OLD CHURCH LIFE

IN

BALLINGRY:

BEING

THE HISTORY OF A FIFESHIRE PARISH, BASED CHIEFLY ON ITS OLD SESSION RECORDS.

BY

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KINROSS:

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Dedicated

TO

JOHN HOPE, Esq., W.S.,

IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE INTEREST HE HAS TAKEN IN MY WELFARE, AND HIS GENEROUS KINDNESS TO ME THROUGHOUT MANY YEARS.

PREFACE.

SINCE the late Dr Edgar of Mauchline published his book on *Old Church Life in Scotland*, many ministers and session-clerks have been looking into their old Session Records with a keener interest than before, to learn what these have to tell of bygone days. My indebtedness to Dr Edgar's work is declared in the title given to this little volume.

While the main body of facts recorded here is drawn from the Session Books, I have taken information from every available source, that the history of the parish might be as complete as possible.

It is hoped this work will be found of interest throughout Fife and Kinross, and prove of more than local value as a contribution to Scottish Ecclesiastical History, and a record of Parish Life during the last two hundred years.

My thanks are due to the Heritors and others who supplied me with notes respecting their several properties.

It is only necessary to add that these chapters were originally prepared for delivery as lectures.

DAVID JAMIE.

BALLINGRY MANSE, LOCHGELLY, FIFE,
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OLD CHURCH LIFE IN BALLINGRY.

CHAPTER I.

ANTIQUITIES AND GENERAL HISTORY.

THE parish of Ballingry consists of two small portions of land in the north-west corner of the county of Fife. The larger portion, having Navitie in the north, and Lumphinans in the south, with Rosewell in the east, and Benarty in the west, contains about four square miles. The other portion, lying to the north-east, separated from the rest of the parish by a piece of land which juts out from Portmoak, and comprising the two farms of Balbedie and Craigend, is about one square mile in extent.

The name Ballingry has received various interpretations. Mr Hardy (1793) and Mr Greig (1837), the former ministers of this parish, who wrote the "Statistical Accounts," believed the word to mean "the village of the cross." The first part of the word they took to be the Celtic "bal," so common throughout Fife; the rest they imagined to be made up of the initials of the Latin words that Pilate put upon our Saviour's cross, "I.N.R.I." This is perhaps somewhat far-fetched. Dr Ross, in his book of Antiquities, published four years ago, adopts the Celtic origin for the *latter* part of the word, but the first syllable "bal" he connects with the Semitic "ba-al," and translates "the place of worship of the king." This also seems, in some degree, objectionable. Modern Gaelic scholars testify that the whole word is probably Celtic, that it comes from *bal-an-rhi*, and means "the dwelling-place of the king." In what way can we make it appear that this name is applicable to the parish?

It happens that Ballingry is not only the name of the parish,

but also of an estate within the parish, possessing a fine old mansion-house and many stately trees. Stand at the door of this mansion-house and look around—how magnificent is the view! Not only does the parish lie at your feet, but almost the whole county; while away on the horizon are descried North Berwick Law, the Bass Rock, and the island of the May. Ascend Dunmore (another Celtic name, meaning "the big hill"), which belongs to this estate, and you have before you not only the Fife county, but a large portion of many counties more. What better site could there possibly be for the dwelling-place of the ruler, not only of the parish, but of the whole kingdom of Fife? Moreover, it is probable that this very house became a resting-place for the later Scottish kings. We know how fond the Jameses were of Falkland Palace, and of hunting and hawking in the Falkland woods. We read of the journeys that they took between Falkland and Dunfermline, Edinburgh, and Stirling. We read of Mary of Guise and Queen Mary travelling between St Andrews and Dunfermline and Edinburgh, and stopping at Falkland by the way. A very likely place at which to make another halt by the way is Ballingry. It is a beautiful and well-sheltered spot, and nothing could be more cool and refreshing than the water that pours down the slope of Benarty. Even yet Ballingry, with its unrivalled situation, might be made a house fit for a king.

The history of Ballingry parish is known to us from the very earliest ages. Its annals are written in the rocks, and in the strata revealed to us through the numerous bores that have been made in the search for coal in every part of the parish. Through these same bores we can tell beforehand what its future history is likely to be. Those who are best skilled in these matters tell us that at no very distant date the deep beds of coal in Benarty, Lochore, Crosshill, and Glencraig will be opened up, and our rural quietness exchanged for the bustle and activity of a populous mining place.

It may be hard to believe, but it is undoubtedly true, that those wooded slopes and grassy fields upon which our eyes rest with so much complacency were once covered with almost perpetual ice and snow. We can trace the course of the glaciers that came gliding down thev alley in front of Benarty Hill;

and to this day the children climb and play upon the mighty boulders that the ice-stream carried down in its bosom and left lying in the fields at Capeldrae.

There have also been in prehistoric times many volcanic upheavals, and much internal disturbance within the limits of our parish boundaries, as the miners, and likewise the proprietors, have learned to their cost. That is the reason why the plough strikes so often upon stones in B'ingry. That accounts for Dunmore, for the quarry at Spailinn, for the knowes at Craigie-Malcolm, and for the general undulatory condition of the surface of the parish. That is likewise the reason why our fields are so uniformly fenced with whinstone dykes. The old legend was that Sathanus intended to fill up Lochleven with stones; but as he flew through the air, and just when he was in sight of the loch, his apron-string broke, and all the stones were scattered over our fields. Anyhow, our fathers found, as we do, the stones lying in the fields. To break them up and drag them to the side, and to build them up as fences, has been a work of enormous toil and expense; and still is, although now we have the friendly aid of dynamite. But it is a good work; those proprietors who attend to it are the benefactors of their race, for it is the first step towards bringing the land into cultivation, and thus providing food for man and beast.

Within historic times our parish shares the history of the district to which it belongs—namely, the western portion of the county of Fife. And here we have first to deal with the presence of the Romans. Tacitus, the historian, relates that Agricola, the Roman general, invading Britain in the year 83 A.D., had determined to subdue the Caledonians, and having his ships in the Firth of Forth with his supplies, poured his soldiers into Fife. He built a series of camps at Carnock, at Prate Hill, three miles east of Dunfermline, at Coldrain, and likewise at the chapel of Lochore, in the middle of this parish. The Britons, too, had built a camp upon Benarty, and in the night they swept down upon the Romans, attacking their camp with skill and vigour; and, had not a scout escaped to another camp to summon Agricola with his light troops, the ninth legion would have been utterly exterminated. Several writers have described those camps. It is difficult to trace

them now. Dr Ross affirms that in the days of Lord Commissioner Adam, who was a friend of Sir Walter Scott, both of these camps within our parish were entire. Sir Walter, whose son, through marrying the heiress, became the proprietor of Lochore, was greatly interested in our antiquarian lore, and in a letter to his daughter-in-law graphically describes the rush the Britons made down the Bowhouse bank, and praises their intrepid valour as they threw themselves upon the Roman ramparts. Two days after this, as Tacitus relates, Agricola withdrew his army south of the Forth.

Besides the camp, there are other remains to recall the days of the Roman occupation. There is the word "Blair," the old name for Benarty estate, which is said by Mr Hardy to mean *locus pugnæ*, the scene of a fight. In the digging of the ditches preparatory to the draining of Lochore, a Roman spear and other articles were found. Then there are the three hundred Roman coins discovered a few years ago in a potato field. Since the camp was at Lochore, it was immediately supposed by those who did not know the facts, and it is now widely believed, that the coins were found in Lochore. But the fact is not so. They were found in a field on North Bogside, a mile or so to the east of Lochore. There are those among us who as children played with the coins, and who can take us at this moment to the very spot where they were found. But as North Bogside is in Portmoak parish, the coins do not belong to us at all. We can only say of them that they testify to the Romans being in our neighbourhood.

From the time that the Romans retired, up till the middle of the twelfth century, the story of the whole of this neighbourhood is involved in the utmost obscurity. To quote from Dr Henderson's *Annals of Dunfermline*, it "abounded in forests, moors, swamps, lakes, and rivulets, over which roamed the wolf, the deer, the bison, and the boar." And the inhabitants, we may likewise be assured, would be possessed of no very high degree of civilisation.

In the year 1160 the light of history is again thrown upon us, for it is in that year that Duncan de Lochore built on an island, then called Inchgall, or "the island of strangers," the castle of Lochore. The lake in which the island stood covered

upwards of one hundred acres. The ruins of this castle, standing but fifty yards from the public road, are passed and repassed by us every day without perhaps exciting in us any great interest. They are worthy of at least a passing thought. The principal feature of the castle was its square tower or keep, which was 23 feet long, 16 feet broad, and 40 feet high. There were many lower buildings, and the walls were in some places 9 feet thick. The circumference of the area enclosed by the buildings was 200 yards.

For 150 years after this date (1160), this whole parish, along with that of Auchterderran, belonged to the Lochore family, and the two parishes together constituted the barony of Lochore. This family was of some importance in the history of the country. Adam de Lochore was Sheriff of Perth in Alexander II.'s time—say, 1230. David de Lochore held the same office in 1255. Hugo de Lochore was Sheriff of Fife in 1289, and Constantius was the same in 1292. Thomas de Lochore was one of the Parliament of Ayr in 1315 who "tailzied" —*i.e.*, entailed—the Crown of Scotland on the heirs of Robert Bruce, and his seal was appended to that Act. David de Lochore was mentioned in the Ragman's Roll, 1296. In still later days this family produced a distinguished lawyer. He sat on the Bench with the title of Lord Lochore, and became Lord President of the Council; but as he was a Jacobite, he had to demit his office at the time of the Revolution. He lies buried in Ballingry Church.

In the beginning of the fourteenth century, Adam de Valloniis (Vallance) married the heiress of Lochore, and with her acquired the barony. When Dominus Jacobus Valloniis, the last male representative of this house, died, he left three daughters, the eldest of whom married Sir Andrew Wardlaw of Torry, and with her passed to him as her dowry the parish of Ballingry. Now, the Wardlaws, like the Vallances and Lochores, made the castle of Lochore their residence. The Wardlaws seem to have rebuilt and improved it, for until quite recently the name of "Robertus Wardlaw" could be seen carved above the principal entrance to the tower.

For a short time the Rothes family seem to have had some interest in these lands, but in the middle of the seventeenth

century, under Charles I., the lands came into possession of Sir John Malcolm, Bart., who was the eldest son of John Malcolm of Balbedie. This Sir John lived in Lochore, and took the title of Lochore, while the younger brother became, on the death of his father, proprietor of Balbedie. About the year 1790, when Sir Michael Malcolm of Lochore died, without male issue to inherit the baronetcy, it passed to the Balbedie family, descended from the younger brother of the first baronet, and Michael Malcolm of Balbedie became Sir Michael. Not, however, Sir Michael of Lochore, but of Balbedie, for it was at this juncture that the Malcolm family elected to part with Lochore.

Every now and again, for years before this, the Malcolms had been selling portions of their lands, so that, at this time when Lochore was sold, just one hundred years ago, instead of there being just one proprietor for the whole parish, there were quite a number of heritors. Besides Lochore, we have Balbedie, Navitie, Ballingry, Blair, Contle, Cartmore, Lumphinans, Milton, and Crosshill.

Of each of those places we shall have something to say as we proceed with our narrative; it shall be our aim in what remains of this chapter to gather up the threads of their external history, so that we may have a conjunct view of them down to the present day. We shall begin with Lochore.

The person who bought this estate from the Malcolms was Captain Park, and he it was who, at a cost of £1000, made that deep cutting near the castle and drained the loch, which, as Sibbald tells us, had been the abode of abundant pike and perch. The cutting, unfortunately, proved too small, and in rainy seasons even yet the meadows are covered with water. Under the bed of the loch there were discovered a cannon-ball, a silver spoon, and a marble slab, out of which a draught-board has been made.

The captain's aim was to improve the property by reclaiming so much land. He calculated he would gain about 150 acres. There was substantial gain. No doubt there is something picturesque about a loch, especially if there be an island with an old castle in it. There are infinite possibilities of enjoyment in it through boating, fishing, or even wandering upon its strand, admiring the sunlight, or mayhap the moon-

light, as it gleams upon the water. But Captain Park was a practical man, and thought that if he had good land, and therefore good crops, instead of a useless sheet of shallow water, it would be an advantage to him. Perhaps he did not personally reap the advantage, the cost of the work—since there was much rock to go through—was more than he anticipated. But the parishioners of the present day do, for year by year they obtain, at a moderate price, an abundant crop of excellent meadow hay. This energetic proprietor also wrought lime and ironstone. At first it promised well, but latterly the work had to be abandoned.

After a few years the estate was bought by Mr Syme (who was also the proprietor of Cartmore), who, in 1813, sold it to Mr Jobson. Now, Mr Jobson had an only daughter, his heiress, and it was through her, as we have already seen, that the property was, as in the case of previous heiresses, destined to pass into other hands.

Jeanie Jobson—as she is affectionately called by the old parishioners—appears to have been a young lady of great beauty. When George IV. came to Edinburgh she was brought into near proximity to him as a maid of honour, and she also received the friendship of Sir Walter Scott. In the Christmas of 1824, when at a ball at Abbotsford, she was called by Captain Hall "the pretty heiress of Lochore," and in 1825 she was married to Sir Walter's eldest son. For some time they resided in Lochore House, a worthy dwelling for a worthy pair, and there they received many distinguished visitors. Sir Walter Scott himself was often here; and he has left a record of his presence in *The Abbot*, where he speaks of Ballingry Church. It was due to him also that the West Lodge of Lochore received the name of "Cleikum Inn." But in 1832 the great Sir Walter passed from the scene of earthly things, and Jeanie Jobson became Lady Scott of Abbotsford. After this, Lochore House was let to tenants, till, in 1867, the estate was purchased, at a cost of £60,000, by the Lochore and Capeldrae Cannel Coal Company, in whose hands it still remains.

The mansion-house next in antiquity to the castle of Lochore is probably that of Balbedie; but as, unfortunately, for many years—since 1828, when Sir Michael Malcolm died—

the proprietors have not dwelt in it, it has fallen greatly from its ancient dignity. Many of the outer houses are in ruins, and when you enter the narrow doorway into the ancient hall you discover that it is fitted up with wooden stairs, affording entrance to the cottar houses of Craigend, into which the mansion has been portioned off. But what is this Craigend? In the old nomenclature of the place this word never occurs. Like the farmhouse (date 1855) of that name, the name itself is of very recent date. The old parishioners, more poetically, spoke of "the shady half of Balbedie and the sunny half of Balbedie." Craigend is a portion of the sunny half. The present Balbedie farmhouse was built in 1838.

At the time when our session records begin (in 1669), it was Balbedie, and not Lochore, that was the principal proprietor in the parish. The most prominent place is assigned to the Laird of Balbedie, and he is spoken of with much deference. He is patron of the church, and Lochore, belonging to his son, Sir John, is of quite secondary importance. Indeed, for some time Lochore ceases to be mentioned, except as a title to the baronet, and what takes its place in the records is "Ladath," one of the divisions of Lochore. When the old laird dies, the patronage then passes over to Lochore, as is seen in these formal notices, written out on a special page of the session minute-book:—

"John Malcolm of Balbedie, Lochoir & Innertiel, patrone of this Church, died February 8th 1692, att 11 before noon, buried in his Isle, Aged 81."

"Sir John Malcolm of Lochoir & Innertiel, succeeds to his father as patron, & is so 22 July 1701."

The Malcolm family are still the leading proprietors. Lady Malcolm, the mother of the late Sir John (who died in Burntisland on 24th December 1865), has a life interest in the shady half of Balbedie, Tushielaw, Rosewell, Flockhouse (now in ruins), Kirkland, and Middleburn. Sir James, cousin of the late Sir John, who will ultimately possess all these, already has in his possession the sunny half of Balbedie, and the lands of Waulkmill and Balbegie; and in respect of the lands that they possess between them, they pay 47·3 per cent. of the minister's stipend.

Navitie is also an ancient place. In 1670 the proprietor

was John Robertson, of whom we shall hear again. Thirty years later it belonged to John Rutherford; in another thirty years it had passed to John Rutherford's son James. In forty years more—*i.e.*, in 1774—it had been purchased by Mr Hardy, who was then the minister of the parish. In those days the present mansion-house did not exist, and the house those earlier heritors had would probably be of more moderate size, and on the site of the present farmhouse; and regarding the erection of the present mansion-house a tale has to be told.

In one of the local histories of Dunfermline it is related that at one time the Abbey Church required a precentor, and among the candidates was a certain young man belonging to the town. When he got into the precentor's desk to sing, and looked around him, the sight of so many faces known to him, and looking up at him with expectation, so completely unnerved him that he could not produce a note. In confusion, he descended from the desk, and was so mortified at his failure that he fled from the town—fled away to the other side of the world, and did not come back for fifty years. Meanwhile he had made his fortune. Some of his money he brought to Ballingry, built with it the mansion-house of Navitie, and lived there. The Dunfermline historian does not tell his name. That is revealed in our session records; his name was Lindsay. He entered the service of the East India Company, and came home with the title of lieutenant-colonel; and when he died in May 1812, his sister, Miss H. Lindsay, out of respect to his memory, gave a donation to the kirk of £5, 5s. As connecting this family with the present time, we may note, in passing, that the eldest sister of Mrs Robert Low of the Shank was the Lindsays' servant-maid.

After Colonel Lindsay came Mr George Greig, and he was succeeded by Mr Hunt, whose name is not yet forgotten. In 1878 he was still with us, for in that year he subscribed to the fund for church improvement. From him the estate was purchased by Mr Benjamin Liddall, and when he died two years ago, his son William came into possession. This young proprietor has just spent a large sum of money in renovating and improving both the house and the property, and has come with his family to live here and enjoy them.

East of Navitie we come to Ballingry, of which we have already spoken. There were two divisions of Ballingry—Upper Ballingry, which included the mansion and the cottages which anciently clustered around it; and the Kirkton of Ballingry, embracing the kirk and the cottages in its immediate neighbourhood. It is mentioned in 1670, but it is not till 1678 that we learn that it belonged to two brothers, Patrick and John Greig. These gentlemen are in no way remarkable; but the next laird, Mr Craufurd, and his son, are of great vigour and considerable influence in the parish. In 1735, when Mrs Craufurd dies, it is disclosed that she has the title of Lady Ballingrie, which she probably brought with her, for she is described as the daughter of the Laird of Dolbine. In 1758 there is another Mrs Craufurd, whose influence secures for her friend, Mrs Wilson, a place of honour for her burial. She is buried "below Sir Michael's loft in the church by the south wall of the kirk." Towards the end of the eighteenth century the Craufurds disappear, and the proprietor is Laurence Bonar, Esq. From him Ballingry passed to William Gilmer of Pitlochie, whose daughter Jane, now living in Kinross, continues to possess the lands.

Passing further to the east, we come to the lands of Blair, or East Blair, as they are called, to distinguish them from West Blair, which is Blairadam. In 1670 the Laird of Blair was Alexander Colville, and in the hands of his family the property remained till the end of last century, when it was purchased by Mr Syme, who had been proprietor of Cartmore, and afterwards also of Lochore. This Mr Syme was father of the late Professor Syme of Edinburgh, who was born in Benarty House—not the present Benarty House, but the old house, which stood a little to the east, on ground that is now chiefly occupied by the garden. The present Benarty House was built by Mr Briggs, who bought the estate from Mr Syme. Mr Briggs was the uncle of the late Mr Constable, who died in the year 1882, when Mr W. Briggs Constable succeeded to the lands.

The next property we have to deal with is Glencraig. It is composed of four small properties—the Contle, the Clune, Inchgall, and Templeland—which came to be united in the

manner the sequel will show. For 160 years the Contle belonged to a family named Betson, whose good deeds will be chronicled later on. It was the last of this family that built the present Glencraig House, on a new site to the south of the old one; in fact, the north wall of the present garden was the north wall of the old house. The name Contle is still preserved in that row of houses which we call by that name, but it is in Auchterderran parish, secured to the owner of Glencraig by excambion from the Earl of Minto's property.

The Clune, which at first had belonged to the Betsons, had been parted with in a time of adversity, and had come into the hands of a Mr Greig, whose only daughter, by marrying the last Betson's father, joined the two properties together again.

The Clune promises to be an interesting possession. Its present proprietor is, as we all know, a man of great activity and much public spirit, and this present year has made excavations on Clune Hill, with the result that he has discovered distinct traces of several Roman or ancient encampments, the walls being 11 to 12 feet thick at the foundation. That is just what one would expect from the situation of Clune Hill. Assuming that the Romans occupied this region—and of that there is no doubt—the possession of Clune Hill would be of vast strategic importance.

Templeland belonged to a man of the name of Watson, and was purchased by Captain Park of Lochore for the sum of £700, and resold by him the same day to the last of the Betsons for the same sum—with this reservation, however, that the cutting which was to drain Lochore should be made through the land of Templeland, without any damages being claimable. And thus Templeland fell in to Contle and Clune.

There is still Inchgall. It belonged to the Malcolm family, and was sold by them to a Mr Henderson, a retired Customhouse officer from Dundee, with the right of redemption. This Mr Henderson was a bachelor, and so was the last of the Betsons. The two old men, who were great friends, made wills in each other's favour, to the effect that the one who lived longest would succeed to all that both possessed. Henderson died first, and thus Mr Betson, acquiring Inchgall, became

possessor of Contle, Clune, Templeland, and Inchgall. He, however, neglected to destroy his will, made in Mr Henderson's favour, or to make a new one; and when he died in 1829 the heirs of Mr Henderson stepped in and claimed all. The united properties were called Glencraig, and in 1830 we find in our records the name of John Henderson of Glencraig.

Inchgall, because of certain decisions regarding its teinds, has made Ballingry famous in the legal world. Lawyers find it a very difficult matter to arrange "localities;" nowhere has more difficulty been found than with the locality of Ballingry.

Harelaw, which is within Inchgall, has within this present year (1890) become of great antiquarian interest. On the top of the hill there was a huge cairn of 700 or 800 loads of stones. After a trial at the Clune, Mr George Constable spent a day examining this place also, along with Mr R. Burns Begg, F.S.A., and they found two pieces of cinerary urns, along with several pieces of charred wood. Encouraged by this success, they returned to the excavation. They drove a broad deep trench 21 feet into the western side of the mound, and discovered a neatly-formed stone cist; and when they removed the freestone cover, there was exposed to view what they believed to be a cinerary urn, containing bones and wood ashes. The cist was 2 feet long by 18 inches in breadth and 15 inches in depth. It was composed of four flat and carefully-dressed stones set on edge, and it seemed to have been carefully puddled above and below with clay. It was found at a depth of about three feet below the surface of the mound. The urn, which was quite entire, was remarkably perfect in shape, formed of a bluish clay common to the district, and was entirely covered outside by the usual rude ornamentation. It was $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height, $20\frac{1}{4}$ inches in circumference at its greatest girth, tapering to 9 inches at its base. The contents of the urn have since been more carefully examined, and antiquarians now declare it was a food urn, and must belong to a very remote period. Deeper down, in the centre of the cairn, was found a stone chest with distinct traces of human remains. Further investigations are to be made, which may probably result in still further discoveries.

There is another portion of this estate, whose aristocratic

name is Lochcraig, but which is generally called Spailinn. It was once a joiner's shop. The joiner kept a stock of wood, and he piled it up in his yard, as is the manner of that fraternity, and the passers-by, seeing the planks sticking up in the air like so many spails of wood, called the place Spailinn.

To bring the history of Glencraig down to the present day, it only remains to say that the Henderson family held the property till 1872, when it was purchased by Mr James Constable, who died last year, and who, having been a confirmed invalid for several years, had already conveyed the estate to his only son George, whose energy and public spirit we have just described.

On the north side of Lochore cutting, and separated by it from Glencraig, are the small estates of Milton and Crosshill. They do not figure largely in our history, though they never cease to be mentioned. They also have attracted the attention of antiquarians. Here was the site of the ancient city of Orrea, "the city of the king," through which ran the main highway connecting this part of the country with the harbour of Pettycur. This is the old road known to the gipsies, who regularly make their encampment here. In 1678 we find mentioned James Pudziel of Corshill; in 1759 it is Chalmers of Corshill; and in the same year it is Kinnell of Miltown. These men are described as feuars, the superior being Balbedie. Coming down to 1816, we find that Andrew Rutherfurd is the owner of the place; and in 1881 it is in the possession of Adam Henderson and his two sisters, who inherited it from their uncles, who, while farmers at Pitkinnie, purchased the property from Mr Rutherfurd.

Of Cartmore there is little to be said. In 1670 a Mr David Scrymgeour was the owner of Cartmore. In 1770 it was Mr Syme. Now it belongs to the Earl of Minto, whom we find from time to time acquiring property in the neighbourhood of Lochgelly, where, in the latter half of the seventeenth century, Sir Gilbert Elliott, the ancestor of the Mintos, had his mansion-house. The ruins of this mansion are still extant near the present Lochgelly House.

Part of the Lochgelly lands acquired by the Minto family are the small properties of Spittal and Brighills. They are

reckoned in Ballingry parish, but are surrounded by Auchterderran. There is a proposal before the County Council to have them disjoined from Ballingry and given to Auchterderran. Their combined rental is only some £70.

Our present survey of the parish concludes with Lumphinans, concerning which we have not now a very great deal to say. Its recent rapid development as a mining place will be noted by and by. Until the collieries began it was a very quiet place. In 1763 it belonged to Sir Laurence Dundas. Later on we read of Lord Dundas, and now it is the Earl of Zetland who receives the rents.

CHAPTER II.

THE KIRK AND ITS MEMBERS.

As the principal source of our information regarding the kirk and its members are the records of the kirk-session, it will be appropriate to begin this chapter with a short account of what those records are. Including the four books in present use—namely, the minute-book of session, the communion roll, the baptismal register, and the book of proclamation of banns—we have a series of fourteen volumes of various sizes, and in a more or less complete state of preservation. These volumes are replete with most interesting matter. There are the session minutes, embodying the results of careful deliberation on the part of the minister and the elders, who were generally the leading men of the place, concerning the kirk, the school, the poor, and the religious and social well-being of the parish. There is the money register, brimful of unique details of income and expenditure. There is a list of baptisms and of marriages, and yet other lists; and the variety of incidental allusions to the contemporary history of the country, and the strange manner in which this retired corner of Fife is seen to keep in touch with the surrounding and even remote districts, is highly instructive and not a little entertaining. We are very fortunate in our records. The session minutes begin in 1669, and are well brought down to the present day, except for three blanks, which are easily accounted for. The first blank is one of twenty years at the end of the seventeenth century, occurring in the incumbency of an Episcopal minister, who had to be deprived of his office because he would not take the oaths of submission and obedience to the supreme courts of the Church. The next is a blank of twelve years, during a long-continued illness of one of the ministers, when there were few services in church, and still fewer meetings of kirk-session. The third

blank is rather a long one—viz., for forty-four years; but it is the time of old Mr Greig, as he is called, who, among other peculiarities, is believed to have disapproved of session meetings. We can the better bear this loss because we have a tolerably fair account of this very time from Mr Greig's own pen, and there are other sources upon which we can draw to fill up the record of these years. The lists of baptisms and marriages, except for very recent years, are meagre; the money register, however, excepting those twelve years in the sick minister's time, and another short blank when there were next to no money transactions, is complete from 1687 to 1890.

We cannot over-estimate the value of our records. Without them a large portion of our life as a parish would have been consigned to oblivion; with them we are securely linked to an honourable past, and we are encouraged and inspired with the spectacle of humble but noble-minded men acting well their part in circumstances which frequently called for patience, tact, skill, faith, and courage.

We are doubly fortunate in our records when we consider how easy it would have been for any of them, or for all of them, to have been lost beyond recovery. In one case it is found, after the demise of a minister and the removal of his effects, that not only is the minute-book gone, but several pounds sterling, belonging to the poor, have also been carried away. It is three years before the book is recovered and the money repaid by the deceased minister's friends.

In the very first minute that we have we find the session grappling with a difficulty of this kind. In 1669 a new minister has been appointed, and one of the first questions he asks is, Where is the minute-book? He is told it is in the possession of Mr John Bruce, the minister of Portmoak, who had married the late minister's daughter. The clerk, who is the schoolmaster, is deputed to go to Portmoak to receive the book. At the next session meeting he reports that Mr Bruce neither has the book nor knows anything about it. The session think the minister should go himself and interview his neighbour at Portmoak. He returns with the same answer that the clerk had got. The minister next proceeds to enquire among the other relatives of his predecessor, and is informed by them that

the book is destroyed. On receipt of this information the session determine to ask the advice of the Presbytery. The Presbytery put the matter into the hands of a committee of their own, whom they instruct to speak to the executors of the late minister, and all others concerned, concerning the session-book, and on 30th July 1671—*i.e.*, at the end of a year and a half, during which incessant search had been made—this committee reports "that the persones examined declared that if it wer put to ther oath they knew not what had come of it."

There is every prospect now of church records being more carefully guarded. The General Assembly has had the matter under consideration, and this year have sent down to Presbyteries an overture in the following terms:—

"Whereas no strict rules have been laid down by the Church for the preservation of session records and relative documents: And whereas many of these papers, of much historical as well as ecclesiastical value, are liable to go amissing, without the possibility of their being traced: The General Assembly hereby directs and enjoins all Presbyteries to see that the kirk-sessions within their respective bounds cause inventories of all records and documents to be made out, compared with the actual documents by a committee of at least two out of each session, and when found correct to be engrossed in the session records; and that this be repeated whenever a new session-clerk is appointed in a parish, and that no Presbytery be at liberty to attest session records without this rule being strictly complied with."

How far back in our history this lost minute-book might have carried us it is impossible to say; but there can be no doubt that Ballingry was a parish at a very early date. It is believed to be one of the oldest parishes in Scotland. It is only natural that that should be so, seeing we are so near Lochleven, with its island of St Serf's and its Culdee monastery there. The monks, whose zeal and influence were so great as to found Culdee colleges in Abernethy, St Andrews, Dysart, Dunfermline, and Culross, would not disdain to Christianise Ballingry. They would never leave men almost within hail of their walls in the darkness of heathenism. Nor did they. They disseminated the truth, which lingered among the people,

and when the organising power of Rome appeared, there were the materials from which a congregation could be formed. For that primitive congregation a church was built, and that ancient edifice connected us with Roman Catholic times. The only relic left us of that building and those times is the belfry of our present church, which still stands, and seems likely to stand for many years to come.

The church bell seems to have been the gift of the first Sir John Malcolm. High up on the bell, on the side facing the west, there is inscribed "Malcolme of Lochore, 1658;" and underneath that is the monogram ℭ; while, lower down, round the outer rim of the bell, is the following inscription:—"Felices quos hæc Balingria cimbala Cristi ad pia sacra vocant: Ps. 89. ver. 15," which Latin words may be translated thus: "Blessed are they whom these Ballingry chimes summon to the sacred worship of Christ."

When the Reformation came—in which this parish had its share—the church of Ballingry was placed under the charge of Kinross. The minister of that parish, Mr James Dolby or Dowie, was also superintendent of both Orwell and Ballingry; but in 1581, when the Presbytery of Dunfermline was instituted, we find enumerated as "within its bounds" "Ballingarie, Auchterderran, Kinglassie," and several other parishes now in the Kirkcaldy Presbytery. In the opening page of our earliest minute-book, in the upper right-hand corner, written at a later date than 1669, and by a strange hand (perhaps that of the Episcopal minister), we find the words: "Balingrie rd [registered] in the diocie of St Andrews and Presbytrie of Kirkcaldie." When the Kinross Presbytery was formed, some forty years ago, Ballingry was severed from Kirkcaldy and rejoined to Kinross.

The old kirk of Ballingry stood on the same site, only it was smaller than the present church. The east wall and the north wall are in the same place now as formerly, their position being fixed by the Blair and Malcolm aisles. In the present church the south wall is brought a little forward, and the west wall a little further to the west; thus the church is both longer and broader than its predecessor was. And in the old church there was no front gallery. It was a long narrow

building, with a loft at either end, reached, as now, by a stair at either end, entrance being given to the stairs by an east door and a west door, both doors being in the south wall of the church.

There were then, as now, the Malcolm aisle in the north and the Blair aisle in the east. The Malcolm aisle, which communicated directly with the church by a door in its northern wall right opposite to the pulpit, was open to the sky; and it was the Malcolms' burying-ground. Preserved along with our session-books is a loose leaf from a book now lost, written over on both sides with an account of the death and burial of leading personages, chiefly Malcolms. Among other entries are the following:—

"March 30th 29 (1729) being Sunday about two in the morning died Sir John Malcolm of Innertiel aged 83 buried in his Ile that is to the [back] of this church his head to the west wall and near to the church wall."

"Aug. 15 1753 being Wednesday about ten forenoon died Sir John Malcolm of Lochore aged 73 and buried in his father's grave in the Ile."

"June 30 1737 died Mr James Malcolm Sir John's eldest son he died of a consumption aged 38 years and lies next to his grandmother the third grave from the church wall."

The Blair aisle is still used for burial. Like the Malcolms', it used to be surrounded by walls; but, as they had fallen into disrepair, they were in the time of Mr Briggs replaced by the strong iron railing which we see there now. When the railing appeared, there first had disappeared a large elm tree which grew in a corner of the aisle. The old parishioners tell how the arms of this huge tree hung over the east end of the church and shaded even the window at the east side of the pulpit.

The old church is first mentioned in our records in 1678, when the Presbytery make a formal visitation to the parish. These presbyters had very sharp eyes, and the clerk had a very nimble pen. Nothing escapes their observation or enquiry. And here is the note they make upon the church of that date:—

"The presb: perceiving yt the fabrick of ye church is very ruinous for ye present the slaits being alltogither off the south syd of ye nafe Did enact that ye heritors with all expedition

should goe about the repairing of the kirk As also the building of the rest of the church yaird Dykes not yet finished."

Regarding the internal arrangements of the church these keen observers make the following remarks:—

"The presb: noticing the inconveniency of entering to the pulpit The mi^{r} having y^{e} whole body of y^{e} church to pass through q^{ch} canot bot make disturbance when the kirk is throng especially at y^{e} comunion recomendes to y^{e} heritors and elders to make a more convenient entrie for the mi^{r} q^{ch} they perceive may be safely done and with small expensse By the window close by the East syde of the pulpit.

"Likewise recomendes to the heritors that are concerned that they would with all conveniency fill up with deskes the emptie roomes of the church."

In 1706 the roof of the kirk needs mending again, and also the "kirkyaird" dykes. In 1713 a large quantity of lime and sand is again ordered for the roof of the kirk; and the same again at various times subsequently, thus showing that the "slaits," which were grey flat slabs, as seen at the present day on the roof of Falkland Palace, required frequent pointing with lime. Twenty "slaits" could be purchased at a cost of 10s.

The windows, like the church itself, were long and narrow. From 1707 onwards there are frequent accounts for the putting in of "glasse." On one occasion, when they had determined to have more light, probably in the gable wall, it was a slit in the church that required to get six "lozens."

The Presbytery's idea of having another door knocked out in the south wall by the long east window does not seem to have been carried into effect, and possibly the minister found no great difficulty in getting through the throng. That he had to go through the whole body of the church does not mean the whole length of the church; his way led behind the seats in the body of the church to the door communicating with the Malcolms' aisle, and then straight forward to the lectern, and thence up to the pulpit.

The lectern was, as its name implies, the clerk's reading desk. While the congregation was assembling, and between the ringing of the bells, it was the duty of the clerk to read

the Scriptures. Between the first bell and the second the Old Testament was read; between the second and the third the New Testament or the Catechism; and then the minister appeared and preached the sermon. The clerk meanwhile—who was also the precentor—kept his seat in the lectern, and from it led the praise.

Though it was from the pulpit that intimations usually were made, it was not always so, for in 1764, as in other years, it is declared that a meeting of the heritors was duly intimated "from the letteron."

In a conspicuous place within the church stood the "pillorie," of which more is to be heard. Perhaps also there was a clock, for in 1724 a man is paid so much "for colouring the dyal of the kirk." This may not, however, be a reference to a clock, but to a sundial in the churchyard. There was the less use for a clock inside seeing that there was a sand-glass.

The present church was built in 1831, and as it was seated for 320 when the whole population of the parish was only 370, it might well be called "a commodious church." In 1876 there were alterations made, at a cost of £130, whereby, among other improvements, some of the seats were widened—thus reducing the number of sittings, however, to 287. This was the time when the door was made in the west wall of the church, and the west door in the south wall blocked up, that the little vestry might be made. This vestry was for the convenience and comfort of the elder who stood at the plate. The idea was to close the east door while the congregation was assembling, that all might enter by one door—the west door—and one elder would be all that would be needed each day to gather the collection.

How long the number of sittings (287) will suffice must, of course, depend upon our circumstances. When Capeldrae Mine was in the height of its glory, and every house in all the rows was crammed to its utmost capacity, we had difficulty in providing seats for all who desired them. In the days of our future prosperity (*D.V.*) we may have to enlarge the seat-holding capacity of the church. It would be idle prematurely to discuss the ways and means. I have no doubt, when the time comes, Ballingry will rise to the emergency.

Belonging to the full equipment of the church are what are called the utensils. There are several inventories of these at various dates, the longest being of date 1872, when there are enumerated twenty-three articles. They include the communion plate, the communion linen, tokens, money-boxes, even the kirk pick and spade, and the mortcloth. Like the session records, the utensils required to be looked after, and sometimes we find in a vacancy that they are deposited with an elder for safety. On one occasion, in 1710, they are nearly lost, for that Episcopal minister already mentioned took them with him to Edinburgh, and only restored them when compelled by the Court of Session, after a law plea instituted by our minister and elders. It would have been a great loss had we been deprived of our ancient silver cups. Two of these bear the date of 1678; the other two belong to 1685. They are all duly inscribed, and have neatly engraved upon them the donor's coat of arms. Our communion linen carries us even further back, for the long tablecloth still preserved has the date, sewn in in silk, 1673. The two large bread-plates we use in our communion services belong to the year 1792, while the two pewter plates in which we take our church-door collections were purchased for the session in 1852 by Mr Henderson of Glencraig, at a cost of 5s. 6d. the pair.

The mortcloth is an important "utensil," deserving a whole paragraph to itself. You are aware that the mortcloth was taken out at every funeral to cover the coffin, and a fee, which varied according to current practice and to the rank of the deceased, was charged for its use. In the money register each fee is written down under the date on which it was received, and invariably the name is given of the person whose remains it covered; and thus, though the minute-book be silent, there is yet recorded, at the exact dates, the changes that took place in almost every house in the parish. Thus the record of the mortcloth becomes the history of the place.

These mortcloths were in themselves sometimes very elaborate affairs. In 1717 it is recorded that the cost of a mortcloth for this parish was £177 Scots (£14, 15s. sterling), and because it was so fine a special charge was made. That one must have been too grand, and not at all serviceable, for

in 1721 occurs this entry: "For taking down the mortcloth and making a new one, £2, 8s. 0d." (*i.e.*, 4s. sterling). In 1725 it required to be repaired, for this account appears: "Eight elles of black serge to line mortcloath;" and in 1743 a new one is required, for the session buys "eight elles of velvet for a mortcloath," at the price of £16 Scots (£1, 6s. 8d. sterling). In 1819 the charge for the mortcloth was 5s. sterling.

In the records there is very little said about the manse. Here is the information which the Presbytery receive about it and the glebe in their visitation in the year 1678. The minister reports "that his manse is sufficient Bot the Gleib was too little for quantitie and very bad for qualitie. That he had a horse and two kine grassed with the kine in the Mains of Inchgall. Bot he had no foggadge fail or divot." His stipend was 400 Lib. (£33, 6s. 8d.) in money, and three chalders in victual, two parts meal and three parts barley. Regarding this state of affairs the Presbytery make no remark. They must have held it to be on the whole satisfactory.

The main portion of the present manse was built in Mr Cuthbert's time, on a site a little to the west of that on which the old manse stood, and it was the same minister who laid out the grounds as they now are. If there is anything remarkable about these grounds, it is a holly tree in a corner, which must be of a very great age, as its trunk is of enormous girth. There were two additions to the manse in my predecessor's time.

That our story may be complete, we should note, in passing, that when the new manse was built there was a change made in the position of the offices. The minister's barn stood just opposite the west gate of the manse, in the corner of the park, which is therefore called the Barn Park. A portion of its eastern wall still remains as part of the dyke which encloses the park. This piece of ground formerly was part of Ladath, and belonged to Lady Scott, but it was purchased from her by the proprietor of Ballingry. Ballingry obtained the site of this barn as part of his new field, and in exchange he gave a new site for the offices where they now stand on Ballingry proper, contiguous to his own cottar houses. Another arrangement was

entered into between the heritors and the Laird of Ballingry. That was concerning the manse water supply. Ballingry allows a reservoir to be formed and maintained in the centre of one of his parks at a height sufficient to admit of water being brought into the manse by gravitation. But he may withdraw that privilege at his pleasure; and in return for that privilege he secures a supply of water from the heritors' pipe for his cottar houses.

There is still one little corner of land that remains to be accounted for. It is that small piece on the roadside under the minister's shrubbery wall, just a few square yards in size, on which once stood the beadle's cottage. From its position you would imagine it was originally Kirkland. Most probably it would afterwards belong, like the farm of Kirkland, to the proprietor of Balbedie. I have heard it claimed on behalf of Lochore; and it has also been held that it belonged to Ballingry, and formed part of the subjects treated in the arrangement between the heritors and Ballingry. But the heritors do not claim the ground; nobody claims it. The minister, like his predecessor, has it in possession, and possession is nine points of the law.

To acquire a correct notion regarding the members of the kirk, our best course will be to ask what was, from time to time, the number and the character of the population of the parish. On this point the earliest authentic information we have is contained in our oldest session minute-book, where, on the title-page of the book, in the form of a casual note, there is written:—

"In all q^{r} of in Balbedy there are 32. At Mart. 1698 there are about 260 q^{r} of 34 in Balbedy. At Whitsunday 1700 y^{r} are 254 q^{r} of 34 in Balbedy."

During the next fifty years the population increased so much that in 1755 there were 464 persons in the parish, and in the parish we of course include Lumphinans as well as Balbedie and all that lies between. By 1793 the number has gone down nearly a half, for in that year it was only 220. This great decrease is accounted for by Mr Hardy through the fields being laid down in grass, the estates, he says, being now in the hands of considerable dealers in cattle. Thus we conclude that in the earlier years the parish was chiefly agricultural.

From this point (1793) the numbers began to rise again. In 1801 there were 277 of a population; in 1821 there were 287; and in 1831 there were 372, exclusive of some twenty labourers, who were strangers, and only temporarily employed. In 1881, when the last census was taken, the population was 1065; and in 1891, unless there be some check, of which there is at present no sign whatever, the numbers will be found to have still further and enormously increased.

It is the people of the olden time, however, who chiefly excite our interest, and here we learn that in bygone years there were from 260 to 300 of a population in the parish, from which the members of the kirk could be drawn; and the question is: Can we present to our imagination a picture of what the congregation would be like? Do we know the precise elements of which the membership of the church was composed? We do, with tolerable certainty. There was first the minister and the elders; but as we are afterwards to consider them specially, we shall for the present set them aside. Then there were the heritors; but they also are to be treated of in another chapter. We may even ask the precentor to stand by, as he was usually the schoolmaster, and the schoolmasters come before us later on. Of the ploughmen little need be said. They rose in the morning, tilled the fields, tended their horses, ate and slept as the ploughmen do now, only the fare was plainer, and the whole style of living simpler than is now the case.

The first to whom we shall give particular attention is that important church functionary, the beadle.

The duties of the beadle in olden time were very varied, and his emoluments considerable. He had first of all to ring the bell, and prepare the church or the school for the Sabbath services. If through illness or any other cause he requires a substitute, this substitute is paid for the ringing of the bell at the rate of 2d. per Sabbath day. When delinquents are cited to appear before the session or congregation, they are cited by the beadle. On one occasion, when a delinquent was expected and failed to appear, it was explained that the reason of the failure was that "the beddall being sick all week," this person "was not summoned," and the citation was made for the following Sabbath. In a vacancy, when the pulpit was to

be supplied by a neighbouring minister on a particular day, that minister was duly reminded of his engagement by a visit from the beadle. He was the general messenger of the session and servant of the church. Though he was not a regular sexton—for the friends of the dead seem themselves to have dug the graves, or arranged for the digging of them privately—yet, when a poor person died who had no friends to dig the grave, the beadle performed this duty at the session's expense. He makes the sackcloth that penitents wear; and for sundry tasks not requiring much skill, such as mending the "kirkyaird" dyke, he was the man who was retained.

As beadle he had a sort of annual retaining fee, of, say, £4, 10s. Scots; then he had an allowance for baptisms, marriages, and funerals; he got so much for carrying out the mortcloth; he is paid 10s., or other sum as determined, "for digging a poore persone's grave." For the messages he goes, as well as for his trouble in summoning delinquents, he receives certain other sums. Thus we read: "Given to the beddall for going to the Paran Well, 6s.;" "For going twice to Cleish, 12s.;" "Given to the beddle for summoning A. B. twice [from Auchterderran], 12s." And that he may be prepared to go these errands he is kept in shoes. Year by year, and sometimes by the half-year, there is the regular entry in the cash-book, "For the beddall's shoes," or "Given to the beddall to buy a pair of shoes," £1, 6s., or £1, 10s. Then he has his allowance at the sacrament of £1, 10s. He has his house meal, which is valued at £6 a half-year. And there are other occasional sums that come his way—*e.g.*, when a service is held in the church on the king's birthday, which service is always called "the solemnitie," the collection is given to the beadle. When he rings the bell on coronation night he earns thereby 2s.

Now, these figures seem rather large; but if you remember always that they are to be reckoned as so many pounds Scots, they will not appear quite so formidable. A pound Scots is 20d., a shilling Scots is therefore 1d. sterling. Thus, when you hear that the beadle receives, for going twice to Cleish, 12s., and remember that to us that means 12d. or 1s., you see that he is not very much overpaid for his walk of twenty-two miles.

When the faithful beadle comes to die, as a token of respect and honour he receives the mortcloth gratis. But the world must move on; and so in the next line we read: "To the new beddle to buy a shovel and spade shaft, £1, 1s."

The family of the beadle are also pressed into the service of the church. Thus it is the beadle's son who rings the bell for three days in his father's absence, and he is remunerated with the sum of 4s. Scots—*i.e.*, 4d.; and it is his wife who usually washes the tablecloth after the communion, thus winning towards the maintenance of the household 4d. or 6d., as the case may be.

Another semi-public character in the parish and in the membership of the church is the smith. For him there is very frequent employment about the church. Every now and again he is summoned to "mend the kirk bell." And this is a task which must have its intricacies, for though sometimes it is perfectly clear what has gone wrong—as, *e.g.*, when the chain breaks—it is not always so, and the puzzled clerk, desiring to be accurate, can only say, "For mending somewhat about the bell, 6s." Then all the locks of all the doors in the kirk and "kirkyaird" gates are his peculiar care, and we are always told whether it is the east door of the kirk or the west "style" of the "kirkyaird" whose lock has given way and requires to be mended or replaced. For "a band of iron for a seat in the loft" he gets £1, 6s. 8d.; for "two pairs of bands for the church windows" the charge is only 14s.

More interesting, however, than these details is the fact that the smith is always employed at the time of the communion. At this season the tables have to be put up in the church, and the tent erected in the churchyard. The tent is a wooden structure, but the smith supplies the nails. Over and over again we have the item: "For a hundred nails for the tables and the tent, 7s.," or, as it may happen, 8s. And he it was who likewise made the tokens. In 1704 we discover that for 650 tokens the smith receives £2, 10s. In 1723 there is needed a fresh supply, and there is given "to the smith for making the tokens £1, 6s. 8d."

These old iron tokens are very rare. So far as I have been able to discover, there is not one in the parish. There

are one or two in the country, in the possession of gentlemen who have made collections of old tokens; but in some of the collections this one is awanting still. I lately heard of one in America, kept and prized by an old parishioner as a memento of dear Ballingry.

A new and large supply of tokens was got for the church in 1864, but there is nothing interesting about these. They are of lead, stamped out by a machine, sharp in the edge, and altogether devoid of even the suggestion of antiquity. In 1882 these leaden things were discarded for the still more modern paper token, on which is written the name of the communicant, in order that the communion roll—which in election time is such an important document—may be kept with the strictest accuracy.

After the smith comes the wright, and he, too, figures at communion time. He erects the tables and the tent, supplying, when needful, the wood that is required. In 1727 he has to bring "the deals and trees to make a tent," which cost the session £6, 18s., and for the making of the tent he charges £1, 10s. The wright is sent to "mend the seats in the loft of the church," to mend the communion tables, to make the gates and "styles," to mend the "brod," to make the window frames for the church, put a shaft to the kirk spade, and make coffins for the poor.

Now let us get away from the church and out into the parish, and see what other classes of people there are to be members of the church. When, let us ask, do we first meet with colliers? At a very early date. In the *History of Dunfermline*, so far back as the thirteenth century, we find reference to a "black stone called coal." We learn that it was the sixteenth century before coal came into general use in Scotland. It is in the beginning of that century that Boethius speaks of the "black stone" found in Fife. This "black stone" had been found in Ballingry, and was being worked by miners in 1710, for in that year our session has to deal with a "couliar" in the Blair. Four years later they have before them a woman from the Blair, who is described as a "coal-bearer." To understand that term you require to know the methods the miners adopted 180 years ago. They had no

deep pits nor powerful machinery, but ran their mine down at an angle not too steep, only a very few fathoms; and the coal they dug out was brought up to the surface in baskets by women, to whom this name of coal-bearer was given.

The coalworks at the Blair were on no very large scale, nor have they continued without interruption to the present day. For many years the pits were closed. It is only in recent years that the collieries in this neighbourhood have been developed. At Lochgelly the first pit was situated near where the railway station has been placed, and in 1804 only thirteen people found employment there. In 1836 there were fifty-one workers; but this number was largely increased in 1848, and still further increased in 1857, when there were four iron furnaces in blast. Lumphinans coalworks began in 1826, and Capeldrae in 1835. The Lochore mines were opened in 1867, two years after Crosshill had begun. Milton opened in 1870; and in the present decade followed Manorleys, Benarty, Rosewell, and Kinnimont, and, for a short time, also Westfield, giving employment at the busiest times to about five hundred workmen.

There was yet another vocation at the Blair in olden time not represented now, and that was the brewing of ale. The brewer appears as early as 1705, and his implements and manner of working would doubtless be of a very primitive character.

The mention of the brewer suggests the house in which the manufactured article is sold; and with the inn we have the innkeeper, who likewise is a member of the church. In 1760 we read of Jean Bruce at the Shank, and the liquors that she had to sell. Of her and them we shall speak anon.

In connection with the windows of the church we often read about the glazier; when houses are being built we have within our borders barrowmen; but as these were probably imported for the occasion, we cannot properly reckon them amongst our members. We have also a peculiar reference to a constable. This is in 1707, long before we meet with the term "policeman." The names of delinquents are given up to him, though for what purpose, or who this constable was, is not declared. He also, in all likelihood, would be a stranger to the parish.

The boundaries of our parish, *quoad civilia*, are the same as they were in the early days; but, *quoad sacra*, there has been a change. Lumphinans, Cartmore, and all in the parish south of the Fitty Burn, which is the southern boundary of Glencraig, has been assigned to the care of the church in Lochgelly. The foundation-stone of the Lochgelly Church was laid on the 29th of June 1855; and on the 22nd July 1856 the Rev. Mr Wilson, the first minister of Lochgelly, applies to Ballingry kirk-session for authority to admit to the communion at Lochgelly all qualified persons in the district assigned, or to be assigned, to him, *quoad sacra*. His request was unanimously granted. And from that day to this the two churches of Lochgelly and Ballingry have each held their own course, independent of each other, but each interested in the other's welfare, and mutually helpful.

Lumphinans and Lochgelly, the populous portions of Ballingry parish, being severed from the old church, there remains under its spiritual care a population which varies at from 400 to about 460. A few years ago, when Capeldrae was flourishing, our communion roll reached the number of 221; on the 19th December 1889, when last the roll was purged, our number of communicants was 185.

CHAPTER III.

THE MINISTERS OF THE PARISH.

In our last chapter we stated that Ballingry had been a parish before the Reformation. We may date the Reformation from 1560, for it was in that year that the first General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was held. That the new order of things might be gradually introduced into the several parishes of Scotland, superintendents were appointed, and it was ordained that no minister in any parish should administer the sacraments without authority received from one of those superintendents. The superintendent of Fife was John Winram, one of the first five who held this office in the country.

In that year (1560), and for several years before it, the Roman Catholic minister of Ballingry was Alexander Wardlaw, son of the Laird of Torry, of that same family who became proprietors of Ballingry, and lived in Lochore Castle. Wardlaw, the minister, would not stoop to ask authority from Winram to administer the sacraments, nor would he demit his office; and Winram, in the exercise of his duty, sent Peter Watson in 1561 to act in this capacity. But when he essayed to "baptis ane bairn," Wardlaw resisted him. If he allowed any one to supersede him in this function, he considered he would be reduced to the position of a *reader*—which was the name given to men of inferior attainments, who temporarily occupied a minister's place till a properly qualified minister could be found—and he vehemently declared that "he would not be ane redar to John Knox nor any other in Scotland." When Watson further attempted to celebrate a marriage, Wardlaw again interfered, and would not permit him to proceed. There was nothing left for Watson but to call in Winram; and he came, though at much inconvenience, for he had "other gret besines." Being here, however, he took occasion to admonish Wardlaw, and the

parishioners generally, to repair the church; but so little was Wardlaw overawed by the appearance of that high official that he openly declared that "the Devill ane penne he wald spend upon the kyrk gewand Ewill exempill and occasion to the parochinaris to leyf undon thar dutie;" and on the following day, in presence of the heritors, he reviled Winram, and said "he wald do nothing in that behalve nor obey any admonition or command of that fals dissaitful gredy and dissembling smayk, for he was ane of them that maist oppressed, smored, and held down the word of God." So hot was he that he added "or I war not revenged on that fals smaik I had lever renunce my part of the kyrk of God."

Being met in this way, Winram had no option but to prosecute Wardlaw. At the trial the minister made a bold stand. He spoke out against the superintendent, declaring that "he hundit the haill country against him and was very partial." He also denied some of the charges made against him; and when the witnesses were produced he objected to them, although some of them were his near relatives. From the evidence it appeared that so determined was he to stop Watson from officiating in his church that he had actually provided Jedwood staves in the chancel. The procurator conducted the case for Winram successfully, and Wardlaw was ordered to make public satisfaction, both in the church of St Andrews and in that of Ballingry, under pain of excommunication. (*Fife News*, April 1889.)

Thus Peter Watson, whom we shall consider the first minister of Ballingry after the Reformation, was left in peace to the due performance of his ministerial duties. Before the Reformation he had been a member of the Chapter of St Andrews. For six years he ministered to the congregation of Ballingry, and then he was translated to Markinch.

On his disappearance in 1567, Alexander Wardlaw reappears; not, however, as the minister, but only as the exhorter. He had been subdued, he is still kept humble; and it is not till 1574 that he recovered his full status as minister of the parish. Immediately on his being restored to his office he engaged a reader, generously paying his salary out of his very meagre stipend.

The next minister of Ballingry was William Braidfute, who was appointed in 1580. The only thing recorded of him is that he was transferred to Markinch; but that was only a temporary arrangement, for he was sent back to Ballingry before 1585, and the parish had the benefit of his ministrations for other ten years.

David Anderson, A.M., who was admitted to this charge in the summer of 1595, appears to have had some character. He was appointed at a time when Episcopacy was making vigorous efforts to hold sway in Scotland, and he is described as the vicar of the parish. Whatever his own wishes may have been, he found his parishioners had no desire that way. King James had long been struggling to assimilate the doctrine and the worship of the Church of Scotland to that of England, and had so far succeeded that he had secured in 1618 the sanction of the Assembly at Perth to the famous Five Articles regarding the sacraments, the first of which was "that the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ should be received kneeling." When David Anderson was asked at the Synod in 1620 whether he had administered the sacrament according to the Act of the Assembly at Perth, he replied, "No; my parishioners will not receive it in that manner from me." As there were in the Church both ministers and congregations in great numbers who would not obey the injunctions of this Assembly, it is not surprising that both our minister and congregation escaped on this occasion without censure.

This poor minister had troubles of a personal as well as an ecclesiastical kind, for we read that he was violently attacked "fornint his own dwelling-house at the kyrk of Ballingry," and in the struggle that ensued he lost his right arm.

Coming now to 1641, we chronicle the appointment of Robert Bruce, A.M., who was presented to this living by John, Earl of Rothes, in November 1640. His ministry extended over seven years. One of his two daughters, the one named Helen, was married to the minister of Portmoak, whose name was also Bruce.*

Of the next minister we have fuller information than of any that have gone before, for now we can draw upon our own

* For above see chiefly Hew Scott's *Fasti.*

church records, as we have reached the year 1669, when James Martin, A.M., becomes the minister of this place. He brought with him ripe years and much experience, and set himself to work in the most methodical and business-like manner. He increased the eldership, tightened the discipline, and carried out all parochial arrangements with order and regularity. So strict was he that, on one occasion when a contract of marriage had been entered into without his consent, he would not allow it to be held as valid, although the names had been taken in in good faith by two of his own elders. Before coming here Mr Martin had been minister of Auchtermuchty. He died in February 1684, at the age of seventy, so that when he came to Ballingry he had been fifty-five years of age.

In the same year in which Mr Martin died he was succeeded by Mr Henry Malcolm, who was the son of a writer in Cupar, and no relative of the Malcolm family who had and still have so much interest in this parish. He was that Episcopal minister of whom mention was formerly made. Here is the note that we find about him, formally written out on a special page of the minute-book:—

"Mr Henry Malcolm was admitted minister of Balingrie, 24th September 1684, and deprived by the King's Council for not taking the oaths, 22nd July 1701."

Now, this was a very strong measure for the King's Council to take in the case of the minister of Ballingry. It seems the more surprising when we consider that the King's Council was notoriously lenient. Dr Cunningham tells us that "a multitude of the Episcopal ministers still occupied the parish manses and preached in the parish pulpits." Perhaps the cause of the deprivation here was the zeal of the Presbytery. Perhaps it was stubbornness on the part of the incumbent, or, if he would prefer it, a stern adherence to principle. I am rather inclined to think the people of Ballingry would have something to do with it. A congregation which was Episcopalian defied the law and kept their curate or their clergyman; but this congregation, which was so sturdily Presbyterian that it would not receive the sacrament at the hands of the vicar in the kneeling posture, would submit to the rule of an Episcopalian only so long as it was necessary, and would actively help in ridding themselves

of a government of which they did not approve, and cause the removal of him who was the embodiment of that government. If there had been a better feeling between Mr Malcolm and his parishioners, he would not have given them the annoyance, and put them to the expense he did, when he carried with him to Edinburgh even the church utensils. Mr Malcolm died in Cupar in 1727, at the age of seventy-four.

In 1702 the parish was fortunate in obtaining as its spiritual guide Mr Andrew Wardroper, A.M., who, at the age of fifty-three, came from the second charge in Kirkcaldy to minister here. He was an earnest, pious, devoted son of the Church, always apparently actuated by a fine Christian spirit. The character and temperament of the man is exhibited in the arrangements he made regarding the celebration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. He had been about two years here ere he bethought him it was time to celebrate this ordinance. It must not be profaned by too frequent repetition. Two years after that again we find the following minute:—"The minister acquainted the session *that he had some thoughts* of administrating the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Therefore he desired that a day should be prefixed for examination and prayer, to beg counsel and direction from God in going about such a solemn work. Which being considered it was resolved that they should meet the 25th day of this current (June 1706) for prayer."

On the 25th they accordingly met, and having spent part of the day in prayer, they "thereafter concluded that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper should be administrat in this place upon the first Sabbath of August next to come."

In other two years we have the session taking the initiative, and we read: "The session took into consideration that *it was time to think* of the administration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and it being a matter of great weight, they thought it meet to ask advice by prayer to God, and then concluded that the second Sabbath of June next be the day wherein the said sacrament shall be administrat in this place."

For "the orderly and decent regulating of the administration of that solemn ordinance" the following are the rules; and after you hear the rules you will be able to picture to yourselves

what a Communion Sunday would be like in Ballingry in olden time :—

"That such strangers as are to communicat bring Testimonials from their respective ministers. And if so be their ministers be here they are to repair to them.

"Such as have no Testimonials shall not receive tokens.

"Sermon is to begin on the Saturday at eleven of the clock in the forenoon. Such as do not communicat are to have preaching without doors. Therefore they are to be exhorted to stay without.

"Communicants are to enter the east door of the kirk and go out at the west door.

"That such as come from the tables must not throng to their seats, but go out and hear sermon without doors.

"And likewise that people that have seats may endeavour to accommodate strangers.

"And that such as do not communicate may not sit down at the table, and that such who are to communicate that sit down in the morning to hear sermon, may not rise therefrom untill they participat of that holy Sacrament.

"The tokens are to be gathered at the table after they are set down. These who want tokens are not to enter the kirk untill sermon begin, and then if there be any room they may enter, provyding they remove when the tables are serving. And if the action be without doors, that such as are to communicat be placed nearest the table.

"Sermon is to begin on the Sabbath day precislie at eight of the clock, and the doors to be opened at seven.

"There is no collection of the poors money to be at the tables, but it is to be collected at the doors.

"Sermon is to begin on the Munday at nine of the clock."

It is also arranged what elders are to take the collection on the several days, and when everything has been agreed upon the minister concludes with prayer.

On the 13th of June 1717 Mr Wardroper died, and shortly afterwards it was announced that he had left fifty merks to the poor of the parish. The session accept the money gratefully, and in recording the gift "for ane encouragement for others to follow the like example," they take occasion to pay a tribute

to "their late worthie, faithful, and laborious pastor, whose memory," they poetically say, "will be for ever fragrant."

In Hew Scott's *Fasti* it is recorded, without remark, as if there was no doubt about it, that during the incumbency of Mr Wardroper there were seven years in which there was neither birth, baptism, marriage, nor funeral in the parish. There is a tradition in the parish at the present day to the same effect. It was related to me by a parishioner, on the authority of her grandmother, as having been true of a period within the last hundred years. Now, it does not happen to be true. I have consulted the record of the mortcloth, of which I spoke in the last chapter, from which it appears that there was no year of the fifteen in which Mr Wardroper ministered here in which there was not one or more deaths. How, then, could the story have arisen? It is probably a case of "the three black crows." On the fly-leaf of our oldest minute-book this short note appears: "From Jun 22, 1685, to Jun 3, 1686 exclus., died only one." Now, this "only one" in the course of time has grown down to none; and the one year indicated has increased to "two," then "three," till the magic "seven" has been reached; and the statement has gradually widened its application till it has taken in not only deaths, but births, baptisms, and marriages.

As if to show the utter futility of making a statement without the requisite authority, it so happens that for those very years we have a list of the baptisms and marriages that took place. From 1701 to 1721 there is no year in which there were not several baptisms; and from 1706, when the record begins, to 1722, with the exception of 1711, there is no year without its marriages. We thus are in a position to relegate to the category of exploded ideas the supposition that there was, at any period, seven years of such complete parochial stagnation as this tradition has affirmed. Obviously it would be very dangerous to pin our faith upon tradition.

This will be the proper place to speak of the manner in which the baptisms were performed. That there was no fixed rule is manifest from the terms in which the first three notices that appear in this list are expressed:—

"August 13, 1701.—This day Patrick Greig had a child

baptized called Catharine before thir witnesses Robert Bogie of Kinnestoun and Robert Dick in Ballingry.

"November 2, 1701.—Georg Marshall had a child baptized before the congregation called David.

"George Peadg had a child baptized at Portmoak Kirk called Georg."

There you have private baptism, baptism before the congregation, and baptism which took place in another parish.

This case of baptism in Portmoak is by no means isolated. There are others recorded that took place in Auchterderran, Beath, Kinglassie, and Cleish. Why Ballingry children were baptised in those other parishes is not explained. For some reason it must have been more convenient. Perhaps the majority of the infants' friends lived in the other parish, and the minister of that parish was not unwilling to do his neighbour a friendly turn; or perhaps, that they might have their child baptised by their own minister without delay, the parents followed him to the parish where he happened to be preaching for the day.

Here is another interesting fact revealed by this list of baptisms. In 1702 there were fourteen baptisms, and seven of these took place "before the congregation." In 1703 there were again fourteen, of which *eleven* are "before the congregation." In 1704 there were eighteen, of which only *one* is "before the congregation." In 1705 there are thirteen baptisms, but of this number *not one* takes place "before the congregation." And after that they all seem to be done in private. What inference may be drawn from figures such as these? It seems as if, when the new minister comes, he impresses upon the people the duty of bringing their children to the church for baptism. For a year, or a year and a half, the exhortation is effectual, but then the old habit reasserts itself, and the people fall back into the old way. The testimony of the moderns will be that "history repeats itself."

Here let us interpolate also a sentence or two about the marriages.

Although the list is headed "Persons who were Married," it is, properly speaking, a list only of "persons contracted in order to marriage," and corresponds to our present book of

proclamation of banns. As a specimen of the form of entry take the following, which heads the list:—

"James Alexander, in the parish of Aberdour, was contracted in order to marriage with Christian Nicolson, in this parish of Balingrie. John Alexander was cautioner for the man, and James Kellock for the woman."

After a perusal of this list you are struck with the fact that scarce ever do either of the parties come from a distance. They either belong to Ballingry or a neighbouring parish. You are surprised also to meet so often with the name of "Catherin." And there is further this interesting fact—you are afforded a pleasant glimpse into the domestic life of the parish. Thus, when you read, under date August 23, 1719, "The Laird of Rossie in the parish of Forgan, and Mrs Joan Colvill in this parish, were contracted," you can picture the scene of joyousness and festivity that would ensue in the old house of Benarty.

We have one notice, however, of an actual marriage, and that was one which took place, in accordance with the law of the Church, in the church itself. This is evidently an exceptional case. It is under its proper date, but among the baptisms. It is at the bottom of a page and in blacker ink, thus suggesting the thought that it was inserted at some odd time other than when the baptisms were filled in. The notice runs thus:—

"Dec. 7 [1705].—James Lavrock and Janet Moyes were married at the kirk of Balingrie."

The minister who succeeded Mr Wardroper was Mr Robert Balfour, A.M. He was a probationer, but had been acting as chaplain to Sir John Wemyss of Bogie. He was presented to the living by Sir John Malcolm in July 1717; in July of the year 1718 the call was subscribed, but it was not till 25th March 1719 that he was ordained. The officiating minister was Mr Drysdale of Kirkcaldy, and, after the usual procedure, we are told that "the moderator and remanent members of the presbytrie did give him the right hand of fellowship, and the heritors, elders, and masters of families took him by the hand, *in token of their owning of and submitting to him as their lawfull pastor.*"

For thirty-eight years the affairs of the parish move on

regularly and smoothly, giving little occasion for the making of a remark. But in 1757 Mr Balfour falls ill, and continues indisposed for so many years that matters get into a very backward state, and even into confusion. At length the heritors have to intervene, and there is a long dispute between them and the minister, which we shall have afterwards to describe. There is one man, however, who is always at his post, and that is the clerk. Beginning two months after the minister ceases to preach, he writes down, Sunday after Sunday, whether there was a sermon, and if there was, who preached it, and whether there was any collection taken. He heads his account thus: "A Record of the Sabbath Days and when any preaching the time of Mr Balfour's Indisposition, which began near two months since or preceding this date [December 4, 1757] and no Elders acting."

It is rather a dreary record. In the church there is service only occasionally, when a neighbouring minister is sent by the Presbytery, or a probationer comes, or a schoolmaster can be found to make a few observations. Mr Balfour lived till the 1st of May 1773—that is to say, he was out of his pulpit for fifteen years and a half, and during that time there were in all only 192 sermons preached in Ballingry. Mr Hardy, his successor, was not ordained till the 16th of June 1774. While the vacancy lasted there were 18 sermons preached, giving a total of 210 sermons in about seventeen years, or, on an average, a sermon once a month. But towards the end of this period there are long breaks of seven months or eight months at a time, when the church door was never opened. In the last six years of the period there were only 24 sermons preached—*i.e.*, at the rate of one in the quarter. Up to the end of 1763 the church-door collections amounted to £15, 13s. 11d. Scots, or £1, 6s. 2d., being about 5s. in the year; and then, for a certain reason, collections ceased to be made. Affairs were in a very unsatisfactory state. The minister was ill, and could do nothing; the elders were few, and they did nothing; the Presbytery were asleep, they were culpably careless, doing next to nothing. It is almost a marvel how the congregation held together. It was a long-suffering congregation; but it was moved with sympathy for the old

man in his weakness, and when he died their sentiment found expression in the words of the painstaking clerk, who writes in his cash-book, under date 6th May 1773: "To the best cloth to the corps of Mr Balfour (minister here for the space of 54 years, who is buried below Mr Wardroper's stone before the pulpit in the church) gratis."

The next incumbent, Mr Thomas Hardy, son of a minister at Culross, was presented to this living by Sir Michael Malcolm in 1774. The outstanding facts of his time are these: that he was proprietor of Navitie; that he kept a cash-book of his own, with which he compared the clerk's book and duly certified its exactness; and that in 1784, after he had been ten years here, he was translated to the High Church of Edinburgh.

Mr James Lawrie, who was also presented by Sir Michael Malcolm, died in 1788, after he had ministered here for only three years. This was the minister whose friends carried off the cash-book and the poor's money, doubtless unwittingly, restoring them, however, after the lapse of three years.

Mr Thomas Scott, son of the minister of South Leith, obtained this charge from Captain Park, who was now the patron, but resigned it in April 1801, on his being translated to Newton.

In 1802 we are introduced to Mr James Wallace, who held the ministerial office here for four years, when he obtained an appointment to Whitekirk and Tynningham. He took with him to Whitekirk his old housekeeper, who, on being asked how she liked the place, answered, "Oh, the place is weel eneuch, but it's no like bonny B'ingry." This minister in his time obtained the highest dignity which the Church can confer upon any of her sons, for he was elevated to the Moderator's Chair.

Coming now to 1807, we are brought into touch with modern times, for in that year Mr James Greig was nominated for the vacancy in this parish by Mr Syme, who now possessed Lochore. We have still on our communion roll members who were admitted to the sacrament by Mr Greig, and at least one couple who were married by him. They remember him as an old man with his grey hair, his staff, and knee breeches. He was minister for forty-three years, and died only forty years ago. He seems

to have been of a high-strung, nervous temperament, which made him appear to be timorous, and gave rise to several of the stories that are preserved concerning him. Some two and a half years before the opening of the new church here in 1831, there had been a calamity in the parish church of Kirkcaldy. While Edward Irving was preaching there, a gallery fell in and thirty people were killed. Mr Greig had fears for the opening day lest a crowd should come to Ballingry, and there should be a similar catastrophe. Hence he made the opening ceremony as quiet as he possibly could. He was abnormally afraid of thunder, and discovering one day, when he was on his way to Benarty to dine, that an electrical storm was brewing, he left the dinner and his entertainers to wait for him in vain, while he returned and buried himself in his bedclothes. He was of grave demeanour, and on occasion could be even courtly, as when, in reply to the lady who wished to see the pulpit covered with red cloth, he said, "I should be sorry, madam, to mention in your presence of what lady red is the emblem." But he was yet approachable, and in his ordinary conversation did not disdain to use the homely Doric. He used to declare that "when he came to the parish there were only seventy reekin' lums in it."

During this minister's time there was a great deal of litigation about the teinds, and when the case came to the House of Lords, he wrote to Lord Brougham, the Chancellor, saying that he would let the papers speak for themselves, for he could not risk any more expense in the employment of counsel. His caution was justified, for the case was decided in his favour.

In the great turmoil of 1843 it is said that Mr Greig wavered; but his brother Christopher, the minister of St Ninians, who always came here to assist at the communions, was more precipitate. "He cam' oot an' rued it" was the averment of the villagers, and James, profiting by his experience, stayed in. When Mr Greig died there was a proposal to bury him in the church, but other counsels prevailed. His tombstone stands just opposite the east door of the church.

Following Mr Greig came Mr James Cuthbert, who was ordained on the 4th of September 1851. During all his time the minutes are regularly kept, but nothing happens that is

worthy of special notice. In the early part of 1857 Mr Cuthbert resigns his appointment, and in November of the same year appears the name of Mr James Pennell, my immediate predecessor. Mr Cuthbert was also of a volatile, nervous temperament; he had some scholarly qualities, and was specially gifted with the faculty of deciphering old manuscripts.

Of Mr Pennell it is quite unnecessary that I should speak. Many still in the parish knew him well. I shall only note one or two of the changes that took place during his incumbency.

Like Mr Greig, Mr Pennell had to enter into litigation concerning the teinds. This litigation proved to be both protracted and keen. But Mr Pennell was eminently successful, for he succeeded in securing an augmentation to the stipend of no less than six and a half chalders; and to increase the value of the living is, of course, to benefit the church. He also permanently improved the glebe, causing a portion of it to be drained, and getting the glebe cottage built. He also carried through the arrangement by which an acre of the glebe was feued for the cemetery. Financially this also was an improvement, that acre being almost of as much monetary value as all the other acres of the glebe put together.

While attending to the temporalities, Mr Pennell was also carrying through some alterations in the church and the church services. He early introduced a winter dispensation of the sacrament. In 1873 there was for the first time simultaneous communion. In the early part of 1876 there was the introduction of the harmonium, and towards the end of the year there was brought into use for the service of praise the "Scottish Hymnal." It was in this year that the improvement of the church took place, Mr Pennell's personal contribution to the improvement being the gift of the communion chair, which is greatly admired by connoisseurs, and also of the chairs in the vestry. After a short illness Mr Pennell died abroad, at the comparatively early age of fifty-three. His friend, Mr Peters, the minister of Kinross, preached the funeral sermon, and testified to his many excellences as a man and as a parish minister.

The present incumbent entered on his ministry here on the 18th of July 1882.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ELDERS AND THEIR DUTIES.

In the smaller country parishes in olden time the eldership was generally much more numerous than it is now. If to-day in our parish we had seven elders acting, we should certainly consider that number quite sufficient for all they are expected or required to do. When Mr Martin came from Auchtermuchty in 1669 and found that there were only seven, he at once suggested the propriety of adding to the number. There were already these seven—John Greige, John Millne, Alexander Balzie, John Patersone, Andrew Nickelsone, Adam Meldrum, and Thomas Betsone. The session, after due consideration, nominated other six—viz., the Laird of Balbedie, elder; Mr Alexander Colvill of Blair, Mr David Scrimgeour of Cartmore, Sir John Malcolme, James Betsone of Contle, and Archibald Douglas. Of these the Laird of Blair absolutely refused to accept office; the proprietor of Cartmore excused himself on the ground of his almost constant residence in Edinburgh; but the other four accept nomination, and, after the requisite procedure, which did not differ from that of the present day, are duly installed, and the minister is pleased at having now the assistance of eleven good working elders.

The reason why there must be so many in a session was that the duties to be performed were so multifarious. There were not only their ecclesiastical functions, but there was likewise entrusted to them the care of the poor. They were the Parochial Board of the parish; they superintended the educational requirements of the place, thus doing the work of the modern School Board; and they were also burdened with certain judicial tasks which are now assigned to the secular courts of law.

To overtake these varied duties the session made use of the

principle of division of labour. Thus we find, for example, one of their number chosen as box-master. The duties of this functionary were to receive the "weekly collections," and such sums as came to hand from other sources; "and at Whitsonday yearly to clear his accountes and to get an exoneratione from y^e^ Sessione," when another would be chosen to do this work. If a scandal broke out in any part of the parish, two elders were sent to enquire and report. When a tenant in the property which the session held for the poor sought repairs to his house, another two were commissioned to inspect the part complained of, with or without powers to cause the repairs to be done, but in any case to report as to their diligence. When our tenant complains that the Laird of Dowhill's tenant, who is his neighbour, molests him as he works in his field, the minister and an elder undertake to "speak to Dowhill," that he may restrain this disturber of the peace. Then, again, we find an elder appointed collector for the "minister's maunce." When a poor woman makes a special appeal, an elder is told off to buy her "six elles of plaiden." When the communion linen requires to be renewed, two elders are appointed to see that this is done.

As organisation would be fruitless without the divine blessing, our elders avail themselves of the help to be derived from prayer. There is frequent mention of an occasional day of which a part is spent in prayer, but in Mr Wardroper's time they decide upon a particular day on which they are to regularly hold a diet of prayer. The day fixed is the first Monday of each month. How long they acted upon this resolution we cannot tell, for at the conclusion of the first meeting the minute runs thus: "Thir meetings for prayer are not to be recorded after this."

That the elders would be uniformly zealous is more than could be expected. You have already heard of the unhappy time when, according to the clerk, there were "no elders acting." At that time there were two who should have been acting; and when assessors were called in, they were "recommended" by the session so constituted to attend to their duties, and collect for the poor at the church doors. But so disaffected were they that they did not observe this recommendation. One of them

intimated that he had now gone to live at Lochgelly, in the parish of Auchterderran, and so for the time being he escapes animadversion; but the other, when he declared that he was resolved not to collect till certain accounts for meal were taken off his hands, they told him that that was an insufficient excuse, and he was rebuked; it was "recommended to him to take up that part of his office again, with certification that if he does not before next meeting, they will proceed to higher censure against him."

In other and more prosperous days an elder sometimes excused himself from attending the session meetings from advancing age, and from his living at a great distance from church; and then, again, when one has been appointed representative to the Presbytery or the Synod, he begs to be allowed to absent himself, the hay being almost ready, or the harvest being near. It must be noted, however, that failures and excuses are quite the exception.

The prime function of the eldership is to constitute an ecclesiastical court, and our elders are found to act in that capacity. The session here has the usual relation to the Presbytery, the Synod, and the General Assembly. They regularly send representatives to the Presbytery, which usually meets at Kirkcaldy, and to the Synod, which meets by turns at Kirkcaldy, Cupar, and St Andrews. In any difficulty they at once appeal to the Presbytery, and they obey the injunctions of all the superior courts.

The first mention made of the Assembly is in 1705, where an elder hands over in session the sum of £185 belonging to the poor, which was "delivered to him to keep the time the minister was at the Assembly." In 1704 the Synod of Fife passed a certain act anent "testimonials," which was read before the congregation. In carrying out the provisions of that act, it was intimated that the elders would call in their several districts to receive testimonials from those who had not brought them in. Parishioners will be interested to learn the names of the elders at this time, with the districts for which they are severally responsible. James Beans and Patrick Kinnell are to require testimonials from those in Inchgall, Bowhouse, Ladath, and the Blair [Lochore and Benarty]; John Kilgour and Edward

Hoy, from those in South and North Lumphinans, Denhead, Moorhead, Cartmore, and Bandrum; Andrew Weillie and Thomas Hoge, from those in Inchgall, Milne, Contle, Clun, Milltown, Crosshill, Brigleys, and Spittle; John Wilson and Robert Steedman, from those in Kirkland, Navitie, Ballingry, Balbedie, Hynds, and Tushielaw.

As a court of the Church the session is at the service of the parish, ready at all times to hear complaints and dispense justice between man and man. Thus, when any person in the parish has been slandered by his neighbour, it is to the session that he comes for redress. There are several cases of slander reported. The first case is one in which John Robertson of Navitie (1672) is ordered to be summoned upon a bill given in by Robert Greig, that the said John Robertson had scandalised him in the matter of stealing sheep. Mr Robertson, being sick, could not appear the first day, and is therefore "summoned against the next day—*pro secundo.*" He appeared, and denied the words of the libel, affirming that he only said the ewe was seen bleating at Robert Greig's house. After the case has been considered, the judgment is expressed in the following words:—"The session does not find what John Robertson has spoke to have been slander."

In another case, where a woman is accused, she "confesses the most part of the points libelled," and as a punishment is "ordained to declare her repentance before the pulpit" for her "scolding and foule slandering."

When witnesses were brought forward to prove the averments on either side, before their testimony was taken they were first "solemlie sworn, purged of malice and partial counsel, good deed done, or promised to be done, to witness in this affair."

To prevent parishioners libelling their neighbours without due cause, the session imposed a penalty of 13s. 4d. upon all who made an accusation which they failed to substantiate.

The elders, however, did not wait till cases were brought to them for judgment. It was their duty to know what happened within their districts, to search out cases, and bring them to the consideration of the session. The minister regularly asked the elders if there were any faults to be related. Before communion time they were asked if they knew of any who

ought to be debarred from participation in the sacrament. Going over the examination roll name by name, they discussed the lives of the parishioners, and were prepared to deal with those who in any way fell short. They were expected to be strict. When the Presbytery made their visitation in 1678, and asked the minister, after the elders had been removed, how they performed their duties, it is said that "he gave them a good testimony, only desiring they might be exhorted to make conscience in attending the meetings of session, and be more careful to delate scandals in their several quarters and in the whole parish when they came to their knowledge."

In many parts of Scotland, even in quiet country places, a constant source of trouble to the session was the prevalence of intemperance; but in the case of Ballingry, although there is the inn there at the Shank from a very early date, there is never the slightest hint of drunkenness among the members of this congregation.

There are several instances, however, of the sin of Sabbath-breaking.

In midsummer of the year 1704 a flagrant report is circulated, and it is ascertained that the minister of Kinross has made a verbal complaint that David Paton, a servant of James Betson in Lumphinans, "did drive right open on the Sabbath day, in time of divine service, through the Parish of Kinross." David is summoned to the session to answer for his misdeed. Failing to appear, he is cited again, and as he has again neglected the citation, he is judged contumacious, and referred to the Presbytery. This august body secures him, and he is ordered to submit himself to the session for their censure. Appearing now humbly before them, he "acknowledges his guilt and promises [through grace] he should never be guilty of the like again." He is removed, and the session, considering the whole matter, judge that he be "sharply rebuked;" and on his being recalled, this is accordingly done.

In the month of March 1673 one of the elders brings before the session what he calls the "gross miscarriage" of three young men. He complained that betwixt sermons "they made a great stirre in the church, by casting divats and other cloades one at another before him and some other elders." They

are formally cited to appear before the session on a certain day. They all appear, profess that they are very sorry for what they had done, and promise not to do the like again. They are removed, and the session deliberate. As they were young men, and this was their first fault, and they were very penitent, it was decided to rebuke them only before the session. They were called in and received a quiet admonition.

Several years later a complaint was again made that there was noise in the church betwixt sermons. The minister this time simply admonishes the people, threatening, however, that if the noise be continued, the guilty persons would be summoned to the session for censure.

At another time it was found necessary to have an elder posted in the loft to keep order among its frivolous and unruly occupants.

It was always a serious difficulty to the kirk-session to know what they should do in the matter of irregular marriages. The cause of their hesitation was probably their feeling that they had not fully mastered all the facts of the case, and it was not easy to get authentic information. In the quiet of an October Sabbath morning a couple walk down from Ballingry to the "Ferrie" (from Pettycur to Leith), and on the Tuesday they return declaring they are husband and wife, for they were married in Edinburgh on the Monday. What can the session do, when they are told this by the parties, but "delay this affair till afterwards?"

On another occasion a man is brought before the elders, who, on being asked whether he is married or not, said that he thought not; and then he told a story of his formerly marrying a woman in a clandestine and irregular manner, because of representations that friends of hers had made who belonged to the seceding congregation in Kinross; but, he explained, he arranged with her privately that they were not to consider themselves married except on a certain emergency. The event referred to had not taken place, and so he looked upon himself as being still an unmarried man. The session considered that it hardly fell within their duty to clear up this uncertainty, and "in regard that this individual was not a member of the Established Church [anno 1777] they agree to take no further

steps respecting him. The woman, however, who was at present implicated along with him, did belong to the Established Church, and as it would be a hardship to refuse her offered satisfaction, they take her under discipline and "resolve not to engage in any unnecessary enquiries respecting the man's alleged marriage."

Still later (1798), a Ballingry couple appear, producing "a sort of lines of their marriage. The said marriage being irregular, They were Rebuked, for their Irregularity, acknowledged each other as Husband and Wife, and were Declared by the Mod^r^ to be married Persons."

In 1722 the session are informed that a parishioner has gone elsewhere and got baptism for his child without acknowledging the minister. This is held to be grossly irregular, and the delinquent is cited to appear. Though summoned on three successive Sundays, he refuses to appear, and the whole affair is referred to the Presbytery. About the same time our elders have to deal with a case of bigamy. This, too, has to be referred to the Presbytery.

As you are doubtless prepared to hear, the great majority of discipline cases with which the session have to deal arise through the sin of impurity.

In our records there are some cases possessing very peculiar and sadly interesting features, approaching sometimes even the tragic. In one case a hot-blooded youth was nearly murdering the maiden he had wronged in his efforts to conceal his shame. At another time our session had to deal with incest and child-murder.

But here let us say a word about the various kinds of punishment. The nature of the punishment depended upon the heinousness and aggravations of the sin. For this sin now under consideration the ordinary penalty was to appear before the congregation on three successive Sundays, and publicly be rebuked and exhorted on at least the last of the three days. If it were a relapse into the sin, that brought upon the offender the prominence of the "pillorie," which was a raised platform in a conspicuous place in the body of the church; and this bad eminence had to be endured sometimes for six successive days. Or if it were not the "pillorie," the position was "before the

pulpit, on their knees, before the congregation." In other cases, where there had been some special aggravation, the sackcloth was brought into requisition. In one bad case, where the wronged party had been scarcely *compos mentis*, the wrong-doer was made to feel the horror of his crime and the utter detestation it aroused by his being made to stand at the church door, "between the ringing of the second and third bell, clothed in sackcloath, and thereafter to compear before the congregation upon the pillorie in sackcloath, and to continue in his compearance from Sabbath to Sabbath untill the session find cause to absolve him. The session recommend to the minister to speak frequently with the misguided man, and pray with him, in order to bring him to a sense of his sin."

That very serious case of which I spoke caused the session, as you might well imagine, the keenest sorrow and perplexity, and for advice they went to the Presbytery. The Presbytery deemed it necessary to pronounce against the unhappy girl the sentence of excommunication. The minute runs thus:—"The Presbytery did approve of the steps taken, and being deeply affected with this lamentable storry, did in a most solemn manner after prayer to God Excommunicate the said Janet —— from y^{e} communion of the faithful, Debarred her their privileges, delivered her over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that y^{e} spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus, And did appoint Sabbath the 21st of March to be observed as a day of solemn fasting and prayer in this congregation, and appointed the minister to intimate the sentence of higher Excommunication."

The father of this poor girl, who had brought all her trouble upon her, proved to be as cowardly as he was wicked. At the first hint of danger he fled, leaving the whole weight of the burden to be borne by her. Three men, however, went in pursuit of him. They followed him for seven days until they came near the border, and then, losing trace of him, they bent their steps homeward again.

The whole sad story, down to the minutest detail, is related in the session minute-book; but you come upon certain other supplementary facts when you consult the cash-book. There we learn that the case was not tried in Cupar, whither Janet

was at first conveyed, but in Perth; and the session have to bear the expense of conveying witnesses to that city. Two women and two elders go as witnesses at a cost of £4, 18s., and Janet herself receives when in prison there the sum of £1, 4s. The two men who went with Janet to Cupar got £1, 4s. to pay their way, while the expenses of the three who pursued the man amounted to £19, 16s. This was not an entire loss to the session, for they fell heir to the fugitive's effects. These were exposed to public roup. For the cow and nine-threave bear the sum of £19 was obtained, and the small household furniture brought £6. The net loss to the session was only about £1, 8s.

You hear sometimes that our Presbyterian discipline in olden days was very strict, and often unduly severe. Judged by our modern standard it no doubt was. But it is quite a mistake to imagine that the old elders were in any way stern or unfeeling. I could give you numerous instances in which judgment was tempered with mercy. That poor woman of whom I spoke as being weak in mind was let easily off, as "the session did not think it would tend to edification to make her appear in public." When a woman pleads to be taken twice in one day because she lives far from the church, the days are short, and she has no one to leave in charge of her young children, they do not refuse her plea. When a man who had been guilty of an ante-nuptial offence petitions for a similar favour on the plea that his wife and himself had been blessed with offspring, they grant the boon, "being loath to procrastinate the baptism of their child." A woman had been contumacious, and had therefore been sent to the Presbytery, but begs now to be taken on rather by the session; they agree to "indulge her in the desire," and the minister is asked to try to stop procedure in the superior court. And so on. So far from being harsh, it would rather appear that while they sought conscientiously to do their duty, and act up to the ideal of eldership as it was understood in their time, they wielded their authority with a moderation, and sometimes even a gentleness, which is in the highest degree commendable.

In the course of this chapter I have said very little of individual elders, nor have I chronicled the various appointments

of elders that were made from time to time; though, had I done so, you would have heard several familiar names, both of men and places. Every few years new elders had to be appointed: if an elder came from another parish, he had to be formally admitted to this session, and every change is duly recorded. Thus, in 1680 we have a new elder from Kinglassie; in 1730 a new elder from Cleish; in 1792 the session is strengthened by the admission of Captain Park. Now and again, on the other hand, the session suffers loss through death, removal, and through resignation. At times no doubt it has been somewhat attenuated; but there is always, even in the darkest days, some who, if not actively employed, are at least waiting, watching, and holding things together until happier days return. Much of the staying power of the Church has been in the hands of the elders. Like the non-commissioned officers in a regiment, they have had to perform a multitude of duties of the less obtrusive kind, which were, however, imperatively required before efficiency could be obtained. It will be an evil day for the Church should she ever fail in securing as elders honest, intelligent, pious men, who will faithfully and efficiently perform the duties belonging to the office.

CHAPTER V.

THE HERITORS AND THEIR DOINGS.

In the earlier periods of our parochial church history the respective duties and responsibilities of the heritors and elders do not seem to be very strictly defined. The reason of that is doubtless that frequently the heritors were themselves elders; and where they constituted only a portion of the kirk-session they were the more prominent and influential portion, and it was natural that they should be specially mentioned, and that precedence should be given to them when the names are given of those who along with them composed the sederunt. Thus when, year by year, the session met to count the money that was in the poor's box, it is carefully noted that the Laird of Balbedie was present while this was being done. When heritors are sent to the Synod or General Assembly, it is, of course, as elders that they go, and what they represent is not the body of heritors, but the kirk-session of the parish. The last time that a heritor went from this parish as representative elder to the General Assembly was in 1860, when the appointment was given to Mr Robert Henderson of Glencraig.

The heritors and elders are often found in session together, because upon them conjointly is devolved the administration of the funds belonging to the poor, and, as we shall see afterwards when we are treating of the poor, that was in this parish no light task, for the poor were very considerably endowed. These conjunct meetings of heritors and elders are looked upon at times as differing very little from ordinary meetings of session, and what they do is described as the work of the session, as, for example, when it is said in 1763, "The session empower Sir Michael Malcolm, the minister, and Mr Crawford [of Ballingry], or any one of them, to give to the poor as they shall see cause, between the meetings of session." In accordance with

this power granted to them, they give "orders" or "lines" to poor people that they may receive from the clerk, or other person, as arranged, charity, either in money or in kind. Usually it is money that they get, sometimes it is meal, but occasionally other creature comforts are added; and in one instance at least a poor person obtains, by Sir Michael's order, "a peck of meal and a bottle of gin."

There are other times when the two bodies, though sitting together, remember that they are distinct. There is a period when the relations between heritors and elders are somewhat strained. The heritors have summoned a meeting, and the minister and elders have come. Together they conduct their business relating to the poor, and then the heritors retire; but the others remain, and dispose of some matters that belong purely to the church.

In the placing of a minister the heritors and elders are also found together. In 1718 they conjointly applied to the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy to appoint some of their number to moderate in a meeting of the "heritors and others in this parish concerned in calling a minister to this congregation." Their application was granted, and when the meeting took place it was found that "the pluralitie of the Heritors and Elders did subscribe a call to Master Robert Balfour probationer for the ministrie to be minister of this congregation."

In some matters, again, which in modern times are held to belong exclusively to the heritors, we find that the elders have a part. They assert themselves, and are taken into consultation in the matter of the upkeep of the fabric of the church. In June 1677 it is minuted that "Intimation was made for the heritors of this parish to meet on Wednesday next for repairing the roof of the kirk." They may have met, but the work was not immediately done, for in 1678, when the Presbytery made their visitation, as we have already seen, the fabric of the church was "very ruinous," being greatly in want of "sklaits" for the roof. Even yet no effective work is done; it is not till 1706 that the heritors take up the matter seriously, and then they proceed in a most business-like manner, as the following minute will show:—

"At Ballingry Kirk, May 9, 1706.—The which day the

Heritors of this parish mett here, & having taken inspection of the roof of the Kirk, & finding that it hath need of mending & pointing, They did make ane estimat of the lime and workmanship that it will take for repairing thereof. They find it will take twelve bags of lime at ten shilling scots the bag, which amounts to six pound, And they find that there will be six roods of work which will be nine pound extending in whole to fifteen pound, And that there must be 30 bags of sand, which is to be carried by the parish, and every plough in the parish to furnish two horses which are to be furnished to carrie two bags of sand when required, for advancing and carrieing on the work now when the season offers. They find it likewayes necessary that the two entries to the Kirk-yeard have doors, and having called John Elder Wreight, They did agree with him as follows—viz., that the said John make a Barras gate for the west gate, with two leaves to be secured by a bolt of iron on the outside, & ane iron bolt in the inside and a hinging lock And he is likewayes to make a close door upon the east gate with lock & key and is obliged to furnish all materials & workmanship & to finish the work against the first of Julie. He getting the half of the bargain payed him per advance For which the meeting have agreed to give him thirteen pounds scots money Which summe is to be laid on upon the roo-hl rent And they appoint their collector to pay him the advance money at his entrie to the work Requiring the persons lyable in payment to pay in their several proportions to the Kirk-Session which they find to be 20 s. scots upon each hunder pound for the said summe of twenty-eight pounds and for seven pounds resting of former accompts And that betwixt and the first of June. And they recomend to the Kirk-Session to make such advances of money for carrieing on these works betwixt and the said day as they shall see need Which shall be allowed to them the first end of what is laid on & further recomends to the Kirk-Session to see the premisses effectually done."

There, you will observe, the heritors ask the kirk-session to supervise the work and advance what money may be necessary, promising to refund the money from what is raised by assessment. They do not seem always to be so ready to defray

expenses, for two years afterwards we have this entry in the cash-book :—"To James Rowan for lime for building the office houses of the manse *which the heritors ought to pay* £4, 19s." Then, in two years more, as if the heritors could not be depended upon to execute the necessary repairs, the session undertake such work themselves, and pay it out of their own funds. In the minute-book they say, "The Session considering that the window in the Church next to the pulpit needs reparation therefore they appoint the same to be repaired." And in the cash-book there is written, "For mending glasse windows in the kirk £4, 3s."

In many ways it was the Church's gain that the heritors were brought into such close relation with it. Having a personal share in its work, they were interested in it, and exerted themselves for its advancement.

(1.) They dowered the Church with gifts and bequests. Among the benefactors of Ballingry Church the chief place must be assigned to James Betson of Contle and Clune. He was elder as well as heritor, and he was not only a churchman, but a public-spirited parishioner, and his memory is preserved in a laudatory paragraph, carefully written out in our earliest minute-book :—"James Betson of Contle & Clun mortified to the poor of this parish of Ballingry ffyve hundreths merks, & He gave foure silver cups for the communion, & also He built the Clochrite bridge.* He died of a fluxe, 13th July 1695, aged 94. On Saturday att 7 at night."

Another public-spirited heritor, who was also an elder and benefactor of the Church, was Captain Park of Lochore. His name is enshrined on the fly-leaf of another of our session-books in a note which runs thus :—"That Capt^n. Park of Lochore bought the Garnar from James Paterson late Tenant in Inchgall Mill, and paid two pound sterling for it, and gave it grates to the Session for the use of the poor sometime before Whit-

* This Clochrite bridge is the bridge over which the public road runs at the entrance to Glencraig Avenue. Built into the bridge is a stone on which is sculptured the coat of arms of Mr Betson, his initials, and the date of the building—viz., 1671 ; while on a stone near it is cut the date 1765, indicating probably the time when the bridge was rebuilt or repaired. On the communion cups are also Mr Betson's coat of arms, with the legend (which also appears upon the bridge), "*Hæc mihi sola placet.*"

sunday I•IvIIH and ninety-five years (1795). Attested by Tho. Massy S. Clk." To complete this gift, the session supplied the "Brod and Buest," while the minister gave gratis the "Balk for weighing the meal." Thus do good men provoke one another to good works.

If Captain Park had regard to the meal for the poor, Mr Syme, who succeeded him in Lochore, was mindful to supply the needy with coal; and here again the session share in the good deed done, for they undertake to drive the coal for which the heritor pays. This beneficent spirit among the heritors is happily not quite extinct, as we may be reminded every time we come within this church, for the harmonium, which is always before our eyes, was presented to the church in 1876 by the present Sir James Malcolm of Balbedie.

(2.) The presence of the heritors had a favourable effect upon the church-door collections. Had their contributions been withheld, to count the money in the box would have been a very lenient task. This is proved by the fact that note is taken of any special contribution that a heritor may chance to give. When Mr Jobson came into possession of Lochore, he signalised his advent by a donation to the church. The session-clerk had then to chronicle that "the collection, including £5 stg. from Mr Jobson of Lochore (amounted to) £5, 2s. 5½d." Similarly, when Andrew Rutherfurd, Esq., acquired Crosshill, his £1 stg. made the whole collection £1, 4s. 4d. And in 1830, when Mr John Henderson of Contle gives £1, 1s., it makes the whole collection £1, 1s. 4d.

(3.) The heritor, again, was of service to the Church if he happened to be a notary or justice of the peace. Not that he did the notary work gratuitously; we always find him accepting his regular fee; and not only so, but he charges an extra 7s. for the sheet of stamped paper on which the agreement is written. Mr Colville of Blair was a justice of the peace. Mr Rutherfurd of Navitie is a notary; and to him the session have recourse whenever a new "tack" or lease has to be made out between them and the tenants of the poor's lands. Thus, in 1705 we find this gentleman receiving for writing a tack 14s. 6d.; in 1706 there is given "to the Laird of Navitie for writing a tack 17s. 6d." When any legal document is required,

such as a commission to A. B. to instrument C. D., "Navitie," as he is called, is the man to supply the same.

(4.) Very frequently individual heritors do a real service to the Church in seeking out proper parties with whom to invest the considerable sums of money belonging to the poor. It was not so easy in former times as now to obtain a good investment Sometimes even the banks refused to take in money, and give even a low rate of interest for it. At times such as these we find our heritors taking over the money themselves, giving their bond for it, and paying interest on it, rather than that it should lie "dead"—*i.e.*, not bearing interest. And whenever a proper person is found to receive the money at a proper rate of interest they give it up and receive back their bond. Occasionally it is found that the money has not been safely invested, and steps are taken to remedy the evil. A case of this kind occurs in 1773, when Sir Michael Malcolm reports to the session that £170, which they had been at great pains to get invested, was in danger through the failure of one of the men who had it. The session accordingly send at once to Mr Rutherford, writer, Kinghorn, giving him full powers to act legally for the recovery or security of the money.

(5.) Sometimes, too, the session's lands may be without a tenant. It would be folly to let the land lie "dead"—that is to say, untilled; and so Sir Michael again comes forward with the offer that his tenant in the Binn will labour the Paran Well lands until a new tenant has been got, and assures the session that the rent will be forthcoming. For this the session thanks Sir Michael.

(6.) And yet again, and in connection with the lands, the heritors ease the session's burdens when proposals are made to divide the commonties in which they have an interest. The usual course was for the parties concerned to appoint an arbiter or arbiters, and agree to abide by the decision given. This course was adopted with regard to the commonty at Nivingston, in Cleish parish, in 1793. But matters did not go on smoothly, for at a meeting of session "Cap^{n} Park produced a letter from Mr Beatson, one of the arbiters" in this case, "respecting their right to the said commonty, as to whether they were entitled to the whole or to the one half of the servitude, as stated in their charter. The meeting having [taken] the said [letter] into

consideration, and feeling themselves incompetent to give an opinion on the Subject, did agree to appoint Mr Syme, of Cartmore, as their agent, with instructions to support their right in the division of the said commonty."

At this period there seems to have been an enthusiasm for dividing commonties, for in 1798 we find the following minute:—"The moderator stated to the session that he had been spoke to by Mr Syme of Lochore about dividing the Commonty of Kinneard, in which the poor of this parish have an undoubted interest, and that the proposed method of dividing the same was by entering into a submission and referring all the points in dispute to an Arbiter, and that the Arbiter proposed was David Douglas, Esq$^{r.}$ of Strathhendry, Advocate. The session, having considered the same Do approve of the proposed method of dividing the Kinneard Commonty by submission, and hereby empowers the moderator to sign the said submission, and request of him to draw up Memorials and Do whatever may be necessary for ascertaining and making good the rights of the poor."

A few years before this our session made a claim to pasturage on Benarty Hill, and Lord Braxfield was appointed arbiter. He seems to have decided against the session, for we hear no more of pasturage there. In the course of the litigation regarding the teinds—of which mention has formerly been made—this claim was again referred to, but nothing transpired through which effect could be given to it.

There are still further tokens of the harmonious manner in which the heritors and the kirk-session carried on the work of the parish. In January of 1710 this minute was penned:—"The Session considering that the heritors have chosen Mr James Mitchell to be Schoolmaster, and that the minister hath appointed him to be precentor, the Session unanimously choose him to be their clerk." A precisely similar transaction to this occurs in 1722; and that the same feeling survives to still more recent times is made clear in 1872, when the minister's servant is appointed church officer and gravedigger, "the resident heritors having expressed a wish to have a man at hand to attend to the funerals, and he being in their opinion the most suitable person."

At no place and among no people do we find t
always calm and full of sunshine, and so among th
of Ballingry, and between them and the minister a
there has sometimes been a little friction, and on one occasion at least rather serious discord.

When the project of dividing the commonty of Nivingston was first brought before the session, and they began to consider in what position they precisely stood, they bethought them that the rights or title-deeds of the lands were in the custody of Sir John Malcolm, and they sent two of their number to Sir John "anent the said affair." He told them he could not let them see the papers, but he said that they bore that the session had right to have upon the land "two cows and their followers, one stud mear and her followers, six ewes and a ram and their followers, one broad sow and a boar and their followers, one broad goose and a ganner and their followers."

A year and a half after this the subject comes up again, and as Sir John still has the papers, the session instruct one of their number "to take with him a public notar, and require from Sir John the said rights under the form of an instrument." He still retains the documents, whereupon they send the same elder "of new, to take with him a public notar to Sir John and there in this Sessions name to protest for rest, skeath, and damage." Sir John, thus menaced, intimates his readiness to give up the papers provided he gets "a receipt or obligation to deliver them back to him against the first of March, and that he receive two parchments on his receipt."

Having secured the papers, the session could now take counsel's opinion on a legal matter in which they were involved.

It was just about this time that the session received intimation that the "utensils," concerning which they had had a law plea against the late incumbent, were now to be had through an agent in Kirkcaldy, if the minister would subscribe a discharge to Sir John Malcolm as patron, and to the late minister; "whereupon the minister protested he nor the session had nothing to do with Sir John Malcolm *qua* patron, and that he was willing to give his receipt for the utensils as his instrument thereanent bears."

It does seem that Sir John was just a little inclined to carry matters with a high hand, for in 1714, twelve years after the appointment of Mr Wardroper, the clerk had to write as follows:—"The Session did observe that when Mr Wardroper their minister was planted in this parish, Sir John Malcolm kept the poor's box, and the minister and elders received no money belonging to the poor so that the foresaid Sum [900 merks] hath been gathered and managed by the Session since the minister came to the parish."

On at least three occasions—one in 1677, one in 1738, and another in 1802—the painful duty was laid upon the minister and elders of dealing with a prominent heritor for the sin of impurity; and though this might not embitter the relationships between the session and the heritors, it certainly would not tend to sweeten them.

Any discord that did exist in the parish between the heritors and the session was at its highest in the dispute that arose with Mr Balfour about the administration of the funds belonging to the poor.

In 1757, at a time when the kirk-session happens to be very weak, Mr Balfour, the minister, falls ill. He asks the Presbytery for assessors, and three of their number are appointed. The heritors meet with the session so constituted, and ask to see their records, along with all the bonds, bills, and tacks of land, and all their papers which relate to the state of the poor's money, in order to have them inspected and adjusted, and that the true state of the poor's funds may clearly appear. This was agreed to, and they took away the books and papers. On returning the papers after inspection, they intimate that there is a charge against the session of £3152, 1s. 7d. Scots, and gave them a certain time to account for that sum. Engrossed in the session-book is a full report of the heritors' examination of the papers. They complain that there has been mismanagement. For example, they say there is a sum of £12 lent, and never afterwards mention made of either principal or interest.

The session, thus put to it, call upon each elder to report his intromissions in money or meal, and the tenants are pressed to pay up all arrears. And when matters have been

arranged, a meeting of heritors and elders is summoned from the pulpit to receive Mr Balfour's answer to the heritors' charge. Mr Craufurd of Ballingry, who had personally examined the books, and had formed a strong opinion on the whole affair, had intimated that if the heritors did not pursue the minister and elders, he would do it individually; but, in the meantime, till the answers are heard, he does not prosecute his plea. Mr Balfour makes up a counter-statement showing that, instead of £3152, 1s. 7d., the balance is only £586, 4s. $1\frac{8}{10}$d., not taking into account a debt by a deceased elder; and he reserves the right to give additional observations, as they shall arise, to throw light on the affair. Mr Craufurd asks for a meeting with the person who had assisted Mr Balfour, that they might try to come to some agreement. This was agreed to.

A few months later another conjunct meeting is convened, to put an end to the disturbance about the money. Mr Balfour says he will pay all he is personally liable for, but if there are omissions and mistakes, that is the fault of the clerk, and he states the sum he is prepared to pay. The heritors agree to accept £60 sterling in lieu of all claims. Mr Balfour will pay only £42. Sir Michael protests that if he will not instantly pay £60, the heritors will pursue him for the whole sum claimed. The minister then agrees to pay £7 more, but the other £11—a debt due by a deceased elder—he maintains is not justly his debt. The heritors refuse to make any further proposals, and say they will insist on the whole claim.

In about six weeks afterwards Mr Balfour calls another meeting, and offers to pay £60; but the heritors hesitate in accepting it now, and all they do is to ask Mr Balfour what security he can offer for that sum. Mr Balfour (always acting through the assessors, the meetings being held in the school-house) answers the question about the security, and then the heritors agree, "considering the circumstances of his family, his own personal distress, and the love of peace, to take £60 on the security offered." From this agreement Mr Craufurd protests in writing, and his protest is engrossed. At a subsequent meeting Mr Craufurd lodges a "State of the Funds," and he adds a very strongly-worded statement, in

which "honest," "embezzled," "justice," and other expressions of a like nature occur. Some further difficulties are raised; but finally the heritors decide to abide by their former resolution as the safest course for the poor, if they are made sure of the security for the £60. Mr Craufurd still protests, holding minister, elders, and heritors all liable for "cost, skaith, damage, or expense he may be led into in raising a process before the Sherriff of Fife."

At the next meeting Mr Craufurd appears, protests against the meeting being held, and withdraws. His protest is kept *in retentis.*

In some money dealings that the heritors and elders have with Mr Craufurd, they press rather heavily upon him, thus showing their displeasure at the course he has felt it his duty to pursue. He does not swerve from that course; but in August 1762 the Sheriff decides against him, on the ground that the heritors "did agree to take £60 from Mr Balfour." Mr Balfour pays the money, and is discharged, his heirs and executors; and thus ends a most disagreeable episode, in which the heritors, taking them as a whole, do appear, having secured the interests of the poor as far as they were able, to be actuated by kindly feeling and a love of peace.

Another jarring note is struck in 1762, in connection with the Laird of Blair; and there are indications that this was only an epilogue to the Balfour dispute. In this year the reports of the collections at the church door suddenly cease to appear. In the minute-book it is diplomatically said that that is "for a certain reason." When we turn to the cash-book, for which the clerk is responsible, we see that this careful individual has written down, under date 7th November: "N.B.—There is no more collections made at the church doors owing to the Laird of Blair's Fray in the church with the precentor on the 10th of October last." And no more collections are taken till the month of June in 1774.

For several years after the conclusion of the Balfour dispute the heritors are chiefly responsible for the administration of the poor's money. They pass accounts, clear the clerk's book, and give orders concerning the disbursement of the poor's money. They were liberal with their disbursements; and it

is during this time that we find several references to the Shank (the inn of the parish). At the close of the year 1760 this entry occurs: "By payment to Janet Bruce in the Shank for three half-mutchkins of Brandy she delivered to Andrew Scarlett's wife to Dress his leg per orders 15s." The next reference to the Shank is in 1763, when intoxicants are ordered, at the session's expense, for a poor person's funeral. It is as follows:—"By cash paid Janet Bruce for ale and spirits for James Campbell's burial £3, 16s. 6d." For the next pauper's funeral, which takes place in 1765, the heritors seem to think they will get better spirits if they send to Kelty. They buy the ale, however, from James Westwood in the Shank, and they also purchase from him three candles, the whole thing costing £3, 16s. 6d. In 1770 another £3, 6s. is spent in a similar way, and this time it is expressly said it is "by Sir Michael's order." The last entry of this kind is in 1777, when the heritors send to James Anderson in Kirkness for ten pints of ale and one bottle of spirits for a burial; but the new minister, probably thinking that the poor's funds should hardly be made to bear expenses of that kind, decided to defray the cost this time himself. As the entry, however, had been made, the clerk merely drew his pen through the sum of £1, 7s., and wrote between the lines, "N.B.—The min^{r} paid the ale and spirits out of his own pocket."

In the course of a lifetime a man will sometimes have to play many a part, but in 1711 we have the unique spectacle of a heritor and elder of Ballingry parish obliged to become a pauper and receive his allowance of meal. This reverse of fortune happened to the man who bore the honoured name of James Betson of Clune. It must have been only a temporary reverse, and in six months he recovered himself again; but from April to October of the year I have named there are these three entries:—

"To James Betson of Clune being very poor and in great want £12."

"To James Betson of Clune to buy meal £5, 0s. 4d."

"To Robert Steedman for meal to James Betson, elder, £2, 4s. 0d."

Sometimes, I suppose, even very rich men may be in want

of ready money, and do not disdain to borrow; and therefore, when we discover that some of our heritors have sought to obtain money on loan, it would not be safe to draw any conclusions as to their impecuniosity. I have told you of our heritors accepting money from our session as a favour, and paying interest on it, till an investment was obtained; it is also the fact that they sometimes come to the session and apply for money on loan. Mr Craufurd was debtor to the session, and they possessed his bond. At various times (1735, 1737, 1767, 1769) considerable sums are advanced to Sir Michael or Sir John; but they regularly pay the interest. And thus, as it is pleasant again to observe, the heritors and the session are mutually helpful to each other.

The references in our records to the families of our heritors are necessarily few, and are chiefly confined to the lists of births, deaths, and marriages. There are, however, other incidental allusions; as, for example, when the clerk, to explain an unusually good collection, inserts within brackets this little phrase, "Lady Malcolm at church;" and in comparatively recent times, when fees are given to Mr Malcolm, son of Sir John, for medicine and medical attendance.

Our present heritors and their doings are left for future chroniclers to describe and relate.

CHAPTER VI.

SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLMASTERS.

In pre-Reformation times the country was not without schools, but they were not elementary public schools. They were educational establishments attached to the abbeys and cathedral churches, taught by the monks—some of whom were men of learning and ability—and attended chiefly by those who were being trained for the service of the Church. The doors were open to others besides young churchmen—to the children of the poor as well as of the rich; but as it was very seldom that a poor man's son could take advantage of the open door, the non-ecclesiastical pupils were usually only the children of the landed gentry. Education was a commodity that had not yet come within the reach of the mass of the people.

The Reformers sought to remedy this state of affairs, but their idea was never fully carried out. Their aim was to have a school in every parish, provided for most handsomely out of the Church's teinds. But the greedy barons, who had got possession of the teinds, held them by so firm a grip that they were disappointed in their aim. There were schools planted in various parts of the country before the end of the sixteenth century, but they were few. For their support the Presbyteries acted as if they believed they had a right to impose a small tax —generally so much meal or grain—on every plough-gate of land; but it is evident that this could only be done with the general consent or good-will of the parishioners, which could not always be obtained.

An important step was taken by the Secret Council in 1616. It ordained that a school should be established in every parish, and a fit person appointed to teach it; the expense of this to be borne by the parishioners. The task of seeing that this ordinance was attended to was laid upon the bishops; but the

bishops were not in full sympathy with the people, and so very little was done. The important fact, however, is to be noted that, in 1616, the law was that there should be a school in every parish.

The next step was taken in 1627, when all ministers were required, with the help of two or three of their parishioners of best skill, to give an account of their parishes, in order that ministers and schools should be better provided. A number of such reports were made, and forty-nine of these have been preserved. They were printed for the Maitland Club in 1847. In 1633 the Parliament confirmed the act of the Secret Council of 1616, thus proving the nation's strong desire that schools there should be. It was not till after the Revolution Settlement of 1688 that the burden was laid upon the heritors of maintaining a school in every parish; nor in the remote parishes was the statute obeyed even then, nor was it for years afterwards.

How was it with the parish of Ballingry? The first step towards securing a school for Ballingry seems to have been taken by the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy. In 1668—twenty years before the Revolution Settlement—three ministers, sent by the Presbytery, came to Ballingry, and had a meeting with the heritors and others concerned "for setting of a schoole for educating children within the forsaid parish." The ministers were Mr George Ogilvie, who happened to be moderator of the Presbytery at the time; Mr Gilbert Lyon, minister of Kinghorn; and Mr John Bruce, minister of Portmoak. The meeting had been duly advertised, but the only heritors present were Balbedie; James Betson of Contle; Crosshill; a representative from Ladath; and Patrick Greig of Ballingry. "On these being severally asked whither they would agree and contrive for advancing the forsaid designe, according to the need of the place, the law of the Land, and custome of other places they Did unanimously declare Their willingness to have a schoolmaster settled amongst them according to law. And that for Reading the Scriptures Singing Teaching of children According to the custome now used in the Church of Scotland. Furthermore for encouraging the forsaid schoolemaster who should ther be formally and orderly called and allowed by the presb^{trie} to

the said office. The Mi[rs] above specified with all y[e] heritors present at the time did consent that this following maintenance should be settled upon him and his successours Respectively, viz.: Out of the Tounes and Lands of Lumfinnans eight pounds ten shillings money Scots, with two firlots two pecks meal;" and so on: out of Balbedie so much money and so much meal; and from all the properties in the parish, according to the rental; till a sum of £48 was reached, with four bolls two pecks of meal. As for the house and school, Balbedie willingly gave a piece of ground for a site, and also a piece for a "yaird," "which should for ever remain, without repitition, for the forsaid use;" and "because there was no house nor school presently builded the said heritors willingly condescended That for building them Ane Hundreth Markes should be uplifted (proportionally divided amongst them) this yeare for defraying the expenses thereof."

This having been arranged in 1668, the Presbytery, when it met in Ballingry in 1669 for the induction of the new minister, made it their first business, "after sermon," to "authorise Mr James Reid to be schoolmaster of this parioch and reader and precentor in the congregatione."

There, then, we have this fact, that the first schoolmaster in Ballingry parish was Mr James Reid; he was appointed in 1669, and held his appointment by authority of the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy.

Having got a schoolmaster, the session determine that his office shall not be a sinecure; but, on the other hand, they resolve to aid his efforts: at all events they provide that he shall not be subjected to harassing rivalry and competition. Three months after his appointment they ordain that "particular notice be taken what bairns ther are in the parish who are meet to be put to the scool, And that the severall elders in their respective quarters be carefull to see to it that they be put to the schoole, and keept at it. And that their be no moe schooles in the parish but the publick school in the kirk or in the school when it is built, except it be a womans school ane or moe for teaching of lasses to sue only."

Whether the heritors are as good as their word in the matter of emolument does not appear, but the elders are anxious

to do the schoolmaster every justice. They are, however, inexperienced, but they resolve to enquire how things are done in other parishes. They undertake to find out what the ordinary allowances are for "Baptismes mariages and testimonials," "and that the schoolmaster here have the like allouance not with the least."

In the matter of the school and the schoolmaster's house, the heritors were undoubtedly slow to proceed; and it is to be feared they were not too ready with the schoolmaster's stipend, for two years after his appointment the session are forced to consider how he can be suitably housed and fed; and after an earnest consideration of the point they come to the following resolution:—"The schoolmaster wanting convenient accomoda^{a}ne for y^{e} p'sent the schoole and schoolmaster's house not being yet built. The elders of the session after serious thoughts being very sensible q^{t} a great want it is to want a school in a parish for the breedinge instructing of young ons and being very unwilling that he should be gone on y^{t} account Did all willingly and unanimously accord and enact that for the time untill a house be built for him He should have his dyet for bed and boord with the heritors of the parish and Elders of the session eight days about."

However willing and anxious the session might be to bring matters forward, it would seem as if there must be delay, for another eight months are allowed to pass before a meeting of the heritors is called. And when the intimation for the meeting is made, they appear to be desirous of catching the flowing tide, for they announce that the heritors are to consider not only "about the building of schoole and schoolmaster's house," but also about "y^{e} kirkyaird dykes."

The heritors would likely meet, in accordance with this intimation, and they would probably agree to do all that was necessary; but still the project hangs fire, for in 1677—nine years after everything was satisfactorily settled—the Presbytery discover that the school is not yet built.

There is, however, a new schoolmaster, or at least a candidate for the office. Mr James Reid was succeeded in 1670 by Mr John Sage, and now he had retired—but whether a victim to deferred hope, or whether he had been removed by some

more potent cause, is not declared; but in July 1677, eight years from the last appointment, Mr William Wilson arrives from the parish of Beath to take his place. This young man does not receive the appointment at once and without any trouble; he has first the ordeal of an examination to pass through. And, strangely enough, the session do not test his capacities as a teacher—they are probably satisfied as to that by the recommendation he brings from his native parish—but they desire to be assured that he will be an efficient reader and precentor. They order him to bring a testimonial from Beath that he has officiated as precentor, and they resolve "to take trayall for a time as to his singing and reading in the church."

It is while these trials are going on that the Presbytery appears upon the scene, and asks, among other things, "if they had a sufficient authorised schoolmaster at present?" The reply of the session was "that they had none for the time, only that a young man of a neighbouring parish came here on the Sabbath for Reading and precenting who had for his paines only the casualities of Baptismes Mariages and Testimonials and that else the Sess. should please to allow to him." [No word of fees, nor, alas! of stipend.] "Bot were hopefull to have that shortly redressed in respect the work was begun some yeares since of building a school and house for y^{e} schoolma^{r} bot not yet finished."

No, it was not yet finished, nor was it finished for several years yet to come. In 1706 there is a minute which at first leads one to think that the heritors had indeed taken heart of grace and carried through the work, for in it we read of "the pointing also of the schoolhouse;" but in 1719 we come to learn that, while the work was indeed begun, it was never completed; there were only four bare walls, which stared upon each other; they were not yet roofed.

Meanwhile, of course, there was the church, in which the school could be held, and there certainly was a schoolmaster; but from 1710 it was no longer Mr Wilson, but Mr Henrie Mitchell, who acted in the triple capacity of teacher, reader, and precentor. He was likewise session-clerk.

Mr Mitchell may have been in many respects an excellent man, and may have done a great deal of very good work, but

it is not recorded. Nor have we any history of his woes. There is just one other reference to him, and from that reference we infer that he had somehow fallen under a cloud. In July 1719 it is said: "The session consider that it is needful they have a session-clerk to keep their minutes in due order. Therefor they by pluralitie of votes did repone Mr Henrie Mitchel schoolmaster here to be their clerk he having promised fidelitie in exercising that office. And the session did resolve to give him ten shillings sterling yearlie for serving the session as clerk, which sellary was formerly given him when in that station."

Coming now to 1719, we reach a distinct stage in the history of the school. The heritors are again in full conclave. Having settled what they are to do about the church and manse, they turn their attention to the matter of the school. They have come to consider, and they unanimously express the opinion, that to have a school beside the church is inconvenient, inasmuch as it is so remote from the centre of the parish, and "they all agree that the same shall for hereafter be at the Milntown. The expense of which is to be cast upon the valued rent of the parish not exceeding one hundreth pounds Scots, or ten pound sterling." That there might be no difficulty made about the "present schoolhouse wanting a roof," Balbedie undertakes to have it valued—it and the land on which it stands—and if it be shown to be more valuable than the land chosen for the new site which belongs to him, he will pay the balance over "for the ease of the Heretors to that work."

Meeting four weeks later at the Milntown of Inchgall, the heritors, along with the minister, elders, and "several others, honest men, Indwellers therein," receive the report from the masons who had been appointed to value "the old schoolhouse," as it is now called. These masons were James Neilson and Thomas Malcolm, both from Scotland Well. These two having measured the walls, and found them to be 23 feet long by 13 broad, "did with one voice declare them to be worth twenty-three pounds Scots money." Thereupon the company assembled, having inspected the ground at the Milntown, "with one consent by the express consent of the said Laird of Balbedie did condescend upon that piece of ground by and before the shop of

Patrick Kinnell, Smith and Feuar at Milntown, straight in a line from the west givel of the Byre presently possessed by John Wilson, Litster, which is to be of twenty-four foots of length and thirteen foots of breadth within walls." Then, having arranged to build a schoolhouse there, and declared that the old schoolhouse was to be appropriated for Balbedie's use and behoof in all time coming on the condition beforementioned, they subscribed the minute and separated.

Surely now, you will say, the school is in a fair way of being built. But be not too sanguine. Look now, under date 27th February 1722, and you will find that a meeting of the heritors takes place in Ballingry manse "for settling and building a school and schoolhouse."

It now appears that the "generalitie of the parish" think it would be inconvenient to have the school at the Milton; and the Laird of Balbedie, having been approached, with much good nature expresses himself as perfectly ready to give an equivalent piece of ground near the church, which the heritors judge to be "most comodious." They now agree "unanimously that the school and schoolhouse be built and erected on the east side of the kirk-yard Dyke besouth the east gate of the kirkyard, twenty-seven foot straight east of length w^{t} als much of his propertie besouth that meith and march as shall be included w^{t}en four ells from east the kirkyard Dyke and Grass-yard Dyke, in the Min^{rs} possession als far south as the south east corner of the grass-yard. And for farther encouragement to a schoolmaster the Min^{r} has freely condescended that a straight line be run from the [?] at the south-east corner of the kirkyard Dyke straight south to the south Dyke y^{r}of to be an addition to the ground given by Balbedie. Which piece of ground so meithed and marched as before the meeting appoint and appropriate to be for building a school and schoolhouse and for a yard to the schoolmaster."

Now we are upon ground that can very well be identified. The minister's grass yard is the present manse garden. The school and schoolhouse occupied the site of those dwelling-houses to the east of the churchyard. The gardens at present attached to those houses are not the gift of Balbedie; they are still in his possession, and have to be accounted for, year by

year, to Balbedie's tenant; but that piece of ground to the south, between the walls, in front of the house with the door to the south, is the conjoint gift of Balbedie and the church. It was given to the school; but now, since the erection of the new Board school on Craigie-Malcolm, it has passed entirely away both from church and school.

The heritors are in earnest now about the building of the school. There is no longer any dilly-dallying. Workmen are communicated with who can give advice about the quantity of materials needed and the force necessary to carry all materials to the building stance; and an early day in April is appointed, "on the which they are to meet with the workmen and make final arrangements." They calculate that there are thirty-eight ploughs in the parish, and they find that each plough will be liable for the carriage of ten "sled draughts of bigging stone" —that is, five cartloads; each plough must also bring one cartful of hewing stone, also seven draughts of sand and one long carriage of timber; and it is enacted that all the draughts be performed between the 7th and the 17th day of June. The beadle is instructed to give timeous intimation to all concerned; and a man is appointed to levy the contributions, pay accounts, and prosecute before the judge ordinary all who fail in paying their share of the expenses.

The first intention had been to put a divot thacking on the roof; but in July they begin to reflect that the season is late, and it has been a wet season, and therefore it would be more convenient to thack the house with "tyle;" and they recommend Sir John Malcolm to inform himself as to the kind of "tyle" that will suit, and the prices, and report with all speed. Sir John loses no time, and by the 3rd of August is able to say that good tile can be had at the Linktown of Abbotshall at eighteen pounds Scots the thousand. They agree to purchase here at that price.

Towards the end of August another meeting is held, and we learn that the mason work is nearly done. They are anxious now about a speedy delivery of the tile, and they make another calculation. At the rate of thirty-five ploughs, a horse to each plough, and thirty-six tiles to the horse, a sufficient number of tiles will be procured; and so they direct that the thirty-five

horses appear at the windmill of the Linktown of Abbotshall on a certain day, at eight of the clock, that all the "tyle" be procured and delivered in time to have the building complete before the bad weather sets in.

The buildings thus erected in 1722—*forty-five years after* the time the work should have been done—stood till 1825, when the building we now see was raised, minus that new portion built recently towards the north.

To enter on the duties of teacher in the new school they had, as was fitting, a new schoolmaster. His name was William Simson. To him was likewise given the appointment of precentor and clerk. These offices he held for thirty-one years, and, as we are informed by a special note on a fly-leaf, he died on the 12th of December 1753.

Mr Simson was succeeded by Mr Marr, who, in the course of a long career, came to develop a rather striking personality. He began by being pugnacious. As he had the *ad vitam aut culpam* appointment, it would not have been easy to dislodge him from office. He quite felt the strength of his position. In a very short time he had so offended the kirk-session that they forbade him the lectern (1755) and ceased paying him his salary. About the lectern he does not seem to trouble himself, but he rather misses the money; and at a meeting of heritors and session he appeals to the promises made him at his appointment—that he should have all the perquisites and emoluments which his predecessor enjoyed; and, as in this he was perfectly correct, he got payment in full up to date 1758.

It was about this time that the minister fell ill, and the elders ceased to act; he, however, keeps warily at his post, and in 1764, when the accounts are being revised by the heritors, he makes a claim for remuneration because of "extraordinary trouble" in factoring for the poor. He is rewarded with £36 Scots, being payment for six years to date. On subsequent occasions also he asks and receives extra pay for "extraordinary trouble."

However well he might keep his books and do his factoring, he is not liked as a precentor, and in 1769 he is asked unanimously by heritors and session to "officiate as Precentor in this Parish by a Deput as a means of promoting harmony there."

To which he rather pompously replies that he will "consult his friends, particularly Sir Michael Malcolm of Lochore, and Mr Malcolm of Balbedie," and report to next meeting. His answer is not received for twelve years—viz., in 1781, when he has just been appointed treasurer of the kirk at a salary of 20s. sterling a year—when, with much loftiness, he intimates that "for the sake of peace he shall not attempt to precent in Parish Church of Ballingry, or Tent, so long as he is continued in the office of Treasurer as aforesaid, providing his emoluments are all secured to him, and that no schoolmaster within the parish shall do that office of precenting in his room during his incumbency." While making these terms, Mr Marr takes care to point out that the schoolmaster used to get 5s. at each time the sacrament was celebrated; whereupon the session agree to give him the 5s. He further makes it clear that he reserves his right in making the proclamations of marriages. He also secures that the office of treasurership is to be held *in vitam aut ad culpam;* and, as the iron is hot, he still strikes on, and obtains for "extraordinary trouble" three guineas, which is to clear all bygones up to date. Thus does this worthy man keep his eye upon the main chance. One feels sure that it was in connection with money that the Laird of Blair had the fray with him in the church. Though a capital accountant, his Latin is sometimes a little hazy, as when, for *apud acta,* he summons people to the session "*apa dapta.*"

After a period of service of nearly fifty years, this old pedagogue dies, and is succeeded in 1802 by Mr John Robertson. In 1805 this teacher is replaced by Mr Stevenson, and in 1807 the appointment is bestowed upon Mr Andrew Laurence, with whom, as he is the contemporary of Mr Greig, we again touch upon modern times.

Ballingry school does not seem to have flourished in his day. When he had scholars, they are said to have abjured all study, and devoted their energies to the making of thunder for the amusement of passers-by. But as this sort of education was not approved by the douce parents, they kept their children at home. When Mr Greig was asked by his co-presbyters how his schoolmaster was getting on, he replied, "Oh, very well." Asked "How many scholars has he just now?" the reply is,

"Oh, he hasna ony scholars just now." And when, in response to this, it is said, "Dear me! what does he do?" Mr Greig, who was now a very old man, answered, "He does naething; he just rins between B'ingry and Blairadam wi' the letters." That the parish might not be entirely without education at this time, a few of the parishioners provided and maintained a voluntary school at the Flockhouse.

The next schoolmaster was Andrew Tait Keppie, who came to Ballingry in 1858, and was immediately appointed session-clerk. After a few months he was made an elder, "it being distinctly understood," as it is said in the minute, "that he confine himself to his proper duties of eldership in the church, it being illegal for him to act as a member of the Parochial Board as long as he continues inspector of poor of the parish."

From early times it was the custom to apply part of the session funds to the education of poor children at the parish school. In 1860, and at other times, the minister applied so much of what was collected at the communion "for the education of two or three poor children." But in 1871, after £1, 1s. 9d. had been charged in the accounts for payment for education, a note is inserted announcing that that sum is withdrawn, "as Mr Keppie expects the sum to be paid from other sources." The "other sources" would probably be the Parochial Board, it being provided by the Education Act that it should pay poor children's fees.

Matters did not altogether run smoothly with Mr Keppie; and in 1874 we find him resigning his offices of elder and session-clerk, and shortly afterwards he left the parish and went to reside in Edinburgh.

For several years before Mr Keppie left, and indeed during the whole of his incumbency, the parish had been changing very considerably. The coalfields were being opened up, and Lumphinans and Lochgelly were becoming populous places, requiring schools for themselves. In 1856 Lochgelly was made a *quoad sacra* parish, and looked after its own school. In 1864 the Earl of Zetland opened a school in Lumphinans, and provided for it a certificated teacher. From 1865 Crosshill, Lochore, and Milton were producing coal, and there were now many miners' children to be attended to. As there was

every prospect of Ballingry being a busy place, a large new school was built by the newly-created School Board, so that when Mr Keppie's successor came—viz., Mr Macintosh—his was an enlarged inheritance.

Mr Macintosh was session-clerk, and for a time precentor; but, becoming enamoured of the rich lands in the great North-West of Canada, he resigned his appointment in 1886.

After his departure the parish was fortunate in securing the services of Mr Shaw, who is not only an experienced teacher, but likewise discharges, with skill and prudence, the duties belonging to various other offices. He is session-clerk and heritors' clerk; he is inspector of poor, officer under the Local Authority, and also inspector of dairies. We are all desirous for the continued prosperity and efficiency of the school, and trust it may be long before the parish shall require another schoolmaster.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHURCH AND THE POOR.

THE Christian Church has always made the poor her special care. She has felt it a privilege as well as a duty to take to her warm embrace and cheer with her kindly sympathy the weak, the distressed, the sick, and sorrowful. In brotherly love, and in remembrance of the Elder Brother, the pious followers of the Lord Jesus in all ages have, with true benevolence, brought of their wealth to the company of the saints, and laid it at the apostles' feet, that distribution might be made to every man according as he had need. The spirit of the Christian Church has so leavened the Christian nations, that what was at one time simply a Christian duty has come to be regarded as a national duty, and even the secular lawgiver now admits and declares that he is his brother's keeper.

The Poor Law, as it now exists, is liable to many abuses. That is chiefly, however, in large cities, where, from the circumstances of the case, we are dependent more upon administrative machinery than upon personal knowledge acquired by intimate acquaintance with individual cases of want. Were the idea of a national territorial church, properly manned and efficiently worked—such as has been sought to be embodied in the Church of Scotland—fully and perfectly carried out, you would require no other machinery; but, among other difficulties, there arose the old complaint of certain being neglected in the daily ministrations, and there were called into existence the Parochial Boards, which, though generally kindly, are sometimes harsh, and always just a little cumbrous.

In the parish of Ballingry, from the Reformation till the advent of the Parochial Board, an ample provision for the poor was made and maintained; and a very complete record of the intromissions is preserved to this day. As this record contains

many curious and interesting facts, it will repay perusal. These facts I have sought to arrange in three groups, which we shall describe as—(1) Sources of Revenue; (2) Investments; (3) Distribution of Annual Income.

First to be considered among the sources of revenue are the bequests, or mortifications, as they are called, of money, or land, or other kind of property. These gifts, bequeathed to the poor, were usually handed over to the heritors and kirk-session, to administer according to their discretion. Of such bequests I have already mentioned the 500 merks "mortified" by Mr James Betson of Contle and Clune, the 50 merks left by Mr Wardroper, the minister, and the sums contributed at various times by heritors residing here. I will only now add that in 1823 it was intimated that "the late William Jobson of Lochore, Esq., left to the poor of this parish a legacy of £100 stg."

At the present day such bequests are not generally made, because their effect is simply to relieve the rates, and the chief advantage is reaped by the rich rather than the poor. Liberality of this kind finds vent now in donations to medical charities, like the Royal Infirmary, or to educational institutions, in the providing of bursaries and the like; or to one or other of the many "Homes" for the helpless or the indigent; or, since "the field is the world," in contribution to the support of the various mission schemes. Congregations do attempt to brighten the lot of their own poorer members, but that is done by donation rather than bequest. This duty should never be forgotten. Christian people will suffer a great loss if they ever deprive themselves of the privilege of giving to the poor.

Next among the sources of revenue I mention the weekly collections. This, though an established institution, and on the whole a steady source of income, has been in the past, as it is now, subject to certain elements of precariousness. In a congregation there are always a few upon whose consciences it has not been borne as a duty to contribute to these weekly collections, and who permit themselves regularly to "pass the plate;" those who do contribute when they come to church are sometimes absent, when, in addition to the loss of moral support derived from its members' presence, the church suffers

from a deficit in its exchequer. Then it has often happened that there has been no service. The minister is occasionally sent by the Presbytery to preach in a neighbouring parish, and as there was no provision for occasional supply, the result is there is no preaching here, and of course no collection. Sometimes, again, the minister is ill. In 1670 the new year came in on a Sabbath day, but the clerk's report for that day is: "Januar 1. No preaching heir because of the minister's distemper." Next Sabbath the minister is still afflicted with "distemper," and there is no preaching; but the vigilant elders have secured as collection 5s. 2d. For three Sabbaths after this there is no preaching, but there would be reading, although this is not mentioned, and there certainly was a collection, and an increasingly good collection, for that is duly reported. But the later days are more degenerate, for after this, whenever the church door is closed, so also are the purse-strings.

Lest you should imagine that "distemper" was an ecclesiastical disease, I hasten to add that the same term is applied to other subjects—for example, to the weather. Thus we read, under various dates, "No preaching this day because of the distemper of the weather." At other times it is "tempestuous weather." And occasionally, when the weather is "tempestuous," so few people have braved the elements that it is not thought worth while to go into the church, but they assemble for a short service "in the minister's hall," that is to say, in the manse lobby. On such occasions the hardy few are permitted to depart to their homes without being solicited to augment the church's funds.

Week by week the collections were dropped into the box, and periodical meetings were held for the purpose of counting the money that had been gathered. Under date July 30, 1679, when such a counting took place, the minute reads: "The minister with James Beans and Robert Dick [elders] counted the box. Ther was in it of whyt money 22 libs And of copper money 6 : 5 : 4. And of cards [paper money ?] 14/8."

Our histories tell us that about the end of last century a good deal of bad money found its way into circulation. We are under the sad necessity of reporting that it invaded even the sacred precincts of the Church. In 1785, our clerk declares

a loss through spurious coins being put into the box; he makes a similar complaint in 1799, and in 1801 we find the two following entries:—

"March 30th.—By loss of bad coper counted in presence of the min^{r} £1-1-9."

"Aug^{t} 8.—By bad halfpence found in Mr Marr's Desk belonging to the poor's money £1-1-11."

The funds of the session were also increased by the "penalties," or fines, which were imposed upon those who had been guilty of faults which brought them under session discipline. In 1670 we have a certain Grizel Tod desiring the session to receive £4 Scots as her "penaltie." Two years later Christian Wilson was found guilty of "scolding and foule slandering;" but as she did not readily pay the sum imposed, the session "desire the Laird of Balbedie's concurrence as he is a justice of the peace to get in the fyne." The session were determined to put down slandering, for they enacted that "£9 was to be forfaulted to the box if anything was proven that deserved censure." For a clandestine marriage so late as 1830 our session impose a fine of £1, 10s.

After the fines are to be mentioned as sources of income the burial dues, the fees for baptism, for "testimonials," and the pledges of marriage.

The amount charged at a funeral is found to vary from time to time, and to depend upon the social condition of the person deceased. Thus, in 1670, the session ordain that the box-master is to receive from persons without the parish desiring to bury their dead, "from every one of the poorer sort a merk, and for one of the better sort two merks." This was a guiding principle for many years in the giving out of the mort-cloth for the interment of parishioners. At times there is a new cloth and an old one, with a difference in price for the use of each; or it is a large cloth for adults and a small one for children, the smaller one to be had for a less price. The average sum was about £1, 10s. Scots money, but on one page we find the sums varying from £1 to £2, 8s. Scots. In 1797, when the money came to be reckoned in sterling value, the prices for the large cloth were 5s. and 6s., and for the small one, 4s. and 5s.

In all probability these burial dues would be willingly and punctually paid. Through the careful book-keeping of the clerk we know of at least one case in which the money was not recovered. It is that of Mrs Balfour, wife of the minister of that name. For more than ten years this lady had nursed her sick husband, and in 1766, seven years before he died, she was summoned to her rest. This we learn from the money register, where we read, under date 30th May, "To the best mortcloth to the corps of Mrs Balfour, who died 27th inst., and was buried in the church at north side of Mr Wardroper's stone. N.B. Never was paid."

The usual sum deposited at a contract of marriage was £1, 10s. Scots. In the earlier days it was two rex dollars. But a couple presenting themselves who could not afford that sum, the session, on their providing a cautioner, agreed to accept 24s. In 1807 the sum charged was 2s. 6d., exactly what it is at the present day.

Small sums charged at baptisms and for testimonials, which latterly were dignified with the name of fees, were the perquisites of the clerk and of the beadle, and so did not pass through the session-books at all.

The interest of sums of money lying in the bank was also regular income; so also were the rents of the poor's lands, and there were besides certain miscellaneous little sums that came to hand from time to time. For example, in 1726, a woman paid £1, 10s. for liberty to put up a head-stone in the churchyard. In 1805 Colonel Lindsay gave 4s. for the use of the seat in Cleish Church, which belonged to our poor in respect of the lands they possessed in Cleish parish. And on several occasions when a pauper has died and the effects were disposed of by roup, the sum realised was added to the session funds.

In 1765 a case of this kind occurs, and in the minute-book there is preserved a complete record of it down to the minutest detail. The sale takes place "by order of the heritors and kirk-session," who had been informed that the impersonal "they" were "embezling" the deceased pauper's effects. The articles of roup declare that when any article is above a crown in value, each "bod" must exceed the other by 2d.; below a crown the "bod" is to be increased 1d. at a time. Ready

money must be paid, and the purchaser is required to pay to the crier 1d. on every article above 1s. in value, and ½d. on each article under 1s., the clerk to have the freedom to make offers. There are fourteen purchasers, whose names are all given. The sum realised is £2, 8s. 1½d., which is duly entered in the cash-book. Of this sum £1, 8s. 6½d., or considerably more than half of it, is received for bed and bedding, the balance being obtained for fourteen or fifteen articles, all of a very humble description. A stool brings 2d.; a little can, 1d.; an old black coat is sold for 5d.; a gown for 4s. 10d.; an iron kettle is given for 7½d., the same price as an old chair. The chimney tongs and crook are bought by James Robertson for 2s. 6d.; another man gets a basket for 2½d.; while Adam Dick, who has paid 5s. for a press, becomes the possessor of "ane old Bible" for the sum of 4d. After the roup, which was conducted at Upper Ballingry, where the deceased Helen Martin had lived, a woman came to the session and declared that Helen was due her 1s. 7d., which sum is ordered to be paid to the claimant.

The particulars were not always so fully recorded, a simple minute giving a general statement being held to be enough, as in 1802, where we read: "The session made enquiry into the roup of the late Hendry Dall who had for some time rec^{d} charity from the poor's funds of this parish, and who had died during the vacancy, and find after clearing all the expenses of his funeral and debts £: 18s. 6½d., recovered as part payment of the sum which he had received when a pauper on the poor's roll of this parish."

Under the head of "Investments," I have first to speak of the lands which were in the possession of the poor of this parish. They were the Templelands of Binn, called Paran Well, and the Templelands of Nivingston, in Cleish parish. The account of "the rents received by the Patrone Min^{r} and Elders of Ballingry" opens in 1687, and with the opening statement one seems instinctively to fasten on to the idea that the possession of these lands will be the source of a very considerable amount of trouble to the session. David Law, who had a lease of Paran Well, had been unable to pay his rent of "36 libs. Scots," and his goods had to be "arristed." But he was "exceeding

poor, and all he had quietly delapidate;" and Robert Duncan, weaver in Kinross, who was his cautioner, must also have been poor, for after his money was "arristed," between the two they only paid £26, 11s. 8d., a bond being given for the balance.

The next tenant—John Blackwood—enters on possession, agreeing to pay £40 yearly; but after two years he begs for a reduction of rent. The matter is referred to Thomas Betson, who apprises the value at £30. But "Balbedie and the Session" decide to let the rent down only to £33, 6s. 8d.

Of the Templeland of Nivingston they had made two small farms. One, being the third part of the land, let at £11, 2s. 3d., and the other drew double that amount; but, as the tenants here also asked for a reduction, they were revalued and "sett" at a considerably reduced figure.

These lands had been in the church's possession long before 1687, for in 1672 it is minuted that a certain elder is appointed to lift the rents at Paran Well, and on one of the pages of our earliest minute-book is carefully written down this "Nota.—All the former particulars of neat rent paid into the old boxe are accounted for in the old Session-Booke," which book, as we saw in the second chapter, was irrecoverably lost.

Sometimes, according to the "tack," the tenant had the liberty of paying so much rent in kind. Thus we find him paying in so many pounds of butter or so many pecks of meal, and he is accredited in the book with their monetary value. This, however, is by no means an advantage to the session, for sometimes they fail to get the goods off their hand except at a considerable loss. On one occasion the session get ten bolls of barley in the month of July, and allow for it 50s. a boll; but when they come to sell it in the month of March, they only get 40s. a boll, thus losing £5 stg. on this one transaction. And the strange thing is that, while frequently there are transactions of this kind resulting in loss to the session, you never find any in which they are the gainers.

Perhaps it was because of this tendency, which they could not fail to observe, that they resolved to be very careful in securing their rents. If a tenant fall behind with his rent they warn him; if he appeal for time they listen to his appeal; but if he show signs of sinking deeper into debt they promptly

arrest his goods. At one time they hear that a tenant who is behind is selling his corn; they call before them not only the tenant but also the man who has bought the corn. It appears that the corn was sold to procure money for the rent; but it is not yet paid for, and the purchaser has to ask the session to allow the account to lie over till Martinmas. Meanwhile the tenant asks for repairs. He represents that he requires two new doors and three new pantrees in his roofstead. The session appoint two of their number to go and inspect the property, and if they find it necessary to grant the repairs they are to "make Robert Anderson, who bought the corn, afford the same in number and workmanship, and it shall be allowed him in first hand of what he is owing to the session." Robert does the work, submits to the inspection, and receives a discharge for the value of the work.

At another time the tenant is a woman, a certain Jean Blockett. She is due something to the session, and they hear she is about to be married. Fearing that if she be *vestitus marito* there will be less likelihood of recovering what is due, they send at once to Kinross and take out a process of arrestment on her goods. And so on through all the years. Now it is arrestment, again it is repairs; now they deal with the tenant, and again with the cautioner; and always they find these lands making call upon their time and their patience.

They have also trouble with the commonties of Nivingston and Kinnaird. In 1735 the tenant of the Templeland of Binn, who again is a woman, complains that she cannot get her beast pastured on the moss of Kinnaird, according to use and wont, past the memory of man, and the right of the poor of this parish. Sir John Malcolm undertakes to see the Laird of Kinnaird about the matter. The interview was not satisfactory, and on receiving his report the session determine to consult an advocate. This matter was never properly adjusted till the commonty was divided. They had difficulties likewise with the commonty of Nivingston; but it also was ultimately divided and the session's portion fenced and cared for.

In course of time it happened that Mr Syme, who had been proprietor of Cartmore and of Lochore, purchased also Blair. In 1799 he got a nineteen years' lease of Paran Well. Shortly

thereafter he conceived the idea of acquiring this small property and giving for it an equivalent in land at Lochgelly, which idea was carried out in 1803. Mr Greig, in his "Statistical Account," says that the poor lost by this exchange. It does not really seem so, for while the rent of Paran Well was only £6, 6s., that of the Lochgelly Park was £13. At all events, Mr Syme took no undue advantage of the session, as the following minute will show:—"The session, taking into consideration a proposal made by Mr Syme of Lochore, of granting to them lands lying in this parish and in the immediate vicinity of Lochgelly, in lieu of the lands of Paran Well and Templehouse, which are under their management for behoof of the poor, are unanimously of opinion that such an exchange would, upon equitable terms, be for the interest of the poor, as their lands would then be in one lot instead of being separated into pondicles as they are at present. The session, farther considering that Mr Syme agrees to arbiters of their own nomination for ascertaining the value of these premises, and they being anxious to have men of approved skill and integrity, hereby agree to nominate and appoint Mr Robert Mitchel, land surveyor in Pathhead, and Mr John Anderson, factor to Mr Ferguson of Raith, to be arbiters in the premises, and for this purpose they authorize the moderator to sign a deed of submission in their name in order to the final decision of the same."

What subsequently happened to the Lochgelly Park is matter of recent history. The rent came gradually down till, in 1808, it was only £11, 10s., which sum was still further reduced by the county taxes which now began to be imposed. In 1811 there is a sudden rise in the rent, and Mr Syme of Lochore gives £16 for it; but in 1812 the rent is still larger, for by that time it has been feued to seven gentlemen, who had each taken an acre at sums ranging from £3 to £9, 19s., giving a grand total as feu-duty of £31, 4s. It is interesting to read in the minute-book of the ceremony at the marking off of the feus, and of the liberal refreshment provided for all concerned. The session no doubt felt that now they really had a good investment. But, as it had been with the rents, so was it soon with the feu-duties—they were beset with appeals to lower them; which they did, so that in 1830 the income from the

feus was only £20, 16s.; and in 1855, when feu rents are paid to the session for the last time, they were even yet a little more reduced. After this date the management of the Ballingry feus passed into the hands of the Parochial Board. What was once the poor's park in Lochgelly is now largely built upon, and the site is fixed by the name, which still adheres to the locality, of "Ballingry Feus."

You have already heard of the large sums of money which accumulated in the session's hands, and of the efforts made to have it securely placed, so that it would bear regular interest. You know that among the borrowers were some of our own heritors, and friends of theirs. Frequently in the books you also come upon the names of several of the neighbouring landed gentry, such as the Laird of Gospetrie, Douglas of Kirkness, and Mrs Balfour of Burleigh. The interest is not in every case so regularly paid as one would like to see; occasionally we have an elder deputed to speak to a defaulting laird to hurry him on with his payments; indeed, there is an uneasy feeling created, by a perusal of the intromissions, that, as Mr Craufurd of Ballingry complained, both principal and interest are sometimes permitted to slip through the session's fingers. And here also there was this further element of loss, that interest was paid in grain or meal, which failed to realise, when it was brought to sale, the sum in lieu of which it was taken. Moreover, to get the surplus produce off their hands, the session sometimes had to give away more liberally than they otherwise would have done, and even extend the range of their liberality. A case to illustrate this occurs in October 1742, when the clerk writes in his cash-book: "The thirteen Bolls and one half of meall Received from Mrs Margaret Balfour of Burleigh was distribute to the poor according to their necessities a great part whereof has been given to families in the Congregation which formerly did not stand in need of supply after this manner. The Session did not think proper to mention their names nor the particulars given and with what was before insert Exhausts the whole the sum amounts to £78-0-0" (Scots).

But why, you will ask, since there were those difficulties, did they not put the money in the bank, where, though the interest would be small, the principal would at least be safe?

To which it is to be replied that they did indeed deal with the banks; but 150 or 200 years ago banking was not the simple, safe, and convenient process that it is now. There were few banks, and, as I have told you, they would not always take one's money. In 1763 the heritors and kirk-session found themselves with £178 sterling in hand, without any immediate prospect of getting it invested on heritable security, and they agreed to put it in the bank. "But in considering how it should be conveyed," and here I quote from the session minute, "it was proposed that Mr Betson of Contel shou'd take it, and carry it over and put it in the bank; and after he refused it, it was offered for the same end to the several gentlemen present, and they all likewise refused to take the charge of it. The meeting therefore agreed to transmitt it immediately by the hands of the clerk, and ordered him to go with the said money to-morrow to either of the banks at Edinburgh, and get their receipt to the Session of Ballingry (at their usual interest) for the behoof of the poor thereof, and they agree that he be allowed payment for his trouble." At next meeting the clerk reports that "he went over to Edinburgh and offered the money to both banks, but that they had refused to give any interest for it, and therefore thought himself obliged to bring it back and report the fact to the heritors and session."

Some thirty years later they had better success, for in 1792 the moderator and Captain Park report that though they had failed to find heritable security for a sum of £292, 10s., which the session had to lend, they had "in the meantime lodged it in the bank of Sir Wm. Forbes & Co. [Edinburgh] on their note of the date 10th Novbr. last, bearing Int. at 4 p. cent."

At various dates from 1823 onwards, sums of £100 or thereabout are deposited in various branch banks—as, *e.g.*, in the Bank of Scotland, Kirkcaldy, and the British Linen Company Bank, Kinross—on each occasion bearing a certain rate of interest, which is duly expended in the payment of current accounts.

This brings us to the third division of our present subject, namely, the various items of expenditure of current income.

The first charge upon the cash in hand were the salaries of officials and the payment of ordinary business accounts. With unfailing regularity you observe, down to the present day, a note of the fees paid to the presbytery clerk and the synod clerk; then there is the session clerk, the precentor, with his perquisites as well as fees, and the beadle, to whose share, among other items, falls the sum of 6s. 8d. Scots at the baptism of "two small infants." The Presbytery undertook to provide, by contributions from the several parishes, a theological bursary. As early as 1673 we find Ballingry sending its 13s. 4d. for the "bursar of Theologie." For many years there are contributions given for the "Highland Bursar" and the "Lowland Bursar."

Among the business accounts, such as those sent in by the smith, the wright, the glazier, of which you have already heard, must be reckoned that for "coals for the Sunday School." And there are many miscellaneous items, such as the carriage of a letter to Perth, which cost 2s., and a horse hire from Kirkcaldy in the time of a vacancy, which amounted to 12s. stg.

The main charge, however, upon the session funds were the contributions given for the relief of the poor. These were chiefly in money, but they were also sometimes in "kind." Thus you find an elder buying flannel or serge to make garments for poor women. A "poore person" receives a gift of shoes. In 1712 John Logat's wife gets £1, 10s. (Scots) to buy a Bible.

Another method of granting relief was to give the mort-cloth gratis, to remit the dues for baptism or marriage, clear the doctor's bill, or pay house rent.

The recipients of the session's bounty divide themselves readily into three classes—(1) the regular pensioners, who were the aged and infirm poor; (2) occasional beneficiaries, who only needed temporary help; and (3) those whom I shall call "casuals."

In the earlier years (1670) it seemed to be sufficient if the pensioners got quarterly payments in money or meal. Later the payments were usually monthly, though sometimes also they were made once a week. The number of pensioners of course varied; at times there were only four—indeed, there

were three several years in which there was only one each year; but at other times, again, the numbers had risen to nine or ten, and the sums granted to them varied from 3s. to 7s. a month.

How strong is the call the aged, honest poor have upon our sympathies! How sweet a task it is to relieve their necessities! In the bustle and heat of the day they have toiled and struggled; they have breasted the storm and endured the conflict; let them now, in the evening of their days, enjoy repose and rest. It was formerly the Church's privilege to bring comfort to their later days—it is still the Church's duty.

In a parish there are always some who, though not actually disabled, are still in difficulties, but can be helped through their difficulties by a little timely aid. Such persons have always been generously dealt with by the Church. It is the truest charity to help men and women to attain a position in which they can, in the best sense of the word, help themselves. On this principle the Ballingry session regularly acted. Over and over again they gave to struggling parishioners £6 or £8 (Scots) to help to buy a cow. If the breadwinner dies and a widow is left with a family to provide for, the session aid in securing her a cow that she may earn a livelihood. In 1766 a tailor in Tushielaw obtains a cow, promising that when better times come he will repay the loan. The good time never seems to come, and they give him back his bill. A pedlar turning lame is assisted in his purchase of a horse; but they bind him, in a document which he signs, never to apply to the session for assistance again. A young widow in an impoverished condition, finding her late husband's farm thrown on her hands, obtains a grant from the poor's fund that she may purchase seed. And so on; whatever be the circumstances, the case is fully considered, and relief afforded in the most convenient way. Thus, *e.g.*, in 1706, "Alex^r Clark having his house in the Blair broken into in the night, when he was absent, and nothing being left to him, and he having a numerous family the session condescend to give him £10 (Scots)." Or take another case. M. B. is an able-bodied woman, willing to work, but cannot leave her young child in the house; another woman, who is not so strong, but can attend to the child, is brought in

at the session's expense, and the mother goes out to work and earn a livelihood. In the winter time there is the ordinary supply of coals to the poor, the pensioners getting an extra sum at times to procure them.

In olden times the law was not so stringent in the matter of vagrancy as it is now, and so numbers of poor people passed through the parish obtaining alms as they went along. Sometimes they are described simply as "strangers," and the amount of the small donation given them is recorded. The usual name applied to such is "suppliants," and if they carried "lines" with them as proof of their respectability, they are said to be "*clothed* with a testimonial." At the communion season these suppliants appeared in droves, and they were denominated "beggers." This was a time when money was liberally distributed. In 1708, where we have a full account of a communion, seven poor people in the parish get an extra 2s. 6d. A girl in Leslie, a woman in Kirkcaldy, and another in Dysart, get small sums sent to them, and there is "given to the begers £3, 10s." (Scots).

Occasionally these suppliants are a little more particularly described. Thus we read of a "ship broken English merchant" getting 13s. 4d.; a "broken seaman" obtains 5s.; one "who lost all by papists" receives £1, 4s.; a "poore souldier" is enriched with 10s.; while a distressed gentleman has his lot alleviated by a donation of £1, 10s.

Among the many other casuals you have a dumb man, a cripple woman, a deaf and dumb gentlewoman, a minister's relict, a schoolmaster's relict, a minister's daughter, an Episcopalian incumbent, a relict of an Episcopalian minister, a poor scholar, a poor girl afflicted with the "falling sickness," and a great variety more.

In this class are also to be reckoned those who came with a recommendation from noted personages or public bodies. Thus a minister's daughter appears with a recommendation from the Assembly and receives pecuniary aid. At another time a woman came recommended by the minister of Kinross. They must not have judged hers an urgent case for they only gave her 2d.; her destination lay further to the east, so they took advantage of a cart that was going to Auchterderran, and gave the man

1s. to set her down there. A "poore scholar," who had a line from the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy, had better success; he departed happy with a sum of 20s. (Scots).

It has required so much time to relate the simple facts, that there has been no leisure to reflect or moralise. It would have been possible, had such been our aim, to extract a deal of amusement from the peculiarity of some of the entries in the cash-book. It will be more fitting that I suggest to you the pathos that sometimes underlies those figures. Take one out of many examples. In 1785 a certain John Elder receives a small sum of money to help to carry his son to Edinburgh, to be treated in the Infirmary there. Two months later he gets 2s. 6d. to bring him home again; and in yet another two months, 5s. are advanced towards the expenses of the young man's funeral.

Little by little, as we come nearer to our own day, we begin to see the working of the modern machinery for relieving the wants of the poor. The first mention of the Parochial Board is in 1851, when the parochial board is still practically the kirk-session. In this year the session pay the salary of the inspector of poor, which is £1, 2s. In this year, also, money is transmitted to another place by Post Office Order. The policeman, too, is noticed. He has kindly taken in for the night a sick woman and child whom he found out in the road, and is rewarded for his charity with the sum of 6d. For this year, also, the session pay the parish doctor's fee of £2, 9s. Next year we find the Board of Old Monkland asking us to advance their pauper widow Hill 4s. weekly, which sum we of course recover from that Board. In 1853 our session is charged 4s. 4d. for a minute-book to the Parochial Board. Then we have record of our inspector of poor recovering money from the Glasgow Barony Parish. We pay Markinch sums advanced by their Board; and so on till after 1855, when the board and the session seem to have grown apart and independent, keeping separate records of their own.

In 1855 we have another sign that we have come to modern times in the mention of the carriage of a parcel from Cupar by *railway*.

In dealing with the poor, the new way may be better than

the old; doubtless in some respects it is. This at all events must be said, the conditions now are different from what they were in olden time, and the old methods might not now so well apply. But if we should not be able to look upon the past with longing, we must at least regard it with respect. Our forefathers dealt honestly with the problem as it presented itself to them, and they solved it with no small measure of success.

CHAPTER VIII.

LINKS WITH THE WORLD OUTSIDE.

MANY years ago, before the advent of the steam-engine, the penny post, and the electric telegraph, there were no ready means of communication with distant places, or transportation from one part of the realm to another; and men often spent their whole three-score years and ten within the radius of a few miles from the spot where they were born. Their parish was their little world. Daily they performed their simple round of duties. In the evening they enjoyed their joke or dozed in the chimney corner. For the rest, they ate, and slept, and went to the church on Sunday, leaving the great world outside to jog along as it willed;—it was no concern of theirs. All the same, the world was an organic whole, and in every throb of its huge life the pulsation was felt to its remotest extremity, and thus not even the most out-of-the-way parish could be an all in all to itself. Whether it would or not, it came to have relations with the other parishes, with the country of which it was an integral portion, and with other countries and their peoples all over the surface of the globe.

The parish of Ballingry was no exception. Though small and retired, it made itself felt in most distant regions, and was reacted upon by other places both far and near.

It was of course most readily affected by neighbouring parishes, with which it had common interests, and with whose inhabitants there were transactions of a mercantile and business character. The parishes were connected also by the ministers, who had their brotherly exchanges, and who ministered to each other's congregations whenever there was need for it. They were bound also by the charities which a parish dispensed in other congregations than its own. It occasionally happened, also, that there were relations between parishes of other than a

harmonious kind. An example of this is found in the dispute in which the parish of Ballingry was embroiled with that of Cleish.

The difficulties arose about a matter connected with the teinds, and our session found themselves involved in them rather unexpectedly.

On the 23rd November 1706, the minister lays before the session a letter he has received from Mr Gib, the minister of Cleish, summoning him and the elders before the Lords of Council and Session upon the 26th of that month, only three days later. They are told that the plea will concern the two small properties belonging to them in Cleish parish, but what the precise question will be they are not informed. They agree to consult the Laird of Navitie about it. When the case is called they learn it will be necessary to produce the "rights" or title-deeds of the lands, which are in possession of Sir John Malcolm, and which he will not give up. They also discover it will be advisable for them to have an advocate retained to plead their cause. But they are informed by the Laird of Reind that it will be a more expensive business than the poor's lands in Cleish will bear. Nevertheless, if no better can be done, and they still desire it, he will employ an advocate for them.

The session consider that as this is a matter concerning the possession of the poor, they should get the benefit of poor, and thus the case would cost them nothing. But in this they are defeated.

As another means of averting the trouble, the minister writes to the minister of Cleish, asking him to pass from his plea as far as the poor are concerned; but Mr Gib refuses to accede to this request. And so the matter rests until February of next year, when another letter is received by the minister intimating that "My Lord Colvill will obtain a decreet against our poor's lands in the parish of Cleish to pay eighteen merks yearlie of teind." Again the session resolve to have an advocate, and give Bailie Swinton five dollars to secure the services of one. A month later the account for the former pleading is paid; it amounts to £8, 16s. The case goes on, and in February 1709 we learn that the minister of Cleish has been successful, and he gives "the members of the session *qua* Heritors of the said

lands ane charge of Horning for payment of 36 merks as two years stipend for the said lands." Now, this was a very considerable increase on what formerly was paid. Up till now the sum payable was only £4, 7s. Scots, just a little over one-third of what is now claimed, and the session seek for a means of escaping the payment. On consulting an advocate they are buoyed up with the hope that the "decreet" may be reduced. This, however, will cost £8 stg. But if they could only get the benefit of the poor, it would cost little; and they resolve to make the attempt. By July 1709 their case is ready, and My Lord Colvill and Mr Gib are summoned before the lords anent the reducing of the decreet. It is all labour in vain; and, bowing to the inevitable, in July 1712 "the session order 18 merks to be paid Mr Gib as stipend for 1711." Our kirk-session's hope that they might escape the payment of stipend lay in the fact that the poor's lands were already free of the Government land-tax, which was called "cesse." On a fly-leaf of our earliest minute-book occurs this note: "The act of the Thesaury exempting our Templelands from cesse is dated 28 January 1697. Mr Rutherfurd the Receaver has an Extract. We have ane Copie under the attestation of Two Nottars."

About the time that this dispute with Cleish was drawing to a close, another of a less serious kind began. In April of 1710, information is received that the seat in Cleish Church belonging to our poor is taken out without legal intimation; therefore the session "appoint a procuratorie to be drawn to James Beans, appointing him to go to Cleish manse with a Notar, and protest that Mr Gib cause put the seat belonging to our poor into its own place, and in case of refusal, protest for all cost, skaith, and damage, and that the session shall not be liable in payment of the minister of Cleish's stipend, and that he take instruments ane or moe on the promptest." Mr Beans loses no time, but next day, along with the "Notar," duly presents himself at the manse of Cleish and protests. Two days later he is again at Cleish protesting against the heritors and elders of Cleish, and in each case takes instruments upon oath. These vigorous measures are successful, and the poor's seat is restored to its wonted place. The only thing left is to pay the

bill. This is duly done, and the Laird of Navitie is richer by £3, 18s. Scots.

Such bickering between two neighbouring parishes is, however, quite the exception. The relations are almost always of the kindliest nature. We have always been on the best of terms, for example, with our neighbours of Portmoak. About 1668 Mr Bruce, the minister there, married a daughter of Ballingry Manse. This same minister was one of the three who came over here to stir up our heritors about the building of a school. Several of our children were baptised in Portmoak. In 1714 the now famous Ebenezer Erskine came to us in our minister's absence and moderated in our kirk-session, giving sentence in a case of discipline. Sometimes also we gave of our charity to poor persons in Portmoak.

There were similar friendly dealings with Auchterderran, and there was even an amicable interchange of courtesies with the *quondam* enemy Cleish. Cleish, desiring to be strictly just, returns 11s. 6d., the proportion paid from our poor's lands for communion elements which had never been required. Ballingry, mindful also of what is due, takes care to forward to the widow of Mr Gib the stipend due him at his death, and likewise the proper proportion of the widow's *ann.* Nor do our session forget the claims of the school and schoolmaster of Cleish. In 1732 they pay their share for the building of the school, which amounted to £1, 19s., and as soon as it is due they forward the schoolmaster's stipend, and in charity, when he has been taken away, they send a sum to the schoolmaster's "relict."

There are quite a number of parishes in Fife that get contributions from Ballingry in this way. Generally the name of the recipient is given, with the sum that he or she received, as, for example, "To Helen Morrison in Kinghorn," such and such a sum, or "To Helen Whyte in Burntisland 14s." Sometimes the statement is more general, and it is simply announced that the beneficiaries are poor people in Kirkcaldy, Cupar, Leslie, St Andrews, or whatever the place may chance to be. On one occasion a small sum is sent to a "puir bodie in Wemyss."

At other times the circumstance is mentioned which

specially makes the recipient an object of charity, as when we read of £3 being sent to a man in Kennoway who was afflicted with stone, and was about to undergo an operation for its cure. In Orwell there is a case of a similar kind which obtains from us pecuniary relief. A sum of £2 is sent to a woman in Kinghorn who is suffering from cancer. Markinch is another town very frequently referred to. More than 300 years ago, a Ballingry minister was, as you may remember, transferred to Markinch. He must not have considered it promotion, for after a few years he returned to us again. When, 150 years ago, our session wished the services of a Markinch minister for the day, they had to pay for carriage hire 12s. stg. A similar sum was charged in 1825 for the carriage of a letter express to Dunfermline. That letter must have dealt with a matter of great urgency, for in the same year a letter was conveyed to Kinghorn, about an equal distance, for the sum of 6d

The four principal towns in the county are often mentioned in connection with the synod meetings. From the earliest years the meetings took place alternately in Cupar, Kirkcaldy, and St Andrews, and representative elders are regularly appointed from this kirk-session; but it is not till 1729 that we have Dunfermline mentioned as the meeting place. When, two or three years ago, this synod overtured the General Assembly for permission to meet at those four centres in turn, they but sought to revert to an ancient practice.

Our interests and our charities were by no means confined to the county of Fife. They extended all over the country. In 1670, under date "Appril 3," we read, "The contributione for Kilmarnok intimated." Next day the minute runs, "Collected for Kilmarnok 26s." And in August it is reported, "A discharge received for the contributione of Kilmarnok." On 22nd May of the same year it is laconically said, "The contributione for Coupar intimated," and on the next Sabbath we have the simple statement, "Collected by John Mill at the solemnitie, and Thomas Betsone for Coupar, £5, 13s.," thus making it appear that the collection is more liberal when it is for some place nearer home. In this year also we have communication, through testimonial, with the city of Aberdeen.

You will have more interest perhaps in hearing that in 1671 our parishioners sent a contribution to help to build the harbour of Dundee. It was recommended to them both by the Presbytery and by the Synod to do so. At the same time an appeal was made for a blind preacher and a diseased man in the parish of Markinch. They appoint a collection for the Dundee harbour on one day, and for the blind preacher "the day next following save one." For Dundee the collection amounts to £2, 12s. 10d.; for Mr Birnie, the blind preacher, £2, 5s. 8d. It is something for Ballingry to have had a share in promoting a work the revenue of which amounted last year to £55,373, with a clear profit of £4,006.

In 1709 our minister and elders were nearly making a closer acquaintance with Stirling than they seemed to care for. They were summoned by the Sheriff of Kinross to attend the Lords of Justiciary there as administrators of the Templelands in the parish of Cleish. They consult an advocate about the necessity of this, and they communicate likewise with the sheriff. On representations made he promises to make the excuses of the session for not going to Stirling.

In this same year of 1709 a report is brought to Fife that a tenement in the Canongate-head, Edinburgh, has been burned to the ground. Any one who remembers the tenements that in olden times stood there will understand how great a calamity that would be. Those monster buildings stood eight or ten stories high, with numerous families in every story. By this fire a large number of people would be rendered destitute. The Presbytery of Kirkcaldy recommend that a collection be taken throughout the bounds. Ballingry on this occasion contributes £8 "for the houseless," which sum was delivered through the Presbytery. At another time a certain John Logan, residing in the Pleasaunts, Edinburgh, receives pecuniary help from B'ingry; and yet again our session send £3 "to Mrs Arnot in Edinburgh." Here also we may note the £2 sent to the Deaf and Dumb Institution in 1825.

The stream of charity from this generous parish flows north as well as south. Three shillings are sent to a poor woman in Dunblane; a Highlander gets 12s.; assistance is given to "a strange man in Dundee;" for the building of the Tolbooth in

Tain we send £1, 6s. 10d.; to make a bridge in an Angus-shire parish there is given a sum of £4, 10s.; and coming down again to 1825, we observe the congregation collecting £4, 3s. 1d. for catechists in the Highlands.

England never seems to have made a claim upon our session's sympathies; the only time when money was sent across the border was in 1709, when the sum of £2, 15s. 4d. was dispatched to London to aid in the building of a German kirk there. Their hearts were touched, however, by the woes of Ireland, and frequently they held out to the sister isle a kindly helping hand. As, like the Germans in London, the sons of Ireland wished to have a place of worship, our session give £3 to Mr Stewart, an Irish minister, "to help to build a meeting-house." Some years before this they had given a subscription towards the repairing of "a meeting-house in Ireland." In 1822 we send over to Edinburgh more than £6 stg., to be added to the fund a committee there is gathering "for the distressed Irish." Among the casual poor of whom I spoke in the last chapter there were many of the Hibernian race. Their names are not often given. We only hear of this one and the other one that he is an Irish stranger, or that it is "a stranger and his family from Ireland." Latterly, however, they do give names, especially if here the Irishmen have taken up their abode. And we learn how careful the session were, and how continuous was their care, that the destitute Irish should be provided for as liberally as the Scotch. The impression is even given that because they were, though resident here, in a manner strangers, they were regarded with the greater tenderness.

Our parish is linked with the outside world not only by its charities, but through outstanding events in the history of the nation. In the reign of George I., when the Spanish fleet had been routed by Admiral Byng and utterly destroyed, Spain sought its revenge by fitting out an expedition against Scotland. The country populations were alarmed, and, in Ballingry at least, a day was set apart for fasting and prayer (1719). The invading fleet was destroyed by a storm, and the danger happily passed away. After George II. had ascended the throne, our ploughmen were reminded of the coronation day by the

ringing of the parish bell. The one man in the parish who profited by this ceremonial was the ringer of the bell, the beadle. He was remunerated for his trouble with the handsome sum of 2d.

A short time after this the Ballingry householders were afraid they were about to be visited by the plague; but when it passed away without coming near, they held a thanksgiving service for the deliverance.

About the end of last century, when Napoleon was creating such a stir upon the Continent, there was a flutter throughout all this land. In 1798 Ballingry pays its "assessment for raising countrymen for the years 1795 and 1796, amounting to the small sum of 9s. 4d.

Four years later our great Admiral Nelson had shattered the Danish fleet at the battle of Copenhagen, and the congregation of Ballingry again convened for a public service of thanksgiving because of the peace that ensued. The peace was illusory. War broke out again on the Continent, and in it Britain got deeply involved. In the dark days of the year 1807 we held a national fast. What the precise procedure was is not declared. All that is said of the "solemnitie" is that there was no sermon in Ballingry. But Britain's star was soon in the ascendant; victory followed victory in the several campaigns; and, in 1814, we are in a position to celebrate a national thanksgiving, which is shared in by this parish of ours. The congregation assemble to make grateful acknowledgment of the splendid triumphs that had been vouchsafed to our arms in the war with France. But when the collection-box was presented to them they must have been taken by surprise, for all that was gathered that day was 3½d. It was a little better in 1816, when they were once more summoned to join in national thanksgiving. This time they were rejoicing at the peace that had settled down on Europe, and the amount of the collection rose to 11d.

In more recent times the chief token in our minute-books that the session is alive to current interests consists in its occasional petitioning of Parliament. In 1871 it sent a petition against the Education Bill; and still more recently, as you will all remember well, a very largely signed petition was pre-

sented from this parish against the bill associated with the name of Mr Dick Peddie.

I have still to tell you of what our session did for foreign parts. There were the usual gifts to poor persons whose cases had been before the Assembly, and had obtained a recommendation from that august court. Thus we read of 12s. being given to "a French minister," and a similar small sum to a "stranger in Naples."

In connection with those foreign cases there is sometimes a spice of romance. You would be surprised if, having had no previous explanation, you found on looking down a column of the disbursements that the sum of £4 had been sent to "a slave in Algiers." What possible connection could we, or the Assembly, who recommended the case, have with a slave in Algiers? There is an entry of this kind in 1704. The explanation is suggested in a previous column of these same disbursements. In 1678, under date 3rd March, there is the following minute:—"The contribution was intimat for the releife of severall prisoners of Montrose taken by Algier Pirrats to be collected the next Sabbath at the Kirk dore;" and next Sabbath there was collected "for the prisoners of Montrose £17, 7s." Now, as matter of history we know that the Mediterranean swarmed with pirates. Not finding enough within that narrow sea to satisfy their cupidity, they sallied forth into the ocean. They prowled about the North Sea, pushing their way even as far as Iceland. A party of these sea rovers on their return from Iceland had fallen in with those fishermen of Montrose, had carried them off to Algiers, nor would allow them home again until they had received a ransom. The ransom was sought to be provided by collection at the "kirk dore."

At even an earlier date than this—namely, in 1675—there is a collection of £4, 11s. given "for the indwellers in Innerkithing, now prisoners with the Turks." How Inverkeithing men could have fallen into the hands of the Turks is not so easily explained. They may have been abroad in the interests of trade and commerce, but it is more probable that they were engaged in some political movement, for the order that this collection should be made is given by the Privy Council.

Once more, coming down to modern times, we note the

connection of our parish with the outside world, through its contributions to the Foreign Missions of the Church. A Missionary Society had been formed in Edinburgh, and in 1824 this parish contributes to its funds £1, 3s. 5½d. In 1840 we send contributions for the Presbyterian Churches in British Colonies, for the Indian Mission, and for Church Extension. In 1841 occurs the first mention of the Mission to the Jews. In 1844 we have collections for the Foreign Mission, Home Mission, and the Education Scheme. In 1846 there is a special subscription for the Canton de Vaud. In 1881 we augment the funds of the Edinburgh Students' Mission, and down to the present day contributions continue to be sent to the various schemes that receive the *imprimatur* of the Assembly, and as that Supreme Court of our Church gives order and direction. It becomes us to be charitable as our fathers were. It will be a token and a pledge of our real Christianity if, like them, we remember the distressed and all who are in want, wherever they may be. We are not an all in all to ourselves: we are our brother's keeper. We are bound by cords, strong and indissoluble, to the whole human race.

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