

PARISH OF BORROWSTOWNNESS (COUNTY OF LINLITHGOW)

By the Rev. Mr ROBERT RENNIE

Name, Situation, Extent - BORROWSTOWNNESS derives its name from the small village of Borrowstown (1). The parish is situated in the county and presbytery of Linlithgow, and in the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale. The town stands about 3 miles north from the presbytery seat, and about 18 miles north-west from Edinburgh, the seat of the Synod.

Prior to the year 1634, Borrowstownness belonged to the parish of Kinneil. The inhabitants then becoming numerous, built a church, finding it inconvenient to travel nearly 2 miles to the Old Church at Kinneil, and petitioned the Parliament of Scotland, A.D. 1649, for a disjunction, and a separate minister. Parliament granted the prayer of the petition, and after several visitations, the presbytery of Linlithgow found it necessary, that Borrowstownness should be erected into a parish by itself, bounded on the south, by Graham's dyke; on the north, by the sea; on the east, by Thirlestone, and on the west, by the castle wall, commonly called "Capie's wall." In December 1669, the Duke and Duchess of Hamilton, obtained an act of the Scotch Parliament, declaring the church lately built within the town to be "the kirk of the hail barony Kinneil and Borrowstownness." From that period, the parishes have been united, and considered as one. The parish now is about 4 English in length, from east to west, and about 2½ in breadth, from south to north.

Nearly of a triangular form, it is bounded on the east and south by the parishes of Carriden and Linlithgow; on the west and south, by the river Avon, which divider it from the parishes of Polmont and Muiravonside; and on the north, it is bounded by the Frith of Forth, reckoned 4 miles in breadth, directly opposite to the burgh of Culross.

Surface, Soil, Rent, Produce - The parish comprehends more than 320 English acres, all properly divided and well inclosed, except about 126 acres in the neighbourhood of the town, which are let or feued for the conveniency of the inhabitants. The surface of the high ground or dry-field, which may contain 2713 acres, is uneven, rising gradually from the Frith to the south, and sloping gently on the west, to the banks of the Avon. It is let at about 24s per acre. The soil is deep and heavy, of a thick, loamy consistence. About 330 acre of the north-west part of the parish, are carse ground. It is of the same nature with the carse of Falkirk, and reckoned rather superior in quality. Prior to the year 1750, this land was let at a low rent. At that period, a new lease was granted, at 18s 4d per acre. In the year 1770, another lease was granted at L1:18:6d per acre. And in A.D. 1792, the last lease was granted at L.2:10s per acre. The valued rent of the parish is L.3559 8s Scots, and the real rent at present is reckoned about L.3000, exclusive of the coal and salt. In general, the ground over all the parish is in good order, and capable of the highest improvement. A farmer employs 2 or 3 ploughs, with sometimes 2 horses and sometimes 4 in a plough. No oxen are employed for the purpose of husbandry, and grain appears a greater object than pasturage. The average price of a good horse reared in the parish, and 5 years old, is L.20. A good cow of the same age, is sold at L.6. Beans, wheat, peas, barley, and oats, are sown in rotation. Beans, peas, and oats are sown in March and April; barley in April, and the beginning of May; wheat for the most part is sown in September and October. If the season is favourable, harvest begins in August, and ends in October. The crop is reaped by domestics, day-labourers, or servants hired for the purpose, and their wages vary according to contingent circumstances. Within these 20 years sown grass has been introduced into the parish, and pretty good crops of hay have been produced. Besides many clumps of young firs in a thriving state, there are upwards of 70 acres of natural wood in the vicinity of Kinneil house.

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Heritors - The Duke of Hamilton is proprietor, and superior of the whole parish of Borrowstownness, except the farm of Muirhouse, afterwards to be mentioned; it holds of the Crown by a charter from Charles II. His Grace the present Duke never resided in the parish. The house of Kinneil, an ancient seat of that noble family, is large and habitable. It is built on the top of a beautiful bank about 50 feet above the level of the sea. The architecture seems ancient, though not of a Gothic appearance. The main house fronts east, is 4 stories high, with two large turrets. Many of the rooms are neat, and in good order. Some of them are spacious, and the finest figures wrought in tapestry, are to be seen in perfect preservation. From the high story, you ascend by a cupola to a flat lead roof, which is surrounded by a parapet-wall, several feet high; and the spectator securely enjoys at once, an extensive, variegated, and grand prospect. At some distant period, a wing has been added to the north end of the house, containing some elegant apartments. The house is surrounded by two gardens, by large inclosures, and by aged planting, which forms beautiful natural vistas; and though now uninhabited, in other times it was the residence of Nobility, and the retreat of Kings.

Population - In Dr Webster's report, A.D 1755, the parish contained 2668 souls.

Present population (2)	Town 2613	
	Country 565	3178
Population A.D. 1755		2668
Increase		510

Abstract of Baptisms, Death, and Marriages, for Seven Years preceding 1794.

Baptisms

Years	Males	Females	Total
1787	60	69	129
1788	61	47	108
1789	68	51	119
1790	54	51	105
1791	47	39	86
1792	42	54	96
1793	38	45	83
	370	356	726
			Average 103 ⁵ / ₇

Deaths

Years	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
1787	32	38	70
1788	23	27	55
1789	47	36	83
1790	32	25	57
1791	22	33	55
1792	38	37	75
1793	28	33	61
	227	229	456
			Average 65 ¹ / ₇

Marriages

1787	37
1788	28
1789	21
1790	27

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1791	23
1792	25
1793	19
	180
	Average $25 \frac{5}{7}$

Baptisms for 7 years, from 1752 to 1759 - 617 - average of $87 \frac{1}{19}$
Deaths, 505 - average $72 \frac{1}{19}$
Marriages, 128 - average $18 \frac{2}{19}$
Twins born in the parish for 10 years, from 1784, 6 times.

In the parish, there is one minister of the Established Church, one preacher, three students of divinity, and 293 dissenters, including all sectaries and their children (3). The Antiburghers only have a place for public worship; but no minister. The Burghers were connected with a congregation in Linlithgow.

Town - Borrowstounness is a Burgh of Barony, governed by a baillie appointed by the Duke of Hamilton. No certain information can be obtained when it was built, or when it was erected into a Burgh of Regality; but it was made a Burgh of Barony, when the Jurisdiction Act was repealed in 1748 (4). It is situated on the north-east corner of the parish, almost on a level with the sea. At high-water, the tide washes the north side of the town. The two principal streets are narrow, and running from west to east, about 300 yards, terminate in one, which is continued about 350 yards farther. The houses, bearing the marks of antiquity, are low and crowded; but for the most part, clean and commodious. The smoke from the coal-works, was lately a great nuisance. The town involved continually in a cloud, the houses were blackened with soot, the air impregnated with vapour, and strangers were struck with the pandemonian appearance of the place. But these nuisances being now removed from the immediate vicinity, to a considerable distance, and more attention paid to cleaning the streets, the air is more pure and salubrious, and the town assumes a very different aspect. Still, indeed, the smoke from the Grange coal works on the east, the Bo-ness salt-pans on the west, and the dust excited by the carts carrying coals to the quays for exportation, occasionally incommode the inhabitants.

An elegant building, said to be an exact model of Inveraray house, was built at the head of the harbour, about 20 years ago, by the Duke of Hamilton. The ground floor was intended for a Prison, the second for a Court-room, and the attic story, for a School. But, the original intention not having been carried into execution, this fine building is going to ruin. Any rooms in repair, are employed as granaries. If the original design were executed, the house would be highly useful and ornamental to the place.

Water is sometimes scarce in summer, the coal-mines having diverted all the springs from their former channels. It is to be found, however, at a small distance from the town, in great abundance, and of an excellent quality, fit for every domestic purpose. It is proposed to bring it to the town by pipes, for the benefit of the inhabitants. Crowded as the houses may appear to a stranger, no bad consequences are felt. No endemical diseases prevail. The epidemics, such as the small-pox, measles, chincough, &c. are not more frequent than in other places. Dysenteries are very rare; and fevers, when they do prevail, are in general of a low, nervous class. It has been observed, that health is enjoyed in a greater degree about Borrowstounness, than in many other towns of its size and population. This is easily accounted for. The shore is washed by the Forth, twice every 24 hours, when, from the influx and reflux of the river, a great evaporation of vegetable effluvia must impregnate the atmosphere; which, combined with the vapours from the salt-pans in the immediate neighbourhood, will correct any septic quality in the air. The walks about the town, are romantic and inviting; the walks on the quays, and on the west beach are, at all times, dry and pleasant, much fitted to promote health and longevity. But here, as in many other places specified in the Statistical Account of Scotland, tippling houses are too numerous. It may be seriously regretted, by the friends of religion and virtue, that so many people are licensed to vend ardent spirits in every town and village. Such places ensnare the innocent, become the haunts of the idle and dissipated, and ruin annually the health and morals of thousands of

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mankind. Perhaps, if the malt-tax were abolished, and an adequate additional tax laid upon British spirits, as in the days of our fathers, malt-liquor would be produced, to nourish and strengthen, instead of whisky, which wastes and enfeebles the constitution: Or, were Justices of the Peace to limit the number of licences issued, by apportioning them to the population of each place, and by granting them to persons of a respectable character, a multitude of grievances would be redressed, to which the innocent spouse, and the helpless infant are daily exposed.

"O' a' the ills poor Caledonia
 "E'er yet preed, or e'er will taste,
 " Brew'd in hell's black Pandemonia,
 " Whisky's ill, will skaith her maist." (5)

A List of the Mechanics in the town of Borrowstownness, exclusive of Journeymen and Apprentices.

Bakers	11
Barbers	5
Blacksmiths	7
Butchers	3
Clock and watch-makers	2
Coopers	3
Joiners, glaziers, cartwrights.&c.	15
Masons and slaters	3
Tailors	10
Shoemakers	15
Weavers	6

There is 1 surgeon, 1 writer, 1 brewery in the town, and 1 distillery in the parish.

Wages, and Prices of Provisions.

Average wages	at present	20 years ago
A man-servant per an.	L.10 and victuals	L.6
A maid-servant per an.	L.3	L.1:10
A labourer per day	1s 3d, without victuals	1s

Average prices of provisions, per Dutch lib.

	The present year		20 years ago	
	At Whitsunday	At Martinmass	At Whitsunday	At Martinmass
Beef	from 3d	to 4d,	from 2d $\frac{1}{4}$	to 2d $\frac{1}{2}$
Mutton	5d	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	2d $\frac{1}{4}$	2d $\frac{1}{2}$
Veal	5d	3d.	2d	2d $\frac{1}{2}$
Lamb	5d	3d	8d to	9d per quarter
Pork		4d,		
Poultry	3s and	3s 6d per pair.		1s 6d per pair.
Eggs	4d to	7d per dozen,	2d per dozen.	
Butter	9d or	11d per lib. Tron wt.	5d or	6d per lib Tron wt
Cheese	3d or	3d $\frac{1}{2}$ per lib. Tron wt.	2d per lib. Tron wt	

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Meal	1s or	1s 2d per peck,	7d or	8d per peck
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Harbour - It does not appear by any record extant, when the present harbour was begun. Very probably about the beginning of this century, the west head or pier, had been so far carried out. Before that period, it is said, vessels were loaded and unloaded at low water, by means of a causeway, run out into the mud. The east head was begun in the memory of old people yet alive; and had not been built above one third of its present length, when an increase of trade occasioned an application to parliament, for an impost of two pennies Scots on the pint of ale and beer brought into, or brewed in the town, for repairing and enlarging the harbour. This was obtained in 1744, for 25 years, and was renewed for 25 years longer, in 1767, and extended over the parish; and again, in 1794, continued for 21 years, with the addition of an anchorage duty of 1d ½ per ton, on every ship entering the harbour. These duties, are under the management of 15 Trustees, elected from the merchants and ship-masters, who have been enabled, from time to time, to make great improvements on the harbour. One of great importance, a bason for cleaning the harbour, was executed about 30 years ago, by the late Robert M'Kell, engineer. A double wall, moated in the heart, was run across between the two piers, inclosing about one fourth of the harbour, on the land side, and having 4 sluices. During spring tides, these sluices are regularly opened, and shut at full sea, when a great body of water is retained. At low water, the sluices are opened; emptying the bason with so rapid a current, that in the course of a few years from the erection, a great increase to the depth of water in the harbour was made, and continues to be maintained at a very small expense. This bason-wall, being of similar breadth with the two piers, has given great accommodation to trade; and from it also, a middle pier has been built, parallel to the other two. The addition just now finished of 160 feet to the east pier, not only gives more room for shipping, but closes in the harbour so completely, from the north and easterly storms, to which it has been much exposed, that at present it may be fairly considered as one of the safest harbours in North Britain, and also one of the easiest access. The depth of the harbour in spring-tides, is from 16 to 18 feet. The piers, bason, and harbour may include about 2 English acres. It is proposed, as soon as circumstances will allow, to have a dry-dock, which can be conveniently situated on one side of the bason, and will be another material improvement.

Ship-building and Ships - At Borrowstounness, ship building has been carried on pretty extensively for 40 years. There are 2 builders at present, of considerable eminence in their profession, who employ from 30 to 40 men constantly; and build vessels from 40 to 350 tons burden. One ship is now building for a Company at Greenock, of nearly 400 tons.

The shipping belonging to the town, are at present 25 sail; whereof 17 are brigantines, of 70 to 170 tons per register; and 8 sail are sloops, from 20 to 70 tons per register, employing about 170 men and boys. Of the brigantines, 6 are under contract to sail regularly once every 14 days, to and from London. They are all fine vessels, from 147 to 167 tons per register. The remaining 11 brigantines, and 1 of the sloops, also a good vessel, are chiefly engaged in the Baltic trade. The other 7 sloops, are for the canal and coasting. The shipping of the port, including all the creeks, are said to be nearly 10,000 tons per register; and those of Borrowstounness, make about one fourth of the whole.

Trade - Several branches of commercial and mechanical industry are carried on at Borrowstounness. A pottery was begun on a small scale in the year 1784. Within these 3 years, it has been carried on upon a much more extensive plan. At present, it employs nearly 40 persons; including men, boys, and girls. The clay for the stone-ware is imported from Devonshire. The clay for the earthen-ware is found in the parish. Cream-coloured, and white stone-ware, plain and painted, and brown earthenware, are the articles principally manufactured. A manufacture of soap belonging to a company in the town, is carried on to a considerable extent. It employs 6 men, and pays annually to Government, about L.3000 sterling. Whale-fishing has been often and long attempted; but without success. It is now entirely given up.

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Herring-fishing was very successful in the Frith last season (6). But as it is a new speculation in the place, nothing certain can be said on the subject. Small quantities of flounders and whittings are taken during stream-tides, in the run of Avon-water, west of the harbour, and mostly by the coalliers who use hand-nets. Some likewise are taken in cruives. It has long been thought, that this fishing might turn out to much more account, were it followed with attention and skill, as good haddocks, have frequently been caught in the neighbourhood.

Many of the women in this town, and the country around, earn a comfortable subsistence by spinning silk, the waste of Spittalfield's manufacture, sent by sea from London to agents here, who return the yarn to be manufactured into stockings, epaulets, &c.

Coal and salt are the principal exports of the place, and the imports are grain, timber, tallow, flax, and flax-seed, with other Baltic and Dutch goods. The exportation of coal to Holland, had become very early a considerable branch of trade here; and Borrowstownness, for the first 50 or 60 years of this century, was a great mart for Dutch goods of all kinds, particularly flax, flax-seed, and old iron. But as the manufactures of this country advanced, so as to increase the demand for Dutch flax, the traders and manufacturers in other places, found their way to a direct importation into their own ports, and though there are still two considerable manufactories for dressing flax here, and large quantities imported, both for dressing and selling rough, yet this branch has greatly decreased in comparison with what it once was; and the Baltic trade now chiefly consists in the articles formerly mentioned.

The commerce of this town with the Baltic, as well as that of Leith, Grangemouth, and some other places on the east coast, was greatly enlarged during the war with America. That country had been in use to supply Britain before the war, with large quantities of timber, iron, tar, pearl and pot-ashes. The American trade being suspended by the war, not only all these articles were imported from the Baltic to this east coast, and by the merchants on this side of the island; but those of the west, to save the risk of capture in a circuitous voyage round the highlands, made the importation of those goods into the Frith of Forth, to be carried from Bo'ness and Grangemouth, through the great canal, to Glasgow. Great quantities of tallow and hemp, were also brought over during this period. The trade then enjoyed by this and other ports in the neighbourhood, was happily improved, to furnish the means of an extended commerce for several years after the peace was concluded, A.D 1783.

It is only since 1793, the commencement of the present French war, that the trade of this town has decreased, in common with the commerce of other ports trading to the Baltic; and there is every reason to hope for a revival, when the blessing of peace shall be restored; an event earnestly to be desired by all the friends of human kind.

The corn trade, both British and foreign, is very considerable here. In 3 large granaries, and in some smaller ones, there is very good accommodation for above 15,000 bolls.

Grangemouth, South Queensferry, and North Queensferry, St David's, Inverkeithing, Lime-kilns, Torry, and Culross, are united to the Custom-house of Borrowstownness; but the annual revenue received, excluding these creeks, will, on the average, amount to about L.4000. The salt-duty amounts to about L. 3000 per annum. The business of the Custom-house employs about 44 officers.

Coal and Salt - Coal is said to have been wrought in this parish above 500 years ago, and has been continued more or less since that period. The depth of the pits now in use is about 42 fathoms. The seam of coal, is from 10 to 12 feet in thickness, and is nearly exhausted. There are various seams, some of them of a superior, and others of a very inferior quality. All of them have been wrought in different places, and at different times, to a great extent, particularly in and about Bo-ness. On the south-east, and on the west, there is still a vast extent of unwrought coal. It is proposed, to sink a pit soon on the west of the town. The depth, to the principal seam in this quarter, may be about 70 fathoms; but there are several other seams at a much less depth. Various methods have been adopted, with regard to the manner of working the coal; but in general, what is called stoop and throw, has been found the most

eligible. The average quantity of coal raised in 12 months, for some time past, may be about 44,000 tons. A considerable part of the great coal has been exported, at 7s 9d per ton. The remainder has been disposed of in the coasting trade, and in the adjacent country. A great many of the chew-coals, are carried by the contract shipping to the London market, at 6s per ton. The greatest part of the small coal is consumed by the salt-works, which consist of 16 pans, and employ about 30 salters and labourers. The annual quantity of salt made, may be about 37,000 bushels, which is partly disposed of in the coasting trade; but chiefly, for the supply of the country to the south and west of Borrowstownness. It is sold at 3s 6d per bushel, including duty. But upon the duty, there is a draw-back of 7d ½ per cent, allowed by the Custom-house to the purchaser. It is believed, that the salt-works were erected here a considerable time before coal-pits were opened; and that in place of coal, wood was applied as fuel. Hence, small coal retains the name of pan-wood. — The number of colliers, coal-bearers, labourers, carters, &c. employed about the coallery, may be nearly 250.

Ecclesiastical State &c. - The present church of Borrowstownness, is a good plain edifice. When the parishes were first united (7) in the year 1669, the Duke of Hamilton added a large aisle for himself and his tenants. In this form, the church continued till about 20 years ago, when, pursuant to an agreement between the town and the Duke's Commissioners, the aisle was taken down, and the church neatly rebuilt. The two front-comers were extended as far as the aisle had gone; and the area within the walls, is now an oblong figure of 69 feet, by 48. The walls and ceiling are handsomely plaistered and ornamented; but the galleries are heavy, and ill-constructed. When Bo-ness was first detached from Kinneil, the annual interest of the stock, provided by the inhabitants for the minister's stipend, did not amount to 800 merks Scots. An Act of Parliament was then obtained by petition, appointing the inhabitants to be assessed, to make up the sum; and representatives were to be chosen annually, by common consent of the town and Kirk-Session, to fix and levy the tax. During the first-century after the separation from Kinneil, the annual assessment authorised by Parliament for making up the 800 merks of town-stipend, was often levied; but for these 40 or 50 years past, there has been little or no occasion for any such contribution. The original mortified stock had been early invested in land, 2 miles south of the town; and it is well known, how much the value of this kind of property has risen throughout the island within these 50 years. The land which, during the former lease, yielded only about L.20 per annum, now lets for L.50 ; and the tenant having inclosed the whole, as he was bound to do by the terms of his lease, it is probable, than the rent will be more than doubled at the expiration of the present lease (8). To the 800 merks Scots given by the town, the Act of Parliament obtained by the Duke and Duchess of Hamilton, December 1669, appointed the old stipend of Kinneil to be added, and the whole, to be the constant stipend of the minister, serving the cure of the united parishes, - ordering also, that a manse and glebe should be provided by the Duke and Duchess, in place of the old manse and glebe of Kinneil. The present stipend in Sterling money, valuing 3 chalders payable in victual, at the legal conversion of L. 100 Scots the chalder, amounts to L.83:6:8d; besides coals, a glebe, consisting of 4 arable acres, and 2 of very good pasture; also house-rent, in lieu of a manse, which has not yet been provided by the family of Hamilton. The Duke is also at the expense of Communion-elements. His Grace is undoubted patron of the parish.

There are 5 schools in the town and parish, well attended. The Parochial schoolmaster, commonly employs an assistant, and has generally from 80 to 90 scholars. He has a salary of 200 merks Scots (L. 11: 2: 2 ²/₃) besides the perquisites of his office as Session-clerk; and the sums paid for education at his school, which are as follows,

English and Writing by the quarter,	L. 0 2 6,
Latin or French, by ditto.	0 5 0
Arithmetic and other branches of Mathematics,	0 3 6
Navigation or Book-keeping, per course,	1 1 0

The poor in the parish, are pretty numerous. The funds for their support, are the following,

Weekly collections at the Church door, amounting annually to about,	L. 82 0 0
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Rent of landed property,	16 12 6
Interest of a bond and a late Legacy,	38 11 2
Mort-cloth dues (9), annually about (10)	2 5 0
	L. 139 8 8

The pensioners who receive regular supply at present, are in number 36. Occasional supplies, upon proper recommendation, are often appointed to such persons as are reduced to temporary distress. Upon any pressing emergency, the liberality of the opulent part of the inhabitants, is exemplary. During the late severe winter, near L.60 sterling were collected, and distributed in the most judicious manner, by a committee of gentlemen in the town. Begging is still common; but the paupers who go about from house to house, are, for the most part, from other parishes.

Roads and Milns - Besides several cross-roads, two public roads run through the parish; one from Borrowstownness, leading south to Linlithgow, and the Cleugh iron-works, in pretty good order, upon which there are several toll-bars; another running east and west, (by the water side) frequented by travellers from Falkirk and Queensferry. On the river Avon, which skirts the parish on the south and west, there are five milns, the property of the Duke of Hamilton. To the 2 corn-milns, all the barony of Kinniel are thirled with their oats, and pay as dues the 17th part or peck. Farmers from other parishes, pay only the half of this culture. There are 2 flour milns, which grind flour for Falkirk, Borrowstownness, &c. The fifth miln was built for the purpose of grinding malt, for the brewers in Borrowstownness; but is employed at present, in grinding flint for the pottery formerly mentioned. The river Avon is a fine stream, well fitted for the purposes of machinery. Falls of considerable height may be found; and there is plenty of water, unless when the drought of summer is uncommonly severe. The water is also perfectly pure, except when the torrents rush impetuous from the hills, after heavy rains.

Minerals and Antiquities - Besides coal already mentioned, iron-stone is dug from a bank in the neighbourhood of Borrowstownness, and is said to abound in other parts of the parish. Quarries of excellent granite and freestone, are also wrought on the south and west of the town. Lime-stone is to be found on the west end of the parish. A draw-kiln was erected about 20 years ago, and the work carried on to a considerable extent; but the quantity and quality of the lime not answering expectation, it has been discontinued.

The Roman wall between Forth and Clyde, well known in the History of Scotland, runs through the high grounds, the whole length of the parish. It is still distinctly visible on the east bank of the Avon. At Inver-avon the ruins of a Roman tower still remain. It has been built of common free-stone, and stands in a very conspicuous place. It appears from the foundation, that the building must have been pretty extensive; and were the rubbish cleared away, perhaps farther information on the subject might be obtained for the antiquarian. In a window of the adjacent farm-house, there is a stone with several hieroglyphic characters, which, although much venerated for their antiquity, are not understood.

Prospects - From the brow of the hill, behind the town of Bo-ness, the ascent is gradual to the south, for more than a mile and a half; and the prospect still varying and extending, is inexpressibly grand and beautiful. On the east, the horizon is boundless, the prospect reaching the Pentland-hills, Arthur's-seat, Edinburgh castle, and the German ocean, On the north-west, are seen a number of gentleman's seats, and plantations around them, the whole range of Ochil-hills, the celebrated Grampian mountains, Campsie hills, and the towering top of Benlomond. This prospect, which includes also a view of the towns on the opposite coast, must charm the spectator of taste, and afford high entertainment to all who take pleasure in contemplating the sublime and variegated works of nature and art. From the high grounds in a clear day, the eye may take a pleasing range over part of 11 counties, in cultivation equal, if not superior, to any in Scotland.

Miscellaneous Observations - When the navigation by the canal between Forth and Clyde was first projected, it was the general opinion, that from the advantageous situation of this town and its harbour, the east termination should have been here and not at Grange-burn. It would serve no good purpose at present, to point out the causes which combined to place the termination otherwise. Suffice it to say, the public would, in all probability, have been much better accommodated, and Bo-ness would have increased ten-fold. To prevent this town from suffering the disadvantages apprehended from the termination of the canal at Grange-burn, a subscription was opened in the year 1782, on an estimate for a canal of communication from the harbour of Borrowstownness to Grangemouth, supposed to cost about L. 12,000 and subscriptions for L. 10,000 were procured. The canal was cut from Avon-water eastward, within a mile of the town, and an aqueduct bridge of stone built for crossing the Avon. The expense, however, of this work, and that of procuring two Acts of Parliament, together with salaries and heavy incidental charges, had, in 1789, exhausted half the subscription. Doubts were then entertained, whether the navigation could be properly executed for the estimate, as the works next the town were foreseen to be very expensive. It was judged prudent to have a new survey by that eminent engineer, Mr Robert Whitworth; who reported, "That to complete the canal properly, L. 17,000 would be wanted." By this time, not L.4,000 good money remained, and the work was relinquished, till new funds should be raised; which unfortunately have never yet been procured, and when they shall be obtained, is at present uncertain. The return of peace, with a reviving commerce, may perhaps encourage former subscribers, or animate new ones, to finish a work of public utility; and which would be of so much local advantage to this town and the adjacent country.

It is highly probable, that all the low ground in the parish, was formerly part of the bed of the river Forth. This opinion easily gains assent, because immediately at the bottom of the bank, far from the shore, and far above the level of the present spring tides, shells, particularly oyster-shells, are to be seen in several places, and in great quantities. At low-water, above 2000 acres opposite to the parish are left dry. It is said, that a Dutch company offered, for a lease of 99 years, to fence off the sea from these acres with a dyke, to prepare them for the purposes of agriculture, which would have been a vast accession to the carse grounds of the parish. But the project failed, and a large extent of ground remains useless, shewing its face every 24 hours, to reproach the fastidiousness and indolence of mankind.

It appears, as far as the writer of this account has had an opportunity to learn, that the natives of the town and parish of Bo-ness, are fond of a sea-faring life. Many able-bodied seamen from this place, are at present in his Majesty's service; and are distinguished for their sobriety, courage, and loyalty. Adventurers from the place, are also to be found in the most distant parts of the globe.— The inhabitants of the town are in general sober and industrious, and support a respectable character. The inferior ranks are quiet and regular; the superior ranks well-bred, hospitable, and public-spirited. Though indulgence over the glass, a characteristic of the present age, is too frequent, intemperance or rioting is seldom to be seen on the streets. Religion, it must be regretted, is too much neglected; yet the sabbath-day is decently observed, and divine worship attended by all, except by those who from ignorance, or from habits of irregularity, are insensible to the solid comforts and satisfaction which arise from a life of religion and virtue.

Notes

1. Borrowstown probably the town of the borough, as being in the vicinity of Linlithgow, the county town in the neighbourhood, and ness, which signifies a point of land projecting into the sea.
2. The present minister having been ordained only a few weeks before this account was called for, could not ascertain the population of the parish with perfect accuracy.
3. Burghers 153, Antiburghers 103, Cameronians 37.
4. Borrowstownness is a regular post town.
5. Scotland's Skaith, a little poem of real merit.

6. Those who are intelligent on the subject of this fishery, remark, that according to the result of the best observation, the herrings after having set into the Frith last year, (1794-95), in such abundance, may be expected to return in many future years.
7. It was formerly mentioned, that Bo-ness is an united parish. A little west from Kinneil-house, the ruins of the old church and burying-ground of Kinneil, are still to be seen.
8. The fund being already more than equal to the payment of the stipend, and ordinary repairs on the church and church-yards dykes, the managers have in contemplation, some very essential improvements upon the avenues around the church, and upon its internal arrangements.
9. At the burials of the poor people, a custom, almost obsolete in other parts of Scotland, is continued here. The beadle perambulates the streets with a bell, and intimates the death of the individual in the following language: "All brethren and sisters, I let ye to wit, there is a brother (or sister) departed, at the pleasure of the Almighty, (here he lifts his hat) called —. All those that come to the burial, come at — o'clock. The corpse is at -." He also walks before the corpse to the church-yard, ringing his bell.
10. The annual amount of mort-cloth dues at the disposal of the Session is trifling, as the people in the country part of the parish, and the different corporations in the town, such as the sailors and maltmen, keep one, and receive the emoluments.