

KILMANY PARISH

PAROCHIAL REGISTERS: - The parochial registers I examined with great care in November 1828, and I then made the following minute with regard to them : Kilmany, November 16th 1828, " I have examined with considerable care the records of the session of Kilmany, and I have found them wonderfully complete, notwithstanding their present miserable condition. They have been originally bound up as a volume; but at this date they consist of separate sheets and leaves. When they were put into my possession, they were in great disorder, and it required nearly a week's labour to put them into their present condition. A considerable part of them are consumed with damp and bad care. The marking of the pages is gone ; and I am afraid, that, in their present wasted state, they will not keep together for many years. The paper is so much consumed, that they cannot be bound into a Volume. All that I can do to preserve them after being arranged is to enclose them in a portfolio. They commence 1st of November 1696, and they go down to 1729 ; the month at which they close, is worn off. In the records there is a blank from October 31st 1697 to June 1st 1701 ; also a leaf of distribution of kirk-session 1728. I have observed in these early records of the kirk-session no other blank. I have put the registers of births together at the end. They consist of three fragments. The first of the register of births begins May 5th 1706, and is very accurate, although a good deal decayed, until August 18th 1710. The second portion of the register of births commences November 18th 1711, (leaving a blank from August 1710,) and continues regular although much wasted at the bottoms of the pages, until October 12th 1718. Third portion of the registers of births commences November 18th 1721, (leaving a blank from October 1718,) and it goes down to 1727. This is in far worse condition than the other two. It is so much wasted that I could not ascertain the particular month in 1717, when it closes. The records which I have examined and described begin, as before stated, November 1696, and come down to 1729." This volume of minutes of session has been long in bad condition. So far back as when Mr Adamson was elected minister in 1764, it is stated, that the session-clerk produced " an old illegible book of minutes, about the year 1669 -70,* etc. a book in which were contained a register of baptisms, etc. from November 1696 to December 1729, inclusive, and minute of discipline, collections, distributions of the same dates ;" another book, containing a register of baptisms, etc. from January 1730, to the present time, and minutes of collections and distributions from January 1730 to December 1728, inclusive, and discipline by itself, from January 1749 to the present time ; another book containing only minutes of collections and distributions from January 1749 to the present time." These are all in existence. They were most accurately kept by Mr Adamson. They have been continued to the present day, except minutes of discipline. Since Mr Adamson's time, until very lately, this part of the parish registers has been completely neglected. No entry has been made with regard to any meetings which have taken place betwixt the heritors and kirk-session.

Little is known of the ecclesiastical state of the parish before 1697. From a monument lately turned up in the churchyard, it appears that a Master James Thomson was minister of Kilmany for forty-two years previous to 1646. He died in that year aged seventy-eight; and it adds, and " that of his beloved wife, Besse Smith, with whom he lived forty-one years, Deo Lavs, amen." No tradition remains in the parish with regard to this reverend gentleman. In Limond's Diary, a Mr George Thomson is mentioned as minister of Kilmany, and dying there about 1655. But whoever were the ministers of Kilmany previous to 1697, it is evident from a minute of session, May 7th

1707, that the sacrament of the Lord's supper for a long time had not been regularly dispensed. These are the words of it: " Being Wednesday the session met, and considering that this congregation has long wanted the benefit of the sacrament of the Lord's supper, the minister (Mr Brown) did intimate to them his design of celebrating that solemn ordinance; and the session considering what may be the most proper season for it, did condescend upon the last Sabbath of June next; and farther considering that the communion tables were all broken and gone to ruin, the session recommends it to the minister and elders in the town of Kilmany to agree with James Miles, wright, to buy timber, and make up the said tables, and to mend some parts of the pulpit that is decayed, and to do other things needfull about the church. And the session farther recommends to the minister, to write to the provost of the Old College, either to furnish the communion elements, or allow a fund to buy them, being, it is said that the Old College was in use and wont so to do, and being proprietors of the tithes of the parish, are obliged to allow a fund for, or else provide elements for, the rise of the parish." Upon this solemn occasion, " Elizabeth Forrester, Lady Mountwhanie, spouse to James Crawford of Mountwhanie, did provide the pulpit with a covering, together with a good silk fringe, and other things belonging thereto ; as also she did give as much fine linen as served for the use of the table cloaths at the Sacrament. The session, out of gratitude to the said lady, did order the recording of this in the minutes." It is stated in the minutes of June the 8th, " the provost of the Old College declines to allow a fund, or afford communion elements. The session recommends to the ininister to take advice what means must be used to obtain a fund for this purpose in time coming." June 22d, the session met, intimation was made this day, that the fast day before the sacrament was to be on Wednesday next. The sacrament was dispensed on the 29th of June. The session met on the 2d of July . " the minister reported that he had taken advice what method must be used for obtaining a fund for providing the communion elements, and that the advice was, that there was no other way but to raise a process before the Session Lords, now Commissioners for Plantation of Kirks and Valuation of Teinds, and that he was resolved, when a fair opportunity offered, to take that method, both with respect to his stipend and the communion elements. The session, considering that the minister's stipend, being but a scrimp enough maintenance, could not allow of paying the elements out of it, they unanimously agreed to pay them out of the collections, gathered at the sacrament, until a fund shall be otherwise provided." In July 6th 1714, the session met, and the minister represented to them that he had at last, after a long depending process, obtained a decret of modification and locality of his stipend ; wherein a fund is provided for communion elements, which he pays out of the same, and so the Poor's box will be no longer burdened wtili the payment of communion elements.

In the minutes, there is nothing particularly interesting to the general reader. In November 8th 1704, the session gave to Daniel Guines, as encouragement for setting up a printing-house in Dundee, 14s. In May 5th 1709, a collection was ordered for those whose houses were burnt in Edinburgh. " In October 23d 1747, the session met, and the minister represented that the rebels having been in his house several times during the late rebellion, and carried off some of his effects, he had put in places he thought they would not suspect, some papers of value in his custody, particularly a bill of seventeen pounds sterling, belonging to the kirk-session, and that he could not recover the said bill." As this bill was afterwards renewed by the person who owed it, the kirk-session lost nothing by this depredation of the rebels.

The Lawries of Hill Cairnie are the oldest residents in the parish. They have lived upon the same farm for 118 years, and, from 1720 to 1834, they were members of the kirk-session. The first, Mr David Lawrie, was admitted into the session of Kilmany in 1720. His son, Mr David Lawrie, was elected an elder in 1766; and his son, Mr David Lawrie, (who died 1834,) in May the 5th 1814.

*I never saw the old illegible book of minutes about the year 1699-70. The earliest which was put in my possession was 1st of November 1696.

POPULATION.

The population of Kilmany has been decreasing for many years. This arises from the enlargement of the farms, from the want of ground for feuing, and from the introduction of machinery for bodily and manual labour. In the last Statistical Account it is stated, there are now living in the parish 396 males and 473 females. When the census was taken in 1821, the population was 751, 345 males and 406 females. In 1831 it had fallen to 707, 334 males and 373 females, and since that date it is as low as 685 or 690. From the time when the last Statistical Account was written, thrashing-mills have been universally introduced, and have led to a considerable diminution of the population; and individuals with large families naturally retire from a parish, where there are no manufactories, to towns and places where they can obtain employment for their children. The average of births for the last seven years has been 15, of marriages 3 ; of deaths it is not so easy to speak accurately, as some die in the parish who are buried elsewhere, and many of the dead from other parishes are buried in Kilmany churchyard. This will appear evident from the following statement: There have been buried at Kilmany, for the last seven years, 106 ; of this number only 45 have died in the parish. Those who died here, and were buried elsewhere, are not recorded in our register. I should think that twelve is a fair average of those who have died in the parish for the last seven years.

The average number of persons under 15 years	240
betwixt 15 and 20	203
30 and 50	159
50 and 70	68
70 and upwards	14
There are no nobleman in Kilmany parish.	.
Number of proprietors of land of yearly value, L. 50 and upwards	9
The number of unmarried men, bachelors, and widowers, above 50	11
Unmarried women upwards of 45	21
Number of families	137
of inhabited houses	137
of uninhabited	5

The inhabitants, from the profession which they follow, and from their temperate habits, are healthy and strong, and many of them reach to very advanced age. Since 1830, there have died eleven individuals, whose united ages amounted to 924 years ; the average age of each, 84.

From an early period, Kilmany has been an agricultural parish, and its population possessed of much natural talent, great industry, and Pious and amiable dispositions. Every clergyman who has laboured amongst them. has had good reason to bear testimony to their piety and correct conduct, and has received from them, many marks of affection and esteem. This amiable feature in their character, has hitherto been general.

INDUSTRY:- The number of males employed in agriculture is 120. They may be thus divided : proprietors farming their estates or part of them, 5; tenants, 12; cottars or agricultural married servants, 37; unmarried do., 66 ; total, 120. The industry of the parish in other respects may be estimated from the following statement: day labourers, 18 ; weavers, 10 ; wrights, 2 masters, workmen and apprentices, 11 ; sawyers, 5 ; smiths, 6 masters, workmen and apprentices, 4; publican, 1 ; toll-keeper, 1 ; tailor, 2 masters, apprentice 1 ; masons, 3; gardeners, 2 masters, workmen and apprentices, 4; grocers in a small way, 2 ; millers, 3, assistants, etc. 3; beadle, 1 ; shoemakers, 3 masters, workmen and apprentices, 6; ministers, 1 Established, 1 Secession; parochial schoolmaster 1, schoolmistresses, 2; butler, gamekeeper, etc. 5; retired, 3; total, 101.

There is no large manufactory in the parish. The weavers are employed at home work, and when this cannot be obtained, they are supplied with Osnaburgh, or other cloth, by the merchants of Dundee and Cupar; or by their agents in the country. In addition to the number who weave, mentioned above, there are several females who occupy themselves in this manner, during the winter. In summer, they generally give up this work when the farmers need their assistance.

The only branch of industry, except agriculture, which is carried on to any extent, is a saw-mill, which was some years ago erected by Mr Thomson of Charleton. It has been occupied, ever since it was built, by Mr William Malcolm, wright. During the course of the year, it is by him actively employed, and cuts down a considerable quantity of wood. Its power is not sufficiently strong for large trees, but it is admirably adapted for cutting paling, for preparing wood for sheep flakes, and for converting inferior timber into staves for herring barrels. Many thousands of these are annually sent from this mill to Leith, and other places on the Forth where herrings are cured.

PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

MARKET TOWN- MEANS of COMMUNICATION:-What is called the village of Kilmany consists of the cottars' houses of the two farms of the same name with those of the wright, smith,

shoemaker, weaver, and beadle ; and of a few more families. The market-town is Cupar, which is distant from the centre of the parish betwixt four and five miles. Although the roads are excellent, it enjoys few means of communication with the neighbouring towns and villages. There is no post nearer than Cupar or Newport, which is found in many cases to be very inconvenient, and no carrier passes this way to Dundee and Cupar. A great part of the necessaries of life must be sent for, to one or other of these places, which entails upon the inhabitants additional labour and expense. The parish is abundantly supplied with excellent bread, three or four times a-week, by carts from Cupar, Newport, and Leuchars. The length of the turnpike-road running through the valley is six miles. Originally there was a considerable deal of posting upon it, from Newport to Edinburgh, as this is the best and nearest line of road betwixt these places. But all the public coaches go round by Cupar, and since the starting of these conveyances, few post-chaises are seen in this district. There are eleven small bridges in the parish, eight of them are over the Motray, and all of them in good order.

ECCLESIASTICAL STATE:-The church is situated upon the beautiful rising ground, upon which the small village is placed. It commands a fine view of the surrounding country. The Motray runs below it, and washes the bank upon which it is built. It is not particularly well situated for the accommodation of the parish; as the most extensive and populous parts of it lie at a considerable distance from the church. This cannot now be avoided. As the parish is not extensive, the people in good weather can easily attend divine worship, from its most distant points. If they are unwilling to come so far, there are other churches connected with the Establishment nearer them, to which they can easily go. The greatest distance from the parish church, is about four and a half miles. It was built in 1768. It is of the plainest construction. The original expense of it, was under L. 150. From some repairs which it lately received, it is far from being uncomfortable. It can accommodate from 300 to 340 individuals. As the parish has diminished in population since it was erected, it is more than sufficiently large for the congregation. The greatest part of the area is divided amongst the different heritors, and is occupied by them, or by their tenants and servants; but the communion tables and the east gallery are free sittings, as nothing has been charged for them for many years. These were erected originally at the expense of the kirk-session, and were let out for the benefit of the poor.

The manse was built for Dr Chalmers in 1810. By his advice, the site of it was removed from the village to its present situation on the glebe. It is now about 400 paces to the west of the church. This change for many reasons was a desirable one. The old site with the garden, and small park below the church, do not now belong to the minister. They were exchanged in 1820, for land lying contiguous to the principal part of the glebe. The manse now stands by itself, in a fine park of ten acres, with an excellent approach to it, which the late site completely wanted. The manse and offices are in good repair, and are in every way suitable to the accommodation of the minister. The garden is surrounded with an excellent wall, five and a half feet high to the south, nine and a half to the east, north, and west ; it was built in 1820. The heritors allowed for this purpose L. 45; the present incumbent, for his own conveniency, gave an additional L. 10. It is now well stocked with fruit trees, although the soil is not very favourable for their growth ; and with an abundance of gooseberry, and currant bushes. The ground about the manse was laid out with great taste by Dr Chalmers. It remains very much in the state in which he left it.

There has been a dissenting chapel in the parish since 1762, The clergyman, I believe, is paid by the collections, and the Seat-rents ; his salary is about L. 100. He has, in addition, a good house, and an excellent garden. As the congregation is composed of the Dissenters of various parishes in the neighbourhood, I do not know the number which attends this chapel. The number of heads of families attending the Established Church is about 80 of communicants, 266 to 275.

EDUCATION:-There are three schools in the parish ; the parochial one, at Rathillet, the centre of the parish ; and two private ones, taught by females, at Hazleton of Mountquhanie, and at Kilmany. The two last are supported by the liberality of Mrs Gillespie of Kirkton, and Mrs Thomson of Charleton. Each teacher has a house, school-room, and garden, and L. 10 of salary; the rest of their living is composed of school-fees, which may amount to betwixt L. 5 and L. 10 per annum. These schools have been of great use in teaching the younger children, who are not able to go so far as the parish school ; and still more so, for giving to the girls in the parish and neighbourhood a knowledge of knitting, needle-work, and other branches of female education. In the parochial school, the ordinary branches of education are at present most ably taught by Mr William McGillivray. In addition to these, if required, he is prepared to teach practical mathematics, geography, and Latin. The fees are fixed by the heritors and minister, as follows : for English reading, 2s. per quarter; do. with writing per quarter, 2s. 6d ; these, with arithmetic, 3s. 6d. per quarter ; these, with English grammar and geography, 5s. per quarter; without geography, 4s. : and for the whole, with Latin, 10s. per quarter. The schoolmaster, like most of his brethren in country parishes, receives only three quarters per annum. He is at present ill accommodated, having only the legal allowance of two rooms ; and these are small and low in the ceiling ; but I have no doubt that this will be corrected by the liberality of the heritors, when a new school-room is built. He has an excellent garden; and as session and heritor's clerk, he has a salary of L. 3, 10s., the emoluments of which office, from marriages, births, and funerals may be, on an average, L. 2 more per annum. His school-fees may amount to L. 18 or L. 20 per annum. All the children are sent to school, and there is almost no person who cannot read; and a great part of the lower classes, can also write and keep accounts. From the central situation of the school, all the children in the parish can attend it, Who have reached the age of seven years. There is no need of additional schools.

POOR and PAROCHIAL FUNDS:-The poor of this parish are few in number, and are supported at a very trifling expense. There still exists amongst them that noble spirit, which spurns at public assistance, when, by their own exertions and economy, they can provide for themselves. We have, at present, cases amongst us where individuals have reached the utmost verge of human life ; with means bordering upon poverty, and by many, would be considered actually so, resolutely refusing the scanty supply which is given to those who are upon the kirk-session roll. The number who were assisted by the kirk-session last year were 14, of whom five only were regularly on the roll; the rest got occasional assistance. The whole sum given to the above poor, from January 1837 to January 1838, was L. 23, 11s. 5d. In addition to this, 15s. 6d. was given to a medical gentleman for advice; and perhaps L. 3 are still due to the schoolmaster, for poor scholars. In addition to this sum, David Gillespie, Esq. of Kirkton, gave me liberty last year, to

give coals to every person in the parish, who I thought stood in need of them ; and I was particularly requested by him, not to diminish the ordinary supply afforded to the poor, in consequence of his donation. Several families, who were in distress from accidental circumstances, were thus supplied with coals, who never received a farthing from the kirk-session. Call the average, L. 30: and this sum cannot be said to be extravagant, upon a rental of L. 8000 to L. 9000 per annum, although the heritors paid every farthing of it. But this they do not. 1st, The kirk-session has an heritable bond belonging to it of L. 200; the interest of which, although now reduced, goes for the support of the poor, and the other expenses of the kirk-session, which amount annually to L. 8, 7s. ; 2d, collections at the church doors, which amount to about L. 14; 3d, dues upon mortcloths, which may average from L. 2 to L. 2, 5s. : and dues upon marriages, which come to very little money; 4th, interest of a legacy of L. 45 left by the late David Gillespie, Esq. of Kirkton, for the benefit of the poor; and 5th, interest of the remains of a legacy of L. 34, 2s. 10d. left by the late John A. Thomson. Esq. of Charleton, to be expended upon clothing to needy and respectable individuals. Although the kirk-session had no other expenses, the funds are not sufficient of themselves to supply the poor, few as they are, and to pay the salaries above stated. In addition to these, there are school-fees for the children of people in distress, and there are accidental expenses, which, taken together, may amount annually from L. 3, 10s. to L. 4, 10s. To make up any such deficiency, the heritors were accustomed to assess themselves voluntarily, according to their valued rents. All that was required of them, Was a sum of L. 30 to L. 35 every alternate year. They thus kept the capital of the kirk-session entire, and ready to be advanced upon any emergency. But on a late occasion, a majority of heritors agreed not to contribute as they had hitherto done, until the legacy left to the kirk-session by Mr Gillespie was expended. The tendency of such proceeding, if carried farther, is to bring on a legal assessment, which will destroy here, as elsewhere, that independent and noble spirit, which spurns at parochial relief. The present incumbent, at least, has done all in his power to prevent this state of things.

INNS:- There is now only one public-house in the parish.

June 1838 (Rev Henry D. Cook)