

NUMBER XXI.

PARISH OF STRATHBLANE.

(COUNTY OF STIRLING.)

By the Rev. Mr GIBB.

Name.

THE parish of Strathblane takes its name from the river Blane, which rises in it, and runs through its whole extent. Blane is a contraction of two Gaelic words, signifying *warm river*. The literal interpretation of the word Strathblane, consequently is, “the valley of the warm river;” a name fitly appropriated to this parish, which from its situation, enjoys a peculiarly mild atmosphere. Lying on the south side of the Lennox hills, it is sheltered by them from the inclement winds of the north; while the reflection of the sun’s rays from a light sandy soil, produces an agreeable temperature of the air at all seasons.

Situation, Boundaries, &c.—Strathblane is situated in the northwest corner of Stirlingshire, and lies within the bounds of the commissariat of Glasgow. In ecclesiastical matters it belongs to the presbytery of Dumbarton, and synod of Glasgow and Ayr. It is bounded on the east, by the parish of Camp-

fic; on the south, by the parishes of Baldernock and Newkirkpatrick; and on the west and north, by the parish of Kilkearn. It lies 10 miles north from Glasgow, 14 east by south from Dunbarton, and 20 southwest from Stirling. Its form is an oblong square, 5 miles long, and 4 miles broad.

Soil, and face of the Country.—This parish may properly be distinguished into valley and moor grounds. The valley is bounded by high hills on the north, and by a rising ground on the south side of the river, which ascends about one third of the height of the opposite hills. This hanging ground on each side of the river, consists of a light quick soil, is well cultivated, and produces excellent crops. Toward the western extremity, the valley widens considerably; and the soil there, on the level grounds, is clay mixed with a rich earth, deposited from time to time, by the overflowing of the river. This soil is fit to carry heavy crops of any kind of grain.

The moor runs parallel to the valley, commencing at the brink of the rising ground on the south side of the river, and extending in an uneven surface, about a mile and a half in breadth. Here the ground descends into the parish of Newkirkpatrick, with a declivity similar to that with which it ascends from the Blane. A great proportion of this consists of heath; but in many places, particularly on the south border, and in the western extremity, it is now cultivated, and produces crops nearly as rich as those in the Strath. The soil here, in the parts susceptible of cultivation, is dry, light, and rocky; and from the return which it makes, when properly laboured and manured, gives great encouragement to the improver. Besides these moor and valley grounds, the hills on the north side of the parish afford most excellent pasture for black cattle and sheep.

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The general appearance of the country is agreeably picturesque. Coming from the south, the traveller at first ascends from the fertile fields of New-kirkpatrick, into what appears an extensive heath; but which he no sooner enters, than he finds it interspersed with cultivated fields, and here and there observes a lake of several acres. Descending into the valley, he is charmed with the verdure of the country, the mildness of the air, and the appearance of cheerfulness and plenty, which is displayed around. Several neat villas scattered along the bottom of the hills, and here and there a cascade precipitating its torrent from their sides, enliven and beautify the scene. In summer, the landscape is enriched and adorned by the luxuriant foliage of the woods with which the hills are skirted, and the whole receives an air of grandeur, from the abrupt precipices in which the hills terminate. Toward the west, the hill of Dumgoiack, on the Duntreath estate, presents a singular and striking appearance. Insulated in the middle of the valley, of a conical figure, and compleatly clothed with wood, it arrests the attention; whilst a shoulder of the opposite hill, projecting like the pedestal of an arch, directs the eye, as it were through an immense vista, to the plains below, when the whole prospect is bounded by the distant mountains on the side of Lochlomond.

Cultivation and Produce.—For many years past the farmers have paid considerable attention to the improvement of their lands; and perhaps the state of agriculture is nearly as far advanced as the nature of the soil will admit. Already inclosed, for the most part dry, and originally quick and fertile, it requires only to be manured and laboured, in order to produce plentifully. The manure chiefly used is lime, and the opportunity of getting it readily from the neighbouring parishes of Campsie and Baldernock, has caused it to be generally

rally adopted. The quantity laid on at once is but small, being 4 chalders per acre; but this is repeated with equal advantage, after two rotations of crops, or every 12th year. This fact has been ascertained by undoubted experiment. The crops generally raised, are oats, barley, and grafs-seeds. The usual rotation, is 2 years pasture, 2 crops of oats, 2 of hay, and then pasture again. The lime is spread upon the pasture grafs, a year previous to ploughing it up for oats. This gives it time to incorporate with the mould, and both improves the grafs, and meliorates the soil for a future crop, to a higher degree than when laid on in the same year in which the ground is ploughed. The grafs-seeds are sown with the second crop of oats, in the quantity of half a boll of rye-grafs seed, and from 4 to 6 pounds of clover seed to an acre. This course of cropping is uniformly adhered to, and is only varied, in as far as barley is partially introduced for the second crop of oats. As far as this can be done, it is certainly an improvement on the plan; but as barley only succeeds when the ground is well dunged, the sowing of it cannot be extended any farther than the quantity of that manure collected in the course of the year will admit.

This method of cropping may be thought too severe, especially the second crop of hay, which is very impoverishing. But as this article brings a good price, being usually sold at 6d per stone, the farmer depends a good deal upon it for his rent; and it yields ready money the second year, without any expence of seed or labour; an object worthy of being attended to.

Of late years, however, the farmer's hopes have in a great measure been frustrated in this respect, by the inattention of the seed merchants, who have supplied them with rye-grafs seed, which remains only one year in the ground. The first appearance of this annual seed, caused a good deal of alarm
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and disappointment, and various methods have been adopted, to remedy or supply the defect. Some by preserving and collecting the seed of such as remained the second year, acquired by degrees, a stock sufficient for their own supply. Others, by sowing an additional quantity of clover seed, secured at least, a good bulk of hay the second year, though inferior in quality to the rye-grass hay.

But the hope of an effectual and general relief is now afforded, by the public spirited proposals of the *Farmers Society* at Glasgow, who have lately taken the matter into consideration. This society (of which most of the farmers in this parish are members), consists of the most noted and experienced farmers in an extent of country of 15 or 20 miles round Glasgow. The exertions of so many men, eminent in their profession, promise to become of general utility. By a private subscription among themselves, they have already raised a considerable fund, from which, they give premiums to eminence in agricultural exertions or useful improvements. They also assist spirited members of their own body, by lending them money from their fund, toward carrying useful projects into execution. It has been proposed amongst them, to commission their own grass-seeds from the best foreign markets; by this plan if it shall be carried into execution, they will not only secure the best in quality, but also have a saving on the price. When imported to the general depot at Glasgow, each parish can conveniently get the quantity allotted to it conveyed home. It is by turning the attention of the inhabitants of a country to such useful and practical objects, that a nation may expect to become truly great.

Pease and beans have been found to thrive well in several farms, and one spirited farmer made lately an experiment of a wheat crop, which succeeded to his wish. From 2 acres, he reaped 32 bolls. The ground indeed was summer fallow-

ed, and richly dunged. This success would have encouraged him to continue the plan, but the scanty supply of dung prevented him. He therefore now substitutes a turnip crop for the summer fallow, and a barley crop for the wheat; and from an exact calculation, he finds he is a gainer by this latter method. If this practice should become general, it will certainly be more profitable than the method at present in use.

The following table contains the average quantity of grain and hay sown, and produced annually.

Annual Average of

	Bolls sown.	Product of each boll.	Total product.
Oats	486	7	3402
Barley	44	8	352
	Acres.	Stones.	Stones.
Hay	120	product 150 per ac.	18000

Grazing.—Agriculture, however, constitutes only one branch of the farmers employment in this parish. The rearing and feeding black cattle and sheep, occupy a considerable share of their attention. The excellent pasture afforded by the hills, which can never be turned to agricultural purposes, both compels and encourages their exertions in the grazing line.

In this branch, the stock of milk cows deserves to be first mentioned. This has been brought to a considerable degree of excellence, by the attention which has been given to procure bulls of a good kind, and by selecting the best and handsomest cows to breed from. Accordingly, the breed is much esteemed in the country toward the west and north, and the farmers find encouragement to rear as many as they can, to answer the demand that is made from that quarter. The cows reared, are sold when they first become pregnant, which

which is at 3 years old, and they then bring from L. 5 to L. 6 each.

Besides the milk cows or native stock, a considerable number of highland cows are fattened upon each farm. These are commonly bought in at the Michaelmas and Martinmas markets, and wintered upon the farm, with the assistance of a little fodder, from New-year's-day, till the middle of April. They are then fed during the following summer, and sold to the Glasgow and Paisley markets in autumn. At the time they are sold, they generally weigh from 18 to 24 stones of beef and tallow, which brings, at an average, 6s per stone.

The sheep stock consists of ewes, which are all of the short or black faced kind; which the farmers have taken considerable care to improve, by selecting the best rams, and supplying the defect of their stock, with the best and stoutest ewe lambs. In addition to this, they also buy in from time to time, good lambs from those parts of the country which are famed for keeping good stocks of sheep. The profits arising from the sheep stock, are chiefly derived from the wool and lambs. The smeared wool sells at 6s per stone, and white wool from 8s to 9s. The lambs bring at an average 6s each. A few of the worst ewes called *shotts*, are likewise sold every year about Martinmas.

The ewes are so managed, as to begin to produce their lambs about the 10th of April; the most proper season on high grounds. It sometimes happens, that a number of them have twins. When that is the case, the ewes are brought down to the low grounds, where the rich pasture enables them to nurse both. If any ewe happens to lose her lamb, she is confined in a house, with a twin lamb taken from another, for two nights; by which time, she becomes attached to it, and nurses it as her own. In the latter end of July, the lambs are weaned; when those selected for keeping up

the stock, are put to a separate part of the farm, where they are kept apart from their dams, till next summer. The rest are either sold for slaughter, or for stocking farms in other parts of the country.

In the month of November the whole stock is smeared; a practice which, although it is both expensive and troublesome, is found to be not only necessary, but beneficial. The salve, a mixture of tar and butter, kills the vermin with which sheep are infested, and makes the wool adhere closely to the animal. This contributes both to its comfort during the winter, and preserves a better fleece till the season of shearing, than what is then found on the white or unsmeared sheep. The wool also, though not of so fair a colour as the unsmeared, is yet of a better quality. These advantages attendant upon smearing, have been ascertained in the most satisfactory manner, by a comparative experiment lately made by a farmer in this place. He took 100 lambs of the same stock, and divided them equally; taking equal care in every respect of the two parcels. He smeared 50, and left 50 unsmeared. At the sheep shearing season, 4 fleeces of those that were smeared, weighed a stone; whereas, it took 7 fleeces of the unsmeared to produce the same weight. The quality too of this last was inferior, being coarse and matted. He persisted in the experiment for 5 years, and the older the sheep grew, the preference in favour of the smeared wool became still more decided; till at last the merchant could scarcely be prevailed upon to take the white wool at the same price with the smeared. The ewes also failed sooner than the others; so that he gave up the attempt, fully convinced of the propriety of smearing the wool stock.

The same enterprising spirit, however, which prompted the above experiment, induced him to try others, for reducing the expence of smearing. After repeated trials of fundry ingredients

redients mixed with the *tar* and *butter*, in order to reduce the quantity of these expensive articles, he found that butter-milk in a certain proportion, produced this effect. Thus, 2 pints of butter milk, added to 6 pints of tar, Scots measure, and 12 pounds Tron, of butter, will smear 4 sheep more than the same quantity of tar and butter by themselves. If the butter-milk be a week or two old, it is so much the better. It makes the tar and butter incorporate more closely, renders the salve firm, and draws much finer upon the sheep, than without it. Besides these advantages, the salve thus prepared, is fit for immediate use; whereas, without this ingredient, it requires to stand some days after it is made, before it can be used.

The horses kept in this parish, are entirely destined for the purposes of husbandry, and a very few are reared for sale.

A table is subjoined, shewing the numbers of each kind of cattle in the parish.

Horses kept for labour,	-	-	100
Do. reared annually,	-	-	26
Milk cows,	-	-	310
Cows rearing under 3 years old,	-	-	376
Cows fattened annually,	-	-	442
Sheep, consisting of ewes.	-	-	1200

This article ought not to be concluded, without taking notice of the laudable exertions of Archibald Edmonstone, an extensive grazier on the Duntreath estate, to introduce improvements in his line. Among many other attempts to this purpose, (to which allusions have oftener than once been already made in this account,) he has lately introduced a few sheep of the true Spanish breed into his farm. The only hazard of which he was apprehensive, was that the inclemen-

cy of the weather in winter would hurt them. Of this apprehension he has been most agreeably relieved. They have already stood two winters, as well as the rest of his stock; and one of them was the most severe, that has been known for many seasons. The only precaution which he used, was to keep them on his low grounds during winter; but in summer, they are fond of feeding on the tops of the hills, and thrive there as well as the native breed. Their lambs are equally hardy as themselves, and promise to become a great acquisition to the country; the wool being much superior to any ever known in this place. Each ewe produced L. 4, and the ram L. 5, which brought 3s 6d per pound, and was even at that price sold much under value.

Last year he crossed the breed with the Spanish ram and Scots ewes; and also with a Scots ram, and the Spanish ewes; and this experiment has succeeded beyond expectation. The lambs thus generated, have wool little or nothing inferior to the old Spanish sheep, and they may be expected to be even hardier than these, as being inured to the climate from their birth. In short, there is not a doubt, if he had a sufficient extent of low ground to winter a large stock upon, that Mr Edmonstone would push this experiment to a degree which might prove highly beneficial to himself, to his landlord, and, *as setting an useful example, to the whole country.*

In autumn last, he also procured a few Cheviot ewes, which he has crossed with his Spanish ram. It is expected this will produce a hardy breed, and improve the wool to a still greater degree of fineness, than the crossing with the common Scots ewes; but on the success of this experiment, time must be left to decide.

Manufactures.—Although this parish cannot boast of extensive establishments in manufactures, yet lying in the vicinity

nity of the city of Glasgow, a portion of that spirit of enterprise, which possesses all ranks there, has diffused itself hither. Three bleachfields have lately been erected, which employ a considerable number of persons. These belong to companies stationed at Glasgow, who send their goods here to be bleached. Nothing can excel the softness and pureness of the water for this purpose, being broken by rushing from the hills and precipices, and filtered through beds of the cleanest sand. The ground also on the banks of the river, affords the most favourable situations for spreading cloth. Consisting of a warm sandy soil, it contributes towards whitening and clearing the goods sooner, and to a more exquisite pureness, than can be done where the soil below is of a clayish texture. The chief employment of one field is bleaching muffs and pullicates. The other two belonging to inkle factories in Glasgow, are wholly confined to bleaching tapes and yarn.

Mechanics.—Of these weavers constitute the greatest proportion, as besides the employment they get from the country people, they are supplied with abundance of work from the manufacturing companies in Glasgow. There are about 22 looms employed in this manner; besides 10 inkle looms lately set to work, at one of the bleachfields above mentioned. Of other tradesmen, there are 7 taylors, 3 shoemakers, 3 hosiers, 3 carpenters, and 1 smith.

Population.—There being a great many feuars or small heritors, who reside upon and labour their own lands, this parish has on that account been less subject to fluctuation in its inhabitants, than might otherwise have happened. It has however experienced some changes in this respect. A considerable diminution of numbers has been produced, within the last 20 or 30 years, by the greater proprietors letting out
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their lands in large farms, which exclude cottagers. On the other hand, an accession of 60 or 70, has lately been obtained by the persons employed at the bleachfields.

The population as returned to Dr Webster, in 1755, was 797. In this present year 1795, it is found by an actual enumeration, to be 620 souls.

Of these there are,

Under 10 years of age,—140

From 10 to 20 years,—125

—— 20 to 50 - —247

—— 50 to 70 - —68

—— 70 to 100 - —40

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Total 620

Diminution since 1755, 177

Average of deaths *per annum*, - 7

—— of births, - 13

—— of marriages, - 5

Poor.—The poor are supported by the weekly collections at the church, and the interest of a fund amounting to L. 220, accumulated by charitable donations from individuals, having property or interest in the parish. There are at present 7 persons on the parish-roll; 5 of whom receive 5s monthly, and the other 2, being bed-ridden, receive 10s monthly. Besides this allowance, they are supplied with coals in the winter, and for some of them, their house rent is paid. Several others, who have not hitherto been admitted on the roll, receive such occasional assistance, as their necessity requires. These distributions are managed by the Kirk Session, without any

any expence to the fund. To their discretion also, is left the apportioning each poor person's supply, and they keep regular books for the inspection of the heritors. By this management, the poor are kept from public begging, a nuisance wherever it prevails; and with which this parish, notwithstanding it thus supports its own poor, is greatly infested by mendicants from other parts.

Heritors.—The superiority of this parish is vested in his Grace the Duke of Montrose and Sir Archibald Edmonstone Baronet of Duntreath; whose ancestors, at one time, also possessed the whole property of it. In the beginning of last century, that part of it which belonged to the estates of Montrose was chiefly feued out; the castle of Mugdock, and the park adjoining, being alone retained in the family. The estate of Duntreath, formerly one of the greater baronies, in right whereof the proprietors sat in Parliament without election, still constitutes about a third part of the parish. The ancestors of this family, were twice allied to the Royal Family of Scotland. Their last marriage into it was between Sir William Edmonstone, Baronet of Duntreath, and Mary Countess of Angus, daughter of Robert III. and sister to James I. This Princess lies buried in Strathblane church. The present Sir Archibald is lineally descended from both alliances.

There are 9 other heritors, who possess property in the parish, from L. 100 to L. 250 each; besides 15 of smaller note, who reside on, and farm their own lands. The whole rental of the parish, amounts to L. 2500.

Church, &c.—The church is a mean building, erected in the beginning of the present century; and having never been lathed or plaistered, the bare walls and roof without
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cieling, present a very sorry appearance for a place of worship.

The stipend hitherto has been 85 bolls of oat-meal, and L. 27 : 7 : 11 sterling in money. A new decret of modification was obtained at the instance of the present incumbent, before the Teind Court, in 1793, converting the money into grain; which, when allocated, will augment the value of the *living* to L. 130. His Grace the Duke of Montrose is patron.

Roads, &c.—This parish is intersected with good roads in every direction. Two turnpikes run through it from south to north, in parallel lines, at 2 miles distance from each other. The one leads from Glasgow to Balfron, and a little beyond that village, joins the great military road between Stirling and Dumbarton, at the 17th mile-stone from Stirling. The other line leads from Glasgow to Drymen, where it also joins the military road, at the 11th mile from Dumbarton. Besides these roads, which intersect the parish at right angles, there is another which cuts it diagonally, from southeast to northwest, forming a junction between the Edinburgh road near Kilsyth, and the above-mentioned military road at Drymen bridge. The western part of this line, which was formerly impassible, is just now converted into an excellent turnpike road. If the bridge over the Leven at the mouth of Lochlomond, which is at present in contemplation, be built, the straight road from the west highlands to Edinburgh, will run through Strathblane, thereby avoiding the compass by Stirling on the one hand, and by Glasgow on the other. To these advantages, it will add that of being more level, there being no sensible ascent from the Leven, to Kilsyth. All these roads have received very material improvements within the last 6 years. From being so steep and rugged,
that

that a horse could not draw half a load upon them, they are now rendered smooth and level, so that a carriage of any weight may pass with ease. This improvement we owe to Robert Dunmore of Ballendalloch Esqr, the original mover of it; a gentleman to whose public spirited exertions this district of country stands indebted for many real and permanent advantages.

There are many bridges over the streams which fall from the mountains; but none of any note. They all consist of π arch, of about 12 feet span. Of these, there are 7 within the parish, which render the communication easy and safe at all times.

Wells, Lakes, &c.—The hills, which form the northern boundary of the parish, constitute part of that range anciently known by the name of “the Lennox hills.” In former times, the noble family of that name had extensive possessions in this part of the country; and the district itself was denominated Lennox. The shire itself is now partitioned between the counties of Dumbarton and Stirling; but the range of hills will transmit the name to posterity.

The “Lennox hills” reach from Dumbarton to Stirling, beyond which the range is continued from the Forth to the Tay, under the name of the Ochils. Throughout the whole, stupendous piles of basaltic rocks are found. In Fintry, which lies in the midst of this range, about 8 miles eastward, a most magnificent colonade of these pillars presents itself; of which a particular description is given in the Statistical Account of that parish. In this parish, the front of a precipice for the space of a furlong is lined with stately columns of the same kind. They consist of 4, 5, and 6 sides, are from 2 to 3 feet in diameter, and 30 feet high. They rise from the horizon with a little inclination from the perpendicular,

and some of them are apparently bent in a segment of a curve line.

The highest hill in the parish is the *Earl's seat*, elevated above the rest of the range, with a conical top. Here the Blane has its source, whence it runs in a southwest direction for 3 miles, and is then precipitated from the south side of the hill, over several very high falls. The most remarkable of these is the *spout of Ballagan*, a cascade of 70 feet. This, when the river is swelled, puts on a very grand appearance. Leaving the spout, the Blane turns due west; when after running 8 miles in this direction, it loses itself in the Endrick, which falls into Lochlomond. It may here be observed, that the Blane, with the whole district through which it runs, has been omitted to be marked in Ainslie's map of Scotland.

At the spout of Ballagan a very remarkable section of the hill is presented. The side of it, cut perpendicularly by the water, discovers no fewer than 192 alternate strata of earth and lime-stone. Near the bottom of the section are found several thin strata of alabaster of the purest white. There were found also near the same place, among the rubbish thrown up by the river in a late inundation, some fragments of antimony, which when tried by a chemical process, turned out to be very rich specimens. The source however, whence these were dug, has not been discovered. If it shall be found, it may probably prove a valuable mine.

There are 6 lakes in the parish, the largest of which does not exceed half a mile in length, and a quarter of a mile in breadth. These lie in the moor-land part of the parish, and contribute to render that a cheerful prospect, which would otherwise be bleak and dull. They abound with pike, perch, and trout. They are also frequented by wild ducks, and other aquatic fowls. In the Blane likewise, there are
 plenty

plenty of small and some large trout; and salmon make their way up in considerable numbers, at spawning time.

Buildings.—The castles of Mugdock and Duntreath, especially the former, have been anciently places of considerable strength. There is no tradition concerning the time when they were built; nor do they bear any inscription from which that can be ascertained. Their construction, however, determines them to have been built about the same time, and for the like purpose, with many others of the kind in Scotland, viz. to defend the chieftains who possessed them from the sudden incursions of a hostile or enraged neighbour. The castle of Mugdock seems to have been a regular fortification. Covered on the east and north by a lake, the waters of which were drawn around it by a ditch, whereof the scite is still apparent; it must have been inaccessible to any force, which could be brought against it in those days. The square tower which is still entire, has something peculiar in its construction. After rising to the height of the outer wall, the west and south sides of it spread so as to form an obtuse angle at the corner, over the great arched gate-way. This would appear to have been done with a view of more easily observing from within the motions of an assailant. By this construction also, missile weapons might be discharged from both those sides of the tower, upon an enemy approaching the gate.

Opposite to this tower, at the distance of 300 yards, is heard a very extraordinary echo. It repeats any sentence of 6 syllables, in the exact tone, and with the very accent, in which it is uttered; waiting deliberately till the sentence is finished, before it begins; and it will reverberate even a whisper.

Trees.—Two oak trees adjoining to the public road at Blarquosh, in the western extremity of the parish, attract the notice of passengers, as being unusually large in this part of the country. The trunk of the largest, measures 15 feet in circumference, and its branches form the radii of a circle 30 yards in diameter. As the public road passes underneath it, it falls within the notice of every traveller. The other grows near it, and though not quite so large, is a more beautiful tree, having a taller trunk, and being more closely covered with foliage.

Inundations.—Owing to the vicinity of the hills which attract the clouds, the Blane is frequently subject to sudden swellings. It has however, only risen twice to an alarming height, within the memory of persons now living. About 60 years ago, a water spout is said to have burst at its source; which poured such a torrent from the hill, as threatened unavoidable destruction to the plains below. Happily however, as the Blane falls into the valley, at a place whence it declines to both the east and west, the waters, bursting from their accustomed channel, were discharged eastward. By this circumstance, the country was saved at that time, from the effects of the deluge. The waters turning in this direction, where the valley is wide and level, they stagnated upon it. Here also, they could do little damage, the ground toward the east for 2 miles being marshy.

The accounts, however, which old people gave of the magnitude of that inundation, were such as appeared fabulous; till they were again formidably exemplified, during a thunder storm on the 13th of August last, 1795. About 8 o'clock on the evening of that day, the clouds which during the afternoon had hung in threatening aspect around the skirts of the horizon, were condensed above the Earl's seat. Here they
burst,

burst, and fell, as was evident from the effects, in entire sheets. The spout of Ballagan appeared as an opening, whence the bowels of the mountain were issuing in water: reaching the plain, the torrent burst the banks of the river on each side, and discharged itself in nearly equal quantities to the east and west. That which ran west, tore up every thing before it. Corn fields were laid waste. Oats, barley, and potatoes, were destroyed to a great amount. Much damage was done to the bleachfields below. It carried stones of 3 tons weight a considerable way into the open field. At one place, it forced a passage for itself along the public road, which it tore up like the channel of a river. In short, it presented such a scene of devastation, as must appear incredible to those who have not seen it. It is computed, that there was at least 6 times the quantity of water ever seen in the river, during the greatest usual floods; and had it not been for the circumstance of a part being discharged to the east, it would have swept the houses situated on its banks before it. It lasted 4 hours, during which time, the thunder and lightning were tremendous.

Historical Anecdotes.—The name of Rob Roy M'Gregor, a famous Highland free-booter, is familiar to every inhabitant of this part of Scotland. The depredations which he and his descendants committed are still related with wonder. The following copy of an order of the Justices of the Peace, met in quarter session at Stirling, a little after the middle of last century, will show the manner in which he held the country under contribution. It is taken verbatim from the original manuscript, sent at that time to be published at the kirk of Strathblane.

“ AT

“ AT Stirling, in ane Quarter Session, held be the Jus-
 “ tices of his Highness Peace, upon the 3d day Febru-
 “ ary, 1658—9. The Laird of Touch being Chyrf-
 “ man.

“ Upon reading of ane petition given in be Captaine M'Gre-
 “ gor, makand mention that severall heritors and inhabitants
 “ of the paroches of Campsie, Dennie, Baldernock, Stra-
 “ blane, Killearn, Gargunnoch, and uthers within the sher-
 “ rifdom of Stirling, did agrie with him to oversee and pre-
 “ serve thair houses, goods, and geir, frae oppressioun, and
 “ accordinglie did pay him; and now that sum persones delay
 “ to maik payment according to aggriement and use of pay-
 “ ment; thairfore it is ordered, that all heritors and inhabi-
 “ tants of the paroches aforesaid, maik payment to the said
 “ Captaine M'Gregor, of thair proportionnes, for his said
 “ service, till the first of February last past, without delay.
 “ All constables in the severall paroches, are heirby comman-
 “ dit to see this order put in executionne, as they fall answer
 “ the contrair. It is also heirby declared, that all who have
 “ been ingadgit in payment, sal be liberat after such tyme
 “ that they goe to Captaine M'Gregor, and declare to
 “ him, that they are not to expect any service frae him,
 “ or he to expect any payment frae them. Just copie ex-
 “ tracted be

“ JAMES STIRLING, Clk. of the Peace.”

“ FOR Archibald Edmonstoune, Bailzie of Duntreath, to
 “ be published at the Kirk of Strablane.”

It is to be observed, that the inhabitants of the country
 were obliged to enter into such engagements with him, to se-
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cure them against the depredations of a banditti employed by himself to plunder. And as he possessed power enough to overawe even justice itself, it is not to be wondered at, that he obtained such an order in his own behalf. Such an incident should teach us to set a high value upon the happy privileges which we enjoy under a mild and safe government.

About 3 years ago, a number of old coins were found in this parish, inclosed in a log of wood. They consisted of crowns, half crowns, and shillings of Elizabeth, James I. of England, and Charles I. A few gold coins were also found amongst them, and some Dutch ducatoons; the value of the whole might amount to L. 40 sterling. The log was about a foot and a half square. A small triangular opening was cut into the surface of one of the sides; by this aperture, the log had been excavated, and the treasure deposited. It was then closed up with a piece of wood, neatly fitted to the place, and fastened with wooden pegs. As none of the coins bear a later date than the reign of Charles I. they must have been concealed during the troubles which preceded or succeeded the death of that monarch.

The history of the log itself is somewhat singular. It can be traced back for 40 years. At that time, it is remembered to have served as a prop to the end of a bench in a school-house, near the church. Afterwards, it was used as a play thing by children, who amused themselves with carrying it to the top of a declivity, whence it rolled to the bottom. It then lay many years on the wall of the church-yard. At last, it was appropriated by a crazy old woman, a pauper, who lived in a hut by herself. She used it as a seat for above a dozen of years. She dying, a neighbour was employed to wash the clothes that were found in her house. As fuel was scarce, the log was laid on the fire to heat water for that purpose; it not burning quickly, the washer woman took it off,
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and proceeded to cleave it with a hatchet. At the first stroke, the treasure came out and was secured by the woman, who perceiving the value, wished to conceal it. In a few days however, it was divulged. But the woman's husband, who was a worthless fellow, got hold of it, and decamped with the whole amount; a few pieces excepted, which he had previously sold. He has not since been seen in the country, and has left his wife to support 5 children by her own industry.

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