaks of the majestic Grampians.

Behind the mansion-house of Craw-hill, on the banks of the river Avon, which are deep, rocky, and wooded, there is a chasm commonly called Wallace's cave; and close adjoining it there is a natural arch in the living rock of very considerable size, within the deep clefts of which there are some beautiful and rather rare varieties of lichens and mosses.

The climate is unquestionably good, though rather cold. The air is pure and bracing, particularly in the eastern division of the parish; and even in the more upland and moorish districts westward, there are no such exhalations as to be noxious to the health of the inhabitants.

Hydrography.—There are only two mineral springs deserving of notice as such. At the westward base of the Kipps-hill there is one said to be impregnated with vitriol. On the estate of Wallhouse, and about a mile west from the village, there is a chalybeate spring, which formerly enjoyed some reputation as a tonic, but has fallen into neglect, so that even its position is scarcely known. Several other springs exhibit traces of mineral impregnation, but of no very decided character.

On the very boundary of the Cathlaw estate, nearly due east from the Preceptory, there is a very strong spring of deliciously tasted pure water, called St John's well; to which it is said the Knights of St John used to go in days of yore for a morning draught. Whether its virtues were medicinal, or of a more hallowed character, tradition cannot exactly inform us; but still its waters are thought to possess peculiar healing powers, if not still rarer qualities, which operate in various cases as a charm. Near it stood a stone, in some way connected with the well, and on the very limits of the parish.

There is a beautiful little lake at Lochcote, about a mile to the north-east of the village, in the hollow formed by the surrounding hills of Bowden, Cachil-righ, and Kipps. It covers about 22 English acres. Formerly it discharged its surplus waters by a stream from its north-west end, which formed a singular pool, called the eel-ark. From this pool it ran under ground for more than 200 yards, when it again burst upwards like a strong spring, and continued its course into the Avon. This romantic little lake was drained by a late proprietor, who thereby lost a great natural beauty, and gained a few acres of deep, ill-reclaimed, and not half arable marsh. The present proprietor (Joseph Hume, Esq.) has, with great taste, determined to restore the lake, considering a beautiful sheet of water more truly valuable as an ornament to his elegant mansion on its margin, than could be the acquisition of as much muddy soil and rank vegetation.

The little river Avon flows along the north boundary of Torphichen, dividing it from the parish of Muiravonside. The Loggie is a much smaller stream than the Avon, into which it falls. It forms the boundary between Torphichen and Bathgate for several miles; but though its channel is considerably deep, its course is not adorned with scenery of particular interest.

Geology and Mineralogy.—The most peculiar geological features of the parish are to be found in the east end of it, skirting

the Bathgate range of hills. That range is chiefly composed of trap-rock as its central mass, with successive strata of limestone, carboniferous shale, coal, sandstone, and thick beds of clay, gravel, and other alluvial deposits. The ridge seems to have been produced by igneous agency, upheaving the superincumbent strata, bursting through them in the centre, in some places overlying them, in others rending them asunder and thrusting them aside till it displayed the disturbing material in various aspects, occasionally in that of columnar trap. The dip of the superincumbent strata is accordingly very steep, in some places almost perpendicular, in others a foot in five or six, and gradually diminishing till it reach the level of the adjoining country. The picturesquely undulating range of the Torphichen hills, already described, is also composed of trap; and where it has been decomposed around their sides and bases, or in hollows, it has formed a peculiarly rich and fertile soil, though of no great depth. On the Hilderston hills, on the west side of the Bathgate ridge, there is a coal mine, the mouth of which must be at least 800 feet above the level of the sea. This height has been manifestly caused by the upheaving of the ridge where the trap forced its way from beneath, raising in its passage the superincumbent strata, as the mine is worked in from the top where the coal *crops out*. Nearly opposite, on the eastern shoulder of the same hill, there is a limestone quarry, in which many shells are found, chiefly ammonites, some of which are unusually large. Some fossil fishes are also said to have been found. A coal mine has been recently opened in the hollow between the Kipp hills, the Torphichen wavy range, and the continuation of the Bathgate range, running through Cathlaw estate. The coal bed seems to lie in a kind of basin formed by these ridges, and can scarcely be expected to be very productive or permanent from the nature of the situation.

In Bowden hill is another limestone quarry, or rather mine, entered by a horizontal shaft in the side of the hill, and chambered out regularly, leaving columns to support the roof of what is becoming an immense cave.

Along the course of the Loggie burn there runs a chain of conical sand-hills, of such a regular figure, as to have led to the erroneous popular belief that they are artificial, and have been raised at some distant period as monumental mounds. They are, however, obviously natural, being composed entirely of fine sea-sand, washed together into regular heaps and banks by the action

of water, at some period indefinitely remote, when the whole circumjacent country had not yet emerged from the depths of the ocean.

In the limestone quarry first mentioned, there was formerly found a considerable quantity of silver ore, whence the place is still called the silver mine; but the ore was not found to be either sufficient in quantity or rich enough in quality, to repay the expense of working it; consequently that has been abandoned.

There was also a coal mine on the property of Bridgecastle, about two miles and a-half west from Torphichen village, which was wrought several years. Its quality is said not to have been very good, and it also has been neglected for some time, though it is reported that the present proprietor, Captain Hope, R. N., intends to open it again.

Zoology and Botany.—There is nothing known of the zoology of this parish meriting peculiar notice. In botany it is worthy of more attention; less, however, on account of its possession of very rare plants, than because nearly all the varieties of plants indigenous to the lowlands of Scotland, especially to trap districts, may be found in it in a state of great perfection, and even some almost peculiar to the Highlands. On Cathlaw estate the lycopodium is found in great profusion; as also the wild gentian, and some beautiful varieties of the polygala, or milkwort. There are also some fine species of the orchis; and the trap hills of the Torphichen ridge abound with the common wild heart's ease in greater profusion than can be seen almost any where else. There are also some rather rare kinds of mosses and lichens found on the moorish districts, and among the rocky banks of the Avon. Some exotic plants have been occasionally found on the Kipps hills, as if naturalized, which are thought to have been brought thither by Sir Robert Sibbald in former days.

The soil seems to be adapted to the growth of timber of almost any kind, as appears from the well-wooded aspect of the district in the eastern division of the parish. There are some fine old trees of considerable magnitude around the mansions of Cathlaw, Lochcote, Wallhouse, and Bridgecastle; and on Cathlaw hill and Hilderston hill there are some young plantations in a very thriving condition,—indicating the possibilities of the district, were a system of planting adopted generally by the proprietors.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Almost the only account of the parish of Torphichen that has

ever been written or printed is to be found in Sir Robert Sibbald's History of the Shire of Linlithgow. There is also a somewhat confused account of it in a brief history of Linlithgowshire by the late John Penney, Esq. Information respecting its history and antiquities may also be gleaned from papers connected with the family records of the different proprietors, particularly the Noble family of Torphichen. As these contain materials of some interest, it has been thought proper to bring them together so as to form a somewhat detailed and connected account.

The civil history of Torphichen is so intimately connected with that of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem, who had their Preceptorate, or chief site and regality there, that a short account of that military and monastic order of knighthood will be that of Torphichen itself. This celebrated order had its origin in the interval between the first and second crusades, when, for the accommodation of the pilgrims who visited the Holy Sepulchre, especially of the sick among them, an hospital was built near the church, and dedicated to St John the Almoner. As they increased in numbers and influence the brothers of the hospital first withdrew from the jurisdiction of the Abbot of the Latin Church, and finally became independent of the Patriarch of Jerusalem. This happened in the year 1104, which may be taken as the date of the commencement of the Order of St John of Jerusalem or Knights Hospitallers, as they are sometimes termed, in contradistinction to the Order of Templars. When Jerusalem fell into the hands of the Saracens the survivors of the Order were compelled to retire into Italy, where they obtained from Pope Innocent IV. a dispensation, absolving them from their original obligation, and permitting them to elect a Grand Master and other subordinate officers for their own government. The same distinguished Order afterwards held possession of the Island of Rhodes, maintaining it against the Turks in the most brave and determined manner, during which they were generally called the Knights of Rhodes. When Rhodes finally was reduced by the Turks in 1522, the knights obtained possession of Malta in 1530, which they defended against their old antagonists the Turks, and in the defence displayed prodigies of valour and military skill.

The renown obtained by the Knights of St John gave rise to several other orders of knighthood, of which the Templars were the chief. The templars, however, excited the indignation of Philip IV. of France by their licentiousness, or his cupidity; by

their wealth; and were suppressed in the year 1312. Previous to their downfall they had acquired extensive possessions in every kingdom in Europe, which were either seized upon by the sovereign, or transferred to the kindred order of St John. In this manner, the lands of both orders came to belong to the Johannites; though in many instances they retained the name of Temple lands, from the Templars, as being the best known, though not the most ancient and honourable order.

As the Knights of St John had adherents, so they soon acquired possessions in every country in Europe. They were first established in Scotland by David I. or Malcolm IV. in the year 1153. In the charter granted by that monarch there occur the following words: "Qui in liberam et puram Eleemosynam donavit Fratribus Hospitalis Hierosolymitani unum plenarium toftum in qualibet Burgo totius terræ suæ." This small foundation was greatly amplified by additional grants from the succeeding kings, especially by Alexander II. and III., Robert II., and the Jameses II., III., and IV. These sovereigns not only confirmed the donations of their predecessors, but by new grants of lands, and by grants of privileges, powers, rights of patronage, and civil immunities, they bestowed at length a competent revenue and territory, and erected the dignities of the order into what was termed the Lordship of St John and Preceptorie of Torphichen. The suppression of the Templars tended greatly to augment the power of the Knights of St John. By a canon of the Council of Vienna, and a bull of Pope Clement VII., the whole lands and possessions of the Knights Templars in Scotland were conferred upon the Knights of St John of Jerusalem. The former had had their chief seat at Temple in Mid-Lothian, the latter at Torphichen, which continued to remain their chief seat or Preceptory. Not only did their new acquisitions, however, retain the designation of Temple lands, but even their own original property came to be called by the same name, which has caused considerable confusion in the attempts that have been made to discriminate between the lands formerly held by the Templars and those held by the Knights of St John.

Several of the preceptors, priors, or grand-masters of Torphichen were men of great talent, and distinguished themselves in the public affairs of the kingdom. Mention is made of one "Archibaldus Magister de Torphichen," who is witness to a charter of Alexander, Great Steward of Scotland, in 1252.

In the year 1298, while the heroic Sir William Wallace was Regent of Scotland, he held his head-quarters at the preceptory of Torphichen for some time previous to the battle of Falkirk, as appears from a charter granted by him as regent, conferring some lands at Dundee upon Alexander Scrimgeour, the royal standard-bearer, as a reward for his services, which charter is dated at Torphichen, the 29th day of March 1298.* It would seem that the then preceptor had previously sworn fealty to Edward I. of England, as did so many Scottish nobles, but redeemed his character for patriotism, and afterwards fell at the fatal battle of Falkirk, fought on the 22d of July 1298. His name is given by Rymer as Alexander de Wells.

The next Preceptor of whom particular mention is made was Sir William Knolles, who held the preceptorate about half a century, and was commonly designated Lord St John. He held the offices of Councillor and Treasurer in the reign of James IV., and was killed fighting by the side of that brave but rash monarch at Flodden Field in 1513. He was succeeded by Sir George Dundas, who had been the fellow-student of Hector Boetius at Paris, and was distinguished for his learning. Sir Walter Lindsay was the next preceptor, who also rose to distinction in the kingdom, and was appointed to the office of Justice-General of Scotland in the reign of James V. In Sir David Lindsay's "Testament of Squyer Meldrum," he is mentioned in the following laudatory terms :

* " CHARTA DOMINI GULIELMI WALLACE,

Custodie Scotie, Nomine Johannis Balliol Regis cum sigillo ejusdem Johannis.
 " Willelmus Walays miles custos regni Scotie et ductor exercitus ejusdem nomine preclari principis domini Johannis dei gratia Regis Scotie illustris de consensu communitatis ejusdem regni, omnibus probis hominibus dicti regni ad quos presens scriptum pervenerit eternam in Domino salutem. Noverit universitas vestra nos nomine predicti domini nostri regis Scotie per consensum et assensum magnatum dicti regni dedisse et concessisse ad ipsa donationem et concessionem presentis carti confirmasse Alexandro dicto Skirnischur sex marcas terre in territorio de Dundee. Scilicet terram unam que vocatur campus superior prope villam de Dundee ex parte boreali cum agris illis in campo occidentali. Et etiam pratum regium in predicto territorio de Dundee cum suis pertinenciis, libertatibus, et assamentis sine aliquo retinemento pro hamagis predicto domino regi et heredibus suis vel suis successoribus faciende, et pro fideli servicio et succursu suo predicto regno impenso portando vexillum regium in exercitu Scotie tempore confectionis presentium. Tenend et habend predicto Alexandro et heredibus suis de predicto dominio nostro regi et heredibus suis vel suis successoribus libera, quiete, integre, pacifice, et honorifice in perpetuum cum omnibus pertinenciis libertatibus et assamentis ad dictam terram et pratum prenotatum et prefatum constabulariam spectantibus vel quoquo modo spectare valentibus in futurum, faciendo inde annuatim domino regi et heredibus suis vel suis successoribus, scilicet pro predictis terra, prato, et constabularia cum suis pertinenciis, libertatibus, et assamentis servicium quod pertinet ad dictam constabulariam tantum pro omnibus que de predicti exigi poterunt in futurum. In cuius rei testimonium sigillis boni nomen predicti regni Scotie presenti scripto est oppositum, datum apud Torphichen xxix die Martii, anno gratie millesimo ducentesimo nonagesimo octavo."

"The wise Sir Walter Lindsay they him call,
Lord of St John and Knight of Torphichen,
By sea and land a valiant capitane."

Sir Walter Lindsay died in 1538, and was succeeded by Sir James Sandilands, brother to Sandilands of Calder. During his preceptorate, the Reformation began to stir men's minds, and to break up every thing established on no better foundation than superstition. Sir James Sandilands joined the Reformers, and this, together with the spirit of the times, caused the dissolution of the order of Knights of St John in Scotland. He resigned into the hands of Queen Mary the whole lands and baronies possessed by the preceptors of St John, receiving them again *in feu farm*, to him, his heirs, and assignees, for ever, upon condition of paying to her Majesty 10,000 crowns of the sun,* and 500 merks of annual feu-duty. The charter conveying to him the lands, &c. is dated at Edinburgh the 24th day of March 1563. The most important part of it is as follows:—"Dedisse, concessisse, et hac presenti carta nostra confirmasse, hereditarie dicto Jacobo Domino de Sancta Johanne heredibus suis et assignatis totas et integras terras et Baronias de Torphichen, Listoun, Balintredo, Tankertoun, Denny, Maryculter, Stennop, Galtua, cum tenentibus et tenendiis et libere tenend: servitiis, advocacionibus et donationibus Ecclesiarum beneficiarum, et Capellanarum omnium et singularium dictarum terrarum et Baronarum cum molendinis, murturis, silvis, piscariis, castris, terribus, fortaliciis," &c. It thus appears, that, at the period of the Reformation, the Knights of John were in possession of not less than eight baronies; and the records of the order contain a document in the hand-writing of Sir Walter Lindsay, which gives the same number and names. The last Preceptor, and first Lord Torphichen, resigned all these into the hands of James VI., with the exception of Torphichen and Liston. The church patronage held by the first Lord Torphichen in right of the order were Torphichen, Inchinnan, Maryculter, Tullaich, and Aboyne.

In the earlier periods of their history, the preceptors of Torphichen sat in councils and Parliament alternately among the higher clergy and the temporal barons. Sir William Knolles was raised permanently to the dignity of a Lord of Parliament by James IV., with the style and title of "Lord of St John," or "Lord St John of Torphichen," which title descended regularly

* 10,000 crowns of the sun, equal to about L. 1100 Sterling,—a large sum in those days.

to his successors, Sir George Dundas, Sir Walter Lindsay, and Sir James Sandilands. When the charter of the new peerage was granted to the last preceptor, it rendered that rank and title hereditary which had previously been purely official, that is, vested in the office of Prior, Grand Master, or Preceptor of the Order of Knights of St John of Jerusalem, whose chief residence or Preceptory was Torphichen. The office and the seat, therefore, gave the title, which was not vested in or inheritable by, any peculiar family; and by the charter of 1563, the title was changed into that of Lord Torphichen, but still remained attached to the ancient Preceptory, as a local dignity, though the official dignity had been abolished. The abolition of the official dignity rendered the title hereditary in the preceptory itself, whosoever should be its possessor, and in the family of Sandilands so long as they should retain the possession.

In 1599, James, second Lord Torphichen (nephew of the first,) conveyed the whole Temple and some of the Hospital-lands, with the exception of the baronies mentioned above, to Mr Robert Williamson, writer, and James Tenant of Linhouse. Williamson became sole proprietor in 1604, and afterwards sold them to Sir Thomas Hamilton, subsequently Earl of Melrose and Haddington. This nobleman acquired a charter from the Crown, erecting the lands so obtained into a barony, called the barony of Drem. The act of Parliament ratifying this charter is dated 1614. This barony was disentailed by act of Parliament about the middle of last century, and having passed through the hands of two or three proprietors, appears to have at length become dormant, if not extinct.

In 1683, John, Lord Torphichen, upon the resumption by Charles L. of the superiorities of church lands, felt apprehensive that his rights as successor to a religious order might thereby be prejudiced; and after petitioning Parliament, obtained an award of his Majesty, following a resolution of the Privy-Council, which was to have the force of an Act of Parliament; that the resumption, while it included the temple-lands, &c. should be held in no degree to encroach upon the superiorities of the barony of Torphichen, in Linlithgowshire, within "*that mean portione thereof quharin does subsist the title and dignity of Lords of Parliament, and to quhilk the title of Lord of Parliament is annexit, pertaining to him (Lord Torphichen) presentlie in propertie;*" but that the same "*shall remain with him and his successors, according to the tenor of his auld richts and infestments, to be holden of his majesty*

in feu ferme for payment of the soume of ane hundrethe merks yeirlie." No other title being mentioned in the Act, except the previous charter in 1563, it hence continued the regulating one, to be in force as far as respected the remainder of the property which had been still retained by the family. This "*mean portione,*" wherein the title "*subsists,*" is probably the central part of the barony, including especially the preceptory and its immediate demesne lands, which was, perhaps, the most ancient part of the patrimony of the knights.

The earldom of Arundel in England is held, it appears, by a similar tenure, the title being vested in the castle itself; and this too was ratified in the reign of Charles I.

The lands constituting the barony of Torphichen have been gradually sold, till little more remains in the possession of the Noble family than probably what constituted the original patrimony at first bestowed upon the founders of the Order in Scotland, nearly 700 years ago; but the portion which remains is that in which the title is vested, lying around and adjacent to the preceptory. It would appear from a claim given in by John Gillon of Wallhouse, November 10th 1747, that the lands of Wallhouse, South and North Hilderstons, Torphichen mill, and other lands, were originally held under the lordship of St John, as he mentions that they formed part of the regality of Torphichen, and that he had acquired the superiority thereof, and right of regality by purchase from James, Lord Torphichen. Mr Gillon states he had procured a crown charter of resignation under the great seal, on the 22d of June 1733, upon which infestment followed on the 29th of the same month. He claimed L.300 as the value, but his claim was dismissed.

The lands of Lochcote, which are said to have belonged to the same lordship of St John, enjoy the peculiar privilege of paying no teind, apparently on the assumption of having been churchlands.

Eminent Characters, &c.—Some of the most eminent characters connected with the parish by birth or residence have been already mentioned in the enumeration of the most distinguished preceptors of Torphichen. Of these, the last preceptor, Sir James Sandilands, occupies the most prominent position, in consequence of the part which he took in the Reformation. This distinguished man, having left no family, was succeeded in his honours by the son of his elder brother, Sandilands of Calder; and as Calder

House had been long the patrimonial residence of the family, it continued to be that of the Lords Torphichen, in consequence of which, the preceptory and its appurtenances were comparatively neglected, and allowed to fall into decay. Some portions of the original barony, however, came into the possession of cadets of the family, of which perhaps the most noted was Sandilands of Hilderston.

During the stormy period of the Covenanters, the family of Sandilands adhered to the principles of their ancestors; and both struggled in defence of, and suffered with, the persecuted Church of Scotland. William Sandilands, brother of the fourth Lord Torphichen, and tutor to his nephew, the fifth Lord, was laird of Hilderston. He married the second daughter of Cunningham of Cunninghamhead, in Ayrshire, a gentleman distinguished, even in that period, for his sincere piety. Hilderston and his lady were both remarkable for their attachment to the Presbyterian principles of the Scottish Church; and their mansion-house at Hilderston was often the hospitable resort of the persecuted Covenanters. There Mr Blackadder and others often held what were termed conventicles, and heavy fines were on that account imposed upon the family. Walter Sandilands, his son, married the heiress of Westport, near Linlithgow, and assumed the name and arms of Hamilton of Westport. He retained the same attachment to Protestant and Presbyterian principles which had characterized the family, from the days of their illustrious ancestor, Sir James Sandilands, the last preceptor, and the personal friend of John Knox. (See Wodrow, Vol. iii. p. 441.) This branch of the Sandilands family is now represented by Colonel John Ferrier Hamilton of Westport and Cathlaw.

It may be mentioned, that in the same troublous times, the regality of Torphichen is among those stated to have fallen into the hands of his Majesty, in consequence of their possessors refusing to take the test; and Lord Livingstone is recommended as the person to whom it should be given, probably on account of his want of principle and subserviency to that corrupt and tyrannous court, which had honoured Lord Torphichen by its dislike and its feeble enmity. The then minister of Torphichen was also ejected from his charge for refusing to take the same test; as appears by a report of the Committee for public affairs, offering it as their opinion that missives should be sent to the patrons of parishes vacant by the ministers' refusal of the test, of which mis-

nives one is directed to Lord Torphichen for the parish. (See Wodrow, Vol. iii. pp. 360—1.)

Sir Robert Sibbald, an eminent Scottish naturalist and antiquarian, was connected with this parish by becoming proprietor of the estate of Kipps, in right of his mother, heiress of the family of Boyd, its former proprietors. He resided for some time at Kipps; and there are still to be found some proofs of his taste in some kinds of exotic plants introduced by him, and now growing wild on the lands.

The Rev. John Bonnar is well known as one of the marrow-men; and subsequently as one of the ministers who assisted at the remarkable revival of religion which took place at Cambuslang in 1742, at which time he was still minister of Torphichen. It is stated, that he was then very old, and so infirm that his journey to Cambuslang occupied him three days, though the distance is not more than eighteen miles. Although none are now living who enjoyed his ministrations, his memory is still held in the highest respect and veneration. It appears, also, that Mr Gillon, of Wallhouse, ancestor of the present W. D. Gillon, Esq. was at that time an elder in Torphichen, and officiated as such at Cambuslang.

Mr Henry Bell, celebrated as being the person who first successfully applied the steam-engine as a propelling power, for the purpose of river and canal navigation in Britain, was a native of Torphichen. In a little spot of level alluvial ground, formed by the Avon, in a bend of that river, near Torphichen bridge, and sheltered by steep banks, may still be seen the ruined side walls, and the solitary gable of the cottage in which he was born. A few years before his death he paid a visit to the secluded scene of his infancy, with a view, it is said, of purchasing the spot, and erecting another cottage, and in that calm retreat terminating a career, the honours and rewards of which had been, as too often happens, but ill proportioned to its usefulness. He did not, however, prosecute his intention, and the solitary ruin remains his melancholy memorial.

Land-owners.—The chief land-owners are, the Right Honourable Lord Torphichen; W. D. Gillon, Esq. of Wallhouse; Colonel Ferrier Hamilton of Cathlaw; David Pringle, Esq. of Kipps; Joseph Hume, Esq. of Lochcote; Captain David Hope of Bridgecastle; William Wardrop, Esq. of Bridgehouse; Peter Sawers, Esq.; R. C. Buchanan, Esq.; and Sir Thomas Living-

stone, Bart. of Bedlormie. There are in all 37 proprietors, of whom 25 possess lands of the yearly value of L.50 and upwards.

Parochial Registers.—The earliest entry in the parochial registers bears the date of 1650. Since that time they have been pretty regularly kept, though they are somewhat meagre in their details. They amount, at present, to five volumes of no great size. There are two volumes of acts of Assembly from 1690 to 1733; but from that time till recently these acts have not been regularly obtained.

Antiquities.—The chief object of interest, in an antiquarian point of view, is the Preceptory, or chief seat of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem. It would appear, from the date of the original charter, 1153, that the preceptory was founded in that year, as it was the first property held by the Knights in Scotland, and continued to be their chief seat. Its site was well chosen for both strength and beauty; at the base of the picturesque range of the Torphichen hills, on the edge of a piece of marshy ground which furnished water to fill a moat twenty feet wide, by which the building itself, and about a Scotch acre of land, were surrounded, of which moat the course may still be distinctly traced. The upper part of the building commanded an extensive prospect towards the Frith of Forth in the direction of Falkirk and Stirling; as also, the upper range of the Ochils, and the summits of the Grampians. It appears to have been built, as most religious structures were, in the form of a cross, of which nothing but the *transept*, or cross-beam, necessarily the smaller division of that figure, with a tower at one angle containing a spiral staircase, are now remaining. The walls of the *nave*, or main part of the fabric have long disappeared entirely, but its foundation may still be traced so as to give some idea of its original dimensions. The transept, or, as it is commonly called, the choir, still remains almost entire. It is about 72 feet long by 26 broad; (inside 66 by 20, the walls being above 3 feet thick;) the nave was about 112 feet long. The interior is composed of three lofty arched domes, supported by massive yet handsome Gothic columns, 20 feet high before the spring of the arch; of these the central dome and its columnar shafts are distinguished by their symmetry and simple grandeur, and the key of the vault itself, in the central dome, being formed of an open horizontal arch, or rather complete circle, at right angles with the arches of the vault, and sustained merely by their mutual and equal pressure 30 feet above the level of the floor, the effect is peculiar.

ly striking and elegant. In each end of the transept is a beautiful Gothic window, formed by arched divisions and tracery of stonework, part of which has yielded to the dilapidations of time. Owing to the marshy nature of the ground, the whole structure seems to have been built on strong piles of oak, driven deeply into the yielding soil, and thus forming a perfectly secure foundation. Portions of these piles have been occasionally dug up in excavating graves, and found to be not only firm and entire, but even of a hardness and compact consistency little short of black marble, such has been the effect of the antiseptic qualities of the morass, together with the pressure which they have so long sustained. A portion of the ground, formerly inclosed within the moat, still bears the name of "the Knights' Garden," although it has long been cultivated by the plough alone, and yielded no other produce than that common to the adjacent fields.

Notwithstanding the entire disappearance of the *nave*, the larger portion of the original building, there are no records, nor even traditions of its having been demolished by any sudden burst of popular violence. From any such fate it may have been preserved by its falling entire into the hands of Sir James Sandilands, who could have no interest in its destruction, and whose influence with the Reformers would be sufficient for its preservation. But as Calder House very soon became the chief residence of the Lords Torphichen, it was neglected, and, falling into decay, was used as a quarry, whence stones might be procured for any necessary purpose. That such was the case is evident from the fact, that many houses in the village are built entirely of hewn stones, such in size, form, and apparent age as those of the portion which still remains standing, while the greater part of the stone walls by which the adjoining fields are subdivided are composed of exactly similar materials. In this manner have the walls of the nave been carried piece-meal at length entirely away. There was also, according to tradition, another house of some size and unknown antiquity, built close to one angle of the transept, a portion of which was standing about eighty years ago, as the writer of this was informed by an old woman who died in 1837 at the age of eighty-nine. It was said to have been a separate tenement, built for the accommodation of the knights when their numbers had increased beyond what the preceptory could conveniently contain. It communicated with the transept by a private door, which is still visible, though strongly built up. While the lovers of antiquity must deplore the dila-

pidations by which this ancient and very remarkable building has suffered so severely, it must be gratifying to know, as it is to record, that it will be preserved henceforth from any such violence and desecration. Its present Noble proprietor, Lord Torphichen, has with great good taste and judgment recently protected it from the wasting ravages of time and the weather by roofing it completely anew, and closing the rents and chinks which here and there had deeply scarred its hoary and venerable walls; so that remote ages may continue to contemplate the sole remaining monument of what was once a mistaken, yet a very gallant Order of vowed and consecrated warriors, many of whose exploits shed lustre on the darkness of the middle-ages, like the path of a meteor through the gloom of a lowering sky.

In the interior of the transept or choir, at its south end, beneath one of the windows, is a curious arch, in the form of a canopy, about six feet in span, within which it is said the bodies of the knights were laid before interment, and during the performance of the funeral rites; and close beside it is a font for holy water. There is an antiquely carved stone, built into a comparatively modern part of the inner wall on the west side, on which the following inscription may with difficulty, and perhaps also with some uncertainty, be read: "Gualterus Lindesay, Justiciarius Generalis de Scotland, et Principalis Preceptor Torphicensis, 1538." The inscription is in what is termed the *black letter* characters, and is embarrassed by several abbreviations; but the above seems to be its true reading, as far as can be made out.

In the churchyard stands a short square stone pillar, with the outline of a St John's or Maltese cross rudely carved on it. From this as from a centre was measured in ancient times the sanctuary of Torphichen, which gave, at least, temporary protection to any person accused of crimes less than capital. Its limits were marked by four stones, each bearing the St John's Cross, erected as near as might be on the cardinal points, east, west, north and south, each a Scotch mile from the central stone in the churchyard adjoining the preceptory. They all still occupy their original positions.

In a field adjoining the old *peel*-like mansion of Kipps, there are the remains of a Druid circle. The central stone, of a large size, probably the stone of sacrifice, still occupies its original position, but has been split asunder, which tradition says was done by lightning. Some of the stones that formed the circle have

been broken and removed, in order to give place to the plough; yet the outline of the circle may still be traced, which has been of considerable extent. There is an upright stone at no great distance, connected, probably, with this ancient place of superstitious worship, but of which the express use is not now known.

On the top of Bowden Hill are the traces of a camp, with a deep trench surrounding it. Some antiquarians term it a Roman camp; but its circular, or rather oval shape, scarcely permits it to be regarded as Roman. Some term it Danish, which is at least equally improbable, as this district was never peculiarly subject to the incursions of those invaders. Tradition gives no information respecting it, and history is equally silent. On the Lochcote Hills, in the immediate vicinity, there is a large cairn, and not far from it have been found several stone-coffins, which, being opened, were found to contain human bones. A very dim and uncertain tradition speaks of some bloody battles having been fought in this neighbourhood, but states nothing as to the date, or the parties between whom the contest was waged.

On the rising grounds above the Loggie Burn, there were several stone coffins found a few years ago, of a very simple construction, being merely thin stones set on edge, to mark the length and breadth of the grave, with one long flat stone-cover laid upon them; the bottom being merely the natural sand of which that ridge is composed. Nothing is known respecting the time or cause of these sepultures, beyond the usual vague tradition of battles in times immemorial.

Bridge Castle still remains in nearly its original condition, though shorn of its original splendour. It was formerly the seat of the Earls of Linlithgow, and still shows remains of its former importance in a few trees of great age and considerable magnitude, especially in height, by which it is partially surrounded.

About two miles to the south-west, may, by diligent search, be discovered the ruins of the foundation of Ogilface Castle, the seat of the ancient family of De Bosco, Barons of Ogilface. It fell at length into the hands of the Earls of Linlithgow, and upon the fall of that family, ceased to exist as a barony, and was sold in portions to different proprietors, the chief of whom is now R. C. Buchanan, Esq. It must have been a place of some strength, though of no great size, as appears from the outline of the ruins of the foundation, as far as that can be still traced.

Bedlormie has also been a place of considerable antiquity and

some strength. Its general structure resembles that of the Border peels, consisting of a single square tower, the under storey of which is constructed with a vault or stone arch, nearly fire-proof, for greater security against sudden and desperate assaults. Such is also the structure of Kipps, on a smaller scale.

Modern Buildings.—Of these there are none of any peculiar importance, except perhaps Wallhouse, the seat of W. D. Gillon, Esq., and that at present being built by Mr Hume at Lochcote, which, when finished, will be an ornament to the district. There are of mills one for oats alone, one for oats and barley, two lint-mills, and two woollen-mills, all generally well employed.

III.—POPULATION.

The census of 1841 may be taken, as giving an accurate view of the parish at present :

Population residing in villages, Torphichen, 490 ; Blackridge, 94, . . .	524
the country, about	893
	<hr/>
	1417

The average of births, deaths, and marriages cannot be exactly ascertained, owing to the migrations to, and connections with other adjoining parishes, but may be estimated at about

Births, 24 ; deaths, 16 ; marriages, 5, annually.

The average number of persons under 15 years of age,	505
betwixt 15 and 30,	335
30 and 50,	259
50 and 70,	143
above 70,	68

There are no resident nobility, and very few families of independent fortune residing in the parish. The number of proprietors of land of the yearly value of L.50 and upwards, 25.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Rent of Land.—The average rent of arable land, about L. 1 per acre ; average rent of grazing, L. 3 per ox or cow per annum.

Wages.—Rates of labour average 1s. 8d. per day summer ; 1s. 3d. winter for men, and for women about 10d. summer and winter.

Live-Stock.—The breeds of sheep and cattle are of the common kind. A few of the Ayrshire cattle have been introduced, and some improvement in that respect is taking place. The chief improvement in agriculture of which the district is susceptible, and which indeed it requires, is draining, much of the land being very wet. Some progress is making in this branch also ; but the want of resident landholders, and of disposable capital, must tend greatly to impede agricultural improvement. The general duration of seasons



is fourteen or nineteen years. The farms are not large ; and the style of farm-building corresponds ; some of them, however, are of a rather superior order.

Quarries.—There are two limestone, one sandstone, and two granite quarries ; and there was once a quarry or mine of ironstone on the bank of the Avon, near Torphichen bridge, but it has not been wrought for some years. The two limestone quarries of Cathlaw and Bowden have already been noticed, as also the coal mine on Hilderston, on Kipps, and on Bridge-Castle estate. It is said also that coal may be obtained on the Bridgehouse property.

Produce.—The average amount of raw produce raised in the parish has not been ascertained, and cannot be stated.

Manufactures.—The only branches of manufacture in the parish, if such they can be termed, are two flax mills, and one mill for the manufacture of wool, part of which is wrought into shawls.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Market-Town.—There is no market-town in the parish ; the nearest is that of Bathgate, distant from Torphichen village about two miles and a-half. Linlithgow is little more than four miles and three-quarters distant. There are two villages in the parish, Torphichen and Blackridge.

Means of Communication.—The means of communication enjoyed by the parish are, the turnpike-road from Linlithgow to Bathgate, about two miles and a-half of which is within Torphichen ; that from Linlithgow to Glasgow by Armadale, about one-and a-half of which is within Torphichen ; and about three miles of the middle road from Edinburgh to Glasgow, passing through the west end of the parish. The parish roads are kept in general in a very good condition ; and are upheld by an assessment upon the land at the rate of L. 2 each ploughgate, which is estimated at seventy acres.

Ecclesiastical State.—The parish church is situated close beside the village of Torphichen, its eastern gable resting on the ancient preceptory. It is within about a mile of the east end of the parish, consequently is by no means convenient for a very large extent towards the west. As, however, the eastern district is the most populous, the church is tolerably convenient for nearly two-thirds of the population. It was built in 1756. It affords accommodation for about 450. Being allocated to the different proprietors of land and their tenants, its sittings are free to such persons,

but cannot be let to any others, except by private bargain between the parties themselves. There are about fifty-eight sittings not allocated, in what are called the table-seats, where, consequently, the poor may sit free. The manse was built above 100 years ago, and enlarged about thirty years ago, since which time it has obtained no repairs. The glebe is above eleven acres, only six of which are arable. It lets in grass for about L. 13. The stipend is L. 150, of which L. 25, 7s. is granted by the Exchequer.

There has been a new church built by subscription at Blackridge. It was opened for public worship on the first Sabbath of June 1838. A minister has been recently chosen for it, who is to be supported by the seat-rents and collections, by which it is hoped that about L. 60 will be obtained. It cannot yet be stated what number of people may attend the church at Blackridge, as it is not yet in full operation, consequently the respective numbers of Churchmen and Dissenters in that district cannot be stated. The attendance at the parish church is almost equal to the amount of accommodation afforded by the church, and is very regular. The average amount of communicants is 350. Average church collections for charitable purposes, L. 25; for religious purposes, L. 12.

Education.—There are three schools in the parish, of which two are parochial, and one unendowed. The branches of instruction generally taught in each are, reading, writing, arithmetic, mensuration, book-keeping, and rarely Latin. The salary of the parochial schoolmaster at Torphichen is the maximum; at Blackridge L. 29 of a mortification and 100 merks.

Libraries.—There are two parochial libraries in the parish, one at Torphichen, the other at Blackridge, both of which are pretty well supplied with books, well selected, and carefully perused.

Friendly Societies.—There is one Friendly Society.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of persons receiving parochial aid is 18; the sum allotted to each varies considerably, but the average, including house-rents, is about L. 4, 14s. 6d. per annum, or about 1s. 9d. weekly. The annual amount of church-door collections is about L. 25; from sums mortified, or otherwise disposed at interest, there is obtained about L. 25; and the heritors have assessed themselves voluntarily to the amount of about L. 35 per annum, making the sums annually expended for the maintenance of the poor about L. 85. It is to be regretted, that the lofty and generous reluctance to receive parochial aid, formerly characteristic of the poor, is declining, and