

lation of the parish—about 2400—is doubled in the summer months. There are five churches in the town.

THE BASS ROCK is two miles from the mainland. It rises perpendicularly out of seven-teen fathoms of salt water to a sheer height of 480 feet. It is a mile in circumference. I shall not soon forget the hours I spent upon it. On the previous evening I had hinted to the Doctor that I wanted to explore that rock. "It can be done," he said, dryly, "but it is difficult. You must walk three miles to the ferry; the boatman has a monopoly of the transit, and will 'salt' you pretty well; and, the sea is always treacherous." He excused himself from accompanying me. For this I forgave him the more readily that his accomplished daughter volunteered to be my guide. We made an early start, and, having overcome the three-fold difficulties, we landed at the only point where landing is possible and soon found ourselves on the green sward that clothes the summit. The view in every direction was perfect. Looking north over the expanse of waters were seen the Lomonds in "the Kingdom of Fife," and the Island of May. To the south were the fields of East Lothian—the finest agricultural district in Scotland—waving with luxuriant crops of grain ripe for the sickle. Westward, the Frith of Forth, with Inchkeith and Arthur's seat in the distance, and twenty miles of shore adorned with towns and villages and stately mansions. On the east, the German ocean. Besides the rabbits and two score sheep, the only other denizens of the rock are the Solon geese, estimated at 250,000 in number. They are beautiful creatures, measuring from tip to tip of wing from six to seven feet. The young birds are easily caught. Poor things! they are made for the slaughter. The island is rented for £30 a year, in consideration of which the tacksman has the right to kill from three to five thousand birds annually, and to rob them of as many eggs. It is a dangerous traffic. The executioner, armed with a club, is lowered over the edge of the cliff. Striking right and left as he descends, the birds fall dead into the sea and are picked up by boatmen. Many a scuffle the man has while dangling in the air, for the old birds die hard and often leave their mark upon their enemy. The curious old custom still obtains by which the Bass Rock contributes towards the parish minister's stipend, as part of the "tiend," twelve Solon geese annually.

But the interest attaching to the Bass is by no means confined to these living creatures. There are evidences of another kind of life than is now found upon it, in the ruins of extensive fortifications whose walls and casements and secret passages and dungeons

can be distinctly traced. In the early times of Scottish history the Bass was a stronghold of the Picts. In the sixth century, St. Baldred, one of the Culdees—a disciple of Kentigern and one of the earliest Christian missionaries in this part of the country—had his home on the rock. The walls of a chapel called by his name are still in good preservation. Later times found the Church of Rome in possession, and in the twelfth century the Bass was claimed by the Bishop of St. Andrew's. It passed into the hands of the Lauder family. In 1671 it was purchased by the government for £4000 and made the state prison of Scotland. Here many of the Covenanters were confined for holding armed conventicles, or because they were suspected of complicity with those who did. It is not known how many were imprisoned during the persecuting times, but the names of at least sixty have been preserved, among whom were Alexander Peden, John Blackadder, John Welsh, and Gabriel Sen-pilp. The name of the Duke of Lauderdale, at that time Governor of the Bass, became as detestable as that of Claverhouse. It was a common saying of his, in respect to those who refused to take the oath of abjuration,— "Then let him go and glorify God at the Grassmarket." It is certain that James Learmont, for presuming to attend a conventicle on the hills of White Kirk "in the sight and view of the garrison of the Bass," paid the penalty with his head at the Grassmarket. Mr. Blackadder died on the Bass in 1685, and was buried in North Berwick churchyard. The epitaph on his tombstone is quaint, like that over many a Scottish martyr's grave. It runs thus:

"Here lies the body of Mr. John Blackadder, minister of the Gospel at Troqueer in Galloway, who died on the Bass, after five years' imprisonment, Anno Dom. 1685, and of his age sixty-three years.

"Blest John, for Jesus' sake in Patmos bound,
His prison Bethel, Patmos, and Pisgah found.
So the bless'd John, on yonder rock confined,
His body suffered, but no claims could bind
His heaven-aspiring soul; while day by day,
As from Mount Pisgah's top he did survey
The promised land, and view'd the Crown by faith
Laid up for those who faithful are till death.
Grace furnished him in the Christian Hero's mould,
Meek in his own concerns—in 's Master's bold.
Passions to reason chained, Prudence did lead—
Zeal warmed his breast, and Reason cool'd his heat.
Five years on the lone rock, yet sweet abode,
He Enoch-like enjoy'd, and walked with God;
Till by long living on this heavenly food
His soul by love grew up too great, too good
To be confined to jail or flesh and blood.
Death broke his fetters off, then swift he fled
From sin and sorrow, and by angels led,
Enter'd the mansions of Eternal joy.
Blest soul—thy warfare's done, praise, love enjoy
His dust here rests, till Jesus come again—
Even so, blest Jesus come—come, Lord,—Amen."

The Bass was constituted a parish and the church upon it was duly consecrated in 1542—eighteen years before the Reformation. Subsequently it was merged in the parish of North Berwick. J. C.