

## PARISH OF BLAIRGOWRIE.\*

PRESBYTERY OF MEIGLE, SYNOD OF ANGUS AND MEARNS.

THE REV. ROBERT M'DONALD, MINISTER.

### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—IN the former Statistical Account, the name of this parish is said to be derived from the Gaelic word *Blaar*, signifying a place where moor and moss abound. By another theory, it is connected with the Gaelic word signifying battle, or the place of battle. Gowrie was the ancient name of the district in which the parish is situated, and seems to have been added to the term Blair, to distinguish it from other places of the same name, as Blair-in-Athole, Blair-Logie, Blair-Drummond, &c. The barony is said to have formed a part of the extensive possessions of the unfortunate family of Gowrie.

*Extent, Boundaries, &c.*—The figure of the parish is exceedingly irregular; but the length is considered to be about 7, and the average breadth about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles English, which would give a superficial extent of about  $10\frac{1}{2}$  square miles. This computation is exclusive of two detached portions of the parish, (to be immediately noticed), which, it is supposed, contain together about 6 square miles additional, making a total superficies of some  $16\frac{1}{2}$  square miles. The main division of the parish is bounded on the east, partly by a detached part of the parish of Bendochy, but principally by Rattray parish, from which it is separated by the river Ericht, which forms the boundary line of the parish for the space of 10 miles; on the south, by Bendochy parish; on the south-west and west, by the parishes of Caputh and Kinloch; and on the north, partly by another detached part of Bendochy, and partly by the parish of Alyth. As already noticed, there are two portions of the parish separated from the main division, by the intervention of branches of the parishes adjoining. The largest of these detached parts lies to the north-west of the

\* Drawn up by William Shaw Soutar, Esq. Writer in Blairgowrie.

principal division, from which it is separated by branches of the parishes of Kinloch and Bendochy. It comprehends part of the district called the Forest of Cluny, and a considerable tract on both sides of the river Ardle, consisting of the properties of Blackcraig, Wester Cally, and Whitehouse. Its superficial extent may be about 4 square miles. The Forest of Cluny, within the memory of man, contained a considerable population, who cultivated small farms along the banks of the Burn of Lornty, which traverses the district; but this population has been entirely swept away, and their possessions thrown into one large grazing. The other detached portion of the parish lies to the north-east of the main division, from which it is separated by the parish of Rattray, and is supposed to contain about 2 square miles. It is known by the general name of the *Creuchies*, and is but thinly inhabited.

*Topographical Appearances.*—The parish lies on the north side of the magnificent valley of Strathmore, partly within it, and partly along the series of gentle elevations which form its northern boundary, rising in height, as they recede from the plain, till they swell out into the lofty summits of the Grampian mountains. Longitudinally, the parish extends nearly due north and south, and is naturally divided into two districts, nearly equal in extent, the Highland and the Lowland; the former being the hilly division, which lies to the northward of the great strath, the latter, the portion lying within its boundary,—each differing from the other, as well in the characteristic features of natural scenery, as in the habits and manners of the population, though, in the latter respect, the difference is daily becoming less remarkable. The upper division extends for a distance of several miles along the west side of the romantic Glen-Ericht, which forms the entrance of one of the great passes into the Highlands, and through which the Ericht\* pours its impetuous torrent towards the valley of Strathmore, in a direction nearly south-east. The first of the series of elevations rises with a somewhat steep ascent, from the level of the strath, to the height of a few hundred feet. It is known by the name of the Hill of Blair, and is entirely under cultivation. Immediately behind this eminence rises another ridge, rather higher than the first, called Knock-ma-har, partly cultivated, and partly covered with plantations of Scots fir, and sloping abruptly on the north side down to the bed of the burn or water

\* *Ericht*, a Gaelic name, meaning literally "rough" or "rapid."

of Lornty, which flows nearly due east to join the Ericht. Beyond the Lornty, the ground rises very abruptly into another ridge, much higher than those already mentioned, and of very wide extent. On the south and east, this ridge or hill, though steep and difficult to farm, is in general well cultivated, and produces good crops of grain. This district of the parish (at least that part of it lying next to the Ericht), is known by the general name of the Maws; The Braes of Maws, the Cloves (or cliffs) of Maws, and the Heughs of Maws, are all local terms descriptive of the more marked features of its general aspect. To the westward of the Maws, along the north side of the course of the Lornty Burn, lies the ground of Drumlochy, which was anciently a barony or lairdship, possessed by a family of the name of Heron, the ruins of whose fortress are still to be distinctly traced, by the enormous thickness of the loop-holed walls, amid the meanness of the present modern farm-offices. Above Drumlochy there is another farm, which extends to the summit of the ridge, and is called *Ard* or *Aird*, a Gaelic name meaning literally the "head" or "top." The top of this great ridge presents a wide undulating tract of moor and moss, which stretches away to the west, many miles beyond the boundary of the parish in that direction. The great peat-moss of Cochrige,† on this ridge, supplied fuel to the inhabitants of the surrounding district to a considerable distance; but coal is now fast superseding the peat even in the higher part of the parish. On the north, this ridge slopes down to the bed of the Ardle, and on the east to the vale of Glen Ericht. At this point, the western boundary line of the parish, after crossing the ridge, runs in a slanting direction, with a partial interruption from an intervening portion of the parish of Kinloch, down to the river Ardle, and then follows the course of the river to its junction with the Shee or Blackwater, about a mile below the Bridge of Cally. Crossing these united streams, (now the Ericht), it follows the eastern bank of the Blackwater for a space of nearly three miles, to a place called Kingsseat, which is the northern extremity of the parish. Where it crosses the Ericht, the parish is narrowed to little more than a mile in breadth; but beyond the stream it rapidly widens, so as to embrace the whole district of Clayquhat on the south,

\* This moss (the description of which belongs more properly to the statistics of the neighbouring parish) was accidentally set on fire in the beginning of the great drought of 1826, and continued to burn underneath the surface, till extinguished by the snows of the following winter and spring.

and Ashmore and the Kingseat on the west side of the hill of Clayquhat or Colliemore, the summit of which is within the parish. This hill, though of gentle and easy ascent, is the highest elevation in the parish. Its height has never been correctly ascertained; but it is supposed to be about 1000 feet above the level of the sea. A large portion of the upper part of this hill is covered with plantations of larch. The vale of Glen-Ericht, especially along the banks of the river, is adorned with a good deal of wood, both spontaneous and planted; and the scenery is picturesque and beautiful in a high degree.

The lower division of the parish stretches away to the south, from the foot of the hill of Blair to the middle of the valley of Strathmore, a distance of four miles. It comprises an extensive superficies, and is considerably diversified in the nature of its soil and the character of its scenery. A narrow tract, lying directly at the foot of the hill (comprehending the manor-farm of Blairgowrie and some smaller farms), consists of a good sharp soil, and is in a good state of culture. To the south of this cultivated part, there is an extensive tract of flat moorish ground, extending to about 1000 acres, called the "muir of Blair," the greater part of which is covered with thick plantations of Scots fir; and where there is no wood, it is clothed with heath, furze, and broom. The surface of the moor consists of two or three inches of light dry soil upon a gravelly bottom, and could only be brought under tillage at a great cost. All along the side of the Ericht, including a large portion of the south-east extremity of the parish, the land is fertile and highly cultivated. Along the southern boundary, beyond the muir of Blair, the soil, though generally thin and light, is under cultivation. The estate of Ardblair occupies a considerable extent on the west side, and is partly under cropping and partly laid out in grass parks.

The town or village of Blairgowrie occupies a pleasant situation on the west bank of the Ericht, on a rising ground, which forms the first step of the acclivity of the "hill of Blair."

The church is finely situated on the summit of the hill of Blair, immediately above the village. Close behind the church there is a deep ravine or dell, finely wooded, both banks of which, at its eastern extremity, descend almost perpendicularly to the bed of the river. From the churchyard, which lies in front of the church, the prospect is one of great extent and surpassing beauty,—embracing the whole valley of Strathmore, from its western extremity

to the Hunter Hill of Glammis on the east,—shut in on the south by the picturesque range of the Sidlaw Hills. This noble valley, so richly cultivated, and so diversified in its scenery, forms one of the most magnificent panoramic views that can be conceived. The river Ericht, debouching from the narrow defile on the left, sweeps rapidly past the village towards the hollow of the Strath, forming a fine reach of a mile in length, before it turns to the eastward, and disclosing occasional glimpses of its waters in the distance, as it tranquilly winds onwards in a devious course to its junction with the Isla.

About three miles to the north of Blairgowrie (on the estate of Craighall, belonging to R. C. Rattray, Esq.), the course of the Ericht, for the space of nearly two miles, lies through a deep chasm or ravine, the sides of which are of great height, consisting in some places of perpendicular precipices rising sheer 300 feet from the bed of the river; in others, of steep banks clothed with thick underwood of oak and hazel, interspersed with clusters of tall and graceful trees, disposed in the most picturesque and tasteful manner. One of the most remarkable of these precipices is to be seen on the west or Blairgowrie side of the river, and is called *Craig Liach* or “the Eagle’s Craig.” It is a huge rock about 300 feet in height, presenting a vast gray front, so uniform and unbroken in its surface as to resemble a work of masonry, and it is fringed on either side and along the summit with forest trees and underwood. In this rock, at the base, there is a cave or fissure, which seems to have been formed by the violent breaking off and detaching of huge masses from the solid rock. It is low in the roof, and extends only about 30 feet underneath the rock. Immediately beyond this precipice, at a sudden bend of the river, the scenery is indescribably grand and savage; the rocks on either side are lofty and imposing, most bizarre and eccentric in their shape, and overhanging a deep and gloomy chasm, at the bottom of which the river forms a deep and sullen pool, black as night, and apparently of great depth. Nor is the mysterious legend befitting such a scene wanting to heighten its romantic interest. Upon an angle of the rock, and on the very verge of the precipice, are still to be traced the ruins of a circular tower, once of great height and strength, still known by the name of Lady Lindsay’s Castle, in which, some centuries ago (so runs the legend) a daughter of the noble house of Crawford was confined for life in obedience to a fiat of the Pope, to expiate, by a dreary

penance, some deep and deadly sin which she had committed. On the Rattray side of the river is to be seen the mansion-house of Craighall, occupying a magnificent position on the verge of a high cliff which overhangs the river, adding greatly to the picturesque aspect of the scenery. The view from the windows up the river is much admired, and allowed to be unsurpassed in pictorial beauty by anything of similar character and extent in Scotland. The whole scenery about Craighall has been recently invested with a new and powerful interest, by the publication of the fact, of its being the prototype of the Tully-Veolan of Waverley.\*

*Natural History.*—The temperature of the atmosphere during winter is in general rather higher in the district of the parish immediately surrounding the village of Blairgowrie, than in the neighbouring and less elevated parishes; a circumstance which is in a great degree owing to the southern exposure of the surface, and the shelter which the rising grounds to the north afford from the cold north winds. The temperature, in common with all districts bordering on the Highlands, is subject to frequent and sudden variations. †

\* Sir Walter Scott visited this part of the country in the course of a Highland excursion. "Another resting-place," says Mr Lockhart, "was Craighall, in Perthshire, the seat of the Rattrays, a family related to Mr Clerk, who accompanied him. From the position of this striking place, as Mr Clerk at once perceived, and as the author afterwards confessed to him, that of Tully Veolan was very faithfully copied, though, in the description of the house itself and its gardens, many features were adopted from Bruntfield and Ravelstone."—*Lockhart's Life of Scott*, Vol. i.

† While upon this subject, it may not be out of place to give here a brief account of the various phenomena attending the earthquake which was felt throughout this district in the month of October 1839. The most severe shock was felt about twenty minutes past ten o'clock on the night of the 23d October, and was accompanied by a noise resembling distant thunder, or the rapid passage of a heavy-loaded vehicle over a newly-metalled road. The motion, at the commencement of the concussion, was of a waving or undulating nature, and terminated in a vibration or tremor, becoming gradually less distinct, until it ceased altogether. The shock appeared to be most strongly felt in houses situated on elevated ground, in some of which it was so severe as to excite very great alarm in the inmates; and in one house, situated in the town, the motion was so great as to force open some of the doors. In the districts of Glenashie and Strathardle, about ten or twelve miles to the northward, the shock was much more violently felt than in this neighbourhood; so much so, that several people who were asleep at the time were awakened by the shaking of their beds; and one person, who was lying in bed awake when the shock commenced, describes the feeling he experienced to be as if his bed had been heaved up, and pushed, first to one side and then to the other, from west to east, and afterwards shaken violently; and he at the same time heard a loud noise, of the nature already described. The sound, in the opinion of the majority, proceeded from the ground, advanced from the north or north-west, and died away in the opposite direction.

The atmospherical appearances which attended this convulsion were not in any respect remarkable, excepting that, during the whole evening, before the shock occurred, the eastern horizon was overspread by a dull, lurid light of a yellowish hue; and for some days previously, a very great quantity of rain had fallen, which had increased to a torrent on the evening of the occurrence, accompanied by a pretty strong

*Hydrography.*—There are one or two chalybeate springs in the parish; but they have never been chemically analyzed, so far as the writer of this account is aware. There is one very fine spring, called the "heugh well," which deserves particular notice. It springs from the face of the "heughs of Mause,"—(a mortar cliff of singular appearance, which descends abruptly into the bed of the river with an almost perpendicular declivity of about 200 feet)—and judging from its colour, contains a considerable quantity of ferruginous matter. The use of its water has been found to be very beneficial in cutaneous eruptions, and affections of the stomach.

There are no less than six lakes in the parish, viz. the Stormont Loch, (or Loch Bog,) Black Loch, White Loch, Fingask Loch, the Monkmyre Loch, and Ardblair or the Rae Loch, all of which abound with pike, perch, and eels. The first mentioned loch is very shallow, the depth being in general not more than from 2 to 3 feet, and the bottom is composed of soft mud or moss of considerable depth. Black, White, and Fingask Lochs are situated close together, in a line from east to west, and communicating with each other by small burns running from one to the other. Black Loch is more properly a morass or mossy pool than a loch, exhibiting merely a collection of reeds and other aquatic plants, with a small space of clear water; but it contains some very powerful springs, as is evident from the circumstance, that although it receives no supply of water from the surface, a large stream runs out of it into the adjoining lake of White Loch, sufficient to turn a mill, and this stream is never diminished in quantity even in the driest weather. White and Fingask Lochs are sheets of water of about one mile each in circumference. The bottom of the former is gravelly, while the latter rests upon a bed of clay or marl, of which great quantities were formerly excavated, and used for agricultural purposes by the farmers for many miles around. Of late years, however, the use of this substance as a manure has been almost entirely discontinued. Ardblair or Rae Loch is a small sheet of water, lying close to the road between Blairgowrie and Dunkeld. Its depth is believed to be greater than that of any of

breeze from the east. The barometer also had previously, notwithstanding the continued rains, risen rapidly, and stood at "set fair" on the index. It was also observed, that the river Erich fell several inches below the level it had attained during the day, although the rain had, in the interval, continued with unabated violence. Two other shocks were felt on the same evening, but they were much less violent than that already described.

the others, but it has never been accurately ascertained. The depth of the others varies from 2 to about 20 feet. The Monkmyre Loch, as the name indicates, scarcely deserves the name of a loch, having been originally merely a shallow pool or "myre," surrounded with moss and reeds, and abounding with marl, in the course of excavating which substance, it was gradually deepened, until it assumed the form of a small lake. The rivers connected with the parish are the Ardle and Blackwater, which skirt part of the northern division of the parish,—the Ericht which is formed by the junction of these two near the bridge of Cally,—the Lunan, which partly bounds the parish on the south,—and the Lornty, which flows through part of the parish and falls into the Ericht, about half a mile above the town. The two latter are more properly large burns than rivers. The Ardle rises among the Grampians, at the head of the valley of Strathardle, and, after a course of ten or twelve miles, forms a junction with the Blackwater. This last-mentioned stream has its source near the summit of the Cairnwell mountain, and flowing, under the name of Beg, through Glenbeg, debouches at the Spittal of Glenshee into Glenshee, where it is joined by the Tetnich water, and takes the name of the Shee for about six miles farther. It then again changes its name to the Blackwater, which it retains until its junction with the Ardle, when the two united form the Ericht. The whole course of this stream to its junction with the Ericht is about twenty miles. The Ericht flows along the north-east boundary of the parish, through the romantic scenery of Craighall, passes close by the town of Blairgowrie, and falls into the Isla at Coupar Grange, after a course, under its own name, of about ten or eleven miles. The upper part of its course, including that of the Shee and Blackwater, is very rapid and impetuous, particularly in winter, when, swelled with the torrents that pour into it from the hills on both sides, it comes thundering down with headlong fury, carrying away everything moveable within its reach. Close to the town of Blairgowrie, the bed of the stream has a considerable descent to the valley of Strathmore, and forms a small cascade called the "Keath," which has been heightened by artificial means, so as to create, for the benefit of the fishings below, an obstruction to the upward progress of the salmon from the sea. In great floods, however, this contrivance is rendered of no avail, for at such times the impetuous torrent fills up the whole space betwixt the rocky banks so as to obliterate the fall altogether, and admit

of the passage of the salmon up the stream. In summer, when the river is low, its course is here so hemmed in by encroaching rocks on each side, that it is quite possible to leap across, although the feat is certainly attended with some peril.

The scenery of the river, in the vicinity of the town, is very beautiful, comprehending those most essential elements of romantic scenery,—wood, water, and rocks, in finely diversified combinations.

*Geology.*—The chief geological formations in the parish are of three kinds, 1st, greywacke; 2d, greenstone; 3d, sandstone, or conglomerate. In the northern division of the parish we find an extensive bed of clay-slate at a place called Rochalzie, about four miles to the northward of the town, where it was some years ago quarried for roofing houses, a purpose for which it seemed to be well adapted. This quarry has for some years past been discontinued, owing partly to the difficulty and expense of carriage, and partly to the limited demand for the slates, which, though of durable quality, were of a disagreeable yellowish-blue colour. This formation seems to stretch across the parish in a westerly direction; but it is not again visible on the surface at any other point. Its thickness is supposed to be about 40 feet, and it dips at an angle of about 40° north-west. Proceeding southward, we meet with a stratum of greenstone or whinstone, stretching along the summit of the ridge already described, called Knock-ma-har, and extending quite across the parish, from east to west, into the adjoining parish of Kinloch. The same formation is seen also in the adjoining parish of Rattray, at a place called the Cats-craigs, where it rises into cliffs of considerable elevation. The strata are nearly horizontal, with a slight inclination to the north-west. Still farther south, all along the southern slope of the ridge immediately to the north of the town, and extending into the lower ground to the south and west, there is a very extensive stratum of coarse red sandstone or conglomerate, of great thickness, running in a north-westerly direction across the parish. It dips towards the north-west with an angle of about 15°. About a mile to the south-east of the town, this red sandstone assumes a much finer grain and darker colour, and forms a perpendicular cliff of considerable height on the bank of the river, at a place called the Red-brae, where it was partially quarried some years ago. About a mile to the south of this, there is another very regular and beautiful stratum of fine grey

sandstone, of excellent quality for building, and apparently of great thickness. This bed has been extensively quarried at Parkhead, within this parish; and at this point the strata appear to be nearly horizontal. On both sides of the bed of the Ericht, and about half a mile to the northward of the town, there is a fine dike of columnar basalt, in horizontal layers, so very regular as to resemble in some degree a work of art, and to obtain for the locality the popular name of the "Deil's Briggs." The basalt is not visible at any other point in the parish.

All the rocks in the parish which are of any height are formed of the conglomerate above-mentioned; and in some places, (such as Craighall and other points along the course of the Ericht,) they rise into lofty mural precipices, exhibiting scenery of the most picturesque and romantic description. The whole strata of conglomerate are intersected by occasional fissures at right angles to the planes of their stratification.

The alluvium which covers the strata already described is a species of till of very irregular quality and thickness. At a place called the "Heughs" or "Cloves of Mause," half a mile north of the town, it forms a precipice of a very singular and picturesque appearance, rising from the bed of the river to the height of nearly 200 feet. To the north-west of this, the greywacke already described is covered with moss to a very great extent, forming the great moss of Cochridge, an extensive tract of barren moor, covered with heather and pools of water. To the southward of this, on the slopes of the ridges rising to the north of the town, the soil is a brown stiff clay, of considerable fertility; and in the southern division of the parish it is a strong black loam, yielding a large return to the labours of the farmer. A large extent of barren unproductive gravel, however, intervenes, forming the "Muir of Blair," a great part of which, as formerly mentioned, is under plantation, and the remainder covered with heather.

*Zoology.*—There are no rare kinds of the quadruped or feathered tribe in this parish, with the exception of the jer (or ger) falcon, which breeds amongst the precipices about Craighall, and which was highly valued in ancient times when the sport of hawking was the favourite pastime of the nobles and gentry of the land. Now that this sport has fallen altogether into desuetude, however, these birds are permitted to breed and bring up their young in

their rocky habitations, unmolested. The Stormont Loch is, in summer, frequented by immense flocks of sea-mews or gulls, which build innumerable nests amongst the reeds and rushes, by which a considerable part of the surface of the lake is covered. Their eggs are highly prized, and are annually gathered and sold for the benefit of the proprietor or his tenants. These birds arrive from the sea-coast about the beginning of March, when they may be seen in thousands fluttering about the surface of the water. For the first week after they make their appearance, they go back to the sea every night and return the following morning; but after this *reconnoissance* is over, they finally take up their residence on the loch, and commence building their nests with great assiduity. These nests are formed merely of a few rushes laid on the surface of the water, amongst the reeds and grass with which the loch is covered. After bringing up their young, and when they are strong enough to fly, they take their departure again for the sea in the end of autumn, to return to this, their favourite haunt, again with the mild weather in the following spring. All the lakes in the parish are well stocked with pike, perch, and eels. In the Stormont loch, especially, both perch and pike are occasionally caught of a very large size,—the nature of the bottom being peculiarly favourable for their growth and subsistence. The Arde, Blackwater, Lunan, and Lornty<sup>s</sup> abound with trout, and the Ericht, below the Keath, with both salmon and trout. Salmon generally begin to appear in the Ericht, from the sea, early in April, and sometimes sooner, if the weather is mild, and they continue running, when the water is in flood, until the month of June. In the months of July and August grilse make their appearance in the river, and occasionally a few of these are found newly run, until the 14th of September, when the fishing closes in this river. In the end of September, salmon and grilse begin to ascend the river for the purpose of spawning, and commence spawning in the fords and shallows about the middle of October, and sometimes earlier, when the weather is cold. They continue spawning until about the end of December or beginning of January, when they retire to the deep pools, in which they remain until they have somewhat recruited their exhausted strength, when the male fish make for the sea; but the female fish often remain in the river until the month of March and beginning of April. It is supposed by some, that the female fish do not leave the river, until the young fry are able to accompany them to the sea. The

young fry or smolt begin to leave the river on their way to the sea in the end of April, and are all off before the end of May.

*Wood.*—In the southern division of the parish, there are extensive plantations of Scotch fir, formed, about forty or fifty years ago, on ground which had been previously a barren moor or common, covered with heather and broom, and which was, about that period, divided amongst the heritors and feuars. A great part of this moor, as already mentioned, still remains in a waste and unproductive state; but some parts of it have lately been planted with Scotch fir and larch, to the growth of which the soil of the parish seems to be most congenial.

There are also a few detached plantations of hard wood in the parish, but none of any considerable extent; and the face of the country generally is embellished with clumps and belts of oak, elm, ash, and beech trees, none of which, however, have attained any remarkable size. The northern division of the parish is comparatively bare and destitute of trees, excepting the banks of the river, which are richly clothed with wood, chiefly natural, such as birch, hazel, mountain-ash, alder, and oak coppice. About Craighall, especially, the oak coppice is of considerable value. It is cut periodically every eighteen or twenty years, and the proprietor realizes a considerable sum at each cutting from the sale of the bark and of the wood for fuel, &c. But, although the parish does not now contain any tracts of wood deserving the appellation of forests, there is reason to believe, as well from the names still attached to certain portions of the parish, as from the fossil remains (chiefly oak of great size) which are frequently discovered in excavating the mosses for fuel, that, in ancient times, the face of the country had been much more densely wooded than it is at present. Thus there is an extensive tract of country, now barren and covered with heather, which still bears the name of the *Forest of Drimmie*, and another of the same description, in the north-west quarter of the parish, called the *Forest of Cluny*; and the country people, in digging for peats in these districts, have often uncovered huge logs of oak as black as ebony (thence called "black oak,") and in as perfect a state of preservation as if they had but yesterday fallen under the axe of the woodman. The writer has seen one of these logs which measured upwards of three feet in diameter. Mr Tytler, in the second volume of his *History of Scotland*, mentions the *Forests of Drimmie and Alyth* as being royal forests, preserved for the recreation of the kings of Scotland.

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Till of late years, the parish, from its remote situation, and the rural character and occupations of its inhabitants, was little noticed, and comparatively insignificant. Owing to these circumstances, also, it had little or no share in the great religious and political contests which so frequently, in former times, agitated the great body of the population, and deluged the country with blood; or, at least, its share in these (if it had any) was too insignificant to obtain a place in history. The village is, however, casually mentioned, in the History of Montrose's Wars, as one of the places through which that great warrior passed in one of his hostile descents from the Highlands into the valley of Strathmore.\*

*Eminent Men.*—The eminent men connected with this parish are, 1. George Drummond, who was repeatedly elected Lord Provost of Edinburgh, and was the principal projector of the North Bridge of that city, and other important and useful public undertakings connected with it. He was born in the Newton Castle, which is situated within a quarter of a mile of the village. 2. Thomas Graham of Balgowan, afterwards Sir Thomas Graham, now Lord Lyndoch, who was formerly proprietor of the estate of Blairgowrie, including the Mause district.

*Land-owners.*—The chief land-owners of the parish are, William Macpherson, Esq. of Blairgowrie; Robert Clerk Rattray,

\* About the time of the outbreaking of the French Revolution, the village of Blairgowrie, obscure and insignificant as it then was, shared in the general excitement which pervaded the nation, and numbered amongst its inhabitants a very few of the *soldisant* "friends of the people." At the time that the Militia Act first came into operation, also, the class of persons who were liable to serve under its enactments, and the lower ranks in general throughout the country, were greatly discontented with the measure; and on the day when the Justices of the peace for the district met in Blairgowrie for the purpose of balloting for those who should serve, this discontent broke out into open violence. Great crowds of people from this and all the other parishes of the district collected in the village—made prisoners of Colonel Macpherson of Blairgowrie, Sir William Ramsay of Banff, and the other gentlemen assembled,—and confined them in the inn until they got hold of the only "writer"† then in the village, whom they compelled (*malgré lui*) to draw out what they called a *bond*, to be executed by the Justices, by which they should be bound to abstain in future from any measures for enforcing the obnoxious act. This precious document was accordingly duly prepared, written out on a stamp,—(a ludicrous attempt to legalize an illegal document by a rigid observance of the statutory solemnities)—and subscribed by the captives under the threats of the mob. Satisfied with the victory they conceived they had gained, and in the full belief that they had effectually extinguished the Militia Act, these deluded men then allowed their prisoners to depart, and themselves peaceably dispersed to their respective parishes. But a week had not passed over their heads when a strong body of the Sutherland Fencibles made their appearance in the district,—pounced upon the most active of the rioters, and set most of the others scampering to the hills to avoid a similar fate. This vigorous proceeding effectually quelled the disturbance, and the provisions of the act were thenceforward carried into effect without further trouble. Several of the most active of the mob were sentenced to various periods of imprisonment, of from one to four months.

† *Anglicæ*, Attorney.

Esq. of Craighall; Colonel Chalmers of Glenericht, C. B.; Sir J. M. M'Kenzie of Delvine, Bart.; the Right Honourable Lady Keith, (Countess Flahault); J. L. Campbell, Esq. of Auchalader; J. B. Oliphant, Esq. of Gask and Ardblair; Sir James Ramsay of Banff, Bart.; and Robert Geekie, Esq. of Rosemont.

*Parochial Registers.*—The earliest parochial register now extant belonging to this parish commences in the year 1647, and continues down to August 1658. There is no register from the latter period down to 1702, from which time to the present the books are complete, and appear to have been regularly and accurately kept. The book or books in which the register betwixt 1658 and 1702 was kept have been lost. The existing volumes contain the register of births and marriages, and the records of session, but no register of deaths. In the more ancient session records, there are several rather curious entries, illustrative of the strictness of discipline enforced in the Presbyterian Church, the internal discord and contentions which then distracted the kingdom, and the rude and ignorant condition of the population; and it may not be uninteresting to the readers of this account to give a few extracts from them, so far as they relate to these points: "October 15, 1648, The minister asking if there was any new scandal, the session declare that George Clyde, Andrew Keay, and Walter Butchart were shearing corne the last Sabbath, and George Watson did threshe the said Sabbath. The kirk-officer ordained to summon them against ye next day." "October 29, 1648, The above parties called compearit, quho, after long denying, at last being convinced, confessed the breach of ye Sabbath, as they alleged after sunseting. After ye minister had aggravated yair sinne, by shewing yat ye whole Sabbath is religiouslie, to be observed not only in the kirk, but in yair private families, the sessione ordain them to satisfie ye next Lord's day, before ye pulpit, in humbling themselves and acknowledging their breach of Sabbath before ye congregation." Again, "November 27, 1648, Sundrie people fined," (under an ordinance previously made regarding the keeping of the Sabbath), and "ordained to satisfie before ye pulpit. Further, ye sessione, for the suppressing of this sinne upon the Lord's day, doe also hereby ordain that every taverne keeper, or seller of aile, quho runs aile in tyme of sermon, or ye whole day in ane excessive manner to any, sall pay hereafter as much as ye drinkers, *toties quoties*, it sall be found they are guiltie therein." An ordinance of session

having been made on August 5, 1649, that the elders should search the "taverne houses" during afternoon service, "for contemners of the Word," there occurs, on next Sabbath, the following entry: "August 12, 1649, The elders being required to give account of yair diligence anent searching ye taverne houses for contemners of God's worship, reported that two of them had gone through the towne, and searched, and had found sundrie in their awin houses, quho declared to them that they were presentlie going to ye church before yair coming in to them. The sessione, therefore, to the end that the wicked prevaricatione of these persons may be better detected, ordaine that hereafter they search, not immediatlie at the beginning of ye afternoon service, but betwixt ye closure of ye sermone and ye blessing, or betwixt ye last prayer and Psalme, that such persons as then sall be found may be clearly rendered inexcusable." One George Ambrose having been called before the session to answer a charge of being absent from church and "selling of aile" on the preceding Sabbath, appeared on the 16th January 1654, and gave the following curious account of the cause of his absence from church:—"The said George denyed that he sold any aile that day in tyme of Divine service, and that the trow cause of his absence was, that he had but ane playd betwixt his wyfe and him, and that she had the use thereof that day, and was in the church." Notwithstanding this *naïve* excuse, however, the session "reprove him of his sinne, and ordaine him to keepe the kirk in tyme cumand, under ye paine of censure."

Innumerable other entries of this nature occur in these records, from which the session appears to have exercised the most vigilant superintendence over the conduct of the parishioners in the observance of the Sabbath, and to have visited the slightest fault with severe censure and punishment.

These records also contain numerous entries of historical interest, such as intimations of fasts on account of national occurrences, &c., a few of the most curious of which we shall extract. On the 10th December 1648, "the Covenant, and ane publick acknowledgement of the sinnes of the land, were publickly read before the blessing, and a fast for this effect intimated, to be kept on Thursday first and the next Sabbath immediatlie following; and the Covenant intimated to be renewed on ye said Lord's day, according to ye ordinance of the Commissione of ye Generall Assemblie."—"Aug. 16, 1649. The same day there was intimat

and read causes of a solemne fast, appointed by ye Generall Assemblie to be kept throughout all the congregations of the kingdom upon ye last Sabbath of this instant;" the causes whereof were, *inter alia*, the following: "1. We are to mourne for the continuance and increase of sinne and profanitie, especallie of *the abominable sinne of witchcraft*, which abounds in ye land, as appears from ye frequent discoveries thair of in all corners and quarters of the countrie. 2. We are to afflict our souls before ye Lord for ye sad interruption of the Lord's work in England and Ireland, and for the sore oppressione of his people, and such as ar stedfast in his cause in these kingdoms, by a prevailing partie of sectaries in ye one, and of malignants in the other. 3. It is matter of humiliatiōe to us, that our King hath not as yet granted the just and necessarie desires of this kirk and kingdome for serving of religion, and that he hath made peace with the Irish rebels, who have shed so much blood of ye Lord's people, and hath *graunted unto them the full libertie of Poperie*," &c. And again, on the 14th November following, another fast was intimated, one of the causes of which was stated to be "ye pregnant scandall of witchcraft and charming within this part of ye land;" and on 26th May 1650, solemne thanksgiving is intimated "to be keeppit upon the 2d of June, the next Lord's day, for that wonderfull victorie over James Grahame and his associates of late in the north." On the 28th of July following, "ther was read from the pulpit a declaratione of the Generall Assemblie, in answer to a declaratione of the armie of England, upon their march into Scotland, and intimatione given of a fast for the sinnes of ye land, and for the great danger the cause and the work of God are into by the invasione of sectaries." On the 10th October 1652, intimation is given of a collection "for the sadd condition of the toune of Glasgow, being half brunt." Under the date of 12th December 1653, it is intimated, that there was "na sessione, in respect the elders were withdrawin in attending some of Glencairne's souldiers, who were ranging throw the paroch."

There are still farther in this ancient manuscript several curious entries respecting parochial matters and discipline, and of a miscellaneous nature, which we cannot resist the temptation of transcribing, even at the risk of being charged with tediousness. The following are a few of the most remarkable of these: "December 24, 1648," (a schoolmaster being required for the parish school, a person of the name of Fittie had presented himself to the session

asa candidate for that office, and attended on them for several Sundays to obtain their decision on his application. The following rather *naïve* minute at last occurs under the above date, from which it may be inferred that the applicant had at length become rather importunate, and that the session stood somewhat in awe of the bold "troopier".) "Compeared Mr Patrick Fittie desyring ane answer. The sessione (he being removed) declare yt he was presently a troopier before he presented himself, and yt he was cashiered as being upone ye unlawfull ingadgement. The sessione resolve, calling him in againe, to discharge him in a *fair way*, in respect thair was not a competent provision yet agried on, and ordained to give him twentie-four shillings" Scots. On the 12th August 1649, "compeared James Ireland (adult<sup>r</sup>) in ye publick place of repentance (for the *twenty-fourth time*,) and the minister aggravating his sinne, and exhorting him to sorrow and grieffe of heart for the same, *was continued to give farther evidence of ye treuth of his repentance.*" "February 17, 1650, Given this day to Sir Robert Mubray, sometyme laird of Barnbougall, now become through indigence, ane poor supplicant, twentie-foure shillings." On the 24th February 1650, "the Presbyterie Act anent brydalls, ordaining thair sould not be above eight persons in ye syde, that thair sould be no debaucht pypars nor fiddlars, nor promiscuous dancing, nor excessive drunkennesse, was lykeways intimate out of ye pulpit." Finally, on the 19th July 1650, there occurs the following minute of session: "The minister inquiring if there was anie new scandall, it was declared be some yat Andro Malcolm had most despytefullie and devilishlie railed against ye sessione, cursing minister and elders. The said Andro ordained to be cited against next day."—Afterwards ordained to evidence his repentance in face of the congregation, but proving "refractory and contumacious," was put into "the jouggs" till he agreed to obey the former ordinance.

*Antiquities.*—This parish contains few remains of antiquity possessing much interest. Amongst those deserving of notice are the *Häer* cairns, of which there are, or rather *were* several, in various parts of the parish, marking the scene of mortal conflict, and the last resting place of the slain. Most of these have now been either partially or wholly removed in the course of modern agricultural improvements; and in the process of excavation, human bones in great quantities have been found, and two stone coffins, formed of four flat stones, containing a skull and a quantity of ashes.

PERTH.

3 M

About twenty years ago, the workmen engaged in removing a large mound of gravel in the western part of the town, uncovered two Roman cinerary urns containing burnt bones, but these were unfortunately broken and thrown away by the men as of no value. A Roman spear head was also found many years ago in the great moss of Cochrage, already mentioned, and is now in the possession of the writer. Another was found, about eight years ago, near the bed of the river. There was also found in the neighbourhood of the town, and close to one of the cairns above mentioned, a coin of the Emperor Hadrian in bronze. Close beside the manse, there formerly existed a green conical mount, about 200 yards in circumference, called the "Hurcheon" or "urchin hill," on which, according to tradition, the Earls of Gowrie and their predecessors, in times still more remote, held their baron courts, for administering justice (or at least such justice as the weak could expect from the strong in these barbarous times,) to their vassals and retainers; and, as these fierce barons were then invested with the formidable power of "pit and gallows," this mount must, doubtless, have often witnessed the last despairing glance of the wretched offenders against their despotic chiefs, ere they were hurried away to their doom. There is a ridge or rising ground within less than a quarter of a mile to the westward of this knoll, which still bears the name of the "gallow (or gallows) bank," where, according to tradition, the unfortunate criminals condemned at the neighbouring baronial court were immediately afterwards, and without further ceremony, hung up to the bough of a tree. The hill or mount, in its original and perfect state, had a flat space on the top, which was surrounded with an embankment or rampart of earth; but most unfortunately the whole of the earth composing it was some years ago carted away, and put upon part of the glebe, and there are now few vestiges remaining.\* There is a small island in one of the lochs already described, on which the traces of a building are still to be discerned, and tradition states that, in times of peril, the inhabitants of the surrounding district removed their most valuable effects to this

\* In the course of digging the foundations of the new wing added to the manse, in 1838, there was discovered, in the centre of the space formerly occupied by the mound, a circular excavation, about three feet in diameter, and six feet in depth, which had been dug far down into the hard gravel, and afterwards filled up with black unctuous looking mould, intermixed with ashes and pieces of charred wood. The writer examined this excavation, but can form no conjecture as to its origin or purpose, unless it may be supposed to mark the spot where *witches* were formerly burnt, — many of whom, according to tradition, were executed on this knoll.

island for safety, whence the loch derived its name of the Stormont or "Store Mount Loch." There are likewise some remains of a building on a wooded knoll near Ardblair, about a mile west from the town of Blairgowrie. This knoll, according to tradition, was at one time surrounded with water,—a circumstance which is partly corroborated by the nature and aspect of the surrounding ground, which is low, flat, and mossy, and even at this day partially covered with surface water in winter. The Newton Castle, situated close to the town, is a good specimen of the castellated style of mansion-houses which prevailed about the latter end of the seventeenth century. It possesses the finest prospect imaginable, commanding the whole valley of Strathmore with all its picturesque and varied scenery; and, occupying an elevated site, forms itself a very picturesque object, and is visible from a great distance. Like most other ancient buildings, this old mansion is provided with a ghost, in the shape of a lady dressed in a green silk gown, thence called the "green lady," which is said (and *believed* by some even in this modern age of scepticism on these points,) still to haunt some of the apartments of the castle. About a gunshot to the west of Drumloch Castle, already mentioned, on the opposite side of the deep ravine which forms the boundary between the parishes of Blairgowrie and Kinloch, are to be seen the still imposing ruins of the ancient castle of Glasclune, once a place of considerable strength, both natural and artificial, possessed of old by a powerful family of the name of Blair. An inveterate feud subsisted between the Blairs of Glasclune and the Herons of Drumloch, which the proximity of their strongholds afforded them abundant opportunities of gratifying, by a constant and harassing system of petty warfare, attended with considerable bloodshed on both sides, till at length the struggle was ended in the total discomfiture of the unfortunate laird of Drumloch, and the demolition of his fortress. Notwithstanding the tempting nature of the subject, however, which is full of interest, both antiquarian and historical, we must refrain from describing the ruins of this castle, that we may not encroach on the province of the statist of Kinloch parish, within the boundaries of which it is situated.\*

\* It may be here noticed that Mr Knox, in his "Topography of the Basin of the Tay," confidently argues that the high ground extending westwards from the town of Blairgowrie, is the true locality of the battle-field where the decisive encounter betwixt the Caledonians under Galgacus and the Roman legions of Agricola, described by Tacitus as the battle of the Grampians, and which has been so long a "bone of contention" amongst antiquarians, took place. He supposes the Cale-

## III.—POPULATION.

The population of the parish in 1792 appears to have been 1651, of which 1226 were in the landward part of the parish, and 425 in the village. It is thought that, for perhaps two centuries preceding the period to which this report applies, and down to about the year 1812 or 1814, the population continued nearly stationary, or, at all events, that the increase was very small, if any.

On comparing the return by Dr Webster in 1755 with that furnished in the last Statistical Account, we find that, in the intervening period of nearly forty years, the increase over the whole parish was only 55.

The following table shows the state of the population of the country part of the parish at different periods betwixt 1792 and 1836, and the comparative increase or decrease at each period :

Population in 1792,	Population.	Increase.	Decrease.	Total.
1811,	1226			
1821,	940		286	
1831,	1018	78		
1841,	1051	33		
	1226	171		
			282	
	Total decrease,			4

The disproportioned *increase* in the latter part of this period is chiefly owing to the number of families who have of late years taken up their residence in the neighbourhood of the various spinning-mills adjoining the town. The writer is at a loss to account for the large *decrease* which seems to have taken place among the rural population between 1793 and 1811, unless on the assumption, that there must have been some mistake or inaccuracy in the return for the former year.

The state of the population in 1841, and the respective proportions residing in the town and country, is as follows :

Number of inhabitants in the town,	2242
country,	1226
Total population of the parish,	3468

donians to have occupied the ridge or elevated ground extending from the Ericht to Forneth, about five miles to the westward, having their left covered by the precipitous banks of the Ericht, and their right by a deep ravine to the westward of Forneth ; and he advances a very ingenious hypothesis as to the mode of attack, the various movements of the two hostile armies during the battle, and the fatal error committed by the Caledonians, of descending from their vantage ground, and exposing themselves to the impetuous attacks of the Romans on the plain. Without venturing any opinion on this subject, it is sufficient to refer the reader who may feel any interest in this much disputed question, to Mr Knox's work. The nature of the ground, as well as the numerous remains of Roman encampments and ramparts which are still to be seen in the neighbouring parishes, certainly favour the hypothesis alluded to.

## Comparative view of the population in 1831 and 1841:

Population of the town	{ in 1831,	1598	
	{ in 1841,	2242	
	Increase,	—	649
Population of the country	{ in 1831,	1051	
	{ in 1841,	1226	
	Increase,	—	175
Total increase in ten years,			824
Total number of males in the town and parish,		1571	
females,		1897	
Excess of females,			326
Number of inhabited houses in 1841,		604	
uninhabited,		20	
houses building,		3	
Total,			627
The number of families in the parish is			583
Average number of individuals to each family, including the parents, about			4½

The number of proprietors of land of the yearly value of L.50 and upwards residing in the parish is four.

In the upper district of the parish the Gaelic language is still partially spoken by the common people; but there are none who cannot also speak English. The Gaelic is, however, gradually disappearing; and it is likely that, in a short time, it will be altogether disused.

The general character of the people, both in a moral and intellectual, and also in a religious point of view, now stands as high, it is believed, as in any parish similarly situated in Scotland.

## IV.—INDUSTRY.

*Agriculture.*—The strict accuracy of the following returns cannot altogether be depended on, but they have been made up with as much correctness as the nature of the information obtained would admit of.

The number of acres which are either cultivated or occasionally in tillage is estimated at	4987
Do. which have been cultivated, and which remain constantly waste or in pasture,	3800
Do. which might be profitably brought into cultivation,	302
Do. under wood, natural and planted,	1407

The species of trees most generally planted are larch and Scotch fir. Of the latter especially, as formerly stated, there are large plantations in the southern district of the parish. There are no plantations of hard-wood of any great extent, but there is a considerable quantity of ash, elm, and beech planted, either in hedgerows, belts, or small clumps, and these kinds appear to thrive well. The kinds which are indigenous to the parish are, the alder, the birch, the hazel, and the mountain-ash, which (especially the first) grow in con-

siderable quantities along the banks of the rivers and burns in the parish. The management of the plantations, with respect to thinning and periodical felling, appears to be good; and of late years considerable attention has been paid by the proprietors of the district to these operations. The Scotch fir has been invariably found, after reaching a certain age and size, to stop growing, and, soon after, begin to decay, so that this species of tree is generally cut when it has reached the age of from 40 to 60 years, or, if left after that period, it begins to get fogged or covered with moss, the branches lose their dark green hue and become yellow, and in a very short time the wood gets deteriorated in quality, and exhibits that bluish colour, after being cut up, which is always perceived in what is technically called "back-going wood." This is not the case with the larch, however, which continues to improve to the last, and even after it has apparently ceased to increase in size, the wood goes on improving in quality and hardness. For this reason, the more recent plantations are either altogether composed of this useful tree, or at least contain a large intermixture of it. The writer regrets to add, however, that a great proportion of the larch planted within the last fifteen or twenty years is already beginning to wither and decay, but whether this is owing to the bad quality of the seed or to the nature of the soil, he cannot take it upon him to express an opinion.

*Rent.*—The average rent of arable land in the parish is L. 1, 10s. per imperial acre. In the upper district of the parish, the rent is considerably lower, and it is much higher in many parts of the lower district, while in the immediate vicinity of the town it is as high as L. 3 and L. 4 per acre; but the average, as nearly as can be estimated, is the sum above stated.

*Live-Stock.*—There are few or no sheep reared in the parish; but many sheep farmers are in the habit of purchasing sheep in the autumn, feeding them on turnips in the fields during the winter, and selling them again in spring in a fattened state. Considerable quantities of turnips are eaten off the ground in this way by sheep, either belonging to the farmer himself, or to sheep-farmers in the Highland districts, to whom he lets the turnips at a certain rate per acre, varying according to the quality of the crop.

Within the last few years, great attention has been paid to the improvement of the breed of cattle in the parish; and by the introduction of short-horned bulls, and crossing them with the native

breed of cows, the quality of the stock is now equal to that of the best agricultural districts of the country. A large quantity of cattle are annually fed and sold for the Glasgow and Falkirk markets.

With regard to the system of *cropping*, it is the opinion of those most intimately and practically acquainted with the subject, that it would be a decided improvement to introduce, for good soils, in place of the present system, which is one of *fives*, a rotation of *sevens*, in the following order: viz. 1st, oats; 2d, potatoes with dung; 3d, wheat, barley, or oats; 4th, turnips with bone-dust, a proportion of which to be eaten off the ground with sheep; 5th, barley with grass-seeds; 6th and 7th, two years grass, one of which at least to be pastured.

Very considerable improvements have of late years been made in draining and inclosing, and the face of the country now presents, in this respect, a very remarkable contrast to its appearance at the period of the publication of the last Statistical Account.

The general duration of leases is nineteen years, although several are only fifteen; and the stipulations are in general favourable to the tenant.

*Quarries and Mines.*—The only kinds of stone found in extensive beds in this parish, and which are at all adapted for building, are the coarse red sandstone or conglomerate already mentioned, and a species of whinstone of a very dark colour, a stratum of which, as mentioned under a previous head, stretches in horizontal layers along the ridge of Knock-ma-har. This latter has been used only to a very limited extent in building, owing to its sombre and gloomy colour, and its almost impracticable hardness. Of the former there is a large quarry within half a mile of the town, which was worked for a great number of years, and out of which the greater part of the stones used in and around the town were taken. Some years ago, however, the proprietor of the neighbouring villa of Altamont, which is situated in the close vicinity of the quarry, having experienced great annoyance from the process of blasting the rock so close to his house, took a lease of it from the trustees of the proprietor, and shut it up; so that it has not been worked for several years. A quarry of the same material has been opened about half a mile to the south-west of the old one, and is now in full operation. The stone, as already mentioned, is of very coarse quality, and not easily dressed, but durable. Another quarry of red sandstone, of finer quality but softer texture, was opened some years ago and worked for some time on the

ground of Rosemount, in the face of an almost perpendicular cliff rising out of the bed of the river; but it has now been abandoned. There is still another quarry of fine gray sandstone at Parkhead, in the southern district of the parish; but it has not been worked to any considerable extent of late years, owing to the expense of carriage, and the difficulty of keeping the excavations free from the water, with which they are liable to be inundated.

*Fisheries.*—The only fishery carried on in the parish is salmon-fishing, which has now much decreased in value, owing to the fish being intercepted and destroyed in such numbers on their way from the sea at the fishing-stations further down, in the Tay and Isla. Previous to the commencement of the present century, salmon and grilse were very plentiful in the river; so much so, that, in the year 1804, no less than 336 salmon and grilse were caught at one haul in a pool called the Coble Pool, in the neighbourhood of the village; but, owing to the cause already mentioned, they are now scarce and high-priced. The fishing along the whole course of the Ericht, from the Keith to the boundary of the parish, is now let for L.21, 12s. per annum; and even this sum is considered much too high.\*

\* It may not be considered out of place here to describe the method of fishing with the hand-net, which is curious, and is believed to be peculiar to this parish. The net used is what is called a pock-net, about six feet six inches in depth, fixed on a hoop or "scob" formed of elastic hazel wands. This hoop or "scob" is about four feet in diameter, of an oval or circular form, and is attached to an elastic pole or handle about 21 feet in length. When the river is in flood, the fishermen, standing on the rocky brink of the water where it is narrowed by the approach of the rocks on each side to a breadth of from 8 to 12 feet, dips down the net into the eddies formed by the projecting points of rock turning aside the force of the stream, and into which the salmon retire to avoid the strength of the current, and recover themselves before attempting to leap the fall immediately above; and, by means of the long elastic handle, he moves the net slowly along from six to eight feet beneath the surface of the water, and the moment he feels any obstruction to its progress, he hauls it rapidly up, and lands the fish on the rock without trouble. In this way, when the fish are plentiful, and the river swollen with rain, considerable numbers of salmon and grilse are caught. When the river is small and clear, it is artificially discoloured, by throwing a quantity of mortar into it above the fall about the dusk of the evening, and the fish are then caught in the same way during the night. There is still another expedient put in practice for the destruction of the fish. When the river is small, its breadth from rock to rock, about thirty yards below the fall, is not more than six or eight feet; and at this narrow part a net nearly of the same form as those already described, but shorter in the handle, and sufficiently large to fill up nearly the whole space from side to side, is put down into the water, as near to the bottom as possible, and the fish are dislodged from under the rocks above, and forced downwards by means of a long pole with a mass of red cloth at the end of it, which is pushed under the rocks. Terrified and confused by the noise† and splashing, and the glare of the uncouth instrument with which it is performed, the salmon rush blindly down to escape from it, and fall into the net placed to intercept them. Frequently, however, they escape the danger, either by getting past or under the net, or by darting out of it again before it can be raised to the surface.

† We are satisfied, from personal observation, that salmon do hear, though this is a disputed point in natural history.

The best months for angling in this river are April and May for salmon, and July, August, and September for grilse. The second day after a flood, when the wind is from the east, and the sky cloudy, but without any appearance of rain, the fish rise readily to the common salmon and grilse fly; and in the warm summer months, when the river is low, they will sometimes readily take a minnow in the deep pools early in the morning.

*Produce.*—The average gross amount of raw produce raised in the parish is, as nearly as can be ascertained, as follows, viz.

Produce of grain of all kinds, whether cultivated for the food of man or the domestic animals, . . . . .	L.12,000	0	0
Potatoes and turnips cultivated in the fields, . . . . .	7,550	0	0
Hay cultivated, and sown grass pastured, . . . . .	6,600	0	0
	<hr/>		
Total yearly value of raw produce of arable ground,* . . . . .	L.26,150	0	0

*Manufactures.*—The only branches of manufacture carried on here are the spinning of flax and tow into yarn, and the weaving of these yarns into cloth of various fabrics. There are no fewer than five spinning-mills in the parish, engaged in the first-mentioned branch of manufacture, and the machinery of all of them is driven by water. Three of these are situated on the Ericht, one on the Lornty Burn, and one on the Lunan, (a small stream which forms the south-west boundary of the parish.)† The following table shows the number of hands engaged at each of these mills, distinguishing the males from the females:—

	Males	Females.	Total.
Blairgowrie Mill,	9	32	41
Oakbank, . . . . .	35	36	71
Lornty, . . . . .	8	21	29
Ashbank, . . . . .	32	40	72
Carsie, . . . . .	1	5	6
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	85	134	219

The flax used at these mills is imported into Dundee from the Baltic ports, and, after being spun into yarn, is either reconveyed to Dundee for sale there, or disposed of to manufacturers in the neighbourhood, and in Alyth and Cupar-Angus. The value of flax weekly consumed in the three mills at present in operation in the immediate vicinity of the town, is from L.400 to L.500, or from

\* The writer of this account has not been able to obtain sufficient data to enable him to hazard any estimate of the probable value of the produce of the unarable ground pastured, or of the annual thinning and periodical felling of copse and plantations, which is of a very fluctuating and uncertain nature.

† Besides the mills above enumerated, there is another large mill, (employing above 200 hands), situated in the close vicinity of the town, in the adjoining parish of Rattray, a large proportion of the people engaged at which reside in the town of Blairgowrie.

L.20,800 to L.26,000 per annum; and the value of yarn spun at the same mills, from L.650 to L.700 per week, or about from L.33,000 to L.36,000 per annum.

The other branch of manufacture, the weaving of yarn into cloth, employs about 370 hands. The yarns are purchased by the master manufacturers of the place, who employ weavers to weave it into cloth, which is then sent to Dundee and sold to cloth merchants there. Part of the cloth, however, is shipped direct, at the risk of the manufacturer, to North and South America and France. The greater part of the cloth manufactured consists of Osnaburgs and coarse sheetings; but there is also a considerable quantity of fine dowlas and drill manufactured. The weavers employed by the master manufacturers are paid for their work by the piece, and their earnings average for men, 8s.; and women, 5s. per week, working fourteen hours per day. The whole of the weaving is done by hand-loom, no machinery being employed for that purpose.\*

About the period of the publication of the last Statistical Account, a considerable quantity of flax was grown in the parish, the produce of which was spun with the common spinning-wheel by domestic servants, and women who were not fit for any harder work, and it was quite a common thing for expert hands to earn from 3s. to 4s. 6d. a-week in this way. The yarn was then woven into linen, sometimes of very fine texture, for shirting, &c. The introduction of machinery, however, has now completely superseded this branch of industry.

With regard to the effect which these occupations may have upon the health of those employed in them, the writer is not prepared to say that it is *prejudicial*, at least to any great extent,—certainly much less so than in large towns where the operatives do not enjoy equal advantages in respect of air and exercise; and were these operatives more regular in their habits of living, and more attentive to cleanliness in their persons and dwellings, it is thought that they would be equally healthy with other classes of the population who are also engaged in occupations of a sedentary nature.

Their effect on the *morals* of the operatives are unfortunately much more marked and observable, and is such as might naturally have been expected, and has invariably followed, from the pro-

\* Messrs Leadbetter, Adamson, and Co. have lately erected power-loom in their large mill at the Haugh, on the opposite bank of the river.

miscuous association of numbers of young persons of both sexes, without any efficient control or surveillance over their conduct.

#### V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

*Market-Town.*—The only market-town in the parish is the town of Blairgowrie, which was erected into a barony in favour of George Drummond of Blair, the then proprietor of the estate of Blairgowrie, by a Royal charter from Charles I., dated 9th July 1634. In the year 1809, the town was created a free burgh of barony by a charter from Colonel M<sup>c</sup>Pherson, the feudal superior, whereby the burgesses were empowered to elect a bailie and four councillors for the management of the affairs of the burgh. The bailie and two of the councillors vacate their offices every two years, and their places are supplied by others elected by the burgesses qualified to vote in terms of the charter.

The population of the town in 1841, the period when the last census was taken, was 2242. Since the publication of the last Statistical Account, its population has been quadrupled, as will appear from the following table :—

Population in 1798,	425	Increase.
1811,	1025	600
1821,	1235	210
1831,	1598	358
1841,	2242	649
		—
Total increase since 1798,		1817

The police of the town is regulated by the provisions of the General Police Act, and is under the management of the chief magistrate and four commissioners, the latter being elected annually by the L.10 householders. These commissioners have the power of levying, for the purposes of the act, an assessment to the extent of 8d. per pound on rents at and above L.2; and the funds thus raised are applied under the management of these commissioners, to defray the expenses of lighting and cleaning the streets of the town, and other necessary charges connected with the police of the place. The provisions of the Act regarding watching and paving have not been adopted, the householders being bound by the charter of constitution, either themselves to take their turn of watching, or to provide substitutes. This is not a very burdensome duty, as it only devolves about once a-year on each inhabitant.

The town is now well lighted with gas, supplied by a joint-stock company established in 1834, and gas is now very generally substituted for oil and candles, both in the shops and private dwell-

ling-houses in the town, although the high price charged for it, (14s. per 1000 feet), and the expense of pipes and fittings, has somewhat retarded its introduction into general use among the poorer classes. The company now pays an annual dividend of five per cent. to the holders of the stock. There is a branch of the Bank of Scotland, and another of the Commercial Bank in the town.

There is no other place in the parish deserving the name of village.

*Means of Communication.*—Besides private roads, there are three public roads which intersect the parish, viz. 1. the Great North Road from Perth to Fort George, which enters the parish at its southern boundary, about two miles from the town; 2. The road from Cupar-Angus to Blairgowrie, which was made a turnpike in the year 1832, and is now kept in excellent repair. It enters this parish about two miles to the south of the town, and terminates at Blairgowrie; 3. The line of road from Kirriemuir, Forfar, &c. to Dunkeld, passes through the town and across the parish from east to west. There is not much traffic on this line of road, even in summer, and it is not therefore kept in a very sufficient state of repair.

There are five bridges in the parish, viz. the Bridge of Blairgowrie, by which the Great North Road crosses the Ericht, the Bridge of Craighall, where it recrosses the river; the Bridge of Cally, where it crosses the Ardlie; the Bridge of Carsie, by which it crosses the water of Lunan, and the bridge of Lornty, where the old military road crossed the Lornty. These bridges are all in tolerably good repair; but they are all built on the old construction, with a considerable rise in the centre, and very narrow. The Bridges of Craighall and Cally, especially, are not only too narrow to admit of the passage of two vehicles meeting, but also form an acute angle with the road, which renders them both inconvenient and dangerous. At the Bridge of Cally, there is a very steep ascent on both sides from the bridge, with an almost perpendicular declivity on one side of the road, quite unprotected by any fence or parapet, so that any carriage going too near the side of the road would infallibly be hurled down the steep bank to the river, a depth of from 60 to 100 feet. Besides the bridges above enumerated, there is a very elegant suspension bridge of iron over the Ericht, erected by

Colonel Chalmers of Gleneloch, to give access to his country seat.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The situation of the town of course determined that of the parish church, which, as already stated, is situated close to it. In a parish of such extent, it necessarily follows that the church is inconveniently placed as regards some part of the population; but, as its site is nearly equidistant from both the northern and southern extremities of the parish, it is quite accessible to the great majority of the inhabitants. It is true the districts of Clayquhat and Cally are from four to five miles distant from the church, while the detached districts of Blackcraig and Wester Cally are upwards of seven miles distant; but although, owing to this circumstance, the inhabitants of these districts are, in general, unable to attend the parish church, their comparative proximity to the chapel of Persie, (a chapel of ease for the accommodation of the inhabitants of detached parts of Bendochy, Blairgowrie, Alyth, and Kinloch parishes,) materially lessens the inconvenience which would otherwise result from their remote situation. The most distant points of these districts are not more than three or four miles from the chapel of Persie. The parish church was erected in 1824, on the site of the old church, (which had become much too small for the accommodation of the rapidly increasing population,) and it is of course in good repair. It is calculated to hold about 1000 people, although in the scheme of division of the seats among the heritors, the number it would hold was computed at only 900. There are no free sittings, with the exception of a very few which are reserved for the poor. The manse was built in 1771; but in the year 1838, the whole house and offices, with the exception of the wing containing the dining and drawing rooms, were taken down and rebuilt, and several additional rooms added to the dwelling-house. Both the dwelling-house and offices are now, therefore, in the most complete and sufficient state. The repairs and additions cost upwards of L.500. The glebe, including 5 acres which were given in lieu of a right of pasturage formerly enjoyed by the incumbent, extends to about  $9\frac{1}{2}$  acres, and its average annual value may be about L.18. The stipend is partly money and partly "victual," in the following proportions, viz. money stipend, L.109, 1s. 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d; meal, 71 bolls, 2 lippies, 2 pecks; barley, 62 bolls, 3 firlots, 1 lippy, and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  pecks, convertible into money at the highest fiars prices of the year.

In the year 1837, the parish church having been found to be much too small for the adequate accommodation of the parishioners, and a chapel belonging to the burgher congregation being then for sale, a subscription was entered into for the purpose of purchasing the building, and opening it as a preaching station in connection with the parish church. Nearly L.300 having accordingly been raised by subscription, the chapel was purchased for the sum of L.399, and the title taken to certain trustees (appointed by the subscribers,) and their successors in office, for behoof of the subscribers; and the chapel was opened as a preaching station in the month of December of the same year. The subscription raised having proved inadequate for the payment of the whole price, the Church Extension Committee granted L.100 from their funds for the benefit of the chapel. This sum has completely relieved it of all debt, and the annual income arising from the seat rents and collections having hitherto proved sufficient for the payment of the minister and all incidental charges, the undertaking has turned out a most successful one, and promises to be of great and lasting benefit to the community at large. The chapel is situated in Brown's Street, Blairgowrie, and is a plain building of hewn stone. It is capable of containing about 600 souls, and is for the present amply sufficient for the supply of the destitution of church accommodation which previously existed. The minister receives the whole free income arising from the seat rents and collections, after deducting the necessary expenses, and the sum paid to him from this source for the last year was upwards of L.140. The seat rents for the current half year (December 1842) amount to L.42, 0s. 4d., and the collections average upwards of L.1 per week.

There is one Independent and one Catholic chapel in the parish, the ministers of which are paid, it is understood, partly from the seat-rents and collections, and partly by voluntary contributions from the members of their congregations; but the annual amount of their stipends is not known, being rather fluctuating and uncertain. Public worship is performed in the Catholic chapel only once a month, and it has no resident clergyman—the gentleman who officiates having his residence in Perth, and having under his charge several other chapels besides the one in this town. There is a considerable number of Seceders in the parish; but no chapel belonging to that body within its bounds. Those who belong to that sect attend either the chapel lately erected in the

neighbouring parish of Rattray for their accommodation, or the Seceder chapel, at Lethendy, three miles distant.

A congregation in connection with the Scottish Episcopal Church was formed in the year 1841, and the number of individuals belonging to it is at present not more than 90,—the regular weekly attendance in its present temporary place of meeting averaging from 30 to 40. Its founder and pastor, the Rev. John Marshall, is at present engaged in the erection, chiefly at his own expense, of a handsome Gothic edifice, in the early English style of ecclesiastical architecture, to be named "St Catharine's Church," which will afford accommodation for about 200. Being intended as a model of the style and form of ecclesiastical edifices previous to the Reformation, it consists of a nave and chancel; the latter containing a beautiful window of stained glass, ornamented with various devices relating to church subjects. There is a vestry and library attached to the building; and the latter is not intended exclusively for the use of the congregation, but for persons of all denominations, and contains many works in science and general literature.

The number of families in the parish that attend the Established Church, either in the parish church, Brown Street chapel, or Percy chapel, is about 560; the number of individuals, about 2400. The number of persons attending the chapels of Dissenters and Seceders is about 560. The number of individuals belonging to the Episcopalian church is about 90; and to the Roman Catholic persuasion about 40.

There is a Sabbath evening school held in the church, at which the attendance is upwards of 400, and the good effects of the religious instruction there communicated are beginning to appear very conspicuously in the evident and rapid improvement of the population, and the sensible decline of vice and immorality of every description.

The average number of communicants in the parish is 1100.

The average amount of *church* collections yearly for religious and charitable objects, exclusive of the regular weekly collections for the poor, is L.18, 10s. 9d. Sterling; but there is a society in the parish, called "the Juvenile Parochial Missionary Association," whose average annual contributions for the last three years amount to no less than L.87. The funds raised by this association are devoted to the five schemes of the General Assembly, and to female education in India.

*Education.*—The total number of schools in the parish is four, whereof one is a parish school, and the other three are taught by individuals on their own account, without any endowment or other emolument than the school-fees. Three of these schools are situated in the town, and the other at a place called Banchory, in the lower extremity of the parish. The salary of the parish schoolmaster is the maximum; and the parochial teacher has the legal accommodations. The general expense of education per annum, in all the different branches taught in these schools, is from L.1 to L.1, 12s.

The whole population of the lower part of the parish, and the greater proportion of that inhabiting the upper district, are within a convenient distance of one or other of the schools above enumerated, or, at least, they are accessible to them without much inconvenience; but the inhabitants of the detached districts of Blackcraig and Cruchies, and also the district of Clayquhat, are at too great a distance from all of them to derive any benefit from their operation. The wants of that portion of the population are, however, partly supplied by a school near the Bridge of Cally, which is open in the winter season only, and by another school situated at a place called Ballentuim, in the parish of Kirkmichael. The former of these is supported partly by voluntary subscription, and partly by the school-fees, which are very small, and the latter altogether by the school-fees. The district of Cruchies is supplied partly by a school supported chiefly by Sir James Ramsay of Bauff, and partly by the parish school of Alyth. An endowed school, established at or near the Bridge of Cally in this parish, would be of very great benefit to the population of that district of the parish, which is very considerable. A bequest of the late Mr George Barty, connected with this subject, is afterwards described under the head of Charitable Institutions.

*Literature.*—There are two circulating libraries in the town of Blairgowrie besides the library attached to the Episcopal church, already mentioned; and a small parochial library has also been formed in connection with the Sabbath school. There is likewise a small printing press in the town, which is chiefly used for printing handbills and advertisements.

*Charitable and other Institutions.*—The only institutions of a charitable nature at present in operation in the parish are, a Society for the purchase and distribution of clothing to destitute families, and a Savings' Bank. The latter was established in Oc-

tober 1837, and now numbers 120 depositors, having at their credit deposits amounting to L.1197, 19s. 7d. The institution is a branch of the National Security Savings Bank of Perth, with which its funds are invested, and the rate of interest paid on deposits is  $3\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. The deposits vary in amount from 5s. to L.30.

The late Mr George Barty, formerly tobacconist in Perth, and a native of this parish, by his settlement, bequeathed one-third of the free residue of his estate to the Dean of Guild and Guild-Council of Perth, in trust, for the purpose of laying it out on heritable security, and paying the interest thereof annually to the parish schoolmaster of Blairgowrie, and his successors in office, to defray the expense of educating "all the orphan, fatherless, and poor children" belonging to the parishes of Blairgowrie, Rattray, Bendochy, and Kinloch in the parish school of Blairgowrie, the children to be recommended by the minister and kirk-session of these parishes, and those bearing the names of Barty and Soutar to be preferred. Mr Barty died in the month of June 1838, and his bequest came into operation at Martinmas 1841. The fund thus mortified amounts to about L.1400, and there are now forty children enjoying the benefit of the bequest. These children are taught the same branches, and enjoy equal advantages in other respects with the other children attending the parish school.

There are still two other institutions, which will properly fall to be alluded to under this head, viz. the Monthly Deposit Company, and the Tee-total Society. The former of these is something of the nature of a savings' bank, although conducted on different principles. It comprehends about 106 members, who each deposit 5s. per month for a period of ten years, at the expiration of which the whole funds, principal and interest, fall to be divided amongst the depositors or their representatives. The funds as they are periodically collected from the depositors are lent out at interest, either on personal or heritable security, and they at present amount to upwards of L.2000.

A Tee-total Society was established in November 1838, and numbers about 700 members, including those inhabiting the neighbouring parish of Rattray.

*Poor and Parochial Funds.*—The average number of persons receiving aid regularly from the poor's funds of the parish is 37; and the average sum allotted to each is 5s. per month, or L.3 per annum.

The average number of persons receiving occasional relief from

the funds is 38; and the average sum paid to the whole collectively is L.16, 14s. per annum, or about 8s. 9d. each person. The average annual amount of the whole contributions for the relief of the poor, from whatever source, is as follows, viz. collections at church gate, L. 69, 6s. 5d.; voluntary contributions of the heritors, L. 38, 18s. 8d.; proceeds of mortcloth dues and other sessional emoluments, L. 11; total, L. 119, 3s. 1d.

There is no other regular mode of raising funds for the support of the poor than those above enumerated. When there is any deficiency in the ordinary collections for the poor, it is supplied by the heritors, who assess themselves voluntarily in the necessary sum, according to their respective valued rents.

Until within the last twenty or thirty years, there existed amongst the poor a very great disinclination to seek relief from the poor's fund. Unhappily, however, this noble and independent spirit is now in a great measure extinct, and the kirk-session are continually overwhelmed with applications for relief, often from those who have relatives quite able to afford them such help as would render such applications unnecessary.

*Prisons.*—The only place for the confinement of delinquents is a sort of cell in the lower story of the town-house, which is divided into two apartments, and well secured with sufficient locks on the doors, and iron gratings on the windows. The cells are under the superintendance of the town-officer, whose duty it is to report to the bailie the apprehension of every offender as soon as he is secured in the cell, or, at all events, next morning, if he has been incarcerated late on the previous night, and the bailie then holds a court upon the prisoner without delay, hears the charge and evidence, and inflicts a punishment according to the nature of the offence, varying from a fine of 1s. to L.2, or from twenty-four hours to twenty days' imprisonment in the cells on bread and water. This system has been found to be very efficient for the prevention of drunken brawls and other breaches of the peace, which are now much less frequent than they formerly were. The number of prisoners confined in these cells during the year 1841 was 128; and the offences were petty thefts, drunkenness, assaults, and other delinquencies of the same nature.

*Fairs.*—The fairs held in the town are the following, viz. the third Wednesday in March; the 26th May (if a Wednesday, if not the first Wednesday after;) the 23d July; the first Wednesday in November; the 22d of November (or first Tuesday there-

after;) and on the Wednesday before Falkirk Tryst. A market for cattle and grain is also held every fortnight, on Wednesdays, during the winter and spring, which is much frequented by the farmers and graziers of the district.

The number of licensed inns and alehouses in the parish is 36, the whole of which are in the town, with the exception of two.

*Fuel.*—The fuel generally used in the town and the lower part of the parish is coal and wood; and, in the upper district, peats. The coal is procured from Dundee and Perth, and costs, including carriage, from 1s. 2d. to 1s. 4d. per cwt., or, if sold by the ton, from L. 1, 3s. to L. 1, 6s. The wood used for firewood is furnished by the thinnings of the fir and larch plantations in the parish, the branches lopped off the hardwood trees, and the oak copse when periodically cut for the bark. The peat is obtained principally from the great moss of Cochrage already mentioned, but it is not much used in the lower division of the parish, except for kindling the fires. It cost about 3s. the cart-load.

#### MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The changes that have taken place within the parish since the publication of the former Statistical Account are numerous and very remarkable. The population has been nearly doubled; trade and manufactures have grown up and flourished in an unprecedented manner; agriculture has been extended, and brought to great perfection; and a vast and beneficial alteration has taken place on the social condition of all classes of the community. The character, manners, and habits of the people, have likewise undergone an important and striking change, in some respects, for the better, but in many, it is feared, for the worse. It appears that, while the population of the rural districts has decreased, that of the village has augmented in more than a corresponding ratio. About forty years ago, Blairgowrie was a quiet and insignificant village of mean and thatched houses, collected in the vicinity of the parish church and the seat of the proprietor of the barony. It is now a large manufacturing and market-town, containing good streets, filled with all the bustle of an active and industrious population.

In the rural districts the change is not less remarkable. There is now, properly speaking, no *peasantry*, the whole class coming under that denomination having been swept away by the breaking up of the cottar system throughout the parish, and the prevalence

of the practice, now so generally adopted by Scottish land-owners, of throwing several small farms into one,—a practice which has had the effect of transferring the agriculture of the parish to a body of men possessed of superior intelligence, and such a command of capital, as enables them to conduct it on a liberal scale, and on the most approved principles. The result has been a vast improvement in the whole system of agricultural management, and, consequently, in the general aspect of the country, since the publication of the last Statistical Account. Then nearly two-thirds of the parish lay quite open and unenclosed: Almost every field was intersected in many places by stripes of waste ground, called “baulks,” on which the stones gathered from the ground under crop were deposited: there were no drains to carry off the superfluous water, and no plantations to shelter the fields from the cold and blighting winds: a proper system or rotation of cropping was almost unknown, and a great extent of ground remained wholly waste and unproductive, or yielded but a scanty pasturage for cattle during the summer months. Now almost every farm is properly subdivided and enclosed; the “baulks” have been all removed; the wet ground has been drained; and many plantations formed for shelter to the more exposed grounds. A proper rotation of cropping and manuring has been introduced; and the greater part of the waste ground has been either reclaimed and cultivated, or covered with thriving wood. Nor is the improvement in the domestic economy of the farmer less marked. Instead of the miserable thatched hovel,—dark, dirty, confined, and withal ill furnished,—in which he formerly contrived to exist—he now inhabits a good substantial slated house, well-lighted, clean, commodious, and comfortably furnished. Instead of the ill-fashioned garments, of coarse home-spun materials, which he formerly wore, he is clad in well-fitting clothes of good broad-cloth; and the hat of modern shape has taken the place of the broad blue bonnet of former days. The change in the whole style of his “house-keeping” is equally observable; and, without entering into a minute detail on this subject, it may suffice to remark, that the habitual style of living which now prevails among this class marks the acquisition not only of new tastes and refined habits, but of the means of gratifying them; and, however opinions may differ on the question, whether this change may not have been carried farther than their station and circumstances warrant, the

social condition of the farmer, as compared with what it was thirty or forty years ago, is unquestionably both elevated and improved.

It would be extremely gratifying to be able to record an improvement in the moral and religious character of the population, commensurate with that which has taken place in their external circumstances and mode of living. But it must be admitted that in this respect there has been a very evident and decided falling off; that the strictness of religious principle has been relaxed; and the general tone of morality greatly lowered. The chief cause of this unfortunate deterioration is undoubtedly to be found in the great influx into the parish, from Dundee and other large towns, of immoral and dissolute characters of both sexes, who obtain employment in the numerous spinning-mills in the neighbourhood; and it is not difficult to foresee that the contagious effect of this moral pestilence must inevitably be felt throughout the community. Great exertions are at present making, however, by the gratuitous instruction of the children of the working classes in Sabbath schools and otherwise, to counteract this evil influence, and to promote the growth of practical religion and morality throughout the parish; and it is to be hoped that the means employed for this object may, through the blessing of God, be attended with the desired effect, and lay the foundation of a gradual and thorough reformation.

January 1843.

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## PARISH OF KINNOULL.

PRESBYTERY OF PERTH, SYNOD OF PERTH AND STIRLING.

THE REV. JOHN EDWARD TOUCH, MINISTER.

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### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Extent, &c.*—THIS parish is of a very irregular form, being intersected in different directions by those adjoining. It includes the village of Balbeggie on its northern extremity, betwixt and which the parishes of Scone and St Martins intervene, while the village of Inchyra, lying on its eastern extremity, has the parish of Kinfauns interjacent. Its greatest length may be stated at 12 miles, its greatest breadth 4. The central part of the parish, con-