

INVERKEITHING PARISH

FERRY.-At this ferry, is a flourishing village inhabited by the boatmen, principally, and much resorted to in summer, as sea-bathing quarters. The piers are unrivalled, and there is an elegant and commodious inn, lately built. In old times, this ferry was subject to the Abbots of Dunfermline, who drew the fortieth penny of passage money to repair their quair, and also one-fourth to supply boats. The present superior of whom the ground of the village is feued, is the Marquis of Tweeddale. Of later years, the right of ferry belonged to neighbouring proprietors, the Earl of Rosebery, Dundas of Dundas, etc. to whom a rent was paid, but upwards of twenty years ago, it was vested by act of Parliament in trustees. The rent, under this act, once amounted to L. 2300, but now it yields about L. 1500 only. The currents of the tide here are so peculiar, that, as was proved upon trial when an attempt was made about the beginning of the century to turn off the old boatmen, no sailor, unless brought up upon the passage, can navigate the boats without much delay and risk.

At one time, a visionary project of a tunnel beneath the Frith a little way above the ferry, was entertained ; and more lately, another of a chain bridge across it, having Inch Garvie in the middle for an intermediate step. There is at the ferry a battery, at present dismantled, erected after the visit of Paul Jones.

PAROCHIAL REGISTERS ** -The minutes of session are regular and without blanks, from 1676 to the present date. The register of baptism and marriages also extends from 1676 to the present date, though from 1676 to 1698, in the same books with the session minutes, and intermixed with them as they occurred, and with the exception of a blank from 1711 to 1748, caused by the loss of a book, which, according to an entry in the session minutes about 1755, was taken to London as evidence in a law-suit about 1750, and never returned. There is a register of burials from 1702 to 1708, and for 1710, and of testimonials given and received from 1701 to 1711.

**There are some curious notices of old customs to be found in the old minutes. money appears to have been often given from the poor's funds, to enable students to prosecute their studies, and there was a fine to the poor on baptisms and marriages, when these took place in the parties' own houses. The session also assumed the power of appointing who should sit in the vacant seats in the church, and it seems to have been acquiesced in. Persons are prohibited from receiving into their houses, or letting houses to those from another parish, who do not bring " testificates." and the civil powers are called upon to enforce this. Persons recusant are compelled to appear before the kirk-session, and to submit to the discipline enjoined, under penalty of imprisonment by the magistrates, until they consent to do so.

The exercise of discipline also appears to have been what would at present be accounted rigorous. During the first thirty years of last century, there are instances of persons rebuked before the congregation for swearing, drunkenness, stealing, for not attending public worship, for being out of doors unnecessarily, or carrying water on the Sabbath, for ferrying people across on

the Sabbath without an order from the minister, for abusive language or calling names, very frequently women for scolding, once, a man for cursing and striking his wife, and another for consulting a " wizard." An offender, in addition to the usual censures and fine, is ordered to learn censure, if he shall be found " deficient in learning " According to order of the Lord Ordinary, there is, in 1701, a guardian of morality appointed in the parish, to put the laws in execution against immorality and profaneness, and there appears to have been a strict system of espionage established in regard to these.

In 1702, there is a named list of communicants, chiefly females, amounting to seventy-eight in all, and a few years after, a named list of elders, amounting to nineteen. During this period it is customary to mark in the minutes the name of any stranger who may have preached, and very often the subject of his sermon. Even on solemn occasions decorum was evidently not very strictly observed in those days, as at every sacrament there is a regular entry of a sum of money paid to the town officers "for keeping off the throng." Many irregular marriages are also recorded.

About 1720 the parish seems to have been in a sad state so far as morality was concerned, and also in the years preceding 1745, both periods of great political excitement, offenders during the time between these dates were also exceedingly refractory and contumacious, and there appear to be good grounds for concluding that the present generation and their fathers have improved very much upon their ancestors in those days, at least in sobriety and decency of behaviour.

POPULATION.

According to the return made to Dr Webster this was in 1755. 1694

By an accurate private list made in 1793, 2210

By the Government census 1801, 2228

1811, 2400

1821, 2512

1831, 3189

Of this last return, 1569 are males, and 1620 females.

The number residing in the burgh is 2020, being 978 males, and 1042 females ; in the village of North Ferry, 434, being 203 males, and 231 females; in that of Hillend, 279, being 146 males, and 133 females ; and in the country part of the parish, 458, being 243 males, and 215 females.

The increase in the number of parishioners between 1821 and 1831 is 677. This great increase may be partly accounted for by the establishment of a large distillery between these periods, but it arose principally from a large influx of labourers employed about 1831, to work in the greenstone quarries supplying materials for the extension of Leith pier, and the erection of the new bridge at Stirling. These quarries being abandoned upon the completion of the works the labourers and their families have gone elsewhere, and it is supposed that the population is not now so numerous as in 1831.

The number of families was in 1831, 712, of inhabited houses 438, and, of other houses, 12. The average number of a family nearly $4\frac{1}{2}$

There are two persons only of independent fortune residing in the parish, and one of them is but a very small proprietor in it. There are no noblemen resident, and but one of the larger heritors. The proprietors of lands in the parish of more than L. 50 rental, are 11 in number.

MANUFACTURES:- There is a large distillery in which Whisky is made, both for the English and home markets, by Coffey's patent steam apparatus. There are also two founderies in the parish, where large articles are cast, and steam-engines and other machinery made. There is a tan-work, a ship-building yard, a salt-work, a magnesia manufactory, and a brick-work, where very excellent fire bricks are made and also chimney cans of elegant patterns, and other ornamental work, exactly resembling a fine freestone. A mill driven by steam has also been erected for crushing bones for agricultural purposes. These bones are chiefly imported from abroad, and are exported when ground down to supply the consumption, of the east coast of Scotland, - little of them being used in the district. There are two mills for making meal and flour, and a barley mill. A considerable number of the usual tradesmen reside in the parish, and also some weavers employed by the damask table cloth-manufacturers of Dunfermline. The distillery employs about 80 men when in operation, the two founderies from 40 to 50, and there are a considerable number of carpenters in the building yard. The usual time of working is ten hours a day; the employments are healthy and the payment good.

EDUCATION.-There is a parochial school, in which are taught English, writing, arithmetic, Latin, Greek, French, geography, mathematics, etc. The teacher has the maximum salary; there is a good dwelling-house, and an elegant adjacent school-house. The school fees may amount to about L. 70. There are six private schools, in which the ordinary branches of education are taught, and in which the teachers are supported by the school fees alone. One is a female school for the higher and ornamental branches of education. There is also a Sabbath day school, which meets both before and after public worship, and is supported by subscriptions and collections, and attended by numerous scholars. The expense of education is moderate, being per quarter 3s.

for English ; 4s. for English and writing; 5s. for arithmetic; 7s. for Latin; and the same for French. The number of scholars attending all these schools is very nearly 400.

POOR AND PAROCHIAL FUNDS.-The number of poor receiving parochial aid belonging to the Established Church, was, during last year (1835) 43. The accounts of the current year cannot be made up, until the end of it. The allowances given them vary from 6d. to 2s. 6d. per week, proportioned according to their wants. The collections at the church door are upon an average, L. 20 annually, and the subscription or assessment upon the heritors for the year above-mentioned was L. 110, out of which there are L 10 given to the dissenters in aid of their paupers. There are some small salaries paid to clerks, and church-officers. The heritors pay according to their valued rents.

PRISONS.-The jail is by no means secure, several escapes have been made from it. Excepting a vagrant or rioter upon the streets, and that for a night, incarceration in this prison is a rare event. It is superintended by one of the town-officers.

November 1836 (Rev Andrew Robertson)