

PARISH OF LINTON.

PRESBYTERY OF KELSO, SYNOD OF MERSE AND TIVIODALE.

THE REV. WILLIAM FAICHNEY, MINISTER.*

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE name of the parish is derived from *Lynn*, which in the British language signifies a pool, or lake, as well as a cataract, and from the Saxon word *ton* or *toun*, which denotes a dwelling-place. Linton thus means the dwelling at the lake. The ancient village of Linton, of which there are now scarcely any vestiges, was situated near the borders of a lake still called Linton Loch,—which lies in a south-eastern direction from the parish church.

Extent and Boundaries.—The length of this parish, extending west to east as far as the English border, is 6 miles: its breadth, 2 miles. It is bounded on the north and north-west by the parishes of Sprouston and Eckford; on the west by Eckford; on the south and south-west by Morbattle and Yetholm; and on the east by Northumberland. Its western extremity forms part of a beautiful valley watered by the Kale, a stream which descends from the Cheviot range.

Topographical Appearances.—From this valley the land rises in a somewhat undulating ascent, till it reaches its highest elevation on the summit of Linton hill. Its surface eastward is varied and uneven, and sometimes intersected by small hills, which connect those of the Cheviot with the fertile plain which extends along the southern bank of the Tweed, in the parishes of Kelso and Sprouston. If, in former times, the inhabitants of Britain chose the summits of hills as the places for judicial proceedings, or the purposes of legislation, the small hills in this parish appear, from their names, Kiplaw, Hoselaw, Blakelaw, to have been the scene of such proceedings. The hills now mentioned extend along the northern boundary. Between these and Linton, and the Graden hills, which skirt the southern extremity, a considerable tract of low land intervenes, which again is sometimes indented into valleys. The greater part

* Drawn up by the Rev. James Brotherston, Assistant to the Minister of the parish.

of this tract is richly cultivated. Though in some places it is marshy and interspersed with mosses, yet almost the whole of it is susceptible of cultivation. With the exception of Linton hill, the higher parts of which are still waste, the plough has reached the summit of the highest eminences. The valley on the western extremity, and of which 300 acres belong to this parish, is bounded on the north and north-east by the church of Linton, and Clifton Park, a seat of Mr Pringle of Clifton, M. P. surrounded by a fine old plantation; on the west, by Marlefield, formerly the residence of Sir William Bennet of Grubbet, the well-known patron of Allan Ramsay, and of whose hospitable mansion, Thomson, the author of the Seasons, is said to have frequently been an inmate; on the east, by Wideopen, the paternal inheritance of Thomson; and on the south and south-west, by the village of Morbattle and Cessford, the massive remains of whose baronial fortress, once the residence of the ancestors of the noble family of Roxburghe, still frown in ancient dignity on the adjacent territory. This valley, both on account of its delightful scenery and local associations, has been often surveyed with no small interest.

Meteorology.—The climate, which, in the western and most populous portion of the parish is peculiarly mild, in the eastern and central district undergoes a considerable change for the worse. Here the increased coldness of the atmosphere, the greater poverty of the soil, the absence of plantations, and the greater elevation of the ground, all combine to render the aspect of the fields bleaker and more barren. The winds likewise vary in the eastern and western districts; while the east and north winds chiefly prevail in the former, and prove in no small degree hurtful to vegetation,—in the latter, these winds are little felt; while gales from the south-west blow across the valley, and strike the rising ground opposite to it with considerable violence. Severe blasts not unfrequently range from the Cheviot on the south-east, assail this portion of the parish. The wind always blows from that direction in a severe storm.—The climate of this parish has always been deemed, upon the whole, peculiarly healthy. At one period, agues were not unfrequent; but, since the draining of the lakes and marshy lands, these have totally ceased; and in the parish there are several individuals who have reached a very advanced age.

Hydrography and Geology.—There are two lakes in the parish. Linton Loch is nearly circular in form, and contains fifty acres. It occupies a natural basin formed by hills of considerable height,

surrounding it on the north, east, and south, and cultivated almost to their summits. Towards the west, it opens into the valley of the Kale, into which, by a copious stream, it discharges its waters. The whole of the surface of these fifty acres was formerly covered with water; it is now partially drained, and it exhibits the appearance of a verdant morass, interspersed with three or four pools of water, in which are found excellent trout, closely resembling those of Lochleven. The surface of the lake or morass, to a considerable depth, consists of moss, under which there is excellent marl. Of the moss, there are three different kinds: the first stratum consists of vegetable roots of a more recent and less complete decomposition. Its depth is from four to five feet. The second stratum is from two to three feet deep, of a lighter colour, and more decomposed; when long exposed to the air, it becomes nearly as white as marl; and when dried, it is quite hard. The lowest stratum is nearly four feet thick, and entirely composed of wood of various sorts; but principally of birch and hazel. In this stratum were found large quantities of hazel-nuts, heaped in large masses, as if collected by the impulse of a current of water. When exposed to the air, they appeared quite fresh; they were broken even by a slight touch, and were found to be full of water. The moss in the centre of the loch is of extraordinary depth; sixty-five feet of iron rod could not fathom it,—as was found from a recent experiment made in search of marl. About eight years ago, it was attempted to dig the marl found beneath the moss; but, though it was of the finest quality, the expense of digging it was so great, in consequence of the annoyance arising from the great abundance of water, that the enterprise was abandoned. From an accurate measurement, so far as this was practicable, it appeared that the marl amounted to one million of cubic yards. Its seam varied in thickness from two to eighteen feet. It was sometimes blended with a seam of sand from two to three feet in thickness. The colour of the marl is varied; the greatest part of it being white as lime; and a considerable quantity of it black as moss; and there are portions of it which partake of both colours, mingled in various proportions. The black marl was, upon trial, found equally efficacious as the white. Viewed through a microscope, though fine as flour, it presented the appearance of decomposed shells. The black was generally separated from the white marl, and in different layers. A deer's horns, of an extraordinary size, and supposed to be

those of the rein-deer, were found imbedded in the marl fourteen feet below its surface,—above which there were ten feet of moss. These are now in the possession of Mr Pringle of Clifton, the proprietor. They measured 3 feet in length, and 3 feet 10 inches between each horn. Besides these, several skeletons, amounting to twenty, of animals of different species, and of various sizes, were discovered in the space of less than an acre. The bones of one of these in magnitude exceeded those of a horse. Some of them were much decayed; and when affected by the air, mouldered into dust. The moss also abounded with large and thick oaks; it contained wood from the smallest twig to the tree of two feet diameter, which was usually quite soft and spongy,—so that these trees were saturated with moisture, and the soil or vegetable roots amid which they were imbedded. In the bottom of the lake, also, a very strong and copious mineral spring was found to issue from the sand beneath the seams of marl after it was dug. There are obvious traces of this lake, enlarged by the waters of the Kale once flowing into it, and by the rills and torrents descending from the adjacent hills, having formerly covered the whole expanse of the valley formerly mentioned, and extending to 1000 acres,—thus forming a uniform and magnificent sheet of water. The whole of this space abounds with copious springs of the purest water, whose origin is traced to the Kale, and which rise through veins of sand. The other lake, called Hoselaw Loch, is situated near the eastern extremity of the parish. Its surface extends to thirty acres; it is of an oblong form, and is three-quarters of a mile in circumference. It abounds with perch and eels of the silver kind. The perch which it contains were only recently introduced to it from a neighbouring lake: and the fishing of these affords amusement to parties of pleasure during summer. Sometimes, during the most sultry period of summer, shoals of perches are, from some cause unknown, cast out dead upon the margin of the lake. The greatest depth of the lake does not exceed at any time fifteen feet: in summer it greatly decreases. It forms an entire sheet of water: and is terminated on the west by a moss of great extent and depth,—which, from the difficulty of access to it, and the indifferent quality of the peat, is little dug. There is another moss, about a mile westward from this, on the farm of Greenlees, which also is of considerable extent and depth. Its peats are of a better quality: and marl has been found beneath the moss; but neither have been used to any extent.

Besides the mineral spring already mentioned, there are several others in the parish,—one of which, on the farm of Bankhead, appears, from tradition, to have been frequently used for scorbutic complaints. It is still occasionally employed in these disorders.

Soil, &c.—The soil of the greater portion of the western district consists of loam, gravel, sand, and clay, mixed in various proportions; 300 acres adjoining Kale water are of a stiff retentive clay, resting on a wet channel bottom; but the soil of part of this tract is a deep loam, reposing on sand and gravel. The whole of this fine strath would be much improved by deepening the course of a mill-dam which flows through it, and by draining. In the eastern and central district, where the land is higher, the soil is light. There are frequent instances of the soil having been carried by the rain from the higher, and deposited in the lower lands. This, though sometimes beneficial, also proves occasionally injurious to the latter, as in draining, the good soil has been discovered buried beneath a lighter soil, which had been thus borne down from the hills. Most of the rocks are whinstone, which, when broken, has been frequently found to contain rock crystals. In one quarry, there is a large seam of the latter interwoven with the whinstone; the course of which seam can be readily traced by the eye. On the farm of Frogden, there is a quarry of freestone, which, notwithstanding the good quality of the stone, has been little wrought. Large pieces of jasper of all kinds are frequently dug up by the plough, and lie scattered over the surface of the ground. The fir, the oak, the ash, and the elm, here find a congenial soil. The principal plantation is that of Clifton Park, which covers an extent of thirty acres. Several years ago, a small seam of coal was discovered on the farm of Greenlees, but the working of it was not proceeded in to any extent, and was speedily abandoned as unprofitable.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

The earliest notice of this parish appears in connection with the donation * of the church of Linton to the monks of Kelso, by Sir Richard Cumin, for the salvation of the soul of Prince Henry, eldest son of David I. This Sir Richard Cumin was the ancestor of the Cumins of Badenoch, and of the famous John Cumin who aspired to the Scottish crown. At the period of the gift, he appears to have held one of the highest offices of the state; but whether or not he possessed property in the parish is uncertain.

* See Chartulary of Kelso.

Family of Somerville.—Soon after this period, it appears that a considerable portion of the lands of Linton were obtained by William de Somerville, ancestor of Lord Somerville, as a reward for having killed a monstrous serpent, wolf, or boar, which infested the neighbourhood, and seems to have committed great devastation. * This gift is stated to have been made by William the Lion, King of Scotland, in the year 1174: † and the property thus acquired seems to have remained, during a considerable period, in the possession of the Somerville family,—some of whose representatives are recorded, at different periods, to have granted lands in the parish to the monks of Glasgow and Melrose. ‡

The name of the above William de Somerville appears in the list of witnesses appended to a charter of confirmation granted to the monks of Kelso by King Malcolm IV. He was the son of Roger de Somerville, Baron of Whichnour, in England, and after performing the exploit for which he was rewarded with the barony of Linton, he was invested with the office of principal Falconer to the King of Scotland, and also with that of the sheriffdom of Roxburghshire. He built the tower of Linton, which continued to be the residence of his family till near the end of the fourteenth century, when they removed to the castle of Cowthally in Carnwath. A portion of Linton church then called the choir, too, was their ordinary burial-place, till about the year 1424. In this place the remains of the above William, the founder of his family in Scotland, were interred. § When the barons of England, who extorted the Magna Charta from their reluctant king, were afterwards subdued, and when many of their castles and possessions were reduced to ruin, Roger, his father, who was one of them, sought refuge with his

* See Douglas' Baronage of Scotland, and History of the Family of Somerville.

† The den of this animal is still pointed out under the name of "the worm's hole," and the field in which it is situated receives the name of Wormington.

In the southern wall of the parish church, an ancient stone, which exhibits the effigy of a man on horseback, with a long lance or spear in his hand, and thrust into the mouth of an animal resembling a dragon, is thought to illustrate the tradition; and the history of the noble family of Somerville, lately published, gives a detailed account of the transaction. It is also said that the stone once contained the following inscription:

"The wode Laird of Lariestone,
Slew the wode worm of Wormieston,
And won all Linton paroshine."

The memorial of this event is still preserved on the crest of Lord Somerville's arms, which retains, among other allusions to it, the following inscription, "The wode laird."

‡ See Chartularies of the above monasteries.

To these religious donations, probably, are to be ascribed the names still in use of certain fields and hotbes,—such as the "Prior Row," and the "Priory Meadow."

§ At the period of his death, he must have been upwards of eighty years of age.

son in Scotland, and shortly after died at Linton tower, and was buried in the choir of Linton church. Some of the representatives of this house, while they resided in their barony of Linton, were renowned for their patriotism. Walter de Somerville, the third Baron of Linton, magnanimously maintained the rights of his country against the aggressions of Edward I. He was one of the few barons who supported Wallace, and seconded his efforts to recover his country's freedom. Under Wallace he commanded the third brigade of cavalry at the battle of Biggar. He also appears to have been among the first who joined the standard of Bruce,* to whom previous to his death, he solemnly entreated his son to remain a faithful adherent. The latter, accordingly, John de Somerville, was not disobedient to his father's injunctions, and steadily maintained the interests of the house of Bruce till his death. His remains were consigned to the tomb of his ancestors in Linton church. †

Antiquities.—The ancient fortalice or tower of Linton, of which there are now scarcely any vestiges, and which was formerly the residence of this family, stood on an eminence now covered with trees, near the church, which overlooks it. About twenty years ago, a large iron door was dug out of the cavity, which still remains to mark the site of the dungeon. It appears to have been surrounded by a fosse, the water of which was supplied from an adjoining rivulet. It shared in the devastations common to similar fastnesses in the borders; for during the reign of Henry VIII. the warden of the English marches, in a hostile invasion of the Scottish territory, besieged and set fire to it; and Surrey, in a letter to the same sovereign on a similar occasion, mentions his having razed it to the ground." ‡

The Kerrs of Graden in this parish were distinguished in border warfare. Graden Place, their residence, still manifests the traces of an ancient fortress, surrounded by a moat. During the border feuds and depredations, while the two kingdoms were separated, this parish suffered in common with the adjacent country. Occupying part of what was formerly called the "dry marches," it formed one of the principal thoroughfares betwixt the two kingdoms. A narrow aperture between two hills along the verge of Linton loch appears to have been regarded as an important *pass*, and there are still obvious marks of its having been once closely guarded. The small eminence on which the church is built seems to have af-

* See Tytler's History of Scotland.

† We also find him mentioned among the prisoners taken by the English, after the Bruce was defeated at Methvin.

‡ See Cotton Manuscript, and Monastic Annals of Tiviotdale, p. 29.

forded a favourable position for defending it: and this eminence is generally believed to have been artificial. A hollow in the neighbourhood is still shown, whence the soil which forms it was conveyed.

In a field on the farm of Frogden, five or six upright stones, forming a circle, were designated the "tryst,"—from their being a rendezvous where predatory hordes projecting an incursion into Northumberland were wont to meet.

The whole of the district abounds with memorials of ancient border warfare. From its contiguity to the fortresses of Werk and Roxburgh, it must occasionally have been the scene of the more important struggles between the two kingdoms. Accordingly, on the summits of the small hills, there are remains of circular encampments; and from the surface of the ground arise numerous small tumuli, which, when excavated, are found to contain human bones inclosed in circular earthen urns, of various dimensions. Some of these are obviously of Roman construction. In one place, these tumuli are so numerous as almost to resemble a burying-ground, or at least they render it probable that the ground which they occupy had been once a field of battle. Most of these bones, as well as the urns containing them, when exposed to the air, dissolve into dust. About fifty years ago, during the repairing of the church, a large grave was discovered, in which were fifty skulls; all were equally decayed, and many of them bore marks of violence. It is conjectured that they belonged to individuals who had fallen at Flodden Field; the remains of many of whom, as is well known, were consigned to a common grave in the cemeteries of the nearest border parishes. A few years ago, a brazen Roman spear was found in a mossy soil, three feet below the surface, near the mouth of a well, and is now in the possession of Mr Pringle of Clifton, M. P.

A chapel belonging to the Established church appears to have been formerly at Hoselaw, for the benefit of the inhabitants of the eastern district, which was then, as at present, at an inconvenient distance from the parish church. The remains of this chapel and of a small burying-ground attached to it were visible till lately, when, by the operations of the plough, they were wholly effaced.

Land-owners.—Robert Pringle, Esq. of Clifton and Haining, Member of Parliament for Selkirkshire, is the principal proprietor and the patron of the church; nearly two-thirds of the lands belong to him. This gentleman maintains the same high reputation for public spirit, generosity, and interest in the welfare of his

tenants, which have distinguished his ancestors. The tenantry are prosperous and happy, and hold him in the highest estimation. They avoid either extreme of extravagance or parsimony. Their industry, diligence, and zeal in executing those improvements which experience has proved to be advantageous, are highly commendable; and all of them reside on their farms, each of which is of sufficient magnitude to occupy the attention of a resident tenant. The other proprietors are Mr Wauchope of Niddrie-Marishall; Mr Dawson of Graden; Mr Oliver of Blakelaw, and Mr Davidson of Hoselawmains. None of these are resident.

Eminent Persons.—The late Mr Dawson, while farmer at Frogden, was the first who introduced into Scotland some of the most important agricultural improvements, such as the turnip husbandry, and drill system, the laying down of the lime, and harrowing it in on the land when laid down in pasture, and the sowing of artificial grasses. Mr Thomas Pringle, author of a small volume of poems, and of several other useful and interesting publications; and Dr Clarke, who long enjoyed celebrity as the first physician in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, were both natives of this parish.

Parochial Registers.—The registers of births have been pretty regularly kept; and the date of their earliest entry is 1732.

III.—POPULATION.

Though there are now no remains of the once considerable villages of Hoselaw and Linton, yet the number of the inhabitants of the parish has rather increased. This is entirely to be attributed to the improvements in agriculture, requiring a corresponding increase of labour. The population is spread over a rural tract among the various farms or hamlets, and is almost exclusively confined to agricultural employments.

Population in 1811,	- - -	462
1821,	- - -	458
1831,	- - -	462

Of the 462 inhabitants at the time of the last census, only 6 are employed in trade or manufactures. The average number of marriages, births, and burials is at present nearly the same as that which was stated in the former Statistical Account; it may be computed at 5 marriages, 10 births, and 6 burials annually. It has been remarked that, of late years, there are even fewer burials than formerly, in consequence of the hinds being less stationary in a parish of this kind than in those which have villages, into which they retire when disabled by age or infirmity. On all the farms, amounting to fifteen, (with the exception of five,) the tenants reside; but of the residing farmers only four are married.

Character of the People.—The peasantry possess all the qualities which have long characterized the same class in Scotland. They are distinguished for intelligence, and, for the most part, are exemplary in their habits. No ardent spirits are sold in the parish, and therefore they are seldom tempted to deviate from their ordinary sobriety. The tenantry and their binds or farm-servants generally follow the occupations of their fathers, and with “sober wishes” they pursue “the noiseless tenor of their way,” unseduced by the allurements that are usually found in a crowded population. The cottages of the poor in general present internally an appearance of the utmost cleanliness. Their dress at church or at market approaches to elegance. Most of them possess abundance of solid and wholesome food; and there are few cases of real privation. They seldom change masters, and on some farms most of the servants have remained during the currency of more than one lease.

There have been two illegitimate births during the last three years.

The number of families in the parish is 84.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—This parish contains 6500 acres of land; 4750 of these are cultivated; and the remaining 1750 are waste, whereof about 80 acres are covered with wood.

Husbandry.—Two or three of the farmers have long enjoyed celebrity as improvers and breeders of stock of all descriptions. The stock principally consists of cattle of the improved short-horned breed, and of the Leicester and Cheviot breed of sheep. The cultivated land, too, has been highly improved. Much waste ground has been reclaimed, and the benefits derived from this source have been such, that the present tenants can keep as much stock as those of former times, and have, besides, all the additional grain yielded by the improved land. A considerable portion of the remaining waste land (probably 450 acres) is susceptible of cultivation, and is fitted either to produce crops, or to be laid down in pasture. The crops raised are, oats, barley, and wheat,—of which the two latter are the most prevalent. The turnips were, at an early period, infested by the bad root; the only remedy for which that has yet been discovered is abundant liming; and even this has been but partially successful. In not a few instances, like every other expedient, it has failed to revive the sinking hopes of the husbandman, doomed to witness the baneful effects of this desolating scourge. The duration of leases is nineteen years.

The rent of a few farms is paid in part according to the *fiars*,—which mode of payment is deemed the most equitable. The accommodations granted to the tenant, both as regards building and enclosing, are generally of the best description.

Draining, though practised to a great extent, is still very imperfectly carried on, and presents a large field for exertion, and for the application of capital. One field only, extending to 20 acres, has been irrigated. The experiment, however, was successful, and afforded abundant compensation for the labour and expense. Considerable embankments have been made on Kale Water, and on a small stream called the Lake, whose course at one period appears to have been deepened for the purpose of emptying the stagnant waters of a lake or morass in its vicinity, of which there are still some remains. These embankments have proved very beneficial.

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

833 bolls of wheat, imperial measure,	-	-	-	L. 1452	10	10
3560 do. barley,	-	-	-	3204	0	0
5700 do. oats,	-	-	-	3657	10	0
758 acres turnips,	-	-	-	3092	0	0
32 potatoes,	-	-	-	320	0	0
230 cultivated hay,	-	-	-	805	0	0
Land in pasture, rating it at L. 3 per cow or full-grown ox, and at 10s. per ewe or full-grown sheep,	-	-	-	1904	0	0
				<u>L. 14,975</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>10</u>

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Kelso, which is six miles distant, is the nearest market-town. The farmers occasionally frequent also the market of Jedburgh, which is at least eight miles distant. They deal extensively with the corn-merchants of Berwick, with whom they bargain to convey thither the grain that has been purchased, and they usually return home with a load of coal or lime from Northumberland; hence the advantages which they would reap from the execution of the long projected rail-road between Kelso and Berwick. They generally drive their stock and fat cattle to the markets of Edinburgh and Morpeth, but principally to that of the latter place. They are almost equidistant from both.

Means of Communication.—Kelso is also the nearest post-town;—with which, exclusively of the market-day, there is a regular communication twice in the week. Most of the roads are good, and kept in good repair. The fences are in general good, and chiefly consist of hedge-rows of thorn, interspersed with trees.

These, besides improving the aspect of the country, by giving to it a finely wooded appearance, are attended with other advantages previously stated, which amply compensate for the failure of vegetation in their neighbourhood.

Ecclesiastical State.—A more delightful and sequestered situation than that which is occupied by the church and manse can scarcely be conceived;—the church crowning the summit of a circular little hill; the manse about 100 yards distant from it, embosomed amid fine old fruit trees, and agreeably sheltered and approached by an avenue lined with tall trees,—present a scene whose peculiar charms uniformly arrest the attention of the spectator. As the church is placed nearly at the western extremity of the parish, a distance of almost six miles intervenes between it and the remotest part of the eastern district. To the inhabitants of the latter, therefore, its situation is inconvenient: As it is easily accessible, however, to by far the most populous part of the parish, its present position, which, as regards climate, soil, and the cultivation of the land contiguous to it, has superior advantages, is upon the whole the best and most eligible; and few, if any, have expressed a serious desire for its removal.

From the thickness and strength of its walls, and the depth to which they have sunk in the soil, the church exhibits marks of considerable antiquity. It was repaired about forty-five years ago, and contracted within its original dimensions. It affords accommodation for 180 persons, and is sufficient for the inhabitants of the parish. The above number rather exceeds that of the average attendance; but on ordinary Sabbaths it is still well attended. The average number of communicants of late years has been 170. There are no Dissenting chapels in the parish; they abound, however, in the neighbourhood, and are attended by twelve families in this parish, who chiefly belong to the Seceders of the United Associate Synod. The manse was built about fifty years ago; it has since received scarcely any repair; and both it and the office-houses are in a good condition. The glebe contains ten acres of arable land of the best quality, and the stipend consists of sixteen chalders of grain. In the manse garden, there are two fine old pear trees, the price of one year's produce of which amounted to L. 10.

Education.—The parochial school is the only seminary in the parish; the branches of education taught at which are reading, writing, arithmetic, algebra, and mathematics. For instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic, the average sum paid for each

pupil is 3s. per quarter. The teacher is authorized by the heritors to exercise his own discretion with regard to the fees to be exacted from those who are taught algebra and mathematics. The accommodation of the schoolmaster is good, and somewhat exceeds the legal allowance. He possesses the maximum salary. The remotest part of the parish is at least five miles distant from the school; but, as this part is thinly inhabited, the inconvenience of the distance is not much felt, and is not so great as to render the erection of another school necessary; 40 is the average attendance. The school fees may amount to L. 20 a-year. It is pleasing to witness the solicitude of the poorest persons respecting the education of their children in the ordinary branches of instruction. Rather than forego this advantage, which they deem inestimable, they will submit to no small privations; and they cheerfully devote to its attainment a portion of their scanty and hard-earned gains. The history of the poor in this, as well as in other districts, unfolds many cases of endurance borne with alacrity, in order that they may procure not only the quarter's fees, but shoes and clothing, to enable their children to make as decent an appearance at school as those of their neighbours. Such has been the influence of the system of moral and religious instruction peculiar to our ecclesiastical establishment and parochial schools, that all vestiges of predatory habits have long disappeared from the borders,—whose inhabitants are now as remarkable as those of any part of Scotland for intelligence, persevering industry, and ardent piety. The total number of scholars at schools in the parish is 55.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of persons who annually obtain parochial aid is 12; each of whom receives nearly 2s. per week, or an yearly allowance of L. 5. The funds required for this purpose are supplied by legal assessment, of which the average annual amount is L. 60. That of the church collection is L. 6, and affords the means of relieving occasional indigence. The receiving of parochial aid is here reckoned no degradation. Most seem to demand it as that to which they have a legal claim; and instances are not uncommon of active and vigorous young men who do not think it incumbent on them to minister to the necessities of their aged parents, but who, without scruple or any sense of impropriety, consign them to the support of the parish. Such sentiments, common to the inhabitants of all the border parishes, have, not without reason, been ascribed to their contiguity to England.

Fuel.—Almost the only fuel used is coal, which is 14 miles distant, and brought from Northumberland. Though the peat, with the exception of that of Graden moss, is of a good quality, yet the mosses mentioned above are little dug. Coals can be procured at nearly as cheap a rate as peat; the cost of the former, including carriage and all other expenses, being about 7d. per cwt.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

Since the period of the last Statistical Account, the population, in consequence of agricultural improvements and the extension of cultivated land, has somewhat increased. The number of inhabited houses, which was then 55, is now 79. The number of ploughs, which was then 30, is now 50,—to each of which a pair of horses belongs. The rent of the parish, which was formerly L. 2113, is now L. 5514, 6s. 8d.; that of the largest farm, which was formerly L. 400, is now nearly L. 800. The improved system of husbandry which has since that time been introduced, as well as the reclaiming of waste land, have thus obviously augmented the quantity of labour, and compensated for its anticipated diminution by the use of thrashing machines. Sources of industry have thus been multiplied, and what was lost in one department has been gained in another, no less subservient to the welfare of the community. The much greater demand for stock of all descriptions than formerly has prompted the farmers, for the purpose of rearing them, to subject to the agency of the plough much of their ground which they once deemed inadequate to remunerate them for the labour and expense of cultivation. Whether the general comfort and happiness of those who follow agricultural employments have also been advanced is doubtful. Their habits and intelligence, in no small degree, have kept pace with the spirit and improvements of the age. They are now better educated than formerly; books are more accessible to them, and not a few avail themselves of these sources of mental enjoyment. Still, their increased thirst of knowledge creates wants, for the supply of which their scanty means are incompetent, and thus gives rise to discontentment and fretfulness. A small augmentation of their wages would do much to improve their condition. To these sources, is to be traced that very general desire of emigration to Canada which of late years the class of hinds has manifested; and the children of those whom no worldly motive could have torn from their native hills and valleys, now, without a tear, nay, with a sort of exultation, leave the land of their fathers.

December 1834.

PARISH OF YETHOLM.

PRESBYTERY OF KELSO, SYNOD OF MERSE AND TIVIOTDALE.

THE REV. JOHN BAIRD, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—YETHOLM is sometimes written Zetholm, Zettin, Yet-tam, and Yetham; which last is probably the original name of the parish. It seems to be derived from the Scoto-Saxon word “*Yet*,” or “*Gate*,” signifying a gate or road, and obviously connected with the Anglo-Saxon word *Zeat*, *Zete*, *Zate*, *porta*. Yetholm is a border parish, and the villages of Town and Kirk Yetholm are separated from England by a valley one mile in length, and about a quarter of a mile in breadth, which, in former times, must have presented a very easy access or entrance from the one country to the other; so that Yetholm or Yetham may signify the hamlet or dwelling upon the great entrance from England, or the adjoining part of Northumberland, into Scotland.

Extent—Boundaries.—The extent of the parish is 2 miles from nearly north-east to south-west, and 4 miles from north-west to south-east. It marches with England for a distance of about six miles, and no part of the parish is distant more than two miles from the border.

Topographical Appearances.—The general aspect and outline of the parish is hilly, though none of the hills are of any great elevation; the highest probably not exceeding 700 or 800 feet above the level of the sea. The lower hills are cultivated; and the higher, which are a portion of the Cheviot range, are clothed with a rich green sward to their summits, affording excellent pasture to many thousands of sheep. Several peaceful and romantic little valleys lie embosomed amid these hills; and the vale of the Bowmont itself, in which nine-tenths of the inhabitants of the parish reside, is only a larger vale of the same description. That part of this vale which lies in the parish of Yetholm is two miles long, and from a quarter to nearly half a mile in breadth, and appears