

PARISH OF FETTERCAIRN.

PRESBYTERY OF FORDOUN, SYNOD OF ANGUS AND MEARNES.

THE REV. ALEXANDER WHYTE, A. M. MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THIS parish is supposed, by some, to have derived its name from its vicinity to the *Cairn-o-Mount*, a part of the Grampian mountains, over which the public road to Aberdeenshire passes, and to which it begins to ascend, at a small distance, to the north of the village.

Extent and Boundaries.—The parish of Fettercairn forms the extreme western division of Kincardineshire, on the south side of the Grampians. Its length, from south to north, is 8 miles, and its greatest breadth, from east to west, $4\frac{1}{2}$. It contains about 13,192 imperial acres, or about 20 square miles of surface. It is bounded on the north and north-east, by the parish of Fordoun; on the east and south-east, by the parish of Marykirk; on the south and south-west, by part of the parish of Marykirk, and the river North Esk; and on the west and north-west, by part of the parish of Edzell and the Grampian mountains, which separate it from the parish of Strachan, in that direction.

The highest part of the Grampians, here, does not ascend more than 1600 feet above the level of the sea. Their angles of ascent range probably from 30° to 40°. Their lower undulations, as they slope down to the plain country, give a diversified and pleasing, but not a hilly appearance, to the landscape.

Meteorology.—A register of the weather, kept from 1816 to 1836, by an intelligent observer in the parish, (from which the years ending 1st September 1817, 1821, 1826, and 1831, are selected as likely to give a fair average of that period,)—leads us to conclude that there were dry days in each year, 222; wet days or days in which rain, hail, sleet, or snow fell, in some quantity or other, 143; majority dry, 79.

| <i>No. in each season thus,</i> | | <i>June July Aug.</i> | <i>Sept. Oct. Nov.</i> | <i>Dec. Jan. Feb.</i> | <i>Mar. Apr. May.</i> | <i>Total.</i> |
|------------------------------------|--|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| No. of dry days in each year, | | 61 | 52 | 50 | 59 | 222 |
| wet days do. | | 31 | 37 | 42 | 33 | 143 |
| Majority dry do. | | | | | | 79 |
| Days on which the south wind blew, | | 32 | 19 | 17 | 23 | 91 |
| west do. | | 25 | 23 | 24 | 18 | 90 |
| north do. | | 14 | 15 | 16 | 22 | 67 |
| east do. | | 8 | 9 | 18 | 10 | 45 |
| Calm or variable, | | 16 | 22 | 19 | 15 | 72 |

From this statement, it may be inferred that, on the whole, the climate is good. Accordingly, invalids, who require change of air, often derive much benefit from it during the summer season. Still, at other times, the sudden changes of temperature, and the frequent prevalence of cold fogs and hoar frosts, are very apt to produce all the varieties of inflammatory affections, which are the most common diseases.

Hydrography.—In the hill above Fasque, there is a spring of a distinctly chalybeate character. There is another, about one-fourth of a mile below the village, on the Fettercairn estate. In many other places in the parish, the water seems impregnated with iron, from the quantities of oxide of iron which appear in the bottoms of drains, and other situations, where it converts the stagnant water into a coagulated state. No iron rock has been discovered near these places. No rivers take their rise in or run through this parish. But the North Esk, after it issues from the mountains, forms the boundary between it and Edzell, for the space of nearly four miles. This river then runs almost due east, for about nine miles, and enters the German Ocean, a few miles north of Montrose. In the neighbourhood of The Burn, its banks

are very precipitous. In some places, it has there worn a bed to itself, through the rocks, to the depth of from 20 to 30 feet below the level of the conterminous grounds.

Geology and Mineralogy.—A particular account of the geological peculiarities observable in the channel of the North Esk has been published in the sixth volume of the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. That account was carefully drawn up by the late Colonel Imrie, who lived several years in this parish, and paid great attention to matters of this kind. He has observed in that article, that “the various strata, standing in a position vertical or nearly so, and the river cutting across these strata at right angles, the succession is uncommonly well exhibited, and a fair display of the structure of the country, and of the materials composing it, to a great depth, is open to the attentive observer.” The limits of this paper do not admit of a particular description of the Colonel’s discoveries. It may be remarked, however, that he found, either in a detached or stratified form, or in a state of combination, distinct specimens of silicious grit, or red freestone, quartz, felspar, granite, mica, porphyry, whinstone, argillite, or thinly slaty rock, jasper, limestone. These different kinds of rock are in every sort of position, and often mixed together in irregular masses. From the granite to the plum-puddingstone, almost all the intermediate varieties may be seen in some form or other. Specimens of many of these kinds are also observable in the beds of the burns or rivulets, which run past Balnakettle, Dallalie, and Bogendollo. Porcelain clay of fine quality is found in the banks of the first of these streams.

Mr Robertson, in his Survey of Kincardineshire, has mentioned a substance which has been occasionally found on the farm of Balnakettle, and which he has assumed to be native iron, and has traced its origin, apparently, on the theory of La Place, Dr Hutton, and others, to some convulsion in the moon. The analysis, however, which he has given of its component parts differs very widely from that which Mr Howard gave, of the specimens of the African and Peruvian native iron which he analyzed. Some have thought that it is nothing more than part of the sweepings of a smithy, formerly in that neighbourhood; while others have believed that it might have been a kind of coarse iron imperfectly fused and brought hither from Dalbog, a few miles distant, where an iron mine seems to have been wrought little more than a hundred years ago. A description of Great Britain, printed in London in

1708, mentions this place in these words : " They find plenty of iron ore near the wood of Dalbog."

Bog iron ore, of the latest formation, has been found in the neighbourhood of the village. Large fir and oak trees, in a good state of preservation, have been found at great depths from the surface of the ground in different places in the parish.

In some places, the soil is alluvial; in others, it is a stiff clay of a brownish colour. Deep moss prevails in some low situations; and gravel, with a thin sprinkling of moss or vegetable mould, is often observable on the higher grounds and moorish lands.

Zoology.—On the hills, the red grouse abound. The alpine or white hare is occasionally seen. In the woods, all the usual kinds of birds are to be met with. Black game has become rather numerous of late. The woodcock is an annual visitor and residenter from October to March. Pheasants have been introduced, but have not multiplied to the extent desired. In the North Esk are all the varieties, except pike, of fresh water fish; but salmon have rarely ascended above a water-fall near The Burnhouse, till of late, when the fall has been lowered to let them up the river. Perch and other kinds of fish abound in the lakes at Fasque and The Burn. Hares and partridges are numerous in the fields. All the other kinds of animals common to the country, whether wild or domesticated, are to be seen.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Land-owners.—The land-owners of the parish, in the order of their valued rents, are, Captain M'Inroy of The Burn and Arnhall; John Gladstone, Esq. of Fasque; Sir John Stuart Forbes of Pitsligo and Fettercairn, Bart.; Sir Alexander Ramsay of Balmain, Bart. late M. P. for Kincardineshire; The Hon. Donald Ogilvy of Clova and Balbegno, Colonel of the Forfarshire and Kincardineshire Militia; The Right Hon. the Earl of Kintore; Miss Robertson of Dalladies; The Right Hon. the Viscount Arbuthnott, one of the sixteen representative Peers of Scotland, and Lord Lieutenant of the county.

Maps, &c.—There is no map of the parish, except what is contained in the maps of the county by Garden and others, or in the plans of the different estates belonging to the foregoing proprietors. By these plans, it appears that it contains less surface, by at least 1000 imperial acres, than the quantity stated by Garden, and by the writer of the last Statistical Account, on his authority. Till that Account appeared, there was no history of the parish.

Parochial Registers.—The parochial registers extend backwards to 1669, with partial interruptions, which were occasioned, in part, by the burning of certain portions of them, in consequence of the adherents of the Stuarts having set fire to the school-house, where they were deposited, in 1745, the inhabitants being attached to the interests of the Hanoverian family.

Antiquities.—The death of Kenneth III., King of Scotland, in 994, is believed by some to have taken place in this parish. Historians differ as to the circumstances. John of Fordoun and his followers tell us that he was shot by an arrow, from a curious piece of mechanism, in consequence of a plan which a lady, of the name of Finella, had devised, to be revenged for her son, Crathilinthus, whom he put to death for certain heinous crimes which he had committed. Winton, Buchanan, M'Pherson, and others, make him fall by the hands of a body of conspirators, who suddenly rose upon him in Fettercairn, as he was directing his course to the shrine of St Palladius, with a view there to unburden his mind of sins which troubled it much. The late Professor Stuart of Marischal College, Aberdeen, published a paper in Vol. ii. Part ii. of the Transactions of the Antiquarian Society of Scotland, in which he laid it down as a probable conjecture, that the King was assassinated in a hunting-match in the neighbourhood. This theory he founded on certain figures, representing a hunting-scene, cut on a grave-stone, which was discovered in the churchyard of Fordoun some years ago, and supposed to commemorate this event. All seem to admit, however, that Finella had a hand in the tragedy.

Buchanan terms Finella's place of residence "the Castle of Fettercairn," which seems to be unfavourable to the belief, entertained by some, that it was situated in the parish of Fordoun; though the names of certain places in that parish give an air of probability to that belief. Others think that it must have been about a mile and a-half south-west from the village of Fettercairn, where the remains of a large fortified place, called Greencairn, are still visible. This is a mass of ruins on the top of a round eminence of about forty or fifty feet above the level of the adjoining grounds. What its origin was, or when it ceased to be inhabited, is unknown. But that it must have been a place of great strength, and must have been many ages uninhabitable, is evident, from the portions of vitrified materials, of which it was composed, still remaining, and from the entire state of desolation to which it is now

reduced, notwithstanding the durable nature of that mode of building.

The next most ancient place is Balbegno Castle, on the same estate, and still habitable. The date of 1509 is visible on the parapet wall. The expense of building it is said to have been so great, that the proprietor, whose name was Wood, was obliged to sell the lands of Balnakettle and Littlestrath, then belonging to him, to enable him to complete it. Various pieces of sculpture are exhibited in the higher parts of the wall. Within, there is a lofty hall, the roof of which is composed of freestone, arched and groined, and divided into sixteen triangular spaces. In these are painted the names and coats of arms of sixteen Scotch peers.

The lands of Balbegno were given by William the Lion, who died in 1214, to one "Ranulphus filius Walteri de Lenorp." The deed of gift included "Lachra," that is, Luthur or Halkerton, with "Balbegno in vic. de Kinkardin;" and Ranulphus is designated in it, "Falconario nostro." This was the origin of the name and estates of the family of Halkerton in this county, now represented by the Earl of Kintore. By what means Balbegno was separated from the rest of the Halkerton property is unknown. In 1680, it was possessed by Andrew Wood. His son, also named Andrew, sold it in 1687 to Andrew Middleton of Pitgarvie. In 1722, we find it in possession of John Ogilvy, son of George Ogilvy of Lunan, an advocate in Edinburgh. A sister of his had married and survived Robert Middleton, the former proprietor; and by this connection it may have come into his hands. He left four daughters, the oldest of whom married and survived a Dr Brisbane, and possessed the estate till 1778, when it was sold to the father of the present proprietor, for a sum not equal to a fifth part of its present value.

Another ancient building is Fettercairn House, a few hundred yards north by east of the village. A tasteful addition to it was built a few years ago by the present proprietor. The original part bears the date of 1666, and the initials of the name of John Earl of Middleton. His initials, coronet, and coat-of-arms, also, appear on the capital of an octagonal pillar in the village. This pillar, which is understood to have been the cross of the old town of Kincardine, the remains of which are still traced on the Fettercairn estate, bears the date of 1670, and rises about seven feet above a mass of building, composed of six concentric circles, or circular steps. An iron rivet is still seen on one side, to which

the *jugs*, the old instrument of punishment in Scotland, appear, from the marks on the stone, to have been suspended.

The Fettercairn estates, which also seem to have formerly borne the name of Middleton, were possessed by one called Middleton, in the twenty-fourth year of the reign of Alexander III. In 1539, John Middleton sold the lands of Middleton to David Falconer of Halkerton; after which he and his successors went by the designation of Middletons of Pitgarvie and Cadham. From these descended the distinguished Earl John above-mentioned, who recovered the Middleton property; but whether by purchase or otherwise, does not appear.

Earl of Middleton.—This nobleman was the son of John Middleton of Cadham, and his wife, Helen Strachan, one of the Thornton family. He devoted himself to literary pursuits till the civil wars broke out, when he took up arms on the side of the English Parliament. In 1644, Sir William Waller, by virtue of powers from the Earl of Essex, gave him the command of a troop of Harquebusiers, and afterwards raised him to the rank of a lieutenant-general, in which capacity he acted till the Parliament cashiered Essex, when he resigned his command, and entered into the service of the Estates of Scotland. In 1647, he was made Lieutenant-General of the Horse, in the army raised to liberate Charles I., then a prisoner in the Isle of Wight. In the battle of Preston he was taken prisoner, and afterwards confined in Newcastle, till his royal master was beheaded. He then found means to escape and reached Scotland at the time when Charles II. arrived in that kingdom. He again obtained the command of the Horse, in the army which Charles led, in person, into England, and fought bravely in the battle of Worcester, in 1651, where he was wounded, and again made prisoner. He was sent, by Cromwell's orders, to the Tower of London, there to be executed; but again he escaped, and joined his sovereign in Paris. In 1653, he arrived in Scotland with a royal commission, and superseded the Earl of Glencairn as Commander-in-Chief of the Forces. Being unable to receive foreign supplies, he struggled with difficulties for about a year, when he was defeated by General Monk, and obliged to seek his safety in concealment. In 1655, he escaped to the Continent, and again joined his master at Cologne, with whom he continued during the remainder of his exile. After the Restoration, Charles raised him to the peerage, by the titles of Earl of Middleton and Viscount Fettercairn, in Scotland, and Lord Clermont, in England. He was also made Commander-in-

Chief of the Forces in Scotland, Governor of Edinburgh Castle, and one of the Lords of the Privy-Council. In 1661, he was appointed Lord High Commissioner to the Scotch Parliament; but, having abused his power, and rendered some powerful noblemen his enemies, he lost the royal favour, and was deprived of the various places of trust and honour which he held. On the suggestion, it is believed, of the Earl of Lauderdale, who feared lest the King's affections might return to him, and who, therefore, wished him removed to a distance, he was afterwards appointed governor of the new English Fort of Tangier, on the coast of Africa, where he remained till the time of his death, which was occasioned by a fall from a stair in 1673.

Earl John Middleton was succeeded in his estates and titles by his son Charles, who acted as one of the principal secretaries of State for England, from 1684 to 1688, when he followed the fortunes of his exiled master, and remained in France till he was attainted, by act of Parliament, in 1695. He and his two sons having embarked in the expedition fitted out in France, in 1708, for the restoration of the Stuarts, were taken prisoners at sea by Admiral Bing, but soon afterwards were liberated by the Queen's orders, and no more appeared in public life.

The lands continued in the possession of the Middletons till 1777, when they were purchased from the heirs of Lady Diana Middleton, by Sir John Stuart, Bart., the maternal grandfather of the present proprietor, and, at the time of his death, one of the Barons of Exchequer of Scotland. Like the lands of Balbegno, they are now worth more than five times the original sum that was paid for them.

The only other antiquity, to be noticed, is the Gannachy Bridge. It is built across the North Esk, on two steep rocks, and forms the communication between Fettercairn and Edzell. The arch is about 30 feet high, and 52 wide; and yet the quantity of water in the river, in August 1829, almost completely filled it. The original bridge was built by James Black, tenant in Wood, parish of Edzell, in 1732, at an expense of 300 merks Scotch. Being too narrow from parapet to parapet, it was widened by adding another arch to the side of it, so as to make it about 20 feet wide. This was done in 1796 by Lord Adam Gordon, and the Honourable William Maule, now Lord Panmure, at their own expense, said to have amounted to L. 300.

Mansion-Houses.—About three-quarters of a mile north by west from the Gannachy Bridge, on a rising ground, a few hundred yards

from the river, stands The Burn House, a neat commodious mansion, built by Lord Adam Gordon in 1791, and much improved by alterations and additions, effected by Messrs Brodie and Shand, its successive proprietors. The scenery is here very much admired, particularly along the banks of the river. The walks cut through the rocks, and the woods planted by his Lordship's directions, have converted the native ruggedness of these banks into scenes of sublimity and beauty.

Fasque, the only other mansion-house in the parish, is situated about a mile and a quarter north by west of the village. It was built by the late Sir Alexander Ramsay of Balmain, Bart. in 1809. It is a large house of a castellated form, and contains every accommodation for a numerous family. Having been built on elevated ground, it commands an extensive, diversified, and pleasing view of the surrounding country. A lake of about twenty acres of extent, and a fine approach to the house, completed a few years ago by the present proprietor, give additional effect to the scenery of this place.

III.—POPULATION.

By returns given to Dr Webster in 1755, the population of this parish seems to have been 1950. Mr Garden, in 1774, when he published his map of the county, made it 1500. Mr Foote, in the Statistical Account drawn up by him in 1791, stated it at about 2000. In 1801, by the first Government census under Mr Abbot's bill, it was 1794,—in 1811, by the second census, 1562,—in 1821, 1573,—in 1831, 1637; at present, it is thought to be considerably more.

By the last census, the males were 775, and the females 862. There were in the village 234 inhabitants, and in the rest of the parish 1403, of whom were under fifteen years of age, 573; between fifteen and thirty, 405; between thirty and fifty, 383; between fifty and seventy, 203; upwards of seventy, 73: in all, constituting 388 families, and living in 367 houses, being an average of $4\frac{1}{2}$ persons to each family. There are 2 persons totally blind, 2 partially blind, and one fatuous. The average per annum of births for the last nine or ten years has been about 43; deaths, 18; marriages, 16.

The incomes of the different proprietors, arising from the property they hold in the parish, vary from L. 200 to upwards of L. 2000 per annum. Only two reside occasionally in the parish.

The people may, on the whole, be said to be a sober, industrious, intelligent, and religious people.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Number of imperial acres in the parish, which are either cultivated or occasionally in tillage, | 7490 |
| Number of acres which might with some degree of advantage be cultivated, whether they were afterwards allowed to run waste or not, | 172 |
| Number of acres of moss, which might be added to the last description of ground, | 177 |
| Number of acres which have been planted with wood, | 1780 |
| Number of acres which remain constantly waste or in pasture, | 3573 |

Rent.—Some of the arable land is let as low per annum as 10s. per acre, and some as high as L. 4, 10s. Scotch measure; but the average may be about L. 1, 1s. In several instances, part of the rent is paid by the fiars prices of the county. The whole gross rental of the parish, including about L. 3: 5, arising from hill pasture, and sales of wood, amounts to about L. 8230. A considerable extent of enclosed grounds or grass parks, is annually let by public sale, for the summer half year, the rate of which is from under L. 1, to nearly L. 4, per acre. It is estimated that a sheep might be kept for 3s., and an ox of ordinary size for from L. 2, to L. 2, 10s. for the summer half year, and about the same sum for the rest of the year, on turnips and straw.

Wages.—The price of labour seems to be as follows: farm-servants hired for the half-year get, with food from their employers, as follows, viz. men, from L. 6 to L. 8, 8s.; women, from L. 3, 10s. to L. 4, 10s. in summer, and from L. 2 to L. 3, in winter; day labourers without food furnished them, as follows, viz. men, 1s. 6d., to 2s. in summer, and 1s. 3d. to 1s. 6d. in winter; women, 9d. in summer, and 7d. in winter; masons, 3s.; wrights, 2s. 6d.; and slaters, 3s. for ten hours work, without food from their employers; tailors, 1s. 3d. with food; shoemakers per week, 9s. to 12s. without food; blacksmiths with food, L. 9 to L. 11 per half-year.

Prices.—The prices of raw materials stand nearly thus: hides, 4s. per stone Dutch; wool of black-faced sheep, 1s. 3d. to 1s. 6d. per lb. of 24 ounces, Cheviot 1s. 6d. to 2s.; flax 12s. to 14s. per stone of 24 lbs.; wood per solid foot, birch 1s., Scotch fir 1s. to 1s. 8d., elm 3s., oak 3s., ash 2s. to 2s. 6d., plane 1s., beech 2s.; lime per boll 2s. 11d. to 3s. 2d.; single-horse cart-load of stones at the quarry, for ordinary purposes 6d., for finer work 1s., and carriage per mile 7d.

The prices of grain and provisions are these: wheat, L. 2, 16s. to L. 2, 18s.; barely, L. 1, 4s. to L. 1, 10s.; oats, L. 1, 2s. to L. 1, 7s. per imperial quarter; oatmeal about L. 1 per boll of 140 lbs.; quartern loaf 8d.; potatoes 12s. to 16s. per boll of 32 stones

Dutch; beef 5½d. to 6d. per imperial lb.; mutton do.; veal do.; butter 9d.; pork 5s. 9d. per imperial stone; cheese 7s. to 8s. per do.; milk 1½d. per chopin; eggs 5d. per dozen; fowls 1s. 2d., to 1s. 4d. each; chickens 1s. to 1s. 3d. per pair; turkey 4s. to 6s.

Live-Stock.—The common breed of sheep is the black-faced kind, with a few Cheviots. The black cattle are chiefly of the Angus-shire breed, but there are also a few of the Aberdeenshire and Ayrshire kinds. The species of pig most in use is the Chinese. Bees are cultivated, but not to much extent or advantage.

Husbandry.—The mode of husbandry is generally that of five years rotation, being successively oats, green crop, barley or oats again, hay, and pasture the last year. Wheat is not much cultivated. In the green crop stage of the rotation, mangel wurzel, or beet-root, has been tried and has grown well, and been considered a very valuable kind of food for milch cows; but the cultivation of it has been discontinued on account of the trouble and expense attending it. In the scarcity of manure which sometimes occurs, bone dust is used as a substitute. It produces good crops of turnips; but sheep are generally laid on the field to eat them off, for the sake of the following crops.

The Georgian, Hopetoun, Kildrummie, Early Angus, and potato oats, have all been tried; but the potato and early Angus varieties are those at present in use. Barley is most frequently sown in the lower, and bear in the higher, parts of the parish; and the returns vary from 4 to 8 qrs. per acre. Frequent changes of seed are used to prevent deterioration, which would otherwise take place. Tares are sown, as a substitute for clover-grass, to be used in the end of the season. Flax has been esteemed a severe crop for the land, and has been less cultivated for several years back than when it was encouraged by the Government bounty.

Leases, &c.—The common period of leases is nineteen years. The farm buildings and enclosures are, in general, commodious and in good repair. In most cases, the tenants bear a part of the expense of them. The disposition of the present proprietors is allowed to be liberal towards all that sit under them.

Improvements.—At an early period in the agricultural history of this county, we find the Ramsays of Balmain mentioned as very active and extensive improvers of land. By the zealous and judicious exertions of the successive members of that family who came into the possession of the property, it was brought to such a state of improvement, that comparatively little remained to be done after the

end of last century. On the estate of Fettercairn much, too, was done by Sir John Stuart, by draining, planting, and other improvements. But the most extensive improvements in the parish, since the former Statistical Account was published, have been effected on the estates of The Burn, Woodton, and Arnhall. The following very hurried and superficial sketch of them is all that our limits will admit of. In 1774, Lord Adam Gordon purchased Woodton, a part of the estate of Balfour, from Captain Forbes; and in 1780, the lands, properly called The Burn, lying between it and the river, from Sir David Carnegie. For these two properties he paid L. 5250; and the annual rent which they then yielded was only L. 113, 11s. 1½d. Sterling. They were both in the wildest state of barrenness. In 1782, his Lordship began to improve them; and for twenty years he went steadily on with his operations, till he had planted 526 acres of ground, converted much moor into arable land, and so completely changed the appearance and increased the value of them, that it was a subject of wonder how so much could have been effected in so short a time. On his Lordship's death, they were purchased for L. 20,000 Sterling, including L. 1000 in name of household furniture, by the late Mr Brodie of Arnhall, father of the present Duchess of Gordon.

Mr Brodie had bought the estate of Arnhall, in 1796, from Sir David Carnegie, for L. 22,500 Sterling. He completed such of his Lordship's plans as had been left unfinished, and extended and carried on his improvements over all the estates till he had reclaimed, from moss and moor ground, upwards of 400 acres of surface, at an expense, on most of it, of L. 12, 10s. per acre, built 500 roods of stone dikes; made five miles of roads; and planted 220 acres of waste ground. The extent of his improvements, and the importance of them, may be inferred from the fact that, when offered for sale, the three estates were purchased in 1814 for L. 70,000 Sterling, by the late Mr John Shand.

On this gentleman the mantle of his predecessors seemed to have fallen. They had done much, and yet much remained to be done. In 1818, therefore, he began his operations on an extensive district of deep moss, on the Arnhall estate. He cut a large drain 2½ miles long, 9 feet deep, 18 feet wide at top, and 4½ at bottom, and a multitude of smaller ones running into it at right angles. When the moss was thus brought to a state of dryness fit for working, upwards of 600 cart loads of gravel per acre, were mixed up with it, in some places to consolidate it, and make a proper soil for

bearing crops. By these, and other operations, more than 200 acres of waste ground were converted into productive land, and let to industrious tenants at a moderate rent. Belts of wood were also planted, and miles of excellent roads were made.

Many improvements, on a smaller scale, have also been effected by intelligent and industrious tenants, on the farms occupied by them on the different estates throughout the parish, which want of space makes it here impossible to detail. Most of them have erected thrashing-mills at their own expense. The number of thrashing-mills in the parish is 27.

Produce.—The gross amount of the value of raw produce raised annually in the parish may be estimated at from L. 15,000 to L. 16,000, though it is impossible to ascertain it exactly. About two-fifths of this sum may arise from grain and flax, and the remaining three-fifths from cattle and other kinds of live-stock, and the produce of the dairy.

Manufactures.—There is a small establishment at Arnhall, for carding and manufacturing wool into coarse cloth, in which a few women, but no children, are employed. Their hours are moderate. There is another establishment at Nethermill, near the village, for distilling whisky from malt alone, in which men only are employed. The nature of their operations necessarily renders their hours irregular. No decidedly bad effects seem to be produced by either of these establishments on the health or morals of those immediately engaged in them. Both yield, apparently, a fair remuneration to the persons who have capital embarked in them.

Fettercairn Club.—The only association in the parish, for the encouragement of any branch of industry, is the Fettercairn Club. It was established in 1826, principally by the influence of Captain Ramsay, one of the Balmain family, then residing at Balbegno Castle. Its primary object was the improvement of the district of country around Fettercairn, in whatever related to the interests of agriculture. At present it is composed of about 86 members, from among the proprietors and principal tenants in the neighbourhood, and gentlemen at a greater distance, who feel interested in its success. Each member contributes annually L. 1 to the funds of the institution, by means of which a library is kept up for the use of the club, prizes are provided for certain purposes specified in the regulations, and the expenses connected with its management defrayed. The Highland or Agricultural Society of Scotland has patronized it, for some years back, by submitting part of their funds to its disposal every alternate year.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Means of Communication, &c.—There is no weekly market-town in the parish. The nearest place of that description, with which a regular intercourse is kept up, is Montrose, twelve miles distant. The only village is Fettercairn, which is a burgh of barony on the estate of Fettercairn. There are two fairs held in it annually, the one at Whitsunday and the other at Martinmas. It has a post-office, at which a foot-post daily arrives with mails from Montrose, about half-past eight o'clock A. M., and from which he departs at two o'clock P. M. A carrier travels to Montrose every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and to Aberdeen every second Tuesday. A stage-coach runs between Aberdeen and Dundee through the parish each day except Sunday, starting from Dundee at seven, and from Aberdeen at half-past ten o'clock every morning, and passing through Forfar, Brechin, Slateford, Fettercairn, Auchinblae, Drumlithie, and Stonehaven. There is no turnpike-road in the parish; but commutation roads traverse it in various directions, which, together with bridges and fences, are well attended to, and generally kept in good condition.

Ecclesiastical State.—The parish church is not conveniently situated for many of the parishioners, being placed near the north-east extremity of the parish, and five miles distant from some of the inhabitants towards the south-west. It was built in 1804 to contain 800 sitters, but it can accommodate considerably more, and is in good repair. The sittings are all attached to the land except those provided for the minister and elders, and are therefore free only to the tenant.

The following benefactions were left, at different times, to the poor, by benevolent persons in their latter wills, viz. L. 500, by Dr Ramsay of Barbadoes; L. 50, by Provost Christie of Montrose; 200 merks Scotch, by James Black, the builder of the original Gannachy Bridge, formerly mentioned; L. 20, by George Cooper, late merchant in Slateford; L. 50, by R. Valentine, late tenant in Bogindollo; and L. 19, 19s. 11d., by Anthony Glen, late manufacturer in Luthermuir; several hundred pounds, in houses and other property, were left by James Smith, late manufacturer in Fettercairn, to be under the management of certain trustees, for behoof of indigent persons not upon the regular poor's roll.

The manse was built in 1774, and repaired and enlarged in 1822. The glebe is about six Scotch acres of extent, is good alluvial soil, and worth about L. 3 per acre per annum. The sti-

pend is 16 chalders, half barley, half meal, with L. 8, 6s. 8d. for communion elements. There is no chapel of ease nor any dissenting place of public worship in the parish. But there are 52 individuals who are not of the communion of the Established Church, viz. Independents, 14; Episcopalians, 13; Bereans, 14; of the United Associate Synod, 6; Anabaptists, 2; of the Relief Synod, 2; and 1 Roman Catholic. This list does not include the members of the two proprietors' families formerly mentioned as residing in the parish only occasionally, they being at present non-resident therein. The number of families which attend the Established Church cannot be exactly known, as some families are divided between it and the above denominations of worshippers; but it may be stated at about 377, and the individuals of all ages who generally attend public worship, may be about 1300, making thus an allowance of about 330 for children, infirm, and aged persons, and those now mentioned as not in communion with it. Divine service is well attended by all ranks. The average number of communicants is about 850, including those who attend from the adjoining parishes of Fordoun and Marykirk, for the sake of convenience. The average amount of collections annually in the church, for religious and charitable purposes, may be about L. 85, including collections for infirmaries and the parish library. The collections which were formerly made in behalf of the Bible Society, the Highland Schools, and the India Mission, are not included in this sum. For promoting the interests of these institutions, a parochial association, on Dr Duff's plan, was last year formed, and raised L. 16, to be divided between them and the Church Extension scheme. Its operations are not this year yet completed, but are expected to be as successful as last year's were.

Education.—There are five schools in the parish, which supply daily instruction to about 190 children, viz. the parochial school, which is supported by the maximum legal salary, a mortification in land yielding L. 2, 15s. per annum, and the school fees of about 68 scholars, which may amount to L. 30 per annum. His other emoluments, including session-clerk's fees, amount to about L. 15 per annum. The languages and all other branches of parochial education are taught in the parish school.—A private school at Daladies, supported by the school fees of about 36 scholars, paying from 3s. 6d. to 6s. per quarter, school-room and schoolmaster's house rent free. All branches taught in the parochial school are taught in it. A private school at Inch of Arnhall, supported by the fees of about 30 scholars, paying from 3s. to 4s. per quarter, school-

room rent free,—reading, writing, arithmetic, and English grammar taught.—A private school at Oldmains of Fasque, supported by the fees of about 30 scholars, paying from 2s. 6d. to 4s. per quarter, school-room rent free,—the same branches as in the last taught.—A female school in the village, in which reading and needle-work are taught, supported by a small salary paid by two of the heritors, viz. Sir John Stuart Forbes, Bart. and Mr Gladstone during their pleasure, and, by the fees of about 26 scholars, paying from 3s. to 5s. per quarter. Besides these, about 40 children are instructed daily in smaller places of elementary tuition throughout the parish. A Sunday school is taught in the church throughout the year, and is attended by upwards of 80 children, who have received prizes from one of the heritors,* for several years, for proficiency, regular attendance, and good conduct. Another Sunday's school is taught on the Arnhall estate, at which from 20 to 30 scholars attend. By one or other of these means, instruction is provided for all the rising generation, within a convenient distance from their respective places of abode. There are few, if any, between six and fifteen years of age who cannot either read or write; and there are, it is thought, as few above that age who cannot do both. The people, in general, seem alive to the benefits of education, and make great efforts to keep their children as long as possible at school. There can be no doubt that, to some extent or other, their morals and conduct have improved with the increased facilities afforded them for education.

Libraries.—There are two libraries in the village. One of them belongs to the Fettercairn Club; and the circulation of its books is confined to the members of the Club and their families. It contains above 500 volumes on miscellaneous subjects. The other is a parish library, under the management of the minister and elders. It is supported by donations of books and cash, and by occasional collections in the church. It contains nearly 400 volumes on various subjects, but chiefly on religion. The books are given out gratis for perusal; and there generally are from 80 to 120 readers.

Savings' Bank.—A savings' bank was established in 1831. It has succeeded well. Amount yearly invested, L. 126; withdrawn, L. 79.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of regular paupers is about 40; their average rate per month, 4s.; occasional paupers about 15; their average rate per annum, about L. 1.

* Sir John Stuart Forbes, Bart.

The average annual collections for their support amount to about L. 70. From mortcloth dues, occasional donations, interest of so much of the above enumerated benefactions as still remain available, and other incidental means, arise about L. 50 more—making, in all, for behoof of the poor, (with clerks' and officers' fees, and casual expenses), L. 120 per annum.

Many are very reluctant, and others very anxious, to be put upon the poor's roll. The majority, however, struggle long with poverty, before they can bring themselves to submit to accept of public charity.

Inns.—There are 3 inns in the parish, 2 of which are in the village.

Fuel.—In the higher situations, the fuel is principally peat and turf, the expense and trouble of procuring which are considerable. In the lower situations, it is partly peat, and partly wood, but chiefly English coals, brought from Montrose. These, at the ship, cost from 1s. 1d. to 1s. 3d. per barrel of 11 stones 9 pounds imperial; and the expense of carriage to the village, when charged, is from 6d. to 7d. more.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

From the foregoing statement, it must be evident that the improvements in this parish, either begun or completed, since the last Statistical Account was published, have been of great extent. Much waste ground has been reclaimed, and converted into productive arable land. Extensive plantations of wood have been formed, which are now, generally, in a thriving state, and adding to the shelter of the fields, the beauty of the landscape, the resources of the proprietors, and the benefit of the neighbourhood. Better accommodations in the dwelling houses, farm-steadings, and enclosures, have been provided. By means of extensive and judicious draining, the salubrity of the atmosphere has been improved, the state of disease has been altered, and the health of the people promoted. By the introduction of thrashing-mills, and other useful inventions, agricultural labour has been greatly diminished. By the formation of so many commutation roads, internal communication and access to markets have been very much facilitated. Enlarged means of intellectual, moral, and religious improvement have been called into operation; and, it is to be hoped, the habits, manners, and enjoyments of the people have, in some measure, kept pace with the increase of these advantages.

It has been suggested that these advantages might yet farther be increased by some amelioration of the cottage system. As the Highland or Agricultural Society of Scotland have taken up the consideration of this subject, it may be expected that the result of their patriotic measures will be, an addition to the comfort of a most useful and deserving class of the community.

It has also been suggested, with a view to identify and promote more effectually the interests and sympathies of landlord and tenant, that, in the letting of land, it might be an improvement, to make the amount of rent depend on the fiars prices of the county, either in whole or in part. This would certainly be as equitable a plan as the fluctuations in the value of farm produce could admit of, with this condition, that it might be expedient, in dear years, to have a maximum, to protect the tenant, and in cheap years, a minimum, to give a corresponding protection to the landlord.

April 1837.