

PARISH OF KNOCKANDO.

PRESBYTERY OF ABERLOUR, SYNOD OF MORAY.

THE REV. GEORGE GORDON, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name, Boundaries, &c.—THE parish of Knockando, or as it formerly was spelled, Knockandow, derives its name from two Gaelic words, which denote Black Hill, or Hill with the Black Head. The parish of Ma Calen, or Macallan, is now annexed to Knockando, but no distinct record of union is preserved. According to Shaw, Knockando was a vicarage depending on the parson of Inveravon, and Ma Calen or Elchies, a vicarage depending on the parson of Botarie.

Extent, Boundaries.—Knockando is of a long irregular figure, stretching along the banks of the river Spey, and extending about 15 or 16 miles in length, whilst varying from 2 to 6 in breadth. It is bounded on the west by the parishes of Cromdale and Edin-killie; on the north by Dallas and Birnie; on the east by Rothes; and on the south by the river Spey, which separates Knockando from Inveravon and Aberlour, in the shire of Banff.

Topographical Appearances.—The external appearance of Knockando parish is considerably diversified by rising grounds and intervening glens, with occasional level haughs stretching along the river side. On the northern boundary the ground is hilly, forming part of a tract known by the names of the Hunt Hill and the Mannoeh Hill. In the western direction of the parish is an eminence called James Roy's Cairn, which is generally supposed to be the highest ground in Morayshire. In fine weather there is a very extensive prospect from its summit. Along the banks of the Spey the scenery is in general picturesque, especially at the mansion house of Knockando, and the bridge of Craig Elachie. The hills are covered with various kinds of heather, and the banks of the river are in many places skirted with wood.

Caves.—There are two caves in the parish,—the cave of James An Tuim, *i. e.* James of the Hill, at Dellagyle. This James An

Tuim is supposed to be James Grant, nephew of Carron, frequently mentioned in a well known publication entitled "The History of the Troubles and Memorable Transactions in Scotland, by John Spalding, Commissary-Clerk of Aberdeen." The other cave is called Bane's Hole, and takes its title from Donald Bane, (White Donald,) a robber of that name, who is supposed to have been shot and buried in the immediate neighbourhood.

Meteorology.—The climate may in general be characterized as dry and healthy. The temperature is considerably colder than in the lower and more fertile districts of Moray, resembling rather the climate of Aberdeen and Banff shires. The west and south-west winds are the most powerful and prevalent, frequently continuing for days and nights in succession, especially during the winter and spring months of the year. The snow generally remains longer than in the low country, and this may be easily accounted for from the hilly nature of the parish. The warmest part of the parish is the district between the Spey and the House of Knockando. At Mill-haugh of Ballintomb and Dalmounach Cottage, there is frequently calm and warm weather, when at half a mile's distance the storm is raging.

The following observations were taken at the House of Wester Elchies.

1834,			1835,		
	<i>Therm.</i>	<i>Barom.</i>		<i>Therm.</i>	<i>Barom.</i>
Dec. 20,	40	29 7-10ths	Jan. 17,	35	28 5-10ths
21,	40	do.	18,	35	do.
22,	36	do.	19,	27	28 4-10ths
23,	39	do.	20,	22	29 1-10th
24,	48	29 5-10ths	21,	33	29 3-10ths
25,	48	do.	22,	43	29 do.
26,	38	29 9-10ths	23,	43	29
27,	30	29 7-10ths	24,	50	29 3-10ths
28,	30	28 5-10ths	25,	50	do.
29,	29	do.	26,	42	do.
30,	29	do.	27,	42	do.
31,	29	do.	28,	43	do.
1836,			29,	40	29 1-10th
Jan. 1,	35	do.	30,	45	29 2-10ths
2,	35	do.	31,	44	29 1-10th
3,	43	30	Feb. 1,	55	28 5-10ths
4,	30	29 8-10ths	2,	45	29 1-10th
5,	42	29 9-10ths	3,	45	do.
6,	37	29 8-10ths	4,	45	do.
7,	37	29 7-10ths	5,	42	28 5-10ths
8,	40	29 8-10ths	6,	35	29 3-10ths
9,	40	do.	7,	35	do.
10,	37	28 5-10ths	8,	45	28 5-10ths
11,	30	28 9-10ths	9,	30	do.
12,	21	28 1-10th	10,	38	29 6-10ths
13,	35	28 8-10ths	11,	38	do.
14,	41	do.	12,	38	do.
15,	41	28 2-10ths	13,	40	29 5-10ths
16,	37	28 5-10ths	14,	42	29

1835,			1835,		
	<i>Therm.</i>	<i>Barom.</i>		<i>Therm.</i>	<i>Barom.</i>
Feb. 15,	42	29	March 18,	47	29 5-10ths
16,	41	28 9-10ths	19,	49	29 2-10ths
17,	41	28 1-10th	20,	45	29 4-10ths
18,	38	28 4-10ths	21,	46	29 5-10ths
19,	42	28 3-10ths	22,	46	do.
20,	32	28	23,	46	30
21,	35	28 3-10ths	24,	50	29 9-10ths
22,	41	28 6-10ths	25,	47	do.
23,	31	28	26,	52	29 7-10ths
24,	31	28	27,	48	do.
25,	41	28 1-10th	28,	40	29 5-10ths
26,	45	do.	29,	39	29 4-10ths
27,	42	28 3-10ths	30,	44	29
28,	39	29 5-10ths	31,	30	do.
March 1,	29	29 1-10th	April 1,	40	do.
2,	29	28 5-10ths	2,	40	29 1-10th
3,	32	do.	3,	32	29 6-10ths
4,	36	29	4,	32	do.
5,	36	29 5-10ths	5,	45	29 5-10ths
6,	35	28 8-10ths	6,	53	do.
7,	39	29	7,	50	29 4-10ths
8,	30	29	8,	40	29
9,	40	28 8-10ths	9,	50	28 9-10ths
10,	40	28 5-10ths	10,	42	29 5-10ths
11,	43	28 4-10ths	11,	50	29 7-10ths
12,	43	29 5-10ths	12,	50	do.
13,	40	29 4-10ths	13,	50	29 8-10ths
14,	40	28 9-10ths	14,	40	29 2-10ths
15,	45	29 2-10ths	15,	33	29 3-10ths
16,	45	do.	16,	36	29 5-10ths
17,	41	29 1-10th			

Hydrography.—There are a great many mineral springs in this parish, which might with very little trouble be converted into excellent wells. On the farm of Bogroy, there is a chalybeate spring, which contains a small quantity of carbonic acid, and a great quantity of iron. Another mineral well on the farm of Felochans, near the village of Archiestown, partakes much of the same ingredients. In the wood of Wester Elchies is the well of Topran, or the Sabbath Well, which contains a trace of sulphuric acid united with soda, a small quantity of carbonic acid gas and salt, according to an analysis made by Mr Shier, lecturer on chemistry, and late assistant to Dr David Boswell Reid of Edinburgh. The Topran Well affords a general specimen of the common drinking water of the parish.

There are two small lochs in the moorlands, viz. Benschalgs, and Loch Coualt, or the loch of the small burn. The latter is about a mile in circumference, the former not so much.

A number of burns water the parish, the principal of which are the burn of Akyoulie or Ault Gheallaidh, (this name in Gaelic signifies Burn of the Covenant, and it is generally believed that a paction between two contending clans had been entered into upon

its banks,) the burn of Aldarder, the burn of Knockando, and the burn of Ballintomb. Trouts are found in these streams.

All these rivulets rise amongst the hills, and descend during rain with surprising velocity, overflowing their banks, and doing considerable mischief. During the great Moray floods of August 1829, all these mountain streams rushed down with tremendous force from their native hills, swollen to the size of rivers, carrying bridges, mills, trees, &c. before them to the Spey.*

There are several pretty little waterfalls over some of the burns, especially those of Knockando, Aldyoulie, Aldarder, and Ballintomb. One romantic fall is caused by the junction of two burns beside the glebe, the view of which, as seen from the rustic bridge of Poolflasgan in the immediate vicinity, is very picturesque.

The Spey is the only river in the parish, and is the most rapid as well as one of the largest in Scotland. It flows through the whole length of the parish, from the Cromdale boundary on the west, to the Rothes boundary on the east, a little beneath Craig Elachie Bridge. The velocity of the Spey may be stated at four to four and a-half miles per hour. A number of rafts of timber pass down the river during the floating season, from the forests of Rothiemurchus and Abernethy. In this parish is the rock of Tom-dow, the most dangerous place for floats in the course of the river. During the flood of 1829, this rapid and powerful river occasioned great damage in this as well as in many other parishes along its banks. On the lands of Kirdals, belonging to Mr Grant of Bal-

* The following interesting description of the Knockando Burn is given by Sir Thomas Dick Lauder of Fountainhall and Relugas, Bart., in his "Account of the Great Floods of August 1829, in the Province of Moray and adjoining Districts."

"The Knockando Burn, entering from the left, is extremely small, but it was swollen by the flood to a size equal to that of the Spey in its ordinary state. The high promontory, on the neck of which the manse of Knockando stands, shoots forwards towards the steep opposite banks of the burn, interrupting the continuity of its haughs by a narrow pass, leaving room only at the base of the precipice for two cottages, a small garden, and a road. Where the glen opens, a little way above, there stood a carding-mill, a meal-mill, and the houses of their occupants. Of the two cottages at the bottom of the promontory, one was inhabited by the old bellman, his wife, and daughter, and a blind beggar woman, who had that night sought quarters with them; the other was tenanted by a poor lame woman, who kept a school for girls and young children. After the flood the prospect here was melancholy; the burn that formerly wound through the beautiful haugh above the promontory, had cut a channel as broad as that of the Spey, from one end of it to the other. The whole wood was gone, the carding mill had disappeared, the miller's house was in ruins, and the banks below were strewed with pales, gates, bridges, rafts, engines, wool, yarn, and half-woven webs, all utterly destroyed. A new road was recently made in this parish, and all the burns were substantially bridged, but, with the exception of one arch, all yielded to the pressure of the flood. Mr Grant of Wester Elchies damage is estimated at L. 820. The parish of Knockando returned twelve cases of families rendered destitute by this calamity."

lindalloch, the house and offices of one subtenant were completely swept away, and the ground covered with sand to a considerable depth. The following will suffice for specimens of damage on the estate of Mr Grant of Wester Elchies:—On the Broom Isle, 3 acres covered with sand to the depth of 2 feet; 7 acres, do. $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet; 6 acres, do. 1 foot; 1 acre, do. 3 feet; 4 acres, do. 15 inches.—On the Haugh of Wester Elchies, 5 acres, 2 of which average 4 feet of sand, and 3 do. 1 foot; $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres, do. $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet of sand and gravel; 5 acres, do. $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet; 1 acre, do. $2\frac{1}{2}$.—On the Haughs of Dellagyle and Dellowlie, 4 acres, averaging 2 feet. On the Boatman's Haugh, 1 acre, averaging 3 feet. The appearance of the country on this memorable occasion was awfully grand, and will long be remembered in Knockando.

Geology and Mineralogy.—The rocks are all primitive, and consist of granite, felspar, mica, sandstone, slate, gravel, and rock crystal. There is a considerable variety of soil. Near the river it is sandy; higher up, black gravelly mould; still higher up, a heavy clay soil, and near the hills, mossy. In some places the substratum is clay, in others gravel. The alluvial deposits consist of clay, bog iron ore, peat, fuller's earth, and marl. The mosses are of considerable extent; the chief are, Milton, Monahoudie, and Mannoch. Oak and fir roots, and sometimes whole trees, have been found imbedded in the mosses, and in all probability have lain there concealed for ages. Hazel-nuts have also been found at the depth of twelve feet. From which circumstances, there is considerable reason for supposing that the country had at one period been covered with wood. Neither coal nor lime have been found in the parish. There is a small vein of slate, from which stones have occasionally been taken, and which is capable of being wrought.

Zoology.—The only rare animals are a few Thibet sheep at Wester Elchies, sent home from India by Mr Grant. They do not appear to thrive well in this part of the country, owing, as is thought, to the damp of the climate. The cross breed, however, have succeeded well, and afford excellent mutton, and lamb of the most delicate quality. The wool has degenerated; but is still of a very soft texture, and superior to the common.

Amongst the animals commonly found in the parish may be mentioned the roe-deer, which frequents the woods of Wester Elchies during winter; the fox, polecat (*Mustela putorius*), weasel (*M. vulgaris*), rabbit (*Lepus cuniculus*), blue, white, and brown

hares, badger (*Ursus meles*), wild cat, ermine, (*Mustela erminea*), black rat (*Mus rattus*), mole (*Talpa Europea*.)

Reptiles.—Adder (*Vipera communis*), toad (*Bufo vulgaris*), frog (*Rana temporaria*), eel (*Triton aquaticus*.)

Ornithology.—A great variety of warblers are found in the parish of Knockando, the woods affording a pleasing shelter for building their nests.

“ Per virides passim ramos, sua tecta volucres
Concelebrant, mulcentque vagis loca sola querelis.”

BUCHANAN.

The following list contains the chief varieties, viz. *Warblers*.—Blackbird (*Turdus merula*), thrush (*T. musicus*), bullfinch (*Pyrrhula vulgaris*), linnets (*Fringilla cannabina*), robin red-breast (*Sylvia rubecula*), chaffinch (*Fringilla cœlebs*), and the sky-lark (*Alauda arvensis*.)

“ Bird of the wilderness,
Blithesome and cumberless,
Blessed be thy matin o'er moorland and lea.”

HOOE.

Game Birds.—Red grouse (*Tetrao Scoticus*), black-cock (*T. tetrix*), partridge (*Perdix*), wood-cock (*Scolopax rusticola*), snipe (*S. gallinago*), curlew (*S. arquata*), wild duck (*Anas boschas*), lapwing (*Vanellus cristatus*), pheasant (*Phasianus Colchicus*), teal (*Anas crecca*), water ouzel (*Sturnus cinclus*.) During the summer season, the snipes take their departure, but return in winter to breed. Game birds are rather decreasing than otherwise in this part of the country. Amongst other birds may be mentioned the eagle, as sometimes seen when passing to his eyrie, perched on the summit of the lofty Ben Avon, or the “high Cairngorum.” The swallow, “prænumtia veris,” (*Hirundo*), the sparrow (*Fringilla domestica*), the merlin (*Falco Æsalon*), the sparrow-hawk (*F. Nisus*), the blue hawk (*F. cyaneus*), the rook (*Corvus frugilegus*), the raven (*C. Corax*), the hooded-crow (*C. cornix*), the magpie (*C. Pica*), the owl (*Strix*), the great wood-pecker (*Picus major*), the wood-pigeon (*Columba Palumbus*), the wild and tame pigeon (*C. livia*), the water-wagtail (*Motacilla*), the heron (*Ardea cinerea*), the land-rail or corn-crake (*Gallinula crex*), and the cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*.) Sea gulls sometimes come from the coast, and are generally the harbingers of stormy weather. They breed in the lochs.

Entomology.—The insect tribes in this parish are those common to the district.

ELGIN.

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Ichthyology.—The Spey is one of the most productive fishing rivers in Scotland, and a high rent is annually paid for the fishings at its mouth. Owing to stake-nets and cruives being employed farther down, the salmon fishing in this parish has much decreased of late years. There is still, however, occasionally excellent sport for the angler, and in the Spey are to be found white trout; finnock and flounder are also to be numbered amongst the inhabitants of the river. Excellent trouts are found in the larger burns of the parish. The fly, the bait, the bag-net, and the clip, are all employed by anglers, and sometimes the spear is put into operation during a blaze by torch-light.

Botany.—The parish of Knockando affords an excellent field for the study of botany. "The moorland harebells beautiful" are very plentiful; the forget-me-not, that "little modest flower, to friendship ever dear," is not wanting; the anemone, "child of the wind," adorns the woods and plantations; "the violet blue, that on the moss bank grows," is by no means uncommon; the primrose presents itself in great abundance, and in rich profusion scattered around, the "wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower, daisy," rears its gentle head. The honeysuckle, the wild rose, and the foxglove, court the shade of the woods, and the heather rejoices in the moors and uplands. Along the beautiful banks of the burns of Knockando and Ballintomb will be found plants and flowers almost

"beyond the power
Of botanist to number up their tribes."

Amidst these sequestered dells may the student of botany gather each flower of the rock, when "ilka cowslip cup has kepp'd a tear," and explore the varied phenomena by which he is surrounded. Amongst the rarer plants may be mentioned *Ranunculus auricomus* (wood ranunculus;) *Hippuris vulgaris* (mare's-tail;) *Veronica Anagallis* (water speedwell;) *V. montana* (mountain do. ;) *Poa decumbens* (decumbent meadow-grass;) *Briza media* (quaking grass.)

The heath consists of three kinds, viz. *Calluna vulgaris* (common heath;) *Erica Tetralix* (cross-leaved heath;) and *E. cinerea* (fine-leaved heath.)

The fruits are as follows:—*Vaccinium Myrtillus* (blae-berry or whortleberry;) *Fragaria* (strawberry;) *Rubus fruticosus* (bramble or black-berry;) *R. idæus* (raspberry;) *Berberis vulgaris* (bar-

berry;) *Rubus Chamæmorus* (cloudberry;) *Corylus Avellana* (hazel-nut;) *Vaccinium Oxycoccus* (cranberry;) *Empetrum nigrum* (crow-berry.)

Forest Trees.—

<p><i>Quercus robur</i>, oak. <i>Ulmus campestris</i>, elm. <i>Syringa vulgaris</i>, lilac. <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>, ash. <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>, mountain-ash. <i>Fagus sylvatica</i>, beech. <i>Tilia Europæa</i>, lime. <i>Betula alba</i>, birch. <i>Populus tremula</i>, aspen. <i>Populus alba</i>, white poplar. <i>Æsculus hippocastanum</i>, horse-chesnut. <i>Betula alnus</i>, alder. <i>Sambucus nigra</i>, elder. <i>Prunus avium</i>, geen. <i>Pinus silvestris</i>, Scotch fir. <i>Pinus larix</i>, larch fir.</p>	<p><i>Pinus abies</i>, spruce fir. <i>Pinus Picea</i>, silver fir. <i>Prunus spinosa</i>, sloe, or blackthorn. <i>Pyrus malus</i>, crab apple. <i>Cratægus oxyacantha</i>, hawthorn or white-thorn. <i>Laurus nobilis</i>, laurel. <i>Prunus padus</i>, bird-cherry. <i>Ilex Aquifolium</i>, holly. <i>Cytisus laburnum</i>, laburnum. <i>Selix aurita</i>. <i>triandra</i>. <i>fusca</i>. <i>viminalis</i>. <i>alba</i>.</p>
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Woods, Plantations, &c.—There are several plantations in the parish of considerable extent; Easter Elchies, Corgyle, and Archiestown, are the chief. The wood of Dalballie was all cut down a few years ago. In the year 1830, Mr M'Pherson Grant planted about 430 acres of hill pasture on the estate of Kirdals with larches and Scotch firs, and in 1834 he commenced a similar plantation of nearly the same extent.

Trees.—In the garden of Knockando House are three old ash trees, measuring severally in circumference 11 feet 3 inches, 9 feet 5 inches, and 7 feet 5 inches. During the spring of 1834, a larch tree, 73 feet in length, which stood in the wood of Knockando, was blown down by the force of the wind in a tremendous hurricane. Two remarkable fruit trees are to be found in the garden of Wester Elchies, viz. an apple tree, which extends along a brick wall for the space of 78 feet in length by 11 in height, and a geen tree which measures 10 feet in circumference, the branches overhanging a circular space of considerable extent. In the vicinity of the same garden is a silver fir, which measures 6 feet 7 inches in circumference. Scotch firs and larches are the chief trees in the plantations, and appear to thrive better than any others. The natural wood consists principally of birch. At Wester Elchies are two large walnut trees, which in fine seasons generally yield plenty of fruit.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Historical Events.—The flood of August 1829 will be handed

down to future generations as the greatest historical event connected with the annals of Knockando.—A place called Campbell's Cairns is supposed by some to derive its name from being the scene of battle between the Campbells and some other clan, in which the Campbells were defeated; whilst others maintain that the place is so called from Cossack Dhu, a freebooter of the olden time, who was said to have concealed his booty among the cairns.

Parochial Registers.—In consequence of a fire breaking out in the village of Archiestown on the 17th April 1783, the house of the session-clerk was burned, and three volumes of session records were consumed, commencing in 1712, and ending in 1767. The testamentary book, and the register of baptisms and marriages, commencing in the year 1768, were fortunately preserved. Since 1783, books have been kept containing accounts of the ordinary collections, distributions to the poor, and general session business, as likewise registers of baptisms and marriages. The baptismal register is by no means complete, owing to parents having neglected to have their children's names inserted. Within the last few years, however, the register has been more accurate from the measures adopted to enforce registration. No record of deaths or funerals appears to have been kept until the year 1834, when the present minister commenced a private register.

Antiquities.—In the church-yard of Macallan, a small part of the church wall is still standing, but gradually mouldering away, and it is probable that ere long scarcely a vestige will remain. There are two or three places in the parish where chapels or religious houses are supposed to have stood. About eighteen years ago, there was found in the cave of James an Tuim, a dirk supposed to have belonged to that individual. The belt and buckle immediately crumbled to atoms on being touched. The handle appeared to have been composed of deer's horn; only a small part of it was entire. This dirk passed into the possession of Lewis Inkson, Esq., London, and is understood to have been deposited by him in one of the Museums of that city.

A small Danish battle axe of copper, found on the farm of Milton, and two small dirks picked up a few years ago, are in the possession of William Grant, Esq., younger of Wester Elchies. Two small coins of the reign of Charles II., were found last year in the western end of the parish, but unfortunately were sold by the finder, for the small sum of 1s. 6d. On the farm of Ballin-

tuim are three large stones, supposed to have formed part of the ruins of a Druid's temple. A human skeleton was dug up some years ago near the Mains of Kirdals, and reinterred in the same spot.

Occurrences of Note.—The chief occurrences of note are those connected with the great flood of 1829, previously referred to, and which event is now interwoven with the history of Morayland. It may here be mentioned, that a very singular place was formed at that memorable period by the burn of Aldarder, where there formerly was a waterfall 80 feet in height. At that time the burn changed its course, dashing with tremendous force over the top of a small hill, which it speedily undermined, and a chasm is now left of considerable extent. No measurement has been taken, but the ravine may probably vary from 200 to 300 ells in breadth, the banks on each side being from 60 to 100 feet in height. The waterfall was destroyed, and is now reduced to 6 or 8 feet, in the form of an inclined plane.

Land-owners.—There are three heritors, viz. James William Grant, Esq. of Wester Elchies; George M'Pherson Grant, Esq. of Ballindalloch and Invereshie; and the Right Honourable the Earl of Seafield. Mr Grant of Wester Elchies, the chief heritor, holds a civil appointment in Bengal; his family are resident in the parish, at the house of Wester Elchies. The Earl of Seafield possesses the lands of Easter Elchies. Mr Grant of Ballindalloch possesses Kirdals; and Mr Grant of Wester Elchies, Knockando, Ballintomb, and Wester Elchies. All the heritors have likewise property in other parishes.

Eminent Persons.—Lord Elchies, a distinguished Scottish judge, was born, and occasionally resided in the house of Easter Elchies. The Messrs Grant of Manchester, who by their own industry have established one of the most extensive mercantile establishments in the west of England, are natives of this parish. The late Sir William Grant, Master of the Rolls, was nearly related to the Elchies family.

Several young men have gone from this parish to the East and West Indies, and having realized property, have returned to their native land, and it is to be hoped will not again forsake their native hills. Others have settled in various places, and prospered in the world.

Modern Buildings.—The mansion-house of Wester Elchies, which is situated on an elevated position commanding an extensive

prospect, was originally an outpost of Castle Grant in Inverness-shire. From the various additions which this mansion has received, it is now a large building, partly in the old manorial, and partly in the castellated style, still retaining in some of the cellars, small windows and gun ports, used for defence in former ages. In the entrance-hall are preserved some chairs from the ancient castle of Rothes, marked with an Earl's coronet, and supposed to be some centuries old.*

The house of Knockando was built in the year 1732, and is a plain edifice, consisting of a main building and a wing on each side. It is now occupied by three families; part is considerably dilapidated, but the whole is capable of repair. Knockando House is beautifully situated near the bank of the Spey, and surrounded by wood. The walk in this direction is exceedingly picturesque and beautiful.

"The bramble bends
Beneath its jetty load, the hazel hangs
With auburn branches dipping in the stream
That sweeps along."

GRAHAME.

The landscape stretches far and wide, presenting varied aspects of Highland scenery, hill and dale, wood and water, rock and glen, blending harmoniously together in the vicinity, whilst the lofty summits of Ben Avon and Cairngorum are blue in the distance.—In the midst of wild yet simple scenery,

"Far up the windings of the stream,
Where birken witch-knots o'er the channel meet,"

stands Glengunnery, or the cottage of the Clune. This dwelling, built of wood and thatched with heather, was erected in the year 1827 as a shooting lodge, by the late Charles Grant, Esq. of Wester Elchies. The cottage contains thirteen apartments of various sizes; it was for some time inhabited by Ian Stewart, who during his residence fitted up the building in a style tastefully characteristic of the days of "auld lang syne." A young plantation is now rising around this romantic and sequestered spot, situated on the bank of the Knockando burn.

The mansion house of Easter Elchies, which consists of three stories, was erected in the year 1700, by the father of the late Lord Elchies, Captain John Grant, who distinguished himself at the battle of Cromdale, and died in 1715. He was succeeded by

* At Wester Elchies are also to be seen several sculptured stones, the remains of a Hindoo temple. They had lain for upwards of a hundred years in the neighbourhood of Gour, the ancient Hindoo capital, and have lately been sent to this country, by Mr Grant.

his son Lord Elchies, one of the Judges of the Court of Session, whose son Baron Grant sold the estate to the Earl of Findlater. The house is at present occupied by Alexander Reid, Esq. who rents the home farm. In the wood of Easter Elchies, a little below the mansion house, is the churchyard of Macallan, a sequestered rural burial-ground.

At some distance below the House of Easter Elchies, and near the eastern extremity of the parish, stands the elegant bridge of Craig Elachie. This handsome structure was built in 1814 by the Parliamentary Commissioners, aided by private subscriptions. It consists of a single arch of cast metal thrown across the Spey at one of the most beautiful parts of the river. The span of the arch is 150 feet 3 inches above the ordinary level of the water; the abutments are supported by four castellated turrets, each raised to the height of fifty feet. "These towers, during the floods of 1829, established in a remarkable manner the superior durability of a hollow cylindrical construction in masonry, for they were but little affected by the pressure of water, which swept away many seemingly stronger buildings."*

The execution of the bridge did great credit to Mr John Simpson of Shrewsbury. The cast iron was delivered at Speymouth for L. 3000. The cost of erection, &c. including iron, amounted to L. 8000. The approach to Craig Elachie bridge is very grand. The traveller appears on crossing to be approaching a large cavern, but feels surprised to find himself on a turnpike road, cut for a considerable extent along a huge rock covered with firs of a large size, and bounded by a secure parapet wall overhanging the Spey. The height of Craig Elachie rock, at the highest point cut down for the roadway, is 70 feet.

In Rothiemurchus there is another lofty rock called Craig Elachie, and between these two crags is comprehended the well-known district of Strathspey. In former times, signals by fire used to be communicated from the one rock to the other, on the approach of an enemy, to convene the inhabitants. Hence the Grants use for their motto, "Stand fast, Craig Elachie."

III.—POPULATION.

According to Dr Webster in 1755,	the population amounted to	1267
1791,	- - -	1500
By last Statistical Account in 1792,	- - -	1500
By Government Census in 1801,	- - -	1482

* Guide to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland by the Messrs Anderson of Inverness.

By Government Census in 1811, the population amounted to	1832
1821, - - -	1414
1831, - - -	1497, of which num-
ber 699 were males, and 798 females.	
Average number of births for last seven years is	30
of marriages for do.	11
of deaths during 1834, -	21

There are 3 insane persons, 2 or 3 fatuous, and 3 blind.

There are 3 landed proprietors, and 16 tenants paying L. 50 and upwards yearly for their farms; 6 merchants who have shops for the sale of cloths, groceries, &c.

Most of the inhabitants are employed in agriculture as farmers, crofters, labourers, or farm-servants.

There are also 13 masons, 1 heatherer, 4 gardeners, 13 weavers, 7 tailors, 11 shoemakers, 8 blacksmiths, 10 wrights, 3 carpenters, 6 sawyers, 1 dyer, 2 carding-millers, 4 grain-millers, 1 forester, 1 carrier, 1 butcher, 1 groom, 1 fish cadger.

Language.—Not very long ago, the Gaelic tongue was spoken in this parish. There are now, however, not above a dozen individuals who understand it, and not the half of these natives. Knockando is reckoned a Highland parish, but the preaching of Gaelic has been discontinued for nearly ninety years. Provincial Scotch, mixed with English, is now the common dialect of the country. In the neighbouring parish of Cromdale, Gaelic is still spoken and preached.

Customs, &c.—Amongst the customs, it may be remarked, that married women generally retain their maiden names in preference to assuming those of their husbands. Many of the people appear to have formerly had two names. The following specimens are selected from the parochial registers :

Grant *alias* Beg; Grant *alias* Achnach; Grant *alias* Roy; Grant *alias* M'Robbie; Grant *alias* Miller; Grant *alias* M'Kerran; Grant *alias* Cly; Grant *alias* Moir; Smith *alias* Gow; M'Pherson *alias* M'Lellan; Robertson *alias* M'Robie *alias* M'Robert; Cameron *alias* M'Phail; M'Donald *alias* M'Alister; M'Donald *alias* Muggach; M'William *alias* M'Cully.

The night-waking of corpses still continues, but nothing of an improper nature now occurs. The system of drinking, which was too common at funerals, has been happily abolished. It is singular that in this quarter, the father, who ought to appear as chief-mourner, seldom attends the funeral of his eldest child. Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday are the common days on which wed-

dings take place,—the people having some absurd superstition against Monday and Friday.

Within the last few years a visible improvement has taken place upon the dress of the people, especially amongst the females,—caps and bonnets being now pretty generally worn. Many of the younger children are dressed in the kilt and hose. The men generally wear the tartan plaid over coats and trowsers of broad cloth. However plain and homely the parishioners may appear to dress in general; for kirk and market they always reserve a suit of good clothes. Of late, there has also been an improvement in cleanliness, although there is still considerable room for more, both without and within doors. Except by a few families, butcher-meat is not much used. Fish is becoming more common amongst the peasantry than formerly, whilst tea and sugar are rapidly gaining ground.

Character of the People.—The parishioners of Knockando are exceedingly kind and hospitable, according to their means; ever ready to pity the sorrows and supply the wants of the vagrant pauper. They are frugal, and, generally speaking, industrious and sober. It is to be regretted that the blessings and benefits of education have not been prized as they ought,—it being not uncommon to find individuals unable to read and write. This, however, is partly accounted for by the former miserable state of the roads. It must also be admitted, that there are too frequent instances of unlawful intercourse between the sexes; and that poaching, both in game and the salmon fishery, prevails to some extent. Smuggling, which was formerly very common, is now almost entirely suppressed.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture and Rural Economy.—Few parishes in Scotland of the same extent contain more waste land capable of improvement and cultivation. A good deal of hill pasture, which was formerly stocked with sheep, is now brought into cultivation. Some of the hills and waste moors might be profitably planted with larches and Scotch firs, which would not only add shelter to the cultivated fields, but at the same time tend much to adorn and beautify the parish.

On the estate of Easter Elchies there are about 500 acres in constant or occasional cultivation, and about 100 which have never been cultivated, the half of which, however, might, by proper draining, be brought under tillage. There is no undivided common, except where turf and peat are cut for fuel.

There are about ninety acres of wood, consisting of Scotch fir

and larch, and fourteen of ash, birch, oak, elm, and beech. There are few or no enclosures, but the state of the farm-buildings and dwelling-houses is improved of late years. As the farms are small, and the tenants industrious, improvements, encouraged by the landlord, during the last seventeen years have made rapid progress,—much aided, no doubt, by the facility with which lime is procured from Mortlach, in consequence of the building of Craig Elachie bridge, and the improved state of the roads. The returns on the best land are six to eight; and on the poorer soils four to five. The weight of hay from sown grasses from 100 to 150 stones per acre.

On the estate of Kirdals there are 572 acres either cultivated or occasionally in tillage; 132 waste or in pasture; 4500 in a state of undivided common; and 400 in wood, consisting of fir, oak, birch, and alder. There are few enclosures; and, with some exceptions, the farm-buildings are rather of an inferior kind. The greatest obstacles to improvement arise from want of capital, and more extensive meliorations. The number of horses amounts to 44; of black cattle to 330; and of sheep to 200. Average gross amount of raw produce raised on the estate: turnips, 30 acres; grain, 1200 bolls; potatoes, 400 bolls; hay, 3000 stones.

On the estates of Wester Elchies and Ballintomb there are about 1170 acres in cultivation, 100 in meadow pasture, and 3400 in hill and moss, 60 for occasional tillage, and 86 for permanent pasture, 200 in natural wood of oak, birch, alder, &c., and 80 in plantations of Scotch, larch, spruce, and silver firs. The want of capital is the chief obstacle to improvement; and although the proprietor allows L. 5 for every improved acre at the end of the lease, few tenants can conveniently want their money so long, chiefly on account of an advance of ten per cent. on the tenth rent, and five per cent. on the fifteenth rent, which per centages continue to the expiry of the nineteen years' lease. There are but few enclosures, and the farm-buildings are generally but indifferent. Stone enclosures are paid by mutual valuation at the conclusion of the lease. There are about 50 pigs, 90 horses, 800 black-cattle, and a few sheep. The average gross amount of produce may be about 50 quarters of wheat; 200 of barley; 45 of pease; 1940 of oats; 350 bolls of potatoes; 25 stones of flax; and 150 to 200 of hay per acre.

No proper return can at present be given for the estate of Knockando.

Rent of Land.—The rent of land varies from 18s. to L. 1, 15s. per acre, the average rent may be from L. 1 to L. 1, 5s. Most of the tenants, however, pay customs to the proprietor in the shape of sheep, hogs, poultry, meal, eggs, and limestone, besides services consisting of a draught of horses and carts for any purpose the proprietor may choose. Some of the proprietors have now converted most of the customs and services into money. The tenants likewise pay road-money. The annual rent of a labourer's house varies from 10s. to L. 1, and with garden and ground from L. 1 to L. 1, 10s.

Wages, &c.—A ploughman receives in the half-year from L. 4 to L. 5, the average about L. 4, 10s.; women from L. 1, 10s. to L. 2; married servants who have houses, from L. 5 to L. 6, with meal and milk; day-labourers, 1s., and women 6d. per day with victuals; harvest labourers 3d. per threave.—Mason and carpenter work are generally performed by contract. When employed per day, a mason will earn 1s. 6d. or 2s. with victuals; a carpenter or wright, 1s. 3d. with do.; a gardener, 1s. 3d. with do.; a shoemaker, 1s. 6d. with do.; a tailor, 1s. with do. The wages of herds vary according to their duties. Ditching costs 1½d. to 4d. per ell, according to the depth; casting of peats per load, 3d. to 3½d.; setting do. ½d. per load; diking from 4d. to 5d. per ell; trenching 4d. to 6d. per rood. For mossing, men receive 1s. 6d., and women, 9d. per day, without victuals; the rate charged for grazing an ox or cow per annum about L. 2; small cattle, L. 1 per head; a sheep or ewe, 2s. do.

Prices of Provisions, Manufactures, Agricultural Implements, &c.—Butter, 9d. per lb.; eggs, from 3d. to 6d. per dozen; skimmed milk, 1d. per Scotch pint; sweet milk, 2d. per do.; pair of fowls, 1s. 6d. to 1s. 8d.; ducks, 1s. 8d. to 2s. per do.; geese, 5s. per do.; common cheese, 4d. to 4½d. per lb.; pair of chickens, 6d. to 8d.; honey, 2s. to 3s. per pint.

Home-made stockings sell from 6d. to 1s. 6d., according to size; plaiding, 1s. per ell; shirting per yard from 1s. and upwards, according to quality; wool and lint, 1s. per lb.; wool per stone, of 28 lbs. L. 1, 1s.; harn, 10d. to 1s. per lb.; sacking, 1s. per do.; sag and sarge from 2s. to 3s. per do.; weaving of plaiding, costs 2d. per ell; weaving of shirting or sheeting, 4d. per ell; spinning, 7d. to 9d. per spindle. An iron plough costs L. 3, 6s.; a wooden plough, L. 2, 10s.; a full-mounted cart, L. 6, 10s.; a wheel-barrow, 10s. 6d.; a pair of harrows (ash) L. 1, 4s.

Price of Wood.—From the different plantations, the inhabitants

of the parish are supplied with wood for paling, roofs of houses and other purposes. On the estates of wester Elchies the average prices are as follows:—Asb, 2s. 6d. per solid foot; oak, 3s. per do.; elm 3s. per do.; alder, 1s. 3d. per do.; larch, 1s. 3d. per do. Scotch fir, 6d. per do.; geen, 1s. 6d. per do.; birch, 1s. 2d. per tree.

Duration of Leases, &c.—The general length of the farm leases is for the period of nineteen years; feus, for thirty-one years; in the village of Archiestown, there are four perpetual feus.

The chief crops raised in the parish are oats, viz. Hopetoun early and late, Angus, Kildrummy, potatoe and black, oats; barley and Scotch bear, wheat, pease, beans, potatoes, turnips, flax, and hay. The oats and barley are chiefly sold, the remainder being used in families, or for feeding domestic animals. The potato and turnip crops are consumed in the parish. The rotation of crop generally observed consists in two white crops, one green crop, and two crops of grass. The quantity of grass seeds sown in an acre amounts to eight pounds of clover, mixed with three bushels of rye-grass.

The agriculture of the parish may still be said to be in its infancy; but improvements are daily taking place in the system of husbandry, and the farmers becoming more sensible of the advantages of liming. The most approved methods of farming have been adopted by Mr Reid on the farm of Easter Elchies, and by the Rev. William Asher on the farm of Nether Tomdow, the greater part of the latter having been recently improved and laid out.

Manufactures.—There are four meal-mills, a waulk-mill, and a carding-mill, in the parish. Saw and thrashing-mills have also been lately added to one of the former description. At the waulk and carding-mills, wool is dyed and manufactured into plaiding and broad-cloth, blankets and carpets. Four hands are employed, but not constantly. A good deal of weaving and spinning used to go on throughout the parish, but there is now much less than formerly. There are two distilleries, one at Cardow, conducted by Mr Cumming; the other at Macallan, by Mr Reid; both of which are well known for the very superior quality of the spirit distilled.

Rental.—The valued rent of the parish amounts to L. 1987, the real rent to upwards of L. 3000.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Market-Towns, &c.—There are no market-towns within the bounds of the parish; the nearest are Charlestown of Aberlour, distant 5½ miles from the centre, Rothes 10, Dufftown 15, Forres 16, Grantown 16, Elgin, Keith, and Fochabers, 20. There is a

nearer road to Elgin through the Mannoeh Hill, about 13 miles in length; but in winter this road is often impassable, being in some places in very bad repair. The greater part of the grain exported from the parish is shipped at Garmouth, the remainder at Lossiemouth and Findhorn.

Village.—The only village is Archiestown, which was built on the moor of Ballintomb, by the late Sir Archibald Grant of Monymusk, about the year 1760, to whom the property then belonged. By an accidental fire in 1783, the village was partly destroyed. The ruins of some houses still remain in the same dilapidated condition, but Archiestown is now beginning, Phoenix-like, to rise from its ashes. Several new houses have been built during the last year, and three are at present in progress of erection. The village consists of a main street, a square and several bye-lanes, and contains 180 inhabitants.

Means of Communication, &c.—There is no post-office in the parish; the letters and newspapers are conveyed twice a-week by a foot-runner to and from the post-office at Craig Elachie. It is to be hoped that the communication will ere long be more frequent. There is a carrier from Aberdeen to Archiestown, once a week, who resides in Rothes. There is also a weekly carrier from the parish to Elgin. The turnpike road from Elgin leading to Dufftown, Grantown, &c. passes through the parish for a very short distance between the bridge and the blue scaur of Craig Elachie. Until lately the parish roads were most miserable. A central road has now been formed for a considerable distance, and is expected soon to be completed. The bye roads are in very bad repair, and several farm-houses are sometimes inaccessible from the state of the roads. At Wester Elchies, there is a ferry boat, which affords communication with Charlestown of Aberlour, &c.; and there is another farther up the river at Black's Boat, in the parish of Inveraven, which leads to Glenlivet, Tomintoul, &c. At both ferries, foot-passengers pay 1d.; the charge for crossing a horse is 4d. Besides the bridge of Craig Elachie over the Spey, there are several bridges of wood and stone over the burns. A new stone bridge is about to be commenced over the burn of Aldarder. The fences are in general very insufficient, and, with the exception of an old hedge or two, consist of rough stone dikes or wooden palings. The bridge of Craig Elachie has been the means of facilitating the improvements of this and all the neighbouring parishes; and could a wooden or other bridge be erected over the Spey at

Tomdow, Kirdals, or any other place towards the top of the parish, it would prove of the utmost utility. This important object well deserves the attention of the landed proprietors, road trustees, and the commissioners for Highland roads and bridges,—more particularly should the proposed new line of road from Perth to Elgin and Forres be carried into effect.

Ecclesiastical State.—The parish church of Knockando, situated about eight miles from the eastern, and seven from the western boundary, is on the whole pretty central for the population. It was built in 1757, almost close to the site of the former one. It was repaired in 1832, and is now one of the neatest churches inside, in this part of the country, but too small for the population. In order to remedy this defect, it is intended very soon to have a dwelling-house in the village of Archiestown, at three miles distance, fitted up as a chapel in connection with the Church of Scotland, in which divine service will be performed once a month, or oftener, by the parish minister. The collection of L. 11, 13s. 1d. Sterling, recently made in the parish in aid of the General Assembly's Church Extension scheme is to be laid out for this purpose; the family of Wester Elchies having kindly granted whatever wood may be required to promote the object. The parish of Knockando would make two sufficient parishes, both in point of extent and population.

Several small benefactions are on record, which have been distributed amongst the poor; and last year a legacy of L. 19, 19s. was bequeathed by a foundling of the parish who died in Aberdeen at an advanced age, and in which city and neighbourhood she had long resided as a servant. The parish church accommodates between 500 and 600 persons. The sittings are all free, and are proportioned to the tenants, according to the valued rents of the heritors. It thus happens, that for the inhabitants of Archiestown and for tradesmen, little church accommodation is provided.

The manse was built in the year 1767, and stands in the immediate vicinity of the church, on an elevated peninsula formed by the Knockando burn, and distant from the river Spey about a mile. The extent of glebe may be about fourteen acres, of which eleven or twelve are arable. Nearly two acres were destroyed by the memorable flood of 1829. The amount of stipend, including communion element allowance, is L. 158, 6s. 8d. and is all paid in money; Knockando being on the list of small livings augmented by Act of Parliament. There are about 320 fami-

lies attending the Established church. There is a small congregation of Independents in the parish, who assemble for public worship in the upper flat of the minister's dwelling-house. There are about eight families of this persuasion in the parish,—a few families from other parishes also attend. The Independent minister rents a small farm. There is also a place of worship occasionally visited in summer by licentiates of the United Secession church. There are no families in the parish who profess to be connected with that body, consequently the congregation is made up of occasional hearers. There are, however, some individuals who generally attend when there is sermon. Only one Roman Catholic is to be found in the parish.

Divine service at the Established church is generally well attended, especially during the summer season; some of the people regularly coming a distance of six or seven miles. A few families occasionally attend the churches of Aberlour, Rothes, and Inveravon, from the greater proximity of these places of worship. The average number of communicants amounts to 370. The parishioners are almost all well affected towards the Established church, in proof of which, it may be stated, that petitions to both Houses of Parliament, praying for the support and extension of the Church of Scotland, were transmitted in February last, signed by upwards of 400 male inhabitants of the parish. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is dispensed once a-year, previous to which, several diets are held for catechising both the advanced and young communicants. The parishioners are also regularly examined and catechised once a-year, after the conclusion of the harvest season. In the year 1810, four communion cups, and in 1822, two communion plates were gifted to the kirk-session,—the former by Mr George Stewart, merchant, Corgyle of Wester Elchies, and the latter by Mr James Cruickshank, farmer, Bogroy, one of the elders of the parish. The Earl of Seafield is sole patron.*

* The following is a list of the parochial ministers of Knockando: William Watson, minister before 1624, translated to Duthil about 1626; Gilbert Marshall, ordained about 1630, transported to Cromdale 1646; William Chalmers, ordained in 1640, died in 1668; James Gordon, ordained in 1670, transported to Urquhart in 1682; Thomas Grant, ordained in 1683, died about 1700; Alexander Ruddach, ordained at Elchies in 1683; Daniel M'Kenzie, ordained February 12, 1706, transported to Kingussie 1709; James Gordon, ordained in May 1712, died in winter 1725; Hugh Grant, ordained in September 1727, died, 18th September 1768; John Dunbar, ordained 3d May 1764, transported to Dyke and Moy 1788; Francis Grant, admitted 14th August 1788, died 5th November 1805; Lachlan M'Pherson, admitted 3d October 1806, died 14th March 1825; William Asher, ordained 7th September 1826, transported to Inveravon 17th October 1833; George Gordon, ordained 30th January 1834, the present minister.

Education.—There are six schools in the parish, two of which are parochial, three supported by the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and one which is unendowed. The last mentioned, and two of the society's schools are taught by females. Each of the parochial schoolmasters has a salary of L. 25, 13s. 3½d. with a share of the bequest left by the late Mr Dick to the parish teachers in the counties of Moray, Banff, and Aberdeen. The amount of fees at each of the parish schools averages from L. 8 to L. 10 per annum. The school-house of Knockando is at present in very bad repair, and the scholars have no play ground. The school fees vary from 2s. to 5s. per quarter, according to the number of branches which the pupils are learning. The usual branches taught at the parochial schools are, reading, writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, land-measuring, mathematics, geography, English grammar, and Latin, with the Shorter Catechism, and the principles of the Christian religion. The Bible and New Testament are read every day in all the schools of the parish, and the parochial schools and the Society's male school at Archiestown are opened and closed with prayer. In the female schools, sewing, knitting, and sampler work are taught, along with reading, spelling, writing and arithmetic.

There are two Sabbath schools under the superintendence of the minister and elders, which are well attended both by young and grown up persons. It is also intended to have another established. The Independents likewise have a Sabbath school. One of the parochial teachers officiates as session-clerk, with a salary of L. 2, 10s. out of which sum he provides a depute precentor. His fees for proclamations of bans are, 5s. when both the contracting parties reside in the parish, and 3s. 6d. when only one party is resident; for recording baptisms, 1s.; for extracts and certificates, 1s. except when of an unusual length. The session officer has a fee of 16s. 8d. and a small perquisite from the marriage and baptism dues.

Library,—Savings Bank.—At present there is neither a parish library nor a saving bank,—the want of which are felt. It is, however, sincerely to be hoped that means will ere long be found for introducing into the parish these admirable additions to our invaluable Scottish parochial system.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—There are at present thirty-nine individuals on the poor's roll, and upwards of 20 families who occasionally receive supplies during the year. There is a general

distribution once a year, and sometimes oftener, but those who are in immediate want receive additional allowances as necessity requires, from 2s. 6d. to 10s. During the year 1834, the collections amounted to L. 30, including ordination and sacramental occasions. The collections at the church, the interest of L. 60 in the British Linen Company's Bank, with occasional donations and penalties, form the only means from whence the poor are supported. The heritors allow L. 10 per annum for the support of each of two pauper lunatics, one of whom is boarded in a farmhouse, and the other lodged in a house, rent free. Whilst it must be admitted that the reluctance to apply for parochial aid is not gaining ground, yet, the spirit of true Scottish independence is still to be seen in the parish; and last year a case of this kind occurred, when a poor woman in Easter Elchies, to whom the kirk-session sent half-a-crown as an occasional supply, returned the money, saying that, as long as she had her cow, she would not accept of one single farthing. At present there is no pauper in the district of Easter Elchies. The parish is much infested by sturdy beggars, and tinkers, especially during the summer season, who drain away a great deal of what might otherwise be given to the home-poor.

Inns, &c.—There are four public-houses in the parish, three of which are in the village of Archiestown, and the other at the boat of Wester Elchies. One in Archiestown is perfectly sufficient. The effect of such a number is decidedly most injurious to the morals of the people. It is to be feared that there are also some individuals who do not scruple to sell whisky even without a license.

Fuel.—The fuel chiefly used consists of peat and turf, taken from the different mosses. Wood is also burned, but, owing to the distance from the sea-coast, very few coals are consumed.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The most striking variation between the present state of the parish and that which existed at the time of the last Statistical Account, consists in the suppression of smuggling, and the consequent greater attention paid to agriculture, and the rearing of cattle, together with the quantity of moorland which has been improved. Draining and liming are much wanted, and also fences for the protection of the fields from the inroads of cattle, and foot-passengers. There is no agricultural Society connected with the parish. The formation of a local or district society for the improvement of farming and breeds of cattle and horses would be

highly useful; and if premiums were to be occasionally awarded by the proprietors for the best kept cottages and neatest gardens on their estates, the advantages would be very great, there being much room for improvement in cleanliness. We have much pleasure, however, in pointing out Corgyle Cottage, the tasteful residence of Mr Robert Stewart, merchant, which, both in external and internal arrangements, affords an example of neatness to the country around. The school-house of Elchies has also been very prettily dressed up, and is neatly kept by Mr Charles Grant, the present teacher. Grant and Robertson are the most common surnames in Knockando. The late Robert Grant, Esq. of Wester Elchies, had a small medical garden. Several of the plants still remain, including agrimony, camomile, costmary, crowfoot, elder, garlick, black hellebore, lavender, marsh-mallow, mint, mustard, rosemary, rhubarb, saffron, sage, Solomon's seal, savine, saxifrage, sorrel, thyme, valerian, trefoil, horehound, &c. &c.

August 1835.

PARISH OF BIRNIE.

PRESBYTERY OF ELGIN, SYNOD OF MORAY.

THE REV. GEORGE GORDON, MINISTER.

L—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name, &c.—THIS parish, in some old writings, is called "Brenuth." No satisfactory derivation has yet been assigned to the name.*

Extent and Boundaries.—The outline of the parish of Birnie approaches an oblong; with its narrower extremity on the north, and within $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles of the burgh of Elgin, it runs due south for 7 miles, averaging $1\frac{3}{4}$ in breadth. It is bounded on the east, north, and west, by the parish of Elgin, and is separated from the parish of Knockando on the south by the junction of the parishes of Dallas and Rothes. Birnie lies on the north side of the high ground which rises between the Spey and the flat of Moray. From its highest elevation, at the Manoch-hill, of about 1000 feet, it has a gradual fall,—till at its northern boundary it is less than 50 feet

* Shaw derives it from "*Brenoth*, i. e. a brae, or high land."