

## PARISH OF KILCONQUHAR.

PRESBYTERY OF ST ANDREWS, SYNOD OF FIFE.

THE REV. WILLIAM FERRIE, D. D., MINISTER.

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### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—CEAUNIUCHAIR and Kilconquhar are obviously Gaelic words. *Ceaun* signifies a *head, part above, limit, extremity, termination*. *Iuchair* is a common name for a *stream or river*, especially a stream which issues from a lake. *Iuchair* is also applied to a fresh-water lake. *Ceaun-Iuchair*, without shifting one letter, signifies the extreme end, or upper extremity of the fresh-water lake, or the head or part above water. This is perfectly descriptive of the situation of the church, and church-yard or burying-place of this parish. It is an eminence on the edge, or at the head, of a fresh-water lake. The lake evidently at one time had covered all the low ground to the north and west, as well as to the south of the eminence, on which the church stands. Then, this eminence might very properly have been called the head of the lake, or part above water. *Kil*, as every one knows, signifies a cell, a church-yard, or place of worship; *Kilconquhar* therefore signifies the cell, the burying-place, or place of worship at the head or extremity of the fresh water lake. On this spot, in all probability, there was a Druidical place of worship and a burying-place, long before the introduction of Christianity. When the old church was taken down in 1821, the foundation of the oldest part of it was from twelve to fifteen feet below the surface of the earth, although it was built on dry firm ground. Both within and without the building, to all this depth, immense quantities of human bones were found. There can be little doubt that this great accumulation of earth had arisen from the multitude of human bodies that had been interred here.

*Extent and Boundaries.*—This parish extends in length from Earlsferry on the south, to Bruntshields on the north, a distance of about 9 miles. Its average breadth is about 2 miles. It is bounded on the south by the Frith of Forth, and the parish of Elie; on the east, by the parishes of Abercrombie or St Monance, and

Carnbee; on the north, by Cameron and Ceres; on the west, by the parishes of Largo and Newburn, and Largo bay. It contains about 16 square miles.

*Topographical Appearances.*—The surface of the parish, although somewhat irregular, is so level as to be nearly all arable. With the exception of Kincaig hill, the land in the south part of the parish is, generally speaking, flat, rising gently towards the north for four miles, till it reach Reres, and Kilbrachmont, which form part of a ridge 600 feet above the level of the sea, terminated by Largo-Law on the west, and Kellie-Law on the east. To the north of Reres, a deep ravine separates the south from the north parts of the parish, making two nearly equal divisions. From this ravine, the land again rises gradually towards the north for two miles, till it reach its greatest elevation, 750 feet at Dunikier-Law. From this hill it declines towards the north for nearly two miles, when by a gentle acclivity it reaches Bruntshields, the northern extremity of the parish.

Various parts of the parish command rich and extensive prospects. From Dunikier Law, the estuaries of Forth and Tay are seen at nearly equal distances, covered, in good weather, with ships carrying the commerce of the country to and from every quarter of the globe. The land view here is very extensive, comprehending the Angus-shire, Perthshire, and Argyleshire mountains on the north and west, and the Berwickshire hills on the south. From Reres and Kilbrachmont, but especially from Balcarres Craig, which projects a little more to the south, is one of the richest and most splendid views imaginable. Here, you look down upon all the richly wooded and highly cultivated lands, with the coast towns, and family mansions, from Dysart on the west, to Crail on the east;—on the Frith of Forth with its ships and islands; and beyond it, on the fertile county of East Lothian: while Edinburgh, with the Linlithgow and Pentland hills, terminate the view to the south-west, the Lammermuir hills to the south, and the German Ocean to the east.

*Meteorology.*—No regular meteorological tables are kept here. The temperature varies a little in the higher and lower parts of the parish, but the medium is about 47°. The climate is very salubrious, and the inhabitants are generally healthy. Diseases of an infectious nature rarely appear here. Colds and inflammatory affections may be said to be the most prevalent diseases. When

cholera morbus lately visited the country, this parish entirely escaped its ravages.

We have certain prognostics of changes of weather. When clouds rest on Largo Law, we expect soon to have rain.\* When the wind blows from the west or north-west we have our best weather. When the sea is heard making a noise towards Ardross, or St Monance, we are sure soon to have bad weather from the east. When the same kind of noise is heard towards Kincaig, or up the Frith we expect the storm to abate. This noise is only heard when the wind is from the east.

*Hydrography.*—Largo bay, which forms the S.W. boundary of the parish, from being protected by the bold headland or promontory of Kincaig, from the heavy seas, which roll with great fury along the shore in high easterly winds, affords a safe and excellent anchorage for ships, when detained in the Frith by E. and N. winds. It is not uncommon to see forty or fifty vessels of different sizes, lying here in perfect safety, during heavy N. E. winds. In this bay stake-nets have lately been erected, and salmon are caught, although not in great numbers.

Kilconquhar loch is a beautiful sheet of fresh water, lying immediately to the south of the church and village, about two miles in circumference, and half a mile in diameter, encircled with wood on the west, south, and south-east sides. This lake abounds with pike and eel, both of which are often caught of large size. In some parts it is very deep, and long in freezing. The oldest tombstone in the church-yard bearing an inscription, is upon the grave of "William Ballantine, laird of Kilconquhar, who was drowned skating on the loch, on the 28th February 1593, aged 28 years." Little or no water runs into the lake. It is supplied almost entirely by springs. A clear and copious stream issues from it, and falls into the sea at Elie. This lake has long been a favourite haunt of swans.† There are thirty of these majestic

\* The two following old distiches, which are in use among the people here, express the result of their observations: Largo Law lies to the west, Kellie Law to the east; our rains most frequently come from the west.

1.

When Largo Law puts on his hat,  
Let Kellie Law beware of that.

2.

When Kellie Law gets on his cap,  
Largo Law may laugh at that.

† A famous witch of Pittenweem is said to have been drowned here, and the loch appears to have had swans in it at that time:—

fowls upon it at present ; a few years ago there werè fifty. The swans support themselves entirely by what they find in the water, except when it is frozen, when they require to be fed. They breed regularly, and would multiply fast, were it not that their nests are often destroyed in spring. Wild duck, teal, and a great variety of water-fowls frequent the lake. In 1823, about twenty wild swans alighted in it during the severe weather, and remained till the storm abated, when they took their departure.

No river runs through the parish, and only one brook or stream with water sufficient to drive machinery. This stream, which has different names, as it passes different places, takes its rise in the upper parts of the parish, and is increased by several small streamlets as it descends. The water of this stream, with the assistance of dams, drives, in its course, five corn-mills, and one lint or flax mill. It falls into Largo bay, at Shooter's Point, and at its embouchure is the line of division betwixt this parish and that of Newburn. The streamlets, which take their rise to the north of Dunikier Law, run in a northerly direction, till they join some of the tributary streams of the river Eden, which discharges itself into St Andrews Bay. Copious springs, of excellent quality, are every where to be found in the parish, and rarely is any scarcity of water felt.

*Soil.*—There is considerable variety in the soil, but it is generally fertile, and nearly all under cultivation. In the lowest, or most southerly part of the parish, it is light loam, with a mixture of sand. As you recede from the sea, it becomes deeper. Between Kilconquhar and Colinsburgh, there is a strath of rich alluvial soil, which extends in a south-easterly direction till it reach Balbuthie. From this strath to Colinsburgh it is more light and sandy, but sharp and fertile. All the rising ground above Colinsburgh, including the lands of Balcarres, Charleton, and the south parts of Reres and Killbrachmont, is a black loam, and being in the highest state of cultivation, yields abundant crops. To the north of Reres, the climate becomes colder, and the soil less uniform. Still it is, generally speaking, good, and in favourable seasons is very productive. From its elevation, in later seasons the crops are more uncertain.

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“ They took her to Kinnluchar Loch,  
And threw the limmer in,  
And a the swans took to the hills,  
Scar'd with the unbely din.”

*Witches of Pittenweem.*

*Geology.*—The great independent coal formation characterizes, throughout, the length and breadth of this parish. Our space, however, will permit us to give only a very general description of a district, which, both in a scientific and economical point of view, presents a field of inquiry of the most interesting and important character.

If a line be drawn from Kincaig Hill on the S. W. to Bruntshields on the N. W., and another from Balbuthie quarry on the S. E. to Lingo Hill in the parish of Carnbee, about a mile and a-half beyond the N. E. extremities of this parish, a space of nearly 32 square miles will be included, every spot of which is occupied with some member of the coal formation, and a considerable portion of the whole included area, with the useful mineral itself. Three well marked divisions, at different levels and elevations, occur in the line of this course, which comprise separate and distinct coal fields, geographically as well as physically distinguished from each other. The first of these embraces the Grange or Earlsferry coal field, which lies along the shore, and inclines towards the sea; the second includes the Reres and Balcarres coal district, inland about four miles, and elevated above the former upwards of 400 feet. Lathallan, Largoward, and Falfield coals, occupy the high tableland toward the northern limit of the parish, the last attaining an elevation of about 700 feet above the level of the sea. These separations, and elevations, of the once continuous beds of the coal measures, have obviously been occasioned by the interposition of the trap rocks, which occur so abundantly among them; the principal of which are Kincaig Hill, Balcarres Craig, Kilbrachmont-Knock, Reres Craig, and Dunikier-Law. Dislocations, and shiftings, and upheavings, in every possible form and variety, are exhibited in each of the coal fields; but, as may be naturally expected, these curious phenomena abound most in the upper or last division.

Kincaig Hill, on the S. W. extremity of the parish, springs immediately from the beach, to the height of nearly 200 feet above the level of the sea. The southern aspect is nearly vertical, presenting to the surf a bold rugged front of precipitous rock. Here M'Duff's cave affords an object of attention to all the lovers of the picturesque, while the student of geology, if he has courage to pursue his journey to the westward, will be amply rewarded for his exertions. In a line of section of little more than half a mile, nearly every member of the trap family of rocks may be met with, basalt, greenstone, clinkstone,

amygdaloid, trap-tuffa, wacke, and clay-stone porphyry. The trap-tuffa and amygdaloid are beautifully reticulated by innumerable veins of calcareous spar, varying from a thin film, to several inches in thickness. The basalt is disposed in elegant columns, consisting of small jointed pentagonal masses, which are piled upon one another in a regular and vertical order. These columns are sometimes collected into groups, which are separated from each other by seams or rents. The spaces between the jointed concretions are composed of a looser matter than the concretions themselves; and it is by the falling out of this less compact substance that the structure of the whole is so beautifully developed. Large masses or aggregations of columns, sometimes separate, and fall down into the sea, by the action of which they are broken into smaller fragments, when they are rounded and polished into a variety of forms. This basalt has a greyish-black colour, opaque, with a small conchoidal fracture, and is hard enough to cut glass, or to strike fire with a steel.

Earlsferry point exhibits the same interesting appearances, between which and Kincaig a small bay intervenes, where at low water the stratified rocks, and edges of the coal-field may be observed, in immediate contact with those of the trapean class. Sandstone, shale, and slate-clay occur here, all of them much altered, but especially the shale, which is greatly indurated, having in some places the colour and texture of fire-brick. The slate-clay is converted into flinty-slate, and in such specimens the vegetable impressions are completely effaced. The shale contains a considerable quantity of ironstone nodules; patches of sandstone, in the form of flattened globular concretions, also occur, which are invested with a bituminous or carbonaceous coating. The sandstone affords abundance of the stems or trunks of trees, from an inch to several inches in diameter: the cortical part of these is entirely covered with regular impressions of leaves, ranging round them in spiral lines, and in the interior, an included portion resembling a cylinder may be observed, usually of a higher colour than the rest of the mass, and traversing it in a direction parallel to the axis of the stem. If this portion is to be considered as representing the pith, the plants possessed of it, according to Steinhauer, may justly be supposed to have constituted an intermediate order between the *Palmaceæ* and *Coniferæ*.

Immediately to the east of this interesting series of rocks, the

Grange coal-works are situated, the metals of which consist of nine seams; the largest being about eight feet thick. This coal-field is traversed by three trap dikes or veins, which have produced the usual effects upon the minerals, those in contact being charred, and in some places thrown into a vertical position. The strata incline to the west at an angle of  $12^{\circ}$ .

As we approach the Balcarres coal-field, some very interesting sections may be observed, in the Den, of an alternating series of sandstone, shale, coal, and ironstone, and the manner in which these have been upheaved and altered by the igneous rocks. The stream, already mentioned, traverses this beautiful ravine for the space of nearly two miles, and has laid open the outcrop of the whole series, as they have been deposited one above another. Towards the lower extremity of the Den, the attention is first arrested by a projecting mass of trap-tuffa, which is very friable, and easily yields upon the slightest compression, its several component parts, consisting of shale, coal, sandstone, ironstone, clinkstone, basalt, varying from portions of half an inch to a foot or more in diameter, and which are all imbedded in a paste of claystone. This dike (for such it may be considered,) is very interesting, both by its great extent, stretching as it does from Kinraig Hill, to the opposite coast of Fife, where it may be observed to the eastward of St Andrews, forming the *rock* and *spindle*, and likewise by the proof it affords, from its composition, that it must have owed its origin to causes in action at a period long subsequent to the formation of the coal, and consolidation of the adjacent rocks. The strata dip from this towards the N. W., at an angle of  $29^{\circ}$ . The dip increases as they approach Balcarres Craig, where, a few hundred yards to the north, across the stream, the sandstone may be seen capping a mass of greenstone, and dipping nearly due north at an angle of  $50^{\circ}$ . Here the sandstone is very little indurated, though in immediate contact with the trap. Balcarres-Craig, which is a picture in itself, rising abruptly from the bottom of the ravine, to the height of 200 feet, and completely insulated from the surrounding hills, consists of clinkstone split up, as may be observed on the south side, into tabular masses, and exhibiting on the top a considerable display of the columnar structure. It is of a dark bluish colour, close-grained, and compact, and has been mistaken for basalt; but upon minute inspection, it will be found to possess the qualities of a compact felspar or clinkstone rock. At the

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entrance of the quarry a vein of greenstone occurs, a continuation in all probability of the mass noticed above.

Balcarres Coal-field ranges westward from the Craig, dipping partly under it, as well as the Kilbrachmont ridge on the north. It consists of four seams, two of which are splint, the one 6, and the other 2 feet thick. The third seam, which is 3 feet thick, consists of common coal. The fourth is called "marl-coal," from the circumstance of its being split up, or separated into two seams by an interposed bed of that substance. A trap dike of 60 yards thick traverses this field from east to west, doing considerable injury to the minerals. The dip varies from  $11^{\circ}$  to an angle of  $20^{\circ}$ . Reres coal is nearly in the same line of elevation with that of Balcarres; and has been compressed into a trough-like form, stretching to about 800 yards across the edges of outcrop. This curious figure into which the strata have been thrown, terminating in a semicircular end, has unquestionably been occasioned by the action of the trap rocks, by which it is almost surrounded. It also consists of four seams of coal of variable thickness.

The upper division of the parish presents coal at Lathallan, Largoward, and Falfield. Dunikier-Law, the highest point in this range, is composed of fine grained basalt, arranged in large pentagonal jointed columns, and seems to be the centre from whence the innumerable dikes diverge, which have broken up into so many sectional patches the coal-metals of this interesting and disturbed district. In many places the coals are thrown upon their edges, dip in every direction, and at various degrees of inclination. Along with the varieties mentioned above, a bed of cannel or parrot-coal, of 2 feet thick, occurs in this quarter.\* All the seams are more or less injured in the vicinity of the dikes; and by the shifting and upheaving of the beds, much trouble and expense are occasioned to their respective owners. Is their gratitude to the *bountiful Giver and Architect* of the whole rendered the less? Let them reflect that by these very means, through the agency of these very *faults and troubles*, the useful mineral has been lifted from the bowels of the earth, and brought within their reach. Besides, when veins are filled, as is often the case here, with stiff clay, numerous springs are dammed up, and brought to the surface, there-

\* Falfield coal must have been worked for a considerable length of time, as an account is to be seen at Largo House, of so many loads of parrot-coal, driven yearly from Falfield to Falkland, for the use of King James VI. in his own chamber.

by facilitating greatly the process of working; while, by means of the dikes of injected matter which throw down the strata, valuable beds of coal are preserved within the field, which would otherwise have cropped out, and been lost altogether. "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches!"

*Limestone* is not so abundant in the parish as might be expected from the geological character of the district, and what is found by no means bears the highest reputation. It occurs at Kilconquhar, where it has been worked for some years past, and also at Balcarres, and other places. At Kilconquhar, the rock is of a bluish-grey colour, compact or rather somewhat crystalline in structure, and contains abundance of encrinites and minute shells. In the upper district, few organic remains occur in any of the beds, which are all highly indurated, as well as much bleached in colour, occasioned probably by the expulsion of the bituminous matter through the agency of the igneous rocks.

Travelled blocks or boulders occur along the sea shore, and still more abundantly in the higher districts. These consist chiefly of primitive greenstone, mica slate, and granite. Whatever may have been the cause of their transportation, whether we are to consider them as the result of the Noachian deluge, or regard them, with others, as produced and carried along by the bursting of lakes, in either case the agency must have been prodigious, as none of them are to be found *in situ* nearer than the Grampian mountains. The waters, too, which bore them along, must have swept over all our loftiest hills, or their elevation must have taken place subsequently to that event.

*Botany.*—The following plants are to be met with along the sea beach, some of them adhering to the rocks under Kinncraig Hill. *Rumex maritimus*, *Artemisia maritima*, *Eryngium maritimum*, *Smyrniolum olusatrum*, *Arenaria marina*, *Orobanche rubra*, *Cochlearia officinalis* and *Danica*, *Arabis hispida*, *Sinapis tenuifolia*, *Geranium sanguineum*, *Lavatera arborea*, *Eupatorium cannabinum*, *Hordeum maritimum*, *Glauz maritima*, *Senecio aquaticus*, &c.

Kilconquhar loch affords a great variety of aquatic plants, a few of which only can be specified. *Carex* several species; *Sparganium ramosum* and *natans*, *Arundo phragmites*, *Juncus effusus* and *bulbosus*, *Scirpus fluitans*, *lacustris*, and *sylvaticus*, *Nuphar lutea*, *Cicuta virosa*, *Menyanthes trifoliata*, *Lythrum salicaria*.

Balcarres Den, so interesting in a geological point of view, is no less to be admired for the many beautiful specimens which it yields to the researches of the botanist. *Silene inflata* and *acaulis*, *Stellaria nemorum* and *holostea*, *Epilobium hirsutum* and *tetragonum*, *Geum rivale*, *Lysimachia nemorum*, *Azalea procumbens*, *Scrophularia nodosa* and *vernalis*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Sium latifolium*, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, *Oxalis acetosella*, &c. Also a considerable variety of the fern tribe occurs here:—*Aspidium filix mas*, *Pteris aquilina*, *Blechnum boreale*, *Botrychium lunaria*, *Aspidium lonchitis*, *Adiantum capillis veneris*. Towards the higher and more sterile parts of the parish, we meet with the usual plants which characterize such districts. *Campanula latifolia*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Jasione montana*, *Euphrasia officinalis*, *Pedicularis palustris*, *Bartsia Odontites*, *Vaccinium vitis idea*, *Erica cinerea*, *Eriophorum angustifolium*, *Briza media*, &c.

*Woods or Plantations.*—There are no natural woods in this parish, but few parishes in Scotland are so richly covered with plantations. Most of the proprietors have their residences in the parish, and round their mansions are extensive plantations tastefully laid out. Looking down from Reres on the inclined plain to the south, it appears like one richly wooded domain. The plantations of Balcarres, Charleton, Pitcorthie, Cairnie, Kilconquhar, and Elie, all seem to unite. Looking to the north from the same eminence, the woods around Lathallan and Gilston, with the thriving plantations of Kilbrachmont and Falfield, give to that high district also a clothed and sheltered appearance. There are nearly 1000 imperial acres including hedge-rows under wood in the parish. The most valuable wood is around Balcarres, many of the trees being nearly 200 years old, and of large size. In Balcarres Den are nearly 100 acres of valuable hard wood, planted about eighty years ago. The trees are of great height, but, from being planted in a deep ravine, are little observed. The kinds of trees that seem to agree best with the soil and climate are ash, elm, oak, beech, and plane-tree. Larch, except in sheltered situations, does not thrive here. The genuine red pine or Scotch fir, which formerly used to be planted, and was a valuable wood, seems now to be supplanted by a soft yellow pine, having much the same appearance, but of such inferior quality as to be fit for little else than fire-wood.

*Zoology.*—There is nothing remarkable in the zoology. From our having so much wood we have great quantities of birds of all

the kinds common to the country, also a great deal of game, consisting of pheasants, partridges, hares, &c. Roe deer are sometimes seen in the plantations in the higher part of the parish, and there are great quantities of rabbits. There used to be two rabbit-waffrens, one in the St Ford Links, and one in the Grange or Earlsferry Links, but, from the skins having fallen so much in price, the rabbits have been destroyed, and the greater part of the links have been ploughed. \*

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

*Parochial Registers.*—There are no printed nor manuscript historical accounts of this parish, so far as known to the writer, except the parochial registers, which commence in 1631, and have been regularly kept ever since.

This parish originally comprehended the whole of the parish of Elie, and the barony of St Monance. Sir William Scott of Ardrross, who was proprietor of all the lands now constituting the parish of Elie, got them erected into a separate parish in 1639, he becoming bound to furnish a church for the new parish, with a manse and glebe for the minister; and expressly stipulating, that the stipend then allocated on his lands, and payable to the minister of Kilconquhar, should continue to be so paid in all time coming.

The late incumbent of the parish of Elie made an attempt to get the whole of the teinds, and raised a process before the Court of Session to get this agreement set aside. The heritors of Kilconquhar appeared as defenders, and after some litigation the process was dropped.

The present parish church of St Monance was a chapel in this parish previously to the annexation of that barony to the parish of Abercrombie in 1646.

*Burgh of Earlsferry.*—This burgh is very ancient. The original charter was destroyed by fire in Edinburgh, and its date is not ascertained. A new charter was granted by James VI. in 1589, which commences in these words: "James, by the grace of God King of the Scots, to all honest, good, and virtuous men of this land, either cleriks or laicks, greeting, Wit ye because we understanding the burgh of Earlsferry of old, past memory of men, was erected into ane free burgh, with all privileges, liberties, freedoms, and immunities," &c. By this charter all its privileges

\* Rookeries are encouraged here to a very hurtful extent. Crows are allowed to multiply so much as to prevent almost entirely the sowing of spring wheat, which would otherwise be cultivated to a considerable extent, our light soil being well adapted for it. Wherever it is now sown, it is devoured by crows alighting in thousands upon it, and tearing up the seed just when it begins to point through the ground in spring.

were renewed and confirmed. The origin of this burgh is ascribed to Macduff Thane of Fife, who, when fleeing from the usurper Macbeth, was obliged to take shelter in the cave already mentioned in Kinraig-ness, where, remaining in concealment for a time, he received great kindness from the fishermen of this village, who afterwards ferried him across the Frith to Dunbar. In return for these kind attentions, Macduff is said to have got Malcom III. betwixt 1057 and 1093, to erect the village into a royal burgh, calling it Earlsferry, with the privilege, that the persons of all who should cross the Frith from this place should be inviolable, or safe from their pursuers, and that no boat should be allowed to sail in pursuit of them till they were half way across. A considerable trade seems at one time to have been carried on here. By the charter, the provost and bailies are authorized to hold two annual fairs and two weekly markets, and to levy dues and customs. The want of a proper harbour, however, must always have been a great drawback to the trade of this place. Since the erection of a pier, and the formation of a harbour at Elie, which is just adjoining Earlsferry, the trade has naturally been transferred to that port, and these weekly markets and annual fairs have long been discontinued. The burghs of Earlsferry, Falkland, Newburgh, and Auchtermuchty, some time prior to the Union, were relieved from the burden, as it was then esteemed, of sending commissioners, whom they were obliged to pay, to represent them in Parliament. Being thus by their own desire disfranchised as burghs, they are now, with the other villages in Fife, thrown into the county constituency.

The minister of this parish had his manse and glebe at Earlsferry, and resided there till 1717, when land was allotted for a glebe at Kilconquhar, and a manse built upon it. The proprietor of the estate of Elie gave the glebe at Kilconquhar in exchange for that at Earlsferry, which he bequeathed to the kirk-session of Elie, for behoof of the poor of that parish. The circumstance of the minister residing at Earlsferry, may account for the inscription of Macduff's Cross being engrossed on the title-page of the first volume of our parochial register. \*

*Mansion Houses.*—There are six family residences in the parish, viz. Balcarres, Kilconquhar House, Charleton, Lathallan, Falfield and Cairnie.

\* See this inscription, with an account of it, in a note, page 70, in the Statistical Account of Newburgh, by the able and learned minister of that parish.

*Valued Rents.*—The valued rent of the different properties in the parish is as follows :

Kilconquhar, Sir Henry Lindesay Bethune, Bart.	-	L. 2023	14	8	Scots.
Balcarres, Colonel James Lindsay,	-	2144	19	4	
St Ford, Sir Wyndham Carmichael Anstruther, Bart.	-	1146	6	4	
Reres, Robert Bayne Dalgliesh, Esq.	-	827	0	0	
Kincraig, Miss Gourlay,	-	534	18	10	
Lathallan, James Lumsdaine, Esq.	-	463	6	8	
Charleton, John Anstruther Thomson, Esq.	-	408	11	11	
Grange, Sir John Malcom, Bart.	-	319	6	8	
North Falfield, Bethune James Walker, Esq.	-	291	10	0	
Grangehill, Alexander Wood, Esq.	-	280	14	10	
Bruntsields, Heirs of Misses Herd,	-	218	10	0	
South Falfield, James Wyld, Esq.	-	174	0	0	
Cairnie, Melville Dalzell, Esq.	-	102	19	1	

Amount of valued rent, - L. 9546 3 4

The real rent of the parish is about L. 9000 per annum.

None of the heritors have so low an income as L. 50 per annum.

The only noble family connected with the parish is that of Balcarres.

The Earl of Balcarres is patron of the parish, and titular of the teinds.

*Family of Lindesay.*—The first authentic mention of the family of Lindesay is in the time of David I. in 1188, when two brothers, Walter and William de Lindesay, stood high in this King's favour.

The house of Lamberton sprang from Walter de Lindesay, and is now extinct in the male line. The last lineal descendant in the female line is the Duchesse d'Angouleme. The house of Crawford sprang from William. His descendants distinguished themselves in Scottish history, and one of them was created Earl of Crawford in 1398.

The family of Balcarres branched off from that of Crawford in 1558, in the person of John, second son of David, eighth Earl of Crawford, Knight of Edzell. This John settled at Balcarres, which, with several other estates, were erected into a barony in 1592. He was one of the Octavians or secret council of eight, in whom the control of the Exchequer, and administration of public affairs, was vested after the death of Chancellor Maitland. His son David was created first Lord Balcarres, and his grandson Alexander first Earl. Alexander took an active part in favour of the exiled monarch, and died at Breda in exile in 1660, immediately before the restoration of Charles II. His body was brought home and interred in the chapel at Balcarres. This chapel was built by David first Lord Balcarres, who was interred here, as also Alexander, already mentioned, Charles, Colin, Alexander, and James, all Earls of Balcarres, and the Honourable Robert Lind-

say, (second son of Earl James), to whose family the estate now belongs. The present proprietor is Colonel James Lindsay, late representative in Parliament of the county of Fife.

The Earl of Balcarres is now a British peer, and resides on his estates in England.

Sir Henry Lindesay Bethune, the proprietor of the estate of Kilconquhar, is also sprung from the noble family of Crawford, and represents the Lindesays of Pyatstone. Sir Henry was lately created a Baronet for his distinguished services in Persia, where, by his singular energy and ability as a soldier, he mainly contributed to place the present Schah on the throne. Sir Henry is now at the court of Persia, and holds a high command in the Persian army.

The family of Gourlay, proprietors of Kincaig, have possessed this property upwards of 500 years.

### III.—POPULATION.

In 1753 the population was	2131
1794,	2013
1814,	2312
1821,	2317
1831,	2540 exclusive of 70 seamen.
1834,	2749
1836,	2732

Three villages contain nearly two-thirds of the population.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Earlsferry,	309	340	649
Kilconquhar and Barnyards,	256	302	558
Colinsburgh,	239	322	561
Country population,	456	508	964
	1260	1472	2732
Excess of females,	-	212	

The females exceed the males nearly 8 per cent., but the males bear a much nearer proportion to the females in the rural districts of the parish than in the villages. In the former, the females exceed the males only 6 per cent., in the latter 11 per cent. This may be accounted for, by single women finding cheaper houses and more employment in the villages than in the country.

The following is the state of births and marriages for last seven years :

Years.	Births.	Males.	Females.	Marriages.
1829,	68	36	32	17
1830,	58	27	31	15
1831,	53	29	24	16
1832,	66	31	35	28
1833,	68	32	36	22
1834,	79	39	40	16
1835,	54	29	25	22
Total,	446	223	223	136
Average,	63½	31½	31½	19½

It is rather remarkable that the births of males and females, though different in different years, are precisely the same in seven years. There is nearly one birth to 43 persons, and one marriage to 140, or more properly 70, and  $3\frac{1}{4}$  births to each marriage.

The following table will shew the numbers and ages of the persons who have died during the last seven years :

Years.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Average age.
1829,	18	22	40	32
1830,	21	19	40	50
1831,	19	24	43	48
1832,	14	25	39	47
1833,	23	13	36	38
1834,	28	35	63	34
1835,	20	27	47	38
Total,	143	165	308	287
Average,	20 $\frac{3}{4}$	23 $\frac{3}{4}$	44	41

One person to 62 has died yearly. The average age has been 41. The births have exceeded the deaths 138 in the seven years.

The following table will show more particularly the ages of the persons who have died last seven years.

	Under										Above
	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	100
1829,	14	18	19	24	26	29	32	34	38	39	1
1830,	7	12	16	18	18	20	26	31	37	40	
1831,	7	10	13	14	19	22	26	36	43	43	
1832,	7	8	10	12	16	17	21	29	37	39	
1833,	7	12	17	19	22	26	27	29	36	36	
1834,	25	29	30	34	36	38	41	48	63	68	
1835,	6	11	12	16	18	25	36	39	47	47	

The person who died in 1829 above 100 was a female who was born in this parish, and whose name and birth are recorded in our session books. She was one hundred years and four months when she died. She kept an inn or public-house in Colinsburgh for more than seventy years. She was of a placid cheerful disposition, was temperate, but said that she had never been particular as to what she ate or drank.

Persons under 15 years,	981
above 15 and below 50,	1265
above 50 and below 70,	357
above 70,	129
Bachelors above 50,	27
Widowers above 50,	31
Unmarried females above 45,	68
Widows,	99
Insane persons,	4
Fatuous,	4
Deaf and dumb,	2
Blind,	1

There are 655 families, counting each separate lodging a family, which make  $4\frac{1}{2}$  for each family. Many single persons, however,

occupy separate lodgings, so that families, properly so styled, must be considerably larger.

The language spoken here, especially by the young, is better than in most parts of Scotland. This is owing chiefly to our having good schools, and the youth being in general better educated.

There is nothing particular in the appearance, the manners, or customs of the people. They enjoy in a reasonable degree the comforts and advantages of society, and are generally contented with their condition and circumstances. It may be mentioned as a proof of the regularity of their conduct, that during the last twenty-three years, which is the period that the present incumbent has resided amongst them, there has not been an instance of a person belonging to this parish having been brought to a judiciary trial.

The comfort in which the inhabitants live may appear from the circumstance of our bakers using annually about 1000 quarters of wheat in bread; and our butchers killing and selling weekly upon an average 12 animals, including bullocks, sheep, lambs, veal, &c. Besides which, about 600 pigs are yearly fed and used by cottagers and others. Several families, too, in the higher ranks, use their own mutton, lambs, &c.

#### IV.—INDUSTRY.

*Agriculture*, according to the most improved system, is practised here; and in few parts of Scotland does the same extent of land produce so much corn, and other varieties of food. The whole parish except a few rocky spots, and what is covered with wood and roads, and about 200 acres of links, is either under tillage, or laid down for pasture in an improved state, after being enclosed and drained.

The system of cropping generally followed in the lower part of the parish is a rotation of four years, consisting of two green and two white crops, viz. first year grass; second, oats; third, potatoes, beans, or turnips; fourth, wheat or barley with grass seeds; wheat being commonly sown after potatoes, and barley after turnips. Where the green crop has been potatoes in the one rotation, it is generally turnips in the other, so that potatoes and turnips, wheat and barley, seldom occur more than twice or thrice on the same fields during the currency of a nineteen years lease.

In the upper part of the parish, much of the land is laid down in grass for pasture, and when ploughed, a less regular rotation is followed. Little wheat is sown. Two crops of oats are frequently taken after grass; and barley is generally sown after potatoes and turnips.

There are 28 farms of above L. 50 yearly rent; 84 ploughs, all drawn by horses, no oxen being employed in husbandry here. Each plough has two horses, and each farm a spare horse, making about 200 horses employed in cultivating the soil. All the farmers are in the practice of rearing young horses. These may be stated at one annually for every three working horses upon the farm; and as they are not generally sold till they are three or four years old, they may be reckoned about equal in number to the others, making about 400; besides which there are about 30 carriage and riding horses, making in all about 430 horses in the parish.

About 250 cattle are annually fed upon turnips, and about an equal number on grass, so as to be fit for the butcher. A considerable part of these are bought by dealers from a distance, who drive them to the Glasgow or Dundee markets. Young cattle and milk cows may be about double that number, making about 1500 cattle, young and old, in the parish. The kind of cattle bred here is the Fife, with a mixture of Teeswater in some instances. Considerable attention is paid to the breeding of cattle. The east of Fife Agricultural Society hold their meetings in Collinsburgh, and give premiums to encourage breeders. Few sheep are kept except in parks round gentlemen's houses. Cheviot sheep are those most generally kept.

*Produce.*—The average amount of raw produce may be stated as under:

	<i>Acres.</i>	<i>Quarters per acre.</i>	<i>Price per quarter.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Wheat,	350	4½	L. 2 10 0	L. 3935 0 0
Barley,	300	4½	1 10 0	2025 0 0
Oats,	700	5½	1 2 0	4235 0 0
Beans,	150	3½	1 10 0	787 0 0
Potatoes,	300	5 tons per acre, at L. 1, 10s. per ton,		2250 0 0
Turnips,	300	at L. 7 per acre,		2100 0 0
Hay,	250	at L. 10 per acre,		2500 0 0
Flax,	50	at L. 10 per acre,		500 0 0
Pasture,	2000	at L. 1, 15s. per acre,		3500 0 0
Thinnings of wood,				300 0 0
Cattle, supposing 500 annually sold at L. 10 each, = L. 5000. Allow-				
ing the farmer 20 per cent. of profit after deducting grass, turnips, &c.				1000 0 0
Horses, suppose 50 annually sold at L. 20 each, and allowing the far-				
mer 20 per cent. profit,				500 0 0
Coal and lime,				6000 0 0
Miscellaneous produce, including pigs, sheep, butter, cheese, &c.				1000 0 0
Total yearly value of raw produce,				L. 30,632 0 0

*Rent of Land.*—The average rent of land is L. 2 per acre. Leases are generally for nineteen years.

*Rate of Wages.*—Farm-servants are generally hired by the year. Married men get each a house, and wages paid partly in kind and partly in money, amounting to L. 22 or L. 24. Unmarried men

get from L. 10 to L. 12 with victuals. Women servants get L. 6 or L. 7 per annum and board. Labourers,—men have 1s. 6d. per day; women 8d. per day at ordinary work, and 1s. 6d. in harvest. Masons and carpenters get from 2s. to 3s. per day.

*Farm Buildings.*—Farm houses and offices are generally abundantly commodious, and kept in good condition.

*Fences.*—In the lower part of the parish, where the soil is rich and constantly under crop, there are few enclosures; they are considered to be hurtful by harbouring birds, and by occupying land which would otherwise be made productive. In the upper part, where the land is more frequently pastured, it is generally enclosed with stone dikes, which are kept in good repair.

*Manufactures.*—There are no spinning mills nor public manufactures in this parish; 235 persons are employed in weaving, 120 males, and 115 females. The webs are generally got from Kirkaldy, Kirkland, or Dundee, ready for the loom. Manufacturers in each of these places have agents here, for giving out, and taking in the work. The kinds of cloth worked here are doulasses, checks, and sheetings. About fifteen young men in Earlsferry are employed in weaving sheetings from 3 to 4 yards broad, at which they can earn from 3s. to 4s. a day.

The average earnings of all the weavers, male and female, in the parish may be about 8s. per week, or L. 4888 per annum. A great proportion of the men employed in weaving have also been bred to the sea. From thirty to forty used annually to go to the whale-fishing in summer, and return to the loom in winter. From that fishery having been so unsuccessful of late years, few now go to it. About twenty or thirty now go in the months of July and August to the herring fishing on the north-east coast of Scotland.

All the manufacturing part of the population reside in the villages. There is not a weaver in the whole of the landward part of the parish.

*Tan and Currying-works.*—There is a tan-work in Kilconquhar, and a currying-work in Colinsburgh, carried on by the same company, in which leather is manufactured to the value of L. 14,000 or L. 15,000 per annum. From twenty to twenty-four men are employed in these works, to whom about L. 15 are paid weekly in wages.

\* The following list will give a view of the professions and occupations of part of the inhabitants who have not been mentioned: 1 surgeon; 1 writer; 3 cloth-merchants; 13 grocers; 12 gardeners; 9 bakers; 3 butchers; 16 tailors; 29 shoemakers; 20 wrights; 18 masons; 13 blacksmiths; 1 tinsmith; 2 saddlers; 3 coopers; 2 slaters; 1 stationer; 1 house painter; 22 sailors; 12 public-houses; 90 persons employed at coal works.

## V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Colinsburgh is a post-town, in which there is a weekly market for grain, attended by farmers and corn-dealers in the neighbourhood. The corn is sold by sample, and is chiefly bought for exportation to Edinburgh, Glasgow, &c. Besides the weekly markets, there are two fairs annually for cattle in Colinsburgh, one in June and one in October. When the Agricultural Society meet in March to award their premiums, there is also a public market at which many cattle are sold.

*Bank.*—The Commercial Bank of Scotland have an agency here, which does a good deal of business. A Justice of Peace Court is also regularly held here.

*Means of Communication.*—Two stage coaches pass daily through the parish, one from Anstruther to Edinburgh by Pettycur, another from Anstruther to join the Largo steamer, which carries passengers to Edinburgh twice a-day in summer, and once a-day in winter.

Excellent turnpike roads run in all directions through the parish. The great road from the east to the west of Fife along the south coast, passes through it. Colinsburgh is a regular stage on this road. Here there is a good inn, with post-chaises and horses. There is also another line of turnpike road that runs from south to north, and which, in the northern parts of the parish, branches off in various directions leading to St Andrews, Cupar, Dundee, &c. Carriers from this go weekly to Edinburgh, Kirkaldy, St Andrews, Cupar, and all the towns on the coast.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The parish church, which stands in the village of Kilconquhar, was built in 1820 and 1821. The plan was furnished and the building erected by Messrs Dickson, architects, Edinburgh. It is a handsome building in the Gothic style of architecture, with a tower 80 feet in height. The church is conveniently situated for four-fifths of the population, but extremely inconveniently for the inhabitants of the northern part of the parish, the extremity of which is at least seven miles distant. The church contains sittings for 1035; 50 sittings are allotted to the poor.

The inconvenient situation of the church for the inhabitants of the northern parts of the parish has led to the erection of a chapel at Largoward, which was opened for public worship in September 1835, and which, since that time, has been regularly supplied, by the presbytery furnishing supply the one Sabbath, and the minister of the parish providing it the other. A subscription has been made

for supporting a preacher, who may reside in the district, and officiate regularly in the chapel. This chapel is on the confines of two other parishes, Carnbee, and Cameron; and within two miles of it is a population of upwards of 800, who are, some of them, seven, and all of them more than two miles, from their own parish churches. This is a locality where a new parish ought to be erected, and to which the attention of the Royal Commissioners is now solicited.

The manse and offices were built in 1815, and are in good condition. The glebe contains 12 acres, including the space occupied by the manse, offices, garden, &c. The land is good, and may be worth L. 30 or L. 35 per annum. The stipend is 17 chalders, one-half meal, and one-half barley, with L. 10 for communion elements.

The number of persons belonging to the Established Church is 2300. Divine service, both in the church and chapel, is well attended. The number of communicants belonging to the Established Church is 1110; the number generally present at the time of the communion about 1000.

*Dissenters.*—There are four dissenting meeting-houses in the parish, besides a small Baptist meeting. There is also a meeting house in Cameron parish, just on the borders of this, which has a great attendance of the inhabitants of this parish, and is as conveniently situated for them, as any of the others. These meeting-houses contain as many sittings as would accommodate every man, woman, and child in the parish, allowing 18 inches to each. They contain upwards of 2700 sittings. Not 200 of these are let to, or occupied by, persons belonging to the parish. The number of dissenters in the parish, young and old, of all denominations, is 361. The meeting-houses in the parish belong, two to the Relief, one to the United Associate Synod, and one to the Independents. The one in Cameron belongs to the United Associate Synod. One of the Relief meeting-houses in Colinsburgh, and the United Associate meeting-house in Kilconquhar, were some years ago sold for debt; but by some arrangement they are still kept up as places of worship, and have ministers. The other Relief meeting-house in Colinsburgh is now falling into ruins, and is almost deserted. The Independent meeting-house, although actually situated in this parish, which runs close to the village of Elie, was built, and is supported, so far as it has support, chiefly by persons in Elie. A very small number attend it. What stipends these ministers receive is not known. They must be very small.

There are 3 families of Episcopalians in the parish, and 51 persons belonging to no religious communion, although some of them occasionally attend the Established Church.

We have a society for church purposes, composed of members of the Established Church, which distributes annually about L. 30 for the support and extension of the gospel.

*Education.*—There are six schools in the parish. The parochial schoolmaster in Kilconquhar has a salary of L. 34, 2s. 4d. being the maximum. The heritors also allow a salary of 100 merks for a school at Largoward, where the chapel is built. The other four schools have no salary. There is also a female school at Kilconquhar. The number of scholars attending all the schools is about 450, or a sixth part of the population.

The branches taught in the parish school are English, writing, arithmetic, Latin, Greek, French, book-keeping, geography, algebra, Euclid's Elements, trigonometry, mensuration, navigation. The number of scholars studying Latin in this school for the last two years has been 28, in 1834 the number was 33. This school is remarkably well taught, and the teacher Mr M'Laurin, having a commodious house, has 16 boarders from different parts of the country. An usher is kept to assist in teaching this school. In the other schools the more ordinary branches only are taught. The people in general are alive to the benefits of education. All the children are within easy reach of some of the schools, and are taught to read and write.

*Friendly Societies.*—There were several friendly societies in the parish, but, from miscalculation of the allowances to be made to their sick and poor members, they have all been broken up.

*Savings Bank.*—We have a savings bank, but, from there being now a branch of the Commercial Bank in Colinsburgh, few comparatively speaking take advantage of it.

*Poor.*—The average number on the regular poor's list for the last ten years has been 36. About two-thirds of these either are Dissenters, or have been Dissenters. These proportions have been nearly the same for the last twenty years. The Dissenters here do not provide for their poor, nor do they contribute any thing to the poor's funds of the parish. If they give any thing to the poor, it is unknown to the kirk-session, and must be confined to those of their own communion. They give nothing to any of the poor of the Establishment.

The following table will show the amount and application of disbursements for the poor, for the last seven years :—

	<i>Paid Ordinary Poor.</i>			<i>Occasional Poor.</i>			<i>Lunatics.</i>			<i>House Rents.</i>			<i>Total.</i>		
	L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.
1829,	74	14	0	6	18	6	20	4	0	16	19	0	119	15	6
1830,	84	10	5½	18	19	1½	29	19	10	12	7	0	145	16	4½
1831,	81	1	11	17	4	0	20	19	9	12	5	0	131	10	8
1832,	83	18	3	17	6	6	27	19	9	14	7	0	143	11	6
1833,	75	8	4	29	12	3½	34	6	7	14	12	8	154	0	2½
1834,	93	1	7½	29	18	4½	42	3	8½	14	11	0	179	14	8
1835,	92	1	2½	7	18	0	38	5	10	14	5	0	152	10	0½
Average	83	10	9½	18	5	3	30	2	9½	14	3	8½	146	14	1

The average amount of collections for the poor at the church door, for the last seven years, has annually been L. 66, 1s. 4d. The interest of money belonging to the kirk-session L. 38; proclamation dues, L. 2, 4s. 3d; mortcloth do. L. 3, 11s. 9d., making in all L. 109, 17s. 4d. The remaining sum has been raised by a voluntary contribution from the heritors according to their valued rents.

*Prisons.*—There is a jail in Earlsferry in a very wretched state, but fortunately we rarely have occasion to use it.

#### OBSERVATIONS.

*Local Advantages.*—This parish has many local advantages. Being near the sea, we are abundantly supplied with all the varieties of fish caught on the coast. We have a plentiful supply of coals, which are sold at the mouth of the pit, at 5s. per single horse cart-load. We have a much greater quantity of all kinds of agricultural produce than can be used in the parish.

*Improvements.*—Since the date of the former Statistical Account, great improvements have been made in agriculture, particularly in draining and turnip husbandry. Buildings of every description are greatly improved, especially farm-houses, which, from being generally small and covered with thatch or tile, are now large and commodious, and finished in a style that would have been thought extravagant forty years ago. Thrashing-mills are now universal, wherever the farms are of any considerable extent. There are 23 thrashing mills in the parish, which are still driven by horses.

A new era is commencing for the lessening of labour, by the introduction of steam engines. There are as yet only six steam engines in the parish, and only one of these is applied to a thrashing mill, namely, at the farm of Balniel Den, the property of Colonel Lindsay. It may safely be predicted, that, before another half century elapses, it will be as uncommon to see a thrashing mill driven by horses, as it now is to see corn thrashed with flails.

The number of persons qualified to vote for a Member of Parliament is 70.

January 1837.