

NUMBER XVII.

PARISH OF BANFF.

(COUNTY OF BANFF, SYNOD OF ABERDEEN, AND
PRESBYTERY OF FORDYCE.)

By the Rev. Mr ABERCROMBY GORDON.

Name.

THE town of Banff gives name to the county and parish, in which it is situated. Its etymology is variously stated, and indeed seems of little importance to trace.

By some, the name is said to be of Gaelic extraction, signifying a place surrounded with high ground; but this interpretation appears too vague and general, and cannot well be applied to a situation partly open to the sea.

Banff was a part of the ancient thanedom of Boin, whence the name seems to be derived. In some old charters it is spelled Boineffe and Baineffe. The district of Boin has probably received its name from a conspicuous mountain in the neighbourhood of Cullen, called the Binn. On
the

the south side of this hill, at Darbrich, the forrester had his dwelling; and it is well known that the forrestry and thanedom territory extended thence to the borough lands of Banff, divided only by the water of Boindie*.

Situation and Extent.—The situation of this parish is somewhat peninsular, being bounded by the river Dovernan on the east, which divides it from the parish of Gamery; and by the water of Boindie on the west, separating it from the parish of that name. On the south, it is bounded by part of the parish of Alva; and on the north, by the Murray Frith.

It belongs to the presbytery of Fordyce, and to the synod and commissariat of Aberdeen. This parish forms an irregular oblong figure, stretching from north to south-west above six miles; and in breadth measures from one and an half to two and an half miles. It may contain about 12 square miles, and 7680 acres.

Surface and Soil.—The surface is in general beautifully unequal, and rises gradually to the south-west. The nature and quality of the soil are no less various. There are all sorts, the rich fertile loam, the deep strong clay, the light sandy field, and the thin gravelly bottom.

Sea-coast and Rivers.—The sea-coast, for half-a-mile westward of the harbour, is bold and rocky.

Towards the water of Boindie it forms a fine sandy beach, adjoining which is the links †, affording an excellent

* The following etymology is hazarded. Boiny or Boindie is said, in the Gaelic, to signify a little hill, and in this parish there are a great number of knolls, mounts and rising grounds.

† An extensive down or plain by the sea side, is known in Scotland by the name of links.

lent field for the healthful exercises of riding and the golf.

The only river is the Doveran, which has its source in Aberdeenshire, and, winding through many fruitful and highly cultivated plains, falls into the sea at Banff.

State of Property, Valued and Real Rents.—The Earl of Findlater, the Earl of Fife, and Lord Banff, are the principal proprietors; of whom, Lord Fife is the only residing heritor.

The valued rent of the landward part of the parish is L. 2313 Scots. The real rent, including the salmon-fishing and town's lands, is estimated at L. 4500 Sterling.

Burgh.—The town is situated at the influx of the river Doveran, on a fine declivity, opening to the east and south-east; commanding various and delightful prospects. From the sloping road, on the opposite side the river, the variegated scenery which opens to the view is highly gratifying, and never fails to attract the attention of strangers.

The noble mansion of the Earl of Fife, the spacious lawn and extensive pleasure-grounds in his Lordship's park, the smooth flowing Doveran, with its stately bridge, the town and castle of Banff, the bay, harbour and shipping, are the striking objects which at once present themselves to the eye, and charm every traveller of taste.

Banff is an ancient royalty, and the capital of the county. In conjunction with Elgin, Cullen, Inverury, and Kintore, it sends a Commissioner to Parliament.

At what precise period it was erected into a royal burgh cannot be ascertained. According to tradition, it was in the reign of Malcolm Canmore. It is, however, certain, that Malcolm IV. called the Maiden, was at Banff, A. D. 1163.

William the Lyon gives a toft and garden in the burgh of Banff to his chaplain Archibald Douglas, bishop of Moray, A. D. 1165; and fimilar gifts are made to him in the towns of Inverness, Nairn, and Cullen, all royal burghs at this period.

King Robert Bruce confirms the privileges of royalty, and King Robert II. 7th October 1372, also confirms the fame, and fuch other privileges and liberties as were enjoyed by the town of Aberdeen.

These grants were followed by confirmations from King James VI. and Charles II.

Municipal government, &c.—The town is governed by a provost, four bailies and twelve counsellors. Eight of the old council are re-elected, and the new counsellors are chosen annually out of the merchant guild-brethren.

The annual revenue of the burgh amounts to L. 300 Sterling, arising chiefly from feu-duties, rents of lands, shore-dues and petty customs.

Alienation of Lands and Fishings.—Such was the distressed situation of the burgeses, A. D. 1470, that, having no power to increase their revenues but by lease alone, the managers of the town, without fraud, and upon their great *aitb*, with consent of all and sundry neighbours of Banff, let out to certain burgeses, for 19 years, the whole of their salmon-fishings, consisting of 12 nets, for the “infesting and fundanation makkin of a perpetual chaplenary”, to “sing in the Peil-heife † of the burgh, for our Sovereign
“ Lord

* Public Records.

† Pool-haven, where formerly boats and small craft were generally moored. It is now the burying-ground, and was the site of the old church.

“ Lord the King and Queen, their predeceffors and fucceffors ; for all Christiane foules ; for the theiking of the kirk with fclate, and the bigging of the tolbuthe, and for quhat the burgh has not fubftance.” Similar leafes were probably granted until the year 1581, when George Ogilvie of Dunlugas, provoft, and his coadjutors in office, refolved to feu to perpetuity. To this effect they obtained a charter from James II. of Scotland, dated May 9. 1581. The preamble bears, that, “ for the advantage of the burgh *,” “ the council had been in ufe of granting leafes of their property to the refiding burgefles ; that thefe leafes were now expired, and that the nobility in the neighbourhood feeing the fame, and hoping to acquire the profits, did trouble and moleft the peace of the town, and gave no reft to the people : therefore,” &c. &c.

This charter was renewed on the King’s attaining the age of 25 years, *mutatis mutandis*.

Having thus obtained a right to let out their property to perpetuity, the guardians proceeded to exercife their powers. John Baird, provoft, and the bailies of the town, (two of whom could not write), were among the commissioners appointed *ad hunc effectum*. Accordingly, A. D. 1595, “ becaufe of the warres and troubles, the darrth of the country, and fcantines of victual, with exorbitant ftents and taxations for fupporting the warres, the public warkes, and uphading of the kirk, tolbuthe, and calfies, &c. ; for remeid whereof, this empower to fet, fell and feu, the common land and falmon-fifhings of the burgh, to merchant-burghers, and actual refidenters.”

Thefe magiftrates and commissioners, in confequence of their inftructions, did accordingly let out to perpetuity, for a fmall annual feu-duty, the greater part of their lands, and the whole of their falmon-fifhings.

In

* Public Records.

In the above-mentioned charter of 1592, the King, in order to preserve the government of the town pure from any mixture of *aristocracy*, gives power to the council to dispose of their property to *residing burgeses and their heirs-male only*. Had this arrangement been cautiously executed, the intentions of the original granters might have been accomplished; but it is evident, that the ancient governors, if not too attentive to their own interest, were at least somewhat negligent of the advantages of future generations. Thus did the measure defeat its own purpose, and produced the consequences they wished to avoid; for though the neighbouring nobility have not molested the peace and quiet of the inhabitants, they have got possession of the property, as the Earl of Fife has purchased near three-fourths of the whole, and the Earl of Findlater and Lord Banff a considerable part of the remainder. It was the remark of Dean Swift, which the present situation of this burgh strongly confirms, that "great changes and alienations of property" have created new and great dependencies."

Duff House and Park.—Duff House, the principal seat of the Earl of Fife, and the beautiful scenery of his Lordship's park, are well known to the tourist, and described in the journals of several celebrated travellers.

The house is a large quadrangular building, planned and executed by the late celebrated Mr Adam.

The architecture is superb, but the design is not yet completed. The original plan, which is truly magnificent, may be seen in Wolf's *Vitruvius*.

Duff House contains several very elegant apartments, in which is a great profusion of paintings, chiefly portraits. Those particularly noticed by Mr Pennant, are, Frances Duchess of Richmond, a full length, in black, painted in

1633,

1633, by Vandyck. Fine heads of Charles I. and his Queen. A head of Duff of Corfindae. There are likewise a few paintings by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and other eminent masters.

The library is a spacious room, near 70 feet in length, and extending through the whole breadth of the building. The books are numerous, and well selected. In a small apartment adjoining, is a cabinet, containing an extensive collection of Roman and British coins, medals, &c.

Lord Fife's park and surrounding plantations measure 14 miles in circumference.

The park is bounded by the two bridges of Banff and Alvah, and contains within its circuit a part of two counties, and four parishes*. The pleasure grounds are laid out with much taste and elegance. The walks are of great extent and variety, some winding beautifully along the banks of the Doveran, and others leading off, in different directions, to wide and distant plantations.

About three miles from the house, where the river is considerably narrowed by the lofty and impending craigs of Alvah, a majestic arch is thrown across, which is highly picturesque. Here the view which presents itself is peculiarly wild and romantic. The fine windings of the river, the rugged scenery on either side, the overhanging woods, and,

————— the precipice abrupt,
Projecting horror on the blacken'd flood,

THOMSON.

form a landscape truly grand, and worthy the pencil of a Claude Lorraine.

Agriculture

* Counties of Aberdeen and Banff, and the parishes of Banff, Gamrie, Alvah and King Edward.

Agriculture and Improvements.—The state of agriculture in this parish continued stationary for almost a century preceding 1754.

This fact is confirmed, by considering that the land rent suffered little or no change during the above period. From the proven rental in the former decret of stipend, it appears, that the lands belonging to the town paid no advance of rent from 1635 to 1729.

The extensive pasturage of the Gallow-hill, the property of the town, was then rented at the pitiful sum of 10 merks yearly.

In 1754, the town-council feued out these grounds to the inhabitants at 10 s. *per* acre, with a reserve to them of buying up the feu-duty at 25 years purchase.

Industry, superior culture, the advantages of sea-weed, and vicinity to the town, have now rendered what was originally barren, fertile and productive.

These lands are regularly subdivided, and inclosed with substantial stone fences, may be let from L. 2 to L. 3 an acre, and produce excellent crops of all kinds. A few fields adjoining the town are rented so high as L. 5 and L. 6 *per* acre. These are chiefly occupied by gardeners, who raise pot-herbs and other vegetables for the supply of the inhabitants.

About 40 years ago, potatoes and turnips were cultivated, as are vegetables, in the garden, and were not brought to market. Now, cattle are chiefly fed by turnip; potatoes are frequently given to horses, and are sold in great abundance by the gardeners, and in the weekly markets, at 6 d. and 7 d. a peck, of 32 lbs weight.

It is a curious fact, that on the introduction of this useful root, the great landholders were alarmed lest it should be the means of depreciating the value of grain, the staple commodity

commodity of the country. The effect, however, has been the reverse; grain of all kinds being, for some years past, in greater demand, and at higher prices, than at any former period.

Prior to the year 1754, the practice of winter-herding was little known. No sooner was the harvest completed, than the whole country became one great common, and every farmer considered he had an undoubted right to pasture his flocks on his neighbour's fields. In those days, even the best farms were generally divided into what is called out-field and infield; and both were wasted by an injudicious mode of cropping. From this torpid state the farmer was roused by the spirited exertions of the late Earl of Findlater, who happily introduced a new system of farming in this country. His Lordship, during his residence in the Castle of Banff, having taken one of his farms into his own possession, determined to cultivate it after the most approved methods then known in the kingdom. With this view, he engaged an active and experienced overseer from England, to whom he devolved the management of this farm, and in a few years improved it in a stile and manner unknown in this country*.

To conquer the power of habit, and eradicate ancient prejudices, is often a fruitless attempt, and is a task peculiarly difficult in effecting agricultural improvements. Such, however, was the influence of his Lordship's eminent example as a farmer, joined to the judicious encouragement which he afforded his tenants, that, in a few years, a spirit of industry and enterprise pervaded all ranks of proprietors and farmers in this country, and produced a striking improvement in the soil and appearance of this parish and neighbourhood.

Lord

* See Agricultural Report of this county, by Mr. Donaldson.

Lord Findlater was also the first who introduced, on a large scale, the practice of fallow, and the use of lime, sowing grass-seeds, turnip and other green crops; improvements now generally adopted, and with great success. His Lordship's improvements, with the general mode of farming practised in this corner, will be found more fully detailed in the Agricultural Reports of this county.

Farms.—The farms most remarkable for beauty, extent and improvement, in this parish, are, Colleonard and Boindie Hills, belonging to Lord Findlater, and Blairshinnoch, the property of Lord Banff. The first of these was one of Lord Findlater's experimental farms. It lies on a gentle declivity, opening to the south, and commands a variety of pleasing prospects. The fields are laid out with much taste and judgment, inclosed and subdivided with hedge-rows and belts of thriving wood. It bears a striking resemblance to a fine English farm, and to those who remember its former appearance, it seems altogether a new creation. The farm of Blairshinnoch contains about 400 acres, and is generally a productive field.

Boindie Hills is chiefly occupied as a sheep farm, and proves a very lucrative possession to Mr Milne, affording excellent pasture to a flock of 200 to 300 sheep, chiefly of English breed, and of the largest size.

Nor, in this account, must we omit the little farm of Cowden-Knows*, distant about a mile from the town, and justly celebrated for its rural beauty.

Attracted by its wild and simple scenery, the present tenant has chosen this *ferme ornée* as a summer retreat.

From

* This is not supposed to be the scene of the plaintive Scots ballad.

From his clay-built cottage, situated on a rising ground, there is an extensive view of the Murray Frith, of the lofty mountains of Sutherland and Caithness, and various woodland prospects.

This favoured spot is preserved quite in the pastoral stile.

“ Here no rude ploughman side-long lays the glebe,

“ ————— Nor sower stalks

“ With measur'd steps, —————

“ Nor harrow follows, harsh, to shut the scene.”

THOMSON.

The present occupier aspires not to the extravagant praise which Dean Swift bestows on the man “ who makes
“ one ear of corn to grow where there was none before.”

————— Juvat arva videre

Non rastris hominum, non ulli obnoxia curæ.

VIRG. GEORG.

Prices of grain, &c. at different periods.—Meal was sold, by contract for seven years, at 8 s. 6 d. *per* boll, commencing with crop 1758; at 9 s. for the same period, commencing with crop 1764; and at 9 s. 6 d. from 1767. Ten shillings was considered a reasonable price for a contract of seven years, commencing 1768. The medium price of meal, for 20 years preceding 1782, was 11 s. 7½ d.; and from that year to 1795, about 13 s. 2 d.

For some years past, oats have been sold at 1 s. 1 d. and 1 s. 2 d. *per* stone weight*. Meal and barley have given proportionably high prices. Such was the alarming deficiency

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* The boll of oats sometimes weighs 14½, 15, and sometimes 16 stones.

ency of crop 1795, that meal was sold in this parish at 21 s. a boll of eight stones Dutch weight, and barley at 25 s. *

Implements

* Barley of a good kind generally weighs from 18 to 20 stones *per* boll.

Owing to the late injudicious opening of the ports for importation, and the threatening of a farther depression of the distilleries, there is at present an extraordinary stagnation in the sale of grain, which must be attended with the most serious consequences to the farmer.

In seasons of plenty, the impolicy of opening the ports for importation must be obvious to the humblest capacity. When prices are low, in consequence of such plenty, a bounty ought to be given upon exportation; and that bounty ought to be continued until the price rises to a certain height.

“ There must be something very seductive, or very profitable, in the importation of foreign grain; for all the laws that have hitherto been made to prevent it, have been evaded; and yet, except the importer, it is clearly against the interest of every other person in the kingdom for it is destructive of our own agriculture; and we have seen, from certain evidence, that it raises the price of grain upon the consumer.

“ While the ancient laws laid the country open to the importation of foreign grain, by injudicious duties or restrictions upon our own produce, our farmers were dispirited, a great part of the soil lay without culture; the price of grain was consequently high; and population was restrained

“ When the restrictions were not only removed, but bounties given upon the exportation of our excrescent stock, by the acts of 1688 and 1700, the happiest effects were immediately experienced. These laws acted like magic; our agriculture immediately rose, as from the dead; population increased; and instead of eating the bread of foreign nations, we not only maintained all our own people, at a lower rate than was ever known before, but the kingdom received an immediate addition of riches and strength, from the money brought in, from the increase of shipping, and from the people employed in raising and exporting the surplus of our produce. A state of prosperity which continued without interruption for above half a century after the Union. No sooner was importation again encouraged, than our agriculture languished, our exportation declined, and the prices of grain rose.”

“ Importation of foreign grain acts like a mole under ground; we know nothing of its operations but by the heaps which it raises, and when these heaps come to cover an 8th, an 10th, or even a 475th part of our own soil, it is high time to turn them down.”

The

Implements of Husbandry.—In no branch of agriculture has there been a more striking and essential improvement than in the construction of the implements of husbandry. Carts were not used in this parish till the year 1728, when Mr Duff of Corsindae, then residing in Banff, introduced them, having procured two “*timber carts*,” at the price of 5 s. each. The creel or curroch was then the common vehicle in use. Grain, meal, and lime for exportation, were brought hither on horseback, from the most inland parts of the country.

The only plough then used, was what is known by the name of the old Scottish plough, in its rudest form. Now, carriages, ploughs, harrows, and the various utensils of husbandry, of the most approved and modern construction, are either imported from Leith, or manufactured in this country. These are generally painted; a practice which has both ornament and utility to recommend it*.

Nursery.—Adjoining the farm of Colleonard, there is a nursery of considerable extent, conducted by Mr Reid. It was begun about 30 years ago, and has of late been greatly enlarged.

The above facts and observations are taken from “*An Inquiry into the Corn Laws and Corn Trade of Great Britain, and their influence on the Prosperity of the Kingdom* ; by the late Alexander Drom, Esq, of Aberdeen.”

Mr Drom was amply qualified for the investigation of these important subjects. He was particularly acquainted with the state of this county, having long resided in Banff.

* The ingenious Bishop of Landaff, in his *Chemical Essays*, observes, “*Since the same piece of wood has different weights, when dry, and when soaked with water, the covering carts, ploughs, and other husbandry gear usually made of ash, with a coarse kind of paint which will keep out the rain, is a practice full as serviceable in lessening the weight of the implement which is to be moved by the strength of man or horse, as in preserving the wood from decay.*”

enlarged and improved. It occupies between 15 and 20 acres, and contains all the variety of fruit and forest trees, ever-green and flowering shrubs, flower roots and plants, which are in demand in this climate.

A gentleman in this neighbourhood, Mr Garden of Troup, in the course of three or four years, has planted from Mr Reid's nursery, the immense number of one million nine hundred thousand trees, besides what he procured from other quarters, and the greater part in a thriving state*.

Woods, &c.—It is generally supposed, that a considerable part of this parish, towards the south-west, has been covered with woods, and belonged to the ancient forest of Boin. A simple distich, which tradition has handed down, confirms this opinion :

From Culbirnie † to the sea,
You may step from tree to tree.

There is still in possession of a farmer in that quarter, an oak tree, 30 feet long, which was dug up in the neighbourhood of his farm.

Since the decay or demolition of that forest, there were very few trees in this district, till the year 1756, when Lord Fife began his plantations. These are now of great extent and variety, and in a flourishing state.

The woods on Lord Findlater's estates in this parish are likewise thriving, and of considerable extent.

All these plantations add greatly to the decoration of the country, to the comfort of the poor, and to the facility of every branch of industry.

Ecclesiastical

* In these plantations a balm of Gilead fir, last season, advanced 20 inches in height.

† Culbirnie, a farm about three miles distant from the sea.

Ecclesiastical State.—From the public records it appears, that the kirk of Banff was rebuilt by the town-council in the year 1471, when Sir James Ogilvie of Deskford was provost. They endowed a chaplain, with ten merks of stipend, besides a living out of the common fund. Before this period, the chaplainry of St Mary, of the order of Carmelites, was the only other establishment of worship in the royalty.

The parishes of Banff and Inverboindie continued united till the year 1634, when Mr Alexander Seton, then minister of Banff, brought an action * of valuation and modification of the teinds against the heritors, by which the union was declared void, and each holden to be a separate parish, and distinct congregation.

The first minister of this parish, after its disjunction from Boindie, was Mr Alexander Seton. He died 1679, and was succeeded by Mr Patrick Innes, minister of Deskford, who died *anno* 1699. His successor in office was Mr William Hunter, minister of Tyrie. In 1712, Mr Hunter being suspended from preaching, upon his refusal of the abjuration oath, the church was supplied by the brethren of the neighbourhood. The following year he returned to his charge, and died 1716. Mr James Innes was admitted in December 1716, and died September 1753. In December following, Mr Robert Trail, minister at Kettins, was admitted; and in October 1761, was preferred to the Divinity
Chair

* The Earl of Airly, Lord Deskford, and the other heritors, unanimously submitted the terms of the disjunction, and amount of stipend, to Patrick Archbishop of Glasgow, and John Bishop of Ross. Accordingly, these arbiters settled the boundaries of the two parishes, and fixed the *quantum* of stipend payable to each minister, at $3\frac{1}{2}$ chalders of victual, and 350 merks of money, with the vicarage teinds *ipfa corpora*. This judgment was confirmed by the Lords Commissioners of Teinds.

Chair in the University of Glasgow. He was succeeded by Mr Andrew Skene, minister of Keith, who died at Bath, in December 1792.

The present incumbent, Mr Abercromby Gordon, was admitted in August 1793.

The parish church was built in the years 1789 and 1790, after the model of the new church at Dundee; of which Mr Pennant says, "It is built in a stile that does credit to the place, and shews an enlargement of mind in the Presbyterians, who now begin to think that the Lord may be praised in beauty of holiness."

The body of the church measures 80 feet in length, and 50 of breadth, within the walls. It is of proportionable height. Four Ionic columns support the galleries, which form five sides of an octagon, and are high and spacious. The church is elegantly finished within, and, exclusive of roomy passages, will contain 1500 persons. The pulpit is perhaps raised to an incommodious height, being an ascent of 21 steps. Some of my brethren, accustomed to a more humble *rostrum*, decline officiating in so elevated a situation, and are ready to exclaim with the poet,

————— How fearful
And dizzy 'tis, to cast one's eyes so low!
————— I'll look no more,
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong. SHAKESPEARE.

The roof is a curious and massy structure. It has ten principal couples, whose beams extend the whole width of the house, and support the ceiling. The couples are strongly bound with iron, having 700 pounds weight on each.

The spire still remains in an unfinished state, which gives the whole building a heavy and awkward appearance. It is intended, however, to resume the work next season.

The

The church has already cost L. 2400. The old church was taken down only last year, excepting an ancient vaulted aisle, on the south side, now a burying place of Lord Banff's family.

By a late decree of augmentation, the minister's stipend is 60 bolls barley, 52 bolls meal, L. 63 Sterling money. In this are included the vicarage tithes converted, and L. 5 as the allowance for communion-elements.

The glebe, which consists of seven and one half acres, is a beautiful and fertile field, immediately adjoining the town.

The manse was substantially repaired about three years ago, and is a comfortable residence. For this purpose, and for rebuilding the garden-walls, the heritors most cheerfully granted L. 250, with an annual allowance to the present minister of L. 10, for upholding these repairs.

The garden contains nearly half an acre of ground, and is a most productive spot.

The Earl of Findlater is patron. The Magistrates also claim the right of patronage, and have been in habit of formally protesting against his Lordship's presentation. It is apprehended, however, that such protest can be of no avail in preserving their rights, unless made before the presentation is received and sustained by the presbytery, a mode which has not been attended to in this instance.

Banff is not a collegiate charge, though the numbers of the people would require, and the funds in the parish are sufficient to endow, a second minister. Besides the Established Church, there are three places of worship in this town, the Episcopal chapel, the church of Relief, and a Roman Catholic meeting-house.

From the statement of the Reverend Mr Skinner, late minister of St Andrews Chapel, the numbers in his charge amount nearly to 300. Formerly they were divided, and
belonged

belonged partly to the communion of the Church of England, and partly to the Episcopal Church of Scotland. But in the year 1792, when a bill passed in Parliament, relieving the laity of the latter persuasion from those forfeitures, penalties and disabilities, to which they had long been subjected, both congregations, with a few exceptions, united under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Bishop of Aberdeen.

The chapel is conveniently situated, neat and commodious, and has a well-toned small organ.

The poor are admitted to the benefit of the public funds of the parish; in return for which, an annual collection is made in the chapel on Christmas evening, which the clergyman distributes indiscriminately to the poor of other persuasions.

The church of Relief was built in the year 1780, is situated in the Seatown, and is a very commodious edifice. The congregation, which is numerous, is composed partly of families residing in Banff, and partly of people from neighbouring parishes.

The numbers from this town and parish, according to a communication of their minister, are as follows :

From the town,	-	-	360
Country district,	-	-	40
Total,	-	-	<hr/> 400

Of these are said to be examinable, 330.

The poor of this congregation likewise share in the benefit of the general funds; and a public collection is occasionally made in their church, for the relief of the poor at large, which is usually committed to the disposal of the parish minister.

Those

Those attending the Roman Catholic meetinghouse from this parish, according to the statement of their clergyman, are in number 96; of which, 74 are examinable.

Poor.—The funds for the maintenance of the numerous poor in this parish are considerable.

The permanent funds, valuing two inclosures of land at 25 years purchase, amount to nearly L. 900 Sterling, including L. 200 allotted for the support of the poor's school.

Interest of money,	-	-	L. 27	0	0
Land rent	-	-	14	0	0
Weekly collections for 1797,	-	-	98	18	0
Penalties from delinquents,	-	-	3	0	0
			<hr/>		
			L. 142	18	0
Poor who receive occasionally,	-	-			60
Poor on the quarterly roll,	-	-			80
Ditto on the weekly roll,	-	-			10
					<hr/>
Total,	-	-			150

The poor on the quarterly roll receive from 2 s. 6 d. to 5 s. each; those on the weekly list are generally allowed 1 s. each.

Previous to the quarterly distribution, an edict is regularly read from the precentor's desk, requiring the attendance of heritors, magistrates, &c.

Besides the ordinary weekly collections, there is generally an annual voluntary subscription, for the relief of poor families during the rigour of winter*.

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* This season the Ladies have generously subscribed a sum for a salary to a sick-nurse, for attending the poor during illnesses.

Here is a small hospital or bed-house, which affords lodging to eight poor decayed women. It has no other endowment than what is derived from the parochial funds, and the donations of charitable individuals*.

In few places are the poor supplied with more liberality than in Banff. Hence the great number of this description who resort hither from neighbouring parishes, and become stationary. At the same time, it may be remarked, that here, as in most other towns, indigence is often marked with the appearance of greater wretchedness than in country villages, or the solitary cottage.

Those who are entrusted with the management of the poor's funds, have too frequent cause to observe, and to lament, that our charitable contributions, intended as the reward of merit, or the refuge of misfortune, are sometimes, and unavoidably, bestowed on the indolent, the intemperate, and the undeserving, whether natives or strangers. But, "to do the best, (observes an eloquent writer), can seldom be the lot of man; it is sufficient if, when opportunities are presented, he is ready to do good. How little virtue could be practised, if beneficence were to wait always for the most proper objects, and the noblest occasions; occasions that may never happen, and objects that may never be found."

Antiquities.—Few remains of antiquity are to be seen in this parish, to attract observation. Of these few, the old religious houses merit a place in this account.

Here

* Mr George Smith, a native of this county, lately bequeathed L. 1000 Sterling to the Magistrates of Banff, for the express purpose of building an hospital or infirmary. The money becomes soon payable, and such an useful institution will prove a most substantial benefit to this part of the country, so far distant from the Infirmary at Aberdeen.

Here was a convent of Carmelites, or White Friars, consecrated to the Virgin Mary. This order of mendicant friars derived their origin and name from Mount Carmel, in Syria. St Lewis, King of France, returning from Asia, brought along with him some of this sect, whom he established in Paris. They were afterwards divided into 32 provinces, of which Scotland was the 13th. They were denominated White Friars, from their exterior dress. It seems probable, that a convent of these Carmelites was established in Banff, by Alexander III.; although the first Sovereign grant respecting it on record, is dated "Apud Sconam, 1mo die Aug. 1324," confirming, &c. "Deo, beatæ Mariæ Virgini, et religiosis fratribus ordinis de Monte Carmelite, capellam beatæ Mariæ juxta villam de Banff, una cum doto ad eandem capellam pertinente, ad ædificandam ibidem ecclesiam, et alios domos sui ordinis, et ad inhabitandum Dom. locum cum fratribus ejusdem ordinis, presenti pontifice ejusdem fratribus specialiter est concessum: præterea, damus et concedimus hac præsta carta nostra, confirm. fratribus ibidem Deo fervientibus, et pro servituris, illam davatum terræ*, cum pertinentiis quæ ad dictam capellam ante præsentem collationem nostram pertinere solebant, ad invenendum panem, vinum, et ceram, ad cultum Domini ibidem divinius exercendum."

The habit of the order was white, and on the lower part of their mantle were several rolls of stuff. But this habit being disagreeable to the people, Pope Honorius IV. ordered them to change their garb. Accordingly, they laid
aside

* This is the fine plain called the Daw-haugh, on which Duff House stands. This field, together with sandy hills, &c. made a davoch of land, supposed to contain 416 acres. *Vide Statistical Report of Rhyndie.*

aside the bands or rolls from their mantle, and wore afterwards a white cloak, above a grey or tawny gown.

The arms they assumed was a representation of the Virgin Mary, and of our Saviour, elevated on a temple; and below, the figure of a Carmelite, in his pontificals, and in a kneeling posture.

Sir Walter Ogilvie of Denlugas, eager to acquire an addition of landed property, laid in his claim, before the Reformation, for a gift of this religious convent, and obtained a grant thereof, *anno* 1544*. The family of Denlugas retained possession of these heritages till 1630, when they became the property of the Earl of Airly, and in 1690 were purchased by the Laird of Bracco, ancestor of Lord Fife. The superiority, with the feu-duties, were gifted by James VI. to the King's College of Aberdeen, and bought from them, in 1752, by the Earl of Fife.

Two of the Carmelite cells are still to be seen, near the old church, in a pretty entire state.

The beautiful green mount in Lord Fife's park, and another of inferior size, situated in the middle of the town, formed a part of the Carmelites territory. These mounts appear to have been chiefly the work of art, and are supposed to be the labours of penance enjoined by the fraternity.

On the mount in Duff House park, are still to be remembered the ruins and foundation of their chapel, around which was the consecrated ground of the sepulchre. Here many bones of the dead were found, and by the care of Lord Fife deposited in a large urn, elevated on a pedestal,
near

* To this grant William Smith, Prior of the Carmelites in Banff, Sir John Christofom, Prior at Aberdeen, and several other brethren, are subscribers.

near the mount. In the same ground, on an eminence, overhanging the river, his Lordship has built an elegant mausoleum. It is of Gothic architecture, surrounded with shrubbery,

“The cypress and the yew’s funeral shade,”

and forms a striking ornament to the park. The windows are of painted glass, in casements of stone, and in front are placed two beautiful figures in statuary, emblematical of Faith and Hope.

Among the monuments in the mausoleum, is one of curious sculpture, and great antiquity, sacred to the memory of John Duff of Maldavat, an ancestor of Lord Fife. It was brought hither a few years ago, together with the ashes of the deceased, from the family burying-place, in the aisle of Cullen. In this monument is rudely sculptured the figure of a warrior in full coat of armour, with this inscription, “Hic jacet Johanes Duf. de Maldavat. et Baldavi. obiit 2 Julii. 1404,” &c*.

The monument of greatest antiquity in the church, seems to be that in Lord Banff’s aisle, with the following inscription :

Ano Dni 1558. 29 Nove
Obiit. Valterus. Ogilvy. de. Dvnlvgvs. Miles.
Preposit^s. Huj^s. Urbis, &c †.

Castle

* The late reverend and ingenious Mr Cordiner, of this place, in the 24th number of his Remarkable Ruins, &c. in North Britain, has given an elegant delineation of this ancient monument, accompanied with a short description of it, and of the other monuments in Lord Fife’s Mausoleum.

† As a specimen of the versification of ancient epitaphs in this parish, the following are subjoined :

Lo,

Castle of Banff.—The Castle of Banff was a constabulary of old, such as Cullen, Elgin, Forres, and Nairn. It was a place of strength, and said to be occasionally the residence of the King, when visiting this part of his dominions. In his Majesty's absence, it was the messuage of the thane, sheriff, or constable, and the seat where justice was administered.

By the public records it appears, that Walter de Leslie obtained a charter, dated at Perth, 1364, of many lands, among others, of Blairshinnoch in this parish, for furnishing to the King a soldier to attend him, at three head courts: "Apud Castrum de Banffe." The office of sheriff continued annexed to the castle till 1636, when the sheriffdom was resigned by the Earl of Buchan to Sir James Baird of Auchmedden; and the castle to Mr Sharp, father of the Archbishop of St Andrew's.

In 1683 Sir ——— Sharp of Stonyhill disposed the Castle of Banff to Provost Leslie of Kininvie, from whom the family of Findlater afterwards derived their right of property.

The

Lo, here interred, lies the pretious dust of that renowned - *Defaced.*

Soul saving Seton,
Preacher in this Town,
The Key of Knowledge,
And Glory of the Gown. - - *Date defaced.*

On John Andrew, town-clerk of Banff, *anno* 16—,
Here lies a Man whose Tongue and Pen
Did what they could to profit Men,
His life did prove most Christian,
So rests, to rise to Glorie again.

In the church-yard is a handsome pyramidical monument, with an elegant inscription on white marble, to the memory of the late Admiral Gordon and his son.

The castle and adjoining grounds hold of the Crown blench, and pay neither cefs, ftipend, nor any burden whatever. The fheriff's office was refigned in 1681, by Baird of Auchmedden, to the Earl of Findlater, who enjoyed the right till the abolition of heritable jurifdictions in 1748.

Part of the ancient wall is yet entire; and the remains of the moat and intrenchments are ftill vifible.

Excepting a fmall adjoining houfe, the refidence of Archbishop Sharp's father, the caftle is now a plain modern building*. Its fituation is uncommonly pleafing and romantic, and few dwellings can boast of a greater variety of charming profpects.

In the caftle are fome good paintings and prints; particularly a picture of the celebrated Jamiefon, by his own hand. He is reprefented fitting in his painting chamber, with his hat on, and his pallet before him. On the walls of his room feem carelefsly to be hung feveral productions of his various pencil.

Near to the caftle was fituated the chaplainry of the Holy Rood, or *Sancti Crucis*, confecrated in commemoration of our Saviour's fufferings. At what period, or by what founder, this chapel was erected, no information can be derived, either from tradition or ancient record. From an old register of the town-council, 1544, we learn, that this religious houfe lay within the liberties of the burgh, and comprehended, "terras pifcatorias vocatas vulgariter *Fifher's Lands*,

* This was long the refidence of the late Countefs Dowager of Findlater, a lady not more diftinguifhed by her high rank, than by the unaffuming manners, and unwearied benevolence, which adorned her character,

She had, indeed,

————— a tear for pity, and a hand
Open as day to melting charity.

“ *Lands, ex boreali, et occidentali partibus montis Castris*
“ *de Banff*.*”

The Castle of Inchdrewer, on the estate of Lord Banff, is situated on a fine rising ground, about four miles south-west of the town. It is still entire and habitable. By the stile of its architecture, it seems to have been built about the time of King James IV. or V. This is the opinion of the celebrated Grose, who in his book of Antiquities has given a correct view of this castle †.

Two fields, near the confines of this parish, are distinguished by the names of Arrdane and Swordane. Whether these have ever been the scenes of battle, and derived their names from the arrows and swords of the Danes, must be left to more able antiquaries to explore and determine.

Population.—The writer of this report is not possessed of materials sufficient to enable him to ascertain, with precision, the number of inhabitants in this parish at former periods. It is obvious, however, that the great increase of buildings, in different parts of the town, has occasioned a proportionable increase of population.

It appears from a list drawn up by the late minister, in the year 1782, that the numbers in the town then were 2380. By a very accurate roll made up 1797, the number is,

In the town,	-	-	2860
Country district,	-	-	650
			<hr/> 3510

The

* The great causes assigned for this foundation, were, “ the veneration
“ of the provosts, et ad extirpandum heresum dicti conventi, et propitio
“ magni Dei, et promotam orthodoxam fidem.”

† Sir George Ogilvie of Dunlugas, who was created a Baronet by King Charles I. on 10th July 1627, in the same year obtained a charter under
the

The following is an abstract of marriages and births in the whole parish, from 1791 to 1797 inclusive.

Years.	Marriages.	Births.	
1791	33	46	
92	33	51	
93	19	59	
94	22	48	
95	18	44	
96	12	35	
97	39	36	
Average of marriages,	-	-	25 $\frac{2}{7}$
————— of births,	-	-	44 $\frac{5}{7}$

No authentic register of burials has been kept for several years.

It is believed that the population in the country district of the parish has rather decreased, and for which, nearly the same causes may be assigned with those detailed in various Statistical Reports.

Parents are sometimes negligent in recording the names of their children in the parish register. Since the late enrolment for the militia, when the inconvenience of such neglect was often felt, the people are become more attentive in this respect.

Longevity.—Although there are no instances of remarkable longevity in this parish, many of the inhabitants attain a good old age. A tradesman lately died, in full possession of his faculties, long past his ninetieth year. During the

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present

the Great Seal, of the lands of the barony of Inchdrewer. He was afterwards raised to the dignity of peerage, by the title of Lord Ogilvie of Banff, by letters patent to him and the heirs-male of his body, dated 31st August 1642.

present week, (the first of the year 1798), have died four respectable characters, whose joint ages amounted to 314 years.—The writer of this Report baptized a child about 18 months ago, whose mother, grandmother, great grandfather, and great great grandmother, (five generations in a direct line), are all alive.

Air, Climate, Diseases, &c.—If the situation of Banff is considered with regard to those circumstances which have an influence on the health of the inhabitants, there are many advantages in this view which it possesses in an eminent degree.

The town stands on a rising ground, and the houses in general are built on a dry hard stratum, in many places intermixed with sand.

Such a situation is certainly more favourable to a free circulation of air than a dead flat; and the dry foundation of the houses prevents those deleterious consequences which arise from breathing within doors a damp unwholesome atmosphere. From the river, flowing immediately below the town, there are no swamps in its neighbourhood; nor in any direction around it are there any stagnating waters, whose noxious effluvia might prove injurious to health. Thus, from local situation, are the inhabitants exempted from a source of contagion, whence intermittents, and many low fevers, derive their origin. On the other hand, as the town lies open to the north and north-east, the cold winds of these points, blowing immediately from the sea, renders the inhabitants of this place liable to rheumatism, coughs, pectoral complaints, sore throats, and inflammatory fevers. The fevers of a different complexion, which sometimes prevail, are to be considered, upon the most probable and rational principles, as originating from irregularities in living, from contagion, and, among the lower class of people, from
small,

small, confined, and often crowded houses, where the air breathed is foul and noxious, and from inattention to cleanliness, particularly of bed and bed-clothes, which are too seldom washed, and very rarely ventilated.

Such existing causes will, in all situations, have an influence in producing fevers of a malignant kind, or of altering the type of those which, upon their first attack, appear inflammatory.

A reformation in regard to the above particulars, as far as it could be effected, would prove of the most beneficial consequences.

The advantages attending local situation would be much improved, and rendered more complete, by conducting into the town, from springs in the neighbourhood, a sufficient supply of good wholesome water. This measure, though expensive, is practicable, and its expediency is apparent from this circumstance, that the water in general, over the whole town, is more or less hard and brackish.

Proper regulations established, enforced, and uniformly maintained, for keeping the streets perfectly clean, and free from all baneful and putrid substances, would be highly conducive to health and comfort.

An infectious fever prevailed here, with unusual violence, about the year 1782. Unwholesome food, particularly an immoderate use of potatoes, (that year of a bad kind), were among the secondary causes to which this fever was ascribed.

Mr Skene, the late minister of this parish, a gentleman alike distinguished by his great medical knowledge, and his humane gratuitous practice, wrote a small treatise on this fever, in form of a "Serious Address to the People," &c.

This short address, which Provost Robinson was at the expence of printing and publishing, contained several plain sensible instructions respecting the prevention and treatment of the disease, and points out the means by which health
may

may be preserved from every disorder of an infectious nature*.

Inoculation.—The practice of inoculation for the small-pox is by no means become general among the lower ranks. The too tender consciences of the superstitious interpose, to rob them of its salutary benefits. We tempt God, say they, by voluntarily bringing on a disease which we might possibly have escaped: We throw ourselves in the way of danger; we distrust the Providence of Almighty God, who is all-sufficient to deliver us.

These words have, indeed, the appearance and the voice of piety, but they have nothing else. There are few of the actions of life to which the objection might not more or less apply. Does not the man, for instance, equally tempt God, who, apprehending a mortification in one of his limbs, submits to lose it by the operation of a surgeon. Perhaps the dreaded mortification might not have taken place, and the patient sacrifices his life to his timid caution. Yet no man of common sense will dispute, that the practice of amputation is salutary on the whole, and is the means of preserving many valuable lives to the community †.

Mineral

* Among other advices, Mr Skene strenuously recommends great attention to cleanliness, washing the chamber of the sick person with soap and hot water, and, upon recovery of the patient, that his apartment should be white-washed with lime, fresh slacked, laid on hot, and the windows opened every day.

† The deaths by the natural small-pox are generally allowed to be in the proportion of one in six, in seven at the very least, but oftener one in five.

Now, I presume it will be thought moderate to compute, that not above one in forty escape having the distemper, during the course of their lives. Let it be observed, then, in the first place, there are thirty-nine to
one

Mineral Springs.—As a matter connected with the health of the inhabitants of this place, and, under proper management, beneficial to the public at large, it may be proper to mention a powerful chalybeat spring, (the Well of Boindie), within two short miles of Banff.

In chronic cases, attended with debility and relaxation, where tonic medicines are admissible, the water is used with manifest advantage; but, unfortunately, this well is considered by the country people at large as a Panacea, and resorted to as such by great numbers, afflicted with diseases very opposite in their natures. The result is what may naturally be inferred; many are cured or relieved, while others return not only disappointed of expected benefit, but suffering under aggravated complaints. They sometimes, too, place as much dependence on the quantity, as on the quality, of the water. Having but little time to spare to the fashionable avocations of a watering-place, they are very diligent during their stay, and are often known to swallow
three

one against escaping the infection; and then there are only five chances in favour of a person escaping with life. The whole chances in his favour, therefore, are but five and one-fortieth, or six at most; whereas, by authentic accounts of some late general inoculations, it appears, that out of 416 only one died. On other occasions the proportion has been one in 500. A risk scarcely to be accounted for, when we consider what different constitutions must exist among such a number of patients, and the strong probability of the death of fully that number, among so many infants, from other disorders, if inoculation had been entirely out of the question. See an admirable Sermon on the Lawfulness of Inoculation, by G. Gregory, F. A. S. author of *Essays Historical and Moral*.

A surgeon in the north, presuming that self-interest has a stronger hold on man than superstition, has lately opened a policy of insurance for the small-pox! If a subscriber gives him two guineas for inoculating his child, the surgeon, in the event of the child's death, pays ten guineas to the parent. For every guinea subscribed, four guineas; for one half guinea, two guineas; and for a crown, one guinea.

three gallons a-day of the salutiferous stream, besides a reasonable potion of sea-water.

Roads and Bridges.—The post-road, as far as it extends through this parish, is kept in excellent repair. The roads leading to the inland parts of the country, being less attended to, are not in such good order. The proposed establishment of turnpikes must contribute much to the general improvement of this country. If the line is adhered to, which is already marked out in the surveyor's plan, the new road from Banff to Turreff, though not much shortened in point of distance, will oft beguile the traveller of his time, by the varied and beautiful scenery which will occupy his attention.

The former fine bridge over the Doveran was swept away by a violent flood in 1768. Another has since been built, at the expence of Government, a little higher up the river, where it is supposed to be less in danger from the rise of the water. It is a handsome structure, consisting of seven arches*.

Harbour and Shipping.—Of old, boats and trading vessels lay within the river, extending along the banks where the bulwark now is.

We learn from tradition, that the course of the Doveran, near its influx, was considerably more eastward than at present. It is said to have emptied itself at the Craig of Down, now Macduff.

The

* As an instance of the accuracy of some modern travellers, a large quarto journal, lately published, informs us, that in Banff there is a fine bridge of *nine* arches over the river *Dive*. The river is sometimes spelled Doveran, and sometimes Deveron. In the Gaelic language it signifies the *Black Water*, and is so named towards its source in Aberdeenshire.

The traditional report is corroborated by some ancient grants in favour of the Earl of Buchan, in which are specified "the salmon-fishings at the mouth of the river, and in "the sea," *jacentes apud Down.*

That piece of low ground on the east side of the river, called the Gaws, now a part of Lord Fife's pleasure-grounds, was lately the property of the town, is still within the royalty, and, it is highly presumable, formerly lay on the west bank of the river, which divided the earldom of Buchan from the county of Banff. The river, indeed, seems frequently to have altered its course; sometimes passing in a straight line through the beach, and at other times winding to the west, near the Castlehill, where it now runs, and which has been its channel for several years past.

The stream has sometimes been so small, as not to have currency sufficient to keep the passage open, the water oozing through the bank of gravel, and preventing the entrance and departure of the smallest boat.

Hence arose the necessity of building a harbour in a more convenient situation. It was begun so early as the year 1625, westward of the river mouth. The attempt was frequently frustrated, and as often resumed. After various interruptions, and repeated applications to Parliament, and to the Convention of Burghs *, the work was finished about
the

* The Convention of Burghs appointed the Commissioners from Aberdeen, Elgin, Inverness, &c. as a Committee, to examine and report the true state of the harbour, &c. Accordingly, these Commissioners met at Banff, and reported, "That the trade appeared for years past to increase:
" That the merchants had very enterprising genius, but discouraged by the
" bar on the mouth of the river, insomuch, that it often happened from
" Candlemas to Martinmas the water mouth was in no condition to receive
" a boat; and that the last season, three ships, after being loaded, were
" locked in by the bank of gravel, so that 20 coaches might pass in a breast
" dry. And farther declared, That the place was exceedingly well situated
" for

the year 1775, and is now a most useful and commodious harbour.

The shipping belonging to this port are at present 22 sail; of which 8 are brigantines, from 100 to 210 tons each; and 14 sail are sloops, chiefly of 60, 80 and 100 tons.

Vessels.	Tonnage.	No. of Men.
22	1943	137

Some of these vessels are employed in the London trade.

Shipbuilding is carried on here with success. One builder, eminent in his profession, usually employs 12 men, and has just finished a fine brigantine of 190 tons*.

Trade and Commerce.—The state of the trade and commerce of this town may be judged of from the preceding Table of the shipping, and from the following Abstract Accounts of the Imports and Exports, &c. from the 5th January 1795 to the 5th of January 1797, inclusive.

ABSTRACT

“ for trade, the piers good, water deep, and access easy with northerly winds; adding, that, from Aberdeen to Inverness, there is not a harbour that any ship dared venture, when the wind blew hard from that *air'th*.”

At this harbour the burgessees and landholders of the town have the privilege of importing freestone and slate without payment of shore-dues; and for other articles they only pay the half of the usual allowance of harbour dues.

* The distressing intelligence has been lately received, of the total loss of one of these sloops, of 70 tons, with 6 men.

Port of BANFF.—ABSTRACT ACCOUNT of Goods imported, brought and sent Coast-ways, to and from this Port, from 5th January 1795 to 5th January 1797.

Year ending 5th January 1796.	Iron Bars	Salmon Barrels	Butter and Cheese Cwt.	Salmon Kitts	Meal Quarters	Barley Quarters	Oats. Quarters	Cod & Ling fish No
Foreign trade inwards, -	3880	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Coast trade outwards, -		122	434	1412	2361	2196	3490	5500
Ditto inwards, -		800	-	-	-	-	-	-
Year ending 5th January 1797.								
Foreign trade inwards, -	3550	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Coast trade outwards, -		123	701	732	6897	255	600	54,400
Ditto inwards, -		394	-	-	-	370	100	79

Year ending 5th January 1796.	Wheat Quarters	Flour Bushels	Wool Cwt.	Bricks No.	Tiles No.	Spirit Gallons	Wine Gallons	Other Bushels
Foreign trade inwards, -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Coast trade outwards, -		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ditto inwards, -		815	226	11,800	2500	5258	2420	7766
Year ending 5th January 1797.								
Foreign trade inwards, -	170	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Coast trade outwards, -		-	-	5600	46,645	-	-	-
Ditto inwards, -		605	210	2000	-	1576	3420	8094

N. B. Very little foreign trade since the commencement of the year.

Port of BANFF.—An Account of the Quantity of English Coals and Cinders, Scots Coals and Culm, brought Coast-ways into this Port, from the 5th January 1795 to 5th January 1797.

	Quantities of English				Quantities of Scotch	
	Coals.		Cinders.		Coals.	Culm.
	Chalders.	Bushels	Chald.	Bush	Tons. Cwt.	Chalders.
From 5th January 1795 to 5th January 1796.	1745	12	43	0	281 15	7
From 5th January 1796 to 5th January 1797.	1994	35	27	0	617 10	0

N. B. The great increase in the quantity of coals imported in the year 1796, was occasioned by the demands from the country, where peat, the usual fuel, had been much destroyed by the rains of that season.

Salmon-fishing.—The Doveran is richly stored with salmon and trout, and yields a very handsome revenue to the principal proprietor, the Earl of Fife.

In the year 1757, the late Lord Fife entered into contract with a gentleman in Aberdeen, by which he sold the fresh salmon of the Doveran, from 29th September to 15th May, at three halfpence a pound. The pound of salmon now generally sells at sixpence, and early in the season at nine-pence.

Comparative

Comparative statement of the rent of the salmon-fishing at different periods :

Years.	Rent.
1713	L. 299 6 6
1729	310 13 4
1748	441 11 2
1762	600 0 0
1778	850 0 0
1795	1250 0 0

Provost Robinson has long enjoyed the lease of the fishings, and generally employs from 80 to 100 men in the different departments of the trade.

The fishing commences 30th November, and is given up 29th September.

The various expences attending the fishing amount to a sum at least double of the yearly rent.

The cruives are about a mile from the sea, and the whole extent of the river-fishing, including its windings, does not much exceed four miles*.

Manufactures

* The preservation of salmon seems very early to have attracted the attention of the Legislature. Alexander II anno 1214, enacted at Perth, upon Thursday, "the feast of St Margaret, that the stream shall in all parts be two (fo) free, that ane swine of the age of three years, well fed, may turn himself within the stream round about, *two* that his snout nor tail shall not touch the bank or side of the water." Hence, probably, the first construction of the cruives in Scotland.

The salmon is said to breed or cast his spawn in most rivers in the month of August. They deposit their eggs or spawn in a safe place, in the gravel, and then leave it to their Creator's protection. Sir Francis Bacon observes, "the age of a salmon exceeds not ten years. His growth is very sudden, so that after he has got into the sea, he becomes from a samlet, not so big as a gudgeon, to be a salmon, in as short a time as a gosling becomes a goose."

✠

Manufactures.—The thread and linen manufactures were carried on here, a few years ago, to a very great extent.

For the thread manufacture alone 3500 mats of Dutch flax were annually imported; which, at an average of L. 3, 5 s. each, cost upwards of L. 11,000 Sterling. The operation of milling and heckling employed about 60 men. When given out to spin, it afforded employment for 4000 individuals; yielded 150,000 spindles of yarn, which circulated about L. 10,000 among the spinners. The doubling and twisting the yarn, which was done in Banff, employed about 200 women and children, and at the bleachfield, engaged the labour and attention of 40 people more. These threads, when sent to Nottingham or Leicester, were valued at L. 30,000 Sterling.

This productive and useful branch has since given place to the stocking manufacture, which is also conducted on a very extensive scale by Messrs Robinsons.

The stockings are wove on a highly improved frame, of which these gentlemen are the sole patentees.

They have 150 of these frames, for the manufacturing of silk, cotton, and worsted stockings. From the nature of the work, and the advanced state of the mechanical arts, which has necessarily abridged human labour, this manufacture does not offer employment to such numbers as the branch formerly mentioned. In the several departments of the work, however, about 560 persons of different descriptions are constantly engaged.

Young

It is a curious circumstance, and perhaps but little known, that the chief consumption of pickled salmon, when first in season, and when prices are high, is by the lowest classes of the people in London. The middle ranks, and those immediately above them, abstain generally from such indulgences until the prices are moderate. See an admirable treatise on the Police of the Metropolis, by P. Colquhoun, Esq; L. L. D. late Provost of Glasgow, and now one of the Magistrates of the Police for London.

Young men, from 14 to 16 years of age, will sometimes make 40 pairs worsted stockings in one week, and at the usual hours allotted to labour. These stockings generally sell at 3 s. 6 d. a pair.

The medium gain of the frame-worker may amount to 7 s. 6 d. or 8 s. a week.

The worsted is chiefly spun on the two-handed Leicestershire wheel.

A woman who is a diligent and capable spinner, will earn from 5 s. to 6 s. weekly. The average gains are from 2 s. 6 d. to 3 s.

A considerable quantity of the stockings are disposed of in wholesale, to the shopkeepers in the town and country; but the principal market for the manufacture is London.

The linen trade is still continued, though on a more contracted scale than formerly. This branch may now employ about 20 weavers.

Soap and Candles.—A soap and candle work, belonging to a company in Banff, employs a manager and four men, and pays annually to Government L. 500 Sterling.

Brewery.—The brewing of ale, beer, and porter, is carried on here to a considerable extent. The annual consumption of barley is generally 1200 bolls; and the duty to Government L. 700. The number of hands employed amount to eight. The strong beer has long been in high repute, and in great demand, from various and distant parts of the country. The porter, when kept in bottle about a year, is sufficiently palatable, and has been known sometimes to deceive the taste of a connoisseur in that wholesome beverage.

A

A Rope and Sail Manufacture has for some time been carried on here, though not to great extent.

Brick and Tile Work.—The late Dr Saunders of this place, a gentleman of enterprising spirit, established, several years ago, a brick and tile work on his farm, about two miles from the town. It is still carried on with success, (and on an extensive plan), by his son. The work possesses great advantages from its local situation, having the command of a small harbour for the importation of coals, and for exporting part of the produce of the manufacture. Mr Saunders generally employs eight or nine men, besides an overseer.

A brickwork on a smaller scale has lately been set on foot in the vicinity of the town.

In the various branches of mechanical industry, this town can boast of several eminent workmen; but on this article the limits of a Statistical Report do not allow of a minute detail.

Markets.—There is a regular weekly market. It is held on Friday, and is well supplied with provisions of all kinds. There are also in Banff three annual fairs.

Post-Office.—The revenue arising from the Post-Office has increased since the establishment of a daily mail. It amounts to nearly L. 800 *per annum*.

Great hopes are entertained of a still earlier dispatch of the mails from Edinburgh, a measure which would be attended with signal advantages to the towns north of the metropolis.

Banking Offices.—The Bank of Scotland, and the Banking Company in Aberdeen, have each of them established

a

a branch in this town. Messrs Reid and Imlach, the agents, transact business to the extent of L. 150,000 to L. 200,000 *per annum*.

Battery.—During the late war, a small battery was erected on the high ground near the harbour. It is nearly of the half-moon construction, with turf embrasures*, and mounts two 18 pounders, and four 12 pounders, besides two field pieces.

On one side of the gateway is situated the store-house and powder-magazine, on the other a guard-room and officer's apartment.

Having an extensive command of the bay, this battery might afford protection against the depredations of a single privateer; but whether such works, thinly scattered along the coast, would prove of substantial service in the event of invasion, is a point somewhat problematical †.

Military Associations—The Banff-shire Volunteers consist of 16 companies, under the command of Colonel the Right Honourable the Earl of Fife, Lord-lieutenant of the county.

That

* The embrasure in batteries is now condemned by able engineers, and the low parapet recommended in its room, so that the guns may be pointed in any direction within the scope of the work.

† Colonel Diom, a native of this town, in his ingenious "Plans for the Defence of Great Britain," &c. observes, "Indeed it is impossible to line the coast of an extensive country in such a manner with batteries, as to protect it from an invading enemy; for they can be placed in few situations in which they may not be avoided: and if otherwise, the guns in them are generally so unwieldy and difficult to traverse, that they may be approached and stormed without much danger to the assailants. Batteries ought therefore to be erected with great caution, and perhaps only in situations strong by nature, where they may not easily be surprised or attacked on the land-side."

That part of the corps more particularly attached to the town of Banff, comprehends the numbers following, viz. :

	Colonel,	-	-	1	
	Lieutenant-colonel,	-	-	1	
	Major,	-	-	1	
	Captains,	-	-	7	
	1st Lieutenants,	-	-	9	
	2d Lieutenants,	-	-	9	
Staff.	{	Chaplain,	-	-	1
		Adjutant,	-	-	1
		Quarter-master,	-	-	1
		Surgeon,	-	-	1
	Sergeants,	-	-	36	
	Drummers,	-	-	18	
	Rank and file,	-	-	614	
				<hr/>	
	Total effective,	-	-	700	

Of these, 4 companies are stationed in the town of Banff,

- 1 in Macduff,
- 1 at Rothiemay,
- 1 at Grange,
- 1 at Portfof,
- 1 at Cullen.

Total, 9

The Strathalvah and Boyn Volunteers, including officers, consist of

The Enzie Volunteers, - 222

Total in the county of Banff, - 1218

The first companies of the Banff Volunteers were offered and accepted in November 1794; but a certain number of men had previously, and from the commencement of the present

present war, been trained to the exercise of the great guns at the battery.

Besides the Volunteer Corps, there were returned to the Privy Council, by the Lieutenancy of the county, upon the 29th day of September last, 45 men from this parish, as falling within the description comprehended in the late Militia Act.

Schools.—The public schools of Banff, which are entirely under the direction of the Magistrates, (for there is no parochial establishment), were connected together, and converted into an academy, in the year 1786. The several arrangements in this academy were made, and the teachers recommended by Dr George Chapman *, formerly rector of the Grammar-school at Dumfries, and who for some years superintended the establishments for education in this place.

The plan of instruction which Dr Chapman laid down has been strictly adhered to by the different teachers, and has answered the expectations of all concerned. The seminary is at present in a flourishing state.

At the annual public examination in August 1797, the number of daily scholars amounted to 180.

The following branches of education are taught in this academy, by the head master and four assistants :

I. The Classics, Latin and Greek, with geography, and the principles of rhetoric.

II. Writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, mensuration, algebra, practical geometry, and navigation.

III. The French and English languages, &c.

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By

* Dr Chapman was born in this neighbourhood. His extensive knowledge as a scholar, and his merit as an author on Education, are well known.

The

By the care and exertions of the late minister, a charity school was founded some years ago, for the poor children of the town and parish. The numbers usually attending this school are from 25 to 30 children. They are taught to read, and instructed in the principles of religious knowledge. For securing an annual and permanent salary of L. 20 to a well qualified teacher, the sum of L. 400 was sunk in the hands of the Magistrates. This fund was raised by the voluntary contributions of the landholders, the inhabitants, and occasional visitants, and by appropriating, with content of the heritors, L. 200 of the poor's money.

The girls attending the school are furnished with easy and profitable work, by spinning wool for Messrs Robinson's stocking manufacture*.

The provost, minister, and rector of the academy, are the patrons of this school.

Besides these, there are two English schools, in different parts of the town. The teachers, having no stated salaries, depend entirely on the fees paid by the scholars.

Boarding Schools for young Ladies.—Here, too, are reputable boarding-schools, for the education of young ladies. One of these is conducted by Misses Mitchels from England,

The principles on which this academy is conducted, are contained in Dr Chapman's *Treatise on Education*, a fifth edition of which is lately published, and much approved of by the Reviewers.

To this edition the author has given a short supplement, containing useful Observations on two Essays on Education lately published. He has subjoined further Thoughts on the Instruction necessary for the lower ranks of the People; on the appointment of Parochial Schoolmasters, and on the Encouragement they ought to receive.

* Besides a small fund belonging to this school, there is a public annual collection made, for defraying the expences of some necessary clothing to the poorer children.

land, who have lately settled here, and whose superior accomplishments fully qualify them for superintending such an institution.

At the other boarding-school, a qualified governess from Edinburgh assists in the education of the young ladies.

Comparative Statement, &c.—It may prove entertaining to some readers to trace the progress of luxury in this parish, and mark a few of the most striking changes of half a century.

1748

A gown of linsey-woolsey was the usual dress of a laird's daughter, Veild in a simple robe, her best attire,

Beyond the pomp of dress.—

THOMSON.

Her mother, indeed, who was dignified with the knightly title of lady, appeared on great occasions in a silk gown, and fine laces, which were considered as part of the paraphernalia destined to the succeeding generation.

Ladies seldom wore any other than coloured stockings.

The town could only boast of one silken pair, and these were black.

The occupation of milliner was totally unknown.

1748. A four-wheeled carriage was a luxury seldom enjoyed, unless by the nobility.

A gentleman and his wife generally rode together on the same horse.

Drawing-rooms and dining parlours were no less rare than carriages

1798

The decoration of our persons is now become a more general study among both sexes, and all ranks. In order to accommodate their dress to the capricious rules of fashion, there is a frequent, and some times a needless, recourse to the "foreign aid of ornament."

The art millinery affords employment and profit to many; and every trading vessel from London brings a fresh assortment of dresses, adjusted to the prevailing mode.

1798. Post-chaises are now in general use.

Several private gentlemen keep their carriages

The pad is become the exclusive property of the country good-wife.

The minister of the parish must have his drawing room,

Mahogany was seldom seen, save in the tea-tray, the round folding table, and the corner cup-board.

1748. When wants were fewer, and easily supplied, most of the useful articles of merchandise might be procured in the same shop. The various designations of grocer, iron-monger, and haberdasher, were little known, and almost every trader, even although he did not traffick to foreign countries, was denominated merchant.

1748. A joyous company, after dinner, have been seen quaffing the wine of a dozen bottles from a single glass.

1748. Agreeable to Queen Mary's act of Parliament, A. D. 1563, all butcher-meat was carried to market *skin and birn*, and, agreeable to custom, was sold amidst abounding filth.

1748. The annual wages of a great man's butler was about L. 8; his valet, L. 5; and his other servants, L. 3.

The farmer had his ploughman for 13s. 4d. in the half year, with the allowance of a pair shoes. The wages of a maid-servant, 6s. 8d.

1773. When Dr Johnson honoured Banff with a visit, he was pleased to observe, that the natives were more frugal of their glass, (in windows), than the English. They will often, says the Doctor, "in houses not other-

Mahogany is a species of timber in general use for articles of furniture; and the corner press is superseded by the splendid side-board.

1798. The several distinctions of tradesmen are better understood.

As ministers to our luxury, we have in the same street an oil-man, who advertised the sale of Quin sauce, Genoa-capers, and Gorgona-anchovies, &c.; a confectioner, whose bills contain the delectable names of non-pareils, ice-cream, and apricot jelly, &c.; and a perfumer, who deals in such rare articles, as Neapolitan cream for the face, Peruvian dentifrice for the teeth, and Asiatic balsam for the hair.

1798. A sober party sometimes meet, whose libation consists of a solitary bottle, with a dozen glasses.

1798. There are convenient slaughter-houses apart, and meat is brought to market cleanly, and in good order.

1798. The nobleman pays at least in a quadruple ratio for his servants.

The wages of a ploughman vary from L. 10 to L. 12, and of a maid-servant from L. 3 to L. 3, 10s. *per annum*.

1798. Many of our windows are furnished with weights and pullies. We think of the necessity of ventilating human habitations, where we may enjoy the luxury of fresh air, without resorting to the contrivance

“ will mean, compose a square of two
 “ pieces, not joining like cracked glass,
 “ but with one edge laid perhaps half
 “ an inch over the other. Their win-
 “ dows do not move upon hinges, but
 “ are pushed up and drawn down in
 “ grooves. He that would have his
 “ window open, must hold it with
 “ his hand, unless, what may some-
 “ times be found among good contri-
 “ vers, there be a nail, which he may
 “ stick into a hole, to keep it from
 “ falling *.”

Comparative Statement of the Prices of Cattle, Sheep, Pro- visions, &c. at the above periods.

1748	1798
A draught ox, L. 1 : 13 : 4.	L. 15, L. 20, and L. 25.
20 Sheep, small size, L. 4.	L. 12.
Beef and mutton, one penny, and three halfpence a pound.	Beef and mutton, 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. and 6 d. <i>per lb.</i>
A hen, together with a dozen eggs, 4 d.	Hen, without eggs, 1 s. and 1 s. 3 d.
Dozen eggs, 1 d.	4 d. and 6 d.
Goose, 2 s. a pair.	5 s. 6 d.
Turkey, 3 s. ditto.	7 s.
Pigeons, three halfpence ditto.	6 d.
14 Haddocks, three halfpence.	1 s. 6 d.
Claret sold at 1 s. a bottle.	Claret sells in the tavern at 6 s.

Disadvantages.—Among the disadvantages which this town suffers in a commercial view, the principal seems to be the want of a customhouse.

At present, no goods can be shipped or landed, nor any vessels sail from this port, without procuring the usual per-
mit

* In justice to Dr Johnson, let it be remembered, that he acknowledged
 “ these diminutive observations detract from the dignity of writing, and
 “ therefore he communicated them with hesitation and dread.”

mit from the customhouse at Aberdeen, a distance of 45 miles.

To obtain the permission of unloading, the shipmaster, after the dangers and fatigues of a sea-voyage, has generally to encounter, what, to a seaman, is often no less perilous and fatiguing, the labours of a land journey on horseback. Were a deputation granted from the Board of Customs to two or more qualified persons residing in Banff, to transact the necessary routine of business, it would certainly tend to promote the trade and manufactures of this place, and of the country around. The expence attending such establishment must be truly inconsiderable, when weighed in the scale with the advantages which would accrue from it.

A few years ago, we had the prospect of obtaining such a deputation; but, it is believed, a premature and impolitic contest, for the emoluments of office, frustrated the design.

The jarring interests of contending parties, it is hoped, will not in the same manner interfere, to deprive us of the advantages of military barracks.

The town-council have made an offer of ground for the purpose, contiguous to the battery, and the measure is fraught with beneficial consequences to the community, as well as to the military who may be stationed in this quarter.

Town-House and Prison.—Last season were laid the foundations of a new town-house and prison. The principal part of the work is nearly finished, and the whole promises to be a most substantial and commodious building. The front of the town-house, including the spire, extends 71 feet. It contains, on the ground-floor, the sheriff-court room, and county record-office. On the second flat, are the

the town-council room and town-clerk's office. The third flat contains a county hall, 48 feet long, 27 feet in breadth, and 18 feet high. In the same flat of the back buildings, are two drawing rooms, 19 feet wide, and 33 feet long. On the ground floor of the back buildings are two correction houses, 33 feet long, and 18 feet in breadth. The second flat contains two civil prisons, 19 feet square, and two criminal cells, 12 feet square.

In the construction of the gaol, the judicious improvements of the benevolent Mr Howard have been attended to, in those essential respects, air, water, and cleanliness*.

Farming Society.—The Banff-shire Farming Society was established in the year 1785. This institution was designed to forward improvements in agriculture, to reward industry, and to produce unanimity and social intercourse between the heritors and farmers of the country, whose mutual interest and advantage can never be so great as when they are inseparable. To have also under their consideration the necessary and consistent regulations for the police of the country, and for the prevention of litigious pleas among the country people, who are induced either by low advice, or inflamed by petty prejudices †.

To lay down rules answerable to the statute acts of the country; to prevent the destruction of planting, inclosures, and green crops in the fields.

To

* It is intended to have a large reservoir of water on the roof. The only prisoner at present is an unhappy woman found guilty of child-murder. She belongs to a neighbouring parish, and her insanity was clearly proved before the Circuit Court.

† A litigious spirit is by no means prevalent in this county. There are only five procurators before the sheriff-court, who are resident in this town

To lay down rules calculated on liberal principles, for the conduct which is becoming the character and description of the worthy farmer, that when he proceeds meritoriously, he may be protected; when he approves himself a useful member, he may be rewarded; and when he is the object of undeserved persecution, that he may be supported. Such are the laudable and professed designs of this Society. It is composed of the noblemen, and many of the respectable gentlemen, and of the principal farmers, of this county.

The president of the society is an honorary member of the national "Board of Agriculture."

The funds of the society arise from admission fees, and a small annual stipulated exaction from each member. They have three stated annual meetings, generally held in the Mason Hall of Banff.

Friendly Societies.—Besides St Andrews Lodge of Free Masons, and the Operative Mason Lodge, there are several friendly societies established in Banff.

I. Solomon's Lodge, or the Gardener Friendly Society, was instituted in April 1778. It consists of 500 members. Their funds are in a flourishing state. They are possessed of houses and lands in the town and vicinity, which yield a yearly rent of L. 80 Sterling. To the widows of decayed brethren, last year, they paid upwards of L. 60 Sterling.

II. The Grey-stone Friendly Society, was established in the year 1792. The benefit of this institution is not confined to any particular description of persons or professions. Their funds, it is believed, are in a progressive state of improvement.

These, and some other societies belonging to particular corporations, prove of substantial advantage in this place,
by

by aiding the poor's funds of the parish, and administering relief to many individuals.

Public Amusements.—During the winter season, there are dancing assemblies once a fortnight.

Occasionally we have academical concerts of music.

Sometimes the heroes and heroines of the Sock and Buskin favour us with a visit, and fret a few of their summer hours on our little stage.

Circulating Library.—Banff affords a choice circulating library, which, besides the usual *light summer reading* of the times, contains a select collection of the works of eminent writers, both ancient and modern.

From our constant intercourse with London by sea, we have early access to the periodical and other publications of the day.

The Reviews we generally receive from the bookseller here, in the course of the month succeeding their publication in London.

A Book Society is at present forming, on a liberal plan, to consist of 20 gentlemen.

Eminent Men.—Under this article may be mentioned the Bairds of Auchmedden, a very ancient and respectable family, long resident in Banff*.

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1568.

* There is a tradition, that as King William the Lion was hunting in one of the south-west counties, and straggling from his attendants, he was alarmed at the approach of a wild bear, and called out for assistance. Upon this, a gentleman of the name of Baird, who had followed the King, came up, and had the good fortune to slay the bear. For which signal service, the King made a considerable addition to the lands he had formerly given him, and assigned him for his coat of arms, a *boar passant*, and for his motto, *Dominus fecit*. It is further said, that one foot of the animal

was

1568. George Baird being connected by marriage, and in habits of great friendship, with the Regent, Earl of Moray, received from him a disposition, heritable and irredeemable, to the lands of Auchmedden; the Regent assigning the following cause: "for many acts of utility and friendship done to me, and many sums of money given out by him, in my service."

1647. James Baird was bred to the law, and became a person of high reputation in his profession. King Charles I. reposed great confidence in him, and appointed him sole Commissary of the Ecclesiastical Court of Scotland, an employment in those days of great honour and trust.

The King issued his warrant for creating him a peer, by the title of Lord Doveran; but Mr Baird died before the patent passed the seals. He was married to the sister of John Dempster, so remarkable for his disputations in the foreign schools.

1593. Andrew having received an university education in Scotland, went over to France to finish his studies; became one of the best scholars in that kingdom, and was made a Professor of Sciences at Lyons*.

1650. John his eldest son was also bred to the law, and after travelling much in foreign countries, became a man of great knowledge in his profession. On the Restoration, he was created a Knight, and was soon after appointed one of
the

was brought north by an ancestor of Baird of Ordnhuives, and is still preserved. The arms and motto are to be seen on an ancient monument belonging to the family of Auchmedden, in the church-yard of Baill.

* Gilbert, Andrew's brother, married the heiress of Ordnhuives, in this county, *anno* 1578, and had by her thirty-two children, the greater part of whom lived to the age of maturity.

the Senators of the College of Justice, by the title of Lord Newbyth.

1658. Sir James Baird, High Sheriff of Banff, was much respected for his abilities, integrity, and address. In 1662 he received several marks of the King's favour; among others, the following honourable declaration and acquittal, for acting in the above office during the Ufurpation.

“Whereas, We are certainly informed, that the office of
 “the Sheriffship of Our county of Banff, was, by the late
 “Ufurper, put upon Our lovite Sir James Baird of Auch-
 “medden; that he only exercised the samen during the
 “year of the great transactions of Our Restoration, where-
 “in, as the said Sir James was contributive and active, so
 “We are fully satisfied of his conduct and loyal affection to
 “Our Person and Government, and therefore declare him
 “free of all censure, &c. &c.”

Supersigned CHARLES, and subscribed LAUDERDALE.

Sir James was employed by the Duke of Lauderdale, to draw up a rational plan for the union of the two kingdoms. He accordingly prepared such plan, which was so highly approved of, that the King became desirous of carrying it into execution; but it is believed the Duke of Lauderdale, Secretary of State for Scotland, was not a sincere friend to the measure*.

Of the same family was the celebrated Bayardo, an Italian poet, who wrote Orlando Innamorata, which Ariosto made the ground-work of his Orlando Furioso.

This parish gave birth to Dr James Sharp Archbishop of St Andrews, and Primate of Scotland, whose tragical end exhibits

* The account of the family of Auchmedden is collected from an old manuscript received from Mr Rose of Mountcoffer, to whom the writer acknowledges himself also indebted for several other communications in compiling this work.

bits a melancholy instance of the furious and misguided zeal of ancient times. He was the son of Mr Sharp, Sheriff-Clerk of Banff-shire. His mother was a daughter of the Laird of Kininvy. He was born May 1613, in the Castle of Banff.

He gave early proofs of a superior genius, and excelled all his school-fellows in the rudiments of learning.

Having completed his course of academical study with great applause, at the University of Aberdeen, he took the degree of Master of Arts, and was enrolled a Student of Divinity. By the interest of the Earl of Rothes, to whom he was related, Mr Sharp was elected one of the Professors of Philosophy in St Leonard's College, St Andrews, and soon after was appointed minister of Crail.

In that remarkable division of the Presbyterians into two parties, Public Resolutioners and Remonstrators, he espoused the cause of the former. To such height were their disputes carried, as to induce the contending parties to lay their complaints before Oliver Cromwell, the Protector.

Mr Sharp being chosen Revolutionary agent, on that occasion acquitted himself with so much temper and dexterity, that Cromwell seemed convinced by the strength of his arguments, and was so impressed with his insinuating manner and address, that he pleasantly observed to some persons near him, "This gentleman, to use a Scotch phrase, may well be stiled Sharp of that Ilk."

In May 1660, Mr Sharp, at the earnest desire of General Monk and the leading Presbyterians in Scotland, went over to King Charles at Breda, to represent their conduct, and to learn his Majesty's disposition towards them.

During his absence, he was chosen Professor of Divinity in Mary's College, St Andrews; and before he left London, the

the King, as a mark of his royal favour, made him his Chaplain for Scotland, with a pension of L. 200.

In April, 1661, he accompanied the Earl of Glencairn, Chancellor, and the Earl of Rothes, President of the Council, to London, to lay before the King an account of the state of affairs in Scotland.

In a council held at Whitehall soon after, Mr Sharp was nominated Archbishop of St Andrews. A resolution having been formed to fill up all the other vacant sees, the choice of proper persons was left to the new Archbishop, who, (according to his inveterate enemy Bishop Burnet), acted in this instance with great moderation. One of his first official acts, after his preferment to the Archiepiscopal See, was, obtaining a proclamation prohibiting the meeting of clergymen in presbyteries or other church judicatories, until the Bishops arranged a plan for their procedure.

This, and some other rigorous measures, raised against him an host of enemies, several of whom bound themselves by solemn vow to sacrifice him to the sufferings of their party. They at length accomplished their horrid purpose by assassination, attended with circumstances of savage barbarity*.

The

* The following letter from Sir William Sharp of Stonyhill, containing a detail of the shocking circumstances attending his father's murder, was addressed to Sir James Baird, at Banff. It is a genuine copy, and appears never to have been published.

“ Honoured Sir,

“ THIS horrid and stupendous murder has so confounded me, that I
 “ am not able to give a suitable return to your excellent and kind letter.
 “ What I have learnt of that execrable deed, is, that on Friday, the 2d of
 “ this instant month, my worthy father crossed the water; lay at Kenno-
 “ way all night, next morning set out for St Andrews. Being two miles
 “ off, 27 of those villainous regicides had a full view of the coach, and not
 “ finding

The character of this prelate has been differently represented by different historians. While Bishop Burnet writes of him with the pen of severe obloquy, another of his biographers

“ finding the opportunity, divided into three parties, which took up the
 “ three ways he could take homewards. Nine of them assaulted the coach
 “ within two miles of this place, by discharging their pistols, and securing
 “ his servants. The coachman drove on for half-a-mile, until one of his
 “ horses was wounded in three places, and the postilion wounded in the
 “ hand. Then they fired several shot at the coach, and commanded my
 “ dearest father to come out, which he said he would. When he had
 “ come out, (not being yet wounded), he said, Gentlemen, I beg my life.
 “ No ! bloody villain, betrayer of the cause of Christ, No mercy ! Then,
 “ said he, I ask none for myself, but have mercy on my poor child, (his el-
 “ dest daughter was in the coach with him), and holding out his hand to
 “ one of them, to get his, that he would spare his child, he cut him in the
 “ wrist. Then falling down upon his knees, and holding up his hands, he
 “ prayed that God would forgive them ; and, begging mercy for his sins
 “ from his Saviour, they murdered him, by sixteen great wounds, in his
 “ back, head, and one above his left eye, three in his left hand, when he
 “ was holding them up, with a shot above his right breast, which was
 “ found to be powder. After this damnable deed, they took the papers out
 “ of his pocket, robbed my sister and their servants of all their papers, gold
 “ and money ; and one of these hellish rascals cut my sister in the thumb,
 “ when she had him by the bridle, begging her father’s life. God, of his
 “ infinite mercy support this poor family, under this dreadful and unap-
 “ portable case, and give us to know why God is thus angry with us,
 “ and earnestly beg not to consume us in his wrath, but now that his anger
 “ may cease, and he may be at peace with us, through the blood of a re-
 “ conciled Saviour ; and also may have pity upon this poor distressed
 “ Church, and that he may be the last sacrifice for it, as he is the first Pro-
 “ testant Martyr Bishop in such a way.

“ Dear Sir, as my worthy father had always a kindness and particular
 “ esteem for yourself, son, and family, so I hope you will be friendly to his
 “ son, who shall ever continue, worthy Sir, your most faithful, &c. &c.

“ W. SHARP.”

“ ST ANDREWS, 10th May 1679, }
 “ ½ hour after receipt of your’s }

“ On Saturday next is the funeral.”

graphers has drawn his character in terms of unqualified praise.

In his more humble situation, as minister of Crail, we are told he approved himself a diligent and faithful pastor, and by his mildness, condescension, and affability, acquired the love of his people.

But a sudden elevation to great rank and power seems to have a baneful influence on the human heart, and it must be admitted, that the Archbishop of St Andrews did not add one to the few instances of strict moderation in that dangerous sphere. In his official capacity, he was violent in the exercise of his power, and, like most other profelytes, he became the persecutor of his deserted brethren.

Yet his inveterate enemies are agreed in ascribing to him the high praise of a beneficent and humane disposition. He bestowed a considerable part of his income in ministering to pressing indigence, and relieving the wants of silent distress. In the exercise of his charity he had no contracted views. The widows and orphans of the Presbyterian brethren richly shared of his bounty, without knowing whence it came. He died with the intrepidity of a hero, and the piety of a Christian, praying for the assassins with his last breath*.

The late Earl of Findlater and Seafield, a nobleman of singular and extraordinary merit, resided for many years in the castle of Banff. "His Lordship employed his ample
" fortune in promoting trade, manufactures, agriculture,
" and all kinds of industry. Ever solicitous to fill his
" high station with real dignity, and farther to qualify him-
" self

* The Archbishop's monument, in the Cathedral of St Andrews, is extremely magnificent, and his epitaph highly flattering. "The disputable parts of his life, (says a celebrated traveller), are fully related; his undoubted charity and deeds of alms omitted."

“ self to be more extensively useful to society, (the sole ob-
 “ ject of his ambition), he conversed much with, and great-
 “ ly honoured, men of letters, and men of ingenuity in al-
 “ most every profession, always endeavouring to convert
 “ whatever knowledge he thus acquired, to the benefit and
 “ improvement of his country.

“ His natural disposition was calm, placid, and serene, his
 “ sentiments generous and enlarged, his understanding solid
 “ and manly, and his integrity such as could not be sha-
 “ ken.” LOND. CHRON.

He died November 3. 1770.

Under this article it may not be out of place to mention a gentleman of Banff singularly eminent for his good fortune in the lottery. In the British and Irish lotteries he has acquired, by the produce of three tickets, about L. 30,000 Sterling.

Characters and Manners, &c.—To discriminate minutely the manners and characters which distinguish one society or parish from another; to bestow particular and appropriate praise or censure, seems the most arduous attempt of the Statistical historian.

The writer of this account enters on the delicate subject aware of its difficulty, yet encouraged by the sentiments of a great moralist, that the “ history which draws a portrait
 “ of living manners, may perhaps be made of greater use
 “ than the solemnities of professed morality, and convey
 “ the knowledge of vice and virtue with more efficacy than
 “ axioms and definitions*.

Banff has been for several years the general residence and occasional resort of many genteel, opulent, and respectable families :

* Rambler

families; and in few provincial towns are the inhabitants more distinguished for general information, social intercourse, and urbanity of manners.

In their general conduct they are both "pitiful and courteous;" deserving the praise of beneficence to the poor, and hospitality to strangers.

The author of this report has had frequent opportunities of remarking their liberal and ready spirit to do good, and their willingness to communicate to every judicious and disinterested charity.

In their attendance on the ordinances of divine institution, all ranks are highly regular and exemplary.

Such laudable attention to external observances, so prevalent here, and so generally remarked in the different Statistical Reports, though not a certain criterion, is at least a strong presumption, of the existence of internal religion among us. It is a truth, for the confirmation of which we may appeal to living history, and to the conduct of a neighbouring nation, that the decay of outward forms of worship precedes the decay of the more "weighty matters of the law, justice, mercy, faith," and leads to the dissolution of all the "charities of father, son, and brother."

In our present imperfect state, there is certain danger of religion gliding by degrees from the heart, unless invigorated by external ordinances, by a due observance of the Sabbath, by stated calls to worship, and the salutary influence of example.

That disagreement in religious opinions, which generally obtains in every numerous society, is here attended with no personal hatred, or rancorous animosity. We differ quietly, and in general maintain that meekness and moderation which sound reason approves, and Christian charity commands.

The number of those is very inconsiderable who are entangled in the sophistry of sceptical writers.

A few copies of Paine's *Age of Reason* found their way this length; but many more copies of the learned Bishop of Llandaff's admirable *Apology* soon followed*. Thus the "Bane and Antidote were both before us." The new fangled theology of Mr Paine, however captivating by its popular style, has done little harm, and the great body of the people "continue in the faith grounded and settled."

The inhabitants are also entitled to their portion of negative praise. Great crimes are happily uncommon; robberies, house-breaking, and swindling, are rarely known. The writer has not heard of an instance of any person, a native of this parish, suffering the ultimate of human punishment †.

However ungrateful the task, truth and impartiality require us to delineate the back-ground of this picture.

While here, as in every large community, there are many deserving of much commendation, for the general propriety of their conduct, some are highly reprehensible, for the vices which attach to their characters.

It may be inferred, from the short publication already alluded to, that the practice of dram-drinking, habitual swearing, and that species "of conversation admitting no defence ‡," were vices which formerly disgraced some of
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* The celebrated speech of our countryman, Mr Erskine, in the trial of Williams, likewise proves a strong shield in defending our religion against the bold attacks of Mr Paine.

† During the last rebellion in Scotland, a poor fellow from the country, whose imprudent curiosity led him to mark, by notches on his staff, the number of British ships passing in the bay, was apprehended as a spy, and hanged by the King's troops, without the formality of trial.

‡ "Immodest words admit of no defence,

"For want of decency is want of sense."

the lower orders of the people, and it is to be feared, they are vices not altogether eradicated.

But though the intemperate are still to be seen reeling from their nightly revels, and sometimes from their noon-day debauch, the use of ardent spirits is not so common as formerly.

It is apprehended, however, that this partial reformation cannot be ascribed so much to the change of inclination in those who were addicted to the practice, as to the salutary clauses introduced in the late distillery laws.

Although the great majority of the people are justly accounted conscientious, and honourable in their dealings, there are known some solitary instances of persons, who, availing themselves of the ignorance or good nature of a neighbour, do not hesitate to over-reach him in a bargain.

Norwithstanding our excellent establishments for the education of youth, it must be admitted, that the children of the poor are often suffered to follow, without controul, the bent of their own inclinations. The truth is, the care, the vigilance, and the example of the parents, are not always exerted to guide their youthful steps. But this is chiefly to be understood of the profligate poor.

The violations of certain decorum occasion too frequently to the kirk-session a multiplicity of unpleasant discussion, which might be vested with more propriety in the hands of the civil judge.

Within these few years, one or two instances of child-murder have occurred, although the unhappy mothers have hitherto escaped detection.

To this atrocious crime there is here no temptation, arising from the severity of church discipline. The disgrace of public penance has long since been abolished. The reformation of delinquents is now sought by gentler methods, by mild rebuke and admonition, while the session endea-

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vour to render these private vices of individuals, as much as possible, public benefits to the poor.

Among ranks higher in the scale of society, there is perhaps too strict a conformity to the fashionable customs and manners of the age; too much attention to the pleasures of the table, and too much of refinement in many things which administer to luxury.

Although the limits which separate harmless gaiety from blameful dissipation are seldom transgressed, a grave moralist, perhaps, would venture to insinuate, that engagements in convivial festivity are, at some seasons, too incessant and too laborious. He might even farther allege, that men, not always contented with a little wine for their stomach's sake, are sometimes persuaded to increase the quantity, in order, perhaps, to "remove the natural reserve of their manner, and give a proper degree of ease and spirit to their conversation."

Were honest Mr Umphraville to pass the winter in this northern burgh, he might occasionally have reason to complain, that the drawing-rooms, where, in his younger days, the ladies and gentlemen were accustomed to meet each other, were now almost totally deserted; and that, amidst the boasted refinement of modern manners, the gentlemen paid less attention to the ladies than they had done 50 years ago*.

In politics, as in religion, there subsists among us some difference of opinion, not tinged, however, with the virulence of party spirit. Here, it is believed, there are very few who may be said to belong to the order of modern Illuminati, or to the class of violent malecontents †.

His

* *Mirror*.

† The general good behaviour of the people of this county, in regard to the militia act, was so extraordinary, as to call forth the following eulogium from

His Majesty's late gracious declaration has happily tended to diffuse greater unanimity of sentiment.

Ascribing the failure of the negotiation at Lisle to its just cause, the ambitious and vindictive spirit of our enemies, that well judged appeal is calculated to rouse the loyalty of all ranks and descriptions of the people. It must excite them to express, with united voice, their firm determination to defend that happy constitution, which, under the auspices of Divine Providence, is the distinguished source of all our blessings.

Meanwhile, the Executive Directory are entitled to the assurances of our high consideration, for their late fulminating proclamation, of the 1st Frimaire.

It is a Philippic which speaks to the feelings and patriotism of the British Nation, in language still more forcible than the manifesto from the Throne.

It is a warning voice, conveying to us this friendly counsel,

Go call thy sons, instruct them what a debt
They owe their ancestors, and make them swear
To pay it, by transmitting down, entire,
Those sacred rights to which themselves were born.

AKENSIDE.

Quadrupedi,

from the lieutenantcy, at their general meeting in September last: "The
" meeting cannot omit this opportunity of expressing, in terms of the high-
" est approbation, the very high sense they entertain of the orderly, quiet,
" and respectful behaviour of all ranks of the inhabitants of this county,
" in regard to the militia business. This propriety of conduct has not been
" confined to one or two districts, but, from the reports of the different de-
" puty-lieutenants, has been universal throughout the county; nor has a
" single instance occurred, wherein the people have not resisted every in-
" sultation to the prejudice of the act, and come forward with the most
" cheerful and implicit obedience to the law."

Quadrupeds, Birds, &c.—Of indigenous animals there are none peculiar to this place. In Lord Fife's park are several varieties of the deer; and the pheasant is found wild in many of the adjoining woods.

A maccaw, celebrated for its beautiful plumage, was brought from the West Indies in 1756, and lived 27 years at Duff House. His vigour was not impaired, when, in 1784, he was killed by some animal unknown.

In Mr Condiner's late publication of "Singular Subjects of Natural History," are engraved some beautiful specimens of coralline and polypus, found off the coast of Banff. He has annexed particular descriptions of each.

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