

# PARISH OF RERRICK.\*

PRESBYTERY OF KIRKCUDBRIGHT, SYNOD OF GALLOWAY.

THE REV. JAMES THOMSON, MINISTER.

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## I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name, Extent, Boundaries, &c.*—THIS parish has borne, at different periods, the names of Dundrennan, Monkton, and Rerwick, or Rerrick. The first of these appellations is derived from the Irish words *Dun Drainan*, signifying the *Hill of Thorns*—while, according to Symson, whose account of Galloway was compiled in 1684, the parish was called Monkton, from the monks who dwelt in the Abbey of Dundrennan. Chalmers again, in his *Caledonia*, while he admits Rerrick to be a name of difficult etymology, considers it as an “abbreviated pronunciation of *Rerwick*, which was derived from a *wick*, or creek of Solway at this place.”† This can scarcely be considered a satisfactory account of the origin of

\* Communicated by a correspondent.

† Chalmers' *Caledonia*, vol. iii. p. 313.

the name of the parish, although it may be difficult to give any more plausible conjecture on the subject. The parish first obtained its present name towards the close of the seventeenth century, when a new church was erected upon the lands of Rerwick, forming part of the estate of Orroland, now the property of the infant son and heir of the late Robert Cutlar Fergusson, M. P. for the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright.

The parish of Rerrick is ten miles in length, and the average breadth is about six miles. It is bounded on the north by the parish of Kelton; on the east by the parish of Buittle and a Bay of Solway at the mouth of the water of Urr; on the south by the Solway; and on the west by the parish of Kirkcudbright.

The surface of Rerrick is generally broken and varied. Towards the north, it assumes a highland appearance, with a frontier of pretty considerable mountains, the most remarkable of which, both in height and picturesque character, is Bengairn. This mountain, covered with heath, and surmounted by a Cairn of almost Druidical antiquity, rises to a height of about 1200 feet above the level of the sea, and overlooks the Solway in all its length, commanding a view, which in variety, magnificence, and extent, is scarcely to be surpassed on the most romantic shores of Scotland. From the base of the hills on the north the parish trends towards the south and west, exhibiting as it approaches the sea a series of bold and lofty headlands, and terminating in an iron-bound coast, of which it is enough to say, that it furnished to the author of *Waverley* the materials for much of the scenery of *Ellangowan*. In the romance of *Guy Mannering*, the reader will find the shores of Rerrick delineated by the hand of a master.

The traveller who desires to visit this parish to advantage, should approach it from the village of Dalbeattie on the east. The road, after crossing the Water of Urr, and skirting the granite rocks of Kirkennan, approaches Orchardton, the seat of Colonel Maxwell, through the Holms of Glenyarrick. Few places in the south of Scotland are richer in natural beauty than this. It is situated upon a deeply indented bay of Solway, and surrounded on the east and west by the wooded promontories of Torr and Almorness. Towards the north, again, it is encompassed by an amphitheatre of hills, the most striking of which are Skreel and Bengairn. If the traveller has time, it will well repay his

trouble to witness from the summit of either of these mountains, the rising of the summer sun over Skiddaw and the Cumberland range. At such a moment, the broad and still waters of Solway, reflecting the dark and rocky shores of the Scottish coast, form a picture worthy the pencil of Claude.

After leaving Orchardton, the road passes for nearly two miles along the shore, fringed with extensive plantations, till it reaches the village of Auchencairn, situated at the head of the bay of that name. This is a thriving place, with much of an English character in its general aspect. The houses are of a superior description,—interspersed with trees,—built on no regular plan,—but exhibiting, as a whole, that cheerful and *riant* appearance for which the villages of the south are so remarkable. The neighbourhood is beautiful, commanding a full view of Orchardton, and comprehending the mountain scenery already described, with Collin, the pleasant residence of Mr Welsh, at the head of the bay. A little to the south of the village stands the old mansion of Auchencairn, long the abode of the family of Culton of Auchencabony; and two miles along the west side of the bay of Auchencairn is situated the modern mansion of Nutwood, built by the late Major Culton, with its policy overhanging the water. Still farther down, upon the very margin of the bay, stands Balcary, the beautiful residence of Mrs Gordon, widow of the late Mr Gordon of Culvennan. The green isle of Heston forms a fine feature in the mouth of the bay, and, as it were, landlocks it, giving to the whole much of the character of lake scenery. Outside the bay again, the shores of Rerrick, towards the west, and along the *Heughs* of Rascarrel, Barlocco, Orroland, Portmary, and Netherlaw, present the boldest and most sublime features of coast scenery. Two caverns upon the Barlocco shore, called the White and Black Cove, are particularly worthy of notice. The entrance to the former is as lofty as the mast of *some great Ammiral*, and its vast extent reminds the spectator of the airy and echoing halls of Fingal in Staffa. The Black Cove is of an opposite and gloomy character, and its dark caverns would form no unfit habitation for the Spirit of the Solway.

For five miles to the west of Auchencairn, the road passes along comparatively an uninteresting ridge of the parish, still, however, commanding fine views of the Solway and the English coast, till at length it opens upon the beautiful and secluded valley of

Dundrennan, with the village and ruined Abbey in the foreground.

It is impossible to tread this classic spot, without carrying back our recollections to the period when the Abbey of Dundrennan afforded a temporary shelter to the unfortunate Mary Stuart, during the last hours she spent in Scotland. Tradition has traced, probably with more of fancy than of accuracy, her course from Langside to the scene of her embarkation for England. It has been hitherto supposed that, passing through the wildest recesses of the Glenkens, she reached Queenshill, so named from her resting sometime there, and now the seat of Mr Campbell, at the head of the Vale of the Tarf. Proceeding in the direction of Tongland, she is said to have crossed the Dee by an ancient wooden bridge, which then spanned the river about a mile above that place. But this traditionary account of the Queen's progress from Langside to Dundrennan has been recently discredited by the publication of Historical Memoirs of her reign by Lord Herries, the companion of her flight. His account bears, that "so soone as the Queen saw the day lost, she was carried from the field by the Lords Herries, Fleming, and Livistoune. Prettie George Douglas and William the Fundlin escapt also with the Queen. She rode all night, and did not halt until she came to the Sanquhir. From thence she went to Terregles, the Lord Herries' hous, where she rested some few dayes, and then, against her friends' advyce, she resolved to goe to England and commit herselfe to the protection of Queen Elizabeth; in hopes, by her assistance, to be repossessed again in her kingdome. So she embarked at a creek near Dundrennen, in Galloway, and carried the Lord Herries to attend her with his counsel, and landed at Cockermouth in Cumberland. Heer she stayed, and sent the Lord Herries to Londone in hopes to be receaved with honor."\*

Mary arrived at Dundrennan in the evening, and spent her last night in Scotland beneath the walls of the Monastery, then a magnificent and extensive building, and of which Edward Maxwell, a near relative of Lord Herries, was at the time Abbot. The situation of Dundrennan Abbey has much natural beauty, independent of historical associations, to recommend it to the attention of the traveller. The building is now greatly dilapidated; but

\* Historical Memoirs of the Reign of Mary Queen of Scots, by Lord Herries. Edinburgh, 1836, p. 103.

enough still remains to indicate its former splendour. It is almost entirely covered with a pale gray-coloured moss, which gives a character of peculiar and airy lightness to the lofty columns and Gothic arches, many of which are entire. Placed upon a gentle eminence, on the bank of a rocky and sparkling burn, and surrounded on all sides, except the south, by a range of hills, Dundrennan forms an exception to the usual aspect of abbey scenery. There is little old wood near it, save in the deep and devious glens which intersect the adjacent grounds of Mr Maitland of Dundrennan; but the neighbouring *braes* are generally clothed with copse, and afford from many points extensive views of the Solway, and of the mountains of Cumberland.

From Newlaw hill, an eminence adjoining the residence of Mr Maitland, and forming part of the *Hill of Thorns*, from which the place takes its name, the prospect is still more magnificent, commanding, in addition to an almost boundless expanse of ocean, a view of the Isle of Man, and of the mountains of Morne in Ireland. It is not uncommon from this spot, as noticed in the original Statistical Account of the parish, to have upwards of a hundred vessels in sight at one time, between St Bee's Head and the Mull of Galloway, which, from a well-known optical deception, seem elevated one above another, according to their distance, till the most remote appears as if actually dropping from the clouds; so that, in a certain state of the atmosphere, the ocean resembles an immense canvass suspended from the heavens, with an infinite variety of vessels pictured upon it. But *sentiment*, no doubt, gives to Dundrennan its principal charm. These broken arches and tottering columns—these deserted cells and weed-grown aisles—these neglected monuments of belted knights and mitred abbots—and this wide scene of ruin and desolation, melancholy and silent though they be, are all invested with an inexpressible charm, as far superior to that imparted by mere fine scenery, as the pleasures of mind are to those of sense.

For nearly forty years, the late Adam Maitland, Esq. of Dundrennan was the principal resident heritor in the parish of Rerrick; and during this long period, it may be truly said that, within his sphere as a country gentleman, his life was devoted to objects of public usefulness and private benevolence. He turned his most zealous attention to every subject connected with rural economy; and the result of this may now be seen in the admirable roads and

bridges, in the extensive plantations, and in the improved agriculture of the district over which his influence and his estates extended. His important position as Convener of the Stewartry enabled him to give efficient support to every measure of general utility, guided, as all his objects were, by enlarged and liberal views on economical and political subjects. About twenty years ago, Mr Maitland transferred his residence to his estate of Compstone on the banks of the Tarf, but he still continued to take a lively interest in the parish of Rerrick; and during years of declining health, when he had unavoidably in a great measure withdrawn from public life and active exertion of every sort, he still devoted himself anxiously to the work of doing good, by combining the improvements on his estate in Rerrick with the employment of the poor. Shortly before Mr Maitland's death, which took place at Compstone on the 20th of July 1843, he had removed the old mansion of Dundrennan, and erected a shooting-lodge on the site of it.

Nevertheless, it is indisputable that Rerrick suffers from the non-residence of so many heritors, and it is impossible not to look back, with somewhat of a feeling of regret, to the good old times when the hospitable homes of Collin and Dundrennan, of Orroland and Portmary, were occupied by their respective proprietors, and when, of course, the interests of the tenantry and the poor formed the subject of active and personal superintendence. Many of the principal estates in the parish are now occupied and managed as *led* farms for grazing, and with less of agricultural spirit and stir than we should have seen, had it so happened that we could have numbered not only among the *proprietors*, but among the *inhabitants* of the parish, Sir Robert Abercromby of Birkenbog, Mr Murray of Broughton, M. P. for the Stewartry, Mr Maitland of Dundrennan, late Solicitor-General for Scotland, and Mr Welsh of Collin.

The village at the Abbey consists chiefly of *feus* upon the estates of Dundrennan and Orroland. The houses are pleasantly interspersed with fine old trees, and combine admirably with the precincts of the Abbey. From Dundrennan to the sea the distance is about a mile and a half. The road runs through a narrow valley, and passing Netherlaw, the seat of Sir Robert Abercromby, leads directly to the shore, where the rock is still pointed out by the peasantry from which the hapless Mary embarked on her ill-

fated voyage to England. It is situated in a little creek, surrounded by vast and precipitous cliffs, and called Portmary in remembrance of the Queen. The scene is appropriately wild and sublime; and the contemplative stranger who visits it in the stillness of evening is apt to imagine that the waves fall here with a more mournful dash upon the shore, and that the cadence of the autumn wind is more low and melancholy than elsewhere, as if Nature's self were conscious of, and lamented the unhappy event she had seen take place upon the spot.\*

The residence of Portmary is immediately contiguous to the sea. This estate is entailed, and is now the property of Mr James Lenox of New-York, the only son and heir of a native of Kirkcudbright who migrated to America upwards of sixty years ago, and who recently died one of the richest men, and most eminent merchants in the United States. Along the coast of Solway to the east, lies the estate and ancient mansion of Orroland. The late Mr Cutlar Fergusson, Member of Parliament for the Stewartry, succeeded to this estate about thirty-five years ago, while still prosecuting his professional pursuits in India. His brother, Mr Henry Fergusson, soon after removed from Craigdarroch,—the family residence in Dumfriesshire—to Orroland, where he commenced an extensive system of improvement—modernising the mansion-house—rebuilding the farm-steadings—draining and renewing the fences—laying down extensive plantations in the most tasteful manner—and thereby giving a new character to this side of the parish. Still farther east we have Barlocco, the curious residence of Mr Macartney, hanging over the Solway, and Rascarrel, the property of Mr Vans Agnew of Sheuchan, also contiguous to the shore. This brings us again to the Bay of Auchencairn.

To return to the valley of Dundrennan. From this point westward the parish of Rerrick assumes a pastoral character, till it terminates in the farm of Castlecreavie, forming the western extremity of the estate of Dundrennan, which abounds in Roman antiquities, and the higher grounds of which look down upon the delicious scenery of St Mary's Isle and the Bay of Kirkcudbright. To the east of Castlecreavie lies Auchengool, the property of John

\* The substance of some of the preceding observations was furnished some time since by the compiler of the present article to the "Picture of Scotland;" but, in so far as they have been repeated here, it is by permission of the very liberal publishers of that work.

Ramsay M'Culloch, Esq., the most distinguished political Economist and Statist of the day. From this point to the base of Bengairn, the surface of the parish is of a wild and upland description, the greater part of it belonging to Mr Murray of Broughton. This seems enough in the way of a general description and survey of the parish.

*Mineralogy.*—There is much in the parish of Rerrick deserving the attention of the mineralogist and natural philosopher. The range of hills, of which Bengairn is the summit, affords fine examples of the granite formation, while the coast everywhere abounds with freestone of excellent quality, which has of late been much in request for building purposes. Upon the shore, in the immediate vicinity of Portmary, there is a remarkable natural arch of *Barytes* or *Terra Ponderosa*, which, from its resemblance to a person in a state of suspension, has long borne the name of *the Hangit Man*. Some of the highest headlands in the parish, and particularly those in the vicinity of the White and Black Coves of Barlocco, are composed of puddingstone, resting upon extensive beds of very hard freestone. In the Coves fine specimens may be occasionally obtained of jasper which takes a high polish, and rock-crystals of a pale purple colour and of the most perfect prismatic forms, abound in a small stream upon the hill of Screel, within the estate of Colonel Maxwell of Orchardton.

In the lands of Auchenleek, in the eastern district of the parish, formerly belonging to Lord Macartney, and now the property of Mr Henry, an iron mine has been opened under the management of an English company. From fifty to seventy tons of ore of superior quality are obtained weekly, and it is sent chiefly to Birmingham and the neighbourhood. A mine of copper ore has also for some time been wrought in the Island of Heston, at the mouth of the Bay of Auchencairn. It is at present let on lease to an English tenant, and the ore is shipped to Swansea.

*Ports.*—The facilities for shipping produce from Rerrick are considerable; and three places on the coast have been declared free ports,—Balcarry, on Auchencairn Bay, Burnfoot, at the point where the Abbey burn enters the Solway, and Mulloch Bay, at the south-western extremity of the parish. The first of these is safe and commodious by nature, and the other two ports might be made so at a very inconsiderable expense.

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

*Parochial Registers*—The register for births and marriages at Kerrick commences 22d December 1736, and the minutes of the kirk session of the parish 18th December 1751. The former has been very correctly kept since 1806, but very irregularly previous to that period.

*Antiquities*.—Besides the ancient Cairn on the summit of Bengairn, already mentioned, the traces of two Druidical temples, and of no less than twelve camps, Saxon, Danish, and Roman, are extant in the parish. But beyond all question, the most remarkable and interesting remain of antiquity in Kerrick, is the Abbey of Dundrennan. Its situation, *in valle reducta*, has been already described, and it only remains to give some slight notices of its foundation and history.

The reign of David I. has been truly described as “the great age of religious establishments” in Scotland. Fergus, Lord of Galloway, who was by marriage allied to the throne, emulated royalty in the “munificence of his foundations,”\* one of the most remarkable of which was Dundrennan. He founded this Abbey in 1142, and filled it with Cistercian monks from the Abbey of Rievall, in England. Sylvanus was the first Abbot of Dundrennan. He was transferred to Rievall in 1167, and, according to Spottiswood, he died at Belleland in 1189; but Cardonnel assigns the previous year, 1188, as the time, and Dundrennan as the place of his death. Those who are curious in such matters may be referred to Cardonnel’s *Antiquities of Scotland* for a list of the successors of Sylvanus, the last of whom was Edward Maxwell, son to John Lord Herries, after whose death King James Sixth annexed the Abbey of Dundrennan to his Royal Chapel of Stirling. This annexation took place in 1621, and was ratified by Parliament in that year, and again in 1633. Symson, writing in 1684, says, “The Bishop of Dunblaine, as Deane of the Chapel-Royal, is patron of the parish of Kerrick, or Dundrenan, and hath a part of his revenue paid out of the lands of that Abbacy; he hath also a bailerie here, heritable exerc’d by the Earl of Nithsdale, whose jurisdiction reacheth over the whole parish, except one baronrie called Kirkcastel, belonging to the Laird of Broughton.”†

\* Caledonia, Vol. iii. p. 301.

† Symson’s Description of Galloway, p. 15.

The historical notices of the Abbey are generally extremely meagre. The *Chronicle of Melrose*, the compilation of which has been frequently but erroneously ascribed to an Abbot of Dundrennan,\* contains only this slight mention of the Abbey:—“*Anno M.C.XLII. fundata est Abbatia De Dundraynan in Gallowaya.*” Nor does Dempster’s *Apparatus* give much additional information. “DUNDRAN in *Galloweia*. Fundat Cistersiensi ordini S. Daud, Rex. Hect. Boeth, Lib. XI. Historiæ Scoticæ, pag. CCLXXIV; ex hoc S. *Richardus Sacrista* fuit, et *Thomas Abbas Pontificis* elector Concilio Constantinensi MCCCXXXIX, qui *Donduno* male ab Onufrio dicitur apud Joannem Gualterium Chron. Chronicorum, Demochares a *Dundraina* vocat.”† Spottiswood is equally short and unsatisfactory in his account of Dundrennan;‡ but, according to the better authorities, he gives the honour of founding the Abbey, not to King David, but to his noble kinsman, the Lord of Galloway. Sir Robert Sibbald, in his *Manuscript Collections*, preserved in the Advocates’ Library at Edinburgh, describes Dundrennan merely as a *large Abbey*, in the parish of Rerrick, “wherein the wisard, Michael Scott, lived.”§ For this tradition, however, we are aware of no other or better authority.

Although the building has suffered much from the devouring hand of time, and not a little from dilapidation, for the purposes of building cottages in the neighbourhood, the remains are still very considerable, and the original form and extent of the Abbey admits of being easily traced. The church of the monastery was in the form of a cross, with a central spire, which tradition represents to have been 200 feet high. The body of the building was 120 feet in length, and divided into three aisles, by seven clustered columns, supporting arches entering to the side aisles, of great height and beauty. The breadth of each of the side aisles was about 15 feet, and that of the centre aisle 25 feet. The transept measured 120 feet from north to south, and 46 feet from east to west.

The east end of the church was of the same breadth with the middle aisle, and only 35 feet in length. On the south side of

\* *Vide* Mr Stevenson’s Preface to the Edition of *Chronica de Melros*, printed for the Bannatyne Club, *passim*.

† *Dempsteri Apparatus*, lib. i, cap. 15.

‡ *Religious Houses in Scotland*, chap. ix. § 3.

§ Sibbald MSS., *Adv. Lib.*, W. 5, 17.

the church were the cloisters, containing a square area of 94 feet. Still farther south were the lodgings and different offices of the Monastery, occupying a space of nearly 300 feet square. At the south end, again, of the western side of these buildings, was a small projecting erection in the shape of a cross, and very similar to the church but inverted—those portions which fronted the east in the one facing the west in the other.

There are still some ancient and curious monuments to be found at Dundrennan. Of these, the most remarkable is the tomb of Alan Lord of Galloway, surnamed the Great Constable of Scotland, who was buried within the walls of the Abbey in the year 1233. His mutilated figure is rudely represented in *alto relievo*, cross-legged, and in mail armour, with a buff coat above; a belt across the shoulder, and another round the waist. In the neighbourhood this figure is generally known by the name of *The Belted Knight*. There is also a tombstone bearing the figure of an Abbot in his canonicals, in tolerable preservation; but the inscription upon it is so much decayed as to be illegible.

Although the Abbey of Dundrennan was indisputably annexed to the Crown in 1621, it was long matter of doubt whether it had not been included in some of the later Crown charters under which the lands and barony of Dundrennan have been long held by the family to which they now belong. This point, however, was set at rest by the late Mr Maitland of Dundrennan, who some years ago presented a memorial to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, representing strongly the constant dilapidation to which the ruins were exposed, and proposing to abandon all right of property in the Abbey, provided it should be placed under the permanent management and protection of the Crown. After due consideration, this proposition was acceded to; and Mr Nixon, the Master of Works for the Board in Scotland, was authorized and directed to examine and report upon the state of the ruins. The result of this inquiry has been an extensive reparation of the Abbey, and the enclosure of the building, along with the contiguous burying-ground, within a high stone wall. The accumulated *debris* of the ruins has been entirely removed, the pavement and precincts of the Abbey restored to their original level, and the ancient monuments and many curious fragments of the building cleared and most tastefully disposed—the

whole exhibiting one of the most beautiful specimens of monastic antiquity now existing in Scotland. Mr Andrew Carter, school-master at Dundrennan, has been recently appointed Keeper of the Abbey, with an annual salary of L.5.

The chartulary of Dundrennan does not appear to be extant; but one or two charters, granted by the Abbots of this Abbey, are preserved in the Chapter-house at Westminster, with seals, in a state of very perfect preservation.

*Principal Land-owners.*—These, with their respective valuations, are,—

Sir Robert Abercromby, Bart. of Birkenbog,	-	L.1051	0	0
Alexander Murray of Broughton,	-	820	0	0
Thomas Maitland of Dundrennan,	-	740	0	0
Robert Cutlar Fergusson of Orroland, a minor,	-	603	0	0
Colonel Maxwell of Orchardton,	-	347	0	0
Miss Culton of Auchnabony,	-	291	10	0
Lady Catherine Halket of Balig,	-	247	0	0
David Welsh of Collin,	-	192	13	4
Trustees of David Halliday of Mulloch,	-	185	0	0
Sir Graham Montgomery, Bart. of Stanhope,	-	168	0	0
Patrick Vans Agnew of Shetchan,	-	160	0	0
William Cairns of Torr,	-	150	0	0
Mrs Gordon of Balcarry,	-	140	0	0
James Lenox of Port Mary,	-	130	0	0
John Ramsay M'Culloch of Auchengool,	-	115	0	0
Alexander M'Cartney of Barlocco,	-	110	0	0
Earl of Selkirk,	-	93	6	8
James Thomson of Over Hazlefield,	-	90	0	0
Robert Cunningham of Nether Linkens,	-	60	0	0
John Carter of Castlehill,	-	50	0	0
David and Joseph Kissock of Baltangan,	-	50	0	0
George and Thomas Henderson of Park,	-	40	0	0
James Henry of Auchenleek,	-	35	0	0
William Affleck of Upper Linkens,	-	35	0	0
William C. Hamilton Bluehill,	-	30	0	0
Margaret Kissock of Thorn,	-	13	5	0
Margaret Tait of Craigmullen,	-	13	5	0

Total L.5960 0 0

*Principal Seats.*—Orchardton, Dundrennan, Orroland, Netherlaw, Balcarry, Collin, Nutwood, and Port Mary. Late in the seventeenth century, when Sir Robert Sibbald compiled his *Description of Scotland*, the *considerable houses* of the parish of Rerrick are said to have been, “Dundrainnan Abbey, Barlocco, Glenshinnoch, Orchardton, and Colnachtyr.”\* Glenshinnoch is generally understood to have been the ancient name of Orchardton, while Colnachtyr, under the more modern appellation of Conaightry, is now an outlying farm upon the estate of Mr Murray of Broughton.

\* Sibbald MSS. *Adv. Lib.*, Jac. v., i. 4.

## III.—POPULATION.

Although population is generally stationary in parishes so purely agricultural and pastoral as Rerrick, there appears to have been a gradual and progressive increase in the number of inhabitants during the last half century. The return to Dr Webster in 1775 was only 1051; and it is stated in the former Statistical Account, published in 1794, that the population of the parish was then nearly the same. But the more recent Parliamentary returns exhibit the following results:—

In 1801, the population was	1166
1811, . . . . .	1224
1821, . . . . .	1378
1831, . . . . .	1635
1841, . . . . .	1692

As to the general character of the inhabitants of the parish it seems sufficient to repeat the kindly language of their late minister, who knew them well. "The people here," says Mr Thomson in the former Statistical Account, "are peaceable, humane, and hospitable, have a lively sense of decorum and character, and many of them give indubitable proofs that their minds are deeply imbued with rational piety." This was the character of the people of Rerrick in 1794, and at the distance of half a century, they have in no respect forfeited their claim to it.

## IV.—INDUSTRY.

*Agriculture.*—The parish of Rerrick contains about 20,447 acres, standard imperial measure. Of these, 13,088 acres have been at one time or other under cultivation, while 6798 acres have never been cultivated, or otherwise used than as pasture. The remaining 561 acres are under wood, natural or planted. Of late years *agriculture*, properly so called, has not been extending in the parish; and, on the contrary, many of the finest farms have been laid down in permanent grass. In this way, *black cattle* may be considered as truly the staple commodity of the district, by which the farmer pays his rent and makes his livelihood.

*Rent of Land.*—The real rent of the parish somewhat exceeds L.10,000 a year. In the poorer districts, the average rent of the Scotch acre runs from 15s. to 25s., but the rich old grazings of Dundrennan and Netherlaw yield a much higher rent. There are three corn mills in the parish, which appear to be amply sufficient for the purposes of the farmer.

*Fishings.*—Some years ago, a stake-net salmon fishing was established on the west side of the Bay of Auchencairn, by the proprietors of Balcary and Nutwood. It has been reasonably successful, yielding a steady and increasing rent. More recently, Mr Lenox of Port Mary has let the right of salmon fishing on the shores near to Burnfoot. The take of salmon here has not hitherto been great; but the fish are of the finest quality.

#### V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

*Villages.*—There are two villages in the parish, which have been already described,—the one at the head of the Bay of Auchencairn, and the other in the immediate vicinity of Dundrennan Abbey. There are three licensed public-houses in Auchencairn, and two at Dundrennan, which are well kept and regulated.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The greater proportion of the inhabitants of the parish belong to the Established Church, although there is a most respectable congregation of the Free Church at Auchencairn, under the ministry of the Rev. Mr Murray. The patronage of the parish belongs to the Crown; and it is a remarkable fact, that there have only been four incumbents of Rerrick since the Revolution. The first of these was the Rev. Mr Alexander Telfair, who is now chiefly known as the author of a very curious tract, printed at Edinburgh in 1696, under the following title:—*A True Relation of an Apparition, Expressions and Actings of a Spirit, which infested the house of Andrew Mackie, in Ring-croft of Stocking in the Paroch of Rerrick, in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, in Scotland, 1695.* It presents a curious picture of the times, that the truth of the details of supernatural agency contained in this relation “*is attested, as what they saw, heard, and felt*” by the ministers of Kells, Borgue, Crossmichael, Parton, and Kelton, and by several of the most respectable parishioners of Rerrick. Mr Telfair was succeeded, as minister of this parish, by Mr William Jameson, author of an ingenious *Essay on Virtue and Harmony*, published in 1749, and which indicates great metaphysical acuteness on the part of the writer. Mr Jameson died in 1790, and was succeeded by the late Mr James Thomson. In 1818, his son, the present incumbent, was appointed helper and successor to his father, who closed a long life of usefulness and respectability as a parish minister in 1826.

The stipend of Kerrick amounts to 16 chalders, of which L.16 is payable in money. The glebe extends to 16 imperial acres, and may be worth about L.40 per annum. The manse was built in 1790. An addition was made to it in 1811, and in the present year 1844, the heritors have again put it into a state of complete repair, and have erected a new steading of offices upon a convenient site. The manse is in a beautiful situation, immediately contiguous to the ruins of the abbey of Dundrennan, while the parish church is rather inconveniently situated more than a mile to the eastward on the road to Orroland.

*Education.*—There are two parochial schools in the parish, one at the village of Dundrennan, and the other at the village of Auchencairn. These schools are sufficient for the reception of the whole children in the parish, with the exception of those resident in a small district to the west of Bengairn, which, however, is fortunately within two miles of one of the parish schools of Kelton. The schoolmaster at Dundrennan has a salary of L.30, and the schoolmaster at Auchencairn a salary of L.21, 6s. 8d. per annum. Each of the schoolmasters has a free dwelling-house, and the average amount of annual fees in each school may be stated at L.70.

*Savings Banks.*—There is one in the parish. The average sum annually invested in it during the last three years has been L.169, and the average sum annually withdrawn L.62.

*Poor.*—The average number of persons receiving parochial aid is 34, and the average weekly sum allotted to each individual is 1s. 1½d. The average annual amount of contributions for the relief of the poor has been for some time past L.99, 5s., of which L.49, 5s. is obtained from collections at the church door,—L.45 is voluntarily contributed by the heritors,—and L.5 is drawn from legacies and mortifications. There has not hitherto been any legal assessment for providing for the poor in Kerrick, although it is not improbable this may become necessary in consequence of the recent investigations by the Poor Law Commissioners.

July 1844.