

PARISH OF CUMBERNAULD.

PRESBYTERY OF GLASGOW, SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR.

THE REV. JOHN WATSON, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—CUMBERNAULD, in Celtic Cumar-an-alt, is said to signify the meeting of streams, descriptive enough of the situation of this parish,—several brooks uniting their streams a little below the village of Cumbernauld. As it originally formed part of the ancient kingdom of Cumbria, comprehending the south and south-west of Scotland, as well as Cumberland in England, it is supposed by some to have derived its name from the Cumbrians. Nothing, however, is more involved in mystery, than the derivation of names, and this, like many more, rests on mere conjecture.

Extent, &c.—The parish of Cumbernauld, situated at the eastern extremity of Dumbartonshire, is bounded on the west, by the parish of Kirkintilloch; on the south, by the parish of New Monkland; on the north and north-east, by the parishes of Kilsyth and Denny; and on the east, by that of Falkirk, all in the county of Stirling. From east to west its length is about 8 miles, and its breadth from north to south from 3 to 4 miles.

Geology.—This parish is formed of a succession of ridges of whinstone or trap, running in parallel lines to each other, in a direction from east to west; and excellent metal for making roads or paving streets, and for building farm-houses and fences, is here in great abundance. Freestone also abounds in various parts of the parish of excellent quality, and for the purpose of building is worked to a very considerable extent in the lands of Netherwood, adjoining the Forth and Clyde Canal. Limestone on the same lands, and also at Cumbernauld, of a very superior quality, is worked to a great extent, the former averaging above L. 4000, and the latter L. 2500 annually. The mine of Netherwood at present is

cleared of water by manual labour, and Cumbernauld by an ingenious hydraulic machine; but I apprehend that, ere long, some more powerful means for removing the water will be found to be necessary. The dip in both is east and south-east. The lime strata, for properly speaking there are three strata, or the lime post, is between 8 and 9 feet in thickness, lying between an indurated freestone and blaise; on the east, it is cut off by a whin dike; and on the west it is separated from the coal district by a ridge of sandstone. About 20 fathoms below the limestone, there is a stratum of coal not worked; but as the parish lies on the boundaries of the coal fields, which stretch into Fife on the east, and into Lanarkshire and Ayrshire on the south and west, coal is found in different parts of the parish, but chiefly of that sort called smithy coal. At the Hirst, near to the freestone quarry above-mentioned, it is worked to a very considerable extent. About 1400 tons will be the average output. Much of it is made into coke or char for the public works in Glasgow, &c. About two tons of coal will make one ton of char. This mine is horizontal, the coal seam from 12 to 18 inches thick,—the dip south-east, is level free. The depth of this mine from the surface is from 27 to 37 fathoms. Large coal is found at a greater depth, and is wrought to a small extent only, not being of a good quality. It is supposed, however, that, by sinking to a greater depth, coal of a superior quality will be found. Near to this, on the farm of Westerwood, under lease to the Carron Company, is a mine of ironstone wrought by them to a small extent, but this mineral is found in various other places of the parish.

Botany.—Among the few rare plants to be found here, we may mention Ivy-leaved duckmeat, *Lemna trisulca*, on the banks of the Forth and Clyde canal; Alexanders, *Smyrniium Olusatrum*, at the back o' Bog; rosebay willow herb, *Epilobium angustifolium*, *Cochlearia Armoracia*, horse-radish.

Of plantations, there may be above 500 acres; consisting of oak, ash, elm, beech, lime, plane, alder, horse and sweet chestnut, poplars, spruce, larch, &c. which beautify, shelter, and fertilize the country. Holly thrives well, and grows to a large size; and there are some very fine trees of a large size near to Cumbernauld House; and in the Vault glen there are some larch trees planted soon after the introduction of that tree into Scotland, of great height and girth; also some very fine specimens of the Spanish chestnut.

In some favoured spots, apple, plum, pear, and cherry trees, yield

occasionally fair crops. The climate, however, seems not to be adapted for orchards, the finer kinds being liable to blight, and all sorts to canker and rust. The frosts and cold east winds in April and May often destroy the blossom, and render fruit in this place but a very precarious crop.

Zoology.—Grouse and black-cock breed in the moor of Fannyside, and duck and teal in the loch of that name. Pheasants, partridges, plovers, snipe, woodcock, &c. frequent the woods and low grounds. Some years ago the *jambe rouge*, or red-legged partridge, was introduced here by the Honourable Admiral Fleming, but it is supposed that the climate was too cold, as none of them are now to be seen. Swallows and martins, &c.; cuckoos visit us annually. The other small birds are such as are found all over the country, blackbirds, thrushes, linnets, and finches, larks, &c.—Among birds of prey, and these are not numerous, are the glede, the sparrowhawk, and the owl. There are three well-stocked rookeries in the parish. Crows, doubtless, are intended by the Creator to serve a useful purpose; but in spring and autumn, where they are numerous, they do very considerable damage to both the grain and potato crops.

In spring, the roebuck is to be found in the woods of Cumbernauld and Castlecary, where are also a few squirrels. The other wild animals are, the fox, polecat, weasel, club-tailed weasel, or ermine, and the otter. Two wild cats were lately shot. The skin of one of them was nearly as large as that of a fox. I believe that no badgers are now found here.

Climate.—The parish having an elevation of 230 or 240 feet above sea level, the air is sharp; but though sharp it is not unhealthy. The prevailing winds are west and south-west, which, loaded with the vapours of the Atlantic, render the climate soft and rainy.

Hydrography.—From its elevated situation, this parish has no rivers,—the Kelvin, which divides it from Kilsyth, and the Luggie, which separates it from New Monkland, being here inconsiderable streams. Fish formerly abounded, it is said, in both, and in their tributary rivulets; now, however, a few trout are only to be found. This decrease is ascribed to the quantity of lime now laid upon the ground, and the flax steeped in the waters.

With the exception of Fannyside Loch, in the moor of the same name, there is no fresh water lake in the parish. Formerly, there were others, which have been drained and turned into arable land. Fannyside Loch is but a few feet deep; it covers about 60 acres of land, has a few pike and perch, but no trout. In its bottom and

on its banks, there is a very fine white sand, which would answer well in the manufacture of glass.—The only other collection of waters in the parish is the Forth and Clyde Canal, which runs through the north side of it for about four miles from Castlecary on the east to Achinstary on the west. Pike and perch are found in the canal, and coot and wild duck are seen upon its shores. On a small stream near to the old house of Castlecary, there is a waterfall of about 80 feet, which, together with the deep dell, the overhanging and surrounding woods, the old mill and miller's house now in ruins, the murmuring of the water, and the songs of the birds which strike the ear, renders it a scene at once picturesque and romantic.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

I am not aware of any history of the parish extant. The Old Castle of Cumbernauld, together with the barony, which in the end of the thirteenth century belonged to John Cumyn, Earl of Buchan, came into the possession of the Flemings of Biggar and Cumbernauld, in the course of the fourteenth century, who were afterwards created Earls of Wigton.

In the early period of Scottish history, the Flemings of Cumbernauld are often mentioned, and make a distinguished figure in the transactions of those unsettled times. They came originally from the low countries. Under a grant of David I., Baldwin, a distinguished Fleming, settled at Biggar, in the upper ward of Clydesdale, and in the reigns of Malcolm IV. and William I. was Sheriff of the shire. Sir Malcolm Fleming was Sheriff of Dumbarton in the reign of Alexander III. Robert, his son, was one of the chiefs who, at the treaty of Brigham, March 12, 1289–90, proposed the marriage of Margaret of Scotland with Prince Edward of England. He swore fealty to Edward, assisted at the murder of Cumyn at Dumfries, and was one of Bruce's associates in his arduous endeavours to restore the liberties of his country, and received from him a grant of the lands of Leinsie and Cumbernauld, they having fallen to the Crown by the forfeiture of Comyn. Sir Malcolm Fleming, his eldest son, remained true to the family of Bruce, and belonged to one of the four corps into which the Scottish army was divided at the disastrous battle of Halidon Hill, 19th July 1333. Sir Malcolm Fleming retreated from the field of contest, and secured the Castle of Dumbarton, of which he was governor, and from thence carried in safety to France, the young King, David II. with his infant consort, Joanna, where they found protection until their return to Scotland, 4th

May 1341, when they were safely landed at Inverbervie, a small sea-port on the coast of Kincardineshire. It is probable that Sir Malcolm remained in France during the stay of his King and Queen : he returned home along with them, was raised to the peerage by David II. who created him Earl of Wigton, and gave him a grant of lands in the same county. According to the English historians, he was taken prisoner at the battle of Durham, 7th October 1346 ; and it is said that David II. along with his favourite and faithful servant, Malcolm Fleming, was, on the 2d January 1347, sent to the Tower of London, where he suffered a long and dreary captivity ; while others maintain that the Earl of Wigton made good his retreat from the battle of Durham, and in proof cite from the Calendar of Charters the following title : “ De capiendo Robertum Bertram, qui Malcomum Fleming, inimicum Regis, evadere permisit.” He is simply called Malcolm Fleming, probably for this reason, that the English Government did not recognize the right of the Scottish Kings to confer titles of honour. Thomas Fleming, his grandson, by a deed of sale dated at Edinburgh, 8th February 1371, sold the Earldom of Wigton to Archibald, Earl of Galloway, “ pro una certa et notabili summa pecuniæ propter magnas et graves discordias, et inimicas capitales, inter me et indigenas majores comitatus prædicti exortas.” This sale was confirmed by King Robert II. 7th October 1372 ; and he resigned the Barony of Leinzie, in Dumbartonshire, in favour of Malcolm Fleming of Biggar, which was confirmed by Robert II., 20th September 1382. Dying without issue, he was succeeded by his cousin, Sir Malcolm, son of Sir Patrick Fleming of Biggar. Sir David Fleming, his eldest son, distinguished himself at the battle of Otterburn, 1388, was of the commission for a truce with England, 6th July 1405, attended James the Prince of Scotland to the Bass, saw him safe on board the ship that was to convey him to France, and as he returned home on the 14th of the same month, was waylaid and murdered by James Douglas of Balveny, afterwards seventh Earl of Douglas, at Hermandstone, near Edinburgh, and was buried at Holyroodhouse. Of Sir David, Wyntone says,

“ Schire David Fleming of Cumbernauld,
 Lord and Knyghte baeth stout and bauld,
 Trowit, loveit, well with the King,
 This like guid and gentle Knyghte,
 That was baith manful, lele, and wight.” &c. &c.

It is not quite ascertained at what time the Flemings of Cumbernauld were raised to the peerage. Robert Lord Fleming oc-

curs in the Records of Parliament, 11th October 1466. They were probably ennobled by James II. who died in 1460.

In 1563, Lord Fleming held the Castle of Dumbarton for Queen Mary, when Captain Crawford, having bribed some of the workmen about the Castle, surprised and took it. Lord Fleming made his escape; but Lady Fleming, the French Ambassador Verac, together with John Hamilton, Archbishop of St Andrews, were made prisoners.

By patent dated Whitehall, 19th March 1606, John, sixth Lord Fleming, was created Earl of Wigton and Lord Fleming of Biggar and Cumbernauld. John, sixth Earl, went with James II. to St Germain's, voted against the Union with England, and, being suspected on the breaking out of the Rebellion in 1715, was, by a warrant of Major-General Williams, the Governor, committed prisoner to Edinburgh Castle, 20th August 1715, and on 24th June 1716, was liberated by an order of the High Court of Justiciary. In 1736, he was made King's Chamberlain of Fife, died in 1744, and was succeeded in his titles and estates by his brother Charles, who dying 26th May 1747, unmarried, the estates devolved to his niece, Lady Clementina Fleming, only child of John sixth Earl. She married, in 1735, Charles Elphinstone, third son of Lord Elphinstone, and who became afterwards tenth Lord Elphinstone. She died 1st January 1799, being eighty years of age. As heir of entail, the estates of Biggar and Cumbernauld devolved upon her second grandson, the Honourable Charles Fleming, an Admiral in her Majesty's Navy.

The barony of Leinzie, comprehending the parishes of Kirkintilloch and Cumbernauld, originally belonged to Stirlingshire. In the reign of Robert I. or David II., Malcolm Fleming, then Sheriff of Dumbarton, got them disjoined from Stirlingshire and annexed to Dumbarton, while Drymen, Killearn, and other parishes were disjoined from Dumbarton and annexed to Stirling. An act of Parliament in 1503 restored them to their original counties; but this act having been repealed, 8th May 1509, Leinzie was again annexed to Dumbarton, and Drymen, &c. to Stirlingshire. In 1339, or thereabouts, another attempt was made to alter this arrangement, but was defeated by the Earl of Mar, then Sheriff of Stirlingshire. Since then, no change has been made in this arrangement.*

* Vide, Chalmers' *Caledonia*, Hailes' *Annals*, Wood's *Peerage*.

Antiquities.—There are no remains of any religious houses; yet the names of several places, as Achinbee, Achenkill, Chapelton Kildrum, Kilmuir, Croy, and others, would lead to infer that there had been several within the parish.

The only relic of antiquity is Graham's Dike or Agricola's Wall, of which there are some traces. It enters the parish at the Red Burn bridge, near to the Roman camp at Castlecary, where the turnpike road crosses the burn, and runs nearly parallel with the Forth and Clyde Canal, through the whole length of the parish till it enters the parish of Kirkintilloch, at the Barrhill, a little south of Achinstarey.

No part of the wall, which is said to have been 20 feet high, and 24 feet thick, now remains; but the fosse, which tradition states to have been 20 feet deep, and 40 feet wide, is distinctly to be seen throughout its whole length, part of it being used as a parish road. Running in a straight line, partly over elevated and rocky ground, little of it could have been filled with water; but to compensate for this, and where most required, it had the Dullatur Bog, then a loch or impassable morass, upon its northern bank. Near its eastern extremity, on the farm of Toll-Park, the fosse, and part of the road which run along its southern boundary, may still be distinctly seen. But, for a more particular description, we refer to the authors who have more minutely described it.

Some stones with inscriptions, found in or near the wall, may be seen in Glasgow College Museum.

In the garden at Nethercroy, near Achinstarey Bridge, there is to be seen a Roman altar, bearing the following inscription:—

Nymphis,
Vexillatio
Leg. VI. vic.
P. ET. sub. FA
610. LIBERA.

Into the south wall of the mansion-house of Nethercroy are built two stones. On one of them are three male figures clad in armour, and bearing spears and shields. On the other are two female figures, one of them as having come from the bath, regarding attentively her attendant, who is in a bending posture, as if lifting something from the ground.

On the farm of Carrickstone or Carrigstone, on the rising ground nearly west of the church, and a little to the south of the Roman wall, there is a large stone, called the Standing-Stone. Though con-

siderably larger than the one above noticed, it is of the same figure, and probably was used for the same purpose, that of an altar. It has no inscription, nor any figure upon it. But it has a hole in it; and tradition says, that this hole received the standard of Robert the Bruce, then Earl of Carrick, who here assembled his army before marching to the field of Bannockburn, 24th June 1314, which decided the independence of Scotland. Supposing this to have been the place appointed for the rendezvous of the army, in a military point of view, Bruce seems to have made a judicious selection. On the north, he had the Dullatur Bog, then a loch or impassable morass; so that, in case of an attack, he had only to defend the narrow defile at the Castlecary on the east, or the narrow valley through the Balloch Bog on the west or south-west; while, in case of need, he secured for himself a safe retreat, either upon the River Avon and Bathgate to the south-east, or upon the Water of Luggie and the Clyde to the south. This account, it is said, is to be found in some of our early historians.

It has already been observed, that the Forth and Clyde Canal traverses the whole length of the parish on the north. And in its formation, through the Bog of Dullatur, swords, pistols, &c. the bodies of men and horses were found in it, and what seems somewhat marvellous, a trooper, completely armed and seated on the horse, in the exact posture in which he had perished. This bog lay directly south of the field of the battle of Kilsyth, between the gallant Marquis of Montrose, and General Baillie, 15th August 1645; and it is supposed, that these were some of Baillie's men who, in their haste to escape, being either ignorant of the ground, or hard pressed by their enemies, had rode into the bog and there perished.

A Roman road, leading from the south to the camp at Castlecary, may be partially seen in the moss of Fannyside; and in the same moss, the inhabitants direct the stranger's view to certain hollows, or hags, as having been places of temporary concealment for the Covenanters, or persecuted remnant during the time of Charles II. and his brother James.

Near the house of Cumbernauld, there is an eminence called the Towe Hill, where in the olden time, the feudal Baron held his court. The gallows-knowe, it is well known, was always near the Mote Hill, *alias* Court Hall of those times; and we are inclined to suppose from the name, that the Towe Hill might be the place where the Baron's sentence was carried into speedy execution.

Not far from this, is the Vault Glen: and till very lately the farm house called the Vault, on the edge of the glen, was standing; whether, as its name vault would import, it was anciently a prison or place of confinement, is not well known.

At the Chapelton, on the farm of Achinkill, it is supposed there had been a religious house and burying-ground: for upon the removal of the houses, some human bones were turned up by the spade and plough, but nothing else of interest was discovered. A century ago, January 1739, there was a very violent storm of wind, by which many houses were unroofed, windows broken, large trees blown down, and much damage done by it in many other respects.

It is worthy of notice, that, as a very violent storm of wind happened in January 1839, the same should have occurred in 1739. Session Records, 7th February 1739. The same day the session, "considering that the heritors have been often called upon to repair the damage done to the kirk windows by the violent storm in January last, yet it remains utterly neglected by them, appointed a glazier to mend and refit said windows, and to be paid by their treasurer."

It also appears that the year 1739 had been a bad season, for, 20th January 1740, "the session, considering the great want and hardship, which a great many honest families in this parish are under, through the calamities of a late hail blast, and the present cold and dearth, agreed, that the circumstances of such families shall be inquired into, and their necessities carefully relieved by the several members of the session, especially the moderator, to whom they are readiest to let their case be known, with confidence it will not be divulged to the damage of their credit."

During the Rebellion 1745-6, a party of Highlanders having visited Cumbernauld, were followed by a party of the King's dragoons, who took up their quarters in the old castle or house of Cumbernauld, which, after the building of the present mansion, 1731, had been converted into stables, &c. "sic transit gloria mundi," and upon their departure set it on fire and burnt it to the ground. This happened a short time before the battle of Falkirk, between Prince Charles Stewart and General Halley, 17th January 1746. The fury of the dragoons seems to have evaporated with the smoke and the flames of the old house, for the present mansion with its inmates they left unscathed.

Ecclesiastical History.—Originally Cumbernauld formed part of

the parish of Kirkintilloch, from which, by a decret of the Lords of Ereccion and Plantation of Kirks, it was disjoined in 1649, and erected into a separate parish by the name of Easter Leinzie, or Lenyie, as Kirkintilloch was of Wester Lenyie,—a word derived, perhaps, from the ancient British *Leveyn* or *Lleven*, signifying smooth. An account of this parish before the disjunction will fall more properly under the Report of Kirkintilloch.

An application to Parliament in 1621, for building a new church in the middle of the parish, having failed, a decret of the Commissioners, as above noticed, in 1649, ordered the parish of Leinzie to be divided into two parishes, which was carried into effect shortly afterwards. The communion tokens bear, “Erected 1656,” with the words, “*Urit nec Perit*,” over the burning bush. The settlement between the presbytery and the Earl of Wigton for manse and glebe was in 1658. Mr Thomas Stewart, the first minister, was ejected in 1662 for nonconformity. He was succeeded by Mr Gilbert Muschett, with whose induction, 11th May 1666, the session record begins, “The session’s book of Easter Leinzie beginning in the year of God one thousand three score and six.

“At the Easter Kirk of Leinzie, the eleventh day of May 1666, The whilk day Mr Robert Bennet, minister of Kirkintilloch, maid sermon, and thereafter did institute Mr Gilbert Muschett to be minister of the said kirk, and did receive the oath *de fidei*,” &c.

With the exception of an anxiety often manifested by the minister and elders about strangers coming into the parish without testimonials, nothing deserving notice occurs in the record till 5th November 1676, when the session appoint all persons who go out of the parish to get their children baptised at conventicles, to pay 4 lbs. Scots, and be cited to the Presbytery; and several persons are mentioned as liable for this fine.

From this time, the minister from the pulpit often forbids the people to attend conventicles, to reset rebels and fugitives: and on 9th September 1683, he strictly warns them to take notice “that none of the twelve persons declared fugitives be resett in none of their quarters, viz. James, John, and George Russell in Gaubethill,” with nine others who are named.

Subsequent to this, the parish church seems to have been all but deserted. Almost every Sabbath the minister complains of the people absenting themselves from the parish church, and going to the conventicles, and threatening the elders with deposition from their office; but all was ineffectual, for the record often bears that

only fifteen, twenty, twelve, &c. persons, and one, two, or no elders were present, and the reason assigned is "that ane great conventicle" was held either within the parish or neighbourhood.

It is noticeable, that, after the granting of the third indulgence, Mr Muschett, 14th August 1687, intimates from the pulpit, "that he was willing to give one of the dyets to Mr Robb, the Presbyterian minister, that the offering for the poor might be preserved, and for several other reasons mentioned by the minister; and that he would write to Mr Robb thereanent betwixt and the next Sabbath, to see if he would accept of the said offer." This offer, it would seem, that Mr Robb did not think proper to accept; for on 25th September, same year, "the whilk day the people are exhorted to be regular and orderly; albeit Mr Robb is come so neeire as to keep ane meeting in the Newtoun." This exhortation, like the others, was disregarded: the former complaints are still made, "That no elders were present in the church, no offerings were gathered, that no session was kept, and that 300 or 360 heads of families, besides women and children, were absent from the church." On 15th July 1688, the twelve persons formerly mentioned are again denounced as fugitives; and the said "day intimation was maid, that the meeting-house preacher is ane rebell, and not pardoned; excommunicate and not relaxed; and ane slanderer and leisingmaker, alienating the hearts of his Majesties subjects, by not keeping the three late thanksgivings."

Some persons belonging to the parish were suspected of being concerned in the rescue of Alexander Smith at Inchbelly Bridge, in June 1683, when a soldier was killed; for in the record of date 28th October 1688, "Intimation is maid not to harbour or resett John Russell of Cattcraig, who is forfeited; John Bulloch, accessorie to the murder at Inchbellie Bridge, and James Brownlee and Thomas Smellie, his associates; who are likewise suspected to have accession to the same murder; and John Bulloch having upbraided the minister with ill-language, and carrying armes on Saturday last."

On the same day, the minister warns the people not to hear Mr Michael Robb, the meeting-house preacher, in regard of his disloyaltie, in not praying for the Queen, Prince and Royal Family, and in regard of his preaching erroneous doctrine."

In those unsettled times, the minister's person, house, and family, were assailed by some disorderly persons; for December 30th, Sunday after Christmas day, intimation is given, "That, notwith-

standing of his Majesties proclamation, several persons in this parish have, upon Tuesday, 25th December, invaded and robbed my house, taken away my armes and books, some of these persons being under public scandals, at least, the ringleaders of them, and that, though they escape punishment from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment."

The above excerpts from the session-records clearly shew that Mr Robb declined the friendly offer made him by Mr Muschett; but it is afterwards recorded that, of 30 persons who were excommunicated, the first on the list is Mr Michael Robb, the meeting-house preacher, and after the Revolution, the minister of this parish, the reasons of this sentence are noticeable. "January 13th 1689. The first Sunday after the Epiphany, the said day, 30 persons that were grievous offenders, some of them being under the scandals of adulterie, and murder, and others of them being notour railers and scandalizers of ministers, and others guiltie of ane illegal convocation and licentious tumult, having invaded and robbed the minister's person and house, having taken away his armes and books, and others of them being rebels and fugitives, furnishers and reseters of rebels, and some of them having laid violent hands both upon the minister and his wife, all these were procest with the sentence of excommunication, and are pronounced to be persons disobedient to the voice of the church, and to be obstinate and incorrigible in going on in their sinful courses and practices, and are by the said sentence cast out of the church, and debarred from the society of the faithful in meetings, prayers, and all other sacred fellowship, as unworthy, with whom any good Christian should converse untill they be ashamed of their sins, and manifest their repentance, and humiliation, that they may be loosed from the said dreadful sentence, which they have deserved by their gross scandals and offences." Then follow the names of Mr Michael Robb, William Neale, John Carmichael, Ellen Young, &c.

On 27th January, the minister mentions the tumults in Glasgow, and throughout the presbyteries of Glasgow, Hamilton, and Linlithgow, and intimates his resolution "to make sermon in the church till the Government be settled, and so long as the keys of the church door are not taken from him."

The session record ends February 3d 1689, the fourth Sunday after Epiphany, "with the minister warning the people not to join with them who make tumults, in taking away the keys of kirk

doors, or renting minister's gowns, lest they bring trouble upon themselves by such disorderly practises."—Although removed after the Revolution, Mr Muschett seems to have remained within the parish,—for so late as 1715, the record bears that several persons were cited to the session for being irregularly married by him, and censured for the same.

As far down as 1721, the meetings of session are dated at Easter Leinzie. The next entry in the record being the commencement of Mr Oughterson's incumbency, is dated Cumbernauld, 7th May 1727, which is the name which the parish now bears.

Parochial Registers.—The parish register for marriages and births begins 10th April 1688, and though much decayed seems to have been accurately kept till 1722. At this time, the parish seems to have been as populous as at present; from 1688 to 1693, the average number of registrations of births being above 100; from 1693 to 1700, about 90; from that to 1705, about 70. From this period the number gradually decreases, especially from the time of the Secession: for the five years ending with 1735, the average is 56; do. ending with 1750, about 43; do. ending with 1765, about 38.

The number of marriages about the end of the seventeenth century, averages about 23 only. From this time to 1722, there are frequent interruptions; and downwards, are total blanks in the registers; and in the same interrupted and irregular way, the record is continued to 1801. From this time, it has been carefully and pretty regularly kept, though the number of registrations does not give the exact number of births or baptisms, which is occasioned by the Secession ministers keeping a register for their own congregations.

There is no registration of burials before 1817. Since this time, one has been kept with great accuracy. During the seven years ending 1831, the average of births was $67\frac{2}{7}$; deaths, $48\frac{5}{7}$; marriages, $24\frac{5}{7}$. It is worthy of remark, that during the year ending 31st December 1831, the deaths exceeded the births by one, the births being 73 and the burials 74. From the great mortality in 1832, the same excess occurred. These, however, are rare occurrences, for though the situation be high, and the climate moist, the parish is by no means unhealthy. Several individuals now living are considerably above eighty, two or three about ninety years, and some others died lately at this advanced period of life.

III.—POPULATION.

The population in 1755 was 2303

1791,	1600
1801,	1795
1811,	2176
1821,	2864
1831,	3080

In 1821, Cumbernauld village had a population of 950, which, in ten years, had increased 450 in 1831.

Cumbernauld village,	-	-	-	1400
Condorat do.	-	-	-	501
Country, -	-	-	-	1179
				3080

The number of families, 700, gave $4\frac{1}{2}$ to a family, or $4\frac{3}{4}$ nearly.

During the seven years ending with 31st December 1838,

the average of marriages was	333
Births,	794
Burials,	584

The chief employment of the people is cotton weaving, there being above 560 weavers' looms in the parish, or nearly one-fifth of the whole population. Some time ago, weaver's work was hardly to be obtained. At present, work is plentiful, but the prices are small: upon an average, the weaver's weekly earnings will not exceed 5s. or 6s. clear; and considering the price of provisions, and how few are of provident habits, many must be suffering privations. Indeed, the fluctuating nature of the cotton trade, and the small remuneration, have induced many of the weavers to relinquish the loom, and have recourse for employment to the coal and ironstone mines.

The above, with other causes, some of them of a political nature, have produced unquestionably very great changes in the moral character and habits of the people,—not for the better, it is much to be feared; and has hindered them from prizing as they ought, and, therefore, from giving to their children, that education which once was the pride and the honour of the people of Scotland. The natural effect of this is, that though few are unable to read, yet they are allowed to grow up in comparative ignorance of religion and its duties; and hence may be dated the decline of morality,—disinclination to religion and to religious duties,—neglect and disregard of the Sabbath and of Sabbath institutions,—the increase of profanity and crime, and, of late years, the increasing magnitude of the criminal calendar. Notwithstanding of this, and though we have some turbulent spirits among us,—and it is to be regretted that this class seems upon the increase,—still the character of our population generally is quiet and orderly, in the midst of their many privations.

The principal exception from this general character, consistent

with my knowledge, is that of a few deluded men in the village of Condorat, who, in the year 1820, joined some disaffected characters from Glasgow, and accompanied them, upon 6th April 1820, to Bonnymuir, about three miles west of Falkirk, where, engaging a party of the King's troops, they were defeated and taken prisoners. One only was a native of the parish, and was executed at Stirling for high treason; the others had their sentence commuted to transportation.

There are some poachers; but since the change in the Excise laws, if there be any smuggling, it is inconsiderable. A change in the game laws seems in justice equally desirable.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Rural Economy.—The parish comprehends 9145 acres, 3 roods, and 5 falls; of this number, 6168 acres, 2 roods, and 21 falls are arable; 2170 acres, 1 rood, and 12 falls pasture and moss; 556 acres, 3 roods, and 12 falls plantations and woods; and 250 acres roads and waters.

It is divided between 40 and 50 proprietors. About 20 or 25 of them derive more than L. 50 from their respective properties. Several of them have very considerable incomes. The Right Honourable Lord Elphinstone is the only nobleman who possesses property, and the Honourable Admiral Fleming the only person of rank who has a mansion-house within the parish.

The soil of the parish varies; but generally rests upon a stiff retentive till, and when allowed to lie for a few years is again covered with rushes. During the last twenty years, much has been done in the way of general improvement, by plantations, draining, straightening, clearing of stones, weeds, &c. Tile-draining has lately been tried with advantage, and still a great deal requires to be done.

The manner of farming generally may be stated to be the following: 1. oats; 2. oats; 3. green crops, potatoes, or turnips; 4. wheat, barley, or oats, with grass seeds; 5. hay; 6. pasture, for a less or greater number of years.

Lime is sometimes laid on the sward. When prepared for fallow or green crop, five or six chalders of lime, with fifty or sixty carts of dung, are allowed per acre. About the commencement of the before-mentioned period, few turnips were grown, but they are now common on every farm, and the breadth is yearly on the increase, while that under potatoes has likewise been greatly enlarged. This crop was very deficient last year, both in quantity and quality.

Mangel-wurzell has been tried, but not continued, as it is considered not to be profitable.

Admiral Fleming cultivates a number of the artificial grasses; but the Fescue, Timothy, Holci, and meadow-grasses are supposed best to suit the soil.

Twenty years ago, very little wheat was sown here. Both climate and soil were supposed unsuitable for this grain, but experience has proved this to have been a fallacious opinion, for a very considerable breadth is now under wheat. This arises from the different way of management; before the introduction of fallow and green crops, the ground was neither worked, cleaned, nor manured. Still, the farmer labours under disadvantages which no system of cultivation can remove. The continued and heavy rains which prevail in the end of the year often prevent him from getting his wheat into the ground in sufficient time before the winter sets in. Many instances of this might easily be adduced, were it necessary.

At one time flax was grown to a great extent, and when it yielded twenty or twenty-five stones or more per acre, and brought L 1, and sometimes even L. 1, 10s. per stone, it amply repaid outlay and labour; but from some cause not well ascertained, of late years, the flax crops have almost altogether failed, and, of course, the culture is comparatively given up.

Wheat may average per acre from 8 to 9 bolls; barley from 7 to 8 bolls; oats from 6 to 7 bolls; and potatoes, county measure, from 30 to 40 bolls; rye-grass and clover from 150 to 200 stones tron per acre. A few meadows still remain, and when well managed and carefully irrigated, when that can be done, will yield from 200 to 300 tron stones per acre, and an excellent fodder for cattle in winter.

Live-Stock.—The breed of horses, as well as of cows, has been greatly improved of late years, and prizes for both were awarded at the show of stock of the Highland Society last autumn at Glasgow. Indeed, the dairy stock of some of our farmers, for figure and produce, equal any in the country. The milk, generally, is made into butter, and sold in the Glasgow or Falkirk markets. Little or no cheese is made here. The produce of a good cow averages L. 9 to L. 10 per annum. The grass of a milk cow costs about L. 3, 15s.; of a yeld about L. 2, 15s.; of a two-year old quey about L. 1, 10s. to L. 2; of a one-year old quey about L. 1 or L. 1, 5s. It may be sometimes more or less, according to the

pasture. The keep of a milch cow may be estimated at L. 7 or L. 7, 10s. per annum.

Leases have generally been for nineteen years, but, of late, they have been shortened, in some instances, to thirteen and fifteen. But this is supposed to be too short a term for the tenant to benefit by his lease, and this, more especially, when the farm is let at the highest offer, which is generally the case.

The farms are generally inclosed with fences of stone or thorn, and partly with both. The farm-steadings generally are in good condition;—those upon the estates of Lord Elphinstone and Admiral Fleming having been lately built or repaired, and in some cases much enlarged. The parish is well provided with roads, through the influence of Admiral Fleming. The length of turnpike roads within the parish will be little, if at all, short of twenty miles.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Means of Communication, &c.—Roads are a most important branch of rural economy, and from the roads in this parish, the farmer possesses every facility in bringing lime or manure, and in conveying to market the produce of his lands. At present, there is no railroad; but the projected Edinburgh and Glasgow railroad passes through the whole length of the parish, nearly parallel with the Forth and Clyde Canal, and very nearly in the line of Agricola's Wall. Cumbernauld was erected into a burgh of barony in 1649. It had a weekly market, which has fallen into disuse. It has two fairs annually. Sometimes a considerable business in cattle is done at the May fair. At the August fair, no business is done. There is a horse race,—which is advantageous only to the publicans; and is little better than a nuisance.

Falkirk, distant nine, and Glasgow thirteen miles, are the nearest market-towns. Cumbernauld is a daily penny-post upon Glasgow on the west, and Denny on the east. The mail-coach by Crieff, and a coach by Auchterarder to Perth, a coach to Edinburgh by Linlithgow, a coach to Alloa by Falkirk, two coaches to Stirling, pass daily through this parish to and from Glasgow. Sometimes, there are more than these. In summer a coach usually passes for Calander and the Trosachs daily.

Boats with passengers for Falkirk, Edinburgh, &c. at present ply east and west four times a-day; in summer, more frequently. In connection with the passage-boats, coaches carry passengers from Wyndford Loch to Stirling, and Perth, and Alloa, &c. and

from No. 16 to Kirkaldy by Dunfermline. Luggage boats also regularly ply upon the canal with goods.

Ecclesiastical State.—The parish church, situated at the village of Cumbernauld, is nearly in the centre of the parish. Five or six families only are four miles from the parish church, which is an old fabric. It was repaired in 1810, notwithstanding the urgent solicitations of the incumbent and session, as appears from the session record, 25th March 1810, the church being altogether insufficient to accommodate the inhabitants. To obviate this as far as the old walls would admit, both pews and passages are very narrow and inconvenient. It has been repeatedly repaired since; but the dampness of the site, six doors, and the incommodiousness of the seats, make the church uncomfortable, cold, and unhealthy. The church has about 660 sittings. The communion seats alone are free. The number of communicants is about 500. The barony of Castlecary, with a population of seventeen families, by a decret of Court in 1725, or thereabout, was disjoined from the parish of Falkirk, and annexed to Cumbernauld *quoad sacra*. According to report, the minister of Falkirk was taken bound to preach in Cumbernauld three days each year. The present church is quite insufficient for the population; but, from its central situation, a church of proper dimensions would well accommodate the whole parish for enjoying religious ordinances.

The manse was built in 1827. The original glebe, by agreement between the presbytery and the Earl of Wigton, was for 8 acres. In consequence of the turnpike-road passing through it, an excambion was made, the minister getting some marshy land in lieu of that cut off by the road. At present, including site of manse, offices, garden, roads, &c. the glebe may be about 11 acres, but not all arable.

In 1820, the Court, by decret, modified the stipend to 16½ chalders, half meal, half barley, with L. 10 for communion elements.

So early as 1743, a house belonging to the Original Burgher Associate Synod, was built in the village of Cumbernauld. It was rebuilt in 1725, is a commodious place of worship, with a respectable congregation: and the minister has a salary of, I believe, L. 100.

Another meeting-house in the village formerly belonging to the Antiburgher, but now connected with the United Secession body, was built about seventy or eighty years ago. This congregation is not numerous. The minister's salary is, I believe, L. 80. Both

the ministers have dwelling-houses, and both congregations are made up from all the surrounding parishes.

Of the 700 families composing the population of the parish, about 180 belong to the Secession, and there are 5 or 6 Irish families, supposed to be of the Roman Catholic faith. In these 700 families, the annexation is not included.

Education.—The parish school is situated in the village of Cumbernauld, and is attended generally by from 80 to 90 scholars. The salary is the minimum. The dwelling-house has two rooms and kitchen. The garden falls short of the legal quantity by six falls, for which the heritors allow 1s. per fall, or 6s.

The school in the village of Condorat, two and a-half miles west of the church, is attended by from 60 to 70 scholars. Here, there is a very good school-house, and a dwelling-house for the master of two rooms and closet, built three or four years ago by public subscription. Another school at Garbethill, three miles east from the church, has about 20 scholars. Each of the teachers of these two schools has an allowance from the heritors, during pleasure, of a sum of about L. 4, 8s. annually, which small sum has been sometimes withheld. Another school in the village of Cumbernauld is upon the teacher's own adventure. The fees are the same as in the other schools.

Few persons between six and fifteen years of age are unable to read the Bible, and the numbers of those above that age still fewer, though, from the change in their circumstances, occasioned by the decline in the cotton trade, there is neither the anxiety nor the ability for giving children the education which was evinced by parents some years ago, when they were in easier circumstances.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of poor upon the roll is about 25. The average weekly allowance is about 1s. 3½d. with occasional relief both to those who are upon the roll, and to others who are not upon it. For meeting this expenditure, there are the weekly collections at the church door, averaging about L. 50 per annum; the letting out of mortcloths, about L. 7 per annum; and proclamation fees, with occasional donations from non-residing heritors. There never has been a legal assessment. Voluntary contributions and extraordinary collections have hitherto been the means resorted to for meeting any deficiencies. But as legal assessments seem desirable to some influential heritors, it is probable they may ere long be had recourse to in preference to the old way of raising funds for supporting the poor.

From donations and savings, when money was more plentiful with the operatives, and fewer demands made upon the funds, a sum of L. 160 or L. 170 had been realized : but it was all expended some years ago ; and the only sum as a fund for the poor is L. 90 bequeathed by the late Right Honourable George Viscount Keith, the interest whereof he required should be distributed to the poor annually upon the first day of January.

The dislike to being on the poor's roll is certainly not so strong as it once was, and seems daily growing weaker. Whether this be occasioned by the influx of strangers, who generally show no unwillingness to claim from the parish funds, or whether, by the heritors taking the management of the funds, producing a belief of there being a legal right to parochial relief ; whether from these or whatever causes it may spring, there is unquestionably not that feeling of shame at being on the session, as it was termed, which was wont to be when their weekly pittance was doled out to them by the elders of their respective quarters. The Dissenting congregations contribute nothing to the poor's funds. Their poor are supplied out of the parish funds. Those who assert, therefore, that the Seceders supply their own poor, cannot refer to this parish.

Library.—A subscription library was instituted a few years ago in the village of Cumbernauld, now consisting of from 1000 to 1200 volumes, and, in general, the books have been very well selected ;—owing, it is supposed, to the causes formerly mentioned, the annual subscriptions have rather decreased.

Savings Bank.—A savings bank was established in 1815. The annual deposits are from L. 150 to L. 160, and the sums withdrawn nearly the same. It does not seem to have been sufficiently appreciated by those for whose benefit savings banks were instituted ; for, with the exception of a few servants, chiefly females, the deposits have been made by the directors, by societies, or by those farmers and tradesmen who are in easy circumstances.

Societies.—A Society of Weavers, and another of Masons, were instituted about thirty or forty years ago ; but, having been established on erroneous principles, they have been declining for some time.

April 1839.