

arts are favourable alike to the physical and moral health, there is obviously something in such employments destructive of both. And if experience has proved them to be injurious to men, they are a cruel bondage and degradation to the feebler sex. It is enough to make one's heart sick to look upon their wasted figures and colourless countenances, when compared with those who labour for their immediate bread in the pure light of day. But this evil, we fear, is, from the nature of things, without hope of remedy. The moral one, however, may be prevented; and should the root of it at any time be transplanted into this district, we trust that a moral and spiritual education will also keep pace with it, that the people may at least sink no lower, or become worse than they are.

December 1841.

PARISH OF KILBIRNIE.*

PRESBYTERY OF IRVINE, SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR.

THE REV. ROBERT URQUHART, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—KILBIRNIE, the ancient as well as the modern name of this parish, is obviously compounded of the common Celtic prefix *Kil*, signifying a church, cell, or hermitage, and *Birnie* or *Birinus*, the name of the saint to whom the church was dedicated. Though this saint conferred his name on the parish, his festival or anniversary, which fell on the 3d of December, has long since been forgotten, whilst that of St Brandane, the apostle of the Orkneys, is still commemorated on the 28th of May, under the modernized appellation of Brinnan's-day, the great annual fair of Kilbirnie.

Boundaries and Extent.—The parish is bounded on the north and east by Lochwinnoch and Beith; on the north-west by Largs; and on the south and west by Dalry. It is of an irregular oblong figure, in length from south-east to north-west between seven and eight miles, and of the medium breadth of about two miles and a-

* Drawn up by Mr William Dobie, Grangevale, Beith.

half. The area is computed to be equal to seventeen square miles, or 8,576 Scotch acres.*

Topographical Appearance.—The surface of the parish presents in general a pleasingly varied, if not a strikingly diversified, appearance. It may be described as consisting of two naturally well-defined sections, viz. a lower and altogether an arable division, and a more elevated and extensive one, combining with a considerable portion of arable land a great extent of green hill-pasture, bog, and moorland. The lower section, lying in the position of north-east and south-west, along the boundaries of the parishes of Beith and Dalry, is partly flat, especially towards the south-west, but more generally its surface is varied with gently-marked swells and depressions. This division, which is nearly four miles in length, and about the medium breadth of a mile and a-half, does not, therefore, possess any striking features, unless it be the bright expanse of Kilbirnie Loch, extending along two miles of its eastern confines, and the winding course of the water of Garnock, which flows through its upper part from north to south, but which, after passing within a quarter of a mile of the south-west extremity of the loch, forms the eastern boundary of the lower part. West and north-west of this fertile and highly-cultivated division, the ground assumes a much greater variety of position and form; in addition to which, it rises somewhat rapidly, until it swells into airy upland pastures considerably beyond the reach of cultivation. These verdant uplands are succeeded by dreary tracts of moss and heath, and irregular ranges of dusky hills, of an extent equal to fully one-third of the superficies of the parish, and taken altogether, compose a region, doomed alike by climate, inaccessibility, and soil, to hopeless sterility. The lowest land in the parish is about ninety-three feet above the level of the sea, and the highest, which is the Hill of Staik, situated on its north-west boundary, has an altitude above the same level of 1691 feet. From the summit of this hill, the most elevated in the district of Cunninghame, as well as from several of the adjacent heights, panoramic prospects of an extent, variety, and magnificence, may be enjoyed, unsurpassed by any thing in the west of Scotland.

Climate and Diseases.—That the climate of this district is not insalubrious is sufficiently evidenced by the generally healthy condition of the natives, and the advanced age which many of them attain. The prevailing winds being from the west and south-west,

* Scotch measure is invariably alluded to in this Account.

are frequently surcharged with vapour; and as the high lands of this parish are among the first to arrest a portion of their moisture, the consequent rains are frequent, and often heavy and continuous. There are no peculiar diseases incident to the locality; the most prevalent are fevers, rheumatisms, and occasionally consumptions, which can scarcely be attributed to the climate, inasmuch as the same diseases are to be met with all over Scotland. This healthy character will not, however, we are assured, apply to the population lately superinduced on that of the village, by the establishment of two extensive manufactories. Among this portion of the inhabitants, what with the high temperature of the factory, enfeebled constitutions, and inattention to cleanliness, there is almost ever less or more of typhus fever—an epidemic that will never fail to scourge the lower classes of society, until they acquire the good sense of preferring nutritious food to whisky, and the comforts of cleanliness to dirty and improvident habits.

Hydrography.—There are numerous perennial springs of excellent water in this parish, but none have yet been discovered possessing medicinal virtues; that, especially, of Birnie's well, situated about a quarter of a mile north of the ruins of Kilbirnie Place, to which it had been conducted by pipes, is alike remarkable for its strength, and the superior quality of the water.

Rivers.—The Garnock and the Maich, the latter forming the northern boundary of the parish, are the only streams of any note. The Garnock rises at the base of the hill of Staik, and traverses the district in the direction of south-east. About a mile and a-half from its source, it forms a wild and romantic waterfall, called the Spout of Garnock, which, after heavy rains, presents an animated spectacle, strongly in contrast with the immobility and stillness of the surrounding scenery. Nearly three miles farther down, it winds in melancholy murmurings round two sides of the precipitous knoll, on which are perched the tottering ruins of Glengarnock Castle. Descending thence for a short distance through a wooded ravine, it hastens over a rocky channel, and after skirting the village of Kilbirnie, quietly pours its accumulated waters through a strath of much beauty, in the lower part of the parish. It then pursues its devious course through the parishes of Dalry and Kilwinning, and, after being considerably augmented by many tributary streams, falls into the sea at Irvine. Like other mountain rivers, a heavy fall of rain renders, in a short time, the Garnock an impassable torrent, a little way from its source; while dur-

ing the summer months, it is frequently fordable at nearly all points within the parish. Its banks are tame, presenting, in their whole extent, no charms to the admirer of picturesque scenery; the immediate environs of Glengarnock Castle, and of the waterfall, alone excepted. The right to the salmon-fishing of this river from the Rough burn, a mile north of the town of Kilwinning, to the Polgree water, about half a mile below Kilbirnie Kirk, belongs to Blair of Blair, having been granted to that family by the monastery of Kilwinning, to which it anciently belonged. Above the latter rivulet, the fishing of the Garnock is considered free.

The source of the Maich is close by the south side of the Misty-Law in Renfrewshire. It runs in a direction nearly parallel to the Garnock, from which it is nowhere more than a mile and a half distant. After a sinuous course of about five miles in a deep channel, occasionally fringed with natural wood, this "lonely moorland river," enters Kilbirnie Loch from the north, to which it is by much the most steady and abundant contributor.

Kilbirnie Loch lies in the south-east quarter of the parish, and constitutes part of its boundaries in that direction. It is a beautiful sheet of pellucid water, and forms a noble feature in the wide-spread landscape. Its banks, though tame, are remarkably clean, and, where not adorned with trees, arable fields slope gently to its margin. It extends a mile and a half in length, is scarcely half a mile in breadth, and its greatest depth is about five fathoms and a half. Besides the Maich, the loch receives supplies from the Mains and the Bath burns, streamlets which have their sources close by the town of Beith; and its only outlet is by the Dubs Water, which discharges itself into Lochwinnoch Loch. It is well stored with pike, perch, trout, and eel, and is betimes the resort of the wild duck and heron. The comparative tranquillity that has hitherto hung over this crystalline expanse, will in a short time be invaded by the noise of locomotive vehicles, and other sounds incident to a great thoroughfare, as the railroad from Glasgow to Ayr runs along its east bank. The loch forms part of the estate of Kilbirnie, although that property does not extend around one-half of its circumference.*

* Kilbirnie Loch is thus noticed by Bellenden, the translator of Boece: "In Cunninghame is ane loch namit Garnoth, nocht unlike to Loch Dourie, full of fische." It was subsequently called Loch Thankart. In 1628, David Cunyngbame of Robertson is served heir of David Cunyngbame, his father, in the lands and barony of Glengarnock "et loch de Loch Thankart." It belonged to the Cunninghams of Glengarnock, but the Craufurds of Kilbirnie disputed their right, and, in the spirit of the times, these families called out their tenants and retainers and broke one an-

*Geology.**—Viewed geologically, the parish is divided into two sections, unequal in extent, and widely different in character. They are separated by a line running east and west. The north division, which is the largest, occupies an extensive tract of hilly country. It is of an igneous origin, and belongs to the secondary trap formation, being composed chiefly of greenstone and porphyry; but except to the curious in speculative geology, it presents little that is interesting. None of the metallic veins usually associated with the trap formation have been observed. Agates, however, and other simple minerals, are occasionally met with; and the vein of barytes, which is worked in the island of Arran to the south-west, and at Muirshiels, in the parish of Lochwinnoch, to the north-east, and which has also been discovered in the parish of Kilpatrick, still farther to the north-east, is supposed to traverse this district.

But the most interesting, as well as valuable mineral products of the parish, are on the south side of the line indicated. They belong to the carboniferous series of stratified rocks, and occupy an area of about 1500 acres, stretching along the valley of the Garnock. Where the strata have been denuded by streams and otherwise, opportunities occur of investigating the sedimentary rocks, and this has been done with tolerable accuracy to a depth of 120 fathoms. At the depth here mentioned, a limestone post of excellent quality, measuring thirty feet, rests upon a bed of marl, of unknown thickness. Over the limestone, and extending twenty-five fathoms upwards, thinner limestone bands of inferior quality prevail, alternating with shale and freestone. The sixty fathoms next in succession, besides two layers measuring fifteen feet each, formed of ironstone nodules thickly imbedded in shale, comprehend not fewer than twenty ironstone bands, chiefly argillaceous, varying in thickness from one to thirty inches, with intervening beds of fine clay, lime, freestone, aluminous schist, and thin coal seams. The next thirty fathoms reaching to the surface, contain four workable seams of coal, a few calcareous ironstone bands, with strata of freestone, lime, and shale.

others boats. A case between them is reported, 16th July 1626, (Mor. Diet. p. 10691,) from which it appears that both parties had the loch included in their titles. The Craufurds of Kilbirnie subsequently acquired right to the barony of Glengarnock and there was no longer room for dispute on the subject. Sir John Craufurd's right was ratified by Parliament in 1641.

* The lucid and comprehensive account of the geology of the parish here given has been most obligingly contributed by Andrew Craig, Esq., Westfield House, Kingston, Glasgow.

The coal field is found distributed into basins generally of no great extent, sometimes detached, at other times passing into each other by a ridge or undulation, without throwing off the metals. The usual dip is one foot in seven. The basins are seldom found to correspond altogether in their stratification, and are intersected in all directions by faults and dikes, the one dislocating the strata, the other merely disjoining them, without altering their level, and both, from their frequency, adding to the difficulties of the miner. Of course, it will appear that the account here given, is to be regarded merely as an approximation to the general state of the mineral deposits under notice.

The coal has been worked for a long time, but never extensively. The aggregate thickness of the four workable seams is about 14 feet. The average distance from the surface to the upper seam, is 15 fathoms; from that to the second, 6; from the second to the third, 3; and from the third to the lowest, 3. The upper seam is peculiar in this respect, that it is found to assume quite distinct aspects at different parts of the field. At one point, it is the bituminous or cannel coal, now so much in demand for the manufacturing of gas; at another, it is the common free coal; in other situations, again, both descriptions of coal exist in connection, the one overlying the other; and last of all, the two coals are found parted by a few inches of black-band ironstone. However much the seam may vary in its composition at different places, it undergoes no material change in point of thickness, for as the one kind of coal increases, the other is found to diminish. The three lower coals are composed of free coal: one of them known as the smithy coal, is prized for the purposes of the forge, and all of them are good household coal.

The freestone of the district comprehends numerous seams, ranging in thickness from an inch to eighteen feet. Some of the quarries afford compact and durable blocks, well adapted for building. In the flagstone quarries again, pavement of all dimensions is procured at little expenditure of labour.

The limestone exists in great abundance, is worked to a considerable extent, and is much esteemed both for building and agricultural purposes.

The ironstone has never been turned to account, but is now under lease with a view to the establishment of iron-works. Some time ago, a carbonaceous ironstone, similar to Muschet's black-

band, was discovered in this and the adjoining parish of Dalry. It is situated about thirty fathoms below the fourth coal. It is upwards of two feet thick, and yields about 40 per cent. of metallic iron. This and a few of the other bands, it is supposed, may be made available for the purpose of smelting. Considerable risk is thought to attend the contemplated undertaking, arising especially from the nature of the coal, which in this district is of a softer quality than any that has hitherto been employed in reducing iron ore. Should it be found necessary to subject it, in the first instance, to the process of coking, much additional expense will be entailed on the manufacturer, and he will thus be less able to compete with others who do not labour under the same disadvantage. If, however, the works should prove successful, as it is hoped they may, their establishment, on an extensive scale, will doubtless add to the prosperity of the district.

A vein of graphite or black-lead is intersected by the stream which divides this parish from that of Dalry; but no attempt, it is believed, has yet been made to ascertain its quality, or trace its extent.

Soil.—The soil in the lower or south end of the parish is a deep alluvial loam of great fertility. Ascending the river it gradually changes into a rich clayey loam, while to the east along Kilbirnie loch and part of the course of the Maich, it is a light red clay, resting on a stiff clay subsoil. West of the Garnock, clayey loam likewise prevails, and occasionally adhesive clay mixed with sand, varied with numerous stripes of meadow ground, almost every farm in this quarter having two or more acres of this valuable ground. The soil of the higher grounds being incumbent on trap and limestone, is light and dry, and its fertility is sufficiently evinced by the excellency of the pastures. The moorish uplands are generally moss of various depths, resting on a light-coloured clay, and the more level parts are much broken by hags and pools of stagnant water.

Zoology.—There are no rare species of quadrupeds in this parish, nor are we aware that any uncommon remains have at any time been discovered. The ordinary wild animals of the country, such as the fox, the polecat, the weazel, the stoat, and the hedgehog, are numerous, especially in the higher parts of the parish. The otter also frequents Garnock and the loch, during the spring, principally for eels, which it seems to live on at that season. The

badger, too, was formerly to be met with in the glens, but it is no longer to be found. Hares and the more common species of game are numerous, and would become more so, were their illegal destruction more effectually checked.

Birds.—Besides above sixty of the common birds of Scotland, several of the more uncommon species are stationary here. Of the latter, including the rarer summer and winter visitants, the compiler of this Account is indebted to Mr John Jamieson, Kilbirnie, a skilful and enthusiastic ornithologist, for the following interesting list.

Tetrao Tetrix	Sylvia Phoenicurus	Rallus aquaticus
Coturnix vulgaris	Loxia curvirostra	Fulica atra
Phasianus Colchicus	Parus caudatus	Scolopax rusticola
Falco peregrinus	Pyrrhula vulgaris	Tringa pugnax
Buteo vulgaris	Fringilla montifringilla	Cygnus ferus
Buteo palumbarius	———— spinus	Anser ferus
Strix stridula	———— carduelis	——— Bernicla
Caprimulgus*Europæus	Sturnus vulgaris	Podiceps rubdicollis
Lanius excubitor	Garrulus glandarius	Procellaria glacialis
Turdus torquatus	Alcedo Ispida	Larus argentatus
Saxicola Rubicola	Ardea stellaris	Nyroca fuligula

Fishing.—Kilbirnie loch contains trout, pike, perch, roach, and eel, the latter especially in abundance; and of the three first very large ones have occasionally been killed. The Garnock and the Maich are good trouting streams, particularly the former. There would, it is believed, be few rivers in the county equal to the Garnock, in this respect, if the unprincipled destruction of the fish in its tributary rivulets, during the spawning season, could be prevented. Last autumn, one individual caught, by means of a stake-bag-net, no fewer than 150 stones. A few salmon ascend the river as high as, and even above Kilbirnie, in November and December, but they are mostly all destroyed by the night poacher. From a variety of causes, their numbers, it would appear, are yearly decreasing. We have been assured that, about fifty years ago, salmon were to be seen in the latter end of harvest, sporting in every pool of the river above and below the village, and it is but rarely now that a few solitary stragglers are to be seen so high.

Botany.—It does not appear that there is any thing peculiarly interesting in the botany of the parish. In the lower district, vegetation is rather luxuriant, and by no means deficient in variety; but there are few species of the plants that are generally marked as rare in Scotland. The following, however, that are not very common, may be found here:

Veronica scutellata	Sambucus ebulus	Tormentilla reptans
Parietaria officinalis	Allium ursinum	Thalictrum flavum
Anchusa sempervirens	Epilobium angustifolium	Ranunculus hederaceus
Convolvulus sepium	Vaccinium vitis idæa	————— lingua
Campanula trachelium	Adoxa moschatellina	Geranium pratense
Solanum Dulcamara	Saxifraga granulata	Hypericum humifusum
Ligustrum meum	————— hypnoides	————— hirsutum
Sison verticillatum	Sedum telephium	————— pulchrum
Chærophyllum odorata	Prunus padus	Inula helenium
Imperatoria œstruthium	————— cerasus	

The *Conium maculatum*, hemlock, generally so plentiful, is not known in this parish, except in one spot near the ruins of Kilbirnie House. The Malvaceæ seem to be entire strangers; only one specimen, the *Malva moschata*, having been found which could not be reckoned indigenous. The *Ulex Europæus*, furze, was not known until a few years ago, when it was sown for a fence.

Plantations.—With the exception of about twenty acres planted by the late Mr Cochran of Ladyland, some thirty years ago, and eleven acres on the estate of Kilbirnie, along the margin of the loch, in 1807, there has been nothing done in this respect, within the remembrance of any one, worth noticing. A few thin straggling belts and detached rows of trees, consisting chiefly of ashes, elms, and planes, spreading out in different directions from the ruins of Kilbirnie House, are all that now remains of the noble sylvan embellishments of the parks and pleasure-grounds of this ancient seat of the Crawfurds. There are still a few fine old trees around the site of the ancient house of Ladyland; and the modern plantations on that estate, consisting, in a great measure, of chestnuts, planes and firs, are thriving in the very best style. A few farm-houses too, are partially sheltered by immemorial ashes and planes; but by far the greater part of them are marked by a scantiness akin to absolute destitution of such beneficial and ornamental accompaniments. There is thus a great deficiency both of old woodlands and modern plantations throughout the parish—there being only about seventy-eight acres in all; a deficiency that will not probably be fully remedied until the principal estate can claim a resident proprietor.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

There is nothing in the history of the parish that can be stated apart from that of the more ancient families by whom it has been possessed. The few memorabilia of unchronicled conflicts referable to a period antecedent to the introduction of Christianity, such as tumuli or cairns, have been all, with one doubtful exception, removed within the present century. During the long reign of

feudal tyranny, the district of Cuninghame, though occasionally disturbed by such murderous feuds as those of the houses of Kilmaurs and Eglinton, seems, on the whole, to have benefited by the humanizing influence of the church—one of the largest properties being that of the Abbey of Kilwinning, while the predatory violence to which the border counties, and those in the vicinity of the Highlands, were subject, was here unknown.

Eminent Men.—The only eminent person whom this parish can claim, is Captain Thomas Craufurd, of Jordanhill. He was the sixth son of Laurence Craufurd of Kilbirnie, and Helen, daughter of Sir Hugh Campbell of Loudon. He was a brave and enterprising officer, and his adventurous exploit of storming the almost impregnable castle of Dumbarton in 1571, is familiar to every one acquainted with the history of Scotland during the minority of James VI. This extraordinary feat of courage and dexterity, the boldness of which, says Sir Walter Scott, was unequalled by the siege of the Numidian fortress mentioned by Sallust, or the more modern surprise of Fécamp during the wars of the league, has conferred deserved celebrity on his name. In consideration of this and other faithful services, Captain Craufurd received a grant of several lands in the neighbourhood of Glasgow, whence his title of Jordanhill, besides an annuity of L. 200 Scots during his life, payable out of the priory of St Andrews. He appears to have commenced his military career at a very early age, as he was taken prisoner at the disastrous battle of Pinkie in 1547,—which bloody event he survived fifty-six years. The latest notice we have met with of this celebrated character, into the detail of whose public life it would be unsuitable to enter here, is in the year 1581, when the king, by a gift dated at Holyrood, grants him L. 100 Scots yearly “out of the superflue of the third of the benefices not assignat to the maintenance of the ministrie.” Much of the last twenty years of his life was probably spent in retirement,—the state of the country no longer demanding his military services. It must, therefore, be to some part of this disengaged period, that the residence allotted him by tradition at Kersland, in the adjoining parish of Dalry, the heiress of which he had married, must be assigned.

In 1594, Captain Craufurd erected a monument to himself and his lady in Kilbirnie church-yard, and “bequeathed,” says Mr George Craufurd, the learned historian of the shire of Renfrew, “his body to be buried there.” The monument is still entire,

though much weather-wasted. It is built of chiselled sandstone, and is of a quadrangular form, nine feet long, six feet in width, and six feet four inches in height, and is covered horizontally with the same material. Through an aperture in the east end, by the aid of a faint light admitted through a slit in the south wall, are seen the recumbent statues of the gallant captain in military garb, and of his spouse in the costume of the times. On the exterior of the north wall, in relieved characters now scarcely legible, is the following inscription, every version of which hitherto printed has been more or less at variance with the original:—

GOD . SCHAW .	
THE . RIGHT .	
HEIR . IYIS . THOMAS .	AND . JONET . KER . HIS .
CRAUFURD . OF . JOR .	SPOUS . ELDEST . DOC .
DANHIL . SEXT . SON .	HTER . TO . ROBERT . KER .
TO . LAVRENCE . CRAV .	OF . KERRISLAND .
FYRD . OF . KILBIRNY .	1 . 5 . 9 . 4 .

In the centre of the inscription is a shield bearing quarterly Craufurd and Ker, and for crest a figure, by its irregular outline, meant probably to represent a rock, in allusion to Dunbarton Castle. Captain Craufurd died 3d January 1603, and was buried close to the inscribed wall of the monument.

Division of Land, &c.—The parish was anciently possessed by three different families. It is still nominally composed of three estates, or baronies, namely, Kilbirnie, Glengarnock, and Ladyland; though the two last have been considerably broken up,—there being at present twenty proprietors holding portions of them ranging from 15 to 116 acres.

1. The barony of Kilbirnie has always been by much the most extensive of these estates. It occupies the south and most fertile quarter of the parish, and consists of about 5500 acres, of which nearly 3000 are arable, meadow and woodland. This barony of old belonged to a branch of the Barclays of Ardrossan, a family of some distinction in the early history of the country. In 1470, the line of the Barclays terminated in an heiress, who married Malcolm Craufurd of Greenock, the founder of the family of Craufurd of Kilbirnie. Their descendants flourished in high repute for valour, loyalty, and honourable connections, in unbroken succession, upwards of 200 years, when the male descent failed in the family of Sir John Craufurd, who died in 1661. By his second wife, daughter of Lord Carnegie, he had two daughters, the

eldest of whom was married to Sir Archibald Stewart of Blackhall, and the youngest, Margaret, to Patrick Lindsay, the second son of the fourteenth Earl of Craufurd. Upon the heirs of this marriage, Sir John Craufurd settled the estate of Kilbirnie, on condition of their assuming the name and armorial ensigns of Craufurd. Patrick Lindsay and his lady died both in 1680.* Their eldest son, John, was created in 1703, by Queen Anne, Viscount Mount-Craufurd, which title he had afterwards changed to that of Garnock. He died in 1708, and his grandson, George, fourth Viscount succeeding in 1749 to John, eighteenth Earl of Craufurd and fourth of Lindsay, the title of Garnock merged in the more ancient honours of that noble house. He was succeeded by his son George, who dying unmarried in 1808, the titles became extinct, and the estates fell to his only surviving sister, Lady Mary Lindsay Craufurd. On her demise in 1833, she was succeeded by George, fourth Earl of Glasgow, in right of his descent from Margaret, the eldest sister of the first Viscount Garnock.

2. The barony of Glengarnock extends over both sides of the upper course of the Garnock, and consists of about 1400 acres, of which fully more than 1000 are excellent arable land, and the remainder moor pasture. Nearly 700 acres of the best land of this barony belong to the estate of Kilbirnie, along with the superiority of all the rest. About 420 acres of it are possessed by nine different proprietors, all of whom have a right in common to a considerable extent of moorland pasture.

The most ancient possessors of this barony on record were the Riddels, supposed to be descended of the Riddels of Teviotdale,

* The deaths of Patrick Lindsay and the heretrix of Kilbirnie are thus detailed in Law's Memorials: "October 1680. In one week's tyme, dyed, first, the Lady Kilburnie, daughter to the late laird of it, on the 12th of that instant, and her husband, the laird, second son of the Earl of Lindsay, who gott that estate by marrying this laird's daughter, dies also upon the 15th of that instant, both of a fever. The Sabbath before, they were at the celebration of the Lord's Supper at the kirk of Beith. On the day they sickened, the laird's dogs went into the closs, and an unco dog coming in amongst them, they all set up a barking, with their faces up to heaven howling, yelling, and youphing; and when the laird called upon them, they would not come to him, as in former times when he called upon them. The death of thir spouses was much lamented by all sorts of people. They left seven children behind them; within a few days after, the Lady Blackhall, her sister, being infected with the same disease, (for it was a pestilentious fever), and coming to Kilburnie to wait on the funeralls, she also dyes there." Pp. 165—324. It would appear that a considerable party of the citizens of Glasgow had attended the funeral of these distinguished individuals, for on the 21st December following, the town-council ordained "John Robeasone to have ane warrand for the soume of thrie hundreth sextie pundis nyue shilling Scots, payed be him for the expenses and hors hyres of these that went to the buriall of Kilburnie, his Ladie, and to the buriall of the Ladie Blackhall." Memorabilia of the City of Glasgow, 1835, p. 320.

one of our oldest Scottish families. Of the history of those of Glengarnock, all that is known with certainty is, that the line terminated in an heiress, who, some time previous to 1266, had espoused Hervey Cunningham of Kilmaurs, to whom the peerage writers have assigned the honour of having gallantly distinguished himself at the battle of the Largs in 1263. Galfridus, the second son of this marriage, was the ancestor of the Cunninghams of Glengarnock. The early annals of this ancient family are, however, very meagre, and, unless it be to the genealogist, altogether uninteresting. During the sixteenth century, they become more extended, and of the feuds, rencounters, and conspiracies in which the lairds of Glengarnock were frequently and evidently with no aversion engaged, there are many notices recorded. The most restless and enterprising spirit of his race, seems to have been William, the thirteenth possessor of the barony, who closed his turbulent career at the fatal battle of Pinkie, 10th September 1547. His will, made on the eve of his departure from his house of Glengarnock to that disastrous field, an interesting document, and hitherto unpublished, is subjoined.* Sir James Cunningham, the sixteenth in descent from Galfridus, who married Kath-

* This document, of which a literal translation follows, is preserved in the records of the Vicar-General of Glasgow. It is now in the course of being printed for the Maitland Club,—the contribution of William Patrick, Esq. of Roughwood:—“Death is certain—the hour most uncertain. Hence it is that I, William Cunyng-hame of Glengarnock, taking my way to rencounter our old enemies, and, in the event of sudden death, make and ordain my testament and last will. In the first place, I give and leave my soul to Almighty God, the most blessed Virgin Mary, and all saints, and my bones to be buried where it shall please the Most High. And I leave iij pence to the fabrick of St Kentigern, and xx pound to be given to a chaplain duly ordained to pray for my soul in the parochial church of Kilbirny. Also, I leave to Sir Robert Cunyngnam, chaplain, x merkis of money; likewise I leave to the Friars Minor of Air and Glasgow, xx merkis. Also, I appoint and ordain that my tenants have the liberty of compounding their debts. Further, I appoint my executors, viz. Elizabeth Synclair, my wife, and Lady Isabella Cunyngnam, my mother only; and I leave my four best horses to my four sons, in such a way that the eldest shall have the first choice of the same, viz. ay the eldest to cheis first, and that the heirship horse shall stand to my heir for his choice. I leave to Alexander Cunyngnam, my younger son, the younger horse called the ‘seur staig,’ and to John Blair, my son-in-law, the younger horse, called the ‘brown staig.’ I grant and assign to Elizabeth Cunyng-hame, my daughter, relict of the late Alexander Schaw of Sauchguy, that sum of 400 merkis, resting upon the lands and buildings of Sir John Makghe, vicar of Abruthven, lying within the city of Glasgow; as also that sum of 200 merkis, owing by the said Sir John, I assign to the foresaid Elizabeth, towards relieving my executrices of the forementioned sum of 700 merkis due to the said Elizabeth. Moreover, all my goods, moveable and immoveable, my debts being taken out and paid, I give and leave to my three daughters, to be distributed and apportioned at the will of my executrices the aforesaid, as they shall answer to the Supreme Judge.” This testament was made by the mouth of the departing, “the xxix day of the month of August, in the year of our Lord, 1547, my manuel subscription bearing testimony, at Glengarnock.” Follows the form of subscription, “William Cunyngnam of Glengarnok, with my hand.” This testament was confirmed, &c. 4th November 1547.

rine, daughter of the Earl of Glencairn, assigned, in 1609, the lands, of Glengarnock in behoof of his creditors, and went to Ireland, where he had got a grant of 12,000 acres of land from King James VI. A few years afterwards, the estate was sold to Cunningham of Robertland, whose son being unable to keep it, it was acquired in right of a wadset by Adam Watt, clerk to the Signet, from whose successor it was purchased, about 1680, by Patrick Lindsay, husband of the heiress of Kilbirnie, and it has ever since formed a valuable part of that estate.

3. The barony of Ladyland occupies the northern quarter of the parish, and contains upwards of 1800 acres, of which nearly one-half is arable; the remainder, consisting of excellent upland pastures, and a considerable extent of moorland. Of the arable ground, about 400 acres belong to twelve different proprietors, the general extent of whose properties is from 20 to 40 acres each,—15 acres being the lowest, and 116 the highest that any of them possess. They have all a right of pasture over the moorland. The great body of the barony belongs, however, to the heirs of the late William Cochrane, Esq. of Ladyland.

Of the more ancient proprietors of this estate, there appears to be nothing recorded. Prior to 1564, it had been acquired by a branch of the Barclays of Kilbirnie, for, in that year, David Barclay of Ladyland is one of the jury on the trial of Patrick Houston of that ilk, for assaulting Archibald Hamilton of Cochno, on the streets of Dunbarton. In 1592, his son and successor, Hew Barclay, was apprehended as accessory to some treasonable conspiracy for “inbringing of Spaniards to the overthrow of his Highness and all professing the true religion.” He was imprisoned in the Castle of Glasgow, but escaped and went to Spain. In 1597 he returned and took possession of the rock of Ailsa, which he intended to have victualled for the service of his colleagues, but, being surprised by his enemies, he ran into the sea and was drowned.* Hugh Barclay, in his happier days, was the friend and companion of Montgomery the poet, and appears himself to have written verses, as two of his sonnets have been preserved, one of which is addressed to the author of “the Cherry and the Slae,” and the other to his friend Ezechial Montgomery.† The former of these is full of quaint humour, and shows that the author was, at the time of writing of it, in the country, “hotching

* Spottiswood's History of the Church of Scotland, p. 445.

† See Irving's edition of Montgomery's Poems, p. 96.

on a sped," "draight in dirt, vbylis wat evin to the skin;" regretting his absence from his correspondent, who, with his friends, was "birling at the wyne" and "pouing Bacchus luggis."—The Barclays sold Ladyland about 1620. The estate was acquired by Hamilton of Ardoch, previously to 1669; but this family did not long retain it, for in 1710, it belonged to a Henry Moncrieff, who granted several charters to the vassals of the barony. It was, shortly after the above date, purchased by Alexander, ninth Earl of Eglington, who sold it in 1718, to William Cochran of Edge, by whose descendants it is now possessed.

Parochial Registers.—The register of baptisms and marriages commences in the year 1688. A blank occurs between the 9th July 1724, and the 5th December 1725, "in consequence," as is stated on the record, "of there being no schoolmaster during that period;" and another from the same cause, between the 10th January 1731, and the 16th March 1732. Again, the register of marriages, from the 3d July 1729, to the 15th June 1738, has been lost; but from this date to the present time, there are apparently no omissions. The registry of deaths begins in 1758, and is preserved entire. Minutes of the kirk-session commence also in 1688, but there is an unregretted gap in these impure records, excepting some illegible scraps, extending from 1725 to 1791. Money accounts in reference to the poor are likewise preserved from 1688 to the present time, and minutes of meetings of heritors since 1823.

Antiquities.—Various tumuli have, at different times, been accidentally explored in this parish, and in some of which urns filled with calcined bones have been found, and in others stone coffins containing human remains. Early in the century, three stone-coffins, but without the addition of any mound over them, were discovered on the right bank of the Garnock, about a quarter of a mile below Kilbirnie Bridge; one of them contained a large urn filled with burnt bones; but in neither of the other two, nor in one opened about the same time on the opposite bank of the river, near to Nether-Mill, and close to the base of a large barrow or mound, were found any relics whatsoever. About thirty years ago, the late Mr Cochran, in the course of his agricultural improvements, had occasion to remove a slightly elevated tumulus, situated on the lands of Ladyland, in the centre of which a small urn was found containing ashes. The urn, until lately, was to be seen in the Museum of Glasgow College, to which it was presented by

Mr Cochran, but it appears now to be either lost or withdrawn from that collection. In 1836, a stone coffin, containing remains of human bones, was discovered on the farm of Langlands, about three-quarters of a mile north of Kilbirnie. The tumulus over it was by much the most remarkable object of the kind in this quarter. It stood on the level part of a field, skirted by the Garnock on the west, from which it was fifty yards distant. It was of a circular form, 100 feet in diameter, and six feet in height. Originally, it had been much higher, but, about the beginning of the century, a great quantity of stones were taken from its summit to form a road in the neighbourhood. What remained of it in 1830, was composed of stones of various dimensions intermixed with earth. Few of these were heavier than a man could carry, excepting a row placed seven feet within the line of the base, and some three or four feet apart, each of which might weigh half a ton. The coffin or chest, which was formed of six flat stones neatly fitted together, measured 2 feet 7 inches in length; 1 foot 9 inches in breadth; and 1 foot 7 inches in depth. It was situated in the centre of the tumulus, and its longitudinal position was north and south. It contained nothing but bones very much decayed, and the greater part of which lay in its south end. Many of these, on being handled and exposed to the air, crumbled into dust, but several of the fragments which have been preserved can be distinctly recognized as belonging to the human species. In the spring of 1837, every vestige of this primeval monument was removed.

The mound situated at Nether-mill, incidentally mentioned above, is of an irregular pyramidal form, about 18 yards in length, 9 in breadth, and between 5 and 6 in height. It is, we doubt not, artificial, and has apparently been formed by excavating the adjoining bank, which overlooks it. This opinion, though not supported by popular belief or local tradition, is strengthened by the unstratified appearance of the composition of the mound, and by the circumstance of the stone-coffin already noticed, being discovered in its immediate vicinity.

Coin.—In tilling a field last year, near the ruins of Glengarnock castle, there was turned up a silver coin about the size of a modern shilling. It is in excellent preservation, having apparently been little worn, and weighs about one drachm thirty-five grains. The obverse bears the Scottish shield and crown, supported by the letters M. and R. Legend, . Maria . Dei . G . Scotor . Regina . 1556. On the reverse, a large cross, with four less in its quar-

ters. Legend, In . Virtute . Tua . Libera . Me. It is of pure silver, or appears to be so :—it feels like malleable iron ; the modern silver coinage like cast-metal.

Kilbirnie House.—The stately ruins of the ancient house or Place of Kilbirnie, are situated a mile west of the village, and overlook a considerable extent of country beyond the valley beautified with Kilbirnie loch, and fertilized by the Garnock. The surrounding grounds fall gently towards this valley, and are varied but slightly by a shallow dingle, on the margin of which stands the ruined mansion.

The building, which has been erected at two widely different periods, consists of an ancient quadrilateral tower, and a modern addition, extending rectangularly from its east side. The tower is 41 feet in length by 32 feet in width, and its walls are 7 feet thick. Its height has been divided into four storeys, the lowest of which is vaulted and without a fire-place. The second consisted of a hall, 26 feet long, and 18 feet wide, has likewise been vaulted, and lighted tolerably by a window in its south wall, and another facing the west. Above the hall have been two tiers of chambers ; but of their subdivisions there are no traces left. Access to the different floors and to the roof, has been gained by a narrow spiral stair in the north-east angle of the building. A way fenced with a parapet has gone round the top, all of which has fallen down, as well as every vestige of the roof, which was probably of the high triangular form, common to such castellated mansions. It is impossible, from any peculiarities in the masonry of this feudal tower, to ascertain the period of its construction. The absence of gun-ports in its walls, a provision of defence with which every stronghold erected subsequently to the use of fire-arms was furnished, seems to imply that it was built, at the latest, in the early part of the fourteenth century, and consequently, in the days of the Barclays, the most anciently recorded Lords of the barony.

The modern part of the edifice was built about 1627, and must have proved a satisfactory increase of light and airy accommodation to that afforded by the sombre tower. It extends 74 feet, is 25 in width, and has been three storeys in height, besides the attics, the pedimented windows of which have risen above the lower line of the roof, as have likewise the hanging turrets at the extremities of the principal façade. Much of the exterior walls of both parts of the building is still entire ; and, as is frequently

the case in similar ruinous structures, the most ancient part is the least dilapidated. Most of the interior divisions have, within these few years, fallen down, a few of the vaulted apartments excepted, and in these the "lazy steer and sheep," have been long permitted to find a shelter. The building was entirely destroyed by fire accidentally kindled on the 1st May 1757, and from which, as it occurred at an early hour of the morning, the Earl of Crawford with his infant daughter and the domestics, had little more than time to escape. Eighty years of exposure to the weather have much lessened, and greatly enfeebled what the fire had spared; while, during this long period, all the contiguous pleasure-grounds have been torn up by the plough, or permitted to run waste. The noble straight-lined avenue, full twenty yards in breadth, has returned to a state of nature:—the gardens situated to the west, instead of flowers and shrubs, are allotted to the rearing of potatoes and turnips; and of the orchard grounds no traces are now to be found. The high walls with which they were enclosed are everywhere breaking down, and all the fine old timber, which had beautified and sheltered "the Place" for ages, and afterwards added much to the grandeur and interest of its ruins, has disappeared within the last thirty years.

Glengarnock Castle.—The ruins of Glengarnock Castle stand on a precipitous ridge or knoll, overhanging the Garnock, about two miles north of Kilbirnie. This brawling stream skirts two sides of the knoll, and, as the ravine through which it flows is fully eighty feet in depth, the position, under the ancient system of warfare, must have combined security with the means of easy defence. The only access to the castle is from the north-east, in which direction the ridge, upon which it is situated, is connected with the adjoining field. At the distance of thirty yards from its entrance, a depression in the ground indicates what has been the course of a dry moat, by which, and a drawbridge, the approach is said to have been protected. The ground plan of this ancient stronghold could, until lately, be easily traced, and as a portion of the exterior walls still maintains nearly the original height, its appearance when entire, may, with little difficulty, be yet shadowed out. From notes and measurements taken a few years ago, it may be described in general terms, as having consisted of a quadrilateral tower, with a court of less elevated buildings extending from its east side. The entrance has been from the eastern extremity of the latter. This façade is 46 feet long,

and has been about 24 feet in height. A court or passage, 59 feet in length, lay between the entrance and the tower, on each side of which has been a range of two-storied apartments. The tower is 45 feet long, 33 feet wide, and its height has been above 40 feet. Its upper and now only accessible storey has consisted of a hall occupying the whole extent within the walls, and the imbowed ceiling of which has been 20 feet in height. It has been lighted both from the court and from the exterior walls. One of the windows overlooks the rugged chasm through which murmurs the Garnock, and from two narrow apertures facing the east, the eye may yet revel over a beautiful extent of the district bearing the same name as the old lords of the castle. From the hall, a narrow circular stair led to the upper part of the building, which has been surrounded by a parapet wall. The ruins show neither the arrow-slit nor gun-port of defence so common in similar old houses. Perhaps the situation was of itself so secure as to render unnecessary the ordinary means of repelling an attack. The uniformity of style in all castellated mansions, erected prior to the discovery of gunpowder, renders it hazardous to be precise regarding the date of their construction. Few, however, conversant with such remnants of feudal architecture, would hesitate to assign to the ruins of this stronghold, an antiquity as remote as that of any remains of masonry in the west of Scotland. It is not, therefore, improbable that Glengarnock Castle may have existed in the time of the De Morvilles, though the conjecture of its having been the residence of these ancient lords of Cunninghame, appears entitled to nearly the same consideration as that of its having been the castle of Hardyknute.

It may be added, in justification of so minute an account, that the ruins of this castle will soon cease to be an object of interest to the local antiquary, or to form a picturesque feature in the landscape. The storms of January 1839 overthrew the north wall of the tower, containing between 4000 and 5000 solid feet of masonry; and unequivocal symptoms portend, that, at no distant date, the bed of the Garnock will receive the greater part of the time-worn remains.

Ladyland House.—The old house of Ladyland, briefly characterized by Pont, circa 1609, as a "strong tower," was demolished in 1815, with the exception of about 20 feet in length and 25 feet in height of its north elevation. This fragment is six feet in thick-

ness, and as compact as the solid rock. A pedimented stone, which belonged to a door or window of the building, but which is now placed over an entrance to the adjoining garden, bears the initials W. H. I. B. and the date, Anno 1669. The date records, doubtless, the period of some repairs, or perhaps the year the estate was acquired by Hamilton of Ardoch, as there cannot be a question of the existing fragment of masonry having formed part of the "strong tower" noticed by Pont, and in which, a few years previously to his visiting the district, had resided Barclay, the unfortunate friend of Montgomery the poet, as had likewise, probably, all his ancestral possessors of the barony of Ladyland. In taking down this ancient strong house, there were found, in a cavity in one of the walls, a little above the foundation, four small urns, a painted drinking glass, and a large jaw bone, supposed to have been that of an ox. The urns were neatly formed of common clay, three of which were filled with an unctuous kind of earth, and one of them, besides the earth, contained the breast and side bones of a chicken. Two of the urns had handles, and all of them were tightly closed with shreds of trimming or woven cloth, the most of which, on being taken out, crumbled into powder. Part of these relics are preserved by Mrs Cochran of Ladyland, as is a small coin found in the grounds adjoining the tower. The coin is of some compound metal, and bears the legend *FESTINALENTE*; but the date and the impress on both sides appear to have been effaced by long circulation.

Modern Buildings.—In 1816, the late Mr Cochran built an elegant and commodious house on his estate of Ladyland. It is pleasantly situated on a gently elevated terrace or eminence, lying along the base of the high grounds in the north-east extremity of the parish, and commands an interesting prospect to the south. The adjacent heights protect it from the north and east winds, and some fine old ashes, elms, and planes, and thriving modern plantations, contribute much to shelter and beautify its environs. The grounds and approaches have been designed with much taste, and are kept in excellent order. Taken altogether, this is among the most eligible residences of its class, in this section of the county.

There is no other modern building in the parish meriting, by its architecture, especial notice. It may, however, be stated, that in 1824 a commodious chapel was built by the congregation of the

Reformed Presbytery; and that, besides a spinning power-loom manufactory, five stories in height, and a large mill for spinning flax, there have been twenty-one two storeyed dwelling-houses erected in the village, during the last eight or nine years. Several of the fronts of these buildings are of hewn and polished ashlar, and adorned with mouldings and carved decorations, creditable to the taste and inventive capacity of their untutored architects.

III.—POPULATION.

The population of this parish has long been steadily on the increase.

In 1755, when the first census was taken,	651
1792,	700
1801,	959
1811,	1088
1821,	1333
1831,	1541
1841,	2631

The yearly average of births for the last seven years is 49; of marriages for the same period, 16; and of deaths, 37.

Families in 1831,	315
employed in agriculture,	60
trade and handicraft,	207
Occupiers of land employing labourers,	35
not employing labourers,	25
Agricultural labourers,	84
Males employed in manufactures, &c.	194
Capitalists, professional, and other educated men,	12
Number of males, 20 years old,	378
Female household servants,	63
Inhabited houses,	207

There are, at present, thirteen proprietors of land of above L. 50 of yearly value; 30 bachelors and widowers above 50 years of age; 40 spinsters and widows above 45; 2 fatuous persons; and during the last three years, there have been 10 illegitimate births in the parish.

No nobility reside here, nor have any such resided, since the year 1759; and there is only one genteel family of independent fortune occasionally resident.

The increase of the population since 1831 has arisen from the establishment of a spinning power-loom manufactory, and a mill for spinning flax, which employ between them about 500 hands.

At this date, (February 1840) the following crafts and callings form the active or productive portion of this industrious little community:—3 agents for manufactures; 5 bakers; 6 blacksmiths; 100 bleachers; 12 carters; 30 colliers; 1 cooper; 17 day-labourers; 150 flax-spinners; 3 fleshers; 13 grocers; 150 hand-sewers; 160 hand-

loom weavers ; 15 licensed publicans, all of whom do a great deal too much business ; 12 masons ; 3 nailers ; 350 power-loom weavers ; 10 quarriers ; 20 rope-spinners ; 4 schoolmasters : 20 shoemakers ; 1 surgeon ; 12 tailors ; 2 tinsmiths ; 13 wrights.

Character, Habits, &c.—In the former Statistical Account, the inhabitants were characterized as being “sober, quiet, active and industrious,” and we doubt not that to this character they still have generally a good claim. Since the period referred to, there has been a marked improvement in their mode of living—in their habits of domestic and personal cleanliness—in their style of dress—and above all, perhaps, in their taste and intelligence. In all of these respects, they have kept pace with the general advancement of the country, without losing, we believe, any of the moral and kindly feelings for which they were formerly distinguished. Instead of the noisy, and not unfrequently demoralizing gymnastic exercises in which they used to excel, music has of late years been successfully cultivated by the operatives, as their instrumental band sufficiently testifies, and a judiciously selected subscription library might be adduced as another proof of the intellectual character of the present generation. It cannot be doubted that, upon the whole, the people of this parish enjoy as many of the comforts and advantages of society as any similarly constituted community in the kingdom. Many of them are not wholly dependent on their employments ; while the resources of the poor but industrious artisan are not so soon exhausted in small as in large manufacturing towns. The inhabitants, too, seem generally speaking, contented enough with their circumstances, though a few of them have of late, in becoming politicians, become dissatisfied not only with their own social position, but, strange to say, with nearly all the institutions of their country. These constitute, however, but an insignificant fraction of the population, the great body of which is warmly attached to the existing order in church and state. To these general observations, we have only to add, that not a few individuals are to be met with here, alike distinguished for sound religious principle and good moral practice.

The illegal destruction of game and fishings has, of late years, much decreased in this parish, though there is still, it is said, a good deal of the former destroyed by persons maintaining a much more respectable status in society, than that held by the daring poacher of other years.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—The statements under this head are given with confidence, on the authority of Robert Logan, Esq. of Baillieston, one of the most spirited and enterprising agriculturists in the district.

The parish contains in all 8576 Scotch acres, of which there were in 1839,

Under crop,	1280 acres.
In cultivated grass lands and meadows,	2209
Green-hill pasture,	1009
Heath, moss land, water, &c.	4000
Under wood, all planted,	78

About 700 acres might be added to the cultivated land, and afterwards kept in a state of permanent pasture; but this would have to be accomplished by the proprietor, as none of the waste lands would yield to the farmer a fair remuneration for their improvement, during the currency of an ordinary lease. There are, in the higher grounds, two undivided commons, one of which consists of 1000, and the other of 500 acres. The right to the pasturage of the former belongs to different feuars, holding various portions of the barony of Ladyland, and the latter, by a similar right, is pastured by the flocks of feuars of the estate of Kilbirnie. They are of no great value, the land being very poor, and situated far beyond the limits of profitable cultivation. There is no natural wood worth mentioning, and to the few detached acres of plantations there seems to be little attention given—those on the estate of Ladyland excepted, which appear to be regularly pruned and thinned, and their enclosures kept entire. We learn, however, that several acres have been recently planted on the estate of Kilbirnie, and that it is the intention of the noble proprietor, gradually to extend this highly ornamental and most beneficial accompaniment, especially over lands fit for nothing else.

Rental.—The valued rent of the parish in Scotch money is L. 2905, 14s. 1d. The real rent, as recently made out to fix an assessment, is L. 6001, 10s. Sterling; and of houses and gardens in the village L. 1200, 10s.

Rent of Land.—The average rent of arable land is L. 1, 10s. per acre, but in the neighbourhood of the village, where the soil is very fertile, some fields rent as high as from L. 3 to L. 4 an acre. The general allowance for grazing a cow is L. 3, 10s.; for a stirk, L. 1, 5; for a ewe or full-grown white-faced sheep, 16s.; and for a black-faced one, 7s.

Rate of Wages.—An unmarried male-servant within the house receives from L. 8 to L. 10, and female servants, from L. 3, 10s. to L. 4, 10s. per half year. The current wages of women labouring in the field are 1s. per day in summer, and 10d. in winter; and 2s. in summer, and 1s. 6d. in winter, are the ordinary allowances for men. During harvest, female reapers' wages are 10s. a week with victuals, and men's, 12s. Masons, last year, when employed by the day, received from 3s. 6d. to 4s., or for common building, as high, in some instances, as L. 2, 5s. per rood, and 4½d. for the foot of hewing. The ordinary wages of wrights are from 2s. 6d. to 3s. a day; but they have stated prices for the various implements of husbandry, as well as for every piece of work of which it is possible to estimate the value.

Live-Stock.—The dairy cows in the parish are mostly of the Cunninghame breed, to the selection and rearing of which, as well as to the general management of the dairy, considerable attention is paid. The greater part of the cattle fattened for the butcher are likewise varieties of the Ayrshire species. The sheep pastured on the muirlands are the common black-faced kind of the country, and those kept on the arable farms are crosses of various English breeds. The farm-horses are chiefly of the Clydesdale breed,—a race distinguished for strong powers, and of an activity adequate to every purpose of husbandry.

The different species of live-stock are at present as follows: horses of all descriptions, 140; milk cows, 536; rearing and other varieties of cattle, 679; black-faced sheep, 1903; sheep of the English breed, 194; swine, 134.

Husbandry.—Agriculture has, for many years, been as well understood and as successfully practised here, as in any part of the country. In the lower and more fertile section of the parish, the usual rotation of cropping adopted is, 1st, oats; 2d, green crop; 3d, wheat, barley, or oats; 4th, clover and ryegrass; 5th, pasture during three years. On the more upland farms, the rotation still followed is two white crops, one of hay and four or five years pasture. This system, though not approved of by modern agriculturists, does not want its supporters, where the dairy is a primary object of consideration.

The following is a tabular view of the extent of crop sown in 1839, and of the annual average produce per acre, in Winchester bolls:

	Acres.	Average bolls per acre.	Amount.
Wheat,	40	8	240
Barley,	29	5	145
Oats,	677	6	4062
Beans,	71	8	572
	<u>817½</u> acres.		<u>5019</u> bolls.

Acres under turnips, $31\frac{1}{4}$; under potatoes, 148; under sown grass, 278; under meadow hay, 135; under flax, $4\frac{3}{4}$.

Wheat was, for several years, much more extensively cultivated than at present; but, in consequence of repeated partial failures, it has been deemed expedient, of late, to restrict its cultivation. In 1836, there were from 120 to 160 acres under this crop, and the returns averaged 9 bolls per acre. Since that period, the average produce per acre has not exceeded 6 bolls. The soil appears to be too retentive of moisture, and the climate too humid and cold to admit of this fine grain ever being successfully cultivated to any extent, in this quarter. Oats, on the contrary, thrive remarkably well, and potatoes, with the exception of three or four years' failure, as well as turnips and beans, yield abundant returns.

The parish is divided into 643 enclosures, and the farms 62 in all, are of various sizes, the arable ones ranging from 50 to 180 acres. The lower grounds are mostly enclosed by ditch and thorn hedges, and the upper and pastoral lands by high stone walls. Fifteen of the principal farms have thrashing-mills, and there is one corn-mill in the parish. All the lands are thirled to this mill. The multure exacted for grinding oats raised on the Kilbirnie estate, is the forty-first peck; if raised on other lands, it is from the fifteenth to the twentieth peck.

The duration of leases is generally nineteen years,—a term considered sufficiently long to permit the tenant to reap the benefit of ordinary outlays; but when improvements are to be made on an extensive scale, and much hazardous expenditure is consequently incurred, it might be expedient that this period should be extended to twenty-five years.

There are still extant a number of the old, mean, and incommodious thatch-roofed farm-houses, in the construction of which, the comfort of the cattle seems to have been as much studied as that of their owners. These, however, are gradually being displaced by larger and more commodious houses, built after regular and well-arranged plans. All of those erected on the Kilbirnie estate within the last forty years, along with their attached offices, possess every convenience their occupants could possibly de-

sire, while others, built on the smaller properties, present, in every respect, an equally strong contrast to the dingy hovels they have supplanted.

Great and striking improvements, by draining, liming, and enclosing, have been effected in this parish, within the present century, by various individuals, and in particular, by the late William Cochran, Esq. of Ladyland. This gentleman, besides adding considerably to the extent of his arable grounds, by an extensive and skilful style of draining, beautified much his estate by clumps and belts of plantations, and was, by the consequent increased productiveness of the soil, in the course of a few seasons, amply indemnified for all his outlays. He was, moreover, the first agriculturist in this quarter who introduced the enclosing and irrigation of waste lands, by which, according to Aiton, in his *Agricultural View of the county of Ayr*, "land not worth more than 3s. or 4s. an acre, produced to Mr Cochran upon 11 acres, 3000 stones, county weight, or 4500 stones English, of good hay." Another portion of his estate, consisting of 129 acres, he raised, by his mode of improving it, from 1s. 6d. per acre, to about L. 1 of yearly value. In all his undertakings he was eminently successful, and most strikingly illustrated how much might be accomplished within the compass of half an ordinary life, by art and industry,

"When science plans the progress of their toil."

Since their introduction by Mr Cochran, agricultural improvements have been widely extended here, all of which received a fresh impulse, a few years ago, by the succession of the Earl of Glasgow to the estate of Kilbirnie, comprising three-fourths of the parish. Several of the largest arable farms on that extensive property, are in every species of improvement rapidly advancing to the limits of perfection; while the hope may apparently be safely indulged, that the period is not distant, when all the land in the parish, susceptible of profitable cultivation, will be in an equally improved condition.

Mines and Quarries.—Coal has been wrought here upwards of a century. The first pit was on the west bank of Kilbirnie loch, but in 1808, the water breaking in, the workings in this quarter have ever since been abandoned. Shortly afterwards, a pit was opened in the southern extremity of the parish, which continues to furnish two-kinds of coal, both of a good quality. The upper seam, which is of the description called splint coal, is three feet in thickness, and of an average depth of fifteen fathoms from the

surface. Under this seam, at a depth of six fathoms, a very good slaty coal of about the same thickness as the upper seam, is likewise wrought. Both coals are overlain by limestone, and the regularity of the beds is frequently intersected and dislocated by dikes and other disturbing causes, denominated "troubles." A sandstone quarry in the neighbourhood of the village has been less or more wrought, during the last forty years. The stone is of a fine cream colour, and, though a little coarse in the grain, it is very durable, and well adapted for every purpose of country masonry. Though this stone is to be had in large masses at the quarry, or in plates of large dimensions, it not unfrequently occurs in a shattered form, and in that case is almost useless for building. There are likewise two flagstone quarries open at present, for the produce of which there is a considerable demand; and limestone, held in much repute, abounds in the west part of the parish. It is furnished at the kiln at the rate of 10s. 6d. per chalders of 16 bolls.

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

Grain of all kinds,	L. 5600	0	0
Potatoes and turnips,	3235	0	0
Cultivated hay,	1251	0	0
Meadow hay,	540	0	0
Flax,	38	0	0
Pasturage of cattle and sheep,	3979	0	0
Mines and quarries about,	255	0	0
	<hr/>		
	L. 14,898	0	0

Manufactures.—About thirty-five years ago, a small cotton manufactory was established here by Mr George Allan. The mill was burned down in 1831, and rebuilt by him on an enlarged scale; but in 1834, he sold the building to Mr David Watson, Glasgow, who has fitted it up as a spinning power-loom manufactory. It is five stories in height with attics. The spinning-machinery, which consists of about 4000 self-acting mule-spindles, was fitted up by Mr Smith of Deanston, on Smith and Orr's patent principle, and is allowed by judges to be equal, if not superior, to any in the kingdom. It is driven by two engines, one of 32, and the other of 12 horse power. The work employs in all 350 hands, who are paid about L. 250 per fortnight of wages. The men earn from 10s. to L. 1, 5s.; females from 5s. to 8s.; and boys and girls from 2s. 6d. to 5s. weekly. The average working time, according to the Act of Parliament, is sixty-nine hours weekly, or twelve hours

per day, for five days of the week, and nine hours for the remaining working day.

In 1834 a mill for the spinning of flax was erected by Messrs Wilson and Jamiesons, in the same locality as the power-loom manufactory, which has ever since been in full operation. The machinery is driven by an engine of 16 horse power, and the work employs 150 hands, who receive about L. 130 a fortnight in wages. The men are paid from 12s. to L. 1, 18s.; females about 6s.; and boys and girls from 2s. 6d. to 3s. per week. The hours of working at both establishments are the same.

On the opposite bank of the river, and at a short distance west of the above manufactories, is an extensive bleachfield belonging to Messrs William and James Knox. They commenced the business, at least on its present enlarged scale, in 1829, which they have ever since conducted with great skill, spirit, and success. They are chiefly employed by the thread manufacturers of Beith, and bleach, annually, about 140,000 lbs. of linen thread yarn, besides finishing about 1800 lbs. of coloured threads weekly. The number of hands in their employment has averaged, the last three years, from 90 to 100, who receive between L. 70 and L. 80 per fortnight in wages. The men are paid at the rate of from 12s. to L. 1; females from 5s. to 7s. 6d.; and a few boys and girls, 4s. weekly. The hands in this employment work ten hours a-day, or sixty hours per week, and, when working extra time, are paid proportionately. In addition to this extensive business, the Messrs Knox have recently erected in the vicinity of the bleachfield a mill for spinning flax, which, when in full operation, will employ between 60 and 70 hands.

A rope-work, commenced a few years ago, deserves likewise to be noticed in this enumeration of the several branches of manufacture lately introduced here. It employs, on an average, 20 spinners, men and boys, the produce of whose labour, consisting of band and common twines, finds in part a market on the spot, but the most of which is sent, we believe, to Paisley for disposal.

All these works, besides affording a very fair remuneration and support to those engaged in them, have brought a great deal of money into circulation, increased considerably the value of property, and benefited not a little the farmer by the proximity of a market for much of his produce, as well as many of the shopkeepers and resident handicraftsmen. There is, however, one class of intelligent operatives,—the hand-loom weavers, of whom there are

160 here, who have been long indifferently paid for their work, and many of whom are occasionally thrown out of employment altogether. They are engaged on the usual kinds of work furnished by the Glasgow and Paisley manufacturers, and may make when trade is ordinarily brisk, from 11s. to 12s. per week, working at the rate of twelve hours per day. At present, many of them work from five in the morning to ten at night, and, with all their exertions, they will not earn above 1s. 6d. or 1s. 8d. a-day. It is highly creditable to the spirit and principles of the great body of these mechanics, that, amidst all their privations, they maintain a respectable appearance, and that even when stretching their efforts to the utmost, in order to gain a scanty subsistence for their families, they should rarely, if ever, fail to bestow on their children the elements of an education, equal, at least in essentials, to that generally received by the offspring of more affluent parents.

There are likewise about 150 females employed by agents for Glasgow and Paisley houses, in sprigging or flowering muslin. This branch of industry is very well paid at present, as, without any outlay or much broken time, an expert and diligent sewer will earn from 7s. to 10s. a-week, though probably the average gains, one with another, throughout the year, do not exceed 1s. per day: This employment furnishes the means of decent support to many respectable females, and is decidedly preferred by nearly all the young women, natives of Kilbirnie, to working in either of the manufactories.

Agricultural Association.—There is no public or private association in this parish for the encouragement or improvement of any branch of industry; but a few of the farmers are members of the Ardrossan Farmer's Society, and others of the General Ayrshire Agricultural Association, both of which have excited considerable interest in the improvement of the breeds of cattle, and of the art of ploughing.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Village.—The only village here is that of Kilbirnie. It is pleasantly situated on the banks of the Garnock, and nearly in the centre of the most populous and fertile part of the parish. It consists principally of a long street lying south and north along the right bank of the river, and a shorter one extending westwards from its upper extremity. Two of the public works are situated on the left of the Garnock, as are likewise a row or two of dwelling-houses, the greater part of which are only of a few

years standing. As many of the houses are of recent construction, the village bears a cleanly and cheerful aspect, to which the light tint of the freestone used here in building, contributes materially. The town is altogether, indeed, of comparatively modern existence, as it consisted, fifty years previous to 1792, the date of the last Statistical Account, of only three houses. At the latter period, it contained "about 80 families or 300 people." In 1819, the number of inhabitants is estimated by Robertson in his "Topographical Description of Cunninghame" at 700, and in 1831, they were a little below 1000. As there have been two extensive manufactories established in the village since that date, and not fewer than 21 two-storied houses erected, besides others enlarged and repaired, the population at the present day cannot be less than 1500 or 1600, having thus more than doubled itself within the last twenty years.

The houses are, in general, lighted with gas, Kilbirnie being the smallest town in the west of Scotland thus accommodated. The gas is procured at the usual rates, partly from the works at the power loom manufactory, and is partly furnished by Mr John Allan, a spirited individual, who, at his own expense, has erected a work capable of supplying one-half of the village with the purest quality of this brilliant and economical light.

Beith, situated three miles and a-quarter from Kilbirnie, is its post-town, and as it contains branches of several banks, and is the seat of a monthly justice of peace court, much of the business of this parish is transacted there. Its market is, however, merely nominal, but the disposable produce of this, and the surrounding parishes, finds a ready and ever-absorbing outlet, in the great trading communities of Glasgow, Paisley, and Greenock.

Means of Communication.—There is a penny post twice a day to Beith. The person who has the charge of the sub-office in Kilbirnie undertakes the delivery of all letters in the parish. The turnpike road from Dalry to Lochwinnoch, intersects the lower part of the parish, in the direction of north-east; and another to Largs crosses its breadth to the west. There are likewise two turnpike roads leading eastwards, one of which runs by the north, and the other by the south end of Kilbirnie loch—though there is no part of the former, and only about a mile of the latter, within this parish. These and two good parish roads leading into the interior, give ready access to all the arable land, and leave scarcely any additional accommodation, in this respect, to be desired.

There are five and a-half miles of turnpike, and six and a-half miles of parish roads, all of which are kept in good repair. Two carriers travel once a-week to Glasgow, and on separate days the same number maintain the commercial intercourse with Paisley. There are likewise weekly opportunities of conveying parcels to Greenock, though there is no regular carrier on this road,—and from Beith to Largs, there pass through Kilbirnie twice a week as many carriers. No stage-coach runs nearer to this than Beith, nor is chaise, gig, or car kept for hire in the village.

Bridges.—There are not fewer than twelve bridges in the parish, two of which are in the village and a third hard by it. Several of these, however, span even in the worst of weather, insignificant streamlets, and are all, with the exception of that over the Garnock in Kilbirnie, on a level with the roads they connect, and of sufficient breadth. The one alluded to, besides being unnecessarily steep, is by much too narrow, there being only ten feet between the parapets. It stood a long time with the ledges partly broken down, until on a dark stormy night in the winter of 1811, a native fell over it, and was carried off by the swollen river and drowned. On the turnpike south of the loch, though by much the best and most frequented of the two roads leading eastward, there is no bridge over the river, which is, in consequence, altogether impassable after heavy rains. Pedestrians can, however, cross it by means of a wooden bridge, though that this may sometimes be attended with danger, was fatally exemplified, four years ago, in the case of a benighted farmer, who, missing his footing, was precipitated into the overwhelming waters and perished. The want of a bridge over this ford has long been felt,—a desideratum that will probably now be soon supplied, as the railway passes within less than half a-mile of it, and it is said to be by this line of road that the communication between it and Kilbirnie is to be established.

Ecclesiastical State. — The church of Kilbirnie belonged anciently to the monastery of Kilwinning. The Monks enjoyed the rectorial tithes and revenues, and a vicarage was established for serving the cure. In the Books of Adjournal, commencing in 1507, mention is made of Robert Peblis, in Brockly, being convicted of a felony done in the house of John Skeoch, capelano in Kilbirny. This is the first notice we have met with of a resident chaplain. In 1543, James Scott was vicar of Kilbirnie. Prior to that year, the Abbot of Kilwinning had granted to the College of

Justice a yearly pension of L. 28 Scots, from the vicarage of Kilbirnie, but on the 15th of December, a mandate by the Abbot, ordering said sum to be taken from the vicarage of Dunlop, is ratified by Parliament. At the Reformation, the parsonage tithes of Kilbirnie were held on a lease from the Abbot and Monks of Kilwinning for the small sum of L. 8 Scots yearly. In 1567, Mr Archibald Hamilton was vicar and exhorter, with the *thryd* of the vicarage, amounting to L. 31, 2s. 2d. He was forfeited in 1571, for joining with his clansmen, the Hamiltons, in defence of Queen Mary, and was succeeded by Robert Crawford, vicar and reader, who had the *hail* vicarage. His successor was Mr John Harriot, who died prior to 1619, as in that year, Mr William Russell, minister of Kilbirnie, appears as a debtor in the testament of Alexander Boyd, one of the regents of Glasgow College.* In 1670, Mr William Tullidaff was admitted under the first Indulgence, and in 1672, Mr Patrick Anderson was conjoined with him. Mr Tullidaff did not conform to the wishes of the Court, and was in consequence subjected to many hardships. On 8th July 1673, he was fined in the half of his stipend for not observing the 29th of May, the anniversary of Charles's restoration, and in 1684, he and others of the indulged ministers were imprisoned. At the Revolution in 1688, Mr John Glasgow was admitted and remained in the charge until his death in 1721, when he was succeeded by Mr James Smith, who died 11th February 1733. † To Mr Smith

* On the 15th June 1647, Mr Russell complained to the Presbytery, that John Braidine, one of his parishioners, had called his doctrine "dust and grey meal." The said John Braidine being summoned before the Presbytery for the offence, "appeared 29th June, and ingenuously confessed his fault. The Presbytery, considering how prejudicial such speeches were to the whole ministrie, after mature deliberation, does ordain, that first upon his knees he make ane confession of his fault before the Presbytrie, and yrafter to goe to his owne congregation, and there in the public place of repentance make ane acknowledgement of his fault likewise; and Mr Hugh M'Kaile to goe to Kilbirnie to receive him."—He submitted, and was absolved.

† On his tombstone in Kilbirnie churchyard, is the following epitaph, said to have been composed by Patrick, second Viscount Garnock, and which, as it will soon be illegible, is considered worthy of being preserved here.

"Bethia Barclay erected this monument in memory of her dear husband, Mr James Smith, minister of the Gospel in Kilbirny, who died 11th of February 1733. "And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

Buried here lys a worthy man,
Whose life, alas, was but a span;
He pleasure took by God's command,
To lead us to Emanuel's land.
He was a blessing to our place,
Where he did preach by power of Grace,
Bidding us Jesus' footsteps trace,
And from all sinning strive to cease.

succeeded Mr Malcolm Brown, who was admitted, 30th January 1734, and was in office until his death in 1794. He lived to the age of 100 years, and was, as is stated on his monument, "a man highly respected, esteemed and regretted." On the 6th of August 1795, the present incumbent was admitted.

The parish church is situated about half a mile south of the village, and may be considered as thus far removed now from the central point of the population. Its position is not, however, the subject of any complaint, as there is only one farm-house so far distant as three miles from it. It is the most ancient, and, in some respects, the most interesting ecclesiastical fabric extant in the west of Scotland. The body of the edifice, a simple oblong, 65 feet in length and 29 feet and a-half in breadth, must have been built considerably prior to the Reformation, for the Glengarnock aisle attached to its south-east extremity, is evidently a modern addition, though bearing the date 1597. The Craufurd gallery, extending in a direction opposite to this aisle, is the most recently constructed part of the edifice, having been built in 1654, by Sir John Craufurd, as is recorded in relieved characters over one of its windows. The church is, however, chiefly remarkable on account of the carvings in oak with which this gallery and the pulpit are profusely decorated, and for the numerous emblazoned proofs on the former, of the ancestral gentility of John, first Viscount Garnock, by whose commands all these adornments were executed in the early part of the last century. Along the front of this stately family-seat, there are no fewer than sixteen armorial escutcheons genealogically arranged, besides two elaborate representations of the Viscount's honours. This heraldic display, with the carved decorations and some ancient monumental remains, both within and without the church, render it an object unique in its kind, and one of no common interest to the curious in matters of heraldry and antiquity. As this venerable fabric will, in a short time, be inadequate to accommodate the rapidly increasing popu-

To us, alas, he is no more,
 His soul triumphs in endless gloir;
 Why should we then his death deplore,
 Who joined has the Heavenly choir?
 To make his character compleat,
 Nature blest him with temper sweet,
 Kind to his own, to all discreet.
 All who do love his memory,
 Must like him live, and like him dy,
 Then ye'll enjoy eternity,
 In ever praising the Most High.

lation, it is to be hoped that, instead of being supplanted, it will be found capable, when required, of receiving a satisfactory enlargement. Altogether, it is at present capable of easily accommodating 500 sitters. The whole of the seats, with the exception of five table ones and thirty-two free sittings, belong to the heritors. The table seats, which accommodate 55 sitters, having been erected or repaired by money borrowed from the poor's fund, are annually let for their benefit.

The following are the only benefactions ever made to the poor of this parish. Though neither of great amount nor very interesting, they certainly merit being recorded—a justice which has not yet been awarded them, at least in the usual manner that similar bequests are elsewhere acknowledged. In 1794, the Rev. Malcolm Brown bequeathed L. 10; in 1813, James Orr, farmer in Cockston, L. 20, the interest annually to be given to the poor; in 1823, William Kirkwood, a native of this parish, and late farmer in Knockside of Largs, L. 20; in 1829, the late James Gavin, residing in Glasgow, L. 50;* in 1831, John Kirkwood, a native of this parish, and late farmer in Baidland-hill of Dalry, L. 5; in 1834, Andrew Wilson, a native of this parish, and late merchant in Paisley, L. 5.

The manse is pleasantly situated about a quarter of a mile south-east of the church, and within a few yards of the water of Garrock. It is sufficiently commodious and substantial, having, along with the offices, been built in 1796. The glebe, consisting of eight acres and three roods of excellent land, lies conveniently around it, the yearly value of which is about L. 24. The stipend is eighty-four bolls, one firiot of oatmeal, and L. 127, 4s. 8½d.; communion elements included. The Earl of Eglinton is patron.

There is a neat and commodious chapel in the village belonging to the Reformed Presbytery, of which the Rev. James Ferguson is minister. It was built in 1824, and has accommodation for 480 sitters, but, as many of the members of this congregation belong to the adjoining parishes, the usual attendance does not probably

* The words of Mr Gavin's deed of settlement relative to this bequest are as follows:—"To the parish of Kilbirnie, Ayrshire, fifty pounds after the heritable property is disposed of, the interest of which to be paid for the education of honest poor people's children, each child to be allowed two years' education, and the management to be always under the direction of the kirk-session; and which session is to dispose of the original sum here bequeathed, in such a way that it may yield the highest interest, always secure that it may not be lost, and at the same time may never be alienated from the object already specified, namely, the education of as many honest poor people's children as can be accomplished by the yearly interest of the same."

exceed 240. The minister is paid from the seat-rents and from collections—the amount of the stipend being L. 80; besides which, he has a comfortable dwelling-house and a good garden.

The number of families belonging to the Establishment may be stated at 231; communicants, 300; families belonging to the Reformed Presbytery, 60; communicants, 130. The church and chapel are in general well attended. Of the floating population or incomers connected with the factories, there are a few families of Roman Catholics, and several others of no visible religious profession whatsoever.

Education.—The parish school, at which there is an average attendance of 60 pupils, is situated in the village. Here are taught, besides the ordinary branches of education, practical mathematics, book-keeping, Latin, and Greek. The fees are per annum—English, 10s.; English, with writing, 12s.; these with arithmetic, 14s.; and for Latin and Greek, 20s. Besides his fees, which may average L.30, the teacher has more than the legal accommodation, but the salary is the minimum, being L. 25, 15s. 4d. There are in the village likewise, three private or unendowed schools, at which the total average number of scholars is about 70; but at all of which, the branches of learning taught are confined to English, writing, and arithmetic. Nor in this enumeration of the sources of instruction, should a Sunday-school, under the superintendence of the Rev. James Ferguson, be unmentioned. It is well attended, and has been the means of disseminating much religious knowledge among the youth of both sexes.

None of the young between six and fifteen years of age, who have been brought up in this parish, are unable to read, and it is believed that, with the exception of a few females, there is not a native above the age of fifteen, who cannot write, or who is ignorant of the first rules of arithmetic. These facts require no comment; at least, they illustrate satisfactorily, that the people here are fully alive to the benefits of education, and that the present race of parents have little to reproach themselves with, in this respect, in not fulfilling their duties.

Libraries.—A subscription library, established here in 1820, consists now of upwards of 500 volumes. The books have been judiciously chosen, and are chiefly historical works, voyages and travels. The entry and annual subscription money are each 2s. 6d. There is likewise a small select congregational library connected with the Reformed Presbytery, composed of moral and religious

works. It is supported by the heads of families, and the books are lent gratis to the young people attending the Sunday-school.

Friendly Societies.—A society termed “The Kilbirnie Gardener’s Society,” having for its object reciprocal support during sickness, was instituted three years ago. It consists at present of 100 members, and the stock amounts to upwards of L. 100. The entry payment is 3s. 6d., and the annual assessment is 6s., paid by regular quarterly instalments. A member must have joined the Society five years, before being entitled to any benefit from the funds; but after this period, he receives 6s. per week, if bedrid; 4s., if unable to work, but not confined; and in the event of death, L. 1 is allowed in defrayment of funeral charges. As this Society is based on principles of acknowledged stability, it is to be hoped it may soon be generally supported.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of regular paupers on the poor’s fund, for the last five years, has been 13. During that time, 36 individuals have annually received occasional assistance. The regular poor receive from 5s. to 12s. per month. The average allowance to each person annually, is L. 2, 12s. The sum expended yearly in occasional assistance, is L. 33, 6s. 3½d; regular poor, L. 34, 10s. 6d. The sources of supply are, the funds derived from collections at the church door, averaging L. 22; interest of money, 16s.; rents of church seats, L. 3, 3s.; proclamation of banns and mortcloth dues, L. 5. The deficiency has hitherto been made up by a voluntary assessment of the heritors on the valued rent, but henceforth the real rent is to be assessed for this purpose. In the former Statistical Account, it is said, “there are few poor, and none that go a-begging; the poor’s funds are good, and more than sufficient for the parish poor;”—a statement totally inapplicable, with the exception of public begging, to the condition of the poor at the present day. The parochial funds, which, at that period, had accumulated to upwards of L. 300, have been long since exhausted, while the contributions of the charitable and voluntary assessments have, of late years, proved barely sufficient to meet the wants of the regular poor, and the still more numerous claimants for occasional assistance. Pauperism has not, however, kept more than a corresponding pace with the population since 1792, or if it has, it would not be difficult to assign its increase to other causes than to any decay of the virtuous feelings of decent pride among those liable by many casualties, exclusive of sickness and old age, to impoverishment.

While compulsory assessments are deprecated as fraught with manifold and permanent injuries to the poor and the parishes at large on which they are imposed, it is strange that, notwithstanding this belief, voluntary charity will not exert itself to avert the dreaded evil—thereby showing, that to “feed the hungry, and to clothe the naked,” is, we are afraid, regarded by many, even in this philanthropic age, more in the light of a hateful imposition, than in that of a sacred duty. But after all that has been said against this mode of provision, since there must be a tax for such a purpose, “I know of none,” says an eminent authority, “less subversive of industry and morals, than that established in Scotland, obliging the landholders,” and we would add the house proprietors, “in every parish, to meet at stated times, in order to provide a fund for the poor; but leaving the objects of their charity, and the measure, to their own humanity and discretion.”*

Fairs.—The principal fair in this place is held on the third Wednesday of May, old style, and is attended by a great concourse of people, being the largest horse-market in the west of Scotland. It is vulgarly called Brinnan’s day, which is evidently a corruption of Brandane’s day. The number of horses exhibited for sale at this fair, has averaged annually, these nine or ten years past, above 700, the aggregate value of which may be estimated between L. 8000 and L. 9000. Brinnan’s day has likewise been long celebrated for the sale of cooper-work and culinary utensils, such as platters, basins, ladles, &c. and spinning-wheels and reels. A considerable deal of these articles are still sold, though the demand for turned work for domestic uses is much lessened from what it was half a century ago, and the wheel and the reel have been all but superseded. Much general business is transacted among the country people at this fair:—rents paid, tradesmen’s accounts settled, new articles bespoke; and until lately, that shops have everywhere been established, many household wants were in a great measure supplied for the year.

There used to be other two fairs held in Kilbirnie, the trades-race, on the first Tuesday of July, and Crawford’s day, on the last Tuesday of October, both old styles. The former has gone down, in despite of the efforts of a few interested publicans to uphold it; and the other, which was a cow-fair, instituted, it is said, by the Crawfurds of Kilbirnie, has long since ceased to be a cattle-market, or even to be observed as a holiday.

* Kames’s Sketches of Civil Society—Sk. x.

Inns.—There are four inns, where travellers may be comfortably enough accommodated, and eleven ale or whisky-houses, in the village, and another at a toll-bar, within a quarter of a mile of it. The latter class of houses might assuredly, for any beneficial purposes they serve to promote, be dispensed with altogether. They are in a great measure supported by the hard-working artisan and labourer, all of whose expenditure in such haunts of thoughtlessness and dissipation, cannot otherwise be regarded than as so much deducted from individual or family comforts. In justice, however, to the character of at least the native population, it may be stated that neither hard-drinking nor sottish tipping, prevails to so great a proportionate extent in Kilbirnie, as in many of the neighbouring towns.

Fuel.—There is, as has been already stated, a coal-pit in the southern extremity of the parish, about a mile and a quarter from the village. Besides the common kind of coal, it furnishes another called splint, much in demand for the making of gas, and when the two are used together, they make a quick and cheerful fire. The former costs at the pit 7d., and the other 1s. per load; seven and a half of which make an ordinary cart, and ten loads a ton. A considerable quantity of the coals used here are, however, brought from the parishes of Beith and Dalry, and cost respectively on being laid down in the village, 7s. 4d. and 7s. 10d. per ton. Peats are procured from the high grounds, but are only used in kindling fires, and cost, including driving, 3s. a cart.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The principal agricultural improvements introduced into the parish within the last forty years may be thus enumerated:—better parish and turnpike roads,—superior accommodation in farm-buildings,—an improved system of husbandry, based on an extensive and skilful style of draining,—and, as a consequence of this, a greater breadth of land under tillage, and much heavier crops raised. To these it may be added, that waste lands have, to some extent, been enclosed and irrigated, and others planted; that greater facilities are now afforded for the thrashing and disposing of grain and of the produce of the dairy; and that the breeds of live-stock have been all of late years much improved. These constitute the most striking variations betwixt the present state of the parish, and that which existed at the time of the last Statistical Account.

The great increase of the village since 1792, as well as the

causes of its prosperity, has been already adverted to. The numerous advantages of the locality will, probably, from time to time, induce the establishment of other manufactories; and it is not by any means unlikely, that the progress of Kilbirnie in wealth, population, and extent, in the lapse of twenty years, may exceed considerably all the late advances, striking as these have been. In addition to what may be accomplished on the banks of the Garnock, should the projected iron works in the south-east quarter of the parish succeed, another source of prosperity will be opened, which no one, a few years ago, could have possibly anticipated,—while the railway from Glasgow to Ayr will confer many commercial advantages on this, and on all the districts it traverses.

Drawn up February 1840; Revised December 1841.

PARISH OF STEWARTON.*

PRESBYTERY OF IRVINE, SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR.

THE REV. CHARLES BANNATYNE STEVEN, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name and Boundaries.—THE name is evidently formed from the surname Stewart, first used as a family distinction by Walter II. in 1204. The district of Cuninghame, with others in the county, being the property of the Crown, was from time to time vested in the hands of some powerful family, and Stewarton, among others, being created into a separate lordship, became the inheritance of James, High Steward, in 1283. In the account of the charters granted by Robert I., II., and III., there is one by Robert III. to John Stewart Earl of Buchan, the Regent's son, and Elizabeth de Douglas, his spouse, daughter to Archibald Earl of Douglas, of the lands of Stewarton, and Armsheugh, and Dunlop, in Cuninghame, on the resignation of the Earl of Douglas.

This parish is situated in the district of Cuninghame, and is bounded by the parishes of Neilston and Mearns in Renfrewshire on the north-east; Fenwick, on the east and south-east;

* Drawn up by Mr Duncan Macfarlane, Schoolmaster.