

PARISH OF COYLTON.

PRESBYTERY OF AYR, SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR.

THE REV. ALEXANDER DUNCAN, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—IN some old records, the name of this parish is written Quiltoun and Cuiltoun, and more recently we find it Coiltoune and Coyltoune. Some, on the authority of an old tradition, imagine it took its name from Coilus, a king of the ancient Britons, said to have been killed in a battle fought in the vicinity, and interred near the ruins of the old church in the present burying ground. Little trust can be put in this account. It is more likely the parish received its appellation from some feature characteristic of the district: or, from the river Coyl, which rises in its upper extremity, and forms the boundary of the original parish in nearly all its extent. And Coyl may be of Celtic derivation,—*Coill* in Gaelic signifying wood, the plural of which is *Coiltean*; or, it may be as Chalmers conjectures, from the British *Coll* or *Kell*, a Grove; or the British *Coll*, the plural *Cyll* or *Kyll*, signifying hazelwood, and the Saxon termination *ton*. If, as is supposed, the district of Kyle was at one period a forest, and we may conjecture that the hazel abounded on the banks of this river, and its contiguous dells and ridges, both stream and parish may have had their designation from this circumstance;—and the name would then signify *the stream of the hazelwood grove, the place of hazelwoods*.

Boundaries, Extent, &c.—The adjacent parishes are Dalmellington and Dalrymple on the south: Tarbolton and St Quivox on the north; Ochiltree and Stair on the east; and Dalrymple and Ayr on the west.

Coylton is about twelve miles in extreme length; nearly two at an average in breadth; and contains about eighteen square miles, and 11,515 imperial, or 9160 Scotch acres.

Topographical Appearances.—From the river Ayr, which flows nearly four miles along its north-west side, separating it from Tarbolton and St Quivox, it ascends in a south-eastern direction, with

an irregular undulating surface, till it reaches and forms the heights termed the Craigs of Coyl, the elevation of which above the sea is about 750 feet. From thence, it stretches farther in the same line, and terminates in a loftier ridge, which bounds it and Dalmellington, and forms part of the uplands of the valley that is watered by the river Doon.

The summit of this ridge is upwards of 1100 feet above the sea-level, and commands, almost on all sides, most extensive, varied, and in some aspects very magnificent views.

Climate.—The climate is mild, but for a considerable part of the year more humid than on the east side of the island. The atmosphere of the greater part of the parish is perhaps more moist than in some other districts of Ayrshire. The nature of the soil, a retentive clay, and the extent of undrained land in the parish, the small lochs in the bounds, and the number of marshes or bogs kept for raising meadow hay, must tend to produce this effect,—in addition to the more general circumstance, that a greater quantity of rain falls on the west than on the opposite coast.

It does not appear that this degree of atmospheric humidity has any effect on the state of health and disease. The abundance of fuel in the district, the extent to which woollen is used instead of linen, the habits of cleanliness for which the inhabitants are remarkable, the degree in which the necessaries, and even comforts, of life are obtained, and the nature of the occupations chiefly agricultural, must greatly counteract any evil that might arise from moistness of climate. And to these causes it must in part be ascribed, that the inhabitants in general, especially the female part, are a fine-looking, stout, and active race.

Hydrography.—The parish, in many parts, is well supplied with springs of good water. There are exceptions, however. In some places, especially about the middle and lower division, it cannot be obtained. In others, it is difficult to reach, and when found, of inferior quality.

There are three lakes, Martnaham, Fergus, and Snipe, partly in this parish. Loch Fergus is a beautiful sheet of water, covering about twenty Scotch acres, and has a wooded island in the middle of it, nearly an acre in extent. Loch Snipe spreads over about five acres; and Martnaham, half of which is in Dalrymple, is about a mile and a-half long, and at an average a furlong broad. Its greatest width is 2 furlongs, and it is 26 feet deep at the deepest part. In the centre of the parish, on the estate of Sundrum, there is a

little lake called Lochend, which covers from two to three acres, and is about 14 feet at its greatest depth. Loch Martnaham is the haunt of wild-duck, geese, widgeon, teal, and other water-fowl, and abounds in pike, perch, and eel. These are likewise found in some of the other lochs mentioned.

Rivers.—The rivers are the Coyl or Kill, as it is usually called, and the Ayr. The former rises in the upper end of the parish, and after a winding course of nearly ten miles, empties itself into the Ayr.* The Ayr bounds Coylton for nearly four miles on the north. The banks and holms of these rivers possess great natural beauty, which, in most parts, especially on the Sundrum, Gadgirth, and Auchencruive estates, is rendered enchanting by the richness of the wooding. There is a cascade on the Kill, immediately under the beautiful ridge on which Sundrum Castle stands. The fall is about 15 feet, and the breadth of the river at the place from 25 to 30 feet. When the stream is swollen by the floods, the roar of this little cataract adds much to the charm of its sylvan banks.

The Ayr and Coyl are the habitats of a yellow trout. At a former period, pike are said to have frequented the Ayr, but must have long since deserted it. Salmon at one time were caught in abundance. But since the erection of a mill-dam near the town of Ayr, and from other causes, few are now taken. The complaint often expressed by anglers of other streams, once noted for the excellence of the sport they afforded, has of late years been made of both these rivers.

Geology and Mineralogy.—In some useful minerals, Coylton may be said to be rich. It contains coal, limestone, plumbago, ironstone, clay-slate, basalt, various kinds and colours of free-stone, fire-clay, marl, &c.

The geological character of the stratifications is of that order which marks the coal formation. The coal strata are of considerable extent, and are, or have been, wrought on the Sundrum, Gadgirth, Knockshoggle, Craighall, Duchray, and Crosshill estates. The chief coal-field, so far as yet explored, consists of three strata. The first a layer 3 feet thick; about 15 fathoms below this, a stratum 11 feet in depth; and about 6 fathoms farther down, a 5 feet coal. The dip is to the north-east. The incumbent

* The scene of one of Burns' lyrics, "The Soldier's Return," is laid on the Coyl at Millmannoch. And the "Craigs of Kyle" is the scene of a similar production, by Miss J. Glover.

minerals vary in different parts, although there are some of the same nature uniformly found throughout this coal-field.

Strata of ironstone, from 4 to 6 inches thick, are seen at different parts in the bed of the Coyl. There is a layer of about 4 inches between the 3 and 11 feet coal. And in different parts of the same region, small beds or "doggers" are met with. The quality is not the best. In the year 1800, a plumbago mine was discovered on the farm of Laigh Dalmore, on the banks of the Ayr. It was opened and wrought for sale in 1808, and sold in the London and Bristol markets at L. 10 per ton. The work continued till the close of the war, in 1815, when the importation of black-lead of superior quality from foreign countries, and also that discovered in the Borrowdale mountains in Cumberland, drove it from the market. An attempt was made in 1835 to renew the work, and from two to three tons put out; but this not finding sale, operations were abandoned. Limestone was discovered, about fifty years ago, at the east end of the Craigs of Coyl, on the property, now of Lord Dudley Coutts Stewart. The stratum is from six to seven feet in thickness. It varies in quality. Traces of shells are distinctly seen in it. Close by this mine, there is coal wrought; but, being of an inferior kind, it is only used for burning the limestone. Fire-clay is also found in the neighbourhood of the limestone quarry, in great abundance. Clay-slate, or the famed Water-of-Ayr stone, used for hones, was raised for some years on Knockboggle farm; but, being found in greater quantity, easier wrought, and of better quality, in the adjoining parish of Stair, the Coyltón stone has been deserted. Moss and peat are met with in different parts.

Mr Burnett of Gadgirth, in searching for tile-clay, a year or two back, discovered a bed of marl from four to six feet thick, under a layer of clay from two to three feet, and a stratum of moss from three to five feet in depth. The marl is supposed to extend through two or three acres. It contains 40 per cent. of carbonate of lime, 10 parts of animal and vegetable substances, and 50 of earthy and other particles, such as clay, sand, water, &c. It has not yet undergone the test of experiment as a manure, although some has already been bought for this purpose. Marl was found, many years ago, on the estate of the Marquis of Ailsa, but it was not found suitable to agricultural purposes.

Soil.—The soil varies, but its general character is that of an

adhesive ungenerous clay, on a substratum of a like stiff cold retentive mould. Till the introduction of recent improvements, it did not yield very abundant crops. But when properly drained and cultivated, it loses its tenacity, becomes loose and friable; in most cases, increases 30 per cent. in value; and, by its excellent crops, amply repays the toil and outlay of landlord and tenant. The holms or flat grounds on the banks of the rivers are of a light loamy nature, on a sandy or gravelly bottom. There are inland fields, and parts of farms of a similar nature. These are very fertile, and well adapted to all kinds of green crop.

Zoology.—Besides the fur and feathered tribes common in other parts of the county, such as partridge, hare, &c. there are rabbits, snipe, wild-duck, pheasants, moorfowl, and black-cock. The blackbird, thrush, woodlark, bullfinch, goldfinch, and siskin, birds noted for their song, frequent and breed in the woods and policies on the Ayr and Coyl. Some time ago, there was shot on the estate of Drumsay a hoopoe, the *Upupa epops* of Linnæus. This bird is an inhabitant of the south of Europe and opposite shores of Africa; it is met with in Asia, and abounds in the deserts of Russia and Tartary. It seldom breeds in this country. Solitary individuals are found to migrate from their usual haunts, but few, I believe, have been seen so far north in Britain as the above.

Botany.—The following is a list by an eminent botanist,* of some of the rarest plants in Coylton:

<i>Aira canescens</i>	<i>Sambucus ebulus</i>	<i>Lysimachia vulgaris</i>
<i>Arundo phragmites</i>	<i>Sparganium simplex</i>	<i>Lobelia Dortmanna</i>
<i>Alisma simplex</i>	<i>Hypericum elodes</i>	<i>Pilularia globulifera</i>
<i>Botrychium lunaria</i>	<i>Littorella lacustris</i>	<i>Ruscus aculeatus</i>
<i>Fumaria claviculata</i>	<i>Listera ovata</i>	<i>Scirpus lacustris</i>
<i>Primula veris</i>		

Plantations.—The lower part of the parish is well wooded. The plantations are chiefly of larch and Scotch fir. But oak, beech, ash, elm, sycamore, horse chestnut, lime, silver and spruce fir, osier, birch, &c. likewise abound. The soil on the banks of the rivers is friendly to all kinds of hard-wood; and there are some trees, especially silver and spruce fir, ash, elm, osier, beech, sycamore, and horse-chestnut, of great size and beauty.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Coylton was formerly of smaller dimensions than at present. The original parish lies along the south banks of the Coyl. About the end of the seventeenth or beginning of the eight-

* Mr Smith of Monkwood Grove.

eenth century, that portion of it lying on the north and east side of this stream was taken from Ochiltree, and annexed *quoad sacra* to Coylton. The district annexed was part of the estate of Gadgirth, now in possession of three proprietors. The value of the part transferred in the old valuation is L.360, that of the original parish, L. 2930, 16s. 2d. Scotch money.

Eminent Men, &c.—A branch of the family of the Crawfords of Camlarg and Drongan was the founder of an old family,—the Crawfords of Drumsuy in Coylton. William, the first of this name, is designed in a writ under the Great Seal in 1567, “W. Crawford of Drumsoy.” David Crawford, the eighth in descent, was, we learn, a man of distinguished literary acquirements. Among other productions, he wrote a historical defence of Queen Mary of Scotland; a work said to have been highly esteemed in his day by those who espoused the cause of this unhappy lady. This Crawford was also historiographer for Scotland to Queen Anne. He died in 1710, and about twenty years afterwards, the barony of Drumsuy was sold, and has since passed through different hands. It is now possessed by Lord Dudley Coufts Stewart.

John Black, LL. D., the learned author of the life of Tasso, was minister of Coylton for fifteen years. He was a native of Douglas in Lanarkshire, and received the elements of his education in its parish-school. He was ordained in 1810, and died in 1825.

The name of John Hamilton, Esq. of Sundrum, grandfather of the present proprietor, still lives in this parish and county. He possessed eminent talents, and was admired both as a public and private character. He was for many years convener of Ayrshire, and in this capacity so gained the respect of all ranks, that the noblemen and gentlemen of the county ordered a portrait of him to be suspended in the hall, where they met to transact business.

Landed Proprietors.—There are nine landed proprietors: The Most Noble the Marquis of Ailsa; Lord Dudley Coufts Stewart of Drumsuy; John Hamilton, Esq. of Sundrum; James Oswald, Esq. of Auchencruive; John Joseph Burnett, Esq. of Gadgirth; Taylor Cathcart, Esq. of Pitcairley; John Bell, Esq. of Enterkine; John Smith, Esq. of Drongan; Andrew Campbell, Esq. of Rankinston.

The resident heritors are, John Hamilton, Esq.; John Joseph Burnett, Esq.; and Andrew Campbell, Esq.

Parochial Registers.—The session records extant commenced on 6th February 1723. Baptisms and marriages have been registered for upwards of a century. The earliest registration of births is dated 15th February 1725; and of marriages, 29th May 1725. Since that time, these registers have, with few exceptions, been regularly kept. The present session-clerk has kept, with great accuracy, a register of the deaths for the last fourteen years.

Antiquities.—The parish can boast of few reliques of antiquity. Some fragments of the Old Church may perhaps be noticed under this head. The building was taken down, ten or eleven years ago. The date of its erection is not known. It was built prior to the Reformation, but exhibited nothing of that fine architecture which distinguished many of the religious fabricks of the Roman Catholic Church. On Cloquhernan, Drumsuy estate, there is a well called the chapel, or Carnell well, near to which, it is said, a church or chapel stood, which existed at the time of the Reformation. This is supposed by some to have been the place in which John Knox officiated, to which reference is made by Dr M'Crie in his Life of the Reformer, where he says, that "Knox preached in the houses of Bar, Kincancleuch, Carnell, Ochiltree, Gadgirth, and in the town of Ayr." There is also a well on the farm of Raith-hill, the property of the Marquis of Ailsa, called the Chapel-well, beside which appear the foundations of a building, which is said to have been a chapel, from which the spring had its name.

If uncertain authority is to be followed, this district seems to have had great attractions for the Church. We have seen a statement from an old writing, which bears that the island in Lochfergus was the seat of a monastery. There are certainly stones and other appearances in the place, from which imagination might easily conclude that, at some distant time, there was such a building on this interesting spot. Till lately, this islet, now covered with alder bushes, young larch, Scotch fir, &c. was the site of some fine old trees, and the resort of herons. But these successors of the monks have long since deserted their haunt, and their memory, like that of their predecessors, has almost passed into oblivion.* Tradition says that this lake derived its name from Fergus, one of the Scottish kings, who defeated Coilus, king of

* In a small work entitled "A Summary of the Chronicles of Scotland," published in 1624, there is a brief description of Ayrshire. Among many other places of importance enumerated, mention is made of "the loch of Martnam with a strong Tower," and of "Loch Fergus, with an isle with many growing trees, where great plenty of herons resort with the loch-seal. There is a decayed monastery in it."

the Britons, in the adjoining fields. The latter, flying to the eastward, is said to have crossed the Coyl, at a ford at the farm of Knockmurrin, where he was saved from a watery grave, by getting on a large stone in the midst of the stream, then swollen by a flood; and from this circumstance, the place was called "the King's steps,"—a name it has retained till this day. There may be other versions of this story, I have no doubt; but it is of no use to detail histories, of which there is no authentic written memorial.

The castle, or old part of the house of Sundrum, the seat of John Hamilton, Esq. is the most ancient building in the parish. It is not known when it was erected; but its position and structure bear ample proof that this must have been at a very early period, when the constant feuds of rival chiefs, and the petty wars, which, on the slightest causes, embroiled the country, taught the barons of these days the necessity of constructing their mansions, so as to afford them security in times of peace, and defence in war. In some parts, the walls are about twelve feet in thickness, and the window recesses so deep, that they might almost be converted into closets or sleeping-apartments.

Gadgirth Castle, which is now supplanted by a house built in modern fashion, was a place of great note and antiquity. It was the seat of the family of Chalmers, a gentleman who took an active part in promoting the Reformation. Knox, when in the west, preached in this castle, and found, as did all the Reforming ministers, a warm friend, and fearless defender in the laird of Gadgirth. Mr Burnett succeeded to this property, through his maternal grandfather.

Several years ago, a number of silver coins of the reigns of Elizabeth, James VI. and Charles I. were dug up on the farm of Bargannoch; and more recently, four stone coffins were found in a field on Barcleuch, near the banks of the Ayr.

III.—POPULATION.

The population in 1755 was	527
1791,	667
1801,	849
1811,	1159
1821,	1397
1831,	1869
1841,	1484—of which 718 are males—766 females.
The number living in villages or groups of cottages	468
scattered over the country,	1016
The average number of births for the last seven years,	42
deaths,	22
marriages,	13

The increase of population since the earliest account has been owing in part to the subdivision of large farms, but principally to

the erection of houses on building leases, and of cottages by proprietors, and to the much greater extent to which the coal mines have been wrought, which has caused an influx of a migrating population.

There are no proprietors, the value of whose estates in the parish is under L. 50. All are far above this amount.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Coylton, with the exception of the coal trade, is almost entirely an agricultural parish. Of the 11,515 imperial, or 9160 Scotch acres it contains, the number of Scotch acres cultivated or occasionally in tillage, is 6404; the number never cultivated and constantly in pasture, about 2120; the number in wood, chiefly forest trees, 636. Part of those which have never been cultivated might be greatly improved for sheep or cattle pastures, but few or none could with profit be added to the arable lands.

The old valued rent of the parish is L. 3290, 16s. 2d. Scotch. The present real land rental is L. 7734 Sterling. The average rent of land per acre over the whole parish is 18s. But, as the bill affects so much the average of the low and arable ground, it will give a more satisfactory view of the value of land, and state of rents, to mention, that the average rent per acre of the land lying between the Ayr, and a line stretching from the east end of Loch Martnaham to the Coyl, above Coylton village, and comprising about 3342 acres, is L. 1, 9s. 6½d. For the arable land in the district immediately above this, amounting to nearly 3000 acres, the rent is 14s. 6d. per acre; and for the hill and moor land, being upwards of 2000 acres, 3s. 6d. per acre.

The price of grazing varies according to the pasture. In the highest part of the parish, the grazing of a full-grown ox or cow is L. 2, 15s. Towards the middle district, L. 3; and in the best pastures in the lowest division, L. 3, 10s. or L. 4. The summer's grass of a year-old differs in a similar ratio, being L. 1, and L. 1, 5s.; and of a two-years'-old, L. 1, 10s. and L. 1, 15s. or L. 2.

The breed of cattle almost universally kept is the pure Ayrshire. In the high grounds, a few of the West Highland or Galloway kind are pastured; these being better adapted to the natural grasses and keener climate. Till very lately, the sheep-stocks reared were the black-faced, from the North Highlands or Galloway. But, for some years, a cross between the black-faced and Cheviot has been introduced. It was imagined that the Cheviot

would not thrive in the cold wet climate and pastures of the west. But since the system of open-draining moor lands has been practised, this evil has in part been remedied, and the great superiority of the wool of this cross breed has more than compensated any loss from rearing the more tender stock. The loss, indeed, from severe and wet seasons, and the deterioration of the animal, has been so little, that it is contemplated, as the sheep-walks are improved, to approach still nearer to the pure Cheviot.

Husbandry.—The parish in many parts has, of late years, made great progress in agriculture. Wherever furrow draining with tiles or stones has been adopted, and it is rapidly extending, the improvement is visible. There are great facilities for perfecting this system in the tile-works and stone quarries in the parish. The chief obstacles are the want of capital, the state of rents and markets, and the general duration of the leases. The last might perhaps be obviated, were some such principle followed as that of lengthening the lease, in proportion to the number of acres which a tenant drains and improves at his own cost. But indeed, the causes noticed are in the way of being in a great measure removed, by the enlightened liberality of some proprietors, of whom I might mention, Mr Hamilton of Sundrum, Mr Oswald of Auchencruive, and Mr Burnett of Gadgirth, who either execute the drains at their own expense, and receive an interest of four or five per cent. on the outlay; or supply the tiles at a reduced price; or afford other encouragements to the tenants. The nature of the greater part of the subsoil in the parish being cold tenacious clay, subsoil ploughing must be of the greatest benefit. This has been practised to a very limited extent. But as few tenants possess the requisite force, and the expense considerable, it is feared this great improvement will not soon become so universal as could be wished.

The dairy is an object of chief attention, and is managed with great skill on many farms. Cheese, usually known by the name Dunlop, is made in great quantities, and sometimes of superior quality. It may give an idea of the amount of dairy produce sold yearly, to state that in most farms about one-half, in some nearly two-thirds, of the rents are paid by it.

The grain chiefly raised is oats. Wheat in small proportion; soil and climate in most parts being hitherto unpropitious. The turnip husbandry, till of late, was not much attended to. It is now getting into greater favour both with soil and tenant, and

the benefits of it are yearly inducing the farmer to extend its cultivation. The rotation of cropping, for a long time in general practice, was two white crops, a green crop, succeeded by another white crop with grass seeds, and afterwards three or four years in pasture. But the system which experience has shown to be best adapted to the clay lands in the parish, and which, at least expense, yields the best return, and keeps the land in best condition, is that of two white crops, and sowing grass seeds with the second crop, afterwards to lie four or five years in pasture. And the rotation best adapted for the light land is, one white crop, a green crop, a white crop again, with grass seeds, and pasture four or five years, as may be.

The general duration of leases is eighteen or nineteen years. The fences chiefly used are thorn hedges. In most parts, when properly kept, they thrive well. In the farm-steads, there has been great improvement within the last twenty years; the old and insufficient erections giving place to buildings more commodious and substantial, and more agreeable to modern taste.

Tile-Works.—There are two tile-works in the parish. One on the estate of Gadgirth, the property of Mr Burnett, who is a most spirited and successful improver. In the course of a year, when the demand was brisk, about 400,000 tiles were manufactured at this work. The other is on Mr Oswald's property, and was erected in 1833 by Mr Robert Boyle, at his own cost, on a lease of fifteen years at a fixed rental. Both bricks and tiles are made at this work. The number of draining tiles and soles made yearly before the sale was affected by the erection of similar works in the neighbourhood, was about 575,000; and of bricks, about 150,000. The demand for bricks, it is expected, will soon greatly increase. Mr Boyle uses the Marquis of Tweeddale's patent tile machine, the only one at present in operation in Ayrshire.

Quarries.—There are several quarries of excellent stone, and more might be opened, if necessary. At present, there are three wrought on the estate of Mr Hamilton of Sundrum. They are all of freestone, though of different kinds; a red, a white, and a gray blue stone. The two first are highly approved for building; the last mentioned equally so for pavement, &c.

There is a blue whinstone quarry on the Drumsay property, from which great quantities of road-metal are yearly taken. The whole Craigs of Coyl are of this pure material.

The number of coal mines is three. One on Sundrum; another on Gadgirth; and the third on Craighall or Auchencruive estates. The yearly output from the whole is at the rate of 8333 tons. The coal varies in quality and price. Some sells at 10s., others at 9s. per ton, export prices. A ton consists of about 12 creels, or two single cart loads.

The lime quarry on Drumsuy estate has produced for the last few years, at the rate of 12,000 bolls, or 1090 tons annually. The lime sells at 8d. per boll, or 7s. 4d. per ton.

The expense of furrow-draining varies according to the distance to which the tiles or stones have to be carted, and in some measure according to the nature of the soil. But in most instances, after the tiles are laid down on the field, a fall of 18½ feet, including price of tiles, cutting and filling the drains, costs about 9d.

Produce.—The following is, as nearly as can be ascertained, the average gross amount of raw produce raised in the parish:—

	Scotch Acres.	Produce in imp. quarter.	Rate of quarter with straw.		
Wheat,	91½	= 338½	at 54s.	L. 864	5 9
Oats,	1126	= 5067	25s.	6333	15 0
Barley,	17½	= 69	28s.	96	12 0
Beans,	111½	= 333½	46s.	787	12 6
Potato, 96 = 2280 bolls, or 205 tons, 8s. 6d. per boll,				L. 1224	0 0
Turnip, 77 = taken at L. 8 per acre,				618	0 0
Rye-grass hay, 593½ = 212 cwt. at L. 2, 15s.,				1958	0 0
Meadow hay, 120 = 156 cwt. at L. 2,				312	0 0
Pasture, 5998 Scotch acres,—estimating the high and moor lands at from 4s. 6d. to 7s. per sheep, and L. 1 for cattle. The midland pasture at L. 3 per cow, and that in lower part at L. 3, 10s. do.					4115 10 0
Coal-mines, 8333 tons, part at 10s., part 9s. per ton,					4083 0 0
Lime, 1090 tons, at 7s. 4d. per ton,					400 0 0
Tiles, 975,000 at 27s. per thousand,					1309 10 0
Bricks, 150,000 at 30s. per thousand,					225 0 0
Stone quarries,					10 0 0
Thinnings of wood,					200 0 0
Miscellaneous produce,					50 0 0
				L. 22,587	5 3

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Ayr is the post-town and nearest market. It is six miles from Coylton village, three miles from the north, and fourteen miles from the south extremity of the parish. The chief part of the produce is sold in Ayr. But Maybole and Old Cumnock, each about ten miles; and Tarbolton and Mauchline, the former six, the latter nine miles distant, afford, in their periodical fairs, other facilities for trade.

Kilmarnock fourteen, and Irvine fifteen, miles from Coylton, are occasionally resorted to for the same purpose. Till lately, a considerable traffic was carried on with the Glasgow and Paisley markets. Cheese, butter, pork, eggs, poultry, meal, &c. were bought up over the country and conveyed to these marts. Although no one in Coylton is now employed in this trade, it is carried on by others, who make their weekly rounds in the district; and in this way, there is a regular communication with Glasgow, which is thirty-five miles distant. Edinburgh, Cumnock, and Ochiltree carriers pass through the parish weekly; and there is a stage-coach from New and Old Cumnock to Ayr, that goes and returns by Coylton, every lawful day. There is also daily communication with Ayr by means of carters employed in the coal trade. Still some inconvenience is felt from the want of a post, or regular daily carrier.

The great line of road from Ayr to Dumfries passes through the centre of the parish; and from the same point, roads branch off in all directions to the adjoining towns and villages in the county. There are fourteen miles of turnpike roads in the parish, and five turnpike gates, at Crosshill, Dykneuk, Broadhead, Potterhill, and Dalmacow. It may give an idea of the thoroughfare in the parish, and serve other purposes, to mention their rental. The Dykneuk bar on the Dalrymple road, which is not much travelled, is let along with the Crosshill gate, which is the chief one; and their rent for the present year is L. 239; Broadhead for same term, L. 145; Potterhill, L. 30; and Dalmacow gate, L. 37.

The chief lines of road are repaired by a blue whinstone from Cloquherrnan quarry, which costs 4s. 6d. per cubic yard. The annual expense of upholding that part of the Ayr and Dumfries road which is in Coylton, is about L. 30 per mile. The Dalrymple turnpike, L. 6; and the road on which the Broadhead toll-bar is placed, L. 8 per mile.

The extent of parish roads upheld by the conversion-money is 11 miles, 2 furlongs, 177 yards. The amount of conversion-money from land is L. 49, 8s. 6d.; that from householders is variable and uncertain. The sum realised from land and householders last year, and applied to the parish roads, was L. 52, 14s. 2d.

Considerable attention is now paid to the keeping of these roads. They are under the care of the surveyors for the Ayr and Mauchline districts. They still admit of being greatly improved;

and the value of the estates in the upper part of Coylton would unquestionably be enhanced, if these and the private roads to the farm-steads were made a little more after the modern fashion.

The chief village in the parish is Joppa. It contains 178 inhabitants; Coylton village, 40, Knockshoggle, 109, Gadgirth-holm, 50, Craighall, 100.

Ecclesiastical State.—Little is known of the early history of the church of Coylton. It belonged originally to the Bishopric of Glasgow. Chalmers in his *Caledonia* has given the most correct account of what has been discovered since the beginning of the sixteenth century. "At that time," he tells us, "when James IV. refounded and enlarged the establishment of Chapel Royal at Stirling, he founded two of the prebends from the revenues of the Church of Coylton, in equal divisions. These prebends were sometimes called *Ayr prima*, and *Ayr secunda*, and sometimes *Coyltoun prima* and *Coyltoun secunda*, the patronage whereof belonged to the King. At the Reformation, these prebends were held by John Ross and William Angus, two of the canons of the Chapel Royal of Stirling. The whole of the tithes and revenues of the church of Coyltoun were let on lease by them for L. 80 yearly, which they shared equally; and out of which, each of them paid L. 6 to the chaplain or vicar, who served the cure of the parish of Coyltoun." So far Chalmers. For some time after the Papal Faith ceased to be the established religion of the nation, the Church of Coylton appears to have been connected with the see of Dumblane. And when Episcopacy was abolished in the reign of Charles I., that king executed a charter upon the 3d November 1647, by which he transferred the revenues of several parishes in Ayrshire (and Coylton seems to have been one of them,) to their respective Presbyterian ministers.

At this time, a Mr William Scott was minister. He is the first after the Reformation who is noticed in the earliest existing records of the presbytery of Ayr. He was settled in 1642, and deposed in 1651. From that date till the year 1687, there is a blank in the records of presbytery. From 1689 downwards, the following were ministers: Mr John Mair, inducted 1689; John Hunter, 1692; William Boyd, 1700; John Key, 1728; David Shaw, D.D., 1749; John Black, LL.D., 1810; Alexander Duncan, 1826.

The present church was built in 1836. It is a handsome little edifice, in the Gothic style: and in point of conveniency and

comfort, a model for a place of worship. The design was by David Bryce, Esq. Edinburgh, who made it to suit the views of the late John Hamilton, Esq. of Sundrum. This gentleman, who took a warm interest in whatever he thought would promote the improvement and well-being of the parish, besides gifting the site, contributed, by extra advances, to finish it in a very substantial and tasteful manner. It has a square tower upwards of sixty feet high; and a bell very superior to what is attached to most country churches. Its weight is about 12 cwt., and it cost L. 100. The church contains 744 sittings, none of which are let: 576 are appropriated by heritors and their tenants, and 168 considerably left free to accommodate the feuars, cottagers, and poor. Although the church is in the centre of the parish, the great distance of some parts, and other causes, prevent, in bad weather, the attendance from being so regular as it otherwise would.

All the inhabitants are connected with the Established Church, with the exception of six families, who are Roman Catholics; one belonging to the Relief; one to the United Secession; one to the Associate Synod of Original Seceders; and two or three individuals in the capacity of labourers or servants, connected with one or other of these bodies. For the last six or seven years, the average number of communicants in the parish church has been 500. The average amount of collections for the last three years, deducting mortcloth dues, &c. is L. 56, 1s. 5d. For several years, there have been regular contributions from the parish, for religious and educational purposes. These, till lately, exceeded L. 24 annually. Of this amount about L. 18 have been yearly transmitted to the funds of the General Assembly's Schemes.

The manse is new, and very commodious. It was built in 1839, in the most substantial manner. The stipend is 23 bolls, 3 firlots, 1 peck, 3½ lippies bear, 8 Winchester bushels per boll; 42 bolls, 1 firlot, 3 pecks, 1½ lippies, meal; and L. 192, 1s. 2d. Sterling. The glebe, including the garden and site of manse and offices, amounts to 6 acres, 3 roods, and 26 falls, Scotch measure, and is of L. 12 yearly value.

Education.—There is one parochial school, in the centre of the parish, although not perhaps of the population. In a parish so narrow, and extending five or six miles on each side of the parish school, it is impossible it can be accessible to many children till they are some years beyond the age when the work of education should be commenced. From this cause, private schools for elementary-branches have at various times been set up in different parts. There

were three of these till lately. There is at present only one; it is in the village of Joppa, and attended by fifty at an average. The teacher has a free school-room, but otherwise depends entirely on the school fees. There is cause to regret, that some do not see the necessity of keeping their children at school a sufficient length of time, and with constancy, during that period of life, when the difficulties of learning are most easily overcome. The profits arising from the work of children in the fields and coal mines, and from service, are temptations which we fear are sometimes yielded to, when the plea of necessity can scarcely be urged. The parish teacher has L. 30 of salary, the legal accommodation, and statutory extent of garden ground.

All the native population can read; but there are a few from the sister island, who unhappily have not this invaluable art; most of these, however, show a laudable zeal for the education of their children; and Roman Catholic parents evince no reluctance to send their children to our schools.

There are two Sabbath schools,—one kept in the church, the other in Joppa. A village library was set on foot a few years ago, but the number of volumes is yet very limited.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The number of paupers, reckoning children as well as parents and adults, on the permanent roll, in the years 1835, 1836, and 1837, and the total amount distributed to them, each year, are as follows:

Year.	Paupers, including Children.	Sum Distributed.
1835,	41,	L. 62 14 11
1836,	39,	68 17 4
1837,	36,	82 12 11

The number not on permanent roll, but who have been aided during same years.

Year.	Recipients.	Sum.
1835,	13,	L. 1 15 0
1836,	14,	2 0 0
1837,	19,	3 6 0

Those here mentioned, only get coals at the beginning of the year to the amount specified, but cannot be viewed as paupers,—never having applied for parochial relief. An assessment is occasionally levied. It is paid solely by the heritors according to their valued rent, and raised by the session-clerk at a varying per centage. The first assessment was in 1817. The sum usually raised is L. 20. This was not always required annually.

The average collections for the three years preceding the assessment in 1817 was, for 1813, 1814, and 1815, L. 39, 13s. 9d.; for 1835, 1836, and 1837, L. 59, 11s. 9d.

The following is the amount received for support of the poor, payment of session-clerk and precentor, &c., in each of the last-mentioned years.

	For 1835.		For 1836.		For 1837.
Collections,	L. 55 2 4½	.	L. 58 13 4	.	L. 64 19 8½
Mortcloth dues, &c.	6 7 0	.	8 4 6	.	8 19 0
Money assessed or be- longing to heritors,	17 0 0	.	18 0 0	.	25 8 8½
	<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>
	L. 78 9 4½	.	L. 84 17 10		Donation, 0 10 0
					<hr/>
					L. 99 17 5

The number of paupers has considerably increased within the last fifteen years. This has been partly owing to the want of employment for aged indigent females, since the erection of spinning-mills; partly to a decreasing reluctance to apply for parish aid; and to other causes.

Inns, &c.—There are eight houses licensed to sell spirits and ale; a number far greater than necessary. The facility of obtaining ardent spirits, and the immoderate use of them, are undoubtedly among the chief causes of the immorality, disorder, poverty, crime, and misery, witnessed in many parts of our country.

Fuel.—A few peats are dug and used in the upper part of the parish, but this is done from choice. Coal, of which there is the greatest abundance in the parish and neighbourhood, is almost the only fuel. It is got at the pits at 6d. or 7d. a creel, or 6s. per. ton.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

Since last Account was written, the inhabitants have, from the causes already noticed, doubled in number. A very considerable change has taken place in their dress and manner of living. The manufactures of woollen, cotton, silks, and most kinds of clothing, have very generally supplanted home made articles. The products of the East and West, the baker, grocer, and confectioner, have greatly superseded the oaten cake and homely fare of our ancestors. A corresponding alteration may be witnessed in the style and comfort of houses and furniture. The soil and agriculture of the parish have undergone great improvement. A better system of cropping is now followed; new kinds of corn have been introduced; turnip and potato husbandry has advanced; draining of all kinds has been very extensively practised; new plantations have been made; farms-steads built on a larger scale, and after more approved plans; roads have been greatly improved; and there are facilities of communication with near and remote parts of the country, that were formerly unknown. Still, there is great room for advancement.

December 1841.