

NUMBER VI.

PARISH OF TRANENT.

(County and Presbytery of Haddington.—Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale.)

By the Reverend Mr HUGH CUNYNGHAME.

Name, Extent, &c.

TRANENT is generally supposed to be a corruption of Trinity; and the form of the church is alledged as a proof of the derivation *.

This parish is bounded by the Frith of Forth on the N.; is about 6 miles in length, from N. E. to S. W.; and its greatest breadth is 3 miles. The great east road runs through the town, and divides the parish into nearly two equal parts. The land towards the sea is inferior in quality to none in Scotland, renting generally from 40s. to 50s. *per acre*, the^a

* In the charters of St David to the Abbey of Holyroodhouse, it appears the name of this parish was formerly *Travernent*; for mention is made of one *Thoraldus de Travernent*, i. e. *Tranent*. Admitting this, the idea of Trinity is destroyed; and reference seems rather, according to the Latin, to be had to sailing, which corresponds with a tradition still extant in the opposite coast of Fife, that a party of Danes once landed on their shore, but were suddenly obliged to seek refuge in their boats, and put to sea. The cry of the exulting natives was *Tranent, or Travernent, Let them sail over, or right across.* Accordingly, they landed in this parish, from which circumstance it had the name.

a few fetch more. The land to the S. of the post road, though the greatest part of it be of a good quality, lets at a rate considerably lower. The whole of the parish is arable. There are, however, upwards of 100 acres of common, and a considerable portion of link ground, still in a state of nature. Improved muir lets at 15 s. and 20 s. *per* acre; inclosed and cultured links at 36 s. and 40 s. The high rent of these lands is owing to the peculiar advantages of their situation. The face of the country is remarkably pleasant, rising by a gentle ascent from the sea to the southermost extremity of the parish. The town of Tranent commands an extensive view of the adjacent country, the Frith of Forth, and the opposite shore*.

Property and Agriculture.—The parish is divided amongst 9 greater, and nearly double that number of smaller, proprietors. Three of the first either statedly or occasionally reside, and most of the latter. The valued rent of the parish exceeds 10,900 l. Scotch; and the real rent, inclusive of houses and gardens, 6000 l. Sterling †. There are in the parish 3 farmers who rent above 300 l.—5 above 200 l.—4 above 100 l.—8 above 50 l.—and 17 above 20,—besides a great number possessing from 40 to 5 acres, or under.

Agriculture

* The climate is exceedingly good, and the air healthy and dry. The town of Tranent has long been reputed particularly healthy. Intermittent fevers, in particular, are seldom known. Inoculation being little practised, the small-pox is frequent. The year 1792 is, however, an exception to the general healthiness of the place. An epidemical fever, of a putrid nature, prevailed upwards of 10 months, and carried off a great number in the prime of life.

† Houses and gardens were rated a few years ago at 425 l. 8 s. 9 d. Deducting this from the 6000 l. the remainder, 5575 l. will be nearly the rent of the land.

Agriculture in this parish is, in general, in the same flourishing state that characterises East Lothian at large. The great proportion of acres possessed by people who take land from necessity and convenience, makes the proper management of it but a secondary object.

To give an idea of the quantity of each species of crop at an average, a statement of the different sowings for 1791, and the supposed produce, is annexed.

	<i>Acres.</i>	<i>Produce</i>	<i>Value.</i>	<i>Total Value</i>
		<i>per acre:</i>		<i>L. s.</i>
Wheat	650	7 bolls	at 21 s.	4777 10
Barley	430	6 ditto	at 18 s.	2322 0
Oats	741	6 ditto	at 13 s.	2889 18
Pease & beans	312	7 ditto	at 12 s.	1318 0
Potatoes	35	L. 8	-	280 0
Grass feed	394	200 stones	at 4 d.	1313 6
Pasture	423			
Fallow	346			
			Total	L. 12,900 14

Total acres 3331 exclusive of roads, planting, and common.

No value is put upon 423 acres of pasture. The quantity of turnips raised here is trifling; and no lint is sown but for private use. If for these articles, a sum, not exceeding 400 l. is added to the preceding table, the total amount, 13,300 l. will be nearly the annual produce of the parish. The late invention of threshing-mills seems to have met with the approbation of the farmers, there being already 4 of them in the parish.

Commerce, Fisheries, Manufactures, &c.—The sea coast, which is perfectly flat and sandy, excepting the rocky ground where the villages of Cockenzie and Port Seton are founded, forms

forms the boundary of the parish for nearly 2 miles. There is one small harbour at Port Seton, which, previous to the Union, was a place of considerable resort, being the nearest port to Prestonpans, whose merchants had upwards of 20 vessels belonging to them. At present, the shipping is confined to a few east country and coasting vessels. The imports are timber and iron, and sometimes corn and malt, for the accommodation of neighbouring distilleries. The chief, if not the only export, is salt. The shore-dues seldom exceed 30*l*.

A manufacture of great salt, of a very particular fine quality, was established here a few years ago by Dr Schwediaur; but, from various circumstances, the scheme totally failed. In Cockenzie, which connects with this village, the manufacture of common salt is carried on to great advantage and extent, 10 or 11 pans being constantly at work. The internal resource of coal which the proprietor enjoys, gives a decided superiority over every other person, who must either import his coals, or purchase them from the nearest coal-master.

Off the coast, there is a considerable oyster-scalp; but, of late years, the oysters have become very scarce. This must be attributed to over-dragging several years ago, to supply English vessels from Milton, Lee, and other places. Before this, a boat would sometimes drag 9000 a day, which, at 5*d*. 6*d*. and 7*d*. a hundred, afforded a handsome income to the crew. The common average lay betwixt 4000 and 7000. At present, 700 or 800 are reckoned a good day's work, which, though now sold indiscriminately at 15*d*. *per* hundred, afford but a scanty livelihood when divided amongst 5 men, including a double deal to the owner of the boat. There are at present 10 boats, belonging to Cockenzie and Port Seton, engaged in this fishing. Upwards of 20,000
oysters

oysters go regularly each season to the Glasgow market *. Few or no white fish have been taken off the coast for several years. Haddocks, in particular, have become a great rarity. Whittings and flounders, at present, sell on the shore at 2 s. 6 d. *per* scull, (containing about 6 or 7 dozen), which, a few years ago, would not have brought above one third of that price.

The most considerable distillery now in Scotland, belonging to Aitchison, Brown, and Co. is carried on at St Clements Wells, in this parish. From this work alone, Government receives about 4000 l. of revenue yearly. There was originally a small still used here; but, by the spirited exertions of the present Company, it has attained to its present flourishing state. Coal is conveniently situated in a park adjoining to the work. The seam is about 2 feet thick, at the depth only of 15 fathoms, and the coal cost the work at the rate of 5 s. *per* ton. 900 Cattle, and 300 swine, are annually fed at the work. In these different branches, the feeding of cattle, distilling, and working of coal, about 120 hands are employed.

At Cockenzie is an annual fair, held the first Thursday of November, which, like most of the country fairs, owing to the extension of commerce, is much on the decline. Formerly, cattle were brought to this market; now, undressed lint of home growth is the chief article of traffic, and seldom exceeds the price of 2 s. *per* stone. In Tranent is a good butcher market twice a week, from which Prestonpans, Ormiston, and the adjacent country, are principally supplied. In 1791, about 250 oxen, 70 calves, and 1350 sheep and lambs,

* The demand from Glasgow has not been so great this year; but some of the boats have found a ready market, and good price, at Newcastle, to which they have performed several trips during the harvest months.

lamb, were killed by the different butchers. There is here also a considerable tannery, and a small manufacture of locks and nails. A good many looms are employed in the parish, but chiefly for private use, though a few do what is called factory work. One only weaves mullin.

Collieries.—Besides the small seam of coal already mentioned, wrought for the supply of the distillery, there are other 3 collieries in the parish, Tranent, Elphinston, and Birsley. The best seam is that of Elphinston, being no less than 9 feet thick, at the depth of 32 and 25 fathoms, according to the ascent and descent of the surface. Below this is a seam about 5 feet thick; and there are different small strata above, at present not worth the working.

		Tons.	Cwt.
Produce of this colliery in 1790	7	6053	15
in 1791	-	8348	10

It is reckoned, that at these different collieries, including bearers, overseers, gin-men, and bank-men, about 150 hands are employed; and, if the great number of cinder-burners are taken into the account, it is evident that a considerable proportion of the parishioners either belong to, or are connected with, the collieries. The influence they have in forming the manners of the lower classes, is of course considerable; and, according to their frugal or extravagant way of life, the poor's funds are more or less burdened.

Ecclesiastical State.—The church is a very ancient, incommensurable, and unhealthy fabric. No account of its antiquity is any where to be found; but most people skilled in architecture have little hesitation in pronouncing it 500 or 600 years old. The outward form resembles 3 oblong buildings, placed sideways, the middle being considerably longer at each end

end than the other two. The communication within is by arches of different forms and sizes. A square tower rises from the centre of the whole, supported by the side walls of the middle building, and by two cross arches. The roof is vaulted, and covered with stone. The windows are few, and ill constructed; and, in a dark and gloomy day, serve only to make "darkness visible." Either the church has originally been sunk below the surface of the ground, or the surrounding burying-ground has been much heightened by the immense number of bodies interred in it; for the access to the pulpit is by a descent of 4 steps from the church-yard.

The manse is large, and well executed, and was built in 1781. The stipend consists of 27 bolls of wheat, 26 bolls of barley, 43 bolls of oats, 500 l. Scotch, including 60 l. for communion elements, besides a glebe of nearly 6 acres, and somewhat more than an acre of muir, the minister's proportion of the division of a commonry. The King is patron, in consequence of the attainder of the Earl of Wintoun. The present incumbents are, the Reverend Mr Charles Cunningham, settled in 1740, and the Reverend Hugh Cunynghame, ordained assistant and successor in 1784. Besides the two established clergymen, there is a minister of the Burgher persuasion*.

Population

* *Schools.*—The salary of the parish schoolmaster is only 7 l. and some odd shillings; but what with the dues arising from the session and heritors clerkships, from the offices of precentor, collector of road-money and poor's rates, and the profits of the school, the amount is considerable. The present master is burdened with an annuity of 20 l. to his predecessor, who resigned. The heritors, sensible of the inconvenience and hardship of the bargain to a young man of merit, with a rising family, generously and voluntarily added 5 l. *per annum* to the salary, built a new school, and fitted up the master's house in a manner commodious for the reception of boarders. The numbers educated

Population Table.

Number of souls in the	Children under 8	-	197
whole parish in 1755	Widowers	-	31
_____ in 1783	Widows	-	58
Males above 8	Families of 1 person each		54
Females ditto	_____ of above 1 each		271
Children under 8	Number of souls in the		
Widowers	whole parish in 1791		2732*
Widows	Under 8 years of age,		
Families of 1 person each	about		500
_____ of above 1 each	Under 12		610
Of these in the village of	In Tranent		1380
Tranent	Cockenzie and Port Se-		
Males above 8	ton		430
Females ditto	Seton		86
			Relief

at the parish school may be from 60 to 80. School wages are paid weekly, which is a bar to the regular attendance of the children; for many parents, having occasion for their children at home in the beginning of a week, through a mistaken and ill-directed parsimony, keep them from school all the rest of it.

There are at present 7 other schools in the parish, 4 of which are taught by men, the remaining three by women. None of them have any salary except one, voluntarily paid by the proprietors of the ground and the residing partner at St Clements W. Hs. About 70 scholars attend it in summer. At the different schools in the parish, in summer 1791, about 220 scholars were taught. There are besides, two Sabbath evening catechetical exercises; one supported by an annual collection at the church-doors, the other upon the establishment of the Society in Scotland for promoting religious knowledge amongst the poor.

* The increase of population betwixt 1783 and 1791 was owing to the sale of the estates of the York Buildings Company in this parish, the purchasers thereof feuing small spots for houses and gardens; to the enlargement of a distillery; and to a new colliery.

Relief and Meadow Mill	115	Brewers	4
Elphinstone	206	Butchers	7
Wester Falside	145	Smiths	13
St Clements Wells	74	Wheelwright	1
Rest of the parish	296	Barbers	2
Clergymen	3	Stocking-weavers	3
Surgeons	2	Slaters	2
Shopkeepers	12	Sadler	1
Wrights	25	Saltmakers	22
Masons	15	Fishermen	50
Weavers	40	Licensed alehouses	30
Shoemakers	62	Burgher Seceders	110
Tailors	12	Antiburgher ditto	8
Coopers	2	Relief ditto	1
Tanners	4	Episcopalians	10*
Bakers	12		

Poor.

* A very accurate register was kept of the births and burials of the parishioners until the year 1784, when the tax upon recording them was imposed, which many persons refused to pay, and therefore omitted making any entry. The record, consequently, became imperfect in this, as well as in many other parishes in Scotland.

The register before mentioned contains all the deaths of parishioners, though buried in a different parish, all included in the following tables: it likewise contains the deaths of a considerable number dying in adjacent parishes, and buried in Tranent, and children at nurse sent from other places; but these are not included in the tables.

TABLE

Poor.—Betwixt 30 and 40 pensioners are generally supported, (at present the number is under 30), besides occasional poor*. The poor's funds arise

From collections at the church-doors	-	-	L. 30
Mort-cloths and hearse	-	-	15
Seat-rents in the church	-	-	3
An annuity from Dr Schaw's Hospital, granted in consideration of the minister's accepting of the trust specified in his will	-	-	2
Annualrent of 100 l. bequeathed by the late Lord Bankton, at 4 per cent.	-	-	4
An yearly assessment of 52 l. whereof the tenants pay the one half, but of which seldom more than 46 l. is made effectual	-	-	46
		Total	L. 100
			Fines

TABLE I. showing the number of Deaths, and at what ages, in the parish of Tranent, from 1755 to 1784, a period of 30 years, distinguishing males and females.

	Males.	Fem.		Males.	Fem.
Under 1	101	110	Brought over	587	564
Betwixt 1 & 2	85	71	Betwixt 65 & 70	42	57
2 & 3	53	35	70 & 75	49	61
3 & 4	44	23	75 & 80	45	57
4 & 5	20	18	80 & 85	50	56
5 & 10	41	26	85 & 90	17	21
10 & 20	31	29	Aged 91	1	4
20 & 25	28	16	94	1	1
25 & 30	17	19	95	1	0
30 & 40	37	37	96	0	2
40 & 50	31	39	98	1	1
50 & 60	60	79	99	0	1
60 & 65	39	62	102	0	1
Carried over	587	564	Total	794	826

Births.

* In 1782 and 1783, the number was above 60.

Fines for irregular marriages, exactions for private baptisms, marriages, &c. go for private uses, for which no funds are appropriated;

	<i>Males.</i>	<i>Fem.</i>
Births in the same period of 30 years	1094	1055
Deduct deaths	794	826
Difference, mostly emigrated	300	229

TABLE II. showing the probability of the duration of life, at all ages, among males and females, in the parish of Tranent, taken from the foregoing abstract of deaths for a period of 30 years, the deaths taken as a radix.

Age.	Males.	Deaths.	Fem.	Deaths.	Age.	Males.	Deaths.	Fem.	Deaths.
0	794	101	826	110	25	391	4	498	4
1	693	85	716	71	26	387	4	494	4
2	608	53	645	35	27	383	3	490	4
3	555	44	610	23	28	380	3	486	4
4	511	20	587	18	29	377	3	482	3
5	491	14	569	12	30	374	3	479	3
6	477	10	557	6	31	371	4	476	3
7	467	8	551	4	32	367	4	473	3
8	459	6	547	2	33	363	4	470	3
9	453	3	545	2	34	359	4	467	4
10	450	3	543	2	35	355	4	463	4
11	447	3	541	3	36	351	4	459	4
12	444	3	538	3	37	347	4	455	4
13	441	3	535	3	38	343	3	451	4
14	438	3	532	3	39	340	3	447	4
15	435	3	529	3	40	337	3	443	4
16	432	3	526	3	41	334	3	439	4
17	429	3	523	3	42	331	3	435	4
18	426	3	520	3	43	328	3	431	4
19	423	4	517	3	44	325	3	427	4
20	419	5	514	3	45	322	3	423	4
21	414	6	511	3	46	319	3	419	4
22	408	6	508	3	47	316	3	415	4
23	402	6	505	3	48	313	3	411	4
24	396	5	502	4	49	310	4	407	4

Age

appropriated; such as paying an assistant to the parish schoolmaster, transporting cripples, &c.

Expenditure

Age.	Males.	Deaths.	Fem.	Deaths.	Age.	Males.	Deaths.	Fem.	Deaths.
50	306	5	403	5	74	126	10	156	12
51	301	5	398	6	75	116	9	144	12
52	296	5	392	7	76	107	9	132	12
53	291	6	385	8	77	98	9	120	12
54	285	6	377	8	78	89	9	108	12
55	279	6	369	8	79	80	10	96	12
56	273	6	361	9	80	70	11	84	12
57	267	7	352	9	81	59	11	72	11
58	260	7	343	9	82	48	10	61	11
59	253	7	334	10	83	38	9	50	10
60	246	7	324	11	84	29	8	40	9
61	239	8	313	12	85	21	7	31	8
62	231	8	301	13	86	14	4	23	5
63	223	8	288	13	87	10	3	18	3
64	215	8	275	13	88	7	2	15	3
65	207	8	262	12	89	5	1	12	2
66	199	8	250	12	90	4	1	10	2
67	191	8	238	11	91	3	1	8	2
68	183	9	227	11	92	2	1	6	2
69	174	9	216	11	93	1	1	4	1
70	165	9	205	12	94			3	1
71	156	10	193	13	95			2	1
72	146	10	180	12	96			1	1
73	136	10	168	12					

Of the males stated as having died at 93, three, and of the females at 96, three also, were alive; but these are of no consequence in forming a table. In every other respect, it is made to correspond with the deaths mentioned in Table 1.

From the foregoing Tables, it appears probable that the emigration of males is chiefly between the ages of 25 and 37, and of females between the ages of 18 and 28. Until the emigration is completed, the probabilities of the duration of life are by the Tables always too low, and, before it commences, very considerably so.

The small-pox, in the natural way, very frequently makes great ravages among the younger children, especially when attended with the hooping cough.

Although Table 2. is correct only from the year at which the

Expenditure to the parish poor for the last 12 years, including occasional charities.

From November 1780 to November 1781	L. 81 12 0
From ditto 1781 to ditto 1782	95 14 0
From ditto 1782 to ditto 1783	144 0 0
From ditto 1783 to ditto 1784	121 7 0
From ditto 1784 to ditto 1785	120 13 0
	From

the emigration is completed, which may be supposed to be about 38 or 40, as to males, and about 28 or 30, as to females, yet sufficient data are given for making it correct, first, by adding the number of emigrants to the radices for each year, till the emigration commences, and afterwards deducting, along with the deaths, the proportion of emigrations thought nearest the truth; when all are subtracted, the numbers living and dying will coincide with the Table. The number of persons living, of all ages, by the corrected Table, (after deducting the half of the births), divided by 30, (the number of years), will then be equal to the number of inhabitants: thus,

Number of males at all ages who die in the parish	27084
Deduct $\frac{1}{2}$ of births	547
	<u>26537</u>
To which add 31 times the number of male emigrants, being a medium between 25 and 37, the supposed years of emigration	9300
	<u>35837</u>
	Divide by 30)
Male inhabitants	1194
Number of females at all ages who die in the parish	33687
Deduct $\frac{1}{2}$ of births	527
	<u>33160</u>
Add 23 times the number of female emigrants, being a medium between 18 and 28, the supposed years of emigration	5267
	<u>38427</u>
	Divide by 30)
Female inhabitants	1280
Total male and female inhabitants	2474
Wanting only 22 of the real number.	

From November 1785 to November 1786	L. 109	9	•
From ditto 1786 to ditto 1787	-	-	110 13 0
From ditto 1787 to ditto 1788	-	-	106 1 0
From ditto 1788 to ditto 1789	-	-	102 0 0
From ditto 1789 to ditto 1790	-	-	89 10 0
From ditto 1790 to ditto 1791	-	-	85 16 0
From ditto 1791 to ditto 1792	-	-	88 0 0*

The effects of the year 1782 are evident from the above statement. The parish funds bore the whole of the burden; and, considering the high price of oat-meal, (1 s. 6 d. per peck), the additional and unavoidable expence of these years seems extremely moderate. All the inconveniencies of that memorable year seem now to be over; and, notwithstanding the increased population of the parish, there is reason to believe, the expediture to the poor will be considerably lower than for many years previous to 1782. This hope is founded on the good effects (already felt) of the different charitable institutions belonging to the respective trades of the parish and neighbourhood. There are four of these societies, or *boxes*, as they are called, in the parish, and a great number of people connected with others at a distance. It is a fact worth mentioning, that although, by the fatal fever of the current year 1792, upwards of 30 fatherless children, and a proportionable number of poor widows, are in great measure left destitute, not a single application from that quarter has as yet been made for public charity †.

Miscellaneous

* The increased expence for the current year, 1792, is owing to a greater number of occasional poor in distress, the stated pension list being considerably lower than that of last year.

† The most ancient place in the parish, so far as known, is *St Germans*, now the seat of David Anderson, Esquire. There was

Miscellaneous Observations.—The battle of Preston, in 1745, was fought partly in this parish, the scene of action lying about half a mile to the north of the church. The remains of the gallant Christian hero, Colonel Gardiner, who died in the minister's house of the wounds he received in the field, are interred in the west end of the church.

The post road running through the parish is an evident advantage, as thereby an easy communication with the metropolis, on the one hand, and Haddington, the best corn market in the kingdom; on the other, is opened. The nearness, and consequent cheapness, of coal, is an acknowledged convenience to the place, though the scarcity of water is an effectual bar to manufactures that owe much of their success to the low price and plenty of fuel. There is but one spring

to

as here an hospital, but by whom founded is uncertain. In Magman's roll, mention is made of *Barthelmu Mestre de la meson St German*, anno 1296. In later times, St Germans belonged to the Knights Templars, but was, with most of its revenues, bestowed by King James IV. upon the King's College of Aberdeen in 1494.

At Seton was a collegiate church, founded for a provost, 6 chaplains, 2 singing boys, and a clerk, out of several chaplainries united for that effect by George Lord Seton, the 20th June 1493. The charter of foundation is afterwards confirmed

Andrew Abbot of New bottle, therein designed *Apostolicae sedis Delegatus*. He built likewise the revelry or Sacristy of Seton, and covered it over with stone, in the reign of King James IV.; and, dying soon afterwards, was buried near the high altar of this collegiate church. The building is still almost entire.

Close by the church stood the princely ruins of Seton-house, the residence of the Earls of Wintoun. Upon the attainder of the late Earl in 1715, the estate fell to the Crown, by whom, in 1719, it was sold to the York Buildings Company, who suffered the house to fall to decay. In 1790, the whole was taken down by the present proprietor, to make way for a house, now almost finished, on a design of the late Mr Adam, in the old style form.

to supply the whole town, which is conducted to the head of it in wooden pipes. The inhabitants, towards the bottom, are obliged to bring it to their houses in barrels upon carts. A plan has been in agitation to raise a sum to carry the water through the town in a leaden pipe. But the permanent proprietors differ as to the mode of raising it, and there the matter at present rests.

The near vicinity of the coal has likewise its disadvantages. The poorer classes of the community are attracted to the place with the flattering prospect of cheap fuel; and many of the operative people about these works, being none of the best oeconomists, the poor's funds are, of course, sensibly burdened. The grievance to the landed property is the greater, as these lucrative mines, from their precarious nature, plead an exemption from poor's rates. The great number of carts that daily resort to the different collieries, are extremely destructive of the roads; so that, in many places, some of the cross roads in this parish are almost impassable. 60*l.* the statute money of the parish, scarce serves to fill up the track; and great part of that sum is expended at improper seasons. A bill is proposed to be brought into Parliament next session, which, it is to be hoped, will remedy the above inconveniencies, so sensibly felt, at least in this parish.—At a moderate computation, betwixt 3000 and 4000 gallons of whisky are annually retailed in the parish, besides what are commissioned by private families from the stills. The extraordinary consumpt of this article throughout Scotland at large, may indicate a thriving trade, and a productive revenue, but affords a small prospect of a sudden increase in moral and social virtues.—There is an excellent white free-stone quarry in the neighbourhood of Tranent, out of which several of the modern houses in the county have lately been built. There was, within these few years, a chalybeate
spring,

spring, in considerable repute, at Bankton; but it has now disappeared, having found its way into the waste below. A small library was established last year for the use of the parish. The number of volumes, as yet, does not exceed 200. The increase, in a great measure, depends on the countenance and support of the more opulent ranks. The Statistical Account, so far as published, constitutes part of the collection.

NUM. . .