

## PARISH OF DUNDONALD.\*

PRESBYTERY OF AYR, SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR.

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### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—THIS parish derives its name from a small green hill adjoining the village, on which stand the ruins of an ancient feudal castle. The etymology of the word is so obvious as to require no explanation. But who the Celtic chief was, that gave his name to the hill or fortlet, cannot now be ascertained.

*Extent and Boundaries.*—Dundonald is situated at the north-west extremity of the district of Kyle, the middle division of the county of Ayr. The parish, though still comparatively extensive, was even more so, both before and after the Reformation, than it is at present. At the time of the Reformation, in addition to the chapelry of Crosby, it included also the parish of Riccarton. And when the latter, after the downfall of Popery, was constituted a separate parish, Dundonald comprehended the lands of Caprington till they were united with Riccarton about the middle of last century. According to the earliest ecclesiastical records, Dundonald with its two chapelries was granted by the second Walter the Stewart in 1229, to the Gilbertine Convent of Dalmullin, near Ayr. And when this was given up in 1298, it passed to enrich the monastery of Paisley, of which it continued an appendage till the time of the Reformation. Crosby, which has still the remains of a church and burying-ground, does not appear, as is generally supposed, to have been erected into a separate parish, but has always been included in Dundonald, except during the short interval betwixt the years 1651 and 1668, when it was annexed to the parish of Monkton. It is said by Chalmers, that Riccarton at the Reformation was joined to Craigie, and only became a separate parish in 1648. Upon what authority he makes this statement, we do not know.

\* Drawn up by the Rev. Alexander Willison.

out he must be mistaken, as we find in the Session records as early as 1604, several distinct references to the kirk-session of Riccarton.\*

The parish, according to its present limits, is very nearly of the form of an equilateral triangle, the length of the side of which is about seven miles. On the south-west side, it is bounded by the shore of the Frith of Clyde, which, passing over the point at Troon (extending nearly a mile into the sea), runs almost in a straight line from the point at Irvine harbour to where the Rumbling and Pow burns meet, and separate it from the parish of Monkton. On the north, it is bounded by the water of Irvine, separating it from the parishes of Irvine, Dreghorn, and Kilmaurs, and from the district of Cunninghame. On the south-east it has no natural boundary, but runs in a straight line from a point on the Irvine a little below Caprington, to the above-mentioned point on the coast westward, on which side it is bounded by the parishes of Riccarton, Symington, and Monkton.

*Appearance.*—Within these limits, the surface is marked by a very pleasing variety of appearance. All along the sea coast and the banks of the Irvine for a considerable way inland, the soil is almost a dead level, or very gently undulated. But with a view, as it were, to make amends for this tiresome monotony, it rapidly swells up, towards one concentrating point, into eminences betwixt three and four hundred feet above the level of the sea. These form the Clavin hills, so called probably from the Celtic "Clai bheinn," signifying broad-swords, which, when laid in a particular form, give a good idea of their appearance. From the tops of these eminences, there is a most delightful prospect, said to comprise parts of fourteen different counties; and it is questionable if, from an equal elevation, so fine a natural panorama, both for richness and extent, is any where to be met with in the lowlands of Scotland.

At the foot of one of these hills, forming a rocky precipice, and well skirted with wood, lies the village of Dondonald. This, with the adjoining grey ruins of the castle crowning an eminence in front of the village, gives it a very picturesque appearance. There is only one thing wanting to complete the picture, and

\* It was supposed at one time, that the town of Fullarton belonged to the parish of Irvine, having been joined to it in 1690. But, on a question being raised regarding the support of the poor, it was decided by the Court of Session in 1822, that the proper forms of law had not been complied with, and so it still remains a part of this parish.

that is water ; the village being shut in from the sea by the intervening hills, while there is scarcely a stream deserving the name of a rivulet in the parish. This defect, however, tells more upon the eye than upon the comfort of the inhabitants ; for, the soil being generally retentive, excepting towards the shore, springs are everywhere abundant, and the water is in general good, though in some places strongly impregnated with carbonate of iron.

*Climate.*—There is nothing very remarkable or peculiar in this respect, beyond what is characteristic of the district in which the parish is situate. We are not quite sure that it will altogether justify the wit of the English gentleman, who, having procured a few Ayrshire cows, declared, “ that he was obliged to have water poured over them daily to preserve their health,” but it is certainly very moist. As a compensation, however, it has the advantage of being proportionably mild, so that snow seldom lies for any length of time ; and, upon the whole, it may be considered as favourable to health and longevity.

*Geology.*—The parish, as a whole, belongs to the coal-formation, and constitutes a part of the great coal measures of Ayrshire. Freestone, of course, is found in abundance. There are only two places, however, where it is wrought, at Craiksland and Collennan. The quarry at Craiksland yields a very fine and durable stone, which may be raised of almost any size. As there is little demand for it in the neighbourhood, it is chiefly exported, and in considerable quantities, to Ireland, for purposes of ornamental architecture. A steam-engine has lately been erected at the quarry, for sawing it into slabs for pavement, which has succeeded according to expectation. On the estate of Curreath, hone-stone is found in abundance, and is said to be of a very superior quality. But it has never been wrought to any extent, though liberal offers have been made to the proprietor to this effect. Immediately above the hone, there is the appearance of a small seam of black chalk, but whether it exists in any quantity has not been ascertained. Coal, for a great number of years, has been wrought to a considerable extent in two places in the parish—Shewalton, and Old Rome; formerly called Rumford. At the latter work, the depth of the shaft is 37 fathoms, and cuts through four different seams, which lie in the following order :

At the bottom of the shaft is a seam of blind or charred coal, 8 feet 4 inches in thickness ; 13 fathoms above, there is one of common coal, of the same thickness ; 8 fathoms above that, one of

6 feet; and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  fathoms higher still is one of 2 feet 8 inches. At the Shewalton work, the depth of the shaft is 35 fathoms, comprising two seams of common coal, the lower of which is 34 inches thick, and the other, 16 feet above, 43 inches, including 1 foot of hard black *till*, which divides it into two unequal parts. The two works are in other respects very closely assimilated, the dip and rise in both averaging about one in sixteen. The roofs in many places are bad, being composed of a hardish clay, which quickly dissolves on exposure to the atmosphere. In the blind-coal seam, fire-damp is of very frequent occurrence, and demands of the workmen the strictest attention to the use of the safety-lamp.

The strata, in many places, are very much deranged by the intervention of greenstone dikes, and a stone called by the workmen alchemy, which cross each other in all directions. Of the former of these substances, the Clavin hills are composed, and, in the words of a reverend geologist, "are but a greenstone dike on a large scale," forced by old Titan bolt up through the surrounding beds. This is the only part in the neighbourhood where it appears on the surface, except on the coast, at the point of Troon, and the Black rock a mile to the south, at which places it is of a much coarser quality, and very much resembles dark granite in appearance. At the former place, there is a small bed of fire-clay; but, in point of utility, it is not considered of much importance. All along the higher ground, the soil is chiefly clayey. On the low flat land, again, it is principally composed of pure moss or sand, and appears in many places, for some miles inland, to have been, at some distant period, washed by the sea.

*Zoology.*—In addition to the domestic animals, which are in no respect different from those in the neighbourhood, the parish abounds in all sorts of game, such as hares, partridges, snipe, blackcock and pheasants. Woodcock also, in considerable numbers, frequently make their appearance in their regular seasons. As for rabbits, owing chiefly to a large warren along the shore, belonging to the Duke of Portland, which is but imperfectly enclosed, they were till within a year or two, as locusts in the district, and devoured every green thing. So numerous were they from the sandy nature of the soil, and the strict protection which they enjoyed, that the proprietors were obliged, for their own interest, to proceed against them with a war of extermination. They are still very numerous, notwithstanding, in some parts of the parish, and to many a subject of grievous complaint. A few years ago, there was a well-

stocked deer-park on the estate of Auchans; but the deer have all been removed to Eglinton. At the mouth of the water of Irvine, and along the sea coast at Troon, salmon are regularly caught, but not in such numbers as to render the fisheries of very great importance. Indeed there are no fisheries of any kind worthy of attention. Oyster scalps, however, might, in some places, be cultivated with advantage, and we wonder why this has not been attended to.

Amongst animals of a ruder sort we may mention the following: The otter (*Lutra vulgaris*) is occasionally met with, and the seal (*Phoca vitulina*) has a favourite haunt on a rock in the sea not far from Troon. Of water-fowl, the heron (*Ardea cinerea*), the solan goose or gannet (*Sula Bassana*), the sheldrake (*Tadorna vulgaris*), the great northern diver (*Colymbus glacialis*), the herring gull (*Larus argentatus*), occasionally frequent the coast. The common wild-duck is found in great numbers; and less frequently the teal. So far as we are aware, there is only one kind of poisonous reptile, the common adder, (*Vipera vulgaris*), which is found occasionally in Shewalton moss.

The following zoological and botanical list was kindly furnished by the Rev. David Landsborough, minister of Stevenston, so well known for his high attainments in this department of science:

*Mollusca.*—

Patella pellucida	Lacuna vineta	Tellina fabula
——— cœrulea	Trochus magus	Cytherea exoleta
Chiton marginatus	——— ziziphinus	Venus rugosa
——— cinereus	Nassa reticulata	Venerupis decussata
Rissoa interrupta	Pecten opercularis	Hiatella arctica
Natica glaucina	——— varius	Lutraria elliptica
——— Alder's	Cardium echinatum	Mya truncata
——— pallidula	——— exiguum	Lucina radula.
Lucina flexuosa		

A specimen of the *Patella clypeus* of Brown, or *Lottia testudinalis* of Gray, was found at the Black Rock fully an inch in length, and two-thirds of an inch in breadth. Of land-shells we shall mention only *Helix virgata* and *Bulimus acutus*, which are found in great abundance on the sunny embankment at Troon harbour.

*Zoophytes.*—

Cellularia reptans	Crisia gracilis	Lepralia coccinea
Collepora pumiceosa	Laomedea gemiculata	Sertularia pumila
Crisia eburnea	——— gelatinosa	Plumularia cristata.
Sertularia polysonias	Valkeria cuscuta	

This last, the *podded coralline*, seems far from rare at Troon. That part of the coast appears favourable to the growth of zoophytes, for the specimens we found were all large. So far as we

are aware, the *Crisia gracilis* is new to the list of British zoophytes.

*Botany.*—

<i>Salicornia herbacea</i>	<i>Lysimachia elodes</i>	<i>Jungfermannia Blasia</i>
<i>Solanum Dulcamara</i>	<i>Amanita muscaria</i>	<i>Phaseum muticum</i>
<i>Sambucus ebulus</i>	<i>Boletus luteus</i>	<i>Saxifraga granulata</i>
<i>Drosera Anglica</i>	<i>Polytrichum urnigerum</i>	<i>Mentha pulegium</i>
<i>Cenanthe pimpinelloides</i>	<i>Anictangium ciliatum</i>	————— <i>gentilis</i>
<i>Allium ursinum</i>	<i>Dicranum bryoides</i>	<i>Orchis militaris</i>
<i>Juncus maritimus</i>	————— <i>taxifolium</i>	<i>Ballota nigra</i>
<i>Alisma ranunculoides</i>	————— <i>adiantoides</i>	<i>Narthecium ossifragum</i>
<i>Arenaria marina</i>	————— <i>heteromallum</i>	<i>Sedum Anglicum</i>
<i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i>	<i>Trichostomum heterostichum</i>	<i>Scutellaria galericulata</i>
<i>Brassica Monensis</i>	—————	<i>Epipactis latifolia</i>
<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	————— <i>acicalure</i>	<i>Atriplex laciniata</i>
<i>Hypocrepis comosa</i>	————— <i>canescens</i>	————— <i>rosea</i>
<i>Parietaria officinalis</i>	————— <i>lanuginosum</i>	<i>Polygonum roberti</i>
<i>Listera ovata</i>	<i>Hypnum splendens</i>	<i>Convolvulus soldanella</i>
<i>Zaunichellia palustris</i>	<i>Lycopodium clavatum</i>	<i>Rumex palustris</i>
<i>Carex vulpina</i>	<i>Scyphophorus gracilis</i>	<i>Ruppia maritima</i>

Out of a considerable list of Algæ, we shall select only the following :

<i>Fucus ceranoides</i>	<i>Plocamium coccineum</i>	<i>Sphacelaria plumosa</i>
<i>Hironthalia lorea</i>	<i>Odonthalia dentata</i>	<i>Polysiphonia parasitica</i>
<i>Chordaria flagelliformis</i>	<i>Gigartina plicata</i>	<i>Calithamnion roseum</i>
<i>Delesseria sanguinea</i>	<i>Cladostephus verticillatus</i>	<i>Bryopsis plumosa.*</i>
————— <i>sinuosa</i>		

*Forest Trees.*—The parish contains no extensive plantations, but it is generally well wooded, except towards the shore between Troon and Irvine, where the appearance is very bleak. The trees are of the usual forest kind, and thrive well where the soil is good, though none of them have attained to a remarkable size. At Auchans there is a considerable extent of natural wood, and near the old mansion-house some fine specimens are visible.

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

This parish, from having been once the domain and residence of kings, acquires a deep historical interest. But we are sorry to say that the authentic historical records regarding it are both scanty and obscure. The first historical notice we have of the place, is in the time of the third Walter the Stewart, who was styled "of Dundonald," and was made Justiciary of Scotland by Alexander II., at St Andrews, in 1230. It is said, however, by Chalmers, that the manor and parish belonged to Walter, the son of Allan, the first Stewart, who held the whole of the northern half of Kyle, in the beginning of the reign of William the Lion; and that it might have been granted to him by David I., or his

\* This last beautiful sea-weed, got near the Black rock, we have seen nowhere else in Ayrshire.

successor, Malcolm IV. Nothing more is known or even conjectured regarding it, until the reign of Robert II., who appears, by several charters dated at Dundonald, to have made it the place of at least occasional residence, from 1371 till the time of his death in 1390. This later event is particularly mentioned by the Prior of St Serf's Inch, Lochleven.

The secownd Robert of Scotland Kyng

As God purwaid maid endyng

At Downdonald in his countre.

Of a schort sickness thare deyd he.\*—Wynton, B. ix. c. 10.

That his gentle, but ill starred son and successor, Robert III., died in the same place, is also asserted by the same author; and though his authority on this point is disputed by Pinkerton and Fourdoun, there are others of no mean authority, such as Riddiman and Macpherson, who stand up in defence of the testimony of the poet. But, be this as it may, there cannot be a doubt of his continuing to reside here some time after his father's death: and it is probable, that it was honoured by occasional visits from his royal successors, till the time of James IV. From the predecessor of this monarch, James III., Allan, first Lord Cathcart, obtained the custody of the castle, with the dominical lands, in 1482, and with this family they may be supposed to have continued for some time. The next account we have of it is in 1527, the date of a charter from James V., confirmatory of one probably given in his minority, and granting it in right of possession to a person of the name of Wallace, a cadet, in all likelihood, of the family of Craigie, (see Robertson's Ayrshire Families.) In this descent it continued till 1638, when the proprietor, who appears to have been deeply involved in the troubles of the time, by taking an active lead in the covenanting interest, made it over by sale to Sir William Cochrane of Cowdon, the ancestor of the present Earl of Dundonald.† In 1726, it passed again into the possession of the Eglinton family, with whom it still continues; and all that now remains to the Dundonald family, is merely the

\* The reader may remember an anecdote connected with this ruin, which, perhaps, has rendered it more famous than all its history: that when Dr Samuel Johnson on visiting the spot, was informed by Boswell of the fact above-mentioned, he made the old arch ring with a peal of derisive laughter. This was probably only meant to humble the national pride of his Scottish friend. But if otherwise, it was unworthy of the mind of the gifted moralist.

† We take this to be the date of transfer, instead of that given in the former Statistical Account, which is two years later; because that date is given without authority, and we find Sir William's name entered in 1638, as a member of the kirk session, which could scarcely have happened before the purchase of this estate, as it was his only bond of connection with the parish.

mouldering walls of the castle, with the mount on which it stands, extending to about six or eight acres of land.

*Heritors.*—It is rather a singular fact, that, of all the heritors who signed the Solemn League and Covenant in 1638, scarcely one descendant has now an acre of land in the parish. The M'Kerrells of Hillhouse are the only family who have retained possession of their patrimonial estate in any thing like an entire shape. The date of the original grant or purchase is unknown, but it is supposed to have descended in regular succession for 500 years. The Fullartons, the Wallaces, the Cunninghams, and the Cochranes, once all dominant, have long since given place to others, but, for the consolation of heraldry, to families not less old and honourable than themselves; as will be seen from the following list, which we give in the order of their valued rental: Lady Mary Montgomery, lady of Sir Charles Lamb, Bart. (Auchans); His Grace the Duke of Portland, (Fullarton); Sir John C. Fairlie, Bart. (Fairlie); the Right Honourable David Boyle, Lord President of the Court of Session, (Shewalton); Henry M'Kerrell, Esq. of (Hillhouse); Colonel Crawford, (Newfield); Miss Morrice of Craig, (Holms); J. Deans Campbell, Esq. of (Curreath); Colonel M'Gregor of (Caprington); Colonel Fullarton of Bartonholm, (town of Fullarton); James Campbell, Esq. of Craigie, (Broadhirst); Mr Dickie, (Loans); Colonel Kelso of Dankeith, Burgh of Irvine, (Friar's Croft.) All the principal heritors have residences either in or adjoining the parish.

*Parochial Registers.*—These, as in most other parishes in Scotland, from the accidents of time, but more especially from the slovenly way in which they have been originally kept, are in a very imperfect state. The oldest volume, containing the records of session, and bearing date 1602, is tolerably entire; nay, strange to say, much more so than any of the succeeding ones. It extends over a period of forty years, comprising a silent interval of sixteen years, and contains a great deal of parochial information that is curious and interesting. Among other entries of this kind, are minutes of the trial of Patrick Lowrie, Warlock, and Cathrine M'Teir, demit of witchcraft. These seem to have been cases of peculiar interest, and considerable judicial difficulty, from the minute detail of evidence adduced, and the length of time they appear to have been under trial. The attention of the session was more or less occupied by them for nearly five years,—a term which would now-a-days do no small honour to a chancery law-suit. Not-

withstanding all this trouble however, matters seem to have been left just where they began; no decision being recorded, probably from the parties leaving the parish, as we see, from one part of the evidence, they threatened to do. For the curious in such matters, we shall subjoin one or two extracts, on different subjects, from this interesting volume.\*

The volume from which these extracts are taken contains a record of a different, and to Scotchmen at large, of a more interesting kind, namely, the Solemn League and Covenant, to which are attached no fewer than 222 signatures. But of these, which is a lamentable proof of the low state of education at the time, 179 are subscribed by proxy, because, as is stated, "they could not wryt themselves." It appears, however, that the eyes of the people were beginning to open to this defect, as we find them making arrangements two years afterwards, in 1640, for forming what may be considered the first parish school. The articles agreed on at a public meeting held for the purpose, and to be subscribed by the teacher on admission to office, are certainly curious enough. The luckless man of letters was to be any thing but a free agent; for there was scarcely a part of his duty, even the most trifling, which was not laid down to him by rule, and according to which he was not commanded to walk on pain of deposition. The hours of teaching and recreation, the tasks for the children, the deportment to be borne towards them, the kinds of punishment, even to the particular sort of birch to be used, with the exact parts of

\* "Session haldin 8th November 1629. The quhillk day the minister publicklic out of the pulpit, by the authoritie of the presbytery, did inhibit and discharge all sorte of charming, and resorting to charmers, consulting with wizards, sorcerers, and uthers of that sorte, certifeing all and sundrie who did so in time cuming, they should be chalengit criminallic yrfore and followit, and persewit with death, as for the crimes of witchcraft.

"Session haldin 17th March 1605. John Fergushill, younger in Haly, deserit ane alanderous taill spokin to him by Agness Lyonn, spous to Petir Renkin in Parkheid; she aladgand upon George Lachland her author, as the said George Lachland aladgit Symon Muir his author, "That the late minister of Kilwinning now departed his life was cardit (buried,) with his mouth doun, and that he confessit yat ye minister of Ayr and Irvine, and he, had ye wyt of all ye ill wedder ye year.

"Session haldin 23d March 1602. The quhillk day. Symon Wallace in Creux requyrit to schaw ye manner of yat uproir and tumult maid in ye Kirkyard immediatelic efter ye sermon on Sunday ye 8th of Apryle last was, be him and his adherentis, and John Dickie in Curraith and his adherentis. Ye said Symon declarit in manner following; That he persawing ye said John Dickie to come by his accustomed manner with convocation of his friendis yat day to ye kirk, and yat ye said John Dickie had offendit him, he tuik ye sam as done in contempt of him, quhairupon quhen he saw ye said John Dickie he had him ga out of ye kirkyard, and yat yrupon ye said John Dickie and his adherentes drew swordes to ye said Symon, quhairupon yat cutit his gainging staf whilk onlis he had in his han and na ither armor. Ye session continuit yis matters to foyer tryel."

he body to which it was to be applied, are all made the subjects of minute description and legal enactment. What would a teacher now-a-days think, if he were gravely called upon to subscribe such an article as the following? "That he shall attend at all hours when the children are in school, and not suffer himself to be withdrawn by drinking, playing, or any other avocation." And more especially, when he takes a glance at No. 4, and sees that these hours in the winter months are from sunrise to sunset, and in summer from seven o'clock morning till six evening, without even the benefit of a Saturday's recreation. And that on the very Sabbath itself, he was to be always present in church with his little flock around him, to see, as the record bears, that they conducted themselves with propriety, and gave due attention to the ordinances of religion, of which examination on the following day was strictly to be made.

The minutes of session, after the conclusion of this volume, till within the last few years, have been very carelessly and imperfectly kept. The next entry after 1643 is in 1702, the commencement of another volume. And for more than half a century after this date, there are scarcely ten consecutive years of their transactions recorded. The register of baptisms, extending to four volumes, begins in 1673; that of deaths, in one volume, in 1763; and that of marriages, also in one volume, in 1823. The first of these is, in comparison, tolerably correct. But the other two are very incorrect, and hopelessly so, until more stringent measures are taken to compel the people generally to attend to such matters.

*Antiquities.*—In this department of inquiry, the Castle of Dundonald claims the first place. The date of the edifice is unknown; but the probability is, from the style of the building and other circumstances, that it is indebted for its origin to the craftsmen of the twelfth or thirteenth century. As a ruin it is still comparatively entire, and would have been much more so, if it had had only the Goth Time to struggle against; but the hand of man has also been sorely against it for many generations. According to a tradition, which the appearance of the edifice seems to confirm, an entire storey was removed to build the house of Auchans, which is itself nearly a ruin: and from time to time almost every available piece of freestone has been carried off. Though these systematic depredations are now discontinued, the hand of mischief is still occasionally at work. So that if it be true, as we have heard on good authority, that the family of Dundonald hold the adjoining

piece of land in grant from the heirs of Eglinton, on condition of keeping the ruin from further decay, we must say that the terms of the tenure are not very strictly complied with. The building, two entire storeys of which still hang together, roofed in by a rude arch of rubble work, is in the form of an oblong square, and entirely without ornament. It is chiefly built of greenstone from the adjoining rock, with corners and port-holes, &c. of freestone, not superior, as when the former Statistical Account was written, to any found in the parish. But, as it is only of late years that the freestone quarries in the parish have been wrought, it must have been brought from a considerable distance. The length of the building without the walls is 113 feet. The breadth 40 feet. At the south end, is the keep or prison, consisting of two or three miserable looking arched cells nearly filled up with rubbish, which apparently form a distinct compartment, but are in reality a part of the original building. On the western wall, the arms of the Stewarts, with those of some of the more powerful barons, are carved in *alto relievo*, but are so obliterated by time as to be almost undistinguishable. Parts of the wall, both of the outer and inner courts, are still standing, and appearances of a mound or fortification running round the whole, and of a moat at the bottom of the hill, are distinctly to be traced. Previous to the Reformation, the castle contained a chapel dedicated to St Ninian, with an endowment annexed, the patronage being vested in the prince; but no remains of it are now to be discovered. We shall leave these dry bones of once proud and living architecture, with the quotation of a popular rhyme regarding them, which lays claim to a high antiquity. The verse is certainly descriptive enough of the castle as it stands; but if it is as ancient as is supposed, it must have reference to a still older fortlet, which is generally believed to have occupied the same site.

“There is a castle in the wast,  
They ca’ it Donald’s din;  
There’s no a nail in it ava,  
Nor yet a timmer pin!”

In 1240, the family of Fullarton erected and endowed a convent of Carmelites on the site now occupied by the town of Fullarton. The convent, which was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, continued to flourish till the time of the Reformation. (See Aiton’s Survey.) The last prior, Robert Barn, foreseeing the approaching storm, alienated the lands, which went under the name of Friar’s Croft, to Fullarton of Dreghorn. No traces of the edifice or of

the ancient mansion-house of its founders, which stood close by, are now to be found. And the only circumstance which gives a decided locality to the building, which at one time was disputed, was, that when the grounds some years ago were feued out for building, the foundation of the convent walls were discovered on digging, about fifty yards west from the old place of Fullarton. For a more particular detail, see Robertson's Ayrshire Families.

Tradition says that a chapel once existed at a place called Chapelhill, close by the mansion-house of Hillhouse. The ground, which is now covered with wood, has still some traces of such an erection. In the garden wall, which was built nearly a century ago, the font-stone is still pointed out. Such a tradition, even without any visible evidence, may almost be viewed as a certainty, from the history of the age to which it refers; when every baron of any wealth or influence was a kirk-builder on his own account, and prided himself in having his private chapel. And the M'Kerrells were influential enough at that time to lay claim to such a piece of religious state.

On the line of railroad passing through the farm of Barassie, a part of the same property, an earthen urn was found in 1839. It was filled with the usual complement of calcined bones, and from the coarseness of the material, and rudeness of the workmanship, it seems rather to have been of British than Roman manufacture. It was unfortunately broken in the course of extraction, and the fragments have found their way into the private museum of Colonel Blair of Blair.

At Kemplaw, on the estate of Lady Montgomerie, are the ruins of a vitrified fort. It stands on a projecting eminence formed by two ravines; but is in such a complete state of dilapidation, that the form of the edifice is entirely effaced. A few weeks ago, a piece of iron was discovered imbedded in a block of vitrified stone. It is about four inches in length, bent at one end, and exactly in the form of an ear-ring-drop. The position in which it was found would indicate accident rather than design; but to what purpose, either of ornament or utility, it could have originally been applied, we cannot even conjecture. We believe it is intended to send it to the Mechanic's Museum at Ayr.

Close by the mansion-house of Newfield, are what are said to be the remains of a Roman bath or reservoir. As the place is flooded with water, except during a very dry season, we have not been able to inspect it personally, and therefore cannot indulge the antiquarian with a description of its form.

The only other relics of antiquity worthy of notice are two old encampments on the heights above the farm of Harpercroft. "The largest of these," in the words of the former Statistical Account, "contains within a circular embankment of loose stones and earth, ten acres of ground, and there is an inner circle of the same kind, and from the same centre, which incloses one of these acres. The other encampment is about 200 yards distant. No artificial work has been raised on its north-east quarter, the steepness of the declivity being a sufficient defence. But on the south and west, the circular embankment is strong, and within is a platform not exceeding an acre in extent." The construction of these works is popularly ascribed to the Romans, though the absence of the ditch or fosse may be considered by antiquarians as conclusive against this opinion, and it is believed that all undoubted remains of Roman encampments are of a rectangular form, as might be expected from the minute description given by Polybius, Lib. i. On suggesting, however, to a gentleman connected with the parish, of long military experience and considerable antiquarian research, the possibility that the prevailing opinion might be correct, he said, "That the same thought had often occurred to himself—that he considered the Romans too wise a people to adhere with mathematical strictness to any one form of encampment, and that this would naturally vary according to the nature of the ground on which it was raised." This is the opinion of an intelligent soldier, who knows what fighting means; and we think it has at least common sense to support it. But whether they are Roman or Scandinavian, we pretend not to decide. The only way to settle the question satisfactorily, would be to send the ploughshare through them in search of old coins, or fragments of armour; a mode of investigation perhaps not quite to the taste of the genuine antiquarian; but one which time may nevertheless ere long bring to pass.

*Buildings.*—Of these, there are none of a public kind, except the churches, deserving of any notice. There are, however, several mansion-houses of plain, but handsome appearance. Fullerton, Fairlie, Shewalton, Newfield, Hillhouse, and Curreath, are all comparatively modern buildings, suited to the extent of their respective estates, and kept at present in very good repair. The material of which they are built is chiefly whinstone—this being most abundant; but freestone, of late years, has been principally used, even in edifices of much humbler pretensions, where out-

ward appearance was a matter of consideration. The house at Auchans, which bears date of 1644, is of a very irregular and grotesque appearance. As a mansion-house, it is now in a state of hopeless disrepair, and is occupied only in compartments by cottars: this, in point of taste, is much to be regretted, as a finer situation for a handsome building and residence is scarcely any where to be found. From the orchard adjoining this mansion, went forth the fruit which has long been known over Scotland as the Auchans' Pear. The tree originally came from France, and was blown down, in a good old age, by a storm about sixty years ago.

### III.—POPULATION.

Of the increase which, in this respect, has taken place over the country generally, this parish has had its full share, as will be seen from the following returns:—

In 1755, the population was	963
1791,	1317
1801,	1240
1811,	1610
1821,	2482
1831,	5579

And, from the Government returns of the present year, it is 6691, and is divided as follows:—

Town of Fullarton,	2813
Do. of Troon,	1409
Village of Dundonald,	345
(Do) of Old Rome,	256
Do. of Shewalton,	219
Do. of Loans,	205
Country, including hamlets,	1444

This increase is to be ascribed to general causes; but particularly of late years to the erection of the harbour at Troon, and the consequent increase of its trade; and also to its becoming a favourite place of resort for sea-bathing quarters.

The condition of the people generally, but more especially in the landward districts, is comparatively everything that could be desired. In the town of Fullarton, where hand-loom weaving is the principal occupation, and at the two collieries, from the proverbial thoughtlessness of this class of labourers, much destitution, both temporal and spiritual, undoubtedly exists. Still even the worst in these respects are not more so than their neighbours, and not so bad as we have witnessed in many other districts. As a whole, the people are orderly, intelligent, comfortable as to food and raiment, and contented with their condition, except when some wiser heads would persuade them to the contrary; "but even that, they dinna mind it lang."

### IV.—INDUSTRY.

*Agriculture.*—We suspect our statistics in this as in several

previous points, will be more than a twice-told tale; for Ayrshire is "cows and dairy produce" all over; and the parish, in this respect, may be considered as a thrifty cadet of the dairy-house of Dunlop. The greater part of the land is under cultivation, and comprises almost every variety of soil which is anywhere to be found. In these circumstances, the system of tillage is by no means uniform. On the loamy and light soils, which are adapted for green crop, the modern rotation is generally followed; but on the stiff clayey land, where this is impracticable, the usual rotation is, two white crops after six years pasture, with a top-dressing when the soil is broken up. Wheat has been grown for some time in considerable quantities; but, from the badness of the seasons, of late years, it has been greatly given up, and it is questionable if, from the incurable dampness of the climate, it will ever become a profitable crop. Stall-feeding, in one or two instances, has lately been introduced; but it is not likely to be generally adopted, and one proprietor, at least, has set the example of flaking sheep upon turnips, elsewhere found so beneficial, and for which much of the agricultural land in this parish is particularly adapted.

*Produce.*—To give this with any approximation to exactness, is nearly impossible; for it is seldom known even to the farmers themselves. It can only be inferred from the rent paid, and whatever may be the system of agriculture followed, they will generally be found in nearly the same proportion. The valued rent is L. 6411, 10s. 9d. Scots. The real rent, as given in the former Statistical Account, L. 6100 Sterling, and at present, it is fully double this sum. The highest rent of land is L. 4 per acre; but this is far above the average rate. The produce of a cow may be estimated at L. 8, 10s. and from the dairy, it is considered that the entire rent should be raised to give the farmer a fair return for his capital and labour.

*Farms and Farm-Buildings.*—All the land under regular cultivation is well subdivided with hedge-rows, and in some places with drystone dikes. The farm-steadings in general are comfortable and commodious, many of them having been either rebuilt or repaired of late years. The only defect seems to be in neatness of arrangement, which is little attended to even in modern erections. But it is not easy to change old tastes; as is well illustrated by the shrewd reply of a farmer of the old school, who lived before the invention of bone dust. On being requested by his factor to have his dung-hill removed a little farther from his door-step, he an-

swered, "Na, na, Sir, when a farmer thinks shame o' his midden, and a beggar o' his meal-pocks, its time they were quitting the trade." The highest rent paid by one individual is L.1000 a-year; but with this exception, and one or two more, of from L.400 to L.500, the farms are generally small, averaging from L. 100 to L. 200 a-year. The tenants, however, may all be considered as thriving in their way, and we have no doubt of their continuing to do so if steadiness and industry contribute to success. The common length of leases is nineteen years, on a stated money rental. In one or two cases only, it is paid by the fiars.

*Improvements on Land.*—These may be divided into two kinds—such as have been made upon land formerly under cultivation, and such as have tended to the reclaiming of that lying waste. In reference to the former, tile-draining has been the main cause of melioration. This was introduced into the parish, and, indeed, into Scotland generally, by the Duke of Portland, in 1826. Since this date, 272 acres upon His Grace's estate alone have been thoroughly drained, and principally at his own expense. The system adopted here, and, we believe, over all his extensive estates, is, to drain the land at the application of the tenant, with the exception of carting the tiles, on the condition of an annual payment in proportion to the distances betwixt the drains. At 18 feet apart, the rent is 5s. and at 15 feet, 7s. per acre. These terms we consider very equitable for both parties; and their advantages for the tenant especially, may be estimated by the fact, as stated to me by one of themselves, that he had drained land at his own expense, on a lease of three years, and considered that he reaped a safe remuneration. Though His Grace's system is not generally followed, yet almost all the proprietors give more or less encouragement, which is visible in the extensive operations at present going on; and, if they continue to proceed as they are doing, the time is not distant when the whole parish will be as dry as a garden. There is one singular fact well-ascertained, in regard to tile-draining, that it is unfavourable to the growth of beans. The cause is unknown, but it is at present under close investigation.

In regard to the reclaiming of waste lands, of which more than 2500 acres are still untouched, much has also been done. In the sandy districts along the shore, the hilly nature of the surface is the main obstacle. The levelling process is carried on by a machine in the form of a scoop, drawn by horses over the hillocks, and forcing the sand before it into the hollows, which is found to

be both the cheapest and most expeditious mode of operation. On the ground thus prepared, better crops are raised than might be expected, and such as to give encouragement to proceed with the improvements. In operating upon the Shewalton moss, consisting of about 1200 acres, though promising perhaps a better return in the end, much greater difficulties require to be overcome;—the reason, we suppose, why it has so long been neglected. The Lord President, however, the principal proprietor, is setting to it in right earnest. But as the moss is still in a growing state, almost a dead level, supposed in some places to be nearly 30 feet deep, and in all probability requiring to be drained to the foundation, a considerable time must elapse before it is entirely reclaimed. The large trunks and limbs of black oak which are found in a solid state very little below the surface, present also considerable impediments to the plough, even on the outskirts of the moss.

#### V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

*Means of Communication.*—There is no market-town in the parish; but this is scarcely felt as an inconvenience, the distances to Kilmarnock and Irvine being only five miles respectively, and that to Ayr not more than eight, and the roads in every direction good. Indeed, there are few parishes of equal extent so well accommodated in this respect. The turnpike road from Irvine to Ayr runs through the parish along the coast, passing midway betwixt Troon and Dundonald; that to Dalmellington starting at the same point, runs through the village of Dundonald; and these, again, are intersected nearly at right angles by the Kilmarnock and Troon road. In addition to these, there are parish roads in every direction, kept in tolerably good repair, and affording every requisite means of communication. The only thing that the mounted traveller has reason to complain of is the abundance of tolls; but, as the toll seems to be indigenous to the county, let us pay and pass on; for in this case we fear there is very little hope of writing them down. The accommodation of a bridge over the river Irvine, at the ford near Dreghorn, is much needed, and there is a prospect of this being accomplished at an early period by the contributions of the neighbouring proprietors.

*Post-Office.*—The post-office at Troon is the only one in the parish; but, though it is of little service to the parish generally, the defect in the case of Fullarton is supplied by its proximity to the town of Irvine, and the village of Dundonald is accommodated by the Troon runner passing through it daily to Kilmarnock. As

for the dwellers in the other districts, they are left to find and forward their letters as they most conveniently can.

*Railroads.*—Of these there are two in the parish. The older, which is more properly a tram-road, being formed of flat rails with flanges, was constructed by the Duke of Portland in 1810, for conveying coal from Kilmarnock to Troon. The principle is bad, and it is standing in need of constant repair; yet, from the quantity of coal conveyed, it still continues, we believe, a very profitable speculation. The waggons are drawn by horses, and carriages for passengers pass two or three times a-day; but more frequently during the summer months. The other, the Glasgow and Ayr line, passes through the parish along the sea coast for nearly eight miles. The part from Ayr to Irvine was opened in the summer of 1839. The whole line was opened in 1840. Since this date, the whole system of travelling has been completely revolutionized, as if by magic; and, when one hears of the paucity of travellers a few years ago, which was insufficient to support a rustic one-horse conveyance betwixt Irvine and Ayr thrice a-week, and compares it with the numbers who are flocking to and fro at all hours of the day, he is almost led to wonder what moving spirit can have come over the people, and what they can have found to do. A very neat and commodious station-house has been erected a mile from Troon, the nearest point of the line; but a branch is now in progress to connect it with the harbour. Another station-house has been built at Fullarton, on a more extensive scale, principally for the accommodation of the Irvine passengers.

*Harbours.*—Of these there are also two properly within the parish, those of Irvine and Troon. As the former in all probability will be fully described in the Account of the parish to which it belongs, our remarks upon it shall be few. The date of its original charter is very old; but it has not proportionately increased in importance. The harbour being situate at the mouth of the Irvine is secure from the winds; but the depth of water is only from 10 to 11 feet. The number of vessels belonging to the port is upwards of 30, from 50 to 100 tons register each. The principal trade is in coal, as will be seen from the following returns of imports and exports for the year ending 10th October 1840. Imports, barley, 225 quarters; milled do., 100 cwts.; beans, 1231 quarters; oats, 12,317 quarters; oatmeal, 11,620 cwts.; peas, 1174½ quarters; wheat, 4036½ quarters; flour, 1117 cwts. Export of coal, 43,693 tons.

The harbour of Troon, which is technically considered only a creek of the port of Irvine, is a work of much later erection. The original charter was obtained from Queen Anne in 1707 by William Fullarton of that ilk; but it remained for a whole century entirely a dead letter. According to the former Account, it is reported, that, about this date, "an offer was made to the proprietor by the merchants of Glasgow for feuing the adjoining land, and proceeding with the work; but that their offer was rejected for a reason which, however ridiculous it may now appear, would be considered very cogent in those days—lest a rise should take place on the price of butter and eggs." Thus it remained till 1808, when the Duke of Portland, who had previously purchased the estate of Fullarton, entered on the undertaking, which has cost from first to last about L. 100,000. The harbour, for depth of water and readiness of entrance, is one of the best in the neighbourhood, being capable of admitting vessels at low water, drawing from 15 to 16 feet. It is rather defective, however, in point of security, especially when the wind blows from the north-west, as was proved during the disastrous gale of January 1838, when twenty-two vessels were driven from their moorings, all of them being more or less damaged, and a few totally wrecked. This is a serious evil; but it is capable of being remedied at an expense not very formidable for such an undertaking, and it would be of the greatest advantage to the harbour to have it completed. A wet dock is at present in course of excavation from the solid rock. There are two dry docks; the larger, about 300 feet in length, is capable of admitting vessels of the first class. The trade is chiefly in coal and timber. Of timber, about 3000 tons are imported annually; of coal conveyed by the Kilmarnock railway for export, the quantity for the year 1839 was 130,500 tons; and during the quarter ending 7th November 1840, it was 19,480 tons. The vessels belonging to the port are fifteen in number, amounting to 3800 tons register, besides six vessels belonging to the port of Irvine, whose tonnage is 1300. The harbour has a good lighthouse supported from its own funds; and on the Lady Isle, lying towards the bay of Ayr, but belonging to this parish, the merchants of Glasgow, more than half-a-century ago, erected two pillars for the direction of vessels.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—Till within a few years, the people were very ill provided with church accommodation. The parish church, which was built in 1803, and is in very good repair, contains only 690 sittings; and its distance from Fullarton and Troon—the

nearer of which is four miles,—would, in any case, have rendered any thing like a regular attendance upon ordinances altogether impracticable. This defect was remedied in the case of Troon in 1837, and in that of Fullarton in 1838, by the erection of two handsome places of worship on the Church Extension principle, each containing 900 sittings. Both of these churches have ordained clergymen, with *quoad spiritualia* districts assigned.

The stipend of Troon at present is L. 150, and that of the other, guaranteed by bond, is L. 88, 6s. 8d., which, in both cases, is raised from the seat-rents and collections, except L. 20 of the former, which is paid by the Duke of Portland. The parish of Dundonald ecclesiastically contains now a population of only 1307, with 500 communicants; Troon contains 2186, with 500 communicants; and Fullarton 3071, of whom 400 are communicants. The seats in the parish church are all rent-free, being mostly allocated to the tenantry. In Troon, 120 are free, and the rest are rented from 3s. to 7s. each. In Fullarton, 100 are free, and the average rate of those rented is 2s. 6d. Neither of the clergymen of the new parishes has either manse or glebe. The manse of Dundonald, which was built in 1784, is, considering the wear of time, in tolerably good repair. The offices have lately been enlarged and improved, and are, consequently, in better order. The glebe is only four and a-half acres, including the site of buildings and garden; but the land is good, and very productive. Previous to 1792, the stipend was 100 bolls 14 pecks of meal, 32 bolls 11 pecks of bear, Ayrshire measure, and 20 merks Scots. That year, an augmentation of L. 25, 3s. 2½d. was granted by the Court, with L. 5 additional for communion elements. In 1824, it was augmented to the present amount, consisting of 17 chalders, half meal, half barley, and L. 10 for communion elements. The free teind still amounts to fully L. 600.

Besides this provision for clerical instruction, the parish has had the benefit of a resident missionary, connected with the establishment, for the last ten years. He resides in the village of Dundonald, and labours among the families at the three coal-works of Shewalton, Old-Rome, and Gatehead, in the parish of Kilmaurs. The funds for his support are raised by local subscription; but the burden falls chiefly on the Misses Muir, formerly of Shewalton, to whose Christian beneficence the parish has long been under the greatest obligations.

There are in all about 1886 Dissenters belonging to different

denominations, but consisting chiefly of Burghers, Relief, Baptists, and Roman Catholics. Of these, 1400 belong to Fullarton, and attend worship in the town of Irvine, 250 to Troon, and 136 to Dundonald. In the year 1840, about 100 members belonging to the United Associate Synod procured a place of worship in Troon, which was used as a mission station before the building of the present church, and have now an ordained pastor, who is the only Dissenting clergyman in the parish. For the accommodation of the Roman Catholic population, who are almost all Irish labourers, the priest, who resides at Ayr, and is under the superintendence of the bishop at Glasgow, pays regular monthly visits to Kilmarnock and Irvine, and sometimes more frequently.

*Schools.*—Besides the parish school, which has the legal accommodation of a good house and garden, and L.28, 18s. 9½d. of salary for the teacher, there are seven others in the parish, the most of which have small temporary endowments, and are under the same clerical superintendence. One of these was lately organized at Fullarton, in connection with the church, and has a salary of L.15 from the General Assembly's Education Committee. A school-house to contain 300 children, is in the course of erection, at an expense of L.500. This sum was procured from the legacy of the late Rev. Dr Bell of Madras, by the kindness of the Lord Justice General (one of the trustees nominated by that benevolent individual for the distribution of his ample fortune for educational purposes), and who has always taken the deepest interest both in the spiritual and temporal welfare of the district. Another school-house is also in process of building at Troon, for the accommodation of 230 children. The estimated expense is L.335, one-half of which is paid by Government, and the other by subscription. The average number of scholars at the parish school is 60, and at all the other schools together, 640. The rate of wages for the elementary branches of education varies from 2s. to 4s. 6d. per quarter. In addition to these means of instruction, there are several Sabbath schools, which are very numerous attended; and all that is now wanting, in this respect, is only the placing of those schools already in operation on a more independent and permanent footing.—A parochial library was established in the village of Dundonald in 1836, and contains about 150 volumes. It is in two divisions, adult and juvenile, and the annual payments are 4s. and 2s. respectively.

*Poor and Poor's Funds.*—The number of poor at present on the

roll is 94, which is, perhaps, rather a large amount. But on looking into the old session-records, we are not sure if matters, in this respect, are worse than they were. In the year 1648, we find that sixty-three persons were licensed by the session to beg within the bounds of the parish, which, considering the supposable amount of population, is a much greater proportion than at present. The average rate of weekly allowance is 1s. 4½d. which is raised in the usual way, from parish dues, church collections, including the stipulated sum of L. 4 from Fullarton, and an optional one of from L. 7 to L. 10 from Troon, and a voluntary assessment of the heritors. The collections at the parish church for the last year were L. 32, and the assessment 1s. per pound Scots of valued rent. Besides this, there are two mortifications of L. 90, and L. 45, the former under the management of the session, and the latter under that of the Fullarton Indigent Sick Society. The interest of each sum is distributed among five poor families not on the roll. The above may be considered a very scanty provision, but there are few parishes where more is done in the way of private charity. All the principal heritors are liberal in the distribution of coal and clothing, and other necessaries. In this, they are generously seconded by the farmers and inhabitants generally; and there cannot be a doubt, but that the claims upon their charity are becoming more and more urgent. What may be the reason, we know not, but sorry we are to say, that the good old spirit of Scottish independence, which once spurned the kirk-box, as almost worse than starvation, is fast dying away, and that few indeed now think it any degradation to have their wants so supplied. This is surely a symptom of change not for the better, and as it is, from accounts, very generally manifested, we trust it will meet with due consideration from those whose especial business it is to provide and legislate for the poor.

*Fairs.*—No fairs are now held within the parish, unless an annual cattle-show, which takes place at Dundonald in the month of May, can be called such.

William Fullarton of that Ilk, in a charter dated 1707, and to which we have already referred, obtained the power of erecting the town of Fullarton into a burgh of barony, with two annual fairs, on the third Wednesday of July, and first Thursday of November, old style. We are not aware whether the charter in this latter article was ever acted on; but it is now a dead letter, and

the proximity of the place to the town of Irvine has obviously been the cause.

*Inns.*—The number of these would seem to a stranger rather like a slur on the morality of the inhabitants, being not less than 50. But let it be considered that all of them, with the exception of seven, are located in the two seaport towns, and are principally frequented by persons who do not belong to the parish. This, however, to a philanthropist is a poor consolation, and in any case it is to be regretted that such things should be. The grand Turk has levelled the haunts of the opium-eater; the heathens of China have obstinately waged war against its importation; and surely a government calling itself Christian ought not to make gain, both of the temporal and spiritual degradation of its people.

*Fuel.*—The parish possesses both peat and coal in abundance. The former is little used. The latter, which is raised chiefly for exportation, sells at 1s. a load, which weighs about four cwt., and is of a very good quality.

#### MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

We may mention generally, under this head, that the condition of all classes, even of the poorest, has very much improved since the date of the former Account. An entire new town and harbour have risen up at Troon; two railroads have been constructed; common roads have been formed, and all much repaired; what were little better than mud-walls have given place to substantial stone and lime, and in many places to elegant architecture. The comfortable, but unstable, thatch has been supplanted by slate; the fertility of the soil, by a better system of culture, has been inconceivably improved. Money with all ranks is much more abundant; and all these things tell upon the comfort, as we would hope they do upon the gratitude, of those who enjoy them. As to the moral condition of the people, we have not the same means of judging; but, glancing at the records which are scattered over a period of two centuries and a-half, we find that every generation has had its virtues and its vices, and we would suppose that the people at present are neither much better nor worse than their predecessors. The parish, and we think happily, is still free from factories of every kind; the attempt referred to in the former Account having completely failed. And as a lover of those among whom one would choose to dwell, one would say, long may such attempts continue to fail! For while agriculture and the kindred

arts are favourable alike to the physical and moral health, there is obviously something in such employments destructive of both. And if experience has proved them to be injurious to men, they are a cruel bondage and degradation to the feebler sex. It is enough to make one's heart sick to look upon their wasted figures and colourless countenances, when compared with those who labour for their immediate bread in the pure light of day. But this evil, we fear, is, from the nature of things, without hope of remedy. The moral one, however, may be prevented; and should the root of it at any time be transplanted into this district, we trust that a moral and spiritual education will also keep pace with it, that the people may at least sink no lower, or become worse than they are.

December 1841.

## PARISH OF KILBIRNIE.\*

PRESBYTERY OF IRVINE, SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR.

THE REV. ROBERT URQUHART, MINISTER.

### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—KILBIRNIE, the ancient as well as the modern name of this parish, is obviously compounded of the common Celtic prefix *Kil*, signifying a church, cell, or hermitage, and *Birnie* or *Birinus*, the name of the saint to whom the church was dedicated. Though this saint conferred his name on the parish, his festival or anniversary, which fell on the 3d of December, has long since been forgotten, whilst that of St Brandane, the apostle of the Orkneys, is still commemorated on the 28th of May, under the modernized appellation of Brinnan's-day, the great annual fair of Kilbirnie.

*Boundaries and Extent.*—The parish is bounded on the north and east by Lochwinnoch and Beith; on the north-west by Largs; and on the south and west by Dalry. It is of an irregular oblong figure, in length from south-east to north-west between seven and eight miles, and of the medium breadth of about two miles and a-

\* Drawn up by Mr William Dobie, Grangevale, Beith.