

CARNOCK PARISH

PAROCHIAL REGISTERS;-The parochial registers, which consist of minutes of session, records of marriages, birth, and burials, and accounts of collections and disbursements, commence in 1642, and come down, with a few intervals, to the present time. They are comprised in eleven volumes of various sizes, some of which are much injured, and one of them the duplicate of another that is now scarcely legible. An earlier volume than any of the present, seems once to have existed ; but it appears not to have continued long in the hands of the session, as the following entry in the record intimates: " Junii 20, 1647, The kirk registers were produced, viz. the covenant and declaration, the acts of the General Assembly holde at Glasgow 1638,etc. The old session book was amissing." The loss of this volume is much to be regretted, because it evidently comprehended the early part of Mr Row's ministry, and would probably have thrown much light on the state of the parish at that period. The covenant also, another precious relic, with its signatures, disappeared at a subsequent time.

The first of the existing volumes wants thirteen leaves at the beginning. It contains the minutes of session from Januarv 30, 1642, to February 16, 1662; as also an account of collections and disbursements, and a few notices of baptisms. The first part of this volume appears to be in the handwriting of Mr Row, and contains several interesting particulars, both of a local and a general character. The greater part of the remainder of the volume, which comprehends the incumbency of Mr Belfrage, seems to have been written by the schoolmaster of the time. This latter fact is noticed on account of the beauty of the writing, which shows the schoolmaster of that period to have been a superior penman to most of the clerks that succeeded him, and which indicates a higherdegree of literary attainment than what some men are willing to admit as belonging to the time.

The principal blanks in the registers are from February 1662, to February 1665, and from March 2, 1693, to October 23, 1699.

The more early of these records throw considerable light on the times to which they refer, and bear a strong testimony to the advantages which the country at large derives from the National Church, and show with what intelligence and zeal the men who then administered her affairs laboured to reform a rude people, and to promote their intellectual and moral advancement. The discipline exercised was strict and minute. And, though the power that was sometimes assumed may now appear unwarrantable, yet, when we consider the state of the times referred to, and the faithful ministrations with which it was accompanied, we shall be constrained to admit both that it was not overstretched, and that it was used simply with a view to the good of the people themselves. Indeed, almost all beneficial undertakings seem to have then originated with the Established Church, or to have been countenanced and furthered by her. The interests of education, the maintenance of the poor, the ransoming of such as had been carried into slavery, the repairing of damage occasioned by fire, the building or improving of harbours, bridges, and other public works these objects, in addition to the more peculiar duties of their office, engaged

the attention of ministers and elders, and showed them to have been men of sagacity and benevolence no less than of piety.

The following extracts may be regarded as confirmatory of these remarks, as well as interesting in themselves:- "The 3 of November 1643, we, ministeris of the Presbyterie of Dunfer. haifing resolvit to intertene a bursar at the new colledge in St Andrews, we stentet qt every kirk within the said Presbyterie suld pay, yt he mycht be intertened and Carnock was stentet to pay 3 libs. and thairfor Mr John..... present bursar, cam to my house the day foresaid, and receivit the said 3 libs." -" Oct. 3.1647. Having mist some of our people out of the church this afternoon, it was enacted, that some of our elders, day about, should go through the parish one the Lord's day, and see who was absent remaining in their houses; and if some just and lawll cause detained them not, that they should be censured." This regulation was long after continued in Carnock.-" Oct. 29, 1647. I did exhort the elders that they wold be carefull to search and try the parish if ther wer any neighbour at discord wt another, and let them be warned in before the sessioun, that their friendship might be mad, and the day appointed for this purpose to be Thursday next. Nov.4. The qlk day Andrew Creich and David Anderson came in, and were reconciled."

" Nov. 14. Ther was delivered to Robt. Creich, our ruling elder for the repairing of Cramment brig, 4 lib., qlk was delivered." -" November 21. I did shew unto the sessione, that one day of the week must be attendit for weekly examinations, and that one or more elders should be always present." -" Decem. 12. The qlk day it was ordained by the sessione, that the children of poor ones should have the benefit of learning to read, and therefore because they are unable to pay ther quarter payments the sessione ordains," &c.-Decem. 19. Orders given to procure " directiones for family worship," for the use of the parishioners.-" Apr. 30. Ordained, that no more than 24 persons be at penny bridalls, under a penalty of a dollar." -" My Lord Kincardine came to Carnock this 12 of this instant of Oct. and, having held a court, he settled the maintenance of the school to be the somme of a hundred pounds," &c. March 18. 1649. Deacons appointed.-15 Febr. " A general collection throw the parochie for the poor" ordered.-" 7 March 1652. Publick intimation was made from the pulpit of a collection for the supplie of some prisoners that were taken captive at Dunbar, and are now very hardlie dealt withal." -6th July 1656. The session, at a meeting of this date, granted leave to certain persons to erect a seat for themselves in the church, and " every one of them are to give in 24s. to the poor." -" 12 July 1657 The elders wer appointed once in the moneth to give ane accompt of those under yr severall charges, and to see who are sick, under necessity, scandalous in yr carriage, or defective in familie duties." -" 21 Feb. 1658, A collection was publickly intimat for the relief of a poor man in Sauling, called Rot. Harrower, who had his house brunt." -" 22 May 1659, Given to a stranger supplicant, 6s. To another stranger supplicant, 4s. To a poor disabled souldier, 2s." -" 18 Decr. 1659, There was a contribution intimat to be for the support and supplie of the people in Pittenweyme, &c. who had suffered so much skaith by the inundation of waters " -" 15 April 1660, The elders were exhorted to visit the sick more frequently, for the minister declared, that the sick told him yt few or none of the elders came to them, and they were sharply rebuked." -" 29 July 1666. There was a contribution intimat for repairing the harboree of Inverkeithing."

POPULATION.

Nothing very certain can be mentioned regarding the ancient state of the population of the parish, except that it seems to have been more scattered than it is at present. Judging from the register of births, the number of inhabitants, nearly 200 years ago, would not amount to much above 350. At that time, the village of Carnock was the only one in the parish, and of small extent. The others are of comparatively recent date. And as manufactures had then made little progress, the population was chiefly engaged in agricultural pursuits, and in the domestic labours which were then requisite for procuring the necessary supplies of food and clothing.

According to Dr Webster's survey in 1755, the population was	583
From a survey made in 1781,	912
Do. 1791,	970
By Government census in 1801,	860
Do. 1811,	884
Do. 1821,	1136
Do. 1831,	1204
Do. 1841,	1269

The cause of the decrease shown by the census of 1801 appears to have been the ceasing of some coal-works in the parish, about the commencement of the century; and the increase which the subsequent surveys give is sufficiently accounted for by the improvements in trade, manufactures, and agriculture.

At the close of the year 1841 the following were the results

Number of persons residing in villages,	891
the country,	378
The yearly average of births for the last seven years,	33
deaths,	21 2/7
marriages,	10 2/7
The number of persons under 15 years of age,	501
betwixt 15 and 30,	245
30 and 50,	268
50 and 70,	131
upwards of 70,	24

dressing, or a quantity of flour equal in value. Nifflers and rollers, which are used in beaming webs, are also provided by the weavers, and cost L.3 the set. And as a number of persons are required to beam a web, the weavers form themselves into societies, commonly called quarters, and have a set of nifflers to each.

Weavers receive so much a spindle for their work; and as that varies with the kind of cloth, and as the quantity wrought by different workmen in a given time differs considerably, it is not easy to ascertain with accuracy their average earnings, either by the day or by the week. It may be stated, however, that at present those employed in weaving, can scarcely be said to have a fair remuneration and support from their labours.

PAROCHIAL ECONOMY

Market-Town.-There is no market-town in the parish. The nearest is Dunfermline, three miles distant from the centre of Carnock, where there are weekly markets and frequent fairs. The villages in the parish are, Carnock, Gowkhill, and Cairney hill. A fair for cattle, &c. is held annually at Carnock, on the 26th May; and when that happens to be Sunday, the fair is held on the Saturday previous.

Means Of Communication.-A penny-post, in connection with Dunfermline, was procured for the village of Carnock in the year 1838, and has proved a great convenience to the inhabitants. It passes daily. The Culross and Kincardine posts also pass through Cairneyhill twice a-day. The only stage-coach is that between Kirkcaldy and Glasgow, which passes daily through Cairneyhill. But from Dunfermline there is communication with Edinburgh twice a-day by coaches ; and the steam-boats between Stirling and Edinburgh are easily accessible to our population. Carriers go twice a-week from Cairneyhill to Edinburgh, and once a-week from the same to Auchterarder, Crieff, and Comrie.

The length of turnpike roads in the parish is only between five and six miles. They are kept in good repair. The statute-labour roads, however, are generally very indifferent. The one especially, between the villages of Carnock and Cairneyhill, and which forms the principal parish road, was, until lately, in a wretched state. The line is bad, and there is little prospect of getting it altered ; so that the intercourse between these villages is very much impeded, especially in winter.

There are six bridges in or on the confines of the parish. They are all small, but in good condition. The two oldest have had an addition made to their width, subsequent to their first erection. Above the arch of the one of these, which is in the village of Carnock, there are two stones with an inscription on each. The one contains the following in raised letters ;MR. ROW PASTOR ANNO D. 1638 ; and the other contains the words GEORGE BRUCE OF CARNOK.

But whether this date marks the age of the oldest part of the bridge, or of a previous erection, is somewhat uncertain.

Ecclesiastical State.-The former parish church stood near the village of Carnock, and was conveniently situated for upwards of one-half of the population. It was distant from the furthest extremity of the parish a little more than two miles, and from the nearest somewhat more than one mile. It was old, inconveniently small, and most uncomfortable. The time of its being built is unknown. The date 1602, with the letters G. B., appears on it ; but it is evident that part of the building at least was much older than that. From Row's *Historie* just published, it appears that it was repaired in the year 1602, when the roof of heath was replaced by one of heavy gray slate. It was again repaired in the year 1641; and in the year 1815, the gray slate roof was replaced by one of Eisdale slate. A few years ago, some further repairs were made on it, which rendered it more comfortable. But in 1838, the presbytery, on a report by Gillespie Graham, Esq. Architect, condemned it, and issued a decret for building a new church, in which the heritors unanimously acquiesced. The greater part of the walls still remain, and form an interesting relic of the olden times. The old church bell bore the date 1638; but it was lately recast. On the pulpit, which was of oak, was the date 1674, with this motto, *Sermonem vitae praebenti*, Phil. ii. 16. The materials of this pulpit have been converted into a chair and table, for the communion elements, in the new church, preserving as much of their original appearance as was consistent with what they have been adopted to.

The new church, which was planned by John Henderson, Esq. Architect, Edinburgh, contains 400 sittings on the ground-floor; provision being made for the erection of galleries afterwards to contain 200 more, if required. It is an exceedingly comfortable place of worship. The site chosen for it is only at a short distance from that of the old church no other place being more convenient, considering the localities of the parish. It was opened for worship in May 1840, and proves a great accommodation to the parish.

The manse was built in 1802. It underwent some repairs in 1829, and is in pretty good condition ; though, from the defects of its construction originally, it is still cold. The old offices were removed in 1829, and the present ones built. They are small, but comfortable. A barn and cart-shed, however, are still to be erected.

The number of persons belonging to the Established Church is 652. The number of families, 127. The average attendance during the summer months may be estimated at 220. The number who are in the habit of attending throughout the year, but not all present at any one time, amounts to upwards of 350. Several persons, belonging to the Establishment, are in the habit of attending worship in the neighbouring parish churches. The number of communicants on the roll at last communion, belonging to, the congregation, and exclusive of those who worship in other parishes, was about 200. Previous to 1828, the number on the roll was 93; and in 1833, it was 151.

There is one Dissenting meeting-house in the parish. It originated about 1748, and is situated in the village of Cairneyhill. The congregation belongs to the United Associate Synod. The number of sittings in the meeting-house is 400. The minister's stipend is L.96, derived from seat rents and collections, besides a house and garden, and a glebe of two acres. The whole number of Dissenters of all denominations in the parish is 598. Of these, about 400 profess to belong to the congregation at Cairneyhill ; two are Episcopalians, and one a Roman Catholic, who occasionally worship in the parish church; and the remainder, adhering to the United Secession, the Relief, and the Original Burghers, attend places of worship belonging to their respective denominations in Dunfermline. Of those not known to belong to any religious denomination, the number is 19.

The average amount of church collections, &c. yearly for religious and charitable objects, besides the ordinary weekly collections for the poor, may be estimated at upwards of L.10.

Education.-There are two schools in the parish; one, the parochial school, in Carnock village ; and the other at Cairneyhill.

The branches of instruction taught in the two schools at present existing, are, English reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar, geography, and sometimes Latin and Greek. The parochial schoolmaster has the maximum salary, and a small mortification of the value of 5s. 6 1/2d. annually. This mortification is the interest of 100 merks bequeathed the kirk-session of Carnock, for behoof of the schoolmaster, by Principal Row, " calling to mynd," as the deed of mortification in the principal's hand-writing states, " the place of my birth, and first initiating in letters." The schoolmaster at Cairneyhill has a free school-house ; but is otherwise wholly dependent upon the school fees.

Besides the facilities afforded for the education of the young by the two schools already mentioned, the inhabitants of the eastern portion of the parish have the privilege of sending their children to a well-conducted school, which is connected with a public work in the parish of Dunfermline.

In 1834, the number of children at school was 210. Subsequently, the number decreased considerably, and has never since reached that number. This diminution, especially of late, has been owing to the depression of trade.

The parochial teacher has barely the legal accommodation. The school-room is small and ill-furnished; and the dwelling. house, which is above, is in ill-repair and uncomfortable.

A seminary for young ladies has for a number of years past been successfully conducted at Cairneybill, by Mrs More. Besides the ordinary branches of education, there are taught French, Italian, English composition, music, drawing, and other branches, both useful and ornamental,

that are usually taught in the most respectable boarding schools. The terms are moderate, and the seminary is flourishing.

Libraries.-There are two libraries in the parish ; one in the village of Cairneyhill, which has existed several years ; the other in the village of Carnock, which was established by means of collections and subscriptions by the minister in the year 1840, and which now consists of about 250 volumes. The desire for reading has of late been increasing among the people.

Friendly Societies.-The only association of this kind in the parish is what is called the Dead Fund, the object of which is to assist in defraying the expenses of funerals. On the occasion of a death in the family of a member, a certain sum is paid out of the fund to the survivors, each member contributing a shilling or a sixpence, as the sum to be paid may be greater or less. This association has proved very beneficial.

Savings Banks.-There is no Savings Bank in the parish. The nearest is in the town of Dunfermline. A Savings Bank was established there a good many years ago; but as a national one was opened in 1838, the deposits of the old bank were transferred to it. Few persons, however, in this parish avail themselves of the advantages which it offers.

Poor and Parochial Funds.-The average number of persons on the permanent poor's roll, including those that are dependent upon them, is 12. Of these some receive 5s. a month, and some as low as 3s. 6d. One pauper receives 2s. a week. Besides those on the permanent roll, there are several that receive occasional relief. The funds to meet these expenses consist of collections at the church doors, mortcloth-dues, the interest of L.200 of money accumulated in former years by the session, and now invested in the Dunfermline gas stock, and a voluntary assessment by the heritors when required. The average annual amount of church collections for relief of the poor may be estimated at L.11, 7s. 7d. The mortcloth-dues now yield a very small sum, as in these days of reform many think it better to support a small concern of their own, than to be the means of contributing a little for the relief of the poor by using the parish mortcloth; and the heritors do not choose to litigate the matter with them. The burden on account of the poor of this parish, however, is by no means heavy. The sum annually distributed among paupers on permanent roll, in occasional relief to persons not on roll, and in the education of poor children, has not, on an average of several years, exceeded L.36 ; a fact which testifies to the general comfort of the population, and shows that there is a creditable disposition among the poor to refrain from seeking parochial relief.

Fairs.-Only one fair is held in the parish in the year. It is chiefly a cattle and shoe market, and is held on the 26th May, except when that happens to be Sunday, in which case the fair is held on the 27th. Much business used formerly to be transacted at it; but now the attendance is comparatively small.

Inns.-When the former account of the parish was written, the number of inns or alehouses appears to have been ten, viz. four in Carnock, five in Cairneybill, and one at Blair. A considerable improvement has since taken place in this respect, for the number of these houses now amounts only to five, viz. two in Carnock, two in Cairneybill, and one at Gowkhall.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

Since the former Statistical Account was written, the general appearance of the parish has evidently been much improved. With the exception of a few, acres of moor, and of what is occupied by woods, roads, fences, and water, the whole surface is under cultivation. Agriculture has greatly improved ; the means of communication has much increased; trade and manufactures have received a new impulse.

Rev. William Gilston(January 1843)