

PARISH OF AVONDALE OR STRATHAVEN.

PRESBYTERY OF HAMILTON, SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR.

THE REV. WILLIAM PROUDFOOT, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE parish is not unfrequently named Strathaven or Straven; but Avondale is the proper name. Dale seems to be much more descriptive of the face of the country than Strath. There is a considerable town in the parish named Strathaven; so that now Strathaven is the name uniformly applied to the town, and Avondale to the parish. I shall speak of the town and parish separately.

Boundaries, Extent, &c.—Avondale is bounded on the north by the parishes of Glasford and Kilbride; on the west by Loudon and Galston and Sorn; on the south by Muirkirk and Lesmahagow; and on the east by Lesmahagow, Stonehouse, and part of Glasford. It contains nearly 64 square miles, (32,000 acres,) and yields a rental of nearly L. 20,000 a-year. The valued rent is L. 7650 Scots.

Topographical Appearances.—Though lying in rather a high district of the country, yet the lands are generally flat, rising gently from the banks of the river Avon, especially towards the west and south. There are several ridges and small hills in the parish, such as Kype's rigg, Hawkwood hill, Dungivel, and the hills on the boundaries of Ayrshire. There are also the interesting eminences called the Floors' hills, and the Kirkhill, but these are scarcely entitled to be named hills. None of these heights seem to rise more than 800 or 900 feet above the level of the sea.

Climate and Soil.—Upon the whole, the climate may be said to be rather moist; but it is at the same time healthy. The inhabitants are in general a long-lived race. Many of them at present living are above eighty years of age, and one is above ninety. Perhaps in few places is there a finer race of men than in Avondale. They are tall and stout, and well-formed. There are no particular diseases peculiar to the district. Throughout the greater part

of the parish the soil is light and dry, and susceptible of great improvement, especially in the higher districts.

Geology.—The rocks of this parish belong to the coal formation of the secondary class. The common whinstone or trap which is found in great abundance in every part of the parish, exhibits at its junctions with the coal formation many interesting phenomena. Clay ironstone abounds. Limestone is very plenty in various districts; and is wrought at three different places. There is also a sufficient supply of coal for burning the lime in the immediate vicinity of the kilns. But though perfectly fitted for burning the lime, this coal is not accounted sufficiently good for family use. Coal used for family purposes is brought from the works of Quarter, in the parish of Hamilton, and Marlage, in the parish of Dalserf. The distance to each is about five miles; and 14 cwt. can be laid down at Strathaven for 5s.

Hydrography.—The Avon is the principal stream in the parish, which it divides nearly into two equal parts. It rises on the confines of Ayrshire, and runs nearly east by north. It is a beautiful stream, with gently sloping banks; but which unfortunately are almost entirely destitute of wood. Indeed the want of wood is felt throughout the whole parish, especially in the upper district of it. There are several smaller streams which join the Avon in its progress through the parish. There are Cadder and Pomilion on the north; and Givel, or Geil, Lochar, Lowhere, or Lockart, and Kype, on the south. On this last stream at Spectacle-eye-miln, about a mile to the south of Strathaven, there is a considerable waterfall. The waters of the Kype fall over a precipice of about fifty feet. The scenery in the neighbourhood has been much admired. Trouts abound in all these streams. Salmon used to be found at the very source of the Avon, till some erections were raised lower down the river, which for some years has prevented them from ascending. Report says that arrangements are now making to permit the fish again to ascend; so that we are in the expectation of being once more visited by this delightful fish.

Zoology.—*Grouse, &c.*—Vast quantities of grouse are to be found on the moors in the higher districts of the parish. His Grace the Duke of Hamilton has some thousands of acres in sheep pasture, and kept for grouse shooting. Perhaps few places in the south of Scotland are more favourable for game than the Strathaven moors. Partridges abound in the low lands. Plovers and ducks, &c. are to be found everywhere.

Horses and Cows.—The real breed of Clydesdale horses is reared here in considerable numbers. Tradition states, that, at a remote period, one of the Dukes of Hamilton sent a superior breed of horses to Avondale. They were kept in the castle; and from these and the common mares of the country have sprung the real Lanarkshire or Clydesdale breed of horses. It has been alleged, that of late this breed has been injured by being too much crossed with lighter horses, intended more for coaches and the saddle. They are, however, still to be found here in great perfection and beauty. The cows kept here are of the Ayrshire kind. They are reared in great numbers. Indeed, it is said that this race of cattle can be obtained here as pure as in most places in Ayrshire. It has been alleged that the Ayrshire farmer, when tempted by a price, will part with the very best of his stock; while with us, the farmers retain the best, and part with those which are accounted not so valuable.

Strathaven veal has long been held in high estimation. It is reared here in great quantities, and sent both to Edinburgh and Glasgow; but chiefly to the Glasgow market. In preparing the animals for market, they are kept in a dark place, and fed with great care. The ordinary price of fed veal is from L. 3 to L. 5. But a much higher sum has been obtained for those particularly large and well fed.

Botany.—*Hippuris vulgaris* (rare) is found in Moss Malloch; *Utricularia vulgaris*, in Lochgate Loch; *Eriophorum vaginatum*, in the moors; *Sherardia arvensis*, in dry corn fields; *Plantago maritima*, near Drumclog; *Parnassia palustris*, in wet moors; *Nasturtium terrestre*, in the rivulet near the Relief manse; *Ophioglossum vulgatum*, in high wet pastures; *Lycopodium selaginoides*, moors in several places; *Sphagnum cuspidatum*, East Lochgate; *Dicranum flexuosum*, moss east of Hawkwood-hill; *Bryum attenuatum*, near the head of Unthankburn; *Merulius crassipes*, on the roots of decayed trees; *Helvella mitra*, Bonnanhill.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Antiquities.—A Roman road can be traced for a considerable distance in the parish. It runs along the south side of the Avon, and passes the farm of Walesley. On the farm of Gennerhill some shoes or sandals of Roman manufacture have been found, and also some small coins. A few years ago some coins were also discovered on the lands of Torfoot, near to Loudoun-hill, and on the very line by which the Romans when crossing the Caledonian forest, must have marched towards the west coast.

Proprietors.—In this parish there must be nearly 200 heritors. Consequently, property is very much subdivided and broken down. His Grace the Duke of Hamilton is patron of the parish. He is superior of nearly the whole, and proprietor of more than one-fourth of the lands. In Hamilton of Wishaw's account of the Sheriffdom of Lanark, it is stated, that "this baronie of Avendale did anciently belong to the Bairds, and thereafter came to Sinclair, and from them to the Earle of Douglass, with whom it continued several ages; and after his fatal forfaulture in anno 1455, it was given by King James the 3d to Andrew Stewart, whom he created Lord Avendale, and it continued with him and his heirs until 1538 or thereby, that he exchanged it with Sir James Hamilton for the baronie of Ochiltree, in the Parliament 1543, from which time it continued with the successors of Sir James Hamilton until it was acquired by James first of that name, Marquis of Hamilton, and continued with his successors since." There are twelve commissioners of supply in the parish. The principal properties are Netherfield, belonging to Miss Young, Overton, Lambhill, Newton, &c.

Parochial Registers.—The following records are at present in the possession of the kirk-session of Avondale. Minutes of the kirk-session, Vol. i. from 1660 to 1701; Vol. ii. from 1734 to 1757; Vol. iii. from 1779 to 1827; Vol. iv. from 1827 to 1834. Registers of births, Vol. i. from 1699 to 1785; Vol. ii. from 1785 to 1834. Registers of proclamation, Vol. i. from 1723 to 1755; Vol. ii. from 1775 to 1834: A bound book containing a copy of Shawtonhill's mortification: The Acts of the General Assembly, Vol. i. from 1638 to 1649; Vol. ii. from 1690 to 1715; Vol. iii. 1715 to 1724.

Remarkable Occurrences.—The people in this parish suffered much from the "Bloody Claverhouse," who frequently visited this district during the "persecuting times." He never forgot the defeat which he experienced at Drumclog in this parish, on Sabbath the 1st June 1679. On that day the country people had met for worship in great numbers, many of them armed, and determined, if attacked, to defend themselves. Claverhouse rested his men some time in the town of Strathaven, and then marched west about six miles, when he came in sight of the Covenanters at Drumclog, a farm belonging to the Duke of Hamilton, about two miles to the east of Loudoun-hill. The armed part of the congregation marched steadily forward to meet him, and chose their situation with much skill. It was at the foot of a gently rising ground, with a small rivulet in front, the banks of which were so

soft that the horses of the dragoons were unable to pass. In endeavouring to cross this little stream, the military were exposed to the deadly aim of the country people, who from all accounts behaved with uncommon coolness and steadiness. Claverhouse himself was in imminent danger. He was the first to carry the news of his own defeat to Glasgow.—Auchengelloch in this parish was also famous for its conventicles; but as it is quite inaccessible to cavalry, it does not appear that the people ever experienced any interruption. At this latter place, a small stone monument was lately erected, pointing out the place, where the “remnant of the covenant,” far out in the wild and the waste, met together to hear the glad tidings of salvation proclaimed to them.

I grieve to be under the necessity of noticing a “rising” here of a very different description in 1819, — a rising in open rebellion against lawful authority, and intended against both the altar and throne. I refer to the attempt of a few deluded persons calling themselves “Radicals” who, with *something like* weapons in their hands, marched from this place towards Glasgow, under the command of a James Wilson, whose life was soon after forfeited to the outraged laws of his country. It does not appear that Wilson ever contemplated carrying matters so far as to become an open rebel against the laws of his country; but he had infused a spirit into his companions which he was unable to control. This rising was in the utmost degree contemptible, for it comprised no more than thirteen individuals, deluded by a false report that a general rebellion had taken place in Glasgow. It has been remarked that none of those who joined in the ludicrous crusade afterwards experienced any thing like prosperity.

III.—POPULATION.

In 1801 the population was	3623
1811,	4353
1821,	5030
1831,	5761
Population of the town in 1831,	3597
Number of families in the parish,	1246
chiefly employed in agriculture,	311
in trade, manufactures, or handicraft.	672

The number of weavers in both town and parish may be said to amount to nearly 800. Many of the weavers are proprietors of their own houses, and upon the whole are diligent and industrious. There are several extensive dealers in cheese and cattle. In these two departments, there is perhaps more business done in Strathaven than in all Lanarkshire, with the exception of the city of Glas-

gow. A branch of the Glasgow Union Bank has been established here for some time. The inhabitants are a well-informed, reading people.

Marriages.—In 1828 the number of proclamations in order to marriage was 50. In 1829 it was 58; in 1830, 61; in 1831, 54; in 1832, 61; in 1833, 65; and in 1834, 56. Among the lower classes, large gatherings at weddings are very common. There is uniformly a race for the *broose*. When the distance from the house of the bridegroom is considerable, the company ride on horseback; the bridegroom and bride, and as many as can crowd together travel generally in a chaise or coach. The *broose*, or contest who shall first reach the house of the bridegroom, is then very keenly maintained by the young men belonging to the different districts of the parish; and if the parties belong to different parishes, much anxiety is displayed by each party to get before the other, and obtain honour to their parish.

Births.—The number of births cannot be accurately stated, as they are not regularly recorded in the parish register.

Burials.—The number of burials here in 1828 was 147. In 1829, 114; in 1830, 114; in 1831, 134; in 1832, 199. (This season we were visited with Asiatic Cholera, of which 50 of our people died.) In 1833, 156; and in 1834, 115.

Customs, &c.—Much time is lost, and no small expense unnecessarily incurred, by the way in which funerals are conducted in this parish. Great numbers of both men and women usually attend and sit together and receive their “service” together in the barn or place of meeting. Though warned to attend at twelve o’clock, they seldom make their appearance till much later, and do not leave the place of meeting with the body before two o’clock; and having perhaps to travel several miles, the interment is seldom over till towards four o’clock. In general, three “services” are given, two glasses of wine, and one glass of whisky or rum. A practice prevailed at one time very generally here, but which is now beginning to wear out, of collecting vast numbers of the friends and neighbours together, to witness the “chesting,” or putting the body into the coffin. The writer of this has witnessed forty persons present on such an occasion; after which they generally drink tea, perhaps in the same apartment with the confined remains of their departed friend; and, except when some pious influential person is present, it is to be feared that the conversation is not altogether becoming the occasion.

In both town and parish the inhabitants are hospitable, kind, and obliging. They are also cleanly, sober, and industrious.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—It has already been stated that the parish contains 32,000 acres: of these rather more than the half have been cultivated; and about 2000 are in undivided common.

Within the last thirty years the rental of the parish has been doubled. Vast quantities of moss and marsh have been reclaimed, and are now yielding most abundant crops. The Strathaven moss, consisting of about 200 acres, and which, little more than half a century ago, was perfectly worthless, is now drained and improved, and is perhaps more productive, than any land in the parish. Some of it is let as high as L. 4 an acre. Throughout the whole parish, the farmers are actively and extensively engaged in fur draining their lands. They in general open a drain in every furrow, which they fill up to a certain depth with stones; and as there is plenty of whinstone in every district of the parish, this process may be carried on to any extent, and to very great advantage. The rental of the parish might be increased to a very great amount.

This is a pastoral district, and the dairy produce is what the farmers chiefly depend upon for the payment of their rents. The Dunlop cheese is made here as good as in any part of Scotland. In many parts of the parish little more land is cultivated than seems necessary for the support of the cattle. The lands, from one end of the parish to the other, are very favourable for pasture. There are, however, excellent crops of oats raised everywhere,—bear or big, barley, and on some farms to the east of Strathaven, excellent wheat. Great quantities of potatoes are also planted, which are chiefly disposed of to the farmers in the low country for seed. Though the soil be peculiarly adapted for turnips, yet they are not extensively cultivated; and in a district where so many cattle are reared, and so much food required, it seems not a little strange that this should be the case.

Rent of Land.—In the lower parts of the parish, and in the vicinity of the town of Strathaven, the lands are well cultivated, and very productive. Some of them sold during the war as high as L. 140 an acre for cultivation. Even now, L. 100 and L. 105 an acre can be obtained for land in the immediate neighbourhood of the town. There, the annual rent of land is about L. 4 an acre; at a distance from the town, the rent falls much lower.

The gross produce of the parish I am unable to ascertain with accuracy.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Roads, &c.—In every part of the parish the roads are excellent and kept in good repair. It is greatly in favour of Avondale that two turnpike roads, the one leading to Ayr, and the other to Muirkirk, run nearly parallel to one another from the town of Strathaven to the western extremity of the parish, the one on the north and the other on the south side of the Avon. The other roads kept by the parish statute labour extend to perhaps sixty miles, and cost the parish, including every thing, about L. 300 a year. There are about 30 bridges over the different rivulets in the parish, but in general they are too narrow. The road commissioners employ a clerk, treasurer, and overseer, (who is in general the same person) at the very moderate salary of L. 15 a year. He superintends all their road operations, and has improved the bridges and lines of communication very much.

Town of Strathaven.—Strathaven was erected into a burgh of barony in 1450. It had an extensive common, which has now all become private property. There is a weekly market, besides a great many annual fairs. It is ruled by a baron bailie, who is appointed by the Duke of Hamilton. For some years past the town has been deprived of this functionary, or if there be a person appointed to that situation, he is non-resident. The population of the parish of Avondale and town of Strathaven may be stated now to be 6000. The population of the town in 1781 was 1444. In 1791 it had increased to 1610, and in 1831 to 3000; and at present it may be rated at 4000.

Strathaven lies prettily at the end of a small ridge of eminences on the banks of the little stream of Pomilion, which runs through it, and divides it nearly into two equal parts, and contributes greatly to its cleanliness and comfort. It has the appearance of being a very old town. The houses in the old part of it are very much crowded together, and the streets are narrow and irregularly built. It is built in the immediate vicinity of the castle, which is now in ruins. No doubt the cause of the narrowness of the streets, and the crowding of the houses so much together, was, that the inhabitants wished to be under the protection of the castle. Though now in ruins, the castle is still a beautiful feature in our landscape. It is said to have been built by Andrew Stewart, grandson of Murdoch Duke of Albany, and must have been a place of considerable strength.

It stands on a rocky eminence on the banks of the little stream of Pomilion, whose waters flow round the greater part of it. In former times it is highly probable that it was entirely surrounded by this stream, and that the approach to it was by a drawbridge.* Of late years, some excellent houses have been built, and new broad streets formed in the town. A number of neat small villas have been erected by some of the wealthier citizens in the neighbourhood. A few years ago, a number of the inhabitants formed themselves into a company to supply the town with gas, which seems to be succeeding well. Many of the private houses, and almost all the shops are lighted with gas; and it is expected that all the streets will soon be lighted in the same manner.

Means of Communication.—There is a post-office here, and a runner to Hamilton every morning at nine o'clock. There is a very ready communication with Edinburgh, Glasgow, Ayr, and Hamilton every day. The improvement in this respect must appear very striking to the old inhabitants. About sixteen years ago, there was not even a caravan to Glasgow, and there was no intercourse with either Edinburgh or Glasgow, but by a carrier's cart, or on horseback, or by sending to Hamilton for a post-chaise. Since that time the road between Edinburgh and Ayr by the Gairion Bridge has been opened, so that now we have not only coaches to all these places every day (except Sunday) but also post-horses and chaises, gigs, and cars in abundance.

Markets, &c.—There are excellent markets here of all kinds. Butcher-meat can be got at all times only little (if at all) inferior to that of Glasgow. In the town there are three butchers, who deal extensively, and seven bakers, all of whom seem well employed. There is also a brewery. We have a regular market every Thursday, which is well attended, and much business done. The country people have a very bad practice of not coming to market till four or five, or perhaps six o'clock in the evening. They seem to think that by this they gain a day's work, but they must in consequence be often late in returning to their families. It is strange that though there are here weekly markets, and a great number of fairs, there are no markets or times fixed for hiring servants,—

* It is said that the late Duchess Anne of Hamilton, commonly known by the name of the good Duchess, took refuge here during the usurpation of Cromwell, and never forgot the kindness which she experienced from her tenants and vassals in these days of her distress. She died in 1716. After this the Castle of Avondale fell very rapidly into decay. No attention seems to have been paid to it; and it is now fast mouldering away.

which occasions not a little inconvenience both to masters and servants, as they have to travel either to Douglas or Glasgow, and thus incur both much expense and fatigue.

Ecclesiastical State.—The parish church was erected in 1772, and stands on the west side of the town of Strathaven. It formerly stood in the church-yard, a little to the east of the castle, one of the most beautiful situations in the place. It says little for the taste of the heritors of former days, that they permitted it to be moved to its present site. Even when first built, it was far too small for the inhabitants; and that no attention was paid to the application of the people of Strathaven to have it enlarged, which they offered to do in part at their own expense, evinced a very improper spirit on the part of the heritors. After it was built, it remained unseated for considerably more than twenty years; and after it was seated, more than one law-suit before the Supreme Court took place respecting the division of the seats. It is seated to contain about 800 sitters, so that there is here a grievous deficiency of church accommodation. The 4000 inhabitants of the town have a legal title to only 24 sittings in the parish church. About two-thirds of the country population, and a great number in the town, profess to belong to the Established Church; but of course there must be among these many who do not attend public worship; and on inquiring the cause of absence, they meet us daily with the unanswerable reply, "we have no seat." In consequence of the deficiency of accommodation in the present church, and the unkind manner in which they had been used by the then heritors, the inhabitants erected the present Relief meeting-house, to contain about 900. There is also a place of worship here connected with the United Secession body seated for fully 600. The usual attendance at the first of these places is said to be 1000, and at the latter 350. The parish church is well attended. Many of the country people come from the distance of 6, 7, 8, and some of them nearly 9 miles. Those who are most distant are very seldom absent, and scarcely have I ever heard a complaint seriously made on account of their distance from church.

Parochial Visitations.—Ever since the Reformation, the ministers of Avondale have been in the habit of visiting and catechising the people every year. That good practice is still kept up. The diets of examination in the country are remarkably well attended; those in the town not so well; and here also the visits must be less frequent.

The present manse was built about twenty years ago. It is an excellent house, and is in a good state of repair. It was the private property of the former minister. After his death, the house and about six acres of land were bought by the heritors, and an excambion took place of the old manse, and that part of the glebe which lay on the side of the great road to Ayr near the church, and the present manse and lands adjoining. This transaction was agreeable and beneficial to all parties. It improved the living, and turned out well for the heritors. The glebe consists of about $7\frac{3}{4}$ acres. There does not appear to be any grass glebe. The present glebe was augmented to its present size by the repeated excambions which have taken place. The stipend is fixed at 19 chalders, half meal, half barley, and L. 10 of communion elements. There are also L. 5 annually paid by the Duke of Hamilton, being a mortification by the late Duchess Anne. The amount of stipend for crop 1834 was L. 281, 3s. 4d. On account of the number of heritors, and the difficulty of collecting the stipend, the present minister has to employ a factor.

There is a catechist here, or a preacher of the Gospel, who assists the parish minister. He preaches one-half of the year, visits the sick, and catechises the parish. He is appointed by the noble family of Hamilton, who pay him, as fixed by the late good Duchess Anne, the annual sum of 500 merks.

Education.—The parish schoolmaster has the maximum salary, and a good house and garden. His fees may amount to L. 25 per annum. Many good scholars have been taught here. Altogether there are 13 schools in the parish, and the number attending them at last annual examination was somewhat under 600. There are also several evening schools and Sabbath schools well attended. There is scarcely any child above six years of age unable to read. If any, the fault must lie with the parents, as the schoolmaster, most generously, is willing to teach them gratis, where the parents are poor, and the parish supplies the ordinary school books. The master keeps borders. The branches taught in the school are, Latin, Greek, English, English grammar, and writing, arithmetic, geography, mensuration, and mathematics. There is a small portion of land attached to the school at Gilmourton, with a schoolmaster's house and school-room; and a legacy of fifteen shillings a-year was lately left to the small school at Barnock, near Peelhill. These are the only schools that have

any thing like an endowment. The others are kept by persons at their own risk.

Libraries.—There is a good library, instituted in 1809, and containing from 1100 to 1200 volumes. There are also some smaller libraries, intended chiefly for the young persons attending the Sabbath schools.

Inns, &c.—In the town of Strathaven there are excellent inns, and the very best accommodation and attendance; at the same time, it is much to be lamented that so many persons should be licensed to sell spirituous liquors. The certificate of the clergyman is not essential, in order to obtain a license; and the authorities have occasionally been less scrupulous than they ought to have been in granting it. In the town of Strathaven alone, no fewer than thirty-five persons are licensed to sell spirituous liquors.

Charitable and other Institutions.—A savings bank was commenced here fully twenty years ago; but, as it did not meet with proper encouragement, it was given up. In all probability this was owing to the preference given by the people to enter Friendly Societies. There are here five of these; some of them have been in existence for 100 years. At first, these societies prospered exceedingly, and did much good; afterwards, they were not so prosperous; but they are now put on a better footing, and are likely to do well.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The number of persons receiving parochial aid has for some years past been rather on the increase. The number on the roll at August 1834 was 98. They were paid during the year the sum of L. 510; L. 50, besides, were distributed as occasional aids to about forty poor persons not on the roll. Our poor's assessment at present is greatly increased in consequence of several of our paupers being in a state of derangement. One of them is boarded in the Lunatic Asylum of Glasgow; and some of the others are kept by friends in the parish, at a very high weekly allowance. The funds necessary for the support of the poor are made up by the annual interest of mortifications, (amounting to L. 800,) which yield at present L. 32 a-year, and a compulsory assessment; the one-half of which assessment is raised from the heritors, according to the valued rent of their lands; and the other half from the householders, (including resident heritors,) in proportion to their means and substance. The average annual collection at the church door is under L. 14.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

It seems not a little remarkable that no public works or mills have been erected at Strathaven or in its neighbourhood. Abundance of water to drive machinery might be obtained at a trifling expense. An embankment might be erected at Hapton's Craigs for perhaps less than L. 100, which might supply any number of mills every day of the year. The excellence of the roads and the ready communication with Glasgow and the Clyde, as well as the healthiness of the situation, are all most favourable for such undertakings. I am of opinion that Strathaven is only in its infancy; and that from its locality, and from the industry and enterprise of its inhabitants, it is likely to rise speedily into importance.

Enclosures and plantations would improve our scenery exceedingly. This is all we require to render the place really beautiful. Many of the smaller heritors have planted to a considerable extent of late, and are still laudably persevering in their operations. But, in general, their belts are too narrow, and they do not seem to plant the best kind of trees for our district. They chiefly put in the larch and the Scotch fir, which do well for a time, but are not long lived. Let these be mixed with hard wood, and generations to come will be benefited by them. The Duke of Hamilton has done much of late, and is still doing much, in draining his lands, and putting in hedge-rows along the sides of the great roads to Ayr and Muirkirk, and in some of the cross fences between his several farms: it would lay Avondale under unspeakable obligations, if his Grace would proceed a little farther, and give us broad belts of planting. In a few years, he or his family would receive an ample return in the improvement of the scenery, the increase of their rental, and the gratitude of their tenants.

July 1835.