

Fuel.—Coal, conveyed in carts or by the railway, from the neighbouring parishes of Stevenston and Kilwinning, is the only fuel used throughout the parish.

July 1837.

PARISH OF DALRY.

PRESBYTERY OF IRVINE, SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR.

THE REV. THOMAS JOHNSTONE, MINISTER. *

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE ancient name of the parish appears to have been indiscriminately written *Dalry*, *Dalray*, and *Dalrye*. The modern name is *Dalry*. It is evidently derived from the Gaelic "*Dail*," a plain or valley, and "*Righ*," a king, signifying "*King's plain*" or "*King's valley*,"—a considerable portion of the parish being in the valley of Garnock. In ancient times, it is believed that not only the district of Carrick, but also a part of Cunninghame, was comprehended in the province or lordship of Galloway. A part, however, was under the royal jurisdiction, and bore the designation of *the King's District*, hence the name of *King's Valley* was derived. A field, on part of which the village is built, still bears the name of *Croftangry*, doubtless a corruption of *Croftanrigh*, or croft of the King.

Extent—Boundaries.—The parish extends in length, from north to south, 10 miles, and varies from 3 to 8 miles in breadth from east to west, and contains 29 square miles. It is bounded on the east by the parish of Beith; on the south and south-west, by the parishes of Kilwinning and Ardrossan; on the west and north-west, by the parishes of West Kilbride and Largs; and on the north and north-east, by the parish of Kilbirnie. The figure of the parish is very irregular, being narrowest at the middle. A stripe of hilly ground juts out from its northern side, about 3 miles in length, by 1 to 2 in breadth. A portion of the parish at this

ery, the necessary consequence of indulgence, are not wanting to attest the fearful extent of this most baneful and demoralizing habit.

* The following Account was drawn up by Mr Thomas Hogg, Junior, Tofts-Mill, Dalry.

extremity, containing about 1500 acres, is nearly dissevered from the rest by the parish of Largs.

Topographical Appearances.—The principal feature of the parish is a beautiful and fertile valley, which stretches through its middle and breadth, and varies from half a mile to a mile in width. Its elevation does not exceed 90 feet above the sea. The river Garnock flows through the valley in a winding course, and divides the parish into two divisions. On the west, the ground rises gradually from the valley, till it terminates on a ridge of hills on the north-west boundary of the parish. These hills, commencing at the coast at Largs, run in a south-east direction, in two parallel ranges for several miles. The eastern, which comprises the hilly stripe formerly mentioned, bends to the east, and joins the Kilbirnie hills. Its highest elevation is about 1200 feet above the sea. The western range, on its entrance into this parish, bends to the south-west, and terminates at the extremity of the parish. Baidland Hill, its highest point, is 946 feet above the sea. A small ridge of hilly ground runs to the south of this, the highest eminence of which, Caerwinning Hill, is 634 feet in height.

Cave.—On the estate of Blair, in the romantic and beautifully wooded glen of the Dusk, there is a natural cave in a precipitous bank of limestone. It is about 40 feet above the bed of the stream, and is covered by about 30 feet of rock and earth. It has two entrances. The western or main entrance is situated below a vast overhanging rock, 30 feet long by 27 in breadth, the brow of which is covered by the mountain-ash, hazel, and two large plane trees, which give it a picturesque appearance. Its interior resembles Gothic arched work. Part of the roof is supported by two massy columns. Its length is about 183 feet, and breadth from 5 to 12. Near the middle, it expands into a spacious chamber, 35 feet long by 12 broad, and 12 high. Its internal surface is covered by calcareous incrustations, and numerous crevices branch off from its sides. In former times, popular belief peopled it with elves. It consequently acquired the name of Elf-House. In later days, during the tyrannical reign of Charles II., it afforded a hiding-place to the Covenanters of this parish from the violence of their infuriated persecutors.

Climate.—The prevailing winds are from the W. and S. W., from which point it blows for nearly three-fourths of the year. These winds are sometimes strong and violent. During a few

weeks in spring, a cold withering easterly wind prevails, which, being often accompanied by frost, proves very detrimental to vegetation. From its proximity to the Atlantic, the climate is moist,—the rains are frequent, heavy, and long-continued, sometimes lasting for several weeks with little intermission, especially during the months of September and October. The most prevalent diseases as connected with the climate are consumption and rheumatism. The parish is, however, healthy, there being commonly about twenty persons alive above eighty years of age.

Hydrography.—There are a considerable number of springs in the parish, but none of them are remarkable for the quantity of water they discharge. The most important is at Loans Bridge, a chalybeate spring. A strong mineral spring, near Maulside, has long been noted for its salutary effects in scorbutic disorders. The valley of the Garnock appears to have been, at a remote period, a lake stretching from Dalry to Johnstone, in Renfrewshire, and of which the lochs of Kilbirnie and Castle Semple are the remains. In corroboration of this supposition, trees have been found imbedded in the soil, which were apparently deposited by the action of water. The river Garnock, which has its source in the parish of Kilbirnie, on the confines of the county with Renfrewshire, flows through this parish for seven miles, four of which are in a south-west direction. Below the manse it makes a sudden bend to the south, in which direction it flows for the remainder of its course to the sea, into which it falls at Irvine. It flows through a fertile plain, over a bed of gravel. Its declivity in this parish does not average above eight feet per mile, and in some places its motion is hardly perceptible. Its average breadth is about twenty yards. In its course through this parish it receives a number of tributary streams, the chief of which are the Rye and Caaf. The former stream rises in the parish of Largs, and flows through an open moorish country, till about three miles above its junction with the Garnock. It then enters a deep romantic glen, the banks of which are beautifully wooded, in which it rushes impetuously for two miles. It then enters the plain of Garnock, and joins that river after a course of nine miles. The Caaf has its source on the boundaries of Kilbride and Largs. On its descending from the moorish country, a dike of basaltic rock crosses its course, through which it has scooped a narrow passage, in which it rushes with inconceivable velocity. Its banks are almost destitute of wood till near its junction with the Garnock, when it enters a deep

and rocky dell, and rushes through among immense blocks of freestone, and over a succession of rapids, till it is precipitated over a considerable fall, forming a fine cascade, about 24 feet in height by 20 in width. Two large rocks rise upon each side of the cascade, while the adjacent banks are clothed with wood.

Geology and Mineralogy.—The strata on the east of the Garnock incline to the south, and partly to the east. Sandstone, limestone, and secondary trap greatly shattered, are the prevailing rocks. A field of limestone crosses the parish, south of the Dusk. North of this, a dike of trap rock stretches from near Blair House to the boundaries of Beith parish. Betwixt this and the Garnock is the coal formation; the intervening strata are sandstone, limestone, shale, and indurated clay. The coal lies at a depth of 12 to 30 fathoms. The seam is about 5 feet in thickness, and dips to the south 1 foot in 7. Various “steps” cross and derange the strata; one of these raises the coal twelve fathoms, and another 8 fathoms. Various dikes of shale or “till,” as it is provincially termed, also cross the strata. A dike of trap crosses the Barkip coal-field, in a direction from north-east to south-west. It is about 18 feet in thickness, and, for about the same distance on each side of the dike, the coal was completely charred. On the west of the Garnock two seams of coal are found. Dikes cross the strata chiefly south and north, and are formed of porphyry. Limestone is most abundant on this side of the parish. A field of limestone traverses its whole breadth, and is supposed to stretch from Ardrossan to Johnstone. The strata are less uniform than to the east of Garnock. The hills are composed of claystone porphyry, felspar porphyry, greenstone, wacke, and basalt. In the upper course of the Caaf, old red sandstone is abundant. Jasper is found among the porphyry rocks, and ribbon jasper is very abundant. Hornstone is found in the channel of the Caaf, in a bed of about 10 inches thick, resting on a species of limestone. Agates have been found in the water of Rye. Carbonate of lime is found imbedded in the greenstone trap rocks of Rye. Ironstone is found in various parts of the parish. Bands of ironstone are found in the roofs of the coal pits at Swinridgemuir.* Near the summit of Baidland Hill, at a height of 800 feet above the sea, a vein or dike of cannel coal is found betwixt two walls of carboniferous

* A valuable field of ironstone has been discovered since the Account was sent to press, on the estate of Blair, containing several seams, varying from two feet to six inches in thickness.

sandstone, the prevailing rock in the neighbourhood being porphyry. It runs in a direction from north-west to south-east, and is about 6 feet in depth and 4 to 5 in width at the top. It is very inflammable, and emits a strong sulphureous smell on being burned.

The greater part of the limestone quarries abound in petrifications. At Auchenskeigh these are numerous. Sea sand and small shells similar to those found on the sea shore are found in the incumbent earth. In sinking a coal mine recently at Swinridgemuir, great quantities of small shells were discovered in the indurated clay. Vegetable petrifications are numerous in the free-stone quarries there, and in the freestone rocks small cavities are found filled with moss earth.

Trees, chiefly oak, birch, and hazel, are found in all the mosses, generally lying in a direction from south-west to north-east. Several years ago, some persons in digging peats on the Barkip Moss, discovered hairs adhering to the peats. On excavating the moss the body of a cow was laid bare, with a rope formed of "shews," or the refuse of dressed lint, twisted about the horns. On being exposed to the atmosphere, the hair melted into a greasy substance, and the carcase speedily dissolved.

Soil.—On the east of the Garnock, the soil is chiefly a thin, cold, tenacious clay, retentive of moisture. There is a portion of loamy soil along the banks of the Garnock. There is also a considerable extent of moss mostly under cultivation. In the holm lands the soil is a deep alluvial loam. In some places, ten feet deep of soil has been found. On the west of the Garnock, there is a considerable extent of adhesive clay soil. Along the base of the hills, the soil, being incumbent on limestone or trap, is generally light and dry. Although immense quantities of boulders have been removed from the soil within these twenty years, there are still great numbers unmolested, especially on the north side of the parish.

Zoology.—The moor grounds abound with grouse, &c. Snipes frequent the marshy places. Herons are almost daily to be seen in search of fish in the Garnock. The kingfisher is also occasionally observed. Trout are found in all the streams. The Dusk has long been famed for the abundance and excellence of its trouts. These fish are every year becoming less abundant. Bands of persons in spring and summer, when the waters of Rye, Caaf, and other streams are low, sweep every pool with small meshed nets, and, not content with this, destroy the fish with quicklime,—a ne-

farious practice, which threatens to exterminate the whole fish in these waters. Salmon ascend the Garnock, but, owing to the shallowness of the water in summer, and the existence of a stake or bag-net fishery at the mouth of the river, few fish are to be found till near close-time. The salmon ascend to spawn in November and December, and return in January and February. Great numbers are destroyed during the spawning season by poachers principally from Kilbirnie. From the heavy floods in winter, the spawning beds are greatly injured, and immense quantities of the spawn are destroyed by the carting away of gravel from the river during the spawning season.

Botany.—From the extent and diversity of soils in the parish, it affords a wide field for botanical research. In the glens of Rye, Caaf, and Dusk, many uncommon and rare plants are to be found, although the botany of the parish has not been sufficiently investigated. The *Hypericum Androsæmum* is found in the glen of Rye, along with the *Campanula latifolia*, and the *Epilobium angustifolium* in abundance on the trap rocks, also the *Viburnum Opulus* or guelder-rose, and the *Paris quadrifolia*. The beautiful *Vella annua* or cress-rocket, grows in profusion along the banks of the Garnock. A little above the junction of that river with the Caaf, the *Senecio saracenicus* is found. The beautiful blue *Geranium pratense* grows abundantly by the road sides. In addition to the common blue hyacinth, which adorns every wood and glen, a white variety is also to be met with. The elegant *Narcissus Pseudonarcissus* are found in the woody banks of the Dusk. A remarkably beautiful species of the *Rosa canina*, or double dog-rose, grows plentifully on the road side from Dalry to Kilwinning by Blair. A beautiful species of double meadow ranunculus is found in the meadows above the Rye. Among other plants are the following:—*Hypericum pulchrum*, *H. humifusum*, *Epilobium parviflorum*, *Bidens tripartita*, *Rubus saxatilis*, *R. suberectus*, *Lythrum salicaria*, *Ajuga reptans*, *Epipactis latifolia*, *Trifolium medium*, *Spiræa salicifolia*, *Circeà lutetiana*, *Lychnis flos-Cuculi alba*, *Zanichellia palustris*, *Barbarea vulgaris*, *Geranium sylvaticum*, *Tussilago petasites*, *Luzula maxima*, *Scirpus sylvaticus*, *Salix pentandra*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Agrimonia Eupatoria*, *Nuphar lutea*. White, red, and blue varieties of the *Polygala vulgaris* are abundant in the heathy grounds, as also a white variety of heath. Among the fungi are noticed, *Boletus luteus*, *Amanita muscaria*, and among the ferns *Blechnum boreale*. Among the cryptogamous plants

may be enumerated *Bryum turbinatum*, *B. ligulatum*, *B. hornum*, *Jungermannia asplenoides*, *J. bidentata*, *Hookeria lucens*.

Plantations.—A great extent of land has been planted within these forty years, principally by Colonel Blair of Blair. The trees chiefly planted are the oak, ash, beech, elm, plane, chestnut, horse-chestnut, willow, silver, and spruce firs, and larch. The greater part of the Blair plantations have been formed on steep rocky banks, which in their natural state were of little value. Although the trees in these plantations have generally thriven admirably, those with a northern, show a decided superiority over those with a southern exposure. The latter are more liable to be affected by the droughts of summer, and are more apt to become stunted in their growth; while the wood is less firm in its texture, and not so durable as that which has a northern exposure. Extensive plantations have been formed on moss-land by J. Smith, Esq. of Swinridgemuir, and A. Mitchell Esq. of Maulside; especially the latter gentleman, who has, by judicious planting, greatly improved as well as beautified a portion of the parish, hitherto very bleak. The trees are healthy and thriving on this soil, and by no means inferior to any plantation in the neighbourhood. Although much has been effected in planting within these forty years, much still remains to be done. This is particularly the case in regard to the north and north-west sides of the parish.

Large Trees.—In the vicinity of Blair House, there is growing a fine Spanish chestnut tree, believed to be among the largest of the kind in Scotland. It rises with a beautiful stem for upwards of 20 feet. Its girth at the ground is 16 feet 6 inches. Three feet above the ground it is 13 feet 3 inches, and diminishes little to the first branch. It has a fine head of foliage; although having formerly been nearly surrounded by other trees, its branches have not had full liberty to expand. It is growing on a sloping bank, having a north-west exposure. Its age is unknown. There are also some large plane-trees; the largest measures in circumference 18 feet 1 inch; the first branch is 11 feet in girth. In the policies are many beautiful specimens of evergreens, probably not excelled in Ayrshire. Many of the Portugal laurels exceed 30 feet in height. There are also some remarkably beautiful rhododendrons, one of which covers a space of ground nearly 60 feet in circumference; and when in full flower nothing can exceed its splendid appearance;

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Accounts of the Parish.—The only history of the parish hitherto published is to be found in Robertson's Topographical Account of Cuninghame. Colonel Blair, of Blair, has plans of every farm on his property, and a map of the whole estate. Many other proprietors have plans of their property. A map of the parish was published in 1827 by Mr Robert Aitken, land-surveyor, Beith.

Witchcraft.—This parish was the scene of one of those revolting acts which disgrace the annals of Scotland, of condemning persons to the flames for the imputed crimes of sorcery and witchcraft. This case, which is allowed to be the most extraordinary on record, occurred in 1576. Elizabeth or Bessie Dunlop, spouse of Andrew Jack in Linn,* was arraigned before the High Court of Justiciary, accused of sorcery, witchcraft, &c. Her own confession appears to have formed the principal evidence against her, and this was doubtless procured by torture. The substance of it was as follows: That one day when driving her cows to pasture, being greatly grieved by reason of affliction in her family, a person appeared to her who described himself as one Thome Reid, officer to the laird of Blair, who had died at Pinkie, and who informed her of what would take place in her family. Thome visited her frequently after this, by whose aid she commenced the practice of a wise woman, curing diseases, and assisting in the recovery of stolen goods. Her profession appears to have prospered until she drew the evil eye of the law upon her, when, having been apprehended and imprisoned in the jail of Irvine, and subsequently tried at Edinburgh, she was condemned to be "*worried*" at the stake, before being consumed by the flames. The intervention of Thome Reid, as a partner in guilt, did not avail the unfortunate woman, neither did the fact operate in her favour, that her skill was never directed to iniquitous or hurtful ends. It is rather singular that no tradition exists of this tragical occurrence in the neighbourhood.†

Eminent Characters.—Among the patriots who resisted the usurpation of Edward I., Sir Bryce Blair stands distinguished. This parish has the high honour of being the birth place of this distinguished individual. Under pretence of holding a Justice-

* Linn or Lynne, originally the property of an ancient family of the name of Lynne, is believed to be the locality of the well known poem in Percie's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, "The Heir of Lynne."

† The trial of Bessie Dunlop is detailed in "*Pitcairn's Criminal Trials*," and Sir Walter Scott has embodied it in his treatise on "*Demonology and Witchcraft*."

aire, he was invited to Ayr, and there treacherously slain by the English in 1296, along with many other of the Ayrshire barons, among whom was the uncle of Sir William Wallace. Wallace did not fail amply to retaliate, by burning the English garrison at Ayr.

Captain Thomas Crawford, the captor of Dumbarton Castle in the reign of the unfortunate Mary, resided in this parish, having married the daughter and heiress of Ker of Kersland. His eldest son succeeded to the estate of Kersland, whose grandson, Robert Ker of Kersland, distinguished himself during the reign of Charles II. Being a zealous Covenanter, and deeming the form of Episcopacy forced by a profligate monarch on a reluctant nation, to be the prelude to Popery, he did not hesitate to join himself to that devoted band, who, in defence of their liberty and their faith, "loved not their lives unto the death." Having been concerned in a meeting at *Chitterflet*, now *Shutterflat*, near Beith, along with a number of the western gentlemen, he was accused of rebellion,—and being tried in his absence, his life was forfeited, his estate confiscated, and himself compelled to fly into Holland. Subsequently returning, he was apprehended and imprisoned for many years. The prison, however, took fire, and, making his escape, he again returned to Holland, where he died in 1680. At the Revolution his estate was restored to his family.* It came into the possession of John Crawford of Fergushill, who married his daughter, and assumed the name of Ker. This individual, by his political tergiversations, acquired considerable celebrity during the reigns of Queen Anne, and George I. His memoirs of these transactions are well known.

Sir Robert Cunningham, of Auchendarvie, was a native of this parish. Having studied medicine, he soon became eminent in his profession, and was appointed physician to Charles II. for Scotland. He accompanied Charles into England, and was of great service at the battle of Worcester. Having been taken prisoner, he was committed to the Tower; but in regard of his high talents,

* His sword, inkhorn, and a small jar belonging to him are still preserved. The sword is a real Andrew Ferrara, and wants the sheath. The inkhorn is a small circular horn tube, about five inches in length, having a small bulb at one extremity for containing the ink. The slender part is hollow, and contains a receptacle for the pens. The jar is rather a curious article. These relics, at the seizure of the effects at Kersland, were taken by a servant of the family, who bequeathed them to his nephew, the late Hugh Brown, piper, Dalry, a worthy who, had he lived in the days of Habbie Simpson, would have proved a formidable rival to the far-famed piper of Kilbarchan. Brown left them to Mr Andrew Crawford, Courthill, Dalry, in whose possession they now remain.

he was after a short imprisonment liberated by the Protector. After the restoration, he was reinstated in his office, and created a baronet of Nova Scotia.

Chief Land-Owners.—Colonel Blair of Blair is the largest proprietor, being possessed of nearly a third of the parish. The Earl of Glasgow ranks next in order. The following heritors have also considerable properties within the parish: John Smith, Esq. Swinridgemuir; Ebenezer Smith, Esq. Pitcon; William Millar, Esq. of Monkcastle, Windyedge, &c.; Miss Morris of Craig, Auldmuir; Lady Mary Montgomerie, Munoch; William Patrick, Esq. W. S. Barkip; J. Crichton, Linn, &c. The total number of proprietors is 90.

Parochial Registers.—The earliest existing registers are of births and marriages, and commence in 1683, but have not been regularly kept till 1724; from which period they are complete till the present time. The records of the transactions of the kirk-session commence in 1693, and, excepting a blank from 1701 to 1717, have been most accurately kept to 1765. From that time to the incumbency of the present minister in 1821, it appears that the minutes of session were written on detached slips of paper, and, as might be expected from such a slovenly practice, they have all been lost.

Antiquities.—On the summit of Caerwinning hill are the remains of an ancient fortification. It appears to have been formed of three concentric circles or walls of stone, inclosing a space of two acres. The greater part of the materials of which it was composed have been removed to build fences, &c. The outer wall cannot now be easily traced, but, from what remains, it appears to have been from 10 to 12 feet in thickness. The entrance has been on the western side. The vestiges of a fosse or ditch are still visible at the foot of the hill. It must have been a place of great strength, and commands a view of the surrounding country for many miles. The stones must have been brought from a considerable distance, being a species of tuffaceous trap, while the hill itself is composed of felspar porphyry. It is believed that the Scottish army were encamped in this fortification previous to the battle of Largs. The ruins of an ancient square fort formerly stood on the banks of the Rye, on the brink of a precipitous rock called the Aitnach Craig. About forty years ago they were wholly removed.

In the vicinity of the town is an ancient mound called the

Courthill. It is of a conical form, and is covered with the finest verdure. These mounds appear to have been the places for dispensing justice. A stone, which tradition asserts to have supported the gallows, formerly stood a little east of the moat. A few years ago an attempt was made to level this interesting monument of antiquity, in order to fill up some hollows in the field where it is situated, but the hill proving to have been formed of rubbish, the design was abandoned, not, however, till its appearance was greatly disfigured. Various tumuli have been discovered in this parish. In forming the road to Auchinmede a stone coffin was discovered containing human bones. A cairn was removed on the lands of Camphill, on the formation of the Largs road, which contained human bones, probably of some warrior who fell at the battle of Largs. On the lands of Linn, where the ruins of a Romish chapel lately stood, four urns were found containing burnt human bones. At Auchingree two similar urns were also discovered. About ten years ago, an urn was discovered near Blair House, containing burnt bones, and ashes apparently of coal. A part of the jaw bone was unconsumed, which, with the remains of the urn, is in the possession of the gardener at Blair. A sword was found a few years since in the vicinity of Dalry. The blade fell to pieces on being removed; the handle is of brass in two hollow pieces soldered together, and is ornamented with the figure of a dragon. It is now in the possession of Mr Andrew Crawford, Courthill, who has likewise one of those ancient spinning instruments, the "rock," which was in the possession of the family of Hugh Brown, piper, since 1498, till within these few years, when its present owner acquired it.

There is in the parish church an old oak seat, which was originally the family pew of the Boyds of Pitcon, now extinct. It has the arms of the family, with the initials R. B., and the date 1634, carved on the back, and is in excellent preservation.

Modern Buildings.—An elegant mansion has been built at Swinridgemuir by Mr Smith, the stones being procured from the quarry on his own estate.—Mr Mitchell of Maulside has erected a commodious house on his property.—An excellent inn has been built in the village within the last two years, with a large hall attached.—A gas work was erected in 1833. The building materials are chiefly procured from Swinridgemuir and Highfield quarries.

III.—POPULATION.

The population in 1758, according to Dr Webster's return, was	1498
1792, Statistical Account,	2000
1801, Parliamentary census,	2321
1811,	2815
1821,	3313
1831, males, 1833—females, 1906,	3739
1835, December. males, 1907—females, 1934,	3841

The small increase of the population since 1831 may be accounted for partly by the ravages of cholera, and also from the small number of houses that have been built of late years. Many families have been obliged to leave the parish in consequence of their inability to procure houses.

Number of persons residing in the town,	1934
in the villages of Linn and Drakemire,	126
in the country,	1781
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	3841

Yearly average of births for the last seven years.

Established Church,	71
United Secession,	16
Original Burghers, about	7
Others,	15
	<hr/>
	109

It is believed that this is nearly correct. Every child baptised in the Established Church must be registered previously. There are only two instances in the last seven years of persons not belonging to the Established Church registering the births of their children. A register is kept by the United Secession congregation, but, owing to the neglect of parents in registering their children, its accuracy cannot be depended on. The average number of marriages is 32. It has been impossible to ascertain the number of deaths, no register being kept.

Number of persons under 15 years of age is	1382
between 15 and 30,	1168
30 and 50,	752
50 and 70,	413
70 and 80,	107
80 and upwards,	19
	<hr/>
	3841

The number of families of independent fortune in the parish is 6
 proprietors of land of L. 50 and upwards, 56

Electors in the parish.

Old freeholders, of whom 5 are proprietors or sons of proprietors,	18
Proprietors of land,	40
of houses,	55
Tenants of land,	53
	<hr/>
	166
Unmarried men upwards of 50 years of age—bachelors,	33
widowers,	48
	81

Unmarried women upwards of 45, spinsters,	41
widows, - - - - -	99
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Number of families,	140
	760

The number of persons under fifteen years of age, divided by the families who have children, will give three children to each family.

Number of inhabited houses,	514
uninhabited or building,	5

Language.—Within the last forty years the language has considerably improved. The English has greatly superseded the Scottish dialect of that period. Many words that were in common use at that time would now be utterly unintelligible to the majority of the existing generation.

Customs—Amusements.—The ancient custom of “creeling” is still in existence in this parish. In former days, when penny-weddings were in vogue, it was customary for the parties who were at the wedding to assemble the following day, in order to “creel” the bridegroom. Having procured a *creel* or wicker basket, they tied it on the back of the young gudeman, and placed a long pole with a broom affixed to the top, over his left shoulder. Thus equipped he was forced to run a race, followed by the young gudewife with a knife to cut the cords, and who, according to the alacrity with which she endeavoured to unloose the creel, showed her satisfaction at the marriage. After which the parties returned to the house to consume the fragments of the preceding day’s feast. About forty or fifty years ago, weddings having become less numerously attended than formerly, the custom underwent considerable alteration, and was deferred to new-year’s-day. Accordingly, on this morning the young men of the village assemble provided with a wicker hamper, or crockery crate, filled with stones, with which they visit the houses of all those who may have entered the bands of matrimony during the preceding year, and compel each young gudeman to bear the “creel” to his nearest neighbour who may have qualified himself for the honour. Resistance is generally useless, as a number of stout fellows soon compel the refractory person to submit, with the addition probably of one of their number in the “creel,” as the reward of his obduracy. The “creeling” is generally, however, conducted throughout with the greatest good humour; yet, harmless as the custom is, individuals have been known, who, in order to avoid the ceremony, have regularly for fifteen years absented themselves from home for a fortnight at that season.

The custom of the "baal-fire" or "*Tannel*" is still observed on the last of July, St Margaret's Day. For some weeks previous, the boys perambulate the parish with large horns, soliciting contributions for the purchase of coals for the bonfire. Formerly, it was customary to have a piper, and dance a reel round the *tannel*, but this has fallen into desuetude. These bonfires are believed to have originated in the baal-fires of the Scandinavians, and to have been adopted, along with other Pagan ceremonies, by the Romish clergy, and transferred to the anniversary of some tutelar saint,—no doubt with the view of reconciling the people to Christianity, by incorporating with it the observances of their ancient superstition.

The game of kyles* is a very popular amusement in this parish. Curling is a favourite game; but, from the mildness of the winters for many years, an opportunity rarely occurs of enjoying it.

Habits of the People, &c.—The people are generally cleanly in their habits. Within the last fifteen years, a great change has taken place on the dress of the people. On Sabbaths they appear in a style little if anything inferior to that of the inhabitants in the same rank of life of Edinburgh or Glasgow. The ancient checked plaid still maintains its place in the ordinary dress of females. It is formed of red and blue or green checks, and worn over the head and shoulders, hanging down in front.

With some few exceptions, the farmers and proprietors commonly take their principal meals along with their servants, who receive the same treatment as their own families,—and in no part of the country are farm-servants more uniformly better treated than in this parish. The ordinary food of the country people is for breakfast oatmeal porridge, made with whey, bread, cheese and milk,—in winter, pork-ham is given instead of cheese. For dinner, broth, beef, potatoes, bread, cheese and milk, with variations of pork or

* The kyles or keels are nine wooden pins turned out of ash, about a foot in length, and two inches in diameter at bottom, tapering towards the top. One of these is rather thicker and two inches longer than the rest, and is denominated the king. The kyles are placed upright, about nine inches distant from each other, in three lines, the king in the centre, forming a parallelogram, with the angle towards the player, who stands about thirty yards distant, and aims a wooden ball about nine inches diameter at the kyles. Whether he overturns them or not he is entitled to another throw from the place to which the ball has rolled. The great difficulty in playing the game, and in which the most skill is requisite, is to throw down the exact number which completes the game; for instance should forty be the game, and one party stood thirty-five, if the person whose turn it might be to play overturned six kyles, the party could be "debuished;" that is, they resume their former position in the game, while the "debuisher" would play the stroke over again. The king counts no more should it be overturned along with the others than a common kyle; but should it be struck down without overturning any other kyle, a rare achievement, it is deemed equivalent to prostrating them all.

fish. Porridge generally for supper, or potatoes pared, boiled, and mashed with butter. Scones made from a mixture of oats, pease, or beans, with wheat or barley, ground fine, and denominated "*mashlum*" are in general use, and form a wholesome and palatable food.

Although the greater part of the manufacturing population have for some years had to contend with low wages, and often a scanty supply of work, provisions have been low, and articles of clothing cheap,—and the majority of the members of families being engaged in some employment, with industry, temperate habits, and frugal management, the working classes have been enabled to enjoy a reasonable share of the comforts of society. The great body of the people may be said to be contented in their circumstances. The people are in general of an intellectual character. The majority of them are moral in their habits, and strictly attentive to their religious duties.

Poaching.—A number of years ago, the parish was infested by a gang of notorious poachers, persons of idle, drunken, disorderly habits and profligate manners. These, however, have been broken up and dispersed, so that there is not above one or two individuals at present in the parish addicted to this demoralizing pursuit. There is still some salmon poaching, although it is decreasing. Smuggling and pawnbroking are alike unknown in this parish.

During the last three years there were 21 illegitimate births in the parish.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Males employed in agriculture,	304
manufactures,	300
retail trade and handicraft,	146
Wholesale merchants, professional and other educated men,	30
Labourers not agricultural,	90
All other males above 20 years of age,	47
All other male servants,	10
female servants,	176

The number of imperial acres of land either cultivated or occasionally in tillage is, 12,287

And of land which remains constantly in waste or in pasture, 6089

From the marks of the plough still visible on the hill sides, it appears that land was formerly under cultivation, which now remains unmolested by either plough or spade. In former times the lowlands being exhausted by the wretched mode of husbandry then practised, produced little but weeds; and in order to raise corn sufficient for the subsistence of the population, it was necessary to have recourse to the hill lands. There are about 500 acres

which might be added to the cultivated land. There is no common in the parish.

The number of acres under wood is about 670. Pruning is usually performed from February to the end of April. The young wood, especially larch, is pruned with a bill-hook. The hard-wood is pruned as close to the trunk of the tree as is possible without injuring the bark. A small axe is generally used in the operation, and afterwards pared with a hand-knife. Full-grown trees are usually thinned when they begin to overtop each other.

Rent.—The rent of arable land averages L. 1, 5s. per imperial acre. The grazing of a cow, L. 3; of a quey, L. 1, 15s.; of a stirk, L. 1, 5s.; a cross sheep, 15s.; and a black-faced, 7s. 6d.

Rate of Wages, &c.—Farm-servants receive from L. 6 to L. 10 per half year, and board; female servants from L. 3 to L. 6 per half year; labourers receive from 1s. 6d. to 2s. per day. During harvest, reaper's wages are from 10s. to 15s. per week, and victuals; thatchers 2s. 6d. in summer, and 2s. in winter; tailors, 1s. 10d. to 2s. per day, with victuals in both cases; slaters, 3s. 6d. per day; wrights, 3s. in summer, 2s. 6d. in winter; masons, 2s. 10d. in summer, 2s. 6d. in winter.

The wood-work of a pair of harrows costs from 10s. to 16s.; cart-wheels, unshod, L. 2 to L. 2, 10s.; a close bodied cart, L. 2, 10s. to L. 3; including wheels, &c. complete, L. 7, to L. 10; a waggon and long-bodied cart, L. 3 to L. 3, 10s.; hard-wood from 2s. 6d. to 3s. per cubic foot; an iron plough, L. 4, 10s. to L. 5. A smith charges 3s. for shoeing a horse; cart wheels shod for 18s. to L. 1, 4s.; an iron five-barred gate, from 16s. to L. 1, 10s.

Breed of Stock.—The black-faced Linton forms the principal part of the sheep kept. Attempts are beginning to be made to improve the breed by a better selection of rams. In the lower parts of the parish, on most farms, a few sheep are kept, a cross betwixt the Cheviot and the old Leicester breed.

The Cunninghame or dairy breed is the only species of cattle reared. Although great attention is paid to the breeding of stock, the greater number of prize cattle in the neighbourhood being derived from the breeding stocks of this parish, still the breed has degenerated, the present stock of cattle in the parish being inferior to what it was twenty years ago. This may be ascribed to the high prices which first-rate cows bring, and to the great temptations which farmers are under to dispose of them, owing to the low price of farm produce and high rents. Cattle-shows have aided

to accelerate the disposal of them,—very many of the young prize cattle being sold to dealers immediately after the exhibition. The degeneracy is also owing to breeding from animals too closely connected, some farmers almost exclusively breeding “in and in.”

Dairy.—This district has long been celebrated for the excellence of its dairy produce, the milk being almost universally made into cheese. The number of cows at present kept in the parish is 1405. The annual produce of a cow in cheese in some situations will exceed thirty-five imperial stones, while in others it will not reach nineteen stones. The average produce for each cow may be about twenty-five imperial stones of sweet-milk cheese annually, or 35125 stones for the whole parish. Great care is taken in the manufacture of the cheese, and the utmost attention paid to cleanliness in all the operations of the dairy. The whey is given to pigs, the whey from three cows being sufficient to maintain a pig during summer. The cows are pastured during summer. In winter, on some farms, they receive turnips. In the greater number of cases, however, their only food is oat straw or meadow hay. After calving, they are allowed rye-grass hay and boiled food, till the grass affords a full bite. From the almost universal practice of allowing the rye-grass to ripen for seed previous to being cut, and the variety sown being chiefly annual seed, the pasture during the succeeding season is very bare, except on rich soils; and the cows being allowed to range the fields during winter until a few weeks previous to their calving, the fields are greatly poached, and the grass so injured, that sometimes the beginning of June elapses before the pastures afford a full bite. If a more rational system of laying down grass lands were practised, and the frequent drain system fully extended, the dairy produce of the parish might be doubled.

Husbandry.—The dairy forming the principal feature in the husbandry, nearly two-thirds of the arable land are in pasture. The tenants are restricted to cropping *one-third*, and in many instances *one-fourth* only is allowed to be under tillage. The rotation on five-sixths of the farms in the parish is *two white crops*, one of hay, and four or five years in pasture. Oats is the crop generally taken, excepting that a portion may be under potatoes, beans, &c. and should there be an intervening green crop, *three years' tillage* is permitted. On the holm lands and farms nearer the town, where there is easier access to manure, two-thirds are under cropping, and a more liberal rotation being practised, the lands are under high

cultivation, although on no farm is there a uniform rotation pursued. Summer-fallowing is practised by only a few individuals. About thirty-five imperial acres were under fallow last season, which was rather an unusual quantity. The cultivation of wheat has increased during the last fifteen years. In 1819 there were 18 Scotch acres of wheat; last year there were 250 imperial acres under this crop. The principal green crop is potatoes. The inhabitants of the town usually take as much ground from the neighbouring farmers as the ashes, &c. they collect through the year can manure. The farmer performs all the *carting, ploughing, and horse-hoeing*. The town's people plant and dig the potatoes, while the *hand-hoeing and weeding* is a pleasant recreation to them during the summer evenings. The rent is from 6d. to 10d. per fall, and the produce from eight to sixteen imperial stones per fall. This mode of procedure is beneficial to both parties. The farmer receives from L. 4, 10s. to L. 6, 10s. of rent per acre, and has, besides, his land manured at the rate of thirty or forty tons per acre; and the town's people have an abundant supply of a valuable article of food for less than *one penny* per stone, exclusive, of course, of the manure. Owing to the manure being mostly required for potatoes or beans, turnips have been little cultivated, although they are now sown in greater quantities than formerly. The crops are usually very heavy; and, including leaves, ninety-seven tons have been raised from *one* Scotch acre. The number of stock fed on turnips is limited, and consuming them on the field with sheep is unknown. Bone manure has only been tried by two individuals, but not with much success, owing to the loaminess of the soil. On the lighter soils no attempt has hitherto been made to prove its efficacy, but one farmer intends this year to give it a trial.

The rye-grass is allowed to ripen for seed, and after being mown, it is tied and stoked in the same manner as corn. When it has stood a sufficient time to allow the seed to harden, it is thrashed, and the seed sold to dealers, who export it to the English markets, from whence, under the name of English seed, it often returns the succeeding spring to other parts of the country. The produce varies from twelve to thirty bushels per acre, and the price from 5s. to 12s. per four bushels. The natural juices of the hay being absorbed before it is cut, renders it hard and dry, and greatly injures its quality; and if the hay be annual or a heavy crop, the land, instead of the verdure of a grass field, presents rather the appearance of corn stubble. The harvest often proving wet, in order to

prevent the corn from receiving injury from the weather, previous to being stacked, it is built into small piles called *huts*, containing five or six stooks each. The manner of forming these huts is as follows; two sheaves are set up reclining against each other, two sheaves are placed at right angles against these, so as to form a small pyramid; a row of sheaves is next placed sloping around these; another course is then made, which forms the base of the hut, about five feet in diameter. On this more courses are built, each course decreasing in diameter until the hut assumes the form of a cone. Two large sheaves are then placed upon the top, the bands being drawn up so as to allow the bottoms of the sheaves to be spread out and form a thatch. A small rope is then twisted from the grassy end of the sheaf, with which the top sheaves are firmly bound together. When neatly formed, these huts will resist the heaviest rains for several weeks, the top sheaves only sustaining injury.

Draining, &c.—Draining has been carried on to a great extent within these few years. During the last year alone, upwards of 100,000 yards of drains were executed in this parish. The size of the drains varies according to soil and circumstances. In general they are from 15 to 30 inches in depth, and from 5 to 9 in width at bottom. On moss land, drains in every alternate furrow have been cut $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet deep and 18 inches wide. Stones, from their abundance, have been principally used here as draining materials. The expense of cutting a drain is from $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. to 4d. per fall of six yards. The expense of a drain 26 inches deep by 9 wide, may cost 9d. per fall, including all expenses. The cost, however, varies according to soil and access to materials for filling the drains. In general it may be stated at from L. 5 to L. 8 per acre. Tile-draining is becoming more general; and, owing to the difficulty in wet seasons of carting the stones, there can be no doubt, that, were a tile-work* erected in the parish, the use of stones in draining would in a great degree be superseded. Turf, straw, rushes, and the branches of the Scots fir, as they can be procured, are placed above the tiles to prevent the loose earth from entering and stopping the drains. In many situations gravel might be procured, or even micaceous schistus might be useful to place above the tiles. The greater part of the draining has been executed at the sole ex-

* Since this Account was sent to press, a tile-work has been erected, and is now in operation on the estate of Blair.

pense of the tenants. There are proprietors who bear a liberal proportion of the expense, but these unfortunately are few.

In the irrigation of land, the water is generally turned over the meadows during the months of October and November.

Embankments have been erected along the banks of the Gar-nock, to prevent its aggressions during inundations. These are principally formed of earth, in some places faced with stone. Stone walls have also been erected in some situations. These have all been built within these forty years.

Leases.—Few of the leases extend to nineteen years, the greater number being from ten to fifteen years duration. And some proprietors have adopted the short-sighted policy of letting their lands for *two* or *three* years only. For lands in high cultivation, which require little or no outlay beyond the expense of cultivation, twelve or fifteen years may be a sufficient length of lease. But when great outlay is required for improvement, as is the case with the greater number of the farms in the parish, this is too short a period to remunerate an enterprising tenant for his capital and skill,—while on a *two* years lease, not only is all improvement at a stand, but even the fences are in danger of becoming ruinous. The depreciation of the currency is the reason assigned for these short leases, which have such a tendency to produce a deterioration of the soil.

Farm-Buildings.—Within the last forty years, the greater part of the farm-houses have been rebuilt or repaired. Many of them are two storeys high, all are built of stone and mostly slated. There are a few old steadings still remaining, generally wretched in-commodious buildings,—these, however, are gradually being displaced by more ample houses. In general too little attention is paid to cleanliness or neatness around the farm-houses, although in this respect great improvement is taking place. The parish has long been enclosed and subdivided in the higher parts with stone dikes, and in the lower parts with thorn hedges. Although the latter may be said to be in good condition, still, with the exception of the hedges around the gentlemen's policies, the farm of Ryesholm, and some other places, too little attention is bestowed on the management and dressing of them.

Improvements.—The most important improvement has been the reclaiming of moss land by the application of lime. John Smith, Esq. of Swinridgemuir, has the honour of introducing this improvement. Mr Smith's attention was first directed to the sub-

ject by observing the effects produced on a piece of moss, where lime had been accidentally overturned, and which was covered with the finest herbage, while all around retained its original barrenness. To many the circumstance would not have appeared deserving of notice, but Mr Smith being engaged at the time in endeavouring to improve the moss that disfigured his estate, by paring and burning, his active and intelligent mind soon perceived the efficacious nature of the lime, and its vast superiority over the paring and burning system. It is unnecessary here to enter into a detail of the experiments which Mr Smith immediately commenced, and which were attended with complete success. Like many other improvements which have prejudice and ignorance to encounter, Mr Smith's experiments excited the universal derision and ridicule of his neighbours,—but the valuable crops which the moss produced, soon induced his tenants and others to follow his example; and the consequence has been, that extensive mosses which, in their natural state, were not worth a shilling an acre, have been converted into excellent land, and in some instances have yielded from ten to fifteen quarters of oats from a single Scotch acre. Although it is unnecessary to particularize all the improvements made on moss land, those effected on the estate of Maulside, by Andrew Mitchell, Esq. writer, Glasgow, are deserving of attention. This moss was of as sterile a nature as can well be conceived, having for ages been used for peats. By extensive draining and levelling, however, and removing in some places twelve feet of moss, and by incorporating with it immense quantities of clay, together with lime and other dung, it has been converted into a fertile soil. The first crop of oats it produced was valued at L. 11 per Scots acre, and the succeeding crop of hay at L. 7 per acre. Mr Mitchell has planted considerable plantations, which greatly beautify as well as shelter the surrounding country.

Within these twenty years, extensive improvements have been made in the irrigation of land. Large tracts of land in the higher parts of the parish, which formerly were not worth five shillings an acre, and bore nothing but heather, have, since the introduction of irrigation, become greatly increased in value, and now bear abundant crops of hay. Mr Robert Speirs of South Camphill has been the most extensive and successful improver in this branch of rural economy. A great extent of waste land has been brought under cultivation. Thorough draining has been extensively practised. The old high and crooked ridges have been levelled and

straightened. The increased facility afforded by the formation of new, and the repairing of old, roads has in no small degree conduced to these improvements. An excellent road has been formed between Dalry and Largs, instead of the dangerous horse-path, which was formerly the only means of communication. A new road has been made from Dalry to Beith, whereby carriers are enabled to bring from thirty to forty cwt. on a single horse cart, and on which a four-horse stage-coach runs. The greater part of the road is over land, which, thirty years ago, would hardly sustain the weight of a sheep. A new road has been formed from Kilbride and Ardrossan to near Dalry, but, from want of funds, the trustees have not been able to complete it; and the old road which it joins being very steep and ill kept, the public have not enjoyed the benefit that would otherwise have been derived from it.

Obstacles to Improvement.—Among the obstacles to improvement, is the decreasing capital of farmers, owing to low prices and high rents. Short leases, too, are an insurmountable obstacle to improvement, and it is preposterous in landlords to expect that farmers will expend their capital on a lease of ten or twelve years duration. Moreover, few proprietors are willing to give encouragement to improvement by defraying a portion of the expense necessary to effect that object. Perhaps the main cause of this unwillingness on the part of landlords arises from the perpetual threatening of alterations on the corn laws, by a certain class of politicians, who hold forth their repeal as a panacea for every evil, whether real or imaginary, with which the state may be afflicted. When at present * in this parish the best wheat will not average 4s. 3d. per bushel,—a lower price than at the date of the last Statistical Account, and when good bread is sold for 4d. the four pound loaf, and fine at 5d.,—it must appear how little reason there is to allege that the corn laws are a burden on the labouring classes. One serious obstacle to improvement in a considerable portion of the parish, is the great increase of game, especially of hares, which have increased to such an extent, that on some farms the produce will scarcely meet the cost of the seed and labour.

Mines and Quarries.—There are at present *five* coal-pits at work in the parish. In the barony of Kersland the coal has been long wrought. The workings were commenced at the western extremity on a level with the Garnock, and have hitherto been wrought to the crop of the coal, which is nearly exhausted. A considerable

* November 1835.

portion of the dip still remains to work. Furnaces have been erected at this pit for the burning of coke. The Swinridgemuir pits are in the same coal-field with this last. They are about thirty fathoms deep; the seam is about five feet thick. There is a pit at Coal-burn, and a small one at Cleaves. There is a pit also at Hillend of Pitcon, and another was sunk last year in the Earl of Glasgow's farm of Ryesholm. The coals are in general of excellent quality. The most valuable quarries in the parish are those of limestone. In addition to the limestone which many farmers burn for themselves, there are three public lime-works. The most extensive of these is at Howrat, on the Largs road. At Highfield and Auldmuir, limestone is raised and burned in considerable quantities. The lime is sold at the kilns at 1s. 3d. and 1s. 6d. per boll of five bushels. The boll is merely nominal, as no measure is used,—but an ordinary cart, which may contain sixteen bushels of un-slacked lime, is considered as holding two bolls.

Produce.—The average gross amount of raw produce, as nearly as can be ascertained, is as follows:—

Wheat, 264 imperial acres, at L. 6 per acre,	L. 1584	0	0
Oats, 2185 do. at L. 3, 10s.	7597	10	0
Barley, 54 do. at L. 5,	270	0	0
Potatoes, 348 do. at L. 10,	3480	0	0
Beans, 194 do. at L. 5,	970	0	0
Turnips, 105 do. at L. 6,	630	0	0
Hay, meadow,	950	0	0
Ryegrass,	2266	0	0
Lands in pasture,	7847	0	0
Flax,	245	0	0
Gardens and orchards,	200	0	0
Woods and plantations,	300	0	0
Mines and quarries,	5000	0	0
Salmon fishery,	5	0	0
	<hr/>		
	L. 31,344	10	0

Although considerable pains have been taken to ascertain the amount of raw produce, by a personal survey of each farm, the result is given with much doubt.

Manufactures.—Weaving is the principal manufacture in Dalry. The number of weavers is 500, of whom 61 are females, and 104 are apprentices. They are chiefly employed in silk and harness weaving, for the Paisley and Glasgow manufacturers. In general, the present rate of wages in Dalry would afford the weaver a fair remuneration for his labour, if he were constantly employed. The intelligence and enterprise of the weavers of Dalry prevented them from suffering, what, but for these qualities, they would have done on the depression occasioned to the cotton weaving by the

introduction of the power-loom. For early directing their attention to the higher descriptions of work, with which the power-looms cannot enter into competition, they thus saved their circumstances from undergoing that degree of depression which their fellow operatives endured in many other places.

In the former Account it was mentioned, that a company had erected a mill for the spinning of cotton, to which a large addition was in progress of building. Since that time, it has fallen into the possession of one individual, who converted it into a woollen carding and spinning-mill. It is driven by a large water-wheel, to which a steam engine has lately been added. Last year it was entirely fitted up with new machinery, for the slobing and spinning of carpet yarn. It gives employment to nine men, four women, and thirty boys and girls. The men receive from 6s. to 12s. per week, the women 4s. to 6s., and the children from 2s. 6d. to 5s. per week. This employment is not unfavourable to health.

A large number of the females in the parish are employed in sewing and embroidering for the Glasgow and Paisley markets, usually denominated Ayrshire needle-work. A good sewer may earn 1d. each hour at ordinary white work. For a short period during summer, when embroidery is brisk, 1s. 6d. to 2s. per day is occasionally earned at from fourteen to sixteen hours sitting. But this is gained at the probable sacrifice of health.

At Auchingree a small manufactory is established for turning wooden plates, ladles, and other culinary utensils,—it is driven by a small steam engine of two horse power.

Agricultural Association.—The Ardrossan Farmers' Society comprises this parish within its bounds, the annual cattle exhibition and ploughing-match being occasionally held here. The general Ayrshire Agricultural Association has determined to hold their exhibition in Cunninghame, at Dalry, alternately with Kilmarnock.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Town.—Dalry, the only town in the parish, is distant five miles S. W. from Beith, sixteen from Paisley, seven N. W. from Irvine, and fourteen from Kilmarnock, where a weekly grain market is held. It is beautifully situated on a considerable eminence on the right bank of the Garnock, betwixt the confluences of Rye and Caaf with that river, and appears to considerable advantage when viewed from the S. E. It owes its origin to the removal of the church to its present site, about 1608. At the beginning of last century there

were only six houses of two storeys in the village, the population not exceeding 100. At the date of the last Statistical Account, the number of persons was 800; while at present the population is about 2000. The town consists of five streets, three of which, meeting nearly in its centre, form a small square. It contains a considerable number of well-built houses, and can boast of several excellent shops. There are three haberdashers, eight grocers, four bakers, and four inns, which afford every accommodation to travellers, besides five public-houses. A gas company was formed, and gas works erected in 1834. Like those of the majority of places which possess no system of police, the streets are generally in a very miry condition. They have lately been lighted with gas, the expense of which has been defrayed by subscription among the inhabitants. The chief employment of the population is weaving for the Glasgow and Paisley manufacturers.

Means of Communication.—The parish enjoys ample means of communication. There is a daily post, and a stage-coach from Saltcoats to Glasgow, which passes every morning, and returns in the evening. Two carriers travel twice a week to Paisley and Glasgow, while intercourse is maintained almost daily with the surrounding towns and villages, by the bread-carts which leave Dalry. The turnpike roads extend 22 miles in length; and the parish roads 26½ miles. There are five toll-bars in the parish. The rates are moderate,—2d. being charged for a cart, and 1d. for a horse, with the exception of the bar on the Largs road, the charge at which trebles that of the other tolls. The roads in general are in good order, though many of them are steep and ill-directed. About eighty years ago, there was nothing deserving the name of a road in the parish, the intercourse being chiefly carried on on horseback, or on cars destitute of wheels. The roads were consequently mere horse-paths, and, from the boggy nature of the low grounds, the more hilly paths were preferred. As intercourse increased, these gradually underwent repair, until they assumed their present appearance. Wherever practicable, the acclivities have been cut, or new roads formed to avoid them.

Bridges.—The Garnock is crossed by two stone bridges, one of two, and another of three arches. Both of these were originally steep and narrow, but at the formation of the new road to Beith the steepness was remedied, although they still continue as narrow as ever. A new bridge has been erected over the Rye, and another over the Caaf; both of them single arched. From

the great number of streams, bridges are numerous, and are generally in good condition, unless where the ledges have been wantonly thrown down; a practice disgraceful, though not peculiar to this parish.

Ecclesiastical State.—There were originally two churches in the parish. It appears from inscriptions on stones built into the present church, that these were united, and a church erected in its present site about the commencement of the seventeenth century. The church is distant six miles from the northern, and three and a-half from the eastern and southern boundaries of the parish; and is as conveniently situated for the greater part of the population, as the figure of the parish will admit. It is a plain edifice, and was erected in 1771, and received extensive internal repair in 1821, cast-iron pillars having been introduced to support the galleries and roof in place of the former wooden ones. It cannot, however, be pronounced in a sufficient condition, the walls being rent and forced outwards, while the roof has bent inwards. It affords accommodation for 870 persons, but, by placing pews along, and seats across the passages, 60 additional sittings have been obtained. Upwards of a third of the sittings belong to Colonel Blair of Blair, though, what is peculiar, none of his tenants have any right to occupy them, owing to the refusal of their predecessors to aid in carting materials at their own expense for the building of the church. The seats are annually let by public roup to the highest bidder. At the erection of the church, the proprietors of Pitcon and Kersland estates having agreed to give the materials of their aisles in the old church to aid in the erection of the new one, were allowed a proportionate number of sittings, amounting to about sixty each. The proprietors or occupiers of the soil have no right, however, to these sittings; those of Kersland now belonging to the proprietor of the feudal superiorities, while the Pitcon sittings have fallen into the hands of heritors, who let them in behalf of the poor. The remainder of the sittings are occupied by the heritors and their tenants, with the exception of the table or communion seats. It was the original intention that the table-seats should be free, but the scarcity of accommodation has compelled the letting of these also, and the proceeds are applied to the use of the poor. There are now no seats properly set apart for the accommodation of the poor. The population having doubled since the erection of the present church, the accommodation which it affords has become utterly inadequate to meet the wants of the people. Every

seat is let, and, owing to the unavoidable competition, the rent of many of them has been trebled within these few years; and many families unable to procure seats have been compelled either to absent themselves from the public worship of God, or to take sittings in the dissenting chapels. Owing to the peculiar manner in which many of the sittings were acquired, and the mode of letting others, every attempt hitherto made to procure the enlargement of the present church, or the erection of a new one, has proved unsuccessful. We are far, however, from despairing, that the acknowledged deficiency in church accommodation, no less than the insufficient, if not dangerous, condition of the building itself, will, in due time, induce the heritors to erect another, not only with increased accommodation, and better adapted for the comfort of the parishioners, but also in a style more in unison with the wealth of the parish, and more in accordance with the taste of the age, than the present structure.

The principal benefactions on record are, in 1810, L. 50 by Mr Service of Holms-of-Caaf; in 1811, L. 40 by Mrs Hunt of Ashgrove; in 1812, L. 252, 10s. by Mr John Aitken, farmer, Kirkbank, parish of Johnstone, Dumfries-shire; in 1829, Mrs Ferguson of Irvine, daughter of Mr Service, bequeathed L. 50 to the poor, which was partly expended on oatmeal during a period of severe depression in trade.

The manse was built in 1766, and has undergone extensive repairs at various periods, although it is still a damp and indifferent building. The yearly value of the glebe, which extends to 8 imperial acres, is L. 24. The stipend * for some years has averaged about L. 220, with L. 10 for communion elements. There are two dissenting chapels in the town; the one attached to the United Secession, and the other to the Original Burghers. The minister of the former has L. 113, and the latter L. 80 of stipend. The income in both is derived from church collections and seat rents; and in failure of these, from contributions levied on the congregation. The United Secession congregation had a manse for their late pastor, which was sold at his death, with a view to clear off part of the chapel debts. The number of families belonging to the Established Church is 500; the number of persons above twelve years of age, who attend public worship is 1722, and of communicants 1020.

* There have been only two augmentations of stipend since the year 1650.

Belonging to the	Fam.	Indivi.	Above 12 years of age attending		Sit.	Let.	Unlet.
			Public	Worship.			
United Secession,	122	540	389*	508	306	202	
Original Burghers,	45	234	152	352	176	176	
Reformed Presbyterians,	11	55	31	Place of worship at Kilbirnie,			
Relief,	13	77	31	Beith,			
Original Seceders,	6	16	12	Kilwinning,			
Baptists,	0	2	2	Saltcoats,			
Roman Catholics,	0	3	1	Irvine.			

No Episcopalians in the parish.

Divine service is well attended in the parish church, it being inconveniently over-crowded, except on some stormy days in winter, when the country people cannot attend. There are no societies for religious purposes in the parish. The average yearly collection for the Sabbath Schools amounts to L. 7, 10s. The only other extraordinary collections of late years have been for the Assembly's India Mission, L. 9, and for building a Gaelic chapel at Ardrossan, L. 8, 3s.

Education.—Besides the parochial, there are two private schools in the town; and one in the country part of the parish. The usual branches of instruction taught: in addition to English, writing and arithmetic, are book-keeping, geography, Latin, Greek, French, and mathematics. Those taught in the private schools are the same as in the parochial, with the exception of the three last branches. The schoolmaster's salary is L. 30, 13s., with L. 2, 2s. 9d. for deficiency of garden ground. He receives, besides, L. 5 for acting as clerk to the heritors, and as kirk-treasurer. Taking into account his perquisites as session-clerk, his salary will average L. 40 annually. This, together with the school fees, which will fully exceed L. 50 yearly, would give a fair remuneration to the teacher. The school, however, for a number of years, has been taught by an assistant, who receives the fees, while the principal enjoys the salary. The expense of education is, for English 1s. per month; if writing and arithmetic be included, 1s. 2d. per month; and when most of the other branches are taught, the expense is from 18s. to L. 1, 4s. per annum. It is believed that there are few of the young between six and fifteen years of age who cannot write, and none of the same age who cannot read. There are probably not half a dozen above fifteen who cannot read; but there are a considerable number above that age who cannot write. That the people are fully alive to the benefits of education is evident from the fact, that, at the date of the last Statistical Account, the number of children at school was 90, or one scholar to every twenty-two persons; while at pre-

* Of these 22 attend at Beith.

sent there are 390, or one in ten, independent of those at evening schools during the winter months, and at Sabbath schools. Gratifying as this increase is, it is still far short of what it ought to be. Many families, containing from five to eight children under fifteen years of age, keep only one child at school, while others have none at all. The children are sent to school at an earlier age than formerly, but in the majority of cases the time during which they are allowed to remain is very limited. Owing to the depressed circumstances of many of the manufacturing population, they are not only unable to defray the expense of instruction for their children during any length of time, but, from the same cause, are compelled to put them out to work at an early age, and consequently before their education can have advanced much beyond the mere preliminary stages.

Both the parochial and the private schools are far too confined for the health and comfort of the scholars. One of the private schools, originally a weaver's shop, 17 feet in length, by 16½ wide, is attended by no less than 100 children. The populous district of Muirhouse would itself require a school for the numerous children it contains.

Libraries.—There are three public libraries in the parish : 1. The Dalry Library was established in 1811. The terms are 2s. entry money, 6d. annually, and one penny per week for every two volumes borrowed. The number of members is about 120. It contains nearly 1000 volumes. It has been of great utility in improving the minds of the community in Dalry, which has long enjoyed a reputation for superior intelligence among the various villages of Ayrshire. Of late years, however, works of fiction have acquired an undue preponderance in the library; the object of many of the managers being, it is feared, not so much the selection of books fitted to instruct, as of those which would be read with most avidity, and consequently would tend most to increase the funds of the library.

2. The Dalry Church Library was instituted in August 1834, in connection with the parochial Sabbath school. The scholars of this school are entitled to the privilege of receiving books gratis. It is, besides, open to all parishioners, and to those not parishioners who attend the parish church, on payment of 1s. per annum. It contains at present about 600 volumes, all exclusively religious, besides smaller books for the younger scholars, about 300 of whom receive books. The average number of subscribers is 160.

3. The congregation of the United Secession formed a library last year, the terms being 1s. per annum to members and seat-holders, and 2s. to those not connected with the congregation. It contains about 170 volumes. It is earnestly hoped that these religious libraries, under the guiding Providence of God, may operate a permanently beneficial effect on the morals and religious feelings of the people.

Friendly Societies.—There are three friendly societies, having for their object the support of the members during sickness.

1. The Old Friendly Society has existed since 1796; it has 93 members, and a stock of L. 142, 5s. 5d., the average expenditure for five years being L. 14.

2. The Permanent Stock Friendly Society was formed in 1820; its present stock is L. 205. The expenditure has averaged L. 14, 3s. annually for the last five years; the members amount to 80. The payment to both of these societies is 1s. 6d. quarterly, and the members receive 4s. per week if confined to bed, and 2s. 6d. when not confined, but unable to labour.

3. The most important is the Free Gardener's Friendly Society. It was instituted in May 1820, and contains 334 members, who pay 1s. 6d. quarterly, and receive 6s. per week if bed-fast, and 4s. if not confined. The following is an abstract of the state of the funds, and the expenditure for the last ten years.

Amount of Stock—May	1827,	L.	427	12	7½	Expenditure, L.	3	1	0
	1828,		491	6	3½		15	12	0
	1829,		566	13	2		29	10	0
	1830,		604	13	7		44	14	0
	1831,		631	11	6½		70	4	0
	1832,		685	11	6½		59	10	0
	1833,		748	4	1½		50	10	0
	1834,		838	11	2		38	14	0
	1835,		939	14	1½		41	10	0
	1836,		1007	2	10		53	10	0

In 1831 the society was constituted agreeably to the act of Parliament relating to friendly societies—and the scale of ages recommended by the Highland Society adopted. These societies have been of great utility in promoting industrious habits, and independent principles among the community, their members being in a great measure insured against pauperism when afflicted with disease or old age, and unable to labour. Since the formation of these two last societies, the poor funds expenditure has for some years been from L. 50 to L. 60. less than the expenditure previous to their institution, and has, on the whole, greatly decreased. A female friendly society was formed two years ago, but from the

nature of its constitution—persons of sixty years of age being admitted for 3s. of entry money—its advantages, it is feared, cannot be permanent. There is no saving's bank at present in the parish; but it is in contemplation to establish one of these valuable institutions.

Poor Funds.—The average number, for seven years, of persons receiving aid from the parochial funds is 31, and of occasional poor 16. The regular poor receive from 1s. 6d. to 14s. per month,—only one, a lunatic, is allowed the latter sum. The average payment to each person annually is L. 2, 11s. 6d. The sum expended in occasional assistance is L. 13, 12s. 3d. House rents, L. 19, 14s. 9½d. Regular poor, L. 79, 16s. 10½d. Total, L. 113, 15s. 10d. Of the sum paid to the regular poor, about L. 12 is given to persons in Paisley, Kilmarnock, and Newcastle, who, having at some time been resident in this parish, applied for parochial aid before they had acquired a settlement in any other.* The funds derived from collections at the church doors average L. 50, 11s. 1½d. annually. Interest of money, L. 10, 9s. 8d. Rents of church seats, L. 11. Proclamations of banns, and mortcloth money,† L. 8, 2s. 8d. Total, L. 80, 3s. 4½d. The deficiency is made up by a voluntary assessment on the heritors of 1½d. to 2d. per pound of valued rent. The poor funds being managed with parsimonious economy, it may be conceived that the pittance which the poor receive is barely adequate to sustain life, but, by the benevolence of private individuals, their condition is rendered more comfortable. Colonel Blair of Blair usually placed at the disposal of the session L. 10 yearly, which was expended on clothing, blankets, or coals, as appeared most necessary. In the case of aged persons, there is generally a great reluctance discovered to apply for parochial aid, many persons refraining from seeking relief till utterly destitute; and in some cases it has been necessary for the session almost to compel them to accept of assistance. This disposition soon disappears after the parties have been a few weeks on the roll, the object then being to procure as large an allow-

* A few years ago, a person, a native of Maybole, came to reside in this parish, in which he remained three years and a few weeks, when he again returned to his native place. After he had been nearly three years there, he applied to the session of Maybole for parochial aid. They refused his application, and referred him to the parish of Dalry, and the session here were obliged to maintain him for a number of years, although, with the exception of the time he resided in this parish, he had always lived in his native place.

† Some years ago, the heritors, on occasion of purchasing a new mortcloth, raised the dues on each interment to 10s. The consequence has been, that, during the past year, the whole receipt was 2s. 6d., although the dues were latterly lowered.

ance as possible, and much discontent is manifested should others receive a more liberal allowance than themselves. There is only one person in the parish who solicits public charity by means of begging, and who does not extend his calls beyond the town.

Fairs.—There are six fairs held annually; but none of them are of great importance. The principal fair is held on St Margaret's day, the last day of July. About forty years ago, this was one of the most extensive horse fairs in the west of Scotland; but so greatly has it degenerated, that a score of horse and two score of cattle would be reckoned a great fair. Some of the fairs have been established of late years by the publicans, ostensibly for the sale of cattle, lint, &c. but more truly for the disposal of their whisky, which is always a staple commodity at fairs. From the trifling amount of business transacted at these fairs, and the inducements they present to dissipation, characterized, too, as they often are, by quarrels and brawls, they ought to be abolished, as nuisances detrimental to the best interests of the community.

Inns, &c.—There are four inns and five public-houses in the parish, of which five are in the country part. Besides these, four of the grocers retail spirituous liquors. Their effect on the morals of the people is most pernicious. If we except the Largs road, there is no necessity for a single public-house in the country portion of the parish. It is doubtful whether a reduction of their number in the town would be of any benefit, as such a measure might only tend to increase the business of the remainder. One cause of the prevailing intemperance is to be found in the short term of apprenticeships. This seldom exceeds three or at most four years, and boys who are placed at trades at ten or twelve years of age become possessed of more money than discretion, by the time they are fifteen or sixteen; and in order to sustain a character for manliness they resort to the public-houses, and there spend what ought to have gone to the support of their families. A temperance society was formed some years ago, and at its formation was joined by a large number of members, but these not being able to maintain its principles, have dwindled to a very few, and the society never having been countenanced by the more influential portion of the community, has now only a nominal existence.

Fuel.—Coals are the chief fuel consumed. Peats are used only in the vicinity of the mosses, or in small quantities, by the inhabitants of the towns to kindle their fires. Coals are sold at the

pits at 3s. the cart load, and laid down in Dalry at 3s. 8d. and 4s. per cart, or 4s. 9d. per ton.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

Since the publication of the former Statistical Account, the population has nearly doubled, and the rent of the parish has increased from L. 6350 to L. 17,712. A great extent of moss waste land has been brought under cultivation. New roads have been formed, and the old ones greatly improved. Several hundred acres of land have been planted, and are now thriving plantations. Furrow-draining has been most extensively practised. Improved farm steadings have been erected, and are still increasing. Improved implements of husbandry have been introduced; iron ploughs have entirely superseded those of wood; and the old cumbrous stone cheese-presses have given place to the iron lever press, a portable and neatly constructed article.

The Ardrossan canal was destined to have passed through this parish. But having been finished only from Glasgow to Johnstone, an act of Parliament was obtained in 1825, to complete the communication from Johnstone to Ardrossan by a rail-road. It has only, however, been carried from Ardrossan to Kilwinning. As it would have passed, had it been completed, for six miles through Dalry, intersecting extensive fields of coal, limestone, and freestone, it would have proved of essential benefit to the parish. A survey was lately taken of a rail-road from Glasgow to Ayr by Dalry, for which the requisite funds have been subscribed. It is probable, therefore, that this parish will ere long enjoy the advantages of this mode of communication.

June 1836.