

# LESLIE PARISH

MANUFACTURES.-In the town of Leslie, weaving is carried on to a very considerable extent, there being 260 weavers in it. The most of the work is supplied from Glasgow, being plain linen and cotton checks. A good weaver can only earn at the rate of 1s. per day, working twelve or fourteen hours. There are six flax mills in the parish, employing altogether upwards of 200 people. In these mills, they are employed twelve hours per day, or seventy-two hours in the week. The men's wages average from 15s. to 18s. per week, the hacklers from 11s. to L. 1 ; these in general work by the piece, so that it in a great measure depends on their own industry and sobriety. The wages of boys and girls, from 2s. to 2s. 6d. per week. These, when they have been in the mill for three or four years, are able to make full wages. Women's wages from 4s 6d. to 6s. 6d. per week. There are none employed in any of the mills, so far as can be discovered, under ten years of age.

There are likewise three bleachfields in the parish, the first employing 45 hands; the second 39; the third 56. The men's wages, 10s. per week; the womens, 5s.; beginners, 2s. to 3s. They are only at work for ten hours in the day. All these employments afford a very fair remuneration and support to those who are engaged in them.

The bleaching is perhaps one of the healthiest employments that can be engaged in. The workers in the mills have by no means the robust appearance of the bleachers, although in general they enjoy tolerably good health. Great attention is now paid by the mill proprietors to the proper ventilation of the rooms in which the people work. This is attended with the happiest effects on their health.

ECCLESIASTICAL STATE.-The church is situated in the most convenient part of the parish, being nearly in the centre. It was built in the year 1820, and is in excellent repair. There are few country churches neater both in the exterior and interior. It is seated for 850, but with great ease contains 1000. The free sittings may contain 300. The manse was built in 1811, and is an excellent commodious house. The present rent drawn is L. 18 per annum, for the whole. The amount of stipend is L. 257, 8s. 6d., including allowance for communion elements. Number of families attending Established Church, 270, consisting of 1736 individuals.

There are three dissenting chapels in the parish, and one small congregation belonging to the Baptist connection. Two of the dissenting congregations belong to what is termed the United Associate Synod of the Secession Church ; the other to the Associate Synod of Original Seceders. The ministers are paid by the proceeds of the seat rents. Two are supposed to have L. 110, the other L. 70, with free houses. Number of families in the parish attending the three dissenting congregations, 183, consisting of 1098 individuals. Number of families attending the Episcopalians, 6, consisting of 15 individuals.

The service at the Established Church is in general very well attended. The dissenting places of worship, it is understood, are not over-crowded; but the writer has no access to know, the exact numbers of their congregations. The average number of communicants in the Established Church is 500.

EDUCATION.-There are altogether six schools in the parish the parochial school, and five unendowed schools supported by school fees. In the parish school, Latin, Greek, and French, in addition to the other branches of education, are taught. The parish schoolmaster's salary is L. 34; and the amount of his fees may be L. 18; the emolument as session-clerk is L. 7 per annum. In this parish, the parochial teacher has not the legal accommodation; but an adequate allowance is made by the heritors. A mere English education is at the rate of 8s. per annum. For Latin and Greek from L. 1, 1s. to L. 1, 5s All persons above six years of age in the parish can read.

INNS AND ALEHOUSES.-There are 4 inns in the parish and about 16 alehouses. The inns are necessary, and at present remarkably well conducted. But with regard to the alehouses, or rather they should be called whisky shops, a great number of them are a perfect nuisance and the hot-beds of vice. It is no unusual thing for many of the whisky shops to entertain company till three or four o'clock on a Sabbath morning.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS. When the last account was given of the parish, the population was about 1212; at the present time it is 2749. At that time, there was not a spinning-mill in the parish, there are now six and three large bleachfields. At that time, there were six houses where ale was sold, but that not one person or family was supported by the profits of a public-house, all having some other employment. Now there are 20 alehouses, and several of those who keep them, have no other employment. The Sabbath with many of them is the busiest day, not that they allow those who come to drink in the public-houses, but the liquor is taken to private houses, and the debauch carried on before wives, sons, and daughters. The effects of this are most demoralizing. The manner of living has been very much altered within the last 40 years. In the year 1826, there was but one butcher, and he only killed a cow occasionally; now there are three who kill an Ox each, every week, and meet with a very ready sale. Wheaten bread is now much more generally used than oaten. This may be from the most of the women being occupied either in the mills, or winding the pirns for the weaver. They find their time better occupied in this than preparing food for the family, and so purchase at the shops.

The improvement that has taken place in the building of the houses is very decided. The walls are built of neat squared whin, and rybats, corners, skews, and chimney-tops of ashler work of freestone, the roof either tile or slate, the interior of four apartments, very comfortably and substantially finished.

April 1836. ( Rev. James Nicol )