

PARISH OF KINNAIRD.

PRESBYTERY OF DUNDEE, SYNOD OF ANGUS AND MEARNES.

THE REV. JOHN SPENCE, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE name of the parish (as observed in the former Statistical Account) is of Celtic origin, and is compounded of two words signifying “high end or head.” This is descriptive enough, whether it refers to the parish or to the estate of Kinnaird, both of which are higher at the one end than the other. An old castle or manor house, belonging to the latter, stands on the upper part of it.

Situation, Boundaries.—The parish lies about half-way between Perth and Dundee, and has a beautiful southern exposure, looking down on the Carse of Gowrie, part of which is contained within its bounds. It is bounded on the south by Errol; on the north by Collace; on the west by Kilspindie; and on the east by Abernyte and Inchtute. The extent is about 2 miles in one way, and nearly 3 in the other. Several points command an extensive view in all directions, particularly of the Highland mountains. We have nothing here to attract naturalists; the productions of the earth, so far as yet discovered, being all of the more common kinds.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Antiquities.—This part of the world has not been the scene of any remarkable events, nor has any individual distinguished in the history of his country ever belonged to it; the only thing in any respect curious is Kinnaird Castle, an old and stately ruin, but of which there is little on record. It presents an excellent specimen of the sort of dwelling-places in use, when safety was more considered than comfort,—having walls of an enormous thickness, and the different storeys floored by stone arches. We find that the Noble family of Kinnaird, whose present seat is Rossie, in the neighbouring parish of Inchtute, were once connected with this property, though they have long ceased to be so. “In the reign of King William, 1170, Randolph Rufus obtained from that prince the lands of Kinnaird, in the county of Perth, which

continued in his family till the time of King Charles I., and from that barony took his surname; from him descended Sir Richard Kinnaird of that Ilk, whose son, Reginald, marrying Margery, daughter and heiress to Sir John Kirkaldy of Inchtute, in the same county, he with her had those lands, in which he was confirmed by the charter of Robert III."

Land-owners.—The sole land-owners in this parish are, Colonel Allen of Inchmartine; Sir Peter Murray Thrieland of Fingask; Robert Richardson, Esq. of Kinnaird; and Alexander Greig of Hallgreig.

Parochial Register.—A parochial register is kept with great neatness and regularity; the first entry is dated December 1633.

III.—POPULATION.

Population in 1811,	445
1821,	465
1831,	461
The average number of persons under 15 years of age,	153
betwixt 15 and 30,	142
30 and 50,	83
50 and 70,	70
upwards of 70,	13
Widowers and bachelors upwards of 50 years of age,	6
Widows and unmarried women upwards of 45,	16
Average number of children in each family,	4
Number of the population residing in villages,	316
Average number of births yearly for the last seven years,	14
marriages,	2
deaths,	7
Number of families in the parish,	90
chiefly employed in agriculture,	30
trade, manufactures, or handicraft,	27

During the last three years there have been 2 illegitimate births in the parish.

Resident Heritors.—No heritor at present has a residence in this parish. Beautiful situations for houses, however, abound, and there are great facilities for building. Very fine stone for this purpose is found close at hand.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—The number of cultivated acres is about 1550 imperial measure; the number of acres that have never been cultivated is about 1500; the number of acres that could be cultivated with advantage does not exceed 50. The average rent of the land in cultivation is about L. 1, 16s. per imperial acre. The uncultivated part of the parish, consisting chiefly of moor ground, is pastured with sheep from the Highlands in winter, at about 1s. 3d. per head, (say from December 1st to April 1st;) the remainder of the season, it is pastured with oxen. The highest

price per head for pasturing oxen is about L. 1, 10s. Farm-servants are hired by the year. They receive about L. 12 in money with sixty-five stones of oatmeal annually, and three imperial pints of milk daily; day-labourers in summer get 1s. 8d. per day, and in winter 1s. 4d.; artisans, such as wrights, masons, &c. about 2s.—no victuals being provided.

Raw Produce.—The raw produce consists chiefly of grain, potatoes and turnip. Potatoes, for a number of years past, may have averaged 2s. per cwt.; turnips when sold off the land from L. 6 to L. 12 per acre; grain prices vary a good deal. This year best wheat is L. 2, 4s. per quarter; barley, L. 1, 6s. 6d.; oatmeal 14s. 6d. per boll. Grain is the principal production of the parish, and all the inhabitants may be said to be more or less engaged in agriculture. Rearing of stock is little attended to; the ground which is not arable being unenclosed and of inferior quality. The grain raised is generally of the first quality. The arable land is almost all fit for carrying crops of wheat. The quantity of grain of all sorts raised is about 3250 quarters; of potatoes 1800 bolls (of 5 cwt. per boll;) of turnips about 100 acres; of hay about 10,000 stones; of flax 50 stones; of fruit, apples and pears, the average value is nearly L. 60 Sterling. The total yearly value of raw produce is about L. 7700 Sterling.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Market-Towns.—There are no market-towns. Markets are, however, held on a small scale in some villages at no great distance. Perth and Dundee are the chief places of resort for the sale and purchase of commodities. Each of these towns is distant from us ten or eleven miles, and the great road passes within half a mile of the parish. There is a port on the Tay, about four miles off, from which much of our grain is shipped, and at which coals, lime, &c. are laid down. This is a great convenience. There is a post-office within rather less than three miles.

Ecclesiastical State.—The church is conveniently situated. It was built only a few years ago, and is abundantly large as well as comfortable. The manse is quite new, and is substantial and commodious. The glebe consists of 7 or 8 acres, and is of good soil, though with the disadvantage of a northern exposure. The stipend is as follows: Imperial quarters wheat, 2.994768; ditto barley, 68.399616; bolls meal, 91.561392; money L. 8, 6s. 8d.

Dissenters.—There are no dissenting chapels in this parish. Only one of the inhabitants is a Seceder. The rest belong to the

Established Church, and attend divine service with much regularity and decency.

Education.—There is no seminary of learning besides the parish school, which, however, is abundantly sufficient. The people are all anxious that their children should receive a good education, and never grudge laying out money for this purpose; consequently the attendance is very numerous. The heritors have built a large and comfortable school-room, and are soon to erect a new house for the teacher,—the present one being very old. He has the highest salary allowed by law. His fees may amount to L. 24 per annum.

Libraries.—There is no public library; but one or two have been established in the immediate neighbourhood, which answer every purpose; a taste for reading seems to spread fast, from which, if always properly directed, much good may be anticipated.

Poor.—The average number of persons who receive parochial aid is about 3. They get from 4s. to 8s. per month according to circumstances. There is still an aversion to take assistance in this way, so long as it can possibly be avoided, and, under the influence of this very laudable spirit, many submit to considerable hardships before making an application. It has never yet been necessary for us to make an assessment for supporting the poor. This is avoided principally by maintaining a fund, the amount of which at present is upwards of L. 300. The interest of this, together with collections at the church doors, amounting to about L. 12, 10s. per annum, usually does more than answer all demands.

Alehouses.—We have only one alehouse, and there is no occasion for another. The fewer of these the better.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

There does not seem to be a very remarkable difference in this parish, since last Statistical Account was published. No doubt, the mode of agriculture has been improved; some new methods have been successfully tried to make the ground yield her fruits more abundantly, and of superior quality. Several new houses have likewise risen on the ruin of old ones, every way superior to their predecessors. Sundry spots of waste land have also been planted, and much more it is to be hoped will soon be done in this way. One great improvement has recently been made. The higher and lower parts of the parish have been connected by means of a new road, over which carriages of all kinds may travel in any weather; whereas, formerly, there was nothing but a precipitous rut, danger-

ous even for horses. This road is now become a sort of thoroughfare between the Carse of Gowrie and Strathmore, and is of public advantage, as well as private benefit.

May 1837.

PARISH OF MEIGLE.

PRESBYTERY OF MEIGLE, SYNOD OF ANGUS AND MEARNS.

THE REV. JAMES MITCHELL, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Situation, Extent, &c.—THIS parish is in the centre of Strathmore, bounded on the north-west and north, by the rivers Isla and Dean; on the east and south, by the parishes of Essie and Nevy, and Newtyle; on the south-west and west by those of Kettins and Cupar-Angus. It lies in $56^{\circ} 36'$ north Lat. and $5''$ east Long. from Edinburgh, being in length $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles from west to north-east, and from 1 to 2 miles broad. It probably derived its name from its local situation,—the church and manse being built on a plain between two marshes or “gills,” which might thus have given rise to the word Midgile or Meigle.

Strathmore.—Strathmore, “the great strath or vale,” reaches from near Perth to Brechin, about 40 miles long, 4—6 broad, bounded on the south and south-east by the Sidla Hills, and on the north and north-west by the Grampians. There are no caves in the parish, and no part of it is hilly. The gentle eminence on which Belmont Castle stands (says Dr Playfair) is 204 feet above the level of half-flood mark at Panbride, near Arbroath. The village of Meigle lies quite contiguous to the church, and is watered by the burn of the same name.

Geology, &c.—Two quarries of red sandstone have been wrought, and used for building. The dip inclines to the west. Marl was dug in great abundance in the Gill, on the south. It was covered with peat-earth. The remains of the marl are now mixed with the moss by cultivation. But where a bed of marl is found (as under the road to Dundee) it is very soft and white, retaining scarcely any remains of shells.

Alongst the side of the marl-moss (called Myres,) and occa-