

already existed, it was but necessary that motives should be held out sufficiently powerful to awaken the industry of the people; and these were furnished by Mr. Forsyth, in the form of remunerative prices for their labor. The town of Cromarty, from its central situation and excellent harbor, was chosen as the depot of the establishment. The flax was brought in vessels from Holland, prepared for the spinners in Cromarty, and then distributed by the boats of Mr. Forsyth along the shores of the Friths of Dornoch, Dingwall, and Beaully, and northwards as far as Wick and Thurso. At the commencement of the trade the distaff and spindle was in extensive use all over the north of Scotland, and the spinning-wheel only partially introduced into some of the towns; but the more primitive implement was comparatively slow and inefficient, and Mr. Forsyth, the more effectually to supplant it by the better machine, made it an express condition with all whom he employed for a second year, that at least one wheel should be introduced into every family. He, besides, hired skilful spinners to go about the country teaching its use; and so effectual were his measures that, in about ten years after the commencement of the trade, the distaff and spindle had almost entirely disappeared. There are parts of the remote Highlands, however, in which it is still in use; and the writer, when residing in a wild district of western Ross, which borders on the Atlantic, has repeatedly seen the Highland women, as they passed to and from the shore, at once bending under the weight of the creel with which they manured their lands, and ceaselessly twirling the spindle as it hung beneath the staff.