

## PARISH OF TORBOLTON.

PRESBYTERY OF AYR, SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR.

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### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Etymology.*—TORBOLTON or Tarbolton, also in charters written Thorbolton, the name both of the parish and village, appears descriptive of the situation of the village, and of the use to which the beautiful round hill, close to which the village is built, was anciently applied. *Tor* means a round hill, on which *Thor* was worshipped. It has also a more general signification, and denotes any round hill, as is ordinarily the import of the word when applied to places in Britain. *Tor* or *Thor* of the Goths is the same God, whose name receiving a different pronunciation from the Celts, forms the first syllable of the names of many celebrated persons and places, as *Tar-quin*, *Tar-entum*, *Tar-tary*.\* *Tor*, or more correctly *Thor*, is the Saxon, *Tar*, the Celtic pronunciation of a word descriptive of the most remarkable and beautiful object in the neighbourhood, the hill mentioned by Burns in his poem of Dr Hornbook—"I had gaen round about the hill." *Bol* is the name of the god of the Druids.† Some superstitious rites, anciently observed in honour of this eastern god, are annually performed on the hill. On the evening preceding the Torbolton June fair, a piece of fuel is demanded at each house, and is invariably given even by the poorest inhabitant. The fuel so collected is carried to a particular part of the hill, where there is an altar or circular fire-place of turf, about three

\* The *Thor* of the Celto-Scythians of Germany was the *Tar-ants* of their neighbours of the south. In the ancient language of the Scots, both the names of this divinity are retained to this day. Macpherson's Dissertations, page 341. See also *Histoire de Dannemarc par Mallet*, Tom. ii p. 88.

† The name of this Pagan divinity is pronounced in the Gaelic *Bal*, *Bel*, or *Bol* indifferently. It is *Bol* on the ancient coin in the possession of the Earl of Morton, of which an engraving is given in the *Phil. Trans.* Vol. lvii Part I. page 267. In the Palmyrine Inscriptions it is *Bol*, sometimes *Bl*; and so becomes *Bal*, or *Bel*, or *Bol*, according to the vowel which is supplied. See Swinton on the Palmyrine Inscriptions, *Phil. Trans.* Vol. xlviii. Part II. page 736—and Dawk, *Mar. Palmyren*,

feet in height, and is placed upon the altar. A huge bonfire is kindled, and many of the inhabitants, old and young, men and women, assemble on the hill and remain for hours, apparently chiefly occupied with observing a feat performed by the youths, who are to be seen leaping with indefatigable zeal upon the altar or turf wall, inclosing the ashes of former fires, and supporting the present one. It appears from sacred Scripture, that the worship of Baal consisted in part of leaping upon his altar; "And they leaped upon the altar which was made." (1 Kings, xviii. 26). Though our translators, following, as regards pronunciation, the guidance of what is now well known to have been a comparatively recent contrivance, the Rabbinical or Masoretic points, have written the name of the false god so worshipped Baal, yet the name given to him in the original is Bol. So that *Tor* or *Tar*, or *Thor-Bol-ton* or town, is the town at Baal's hill, *i. e.* the town at the hill where Baal was worshipped.

*Topographical Appearance.*—The parish is characterized by its undulatory appearance; the waves or ridges rarely reaching an elevation of 400 feet above the level of the sea, and being all under culture, except where covered with trees. The parish contains scenes of much natural beauty, particularly on the richly wooded banks of the winding Ayr. From some of the elevations, popularly called hills, the prospect is extremely interesting, from its variety, and richness, and extent, comprising the entire course of the Ayr from its source to its mouth—the great valley of Ayrshire, which stretches from the Doon to Ardrossan, a distance of nearly twenty miles. At a greater distance, there are the Cumnock hills, the Carrick hills, the Frith of Clyde, Ailsa, the Argyleshire hills, and the Kilbirnie hills. More remote still, in favourable states of the atmosphere, may be seen Cairnsmuir, in Galloway, the promontory of Fair-head, in county Antrim, Benlomond, and Ben More; and, surpassing all these in loveliness and grandeur, Arran, to which Ayrshire scenery is in no small degree indebted for the impression which it never fails to make on the traveller.

*Boundaries, &c.*—The parish is of irregular shape, and is bounded on the north, by the parish of Craigie; on the east, by Mauchline; on the south, by Stair; and on the west, by St Quivox and Monkton.

The village is six miles, and the western boundary of the parish three and a-half miles, from the sea-coast. The extreme length of the parish is seven miles; its greatest breadth four.

Towards the south-western extremity, the breadth is about half a mile. The superficial extent is about 12,500 imperial acres.\*

*Hydrography.*—The river Ayr forms the southern boundary of the parish for an extent (taking its meanderings into the account) of about ten miles. It is chiefly remarkable, as compared with the other rivers of Scotland, for its dark colour, which it derives from two sources—the alluvial matter which is carried along by it, and the dark colour of the strata composing its channel and banks. There has been a very considerable loss of life in the Ayr, owing to the darkness of its waters, concealing from the view of persons who had ventured into it, deep places, with which the river abounds, termed in the provincial dialect “Weels,” almost every “weel” bearing the name of some person who has perished in it. Several streams rise in the parish. The only one requiring notice is the “Fail,” which rises in Lochlee, and after passing the monastery of Fail, and flowing through Fail Loch and Torbolton Loch, enters the pleasure-grounds connected with Coilsfield House, and discharges itself into the Ayr, at a place which has recently received the name of Failford. The parish abounds with springs. On the summit of Torcorse-hill, one of the highest spots in the parish, there is a pond, which continues filled with water at all seasons.

Three plains, flooded during the winter months to feed three small mills, are dignified with the name of lochs, and are called Lochlee, Fail Loch, and Torbolton Loch. About two years ago the Duke of Portland, with that enlightened liberality which characterizes him, relieved his tenantry from their thirlage to Millburn Mill, and allowed them to carry their corn to that mill or to any other. The consequence is, that the Millburn mill-wheel has become silent, and Lochlee Loch is being converted into arable ground. It is hoped that a similar fate awaits the other two lochs and mills. It is to be regretted that agricultural improvement should be materially impeded, and a large expanse of deep loam kept in a state of morass to supply with water those small mills, which, without injury to any party, could be placed lower down the Fail, or on the Ayr, where there is abundant water-power.

*Geology.*—The parish of Torbolton is occupied by three formations—red sandstone older than the coal, the coal, and the trap.

\* In a work distinguished for its general accuracy, “Aiton’s Survey of Ayrshire,” there is a considerable error in regard to the extent of Torbolton parish, which is stated (p. 716) to contain 22,000 Scotch acres.

*Red Sandstone older than the Coal.*—Entering Ayrshire from the north by the coast road, the strata are composed of old red sandstone, and are to be seen at Ardrossan, dipping under the coal measures. Towards the southern limit of the county, a short way beyond Dalmellington, we have the red sandstone resting on the graywacke, and supporting the coal measures. In the centre of the county, the red sandstone develops itself extensively, occupying the eastern portion of Torbolton parish, and part of the parishes of Craigie, Mauchline, Stair, Sorn, and Auchinleck. It is this rock which forms the bright red cliffs which add so much to the picturesque beauty of the scenery at Auchinleck on the Lugar, and of Coilhome wood and Barskimming on the banks of the Ayr.

The age and position of the sandstone relatively to the coal, seem deserving of attention, because of the extent occupied by this deposit, and because the expectation has been entertained by some that, by penetrating through it, coal may be found. It has great uniformity of appearance, and has a thickness of upwards of 100 feet in many places, as at the localities on the Ayr and Lugar already named. On the south bank of the Ayr, at a place called Clune dam, the red sandstone has a thickness of only a few feet, and here the strata with which it is associated become visible.

There are, 1. Stratified trap.

No. 2. Grey sandstone somewhat indurated.

No. 3. Dark red slaty argillaceous sandstone.

No. 4. Soft, loosely aggregated, red sandstone.

No. 5. Soft, loosely aggregated, red sandstone. This is a very beautiful rock, being chiefly composed of minute translucent, spherical, carnelian-coloured granules.

No. 6. Variegated slaty and argillaceous sandstone.

No. 7. Micaceous argillaceous sandstone passing into an ironstone slate-clay.

No. 8. A rock of a somewhat similar kind, but containing more iron.

No. 9. Red argillaceous sandstone.

No. 10. Overlying unstratified amygdaloidal trap containing much iron, and some carbonate of lime. The dip of the strata, from 1 to 9, inclusive, is to the south-east, at an angle of  $25^{\circ}$ , the strike to the south-west, at an angle of  $10^{\circ}$ .

The prevailing rock of the central district of Ayrshire (the number 7 of the above series) alternates with some of these strata in

the bed of the Fail near Coilsfield House, and in the bed of a deep ravine to the west of Auchinleck House.

Beyond the northern boundary of Torbolton parish, it appears to pass under the coal strata.

*Coal.*—The south-western part of this parish, and also a patch in the north-eastern quarter, are portions of the Ayrshire coal-field.

What first deserves notice in regard to it, is the water-of-Ayrstone, or hone. This is a variety of indurated fire-clay, which at Enterkine, in the parish of Torbolton, at Dalmore, in the parish of Stair, also near St Quivox manse, and at Curreath, in Dundonald parish, is to be found immediately under the soil, covering the coal measures, and dipping conformably to them. It appears to be one of the coal measures. It varies in coarseness, in hardness, and also in colour, being blue, and blue with brown specks, yellow, and brown. In all the localities in which it has been seen, trap occurs in its vicinity.

The strata met with in sinking the Weston pit were the following :

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| No. 1. Slaty micaceous sandstone.  | No. 15. Slate-clay.  |
| 2. Do.   | 16. Sandstone like No. 11.                                     |
| 3. Do.   | 17. Sandstone with much clay, approaching fire-clay.           |
| 4. Slaty micaceous sandstone, influenced in its colour by contained organisms. | 18. Ferruginous slate-clay with traces of vegetable organisms. |
| 5. Ironshot sandstone—slaty.   | 19. Slaty micaceous sandstone like Nos. 2 and 8.               |
| 6. Slaty sandstone.  | 20. Slate-clay like No. 10.                                    |
| 7. Fire-clay.  | 21. Bituminous shale.  |
| 8. Like No. 8.   | 22. Slate-coal.  |
| 9. Slaty micaceous sandstone, calcareous in a slight degree.                   | 23. Coarse fire-clay.  |
| 10. Slaty clay.  | 24. Quartzzy sandstone.  |
| 11. Sandstone.   | 25. Quartzzy sandstone.  |
| 12. Slate-clay—approaching bituminous shale.                                   | 26. Bituminous shale.  |
| 13. Sandstone.   | 27. Slate-coal.  |
| 14. Greenstone with carbonate of lime.   |  |

This last mentioned stratum is at the depth of 47 fathoms. It is 7 feet in thickness, and of excellent quality. Fibrous anthracite may be noticed not unfrequently in the coal.

Coal mines were worked in Torbolton parish so early as the year 1497.

*The Trap.*—The coal district occupying the south-western portion of the parish is separated from the red sandstone by a band or dike of a very peculiar description of trap, which has been traced by the writer from Meadow Bank, in Stair parish, across the parishes of Torbolton and Craigie to the neighbourhood of Symington, a distance of about eight miles. Offsets from this dike, forming ridges

and knolls, give to the parish its undulatory appearance. Clunedam, Cairngillan ridge, Alton-burn, "the Hill," and Torcorse Hill, are portions of this remarkable mass of trap. Its direction is north by west. It may average in breadth half-a-mile. It is a porphyritic and amygdaloidal trap; the amygdaloidal structure prevailing in some places, and the porphyritic in others. The amygdaloidal portions are chiefly calcareous spar, while the crystals which give it the porphyritic character are apparently of hornblend or augite, much decomposed and highly coloured by oxide of iron. The dike along its whole extent abounds in steatite. It decays rapidly from the action of air and moisture on the iron and calcareous matter, and, consequently, is a bad road metal, but it gives rise to a fertile soil.

*Organic Remains.*—Owing to the deep covering of alluvial matter, opportunities of examining the contents of the different strata rarely present themselves. There is an upthrow of the strata in the adjacent parish of Craigie, in the neighbourhood of a greenstone ridge. The following organic remains are met with in the Craigie shale and limestone. The list is given because little attention has hitherto been paid to the organic remains with which this district abounds. It will be seen to contain one or two rather rare species.

Nautilus quadratus	Terebratula ambigua	Productus lobatus
Orthocera lævis	————— lateralis	————— punctatus
————— undata	Spirifer Uriei pinnatus	Mytilus crassus
Turritella constricta	————— trigonalis	Turbinolia Fungites
Bellerophon Uriei	Productus Scoticus	

*Zoology.*—The fox, (*Vulpis vulgaris*) has excellent cover on the banks of the Ayr. The otter (*Lutra vulgaris*) inhabits the Fail. A white mole is occasionally met with in this district, more frequently near Kilmarnock. As it occurs, year after year, in the same localities, it is probably a permanent variety. The king's fisher (*Alcedo ispida*) inhabits the Fail. Torbolton Loch is a favourite resort and breeding-place of the snipe (*Scolopax Galinago*). A small snake is to be found in the woods on the banks of the Ayr, but the writer has not seen a specimen. That beautiful harmless reptile (*Lacerta agilis*) the lizard, seems to benefit by the climate of Ayrshire, and is apt to abound in farm-yards, if ducks are not kept.

The brown rat (*Mus decumanus*) is becoming very numerous, and occasions great destruction of grain during winter. As the progress of tile-draining is increasing indefinitely summer accom-

modation and breeding places for this animal, its increase to a vast extent would be the result, were it not for the activity and courage of the natural enemy of the rat, the weasel (*Mustela vulgaris*). It is unfortunate that there should be a general prejudice against this creature, the most dexterous, the most indefatigable, and the cheapest of all rat-catchers.

*Botany.*—Owing to the mildness and moisture of the climate, many flowering shrubs, originally outcasts from gardens, propagate, and are to be met with in hedge-rows and woods, while plants, unquestionably of native origin, exhibit unusual richness and beauty. Such is the case with the beautiful *Menyanthes trifoliata* and *Parnassia palustris* in Torbolton Loch. In this loch also, the *Ranunculus aquatilis* is to be seen, having its usual single row of petals, but tracing it along till it approaches the central ditch, (or main got, as it is called), when its roots penetrate into rich mud, it acquires a double row of petals. The *Trollius Europeanus*, *Geranium sylvaticum*, and a white variety of foxglove, occurring in Coilhome wood, deserve notice. The *Solanum dulcamara*, with its clusters of purple flowers, adorns the hedge-rows near Privick Mill. The Orchis exhibits itself on shaded banks in great profusion, and is designated by some aged persons of the parish, by a name which vies in beauty with the plant to which it is applied, "the belldera."

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

"*The Hill*" or "*Tor-bol*."—The Hill is a beautiful green knoll surmounted by an artificial summit termed "the Moat." The hill has, in different states of society, been used for very dissimilar purposes. It has already been spoken of as a place of idolatrous worship. One of those implements of stone termed *celts*,\* used by the Druids for cutting the misseltoe, (and probably also for slaying the human or other victim to be offered in sacrifice), was, a few years ago, dug up when cutting a drain in a field about a mile to the north-west of the Hill, and is preserved at the manse. The *celt* is of a hard clay stone, measures ten inches and a half in length, one inch and a half in breadth at the narrow end, gradually widens till it becomes three inches in breadth, when it is brought to a sharp edge, and, being of considerable weight, would, when grasped by the middle, according as the narrow and blunt or the broad and sharp end was used, inflict a stunning

\* "The celts wherewith the misseltoe was cut." Cooke's Enquiry into the Patriarchial and Druidical Temples, quoted by Ure in his History of Rutherglen, page 225—226.

blow, or serve as a cutting instrument. If we suppose it to have been fixed to a handle in the way in which their stone implements are attached by the natives of New Zealand to wooden handles, it would have the shape of the battle-axe.

The Hill seems, on some occasions, to have been used as an encampment, as it retains the marks of trenches. The conjecture, hazarded by the writer of the former Statistical Account, that it was a Danish encampment, is highly improbable, as the roving Danes seldom encamped so far in the interior, and, besides, "there is no evidence that they ever had any settlement within the Frith of Clyde." \*

The form of the Hill and its moat, truncated at the top, adapted it admirably for the administration of justice. "It was formerly the Court-Hill of the Barony of Torbolton; and the Hall formerly built on this mount was the chief messuage of the barons, where seisin was given of the same." †

Across a small brook, and on the summit of an elevated piece of ground to the south-east, is a place still termed "the Gallow-Hill."

About a century ago, the hill was rented by Mr John Hood, the parish schoolmaster, and was the play-ground of his scholars; in consequence of which it has acquired the name of "Hood's-Hill."

*Fail.*—A mile north from Torbolton, in the suppressed parish of Barnweill, and at the western extremity of Fail Loch, encircled by a few ash and elm trees, are the ruins of the monastery of Fail or Failford, once a place of some note, and which still enjoys much celebrity from the mention made of the friars in the sarcastic lines preserved by Ramsay in the Evergreen, and quoted by Walter Scott in the Abbot. ‡

\* Chalmers's Caledonia, Vol. iii. page 455.

† Privy Seal Register, quoted by Chalmers.

‡ "The Friars of Fail drank berry-brown ale,  
The best that ere was tasted,  
The monks of Melrose made gude kale,  
On Fridays, when they fasted."

Another version of this stanza has been preserved.

"The Friars of Fail  
Gat never owre hard eggs, or owre thin kale;  
For they made their eggs thin wi' butter,  
And their kale thick wi' bread;  
And the Friars of Fail they made gude kale  
On Fridays when they fasted,  
And they never wanted gear enough  
As long as their neighbours lasted."

Fail was founded in 1252, and belonged to the Red Friars. They were called Mathurines, from the house of this order in Paris dedicated to St Mathurine; and "patres de Redemptione captivorum," as it was a part of their duty to redeem captives from slavery. The name of the founder is unknown. The chief who ruled this convent was styled "minister." The minister of Failford was Provincial of the Trinity Order in Scotland. From being the head of the order, he had a seat in Parliament.

John de Graham, Lord of Torbolton, grants by his charter, of date September 21st 1335, given at Falle,\* the patronage of the church of Torbolton, with the lands of Wnzank, on which the church is built, to his cousin Robert de Graham of Welston.

The earliest of the "Friars of Fail" in regard to whom anything has been ascertained is "Brother John," who was the chief or minister of Failford in the year 1343. There are some documents extant, relating to this "Brother John" and a "White Horse," which seem deserving of notice as bringing to light some of the methods taken by monks and friars for obtaining land and patronage, and displaying the ignorance and credulity of landowners in Scotland in the fourteenth century. In a notarial instrument dated November 25, 1343,† "Johannes de Graham, nuper Dominus de Torbolton, confesses, that, after his grant to his cousin Robert de Graham, which grant had been confirmed by the Seneschal of Scotland, and approved by the chapter of Glasgow, 'Brother John,' minister of the House of the Holy Trinity at Ffele, in the diocese of Glasgow, had given him a White Horse for the right of patronage to the church of Torbolton, which horse the said 'minister John' had afterwards forcibly taken away (manu forti abstulit) from the said John de Graham. . . . This confession was made at Torbolton, in the church of that parish, before Thomas de Gedwath, monk of the Cistertian Order, and others."

Another document, entitled‡ "Revocatio Johannis de Graham filii," sets forth, "that things which are done through impetuosity of temper and facility of disposition, are revocable; that, being ignorant of law, 'Brother John, of the House of the Holy Trinity of Ffele, in the diocese of Glasgow, had, by his flatteries and most pernicious present (non sine munere pessimo) persuaded him to annul his former grant to his dear cousin, Robert Graham of Walston, of the right of patronage to the church of Torbolton and

\* Liber de Melros, Tom. ii. 447.

† Ibidem, 457.

‡ Ibidem, 458.

land called Unthank . . . that he recalls this error, and will subject himself, as is fitting, to the correction due to his offence. Datum apud Torbolton, 21 Feb. for the salvation of his soul and that of Emma, his wife."

A charter by Robert de Graham of Weilston,\* granting to the monks of Melrose the patronage to the church of Torbolton and to the seven acres of the lands of Unthank, and to the three acres of Carnegolayn, the nearest to the church,—and another charter† by the same Robert de Graham, conveying to the monks of Melrose, for the salvation of his soul, and that of Emma, his wife, the following lands situate in the territory and lordship of Torbolton, viz. "Dernehunche, Quyltisfeld, (Coilsfield) and Auldtounbrune,"—give us to understand why John de Graham was compelled to make and to put on record such humiliating confessions; and show that the affair of the white horse was a struggle betwixt the monks of Melrose, and the friars of Fail, for the increase of their patronage, and the extension of their lands—John de Graham being the dupe of the one party, and Robert de Graham the prey of the other.

The monks of Melrose, by a promise to Robert of what they could not give, "salvation for his soul and that of his wife," had obtained from him not only the advowson to Torbolton church and glebe, but also a grant of the estate of Coilsfield and other valuable lands.

The superior of Fail, his flatterer, and by the gift of the horse, had prevailed with John de Graham to convey to the house of Fail what was no longer his to bestow.

Neither John de Graham nor Robert de Graham appears to have been able to write his own name. Each charter bears that the person granting it had affixed his seal before witnesses.

In the description of the lands of the burgh of Prestwick, drawn up 1470, mention‡ is made of a John Quhit of Fale, "that acht sum tyme a certain piece of land in Prestwick, the annuel of which he had given stat of to our Lady of Grace, and to Tho. of Best in her name."

In 1582, John Hamilton was appointed minister of Failford.

In 1546 and 1560, the minister of Failford, Robert Cuningham, sat in Parliament among the clergy.

In 1587, William Wallace was minister of Failford.

\* Liber de Melros, Tom. ii. 452.

† Ibidem, No. 460.

‡ Records of Prestwick, page 9.

In 1619, Walter Whytefurd was minister of Failford.

The rental of the ministry of Failford, as given up by Robert Cuninghame, the minister, in 1562, amounted to L. 174, 6s. 8d. in money; 3 chalders of bear; 15 chalders, 4 bolls of meal; 30 stones of cheese; 10 hogs (young sheep); 3 stirks (young cows); 2 dozen grilse or salmon.

There belonged to this convent five parish churches, viz. the churches of Barnwell, Symington, and Galston in Kyle, of Torthorwald in Dumfries-shire, and the church of Inverchoalan in Argyleshire.

The estate of Fail is the property of Colonel Thomas Hunter Blair, of Brownhill and Dunskey. The estate and the monastery are in retours sometimes called Fail, but more frequently Failford. The latter name is the designation given in the county valuation book to the lands on which the ruin is situate. Nothing of the monastery now remains, saving one gable and part of a side-wall of the manor-house of the chief or minister.

*King Coil's Tomb.*—To the south of Coilsfield House, and immediately west of the farm-offices, is a circular mound, enclosed by a hedge, and planted with oak and other trees. On the centre and highest part of this mound, are two large stones, masses of basalt—which, according to tradition, mark the spot where the mortal remains of Old King Coil were deposited. The names borne by places in the vicinity are in keeping with this tradition. The beautiful mansion adjoining, one of the seats of the Earl of Eglington, is named Coilsfield, *i. e.* the field of Coil. Kyle, the name of the central district of Ayrshire, is supposed to be the same word Coil, spelled in accordance with the vulgar pronunciation of the name. A little brook that empties itself into the Fail is called "The Bloody Burn," and so testifies by its name, of the blood by which its waters had, on some memorable occasion, been polluted; and a flat alluvial piece of ground along the Fail, opposite the mouth of the bloody burn, is still called "The Dead-men's-holm," probably from its having been the burial-place of the soldiers. High authority.—Chalmers, author of the *Caledonia*, denies that there ever was such a person as King Coil. Although it is well known that that author at times allows himself to be carried away by an undue love of theory, still his scepticism has had the effect of degrading into mere fable, in the estimation of many, traditional history, in regard to the west of Scotland. Regard, therefore, for traditional evidence, respect for the memory of the mighty

dead, and love of historical truth, combined to render it desirable that Coil's grave should be opened. Accordingly, in May 1837, the two large stones were removed. The centre of the mound was found to be occupied by boulder stones, some of them of considerable size. When the excavators had reached the depth of about four feet, they came on a flag-stone of a circular form about three feet in diameter.

Under the circular stone, was first a quantity of dry yellow coloured sandy clay, then a small flag-stone laid horizontally, covering the mouth of an urn filled with white-coloured burnt bones. In removing the dry clay by which this urn was surrounded, under flat stones, several small heaps of bones were observed, not contained in urns, but carefully surrounded by the yellow-coloured clay mentioned above. The urns in shape resemble flower-pots; they are composed of clay, and have been hardened by fire. The principal urn is  $7\frac{7}{8}$  inches in height,  $7\frac{1}{8}$  inches in diameter,  $\frac{5}{8}$ ths of an inch in thickness. It has none of those markings, supposed to have been made by the thumb nail, so often to be observed on sepulchral urns, and it has nothing of ornament except an edging or projecting part about half-an inch from the top. No coins, or armour, or implements of any description could be found.

The discovery of these urns renders evident, that, at a very remote period, and while the practice of burning the dead still prevailed—that is to say, before the introduction of Christianity—some person or persons of distinction had been deposited there. The fact of sepulchral urns having been found in the very spot where, according to an uninterrupted tradition, and the statements of several historians, King Coil had been laid, appears to give to the traditionary evidence, and to the statements of the early Scottish historians, in regard to Coil, a degree of probability higher than they formerly possessed.

According to Bellenden, in his translation of Hector Boece, “ Kyle is namit frae Coyll, Kyng of the Britons, quhilk was slain in the same region.” Buchannan states, “ that the Scots and Picts surprised the camp of the Britons in the night, and put almost the whole of them to the sword. Coilus, King of the Britons, was among the slain in this engagement, and the district in which the battle was fought was afterwards distinguished by his name.”

Other urns were found less indurated, and so frail as to fall to pieces when touched.

An old man remembers that his father, then a tenant on the

Coilsfield estate, turned up pieces of ancient armour and fragments of bones when ploughing the "dead men's home."

In Bleau's Atlas, the following passage occurs, "*Aerae vicomitatus Coilam, a Coilo Brittanorum Rege. . . In campo ubi decertatum Cituus incurvus figura sua cornu referens, in primus canovus, multo post annis effossus est, quo comarchi Caprintonii, quorum ædes primariæ nostris Coilsfield dicitur, ad cogendos rusticos suos et operarios utuntur.*"\*

Defoe, in his Tour through Britain, makes a similar statement, and translates this passage, but does so without referring to the original, or quoting the authority of the celebrated Robert Gordon of Straloch, by whom the narrative accompanying the maps of Scotland was, at the request of King Charles I., furnished to the Messrs Bleau of Amsterdam.†

"A trumpet resembling a crooked horn, which has a very shrill sound, was dug up in the field of battle, and is still kept in the Laird of Caprington's house called Coilsfield,‡ and made use of to call his servants and workmen together."

\* *Geographiæ Bleuianæ, volumen sextum, p. 50, 60. Amstelædami, 1762.*

† *De Foe's Tour through Britain, Vol. iv. p. 130. Seventh Edition.*

‡ In a manuscript volume of poems and miscellaneous pieces now in the possession of David Constable, Esq. Advocate, written about the year 1681, the author, John Bonar, schoolmaster. Ayr, gives in verse an account of a voyage from the port of Bangor in Ireland, with a description of some of the objects of natural curiosity and antiquity of the coast of Carrick, from Loch Ryan to Ayr. In this volume the following passage occurs:

"The britones marchet, tuo dayes before the feild  
To Marrok's mote, for easement and for beild;  
Afore the night they waughtet liquor fyne,  
Lyke filthie beasts lying like drunken swine.  
Quhen fergus heare they wer in sutch a pley,  
Doune fra Craigsbian he came right suddenly,  
And tooke his will upon his traitrous foes,  
Quhair thousands lay skatteret like windlestroes.  
Coylus he fledd unto the river Doune,  
Quher drownet were many yt thair did runn,  
And northward held, quhil they cam till a muir,  
And thair wes stayet be Scots that on him fuir.  
Fergus he followet and came right heastilie,  
Quhair Coyll wes killet and all his hole armie;  
The cuntry people fra thenseforthe does it call  
Coylsfield in Kyll, as ever more it sall.  
Within twelve years, or litle mor's I guess,  
A trew story ane ditcher told me these;  
Tiring the earth for fewell to his flett,  
His spred did run upon ane stane bot lett,  
Quhilk, quhen he hade espyet earnestlie,  
A tomb it wes buildet full curioslye;  
He roll'd away, and fund a pitcher law  
With ashes, and bones, that all men might it knaw,  
Upon the stone wer graven letters fayre,  
Koyl's cly-p of this as now I speak no more."

This horn, so minutely described in Bleau's great work and by De Foe, is carefully preserved at Caprington Castle. It corresponds exactly with the description given of it, and it retains its shrill sound. There is no tradition in the family as to when or where the trumpet was found, and nothing was known of its history when the writer made inquiry concerning it.

The detail given in the subjoined metrical extract seems important, as it reconciles the historical narratives in regard to Coyl with the traditionary account and the monumental testimony. The early historians speak of the battle having been fought in Carrick, near the Doon, while the tomb and names of a variety of places, and also tradition, go to fix Coilsfield as the place of the King's death. According to Bonnar, Coil's troops were surprised and routed on the Doon, but the King and the remnant of his army proceeded northwards, and were overtaken and slain at a moor.

“ The country people fra thenceforth does it call  
Coilsfield in Kyle as ever more it shall.”

It perhaps deserves to be remarked that the name of the gardener's house at Coilsfield is Middle-muir.

Taliesin, who flourished in the sixth century, in his poem on the battle of Argoed Llwyfain, speaks of “ Cheneu, son of Coel.”\*

*Roman Camp and Sepulchral Urns.*—At Park-Moor there is a place called the Roman Camp, where trenches are to be seen. Sepulchral urns were found under cairns near the camp. An urn was also found under a cairn of stones on the farm of Law. It is highly ornamented with markings, made apparently with the thumb-nail, and is in excellent preservation. Sepulchral urns were recently discovered about a quarter of a mile northwards from Fail Monastery. When levelling a piece of ground a large flat stone was found five feet below the surface. Under the stone was a small pit, or grave, in which were two urns containing burnt bones. The urns fell to pieces soon after being exposed to the atmosphere. Two other flat stones have been met with, each covering a small pit. There was an urn in one of these pits. The other had no urn, but contained a considerable quantity of burnt bones. This very ancient depository for the dead exhibits evidence of scrupulous attention having been paid to order. The pits, which are rudely lined with stones, resemble each other in

\* Sharon Turner's *Vindication of the Ancient British Poems*, p. 248.

shape, being wider towards the one end than at the other. Such is also the case with the flag-stones which covered the pits. Two of the pits run north-east and south-west; the third stretches north-west and south-east. These pits or graves are so situate relatively to each other, that straight lines, connecting a point in the centre of each of them, would form an equilateral triangle, the length of each side being eight feet. The Druids, who, in the period of heathenism, were the priests, the judges, and the magicians of the west of Europe, regarded the making of processions in certain geometrical figures, and the placing of stones in certain numbers and forms, as being in importance inferior only to their horrid practice of offering up human sacrifices. "They were expelled," says Selden in his *Janus Anglorum*, "from France by Tiberius, from Rome by Claudius, from Britain by Christianity."

*Eminent Men—Coil.*—The name of Coil is so interwoven with the traditionary history of the west of Scotland, that we cannot but take special notice of him among the eminent men connected with the parish in which he found a grave. He was king of the Britons or Welsh, but had extended his conquests over a considerable part of Scotland. It has been maintained by some, that his daughter Helena was the mother of the first Christian emperor, Constantine the Great.

Owing to forgetfulness of King Coil, there has been much eager disputation as to the correct reading of an adage of unknown antiquity, which sets forth something characteristic of each of four districts of the west country. The most northerly part of Ayrshire is called Cuningham. "Cuning means a butter churn, and Cuningham, the churn district."\*

Carrick also had anciently high celebrity. Speaking of Carrick, Maister John Bellenden says: "In this region are money fait ky and oxen, of quhilk the flesh is rycht delicious and tender. The tallow of their wambis is so sappy that it fresis never, but flows ay be nature of the self in manner of oulie."†

That which has given its distinctive name to the central district of Ayrshire, is mentioned both by historians and poets. "Kyle namit fra Coyll Kyng of Brittons," or, as Burns has expressed it,

"Twas in that place o' Scotland's isle,  
That bears the name o' auld King Coil."

\* Robertson's *Ayrshire Families*, Vol. i. page 247.

† *History and Cronikles of Scotland* De Maister Hector Boece. Translated by Maister John Bellenden. Edin. 1585.

Hence the adage,

" Kyle for a man, Carrick for a cow,  
Cunningham for butter and cheese, and Galloway for woo."

*Peden.*—The Rev. Alexander Peden, whose memory is much revered in the west of Scotland, held the office of schoolmaster in Torbolton. After he became a minister, and during the time of the Persecution, he frequently preached at a secluded spot in the Coilhome wood, called Peden's Pulpit. A short way up the river there is a hollow place in the face of a cliff, to which he used to retire after preaching, called Peden's Cove. The pulpit is a jutting out mass of red sandstone overlooking a level piece of ground bounded by the Ayr, and hid from view by precipitous cliffs and lofty banks covered with copsewood. It is remembered that many of his admiring hearers used to assemble before the pulpit with their loaded firelocks in their hands—a precaution not unnecessary, as is abundantly testified by the subjoined inscription on a tombstone in Torbolton church-yard.\*

Woodhill is on the banks of the Ayr, about two miles up the river from Peden's Pulpit.

*The Rev. Dr William Ritchie.*—Torbolton was the earliest pastoral charge of the late Dr William Ritchie, one of the ministers of the High Church of Edinburgh, and for about twenty years Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh. He was an accomplished scholar, an eloquent preacher, and a profound theologian. During the period of his filling the Divinity Chair, the number of theological students at Edinburgh greatly increased, and a large proportion of the present clergy of the Church of Scotland were educated under him. In consequence of advanced age and repeated attacks of dangerous illness, he, in 1827, resigned his professorship. When he was unable longer to labour in word and doctrine, he had the consolation to know that his former pupils were now the faithful preachers of those precious truths which it had been the business of his life to teach to others, and which proved his own support in the prospect of death. He passed the remainder of his days at Torbolton manse, where he died in January 1829. He was interred in the church-yard of this parish, in the very spot on which he was ordained to the office of the holy ministry.

\* Here Lys William Shillilaw, who was shot at Woodhead by Lieut. Lauder for his adherence to the Word of God and Scotland's covenanted work of reformation, 1685.

*Burns.*—Robert Burns spent the happiest of his days and wrote the best of his poems at Lochlee, in the upper part of this parish. Many of the localities around are alluded to in his writings. Young men of the parish were the members of the Debating Club which he established at Torbolton, and his “dear brothers of the mystic tye.” Daughters of the small farmers, and servant girls of the neighbourhood, were the beauties whose charms he has immortalized.

*Thom.*—A thatched cottage, about a mile from Lochlee, is the birth-place of the most successful of all the illustrators of Burns, the self-taught artist Thom, whose *Tam o’ Shanter* and *Souter Johnny* form a new era in the history of sculpture.

*Mansion-houses.*—*Coilsfield House*, the property of the Earl of Eglinton, is an elegant modern mansion, beautifully situate on the southern bank of the Fail rivulet, and embosomed among rich woods.

“There summer first unfaulds her robes,  
And there they langest tarry.”

It is mentioned by Burns under the name of “The Castle of Montgomerie,” in his beautiful song of “Highland Mary,” and was a favourite resort of the poet during the time of his residence at Lochlee. Mary Campbell, the heroine of the song, and the person addressed in his pathetic stanzas beginning with

“Thou lingering star with lessening ray,  
That lovest to greet the early morn,” &c.

was one of the domestic servants at Coilsfield, and the object of one of his warmest attachments.

The other residences in the parish are, Enterkine, Smithston House, Drumley, and Afton Lodge.

*Land-owners.*—The chief land-owners are, The Right Honourable the Earl of Eglinton; John Bell of Enterkine, Esq.; His Grace the Duke of Portland; Samuel Cooper of Smithston, Esq.; Hugh Hamilton of Halrig, Esq.; Colonel Thomas Hunter Blair of Brownhill; Colonel S. Neill of Barnweill; James Oswald of Auchencruive, Esq.; William Paterson of Ladykirk, Esq.; A. M’Haffie of Overton, Esq.; Thomas Davidson of Drumley, Esq.; William Cooper of Temple Bog Wood, Esq.; James Campbell of Craigie, Esq.; William Patrick of Gillhead, Esq.; Mrs Paterson of Smithfield; William Ronald of Bennels, Esq.; Robert Pettigrew of Tarshaw, Esq.; Hay Boyde of Law, Esq.; Alason Cuninghame of Afton, Esq.; Mrs Hume of Spittleside; John Lees of Millburn, Esq.

*Parochial Registers.*—The date of the earliest entry in the register of baptisms is 1730. The earliest minute of session is of date 1774. The register of baptisms is defective, owing to the carelessness of some parents in not having their children registered.

### III.—POPULATION.

The population of the parish in 1755 was	1365
1798, .	1200
1821, .	2175
1831, .	2274
1841, .	2612
The population of the village is	1083
The yearly average of births for the last seven years is	70
deaths, . . . . .	40
marriages, . . . . .	25

There are five families of independent fortune residing in the parish.

Insane persons, none ; fatuous, 1 ; blind, 3 ; deaf and dumb, 2.

### IV.—INDUSTRY.

*Agriculture.*—The number of acres in crop, or occasionally cultivated is 10,868 imperial.

The number of acres of meadow land or morass is 436 imperial ; all of which, without much difficulty, might be brought under cultivation.

The extent of land under plantation and natural wood is 960 acres imperial.

*Rent.*—The valued rent of the parish is L.7038, 10s. 2d. Scots. The real rent from land is about L. 10,500. The highest rented land is L.2, 10s. ; the lowest 15s., the average rent about L.1, 5s. per Scotch acre.

*Husbandry.*—On most farms in the parish, a fourth is ploughed, and in that case the rotation is, 1st, oats, with perhaps an acre or two acres of beans ; 2d, oats ; 3d, ryegrass ; 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, pasture.

In other farms a third is ploughed, and then the rotation is, 1st, oats ; 2d, green crop ; 3d, oats ; 4th, ryegrass ; and the next five years pasture.

*Live-stock.*—Great attention is paid to the improvement of the dairy-stock for which Ayrshire is deservedly so celebrated.

The mode of making meadow hay in this parish seems to be nearly the same as that adopted in England ; though the Scotch have often been charged with mismanagement of their hay crops. Leases are generally for eighteen or nineteen years. The rents of several farms vary with the fiars prices. The average size of

farms is about 60 acres. Much ryegrass seed is sold to seedsmen; and the ryegrass is often allowed to stand for seed in land which is not in a proper state for a crop so very exhausting. Very little wheat is grown, though there are some good wheat lands in the parish. The climate is such that the sample is not very fine, and the crop is not more profitable than one of oats, taking the state in which it leaves the land into consideration. Turnips are raised in every farm. Mangel Wurzel, little cultivated, and not many carrots are raised.

As every occupier of land is engaged in tile-draining; as subsoiling is coming into use, and as a spirit of improvement is general among the farmers, it may be anticipated that the system of husbandry in this parish will speedily undergo great change.

There are in the parish four corn-mills, one flour-mill, and three tile-works. Most of the farms have thrashing-mills, some of them being driven by water power.

*Raw Produce.*—The amount of raw produce cannot be accurately given. By inference from precise information as to several farms, the value of the gross produce appears to be as follows:—

Produce of grain of all kinds, - - - -	L. 8965	0	0
Pasture, - - - - -	7634	0	0
Hay, meadow and cultivated, - - - -	3758	0	0
Potatoes, turnips, &c., - - - - -	3162	0	0
Gardens and orchards, - - - - -	200	0	0
Coal and other minerals, - - - - -	8847	0	0
	<hr/>		
	L. 27,566	0	0

*Manufactures.*—The weaving of muslin was introduced into Torbolton about the year 1794, and increased very rapidly, the number of looms in 1813 amounting to more than 120. The work, till 1825, was chiefly fine muslins, such as jaconets and lawns. At that period many commenced silk-weaving. At first Persians, afterwards, in succession, sarsanets, bandanas, satins, and velvets, but for three or four years past, new fabrics of mixed materials have been more generally required as challes, (silk and wool,) Victorias, (silk and cotton,) mousselin de laines (cotton and wool,) &c.

At present the number of occupied looms is 140. The work is all got from Glasgow. It gives a considerable circulation of money to the place. At the same time, it is to be lamented, that the hand-loom weavers are often unable to earn adequate wages. There are only a very few looms employed at customer or household work. Domestic manufacture, to a great extent, is discontinued, and a large proportion of the females, both of the village

and the county, have laid aside the spinning-wheel, and are employed at sowed work. The Ayrshire work is beautifully executed here, and is the chief source of support to many families.

At Failford, about two and a-half miles from Torbolton, there is a manufactory for hones and razor-strops. The cases for the strops are veneered with wood and finished in a very tasteful manner.

#### V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

The lands of Torbolton, by a charter of *novodamus*, granted by Charles II. to John Cunninghame, Esq. of Enterkine, were constituted into a free burgh of barony, with the power of holding within the burgh a weekly market on Thursday, and two free fairs annually.

Two bailies and twelve councillors are elected by the householders on Christmas eve. A town-house and lock-up-house were erected by subscription in 1836.

*Means of Communication.*—There is a daily post to and from the village, and there are weekly carriers to Glasgow, Kilmarnock, and Ayr. The parish is traversed from the west to the east by the road from Ayr to Edinburgh, via Murkirk and Douglas Mill, and from north to south by the road from Kilmarnock to Dalmellington. There is a stage-coach daily to Ayr. The principal market-towns with which the farmers hold communication are Ayr and Kilmarnock, the one being seven and a-quarter, and the other eight miles from Torbolton.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The church of Torbolton is described in instruments of date 1335, as situate on the lands of WNSANK, also written in later documents, Unthank,—seven arable acres of which, and three acres of Caryngolayne, the nearest to the church on the west side, were given as glebe to the church of Torbolton by John de Graham, Lord of Torbolton. There is a curious document extant,\* in the shape of a letter, in the old Norman frank of the time, addressed by John de Grahame, Seigneur de Torbolton, to all who shall see or hear this letter, complaining that Sir John de Lyn-desay had maliciously, falsely, and wickedly intromitted with the church of Torbolton, and with the support and maintenance of William of Douglas, had presented to said church. He then states the grant of the advowson of the church and lands pertaining thereto, to his cousin Robert Graham, confirmed by the seneschal, and ratified by the see of Glasgow, and that the said Sir John, and whoever should maintain him, should be held as intromitters against the law of the church and the civil law.

\* Liber de Melros, Tom. ii. 451.

The patronage appears to have gone, with the manor of Torbolton, to the Stewarts of Dernly, in 1361. John Cameron, the Bishop of Glasgow, erected the church of Torbolton into a prebend, or canonry of the cathedral church of Glasgow. This was done with the consent of Sir John Stewart of Dernly, the patron of the church thus converted into a prebend; and the patronage of the prebend was settled to belong to him and his heirs. It was established at the same time, that a vicar pensioner should have the cure of souls at the parish church, with a stipend of twenty merks yearly, and a manse and glebe. The canon who held this prebend had the whole revenues of the church of Torbolton, with the dedication of twenty merks to the vicar, and he was moreover taxed L. 3 a year for the benefit of the cathedral church of Glasgow. The rectory of Torbolton continued a prebend of the church of Glasgow till the Reformation; and the patronage continued with the Stewarts of Dernly and Earls of Lennox. In Bagimont's roll, as it stood in the reign of James V., the rectory of Torbolton, and prebend of Glasgow, was taxed L. 16, being a tenth of its estimated value. At the period of the Reformation, the rectory and prebend of Torbolton was held by James Chisholm, who let the tithes and revenues thereof to Cunningham of Caprington, for the yearly payment of L. 160, out of which Chisholm paid L. 20 yearly to the curate who served the Church of Torbolton, and eleven merks yearly to the chaplin who served in his stall within the quire of Glasgow. Several lands which belonged to the church of Torbolton were granted in feu farm to Cuningham of Caprington at the period of the Reformation.

The Honourable Colonel James Montgomery, fourth son of Alexander, sixth Earl of Eglinton, obtained by purchase from Cuningham of Caprington, the lands of Coilsfield, with the patronage of the church, before 1661.\*

In 1673, the parish of Barnewell was suppressed, and a large portion of it was† annexed to the parish of Torbolton.

The present church, a handsome building, having a spire ninety feet in height, and a clock with four dials, was completed in 1821, at an expense of L. 2500. It contains 950 sittings, and is within four and a-half miles of the most remote dwelling in the parish.

The manse is a substantial excellent house in good repair.

\* Robertson's Ayrshire Families, and Chalmers's Caledonia.

† Hence it is that lands of Fajj or Failford, and the properties of Law and Brownhill, contiguous to the monastery, all of them now in Torbolton parish, are described in retours as in the parish of Barnewell.

The glebe contains  $4\frac{1}{2}$  acres, including the ground occupied by the manse, offices, approach, and garden. The portion of the glebe which is arable amounts to about three acres, and is worth L. 6. There is no grass glebe.

The stipend consists of 16 chalders, one-half meal, the other half barley, and L. 8, 6s. 8d. There are L. 753, 10s. 7d. per annum of unappropriated teinds. The average annual number of young communicants is 43. The number of persons who communicate in the parish when the Lord's Supper is dispensed, may be stated at 720.

There has for many years been a place of worship belonging to the United Secession. The congregation is under the charge of a pious clergyman, and consists of very worthy persons, but is not numerous.

There is in the parish an Association for religious purposes. The amount of its yearly contributions is about L. 15.

*List of Ministers of Torbolton.*—John de Lyndsay was parson of the church of Torbolton in 1362. *Rotuli Scotiae*, i. 864.

Walter de Roule was rector of the church of Torbolton in 1388.\* *Reg. Mon. de Melros*, p. 331.

Willielmus de Fayne was rector of Torbolton in 1408. *Ib.* 338.

Robert Maxwell was rector in 1521. *Ib.* 221.

David Curll was reader in Torbolton in 1571 with 20 merks and the thirds of the vicarage.

Maister John Nisbit was minister in 1576. His stipend was L. 133, 6s. 8d. Scots, with the kirk land of Torbolton.

David Curll was continued with L. 20 of stipend.

Mr John Guthrie till Restoration, 1662.

Mr William Nasmyth translated to Eckford.

Mr George Gillespie.

Mr George Andrew translated to Prestonpans, 1694.

Mr Henry Osborn.

Dr Patrick Woodrow, 1740.

Dr William Ritchie, 1794, translated to Kilwinning, to Glasgow, to Edinburgh.

Dr John Ritchie, 1799, translated from Dunsyre.

Mr David Ritchie, 1829.

\* Walter de Roule, rector of Torbolton, as commissioner on the part of Matthew, Bishop of Glasgow, pronounced on the 4th of September 1388, in the church of Renfrew, sentence of excommunication against the abbot and certain monks of Paisley, and was afterwards proceeded against by the abbot, as having iniquitously, irregularly, and unlawfully fulminated against him sentence of excommunication.—*Registerium Monasterii de Passelet*, p. 333.

*Education.*—There are two schools in the village, and one in the country part of the parish. The parish schoolmaster has the medium salary. There are no natives of the parish upwards of fifteen years of age who cannot read. While this is the case, it is at the same time true that, during the last ten years, there has been a gradual diminution of the proportion of the population attending school. Boys are now at the loom, or go down the coal-pit, when ten or eleven years of age. Girls at even a more tender age earn their subsistence at needle-work. The evil which must result from this shortened period of attendance is at present in some degree mitigated by evening-schools, Sunday-schools, and classes for religious instruction.

*Literature.*—There is a subscription library in Torbolton, and also at the Crawfordston colliery, and there are about 200 small volumes for the use of the Sabbath scholars.

*Alms-houses.*—The late Alexander Cooper, Esq. of Smithston, bequeathed all the money and moveable property of which he died possessed, for the purpose of building and endowing an hospital for the support of persons of the parishes of Torbolton and Mauchline in reduced circumstances, upwards of forty years of age, and who have never begged. A very handsome hospital, or rather range of alms-houses, has been erected at a place which, about thirty years ago, received the name of Failford, and is beautifully situate near the junction of the Fail and the Ayr. The hospital is designed to accommodate eight persons, and has eight separate apartments. The inmates receive a weekly aliment, and have each a piece of garden ground.

*Friendly Societies.*—There are two Friendly Societies for females and one for men, which have proved of great advantage. There is also a savings bank.

*Poor and Parochial Funds.*—The average number of persons on the poor's roll is 20. The average number of persons receiving occasional relief is 15. The collection at the church doors amounts to L. 37. Such further sum as is required is made up by the heritors by voluntary contribution. The average annual expenditure for the poor inclusive of the expense for collecting contributions from heritors, is L. 100.

*Fairs.*—There are two fairs held at Torbolton, chiefly for the sale of dairy stock, one of them on the first Tuesday of June, O. S. the other on the second Tuesday of October, O. S.

*Inns, Alehouses, &c.*—There are eleven places for the sale of

spirituous liquors in the village, and eight in the country part of the parish.

The great number of public-houses, and the low price of whisky, are prejudicial alike to the temporal comfort and moral condition of the population.

*Fuel.*—The only fuel used is coal. The Weston or Crawfordston colliery is three and a-half miles from Torbolton. The coal, which is of excellent quality, costs at the pit 6s. per ton of 20 cwt.

At Adamhill, two miles from the village, light or cannel coal can be obtained at 6s. 8d. per ton of 20 cwt.

January 1842.

## PARISH OF CRAIGIE.\*

PRESBYTERY OF AYR, SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR.

THE REV. JOHN STIRLING, D. D. MINISTER.

### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Boundaries, &c.*—This parish † is bounded on the north by Riccarton and Galston; on the east, by Mauchline; on the south, by Tarbolton, &c.; on the west, by Monkton and Symington.

*Topographical Appearances.*—The hills near the church, with the exception of a craggy rock jutting out here and there, are covered with verdure to the very summit, and although comparatively low, being only about 500 feet above the level of the sea, the view from them is both extensive and beautiful. The parish contains a part of the suppressed parish of Barnweill, the greater part of the stipend of Barnweill being transferred to the support of the minister of Stair. The parish is, in a direct line, about seven miles long, and one and a-half miles broad on an average.

### II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

*Parochial Registers.*—These are, 1st, A register of births and baptisms. The first baptism recorded is in 1679, and for many years this register appears to have been irregularly kept. The births commence to be recorded along with the baptisms in 1807, and from that time the record is kept pretty regularly. 2d, A re-

\* Drawn up by Mr James Watson, schoolmaster.

† Craigie parish and that of Riccarton were formerly united, but were disjoined in 1647.