

PARISH OF YETHOLM.

PRESBYTERY OF KELSO, SYNOD OF MERSE AND TIVIODALE.

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*. Yet-holm is a border parish, and the villages of Town and Kirk Yet-holm 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

encircled on every side by hills, except on the east, where it opens into England. The sides of the hills immediately bounding the vale are all under tillage, and covered generally with a rich and light soil resting on gravel and rock. Towards the middle of this vale, and near the village of Town Yetholm, another valley, or tract of low level ground, the opposite sides of which rise to a considerable elevation, branches off in a westerly direction towards Yetholm Loch.

The climate of Yetholm is remarkably clear and healthy, and the temperature much milder than might be expected.

Hydrography.—Yetholm Loch, sometimes also called Primside Loch, is a sheet of water nearly a mile and a half in circumference: it abounds with pike and perch: and is frequented by a great variety of water-fowl; of which the rarer species are the wild swan, the goosander, and the Siberian goose; but these only appear in severe winters. Bowmont Water, in some very old charters, is also written Bol-bent and Bow-bent, and is probably so named from the curvature of its course. It has its source in the Cocklaw, and, after mingling with the College, it joins the Till, a tributary of the Tweed. The Bowmont is stocked with abundance of fine trout, and before the erection of a mill-dam or call on the Till at Etal, salmon-grilse and sea-trout were frequently caught. The course of the Bowmont is extremely rapid, and, from its vicinity to the hills, it is exposed to frequent high floods, which sometimes do incredible mischief to the haughs and meadow pasture, tearing up and carrying away the rich deep soil on its banks, and occasionally burying whole acres under a bed of unproductive sand and gravel. The practicability of embanking this river is an important subject of consideration to the proprietors; and those who have resided longest upon its banks are generally of opinion that this may be done, and at an expense which, when compared with the importance of the object, might be called inconsiderable.

Geology and Mineralogy.—The rocks composing the hills in this parish belong to the transition series, and are the compact felspar-porphyry and the pitchstone-porphyry,—the latter of which affords very excellent specimens. The felspar-porphyry is by far the most abundant rock, not only of the Yetholm Hills, but of the whole Cheviot range. Numerous nodules of agate and common jasper are met with in this rock; and these are also dispersed in abundance over the surrounding plains, and are very frequent in the gravel of the Bowmont Water and other streams. It is by no

means easy to ascertain in what manner the rock above described as the pitchstone-porphyry, occurs in this parish. Apparently it is in the form of an irregular bed, or in detached masses subordinate to the felspar-porphyry. Possibly it may be connected with the great dike of this rock, which is described as crossing the Cheviot range some miles to the west of this, in a direction nearly east and west. Subordinate, also, to the felspar-porphyry, is the quartz rock which occupies the summit of Thirlestane hill, where both rocks are much intermixed with white steatite. On the same hill are quarries of the compact felspar rock, containing amygdaloidal crystals of calcareous spar, probably only a variety of the porphyry, which here occurs of every sort of colour and structure. The most remarkable rock on this hill, perhaps, is a partial deposit of the new red sandstone in thin strata of a grey and reddish-brown colour, hard and compact, but unable for any long period to resist the action of the weather. This rock, as you descend from the higher ground of Yetholm, towards the north and west, into the vale of the Tweed, soon becomes the prevailing formation, and where it first occurs, it is found resting on the felspar-porphyry. There is no appearance of metals of any kind in these rocks, farther than a considerable abundance of the sulphate of barytes and white steatite, in a rocky and romantic little glen on the top of Yetholm Law, called the "Tod Craigs," may seem to indicate the probable neighbourhood of copper or lead. From the circumstances stated, there seems little probability that coal, or even lime, will be discovered in this parish.

The bed of the Bowmont affords the finest sharp sand for building. The natural embankments of the river are all composed of gravel. The soil on the lower parts of the parish, which is sometimes of considerable depth, rests also on gravel. Hence in dry summers the crops are apt to be burnt up; and in moist seasons they succeed best.

In the vale of Cherrytrees are probably an hundred acres of moss, which, however, have been drained, and are now under cultivation. The average depth of the moss is eight feet, in some places fourteen feet. Trunks of various trees, as willows, birches, but especially oaks of a black colour, and extremely hard, were discovered in it.

Botany.—There are but few rare plants in the parish; and the whole range of the Cheviots, indeed, disappoints very much the expectations of the botanist. In the vale of Bowmont are the

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Teesdalia nudicaulis, *Trifolium striatum*, *T. scabrum*, *Sedum Telephium*, *Dianthus deltoides* in great luxuriance and abundance, *Cichorium Intybus*, *Carduus nutans*, *Anchusa sempervirens*; and in the dry channel of the river *Thlaspi arvense*. On the hills are the *Rubus Chamæmorus*, *Cistus Helianthemum*, *Vaccinium Vitis-Idæa*, *Tormentilla reptans*, *Empetrum nigrum*, *Hieracium pulmonarium*, *Cornus Suecica* (perhaps on the borders of the parish only, not in it.) In and on the margin of Yetholm Loch, and in other moist situations, are the *Cicuta virosa*, *Vaccinium oxycoccus* (abundant in Hoselaw Loch, on the borders of the parish,) *Potamogeton compressum*, *P. pectinatum*, *Scutellaria galericulata*, and *Lycopus Europæus* (abundant at Linton Loch,) *Typha latifolia*, *Ranunculus Lingua*, *Hippuris vulgaris*, *Solanum Dulcamara*, *Trollius Europæus*, *Leontodon palustre*, *Nuphar lutea*, *Gymnadenia viridis*, *Lythrum Salicaria*, *Eriophorum vaginatum*, *Valeriana dioica*, *V. officinalis*, *Listera ovata*, *Sium angustifolium*, *Parnassia palustris*, &c.; a remarkable and dwarfish variety of the *Ranunculus auricomus* in a boggy situation among the hills, without any calyx, and claws or pores at the termination of the petals, and corresponding in its general characters with the *Anemone ranunculoides*, for which it was at first mistaken.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

It is said that, "in 1304, Edward the First came to Yetham on his return from his northern expedition;" (Caledonia, Vol. ii. p. 193.) There is a tradition that the Douglas appointed Yetholm kirk as the place of rendezvous for the Scottish army, before marching to the celebrated battle of Otterburn. It is also said, and perhaps with more truth, that after the battle of Flodden Field, the scene of which is situated about six miles to the east of the parish, the bodies of the Scottish nobles who fell in that engagement were brought and buried in the church and churchyard of Yetholm, as the nearest consecrated ground in Scotland to the field of battle. It is a better known fact, though traditional, I believe, like the others, that, in 1745, a small party of Scotch Highlanders, who followed the fortunes of Prince Charles, marched from the south through the parish and village of Yetholm, up the Bowmont Water, to receive some supplies of money, which had been remitted from France, and entrusted to the care of a Northumberland gentleman, Charles Selby, Esq. of Earl. An old man, lately deceased, in Town Yetholm, distinctly remembered having seen these Highlanders passing his father's house.

Eminent Characters.—Dr Scott, one of the lairds of Thirlestane,

a small property in this parish, (now in the possession of Adam B. Boyd, Esq. of Cherrytrees,) and one of the physicians of Charles II., seems to have been a chemist of some celebrity in his day. In the old mansion-house of Thirlestane, lately pulled down, a room, which he had probably used as his laboratory, continued to retain the name of the "warlock's room." * (See Note to the 11th chapter of Waverley, Vol. i. regarding the ancient family of Scott of Thirlestane in this parish.)

Antiquities.—Yetholm churchyard has probably been the burial place of many an ancient border chief. About two or three years ago, a stone coffin was discovered nearly six feet below the surface, and unfortunately was broken before it could be ascertained what it was. The stone in which the body lay was an entire mass. It contained a skeleton of unusual size. Still more lately, in the same churchyard, was discovered a square erection, consisting of four rough stones, set at right angles, and covered by a flat stone above, in which was found only a skull, which crumbled into dust when exposed for a short time to the air. On the borders of the parish, at Primside mill, under a large flat stone in the middle of the road, was found some years ago an urn, of very rude workmanship, and containing ashes. It was lately in the possession of Mr Oliphant at Marlefield.

There are two British forts in the parish, one situated on the top of Castlelaw, a hill on the farm of Vencheon; the other on the summit of a higher hill, called the Camp Hill, on the farm of Halterburn. They are fortified with two fosses and ramparts, are probably two or three hundred yards in diameter, and from their situation must have been very strong, almost impregnable fortifications.—On the top of Yetholm Law, there are the remains of a very extensive and singular fortification, the general form of which is square, but very irregular,—its irregularity, perhaps, occasioned by the inequality of the ground. It has been supposed to

* The celebrated Jean Gordon, and her granddaughter Madge or Majory Gordon, were both inhabitants of this parish; the former well known as "the prototype of the character of Meg Merrilees," the latter probably having "sat to the author of Guy Mannering as the representative of her person." (See Blackwood's Mag. for April, May, and Sept. 1817.) Madge was married to a man of the name of Young, and is still remembered by many in Kirk Yetholm,—a woman of remarkable stature and striking appearance. I find that most, or perhaps all, her children are registered in the session record of baptisms. From the same record it appears, that in her latter days she had been in very destitute circumstances. For several years the sum of 1s. 6d. seems to have been allowed almost weekly by the kirk-session of Yetholm to "Madge" or "Majory Gordon." I may also mention concerning the family of Will Faa, long king of the gipsies in the south of Scotland, (Ibid.) that they were all, to the number of twenty-two or twenty-four, baptized in Yetholm kirk, and many of them are registered. Several of his family still reside in Yetholm. His son "Will Faa" has succeeded to his father in the title at least of "king."

be a Roman camp, and the Romans were undoubtedly in this immediate neighbourhood.—On the farm of Mindrum, in Northumberland, on the very borders of the parish, was lately ploughed up a vase or bottle of brass containing 500 Roman silver coins.—On a little spot of ground, now a peninsula, but at one time probably an island of Yetholm Loch, there formerly stood one of those old towers or castles so frequent in the south of Scotland. It was the baronial residence of the Kers of Lochtower, a branch, probably, of the Kers of Cessford, or the Roxburgh family. This ancient tower and the surrounding scenery suggested to the author of *Waverley* the picture he draws of Avenel Castle in the Monastery. (See Note at the end of the 7th chapter, Vol. ii.)

Land-owners.—The number of heritors or proprietors in this parish is five. Of these, Mr Wauchope of Niddrie possesses nearly one-half of the parish, and is patron also of the church. The Marquis of Tweeddale is the second heritor, and now possesses what was formerly the property of Sir William Bennet of Grubbet, the friend and patron of the poet of Ednam and of Allan Ramsay, whose “Gentle Shepherd” has sometimes been ascribed to Sir William Bennet, and sometimes regarded as a juvenile production of Thomson.

It is unfortunate that there is only one heritor who resides in the parish, and therefore only one mansion-house. The grounds of Cherrytrees are very tastefully ornamented with wood. The house is a small, modern, but handsome building.

Parochial Registers.—The earliest parochial registers extant are from 1690, and from that period to the present they have been kept with considerable regularity. There is little doubt but earlier registers did exist; and there is a report that, accidentally I suppose, they were destroyed by the family of one of the former ministers of the parish. They consist of three large folio volumes completed, and a fourth is now adding to their number. There is nothing particularly interesting in them.

III.—POPULATION.

In the former Statistical Account, the parish is supposed to have doubled its population during last century; and the cause of this rapid increase is stated to be the destruction of several villages in the neighbouring parishes of Hownam, Morbattle and Linton, the inhabitants of which had withdrawn to the two villages of Yetholm, encouraged, perhaps, by the easy rate at which the proprietors of these villages had granted them feus. Another probable cause might be the practice of uniting many small farms into one large one.

In 1755, the population was 699
 1786, 1070
 1801, 1011

In 1811, 1188
 1821, 1280
 1831, 1289

The increase of population in the country parts of the parish is owing entirely, of course, to the great improvements in the system of agriculture, and the consequent greater demand for labourers: the quantity of land now under cultivation in the parish being much more than doubled since the end of last century. The same cause has also affected the population of the two villages, the greater part of which depends for employment on the farmers. Other subordinate causes might be mentioned, as the great temptation to, and prevalence of, smuggling, from the vicinity of the villages to England,—an occupation from which a fifth or sixth of the population some years ago derived their means of subsistence; and the facility of persons in decayed circumstances procuring a room or lodging in the villages, where, after a residence of three years, they very frequently become burdens on the parish.

The average number of children in a family is $3\frac{1}{2}$ or 4; but among the gipsies not less than 6 or $6\frac{1}{2}$. I have no means of ascertaining the average number of births, deaths, and marriages for the last seven years; the registration of baptisms having been much neglected, and no registry of deaths being kept at all.

Character, &c. of the People.—The people, in general, enjoy remarkably good health. About the middle of last year (1829,) there were sixteen persons between eighty and ninety years of age; and in the churchyard every sixth or seventh person whose memory is recorded seems to have died betwixt seventy and ninety years of age. With a few exceptions, the labouring classes seem, in general, to be in tolerably comfortable circumstances. The villages alone give employment to two or three butchers, and four bakers. As by far the greater part of the population, however, derive their subsistence from their employment by the farmers, whatever depresses the agricultural interest must tend more or less to injure them, by throwing them out of employment. Accordingly, during the last two years which have been so trying to farmers in general, the relief required to be extended to the poor has been much increased. The illegal practice of smuggling, till lately so prevalent in this neighbourhood, and so openly practised, must no doubt have had a very demoralizing influence upon a considerable portion of the population; otherwise I am disposed to regard them, in general, as a quiet and well disposed people.

Gipsies.—Kirk Yetholm has long been known and somewhat celebrated as the residence of the largest colony in Scotland, I

believe, of that singular and interesting race of people, the Gipsies, whose origin is involved in so much uncertainty and doubt. I am indeed far from regarding the "muggers and tinkers" of Kirk Yetholm as the pure unmingled gipsy race, whose forefathers emigrated or were driven into Europe from Hindostan or Egypt. They are much less distinguishable as a peculiar race now than they appear to have been formerly. Still their language, their predatory and erratic propensities, and, in general, their dark or dusky complexion, black piercing eyes, and Hindoo features, sufficiently betray the original of this despised and neglected race. At what period they first arrived and settled in Kirk Yetholm I have not been able with any accuracy to ascertain. The family of the Faa's seem to have been the first who settled there, and probably about the beginning of last century.* Their number in 1797, according to the former Statistical Account, was 50. In 1816, according to the late Bailie Smith of Kelso (whose interesting account of the Kirk Yetholm gipsies was published in Blackwood's Magazine for May 1817), the number was 109. At present there are about 100. Of these, one gipsy female is married to a tradesman in the village; and one woman not belonging to the tribe is married to a gipsy, whom she accompanies in his wanderings.

That the gipsies of Kirk Yetholm have a peculiar language is fully credited by most of the other inhabitants of the village, many of whom have not only heard them converse with each other in this language, but also understand a number of the words. It was my intention to have given a list of such of these words as I have been able to collect; but I shall at present merely mention this general fact regarding them, that, on comparing this list with the specimens furnished by Hoyland from Grellman, I find that the language spoken by the Kirk Yetholm clans corresponds very nearly with that spoken by the English and Turkish gipsies, and that most of these also have been traced to an Indian origin. On this subject, however, they observe a profound secrecy.

Their occupations are various. There are two who manufacture horn into spoons: one tinker; and most or all of the rest are "muggers," or, as they prefer being called, "potters," or "travelers," who carry earthen-ware about the country for sale. These last also frequently employ themselves in making besoms and baskets. The gipsy, in general, enjoys but few of the comforts of home,—with the exception of the spoon-manufacturer, who must remain stationary to fabricate his wares, which the females usually dispose

* See Blackwood's Magazine, Nos. I. and II.

of at neighbouring markets, and in the surrounding country. The horn-spoons, or "cutties," are very generally used by the peasantry, and before harvest are purchased for the use of the reapers. Most readers are probably familiar with the appearance of a gipsy tent. It is generally situated in the least frequented parts of the country, probably beside some plantation, which supplies it at once with shelter and with fuel. The women carry about their manufactured articles for sale; while the men either remain with the cart, or occupy themselves in fishing and poaching, in both of which they are generally expert. The children accompany the females, or collect decayed wood for fuel. At night the whole family sleep under the tent, the covering of which is generally wool-len cloth, and is the same usually that covers their cart during the day. Occasionally two or more families travel together. A dog, chained under the cart, protects their property, and at night gives warning of danger. Each family generally travels a particular district, seldom remaining more than a few days in one place. This is their mode of life, even in the coldest and wettest weather of spring, or the beginning of winter; and sometimes the tents are but scantily provided with warm and comfortable clothing. The ground, from which, while they sleep, they are separated only by a blanket or slight mattress laid on some straw, must frequently, of course, be completely saturated with rain; nevertheless I have never understood that these people are, even so much as others, troubled with colds and rheumatisms, to which this mode of life seems almost unavoidably to expose them. Indeed, both at home and abroad, they enjoy the best health. In cases of sickness they are usually unwilling to call in a medical practitioner. Before autumn all return who are able and willing to hire themselves as reapers. After harvest work is over, they set off once more to the country, where they continue until the severity of winter drives them home. At home they are usually quiet and peaceable. Their quarrels, which do not often take place, and are only among themselves, are very violent while they continue: and the subject or ground of quarrel is seldom known but to themselves. On these occasions they are much addicted to profane swearing, and but too much so at other times. I think it deserving of remark, that most of the murders for which gipsies have been condemned seem to have been committed upon persons of their own tribe, in the heat and violence of passion, the consequence of some old family feud, or upon strangers of other clans for invading what they regard as their territory, or the dis-

strict they have been wont to travel. Their character for truth and honesty is certainly not high. Their pilfering and plundering habits, practised chiefly when from home, are pretty generally known. Their money debts, however, they discharge, I believe, as punctually as others; and there is a species of honour among them, that, if trusted, they will not deceive, and a principle of gratitude, that, if treated kindly, they will not injure. Numerous instances can be referred to of the grateful sense they entertain of favours bestowed on them, and of the length of time they will remember a kindness done either to themselves or their relatives. A deep spirit of revenge is the darkest trait in their character. Yet may most of the savage features of the gipsy character be referred to their loose, wandering, and disorderly life; to their lamentable ignorance of the duties which they owe both to God and man, and their total want of restraint by any consideration, moral or religious. I am not aware that they are much addicted to ardent spirits, or that there is any habitual drunkard belonging to their tribe.

Most of the tribe are able to read, though very indifferently. They seem alive to the advantages of education, and speak of it as the only legacy which a poor man can leave to his children; but the migratory habits of the people prevent their children from remaining long enough at school ever to make much progress. The children are generally remarked as clever. One large family of children have been taught to read by their mother at home; and I have known a father (when he was able) who gave a lesson every day to his two children, in the course of their migrations. I may mention, as a proof of the anxiety of parents on this subject, that most of them have again and again professed their willingness to leave their children at home throughout the year for instruction, could they only afford it, and entrust them to the charge of some prudent person. This is a great step to their improvement, considering how extremely attached the gipsy parent generally is to his children;—that attachment to their offspring being one of those traits or features of character which distinguishes the tribe wherever they are found. Most of the younger children have attended the Sabbath school, when at home; and not only do the parents willingly send them, but even the children themselves seem delighted to attend. I have remarked in most of these children, what may account in some degree for this desire on their parts, a spirit of emulation, and strong desire to please those who will take the trouble to notice them. Even a few of the adults have attend-

ed the Sabbath school; but many are kept back by the shame of appearing more deficient than others of their own age.

A great majority of the children have been baptized; and there are probably not so many illegitimate children among them as among the lower ranks of society in general. They almost always intermarry in their own tribe, and are generally dissatisfied when this is not the case.

Of late, the greater number of the tribe have attended church occasionally, and some with exemplary regularity. Their ideas on the subject of religion, however, are extremely limited, and erroneous. Nor can they well be otherwise, considering their unsettled way of life, and their defective education. Yet they profess a general respect for religion; and, when absent from church, excuse themselves on the ground that they have no suitable or decent clothing.

I have not been able to ascertain whether they entertain any peculiar sentiments on the subject of religion. Like most ignorant persons, they are very superstitious.* All of them profess to belong to the Established church; and there are no Dissenters among them. Eight or nine of them are communicants. Most of them possess Bibles, which have been purchased, however, rather for the use of their children, when at school, than for any other purpose. Those who have not Bibles, would purchase them, they say, could they afford it. Most of them are indeed very poor, if we may judge from their apparel and their household accommodations, all of which are inferior to those possessed by the common class of labourers in the country.†

It is a fact not very creditable to the wisdom of Britain, that, while so much has been done for the heathen, no attempt has yet been made in Scotland, to civilize and enlighten those wandering tribes, who during three-fourths of the year, in pursuing the avocations, from which they derive their subsistence, have no pastor, no church, no school, no home, and are deprived of the means and opportunities of acquiring every kind of instruction. The attempt, if properly made, would, I am persuaded, be in numerous instances successful. Society would be the principal gainers by the success of any such scheme. They would render their own homes, persons, and property more secure; while they would discharge a long-neglected duty to a considerable number of their

* See Blackwood's Magazine, Nos. I. and II.

† Since writing the above, I have received a grant of Bibles and Testaments from the Edinburgh Bible Society, so that every poor gipsy family is now supplied with a copy of the scriptures.

fellow creatures and fellow subjects, and rescue an interesting race from infamy, ignorance, and vice.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—There are nearly 6000 (probably 5700) acres in the parish: of these more than 2600 are arable, and more than 3000 remain in permanent pasture. There is a common of 200 acres, called Yetholm Common, on which the inhabitants of Kirk Yetholm have the privilege of cutting turf and grazing their cattle: it is a wild moorish piece of ground, upon the borders, claimed, I believe, by both kingdoms. On the estates of Cherrytrees and Thirlestane, and on some small spots on the barony of Lochtower, there may be about 100 acres altogether, planted in wood. As remarked in the last Statistical Account, with one or two exceptions, “the proprietors seem but little disposed to plant, though there is abundance of land fit for no other purpose.” The planting of a few hundred acres, besides the beauty and ornament it would add to the parish, would greatly improve and increase the value of the remainder of the land, and afford, what is so much required in the more exposed parts of the parish, shelter to the farmers’ stock.

Husbandry.—There are about 450 acres round the villages of Town and Kirk Yetholm, farmed by the inhabitants in lots, varying from 2 to 30 acres. These fields are held from year to year; but, so long as the occupiers are able to pay their rents, they are very rarely disturbed. The rents they bring are from L. 2 to L. 3, 10s. an acre; and, considering the nature of the soil, and the situation of the country, this is regarded as extremely high. Many of the occupiers of these fields are industrious tradesmen and day-labourers, who, at their leisure hours, or when not otherwise engaged, employ themselves in the cultivation of their little farms, or retain them only for the convenience of a cow’s pasture. The other small tenants, who farm a greater number of acres, are occupied more exclusively in their cultivation. They keep, for this purpose, one or two horses, with which they also drive coals to the other inhabitants of the villages, or to Jedburgh, where they obtain a higher price for them; or drive lime to the farmers, who usually prefer hiring to driving with their own horses the manure of this description which they require. The other farms in this parish are from about 400 to 1800 acres. The larger farms consist more than one-half of sheep pasture. The duration of the leases is from sixteen to twenty-one years. The older cultivated lands are enclosed with hedges; the more lately enclosed lands,

with dry stone walls; and the sheep pastures, with what is called a "ring-fence," or "march-fence;" i. e. a dry stone dike or wall surrounding the farm. The mode of cultivation adopted in this parish is usually what is called the four and five-shift rotation; the former being practised on the village lands, the latter on the larger farms. This mode of husbandry consists in taking a crop of turnips the first year; a crop of wheat or barley, sown off with grass, the second year; a crop of hay the third year; and a crop of oats the fourth year. According to the five-shift rotation, the ground is allowed to lie in pasture the fourth year, and on the fifth it is ploughed up and sown with oats. In some cases the ground remains in pasture two years, which is called the sixth-shift husbandry. There is no bare fallow in the parish, or extremely little. One-fifth nearly of the arable land of the parish is annually sown off with turnips.

Probably one-third of the oats, and nearly two-thirds of the barley grown in the parish, may be sold and exported. All the wheat, and probably more than is grown in the parish, is consumed in it: all the other crops, as of hay, turnips, potatoes, &c. are consumed at home.

The manure usually employed is common manure and lime, which latter is driven a distance of ten miles, and costs 10d. per boll, or 3s. 4d. a cart-load, a single horse drawing four bolls. Forty bolls of lime are usually given to the acre. Bone manure, which is brought from Berwick, a distance of twenty miles, has been extensively used of late years in the parish, and is found to succeed remarkably well: it is used for turnips, 2 quarters or 16 bolls being required per acre.

Live-Stock.—The farmers depend less upon the agricultural produce of the land than upon their sheep. The sheep usually preferred for the higher parts of the parish, or hilly pastures, are the Cheviot. The Leicester, or long-woolled sheep, are preferred for the lower and cultivated parts of the parish; and on farms partly arable and partly hill pasture, a cross between the Cheviot and Leicester is found to answer very well. The number of sheep in the parish may be about 4800: of these about 1800 may be Leicester, 1000 Cheviot, and 2000 half-bred, or a cross between the other two. Few or no lambs are sold. The cattle usually preferred, and, indeed, the only breed of cattle in the parish, are the short-horned or Teesdale, both for giving milk and for fattening.

Rent and Price of Land, &c.—The average rent of the arable

land may be L. 1, 5s., and of the pasture land 10s. per acre. The price of land in the parish varies, of course, according to its quality: good land, per statute acre, has been sold as high as L. 100; but the average price of good land may be considered about L. 50 per acre, and of pasture land L. 10. The price of land is here generally calculated to be equal to twenty-seven years' rent. Owing to the fall in the price of produce, the value of land is much deteriorated, and pasture-land especially, has fallen nearly one-half in value. The total land-rent of the parish, as nearly as I can ascertain, is L. 5600. In 1797, it was L. 2104; and, in the recollection of individuals then alive, it had increased in value three times. Two or three proprietors farm their own land.

At the beginning of this century the spirit of improvement was very great. In 1797, there were only 1170 acres under tillage; whereas now, there are upwards of 2600 (or probably many more.) At the end of last century, sufficient corn was not grown in the parish for home consumption; now a considerable proportion is exported; while yet the same number of sheep is maintained. The farms are cultivated according to the newest and most approved methods, and in no respect is the system or mode of agriculture inferior to that of any other part of the country; but, from the high state of the rents at present, there is no encouragement whatever given by the landlords to their tenants for the improvement of their farms.

Commerce.—There are no branches of commerce or manufactures carried on in this parish, with the exception, perhaps, of the illicit commerce of smuggling whisky across the border, which, I have said, formerly gave employment and subsistence to one-fifth or one-sixth of the inhabitants of the two villages. Of this commodity, I am informed that from L. 10,000 to L. 20,000 worth annually have been sold from Yetholm into England in this manner; but now the quantity disposed of illegally for the English market is scarcely worth calculating. Within the last three or four years, effectual means have been taken by a stricter police, and by heavy fines imposed upon delinquents, to put an end to this demoralizing and illicit traffic, which have succeeded in a great measure for the present. A considerable trade is also carried on here in buying cows in Northumberland, and driving them for sale to the Edinburgh markets.

Rate of Wages.—Masons, 2s. or 2s. 6d. per day; carpenters, 2s. or 2s. 6d.; tailors, 1s. 6d. with meat; women labourers, 8d. to 1s.; men do. in summer, 1s. 6d. to 1s. 8d.; do. do. in harvest, 2s. with meat.

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

Grain of all kinds,	-	-	-	-	L. 5506	5	0
Potatoes, turnips, &c.	-	-	-	-	3051	0	0
Hay,	-	-	-	-	687	10	0
9000 acres of permanent pasture,	-	-	-	-	2760	0	0
					<hr/>		
					L. 12,004	15	0

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Villages and Markets.—The only villages in this parish are Town Yetholm and Kirk Yetholm, in both of which there has been usually a Baron Bailie ; one appointed by the Marquis of Tweeddale, the other by Mr Wauchope of Niddrie, the superiors of the villages. In Town Yetholm there was formerly a weekly market, which is now discontinued. Kelso, Coldstream, and Berwick are the nearest weekly markets.

Means of Communication.—No public conveyances, as coaches, &c. pass through the parish. There is no post-office at present—a disadvantage that might easily be remedied. There is a communication by carriers between Kelso and Yetholm, five days in the week, and more rarely with Coldstream and Berwick. The length of turnpike-road in the parish is four miles, generally kept in good repair, and managed by the trustees for the district of Kelso. There are two toll-houses on these roads, both of which are let annually, by public sale, and at present for L. 180. The turnpike-roads communicate with Kelso, Coldstream, Berwick, Wooler, Jedburgh, and with the coal and lime districts. The bye-roads, kept in repair by the statute-labour money, are about five miles in length. A very neat bridge, erected last year across the Bowmont, between the villages of Town and Kirk Yetholm, is one of the greatest improvements that have taken place in the parish for many years.

Ecclesiastical State.—The parish church is situated in Kirk Yetholm, and no part of the population is distant from it more than two miles. It is a very wretched and insufficient building. An addition, larger than the original church, was built to the west end of it in 1609. The age of the east end is unknown. It is much too small for the population. Usually, it is most uncomfortably crowded, and still one-third nearly of the church-going population are unable to find accommodation. It is but fair, however, to state, that a considerable number of those who attend the Established church are from the English border, the inhabitants of which are generally Scotch and Presbyterians. The

church affords accommodation for only 400 ; the population being nearly 1300. It is most inconvenient in point of shape, being nearly 80 feet long, and from 17 to 20 broad. But, as this goes to press, the heritors have given their consent to the erection of a new church, which, it is hoped, will be commenced early in spring. The heritors have lately provided liberally for the accommodation of the minister, by repairing and building a large addition to the old manse (built in 1788,) and it is now a very commodious and even handsome building. The glebe is generally considered to consist of from 18 to 20 acres, about one-half of which is excellent land. The amount of stipend is 14 chalders, and L. 8, 6s. 8d. for communion elements. Mr Wauchope of Niddrie is patron. The last augmentation was granted in 1820. The valued rent of the parish is L. 7049, 13s. 4d. Scots.

There are two dissenting chapels in the parish, both of which are in Town Yetholm. One belongs to the Old Light Burghers, the other to the United Associate Synod. Both have been built within the last fifty years. The ministers are paid from the seat rents and collections, the one being promised, I believe, L. 70, the other L. 108 annually. Of old and young in the parish, 888 may belong to the Established church ; and the number of Dissenters may be about 412. The number of communicants at the Established church in July last was 460. Of these, however, several are from England. The church is remarkably well attended, and the people generally are attentive to the public ordinances of religion. One probable cause of the number of Dissenters may be the want of accommodation in the parish church.

Education.—The parish school-house, erected in 1833, is, without exception, the handsomest building of the kind in the county. It is attended by 100 scholars ; and the amount of the teacher's fees may be L. 30 a-year ; but he has also L. 6 as clerk to the heritors. There are also two unendowed schools in the parish ; one in Town and the other in Kirk Yetholm. The number attending each may be from 60 to 80. Several of these children attend from the borders. The salary of the parochial teacher is the maximum, or two chalders of oatmeal. The fees at all the schools per quarter are, for reading, 2s. 6d. ; for reading and writing, 3s. ; for reading, writing, and arithmetic, 3s. 6d. ; for Latin, Greek, practical mathematics, and geography, 10s. 6d. Latin and Greek are not taught in the private schools.

The total number of scholars at all the schools in the parish is

240; of whom about 40 are from England and adjoining parishes in Scotland.

Under fifteen years of age, there are very few, if any, of a proper age who cannot read and write. Above fifteen years of age there may be many who cannot write, but few or none who cannot read. The people seem, in general, to be alive to the benefits of education.

Literature.—There is one parochial library, consisting of 500 volumes; one congregational library connected with one of the dissenting meetings; and two Sabbath school libraries.

Charitable and Economical Institutions.—There is a Friendly Society, which has been in existence for several years. Its capital is L. 370. It might probably be made much more useful, but it seems somehow or other to be mismanaged. A society was lately established in the parish for the purpose of supplying the poor, especially poor and single females, with spinning. Its capital is very small, and is daily diminishing; otherwise the benefits of this institution might be greatly extended. A Clothing Society has been more lately established.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The number of poor upon the roll in this parish is very great. The average number each year during the last seven years who have received parochial relief is sixty-five persons. The average sum raised yearly for this purpose by assessment (one-half of which is paid by the heritors, the other half by the tenants,) during the same number of years, is L. 252, 8s. 10d. The average sum, therefore, which each pauper receives in the year is L. 3, 17s. 6½d. The session may have a sum of from L. 15 to L. 20 at their disposal, from L. 12 to L. 15 of which are raised by collections at church, and left in the hands of the session, to be distributed at their discretion among the poor of the parish, either on or not on the roll. It is unfortunate, that, with very few exceptions, there is little disposition among the poor to refrain from seeking parochial aid; neither do they seem to consider it in any sense as degrading.

Obviously one great cause of the number of the poor in this parish, is the facility with which aged and single persons, who have probably spent their lives in England, where they find it extremely difficult to establish a residence, can procure a room or lodging, of any dimensions, in the villages of Yetholm, where they contrive to subsist, by their own labour, for a certain number of years; and finally, when unable to work, get enrolled on the

permanent list of poor. On two sides, they are surrounded by uninhabited and uncultivated mountains, and on the other side by a country more than one-half of which remains in permanent pasture. There are no trade, commerce, or manufactures carried on in the parish. It is, therefore, obviously impossible that the neighbourhood should furnish employment and subsistence to one-half of the 1000 persons residing in Town and Kirk Yetholm, especially as farmers have, residing on their land, and under their roof, the requisite number of farm-servants. The consequences have been, smuggling and an excessive proportion of pauperism. To diminish, therefore, the number of houses, would be to diminish the vice and pauperism of the parish.

Fairs, Inns, &c.—There are two annual fairs in each of the villages: the Kirk Yetholm summer fair being for the sale of Cheviot hogs, and cattle: the Town Yetholm summer fair being for lambs and wool: the Kirk Yetholm winter fair is for the sale of ewes, wedders, and cattle: at the Town Yetholm winter fair, nothing is now done. There are three or four inns in Town Yetholm, and three in Kirk Yetholm. Some of these furnish comfortable accommodation for travellers. Besides these there are seven houses where ale and spirits are sold, and the latter chiefly for the English market. The imperial weights and measures are now universally used.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The parish of Yetholm is far from manure and markets. Its situation on the borders of England presents great temptation to smuggling; and the assessment for the relief of the poor is very high. The comforts of the industrious part of the population would be increased, the poor rates would be lightened, smuggling would be permanently prevented, and the morals of the people improved, by the diminution of the town, and by the equalization of the duty on spirits in both kingdoms. There is no improvement so much wanted in the parish as planting, both for utility and ornament. I have already mentioned the disadvantage to the parish, arising from the insufficient state of the church. The non-residence of heritors may be mentioned as another disadvantage. Were these disadvantages removed, the salubrity of the atmosphere, and beauty and variety of the scenery, might induce persons in more comfortable circumstances to settle in the parish.

Revised January 1835.