

PARISH OF DUMFRIES.

PRESBYTERY OF DUMFRIES, SYNOD OF DUMFRIES.

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I. TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name, Boundaries, &c.—Etymologists are somewhat at variance respecting the origin of the name which this town and parish bear. The supposition that appears to me the most probable, is that which refers the name to the Gaelic words, “*dun*,” a mount, and “*phreas*,” brushwood or furze,—implying a rising ground covered with furze. This derivation is supported by the fact, that the soil is of that light sandy nature, on which, in its uncultivated state, whins and brushwood generally abound.

The parish is from six to seven miles in length, from two to three in breadth, and contains fourteen square miles and a-half. It is bounded on the north-west and north by the parishes of Kirkmahoe and Tinwald; on the north-east by that of Torthorwald; and on the east and south by the parishes of Mousewald and Caerlaverock; while the river Nith is the boundary on the west, separating it from Holywood, Terregles, and Troqueer.

Topographical Appearances.—The surface of the parish may be considered as almost level, if we except the site of the burgh, and a low ridge of hills, which, rising near its southern extremity, stretches to Caerlaverock, in a direction nearly parallel to the river Nith. These hills slope gradually down towards the south-west, on the side next the river; but on the north-east side, they are much more abrupt, presenting a bold front and picturesque outline. Rather more than a mile from the town, two precipitous ledges of rock form the face of the hill, rising perpendicularly to a considerable height. Near the summit of one of these precipices is a sin-

* This Account has been drawn up by Mr Joseph Duncan.

gular cavity, which seems to have been formed by the fall of a fragment of the rock from the upper part, leaving a canopy of stone stretching overhead, while a portion of the broken mass rests upon the brink of the ledge that forms the floor. This place is called the "*Maiden Bower Craigs*," and is reported to have been used by the Druids in the practice of some rites, employed as a test of virginity.

Meteorology.—The aurora borealis, which is often observed here, assumed an uncommon appearance for many evenings in the beginning of the winter of 1830, and particularly on one occasion, when the zenith presented a blood-red appearance, with rays of a pale colour playing across its surface. Suddenly, the fainter rays concentrated themselves into a focus, from which they quickly diverged in every direction, presenting a beautiful irradiation. In connection with the aurora, we must not omit to mention the appearance of two luminous arches, which were that year observed in this parish, as well as in other parts of the kingdom,—the one between eight and nine o'clock on the evening of Friday, the 17th of September, and the other about the same hour on Tuesday, the 5th of October. On the evening of the 17th of September, the polar rays gradually formed themselves into an arch, considerably broader than a rainbow, stretching over from the eastern to the western horizon, and broader towards the former than the latter quarter. The highest part of the arch then passed the zenith, and moved southwards, which gave it the appearance of falling, till it gradually faded from the view. The phenomenon presented on the 5th of October was very similar to the above; but it is remarkable, that, in this instance, the rays flickering for some time in the east, and darting upwards toward the zenith, did not succeed, till after several seemingly ineffectual attempts, in throwing an arch across the heavens. These two beautiful meteors were of the same pale colour usually presented by the aurora borealis, in the form which it generally assumes,—stars being distinctly visible through them, even during the period of their greatest brightness. Several phenomena of a similar nature were observed in September 1833.

The east and north-east winds prevail during spring, and are often very injurious to vegetation. The south-west wind, however, is the most prevalent throughout the year. A lurid appearance in the eastern horizon, called from its direction, a "*Carlisle sky*," the rolling of the clouds landwards, their gathering about the sum-

mit of the mountain Criffel, and the flight of sea-birds towards the interior, are severally regarded as sure indications of approaching foul weather.

The climate is variable, and rather moist; but the dryness of the soil, and the high winds which prevail, obviate in a great measure the evil effects which might otherwise be produced. Typhus fever frequently appears in the autumn and spring. Sibbens, a disease almost peculiar to Dumfries-shire, Galloway, and the west coast of Scotland, is of frequent occurrence here amongst the dissipated and squalid; and one case resembling *yaws* occurred within the last few years.

Hydrography.—There are in the parish a few mineral springs, of which we may here notice one called Crichton's Well, situate in the middle of Lochar Moss, and possessing a pretty strong impregnation of steel; and another, which was discovered about twenty years ago on the farm of Fountainbleau. It is a strong chalybeate, situate like the former in a moss soil. It has been long resorted to, and held in great repute by invalids. The benevolent proprietor has enclosed it within a stone trough, and liberally permits free access to it through his grounds.

There are several small lakes in this parish; in particular the Black, and the Sand Lochs, which are favourite resorts of our curlers during the season of the "roaring play."

The parish is watered by the rivers Nith and Lochar. The Nith rises in the parish of New Cumnock, in Ayrshire, and, after a south-east course of about fifty miles in a direct line, and about 100 including its windings, discharges itself into the Solway Firth, about nine miles below the town of Dumfries. It receives in its course the tributary waters of the Scaur, the Carron, the Cample, and the Cluden. The Lochar rises in Tinwald parish, and falls into the Solway Firth a few miles east of the mouth of the Nith,—the distance from its source to its mouth being about thirteen miles.

Geology and Mineralogy.—The rocks in the parish are principally red freestone.

The soil in the north and north-east, and partly in the south and south-west, consists of a light reddish sandy earth, upon a freestone bottom; but the flat lands south-west of the town, and adjacent to the river, are, generally speaking, composed of clay, upon gravel; the soil in the south-west is a pretty strong clay.

The eastern and south-eastern district of the parish consists of the extensive morass, called Lochar Moss, lying along the confines of Torthorwald and Mousewald. This moss is nearly a dead level of from two to three miles in breadth, and ten miles in length, stretching from the shore of the Solway Firth into the interior of the country. There is a tradition, that this barren waste was, at some remote period, covered with wood, and that afterwards, it was inundated by the sea, which, upon receding, left behind it the decayed vegetable matter in which the moss originated. This tradition has been embodied by the peasantry in the following couplet :

“ First a wood, and then a sea,
“ Now a moss, and ever will be.”

And its truth is corroborated by the fact, that the moss rests upon a deep stratum of sea-sand, out of which not only are shells and other marine deposits frequently dug, but fragments of ancient vessels of no very inconsiderable size have been repeatedly discovered, together with several iron grapples or anchors. Some ancient canoes or boats have also been found, and in particular, one formed out of the trunk of a large oak, hollowed apparently by fire. Between the surface of the moss and the sea-sand immense trunks of trees are found. These, which are principally fir, invariably lie with their tops towards the north-east ; from which it would appear, that their roots having been previously loosened by the inundation of the sea, they had been levelled by the fury of the south-western blast. It has been conceived by some, that the River Nith, at some early period, flowed through Lochar Moss, entering it from the north-east ; but this, taking into account the nature of the ground between the head of the moss and the present course of the river, seems exceedingly doubtful. In the dry summer of 1826, the moss having caught fire, burned with great rapidity, advancing in a direction contrary to that of the wind ; when several cottages fell a prey to the flames before these could be extinguished.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Accounts of the Parish.—A manuscript copy of the Statistical account of this town and parish, drawn up by the late Reverend Dr Burnside for the former Statistical Account, (in which work it is very much abridged,) is preserved in the Society Library here.

Historical events.—No historical documents exist, whereby we

can determine at what precise period the town of Dumfries was founded. From several remains of antiquity, however, we may conjecture that it must have been a place of considerable resort before the end of the eighth century. The earliest historical fact which we find authentically recorded, is the erection of a monastery for Franciscan friars previous to the middle of the thirteenth century, by Dervorgilla, daughter to Allan, Lord of Galloway, and mother of John Baliol, king of Scotland. The base of the mount upon which this religious house stood, is washed by the waters of the Nith on the north and west. It was in the chapel and cloisters of this monastery that the Comyns were slain by Robert the Bruce, aided by Roger de Kirkpatrick and James Lindsay, on the 10th of February 1305. In 1307, the year after the Prince's coronation, Edward II. advanced to Dumfries, and received the homage of several Scottish noblemen. The town was burnt by the English previously to the year 1448, and again in 1536. This latter injury was amply revenged by the Lord Maxwell, who crossed the border with a small body of retainers, entered the town of Penrith, and reduced it to ashes. About this period a magnificent castle was erected out of the ruins, and almost on the site of the Friary,* by the Maxwells, then a very powerful family. Previously to this, a strong castle had stood near the same spot. This is supposed to have been erected some time in the course of the twelfth century. In 1563, Queen Mary and her privy council were at Dumfries ratifying a peace with England; and two years afterwards, the disaffected lords Argyle, Murray, and Rothes, having assembled a force in the neighbourhood, Mary advanced upon the town with an army of 18,000 men. At her approach these nobles fled into England, and Maxwell of Terregles having incurred her royal displeasure, was glad to make his peace by surrendering the castle of Dumfries into the hands of his sovereign. The government of this fortress, however, was not withdrawn from the family. In 1570 the castle was taken and sacked, together with the town, by the English, under the Earl of Essex and Lord Scrope. In 1617, James the Sixth, on his return from a tour through his ancient kingdom of Scotland, after his accession to the English throne, passed through Dumfries, where he was re-

* It is said that the monastery of Greyfriars was deserted in consequence of its having been polluted by the slaughter of the Red Comyn before the high altar. Certain it is, that soon after his death, the people resorted for worship to St Michael's chapel, upon the site of which the parish church of St Michael now stands, towards the south-east end of the town.

ceived with every demonstration of loyalty; and in return, he presented the Incorporated Trades of the burgh with a small silver gun, to be awarded from time to time to the best marksman amongst their number. From this date, the annals of the town present nothing worthy of record till the year 1706, when the inhabitants displayed their opposition to the Union with England by burning the Articles, together with the names of the Commissioners, at the market-cross. Upon the breaking out of the rebellion, however, in 1715, they evinced the greatest loyalty towards the reigning family; for hearing that Viscount Kenmore, at the head of a considerable body of insurgents, purposed to march upon the town, they so completely fortified it by a rampart where it was unprotected by the river, and presented so determined and warlike an attitude, that the rebels judged it most expedient to alter their line of march. But in 1745, a party of Dumfriarians having annoyed the rebel army in its march southwards, the town was severely dealt with upon the return of those lawless intruders, who, not satisfied with levying the excise, imposed upon the inhabitants a fine of L. 2000 Sterling, and 1000 pairs of shoes. Before, however, more than L. 1100 of the sum had been paid, a false alarm of the approach of the Duke of Cumberland having been given, Prince Charles and his army hastily abandoned the town, carrying with them Provost Corbet, and Mr Riddell of Glenriddell, as hostages, to ensure payment of the remainder.

Eminent Characters.—The Rev. William Veitch, who suffered much during the struggles betwixt Presbytery and Episcopacy, and of whose life an account has been published by Dr M'Crie, was, for some time after the Revolution, minister of Dumfries. His pulpit Bible is at present in the possession of a relation who resides here.

The poet Burns spent the latter part of his life in Dumfries, and his ashes rest in the burying-ground attached to St Michael's Church.

Cholera.—In 1832, Dumfries was visited with Indian or spasmodic cholera, and experienced its effects with more than ordinary severity; on which account some notice may here be allowed of the progress of the disease in this place.

The first case occurred on the 15th of September, and terminated fatally in a few hours. Two other similar cases occurred next day, although no personal communication had taken place with the individual first attacked. In the course of the ensuing week, several others were seized; but still the inhabitants

flattered themselves that the visitation would prove slight. On Sunday the 23d, however, the malady broke out so generally in the already infected districts of the town, and in the neighbouring burgh of Maxwelltown, on the opposite bank of the river, as to convince the most sanguine that his hopes were ill founded. From that day, the disorder spread with increasing rapidity, attacking and carrying off, not only the intemperate and the needy, but ultimately many of those whose regular habits and comfortable circumstances rendered them apparently less liable to be affected. From the limited nature of society, in a provincial town such as Dumfries, the danger appearing to be in the very midst of it, the alarm of the inhabitants was great.

A cholera hospital had been provided; and the accommodations were scarcely finished, when its appliances and means were put into requisition, under the able and efficient superintendence of Dr Grieve, and Mr Charles Bell surgeon. The patients were conveyed thither in palanquins or litters, borne on men's shoulders. The hospital was crowded, but was not large enough to hold one-eighth part of the sick; and during the few dreadful days in which the disease raged with such uncontrollable fury, our own medical practitioners, although very numerous, were not sufficient for the emergency; so that the Board of Health was forced to call in assistance from Edinburgh and elsewhere. Almost every one of the medical men suffered more or less, either from the effects of extreme bodily and mental exhaustion, or from the attacks of the disease itself. Three of them, indeed, were cut off in the midst of their usefulness; two belonging to this town, (much and deeply regretted,) and the third, one of those who had been called from a distance. *

* To enable the reader more easily to judge of the progress of the disorder, we here subjoin an extract from the official report of the Dumfries Board of Health, to the Central Board in London.

From the commencement of the disease on the 15th, to the 24th of September, cases 17, deaths 9, recoveries 0.

	New Cases.	Deaths.	Recoveries.
September 25,	14	9	0
----- 26,	9	5	0
----- 27,	37	5	2
----- 28,	68	19	5
----- 29,	52	13	3
----- 30,	73	14	12
October 1,	56	23	13
----- 2,	55	44	10
----- 3,	62	27	1

The disease now prevailed in almost every part of the town, but raged with the greatest severity in English Street, St Michael Street, King Street, Queensberry Street, and the closes leading from the High Street. The practitioner, as he went his rounds, was often beset by several poor distracted creatures at once, eagerly seizing him by the clothes, and each imploring a preference in behalf of some suffering relative. Trade of every description was at a stand; and few shops remained open except those of apothecaries, and of some bakers and grocers;—other men of business having, for the most part, retired from the scene of danger. Partly from this cause, and partly from the want of a sufficient number of hands to prepare the materials, many who had lost their nearest relations were obliged to dispense with the wearing of mourning. As no inhabitant of the country would willingly brave the influence of the tainted air, the market-day was undistinguished from the other days of the week, over all of which a more than sabbatical stillness seemed to reign. Many families fled with the utmost precipitation to the country, and the houses in the streets occupied by the higher ranks were, with few exceptions, shut up. Flight, however, did not always ensure safety. Many perished by the way, or on reaching their destination, far from medical aid and the comforts of home. The gentlemen of the Faculty, worn out by incessant toil, were forced to ride even the shortest distances, and theirs were the only vehicles to be seen on the streets, with the exception of hearses, which, without the usual formality of a funeral, hurried the dead to the “ever yawning and never satisfied grave.”

As we have just hinted, the deceased, while the pestilence was at its height, were, for the most part, followed to the place of interment by none but their immediate relations, and were often conveyed thither without even a single attendant save the driver of the hearse. When, however, a funeral procession was to be formed, the mourners, instead of entering the house of the deceased, were in the habit of assembling in the middle of the street a few hours after the death was known to have taken place, and of proceeding to the churchyard in front of the hearse, or on the weather side of it. Such families as possessed burying-grounds of their own, made use of them; but for the rest, two rows of large pits were dug in the more unoccupied part of the cemetery; and in these the bodies were piled one upon another,—every coffin being surrounded by a layer of quick-lime. Each pit, when the coffins had reached to about two feet from the surface, was filled up with lime and

earth; and, finally, when all the pits had been closed, a fresh stratum of about a foot thick was laid over the whole.

Owing to the absence of some, and the actual sickness, or fear of others, public worship was for some time very scantily attended; but weekly prayer meetings were held in the established churches, and in the different dissenting chapels, both for some time previous to the breaking out of the disease, and during its prevalence. Many private meetings for a similar purpose were likewise constituted at this time, and one or two are still continued,—a proof, we trust, that the awful dispensation has produced at least *some* permanent good effect.

From an early period of the disease, by order of the Board of Health, pots of pitch and tar were kept continually burning in the streets and closes, which were profusely strewed with lime, in the hope of purifying the atmosphere; but all apparently without any good effect. It is worthy of remark, that, up to this date, Dumfries, whether as viewed from within, or looked down upon from any of the surrounding heights, appeared enveloped in a thick and impervious cloud, altogether distinct and different from the smoke, and which retained its station in spite of wind and rain. The inhabitants experienced a raw damp mist, and an atmosphere of a peculiarly depressing nature.

In this state matters continued till Thursday the 4th of October, which had been appointed by the kirk-session to be kept as a day of humiliation and prayer. That night, a thunder-storm burst over the town, the peals being uncommonly long and loud, and the lightning vivid. The weather had previously been by no means such as to warrant the anticipation of a storm, yet awful and unexpected as it was, the most timorous hailed it with joy, as a means of dispelling the poison with which the atmosphere was contaminated. From this date the number of cases continued to decrease, till, through the mercy of God, the disease entirely disappeared.

The total number of cases officially reported, is 837; of deaths, 422; and of recoveries, 415. It is certain, however, that many cases were not reported. The last which occurred terminated fatally on the 27th of November.

It is remarkable that the proportion of females who were seized much exceeded that of males; and that the greater number, at the period of attack, were either menstruating, pregnant, or nursing.

Children seemed equally susceptible of the disease with adults, but they sooner rallied; and seemingly their constitutions received less detriment. Another circumstance we must not neglect to mention, is one which, so far as we know, has not been noticed as attending cholera in any other place. It is described by Dr Grieve, in his printed report, as "a benumbing or tingling sensation, exactly similar to a slight galvanic shock, felt on applying the hand to the skin of a cholera patient, when in the collapsed state, (and more particularly when the body is bedewed with a cold and clammy sweat,) which extends from the extremities of the fingers to the elbow, and sometimes even to the shoulder. Occasionally the effect was so powerful, as to deprive the arm for a few seconds of sensation and motion. Whether or not," continues Dr Grieve, "this peculiarity depends upon some extraordinary state of the nervous system, I cannot take upon myself to determine. It may not, however, be uninteresting to state, that not a single individual afflicted with paralysis, partial or confirmed, has been attacked with cholera. The same sensation was experienced by several of the practitioners of this town."

Parochial Registers.—These consist of twenty-five volumes, including the proceedings of the kirk-session, the record of which commences on the 17th of September 1635. The record of baptisms commences in 1605, of marriages in 1616, and of burials in 1617; in all of which the entries are regular.

Antiquities.—The ancient castle belonging to the Comyns was romantically situated on a spot which still bears the name of Castledykes, overlooking a beautiful bend of the river, at a short distance south from the town. It is not known at what period this fortress was erected, and none of its walls are now standing; but notice of its existence is taken in the history of the reign of Edward I.* We have mentioned the erection of a monastery at Dumfries. For the convenience of the inmates of that religious house, its foundress caused a bridge to be constructed across the river Nith. This bridge is said at one time to have been considered, next to that of London, the best in the two kingdoms. It formerly consisted of thirteen arches; but, having undergone various alterations, has now only seven left, and is used exclusively by foot-passengers. The narrow street which leads from the bridge to the spot where

* In the accounts of the comptroller of the wardrobe to King Edward I. there is a charge for a palisade, granted by Edward for this castle, from the forest of Inglewood in Cumberland.

the friary formerly stood, is still called the *Friars' Vennel*. The castle of the Maxwells has already been mentioned. In the year 1583, a strong building, called the *New Wark*, was erected, which served the double purpose of a fortress and a place of safety, wherein the effects of the inhabitants might be secured against the lawless attacks of the borderers. No vestiges, however, of this building, or of either of the castles, or of the friary, now remain. *

On a slight eminence at the entrance of the town by English Street, may still be traced the foundation of Saint Christopher's Chapel, which was built by King Robert Bruce as a place where mass might be said for the soul of his father-in-law, Sir Christopher Seton, who was hanged on the spot by order of Edward I. On the left bank of the river, just above the town, is another eminence, which is designated in the ancient records as the *Moat Brae*, and which still bears that name. This artificial mount, like many of a similar description in Galloway, is supposed to have been formed and used by the Saxons as a place where their freeholders met for the administration of justice; † but, owing partly to the encroachment of the river, and partly to the spot on which it stood having been laid out as pleasure ground, it has entirely lost the peculiar features which characterized it as a relic of antiquity. At no great distance, is another mound, seemingly of a similar nature, called the *Kirkland Moat*. "In fact," says Chalmers, in his *Caledonia*, "there was a moat hill in every district of North Britain, during an age when justice was administered to a coarse people in the open air."

Near Castledykes above-mentioned, is a field called the *Kingholm*; which name may either have been given it by Bruce after

* The ancient armorial bearings of the town were a cheveron, with three *fleurs de lis*; but instead of these, St Michael, the tutelary saint of Dumfries, represented with wings, a pastoral staff in his hand, and clothed in a friar's dress, treading a serpent under his bare feet, has long been used. The motto is "Aloreburn" or "Loreburn,"—a word of which the precise import has never been ascertained. It is certain, however, that it was the ancient slogan or war-cry of the inhabitants, and is believed to be a corruption of the words *lower burn*, having reference to a small rivulet, the banks of which used to be the rendezvous of the inhabitants when they assembled in arms on the approach of a hostile force. Accordingly, a street in the immediate neighbourhood of the original course of the stream in question, bears the name of "Loreburn Street."

† Moat or Mote signifies *meeting*. Thus, the Saxons termed their national council a *Wittenagemote* (meeting of the wise), and a county court they named a *Folkmote*, that is, a meeting of the people. The word *mote* was transferred from the assembly to the place where the assembly was held, as in the case of the word *Church*.

his accession to the throne, or may be a corruption from *Comyn's holm*, a name which it once bore.

Toward the south-east end of the parish, is an eminence called Trohaughton, which Pennant notices as a Roman station. A relic of antiquity, supposed to be a Roman sandal, was found many years ago towards the east end of the parish; and in the river, nearly opposite to the town mills, was found a gold coin of about the circumference of a sixpence, and the thickness of a half crown, bearing the inscription "Augustus" round the impression of a Roman head. Several Roman and Scottish coins also have at different times been discovered in digging the foundations of houses in the town. It may be mentioned, that there is still to be seen a small part of a deep track of road which led through the castle garden to the river, where a causeway was formed, by means of which the family at the castle could cross over to their seat at Terregles without passing through the town. The buildings in Castle Street, however, have now almost entirely obliterated it. A curious relic of antiquity was some time ago discovered by Mr Affleck, iron-founder, while employed in selecting some pieces of old metal to throw into the crucible. It is circular, fully two inches in diameter, and about the thickness of a penny. Upon being struck with a hammer a crust of verdigris came off, and on one side of it was discovered engraved a lion rampant in the midst of a shield bordered with fleur des lis, and surrounded, in reversed characters, by the legend

"JACOBUS DEI GRA. REX SCOTORUM;"

after which is a figure nearly similar to the letter S, which we conclude must have been intended to represent the buckle of the belt on which the inscription is engraved. The seal, for such it appears to be, is formed of a compound of copper with some other metals, and is, with some plausibility, supposed to have been the privy seal of one of the kings of Scotland. It is evidently of considerable antiquity, and closely resembles, on the engraved side, a silver groat of the date of James the Fifth. The other side is perfectly smooth, and no traces are discernable of a handle ever having been attached to it. The seal remains in possession of Mr Affleck.

Modern Buildings, &c.—The county town of Dumfries is beautifully situated on the left bank of the river Nith, in $55^{\circ} 2' 45''$ north latitude, and $3^{\circ} 36'$ west longitude from Greenwich. It is nearly

a mile in length, and a quarter of a mile in breadth. It has long possessed the character of being a clean, well built town, and has been improved and considerably enlarged within the last forty years. The streets, and most of the public buildings, are well lighted by gas, which was introduced about five years ago,* about which period also a great improvement took place in the appearance and fitting up of the shops, which are larger and much handsomer than those of most provincial towns. The houses are built of red freestone; such as are of older date being generally white-washed, and many in the modern part of the town painted in imitation of Portland stone.

There are in Dumfries two parish churches. St Michael's, which is furnished with a tall and handsome spire, was built in 1745, and stands at the south-east end of the town on the site of a place of worship originally Popish, but converted into the Protestant parish church after the Reformation. The other church, which was not founded till 1724, and is still called the New Church, terminates the High Street to the north-west, and occupies the site of the old castle of Dumfries, out of the ruins of which, materials for its erection were obtained. This church was first opened for public worship in 1727.

St Michael's, or the Old Church, is surrounded by an extensive and crowded burying-ground, which contains a vast number and variety of monuments, some of them very ancient. We mentioned above that in this cemetery are deposited the remains of our national poet Burns. They were originally interred in the north corner of the churchyard, upon which spot a simple table-stone was raised to his memory; but in 1815 his ashes were removed to a vault beneath an elegant mausoleum, which was erected by subscription as a tribute to his genius, at a cost of L. 1450. This monument contains a handsome piece of marble sculpture, executed by Turnerelli, representing the genius of Scotland finding the poet at the plough, and throwing "her inspiring mantle" over him. This burying-ground also contains all that could die of three witnesses for the truth, who sealed their testimony with their blood during the merciless persecutions by which the house of Stewart vainly endeavoured to contaminate the purity of our Presbyterian faith and worship. The graves are marked by plain slabs of freestone, with rude inscrip-

* Measures are now (1833) in progress for supplying the town, by means of pipes, with good spring water.

tions; but a more suitable monument is about to be erected on the spot, as a proof how highly their grateful countrymen respect the memory of the martyrs in the southern district of Scotland. Mr M'Diarmid, the editor of the Dumfries and Galloway Courier, and author of the "Sketches from Nature," calculates, in the latter of these works, that the value of the monuments in St Michael's church-yard, now in a state of preservation, cannot come far short of L.100,000. Of the first class of monuments, there are 109; of tombstones on pillars, 712; besides about 1000 other memorials of the departed, more or less dilapidated.

In 1780, the county gentlemen erected a handsome Doric column, to commemorate the virtues of Charles Duke of Queensberry; this monument stands in Queensberry Square, an open space near the centre of the town. Not far from this, and awkwardly placed in the middle of the High Street, is the *Mid Steeple*, the work of the famous architect, Inigo Jones. In this structure are the chambers where the Town-Council hold their meetings. Opposite to it, on the east side of the street, is the Trades' Hall, an unpretending, but chaste building, erected in 1804, for the public meetings of the seven incorporated trades, to be noticed below. The Court-house is an elegant and commodious structure, wherein the circuit and sheriff-courts, the quarter sessions and the county meetings are held. Opposite to this stands a heavy-looking building, which was at first intended for a court-house, but is now converted into a Bridewell, the interior of which is arranged on the same plan with that of Edinburgh, but on so small a scale, that it is thought, from the facility with which the prisoners can hold intercourse with one another, to be very ill adapted for a place of confinement. Behind this, in a low damp yard, and surrounded by a high wall, is situated the county Jail, which, along with the Bridewell, was built in 1807. Previously to that period, the jail was in the centre of the town. A vaulted passage under the street, forms a communication between the prison-yard and the court-house. The debtors have the liberty of exercising themselves within the enclosed yard. A very handsome suite of Assembly-rooms was lately erected in George Street.

There are in Dumfries two meeting-houses belonging to the united Secession Church; a Cameronian, a Relief, an Independent, and a Methodist Meeting-house; an Episcopalian Chapel, a Roman Catholic Chapel, and a Theatre. The Cameronian, and one

of the Secession Meeting-houses, are new and handsome specimens of architecture.

The Academy is a fine roomy structure, in a dry and healthy situation. There are also a Poor's-house, and an Infirmary; which latter building stands on an airy locality, at the south east extremity of the town, the right wing being used as a lunatic asylum. This institution has proved a great blessing to the whole south of Scotland.

There are branches of the following banks in Dumfries,—viz. the British Linen Company, the Bank of Scotland, the National, and the Commercial Banks. For the latter of these, a costly and classical structure has lately been erected. A house which was originally intended for a Bridewell, has long been employed as a depot for the arms and accoutrements of the county militia. There are three water-mills belonging to the town, but these stand on the opposite side of the river, in the parish of Troqueer. A little above the old bridge, already noticed, stands the new bridge, erected in 1794, and which, though more substantial than elegant, is not destitute of beauty.

III.—POPULATION.

According to the Government Census, the population of the parish in 1811 was,	9,262
In 1821,	11,052
In 1831,	11,606

In 1831, the number of males was 5206; of females, 6400. The number of the population residing in the town of Dumfries is 8432; in villages, and in the country, 3174. The yearly average of births for the last seven years is, as near as can be learnt, about 260; of marriages, 81; of deaths, 229.

The number of inhabited houses is 1512; of unfinished houses, 6. The number of lunatics in the parish is 7; of idiots, 15; of deaf and dumb, 4; of blind, 9. The number of families in the parish is 2599; whereof 248 are chiefly employed in agriculture; and 1170 in trade, manufactures, and handicraft.

Landed Proprietors.—There are eighty-one heritors in the parish, most, if not all of whom, possess land of the yearly value of L. 50 at least; thirty-five of these possess estates without the burgh roods, and therefore have a voice in the parochial meetings of heritors; but the other forty-six, whose property lies within the burgh roods, are represented by the magistrates and town-council.

Language, Customs, &c.—The language universally spoken by the lower ranks is the lowland Scotch, which has, however, within the last forty years, lost much of its national peculiarity,—many words which were then used having now become obsolete.

We have already mentioned the “siller gun.” This royal gift is competed for at least once in seven years, and oftener if the trades think fit. Upon such occasions, every member of the incorporations is bound under a penalty to appear armed with a firelock, and to answer to his name. This done, the whole march in due form to some convenient open ground in the neighbourhood, and there contend for the prize by shooting in rotation at a target. The successful marksman returns to the town in front of the procession, bearing attached to his hat, and adorned with ribbons, the piece of ordnance, of which he is the nominal custodier until the next trial of skill takes place.

There are annual races on Tinwald Downs in the month of September, at which period assemblies are held in the town. The theatre is generally open for two or three months in the year.

The people have of late made considerable advances in cleanliness; and the practice of going barefoot, formerly so common throughout Scotland, is here fast losing ground. The standard articles of food amongst the lower orders are potatoes, porridge, oat-cakes, and milk; salt herrings are also very much used. Although a great deal of poverty exists in the obscure parts of the town, the inhabitants in general seem to enjoy in a very considerable degree the comforts and advantages of society, and are contented with their situation and circumstances.

Character of the people.—The people are generally intelligent, and although there are many amongst the labouring classes who can neither read nor write, yet these are, in but a very few instances, natives of Scotland. Living in a district where no manufactures are carried on upon an extensive scale, the inhabitants have not amongst them those exciting motives to discontent and insubordination which exist more or less in all manufacturing towns. They possess the character of being decent in their external deportment, and respectful to their superiors. Poaching, however, both in game and in the salmon fisheries, prevails to a considerable extent.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture and Rural Economy.

Number of acres cultivated or occasionally in tillage,	-	-	7930
----- which have never been cultivated, forming Lochar Moss, and several patches besides, about	-	-	1350
----- capable of being cultivated with a profit, probably,	-	-	1300
----- in undivided common,	-	-	0
----- under full grown or natural wood, (oak, ash, plane, &c.)	-	-	74
----- planted, (oak, ash, larch, &c.)	-	-	244
Total number of acres in the parish,	-	-	9280

Rent of Land.—The average rent of arable land is from thirty to forty shillings per acre; except in the immediate neighbourhood of the town, where it is from L. 4 to L. 6. The average rent of grazing for a cow is about L. 4. No sheep are put out to graze in that way. The total estimated rental of the burgh and burgh roods is L. 21,000, and that of the landward part of the parish is L. 8810,—making the rental of the whole parish about L. 29,810.

Rate of Wages, &c.—The rate of labour, winter and summer, for farm labourers and country artisans, is 1s. 6d. per day. The daily hire of a mason, carpenter, and other mechanical workmen in the country, is 2s. with victuals; 2s. 6d. without. In town the rate is from 2s. to 2s. 6d. per day. A joiner or cabinet-maker's weekly wages average about 15s. An iron plough costs from L. 3, to L. 3, 10s. A full mounted cart, L. 8.

Breeds of Live Stock.—Very few sheep are bred in the parish. The only cattle bred and reared are of the pure Galloway kind; which, owing to the attention of late bestowed upon the breeding of them, has very much improved. Almost as many Ayrshire as Galloway cows are kept for milk; but none of the former are reared in the parish.

Husbandry.—The principal part of the arable land is managed under what is technically termed a *five or six year's shift*, viz. in the first year *oats*; in the second, *turnips* or *potatoes*; in the third, *wheat* or *barley*; in the fourth, generally *hay*; and in the fifth and sixth, *pasture*. Within the last forty years, about 250 acres have been reclaimed from Lochar Moss, which have amply repaid the outlay, yielding abundant crops of oats, potatoes, and rye-grass hay. Much more might be brought into cultivation if sufficient encouragement were given by proprietors, such, for instance, as a general drainage of the river Lochar. We may here mention that it has been more than once proposed to carry a canal from the Lochar Bridge Quarry to the sea, a distance of about twelve miles, (in which there is a fall of thirty feet,) having a branch to communi-

cate with Dumfries. This, it is considered, would be of immense local importance.

The turnip husbandry is now carried on to the greatest possible extent, and is found to be a valuable improvement upon the dry sharp sandy soils, of which a large proportion of the arable land in this parish consists. Forty years ago it was a rare thing to see turnips sown; but for the last five years, 150 acres have been about the average extent of land occupied by that article. Almost all the turnip crops are eaten on the ground by sheep. About one-half of the quantity of turnips is raised by the aid of bone manure, at an expense of from L. 3, 10s. to L. 4, 10s. per acre. The general duration of leases is from fifteen to nineteen years. These leases are decidedly favourable to the tenants, who generally prefer the latter period.

The farm-buildings, upon the whole, are by no means so comfortable as they should be, owing chiefly to a large proportion of the landward part of the parish being entailed property. The fences are in a better condition.

Quarries.—Four red sandstone quarries are worked in this parish; and at an annual expense of about L. 1000.

Fisheries.—The only fisheries carried on are those of salmon and trout; the rents of which amount to about L. 500 a-year.

Produce.—The average gross amount and value of raw produce raised in the parish may be as follows:

Produce of grain of all kinds, whether cultivated for food of man, or the domestic animals,	L. 12,800 0 0
Of potatoes, turnips, cabbages, beet, and other plants, cultivated in the fields for food,	4600 0 0
Of hay, whether meadow or cultivated, }	1760 0 0
Of crops cultivated for the arts, as flax, }	1526 0 0
Of land in pasture,	500 0 0
Of fisheries, whether sea, river, or lake,	1000 0 0
Of quarries,	1000 0 0
Total yearly value of raw produce raised,	L. 22,186 0 0

Manufactures.—The only manufactures carried on to any great extent in Dumfries are those of hats and stockings. The latter of these does not at present yield a very encouraging remuneration. No fewer than 279 frames are employed by the stocking-weavers in this place. There are three hat-manufactories; in which together, nearly 200 workmen are employed. Formerly checked cottons were fabricated, but this branch has fallen off; and most of the cotton-spinners who remain are in the employ of Carlisle or Glasgow manufacturers. The trade of tanning is also

carried on to some extent; and hides prepared here are disposed of in Glasgow, London, and other parts of the United Kingdom. There are also several breweries in Dumfries, and one very extensive basket-making establishment. The manufacture of clogs, or strong shoes with thick wooden soles, the use of which was till lately confined to the south of Scotland, affords no inconsiderable profit to those engaged in it. Large quantities of shoes are also exported, and in the manufacture of these articles upwards of 300 individuals are employed. The manufactures carried on are not sufficiently extensive to produce much effect upon either the health, or the morals, of the general population.

Trade.—Many thousand carcasses of pork are sold here during the season, which lasts from the end of December to the beginning of April, and are sent off to the south to be cured. More than 700 are sold weekly; and, in some instances, from L. 4000 to L. 5000 worth of pork has been disposed of in one day. A butcher-market was many years ago prepared, and the stalls were occupied; but it is now entirely deserted,—the “fleshers” finding it of greater advantage to disperse themselves over the town. In the meal-market, business is transacted under cover. It has been for some time in contemplation to build new markets, somewhat upon the plan of those in Edinburgh; but nothing has as yet been done towards the accomplishment of this design.

About eighty years ago, a considerable tobacco trade was carried on in Dumfries; but, in consequence of the detection of some systematic and successful attempts at smuggling, the traffic in this article came to be discouraged.

The only foreign trade is with America, for timber, in which several pretty large vessels are employed. The other vessels are coasters, plying to Liverpool, Whitehaven, Maryport, and other parts. The imports are, principally coal, slate, iron, tallow, timber, hemp, and wine. The annual value of the timber imported cannot be less than from L. 8000 to L. 10,000 Sterling. The exports are wool, freestone, oats, wheat, and barley.*

Navigation.—The number of vessels of all burdens belonging to the port of Dumfries, (including the Creek of Annan,) amounts to 84, the total burden of which is 5783 tons. The number of foreign vessels usually trading to this port is from 12 to 18. The range of the Dumfries Custom-house extends from Sark-foot,

* Farther particulars of the trade of this parish are given under the head of Parochial Economy.

at the head of the Solway Firth, to Glenluce, on the coast of Galloway. The gross amount of Customs collected at the port of Dumfries for the year ending 5th January 1832, was L. 5089.

A steam-boat plies once a-week during the summer months between Dumfries and Whitehaven, in connection with one from thence to Liverpool; by which conveyance an immense quantity of goods and live stock, particularly sheep, are exported for the English market.

Societies for Encouragement of Industry.—The Dumfries and Galloway Horticultural Society, instituted in 1812, and which meets periodically in Dumfries, has been of great use in stirring up to emulation, industry, and improvement, the gardeners in this district, prizes being awarded to those who produce the best and rarest articles.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Markets, &c.—Dumfries has long been celebrated for its markets, which are held every Wednesday; when a great deal of business is done among the cattle-dealers upon the “Sands,” an open space by the river side, set apart for the purpose; but, besides these, there are four great annual fairs, viz. one at Whitsunday and another at Martinmas, when an immense number of black-cattle are sold; and the other two for horses, in October and February. The greatest annual cattle-market held on Dumfries Sands, is that preceding and corresponding with Brough-hill Fair in Cumberland, and usually takes place in the last week of September. On each of two occasions, during the last five years, viz. in 1829 and 1830, there have been about 6000 head of cattle exposed,—the majority being aged, or three-year old Galloways and Highlanders; and on each of these occasions business has been done to an amount exceeding L. 30,000. The numbers usually exposed for sale on that day, however, during the last dozen years, amount to from 3500 to 4500 yearly; and for six weeks about this period, an amount of cattle, varying from 1500 to 2000, are generally exposed on the Sands of Dumfries. Fully one-half of these are drove or heavy cattle. But the business done in the public market gives but an inadequate idea of the magnitude of the trade in general; for an immense variety of transactions are effected by the dealers privately throughout Dumfries-shire and Galloway; and in a period of ten days, during the droving season, more than 20,000 head of cattle have been known to

pay toll on the English road, and not one of which had been exposed in the market. Added to the business done in heavy cattle, a very important and bustling trade is carried on by the farmers, graziers, and jobbers,—disposing, on the one hand, of young cattle, which have been grazed or fed on fodder a certain period; and, on the other, purchasing cattle a stage younger, which are grazed in their turn; the difference between the original cost and that which is received at the sale constituting the profit, or sum intended for the expenses of keep.

Of the horse-market, it is impossible to speak with any thing like accuracy. There, again, an immense part of the business is transacted privately; and at the fairs of Candlemas and Roodsmass, the number of all kinds exposed may perhaps vary from 400 to 600. A portion of the best draught horses are retained for service in the district in which they have been reared; and the surplus carried by the dealers to Edinburgh, Glasgow,—the west country generally, and to the north of England.

At the fair in February, an incredible quantity of hare-skins is purchased. The average number cannot be under 30,000; and one year, no less a sum than L. 6000 is said to have been paid for that one article.

Burgh.—Dumfries is a royal burgh, and is entitled to one of five votes for a member of Parliament. The tradesmen are divided into seven incorporations, from each of which a deacon is annually elected; and of the seven deacons thus elected, one is chosen convener, to assemble and preside over the whole craft, which is composed of, *1st*, the hammermen, consisting of blacksmiths, whitesmiths, tinsmiths, coppersmiths, and saddlers, making in all 100 freemen; *2d*, the squarers, 100 in number, and including joiners, cabinet-makers, masons, glaziers, coopers, and slaters; *3d*, weavers, amounting to 30; *4th*, tailors, also amounting to 30; *5th*, shoemakers, numbering 100; *6th*, skimmers; and *7th*, butchers; both of which last incorporations are of small numerical strength. The town-council consists of a provost, three bailies, a dean of guild, a treasurer, twelve merchant councillors, and the convener of the seven incorporated trades, together with the six remaining deacons, making in all twenty-five members. There are six wards of police, and two commissioners for each ward are elected annually in June, by renters of L. 10 each. The provost, the three bailies, and the convener of the incorporations are commissioners *ex officio*. As the capital of the county, Dumfries is the seat of the sheriff and commissary courts. The quarter-sessions, the commissioners

of supply, and the freeholders assemble in this town; and here also the Justiciary and Jury courts sit during the spring and autumn circuits. Dumfries is, besides, the seat of a presbytery and a provincial synod.

Means of Communication.—The revenue of the post-office in Dumfries, was, for the year 1832, about L. 2500, after deductions for salaries, &c. &c.

There are three turnpike roads, each of which, from its commencement at Dumfries, to the boundary of the parish, measures about three miles. The London, Edinburgh, and Portpatrick mail-coaches, daily arrive in and leave Dumfries; and there are besides, coaches to Edinburgh, Glasgow, and London, and carriers to those places twice a-week. Owing to the channel of the river having lately been deepened, vessels of considerable burthen can discharge their cargoes close to the town, and by this means the inhabitants have their coals transported by water from Whitehaven almost to their very doors. There is also a quay at the bend of the river near Castledykes; one for vessels of greater burthen about a mile and a-half further down; and another near the mouth of the river for foreign vessels, and such as draw too much water to approach nearer to the town.

The sums expended on the improvement and repairs of the harbour, and the deepening of the river since the act of Parliament was passed for the purpose, amount to L. 18,530, 9s. 11d.

Ecclesiastical State.—The clergyman of each of the two churches before noticed has a distinct district allotted to him as the scene of his labours. The landward district, and a part of the town, is under the minister of St Michael's, and the remainder of the town is under the care of the minister of the New Church. The officiating elders, and the clergymen of both churches, constitute a joint session. The churches are both very well situated for the convenience of the population. The Old church is now in a good state of repair, and accommodates 1250 sitters. For the New church, much may yet be done to promote the comfort and convenience of the congregation. It is seated for 1200. There are no free sittings in either of the churches; 1000 families attend the two established churches; and the number of communicants at both is about 1500. The manse is a building of the last century; but underwent a very thorough repair in the year 1831.

The extent of the glebe is about seven acres and a-half, exclusive of the garden attached to the manse, and its yearly value in

rent is about L. 40 Sterling. The minister of the New Church has neither manse nor glebe.

The amount of the stipends is as follows; St Michael's, or the Old Church, L. 309 Sterling.

The New Church, from Bishop's rents,	-	800	Merks.
Parsonage teinds,	-	400	
Town's revenue,	-	600	
		1800	= L. 100 Sterling.
From the Exchequer,	-		141 13 4
			<hr/>
			L. 241 13 4
To this the town adds as a free donation,	-		40 0 0
			<hr/>
		Total,	L. 281 13 4

There are eight dissenting places of worship in the parish, which we have already particularly specified. The stipends of the dissenting ministers are paid from the seat-rents, and amount to from about L. 100 to L. 130 each; they have, besides, a free house, and an additional allowance for expense at the time of the communion. 125 families attend the Relief chapel, of whom 102 live within the parish; 70 families attend the Cameronian chapel, of whom only 12 live within the parish; 56 families attend the Episcopalian chapel, one-third of whom are without the bounds of the parish; 43 families, all within the parish, attend the Methodist chapel. It is supposed that the total number of individuals attending the dissenting places of worship may be about 700.

The Roman Catholic chapel derives a large proportion of its congregation from the neighbouring burgh of Maxwelltown, a great part of the population of which consists of low Irish. The bishop resides in Edinburgh.

Societies for Religious purposes.—There are in the parish a Bible Society, a Missionary Society, a Bible and Missionary Society, a Highland Education Society, a Samaritan Society, for promoting the temporal and spiritual welfare of the poor, Ladies' and a Gentlemen's Liberian Society, for the purpose of promoting the interests of the colony of free blacks on the coast of Africa, an Association against Infidelity and Radicalism, and a Benevolent Society, the object of which we have to notice in the sequel.

Education.—This parish is well supplied with the means of education, the total number of schools being no less than thirty-nine. None of these are parochial, but four of them are endowed schools, under the patronage of the magistrates, town-council, and ministers, and are united under the name of the Dumfries Academy. The

branches taught at the academy are, Greek and Latin, English, mathematics, geography, arithmetic, book-keeping, writing, French, and drawing. The salaries of the masters, and the school fees, are as follow:—The salary of the master of the grammar-school is the interest of L. 660, 6s. 3d., with fees at 7s. 6d. per quarter. The salaries of the other masters are, the interest of L. 204, 8s. 10d. each, with fees at 5s. per quarter, for English reading, geography, arithmetic, and writing; but at 10s. 6d. per quarter for mathematics. The French and drawing classes are not endowed, and the teachers have the power of fixing the amount of their own fees. Two other schools are supported by the Benevolent Society above alluded to; one of these being instituted for the instruction of poor children of both sexes in reading, writing, arithmetic, and the principles of religion; and the other for teaching girls to sew and read the Bible. The teachers have each a house attached to the school-house, and a salary,—that of the former being L. 60 per annum, and that of the other L. 20, with sixpence a month from each pupil. There are also two adult schools, one for males, the other for females. These are supported by charitable contributions, and are attended by about 200 scholars, chiefly Irish, of whom about eighty are females. The remaining thirty-one schools are private undertakings, the teachers being supported by the wages only. Of the private schools, eleven are taught by females, and twenty by males. They are of various grades, from dame schools for infants, to seminaries where the higher branches of mathematics and the languages are taught. Wages from 1s. 1d. to 10s. 6d. per quarter. The people in general seem fully alive to the benefits of education. *

Literature.—The presbytery of this district has a valuable library in Dumfries; besides which, there are three others belonging to societies. Of what are called circulating libraries, there are four kept by booksellers on speculation, and a select one, open to the public. There exists also a Mechanics' Institution, in the list of whose members appear the names of many respectable individuals belonging to the town. There are already four public reading-rooms. Two weekly newspapers are published in Dumfries. Other periodical works have been often attempted, but have never prospered.

Charitable and other Institutions.—*Poor's-House.*—The Poor's-House was erected in 1753, from funds bequeathed by William Muirhead, "Merchant Adventurer" in Carlisle, and James Muir-

* The formation of an Infant School is at present contemplated.

head in Castledykes, "his brother-german," for poor orphans, and for aged paupers of both sexes. A master and mistress reside in the house, and the children are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and the principles of religion; after which they are sent to service, or apprenticed to tradesmen. The comforts of the aged inmates are well cared for; and, besides these, there are forty-two widows, who receive pension at their private houses. The affairs of the institution are under the excellent management of a weekly committee of directors, the members of which are selected from the kirk session, the town-council, and the inhabitants. The funds are derived partly from the interest of mortified money and rent of lands, partly from annual subscriptions, and partly from donations; and since its foundation, the Institution has received donations, subscriptions, &c. amounting to more than L. 6000. The house accommodates, upon an average, about thirty old, and twenty young paupers. The annual expenditure is about L. 500. Various attempts have been made to introduce some kind of handicraft into the establishment, but hitherto without much success. The girls, however, are taught to sew and to knit, and such of the elderly females as are able, employ their time in that way; the strongest of the men are engaged in dressing the garden, which is pretty extensive.

Infirmary and Dispensary.—The Infirmary was opened in the outskirts of the town for the benefit of Dumfries-shire and Galloway, in the year 1776, and is still the only institution of the kind in the south of Scotland. As already intimated, a lunatic asylum forms part of the institution, which has now obtained a royal charter. Its income is derived from land and other investments of capital, and from legacies, donations, and subscriptions, including parochial contributions, and liberal annual allowances from the counties of Dumfries and Wigton, and the stewartry of Kirkcudbright. This is quite adequate to the expenditure, which may be stated at L. 1200 or L. 1300 per annum. The average number of patients is about 30; the number treated in the course of a year about 500; the number attended at their own homes about 470. The Infirmary dispenses medicines, gratis, to out-patients who do not require to be visited. The medical attendants consist of two physicians, two surgeons, and a house-surgeon or clerk. A licentiate of the established church regularly officiates as chaplain. A weekly committee of management is chosen from among the subscribers. The donations and bequests to the Infirmary, within the

last fifty years, amount together to about L. 18,000. There is also a public Dispensary at the west end of the town which, during the year 1831, took under its care 2538 patients, and supplied them at the wonderfully trifling cost of L. 30.

Friendly Societies.—The friendly societies of this parish are now all extinct except one, their rules having been drawn up on false principles. The surviving one has for its object the support of widows.

Savings Banks.—A parish bank has existed here ever since the beginning of 1815; and with the happiest effects, of which striking proof has been given in individual cases. The average yearly investments amount to L. 3997, 17s. 6d. and the average yearly repayments to L. 3293, 7s. The small sums deposited in the course of the year 1831, amounted to no less than L. 4829, 2s. 4d. The repayments during the same period, were L. 2816, 7s. 7d. The whole stock now accumulated is L. 7716, 7s. 7d. The investments are chiefly made by labourers, industrious mechanics, and servants.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of persons receiving parochial aid directly from the kirk-session, previous to the year 1832, was 560; and the average allowance to each of these was about 14s. But this does not include the fifty inmates nor the forty-two pensioners of the Poor-House, nor ten pensioners supported by a fund left by the late Mrs Carruthers of Warmanby, for the lame and blind, among whom not less than L. 200 will be annually distributed by the trustees, under the will of the testatrix. Since the commencement of 1832, however, pauperism has, owing to the desolations caused in many families by cholera, so much increased, that it is impossible to give any accurate account, either of the present number of the poor, or of their annual average allowances.

The contributions for their relief, including L. 205 of collections at the churches, donations, fees for proclamation and baptism, and the use of the mort-cloth, the interest of legacies, a large voluntary assessment, subscriptions to the poor-house above-mentioned, rent of land belonging to that institution, and the annual proceeds of the Warmanby bequest, besides one or two minor charities not managed by public bodies, can hardly be estimated at less than L. 1500 per annum. In former times, the poor were supported without the aid of extraordinary contributions from the heritors. Two-thirds of the session's funds were placed at the disposal of the directors

of the poor's-house, who undertook to provide for the whole poor resident in the town, while the session, with the remaining third, were to support the landward paupers. In point of fact, however, it is believed that the directors never fully implemented their part of the compact, and that the session have always been burdened with a portion of the town's poor. On these grounds, the agreement was lately declared null.

The parish is divided into forty-one districts, to each of which a visitor is appointed, to inquire into, and supply the wants of the poor from his private purse; advancing money, which is repaid at the end of the month by a board of control, nominated by the magistrates, heritors, and session. How this system may work is yet uncertain; but it is much to be feared it must give place to a legal assessment.

Prisons.—The number of prisoners, (exclusive of debtors,) committed to the county jail during the last year, amounts to 45.

Inns, &c.—The three principal inns in Dumfries are,—the King's Arms, the George, and the Commercial Inn. Upon a moderate average, no fewer than 168 individuals annually have licences granted them to sell ale and spirits, and the effect upon the morals of the population is truly deplorable.

Fuel.—The fuel used in the parish consists of coals from Sanquhar, in this county, and from Maryport and Whitehaven in Cumberland, and peats from Lochar Moss. As peats can be procured in smaller quantities than coals, they are generally used by the poorer classes, although in the end coals are found to be cheaper. The Maryport coal sells at one shilling a measure; the measure being equal to 28½ gallons. The best Sanquhar coal sells at sixpence per measure, or L. 1, 5s. for a waggon load. An inferior description of Sanquhar coal sells at fourpence per measure, or L. 1 for a waggon load.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The most remarkable features of difference betwixt the state of the parish at the period when the last Statistical Account was drawn up, and its state at the present time, seem to be the general enlargement of the town, and its improvement in appearance, as well as in trade; the increased facility of navigation in the Nith, the great improvement which has taken place in husbandry throughout the parish, and the advance of knowledge amongst the lower ranks of society. Much has been done in reclaiming waste land from

Lochar Moss, and much more may yet be done, if sufficient encouragement be given. The cutting of a channel at the mouth of the Lochar, so as to secure to its waters a free escape into the Solway Firth, or the forming of a canal (as has been proposed,) from the quarry of Lochar bridge to that estuary, is considered to be the only effectual mode by which the moss might be drained. The greatest obstacle to the accomplishment of this desirable object, is a mill which stands near the mouth of the Lochar, and to the removal of which there are at present insuperable difficulties. From Lochar Bridge to the sea the distance is more than ten miles, and the fall is only thirty feet; so that, in consequence of the dam which is attached to the mill, a body of dead water, more than six feet in depth, is kept standing in the bed of the river for several miles, completely saturating the spongy soil in every direction.

•*September 1833.*