

## PARISH OF CRAILING.

PRESBYTERY OF JEDBURGH, SYNOD OF MERSE AND TIVIODALE.

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### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Extent, Boundaries.*—THE parish of Crailing (comprehending, under this name, the ancient parishes of Nisbet and Spittal annexed to it,) may be described as occupying about 4 square miles in length and breadth. It is bounded on the north by a portion of the parish of Roxburgh, which extends in that direction; on the south by Jedburgh; on the west by Ancrum; and on the east by Eckford.

*Topographical Appearances.*—In its general aspect, it presents the appearance of a wide valley with sloping banks on either side, the Tiviot flowing eastward through the centre, and dividing the parish into two nearly equal portions.

*Name.*—Although the name Crailing is the general designation of the whole parish, the two sides of the river still retain their distinctive appellations. Nisbet constitutes the division on the north of the Tiviot, and Crailing the southern half. Of the origin of these names I cannot pretend to give any authoritative account. Crailing has been supposed to derive its designation from being situated on the banks of the Oxnam water,—*Crai-lyn* (according to Chalmers in his *Caledonia*) signifies the brisk-pool, and this name he imagines to have been given by the British settlers on the Oxnam, from the occasional ebullitions of this mountain stream.\* This rivulet intersects the Crailing or south side of the parish, descending northward till it join the Tiviot about half a mile below the village. It has its source in the border hills, but derives its name from the parish of Oxnam, through which it flows. In the bed of this stream, which in summer is exceedingly small, but in winter swells rapidly, and comes down in powerful torrents, there

\* That the name may have some connection with its situation on the banks of the Oxnam, is rendered more probable from the circumstance of two places being designated by the same term. About two miles farther up the stream, stood the parish of Upper Crailing, now called Crailing Hall, and included in the parish of Jedburgh.

are picked up good specimens of jasper. Its banks, as it flows through the grounds near Crailing House, are precipitous, and present a front of soft red sandstone. Nisbet also seems to owe its name to its locality. It is an appellation applied to several places both in England and Scotland; and the site of all of them, having some proximity to a hill, vindicates the supposition of its being of Saxon origin. *Nes, Nese, Nase*, in that language, signifies a promontory or projection. According to this conjecture, the idea conveyed by "Nisbet" is its being the front or nose-piece of a hill,—a characteristic applicable enough to the Nisbet in question; for on this side of the parish the ground rises to a considerable acclivity, which bears the name of Piniel-heugh, and is a point visible at the distance of many miles. This green hill commands a most pleasing and extensive view of the whole country around, taking in the windings of the Tiviot westward, Tweeddale to the north, the range of Cheviots southward, and the whole Merse as far as the ocean in an eastern direction. It has been rendered more conspicuous by a monumental pillar erected on its summit by the late Marquis of Lothian, in commemoration of the victory obtained at Waterloo.\*

Piniel-heugh is a formation of whinstone. Nearer the river, and close to the village of Nisbet, are found excellent strata of sandstone of a light colour, and of sufficient hardness for the purposes of building. Two quarries have been opened, from which were obtained the stones employed in building the new mansion at Monteviot; some of the blocks measured twelve feet in length.

*Soil, &c.*—In the former Statistical Account, a proof of the fineness of the soil and mildness of climate is furnished, which is worth preserving. It appears that about that time (forty years ago) an attempt was made to cultivate tobacco in Scotland. "In one season a tenant in this district drew L. 115 for tobacco plants, and afterwards raised a crop on 12 or 13 acres, which he sold upon the ground for L. 320: but an act of Parliament intervening, the purchaser was unable to fulfil his bargain, and the farmer was compelled to dispose of his tobacco to Government at only 4d. per pound, at which rate it brought him only L. 104."

The soil of this parish is peculiarly dry and favourable to health,

\* This monument is a cylindrical column, with a spiral staircase. Its height is 150 feet. It stands on an ample base, and was built in a very substantial way from whinstone quarried on the spot. It bears the following inscription:—To the Duke of Wellington and the British Army, William Kerr VI. Marquis of Lothian and his Tenantry dedicate this monument, XXX June MDCCCXV.

nor are there any particular diseases which prevail amongst us. I know not whether it be worth while to state, that during one season two or three fatal instances of croup occurred among the children at Nisbet. As this afflictive malady is apt to be induced by humidity, it is just possible that the vicinity of the Tiviot in a wet season may be ranked among the exciting causes.

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

*Parochial Registers.*—The parish registers do not reach farther back than the beginning of last century, nor do they contain any facts worthy of notice.

*Eminent Men.*—This parish, however, is not unconnected with events well calculated to invest it with historical interest. The circumstance of its having been the scene of the ministry of Calderwood, the church historian, and the birth-place of Samuel Rutherford, is sufficient to render it a spot hallowed by associations dear to all true-hearted Scotchmen, nay, to every lover of pure religion and rational liberty.

Both these facts are well ascertained. The evidence in respect to the latter, *i. e.* the birth of Rutherford, is not so circumstantial as could be wished; and one cannot help regretting that no local incidents have been preserved connected with the early days of that great and good man, who bore so conspicuous a part in the struggles maintained by our church against the assaults of regal and spiritual domination. Yet the claims of Nisbet to the honour of his birth-place rest on grounds amounting to highest probability. Wodrow mentions, that “he was born of mean but honest parents in Tiviotdale.” The tradition of his birth at Nisbet was so general, that within these few years the house in which he was born was pointed out, or at least a house situated on the same spot; and Rutherford himself, in a letter, written in 1655, to the Rev. John Scott, minister of Oxnam, a neighbouring parish, says, while regretting his being unable to pay a visit to that quarter, and speaking of the state of religion there, “My soul’s desire is, that the wilderness, and that place to which I owe my first breathing, may blossom as the rose.” He was born most probably in the year 1600, although the date cannot be precisely determined.\*

Of Calderwood’s connection with this parish the information is more abundant. He was settled as minister in 1604. From his own history we find, that, in 1608, he, along with George Johnston, minister at Ancrum, declined the authority of Law, then

\* See Account of the Life of Rutherford, by Thomas Murray, F. A. S. E.

Bishop of Orkney, afterwards of Glasgow, as visitor to the presbyteries of Merse and Tiviotdale. This resistance had nearly brought down on them signal punishment; but, by "earnest dealing of the Earl of Lothian and the Earl of Dunbar in favour of the said Mr David, their punishment resolved into a confinement within their own parishes." In the course of time, however, a relaxation of this sentence was obtained, although liberty was refused Calderwood to compear at presbyteries or synods, where his independent spirit and great influence rendered him a formidable opponent to Episcopal measures. But he seems eagerly to have watched over the liberties and purity of the church; for in 1617 we find him at Edinburgh, joining in a protestation against the assumption of a power on the part of the King to devise and conclude matters relating to the external policy of the kirk, without special advice and determination of the General Assembly. The part he took in this matter proved the cause of his banishment. He was summoned to compear before the High Court of Commissioners at St Andrew's, on the 8th July. King James, who had lately before this come to visit his native dominion, presided in person on this occasion, and questioned Calderwood as to his resistance and non-conformity. A particular account of the whole examination and answers has been handed down, and is interesting, inasmuch as it affords a true specimen of the difficulties with which the faithful Presbyterians had to struggle, and of the vehemence with which their spiritual liberty was assailed. The spirit of this venerable man sustained him to testify that he would yield "a passive but not an active obedience" to the King's commands, when he regarded them as infringing on the privileges of the church, *i. e.* that he would patiently suffer rather than comply. The result was, that the King became incensed, and Calderwood, after being detained in ward in the tolbooth of St Andrew's, was ordained to be banished from his Majesty's dominions. In consequence of this sentence he went to Holland, and there published his famous work *Altare Damascenum*, which is said to have caused inexpressible vexation to King James. On the death of James in 1625 he returned to his native country; but was not again connected with this parish. He was afterwards minister of Pencaitland, and his name appears in the proceedings of the celebrated Assembly at Glasgow of 1638. In 1651 he terminated his mortal career at Jedburgh, in the neighbourhood of the scene of his early labours. Of these labours, in so far as regards the discharge of

the great though unostentatious duties of a parish minister, no notices are preserved. Yet the excellence of his principles, and activity of his character, leave no room for doubt that "they fill an ample page in that book of the Divine remembrance, from which no work of faith, no labour of love, is obliterated." One indirect, yet strong proof of the estimation in which he seems to have been held among his people is furnished in the fact, that Lord Cranstoun, the proprietor of Crailing, who, from the vicinity of his mansion, must have had the best opportunities of knowing his private worth and public usefulness, used the most strenuous exertions to procure the remission of his sentence, and the continuance of his labours amongst them. The son of this nobleman, in presence of the Lords of Secret Council at Glasgow, 27th July, entered into an obligation of 500 merks for Calderwood's leaving the country before Michaelmas, and thus obtained his liberty in the interval. Lord Cranstoun himself accompanied his pastor to Carlisle, and there presented to the King a petition in his favour, that he might be confined within his own parish. But this was not granted; and, in like manner, other exertions which he made were frustrated, through the malignant interference of the bishops, particularly through the underhand agency of Mr John Abernethie, "who," as Calderwood states it, "being minister at Jedburgh, a town in the south, and Bishop of Caithness, a diocese in the remotest part of the north, thought he could not be at ease in Jedburgh if Mr David was suffered to stay at home at Crailing,—a village distant but two miles from Jedburgh."

*Land-owners.*—The Marquis of Lothian is sole proprietor of Nisbet side,\* which comprises more than one-half of the parish. The property lies most beautifully, stretching from west to east on the north bank of the Tiviot. The family residence, which is called Monteviot, † is at the western extremity. The old house is an extremely plain building, and affords but small accommodation; but one wing of a new and splendid mansion is already completed. It is intended to consist of three parallelograms, the plan being of an irregular but picturesque character, in the Gothic style of the later period.

\* This assertion has to be qualified by stating, that, in consequence of the Tiviot having changed its course within the last fifty years, one or two fields of the Crailing property are now on its north side.

† This is the ancient Spittal, which was an hospital belonging to the abbey at Ancrum. Near the site of this mansion there were distinct traces of a burying-ground, and a considerable number of tomb-stones were lately dug out. None of the inscriptions, however, contained any thing remarkable.

The whole of the south side constituted the estate of Crailing, which was long in the possession of the Lords Cranstoun. The house and lands (with the exception of one farm belonging to William Turnbull, Esq. of Fenwick, and about thirty acres of Lord Minto's,) are now the property of John Paxton, Esq. of Crailing, by whose father the present mansion was built. It is a plain modern building, and stands beautifully on a rising ground, with the Oxnam winding below. The interest and beauty of the pleasure-grounds are much increased by the course of this mountain stream. A sweet little glen, formed by its meanderings, and its banks thickly covered with wood, give a variety to the scene of which one has no idea till close upon it.

*Antiquities.*—The parish contains nothing memorable in the way of antiquities, excepting the vestiges of two once strongly fortified encampments at the top of Piniel-heugh.

### III.—POPULATION.

The population of this parish has varied but little for many years. In the former Statistical Report, the number of inhabitants is stated at 672. By last census, it amounted to 733, showing a trifling decrease from the census of 1821, which is easily accounted for, from the incidental circumstance of one of the large farms being at the time without a resident tenant.

The number of families in the parish is	-	-	-	133
chiefly employed in agriculture,	-	-	-	71
in trade, manufactures, or handicraft,	-	-	-	22

*Character, &c. of the People.*—The habits of the people are orderly and industrious. The peasantry over the whole district are a peculiarly well-conducted class,—sober, intelligent, contented with their situation, and in general manage their limited means so as to enjoy the necessaries of life essential to their comfort.

### IV.—INDUSTRY.

*Agriculture.*—Almost the whole land is arable, and a great part of it of the best quality. About 300 acres are planted. There are several plantations of considerable extent: and in the policies of Monteviot and Crailing House, there are many fine trees of great age. The soil is generally of a light loam, and is apt to suffer from drought, but in ordinary seasons yields very abundant crops. The mode of cultivation generally pursued is, to have one-fifth part of the ground under turnip crop, two-fifths in corn, and the remaining two in grass. The turnip crop answers all the purpose of fai-

lowing, and wheat or barley is sown after it. One-half of the turnips is generally led off to fatten cattle kept in the stall, and the other half eaten with sheep in the field. The farms are generally large, and let on leases of nineteen years. The tenantry are most respectable,—possessed of capital,—well-skilled in their profession,—and enterprising. The great obstacle with which they have to contend is the distance from lime and manure; but such is their spirit, that great quantities of lime are regularly brought from the neighbourhood of Etal, a carriage of thirty miles. As a substitute for manure, bone dust has been introduced into pretty general use for the last four or five years, and by this means the bulk of turnip crop has been materially increased. Within the last twenty years, the lands on Nisbet side have been enclosed with hedge-rows of thorn.

*Produce.*—The average gross amount of produce yearly raised in the parish is as follows :

540 acres in wheat, at L. 8 per acre,	-	-	-	L. 4320	0	0
370 acres in barley, at L. 6, 10s. per acre,	-	-	-	2405	0	0
810 acres in oats, at L. 6 per acre,	-	-	-	4860	0	0
850 acres in turnips and potatoes, at L. 4, 10s. per acre,	-	-	-	3825	0	0
25 acres in pease,	-	-	-	125	0	0
190 acres in hay, at L. 5 per acre,	-	-	-	950	0	0
2420 acres of artificial grass in pasture, at 25s. per acre,	-	-	-	3025	0	0
910 acres in permanent pasture,	-	-	-	600	0	0
6115 acres.				Total amount,	L. 20110	0 0

#### V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

There are three villages, or rather hamlets, in this parish,—Crailing, Nisbet, and Upper Nisbet. The village of Crailing was at one time considerable, but within the last forty years has been diminishing, many of the houses having been taken down. There are no small feuars; all the houses belong to the proprietors of the land.

*Means of Communication.*—The road from Hawick to Kelso, forming part of the great road from Carlisle to Berwick, passes through Crailing village. Its course through the parish for nearly two and a-half miles is agreeably shaded on either side by a row of forest trees, consisting of beech, ash, and elm intermingled. During the summer 1833, a great and much-wanted improvement has been effected by the construction of an elegant bridge across the Oxnam. Previous to this new erection, almost the whole passage was through a ford, which was frequently unpleasant from the increase of the stream by rain, though seldom dangerous. There was, indeed, an old bridge; but, in consequence of being considerably above the direct line, and of inconvenient access, it was little

used, unless when the water at the ford was greatly swollen. Our means of communication are very abundant. The market-towns of Jedburgh and Kelso are close in the neighbourhood,—the former at a distance of three and a-half miles, and the latter of six. And twice every week a stage-coach from Hawick to Kelso passes through the village. A post-gig passes and returns daily from Kelso to Jedburgh, by which all persons who choose to enter into an arrangement with the post-offices of these towns get their letters brought to them. We have, besides, a weekly carrier to and from Edinburgh.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The church is a very plain building in the exterior, but comfortable enough within.\* It was built nearly eighty years ago, and is situated on the Crailing side of the parish, on a small eminence about a quarter of a mile north from the village. Forty new sittings have been added to it within these few years, and it may contain with ease 300 persons. Divine service is on the whole well attended. None of the parishioners are above three miles distant; and the only inconvenience experienced is from the Tiviot intersecting the parish. This is somewhat remedied by the establishment of a ferry-boat, upheld by the heritors, in which a free passage is secured to church. On week days a penny is exacted as fare from each passenger. It happens, however, that at times the water comes down in so large a flood as to cover the haugh lands on Crailing-side, in which case it is quite impassable. The nearest bridge is that at Ormistoun, in Eckford parish, about two miles and a-half farther down.

Nisbet being formerly a separate parish, had its church and burying-ground. Of the church scarce any trace remains, but the churchyard is still used as a place of interment by the inhabitants on that side of the river. For a long time after the union of the parishes it appears that divine service was performed in the church at Nisbet,—I suppose on alternate Sabbaths. The last notice to this effect, which I find in the parish registers, bears date 1713.

This church, of which not a relic is now preserved, was centuries ago the scene of important debate among the ecclesiastics of that age. The tithes of Nisbet, as well as of Crailing, had been granted by David I. to the canons of the monastery founded at Jedburgh. It seems that the monastery lay within the bounds of the diocese

\* There are still the ruins of the old church of Crailing; it stood close to Crailing House. After the removal of the church to its present site, and the enclosure of a new burying-ground, many of the parishioners insisted on laying their dead where rested the dust of their fathers.

of Glasgow; a circumstance which gave rise to questions between the Bishop and Abbot as to supremacy.—“At length, however, these altercations in respect to dignities, liberties, customs, rents, vicarages, lands, pastures, &c., were brought to a quiet end in A. D. 1220, by the arbitration of five discreet referees within the chapel of Nisbet before many auditors.”

There are no dissenting places of worship in this parish, but secession from the Established Church has existed for many years to a great extent in this district. It is not the province of a report like this to assign the causes. It may be but justice, however, to state, that I have hitherto seen among dissenters very little of bigotted attachment to their own sect, and scarce anything of hostility to the Establishment. The vicinity of Jedburgh, where there are three dissenting churches,—two of the United Secession, and one Relief,—affords ample opportunity for dissent; and here all the dissenters in this parish, with the exception of one or two families, find accommodation. In regard to the relative numbers of churchmen and dissenters, it may be mentioned, that, out of twelve resident tenants, (exclusive of proprietors,) eight with their families are members of the Established Church, and out of a total of 129 families, 66 belong to the Establishment, and 63 to the Secession or Relief bodies.

We have no regularly constituted societies for religious purposes, but collections have been made in the church from time to time in aid of the propagation of the Gospel at home and abroad, and these have been liberal and encouraging; thus the average of those collections in furtherance of the General Assembly's scheme for diffusing the Gospel in India, gives L. 8 odds to each.

The manse was built twenty years ago, is in good repair, and sufficiently large and commodious. Its present site is about the eighth of a mile farther north than where the old manse stood. The glebe lies chiefly in front, and the public road passes through part of it. The extent of glebe is about  $9\frac{1}{2}$  English acres, and the land is of excellent quality. The minister of this parish is titular of the vicarage tithes, and formerly drew in kind the teind of lambs, wool, hay, hemp, and lint. In 1818, this privilege was commuted by authority of the Court of Session into L. 60 of money, and the grain stipend settled at thirteen chalders, one-half oat-meal, the other half barley. The average of the last five years gives about L. 250 per annum. There is an allowance, besides, of L. 8, 6s. 8d. for communion elements.

*Education.*—The parochial school is in the village of Crailing. The teacher, besides house and garden, has a salary of nearly L. 30, and L. 3, 15s. arising from a sum of money (1500 merks) left at interest with magistrates of Jedburgh, by one of the Lords Cranstoun, and a Bailie George Cranstoun. He enjoys also the emoluments belonging to the offices of session and parish clerk. We have also a flourishing school at Nisbet, which is under the control and patronage of the Marquis of Lothian, and is supported at his Lordship's expense; each of the tenants on the estate contributing also a certain proportion. The salary of the teacher, in addition to house and garden, is L. 20, and his other emoluments may amount to L. 20 or L. 30 more. At this school, besides the usual branches, the classics are frequently taught. The number of children receiving education at both schools throughout the year may be stated at between 70 and 80, and the school fees are as follows, 2s. 6d. per quarter for English reading; 3s. when writing is also learned, and 4s. when instructions are given both in arithmetic and writing.

*Library.*—At Nisbet there is a limited but excellent collection of books, kindly furnished by the Marquis of Lothian, for the use of those residing on his property. The teacher acts as librarian, and the spirit of reading prevails particularly during the winter months. At Crailing also we have a division of Brown's Itinerating Libraries, containing fifty volumes of useful and improving reading.

*Poor and Parochial Funds.*—The poor are supported by an assessment. At this time there are 25 persons on the roll, and the aid granted to each may be stated at between L. 4 and L. 5 per annum. The church collections amount to nearly L. 12 per annum, and are employed in giving occasional aid to the necessitous not on the poors'-roll, and in paying the school-fees of children whose parents are in difficult circumstances. It is expected that the voluntary contributions at church will be so increased as to reduce the rate of assessment,—the heritors having, by a late act, liberally placed the whole of these funds at the disposal of the kirk-session, and relieved them of the payment of church officers' salaries, (viz. session-clerk, beadle, presbytery and synod clerk,)—with which the revenues of kirk-sessions are generally burdened, and against which a prejudice prevails in some places so as to injure the collections. It must be acknowledged with regret, that the feeling of independence and of reluctance to accept parochial

aid, which once distinguished the Scottish peasantry, is not manifested to any great degree in the border districts.

*Inns, &c.*—Small as the parish is, I am sorry to state, we have two public-houses, both at the village of Crailing. These are certainly not supported by the people in the parish, but by traffic on the high road; yet their existence is productive of decided evil. The circumstance of two being found so near each other in a small village, arises from the trustees of the county (through what may be pronounced a very ill-judged policy) having granted license to the toll-bar.

*Fuel.*—Dried turf was formerly much used for fuel; but is now almost entirely laid aside.\* Coal is the staple article. It is brought from Northumberland, a distance of twenty-five miles. It is not so good, and used to be much dearer, than that found in Mid-Lothian; but, from the great number of persons who occupy themselves in driving, the price has considerably fallen, and has of late been about 13s. per ton: farther up the country it is higher. The peasantry have a sufficient quantity of coals brought to them in their masters' carts,—a circumstance which adds materially to their comfort.

#### MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The state of the parish, as compared with that exhibited in last Statistical Report, indicates advancement. The rental was then L. 2500; it is now nearly tripled, being above L. 7000. The whole grounds are finely enclosed and drained; and husbandry, which, forty years ago, was making rapid improvements, is now practised to a degree of perfection nowhere surpassed.

The only thing wanted is increased facility of communication with the sea and the metropolis, which might easily be afforded by the construction of rail-roads; but there is no great prospect of such an improvement being speedily effected. In a quiet inland country, it is difficult to stimulate to efforts requiring enterprise and involving hazard. Within the parish itself we stand greatly in need of a bridge across the Tiviot; and we are not without the hope of seeing ere long realized, the advantages which such an erection would confer.

\* The minister has the right of casting turf,—a privilege which might once have been of some value, but is now scarcely worth the expense attending it.

January 1835.