

PARISH OF WEST KILBRIDE.

PREBYTERY OF IRVINE, SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR.

THE REV. THOMAS FINDLAY, MINISTER.*

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—KILBRIDE, the ancient as well as present name of this parish, is obviously derived from St Bryde, a virgin of great celebrity in the Scotch Kalendar, to whom the church was dedicated; and on whose anniversary or festival, on the 1st day of February, a fair, called *Brydsday*, has immemorially been held at the village or kirk-town. †

Topographical Appearances and Boundaries.—The parish of Kilbride, terminating the far projecting coast of Cuninghame to the westward, is finely situated on the shores of the Frith of Clyde, where that noble estuary suddenly expands itself immediately below the two Cumbrays. Towards the sea, the general appearance is green and fertile, yet much diversified and broken by steep banks and eminences of considerable height; whilst inland, the view is closed by a range of dusky moorland hills. In length, it is about 6 miles; its medium breadth may be about $2\frac{1}{2}$, where broadest, perhaps $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles, extending in all to about 8650 acres Scotch measure, ‡ exclusive of the Island of Little Cumbray. This parish is bounded on the north by the parish of Largs; on the east and south-east, by those of Dalry and Ardrossan respectively; south and west, it is washed by the sea; the general figure being trian-

* This Account has been drawn up by John Fullarton, Esq., an heritor in the parish.

† That this fair was originally kept on the first day of the month is confirmed by Pont's Topography of Cuninghame, MS. temp. James VI. In latter times the day has been changed to the second Tuesday. Fairs on festival days invariably originated with the clergy, who derived certain emoluments from them; and they were usually celebrated within the church and its precincts. In this place, the travelling merchants or packmen, even within the present century, continued to exhibit their wares within the church-yard. The general position of parish churches, near the northern boundary of their inclosures, may have had some reference to the purpose of these fairs.

‡ Scotch measure is invariably alluded to in this Account.

gular. A chain of pretty high hills, gradually declining, however, to, and terminating with its southern limits, runs along its whole inland boundary, occupying, perhaps, fully one-fourth of its superficies. This is a continuation of the hilly western part of Renfrewshire, and intervening parish of Largs. Kame hill, the highest of the range, here rises nearly 1000 feet above the sea-mark, from which it almost immediately springs. From these again are deflected to the westward several eminences of considerable altitude, though cultivated pretty far up; others stand quite detached, as those of Law, Ardneill, Tarbert, and some lesser heights in the vicinity of the village. Of the arable lands towards the coast, about 2000 acres consist of alluvial formations, but little elevated above the level of the sea, varying from a few feet to about 40. Some fissures or openings occur in the rocks near Portincross, as likewise in the Island of Little Cumbray, as afterwards to be noticed.

From its peninsulated figure, this parish has the advantage of an increased line of coast, in all extending to perhaps upwards of seven miles. The shore is low and shelving, consisting of alternate sandy bays and reefs of sandstone, except for about a mile at the promontory of Portincross, which is steep and rocky. To the north, the sands of Southanan, lying in a deep and sheltered curvature, extend fully two miles in length, and from which the tide recedes for nearly a mile in the centre. This fine plain, consisting of a soil in some degree adhesive, largely intermixed with shells, it has been supposed, might be embanked and reclaimed for cultivation; but the expense of such an undertaking, if at all practicable, will probably ever preclude the attempt being made. These sands are frequented by immense flocks of wild fowl, chiefly of the duck tribe, and contain likewise large beds of cockles and mussels, besides other varieties of shell-fish, as the clam, &c. Next southward lies the promontory of Portincross, which is terminated by the celebrated precipice called Ardneil Bank, in some old writings "Goldberrie head." * This majestic wall of rock, rising where highest to perhaps little less than 300 feet perpendicularly, ranges in a straight line along the water's edge, from which it is merely separated by a narrow slip of green land, and extends to about a mile in length. Along the bottom, the precipice is richly fringed

* "Goudberrie head, are grate heigh rockes, making a headland, and running in the maine oceane."—*Pont's Cuningham*.

with natural coppice, in which the oak, ash, hazel, and hawthorn, are thickly interwoven; upwards, the glossy ivy is widely spread, whilst gray lichens intermixed with large patches of a bright golden-colour succeed, lining the bold front to its outmost verge. Viewed from the plain below, the effect is highly impressive and sublime; whilst to approach its terrific summit, the vivid description by Shakspeare of the cliff of Dover is fully realized. The general mass of these stupendous rocks consists of dark-red sandstone, lying horizontally; but for a considerable space where highest, the sandstone about midway up is surmounted by a beautiful brown porphyry. This portion, dividing itself into three distinct and deeply separated cliffs of equal height and uniform appearance, has immemorably obtained the poetical cognomen of the *Three Sisters*, otherwise three *Jeans*, perhaps *Nuns*? and truly it were not difficult in their stately and solemn austerity to conceive a fanciful resemblance to the veiled sisterhood of superstitious observance.* On the south side of this promontory lies Ardroneil bay, a beautiful sandy crescent, which affords an agreeable promenade and easy access for bathing to those in search of health or recreation: others similar, though of less extent, succeed in the same direction, and terminate the shore southward.

Climate and Diseases.—The prevailing character of the climate in this quarter is moist and cloudy, with south and westerly winds. Generally, however, it is mild and salubrious, and the temperature for the most part pretty equable. This state of the weather may constitute fully one-half of the season; and under it the inhabitants are, perhaps, not less healthful than during the hot and arid periods, which not unfrequently occur in the summer and harvest months, the transition being often to a considerable degree sudden and excessive. There does not appear to be any very marked peculiarity of disease here. Rheumatism occasionally appears, though certainly not to any great extent; but peripneumony not unfrequently closes the scene with the aged. Fever has not often been marked by any peculiar severity; diseases of the phthisical class are, perhaps, here, as in most parts of the country, great-

* According to tradition, diamonds were contained in this part of the precipice; and which, it is said, have been seen by fishermen on the sea at night shining like stars in the face of the rock. Symson relates a similar tale of the Mull of Galloway, in his Account of that district. "Such (says he) as sail by it in a dark night have observed a great light, which hath occasioned some to say, that there is a rock of diamonds there." The tradition of the diamond, indeed, is common in many similar inaccessible places in other quarters.

ly more to be feared. Epilepsy is by no means of frequent occurrence, and small-pox for a long time past has been but little heard of,—parents happily having long since got over their “dread of popular odium, or their own superstitious opinions.” *

Hydrography.—No medicinal waters, with the exception of slight chalybeate impregnations, have ever been discovered in this place. Neither are there any lakes or rivers properly so called. The more considerable streamlets are, Gourock, Kilbride, (anciently Millburn,) Southannan and Fairly burns, which all have their source within or near the eastern limits of the parish, and fall into the Frith westward. Southannan is distinguished by its picturesque cascade and beautiful sylvan banks. Of the others, there is nothing very notable to remark, except that, like the latter, they have all in former times been employed in driving corn-mills, as that of Kilbride (the only one) still continues to be used. Excellent and copious springs very much abound; the largest and purest perhaps is that of Dornell-well, on the farm of South Kilruskin.

Geology and Mineralogy.—The general basis here consists of coarse sandstone, declining about a foot in twenty to the south-east. The strata which come into view along the sea shore are chiefly brown or reddish; higher up it becomes clouded with white, whilst the highest of all to the eastward are wholly of the latter colour, a good deal tinged and streaked with ochre of iron. Numerous extensive veins of whin rock, both of the basaltic and porphyritic kinds, intersect it in all directions; in some parts bulging out into considerable hills, which, of course, are all distinguished by their rounded figures, and beautiful verdure. The brown slate porphyry before alluded to forms the summits of several considerable hills, as those of Crosby and others, whilst Kame hill, of still greater altitude, is crowned with dark trap of perhaps 200 feet in thickness. Slight veins of lime appear at Ardneill point, on the shore and other places, but seemingly far too limited and impure ever to be of any avail. At the south end of Ardneill bank, is a very remarkable stratum of puddingstone, the rolled fragments of which, being at places of considerable size, and the cementing medium bearing striking marks of fusion. This stratum lies nearly north and south, dipping pretty acutely westward. It rises near-

* Only one distinct case of cholera occurred here during the alarming epidemic of 1832, and it proved fatal. The individual was employed as a carrier to Glasgow, where he appears to have caught the infection. In 1835, small-pox reappeared to a considerable extent, and of which two or three persons of middle age have died.

ly to the summit of the precipice, and in it is a large opening or fissure, called the "cove," long tenanted by the usual creations of popular fancy,—“fairies and the elfin train.” Slight veins of different kinds of spar occur, and in the trap formations rock crystals have been found; but neither coal nor any metallic ore of any value have ever been met with. As stated in the former account, there is a quarry of excellent millstones, situated on Kame hill. These are formed from a stratum of breccia—white sandstone, minutely intermixed with quartz,—which occurs near the summit of the hill, immediately under the trap formation before alluded to. The number of millstones annually produced is about thirty. They are esteemed of excellent quality, are taken to a great distance at home, and some few are exported.

Soil.—Generally, the soil of this parish may be divided into two classes: that which lies on the original formations of the more elevated parts, and secondly, that which covers the alluvial plains by the coast side, and in the valley bottoms. Of the first, which may comprehend nearly four-fifths of the whole, a considerable part even within the arable range consists of poor spongy moorish land, thin, cold, and ungenial, incumbent on a coarse tilly and impervious foundation. There are nevertheless in this division many portions of very kindly land, of the loamy and calcareous species, chiefly around the bases of the hills and rising grounds. Part of the alluvial division is of a deep dark mould of the finest quality, but still a very large proportion degenerates into a poor hungry corroding gravel, whilst a narrow stripe by the sea side consists of arid burning sand. A considerable extent of moss or peat bogs is interspersed in the moorish parts; and in the valley behind Ardneill hills, near the coast, there is a fine field of this sort, extending in all to perhaps 150 acres, which has recently been advantageously reclaimed and cultivated.

Wherever the sandstone formation prevails, the hills are generally covered with heath, of which there are several varieties. On those hills, composed of whin rock, and on the dry gravelly soils by the coast side, furze greatly predominates, with a little broom; whilst the arable fields in these quarters suffer much from what is termed here the *runch*—*Raphanum raphanistrum*.

Zoology.—From the names of several places, such as Wildcat-road and Catcraigs, the native cat would seem at some time to have been a common inhabitant of this neighbourhood. But the

race is probably now exterminated. On the coast, the seal and otter are still pretty numerous; and the badger yet maintains his footing, especially in his stronghold of Ardneill Bank. Hares and the more common species of game are numerous; and rabbits are thinly sprinkled over many places; but no quadruped which may strictly be reckoned uncommon possibly exists here. The falcon or goshawk has immemorially found a suitable retreat for her eyrie in the cliffs of Ardneill Bank. The young can only be obtained by letting a person down over the rocks by means of ropes, which has sometimes been done.

Fisheries.—With the exception of a few trout found in the streamlets, fishing here is confined to the sea. Herring are occasionally taken in considerable quantities, but are too uncertain to induce any regular pursuit of them. The other species of fish usually found are, cod, whiting, mackerel, lythe and saithe, but except the last none of them are often very plentiful. A few lobsters are caught in their season, which are sent to the Glasgow market, chiefly by the steam-boats which pass this way.*

Woods and Plantations.—There is a general want of wood in this parish, in great part the consequence of long absenteeism among its proprietors; and assuredly nothing could equally contribute to its improvement, as the liberal and judicious introduction of sylvan embellishments in it. In particular, its absence in the vicinity of the sea is signally felt, where, of course, utility not less than just taste requires that it should be supplied with no sparing hand. The many steep banks, ravines, and hill faces, as well as portions of thin and broken land, which occur everywhere, are situations exceedingly fitting for such purposes. The extent of woods of all sorts does, not probably exceed 150 acres, of which about one-third may be natural coppice; the rest mixed plantations of fir and hardwood, mostly of no great age. Unfortunately,

* Fishing, on the whole, has not for a long time been either extensive or profitable here. Its former importance has been very fully and properly alluded to in the first Account. There can be no doubt it was long a main dependence of the people here, and that its declension, as there surmised, may have affected the population. The many little "boat-ports," all less or more the work of art, still to be observed, clearly indicate the fact. Herring appear to have been a common stipulation in the payment of land-rent. In the Commissary Records of Glasgow, a tenant in Fairly, at his decease, 1601, is indebted to "the Lady Fairly, twa hundrith half-hundrith *mail* herring;" another in Largs owes "the Lady Robertland sax thousand salt herring, pryce of the thousand vj li. to be payit yeirlie betwixt Yuill and Candlermas," &c. And in the minutes of the session the following notice, amongst many others illustrative of this subject, occurs:—June 18, 1718, the session resolve that the sacrament "beheld to be before the middle of July because of the herring fishers."

the little which has been planted is generally too much in the background,—a notion having prevailed that trees would not thrive adjacent to the sea, which no doubt is in some degree correct, though by no means greatly to be regarded, as some experiments have fully shewn. The hard-wood tribes seem best suited to maritime situations; and of these the Scotch elm, plane, ash, beech, and oak appear to answer best here. But much depends on the nature of the subsoil. For the most part the fir species soon languish on sour or tilly foundations. Every care should be had to preserve the westerly skirts close and compact; not, however, by too thick planting, a common error. This will best be secured by introducing only the hardiest kinds, cautious thinning, and by allowing each plant to spread to its greatest dimensions, and to retain its branches as low down as possible. Nor should thorough draining and cultivation of the soil, where required, ever be omitted.

Some fine old trees still grow at the ruins of Southanan or Underbank, though latterly a great deal have been cut down. These were chiefly ash, plane, and Scotch elm; and part of a row of lime trees yet remain, of exceeding stately growth and beauty. The situation is on a narrow plain by the margin of the sea, under the cover of high and steep banks; the soil a rich brown loam on sandstone. At the old house of Crosby, there is a plantation of beeches, of perhaps 150 years' growth; but though of goodly height, the trees are deficient in girth, not having been properly thinned. These occupy a deep and narrow ravine in sandstone. There is likewise some old timber at Hunterston, and formerly there was more, which stands on an open sandy plain close by the sea beach. The trees here are chiefly ash, and said to be of excellent quality. In former times, most of the farm-houses, or *towns*, as they were called, were encircled by venerable ash and plane trees. Some of these still remain to enrich the locality, and mark the site of these immemorial homesteads of the original possessors of the soil; but very many of the finest have fallen under the reckless hand of cupidity or Gothic barbarity.

Botany.—The following list of the rarer plants found in this parish has been communicated by the Rev. David Landsborough, minister of Stevenston, a gentleman well known for his attainments in this elegant branch of science.

Allium vineale, Crow garlic.
Triglochin maritimum, Sea arrow-grass.
 ——— *palustre*, Marsh arrow-grass.
Eryum hirsutum, Hairy tare.

Trifolium arvense, Hare's-foot trefoil.
Scutellaria galericulata, Com. skull-cap.
Melica uniflora, Wood melic grass.
Vicia sylvatica, Wood vetch.

- Geranium sanguineum*, Bloody crane's bill.
Lavatera arborea, Sea side tree mallow.
Anagallis tenella, Bog pimpernel.
Lithospermum maritimum, Sea side gromwell.
Oenanthe pimpinelloides, Parsley water dropwort.
Pimpinella saxifraga, Burnet saxifrage.
Anthriscus vulgaris, Com. anthriscus.
Glaucium luteum, Yellow horned poppy.
Cakile maritima, Sea rocket.
Anthyllis vulneraria, Lady's finger.
Hypericum pulchrum, Small upright St John's wort.
 ————— *androsæmum*, Tutsan do.
 ————— *humifusum*, Trailing do.
 ————— *calicinum*, Large-flowered do.
Pinguicula Lusitanica, Pale butter-wort.
Arundo phragmites, Common reed.
Ligusticum Scoticum, Lovage.
Melica cærulea, Purple melic grass.
Solidago virgaurea, Golden rod.
Schœnus nigricans, Black bog rush.
Raphanus maritimus, Sea radish.
Cotyledon umbilicus, Wall penny-wort.
Triodia decumbens, Decumbent heath grass.
Sium latifolium, Broad-leaved water parsnip.
Carum verticillatum, Whorled caraway.
Circœa lutetiana, Enchanter's nightshade.
Scolopendrium officinale, Common hart's tongue.
Hypnum molluscum, Plumy-crested feather-moss.
Stictis pulmonaria, Lungwort sticta.
Hookeria lucens, Shining Hookeria.
Campanula latifolia, Broad-leaved bellflower.
Drosera rotundifolia, Round-leaved sundew.
Coronopus Ruellii, Swine's cress.
Eryngium maritimum, Sea holly.
Samolus valerandi, Water pimpernel.
Eupatorium cannabinum, Hemp-agrimony.
Daucus carota, Wild carrot.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Kilbride appears originally to have been a dependency of the monastery of Kitwinning, and the cure to have been served by a vicar,—the monks drawing the rectorial tithes. Since the dissolution of the Catholic establishment, its boundaries have been altered, and probably enlarged. About the year 1650, the extensive properties of Southanan and Crosby were disjoined from Largs, and annexed *quoad omnia* to Kilbride; on the other hand, the lands of Monfode, Knockewart, and Boydston, were separated from it, and adjoined to the parish of Ardrossan on the south, the two first *quoad omnia*, the last only *quoad sacra*.

This neighbourhood, with some probability, is said to have been the scene of conflicts consequent on the Norwegian descent at Largs in 1263; and doubtless it was exposed to much previous strife with these fierce northern marauders. At the hill of Goldberry, before alluded to, tradition asserts, that a detachment of the army of Haco was attacked and routed by a body of Scotchmen, led by Sir Robert Boyd, who is said to have been the progenitor of the family of Kilmarnock, and for these services to have received a grant of some lands in Cuningham. From the time of this affair, which seems finally to have terminated these long protracted incursions of this restless people, the western shores ever after enjoyed perhaps a greater degree of quiet than that of almost any other district of the country. They continued, however, to

contribute to the common defence of the kingdom. The family of Kilmarnock, which from about this era rose to be among the most considerable of the barons of the west, was mainly advanced by the services of Sir Robert Boyd in the cause of Bruce: Besides extensive grants of land elsewhere, he obtained from that monarch the estates of Kilbride and Ardneill, in this parish, and which were long held by his descendants.

In the unhappy carnage of Pinkie in 1547, the west country appears to have had but too considerable a share. From Kilbride, the lairds of Hunterston and Monfode fell in the fray. Again at the field of Langside, from their wide dependence on the Lord Boyd, great numbers from this quarter were present on the side of the Queen. Robert Boyd of Portincross, and his eldest son, Archibald, with a great many others of their name, afterwards obtained remissions for their appearance on that occasion. Nothing, however, appears to shew that this parish can claim any distinguished place amongst those "patriotic bands," who so greatly exalted the name of Scotchmen, by the noble stand they made in the cause of civil and religious liberty during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, though it is hardly to be doubted, many individuals, however lowly in place, must have shared in that fervour of spirit which shone so conspicuously throughout the west during that memorable period of the national history. As before noticed, the family of Kilmarnock had much influence here; and the part which that family ever acted in public affairs, if we except the services of their founder in the cause of Bruce, was not certainly such as in any way to entitle them to the respect or sympathy of their countrymen. The whole of the church lands here, which were considerable, were unequally shared betwixt Alexander, the "good" Earl of Glencairn, and Lord Boyd.*

Of the unfortunate smuggling traffic which ensued on the union of this country with England, the inhabitants of this parish were unhappily long and deeply participant. Many traces of this demoralizing pursuit may still be found in the records of its session,

* The following characteristic anecdote, relative to this parish, is preserved in Crawford's Genealogical Collections in the Advocates' Library. "Mr George Crawford, a son of Thirdpart, was minister at Kilbryde. He was deposed in the strick times of the Covenant for wardly mindedness and selling a horse on the Sabbath day, as old Portincross (Robert Boyd of Portincross, 'who dyed very aged, near 100 years of age, in 1721.'—*Ibidem.*) told me, who knew him minister at Kilbryde, and was a witness against him at the presbytery."

and of which a few specimens, for the gratification of the curious are here subjoined.*

Eminent Men.—As a talented scholar, the most eminent person connected with this parish was Dr Robert Simson of Glasgow, the well-known translator of Euclid. Dr Simson's progenitors had been long resident here, and at a pretty early period acquired some lands near the village, to which they gave the name of Kirktonhall, and to which in succession the Doctor himself succeeded. In the garden of this residence of his predecessors, there still remains a curious sun-dial, understood to have been designed by this eminent mathematician; it is inscribed with his father's and mother's initials, and the date 1717. Yet it would seem doubtful after all if Dr Simson was born at this place. His father, John Simson of Kirktonhall, was bred a merchant in Glasgow, and entered as a member of the merchant's house there in 1683; and in about two years afterwards, married Agnes, daughter of the Rev. Patrick Simson, minister of Renfrew. Of this union, which produced the remarkable issue of seventeen sons without any daughters, the Doctor was the eldest, being born October 14, 1687. He was educated at the university of Glasgow, under the care of his maternal uncle, the Rev. John Simson, Professor of Divinity there.† In 1711, he was appointed to the mathematical chair of his *alma mater*, it being tendered to him without any solicitation on his part; and in this situation, he continued for the long space of fifty-eight years, "with increasing reputation to himself, and great advantage to the university." He published many works on his favourite science which he professed, and in these has left "a monument of great genius and intellectual ability." Having nearly completed his eighty-first year, this distinguish-

* Feb. 3, 1720.—This day, the session was informed that some person was seen lately, carrying off brandy upon Sabbath morning, &c.

" Oct. 22, 1721.—This day, compered William King, and was examined about baking bread in his house upon the Lord's day. He did not deny but that it might be done, but neither he nor his wife knew anything of it. He told that there was a great confusion about his house that day, with souldiers and custom-house officers, who came up to take brandy on that day, &c.

" June 17, 1772.—This day the session was informed of Robert M'Caltre, in Broomcraig of Hunterston, his having abused with reproachful names Jean Kell; and particularly, for calling her a damned hypocrite in a public company, and on a Sabbath morning, in his own barn, where Archibald M'Kellip was brought in dead, having killed himself with drinking of brandy, &c.

" Aug 29, 1724.—The session being informed, that it is become a practice for young women to carry loads of brandy, some twelve, some sixteen miles out of the parish, &c.

" Jan. 21, 1757.—It was reported that Mr Kennedy, schoolmaster, deals in the running business, &c.

† The late lamented Sir John Moore was, maternally, grandson of Professor John Simson.

ed vindicator of the ancient geometers died at Glasgow, October 1, 1768, and was interred there in the Blackfriars burying-ground, where is placed to his memory a plain marble tablet, bearing an elaborate Latin inscription. Never having been married, Dr Simson was succeeded in his property of Kirktonhall and others by a grand-nephew of his own name, who afterwards disposed of it. In the year 1812, Dr Trail of Belfast published an account of the life and writings of Dr Simson; and there is a portrait of him placed in the public hall of the college of which he was so distinguished a member.

The late General Robert Boyd, Lieutenant-governor of Gibraltar during the memorable siege of that fortress in 1782, derived his origin from the parish of Kilbride. His parents, who were but of the class of small farmers, however, having removed to the burgh of Irvine, it has been assumed that the General was born there. However this may be, he went first to sea in a coasting vessel out of that port, was impressed into the navy, afterwards became a soldier, and, by a life of extraordinary perseverance in the exercise of great talents, rose to the distinguished station which he ultimately filled with the highest reputation and honour.

It has likewise been alleged that the illustrious Mr John Hunter, whose labours have so eminently enlarged the bounds of physical science, was remotely descended from the Hunters of Hunterston in this parish; but the evidence of this circumstance, which of course cannot in any way be necessary to the fame or reputation of such a man, seems to be but of an uncertain nature.

Division of Land.—This parish, as at present constituted, is properly divided into seven estates, here called *baronies*; which disposition of its territory is probably coeval with the arrangements which arose out of the new settlement under Robert the Bruce. These are as follows:

1. Southanan, the most extensive of the whole, belonged from the time of Bruce to the family of Sempil; but was alienated towards the close of the seventeenth century, and now belongs to Lady Mary Montgomery Lamb. The Sempils had here a splendid villa at Underbank, the ruins of which still remain. At this place, "John, Lord Semple, in the time of James IV. built a chapel, dedicated to St Inan; and to which his Lordship granted, for the support of a chaplain in it, an annual-rent of ten marks out of the lands of Meikle and Little Kilruskan, with two *sowms* of pasturage in the Mains of Southanan; and an acre of land on the

north side of the cemetery, for the chaplain's manse : confirmed, 1509." The beautifully wooded and monastic place of Underbank is now occupied as the site of a cottage ornée, built close by the ruins of the ancient mansion.

2. Crosby, adjoining Southanan, comprehends a pretty extensive portion of hill land, lying along the east side of the parish, and abounds in moor game. This property belongs to John Crawford of Auchnams, whose ancestor acquired it from his connections, the original family, of the same name and designation, about the beginning of last century. There is a small mansion-house on it, erected near the end of the seventeenth century, which was long ruinous, but is now being restored in good taste by the proprietor. Crosby was an ancient inheritance of the Crawfords of Lowdon, sheriffs of Ayr, and there seems great probability that it was at the original "Tower of Crosby" that the hero of Scotland, WALLACE, found refuge with his uncle, Sir Ronald Crawford, during his outlawry by the English authorities.* This incident, it is true, has often been assigned to Crosby in Kyle, but, there seems great reason to think, erroneously. Crosby in Cunningham is uniformly contradistinguished from the other as "Crosby-Crawford" in all early writings; and the intelligent Chalmers, speaking of Crosby in Kyle, distinctly states it to have "belonged to the family of Fullarton in the twelfth century, and probably from an earlier age."

3. Kilbride, which, as before-observed, along with Ardneill, was conferred by the renowned Bruce on the ancestor of the Earls of Kilmarnock. There are still remaining here the walls of a very stately tower, called Lawcastle, quite entire. It is beautifully situated on a step, an eminence overlooking the village, and commands delightful prospects of the islands and frith to the westward. In 1670, William, third Earl of Kilmarnock, alienated this estate, along with the lands of Drummilling and Boydston to a Major Hugh Bontine, who, it is said, acquired his fortune in the service of the Commonwealth. From his heirs, the Baillies of Monkton, the whole was judicially sold in 1759, with the ex-

* Pont thus alludes to the Tower of Crosby :—" Crosby toure is the habitatione of William Craufurd of Auchnams, by divers thought to be cheiffe of the Craufurds. He holds the same of the Earls of Glencairne. This surname is very ancient, and did memorable service under King Alexander the 3d, at the batell of Largis, by quhome their good service was recompensed with divers great lands and possessions. According to the old common rithme,

They had Draffen, Methweine, and rich ertth Stevinstone ;
Cameltoune, Knockawart, and fair Lowdounne."

ception of some small portions previously alienated in a variety of lots, as it still remains.*

5. Carlung and Drummilling both church lands. Carlung, which is a *ten pund land*, and very valuable, belonged to the collegiate kirk of Kilmawrs, and at the Reformation fell to the share of Alexander Earl of Glencairn; the other, of far inferior extent and value, which probably belonged to the monastery of Kilwinning, was given to Lord Boyd, a man of very opposite sentiments to those of the "good" Earl; but something conciliatory, no doubt, then, as now, was necessary to be observed in matters of state policy. Both properties lie in the immediate vicinity of the village, and have long since been alienated and parcelled out. Carlung, which was for several generations the seat of a cadet of the family of Glencairn, is now separated into four distinct properties, Carlung, Woodside, Kirktonhall, and Overtoun.

6. Ardneill or Portincross. From the ancient fortalice of Portincross, the chief messuage of this estate, the proprietors appear invariably to have been designed. About the time of Robert II. Ardneill became the patrimony of a third son of the Boyd family, and it continued with his descendants, the Boyds of Portincross, to the year 1737, when it was alienated to the ancestor of the present proprietor, John Crawford of Auchnames, who has a neat cottage residence close by the old castle. The castle of Portincross, the walls of which are yet pretty entire, though long ruinous, is perhaps the most ancient structure of the kind now remaining in this place. It stands on a ledge of rock projecting into the sea under the bold promontory to which it gives name, a singularly wild and romantic situation. Several royal charters of the two first Stewart Kings bear to have received the sign-manual at "Arnele," which unquestionably refers to this fortlet, and which has led to a notion, that Portincross had been at that period a royal residence of the Kings of Scotland. But there seems no evidence whatever to conclude it ever was such in the proper sense of the

* One of the original purchasers, a Mr Alexander Fairy, who had acquired a division of rather indifferent land, which he named Springside, soon after began a regular system of improvement on it, enclosing, draining, and planting, which he very successfully completed; and was one of the earliest improvers here. Mr Boyd of Carlung, who had spent his early life at New York, in North America, was contemporary with Mr Fairy, and equally energetic in enclosing and improving his lands, which on his succession he found in the most barbarous condition. There had been considerably earlier attempts of this nature on the estates of Crosby and Ardneill; but these had not been followed up, and by this time were wholly neglected, the lands having been turned into grazings. Springside is now the property of Mr John Blair Hyndman, whose style of improvements is hardly equal to that of his spirited predecessor.

term. The probability is, that these sovereigns, in passing to and from Dundonald in Kyle, and Rothesay in Bute, had been in use to cross the channel at this point, and may occasionally, as circumstances or inclinations suggested, have prolonged their stay a little at this convenient station. Contemplating the narrow walls of this sea-beat tower, it is certainly difficult to conceive it should ever have afforded accommodation to the prestige of a royal court; yet when we reflect on the circumscribed nature of even Dundonald itself, the favourite residence of these same sovereigns, the contrast by no means appears so very extraordinary. *

7. The last of these "baronies" is the estate of Hunterston, the property of Mrs Hunter of Hunterston; and which is the only portion of the parish which has remained unalienated from ancient times. Crawfurd, the author of the Peerage, states, that this family have had "at least a part of the estate they still possess as far back as the reign of King Alexander II." However this may be, it is clear that this family are very ancient possessors here; for from the records of the Great Seal it appears, that William Hunter of Hunterston obtained a confirmation of the lands of Campbelton, part of Ardneill adjoining, so early as the time of Robert II., and which lands still remain in the family. The original mansion-house of Hunterston, part of which consists of a square tower, evidently of ancient construction, though of very limited dimensions, is still kept habitable, being occupied as a farmhouse; a handsome new mansion having been erected by the proprietor about thirty years ago, a little way nearer the sea. The old fortlet occupied originally a narrow tongue of land jutting into a deep morass, which of course constituted its security from external aggression. But whilst modern improvements have turned the bogs into fruitful fields, the little "lonely tower" has thus been rest of its characteristic defence. Many little patches have from time to time been added to this olden dwelling, and which, being closely environed by aged trees, has altogether a very antique and picturesque appearance.

The whole of these properties, with the exception of Kilbride and Carlung, which have been parcelled out as before noticed, are now, it is understood, under the fetters of strict entails, all of comparatively recent date. For notwithstanding the pernicious effects

* In an inventory of the effects within the fortalice of Portincross, taken in 1621, it appears *inter alia* to have contained "ten fedder beddis," with their furnishings, which is so far illustrative of the manners of those times; for it is clear two or three of these must have belonged to each chamber.

of such restrictions, as well to the possessors themselves, as to the public interest, the owners of property still cling with an undiminished fondness to this no less injurious than absurd and preposterous practice in the disposal of their lands. Difficulties of no ordinary kind undoubtedly have ever stood in the way of undoing the past; but that government could not be said to discharge its proper and bounden duty, which, when such erroneous policy came to manifest itself through its consequences, did not instantly put a stop to its further baneful operations. So long as this barbarous remnant of the spirit of feudalism is suffered to exist, it is obvious, all future ameliorations of the soil must be circumscribed to an incalculable extent.

Parochial Registers.—The registers of this parish commence pretty early, are very complete, and in good preservation; certainly much more so than is usually the case with such documents. The register of births begins November 6, 1691, and is regularly continued to the present time. It is to be noted, however, of this record, that at no time has the law been uniformly complied with, many births never having been entered at all; which of course very much lessens its value to the community. The registry of marriages is continued from 1693, and is preserved entire. Minutes of the kirk-session commence February 15, 1716, and now occupy nearly two thick quarto volumes. Money accounts in reference to the poor are preserved from 1730 to the present time; and minutes of the meetings of heritors separately since 1795.

Antiquities.—Some traces of remote times still exist here. Along the steep banks facing the sea-beach are placed a chain of little round eminences called "Castle hills," supposed to be the remains of a very primitive class of fortlets. They stand at unequal distances, apparently as suitability of situation offered—some scarcely half a mile, others a mile and a half apart. In particular, they occur at Boydston, Glenhead, Seamill, and Ardneill. They are all constructed in the same manner, and are of very limited dimensions. A portion of the bank is detached on all sides and rounded conically; the enclosure on the summit, of about 30 or 40 feet in diameter, is surrounded by a rampart from 6 to 8 feet in thickness, faced on both sides with large undressed stones neatly laid, the interstice being filled up with small stones intermixed with earth. That at Ardneill stands on a finely isolated eminence called Auldhill, and in front of the enclosure or prætorium, there is an esplanade of 40 or 50 paces in length, very ex-

actly formed and levelled. Something similar exists at Seamill; but the rest are confined to the circular rampart alone. Conjecture assigns these structures to the era of the Danish incursions, which seems not improbable; but they may belong to a still higher antiquity.* Tumuli have likewise been accidentally explored here, in which were found urns containing calcined human bones and ashes. Near the Castlehill, at Seamill, about four years ago, whilst the new line of the coast road was being executed, two entire urns of this sort were dug out in a stratum of gravel, about three feet below the surface, but without the addition of any mound being raised over them. One of these, it is believed, has since been deposited in Anderson's Institution in Glasgow. These urns were formed of coarse red clay, of very rude manufacture, yet well proportioned and modelled in the vase form. In hardening, the fire appears to have been applied solely to the inside of the urn, that part being changed to a dark colour, whilst the outside remains of the natural red. A short time ago, a splendid antique silver brooch, of large size, richly ornamented with filigree work, and bearing a Runic inscription, was found near Hunterston; a description with drawings of which, it is said, is in preparation for the Transactions of the Society of Scottish Antiquaries.

One of the large ships of the celebrated Spanish armada of 1588, after the dispersion of that formidable fleet, having found her way into the Firth of Clyde, ultimately perished close by the castle of Portincross. "She sunk in about ten fathom water, at no great distance from the shore," on a clean firm sandy bottom. Tradition affirms that part of the crew were saved, and it seems not improbable that most of them might get to land. In De Foe's Tour, Vol. iv. ed. 1779, there is an interesting account of an attempt to recover property out of this vessel, by means of a diving machine, in the year 1740. A good many brass and iron ordnance were obtained from the wreck, which were all carried off except one of iron, which still lies on the beach beside the old castle; and on which may still be faintly traced the Spanish crown and arms near the breach of the piece.† -

* A few years ago, an opening being made in the ground outside of the rampart at Seamill, a considerable quantity of charcoal of wood, bones of cattle and deers' horns, some of which appearing to have been *sawn asunder*, were found a few feet below the surface, the materials of the wall having fallen down over the place.

† In the legends of the place, the sinking of this ship is ascribed to the spells of a noted witch of the neighbourhood, Geills Buchanan, who, mounting the brow of the promontory and twirling her spindle, with the lengthening thread the hapless voyagers sunk down.

template; and nothing but the darkest prejudice could lead any one to controvert or deny it. That "security," which the inhabitants here were supposed formerly to possess, from their sequestered situation, against "the encroaching influences of that corruption which other places of more business and resort" were exposed to, was at best but a very equivocal sort of advantage. The union of the two kingdoms found Scotland with the most inadequate means of employment for her population, miserably scanty as it was; and previous ages of feudal barbarity had sunk the condition of the people to the lowest point of indigence, ignorance, and immorality. Nor did the union, so indispensable to her improvement, at first lead to those ameliorations which have ultimately so copiously flowed from it. On the contrary, its first fruits were only to allure the inhabitants of Scotland, altogether ignorant of trade and commerce, and, with no systematic knowledge of agriculture, almost universally to plunge into the demoralizing vortex of smuggling, which, from the new excise imposts then laid on, seemed to offer so great a temptation. So generally were all classes, high and low, connected with this outrageous practice, that, for a long time, the recent and ill-consolidated government of the Revolution was utterly unable effectually to repress such disgraceful violations of its authority. For greatly more than half a century subsequent to the union, such was the inauspicious condition of this country; and there can be no doubt if it did not rather retrograde, it was impossible any material advancement could be made.

During the last three years there have been 6 illegitimate births in the parish.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—The extent of land of all qualities occasionally in or fit for cultivation is about 6000 acres; of waste fit only for pasture, 2650, exclusive of Little Cumbray, and from which neither its situation nor nature admit that the arable may ever be profitably augmented from it,—attempts of this kind having already been pushed to their utmost limits, if not a step beyond them. There is now here no undivided common. The extent of growing wood has before been alluded to. The management of trees is perhaps the worst understood, and least attended to species of culture in this part of the country, and assuredly the parish of Kilbride forms no exception to the general depravity.

Rent of Land.—Small patches of land near the village fetch as high as from L. 3 to L. 5 an acre, but the medium rental of the

whole of the arable parts does not probably exceed L. 1, 10s.—the moorish wastes, perhaps, not 5s. which would make the gross annual rent of land about L. 9662.* The value of produce and cost of labour is much the same all over the district of Cuningham; and, as particulars of these must be communicated from many parishes of greater importance, it seems unnecessary they should be repeated here. The arable pastures are chiefly occupied with dairy cows, the produce being almost exclusively cheese of the quality known by the name of Dunlop-cheese. The moors are principally stocked with sheep of the native or black-faced race.

The different species of live-stock in 1819 were as follows: horses of all kinds, 162; dairy cows, 600; rearing and other varieties of cattle, 790; sheep, 2373; swine, 218; † and there is no reason to think that great alteration has taken place since that period.

The natural adaptation of this parish, whether with respect to climate, soil, or situation in the great manufacturing district in which it lies, is obviously as to the dairy; and the practice accordingly becomes more and more accommodated to that species of farming. The soil is far too deficient in calcareous and adhesive components to fit it in any degree for continued aration; and cannot advantageously be subjected to the plough but after a considerable period of rest. Neither are many of the pastures rich enough for the purpose of feeding stock; hence the alternative of the dairy, perhaps the most suitable to which it ever can be applied, has wisely been universally adopted. The whole is now pretty completely enclosed and subdivided, the fences being generally hedge and ditch, but in high and arid situations stone dikes have usually been adopted; and for about fifty years past all the ordinary means of improving the soil have pretty successfully been in practice. Here, as perhaps everywhere else, road-making was the last improvement to make its appearance in the management of farms, though theoretically it ought to have preceded all others, as, without facility of access, every operation must be done, at a great disadvantage. Consequently much this way remains to be done; there being scarcely a farm yet sufficiently provided with

* The number of arable farms may be about fifty, which makes the medium size about 120 acres, the largest about 300, the smallest 30. For some time back, an inclination to reduce the size of farms has prevailed, some of the largest having latterly been divided into two, others into three separate possessions; and, but for the expense of additional buildings, it is probable this practice would soon become more general. The moors are chiefly divided into two sheep-walks, that of Crosby and Southanen.

† Topographical Description of Cuninghame, published at Irvine in 1820, by Mr George Robertson, a man well versed in such matters, and whose work will be found to supply a great deal of this nature.

the means of internal communication. Lime is very generally now applied to the soil, and in considerable quantities; but the distance, (from four to eight miles) and in some cases the badness of the roads, render it a very costly application. Sea-weed is pretty abundant, but the right to it belongs exclusively to lands adjoining to the sea shore, each property, too, being confined to its own boundary. The quickness with which this substance dissolves, requires its instant application to the soil or admixture into compost on its being cast ashore; but from the former wretchedness of the roads, and it may be indolence of the elder husbandmen, the practice has generally been to deposit it near the beach until it was greatly reduced, often to not a third of its original quantum, that the labour of carting it might be abridged! More correct ideas of this, however, begin to prevail, and a better course to be followed, all being now satisfied of the great loss sustained by such neglect. The grain crops raised here are,—wheat, oats, barley, and a little rye along the sea-shore, of pulse, beans, pease, and, to a limited extent, tares. The green crops are, potatoes, turnips, and carrots. Though of late years the cultivation of wheat has been carried to an imprudent extent, the quantity sown still bears but a small proportion to that of oats, perhaps not more than as one to four. Wheat is very liable to disease and injury here. The climate is too humid, and consequently cold, as the soil is perhaps of too feeble a stamina to admit of this fine grain ever being extensively or profitably cultivated in this neighbourhood. Oats, on the contrary, thrive exceedingly well, and their straw is superior to all others as fodder for the dairy cows; yet it is remarked, that an equal luxuriance in the growth of the crop here does not realize an equal return of grain with soils of a more clayish nature, and the seed requires more frequently to be renewed. The barley tribes are likewise pretty congenial to this locality, though for a good while past their cultivation has been very limited. But they will probably soon be more appreciated and attended to, barley being a much easier crop, and more suitable than any other grain for sowing down for pasture. Beans, especially in the drill mode, succeed extremely well on even very light land, and are cultivated to a considerable extent; but peas are of difficult management, albeit for poor dry soils they seem not ill suited, and often produce good returns; the quantity sown is but trifling. Potatoes are not nearly so well adapted to feeble spongy soils as turnips,—a circumstance which is every year being made more apparent in the cul-

tivation of these crops in this place.* Hitherto potatoes have been far more extensively cultivated than turnips, which are of recent introduction; but this is fast changing in favour of the latter. The Swedish turnip is greatly preferred to all others, and it thrives uncommonly well on almost all kinds of soil and situations. Carrots have been still more recently introduced; and, though occasionally yielding singularly profitable crops, are not yet sown to any considerable breadth. They are of nice and troublesome cultivation, and withal subject in an uncommon degree to be destroyed by maggots, and otherwise. Mangel-wurzel has but just made its appearance, and it is not likely successfully to compete with Swedish turnip; nevertheless it deserves further trial, as the plant seems to thrive very well on good deep land. Ryegrass is extensively raised here; and it is nearly all ripened for seed, which sells for from 2s. to 3s. a bushel. But this is a practice by no means consistent with good farming, the succeeding pastures being greatly deteriorated by its scourging effects, so that nothing but the pressing necessities of the cultivator can excuse such a course. Flax may be said to have wholly disappeared, scarcely a patch being now to be seen.

Leases.—The usual duration of leases has long been for nineteen years; but latterly, there seems an inclination on the part of landlords to shorten them, which is certainly a very mistaken view, whether as regards the one party or the other; the independence and prosperity of the tenant alone can redound to the interest and advantage of the owner of the soil.

Farm-Buildings.—As to farm-buildings, a great many steadings have latterly been reconstructed, and such, for the most part, have been substantially and commodiously built. Others are still very comfortless and unsuitable to the purposes required. The implements of husbandry here are all of the most approved order, the iron plough being general, but single horse carts alone are used. Thrashing-mills have become general, few farms of any size being without one.

Manufactures.—Besides a tan-work, which employs eight or ten hands, the only branch of manufacture here is that of weaving and

* The following incidental notice of the early cultivation of the potatoe occurs in the sessional records here:—"Sabbath, October 24, 1725: This day compeared Robert Miller (and some others) who owned, that about twintie days ago, they were at Corsbie, in time of publick worship, but pretended that they were seeking a horse which had wandered away. It being suggested by some of the members, that they were digging *portatos* att Corsbie, and [likewise] were heard realing and making a noise in the hall: which they denied."

sewing muslin for the manufacturers of Glasgow and Paisley. There are about 100 hand-looms employed, and perhaps an equal number of females engaged in sewing. The painfully distressed condition of this important class of mechanics has been too long and too widely felt to require any illustration in the statistics of the obscure parish under consideration.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

The entire disposable produce of this parish, as well as that of all the country round about, is absorbed in the great trading communities of Glasgow, Paisley, and Greenock, with perhaps the single exception of rye-grass seed, a considerable quantity of which is annually sent up to England. But of the different species and quantities of such, it is impossible to give details that could at all be depended upon, scarcely any individual making memoranda of such matters,—a circumstance much to be regretted, as an exact knowledge of this sort would be of essential advantage to farmers of every degree. The only village here is the parochial one of Kilbride. It is situated about a mile off the shore, in a finely sheltered depression, through which flows a convenient stream of pure water, which is employed in driving no fewer than five different mills, two for grinding oats, one for dressing flax (now but little used,) one for grinding bark for the tannery, and another for reducing charcoal to a fine powder for the use of founderies. Here is a well ordered post-office, which has been established for about twenty years, with much advantage to the community. The turnpike roads are the Greenock and Portpatrick line, which runs along the coast the whole length of the parish, and a line from the village inland communicates with the Glasgow road at the village of Dalry, in all about nine miles. The parish roads extend to thirteen miles, being all kept in tolerable repair, and furnished with bridges nearly in all cases where required. At Portincross there is a small quay, constructed about thirty-five years ago, chiefly at the expense of the proprietor of the estate. It is capable of admitting vessels of forty or fifty tons burden at high-water, and is chiefly used in the shipment of produce for the Clyde.

Ecclésiastical State.—The parish church with its surrounding burying-ground, encircled by spreading ash and plane trees, stands near the centre of the village on a gentle rise; a situation exceedingly well chosen for the convenience of the population generally. It was chiefly rebuilt and somewhat enlarged in the year 1732, and has received some subsequent improvements. But it is still, in

all respects, a most unsuitable and uncomfortable place of public worship; and cannot be more justly described than in the former Account, as "a long, narrow, mean-looking edifice; low in the walls, and deep-roofed." In length, it is upwards of 70 feet, the width scarcely 18; and from the lowness of the walls, hardly 10 feet in height, and from there being a gallery in each end, light and ventilation are almost wholly destroyed. Under these circumstances, the necessity of a new church has long been seriously felt; but as it was supposed that the present building could not be condemned as altogether insufficient in itself, the heritors have all along resisted being at the expense. Last year, the congregation, despairing of any thing being done, obtained permission to erect an aisle for their own further accommodation, and which has now been completed, solely by voluntary contribution. Altogether, there is now accommodation in the church for 800 sitters, which as to mere extent is perhaps nearly sufficient for the wants of the parish. No benefactions have ever been made to the parish, except occasional small sums to the poor; nor are there any free sittings within the church. The manse is delightfully situated on the glebe land, close by the church. It is sufficiently commodious and substantial, having been built only about thirty years ago. The glebe lies conveniently around the manse, and consists of very fine land, but is only of the statutory extent of $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres, which lets at L. 4 per acre. Since 1790, three several augmentations have been obtained to the stipend, and the whole now consist of 16 chalders of victual, with L. 8, 6s. 8d. for communion elements.

About 250 families attend the Established Church, and the number of communicants is 515. The Earl of Eglinton is patron; but the heritors have all acquired right to their respective teinds, a considerable portion of which is still unexhausted. There are here no chapels of ease; but there is a very neat and commodious place of worship belonging to the United Associated Synod, built about fifteen years ago; and having accommodation for 494 sitters, though the usual attendance does not probably exceed 150. They are at present without an ordained minister, their late pastor, the Rev. Peter Mather, who was appointed to officiate permanently amongst them, having left them, and joined himself to those denominated Independents.

Education.—There are in all three schools in this parish; all situated in the village, but the parochial one alone enjoys any endowment. The average number of scholars attending all three

for the last five years has been 211; in the parish school, day classes 96, night classes 39; the other schools have, one 40, the other 36. In the parish school are taught English reading and grammar, writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, geography, and navigation, also the rudiments of Latin, Greek, and French. The other two are confined to English, writing, and arithmetic. The school salary is L. 27, 17s. 8d., exclusive of the emoluments of session-clerk, which office has always been enjoyed by the parochial teacher. The average fees of teaching are, at the parish school, 3s. per quarter; at one of the private schools, 3s., at the other only 1s. 6d. The age at which children enter school is usually from five to six years. Scarcely any individual brought up here has not been taught to read and write, and the far greater number, in addition, the first rules of arithmetic. The parish school-room, like the church, is quite unsuitable to the purpose for which it is required. It is contained in the ground-floor of an old house formerly the manse, and, what from the nature of the situation, extreme lowness of the ceiling, and rude inhospitable interior, its ventilation is inconceivably bad, and cannot be but most pernicious to the health and constitutions of its young and tender inmates, as well as most uncomfortable to the teachers.

The people, it cannot be doubted, are every way sensible of the inestimable blessings of education; but, for a good many years past, it is to be feared, many of them have been but little able to afford the necessary expense of obtaining it to their luckless offspring. At the age they should enter school, great numbers of children here, as elsewhere, especially in the manufacturing districts, are put to labour in a variety of ways, that they may contribute to their own physical support; and thus, but for the means of Sunday schools, and other expedients, would inevitably be left to grow up without any knowledge of letters whatever! This parish, however, is exceedingly well provided with teachers, and the abilities, diligence, and assiduity of Mr Smith of the parochial school, are above all praise. Nor are the conduct and efficiency of the private teachers in their sphere at all less deserving of commendation.

A parochial subscription library has been established in Kilbride for about seven years, and now consists of upwards of 400 volumes of pretty judiciously selected works in general literature. By this means, a taste for reading is being diffused among the young, which cannot fail of being productive of the most beneficial effects.

Friendly Societies.—There are three different friendly societies

established here, one of which was instituted so early as 1796. They are all supported by small entry monies and annual contributions. The oldest affords aid to decayed and necessitous members only; the other two give support, during inability to labour, without reference to circumstances.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of regular pensioners on the poor's fund for the last six years has been 14½. Average weekly allowance to each 1s. 7d.

In all for the year,	L. 59 2 0
Average incidental expenses in like manner,	11 13 6
	<hr/>
	L. 70 15 6
Contra average income from the usual sources for same period,	50 13 4
	<hr/>
	L. 20 2 2

This deficit of L. 20, 2s. 2d. for the current and preceding year has been made up by assessment,—a mode to which heritors every where show the greatest reluctance, whatever be the feelings of the poor on the subject; and nothing but the utmost necessity assuredly will ever force them to the adoption of such an alternative. Nevertheless, it must be remarked, assessment is the only fair and equitable manner of proceeding in such a matter. As to any argument about the feelings of people reduced to the necessity of receiving charity, whether it shall thus be justly apportioned, or fall exclusively, on the benevolent, such can only be viewed as ingenious sophistry, altogether to evade the unwelcome burden. The sources from which the ordinary funds arise here, are: collections at church door; fees for proclamations of marriage and use of mortcloths; rent of a house, and rent of some pews in the church.

Inns.—Of inns or houses for the sale of spirits, &c. there are ten licensed within the parish, seemingly all conducted with order and propriety; most of them, however, are but on a small scale, and certainly but little necessary to any beneficial purpose.

Fuel.—The ordinary fuel used here is coal, chiefly from Stevenston, distant about six miles, and a little from Dalry, still farther off. Peats are used in the hilly parts.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

As regards agriculture, the system at present in use here seems in most respects to be exceedingly well suited to the nature of the locality; but that it is still susceptible of great improvement admits not of a doubt. Draining requires to be carried incalculably farther; and, as before noticed, vast improvement might be ef-

fectured by the construction of roads for internal access in almost every farm.* The only portion of the parish which seems to require a common drain of any considerable size to be yet made, is the fine plain running along from Hunterston to Ardneill; by which means, a considerable portion of very manageable land might still be greatly improved. But as this would affect different properties, difficulties must attend any arrangements thereto. Greater facility might yet certainly be obtained in the procuring of lime, by the further improvement of roads, and perhaps by some arrangement for its importation by sea. It need hardly be observed, nothing could more immediately tend to encourage improvement, than a reduction of the cost of an article so essential to the proper management of land.

In reflecting on the improvements which have been effected since the era of the first Account, there is no change more pleasing to contemplate, than that which has taken place in the manners and habits of the people themselves. This is especially observable of the rural portion of the community, though certainly great progress has been made in the domestic and personal condition of all. At the former period, farm-houses, almost without exception, presented no indications of superior comfort or refinement to the ordinary habitations of labourers, differing, indeed, in nothing from such, but in their more ample stores and greater means of rude hospitality. As a criterion, there was not probably at that period a carpeted parlour to be met with in a farm-house within the parish. Now matters are reversed, very few being without that mark of decent comfort; whilst the general economy of most in every way corresponds with this indication of refinement.

But the chief advantage of which this parish probably is susceptible, is as a sea-bathing station and coast residence, though hitherto very little has been attempted towards such an object. The sea-shore all the way from the fine harbour of Ardrossan to Portincross northward, a reach of above five miles, is in all respects peculiarly suitable for such a purpose. Bordering on the

* Our existing road laws seem much to require alteration and amendment. What is called Statute labour money, is levied most unjustly as regards all town communities, they having no control in its expenditure, which is at the sole disposal of a certain class of proprietors of land, and who of course naturally enough direct its application in a great measure to their own farm-roads. All roads of any considerable thoroughfare should probably be constituted turnpike, whilst a general act might be framed, empowering all towns and villages who chose to avail themselves of the privilege, to assess themselves for the maintenance and improvement of their streets. Purely agricultural lines should be wholly made and maintained by the owners of the lands they affect.

wide and open channel, with a southern aspect, the beach is finely shelving and accessible; whilst all along, steep and picturesque banks give complete protection from the north and east. Facility of conveyance alone seems wanting to give to this locality every possible superiority over all places lying higher up in the narrow portions of the Frith, where of course it is impossible but that the marine influence must be greatly less efficacious. This disadvantage of intercourse will probably soon be obviated. By the completion of the Ardrossan and Glasgow railway, already in part executed, the most ample means of access will be obtained. The distance in all is little more than thirty miles, and by adopting the locomotive engine, may, with the greatest safety, be accomplished in about an hour and a half, and at a very small expense. The benefit of such an improvement would not be confined to this neighbourhood; but would in an almost equal degree extend to the opposite coast of Arran, the romantic shores of which, by means of steam-boats from Ardrossan, might then be reached from the city of Glasgow in perhaps less than three hours and a half! Such are the capabilities of improvement which this country everywhere presents, tending to the further comfort and convenience of its great population; and it is impossible to set limits to what may yet be effected under circumstances favourable to the development of its boundless and varied resources.

ISLAND OF LITTLE CUMBRAY.

The Island of Little or Lesser Cumbray lies about midway betwixt the southern part of the island of Bute and the promontory of Portincross, in this parish, distant from either about two and a half miles. It is, however, attached to the parish of Kilbride only *quoad sacra*; civilly and politically, it forms part of the shire of Bute, the juridical seat of which is the burgh of Rothesay. It lies in length nearly north and south, and, according to a parish atlas of Cunningham, published at Beith in 1829, contains $1\frac{1}{2}$ square mile in superficial extent, equal to nearly 700 acres; where highest, it may be from 500 to 600 feet above the level of the sea. It is the property of the Earl of Eglinton, whose family has long possessed it.

This island is composed entirely of secondary trap, but which appears to rest on the brown sandstone of the opposite coast, which comes into view along the water's edge at the landing place on the east side, and very probably is continued throughout.

The trap is formed into thick strata, very distinctly marked, rising like steps of a stair upwards, declining, however, at a considerable angle from the north. On its summit, near the centre of the island, is seated a circular tower of about 30 feet in height, the remains of a former lighthouse—a very conspicuous land-mark from all points in the channel. The present lighthouse, referred to as building in the former Account, stands on the edge of a precipice, overhanging the sea, on the west side of the island, opposite Bute, and presents, with the keeper's residence and garden on the little plain adjoining, an interesting and beautiful object, in contrast with the wild crags amidst which it is placed. The caves formerly alluded to are mere fissures in the rocks. They all occur low down, and near the south end of the island, where the stratification is more distinct and columnar. The largest of them, which is on the east side, is dignified with the name of King's Cave; and, in the tales of the place, is said to communicate, by a submarine passage, with the opposite island of Bute—such have ever been the speculations of credulity and unguided fancy.

For a long time past, this rocky islet has been principally occupied as a rabbit-warren,—about 450 dozen being taken annually; but there are besides a few sheep and some young cattle grazed on it. Cultivation is wholly confined to a few potatoe gardens. The number of families resident on it is four, including the tacksmen's, who rents the whole, and the lighthouse keeper's. In former times, no fewer than eight or ten families are said to have been located here, who all shared in the occupancy of its surface; but it is evident they must mainly have subsisted by fishing; yet many traces of cultivation are to be discerned on the scanty soil of the steps of the rocks, where alone any thing could ever have been forced off it. Except a few ash trees near its north-east corner, and pretty large patches of elder bushes on the opposite shore, the island is wholly destitute of wood.

Both of the Cumbrays were undoubtedly included in the domains of the Stewart family, ancestors of the Kings of Scotland. On the erection of the principality of Scotland by Robert III., in favour of his eldest son, in 1404, the smaller Cumbray was included in it; and a century afterwards, it appears to have been kept as a royal preserve of some kind. In the registry of the privy-seal, the following entry occurs:—

October 28, 1515.—Lettre to Hew Erle of Eglintoune, making him and his assignais, keeparis, oversearis, correkaris, and sup-

learis of the *Isle of Litill Comeray*, the dere, cunyngis, and wild bestis being thairin, quhill the Kingis perfite age of xv yere; becaus Robert Huntare of Huntarestoune, forrestar of heritage of the said isle, is nocht of power to resist the personis that waistis the samyn, without suplie and help, &c.”*

And Mr Donald Monro, in his *Description of the Western Isles*, 1594, observes, “ Besides this (the Greater Cumbray,) lyes ane iyle callit Cumbray of the Dais, because there is many Dayis in-till it.” Not a vestige of the deer here alluded to has survived within the memory of the present time, nor does any remembrance of them appear to have been handed down by local tradition.

On an islet rock on its east side, near the middle of the island, stands an ancient square tower, the walls of which are still nearly entire. It is about 35 feet in height, embattled. The area inside is 28 feet by 15, the walls being 6 in thickness; and as usual the first story is vaulted over with stone arches. During Cromwell's visit to Scotland, Principal Baillie alludes to his having retired to this fortlet for some time, to which the family of Eglinton, his great patrons, appear at that conjuncture to have withdrawn.

“ * * * Cromwell, with the whole body of his army and cannon, comes peaceably by the way of Kilsyth to Glasgow. The magistrates and ministers fled all away. I got to the Isle of Cumbray, with my Lady Montgomery; but left all my family and goods to Cromwell's courtesy, which indeed was great; for he took such a course with his soldiers, that they did less displeasure at Glasgow than if they had been in London, though Mr Zachary Boyd railed on them all to their face in the High Church.”—*Letters, &c.* ii. 395.

In the former Account it is stated, that this castle “ was surprised and burned by Cromwell's soldiers,” which is by no means improbable, though, perhaps resting only on the authority of oral tradition. Lord Eglinton appears all through to have been highly inimical to the Protector. Monk, for some short time, placed a small garrison in the house of Eglinton itself; and it is stated, that the Castle of Ardrossan, a place of considerable strength, was then thrown down by the same authority. In the burgh records of Glasgow, is registered a curious contract, dated in 1568, in which the following particulars relative to the castle of Cumbray and

* The following notice of the family of Hunterston occurs in Mr Thomas Crawford's *Heraldic Collections* in the Advocates' Library: “ Hunter of Hunterston (*præfectus venatorum regionum*) in Cuningham,” bears for arms “ vert, 3 hunting horns, Or, banded, gules.”

others appear:—"Hew Erle of Eglintoun" contracted with "George Elphinstoun glessinwright, burges of Glasgow, that the said George suld uphold and mantene the places of Ardrossan, Eglintoun, Polnone, Glasgow, and Cumray in glassin wark, as also the place of Irvin;" and for all which, Elphinstoun was to receive yearly, "twa bollis meill, and ane stane cheis," "and gif it happinis the said Erle to hald house in ony of thir foir-saidis places when it sal happin, the said George to wirk, the said George sall have his meit the time that he wirks, and als when the said George tursis creillis of glas and leid to Irvyn, Ardrossan, Eglintoun, and Cumray, the said Erle sal caus ane carrage hors to turs the samyn out of Glasgow,"* &c.

The ruins of the chapel and tomb of St Vey, alluded to in the former Account, still remain. They are situated near the top of the hill, a little northward of the castle. The chapel is 33 feet by 15 inside; the walls, very little of which are now standing, are about three feet in thickness, but the mortar with which they have been built seems to have been bad, and very sparingly used. In the tomb, which is at a little distance north of the chapel, are two flat stones, on one of which, now broken in two, are sculptured some ornamental tracery, such as is usually to be seen on those ancient monuments called Danish stones, but no vestige of any inscription is to be observed on any of them. This inclosure, which is of a square form, and of very limited dimensions, was originally surrounded by a stone wall, but of which only the foundation now exists. There is a tradition, that this chapel, another at Ardrossan, and a third on the Garrock-head, in Bute, were all served by one and the same priest, who of course, journeyed *per vices* among them.

About twenty years ago, the late Earl of Eglinton caused to be opened some tumuli on the north extremity of this island, called Shanniwilly point; and in which were found sepulchral urns, and fragments of military weapons, which were all carried off to Eglinton Castle.

A son and successor of the historian Wodrow, in the parish of Eastwood, spent his latter days in this sequestered island, where he died, and was interred in a tomb, which had some time before been constructed for the sepulture of one of his daughters, who had died here in early life of consumption. This romantic burial-

* To this contract "Maister Patrik Wodrow, vicar of Eglescheme," ancestor of the historian of the Scottish Church, is a witness.

place is situated on the brink of a high precipice, overlooking the ocean near the south-west corner of the island; a spot to which it is said the young lady during her illness had become peculiarly attached, and where before her death, as stated on her tombstone, she requested she might be laid.

September 1837.

PARISH OF DALRYMPLE.

PRESBYTERY OF AYR, SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR.

THE REV. ROBERT WALLACE, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—IN charters of the fourteenth century, the name of this parish was written Dalrimpill, which is evidently an abbreviation of the Celtic, *Dail-a'-chruimpuill*, Anglicè, Dale of the crooked pool. This etymology literally applies to the situation of the village, where the church of Dalrymple stands, at a bend or turn of the river Doon; and "this (says an eminent Gaelic scholar, who visited this place in 1832,) is exactly what a Highlander, who knew no English, would denominate the valley of Dalrymple."

Extent and Boundaries.—The extent of this parish, from west to east, is 7 miles; its greatest breadth is 3 miles; and it contains a surface of about 12 square miles. It is bounded on the north and east, by the parishes of Ayr, Coylton, and Dalmellington; and on the south and west, by the river Doon, which separates it from the parishes of Straiton, Kirkmichael, and Maybole.

Topographical Appearances.—With the exception of the valley, where the village and church are situated, none of the rest of the parish can be termed level, for the surface abounds with numerous rising grounds, or little round hills, from most of which are seen the Islands of Bute and Arran, the peninsula of Cantyre, Ailsa-Craig, and the "lofty Benlomond," which is 44' north from, and on the same meridian line with the British fortlet on Woodland, the most southern eminence of this parish. From Kirkmien, the highest part of the parish, the north of Ireland is distinctly seen in clear weather.

Climate and Diseases.—The climate of the parish, and especi-

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