

## PARISH OF ELGIN.

PRESBYTERY OF ELGIN, SYNOD OF MORAY.

THE REV. WILLIAM GORDON,  
THE REV. ALEXANDER WALKER, } MINISTERS.

### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—It appears from the chartulary of Moray that the name of this town and parish prior to the year 1226 was Elgyn or Helgyn; and an old iron seal in the town's repositories, has this inscription, engraven in Saxon characters, in a style supposed to be earlier than that of the middle of the 16th century,—“S. COMMUNE CIVITATIS DE HELGYN.” A variety of etymologies have been given of the name, but the most probable derives it from Helgy, General of the army of Sigurd, the Norwegian Earl of Orkney, who conquered Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, and Moray, about the beginning of the tenth century.\* This general, it is said, built a town in the southern part of Moray, which most probably was Elgin, as it is situated about eight miles south east of Burghead, where the Norwegians had a small fort and harbour for their shipping.†

*Extent, &c.*—The parish of Elgin is inland, and extremely irregular in its figure. With the exception of that part of the parish lying westward of the Lossie, and containing the vales of Pluscarden and Mosstowie, which are separated by a steep hilly ridge, it has a gentle acclivity from the town, on the northern extremity, to the base of the Blackhills, the summit of which is its southern boundary. We are not perhaps far from the truth in estimating the superficial extent at 18 square miles. The town stands on the south bank of the Lossie, on ground sloping a little to the north, and its length is greatly disproportionate to its breadth, the high street being nearly three quarters of a mile long. The bulk of the population have their dwellings in closes or alleys, opening at a right angle to the principal street. In olden times, the river ran by the gardens which generally terminated these alleys to the north; but a field of fifty or sixty acres of haugh land, partly in the parish of

\* Vide former Statistical Account. † *Herum Orcad. Hist. a Thorm. Torfæ.*

New Spynie, now intervenes betwixt the river and its former channel. A highly cultivated and well-wooded secondary slope, rising in the form of a crescent from the north bank, greatly beautifies, and at the same time shelters, the town from the North-west, North and North-east, winds. The south side of the town is preferred for building, and many handsome houses and cottages, have been recently erected; but the effect of the whole is marred by a total want of plan; the Proprietor having left each Feuar at liberty to set down his house according to his own taste or caprice.

*Meteorology.*—No regular register of the barometer and thermometer has been hitherto kept in the parish; but it may be stated generally, that both of these range higher than in any of the northern counties of Scotland.\* The prevailing winds are west and south-west, and the climate of the town and district is particularly mild and salubrious. In the year 1830, 93 deaths were recorded, of which one-third were above sixty years of age, viz. 8 from sixty to seventy; 16 from seventy to eighty; 7 from eighty to ninety; and 2 from ninety to one hundred. There are comparatively few winters when snow lies more than two or three weeks after the commencement of the year, and for some winters past it was scarcely seen for as many days in succession. The summers are dry and warm. When the clouds, loaded with the vapour of the Atlantic, reach the head of the Moray Frith, they are attracted on the north by the Ross and Sutherland hills, and on the south by the lofty mountain range where the Nairn, the Findhorn, and the Lossie have their sources; and the farmer, in what is called the *How* of Moray, sees many a cloud pouring its waters to the north and south which would be most grateful and refreshing to his parched fields. The drought of July is most injurious to the spring crops.

None of the prevalent diseases can be ascribed to any peculiarity in the climate. No case of Indian cholera has occurred in the parish.

*Hydrography.*—The landward part of the parish is generally well supplied with springs of excellent water; but the town is dependent on pump-wells, the water of which is more or less impregnated with the strata through which it rises,—or on river water, brought in casks drawn by horses or carried by servants, at a great expense of time and labour.

\* A barometer, thermometer, and rain-gage have been provided at the Elgin Institution, and placed under the charge of Mr Allan, the accurate and intelligent house-governor, and the observations on each will be given to the public in a tabular form.

The Lossie is the only stream of any magnitude in the parish. It either skirts or winds through it, rather a sluggish course of about eight miles, part of which it forms the northern boundary, and falls into the Moray Frith at the shipping port of Lossiemouth, five miles north-east of Elgin. Running through a flat country, it requires to be confined to its channel by artificial banks, which it frequently overflows, damaging the crops on the adjoining fields, and occasioning considerable expense to the proprietors, in repairs. This was particularly the case in the disastrous floods of August 1829, so accurately and graphically described in Sir Thomas D. Lauder's book on the subject.

*Geology and Mineralogy.*—On either of these branches of science there is very little to interest the naturalist. The hilly ridge which separates Pluscarden from Mosstowie is of hard sandstone, not liable to be decomposed by the action of air and water; and, where the strata are visible, they appear to be nearly parallel to the horizon. About a mile south of Elgin, there is a bed of secondary limestone, lying in the direction of east to west, and which may be traced eastward through the parishes of St Andrews and Urquhart to a rock visible at low water in the Moray Frith. This bed is adulterated with sand, clay, and oxide of iron. These impurities give the lime a dark colour, but it is found to answer very well for agricultural purposes, and for mortar to buildings of an inferior description. There is a great variety of soil in the parish. Much of the arable land is light and sandy, part is inclined to clay, and part is a rich loam, particularly on the banks of the Lossie.

*Woods.*—About seventy years ago, the lowland district of Moray was one of the barest in Scotland. Scarce a tree was to be seen, except a few ashes in the avenue leading to the mansion of some old family. James the Second Earl of Fife was the first extensive planter, and his example was soon followed by the neighbouring land-owners, so that there is now hardly an uncultivated knoll or ridge to be seen which is not covered with wood. The oldest plantation in this parish is at Main, the property of the Earl of Seafield, and it barely reaches to half a century. Many hundreds of acres on the estates of the Earl of Fife and George Duff, Esq. of Milton Duff, which, less than twenty years ago, were naked moor, are now clothed with almost every variety of forest trees. These, and the plantations at Westerton, the property of Colonel Alexander Hay, greatly improve the scenery of Pluscarden, and render the interesting ruins of the priory much more beautiful and

picturesque. On the south side of the parish, Blackhills, the property of Lachlan Cuning, Esq. is also well wooded. All these plantations are very thriving, and consist of larch and Scotch firs interspersed with oak, beech, ash, &c. where the soil gives any promise of sufficient depth and richness for the nourishment of hard timber. The larch here, as in most other parts of the country, is much infested with the insect peculiar to it; and, at one period, the planters were much alarmed at the ravages of the *Chermes pini*, as it has been called, but their fears are subsiding, as experience has shown that it rarely kills, though it no doubt retards the growth of the tree.

*Remarkable Beech.*—There is a very beautiful and perfectly healthy beech tree in the college garden, the property of George Duff, Esq. of Milton. The stem rises almost perpendicular to the height of 16 feet, and then bursts out into a forest of limbs in every direction, and with every possible variety of curve and angle, forming an object truly picturesque. The girth of the bole near the ground is 13 feet, and at 8 feet high it is 12 feet. As nearly as can be ascertained, the fine head rises to 70 feet, and the boughs extend over a circle of 80 feet in diameter. Eight of such trees would cover an imperial acre.

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

The Rev. Dr Lachlan Shaw, one of the ministers of Elgin, published a history of the province of Moray in the year 1775, and the writer of this has abridged from it much of what is stated relative to the antiquities of the town and parish. The book having become scarce, was reprinted with notes at the Courier printing-office Elgin, in 1827, and is now in general circulation.

*Historical Notices.*—Elgin is the county town,—the seat of the presbytery,—of the law and county courts. About the beginning of the eleventh century it appears to have been a considerable town, with a royal fort. The earliest charter of guildry was granted by Alexander II. in 1234. This charter was subsequently confirmed; and various local taxes remitted at different dates by the Earls of Moray, to whom the town was subject as Constables of the King's fort. Grants of land and other concessions by Alexander, Robert, James I. II. and VI. were ratified by Charles I. in a charter dated the 8th of October 1633. The gross revenue of the burgh at present is about L. 600 per annum. The town's arms represent St Giles in a pastoral habit, holding a book in the right hand and a pastoral staff in the left, with this motto, "SIC ITUR AD ASTRA."

Since the passing of the Reform Bill the limits of the royalty have been greatly extended, and include the populous village of Bishop Mill, in the parish of New Spynie. The number of the enrolled constituency is 277, but at least twenty more have a right to the elective franchise, who have not qualified. Along with Cullen, Banff, Peterhead, Kintore, and Inverury, it sends a Member to Parliament, and is the returning burgh. Within the last fifteen years, two printing-presses have been established in the town, and the proprietors of each attempted a periodical, the one a literary magazine, and the other an agricultural journal, but without success. The *Elgin Courier*, a weekly journal, was first published in 1827, and at one time had a circulation, it is said, of 300, which, had it continued, would have remunerated the enterprising proprietor. From untoward circumstances, the journal has recently passed into other hands; and if the *Elgin Courant* is conducted with the prudence and ability which the few numbers published indicate, there is no doubt it will succeed.

*Eminent Men.*—Alexander Grey, Esq. surgeon, and Lieutenant-General Anderson, both of the E. I. C. Service, the former a native of Elgin, and the latter a proprietor and occasional residenter, deserve to be mentioned. Dr Grey, by economical habits, amassed a very considerable fortune in the East, the greater part of which he bequeathed for charitable purposes, particularly for building and endowing an hospital for the sick poor of the town and county of Elgin, of which the objects for whom it was intended have been reaping the benefit for more than fifteen years.

General Anderson was born of very humble parents in the neighbouring parish of Lhanbryd, and entered the Honourable Company's service as a private. By his good conduct and soldierly qualities he attained rank and wealth, and the large fortune which he had honourably acquired he devoted at his death to the education of the young, and the support of the aged poor of his native county. The Elgin Institution at the east, and Grey's Hospital at the west end of the town are splendid memorials of these philanthropists.

*Land-owners.*—The principal proprietors in the parish are, the Earls of Fife, Seafield, and Moray, George Duff of Milton Duff, Colonel Alexander Hay of Westerton, Alexander Brander of Springfield, James Stephen, M. D. of the Shanchry, James Stewart King of the Greyfriars, Lachlan Cuming of Blackhills, and Major Taylor of Bilbohall.

*Parochial Registers.*—The register of baptisms and marriages, extending to seven volumes, commences in the year 1705, and though a few years are wanting, it may be reckoned on the whole as complete a record as is to be found in most parishes. The register of burials begins in 1770, and is confined to those interred in the cathedral burying-ground. This inaccuracy, however, is more apparent than real, as the number of strangers interred in the cathedral ground are probably very nearly the same as the number of persons who die in the parish, and are buried in the neighbouring church-yards. These registers are most accurately kept.

*Antiquities.*—There are various remains of religious houses in the parish, the most interesting and magnificent of which are those of the *cathedral*. This noble edifice was founded by Bishop Andrew Murray in the year 1224, on the site of the church of the Holy Trinity at the north-east extremity of the town, and, as he lived eighteen years, it is probable that if he did not finish, he greatly advanced the building. “The Wolf of Badenoch,” having seized upon, and kept violent possession of some of the Bishop of Moray’s lands, was excommunicated for this outrage, and in resentment burnt the town, the parish church of St Giles, the Maison Dieu, the cathedral, and the greater part of the college in the year 1390. The cathedral was rebuilt with as little delay as possible, in the form of a Passion or Jerusalem cross, having five towers, two at each end, and one in the centre. In the interior it had what is called the *nave* for the numerous and splendid processions of Christian worship under papal guidance,—*aisles* for the reception of the multitude to witness these processions,—and a *choir* for the actual performance of the sacred rites. On the north side was the chapter-house, communicating with the choir by a vaulted vestry. These essential appendages of Romish worship necessarily occupied a space of great magnitude, as the following measurement, which is nearly accurate, will shew: Length of cathedral over walls, 264 feet; breadth, 35; traverse, 114; height of centre tower, 198; eastern turrets, 60; western towers without the spires, 84; side wall, 36. The whole was of Gothic architecture, in the style called “decorated English;” and although the grotesque is the prevailing character of the sculpture, many small ornaments, designed with taste, and executed with the utmost delicacy, are yet to be seen. This costly and imposing edifice stood entire in all its grandeur, until the government of the Regent Morton was driven to the miserable shift of passing an act of council on the 14th February 1568 for

stripping the lead from the cathedral churches of Aberdeen and Elgin, and selling it to pay the troops. This order was too faithfully executed, and the cathedral of Moray, thus uncovered, was suffered to decay as a piece of Romish vanity, too expensive to be kept in repair. The wooden work of the great tower gradually decayed, and, the foundation giving way, it fell in the year 1711. The remains of this venerable pile are well worth the examination of the traveller. The chapter-house, an exact octagon, 37 feet in diagonal breadth, with a vaulted roof 34 feet high, and supported in the centre by a column 24 feet high, and 9 feet in circumference, on which rest arched pillars from each angle of the sides, is in good preservation. The turrets and walls of the choir on the east end, and the towers on the west, between which was the grand entrance with its deep recess and bivalved door richly ornamented, are still standing at the dimensions already specified; but of the walls of the nave and traverse only a few fragments remain. A commendable attention has been paid for some years past by the Barons of Exchequer in Scotland, and the Commissioners of Woods and Forests in England, to the preservation of these interesting relics, and grants of money have been judiciously expended in clearing away the great mass of rubbish in the choir and nave, by which the steps to the altar and the bases of the pillars that supported the arches of the aisles have been uncovered, so that a tolerably accurate idea may now be formed of the extent of the several parts of the building. Much praise is due to the present keeper\* for the zeal and diligence with which he has laboured in bringing to light adjuncts of the fabric, particularly the steps leading to the grand entrance, and a porch to the southmost aisle, of which there was no record.

The *College* was an appendage of the Cathedral, and contained not only the church and grave yard, but also the bishop's house, and the manses and gardens of the twenty-two canons. It was inclosed with a strong stone wall 4 yards high and 900 yards in circuit, and had four gates. The *Pans Port* or eastern gateway, with part of the inclosing wall, is still standing, and appears to have had a portcullis, iron gate, and porter's lodge.

A *Convent of Grey Friars* was settled in Elgin by Alexander II. and the ruins of their church are to be seen on the south side of the town.

The site of the *preceptory of Maison Dieu* may be traced in the

\* John Shanks.

middle of an arable field at the east end of the town, but no part of the buildings remain.

*The ruins of the Abbey of Pluscarden* are situated in a vale of the same name, at the foot of a steep bridge fronting the south, about six miles westward of Elgin. A lofty stone wall, of which a considerable part is standing, inclosed several acres of ground. The church, in the form of a cross, stood almost in the centre, with the prior's house and the cells of the monks adjoining. The Dormitory, which has recently been roofed in, and the walls and windows repaired in the same style as the original building, was on the second floor, at the south east end of the church, and under it was an arched Kitchen. The latter has been fitted up as a place of public worship for the inhabitants of the vale, and a clergyman on the Royal Bounty resides near, and regularly officiates. The inclosure also contained the gardens, the burial-ground, and the mill for grinding the monks' grain. Every attention is paid by the Earl of Fife, the proprietor, to preserve these relics from farther decay, and the shrubberies and walks near the abbey, and the plantations adjacent, add greatly to their beauty and interest.

*Fort.*—There are some remains of a fort on a small green hill, now called the Lady-hill, at the west end of the town, but they are not sufficient to show the form or extent of the buildings. The walls were built of stone and run lime, and, as the length of the plain area on the top of the hill is nearly twice the breadth, the fort was probably an oblong quadrangle. It no doubt had its towers, draw-well, guarded entrance, and fosse, as traces of some of these are still to be seen. The Earls of Moray acted as constables, and had jurisdiction within certain bounds till the middle of the fifteenth century; they had for salary the customs of the town, the assize of ale, and some lands. The property of the hill descended to their successors, and belongs to the present Earl. This little hill commands a most extensive and delightful view of the frith and the surrounding country for many miles.

*New Buildings.*—The Elgin Institution, for the support of old age and the education of youth, stands on the south side of the entrance to the town from the east, and is a quadrangular building of two stories, surmounted with a circular tower and dome. The principal front and entrance is to the north, having the two sides of the quadrangle projecting, and, in the centre a portico of two beautiful Ionic columns with entablature rising to the height of

the building, on which is placed a group of three figures in sculpture, emblematic of the founder and the objects of the charity. The west side has also its portico of six plain Doric columns and entablature rising to the base of the windows of the second story. The interior contains most convenient and comfortable accommodation for sixty children, ten aged and indigent persons, and for the necessary establishment of house-governor, matron, teachers, and servants. The grand entrance leads through a narrow corridor directly into the chapel, having an arched roof full 30 feet high, and communicating by arched passages with both sides of the building. The school rooms, the eating halls, and dormitories of the children occupy the whole eastern side; the apartments of the aged are on the ground floor of the western side, and over these the sick-rooms for the children, and the parlours and bed-rooms of the house-governor and matron. The kitchen, wash-house, laundry, &c. are to the south; and connected with these, but having a separate entry, are the free school, of sufficient extent for 230 scholars, and the apartments for a male and female teacher. The porter's lodge, in the form of an octagon with a pyramidal roof, is on the west side. The garden, play-grounds, shrubbery, and stance of the buildings, measure about 3 Scotch acres, and are enclosed with a stone wall and iron railing. The building is reckoned very chaste, and highly creditable to the talents of Archibald Simpson, Esq. architect, Aberdeen, who designed it. It is constructed of beautiful freestone, from the hill of Quarrywood, and, with the furnishings, cost nearly L. 12,000. It was opened on the 5th June 1833.

*Church.*—The new church, on the site of the old church of St Giles, is in the High Street, nearly in the centre of the town, and is built of the same materials as the Institution, and after a plan by the same artist. This is a very elegant structure, not surpassed by any in the north of Scotland. The length over walls is 96 feet, and breadth  $60\frac{1}{2}$ , side walls 36, and height of ceiling 31. On the east end there is a projecting square tower with clock and bells, surmounted by what is commonly called a lantern, consisting of one massive column in the centre, and a circular colonnade, supporting a tholus or cupola richly ornamented, the whole rising to the height of 112 feet. The access for the congregation is by three doors on the west end, under a spacious portico of six Grecian Doric columns, projecting 7 feet 4 inches from the building and extending  $53\frac{1}{2}$  feet in breadth. The entablature rises to a sufficient height to admit of the portico being roofed uniformly

with the church. An unseemly court-house and jail, a few yards to the westward of the church, prevent this fine portico from being seen to advantage, but an act was passed last Session of Parliament for their removal, so that this deformity to the church and to the street will soon be corrected. The vestry on the ground story of the tower communicates directly with the pulpit, which is placed about ten feet from the wall, by a small stair, and there is a stove for heating the church. The interior arrangements of galleries and pews are most convenient, and a beautiful simplicity, well suited to the forms of Presbyterian worship, characterises the whole. It was opened for public worship in October 1828; and, including communion plate and a fund of L. 300 for repairs, cost the proprietors L. 8300.

*Grey's Hospital.*—This also is a building of two stories, in the Grecian style of architecture, having on the front, which is to the east, a fine projecting portico of four Roman Doric columns, and entablature, rising to the same height as the walls of the building, and the centre crowned with a dome, which has been found fault with as too heavy. It stands on a rising ground at the west end of the town, and coming into view almost immediately after passing the church, it forms a very striking and beautiful termination to the High Street. A small lunatic asylum for paupers, containing ten cells and the necessary accommodation for keepers and servants, was built, 1834, by a voluntary assessment on the land-owners, amounting to L. 850. It is situated on the grounds of the hospital to the westward. Some delay in opening it has been occasioned by the want of funds to provide furniture, and to erect appendages to the building absolutely necessary, though not included in the original plan and estimate. The Trinity Lodge Assembly Rooms, spacious and elegantly furnished; Sir Archibald Dunbar's town house; the Episcopal Chapel; the House of Westerton, are all of recent erection, but the limits of this report do not admit of their being fully described.

### III.—POPULATION.

If the returns of the population of the town and parish prior to the Government census be correct, it has fluctuated very considerably.

In 1750, according to Dr Webster, the amount was	-	-	6306
1793	-	Rev. John Grant	4534
1801	-	Government census	4345
1811	-	Do.	4602
1821	-	Do.	5308
1831	-	Do. males 2824, females 3306,	6130



the agricultural population of the surrounding district, with the necessaries, and such of the luxuries of life as their respective circumstances enable them to reach.

The following statement exhibits the branches of industry in which the male population of the parish above twenty years of age are employed. 1. Farmers, cottars, and servants employed in agriculture, 365; 2. Master manufacturers, 6; 3. Masters and workmen in retail trade and handicraft, 703; 4. Capitalists, bankers, professional, and educated men, 113; 5. Labourers, employed by the classes, Nos. 2, 3, and 4, 151; 6. Retired tradesmen, superannuated labourers, and males diseased in body or mind, not included above, 77; Taxed male household servants under twenty years of age, 12; above twenty years of age, 8; female servants, 480.

*Agriculture.*—The plans and measurements of the large estates in the parish are generally of an old date, and do not give an accurate account of their contents of waste and arable land; and it is equally difficult to get any correct knowledge of the extent of the small properties around the town. In stating the number of the imperial acres in the parish cultivated or occasionally in tillage, and also what is uncultivated and under wood, it must be understood that only an approximation to the truth is given, from the best information that could be obtained.

Imperial acres cultivated or occasionally in tillage,	7000
remaining waste or in pasture,	3000
under wood,	1500

There is a very considerable extent of waste land, particularly on the south side of the parish, which might be profitably cultivated, if sufficient encouragement were given by the land-owners, as lime works most beneficially on the new soil, and raises heavy crops of grain and grass. A common between the estates of the Earl of Fife and Mr Cuming of Blackhills has been recently divided, and though the westmost and most extensive part of it is almost inaccessible to wheel carriages, and no allowance given for building, or for the land improved, beyond a lease of scarcely the ordinary endurance at a trifle of rent per acre, yet it is astonishing to see with what spirit the industrious settlers are bringing large tracts into culture. It is the general opinion that a sum of money laid out in making roads, in a very moderate allowance per acre for improvements, and in planting, would be amply repaid to the proprietor, and make almost the whole of this waste a cultivated and ornamental field. There is no natural wood in the parish, and it has been already mentioned, that larch and Scotch firs preponderate

in the plantations, but not to the exclusion of hard timber. All the plantations are pruned and thinned with great care and regularity, and the thinnings sold for paling, roofing, and other purposes of husbandry.

*Rent of Land.*—In 1828, the rental of land in the parish was L. 8520, and if the foregoing estimate of what is arable be correct, it will make the average annual rent L. 1, 4s. per imperial acre, or about L. 1, 10s. per Scotch acre. The best haugh land is let from L. 1, 12s. to L. 2, and the light lands in the vicinity of the town, from L. 2, 8s. to L. 2, 16s. per imperial acre.

*Rate of Wages.*—Farm-servants generally live in the farmers' houses, and the males receive annually from L. 9 to L. 10, and the females from L. 4 to L. 5, of wages besides food. Male labourers engaged by the day get from 9s. to 9s. 6d. per week, and women for field labour from 3s. to 4s. per week. Male labourers prefer piece-work when practicable, and if they earn more in this way it is by longer and harder toil. A carpenter's wages per day are from 2s. to 2s. 4d. and a mason's from 2s. to 2s. 6d.; with the utmost diligence weavers can hardly reach 9s. per week.

*Husbandry.*—Thirty-five years ago the breeds of horses and cattle in the parish and district was of a very inferior description, but since that time much attention has been paid to their improvement. The best breeds of horses from the southern counties have been introduced; and it may now be asserted that more compact, active, strong, horses are seldom to be met with than those in the possession of the Morayshire farmer. The most prevalent breed of cattle is a black-coloured horned breed, resembling the Aberdeenshire, though not so large, and, with much care and expense by the breeder, it has attained great symmetry and beauty as well as size. Some enterprising farmers have begun to cross this breed with the short-horned; but the experiment has not been made for a length of time sufficient to determine whether the plan ought to be generally pursued. The few sheep fed with the farmer's cattle do not require to be noticed, but pigs of every variety of breed are very abundant in every farm-yard, and there are few of the poorest cottagers without one. On most of the farms in the parish the rotation of crops consists of a five-shift course, in which white and green crops, including two years' grass, alternately succeed each other; and the agricultural implements are of the most approved construction. In the cultivation of green crops, there has been a wonderful alteration within a few years, from the application of

bone manure. It is now used to a certain extent by almost every farmer; and Mr Lawson of Old Mills has erected, near Elgin, a mill for its manufacture. From fifteen to twenty bushels per imperial acre, without mixture, will produce a heavy crop of turnips; but, for a year or two past, a more economical mode of applying bones for raising this valuable esculent has been adopted, namely, by dibbling, and in this way half the quantity, or even less, will raise a very fair crop. In order to render the saving plan beneficial to the soil, the whole crop thus raised ought to be consumed on the ground by sheep,—a practice to which, one great obstacle at present is the want of a market for the fatted stock,—an obstacle which steam conveyance, it is hoped, will soon remove. Wheat, oats, and barley, are cultivated in considerable variety in the parish. About four years ago the *Hopetoun oat* was first tried by that intelligent and zealous agriculturist, Mr Isaac Forsyth of Haughland. This variety does not suit light land, but it is now much used on rich soils, and the produce in straw and corn exceeds considerably that of any other oat formerly cultivated. The *Chevalier barley* has been recently introduced, and from its superior quality is likely to be extensively raised.

The use of lime has been general for twelve years. On light land it is applied at the rate of 120 to 140 bushels, and on strong land at the rate of 200 bushels, or even more per imperial acre. On very light sandy soil, though the effects are visible in the green crops and grass, it is doubtful whether it will pay, but along the margin of the Blackhills and in Pluscarden it operates so advantageously that one crop or two will repay the expense. The farm-buildings generally belong to the tenant. The house of the small farmer consists of one story, and is thatched with straw,—that of the more extensive farmer has two stories, is built of sandstone, and slated. The farm of Main, and two or three small Properties in the vicinity of the town, are enclosed and subdivided with thorn hedges, but this species of fence is too slow of growth, and too liable to accident, and requires too much care and attention to be adopted by the farmer without encouragement from the heritor, which has not hitherto been given. The fields around the Abbey of Pluscarden have been enclosed and subdivided by the proprietor with stone dikes; and similar enclosures, made at the expense of the tenant, are partially to be met with on that side of the parish; but Mr Lawson's farm of Old Mills, near the town, is the only one completely enclosed with this substantial and durable fence. Con-

venient and profitable as such enclosures are to the farmer, they are too expensive to become general, unless the land-owners were to defray the cost of building, exacting a moderate per centage from the tenantry. Extensive improvements have recently been made by draining in the vales of Pluscarden and Mosstowie, mostly at the expense of the proprietors. Much waste land in the parish has been reclaimed by frequent ploughing, harrowing, and liming,—at the tenant's expense generally, though in a few instances an allowance of L. 5 per Scotch acre has been given by the proprietor when the land is brought into proper tillage and limed, and for which the tenant pays five per cent. during the remaining years of his lease. The proprietor of Westerton trenched and limed a large moor some years ago at an expense of L. 12 per Scotch arce, which is now paying well. A small sum of money laid out in making roads, and an allowance of L. 5 per acre for tillage and liming, would soon bring some hundreds of acres of waste land under crop, which, even in these times of agricultural distress, would pay both landlord and tenant. Leases in general are of nineteen years endurance. On some of the large properties the farms are valued by an experienced person before being let; on others they are let to the highest bidder.

*Manufactures.*—There are eight grain mills in the parish,—a carding-mill for wool, and a saw-mill for timber. Thrashing-mills driven by horses or by water are in general use. A tannery and brewery in the town, and two distilleries in the landward part of the parish, are in active operation. The hands employed in any of these works are not numerous, and no injurious effects on the health or morals of the persons engaged in them have been observed.

*Morayshire Farmers' Club.*—This club was instituted in 1799, and is now the oldest local agricultural Association in Scotland. The original members were most happy in their selection of Mr Isaac Forsyth as secretary, who engaged in the cause with all his heart, and, for more than a quarter of a century, devoted the energies of an active and intelligent mind to the attainment of the important and patriotic objects for which the Society was established. The attention and funds of the club were first applied to the introduction of new implements of husbandry—to the excitement of emulation among ploughmen, by awarding premiums after public competition to the most skilful, and to the improvement of the breed of horses by the purchase of one of high character and pedi-

gree. The advantages of the Association became every year more and more apparent, and it soon enrolled as members, not only the whole body of respectable farmers in the district, but also all the noblemen and gentlemen connected with the county. Annual cattle shows were then established,—premiums of large amount were given for horses from the southern districts, to serve for the season in the county,—for the different kinds of stock brought into competition,—for various branches of tillage and crops,—for seed grain, grasses, &c. These premiums are not confined to the members of the club, but, with a liberality which has characterized all their proceedings, are open to every class of farmers in the county; and certainly it is not one of the least gratifying effects of the society's exertions, that a considerable proportion of prizes for the best stock is annually carried off by the small farmers who are not members. The club has not been inattentive to another very important object, namely, to the supply of the means of information to the members on those subjects with which it nearly concerns them to be acquainted. At an early period of the association, a sum of money was annually set apart from the funds, for the establishment of an agricultural library, which now contains a valuable collection of the best books on every branch of rural economy, and is yearly increased by every useful publication on agriculture, as soon as it comes from the press. Since its commencement, the individual members of the club have contributed L. 2250 to its funds; and if the implements in use, the state of tillage, and the breed of stock to be seen even on small farms, be compared with what they were thirty years ago, the mighty alteration must be ascribed, in no small degree, to the judicious expenditure of this large sum, and to the beneficial influence exerted by the society, in promoting the agricultural improvements of the district. The club still exists in undiminished vigour and usefulness.

*Society for promoting Industry among the most necessitous Poor.*—The object of this Society is sufficiently indicated by its name. There is in the town a number of indigent but industrious females, whom the introduction of steam manufacture has deprived of the means by which they formerly earned a subsistence. A small fund is provided by subscriptions and donations among the members and friends of the society, to purchase the materials of spinning, knitting, and sewing, which are given out to these females to be wrought up according to instructions, and for which they receive the ordinary rate of wages. The manufactured articles are then

sold, and the money drawn applied to the purchase of more raw material. There are upwards of seventy aged and infirm females on the books of the society, who are either occasionally or constantly employed. They express their gratitude for the aid which keeps them from the degradation of begging, and seem very sensible how much the relief which their own industry thus procures for them, is superior in relish and respectability to the ordinary gratuity. A committee of ladies attend at the sale-room on a stated day every week, to give out and take in work, and it is chiefly owing to their benevolent and active services, that the society is flourishing in the sixth year of its existence. Beyond the incidental expenses, the annual loss upon the manufactured articles is a mere trifle.

*Produce.*—The average amount and value of raw produce yearly raised in the parish, as nearly as can be ascertained, is as follows:

Grain,	-	L. 14485
Potatoes and turnips,	-	9603
Hay,	-	292
Pasture,	-	2920
		<hr/>
		L. 21,800

The thinnings of plantations may probably amount to L. 100 per annum.

#### V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

*Town.*—There are no villages in the parish, and Elgin is the only town. It has been already stated that it is not a manufacturing place, and that the population are capitalists, professional men, retailers, artisans, and labourers. It has ten fairs annually for the sale of cattle, horses, &c. and a weekly market on Friday for grain, poultry, butter, and other articles of farm and garden produce. The small farmer generally sells his grain to the corn-factor, and the large farmer disposes of his barley to the brewer or distiller, or sends it with his wheat and oats to the Leith, London, and Liverpool markets. Some years ago a considerable traffick in wheaten flower was carried on with Aberdeen and some of the provincial towns of that and the neighbouring county of Banff, but of late this trade has rather declined. There is also a class in the town called meal-mongers, who purchase small quantities of oats, which they manufacture, and retail to the trades-people and labourers.

*Police.*—The magistrates have the superintendence of the police. They appoint a fiscal for the burgh, and occasionally hold courts for determining trifling debts and disputes concerning burghage property, and for the trial of petty offences committed within the

royalty. Excise and small debt courts are held by the Justices of the Peace, but since the Sheriff small-debt court came into operation, there is little business before the latter. About five years ago, the chief magistrate, Mr Lawson Junior, and some other public-spirited individuals, laid before the citizens a proposal for lighting the streets with gas, providing they would voluntarily assess themselves for a certain number of years, to defray the expense over L. 30, granted annually for this purpose by the magistrates, out of the common good. The proposal was almost unanimously acceded to,—a gas company was formed,—a gas manufactory built, and the subsequent winter the streets and shops, and many private houses, were lighted with gas. The matter continued on this footing till the passing of the new Scotch Burgh Police Bill, when the inhabitants adopted the lighting clause, and assessed themselves in the necessary sum, but by a majority negatived the other clauses. The principal streets had been previously causewayed, and had paved foot-paths, and the town-council being chosen commissioners of police, were appointed to enforce the provisions of the statute against the proprietors as to lighting, and the repairs of the pavements. No funds for watching and cleaning being placed at the disposal of the commissioners, they are not perhaps to be blamed that there is no nightly patrol for the protection of property, and that the streets are cleared of filth in a very imperfect and slovenly manner.

*Means of Communication.*—The inland means of communication in the town and parish are very ample. There is a post-office in the town and turnpike roads diverging in every direction. The great north road passes through the town,—another turnpike road strikes directly south, and leads to Rothes and the banks of the Spey, and another north to the sea-port of Lossiemouth. The commutation roads to Pluscarden, Mosstowie, and Blackhills, are in good repair. The Lossie is crossed by one iron and three stone arches, the most distant not more than a mile from the town. The mail-coach passes and repasses every day, and a letter despatched from London through the post-office reaches Elgin about three o'clock P. M. of the third day. There are daily mail-gigs to Lossiemouth and Burghead. A stage-coach starts for Inverness every lawful day at seven o'clock A. M. and returns at nine o'clock P. M. Another for Banff at half-past five o'clock A. M. where it communicates with a coach from Aberdeen, and returns at eight o'clock P. M. The Defiance coach from Edinburgh to Inverness passes and repasses through the town in the middle of every lawful day. There

are regular carriers to Aberdeen, Banff, and Inverness, and to all the adjacent villages. On the other hand sea-carriage is both tedious and expensive. The retailers in Elgin generally supply themselves with goods from the London market, which are carried in the smacks trading to Inverness, and landed at Burghead, if the weather permit. This subjects the dealer to an expense of nine miles of land carriage in addition to the freight, besides much delay occasioned by the trade only affording employment for a few such vessels. In consequence, light goods are frequently ordered to be sent by the steam-vessels to Aberdeen and forwarded by the carriers. The supply of coals for the town and neighbourhood is imported at Lossiemouth, and a good deal of grain is exported, but there is so little water in the harbour, that loaded vessels of small tonnage can only come in or go out at stream tides. The inconvenience and loss to the community arising from the want of a good and central harbour, have led to the formation of a Joint Stock company for erecting one at Stotfield point, a few hundred yards to the northward of the harbour of Lossiemouth. This spot having been surveyed and approved of by an eminent engineer, and a plan given, shares to a large amount were speedily disposed of; an application was made to Parliament and a bill passed last session, vesting the company with the requisite powers of management, levying shore dues, &c. and every thing is ready for proceeding with the work as soon as the season admits. If this undertaking is successful, of which there is the most sanguine hope, it will be of immense advantage to the trading and agricultural interests of the town and district. A direct communication with London and other markets for farm-stock and grain by steam would be immediately opened, and merchant goods and coals imported at much less expense of carriage, and with great regularity and expedition. The writer has been led to notice this projected improvement, though in another parish, not only on account of its importance to Elgin, but because the present harbour and village are the property of the town, and because the magistrates are shareholders in the new harbour to the extent of one-fourth of the sum estimated as sufficient to complete it.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The parish church, in the centre of the town, is about eight miles distant from the westmost point of the parish, and nearly five from the south-east extremity. As three-fourths of the population reside in the town it could not be more conveniently situated. A missionary on the Royal Bounty being

placed in Pluscarden, very few of the country people have to travel more than three or four miles at most to church, and even some of these are still nearer to the neighbouring parish churches. The church was built in 1828, and can conveniently contain 1800 persons. Thirty-six free sittings are set apart for the poor. Four silver communion cups, the gifts of pious individuals, are the only benefactions on record. There is no manse, but in lieu of it, the heritors paying stipend agreed some years ago to pay the senior minister L. 50 per annum during his incumbency, or until they should build a manse. Each clergyman has a glebe of about four acres, which is presently rented at L. 18. The stipend, as modified in 1808, is a fraction under fifteen chalders of barley to each minister, and L. 5 for communion elements. As the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is dispensed twice a-year, it would require nearly double the allowance to defray the expense. It has been already observed, that there is a missionary in Pluscarden, supported by the Royal Bounty, by the interest of some legacies, and by the heritors and people, conformable to the regulations of the commission for managing his Majesty's gift. This mission has been established upwards of a century, and supplies the ordinances of the gospel and spiritual instruction to a population of about 600 souls, in the most remote district of the parish.

The sectarian places of public worship in the town are numerous, and are frequented by persons from every parish in the presbytery of Elgin. There are two chapels connected with the United Associate Synod of the Secession church; one with the Associate Synod of Original Seceders, an Independent chapel in connection with the Congregational Union of Scotland, an Episcopal, and a Catholic chapel,—the Catholic bishop residing in Enzie, Banffshire. The ministers of these chapels are paid by their congregations in seat rents and collections; and as a large proportion of the people attending the chapels of the Secession church are of the poorer classes, their stipends must be very small. Dissent does not appear to be on the increase, and divine service at the Established church is generally well attended by at least three-fourths of the respectable families of the town and parish. The number of communicants is about 800.

*Religious Societies.*—Bible and missionary societies have been established in the parish for many years; and the following is a probable average of their annual contributions; British and Foreign Bible Society, L. 20; Edinburgh Bible Society, L. 30; Mission-

ary Society, L. 24. Collections are also made periodically in the Established Church in aid of the General Assembly's Schools, the Indian Mission, and the funds of the Hibernian schools. The average amount of such collections yearly may be about L. 20.

*Education.*—There are thirteen schools in the parish, of which ten are in the town. The Elgin Academy is partly endowed, and partly supported from the town's funds, and the three schools of which it consists, though not perhaps technically, are in fact parochial schools, and most efficiently answer the same purpose. The trustees of the Dick bequest to the parochial schoolmasters of the counties of Moray, Banff, and Aberdeen, have not as yet admitted the teachers of the academy to any share of the fund under their management, but it is hoped, they will give the benefit of any ambiguity in the wording of the benevolent donor's settlements, to a seminary where education is conducted after the most approved method, with exemplary zeal and distinguished success. The school of industry and the free school of the Elgin institution are both endowed; four others in the town, two of which are for the education of young ladies, are unendowed; and one, an infant school, recently established, is supported by individual subscriptions and fees;—the other three in the landward part of the parish, are also unendowed. The branches taught in the academy, are English reading and writing, English grammar and composition, arithmetic, geography, practical mathematics, French, Latin, and Greek. A course of lectures on natural philosophy is occasionally delivered, and illustrated by a neat experimental apparatus, partly public, and partly the property of the mathematical teacher. In the ladies' schools are taught, English reading and grammar, and composition, writing, arithmetic, sewing, geography, drawing, music, French and Italian. The youths attending the other schools are instructed in the ordinary branches of education. The Bible is read, and the Shorter Catechism committed to memory in all the schools.

The salaries of the English and mathematical teachers of the academy are L. 45 each; that of the classical teacher is L. 50. They have no house or allowance for one, and the English and classical teachers are obliged by agreement with the magistrates to keep and pay assistants. The fees are, for English reading per quarter, 2s.; reading and writing, 3s.; English grammar, 2s. 6d.; Latin, 7s. 6d.; elocution, mathematics, French, and Greek, 10s. 6d.; arithmetic, 4s.; a course of geography, L. 1, 1s., and three sets of book-keeping L. 1, 1s. The interest of L. 200 was bequeath-

ed by the late James M<sup>c</sup>Andrew Esq. of Elgin, to be given annually in prizes to the three boys in the Latin school who have made the greatest progress in the preceding year. The male and female teachers of the free school of the Elgin institution have a joint salary of L. 75. No fees are exacted, and orphans and the children of poor widows receive books. The house-governor and teacher of the school of industry has L. 55 per annum, and his maintenance and lodging in the institution. The teacher of the infant school has L. 25, the fees, and a house. The trades' school has a salary attached of L. 5 from the town's funds. The ladies' schools and one chance school depend wholly on fees. The schoolmasters in the landward part of the parish have each a small salary and a house from the heritor on whose property the school is situated, and some advantages from the tenantry of the district, and, including fees, their emolument may fluctuate from L. 25 to L. 30 per annum each. There are probably none of the young betwixt six and fifteen years of age of sound mind who cannot *read* or *write*; and the writer has not met with or heard of any person above the age of fifteen who cannot *read*, though there are no doubt a good many aged persons, particularly females, who cannot *write*. There are few parishes in Scotland better supplied with the means of education, and there does not appear to be any backwardness on the part of parents to give the advantages of it to their families. It is producing in a greater or less degree its usual beneficial effects on the moral habits and general welfare of the people.

*Literature.*—A circulating library has been long established in the town, and contains an extensive and valuable collection of history, travels, poetry, &c. carefully selected by the proprietor, and to which he is adding the best works for general readers as they are published. A small collection of books, selected by the teachers, has been provided for the use of the students attending the academy.

A literary association, consisting of twenty members, was instituted in 1818 in the town. The object of this association was to procure at a moderate expense four or five of the best periodicals, and such books as the members generally could not readily find access to. The periodicals and books are circulated according to rule among the members, and are afterwards bound and placed in a library. The institution has most satisfactorily answered its purpose, and is going on prosperously. A small annual subscription has already supplied a library of nearly 700 volumes. The

members of the association about two years ago, connected with it a reading-room, supplied with a sufficient number of daily London and provincial newspapers, to which many of the most respectable gentlemen of the town have become subscribers; but the reading-room is conducted without any interference with the funds or property of the original establishment. The *Elgin Courant*, a weekly newspaper, is published in the town on Friday morning.

*Alms-Houses.*—James VI. by royal charter, dated the last day of February 1620, granted to the provost, bailies, councillors, and community of the burgh of Elgin and their successors, the hospice or preceptory of *Maison Dieu*, founded for the aliment and support of certain poor and needy persons, with the right of patronage of the same, together with all the revenue belonging to the said hospice, for the support of certain poor and needy persons, according to the original establishment thereof, to maintain and support a teacher of music and other liberal arts, and to answer and promote the affairs of the burgh, because the common revenue was barely sufficient. There are lands also of considerable extent conveyed by the grant for the same purposes; but there is no evidence that they ever were in the possession of the magistrates, and probably the charter gave right only to the casualties of these lands, payable at the time to the hospital of *Maison Dieu*, the *dominium utile* being in the hands of lay impropiators. By virtue of this charter a Beid-house has been erected within the burgh, to contain four Beidmen having garden ground attached, and as far back as can be ascertained these four paupers have each received annually four bolls of barley, or about three imperial quarters, out of the rents of the preceptory lands.

*Hospitals, Dispensaries, and Lunatic Asylums.*—Grey's Hospital for the sick poor of the town and county of Elgin, was opened for the reception of patients in 1819. It was founded by Dr Alexander Grey of Calcutta, and the funds which he destined to its support are adequate to the expenditure. The average number of sick admitted to the hospital during a year is about 250, and the average number in it at one time is 26. Dr Dougal, a medical practitioner in Elgin, willed L. 15 per annum for the purchase of medicines, to be dispensed to the poor. This sum was handed over to the Trustees of Grey's Hospital by those to whom it had been left in trust, and medicines and advice are now given at the hospital to more than 300 out-patients annually. A pauper lunatic asylum, near the hospital, is just completed, and

will be supported from the interest of money subscribed, and a small board from the parishes who send the lunatics. It contains ten cells, and the benefit of it is confined to the insane poor within the county.

*Elgin Institution for the support of old age and the Education of Youth.*—This charity was founded and endowed by General Anderson, and consists of three branches. *1st*, An hospital for the support and maintenance of indigent men and women, not under fifty-five years of age, of decent, godly, and respectable character; persons answering this description from the burgh of Elgin to be preferred, and failing applications from those in the town, then from those in the parish, and failing both, then from any other part of the county. Five males and five females from the town are at present enjoying as inmates the comforts of the charity. *2d*, A school of industry for the support, maintenance, clothing, and education of male and female children of the labouring class of society whose parents are unable to maintain and educate them, and for placing and putting out the said children, when fit to be so, as apprentices to some trade or occupation, or employing them in such a manner as may enable them to earn a livelihood by their lawful industry, and make them useful members of society. Twenty-two boys and eighteen girls from every parish of the county, in proportion to the population, are reaping the benefits of the institution. On the death of two annuitants this branch will probably include twenty additional children. *3d*, An establishment of a master and mistress, properly qualified to conduct a free school for the education *only* of such male and female children whose parents may be in narrow circumstances, but still able to maintain and clothe their children. Of this class 230 children are receiving in the free school a gratis education suited to their station.

*Friendly Societies.*—The six incorporated trades are in one respect of the nature of friendly societies. From yearly assessments on the brethren of their respective crafts, they have a fund under the management of each corporation, which they distribute, in whole or in part, among their poor and decayed members and widows.

*Guildry Charitable Fund.*—This fund was established in 1714, and the members are all merchant guild-brethren. It arises from quarter pennies and admission fees of entrants. By good management and judicious investments in lands, of a part of their income always reserved, it has rapidly increased, and they now divide L. 250 annually among the widows, children, and decayed members, still

retaining every year a considerable sum, which is added to their sinking-fund.

*Cumming's Beidmen.*—William Cumming of Auchray, by deed of mortification, 12th October 1693, conveyed money and lands for the support of four poor, old, decayed or broken merchants, being residents within the town of Elgin, to the magistrates, and gave to them and his heir the right of presenting alternately. The interest of the money and the rent of lands amount to L. 71, 18s. 9d. which is equally divided among the four persons admitted to the charity.

*Braco's Mortification* 1729, of some lands to the town for the support of a decayed burghess, produces about L. 23. The Earl of Fife names to the charity.

*Petrie's Mortification*, of lands for defraying the education of six poor orphans or children within the parish of Elgin, is dated 1777, and is under the management of the kirk-session. Each of the children receive L. 4 annually, and have the benefit of the bursary for three years.

*Grey's* (the founder of the hospital) *Charity* for reputed old maids of the town of Elgin. This fund amounts to L. 2000, and will receive an addition of L. 1000 more on the death of Mrs Grey, the donor's widow, the annual interest of which is divided among the daughters of respectable but decayed families. The two clergymen and physicians of Elgin are the patrons.

*Laing's Mortification*, of a park of land, to be applied towards maintaining a decayed merchant, burghess, and guild brother, produces a rent of L. 5, 10s. per annum. The nearest relative of the donor living in the county is patron.

*Elgin Savings Bank.*—This bank commenced in 1815, and for the first year and a-half the amount of deposits was only L. 212, 11s. 10d. On the 30th May 1818, it was L. 478, 12s. 2d. After this it grew speedily into favour, for in 1820 the number of contributors was 222, and the amount deposited L. 2087, 5s. 9½d. In 1824, the contributors increased to 492, and the deposits to L. 4851, 12s. 11½d. From that year until 1832, there was a gradual decrease of deposits, averaging annually about L. 150, which was probably owing in part to the rate of interest having been reduced. Since 1832 the investments have exceeded the sums annually withdrawn by L. 320 on an average. At Whitsunday last the number of depositors was 556, and the amount of deposits about equal to what it was in 1824, and during the currency of the past half year.

they have risen about L. 200. The monthly transactions may average from L. 130 to L. 150 of receipts and payments. The investments are made generally, it may almost be said exclusively, by the labouring class.

*Poor and Parochial Funds.*—The average number of poor on the roll of the kirk-session receiving regular parochial aid is 160.—Of these about 30 receive a weekly allowance from 6d. to 3s. or on an average L. 3, 5s. per annum. About L. 60 are distributed half yearly among the remaining 130 poor, averaging 9s. annually to each. Besides this sum, they receive each coals to the value of 2s. 2d. and the interest of money and lands under the management of the magistrates for behoof of the poor, amounting to L. 23, 7s. 6d. The amount of church collections 1834, L. 150; donations from one heritor, L. 5; other persons, L. 42; interest at four per cent. for legacies and other funds destined for the relief of the poor under the management of the kirk-session, L. 1365, is L. 54, 15s. The casual supplies to the sick poor on the roll, and small salaries to the kirk-officer and beadle, consume the balance of contributions above what has been stated as regularly distributed.

No regular mode of procuring funds for the poor, besides that of church collections, has been adopted. The kirk-session, aware that an assessment on the heritors would increase at least twofold the applications for relief, have hitherto successfully laboured to avoid it, by a careful inquiry into the circumstances of the applicant, and a timely, though small, supply. It is believed, that, generally speaking, the poor are averse to seek relief until driven to it by necessity, and that they consider it a degradation to be put upon the poor's roll.

*Prisons.*—The number of prisoners confined in the Elgin jail in 1834 was *one* for murder, *one* for concealment of pregnancy, and *three* for assault. The jail is an old building, and the prisoners cannot be said to be well secured or well accommodated. The magistrates have the government and superintendence of it, and, in as far as they can, are attentive to the health, diet, and lodging of the persons confined. A new jail, in accordance with the improvements of the age in such buildings, will be very soon erected at the expense of the proprietors in the town and county.

*Fairs.*—Besides the ten annual fairs held near the town for the sale of horses, cattle, &c. there are two others in the town on the Fridays immediately preceding the terms of Martinmas and Whitsunday, for hiring farm-servants.

*Inns, Alehouses, &c.*—There are in the town and suburbs 33 licensed innkeepers, 21 spirit-merchants, and 10 tippling-shops, and in the country part of the parish one inn or public-house. This extraordinary number might be reduced at least one-half without any inconvenience to the public, and with much advantage to the morals of the inhabitants. Too little attention is paid to the character of some who receive licenses, and there is great reason to suspect that those who recommend them are influenced by other motives than the good of their fellow citizens. Many of the innkeepers are persons of good character, and to these the granting of licenses ought to be confined, but there are others of an opposite description, and whose houses are too often the haunts of folly and vice. The evils of the present system of indiscriminate licensing are too apparent to be denied, and an effort ought to be made by those who have the power to apply a remedy.

*Fuel.*—Peat or turf is used for lighting fires, but coal is almost the universal fuel of the town. The prime cost and freight of a keil of coals from Sunderland to Lossiemouth may be about L. 15, and the carriage to Elgin, five miles, about L. 4, 10s. The farmers on the outskirts of the parish partly burn peat or turf; but the cost of casting, drying, and driving is so great, that the use of coal is every year becoming more general among them.

#### MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The improvements in the agricultural implements, in the system of farming, and in the breed of stock,—in the education, dress, houses, and other comforts of the peasantry, are very striking and extensive since the last Statistical Report. The drainage,—the straightening and laying out of the arable fields,—the farm-steadings, and the plantations, give to the general aspect of the parish a look of cultivation, and management, and prosperity, which, at the former period, it did not possess. The means of communication are also most decidedly superior. It must be acknowledged, however, as has been already hinted, that there is still ample scope for improvement. A more general and adequate allowance from the land-owner for waste land brought under proper culture by the tenant, and for enclosing and building, should be granted; additional roads and planting are wanted, especially on the south side of the parish. The progress of improvement in the town is also very observable: Forty years ago there were no turnpike roads leading to or from it, no stage-coaches, no gas-work, no lighting, or side pavement to the streets, no hospital for the sick, no insti-

tution for the support of old-age, and the education of youth, no academy, no printing-press, or newspaper published in the town. A large proportion of the houses have been built within the above period, and their external appearance and interior arrangements are vastly superior. The houses then occupied by the most respectable families of the place are now the dwellings of ordinary tradesmen. The improvements still wanting in the town are, a more efficient police, water brought into the streets and houses by pipes, and the removal of that greatest of nuisances, the shambles. Lossie water filtered could be brought into the town, at an expense which the inhabitants would not grudge, if they once had experience of the convenience and comfort of having an abundant supply at their doors and in their houses.

Some attempts have been made to remove the slaughter-house and meat-market, but hitherto without success. An intelligent and public-spirited citizen has favoured the writer with the following observations on this subject: "On the advantage, and indeed, the necessity, of removing from a crowded neighbourhood and the centre of the town, that sink of impurity and danger, the present slaughter-house, there cannot be two opinions. The removal of the present meat-market to a drier and more airy situation is indispensably necessary to the comfort and welfare of the community. It is too confined, and so filthy, that the mistresses of families are unable to attend it, and have therefore mostly abandoned the important duty of personally laying out the money of their families to the best advantage." This duty is generally devolved on servants, from the cause mentioned. The shambles are the property of the town, and the magistrates must take the lead in any plan for their removal. Surely a central situation for a provision market, and a suitable one for a slaughter-house, could easily be found; and if the town's funds cannot afford the outlay for erecting the necessary buildings, there is no doubt that, if a well-digested plan were laid before the public, the capital necessary would very soon be subscribed by a joint stock company. There is hardly any other undertaking in which the magistrates could engage, which would tend so much to promote the comfort and economy of the community, and to induce respectable families to fix their residence in a town so desirable on account of its schools, its society, and its climate.

*April 1835.*

# PARISH OF ST ANDREWS LHANBRYD.

PRESBYTERY OF ELGIN, SYNOD OF MORAY.

THE REV. W. LESLIE, MINISTER.\*

## I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—LHANBRYD signifies in Gaelic the Church of St Bridget. It was united to that of St Andrews in 1782.

*Climate.*—This district is subject, in the spring season, to a succession of storms called, in the common language of the country, the borrowing days, the *Toochet's storm*, the *Gouk's storm*, (the equinoxial,) and the *gab of May*. The most unpleasant weather comes on about the last of these, a withering gale blowing cold from the thawing snow on the mountains of Norway and Denmark, and continuing steadily from the east, till near the summer solstice, equally injurious to vegetation and to animal life. The farmer suffers every summer by drought; it being computed that Moray and Nairn have forty dry days in the year more than any other county in the kingdom. It has by the rain-gage been ascertained that the quantity falling in the year is from 25 to 30 inches.

*Hydrography and Geology.*—The drainage of the Loch of Spynie, at the cost of nearly L. 10,000, is still imperfect; the outfall, at first on a level with the ebb in the port of Lossiemouth, was of late injudiciously made farther up the river, and without the least advantage, nearly a foot above that of the first level.

Upon its southern banks, the boundary of the parish for a mile, the late greatly esteemed John Brander, on the hypothesis that the coal of Brora, at the distance of 100 miles directly opposite on the other side of the frith, might be found about the same depth on his estate here, bored 97 feet through a bed of sandstone uniformly continuous, with the exception of a very thin layer of limestone at two or three different depths. This perforation is kept open and clearly indicated by a weighty stone put over it.

The Lossie, having now by courtesy the title of river, though but a brook in its ordinary state, being in this parish the drain of about

\* Drawn up from notes furnished by Mr Leslie.

600 square miles, is nevertheless too inconsiderable to have been heard of in Egypt by Ptolemy, in the beginning of the second century, any more than its two conjoining brooks, the Lochty and the Lenoeh, winding through their own dun hills. It is certain, that the Lossie in bygone ages occupied at different times different channels in its progress to the sea. Embankments of earth to prevent the overflow of a spot were formed partially along the lower grounds adjacent to the river several years ago; and since the deeply disastrous flood in 1829 they have been improved into a style of magnificence and security on both sides of the river through the whole extent of the plain,—reared on a base of 20 feet broad, to the height of 8 or 10 feet, where the ground is low, slanting upwards to a trim walk along the top, of 3 or 4 feet in breadth. In one very obstructive bend of the river, a straight course of half a mile was then also opened, to the depth of more than 5 feet, in wideness more than 40 feet. After the first swell, which cleared out the new channel, its bottom was found a bed of clay, in which ridges formed by the plough in the direction of the shadow at one o'clock, accurately parallel and equal in breadth, were to admiration presented, which being now scarcely four feet above the level of the frith during the flood, suggests several interesting geological considerations, relating both to the surface of this part of the globe, and the scientific state of agriculture, before that deeply interesting alteration, which superinduced upon this corn field of clay, a bed of fertile sandy loam, over an extent of nearly 1000 acres to the thickness of nearly 6 feet; when it was thus cultivated, the frith could not have been so far within the land, and even the German Ocean must have been then at a lower level than it is now. Secure, however, as these costly embankments may be deemed at present, yet, if given up with presumptuous security to the burrowing of the aquatic rat and of rabbits, they will soon be found insufficient. In the excavation of the canal for the drain of the Loch of Spynie, there were six varieties of shells dug up, of which oysters and cockles bore the larger proportion, with some specimens of a petrification called Belemnite, of which there is as little known of as the *Cornu ammonis*. In the beach which shut in the eastern end of the lake from the sea, such large accumulations of oyster shells have been found as to have been carted off for manure. In a new course lately formed for the brook which works the mill of Lhanbryd, at the distance of seven miles southward from the shore, and more than two northward from the hill in which its component streamlets are united, there was turned out a boulder of more than

a ton weight of blue argillaceous limestone, having its mass confusedly mingled with a variety of petrified shells, in which the *Cornu ammonis* was conspicuous, and muscle shells bore the largest proportion. If this boulder had ever been detached from the rock of the same material at Brora, its transportation to its long undisturbed bed here, not three feet under the surface of the globe, is much more difficult to be accounted for, than that of the celebrated dwelling transported entire from the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, to the western coast of the Adriatic.

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

*Antiquities.*—This parish had the credit of having preserved two Druidical monuments through all the mutations of nearly 3000 years, until lately when, for the sorry purpose of forming material for a road, and uniting a little spot of pasturage to a corn field, one of these objects was annihilated. The other, at the distance scarcely of a mile, is nearly entire.

## III.—POPULATION.

Amount of population in 1801,	-	-	799
1811,	-	-	869
1821,	-	-	934
1831,	-	-	1087
Number of families in the parish,	-	-	215
chiefly employed in agriculture,	-	-	165
in trade, manufactures, or handicraft,	-	-	26

## IV.—INDUSTRY.

*Agriculture.*—This parish is now, with little exception, occupied in farms of from 100 to about 400 or 500 acres, and by gentlemen of skill with adequate capital.

The number of acres in cultivation is probably about 4000  
 never cultivated, (cannot be stated.)  
 under wood, 650

The rental of the parish is betwixt L. 3000 and L. 4000.

*Manufactures.*—In this parish there is one public manufacture of malt. Mr Brown carries on the business of a distiller at Linkwood, having invested a large capital in the requisite buildings and utensils, all in the most commodious arrangement, and of the most substantial construction, in the malting, grinding, brewing, distilling, and in the store. The stills are respectively of the contents of 400 and of 170 gallons, manufacturing yearly 1200 quarters of barley, and producing from 16,000 to 20,000 gallons of fine spirit, consumed mainly between the rivers Spey and Ness; a small proportion only being disposed of in London, and in some of the larger cities of this kingdom; the rivalry in brandy, rum, and gin, being inconsiderable. But a formidable competition is maintained by the great distilleries in the south of Scotland, which

import a coarser and a cheaper spirit than, in the circumstances of the distillers here, can be produced.

Where this parish presses so closely on the city of Elgin as to have the gentle Lossie only intervening, there are two other manufactories,—the very respectable manufactory of wool, begun by Alexander Johnston, Esq. which employs about 50 people in completing cloth from 4s. to 1s. the yard, with blankets, flannel of different degrees of fineness, fancy articles, chiefly of wool, which are all disposed of mostly in the country.

At Newmill there is also established a cast iron foundery, which, though upon a small scale, is of great convenience in the country, and receives increasing encouragement.

#### V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The kirk is as commodious for the people as in landward parishes kirks generally are. About 400 persons form the ordinary amount of the congregation. The stipend is 128 cwt. 90 lb. and 9 oz. of oat-meal,—of bear, 81 qrs. 1 bushel, 1 peck, and 14 pints,—and in cash, burdened with the cost of the communion, L. 6, 11s. 1½d. All the families in the parish, except three or four Dissenting or Seceding, attend the Established Church.

*Education.*—The endowment of the parish school, including the yearly interest of L. 27, 15s. 6d., bequeathed by a distinguished ancestor of the family of Fife, may be estimated almost at the highest allowed by the 43 Geo. III. cap. 54; and the accommodation is better than that act has provided. His fees may amount to L. 10 per annum. The people are all quite sensible of the advantages of education. With scarcely any exception they can all read, and with few exceptions, they can write; although there are many who do not write often, and a great many also who add nothing to their stock of knowledge by their reading. There is no occasion for any other besides the parish school. Although not permanently endowed, it would be improper to omit the mention of Mr Barclay's private academy at Calcots. That gentleman teaches every thing requisite for our national universities, and for the business of life. The number of his pupils at present (the sons of respectable families in other parishes) is 27, in addition to his own sons.

*Poor and Parochial Funds.*—The funds for the poor, after deducting expenses, amount to about L. 36 yearly. The number of poor at present is 42.

April 1835.