

# PARISH OF LEGERWOOD.

PRESBYTERY OF LAUDER, SYNOD OF MERSE AND TIVIOTDALE.

THE REV. JOHN WALKER, MINISTER.

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## I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—THE name of this parish appears to have undergone several inconsiderable variations in its orthography. It is said by Chalmers in his *Caledonia* to be found, in the ancient charters of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, written *Ligerdewode*, *Ligerdeswode*, *Ligeardeswode*. About the period of the Revolution and subsequently, it was written *Ligertwood* and sometimes *Legertwood*,—which last form is still retained by the older people. It is most probably derived from the Saxon word signifying “*the hollow wood*,” or “*the hollow part of the wood*,”—which when the country was covered with trees, would be exactly descriptive of the principal farm which still bears that name.

*Boundaries, Extent.*—It is bounded, on the north, by part of Westruther parish and *Boon Dreigh*, a small stream which separates it from the parish of Lauder; on the west, excepting in one place where it crosses that river a short way, by the Leader, which divides

it from the parishes of Lauder and Melrose; on the south, by the parish of Earlston; and on the east, by the parishes of Gordon and Westruther. Its greatest length from Purves-haugh Bridge on the south, to Dodds Mill, on the north, is 6 miles; and its breadth from Bridge-end, on the west, to Stockbridge, on the east, is  $4\frac{1}{4}$  miles. These, however, are extreme points, and a more correct idea may be conveyed of its extent by stating it at 5 miles in length by 3 in breadth. The boundary line is irregular: and of two portions into which its area is divided by a pretty deep valley, the northern and longest is, until near its upper limit, not much less than  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles in breadth,—while the southern, indented deeply by the parish of Gordon, scarcely exceeds  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles. The whole parish contains about 15 square miles.

*Topographical Appearances.*—The greater part of the parish lies high; the northern part, especially, which may be described as forming with Westruther the contiguous parish on the east, a table land of considerable elevation, extending from the narrow valley of the Leader to the base of the Lammermoor hills. The surface of this portion is not level, but consists of three ridges of hills, with high valleys intervening—the two southernmost of these ridges stretching from east to west, and the northern striking off from them in a northerly direction, and terminating in a round massive height named “Boon Hill,” which rises 1090 feet above the level of the sea. The southern part of the parish is entirely occupied by one hill, which, on the south, slopes gradually into the vale of Earlston, and on the east towards the boundary of Gordon. Of the elevations generally, it ought to be stated, that they agree in having their direction nearly east and west, and in having their abruptest end almost westward, and a gentle declivity as they range to the east.

*Climate.*—The cold and moisture are considerably greater than in the Merse and many parts of the Lothians, owing to the elevation of the land, want of shelter, want of draining, and contiguity to the Lammermoors. The frosts in winter are understood to be more intense than in these parts, and the falls of snow are heavier, and continue longer on the ground. The crops in autumn are generally later by a week, and, in backward seasons, by a fortnight, than in the lowest grounds of the Merse. On the whole, however, the climate is not insalubrious.

Of the very limited population, it may be noticed that there are 22 individuals betwixt sixty and seventy, most of whom are still ac-

tive, and 5 above seventy; one of the latter is considerably above eighty, and another has attained to the great age of ninety-four. The people are no doubt indebted in a great degree for the blessing of robust health, to comfortable accommodation, temperate habits of life, and regular and bracing employment.

*Hydrography.*—There are perennial springs of excellent water in all parts of the parish, which appear to flow from sandstone rock, and frequently through gravel or through sand. It is said that there was formerly a loch of considerable extent on the lands of Corsbie; and that it enclosed a small wooded mount, on which the ruins are still standing of an ancient tower, the residence of the old possessors of the barony. The sheet of water, however, if it did remain entire until so late a period as to encircle this secluded fortalice, has long been drained off, and its bason is now partly unimproved moss, and chiefly meadow pasture.

The Leader washes the western boundary of the parish on its way to the Tweed. The Eden, a very small stream, has its source on the farm of Boon, and after a course of about fifteen miles, falls into the Tweed below Newton Don. Several nameless rivulets convey the superfluous moisture to the Leader, or the Eden, and in the northern parts of the parish into Boon Dreigh, a tributary of the Leader.

*Geology, &c.*—The whole eastern part of the parish, together with the northern side of the valley of Legerwood, rests upon secondary sandstone; and the hills in the northern part, excepting Boon Hill, which appears to consist of conglomerate, have been raised by graywacke. This rock abounds in veins, filled, so far as I have seen, with clay. At one place, where a quarry has been opened for dikes, these veins appear to cut each other at right angles; some running almost due north, others east. Immediately above the bridge at Dodds Mill, on the Edinburgh road, a striking effect may be seen, produced by the action of water upon this veinous rock, which arrested the attention of the French traveller, M. Faujas St Fond. The stream has uncovered a pretty large mass, and by washing away the soft veins which lay parallel to its course, has caused the hard rock to present an appearance which might be mistaken at first sight for columnar basalt. In a scientific point of view, it does not seem to possess much interest; but its appearance is attractive, especially if the formation be mistaken for columnar. The end, covered with ivy, of the edifice upon which the mill-wheel turns, and the trough that conveys the im-

elling stream, abut upon the little cataract; and the whole is shaded by some thriving trees. In consequence of lying lower than the road, too, it is not observed until the passenger is almost in a condition to look down upon it, when the real scene may almost be forgotten, in the likeness which it presents to a Dutch picture.

The hill which has been said to occupy the southern part of the parish is formed principally of conglomerate, resting on which, on the southern aspect of the hill, is a shivered graywacke, much more granular than the compact and solid stone at Dodds Mill, with frequent strata of camstone or slaty graywacke in thin layers much hardened, and at one place of the *road quarry*, where it is revealed, enveloping with several concentric folds an imbedded mass of the principal rock.

Minute portions of copper of good quality have been found washed out by the rain, on the farm of Dodds. It is believed to be present in small quantities over a large part of the district; and, at a distant period, to have been wrought in the Lammermoors. No mine for that or any other metallic ore has ever been opened in this parish. None of the simple minerals have been found in the rocks, excepting veins and occasionally small crystals of calc-spar, and pieces of common quartz. The rolled stones which occur in the fields are generally sandstone, graywacke, camstone, and porphyry, pieces of which abound on Legerwood hill, and may form the top of the highest eminence, resting on the tuffa.

A formation here called *Moorband*, (clay with imbedded stones indurated by iron,) is found at several places in thin but pretty extensive masses near the surface.\* It seems to be a sort of bog-iron, forms rapidly, and, unless broken up and removed, which is not easily accomplished, is both a bar to the plough and destroys vegetation. Peat of great depth and excellent quality is abundant; but it is not permitted to be cut: and, excepting in a few instances, and very sparingly, that fuel is not used.

There is a considerable variety of soils in the parish, which in general take their character from the underlying rock. Upon Boon Hill, the soil is clayey and very deep, and upon much of Legerwood Hill also the soil is a deep reddish clay. The graywacke is covered to the top of the hills by a thin gravelly and untransported soil, which, on their sides, becomes deep and productive; and upon the

\* The *moorband*, in other parishes in Scotland, is named *pan*, and generally is made up of gravel and sand cemented by bog-iron ore.

sandstone rock, wherever the soil is good, it is a mixed soil, partly its own, with detached masses, and partly transported from the conglomerate of the hills. There is also resting upon it occasionally, chiefly in spots, or at the ends of fields, a soil of pure peat earth, which, though damp, appears to be quickened to some fertility. A considerable portion, however, of unreclaimed heath, (much of which is considered incapable of being improved,) rests upon this rock, and consists of a thin layer of sand or gravel mixed with, or underlying, peat earth.

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

*Eminent men.*—The Rev. William Calderwood, who was minister of this parish at the period of Episcopal domination in the reigns of the two last of the Stewart family, is entitled to notice, not as having acted in an eminent sphere, but worthily, during the unequal struggle which presbytery had then to maintain,—and also on account of his family, as he is understood to have been the son or nephew of the church historian. He was admitted to his charge in 1655, and in 1662, along with the great proportion of the talent and worth which still remained in the church, he was turned out for nonconformity to the Acts of Glasgow. Being much beloved by the people, he remained among them for a considerable time after his expulsion, and when at last he had removed from their neighbourhood, he often visited them privately. It appears to have been on account of the meetings which took place at these visits, that the parish was fined for holding conventicles in August 1684.\* He returned to his charge in 1689, and died in 1709, at the advanced age of eighty-one, having earned a high reputation, (which still survives him in the place,) both for sanctity of life, and ministerial faithfulness.†

*Land-owners.*—The land-owners are, according to their valued rents, Henry Ker Seymer, Esq. of Morriston; The Most Noble The Marquis of Tweeddale; Miss Innes of Stow; John Spottiswoode Esq. of Spottiswoode; Dr Scott of East Morriston; Colonel Shillinglaw of Birkhillside; Mr Fairholm of Chapel.

*Historical Notices.*—The whole land in the parish, or at least Birkenside, Whitslaid, Legerwood, and the Morristons, belonged before the twelfth century to the family of Stewart.‡ About the

\* Preface to 2d vol. Wodrow. For the extent of the parish, the fine, which was L. 1666, 13s. 4d., appears to have been severe.

† Three fugitives, also belonging to this parish, are included in the proclamation of this year (1684): Alexander Brown, in Berkenside, and Thomas Carter and John Pringle, both in Ligertwood.

‡ Chalmers' Caledonia, Art. Legerwood.

year 1160, Malcolm IV. granted to his Stewart, Walter, the son of Alan,—Birchensyde and Legerdeswode, as they had been held by his grandfather David in his demesne. Walter, his grandson, and the third Stewart, gave the lands of Birchensyde in marriage with his daughter Euphemia, to Patrick, who succeeded as Earl of Dunbar in 1232; and Robert the Stewart, who succeeded to the throne, granted to Alan de Lauder, his tenant of Whitslaid, many manorial rights in Birchensyde, Legerdswode, and Morrystown,—a grant which was confirmed by King Robert II. 13th June 1371.

The family of Lauder were still in possession of Whitslaid in 1635. It afterwards belonged to the Montgomeries of Mackbiehill; \* and, along with Birken-side, came by purchase into the possession of Mr Innes of Stow. Morryston and Legerwood were, in 1635, in the possession of the ancient family who still hold it. The barony of Corsbie appears at an early period to have belonged to the Cranstouns of Oxenford, and in 1635 it was still in their possession. Dodds afterwards passed to the Hays of Mordington, and then came by purchase to the family of Spottiswoode. The rest of the barony, comprehending the farms of Boon and Corsbie, belongs to the Most Noble the Marquis of Tweeddale.

East Morryston, in 1635, belonged to Francis and John Wilkison. It was afterwards the property of Mr Peter of Chapel, and was purchased by the late Thomas Scott, Esq.

A part of Birken-side, which in 1635 belonged to Robert Hart of St John's Chapel, advocate, became in 1689, the property of William Shillinglaws, elder and younger, of the elder in liferent; and is now in the possession of Colonel William Shillinglaw, their lineal descendant. It is the opinion of Colonel Shillinglaw, that his ancestor, whose entrance to the parish seems to have been connected with Mr Calderwood's return, and who was an elder and keeper for sometime of the Session records, assumed the name of Shillinglaw, in consequence of transactions in which he had been engaged during the previous troubles; and that his real name was the ancient, and in this quarter, honourable, name of Kerr.

*Parochial Registers.*—The date of the earliest entry in the parochial registers is September 8, 1689. They appear to have been regularly kept, but are very meagre.

*Antiquities.*—Of the three ancient towers which are mention-

\* There is a tomb-stone in the churchyard to the memory of William Montgomery of Mackbiehill, who died at Whitslaid in 1689, which was repaired by his grandson, the Right Honourable James Montgomery, Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, in 1798.

ed in the former Statistical Account, two only, those at Corsbie and Whitslaid, are now standing. The tower of Morriston has been pulled down, and has been nearly altogether removed in the course of agricultural improvements. Neither of the towers still standing bear any date or inscription; but they are supposed to have been erected in the reign of James II. Upon the arched roof of Whitslaid tower, there is a fine sycamore tree growing. It is of considerable size, and appears to be perfectly healthy. The traces of two British camps, one on the top of Legerwood Hill, and the other on the hill of Birken-side, are still discernible, but they have been much defaced by the plough; and on the farm of Boon, in the barony of Corsbie, there is a stone which is called the "*Dodds Corse Stane*." It is a shaft of sandstone sunk into a square block of the same material, and is said to have been the place where a market was at one time held for the vicinity.

### III.—POPULATION.

The population of this parish amounted in 1755, to	-	398
1791,	-	422
1801,	-	495
1811,	-	560
1821,	-	476
1831,	-	565

The apparent deficiency in the number of inhabitants in 1821, was owing to the census having been taken immediately upon the term of Whitsunday, after several house and farm-servants had removed, and before many of those had arrived who were engaged to supply their places. The inhabitants, therefore, until 1811, seem to have increased with the demands, first of an advancing, and then of a more perfect agriculture. Since that period, the present system of husbandry is understood to have been followed. There has, however, been a trifling increase of the agricultural population; for in the year 1811, there were 14 families supported by trade and handicraft, and now there are only 10,—the heads of two of these being millers, who each rent a small piece of land. Indeed, the inhabitants may be said to be limited to a number barely sufficient to cultivate the soil and to tend the stock,—the deficiency which would otherwise be experienced in autumn being supplied by Irish labourers, who come in great numbers at that season.

There is no town in the parish, and scarcely such a collection of houses as to deserve the name of a village. On every farm there is a hamlet, where the hinds or farm-servants reside,—every hind

supplying a female labourer, his wife or daughter, or hired servant, to be employed in the work of the farm, for daily pay, except during harvest, when her work is given as for rent of the house which he occupies.

The average number of births yearly for the last seven years amounts almost to 14. In the register, an account is kept of burials, not of deaths; of burials the average is 8,—but this is not a correct shewing of the mortality in the parish, because many people being in possession of a burying-place from their parents or more distant progenitors, inter their dead in the churchyard, who do not reside, or may never have resided, within the parish. The average number of marriages is 4.

The number of persons under 15 years of age,	-	-	-	221
betwixt 15 and 30,	-	-	-	179
betwixt 30 and 50,	-	-	-	112
betwixt 50 and 70,	-	-	-	43
above 70,	-	-	-	9
Number of families in the parish,	-	-	-	98
chiefly employed in agriculture,	-	-	-	88
in trade or handicraft,	-	-	-	10

There is only one proprietor of land resident, Colonel Shillinglaw of Birkhillside. Some of the farmers are understood, in respect to fortune, to be independent of their profession; and, as the farms are large, all have a considerable capital vested in stock, &c.

John Murray, Esq. of Uplaw, although not a proprietor, should be mentioned in an account of this parish, as his family has been longer connected with it than any other now resident,—that family having held the farm of Corsbie since 1671. In 1690, his ancestor, John Murray of Uplaw, was ordained by Mr Calderwood one of the elders for arranging parochial affairs, then in a state of much confusion; and seems to have possessed great influence among the inhabitants,—an influence which his descendants have never ceased to retain.

*Character, &c. of the People.*—They are commonly sober-minded, industrious, and temperate. Their houses, are in general good and comfortable, well furnished, and kept with great attention to cleanliness. They seldom eat butcher-meat; but they keep a cow, have a pig, which they fatten for their families, and get, as part of wages, more meal and potatoes than in some instances they consume. They appear to enjoy in a reasonable degree the comforts and advantages of society, and to be quite contented with their situation and circumstances.

During the last three years, there have been 8 illegitimate births in the parish.

## IV.—INDUSTRY.

*Agriculture.*—The number of acres in the parish amounts to 8430. Of this land, 3470 acres are regularly under cultivation; 1830 are in permanent pasture, but are cropped occasionally, for the purpose of renewing the sown grasses when they die out; 2330 acres have never been cultivated, some of which might be improved, perhaps, as pasture, but not otherwise; and 300 acres are in wood. There is no part of the land in a state of undivided common. About 16 acres are of natural wood, which consists, with a few ash trees and young oaks, chiefly of alder, birch, and hazel. The plantations are of larch, spruce, and common firs, with a small proportion of hard wood. They are all young, protected by good fences, and appear to be in a thriving state.

The land forty years ago, as appears from the former Statistical Account, was held by seventeen tenants. It is now occupied by nine, several of the farms being extensive.

*Rent of Land.*—The average rent per acre is from 12s. to 15s.; The average rent of grazing is at the rate of L. 3, 10s. per ox or cow grazed, and at the rate of 15s. per ewe or full-grown sheep pastured by the year. The rental of the parish is L. 3800.

*Live-Stock.*—The common breeds of sheep are the Leicester and Cheviot, and a cross from these. The cattle are now chiefly, and until of late they were solely, of the short-horned breed: and very great attention is paid to the rearing and fattening both of sheep and cattle. Every arrangement of the farmer has some reference to this paramount object; and the remark of the intelligent writers of the last Statistical Account is still applicable, “even a stranger might judge, at a first aspect, that the feeding and fattening of sheep and cattle are the primary objects of the industry of the farmers of this parish.” Not an acre, probably, of the large portion of land, 1830 acres, which has been stated to be occasionally under cultivation for the purpose of reclaiming the pasture, remunerates by its grain produce, at present prices, the outlay in labour and manure, and seeds. Of that portion, also, which is under regular cultivation, there is much which is considered to be scarcely profitable, and which would be kept, therefore, in permanent pasture, were straw and hay and turnips not needed for the winter sustenance and fattening of stock. A five years’ rotation of crop is observed on all the farms; and, as potatoes are not grown for the market, one-fifth of the cultivated land may be said to be annually in turnips, two-fifths in oats and barley, and two-fifths in grass, of which scarcely one-sixth is cut for hay.

*Husbandry.*—The system of husbandry thus arranged, is pursued with much zeal and enlightened generosity to the land, and appears to be most judicious, and, in the circumstances, highly successful. The tenants are all men of acknowledged skill and experience in the science of farming; they are not embarrassed by inadequacy of capital, and almost every year some melioration, chiefly in the way of draining, is effected. Unfortunately, however, the state in which they appear generally to have entered to the soil would impose upon them much more than it would be practicable for most, or prudent for any tenant, on a common lease, without the greatest encouragement, to undertake. A large portion of the land, it should be stated, is not enclosed, and much of the residue is enclosed but indifferently. The best soils are now, it is true, generally dry and kept in the highest condition: but draining is needed on almost every inferior field; while over nearly the whole of the land which is occasionally tilled, water that might be carried off injures the pasture. Embankment is in some places required. The rigour of the climate, too, which in winter is frequently unfavourable to the turnip feeding of stock, and in other respects hurtful, might be mitigated, were convenient stripes of land, not of much value for other purposes, occupied by plantations. These, however, are changes, that, from their character, or from the extent to which they would require to be carried, no farmer could, without great imprudence, on a lease of sixteen or nineteen years, the ordinary duration of leases, even purpose deliberately.

It is gratifying to state, that improvements, in some instances of great importance, emanating from, or aided by, the land-owners, and sometimes effected entirely by the tenant, have been made, with manifest advantage, or are now in progress, on a scale sufficiently large to encourage the hope that anything requisite to put the agriculturalist, so far as our high climate shall permit, on an equal footing with more favoured districts, will follow in due time. East Morriston, the estate of the late Thomas Scott, Esq. has been under his own superintendence, drained carefully, enclosed, and sheltered by plantations, which have become highly ornamental. Colonel Shillinglaw's property of Birkhillside, with similar advantages, is in the same excellent condition. The large farm of Corsbie, through Mr Murray's exertions, has been improved, and is in a great measure subdivided to the full extent of its arable land, and, although not sheltered by plantations, is known for the rearing of excellent stock. On the large and valuable farm of Legerwood,

though also in need of shelter, so successful has been Mr Murray's treatment of the cultivated land, that much of his crop is not surpassed in the county, while his stock likewise bears a high character. On the farm of West Morriston, a considerable part of the regularly cultivated land is well sheltered and enclosed, and has been drained gradually with care,—while, on the pasture land, a simple but efficacious surface draining has lately been executed by a plough of Mr Sumner's own invention. The farm of Whitslaid appears to be well fenced, and has thriving plantations; and on Birken-side, extensive improvements, conducted with great judgment, are in progress. Dodds, the property of John Spottiswoode, Esq. of Spottiswoode, is, as to the larger part, subdivided; and through the spirit of the tenant, and the landlord's liberal and prudent encouragement, 100 acres of land have lately been improved. And the farm of Boon, the most extensive in the parish, is about to be suitably enclosed and subdivided, immediately on the entrance of the tenant upon a new lease, at Whitsunday next. These changes must shortly be of great benefit, both to the appearance and the qualities of the land.

*Produce.*—The average gross amount of raw produce yearly raised in the parish may be as follows :

Produce of grain of all kinds, whether cultivated for food of man or the domestic animals,	L. 5889 0 0
Of turnips,	1735 0 0
Of hay, whether meadow or cultivated,	700 0 0
Of land in pasture, rating it at L. 3, 10s. per cow or full-grown ox, grazed or that may be grazed for the season, and at 15s. per ewe or full-grown sheep, pastured or that may be pastured for the year,	3450 0 0
There are no market gardens in the parish: The produce of the various kitchen gardens and of the fruit trees may be	18 0 9
Total yearly value of raw produce raised,	L. 11,792 0 0

#### V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

*Means of Communication.*—The means of communication are ample. The road from Kelso to Edinburgh passes along the east side of the parish, and that from Hawick, along the west; and there is a post-office both at Lauder and Earlston. There are about ten miles of parish road; upon which, and on turnpike roads within the parish, are nine bridges in tolerable repair.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The parish church is placed on the northern ascent of the valley, which has been mentioned as passing across the parish; and it is conveniently situated for the bulk of the population. Excepting on the extreme northern limit of the parish, which is inhabited, and is three miles and a-half distant, none

of the inhabitants are at a greater distance than two miles and a-half. It is not known at what time the church was built. It appears, however, from an inscription upon the edifice to have been extensively repaired in 1717. It was again repaired in 1804, and is in good condition. It contains 203 sittings; a greater number of persons might be accommodated, but not comfortably. There are no free sittings, nor are there any let for money. They belong to the different proprietors, according to their valued rents, and are by them apportioned to the tenants, who hold them for their own accommodation, and that of the people who live under them.

The manse was built in 1750, and enlarged and repaired in 1812. The glebe extends to ten acres, and may be worth about L. 15,\* and the stipend is 14 chalders, half meal and half barley, with L. 8, 6s. 8d. Sterling of money. There is no chapel of ease attached to the Established church, or Dissenting or Seceding chapel in the parish.

The number of families in the parish, as before stated, is 98; of which thirteen families belong to the Secession, and attend the chapels at Lauder or Earlston; the rest attend the parish church: and the number of communicants is from 190 to 200. There is a branch of the Berwickshire Bible Society in the parish, and an association for contributing to the Highland Schools and Indian Mission, under the management of the General Assembly's Committees. The church collections yearly for these purposes are expected to amount to L. 10 or L. 12.

*Education.*—There is only the parochial school in the parish. The branches of instruction generally taught in it are, English reading and grammar, writing, arithmetic, and occasionally book-keeping and practical mathematics. The salary is L. 28 per an-

\* I have been favoured by Mr Macdonald of the Register Office with an interesting notice respecting this matter. It is the answer of Mr George Byres to the inquiry instituted by Government in 1625 into the provision made for the support of the clergy, and is understood to have been furnished in 1627.

“The kirk of Legertwood is one of the kirkis of Paislay; the patronage thereof is now in the hands of Alexander Cranstoun of Rummiltounlaw: the present provisioun thereof is three chalders of aitt meal, and the vicarage, quhilk extendis to twa hundredth merkis; the teindis of the said parochie, as according to the stent of the Abbay of Paislay, fyfteen chalders of victuall, quhair of the minister has three chaldersis.

“There is husband land partaining to the parsonage fued to the guidman of Rummiltounlaw be the Abbot of Paislay, quhair of the minister hes four akersis.

(Signed) “Mr GEORGE BYRES, Minister of Legertwood.”

An augmentation was granted to this gentleman in 1635 by mutual agreement of the heritors; who were John Cranstoun, titular of the teinds; John Cranstoun of Corsbie; Andrew Ker of West Morriston; Francis and John Wilkison of East Morriston; Robert Hart of St John's Chapel, advocate, heritor of nine husbands land of Birkenside; Gilbert Lauder, heritable proprietor of Whitslaid and Bridgehaugh; John Brown of Kirkhill.

num, with the legal accommodation as to house and garden; and the school-fees amount to L. 20 per annum. The general expense of education per month is, for English, 10d.; for writing, 1s.; for arithmetic, 1s. 2d.; and for book-keeping, &c. 6s. per quarter.

The number of scholars last year at school was 71.

There are a number of children between six and fifteen years of age who cannot write,—for the population being scattered, five or six years, (according as it is winter or summer,) is the age at which children are first sent to school; and at eight or nine years they begin to write: but there are at present 63 between the ages of six and fifteen in the parish who have been taught to write, or are learning.

There are, perhaps, some females above fifteen who cannot write; but no individuals above that age are understood to be unable to read. The people seem in general to be alive to the important benefits of education, and it is an object which the kirk-session has for a considerable time anxiously watched over and promoted. There is a private school in the parish of Westruther; and another at Blainslie, in the parish of Melrose,—both of which some of the children attend, on account of their distance from the parish school. There is also a Sabbath school, which is well attended. No other schools are required.

*Literature.*—There is a library in the parish; but the number of books is still very limited. It was commenced some years ago as a library for the young who were attending the parochial Sabbath school. The plan was afterwards extended, and books suited to grown-up persons have since been added. It increases yearly, but at a slow rate.

*Poor and Parochial Funds.*—The number of persons at present regularly receiving parochial aid is 12; the average sum allotted to each per week is 2s.—children 1s. The amount of money for their relief assessed upon the land at last November was L. 25. A regular assessment for the poor appears to have obtained in this parish so early as 1755. The church collections for the relief of the poor may amount, together with the mortcloth money, to L. 10 or L. 11 annually. With this money, which is left entirely to the management of the Session, individuals who are in want, owing to ill health or large families, are occasionally aided: and endeavours have for some time been made to bear up, by seasonable relief and encouragement, persons who are in difficulties, so as to prevent them from sinking upon the poors' roll, and as much as possible to mi-

tigate the evils of compulsory provision. There are instances of backwardness on the part of individuals to apply for parochial relief; but they are rare.

*Fuel.*—The fuel used is coal, and a small quantity of peat. The coal is principally carried from the Lothians, and costs about L. 1, 1s. per ton. English coal can be purchased in Kelso at a cheaper rate, but it is considered to be of inferior quality, and is little used.

*February 1835.*