

# HISTORICAL ENQUIRY

INTO THE

ANCIENT STATE OF SCOTLAND;

EMBRACING PRINCIPALLY THE PERIOD

FROM THE ACCESSION OF ALEXANDER THE THIRD

TO THE DEATH OF DAVID THE SECOND.

## ANCIENT STATE OF SCOTLAND.

HAVING brought this work down to the great era of the accession of the house of Stewart, in the occupation of the throne by Robert the Second, I propose to pause for a short time, in order to cast our eye over the wide field through which we have travelled, and to mark, as fully as our imperfect materials will permit, the progress of the nation in some of those great subjects which form the body of its civil history. The general features and appearance of the country; its agriculture, commerce, and manufactures; the manners and amusements, the superstitions and character, of the people; the system of feudal government under which they lived; their progress in the arts, which add comfort, or security, or ornament to life; the character of their literature; are subjects upon which our curiosity is naturally active and eager for information; but it is unfortunate that the writers, who can alone be considered as authentic, have regarded such investigations as either un-

interesting, or beneath the dignity of the works in which they had engaged. Some lights, however, are to be found scattered through their works, or reflected from the public muniments and records of the times ; and it is to the guidance of these, however feeble and imperfect, that the historian can alone commit himself.

It must necessarily happen that, in an attempt of this kind, owing to the paucity of materials, and to the extreme remoteness of the period, any thing like a full account of the country is unattainable ; and that it is exceedingly difficult to throw together, under any system of lucid arrangement, the insulated facts which have been collected. I have adopted that order which appears the most natural.

## SECTION I.

## GENERAL APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRY.

WE must be careful not to permit the ideas which are derived from the condition of Scotland in the present day, to influence our conclusions as to its appearance in those rude and early ages of which we have been writing. No two pictures could be more dissimilar than Scotland in the thirteenth and fourteenth, and Scotland in the nineteenth century. The mountains, indeed, and the rivers, are stern and indomitable features of nature, upon which the hand of man can introduce but feeble alterations; yet, with this exception, every thing was different. The face of the country was covered by immense forests chiefly of oak, in the midst of which, upon the precipitous banks of rivers, or on rocks which formed a natural fortification, and were deemed impregnable by the military art of that period, were placed the castles of the feudal barons. One principal source of the wealth of the proprietors of these extensive forests consisted in the noble timber which they contained, and the deer and other animals of the chase with which they abounded. When Edward I. subdued and overran the country, we find him in the constant practice of repaying the services of those who submitted to his

authority, by presents of so many stags and oaks from the forests which he found in possession of the crown. Thus, on the 18th of August, 1291, the king directed the keeper of the Forest of Selkirk to deliver thirty stags to the Archbishop of St Andrews, twenty stags and sixty oaks to the Bishop of Glasgow, ten to the High Steward, and six to Brother Brian, Preceptor of the Order of Knights Templars in Scotland.<sup>1</sup>

To mark the names, or define the exact limits of these huge woods, is now impossible; yet, from the public records, and the incidental notices of authentic historians, a few scattered facts may be collected.

In the north, we find the forest of Spey,<sup>2</sup> extending along the banks of that majestic river; the forests of Alnete, and of Tarnaway, of Awne, Kilblene, Langmorgan, and of Elgin, Forres, Lochindorb, and Inverness.<sup>3</sup> The extensive county of Aberdeen appears to have been covered with wood. We meet there with the forests of Kintore, of Cardenache, Drum or Drome, Stocket, Killanal, Sanquhar, Tulloch, Gasgow, Darrus, Collyn, and what is called the New Forest of Innerpeffer.<sup>4</sup> In Banff was the forest of Boyne; in Kincardine and Forfar the forests

<sup>1</sup> Rotuli Scotiæ, vol. i. p. 3. 18th August, 1291.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. vol. i. p. 5. Anno 1291. m. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 9. Robertson's Index to the Charters, pp. 32, 35, 42. Rolls of Parliament, ii. 469, quoted in Caledonia, vol. i. p. 792. Fordun a Hearne, p. 1027.

<sup>4</sup> Robertson, pp. 23, 33, 38, 58, 71, 72, also Rotuli Scotiæ, in anno 1292, p. 10. Chamberlain's Accounts. Compot. vice Comitibus Aberdein, p. 298.

of Alyth, Drymie, and Plater;<sup>1</sup> in Fife, those of Cardenie and Uweth;<sup>2</sup> in Ayrshire, the forest of Senecastre;<sup>3</sup> in the Lowlands, those of Drumselch,<sup>4</sup> near Edinburgh, of Jedburgh, and Selkirk, Cottenshope, Maldesley,<sup>5</sup> Ettrick, and Peebles; of Dolar, Traquhair, and Melrose.<sup>6</sup>

The counties of Stirling and Clackmannan contained extensive royal forests, in which, by a grant from David I. the monks of Holyrood had the right of cutting wood for building and other purposes, and of pasture for their swine.<sup>7</sup> In the reign of the same king, a forest covered the district between the Leader and the Gala; and in Perthshire, occupied the lands between Scone and Cargil.<sup>8</sup> Immense tracts which, in the present day, are stretched out into an interminable extent of naked and desolate moor, or occupied by endless miles of barren peat hags, were, in those early ages, covered by noble forests of oak, ash, beech, and other hard timber. Huge knotted trunks

<sup>1</sup> Robertson's Index, pp. 39, 55, 67, and *Rotuli Scotiæ*, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Robertson, p. 47. *Cartulary Dunferm.* f. 12 and 20.

<sup>3</sup> *Cartulary of Paisley*, p. 46, in *Caledonia*, 793.

<sup>4</sup> *Caledonia*, p. 793.

<sup>5</sup> Chamberlain's Accounts. *Rotuli Comp. Temp. Custod. Regni*, p. 62.

<sup>6</sup> *Rotuli Scotiæ*, in anno 1296. vol. i. p. 33. *Ibid.* p. 3, 278, 380. *Ibid.* p. 748. *Cartulary of Dunferm.* p. 10. *Rotuli Scotiæ*, p. 7. and Fordun, p. 1048. Robertson, p. 81. *Chron. Melrose*, ad ann. 1184, quoted in Dalziel's *Fragments*, p. 32. *Cartulary of Kelso*, p. 323. *Caledonia*, p. 798.

<sup>7</sup> *Caledonia*, p. 792.

<sup>8</sup> *Cart. Melross.* p. 104. *Cart of Scone*, p. 16.

of black oak, the remains of these primitive woods, have been and are still discovered in almost every moor in Scotland. Such, indeed, was, at an early period, the extent and impervious nature of these woods, that the English, in their invasions, endeavoured to clear the country by fire and by the hatchet; and Knighton relates, that in an expedition of the Duke of Lancaster into this country, in the reign of Richard the Second, this prince, having recourse to these methods, employed in the work of destruction so immense a multitude, that the stroke of eighty thousand hatchets might be heard resounding through the forests, whilst the fire was blazing and consuming them at the same moment.<sup>1</sup> So utterly erroneous is the opinion of one of those conjectural historians, who pronounces that there is little reason to think that in any age, of which an accurate remembrance is preserved, this kingdom was ever more woody than it is now.<sup>2</sup>

In the times of which we write, however, many districts in the midst of these forests had been cleared of the wood, and brought under cultivation. Thus, in the Forest of Plater, in the county of Forfar, David the Second, in 1366, made a grant of four oxgangs of arable land for a reddendo of a pair of white gloves, or two silver pennies, to Murdoch del Rhynd.<sup>3</sup> In the same forest, the monks of Restennet, at the death of Alexander the Third, enjoyed the tenth of

<sup>1</sup> Knighton apud Twysden, vol. ii. p. 2674. Barbour's Bruce, p. 323.

<sup>2</sup> Wallace on the Nature and Descent of Peerages, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> Robertson's Index, p. 81.

the hay made in its meadows;<sup>1</sup> and in 1362, the king permitted John Hay of Tullyboll to bring into cultivation, and appropriate, the whole district lying between the river Spey and the burn of Tynot, in the Forest of Awne.<sup>2</sup> From these facts it may be inferred, that the same process of clearing away the wood, and reducing large districts of the forests into fields and meadow lands, had been generally pursued throughout the country.<sup>3</sup> It was a work, in some measure, both of peril and necessity; for savage animals abounded as much in Scotland as in the other uncleared and wooded regions of northern Europe; and the bear, the wolf, the wild boar, and the bison, to the husbandmen and cultivators of those rude ages, must have been enemies of a very destructive and formidable nature.<sup>4</sup>

Another striking feature in the aspect of the country during those early ages was formed by the marshes or fens. Where the mountains sunk down into the plain, and the country stretched itself into a level, mossy fens of great extent occupied those fertile and beautiful districts which are now drained and brought under cultivation.<sup>5</sup> Within the inaccessible windings of these morasses, which were intersected by roads known only to the inhabitants, Wallace and Bruce, during the long war of liberty, frequently defended themselves, and defied the heavy-armed English ca-

<sup>1</sup> MS. Monast. Scotiæ, p. 31, quoted in Caledonia, vol. i. p. 798.

<sup>2</sup> Robertson's Index, p. 71.

<sup>3</sup> Chamberlain's Accounts. Rotuli, Compot. Temp. Cust. Regni, p. 63.

<sup>4</sup> Dalzel's desultory reflections on the State of Ancient Scotland, pp. 32, 33.

<sup>5</sup> Triveti Annales, p. 316.



valry;<sup>1</sup> and it is said, that from lying out amidst these damp and unhealthy exhalations, Bruce caught the disease of which he died.

The royal castles must have presented an additional and imposing feature in the external appearance of the country at this period. Built chiefly for strength and resistance during a time of war, these fortresses were the great garrisons of the country, and reared their immense walls, and formidable towers and buttresses in those situations which nature had herself fortified, and where little was to be done by man, but to avail himself of the power already placed in his hand. In the year 1292, when Edward, after his judgment in favour of Baliol, gave directions to his English captains to deliver the royal castles into the hands of the new king, we find these to have been twenty-three in number. On the Borders were the castles of Jedburgh, Roxburgh, and Berwick; those of Dumfries, Kirkcudbright, Wigton, Ayr, Tarbart,<sup>2</sup> Dumbarton and Stirling, formed a semicircle of fortresses which commanded the important districts of Annandale, Galloway, Carrick, Kyle, Lanark, and the country round Stirling, containing the passes into the Highlands. Between Stirling, Perth, and the Tay, there was no royal castle, till we reach Dundee, where Brian Fitz-Alan commanded; after which the castles of Forfar, Kincardine, and Aberdeen, protected and kept under the counties of Perth, Angus, Kin-

<sup>1</sup> Palgrave's Parliamentary Writs, Chronological Abstract, p. 76. Walsingham, p. 78. Barbour, pp. 110, 151.

<sup>2</sup> Chamberlain's Accounts, p. 9.

cardine, and Aberdeen; and travelling still farther north, we find the castles of Cromarty, or Crumbarthyn, Dingwall, Inverness, Nairn, Forres, Elgin, and Banff, which, when well garrisoned, were deemed sufficient to maintain the royal authority in those remote and unsettled districts.<sup>1</sup>

Such were the royal castles of Scotland previous to the war of liberty; but it was the policy of Bruce, as we have seen, to raze the fortresses of the kingdom, wherever they fell under his power; whilst on the other hand, Edward, in his various campaigns, found it necessary to follow the same plan which had been so successful in Wales, and either to construct additional fortresses, for the purpose of overawing the country, or to strengthen, by new fortifications, such baronial castles as he imagined best situated for his design. In this manner the architecture of the strong Norman castles, which had already been partially introduced by the Scoto-Norman barons, was more effectually taught by their formidable enemy to the Scots, who profited by the lesson, and turned it against himself. It not unfrequently happened, that the siege of a baronial castle detained the whole English army for weeks, and even months, before it; and although feebly garrisoned, that the single strength of its walls resisted and defied the efforts of Edward's strongest machines, and most skilful engineers. To enumerate or to point out the situation of the baronial castles which at this early period formed the residences of the feudal nobility and their vassals, would

<sup>1</sup> Rotuli Scotiæ, vol. i. pp. 11, 12.

be almost impossible. - They raised their formidable towers in every part of the kingdom, on its coasts and in its islands, on its peninsulas and in its lakes, upon the banks of its rivers, and on the crests of its mountains; and many of those inhabited by the higher nobility rivalled, and in their strength and extent sometimes surpassed, the fortresses belonging to the king.<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1309, when the military talents of Bruce had wrested from England nearly the whole of the royal castles, we find Edward the Second writing earnestly to his principal officers in Scotland, directing them to maintain their ground to the last extremity against the enemy; and it is singular that, with the exception of Edinburgh, Stirling, Dumfries, and Jedburgh, the posts which they held, and which are enumerated in his order, are all of them private baronial castles, whose proprietors had either been compelled by superior force, or induced by selfish considerations to embrace the English interest. In his letters are mentioned the castle of Kirkintulloch, between Dumbarton and Stirling; Dalswynton in Galloway, a principal seat of the Comyns; Karlaverock, belonging to the Maxwells; Thybres or Tibris Castle, also in Galloway; Lochmaben, in Annandale, the seat of the Bruces; Butil, the property of the Steward; Dunbar, a strong and magnificent castle,

<sup>1</sup> Fordun, in speaking of the death of Edward the First, asserts, that within six years of that event, Bruce had taken and cast down a hundred and thirty-seven castles, fortalices, and towers. Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 240.

one of the keys of the kingdom, by which the potent Earls of March commanded so much influence in an age of war and invasion ; Dirlton, also of great extent, and possessed by the Norman race of the De Vaux ; Selkirk, at that time in the hands of Aymer de Valence Earl of Pembroke ; and Bothwell, a castle at various times the property of the Olifards, Morays, and Douglasses.<sup>1</sup> Innumerable other castles and smaller strengths, from the seats of the highest earls, whose power was almost kingly, down to the single towers of the retainer or vassal, with their low iron-ribbed door, and loop-holed windows, were scattered over every district in Scotland ; and even in the present day, the traveller cannot explore the most unfrequented scenes, and the remotest glens of the country, without meeting some grey relic of other days, reminding him that the chain of feudal despotism had there planted one of its thousand links, and around which there often linger those fine traditions, where fiction has lent her romantic colours to history. In the vicinity of these strongholds, in which the Scottish barons of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries held their residence, there was cleared from wood as much ground as was necessary for the support of that numerous train of vassals and retainers, which formed what was termed the “following” of their lord, and who were supported in a style of rude and abundant hospitality. The produce of his fields and forests, his huge herds of swine, his flocks and cattle, his gra-

<sup>1</sup> Rotuli Scotiæ, vol. i. p. 80.

naries and breweries, his mills and malting houses, his dovecots, gardens, orchards, and "infield and outfield" wealth, all lent their riches to maintain those formidable bands of warlike knights and vassals, who were ready on every summons, to surround the banner of their lord. Around these castles, also, were placed the rude habitations and cottages belonging to the more immediate servants and inferior dependents of the baron, to his armourers, tailors, wrights, masons, falconers, forest-keepers, and many others, who ministered to his necessities, his comforts, or his pleasures. It happened, too, not unfrequently, that, ambitious of the security which the vicinity of a feudal castle ensured, the free farmers or opulent tradesmen of those remote times requested permission to build their habitations and booths near its walls; which, for payment of a small rent, was willingly allowed; and we shall afterwards have occasion to remark, that to this practice we perhaps owe the origin of our towns and royal burghs in Scotland. It appears, also, from the authentic evidence of the Cartularies, that at this period, upon the large feudal estates belonging to the nobles or to the church, were to be found small villages, or collections of hamlets and cottages, termed *Villæ* in the charters of the times, annexed to which was a district of land called a *Territorium*.<sup>1</sup> This was cultivated in various proportions by the higher ranks of the husbandmen, who possessed it, either in part or in whole, as their own property, which they held by

<sup>1</sup> MS. Cartulary of Melrose, pp. 21, 22. Cartulary of Kelso, pp. 254, 255.

lease, and for which they paid a rent,<sup>1</sup> or by the villeyms and cottars, who were themselves, in frequent instances, as we shall immediately see, the property of the lord of the soil. Thus, by a similar process, which we find took place in England under the Normans, and which is very clearly to be traced in Domesday Book, the greater feudal barons were possessed not only of immense estates, embracing within them field and forest, river, lake, and mountain, but of numerous and flourishing villages,<sup>2</sup> for which they received a regular rent, and of whose wealth and gains they always held a share, because they were frequently the masters of the persons and property of the tradesmen and villeyms, by whom such early communities were inhabited. In these villages the larger divisions, under the names of caracutes, bovates, or oxgates, were cultivated by the husbandmen, and the cottars under them, while, for their own maintenance, each of these poor labourers was the master of a cottage, with a small piece of ground, for which he paid a trifling rent to the lord of the soil.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cartulary of Kelso, p. 257, in 1258. Ibid. pp. 312, 317.

<sup>2</sup> Henshall's Specimens and Parts of a History of South Britain, p. 64. In the small part of this valuable work which has been published, and which it is deeply to be regretted was discontinued by the author from want of encouragement, a clear and excellent view is given of the state of England under the Normans, founded on an accurate examination of the original record of Domesday Book.

<sup>3</sup> Cartulary of Kelso, p. 477. In the same MS. there is a Donation, in 1307, by Nicholas dictus Moyses de Bondington, "Cotagii cum orto quod Tyock Uxor Andree quondam tenerit de me in villa de Bondington."

It happened not unfrequently, that the high ecclesiastics, or the convents and religious houses, were the proprietors of villages, from whose population there was not exacted the same strict routine of military service, which was due by the vassals of the temporal barons; and the consequences of this exemption were seen in the happier and more improved condition of their husbandmen and villeyms, and in the richer cultivation of their ample territories. A great portion of the district attached to these villages was divided into pasture-land and woodland, in which a right of pasturage, for a certain number of animals, belonged to each of the villagers or husbandmen in common. It is from the information conveyed in the Cartularies that the condition of these early villages is principally to be discovered.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, for example, in the village of Bolden, in Roxburghshire, which belonged to the monks of Kelso, in the latter part of the reign of Alexander the Third, there were twenty-eight husbandmen, who possessed each a husbandland, with common pasture; for which he paid a rent of six shillings and eightpence, besides various services which were due to the landlord. There were, in the same village, thirty-six cottagers each of whom held nearly half an acre of arable land, with a right of common pasture. The united rent paid by the whole cottagers amounted to fifty-five shillings; in addition to which, they were bound to perform certain services in labour. To the village there was attached a mill, which gave a rent of eight merks;

<sup>1</sup> Rotulus Reddituum Monasterii de Kalchow. Cartulary of Kelso, p. 475.

and four brew-houses, each of them let for ten shillings, with an obligation to sell their ale to the abbot at the rate of a lagen and a half for a penny.<sup>1</sup> These villages, of course, varied much in extent, in the number of their mansions, and the fertility of their lands; whilst the greater security, resulting from the increasing numbers, and the wealth of the inhabitants, became an inducement for many new settlers, from different parts, to join the community, and plant themselves under the protection of the lord of the soil. This emigration, however, of the cottars or villeyms from one part of the country, or from one village to another, could not be legally effected, without the express consent of the master to whom they belonged. A fact, of which we shall be convinced, when we come to consider the condition of the great body of the people in those early ages.

To one casting his eye over Scotland, as it existed during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the numerous religious establishments, the cathedrals, convents, monasteries, and episcopal palaces, must have formed another striking feature in the external aspect of the country. Situated always in the richest, and not unfrequently in the most picturesque spots, and built in that imposing style of Gothic architecture, which is one of the greatest triumphs of the Middle Ages, these noble structures reared their holy spires, and antique towers, in almost every district through which you travelled; and your approach to them could commonly be traced by the high agri-

<sup>1</sup> Cartulary of Kelso, pp. 478, 479. See Appendix, letter N.



cultural improvements which they spread around them. The woods, enclosed and protected, were of loftier growth; the meadows and cornfields richer, and better cultivated; the population inhabiting the church-lands more active, thriving, and industrious than in the lands belonging to the crown, or to the feudal nobility.

To give any correct idea of the number, or the opulence, of the various episcopal and conventual establishments which were to be found in Scotland at this remote era, would require a more lengthened discussion than our present limits will allow. Besides the bishopricks, with their cathedral churches, their episcopal palaces, and the residences of the minor clergy, which were attached to them, our early monarchs, and higher nobility, in the superstitious spirit of the age, encouraged those various orders of regular and secular churchmen, which then swarmed over Europe. The Canons Regular of St Augustine, who were invited into Scotland by Alexander the First, and highly favoured by David, had not less than twenty-eight monasteries; the Cistercians or Bernardine monks, who were also very warmly patronised by David, possessed thirteen; and the Dominican or Black Friars fifteen monasteries, in various parts of the country. Although these orders were the most frequent; yet numerous other divisions of canons, monks, and friars, obtained an early settlement in Scotland; and erected for themselves, in many places, those noble abbacies, priories or convents, whose ruins, at the present day, are so full of

picturesque beauty, and interesting associations. The Red Friars, an order originally instituted for the redemption of Christian slaves from the Infidels, possessed eight monasteries; the Præmonstratensian Monks, who boasted, that the rule which they followed was delivered to them in a vision by St Augustine, and written in golden letters, were highly favoured by David the First, Alexander the Second, and Fergus, Lord of Galloway. The Tyronensian and Clunacensian Monks; the Templars; the Franciscans, and the Carmelites, had all of them establishments in Scotland; whilst the Augustinian, the Benedictine, and the Cistercian Nuns, were also possessed of numerous rich and noble convents; which, along with the hospitals, erected by the charity of the Catholic church, for the entertainment of pilgrims and strangers, and the cure and support of the sick and infirm, complete the catalogue of the religious establishments of Scotland during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>1</sup>

Although covered, in many places, with huge and impenetrable woods and marshes, the country, around the monasteries and religious houses, or adjoining to the castles of the nobles, and to the great towns, royal burghs, and villages, in the reign of Alexander the Third, and previous to the destructive wars which succeeded his death, appears to have been in a state of considerable cultivation. Even during the wars of the three Edwards; when we take

<sup>1</sup> Account of the religious houses in Scotland. Keith's Catalogue of the Bishops, p. 235.

into view the dreadful disadvantages against which it had to struggle, the agriculture of Scotland was very respectable.

The Scottish kings possessed royal manors in almost every shire, which were cultivated by their own free tenants and their villeyns; and to which, for the purpose of gathering the rents, and consuming the agricultural produce, they were in the custom of repairing, in their progresses through the kingdom. This fact is established, by the evidence of the Cartularies, which contain frequent grants, by David the First, William the Lion, and the two Alexanders, to the convents and religious houses, of various kinds of agricultural produce to be drawn from the royal manors, and the same truth is as conclusively made out by the original accounts of the great chamberlains of Scotland.<sup>1</sup> David, for example, granted, to the monks of Scone, the half of the skins, and the fat of all the beasts, which were killed for the king's use, on his lands to the north of the Tay; and the half of the skins and hides of all the beasts slain, upon festival days, at Stirling, and on his manors between the Forth and the Tay.<sup>2</sup> Innumerable charters, by his successors, to the various monasteries and religious houses in the kingdom, evince the generosity or superstition of our monarchs, and the extent of their royal demesnes. Scarcely less numerous, and upon a scale not greatly

<sup>1</sup> Of these accounts, which contain a body of information upon the civil history of Scotland, unrivalled in authenticity, and of the highest interest, a short notice will be found in the Appendix, letter A.

<sup>2</sup> Cartulary of Scone, pp. 2, 6, 8.

inferior to those of the king, were the extensive feudal estates belonging to the religious houses, to dignified clergy, and to the magnates, or higher barons of Scotland; who granted charters of lands to their own military vassals and retainers, or by leases, to other more pacific tenants, upon whom they devolved the agricultural improvement of their domains. Thus, for example, we find, in the Cartulary of Kelso, that the monks of this rich religious house granted to the men of Innerwick, in the year 1190, a thirty-three years lease of certain woods and lands, for the annual rent of twenty shillings; which was approved of by Alan, the son of Walter the Steward, to whom the men of Innerwick belonged.<sup>1</sup>

The clergy, whose domains, chiefly from the liberal and frequent endowments of David the First, and his successors, were, at this period, amazingly rich and extensive, repaid this profusion, by becoming the great agricultural improvers of the country. From them those leases principally proceeded, which had the most beneficial effect in clearing it from wood, and bringing it under tillage. In 1326, the abbot of Scone granted a lease, for life, of his lands of Gilmersland to Andrew de Striveleyn. Henry Whitwell received from the Abbot of Kelso a lease, for life, of all the lands belonging to this monastery in Dumfriesshire, for which the yearly rent was twelve shillings; and numerous other instances might be brought forward. It was in this manner that there was gradual-

<sup>1</sup> Cartulary of Kelso p. 247. Caledonia, vol. i. p. 794.

ly introduced and encouraged in the country a body of useful improvers, who were permitted, from the pacific character of their landlords, to devote their time much more exclusively to agricultural improvement than the vassals or tenants of the barons.<sup>1</sup>

The system of agriculture pursued at this early period, must have been exceedingly rude and simple in its details; and although it is difficult to point out the exact mode of cultivation, yet some information with regard to its general character, and the crops then raised in the country, may be found in the scattered notices of contemporary historians, and in the records and muniments of the times. Oats, wheat, barley, pease and beans, were all raised in tolerable abundance. Of these by far the most prevalent crop was oats. It furnished the bread of the lower classes; and the ale which they drank was brewed from malt made of this grain. In the innumerable mills which are mentioned in the Cartularies, immense quantities of oats were ground into meal; and at the various malt kilns and breweries, which we find attached throughout the same records to the hamlets and villages, equally large proportions of oats were reduced into malt and brewed into ale. In the wardrobe accounts of Edward the First for the years 1299 and 1300, large quantities of oat malt, furnished to his different garrisons in Scotland, form some of the principal items of expenditure. In the same inte-

<sup>1</sup> Cartulary of Scone, p. 32. Cartulary of Kelso, p. 329. Chamberlain's Accounts, vol. i. pp. 5, 12, 22. Cartulary of Inchcolm, p. 31.

resting and authentic record we find that Edward's cavalry, in their return from Galloway, on the 31st of August, 1300, destroyed, in their march through the fields, eighty acres of oats upon the property of William de Carlisle, at Dornock, in compensation of which the king allowed him two hogsheads of wine.<sup>1</sup> It appears in the same series of accounts that Edward bought his oats, and oat malt to be brewed for the army, at various rates, extending from twentypence to three shillings per quarter. From the multitudes of brew-houses with which every division of the kingdom appears to have been studded, from the royal manufactories of ale down to those in the towns, burghs, baronies, and villages, it is evident that this beverage must have been consumed in very great quantities. Although oats was the principal grain raised in Scotland, yet wheat was also cultivated to a considerable extent, chiefly by the higher orders; throughout the south and east districts of the country, wheaten bread was principally used at their tables; and the quantities of this grain which the Cartularies show to have been ground in the mills, evince the consumption to have been very considerable. When Edward, in the year 1300, invaded Galloway, we find, by the wardrobe account of that period, that he purchased large quantities of wheat, which was exported from Kirkcudbright to Whitehaven, and other ports in Cumberland. It was there ground, and the flour sent back to supply the English garrisons in Galloway and Ayr. In the wardrobe account of the same monarch,

<sup>1</sup> Liber Cotidianus Garderobæ Edwardi I., p. 126.

for the year 1299, it is stated that unground pease, for the use of the English garrisons, were furnished at the rate of two shillings and ninepence, and beans for the horses at four shillings and sixpence, the quarter. In addition to these crops, extensive districts of rich natural meadow, with the green sward which clothed the forest glades, furnished grass, which was made into hay, and, with all other agricultural produce, paid its tithe to the clergy. The fields, the mountain grazings, and the forests, were amply stocked with cows, sheep, and large herds of swine,<sup>1</sup> which fed on the beech mast. These last formed the staple animal food of the lower classes ; for even the poor bondman or cottager seems to have generally possessed, in the territorium of the village where he lived, a right of common pasture for a sow and her pigs. Another rich and important part of the stocking of the farms and the forests of those times consisted in the numerous horses which were reared by their baronial proprietors. We learn from the Cartularies that great care was bestowed upon this interesting branch of rural economy. Many of the nobles had breeding studs upon their estates ;<sup>2</sup> and, in the forests, large herds of brood mares, surrounded by their grown-up progeny, and with their young foals at their feet, ran wild, and produced a hardy and excellent stock of little horses, upon which the hobelers, or light-armed Scottish cavalry, were mounted, which, in the nume-

<sup>1</sup> Excerpt. E. Rotul. Compot. Temp. Alex. III. pp. 12, 15.

<sup>2</sup> Cartulary of Melrose, p. 105. Cartulary of Kelso, pp. 283, 284.

rous raids or invasions of England, under Bruce, Randolph, and Douglas, so cruelly ravaged and destroyed the country. Distinguished from these were the domestic horses and mares employed in the purposes of agriculture,<sup>1</sup> in war, or in the chase. Both the wild horses, and those which had been domesticated, were of a small hardy breed, excellently fitted for light cavalry, but too diminutive to be employed as the great war horse of the knight, which had not only to bear its master armed from head to foot in steel, but to carry likewise its own coat of mail. It is on this account that we find the Scottish barons importing a breed of larger horses from abroad.<sup>2</sup> Some idea may be formed of the extent of the stud possessed by the higher barons and the rich ecclesiastical houses, by an inventory which is preserved in the Chartulary of Newbottle. It states that the monks of Melrose possessed in old times three hundred and twenty-five forest mares and horses, fifty-four domestic mares, a hundred and four domestic horses, two hundred and seven stags or young horses, thirty-nine three year colts, and a hundred and seventy-two year old colts.

<sup>1</sup> In the farming operations of ploughing and harrowing, in the leading of hay, the carting of peats, or taking in the corn during the harvest, the wain driven by oxen appears to have been principally employed, while the conveyance of the agricultural produce to any great distance was performed by horse labour. This appears from the minute details of the services due by the tenants of the Abbey of Kelso, in the Cartulary of that rich religious house. Cartulary of Kelso, p. 475.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Douglas brings ten "great horses" into Scotland, 1st July, 1352. *Rotuli Scotiæ*, p. 752, vol. i.



But that branch of rural economy upon which the Scottish proprietors of this period bestowed most attention, was the rearing of large flocks of sheep and herds of cattle.<sup>1</sup> Sheep, indeed, chiefly abounded in the Lowlands; and, during the latter part of the reign of David the Second, we have seen the parliament interposing in order to equalize the taxation of the districts where sheep farming was unknown, and the Lowland counties, where the wool tax fell heavily upon the inhabitants, while, on another occasion, "white sheep" are exempted, probably meaning those sheep which, for the sake of producing a finer quality of wool, had not been smeared with tar.<sup>2</sup> In a short time, however, the northern, as well as the southern districts, abounded in sheep, which became a principal branch of the wealth of the country. Their flesh was consumed at the barons' table; their wool formed the chief article of export, or was manufactured within the kingdom into the coarser kind of cloth for the farm servants;<sup>3</sup> their skins were tanned and converted into articles for home consumption, or exported to England and Flanders. In like manner, the carcasses of the beeves were consumed by the troops of retainers, or exposed for sale in the market of

<sup>1</sup> Excerpta ex Rotulo Compotorum, Temp. Regis Alex. III. p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> "White sheep" is the technical phrase for sheep which are not smeared with tar in the winter time. The smearing injures the wool; and it is not improbable the exemption from tax may have been with a view to the production of wool better fitted to the purposes of the manufacturer. Robertson, p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> Charter of William the Lion to the burgh of Inverness, printed in Wight on Elections, p. 411.

the burgh; the skins were exported in great quantities, both with and without the hair, or manufactured into shoes, leather jackets, buff coats, caps, saddles, bridles, and other articles of individual comfort or utility. In the more cultivated districts, cows were kept in the proportion of ten to every plough; but, in the wilder parts of the country, the number was infinitely greater.<sup>1</sup> Goats also were to be found in some districts, chiefly in the wilder and more mountainous parts of the country.<sup>2</sup>

From the quantity of cheese which appears to have been manufactured on the royal demesnes throughout Scotland, it is certain that the dairy formed a principal object of attention;<sup>3</sup> and if such was the case upon the lands of the crown, it is equally certain that its proper management and economy was not neglected by the clergy or the barons. In the Cartulary of Kelso, we find that David the First conferred on the monks of that house the tenth of the cheese which he received from Tweeddale; the same prince gave to the monks of Scone the tenth of the can of his cheese brought in from his manors of Gowrie, Scone, Cowper, and Torgrund; and to the monks of Rendalgross, the tenth of the cheese and corn collected from the district round Perth.<sup>4</sup> From the same valuable class of records, which contain the most interesting materials for the civil history of the country, we learn that, in addi-

<sup>1</sup> Caledonia, p. 798.

<sup>2</sup> Robertson's Parliamentary Records, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Excerpta E. Rotulo Compot. Temp. Alex. III. p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Cartulary of Kelso, pp. 5, 6. Cartulary of Scone, p. 6.

tion to the more important branches already mentioned, poultry was carefully attended to in the farm establishment; and it is through the monks, the constant friends of all comfort and good cheer, that the fact is transmitted. As early as under Malcolm the Fourth, the monks of Scone, upon the Feast of All Saints, received from every ploughland within their demesnes ten hens, along with other farm produce; and from each house of every hamlet or village on the lands belonging to the Abbey of Kelso, the Abbot at Christmas received a hen, for which he paid a halfpenny.<sup>1</sup>

It will be seen, from these facts, that the state of Scotland, with regard to those necessaries, and even comforts of life, which depend upon agricultural improvement, was sufficiently respectable. Wheaten loaves, beef, mutton, and bacon, besides venison and game of all descriptions, in rude abundance, were to be found at the table of the greater and lesser barons, while the lower orders, who could look to a certain supply of pork, and eggs, cheese, butter, ale, and oaten cakes, were undoubtedly, so far as respects these comforts, in a prosperous condition. Besides this, both for rich and poor, there was an inexhaustible supply of fish, which abounded in the seas that washed their coasts, and in the rivers and lakes of the country. Herring and salmon, cod and ling, haddocks, whiting, oysters, trout, eels, and almost every other species of fresh water fish, were caught in great quantities, and

<sup>1</sup> Cartulary of Scone, p. 16. Cartulary of Kelso.

formed an article of constant home consumption.<sup>1</sup> The pages of the various Cartularies<sup>2</sup> abound with proofs of the assiduity and skill with which the fisheries were pursued, and of the value attached to them by their proprietors. In the wardrobe accounts of Edward the First, large quantities of herring were purchased for the provisioning of his Scottish garrisons; and during his campaigns of 1300 in that country, he carried with him his nets and fishers for the supply of the royal table. Here, as in all other branches of national wealth, the monks were the great improvers, and by their skill and enterprise, taught the great barons, and the smaller landed proprietors, with their vassals and bondmen, how much wealth and comfort might be extracted out of the seas, the lakes, and the rivers of their country. *Stell* fishings, a word which appears to mean a stationary establishment for the taking of fish, were frequent on the coast of Ayrshire, on the shores of the Solway, and generally at the confluence of the larger rivers with the sea. Besides this, we find in the Cartularies innumerable grants of *retes*, or the right of using a single net within certain limits, upon the river or lake where it was established; and of *yairs*, a mode of fishing by the construction of a wattled machine within the stream of the river, which was inserted between two walls, and of very ancient use in Scotland. In the Cartulary of Paisley, the Earl of

<sup>1</sup> Robertson's Parliamentary Records, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Wardrobe Accounts of Edward I. pp. 121, 122, 143, 151.

Levenax, some time before 1224, gave to the monks of that religious house a yare fishing in the river Leven near Dumbarton.<sup>1</sup> A contemporary manuscript in the British Museum informs us, that in the reign of David the First, the Firth of Forth was frequently covered with boats, manned by Scottish, English, and Belgic fishermen, who were attracted by the great abundance of fish in the vicinity of the Isle of May;<sup>2</sup> and we know from the accounts of the Chamberlain of Scotland, that for the use of the king's household not only large quantities of every kind of fish were purchased by the clerk of the kitchen, but that David the Second, like Edward the First, kept his own fishermen for supplying the royal table.

<sup>1</sup> Cartulary of Paisley, pp. 359, 360.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Bibl. Cotton. Tit. A. XIX. f. 78, C. The MS. is a life of St Kentigern, written about the end of the reign of David the First. "Ab illo quippe tempore in hunc diem tanta piscium fertilitas ibi abundat, ut de omni littore maris Anglici, Scotici, et a Belgicæ Galliæ littoribus veniunt gratia piscandi piscatores plurimi, quos omnes Insula May in suis rite suscipit portibus." M'Pherson's Notes on Winton, vol. ii. p. 479.