

PARISH OF CAERLAVEROCK.

PRESBYTERY OF DUMFRIES, SYNOD OF DUMFRIES.

THE REV. ROBERT GILLIES, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name, Boundaries, &c.—ANTIQUARIES differ as to the import of the name of this parish. Chalmers considers it to mean “the castle with the rotundity or buttress jutting out,” while, according to Baxter, it signifies “the castle close upon the sea.” It was anciently spelled Caerlaverock, and this appears the more correct orthography,—although at present it is as frequently written Carlaverock. The situation is entirely peninsular. Connected with Dumfries on the north-west, it stretches toward the English coast. From this, it is separated by the Solway, which is here about twelve miles in breadth. The Nith on the west, and Lochar on the east, are the other boundaries. The Nith is generally fordable at low water, and, in very low tides, people may wade across to the adjacent parish of New Abbey. But on the other side of the parish, the extensive moss through which the Lochar flows, forms an insuperable barrier to all communication, except during the driest months of summer, and even then only to pedestrians. The parish of Caerlaverock is about 6 miles in length, and nowhere more than 2 in breadth. It is in the form of an elongated hill, descending gradually to the Nith on the one side, and the Lochar on the other, and terminating in the Blackshaw flat towards the Solway. About six miles are washed by the tide, which flows up the Nith as far as Dumfries. The shore is a sandy mud, which used formerly to be laid on the land as a substitute for lime. The

climate is moist,—which may be partly occasioned by the extensive Lochar morass, and partly by the neighbourhood of the towering Criffel.

Geology.—Almost the whole parish lies upon a bed of red sandstone. This stone is easily wrought, and at the same time durable. According to tradition, and, I may add, probability, New Abbey was built of Caerlaverock stones. A quarry on the glebe has long been famed for producing very superior grindstones; it is only occasionally wrought, and that to a trifling extent. Neither coal nor limestone has hitherto been found in this parish. There are some faint indications of the latter mineral, and many believe that the former might also be found. This is, indeed, not improbable, when we survey the geological map of the kingdom. The same coal-field in all probability extends from the English side to Sanquhar. This, I am informed, was the opinion of an eminent engineer; but it is right to add, that he also conceived, from the nature of the dip, that the mineral was so deeply buried in the centre of the bed, that it would be in vain to hope that it could be worked to advantage. A good deal of land has been reclaimed from the Lochar moss, and the operations of the husbandman have disinterred many massy roots of oak, which for centuries had been buried under a stratum of peat twelve feet deep. Below the mossy stratum, sea sand mixed with clay and shells may, in many places, be recognized.

Canoes, similar to those used by the North American savages, when first visited by Europeans, have been found in this vicinity. Coins of different dates, some as old as the time of Edward I., have been found in the neighbourhood of the church, and in other places. The soil is in general a light loam, and what is rather uncommon, the worst soil is generally in the valleys. There is a considerable portion of peaty soil; but where the situation admits of draining at a moderate expense, by a liberal application of lime, it is rendered tolerably productive.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Eminent Men.—Dr John Hutton, first Physician to Queen Anne, was a native of this parish. He was originally “a herd-boy” to the Episcopalian minister of Caerlaverock. The clergyman, perceiving his superior talents, generously promoted his education, and fanned his youthful ambition. Hutton directed his attention to the science of medicine. He was fortunately the nearest surgeon at hand when the Princess of Orange met with a fall from her horse in Holland. His services were put in requisition, and

exerted successfully both for himself and the royal princess. His fortune was now secured, but he did not forget the scene of his boyish days, and first humble avocation. At his own expense, he built a manse for the minister, bequeathed for charitable purposes L. 1000 Sterling to this parish, and also left a valuable library to the presbytery of Dumfries. This library originally contained the identical prayer-book which was used by the unfortunate King Charles when on the scaffold. It is much to be regretted that this interesting volume is now amissing.

Land-owners.—There are only four landed proprietors, viz. the Rev. Alexander Houston Douglas, Esq. of Bawds; Robert Thorburn, Esq. of Kelton; James Connel, Esq. of Conheath; and William Constable Maxwell, Esq. of Nithsdale, to whom the whole parish, with the exception of about 600 acres, belongs. Unfortunately for us, this gentleman has a much finer property in England, where he resides. He enjoys at present the honour of being High Sheriff of Yorkshire. Our only resident heritor is Mr Connel of Conheath. This gentleman does not disdain the ordinary duties of the eldership. Happy would it be for Scotland, as well as for themselves, did her gentry more generally show such attachment to the venerable institutions of our church.

Parochial Registers.—These seem to have been kept, sometimes with more, sometimes with less accuracy.

Antiquities.—The castle of Caerlaverock forms to the antiquary the most prominent object of interest. This venerable pile, one of the most magnificent of its kind, was formerly, before the invention of gunpowder, a place of immense strength, though destitute of natural bulwarks. It lies near the shores of the Solway. Its foundation is not many feet above high water-mark, and it has neither rapid river nor lofty rock to aid the resources of art. Its form is uncommon, being triangular. It is surrounded by a double moat, and when this difficulty had been vanquished by the prowess of the assailants, portcullis after portcullis, to the number at least of three, presented a barrier to their farther progress. Connected with this, we may notice the still visible remains of a plan for discharging a torrent of molten lead on the heads of the besiegers. From this, we may form some idea of the mode of warfare, and the consequent methods of defence adopted and practised among our fathers. Their object was to render their abodes inaccessible, except under peril of life, to all but the formally invited guest. In this respect, there is now a most important and salutary change.

Our object, now, is not to fortify our gates, but to render them accessible to all. Caerlaverock Castle will be found amply and faithfully described in many works. A pretty full account of it has been lately given in the Picture of Dumfries by Mr M'Diarmid, and formerly by Grose, Pennant, and others, to which the reader is referred. This castle has stood several sieges; but to take notice of all these would be inconsistent with the object of this work. We find, according to Grose, that after the siege by Cromwell, the castle contained eighty-six beds, forty carpets, and a library worth L. 200, which enables us to form some idea of its ancient splendour. The *fleurs-de-lis*, conspicuous on the windows of the banqueting hall, are a proof of the intimacy which formerly existed between France and Scotland. In the reign of Edward I., Caerlaverock sustained its most formidable siege. The whole army of that distinguished warrior was drawn out for two days against it before it surrendered. The length of time was not remarkable; but it is worthy of being recorded, that the defendants were only sixty in number. The discovery of this circumstance, it is said, occasioned no small surprise among the troops of Edward.

III.—POPULATION.

In 1755 the population of the parish was	-	784
1777 there were 449 males and 553 females, in all	-	902
1791 there were 454 males and 501 females, in all	-	955
1811,		1170
1821,		1206
1831,		1271

The present population is about 1300. The increase is in a great measure owing to the establishment of Glencaple quay, for the accommodation of such vessels as cannot ascend higher up the Nith. From this quay also, for several years, a steamer has run to Liverpool:—the “Nithsdale,” a splendid vessel, which commenced plying this season, accomplishes her voyage in one tide. On sailing days, Glencaple is visited by upwards of thirty vehicles filled with intending passengers and friends. There is also another cause which probably has produced some increase in the population. The extensive provision which is made for the poor, renders it a desirable object for the labouring-classes from other parishes, to acquire a residence in this.

The number of families in the parish,	272
chiefly employed in agriculture,	90
in trade, manufactures, or handicraft,	76

The number of births from 12th August 1833 to 12th August 1834 is 33. The number of deaths for the same period is 14,

but they are only registered when the interment takes place in the parish churchyard. No distinction in the register having been made as to marriages, where the parties settled in the parish, and those where one of the parties left the place and took up a residence in another,—no satisfactory return as to marriages can be made.

Character of the People.—The moral character of the people is decidedly good, partly owing to our abundant supply of schools, by which the benefits of education are extended to all, the children of the poor being taught gratis; and partly to the want of alehouses, of which there is not one in the parish except at the shore, where, on account of the shipping, it seems indispensable. Poaching was, at one time, extensively practised in the parish, though not much by the inhabitants. Now that game is all but absolutely extirpated, poaching of course has ceased. Smuggling also existed to a very great extent about fifty years ago,—now it is unknown.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—The following information has been kindly communicated by the factor of the principal proprietor and three of the most intelligent farmers.

The total number of acres, Scotch measure, is 4640. Mr Maxwell's property consists of 3972 acres, which is let at L. 3930, 10s. so that L. 41, 10s. are wanting to make the rent L. 1 per acre. Judging of the rest of the parish by this estimate, the rent may be stated at L. 1 per acre to a fraction.

	<i>Imperial acres.</i>		
	A.	R.	F.
Of the whole parish there are in wood,	126	0	18
moss and moor,	75	2	27
meadow,	37	3	13
marsh,	252	0	37
Number of acres arable,	5929	0	13

A considerable quantity of ground was some years ago planted on Conheath, by J. Connel, Esq. and the plantations are now thriving and remunerative; but it does not appear that trees generally attain to a great size in this parish, unless in extensive plantations, or on spots peculiarly sheltered.

Rent of Land.—The average rent of land in the parish may be stated at L. 1 per acre.

Live-stock.—The Galloway breed of cattle is the favourite one, and only a few Ayrshire cows are kept. The Leicester breed of sheep is the one chiefly attended to, the enclosures not being sufficiently strong for the wild black-faced or Highland variety.

Husbandry.—The rotation of crops generally pursued is, 1st, oats; 2d, potatoes or turnip; 3d, oats, barley, or wheat, according to the nature of the soil; 4th, hay; 5th, pasture, then oats again. Fallow is seldom resorted to except in the low flats, where the wetness of the soil renders this process necessary for the extirpation of weeds. All the leases on Mr Maxwell's estate are for fifteen years. A term of nineteen or twenty-one years would be more advantageous both for landlord and tenant. A great number of the farm-buildings has of late been substantially rebuilt; if there be any defect in these, the out-houses perhaps are not sufficiently extensive. The greatest improvement in agriculture in this parish is the introduction of bone manure, and the consequent extended and extending culture of turnips. Another stimulus is given by steam navigation, which enables the farmer to transport his sheep, fattened on the turnip crop, to Liverpool, at the rate of 1s. a head. A great obstacle to the improvement of the meadow land on the banks of the Lochar, not only in this but also in neighbouring parishes, consists in the keeping up of a paltry mill, which yields only a rent of about L. 20 per annum. The "weir" of this mill raises the water in the Lochar for miles in its serpentine course. Were this obstruction removed, and the course of the Lochar straightened and widened, many acres which at present lie waste, would be submitted to the plough, whilst, with regard to such places as are occasionally under cultivation, the farmer would not run the risk of having the produce of the year washed away or rotted on the ground by the autumnal floods.*

Quarry.—There are no mines of any description in the parish, and only one freestone quarry, which is wrought. The rent of the quarry is L. 8; the value of the produce L. 100.

Fisheries, &c.—Pike, eel, and roaches, abound in the Lochar. Excellent flounders are caught in the Nith; but the only fishery of any importance is that of salmon. These continue to be taken in small quantities by the "*liester*." Stake-nets were erected many years ago, but the right to do so was lately disputed, and an interdict passed by the Court of Session. Upon an appeal, however, the interdict has been lately removed, and it is to be hoped, that, both for the interests of the parish and the public at large, the decision of the Court will be finally reversed. The rent of the salmon fishing is about L. 30; the produce above L. 100 in value when

* This view is also adopted by other writers in this work; as will be seen by referring to the accounts of Torthorwald and other neighbouring parishes.

sold. About L. 40 yearly may be received from the sale of white fish, of which flounders are the chief.

Produce.—It is not easy to give an accurate account of farm produce. The produce of the land in corn and cattle may be estimated as being upon the whole equal at least to that of arable land in Scotland on an average. The rearing of pigs in this and the neighbouring parishes is carried to a greater extent than common;—almost every cottar keeps a pig, which enables him to pay his rent, and also furnishes him with manure for potatoes.

1450 Scots acres, white crop, at an average of wheat, barley, and oats, in the proportions raised in the parish, at L. 4, 4s. per acre,	L. 6000	0	0
870 do. green crop, at L. 4, 5s. per acre, on an average of potatoes and turnip, and allowance made for the small quantity of bare fallow,	9697	10	0
435 do. sown with grass-seeds, and cut for hay, 120 stones at 5d. per stone to the acre, or at L. 2, 10s.	1087	10	0
435 do. sown out and depastured, 1st year at 15s. per acre,	326	5	0
1260 do. depastured for 2 or more years at 15s. over head (including 100 acres of marsh land,)	945	0	0
30 do. meadow, at L. 1, 5s. per acre,	37	10	0
60 do. moss and moor, at 2s. 6d. per acre,	7	10	0
100 do. wood, at L. 3 per acre,*	300	0	0

Total produce in grain, &c. L. 12,491 5 0

The real rent is L. 4650, 10s. and assuming that for every L. 100 of rent 6 calves are reared and sold when one year old, the number will be 279 one year olds, which at L. 3 a-head, will yield L. 837 0 0.
8 pigs for every L. 100 of rent,—in all, 372 at L. 2 a-head, will give 744 0 0

Amount of live stock raised,	L. 1581	0	0
Bring forward grain, &c.	12491	5	0

Amount of agricultural produce properly so called,	L. 14,072	5	0
Amount of white fish, chiefly flounders,	L. 40	0	0
salmon,	100	0	0
Quarry,	100	0	0

Total produce, L. 14,312 5 0

Manufactures.—There are no manufactures in this parish. Ship-building, however, is carried on to a small extent; and two vessels of about sixty tons burden may be annually launched.

Navigation.—For an account of the navigation the reader is referred to the statistics of Dumfries,—as Glencaple quay can only be considered a subsidiary port to that of Dumfries. Vessels bound for Dumfries, but unable from their burden to reach the place of their destination, here unload,—which furnishes employment for a number of carriers.

* This is not the return of the periodical thinnings, but is calculated from what the plantations may be supposed to yield in the course of thirty years.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

The nearest market-town is Dumfries, to which the inhabitants repair every Wednesday,—perhaps in greater numbers than is absolutely requisite. There are in Caerlaverock seven villages, viz. Greenmill, Bankend, Glenhowan, Shearington, Blackshaw, Glencaple, and Kelton. Most of these, however, are going to decay. Bankend, from its central situation in the parish, may probably continue; and Glencaple, from steam navigation, will likely increase. There are no turnpike, rail-roads, or canals in this parish.*

Ecclesiastical State.—The situation of the church, although nearly at one extremity of the parish, cannot be greatly complained of,—no person having to travel much above three miles to it. It is almost exactly five and a-half miles from Dumfries, and within three minutes walk of the manse. It was built in 1781. The walls are very substantial, and the form is in good proportion. It has one gallery in front, and it would admit of two additional side galleries, which, if erected, would amply accommodate all the population that will likely accumulate for years to come. The walls are liable to damp, the floor is not laid, and the passages are also very narrow; and altogether the interior of the church would require to be remodelled. It affords accommodation for about 470, and no rents are charged for any of the sittings.

The manse was built A. D. 1708, not by the heritors, but by Dr Hutton. Since the date of its erection, it has been repaired more than once, partly at the expense of the Hutton Bequest, partly at that of the late incumbent, and partly at that of the heritors. When the last Statistical Account was compiled, my predecessor writes, “it is yet in decent condition;” and as houses do not improve by age, the writer regrets to state that he cannot say much in its praise. A little was done in repairs by the heritors three years ago; but it continues excessively damp, and, though not very deficient as to the number of apartments, it is very inconvenient as

* During spring-tides, and particularly when impelled by a strong south-wester, the Solway rises with prodigious rapidity. A loud booming noise indicates its approach, and is distinguishable at the distance of several miles. At Caerlaverock and Glencaple, where it enters the Nith, the scene is singularly grand and imposing; and it is beautiful to see a mighty volume of water advancing foam-crested, and with a degree of rapidity which, were the race a long one, would outmatch the speed of the swiftest horses. The tide-head, as it is called, is often from four to six feet high, chafed into spray, with a mighty trough of bluer water behind, swelling in some places into little hills, and in others scooped into tiny valleys, which, when sun-lit, form a brilliant picture of themselves. From the tide head proceed two huge jets of water, which run, roaring along, searching the banks on either side, the antennae, as it were, which the ocean puts forth, and by which it feels its way when confined within narrow limits.”—*M^r Diarmid's Picture of Dumfries*, p. 15.

to their relative situation and size. The office-houses are in a still worse condition; some of them, indeed, give obvious indications that they will soon be numbered among "the things that were." The glebe, including manse, office-houses, and garden, is 19 acres, 1 rood, 23 falls Scotch measure in extent. It is of excellent quality, although part of it is liable to be flooded by the Lochar. The stipend is L. 177, 5s. 9½d. in money, and a teind of fish. It is said, the teinds are not fully exhausted; but the addition is so very trifling, that the present incumbent has never thought it worth while to inquire into the matter. The stipend is all paid in money. The late incumbent compounded with the proprietor, and for the sum of L. 5 Sterling per annum gave up all right to the teind of fish. Should the decision of the Court of Session, to which allusion has been formerly made, be finally reversed, and the fishing by stake-nets let on a lease, the rights of the clergyman will be worth something considerable, perhaps L. 30 per annum. The possibility of a law-suit occurring has hitherto prevented any operations requiring much outlay of capital; and, of course, the fishing has not yielded what it otherwise would have done, or may do. It is proper to state, that the point in dispute is,—where the river Nith terminates and the Solway Frith commences.

We have no place of worship of any description, except the parish church. About two years ago a Sabbath school was instituted by the present incumbent, in which he officiates as teacher. Another Sabbath school is also taught by Mr M^cWilliam at Blackshaw. Almost all the inhabitants attend the Established Church. Of late, however, a few individuals, who had taken umbrage at the conduct of the session with regard to Dr Hutton's mortification, have employed the occasional services of a Dissenting preacher, who officiates in the upper room of a tavern. There are three or four Roman Catholics, and as many regular hearers in Mr Clyde's Dissenting chapel in Dumfries. Divine service is well attended in the parish church, and the respectful demeanour of the congregation during its performance has been the subject of gratifying remark to all who have been called to officiate in the pulpit. The number of communicants is above 420. There have been two collections in the parish church during the last eighteen months,—the first for the Scottish Missionary Society, when nearly L. 4 was raised; and the other for the India Mission, when the collection did not exceed L. 3; but unfortunately the weather was at the time very unfavourable.

Education.—There are three schools in the parish. The number of scholars amounts nearly to 200. The parochial teacher has the maximum salary, and L. 40 per annum from the Hutton bequest. A considerable number of young men from the neighbourhood and also from England board with Mr Hill, the present parochial teacher; and two assistants are kept in his school. Under his auspices, this establishment has acquired considerable celebrity as a commercial academy. The other two schools are situated at the extreme ends of the parish—the parochial one being central. They are supported out of the Hutton bequest and other mortifications, of which some account will afterwards be given. The present teachers, Messrs M'William and Beattie, are both very respectable men, and deserving of much better situations. Each receives L. 20 per annum, but the school fees are low, and not well paid in any of the three schools. The ordinary branches are taught, with the addition of French, Greek, Latin, and the higher branches of mathematics in the parish school. The people are fully alive to the advantages of education, and none are ignorant of the arts of reading, writing, and common arithmetic. No additional schools seem to be required, although it has been found necessary to enlarge the dimensions of the parochial school. This operation is now in progress.

Library.—There is a parochial library, which was instituted two years ago by the present incumbent. It has been supported hitherto by two grants of L. 10 each from the Hutton bequest; one collection in the church; and the annual payment of 1s. from each reader. The number of volumes exceeds 200*.

Poor.—The number of persons receiving parochial aid is about 70. These receive from L. 1, 10s. to L. 7 yearly. The division is made twice a-year; but some are of opinion, that a monthly division would be more beneficial to the poor themselves. A few pounds appear a great sum to a very poor person; hence,

* Dr Hutton's deed of mortification provides that part of the surplus revenue shall be devoted to "the buying of Bibles, with other pious and religious books, for the use of such poor as are not able to purchase the same." It occurred to the writer that this might be fairly construed into authority for instituting and supporting a parish library. A query to this effect was therefore distinctly put to counsel, and the writer felt much pleasure in finding the following remark in the Opinion of the Solicitor-General, Mr Cockburn, with which Mr Cuninghame, the present Solicitor-General, agrees. "In the first place, they," viz. the trustees "may make the best, and best managed parish library in Scotland." English counsel is not so clear as to the power of the trustees on this point without the authority of a court,—at least till the other objects of the charity have been fully attended to; but, of course, the trustees would not think of doing so, until all the objects specified by Dr Hutton had been duly cared for.

petty debts are contracted without due calculation, and the assistance given is frequently more than mortgaged. The amount of collections in the church is about L. 18 per annum; but the great source of parochial relief is derived from the Hutton bequest. In 1708, Dr Hutton mortified L. 900, for pious and educational purposes, and L. 100 was afterwards added to defray the expenses of management; which by the deed of mortification is intrusted to the session of the parish, whose accounts are to be annually audited by the presbytery of the bounds. The whole sum of L. 1000, soon after it came into the hands of the session, was laid out in the purchase of the barony of Barclay, in the parish of Colvend, which now yields an annual rent of nearly L. 400 per annum. The parish afterwards received L. 310 more in donations from different persons, the whole of which was subsequently laid out in the improvement of Barclay. The annual income of the parish is thus expended: to the grammar-school at Bankend, L. 40; to the English school at Blackshaw, L. 20; to ditto at Highmains, L. 20; to the maintenance of five poor boys as bursars at the school of Bankend, each of whom receive annually L. 3, 4s. 6d. for four years, L. 16, 2s. 6d.; privately distributed in terms of a donation, L. 2; publicly at two different times, L. 160; to a superannuated teacher, L. 15.

Formerly the whole of the surplus revenue was given to the poor. About two years ago, old complaints, to which all the previous ministers of the parish had been much exposed, were revived as to the management of the session. Upon this, the present incumbent resolved to place himself under legal advice. The session accordingly procured the professional opinions of Mr Cockburn, then Solicitor-General, and Mr John Cuninghame. Their opinions not entirely coinciding, and such endowments being better understood in England, Mr Russell of the Chancery Bar was also consulted. These gentlemen all agree in commending the general management of the present trustees, as well as of their predecessors; of the propriety of which, the simple statement, that L. 1310, the amount of the different mortifications, now yields an annual income of almost L. 400, is of itself a sufficient proof. They, however, condemned the indiscriminate mode in which the poor had been provided for. Indeed, it is obvious, that, by relieving all the poor of the parish, the bequests have been not so much a boon to the poor as to the heritors. There being a special clause in Dr Hutton's deed of mortification, limiting the charity to those born

in the parish, the session have lately struck off all the "externs" * from the list, in consequence of which the heritors have had to assess themselves rather heavily. It is certainly not a little singular that, in a country parish, with a population not exceeding 1300, and with an income of above L. 400 a-year (including the collections at church) for behoof of schools and the poor, an assessment should be necessary; yet it is not to be wondered at, since the Hutton bequest, as formerly conducted, acted as a bounty upon pauperism. Our surplus revenue for the last half year, as well as for the year to come, will be nearly exhausted in defraying legal expenses—making an addition to the school at Bankend—and in executing necessary repairs on the farm-buildings on the estate of Barcloch. This estate is divided into eighteen farms. As several of the houses are old, and as the property, though not susceptible of much improvement by the plough, yet contains many acres well adapted for plantation, there is a channel provided for our surplus revenue for some time to come. As any delay in these improvements must be injurious to the trust, it is desirable that they should be speedily carried into effect. When completed, however, there will be a large and constantly increasing revenue, for the application of which the trustees will be under the necessity of having recourse to the Supreme Court for extended powers. Unfortunately, in some points, the power of the trustees is rather limited. The positive terms of the deed are inconsistent with its spirit, from the altered state of society, and from the circumstance of the founder never having, in all probability, contemplated such an increase of revenue. By the deed, it is provided, that there shall be two minor schools—but this would be impossible, were the terms of the deed strictly adhered to, which limits the salaries of the masters to L. 1, 10s. The trustees have gradually advanced these salaries to the amount already stated. It would be desirable to increase them still more; but to do this, the authority of a court must be had. With regard to provisions for the poor, there is much truth in the remarks of Dr M^r Morrish contained in a note, † subjoined to the former Statistical

* This term is employed by Dr Hutton in his deed of mortification, to denote them, who, although resident, have not been born in the parish.

† "If the situation, circumstances, and manners of the inhabitants of Caerlaverock are considered, it should seem that a fourth part of the sum allotted to the support of the poor might be sufficient for all the purposes of real and useful charity. And, indeed, an attentive observer will reckon it a matter of doubt, whether the greatness of the parish funds be productive of most good or evil. The moralist has some cause to complain, that it dries up the sources of private charity, and renders the poorer people less willing to assist their old and needy relations. These they seem sometimes disposed to abandon to the care of the session, who cannot, by the small allowance they

Account. The management of the fund has not become easier—but, on the contrary, as may easily be supposed, is the source of much annoyance to the minister and session. Still it is pleasant to contemplate the good that may be done by adopting a system of judicious rigour. Those whose poverty has been the result of early profligacy must not be starved into crime; but they must not be put on an equal footing with the temperate and industrious, whose poverty has been caused by old age, sickness, or misfortune. The trustees are furnished with ample and unquestionable powers to observe this distinction. They are left to the uncontrolled exercise of their conscience in selecting the objects of charity, and the increasing revenue will enable them to bestow a bounty upon virtue and industry, when overtaken by poverty.

Fuel, &c.—Peat is the fuel most commonly used, but such farmers as live at a greater distance from the moas than a mile, would perhaps employ their men and horses more profitably in summer-fallowing their land than in leading peats. A cart-load of coals may be had at the shore for 7s. Lime is occasionally brought from Cumberland in sloops, but is more frequently carted from Kellhead, a distance of ten miles.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

Having already adverted to the “Weir” at Bankend mill, it is right to state, that surveys have lately been made with the view of

bestow, make up to them the want of that tender assiduity, which proves the cordial of age and poverty, and which natural affection alone can administer. The farmer with still greater reason complains, that the idea of a plentiful fund established for their support fills the parish in spite of every effort to prevent it, with the idle, infirm, and indolent; and renders it difficult for him to obtain day labourers. In fine, the poor themselves are far from being contented with the respective proportions of the funds; which are notwithstanding distributed with great impartiality. They are accustomed to lean too much to them, and to depend too little upon their own exertions. Nay, it is said, that a querulous habit is acquired, and even infirmity feigned, in order to excite compassion, and to obtain a more liberal share of charity. In the opposite scale of good, these effects of the funds are to be thrown: *first*, the support of convenient schools; *second*, that no distress arising from poverty occurs, which obtains not a prompt relief, without any expense to the inhabitants of the parish. But, though none of the poor of Caerlaverock are under the necessity of begging from house to house, the parish is as much as any other in this quarter, annoyed with vagrants, and as liberal to them. From these facts and observations, then, it may be inferred, “That distress and poverty multiply in proportion to those funds that are created to relieve them; for ‘where the carcase is, there the eagles will be gathered together;’ that the measures of charity ought to remain invisible, till the moment when it is necessary that they should be distributed; that in the country parishes of Scotland, in general, small, occasional, voluntary collections are sufficient; that the Legislature has no occasion to interfere to augment that stream which is already copious enough, though not always derived from its proper source or confined to its proper channel; in fine, that the establishment of a poors’-rate would be not only unnecessary but hurtful, as it would tend to oppress the landholder without bringing relief to the poor.”

having it removed to pave the way for the improvement of the Lochar moss. It is hoped, that these will lead to more solid advantages than have accrued from former surveys. A very able one was made by Smeaton in the year 1754; but, from some cause or other, it evaporated in speculation. It is also in contemplation, to form a road through the moss between Glencaple quay and the Annan road, where it passes Mousewald kirk. Except about a mile near Caerlaverock manse, and a small rise on the Mousewald side of about half a mile, the rest of the road would be a dead level. The execution of this projected improvement would be of great advantage to Caerlaverock, and the country on the Mousewald side, more especially as a wooden jetty is projected, lower down the Nith, for the benefit of the steamers, and other vessels, which, from their burden, cannot, at all states of the tide, make Glencaple quay. The expense of this would be about L. 200, and it is likely to be soon effected. The mail between Dumfries and Annan used formerly to pass through this parish by Bankend. The road, so far as it lies in this parish, is still tolerably good, and has lately received considerable repairs; but after it enters Ruthwell, all traces of a road have been nearly obliterated by the invasions of the Solway. Were a new road made from Bankend bridge to Annan, and the other improvements alluded to also executed, we would have little to complain of, in respect of roads. The road to Dumfries from Glencaple, which runs along the banks of the Nith, is nearly level, and in tolerable repair.

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