

PARISH OF WESTRUTHER.

PRESBYTERY OF LAUDER, SYNOD OF MERSE AND TIVIOTDALE.

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I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name, Boundaries, &c.—THE original name of this parish was Wolfstruther. In the old glossaries the word *Struther* is defined to be a naked and swampy place, so that from the etymology the parish appears to have anciently been an extensive marsh, occupied by wild animals, especially wolves.* As these animals disappeared, the first part of the original name fell gradually into disuse, and gave place to the prefix *West*, meant to distinguish this from another morass which lay to the eastward, and was called *Easter Anstruther*, now *Dogden Moss*.

It was only of a comparatively modern date that *Westruther* became a separate and independent parish. It belonged anciently to the widely extended parish of *Home*. On a new parochial division of this district at the Reformation it became a part of the parish of *Gordon*, and, down to the year 1647, the inhabitants of this place had no nearer place of worship than the church of *Gordon*. That church, however, being about eight miles distant from the most northerly part of *Westruther*, and there being no communication but through almost impassable moors, a disjunction was effected, and the people supplied with religious ordinances at *Bas-sendean*, which was selected from the double reason of there being an old Catholic chapel there, which, though it had been discontinued since the Reformation, was still in good condition,—and of its being the site of a populous and thriving village. This, however, was only a temporary arrangement. For in two years after, the inhabitants of *Wedderlie*, *Thornydyke*, and *Spottiswoode*, at each of which places there were hamlets of considerable extent,

* This description is confirmed by immemorial tradition, and was adopted by the author of an old manuscript account of *Berwickshire*, who, in his notice of *Westruther*, describes it "as a place which of old had great woods, with wild beasts, fra quhilk the dwellings and hills were designed, as *Wolfstruther*, *Roe-cleugh*, *Hindside*, *Hartlaw*, and *Hareclaw*."

being still dissatisfied with the distance, the heritors agreed to make choice of a more central situation for a church, and, accordingly, the minister was removed from Bassendean to Westruther in 1649.

The parish is of an irregular form, though it inclines to circular. It is about 7 miles in length from north to south, and 5 at its greatest breadth from west to east. It is bounded on the north by Cranshaws; on the south by Legerwood and Gordon; on the west by Lauder; and on the east by Longformacus and Greenlaw. The north is considerably elevated above the rest of the parish, the highest point being 1260 feet above the level of the sea.

Topographical Appearances.—The whole of the northern quarter presents the appearance of a continuous ridge of hills, whose bleak and barren summits are destitute of every attraction, save that of affording a wide prospect of the rich and beautiful scenery of Merse and Tiviotdale. Descending from this northern boundary, it appears an extended valley, unbroken by the smallest eminence, and intersected by varied spots of heath, pasture, and arable land; in the centre it rises throughout the whole extent from west to east to a considerable elevation, and again inclines to a gentle slope at the southern extremity of Bassendean. There is no point within the parish which commands an entire view of the whole, or from which any thing more than a small detached portion can be seen at once. But from the neighbouring heights of Lauder, or after passing the moor of Greenlaw on the east, it appears to great advantage, with its stripes of waving plantation stretching in every direction, and comes on the traveller with an agreeable surprise to find so rich and cultivated a spot, where he might little expect it, skirting the cold and heath-clad brow of the Lammermoors.

Meteorology.—The temperature of Westruther was considerably colder than that of the lower parts of the county. But this has been remedied in a great degree by the growth of wood, and especially by the extensive drains that have been cut in various parts of the parish. The rains which the powerful attraction of the Lammermoors brought down in the earlier part of the season, and the frosts which were so common and so severe in autumn, made the people in the low boggy parts of the parish, about thirty years ago, lay their account with having their crop damaged every four or five years. So much, however, has now been done by planting and draining to subdue the rigours of a capricious and ungenial climate, that

the farmers can calculate on the regular return of favourable weather with nearly as much certainty here as in any other part of Berwickshire. The boggy character of the soil makes dry weather the most favourable for the production of grain, which, indeed, was never known to fail from drought but in 1826. The crop is often excellent and luxuriant here, when a long tract of dry and scorching weather has been attended with injurious effects in more favoured regions. A wet season is what most of all awakens the fears of the farmers of Westruther; and where it does not prove ruinous to their hopes, leads invariably to a late harvest.

Of the winds to which the parish is exposed, the west wind is the most prevalent, and productive of greatest injury to trees and to grain, while the north-east is generally the coldest, and the never-failing harbinger of a storm. Formerly, in the most marshy places, rheumatism and a good deal of croup prevailed. But these have so entirely disappeared with the improving condition of the parish, that there cannot now be said to be any distempers indigenous to the district; and such is the known salubrity of the climate, that for a long time a boarding-school of considerable celebrity was kept in the parish, which was attended by young men belonging to families of the first respectability in the country.

Hydrography.—The springs are numerous, and, except during very violent heats, are perennial; so that a scarcity of good potable water is never known in the parish. All of these springs on the north side of the parish issue from greywacke, and all on the south from sandstone (freestone.) That from the former was lately analysed by an eminent chemist, who pronounced it to be almost pure, with the smallest portion of carbonate of lime. In Harelaw moor there is a spring of a chalybeate nature, which is perpetually boiling, and has never been known to freeze during the greatest intensity of winter. It is bottomed with flags, to which it has given a very yellow tinge, and is about nine feet long, and six broad, and from two to three feet in depth. It is reputed to be very efficacious for the removal of scurvy, and was much resorted to in former times, by patients who came from a distance to lodge on the spot for the benefit of drinking it. It is still as copious as formerly, but its virtues have fallen very much into oblivion, and it has been so long neglected, that it is nearly covered up by a crop of luxuriant rushes.

There are several rivulets, which roll a considerable volume of water, and all of which flow in a southerly direction; some westward, as tributaries to the Leader; others choosing an easterly course, con-

tribute to swell the Tweed. The only river is the Blackadder, one of the tributaries of the latter, which takes its rise at Wedderlie. Flowing in a south easterly direction, it separates Westruther from Greenlaw, and during its whole course through this parish, which including its windings, cannot exceed three miles, it is inconsiderable both in breadth and quantity of water. It increases in magnitude, however, as it descends along the skirt of Harelaw moor, where it meanders through a fine rich meadow, the sloping sides of which want only a little plantation to render it one of the most beautiful and romantic solitudes in the whole of Lammermoor.

Geology.—The parish abounds chiefly with greywacke, the beds of which are interspersed with perpendicular beds of imperfect slate. There is no covering over greywacke but the natural soil. A stone quarry occurs at Houndslow, from which excellent stones of a pink colour are procured for building, of which several houses in that village, and the external part of the new mansion at Spottiswoode, are composed. Over the whole of the stone in this southern district, which consists of sandstone (freestone,) there is a covering by a red dent. A red sandstone is found to the north-west of the village of Westruther, and a quarry at Flass, of a coarse grain. There is a little mica in this stone. About twenty-eight years ago, a slate quarry was wrought at Bruntiburn, in which, many roods of pavement for soles of drains were found, but this slate was found not to be of a durable quality. There is little or no marl, although shell marl was found in a pit at Whiteburn, to the depth of seven feet, and rock marl appears in a quarry which is now in the course of being wrought at Wedderlie, in a vein about two inches thick. Sand is found in great abundance in various parts of the parish.

Fossil organic remains have been discovered at different times, but neither in such number, nor such a state, as to enable us to give a satisfactory account of them. It may be mentioned, however, that the antlers of a deer were found near Whiteburn, and several horns have been dug out of the mosses, said to have been of much greater dimensions, than those of any living animal; some of them exceeding a foot in circumference. All these, however, soon crumbled into powder, after exposure to the action of the air. Eight or ten feet below the surface of the moss, in Jordanlaw, there is a bed of wood, consisting wholly of hard wood, out of which bed oaks have been dug of a very great size, measuring in one instance twelve feet in periphery.*

Soil.—The general quality of the soil is light, with a rocky and

* From the same moss was dug a small bronze urn, supposed to have been a Roman camp-kettle.

gravelly subsoil. Its general depth may average from six inches to a foot; but it varies greatly in character in different places; the highest farm in the parish, for instance, having a deep clayey soil, which at Redhall, especially, has borne good wheat,—the moorland being in general a black sandy soil,—the high parts about Spottiswoode dry and stony,—whereas a little farther to the west again it is wet. The land about Thornydyke and Bassendean is said to be the best and richest soil in the parish.

Zoology.—On this head it may be only noticed, that the Eden river, which rises a little to the south of Houndslow, is so celebrated both for the quality and size of its fish, as to attract amateurs in angling from a great distance. There is also, in deep stagnant pools near the source of this streamlet, a shell-fish called the diamond fish,—probably the horse-muscle.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

There is a short account of the ancient state of the parish drawn up by Mr Veitch, who was first minister of it, and who, says the editor, “wrote for me ane description of Berwickshire in the Merse,—twa sheet and a-halfe.” It is to be found in Sibbald’s *Repertory of Manuscripts in the Advocates’ Library*. This, with the exception of some casual notices taken of it in modern topographical works, and of the papers which each proprietor may have relative to his respective domains, comprises all the known sources of information on the civil history of the parish. The greater part of the parish, at least on the eastern side, belonged anciently to the family of Gordon, who gave the right of pasturage to the monks of Kelso and Melrose, with whom they were ecclesiastically connected. At the beginning of the seventeenth century it seems to have been divided among a great number of heritors,—no less than twenty-two having voted themselves, or sent proxies to support their interest, at the appointment of a minister.

Land-owners.—At present there are only six land-owners,—John Spottiswoode, Esq. of Spottiswoode; Lord Blantyre in Wedderlie; Earl of Lauderdale in Harelaw; Colonel Home, Bassendean; Christie of Baberton; and Somerville, Evelaw.

Family of Spottiswoode.—Of these families, the Laird of Spottiswoode is the only large proprietor, and the only one who resides, though he too has hitherto been an absentee during one-half of the year. The family of that ilk have had a local habitation and a name in this district long before the commencement of authentic history, and several of its members have attained the highest honours in various departments both in church and state. In the

early days of Presbytery in Scotland, John Spottiswoode was superintendent of the Merse and Lothian, "which office," says an old historian, "he discharged with advantage to the church, and with honour both to himself and to posterity." The name of his son, the Archbishop, is so identified with the public history of the period in which he lived, that it would be superfluous to detail it. It may be sufficient to mention, that after having studied with great eclat under the celebrated Andrew Melville, he was made an Extraordinary Lord of Session; and having joined the ranks of Episcopacy, was successively raised to the Archbishoprick of Glasgow and St Andrews,—had the high honour of crowning King Charles I. at Holyroodhouse,—and was afterwards appointed Lord High Chancellor of the kingdom. The reverse of fortune which befel him in common with his order, from the national resistance to the introduction of the liturgy into Scotland, overwhelmed him with grief, and at last brought him to the grave. His remains were interred in Westminster Abbey.

Sir Robert Spottiswoode, son of the archbishop, was born in 1622. He rose to the dignity of a Privy-Counsellor and Lord of Session, and afterwards to that of President of that court. The prominent part which he acted in the cause of royalty made him obnoxious to the Presbyterians, in consequence of which he was specially excluded from the act of oblivion proposed to be passed in 1641; but, after a short imprisonment, he was ordered to be set at liberty, on finding caution "to conduct himself in a way that would tend to the peace and quietness of the kingdom." In 1643, he was made Secretary of State; and while he was in Scotland executing some commissions which that office required him personally to attend to, he was taken prisoner at Philiphaugh,—tried by Parliament at St Andrews,—and sentenced to be beheaded at the market cross. His character has been variously drawn by historians, according to the principles of the party they have espoused; but all allow that he had a great influence in the national councils of that stormy period.

John Spottiswoode, advocate, stands in the records of the University of Edinburgh as first professor of law in the earlier part of the last century. He was the author of several excellent works on jurisprudence,—particularly the well-known work on *Stiles of Writ*, which has gone through many editions, and, as the preface intimates, was written for the use of the students in Spottiswoode's college of law.

There was another member of this family who attained the rank

of General during the reign of George II., and having made himself conspicuous also in the political world, he was appointed governor of Virginia, where he died.

Family of Home of Bassendean.—The family of the Homes of Bassendean have also for centuries been connected with this parish, and borne always a most respectable rank in the county. The only member of this family, however, known to have been eminent in public life was George Home, who lived in the troublous period of the seventeenth century. Being a zealous Presbyterian, and having, in conjunction with the lairds of Polwarth, Torwoodlee, and others, used all his influence to oppose the arbitrary measures of the court, and preserve the integrity of Presbyterian worship, he was proscribed, and an order issued for his apprehension. He had just time to escape, when the officers arrived,—the place of his concealment being a vault contiguous to his own mansion at Bassendean. In that retreat his necessities were supplied by the tender and assiduous care of his wife; and he would probably have entirely eluded the vigilance of the King's myrmidons, had not the advancing pregnancy of his wife, exciting their suspicions that he was not far distant, forced him to consult for his safety in a remoter place. He succeeded in effecting his escape to Holland, then the liberal asylum of the Scottish refugees, and joining his former associates, concerted in that foreign land measures for the restoration of freedom at home. Bassendean was one of that little band of Christian patriots, consisting only of eleven, who, with the Earl of Argyle at their head, met at Amsterdam on 17th April 1685, “and resolved to declare and undertake a war against the Duke of York and his assisters, for restoring and settling the true religion, and the native rights and liberties of the three kingdoms.” He shared in all the troubles of Argyle's expedition, and at length, after the Revolution, he was restored to Bassendean, where he lived to enjoy the fruits of that civil and religious liberty which he had done and suffered so much to establish. His remains are buried within the old chapel there.

James Bassantin, son of the Laird of Bassantin, flourished during the reign of James IV., and enjoyed a high reputation for his extensive acquirements in the physical sciences. To improve himself in his favourite pursuits he made the tour of Europe, to ascertain the state of science on the Continent. On a vacancy occurring in the mathematical chair of the university of Paris, he was elected professor; and his prelections, which were honoured with a numerous attendance of students from all parts of France

and the Continent, were continued till 1562, when he returned to Scotland, determined to spend the remainder of his life on his patrimonial estate at Bassendean. His works, written in Latin, contain a laborious collection of the theories and observations of preceding astronomers, and are monuments of his own extensive acquirements; and, though believing in the mysteries of judicial astrology, he certainly deserves to be ranked among the foremost of those eminent men who ushered in the dawn of science and literature in Europe.

John Veitch.—The name of Veitch, first Presbyterian minister and an heritor in Westruther, is intimately connected with the civil history of the parish. The fidelity of this excellent man,—his uncompromising principles,—his extensive influence and celebrity as a preacher, procured him the distinction of being included in the number of those Scottish ministers who were watched and marked for proscription by the advisers of Charles II. An order was in consequence issued for his removal from Westruther, and a curate appointed to fill his place. About a year after, however, he returned to this charge on the death of the curate, and upon a pressing invitation from the people. Though his name does not appear in the number of indulged ministers, and though he was menaced by judicial proceedings, he continued to preach and to enjoy his stipend, which was contrary to the law at that period, but was in some instances winked at. This eminent man, who was a great blessing not only to his parish, but to a widely extended district, and second to none in that age but his more celebrated brother, died on his return from the Commission of the Assembly at Dalkeith, in December 1703.*

* It is proper to notice here, *Mr Thomas Bell*, a man the very opposite in character to the preceding, and who deserves not to be dragged from the obscurity in which his name is buried, but for his connection with, and influence over, the fate of Veitch. This unworthy person was born at Spottiswoode, as the historian says, "of the meaner sort of gentry," and was in his earlier years patronized by the minister of the parish, who gave him his education, brought him up with a view to the ministry, and took such an interest in his behalf as to procure money from Torwoodlee and other Christian gentlemen, to carry on his preparatory course of studies. The countenance of these benefactors, however, was withdrawn on the recommendation of Mr Veitch, who got notice that their liberality had been misapplied; and Bell, seeing no means of regaining his respectability in Westruther, and reduced for a time to the greatest extremities, fled to England, where he succeeded in obtaining the curacy of Allenton in Northumberland. No sooner was he settled in that place, than, burning with revenge for the affront that Veitch had put upon him, he omitted no means of injuring the reputation, and ruining the comfort, of his former benefactor. It was through his instigation, and by his calumnious reports, that Veitch first fell under the suspicion of the court, and that the mind of Lauderdale, otherwise disposed to befriend him, was for a while poisoned against him. The life and wretched death of this Presbyterian renegade may be found detailed in Hutchison's Northumberland.

Besides these persons, who were either natives of Westruther, or were established residents in it, the following persons spent the earlier part of their life, and received their education there: John Home, author of the Tragedy of Douglas; Lord Kaimes, occasionally; the late James Ballantyne, Esq. printer, and the late George Bell, Esq. surgeon, both of Edinburgh; the present Dr Douglas of Kelso and others.

Parochial Registers.—The earliest entry in the parochial registers is dated November 27, 1655, just seven years after the erection of Westruther into a separate parish. This record commenced during the incumbency of Mr John Veitch. The registers are not voluminous, extending only to three small volumes; and they seem to have been as regularly kept as appears to have been thought necessary in former times. Their greatest defect is the want of designations. There are many chasms, perhaps during vacancies, or when there was no schoolmaster.

Antiquities.—There were anciently three religious houses in the parish,—one respectively at Wedderlie, Spottiswoode, and Bassendean. The chapel at Wedderlie is of great antiquity, as several charters relating to it still exist, which were framed in the thirteenth century. It has long been in ruins, and nothing remains to mark the place where it stood, except a vault belonging to it, into which, as tradition reports, the monks at the Reformation conveyed their most valuable effects, till a convenient opportunity occurred for their removal. That at Spottiswoode was built by the lord of the manor during the reign of David II., for the benefit of his family and hamlet. It received the name of Whitechapel, and long stood in ruins, till these were entirely swept away when the ground was cleared for building the present offices at Spottiswoode. The only relic of it that has been preserved is a baptismal font. The chapel at Bassendean, the ruins of which still exist to the height of ten or twelve feet from the ground, was employed for religious purposes, and served by a vicar, long before the Reformation. The church lands, and mansion belonging to the vicarage, were conveyed by the last incumbent to Sir James Home of Coldenknows, who obtained from James VI. a charter for the same in 1573. The person who thus built his house on church lands, and in the immediate neighbourhood of the chapel, was the ancestor of the Homes of Bassendean. The interior of the chapel is still used as a burying-place by that family.

There are said to be the remains of a Roman camp on the farm of Ræcleugh, a little above Bruntiburn, and another in Harelaw moor; but the mounds are now so indistinct, and have been so much injured by time and other causes, that it is impossible to judge with any accuracy, from their present appearance, whether or not they are to be considered as the vestiges of a Roman encampment.*

A place on the moors of the farm of Wedderlie has from time immemorial been called Gibb's cross, where tradition affirms that a person of that name suffered martyrdom for his attachment to the Protestant faith. But the writer of this, notwithstanding every inquiry, has not been able to ascertain the truth of the report. Among the relics of antiquity may be mentioned also a triangular stone that belonged to the house of Archbishop Spottiswoode at Glasgow. It was brought hither when that house passed into other hands, and is inscribed with the Latin words, "Mihi vivere Christus et mori lucrum." It now forms the pediment of a window in the lodge-house of Spottiswoode.—Harit's dike, which extended from Berwick westward along the whole country, passed through this parish to the north of the village of Westruther. The tract is still visible.—There are no ruins of old houses now except Evelaw, or, as it is popularly called, Ively tower, which is still pretty entire, and was one of those castellated houses that were common on the borders before the union of the two kingdoms, in the reign of James VI. There were several of these in this parish formerly, which have all fallen beneath the wasting hand of time, but the one now mentioned. There were also connected with these what are called *vaults*, which were not subterranean cellars, but buildings erected for the preservation of cattle, which were so closely and compactly built, that there was no crevice or opening in them, but small holes here and there interspersed along the wall, serving the double purpose of admitting air to the beasts within, and of allowing the owners to shoot at any who might threaten an attack on their property. Both these species of buildings were evidently suggested by the necessities of an unsettled period; when the border reivers, suddenly crossing the

* A few coins were found on the Flass farm, belonging to the age of David I., and a great quantity of coins was discovered in a cave at the ruins of the chapel in Wedderlie. It is to be regretted that these were distributed throughout the country, or sold to people who cannot now be traced. But it is said that none of them were of an ancient date; and it is generally supposed that they had been deposited there as a place of security by some of the inhabitants of Wedderlie during the religious wars of the seventeenth century.

march, carried off whole herds of the neighbouring cattle, and when "the good old rule sufficed them,

——— the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can."*

Within the last few years, several stone coffins have been discovered by the ploughmen in fields which had long lain in pasture. The skeletons were in a good state of preservation, and the coffins constructed of large and broad stones, which were arranged in the most regular order. The situation of these graves, coupled with the fact, that many similar relics have been found in the adjoining parish of Lauder, seems to strengthen the tradition, that at some remote period, the date of which cannot now be ascertained, the cause of Scottish independence was maintained on the northern heights of Westruther. The well-known Twinlaw-cairns, composed of two large piles of stones, and visible from a great distance, are the rude and uncemented memorials of the same contest, and are said to have been reared † with a special view to perpetuate the memory of two persons of the name of Edgar, twin-brothers, and leaders in the contending armies, who, ignorant of their mutual relationship, resolved to decide the matter by single combat. ‡

* In one of these raids, when, though the attack was chiefly made on the castle of Blythe, the baronial residence of Sir Richard Maitland of Ledington, the whole of this parish was scoured, it is recorded that 5000 sheep, 200 nolt, 30 horses and mares, were taken away by the marauders. It was on this occasion that the poetical knight wrote his ballad called the "Blind Baron's Comfort."

† The traditionary account of the mode of erecting these cairns is curious. The stones were procured from a brook at the northern base of the hill, and the soldiers on both sides, having suspended hostilities on the death of their leaders, ranged themselves in a line from the bottom to the top of the declivity, and handed the stones from one to another, till their simple monument was completed.

‡ This contest has been celebrated in a poem, which, as it seems to have escaped the diligence of the collectors of ancient ballads, it may be proper to insert. It does not bear the marks of a very high antiquity, but it has been known here for at least a century and a half. I give it as taken down from the recital of an old inhabitant.

The Battle of Twinlaw.

1

In days of yore, when deeds were rife,
And wars on banks and braes,
And nought but strife on every side,
Which brought on dule and waes.

2

The Anglo-Saxon's restless band
Had crossed the river Tweed,
Up for the hills of Lammermuir,
Their hosts march'd on with speed.

3

Our Scottish warriors on the heath
In close battalion stood,
Resolved to set their country free,
Or shed their dearest blood.

4

A chieftain from the Saxon band
Exulting in his might,
Defied the bravest of the Scots
To come to single fight.

5

Old Edgar had a youthful son,
Who led the Scottish band,
He with the Saxon did agree
To fight it hand to hand.

6

The armies stood in deep suspense
The combat for to view,
While aged Edgar stepped forth
To bid his son adieu.

Modern Buildings.—The only modern mansion is the new house now in the course of being built at Spottiswoode. It is in the old English style. The public rooms are of the most splendid description. It is surrounded by a very handsome terrace, 300 feet in length, ornamented by handsome balustrades, pedestals, and vases. The corridor is lighted by a well-proportioned tower in the centre of the building. The tower itself has a very striking effect when viewed from a distance overtopping the tall trees. The new house is connected with the old family mansion, which has undergone very important alterations, so that the whole will have a unique appearance. It is not yet completed, but was fitted up in a temporary, but very elegant style on a late auspicious occasion,—the marriage of Mr Spottiswoode's second daughter to Sir Hugh Campbell of Marchmont, M. P. for Berwickshire.

The mansion-house at Bassendean, an old and plain building, has been recently repaired and modernized in a handsome style, and the adjacent grounds very tastefully laid out.

The mansion-house at Wedderlie is an antique building, which

- 7
- " Adieu! Adieu! my darling son,
I fear that ye be lost,—
For yester night my troubled mind
With fearful dreams was tossed.
- 8
- " I dreamed your mother's parted shade
Between two armies stood;
A lonely youth on every hand
With bosoms streaming blood.
- 9
- " My heart will break if you should fall,
My only prop and stay,—
Your brother, when in infant years,
The Saxons bore away."
- 10
- " Delay it not," young Edgar said,
" But let the trumpets blow,
You soon shall see me prove your son,
And lay yon boaster low."
- 11
- The trumpets, raised with deafening clang,
The fearful onset blew,
And then the chieftains stepped forth,
Their shining swords they drew.
- 12
- Like lions in a furious fight,
Their steeled faulchions gleam,
Till from our Scottish warrior's side
Fast flowed a crimson stream.
- 13
- With deafening din on the coats of mail
The deadly blows resound,—
At last the Saxon warrior,
Did breathless press the ground.
- 14
- An aged Saxon came to view
The body of his chief,
His streaming eyes, and downcast looks,
Bespoke a heart of grief.
- 15
- " He's dead," he cried, " the bravest youth
Ere sprang from Edgar's line,
I bore him from the Scottish coasts
And made him pass for mine.
- 16
- " And in the days of youthful prime
He was my pride and boast,
For oft to bravery he has
Led on the Saxon host."
- 17
- Old Edgar heard the Saxon's moan,
His cheeks grew deadly pale;
A great convulsion shook his frame,
His nerves began to fail.
- 18
- Frantic, he tore his aged locks
With time and trouble gray;
And faintly crying, my son! my son!
His spirit fled away.
- 19
- The Scottish chief, as his father fell,
He raised his fading eye,
And tore the bandage of his wounds
To let life's streams run dry.
- 20
- He kissed his sire, and his brother's wounds,
That ghastly were and deep,
And closed him in his folding arms,
And fell on his long, long sleep.

has been allowed to fall entirely into disrepair, being never inhabited by the family except for a few weeks in the shooting season.

There are 12 thrashing-mills, 2 corn-mills, and a saw-mill. The corn and saw mills at Bruntiburn are driven by the same water.

III.—POPULATION.

The population of the parish seems to have been anciently much greater than it has ever been found to be since the census was taken under the directions of Parliament,—the decrease being the consequence, partly, of emigration, and partly of the junction of farms. Some of the older inhabitants can enumerate more than thirty onsteads, on each of which four or five families were grouped together, which are now entirely desolate, and have been converted into a ploughed field. Since the census began to be taken, no material alteration in the population has taken place.

Population of the village of Westruther in 1831,	-	167
Houndslow,	-	90
in the country,	-	613

870

1. Number of families in the parish,	-	-	165
of families chiefly employed in agriculture,	-	-	104
in trade, manufactures, and handicraft,	-	-	23
2. The number of persons in 1831 under 15 years of age was,	-	-	335
above 70,	-	-	30

There are 3 bachelors, and 4 fatuous persons.

Habits and Character of the People.—Formerly school-boys were accustomed to amuse themselves with cock-fighting on Fasten's eve, —each having a cock trained for the purpose, and the victor in the contest had, besides the honour of conquest, the burden imposed on him of paying for a foot-ball, which ended the sport of the day. This barbarous amusement, with which Fasten's eve was ushered in, was discontinued when the present schoolmaster came into office, who, greatly to his credit, used all his influence to abolish it; and the other more innocent game being so closely connected with it, was also gradually relinquished; the matches often consisted of more than 100 persons on each side. Sometimes the whole parish turned out, but generally the battle was pitched by the unmarried against the married men. There used to be much sport and merriment also at the celebration of penny-weddings, but these, on the interference of the church courts, were prohibited, and since that period there have been no stated amusements of a public kind among the people;—the fairs, which occur at various times in the course of the summer, affording sufficient opportunity for the relaxation and diversion

of the labouring-classes.—This, however, being a pastoral and hilly district, it must not be forgotten that there is plenty of amusement of a different description, and that the sports of the chace may be both enjoyed and witnessed here at almost all times during the season. Notwithstanding the temptations presented by the character of the country, it is believed that poaching in game does not prevail to any great extent.—In consequence of the parish being long in a sort of insulated state, and the condition of the people exposed to no such fluctuations as affect that of a commercial or manufacturing population, the character of the parishioners is distinguished by a primitive simplicity, which is not, however, the simplicity of ignorance, but which is more fitly expressed by open-heartedness, and by an absence of all chicanery and guile. In the earlier history of the parish, this simplicity was allied with much superstition; and as the character of the country gave most of the people an interest in the pursuits of pastoral life, there was no way in which superstition showed itself so much as in what related to the preservation of their cattle. In almost every stable, stones which had any natural hole in them were suspended as amulets; and it was not an uncommon thing to see a herd grazing in a field—with a piece of red tape and mountain-ash on the left horn of every beast to charm away disease. Sometimes this spirit of superstition manifested a darker character; and an instance is recorded of a horse having been burnt alive at Flass in 1726, during a great mortality that prevailed among the cattle. Such remedies have been long ago exploded: and the *mind* of the people is evidently advancing;—one proof of which is, that formerly there seem to have been one or two individuals whom every body regarded as oracles, whereas at present there is no such monopoly of wisdom. Religious knowledge, especially, is universally, diffused, and it is hoped that not a few apply it to its practical ends.—The houses of the hinds and labourers consist generally but of one apartment, which is kept in good order, and would be in most respects comfortable, were it not for the want of chimneys. The fire is lighted on the hearth, and there being no outlet for the smoke but a rude crevice made in the unceiled roof, the houses are almost constantly filled with a dense cloud, which hovers at the height of 5 or 6 feet above the floor. This smoke, proceeding from peat, communicates a smell to the clothes which is strong and offensive to such as are not accustomed to it.

It may be said, however, with propriety and truth, that the people in general are cleanly in their habits, and show a becoming neatness in their dress. About fifty years ago, no man or woman wore any clothes but what were made in their own family. Women's gowns and petticoats were woollen stuffs of various colours, and men's clothes were spun by the women, and sent to the weaver and dyer. But now there is scarcely any home manufacture,—even blankets, which, till very lately, were made in each family, being purchased, and that, too, at a cheaper rate than they could be wrought at home. The weavers, who were once numerous in the parish, are reduced to a single individual; and he, an old man, who can now, since the introduction of machinery, and the change in the market, find no other occupation in his way than the manufacture of coarse sheeting for sacks or other agricultural purposes.

The food of the peasantry consists chiefly of the different preparations of oat-meal; cakes are also very generally used of barley meal, baked to a great thickness, and called *fadges*. Pork also makes a constant item in their bill of fare.* Tea, now very generally used, at least by women, was not introduced here till the year 1800, oat-meal being then very high in price. In that year the harvest was late throughout the whole of Scotland, and the crop in Westruther never thoroughly ripened, in consequence of which there was a great dearth; meal sold at 8s. a stone; rice and foreign corn were bought by the session at Berwick, and sold out at a reduced price to those who were able to purchase it, and the rest, who were on the poors' roll, were supplied with it out of a fund belonging to the session, to be afterwards mentioned. Previously to the introduction of potatoes, the people used to provide a sort of seasoning to their bread by laying up a stock of herrings. The time for doing this was Lammas, at which season they were in the habit of going in bands to Dunbar, and making the purchase of as many of these fish as would serve their family during winter. The introduction of potatoes made an important addition to the livelihood of the peasantry. These were a considerable time in the parish, however, before they were generally used.

* Persons still living remember the time when in the farmers' houses there were only one knife and fork, and the practice was, for the master of the house to apportion the share of butcher meat which each member of the family should receive, and retaining the knife and fork for his own use, to leave the rest to eat their meat in the primitive oriental manner. Several individuals also remember the time when there were only three tea-kettles in the parish,—in Spottiswoode, Wedderlie, and the manse. It is scarcely necessary to say, that the farmers of the present day enjoy, in a liberal measure, the ordinary comforts and luxuries of life.

They were at first confined to a small part of a field, which was dug with the spade for the purpose. But after their utility became known, every person in the parish who had a house was furnished with a piece of land as large as their manure would cover, on which to grow potatoes.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture and Rural Economy.—It appears that a much greater part of the parish was in tillage in ancient times than now, as is evident from various fields, which, though they have long lain in a state of pasture, bear the marks of the plough; and even as far up as the Twinlaw vaults, the high ridges and low furrows of the ancient system of ploughing are still visible; heather is fast covering several places where good grain was wont to be reared. Notwithstanding this, however, the agriculture of the parish has been advancing at a rapid rate of improvement for the last twenty-five years.

The number of acres which are either cultivated or occasionally in tillage is 11,000. The land which is under wood may amount to about 850 acres, including both natural and planted wood, besides which, there are about 150 acres lying in a state of moss. The total number of acres in the parish will thus be 12,000.

Rent of Land.—The average rent of arable land is 12s. per acre. The average rent of grazing for an ox is L. 3; for a full-grown sheep in the low lands 10s.; in the high lands of the parish, 5s. The total rental of the parish is upwards of L. 5000.

Rate of Wages.—The yearly wages of a man-servant is L. 9, with his victuals; of a female who lives in the house, L. 7, with her victuals; of a hind, L. 25; of a herd, L. 28. Women, in summer, who are *bondagers*,* receive 10d. a-day; those who are not *bondagers*, 1s., both without victuals; in winter they receive at the rate of 1d. an hour. Tailors receive from 1s. 4d. to 1s. 6d., and their victuals; wrights, 2s. 6d.; smiths are paid L. 3 per yoke of horse; dikers are paid 2s. per rood, 5½ feet high; labourers from 1s. 6d. to 2s.

Live-Stock.—The breed of cattle and sheep has been greatly im-

* The class of servants here called *bondagers* are not less free and independent than other labourers, but they are distinguished from others by being engaged by the hinds or ploughmen to perform upon their master's farm the ordinary work of weeding, hoeing, barn-work, &c. They receive a rate of wages for the half year similar to that of house-servants. The hind pays these half years' wages, with board to the *bondager*; but receives the day-wages earned by the latter, which are generally equivalent to the wages and board. This arrangement is found convenient, and even necessary, to the various operations of a farm in thinly peopled districts.

proved. Those which pasture on the soil which rests on a freestone bottom are generally better and fatter than those which pasture on a whinstone soil. The cattle are improved by the Teeswater bulls. The sheep are of three kinds, Cheviot and Leicester, and black-faced. The hogs here are rather of a coarse description, and those which have been brought from England, such as the Cleveland breed, have been found to degenerate. About seventy years ago, there were few or no pigs in the parish, as there were then no turnips nor potatoes for them to feed upon. The first pigs reared in the parish were at Bruntiburn, as kain to the Laird of Spottiswoode.

The number of live-stock in the parish may be estimated as follows :—220 horses; 816 black cattle; 6220 sheep. The number of cattle of all kinds is greatly increased since the last Account was published. The increase arises from various causes. In respect of horses, it proceeds chiefly from there being a large coach-proprietor in the parish, whose stud is seldom less than 40. In respect of other kinds of stock, it proceeds from the present high state of cultivation of the arable and pasture lands, and from the care taken from time to time to change and improve the breed. It may be mentioned as one instance of the rich pastures about Spottiswoode, that there was an ox reared there in 1802, which was publicly exhibited in all parts of the kingdom, weighing 320 stones 14 lb. to the stone, and sold for 200 guineas.

Husbandry.—The general character of the husbandry pursued is the four years' rotation. This has been considered fatiguing to a light soil, particularly injurious to oats, by bringing on grub, and to turnips, by producing *fingers-and-toes*. In some farms, accordingly, the tenant is bound to the five years' rotation, that is, to keep the field in pasture every fifth year. *

With regard to the implements of husbandry, there are no peculiarities to be mentioned, save that the old Scotch plough continued to be used here till a comparatively recent period. It was drawn by two horses in front, and two oxen behind; sometimes

* Turnips were first introduced here in 1765; clover a little before that. The field in Wedderlie, where it was first sown, still goes by the name of the Clover park. Before the introduction of turnips, the farmers had little occupation for their horses during summer; so that after the barley seed was over, they took off the shoes of their horses, and set them out to graze till hay-time. But few carts were used formerly here; corn and every thing being carried on horses' backs. In this way the farmers drove their grain to Dalkeith market, and when there were several horses, the leading one had a bell attached to his neck, to warn the rest of the track through the moor.

without horses, and with as many as six or even eight oxen. This is now entirely superseded by the improved form of Small's plough, and two horses is the common strength applied to it in all parts of the parish. Deep-trenching has been tried with success on land just reclaimed from a state of waste. Of the manures, besides the common farm-yard dung, lime is in the greatest use, and, notwithstanding the distance from which it must be brought, which is twenty miles, the farmers find their advantage in the abundant application of this excellent and powerful manure. It is laid down on the field in dry heaps, and afterwards spread. This has been most successfully used on parts of the parish, where formerly the only attempt at improvement consisted in burning the heather. The fields where this manure is laid for the first time bear two successive crops of grain. Bone-dust has also been used.

The pasture lands about Westruther, as in most other places of Berwickshire, anciently lay in a state of undivided common. But more than seventy years ago this promiscuous pasturage ceased, and the lands were appropriated and fences raised. Although in those times, when the pasture was enjoyed in common, there were certain regulations in force by which the tenants fed their flocks in various proportions, yet it cannot be doubted that the division of the pasture lands has conduced as well to order, and to the comfort of the occupiers, as it has done to the improvement of the pasture itself, and the consequent better breeding of the cattle. Such an appropriation, however, of what had for time immemorial been regarded as common, was a work of no small difficulty; and when at last it was, after much and lengthened agitation, brought to a termination, the scholars attending the school were brought out to be witnesses of the several boundaries agreed on, as those who in the course of nature would live to attest the distribution of the land long after the original promoters of the scheme were removed. It was at this time, and from this circumstance, that the feuars of Westruther arose; the small pieces of land which they occupy, and which till very lately were very numerous, being held of one or other of the large proprietors of the parish.

Plantations.—Westruther was formerly overrun with forests of natural wood, which have been greatly diminished within the memory of many persons who are still alive, and the only remnant that is now to be found of them is the diminutive and straggling wood at Flass. In the boggy parts of the valley, on the north side of the parish,

the stumps of these old trees are visible in dry weather, and not unfrequently interpose unexpected obstacles to the work of the mower. This close and stunted wood, surrounded as it was with heather and bogs, gave the whole country an aspect of dreariness and gloom.* If, however, the old natural wood has almost entirely disappeared, its place has been more than occupied by more thriving and beautiful trees, planted by the hand of man. The system of planting began during the time of the grandfather of the present laird of Spottiswoode. It has been regularly carried on ever since; and in consequence of the very spirited improvements which the last twenty-five years have witnessed, a very large proportion of the parish has been beautified and sheltered with wood. Formerly it was thought the coldness of the climate was prejudicial to the growth of plantation; and it was even said, in the Reports of the Agriculturists, that no trees would thrive on the brow of the Lammermoor. Experience has shown that this opinion was wrong, since one of the most thriving plantations on the whole of Spottiswoode estate is at Bruntiburn, one of the highest points in the parish. The failure and the stunted growth of trees formerly arose not from the climate so much as from the mode of planting on a wet soil, and in small belts, in which no shelter was afforded. A more judicious system is now adopted, by first drying the ground through drains, and by surrounding the more valuable with meaner wood, whose quicker and luxuriant growth may defend the infant sapling, till it in turn rises to maturity, when it can bid defiance to the blast. It must not be supposed, from what has been said of a regular and extensive system of planting being comparatively recent, that there are no old trees in the parish. There are some of a great age, some planes, in particular, which are computed to be about 500 years old. Larch may be said to be most adapted to the climate; but trees of every kind, and of every name, have been planted, and are flourishing.

Improvements.—It may be mentioned, that a great deal has been done here in the way of reclaiming waste lands, and of improving by drains in various parts of Westruther. On the Spottiswoode estate alone there is the astonishing number of thirty miles of drains interspersed, from 5, 7, to 13 feet in depth. Besides, there are some thousand roods of open cuts, averaging from 10 to 20 feet wide, and from 5 to 7 feet deep, which discharge a large body of water on the eastern side into the Blackadder, and on the western side into one of

* It was while wandering here, in solitary musing, that Home composed the greater part of his Tragedy of Douglas.

the tributaries of the Leader. The advantages of this extensive system of draining are incalculable; it has brought into a state of tillage, pasture, and thriving plantation many hundred acres which were formerly overflowing with water, added much beauty to the place, and improved the salubrity of the climate, besides affording shelter to the cattle. It may be added, that the agreement between landlord and tenant in such matters is, that the landlord cuts the drains, while the tenant drives the stones, and fills the trenches.*

The general duration of leases is nineteen years; and perhaps in a country where so much requires to be done, it would be still more favourable for the tenant to have the lease extended to 21 years, as has sometimes been done. Subtenants are generally excluded. The entry to the possession of the houses and to the grass is at Whitsunday, and to the arable lands at the gathering in of the crop of that year. The first half-year's rent is payable a twelvemonth after entry. The farms which were about fifty years ago generally very small, have been thrown together, and converted into large farms, which was certainly a good arrangement for the farmer, and indeed absolutely necessary in a country where the chief dependence must always be on the stock. The rent of the largest farm at present is L. 465. Of course the difference cannot be ascertained from this circumstance between the rent of the present day, and the rate of land per acre at the period when the farms were of much smaller extent. But, in general, it may be stated, as a proof of the great improvement which enlarging the farms has been the means of introducing, that a farm which thirty years ago was let at L. 30, is now rated at L. 105. The greater part of the parish is already enclosed with hedges and dikes, and progress is daily making in that department. The accommodation afforded to the farmer may be described as in every way excellent. The houses are of a superior description, there being few places where any farmers can boast of a better or more elegant and commodious style of building. The houses are generally two stories high, wide in proportion, and covered with slate. The offices bear generally a proportion in size and neatness to the house of the farmer. They are well apportioned, consisting of a stable, cow-house, shade for the cattle, a dairy, a piggery, a poultry-house, all the appurtenances, in short, necessary for a farm establishment, and formed into a rectangle, the size of which varies according to

* These spirited improvements have been carried on under the skilful superintendance of Mr Black at Spottiswoode, who obtained for an essay on draining a silver cup from the Highland Society.

the character, extent, and other circumstances of the farm. In agreements as to buildings or repairs, the tenant engages to drive the materials, such as lime, sand, stone, slate, wood, &c.; and the landlord pays the building. The same happens in the building or repairing of dikes. On the whole, the greatest encouragement is held out by every proprietor in the parish to the tenant to make improvements, and he who does so on the most liberal scale, not only finds his reward in the return made to him from the improved state of his farm, but also in the greater readiness of the landlord to accommodate him, and to satisfy his reasonable demands.

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

Oats, 1117 acres at L. 3,	-	-	L. 3351	0	0
Barley, 183 acres at L. 4,	-	-	732	0	0
Turnips, 526 at L. 3,	-	-	1578	0	0
Potatoes, 62 acres at L. 10,	-	-	620	0	0
Clover-hay, 328 acres at L. 3,	-	-	984	0	0
In pasture, 8784 acres at 2s. 6d.	-	-	1945	10	0
Gardens,	-	-	160	0	0
Thinning and felling of wood,	-	-	200	0	0
			<hr/>		
			L. 9270	10	0

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Market-Towns, &c.—The nearest market-town is Lauder; and another market has been recently opened at Greenlaw,—neither of which are above seven miles from the farthest part of Westruther.

The only villages now in the parish are those of Westruther and Hounslow. The former is of great antiquity; the latter was erected within these fifty years.

Means of Communication.—There is no post-office in the parish, but while the family of Spottiswoode reside in the country, a courier is despatched daily to the post-office in Lauder, of which arrangement, the parish, as well as the family, receives the benefit. The mail-curricule runs every day, and the Edinburgh and Dunse coach six days a-week, along the great road from Edinburgh to Newcastle, which passes through Hounslow. This line of road extends about five miles through the parish. The parish, indeed, is very well supplied with good roads. There were no roads, except such as were made by the track, in the year 1745; for a person recently dead remembers well to have seen Sir John Cope's troops in their flight from Prestonpans, scouring the Harelaw-moor, and inquiring in what direction Coldstream lay. The road from Whiteburn to Kelso was made in 1800; that from Whiteburn to Dunse, during the subsequent year, by subscription. It may be estimated

that there are upwards of fifteen miles of turnpike roads,—on which there are three bridges, and all in excellent condition.

Ecclesiastical State.—The church is nearly in the centre of the parish, about three miles distant from the extremities; and although it is three quarters of a mile from the manse, yet perhaps there is not another place in all respects so eligible for the site of the church, as where it now stands. It was built, as already noticed, in the year 1649,—a very plain building, covered with heather without, and unceiled within, but much larger and more commodious than it now is. In the year 1752, it underwent important alterations, as, besides the necessary repairs it received, it was reduced to its present small dimensions. The reason of this reduction in its size was, that the bodily infirmities of the minister, together with the breaking out of the Secession, and the appointment of one of that body to a place in Stichel, who, to his other popular attractions, added the charm of preaching in the open air, had so greatly reduced the congregation, that it was agreed upon, for the comfort of the small remnant that frequented it, to reduce the church to one-third of its size; and, accordingly, the Wedderlie aisle, which fronted the pulpit, and which is said to have been ornamented with the family arms, and other carved work, and to have been altogether the best part of the church, was taken away. The roof also was lowered, while the steeple, uncurtailed of its length, remained the sole memorial of the ancient dignity of the building.

Since that period, the church of Westruther has received no intermediate repairs of consequence, and was so rapidly falling into decay, that the heritors in 1807, met, from time to time, to concert measures for a new building. But their consultations at that time ended in some repairs, which, though designed to be only temporary, have been considered sufficient to the present day. It is believed that the heritors, than whom none can be more attentive to the wants of a parish, have it in contemplation to improve the present condition of the church. The edifice, as it now stands, may accommodate from 350 to 400 people. There are free sittings in the centre, which will accommodate about thirty people.

It may be mentioned among the many good effects produced by the ministry of Mr Veitch in Westruther, that, in consequence of the vast multitudes who repaired to him, especially on sacramental occasions, when persons of the first respectability came from all parts of the surrounding country, and some from as far as Edinburgh, and even Fife, the collections for the poor were most liberal, and far exceeded the demand made by the greatest number

ever found at one time in the parish. They were allowed, therefore, to accumulate, and were never encroached upon till the scarcity in 1800, already alluded to, together with other unfortunate circumstances, greatly reduced them. They still, however, amount to a considerable sum.

There have been three manses since Westruther became a parish. Of the first, the only relic that remains is the foundation-stone, a large shapeless block of whinstone, inscribed with the initials of John Veitch, 1649. These three manses have stood all nearly on the same site, although they have been successively withdrawn a few yards farther south from the road,—which is now felt to be an advantage, from its admitting a small plantation, that adds to the beauty and comfort of the place. The present one was built in 1819. The expense of the building, L. 584, 18s. It is a commodious and comfortable house, and is furnished with excellent offices.

The glebe consists of rather more than twenty acres, of which there may be four that lie constantly in pasture; the rest is good arable land, particularly the east part of it, on which excellent wheat is often raised. It varies much in the quality of the soil; but its general value, in the eyes of practical farmers, is estimated from about L. 25 to L. 30 a-year. Its extent, which is larger than the legal allotment, was probably occasioned by the state of the western part of it, which formed originally a branch of Westruther common: on that common the minister had, with others, the right of pasturage at his pleasure, and a large portion of it was assigned to him in lieu of the extensive privilege he resigned. The stipend of Westruther was fixed at 1000 merks by decret of locality dated 8th March 1693. In 1755 it was L. 63, 12s. 10d. In 1798 it amounted to L. 105, 16s. 8d. Sterling. It was raised to L. 150 when the Government bounty was extended to Scotland, which, together with L. 8, 6s. 8d. for communion elements, and L. 2, 10s. for giving up the right of casting turf on Bassendean estate, makes the total amount of the minister's stipend L. 160, 16s. 8d.

The number of dissenters is computed at 34, all of whom belong to what was originally called the Secession. The parish church itself is very well attended. The average number of communicants is 420. The collection at the sacrament in 1833 was L. 2, 14s. 3½d., and the total amount of contributions during that year was L. 17, 18s. 3¾d.

Education.—There seems to have been a parish school here ever since there was a church. The school, however, was kept in the western gallery of the church till about the first quarter of

the last century, when, by accident, the gallery took fire and was destroyed. This was the first occasion of the erection of a school-house in Westruther. The present school-house is a spacious apartment, well-ventilated, and heated by a stove recently erected at the expense of the heritors. The teacher, who has been qualified by the most liberal education, has the legal accommodations, but the minimum salary. The amount of school-fees he receives may be about L.10 a-year; he has also L. 5 a-year for collecting poors' rate. Besides the parish school there are three private schools, which are supported by individual subscription. The branches taught at all of these are the same; and the rate of school-fees is per quarter, 2s. 6d. for English reading; 3s. 6d. for reading and writing; 4s. 6d. for arithmetic; 7s. 6d. for Latin. There are no persons in the parish between six and fifteen years of age who cannot read or write. It may be added, that a Sabbath-school, which the writer instituted a few years ago, is well attended.

Library.—The people are fond of reading, the means of indulging in which are liberally afforded to the inhabitants of the west end of the parish, from a stock of small and popular works purchased, and furnished to them gratuitously, by the family of Spottiswoode. A library is on the eve of being established for the benefit of the parish at large. The family library at Spottiswoode is a valuable and extensive collection, containing a variety of works on law, history, and general literature,—many of them such as are not commonly to be met with. There are also some rare editions of well-known books.

Savings Bank.—A savings bank was established in 1815. From its commencement to November last, there was deposited the sum of L. 1286, and withdrawn L. 1077. The investments are chiefly made by servants and labourers. The average amount of deposits yearly for the last eighteen years, is L. 72; of withdrawals, L.60.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of persons on the poors' roll is 24, and the average expense L. 4, 13s. 4d. per annum. The assessment was L. 91, 16s. 1d. The collections, L. 20, 5s. 4d. The total amount, L. 112, 1s. 5d. in the year 1832. The assessment fluctuates between L. 70 and L. 90 per annum. This legal provision, though it is not without its attendant evils, has not produced such injurious effects here as in some other places,—the poor being in general satisfied with the allowance made to them, as well as reluctant to come upon the roll. There are no benevolent societies for supplying the wants of the poor. Fortunately there is no occasion for these, since, in addition to the as-

assessment, the family of the principal resident proprietor are indefatigable and exemplary in attending to the wants of the poor; and even during their periodical absence, they furnish the minister and others with the means of relieving the indigent and the distressed. We may say, indeed, that there are few parishes where the condition of the poorer classes is better than in Westruther.

This parish has long been peculiarly infested by sturdy beggars and vagrants. But by a regulation lately made on the threatened appearance of cholera, they were prohibited from being entertained in the parish; in consequence of which, few or none are now to be seen. The same regulation adopted in other parishes, could not fail to be equally beneficial. The minds of the benevolent in this parish were reconciled to the measure by a subscription raised to provide lodging and necessaries for those houseless wanderers who might be overtaken here by night.

Inns.—There are five alehouses in the parish,—more than are required for the convenience of the inhabitants. It is proper, however, to add, that the working-classes of Westruther are generally a sober race.

Fuel.—The nearest place whence coals can be procured is about twenty miles distant from this parish, in consequence of which numbers are precluded from the use of them. The fuel in general use is peat. The wages of a labourer employed in digging this fuel are 2s. 2d. per day; and two days' work of a caster, with two assistants to hurl and spread out the peats as they are cast, are reckoned sufficient to meet the demand of a hind's or labourer's family. The farmers, and others in better circumstances, take sometimes a much longer time. Coal is from 11d. to 1s. per cwt. Turf is now prohibited to be taken for fuel.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

This parish has been advancing for a long time in an almost geometrical progression, in everything that constitutes a "right moral, and a right economical," state of a parish,—in its general appearance,—in the rank it holds among the agricultural parishes of the county,—in its means of communication with other parts of the country,—and in the intelligence of its inhabitants. Forty years ago more than a third of the land was waste and incapable of improvement, on a great proportion of which the yellow corn is now seen to wave; and if a similar interval pass before a third Statistical Account be demanded, such an inroad shall have been made on the few bogs and mosses that are still unimproved, as will leave little to tell of the ancient condition of Westruther beyond the name.

June 1834.