

PARISH OF ROXBURGH.

PRESBYTERY OF KELSO, SYNOD OF MERSE AND TIVIOTDALE.

THE REV. JAMES HOPE, MINISTER.

L.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—ONE conjecture as to the origin of the name of this parish is, that Roxburgh is a contraction for *Rogue's* burgh; another, that it is a contraction for *Rose* burgh; and for each, a special reason is alleged, viz. the character of its ancient inhabitants, and the beauty of its situation. Another conjecture is, that the name may be derived from *Rox*, a Saxon word, signifying strength: and another from the circumstance that, by Lord Hailes and others, it has been spelled *Rokesburgh* and *Roches-burg*. From the similarity of *Rokes* and *Roches* to *Rok* and *Roch*, (a saint, it would seem, in the Romish calendar,) the burgh of Roxburgh may have originally been dedicated to saint *Rok* or *Roch*,—whence the name may have come.

Extent, Boundaries, &c.—The parish extends about 8 miles in length, and in breadth varies from 1 to 5 miles. From the extent thus given, a much larger number of square miles of surface might be inferred than it will be found to contain. There does not appear to be more than fourteen square miles. This circumstance is accounted for by the irregular and peninsular form of the parish. The parish is bounded by Maxton, Ancrum, and Crailing on the west; by Eckford on the south; by Kelso* on the east; and by Kelso and Makerstoun on the north.

* In the former Statistical Account of the parish of Kelso, it is mentioned, that Kelso parish consisted at one time of the parishes of Kelso, Maxwell, and St James'. This statement has frequently been repeated. (Vide Haig, Morton, &c.) It appears to me, on the contrary, highly probable that neither the whole nor any considerable part of St James' was added to Kelso and Maxwell. From what I can learn, St James' was confined to the space betwixt the rivers of Tweed and Tiviot, and must have extended considerably westward, and embraced several farms which were made to constitute a part of Roxburgh parish. At all events, what now belongs to Kelso parish is limited to about thirty acres, forming a triangle above the junction of the rivers. The western boundary of this triangle is a line, extending from river to river, by the Trysting Tree and the foot of St James' Green. This portion of land (commonly called the Kelso lands,) is not under entail to his Grace the Duke of Roxburghe, and is not comprehended in the barony of Roxburgh. That the statement here given is

The figure of the parish is extremely irregular, and has been compared to a spread eagle, with its head to the north, and its wings shadowing eastward and westward.

Topographical Appearances.—The parish may in general be described as flat and low lying; at the same time, there is a considerable unevenness or undulation of surface, which is occasioned by the Tiviot intersecting it from south-west to north-east, and the Tweed bounding it for several miles on the north. At the south-west end of the parish, there are two eminences or hills, supposed to be each about 500 feet above the level of the sea. The one is called Dunse-law, or Doun-law, in this parish; and the other, immediately adjoining in Crailing parish, called Penel-heugh. From these eminences, two ridges gently slope to the eastward for several miles, and thereby exhibit an appearance as if formed by a current of water flowing parallel to the channel of the Tiviot. There are three caves in the parish,—at Sunlaws. The time when, and the purposes for which, these were excavated are not ascertained; but, from their appearance, they indicate a date not less than 1000 years ago, when incursions into this country were conducted with much desolation, rapine, and barbarity.

Meteorology, &c.—The climate of this district is equal, if not superior, to that of any inland part of Scotland. Its remarkable excellence depends on the fact, that there is less moisture than generally obtains in other districts. The cause of this appears to be, that the clouds, driven by the west winds which prevail, besides being exhausted in passing from the west to the east side of the island, are attracted by two ranges of hills, the Cheviot and Lammermoor, which, from a common point or centre, stretch to the east and north, and leave the large vale of Merse and Tiviotdale with comparatively little moisture. The heaviest rains are always from the east. It is probable, from the particular dryness of the atmosphere here, that it is warmer than in many other places of the same elevation, especially in wet seasons.

Hydrography.—There are many excellent springs in the parish, of which several have been found to be of a slightly petrifying quality. The rivers Tweed and Tiviot flow through part of it, and are its greatest ornaments. The quantity of water in the

founded on fact, is proved by the cess-book of the county, which bears that the whole barony of Roxburgh belongs to the parish of Roxburgh, and by the circumstance, that all the public burdens, such as statute labour, poor rates, stipend, &c. are charged for the parish of Roxburgh upon the whole barony and entailed lands thereof.

Tiviot appears to be not more than one-fourth of that of the Tweed.

Geology and Mineralogy.—The rocks found here are of the secondary sandstone formation. Besides sandstone, there are various trap rocks, such as basalt, greenstone, and wacke, &c. The alluvial parts of the parish abound with large blocks of stone, which seem to have been rolled down from the two eminences, formerly noticed, at the south-west end of the parish. The dip or inclination of the stratified rocks which have been observed is chiefly towards the north and east. An appearance is observed on the north side of the parish worthy of notice. Underlying, and conformable to a series of sandstone strata, there is a very thick mass of rock (probably wacke) called the Trow Craigs, extending in breadth to not less than 150 yards, and forming in the Tweed an immense dam, over and through which, in the course of time, the water has forced its way. Owing to this circumstance, the channel of the river here is extremely abrupt and irregular. The descent measures sixteen feet, and in it are various rapids and eddies, where the violence of the water, especially when flooded, becomes an object of interest. Among alluvial deposits, are found gravel, sand, and loam, beside the rivers; and elsewhere, marl and peat. The soils vary from what may be called mossy, sandy, or gravelly, to fine loam.

Botany.—There are numerous plantations in the parish, consisting of various kinds of pine, oak, ash, elm, birch, beech, &c. Though the plantations are in general thriving and good, the trees in general do not appear to be of any remarkable age,—except the Trysting Tree, the age of which is not known, but it appears to have weathered the storm for at least two centuries. There have been at various times, portions extracted from its trunk, which the skill of the cabinet-maker has rendered highly ornamental for the drawing-room. This remarkable elm has for some time ceased to flourish, and is now apparently dead. All the cultivated grasses thrive here remarkably well; and, what is rather uncommon even in the south of Scotland, the red or broad clover seed is occasionally and very successfully raised from the second crop of sown grass seed. Such red clover seed has been repeatedly sown, and in every instance has proved superior to any foreign seed of the same year. A sample of red clover seed, raised here six years ago, was exhibited at the meeting of the Highland Society at Glasgow, and very favourable notice was taken of it by that body.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Chief Land-owners.—The chief land-owner is His Grace the Duke of Roxburghe, who is also patron of the parish. He possesses somewhat more than one-half of the valued rent. The other chief land-owners are, William Scott Kerr, Esq. of Chatto; the Merchant Maiden Hospital; Sir John James Scott Douglas, Bart. of Springwood Park; Charles Rutherford, Esq. of Fairnington. They are here enumerated in the order of their respective valuations.

Parochial Registers.—There are three volumes of parochial registers belonging to the parish. The earliest entry is of date 1624, and the whole have been kept up to this time with more or less accuracy.

Antiquities.—The ancient town of Roxburgh, which is stated to have been the fourth town in Scotland in point of importance and population, was situated at the eastern extremity of the parish. In history, it is said to have been twice taken and burned, viz. in the years 1369 and 1460; and from the circumstance that the town was altogether constructed of wood, hardly any vestiges of it exist. A little to the west of the site of the old town, appear the ruins of the celebrated castle of Roxburgh, “of which there remains now only as much shattered wall as suggests the former prodigious strength and singular magnificence of the fortress. The south wall of the castle impended over the Tiviot,—a part of whose waters was directed by a dam thrown obliquely across the stream at the west end of the castle into a deep fosse, which defended the fortress on the west and north, emptying itself into the river at the east end thereof. Over this moat, at the gate-way from the town, was thrown a draw-bridge, the remains of which were but lately removed.”—(*Vide former Account.*)

At different times, various remains of antiquity have been dug up at or near the castle, which are believed to be in the possession of His Grace the Duke of Roxburghe. With regard to the history of the castle,—it was twice stormed, taken, and demolished, first by Robert Bruce in 1312, next in 1460, when James II. was killed by the bursting of a cannon. A yew tree, planted by His Grace the present Duke of Roxburghe, marks the spot where the king fell. Upon his death, the queen assumed the command in the name of her son, and urged the Scottish chieftains to testify the regard they had to their sovereign, by completing the enterprise in which he had fallen. Her example and exhortation had

the desired effect, and the place which had been a centre of rapine and violence for many ages, was reduced to a heap of ruins. Subsequently, in the year 1547, the Duke of Somerset, having occasion to remain with his army for some time in the neighbourhood, and observing the ruined fortress to be a convenient situation, repaired it, so as to make it capable of receiving an English garrison. Traces of these repairs still appear among the ruins, which are now covered with trees. The mighty change the castle has undergone, while it reminds of former times, conveys a lesson of the instability of worldly greatness.

There is adjoining to the village, and near the river, the ruin of a fort or tower, of which there were many in the border districts. It is denominated Roxburgh Tower, Wallace Tower, and also Sunlaw's Tower,* and evidently formed part of a chain of communication between the castle of Roxburgh and other towers on the rivers Kale, Jed, &c. It appears from history, that these towers had at various times received injuries from the incursions of the English mauraders, but were finally demolished, and reduced to ruin in the reign of Mary Queen of Scots, and in the year 1545, by an army under the command of Hertford, afterwards the Duke of Somerset. Nothing remains of this tower but the ground apartments, strongly arched over, and used, in all probability, as places of security for cattle. Concerning this tower, there are various traditional stories; but, as the truth of most of them is open to suspicion, and as all of them are much exaggerated, they are withheld from this Account.

About midway between Roxburgh Tower and Ormiston Tower, situated about two miles up the river Tiviot, and on a considerable eminence, are the remains of a camp, probably formed for the protection of the towers of Roxburgh and Ormiston.

The great Roman road, from the Frith of Forth to York, &c. runs through the south-west corner of this parish, along which, till lately, cattle purchased at the Scottish markets were driven into England.

III.—POPULATION.

Population in 1782, by former Account,	1100
1791, - - - - -	900
1811, - - - - -	946
1821, - - - - -	926
1831, - - - - -	962

* *Vide* Monastic Annals, p. 98.

The number of families in the parish is	200
of families chiefly employed in agriculture,	110
in trade, manufactures, or handicraft,	18

In the village of Roxburgh and Hieton the population amounts to about 400, and in the country to 562. With regard to the yearly average of births, deaths, and marriages, for the last seven years, no accurate information can be given, in as much as registration in the parish registers has not been made compulsory by law.

There is only one family of independent fortune which resides occasionally in the parish. There are nine proprietors of land of the yearly value of L. 50 and upwards. For several years bygone, there have been exactly 200 families, and 196 inhabited houses, and 15 uninhabited.

Character of the People.—The general character of the people is intellectual, moral, and religious. In proof of this, it may be stated, that hardly anything of the nature of crime occurs, and the people are almost all in communion with the Established church or the Secession.

The temptation of poaching is very considerable, because of the abundance of game; and, in consequence, this offence has occasionally occurred.

During the last three years, there may have been 8 or 10 illegitimate births in the parish.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—There are 5617 imperial acres cultivated or occasionally in tillage; 1735 acres in pasture; 221 under wood.

Rent of Land.—The average value of cultivated land is L. 1, 9s. per acre. Average rent for ox or cow, L. 2, 10s.; and 9s. for ewe or full-grown sheep. The real rent of the parish is about L. 9000.

Husbandry.—The husbandry pursued is commonly denominated *the turnip system of husbandry*; by which is to be understood, that a fourth or fifth part of a farm cultivated in this way is yearly made to grow turnips, of which about one-half is eaten on the ground by sheep; the other half is carted to the farm-steading for the horned cattle. In this way, the ground is manured by the sheep for subsequent crops, and the straw which is the produce of the farm is broken down in the curtains or yards by cattle, and is thus converted into manure for another crop of turnips. The order of cropping is, after turnips, wheat or barley, with an under crop of grass, which comes to maturity the following year, and is generally eaten with sheep. The ground remains frequently one year only, sometimes two, in grass, and is then ploughed up and sown with

oats; which is succeeded by turnips,—a succession of crops thus taking place of four or five years, according as the ground is allowed to remain one or two years in pasture. These are called the systems of four and five-break husbandry. Such a method of husbandry has been found well fitted for the climate of this country and highly profitable. One difficulty, and that a very formidable one, has occurred in pursuing it. Allusion is made to what is called the bad-root among the turnips. Various conjectures have been formed as to the cause or causes of this evil, the principal of which seems to consist in a constant repetition, within a limited time, of a turnip crop. It may be observed, however, that the evil has abated considerably by the use of lime, and attention to a proper change of rotation.

The general duration of leases is from fifteen to twenty-one years. The state of farm-buildings is creditable to landholders and tenants. The pasture land of the parish is well inclosed, and the arable part well subdivided and inclosed.

Quarries and Mines.—There are various sandstone rocks in the parish, but none of them of great value for building, and none of them regularly wrought. No mines as yet have been discovered in the parish.

Fisheries.—On both rivers, the Tweed and the Tiviot, are stations for fishing. The quantity of fish, though an article of commerce, has been for some years very inconsiderable. The rent of the whole fishings does not exceed L. 60 per annum.

Produce.—The average gross amount of raw produce raised in the parish, as nearly as that can be ascertained, is as follows :

Produce of grain of all kinds, cultivated for food of man or the domestic animals,	L. 14,280	0	0
Of potatoes, turnips, and other plants, cultivated in the fields for food,	2,910	0	0
Of hay, meadow and cultivated,	1,200	0	0
Of land in pasture, rating it at L. 2, 10s. per cow or full-grown ox grazed for the season, and 9s. per full-grown ewe or sheep pastured for the year,	3,578	0	0
Of Gardens and orchards,	240	0	0
Of river fisheries per year,	60	0	0
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Total yearly value of raw produce raised,	L, 22,268	0	0

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

There is no market-town in the parish; but there are two situated at a very convenient distance, viz. Kelso and Jedburgh. The former is about four miles distant from the village, and the latter seven miles. There are two villages in the parish, viz. Roxburgh and Hieton.

Means of Communication.—Two public roads run through the

parish,—the one, leading from Kelso to Jedburgh on the south side of the Tiviot, extends about three miles; the other, leading from Kelso to Melrose, &c. in the immediate vicinity of the south bank of the Tweed, and at every point commanding a view of this noble river, and of a rich and beautiful country, extends about four miles. Tiviot Bridge is on this road, and unites this parish to Kelso. This bridge is of excellent structure, and durable material.

Ecclesiastical State.—The parish church is situated in the village of Roxburgh, and its situation is nearly central, but not very convenient for a considerable part of the population, because of the Tiviot which flows near it, and which when flooded cuts off about one-third of the population lying on the south side of the river. The distance from the western extremity of the parish is five miles, and from the eastern, three. The church was built in the year 1752, was repaired in 1828, and is in a good state at present. It affords accommodation for about 500 sitters. The manse was built in the year 1820. The extent of the glebe is ten imperial acres, of value L. 20. The amount of the stipend is 15 chalders, the one-half of which is oat-meal, and the other barley, with L. 8, 6s. 8d. for communion elements. It may also be stated, that there belongs to the minister a servitude for turf from His Grace the Duke of Roxburghe, which has been commuted into the sum of L. 1, 10s. yearly.

The number of families attending the Established church is about 130, and the average number of communicants 240. The yearly amount of church collections is about L. 7. The smallness of the amount may be accounted for by the circumstance, that there has been a regular assessment for the poor of the parish for the last ninety-seven years.

Education.—There are two schools in the parish; both of these are parochial. The branches taught in both are, reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar, and occasionally practical geometry; book-keeping, surveying, and Latin. The salary of the schoolmaster of Roxburgh is L. 34, 4s. 4½d., and of Hieton L. 17, 2s. 2¼d. The amount of school-fees received by each is from L. 12 to L. 15 yearly, and each of the schoolmasters has the accommodation of school-room, school-house, and garden.

So far as is known, there are none between the ages of six and fifteen or upwards in the parish who cannot read and write. The people are in general alive to the benefits of getting their children properly educated. There is a part of the parish, viz. Fairnington,

so distant as to prevent attendance at the parish school; but attendance is given at the parish schools of Maxton and Ancrum, which are much nearer. There has occasionally been a private school in this part of the parish, and an additional school here would be beneficial.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of persons receiving parochial aid varies from 25 to 30. The average sum allotted to each is 2s. 1d. per week in summer, and 2s. 1½d. in winter. The annual amount of expenditure varies from L. 140 to L. 180, and arises chiefly from assessment levied, one-half from the heritors, and the other half from the tenants. This has been the regular mode of providing for the poor since the year 1737, and has been found to prove successful, and, under proper management, in the absence of residing heritors, appears to be by far the most just and equitable method of provision. No doubt, the feeling of reluctance and degradation at receiving parochial aid is diminished by assessment, and also the disposition on the part of the people to contribute to church collections; but these evils may be counterbalanced by proper management; and the opposite evils of want, and unequal distribution, are more formidable.

Fairs.—There is an annual fair held in the parish, on St James' Green, on the 5th of August, for the purposes of merchandize, hiring shearers, and horse and cattle-dealing. Considerable sales of wool are made at this fair, by the farmers in the surrounding districts. The wool is generally disposed of to English buyers.

Alehouses.—There are three alehouses in the parish. Two of them are in the village of Hieton, for the benefit of those passing on the turnpike road leading from Kelso to Jedburgh, Hawick, &c. The other is near the village of Roxburgh, at the ferry over the Tiviot.

Fuel.—The ordinary fuel is coal, which is procured from Northumberland; the distance is about eighteen or twenty miles. To the tenants and others having carts and horses, the expense of a single cart load at the coal-hill is from 6s. to 7s. (tolls inclusive) for sixteen cwt. Others, not having the same means of carting, obtain them for 11s. 6d. There is also abundance of peat in the western part of the parish.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The most striking variation betwixt the present and former state of the parish is in consequence of the introduction of the turnip system of husbandry already noticed. A further improve-

ment is likely to take place in this respect, by the introduction of bone manure, which is found highly suitable for raising turnips, and of which not less than 500 quarters were used in the year 1832. There may be a little difference of appearance in the parish, from the greater space occupied by crop now than formerly. Such occupation, however, is not believed to be considerable, and has in some instances after trial been abandoned. The number of sheep reared renders pasture valuable, so that land which might be cropped with a certain degree of profit is found to be more profitable when in pasture, especially after an occasional tillage with improvement. It is perhaps worthy of remark, that the crops now raised are, beyond all doubt, much more productive and profitable than formerly.

The facilities of internal communication are, however, limited, and form the greatest barrier to improvement. This may be inferred from the fact, that while the land in this county is better than in most other counties, the climate good, and the husbandry highly improved, nevertheless the fiars prices for grain are among the very lowest in Scotland. This fact cannot be accounted for by the inferior quality of the grain, (for the reverse is the truth,) but by the great quantity produced above what is necessary for home consumption. This is carted chiefly to Berwick for the London market. The price of such carriage is regularly deducted from the returns given in by the witnesses on the fiars, and hence the low fiars price of corn. For the purpose of affording increased facilities of internal communication, it has been proposed to form a railway from this district to Berwick, and considerable progress has been made towards its accomplishment.

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