

PARISH OF NIGG.

PRESBYTERY OF ABERDEEN, SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

THE REV. ALEXANDER THOM, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE word Nigg in Gaelic signifies a *nook* or *peninsula*.

The chain of mountains which nearly divides Scotland, called the Grampians, terminate on the east, at the German Ocean, in this parish. The parish forms also the north-east point of the county of Kincardine. In shape, it is a peninsula.

Extent, Boundaries, &c.—Its greatest length is about 5 miles, its breadth about 3, its extent about 15 square miles. On the north-east, the land turning into a ness or headland, runs out into the sea, and is called the Girdleness. On the north-west, it is washed by the River Dee, and the tide in Aberdeen harbour; and on the south-west, it is bounded by the parish of Banchory Devenick; on the east it presents to the sea a bold face of rock, from 60 to 80 feet high, covered with grass and various herbs and flowers: then there is a rising bank, arable from the top of the rock to some distance, increasing towards the southern extre-

mity,—and above, towards the west, an ascending heathy ridge of hill, rising to about 200 feet above the sea, through the whole breadth of the parish, and crowned with two cairns, which are seen several leagues off at sea, and serve to direct those who sail near the coast. During the late war, a flag-staff was erected upon the highest one, to give notice of the approach of enemies' ships. The north side of the parish consists of two haughs on the river and the side of the hill ending in the Girdleness, and of a valley and hill beneath the heathy ridge above described.

A part of the soil is clayey, but the far greater part is black and loamy, of various depths, and on different bottoms. The haughs, the valley, and sides, as well as tops of the two hills to the north, and the bank to the south, are in a state of cultivation, particularly the whole of Torry Hill, (so called from its vicinity to the village of Torry,) the top of which, a few years ago, was in a state of nature, encumbered with stones and covered with furze. A broad belt of above a mile, more or less, throughout the middle and the whole length of the parish, with the exception of some acres (perhaps one hundred) lately cultivated, and others in progress of trenching, is unarable, wild, and uninhabited, consisting of moss and heath, intermixed with a prodigious number of surface and sunk stones.

Coast, &c.—A mile from the south-west boundary of the parish, there is a natural harbour, formed with very little artificial help,—the *Cove*, fit for boats, which accommodates the fishermen of a village adjoining, and is often a place of refuge to boats when overtaken with a north-easterly storm. In the neighbourhood of this place, there is a cave entering from the sea, several yards inland, and terminating in a beach, and covered with solid rock, from which, probably, the village has received its name. In the rocks along the coast, there are several of these caverns or excavations, arched in a very wonderful manner, and running a great way under ground. There are nine boats in the cove, with six men to each.

About three-quarters of a mile farther northward, is *Burnbank Harbour*, less safe,—where there has been a white-fishing settlement for a considerable period. The original settlers throve well, but now it seems to be falling off, probably owing to the less favourable terms of their leases. There are two boats in Burnbank; there were formerly three.

About half a mile still further north, is *Altens Harbour*, formerly a considerable fishing settlement, now wholly deserted by fishermen.

A few of the houses are occupied by crofters and as offices to farmers. The unfitness of the harbour, and the want of suitable turf and moss to cure haddocks, &c. seem to have been the cause of the desertion of this settlement.

Another natural inlet or harbour, about a mile south of the Aberdeen harbour, called Cow-cash, on the Balnagask property, has been frequently pointed out to the proprietor, by fishermen, as a suitable situation for a fishing village. But the proprietor has not come as yet to any determination on the matter.

There is a free open sea along this coast. The water rises at spring tides thirteen feet, and the height of the stream is, at forty-three minutes past noon, at full and change. The tide of flood runs south-west and by south; that of ebb, north-east, half north, and at the rate of three knots, and at spring-tides four knots in the hour.

From six to eight fathoms at the foot of the rock, the bottom deepens, shelving off shore, with sandy, rocky, and various ground, and sometimes rising till it sinks to ninety fathoms, at the distance of ten or eleven leagues from land; then it ascends on the fishing bank, called the Long Forties, to 33, 34, and 35 fathoms, a few leagues over, until it falls into the depth of the North Sea.

The face of the country is bare, being destitute of wood. A great part of the hill of Tullos, part of the Grampians, was planted a good many years ago, with trees of different kinds, by the late Mr David Morice on the north side of the hill, which is sheltered from the sea. The plantation has thriven well, but on the top and side of the hill, which is exposed to the sea, it has failed.

Bays.—In former ages, trees seem to have grown to the edge of the sea, in the mouth of the harbour, along the river Dee, and in the valley adjoining to the bay of Nigg. This bay is semicircular, about a quarter of a mile in diameter. The sea must have flown a considerable way up the low grounds in this bay, at an early period. But from the great quantity of small stones, perhaps brought down the river Dee, about a quarter of a mile north, and thrown back on the land in this bay, with other alluvial matter, it does not flow nearly so far as it had done formerly. It is now kept off by large hirsts of small smoothed pebbles, thrown up at different periods. Some have accounted for these accumulations of small stones, by supposing (which is not improbable) that the Dee, at one time, run down the vale of Nigg. Perhaps the burn that runs down the valley, running through soft ground, at its meeting with the ocean,

might have been the cause of the formation of the bay of Nigg, the earthy matter being constantly washed away, and the stones accumulating from time to time, and forming the hirsts of pebbles. There seem to be three distinct collections of these small stones, formed at different periods. The first or farthest inland of these (about one hundred and fifty yards from the sea) is now covered with vegetable mould, and is cultivated for crops of various kinds. It rises from twelve to fifteen feet above the present level of the sea. Towards the south side of it, an excavation was made in the year 1804, near a burn running through the low ground in the valley above, to the sea, and several feet deeper than the bottom of the burn,—for the purpose of forming a drain to carry off the water collected in the low ground, by a passage to the sea through the beach. In making this excavation, the workmen cut through the timbers of a vessel of considerable size. The depth at which they cut was about nine or ten feet from the surface, and three or four feet beneath the bed of the burn. The distance of the spot where the vessel lay is about an hundred yards from high water-mark. At what period this ship was thrown in, and how so great a quantity of matter requisite to fill up the space above it was accumulated, whether gradually or at once, it is impossible to say.

There is another small bay north of the Bay of Nigg, and close by the Girdleness Light-house, called *Grey Hope*, memorable for the loss of the Greenland ship, the *Oscar*, which happened there in the year 1813, with fifty-five persons on board.

Climate.—The air is healthy: along the coast, it is fresh, and from the influence of the sea is rather chilly. Yet the frost is less intense,—snow continues for a shorter time, and the crop ripens sooner, than in places more inland. The east and north-east winds prevail a good deal. And sometimes, particularly in May, mists come off the sea, and also in autumn, destructive to the crop on the coast. From the moderate quantity of rain which falls upon this east coast, and from the light loamy sandy soil absorbing it soon, and from frequent breezes, the ground soon dries, and allows grain to be sown early, and the crop soon ripens in general.

Springs.—There are several chalybeate springs about the centre of the parish, though not used medicinally. Springs of good water abound everywhere throughout the parish.

There is one lake in the parish, the Loch of Loirston, on the south-west boundary, oblong in form, covering about twenty-seven

acres, and supplying water to a meal-mill, a bone-mill, and saw-mill. In some of the old leases, the liberty of a road is given to the tenants in the lower part of the parish, to drive their cattle to this loch for watering,—a circumstance which must have been occasioned by an uncommon drought at that time in the country.

Rivers.—The River Dee, which forms the harbour of Aberdeen, after a course of eighty miles north-east, falls here into the sea. On this side of the river and harbour is Torry Pier, where ships lie to occasionally. It was much more frequented by shipping formerly than now. Sometime ago, a Greenland Company had a boiling establishment there. The river is famous for salmon, although there are not now so many caught in it as formerly, owing to the number of stake and bag-nets at the mouth of the river, and along the coast north and south, and probably also to the annoyance given by the harbour improvements, and the constant plying of steam-boats, and to the noxious refuse of so many manufactories that run into the river. One of the salmon-fishing stations on the Dee, the Mid Chingle, formerly productive, has been given up, as not covering the expense.

Geology.—The whole parish abounds with rocks of granite, of a very hard consistence, of various colours, blue and purple, &c. In some places, there are large distinct veins of quartz running through the rock. In the low grounds near the bay of Nigg, various alluvial deposits are found, such as white clay, sand, gravel, and rolled smooth stones; and above these, in some places has been formed peat moss to the depth of five or six feet. Imbedded therein have been found the remains of trees, viz. fir, alder, and oak, lying buried at the depth of four or five feet. On the top of the high hill, part of the Grampians, there are several little mounds composed of rounded pebbles, gravel, and sand, in pretty regular strata, such as still appear on the beach below.

Fishes in the River.—Salmon, during October and November, go up the rivers to deposit their spawn. Some of the earlier spawners return to the sea generally about the end of December, or in January. The lobster and crab are found here in their seasons. The latter is used by the fishers along the coast as bait, as is also the limpet, a small shell-fish gathered from the rocks, usually by the younger branches of the family.

Botany.—The artichoke is a plant, to the growth of which the climate and soil are particularly favourable.

Marine Plants.—The sea-weed bladder-fucus grows on the

rocks round the ness and bay of Nigg; and every three years, is fit for being cut, dried, and burned for kelp. But this manufacture, which gave employment to a great many young fisherwomen in this parish, under the direction of an overseer, has been given up for some years past.

Several fisherwomen, in the spring and summer, go to the rocks at low tide and gather dulse (*Fucus palmatus*), bladderlock (*Fucus esculentus*), and pepper dulse (*Fucus pinnatifidus*), which many in this country are fond of, and which they sell in Aberdeen.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

The Bay of Nigg was formerly called San Fittick's (Sanctus Fitticus,) and the church St Fittick's Church. He was perhaps some reputed saint or hermit, who had fixed his solitary retreat in a retired place, in the neighbourhood of the bay, the probable site of which is still to be traced.

The whole of this parish, before the Reformation, belonged to the abbacy of Arbroath. After the Reformation, one-half of it came to a predecessor of Mr Menzies of Pitfoddels, the present possessor, the town of Aberdeen holding the other half. By the arbitration of two gentlemen, the parish was divided into two parts in the year 1786, the town of Aberdeen obtaining the half along the lower part of the harbour, and round the coast, and Mr Menzies the other part, which went up the river and into the interior. Mr Menzies divided his grounds into small farms, which he let in lease for nineteen years and a lifetime, after the expiry of the nineteen years. Three or four of the liferenters still survive. The Town-Council of Aberdeen, soon after, feued out their share into nine moderate lots, at from L. 30 to L. 90 a year each. A spur has thus been given to industry and improvement, by which the lands in this parish have been rendered very valuable. Some of the lots since that period have had different proprietors.

Land-owners.—The chief landholders at present are, John Menzies, Esq., Pitfoddels; Alexander Davidson, Esq. of Balnagask and North and South Kirkhill; John Morice, Esq. of Tullos and Middleton; Alexander Crombie, Esq. of North Loirston; James Ferguson, Esq. of Altens; Alexander Muir, Esq. of South Loirston, and the treasurer and master of mortifications of Aberdeen; none of whom are resident.

Parochial Registers.—The oldest register belonging to this parish is a quarto register of baptisms, kept in tolerable order, the earliest entry of which is dated August 10, 1675. There are also

three folio volumes in good order, of the register of doctrine and discipline, the first entry of which is dated December 6, 1757.

Antiquities.—Abbots Walls are the ruins of a house that belonged to the Abbot of Arbroath, on the haugh opposite to Aberdeen, where it is said he spent some months in the summer.

Several tumuli are found on the hills. In such of them as have been opened, nothing very remarkable has been found.

Modern Buildings.—A few years ago, a handsome new church was built in a central situation, with a square tower for a bell and clock. It is built of granite, on an eminence, and seen at a great distance. It has seats for 900 persons, more than sufficient for the present population of the parish. It cost L. 1800.

Girdleness Light-House.—A light-house was founded in the year 1831, and finished in 1833, on the Girdleness, near the mouth of the harbour, by order of the Commissioners of Northern Light-houses, and under the direction of Robert Stevenson, Esq. their engineer. The building consists of a circular tower, with oil and fuel stores in the lower part of it. There are two dwelling-houses, one storey each, for the accommodation of the light-keepers. The basement course of the tower is laid at fifty feet above the medium high water level; and from that level the tower rises to the height of 116 feet, which, together with the high lantern of 15 feet, makes the extreme height 131 feet above the basement course; and the extreme diameter at the basement is 23 feet 5 inches. In the tower, there are two lanterns or lights 70 feet apart. The first or lower lantern, which is a 28 sided polygon, is placed at 46 feet 6 inches above the basement course, or 96 feet 6 inches above the sea. The wall of the tower is here reduced in thickness to 3 feet 4 inches, or 17 feet 5 inches of external diameter, to make room for the lantern sill, and a balcony, forming together a breadth of 5 feet 5 inches. The balcony is supported by a strong corbal cornice. The lantern is formed of sashes surmounted by a cornice, all of cast iron, and covered with a roof of cooper. The lantern is glazed towards the sea, with plates of glass 28 inches square, and one-fourth of an inch in thickness, and towards the land with plates of cast iron, ornamented with characteristic figures. The higher lantern is placed upon the top of a parapet wall of polished sandstone, which rises above the higher corbal cornice 5 feet 5 inches, forming a balcony of 3 feet breadth on the top of the corbals, and on the exterior of the light-room parapet wall. This lantern is a 16-sided polygon, glazed (as already described for the lower lan-

tern) with plates of glass towards the sea, of 27 inches square, in three tiers, and towards the land with plates of cast iron. The whole is covered with a dome of copper. This light is 170 feet above the medium level of high water.

The dwelling-houses are very compact and comfortable. The one house contains a room and kitchen for the principal keeper, and a parlour and bed-room for the general inspector. The other house contains a room and kitchen for the assistant keeper, a bed-room for artificers, and a work-shop. The tower, the oil, and fuel stores are separated from the dwelling-houses by an open court, 70 feet in length, and 40 feet in breadth, neatly laid with granite pavement. The access to the lantern is by a stone stair, built upon a wall of brick 6 inches in thickness, and separated from the stone wall by a void of 3 inches in width through its whole extent. The steps amount to 189, the rise of each being 7 inches. There are about ten acres of land for a garden and park ground, intended as a cow's grass for each light-keeper. The whole is enclosed by a stone wall.

This light-house was first lighted on Tuesday the 15th October 1833.*

III.—POPULATION.

In 1755, the population of this parish amounted to 1289, and perhaps it continued nearly the same for some years after.

About seventy or eighty years ago, the granite quarries in this parish, which are abundant and of an excellent quality, particularly for pavement, were opened, and gave employment to about 600 quarriers. Their subsequent success has been various,—the stones being squared, dressed, and carried to the harbour of Aberdeen, and thence shipped to London to pave the streets of the metropolis. But of late, the demand has very much diminished, and now

* For some weeks before, the following notice was given in Aberdeen newspapers, viz. "The Girdleness Light-House is placed on the headland of that name, in the county of Kincardine. It is situated in Latitude 57° 08' north, and in Longitude 2° 3' west, and immediately off it lies the sunken rock called the Girdle. This light-house bears from the north pier of Aberdeen, S. by W. distant 1220 yards:—from Buchanness Light-house S. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. distant twenty-five miles, and from the Bell Rock Light-house N. E. $\frac{1}{4}$ N. distant forty-three miles. The two lanterns at this station are open or glazed from N. N. E. to W. S. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. and intermediate points easterly and southerly. The bearings are taken by compass, and the variation is 26° 45' W.

"Girdleness will be known to mariners as a double light, exhibiting from the same tower two fixed lights, like stars of the first magnitude, the one over the other. But to a distant observer the lights will appear as one, having an elongated form. These lights will be from oil, with reflectors placed in lanterns elevated respectively 115 and 185 feet above the medium level of the sea, and will be seen at the distance of 13 and 16 miles, and at intermediate distances according to the state of the weather."—By order of the Commissioners of the Northern Light Houses, &c.

very few men are employed in them; in consequence of which, the population has decreased. The quarriers have left the parish, and gone to other places in quest of employment.

The driving of these stones to Aberdeen, kept up the population in part, and was of great benefit to the tenants, by employing their carts and horses and servants, and enabling them to pay high rents.

A considerable number of the tenants keep a good many milk cows, and send their milk, morning and evening, for sale to Aberdeen, by which means they are enabled to pay high rents still for their grounds, and, with much toil and drudgery, procure a living for themselves and families. This also, in part, contributes to keep up the population.

The number of the population residing in the village of Torry is,	-	370
Cove,	-	393
Burnbank,	-	60
Charlestown,	-	198
In the country,	-	663

Total, 1684

Average number of births for 7 years previous to January 1834,	50
marrriages,	14
Burials of persons belonging to the parish 18; strangers 26	624
The average number of persons under 15 years of age,	422
betwixt 15 and 30,	451
30 and 50,	187
50 and 70,	

There are two persons betwixt 90 and 100.

There are no nobility, nor persons of independent fortune residing in the parish. There may be, perhaps, about 20 unmarried men, bachelors and widowers, residing in the parish, upwards of fifty years of age; and double that number of unmarried women, upwards of 45.

The whitefishers in the fishing villages marry early in life, and in general have numerous families.

The average number of children in each family is nearly 3.

There are 3 fatuous persons in the parish, 4 blind, 2 deaf.

The habits of the people are in general cleanly; and the style and manner of their dress are very different from what they were fifty or sixty years ago.

In some farms, where a number of servants are required, a *bothey* is used.

Farm men-servants seldom remain long in one place; some of them change almost every half-year. Feeing markets are favourable to this change; and now places are easily obtained without any recommendation from the former master. Changes are by no

means so frequent among female servants, who, when of good character, are here highly valued for their services in the work of the dairy.

The people in general enjoy a tolerable degree of comfort, and the advantages of society, and appear contented with their situation. They are, on the whole, intelligent, decent, sober, industrious, and well-behaved.

Poaching in game, particularly in partridges and hares, prevails very much in this parish : and smuggling, which prevailed in former times to a great degree, has now been discontinued, through the vigilance of the Preventive Service, who are, in general, sober, quiet, and well-behaved, and set a good example to the parishioners.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—There are 1885 acres, imperial measure, in the parish, arable and in cultivation, and 1652 moss and moor, waste and uncultivated. A great part of the hills, particularly where granite quarries abound and have been opened, it would be impossible ever to improve into cultivated land ; but the greater part of the presently unimproved ground may, at considerable expense of labour and money, be turned to good account.

About thirty years ago, Mr Menzies portioned out a waste hill on his property, in different parts of five or six acres to different tenants, on two nineteen years leases. The first nineteen years, they were to pay a small rent, which was to rise during the other nineteen, a small sum (L. 10) being allowed them, to enable them to build a house and offices. The greater part of the hill, which was formerly waste, and worth little or nothing, is now in cultivation, and a village called Charlestown, containing nearly 200 inhabitants, is formed on the property. The people in general are poor, and not able to lay out much in improving their ground, otherwise it might be made more productive than it is. A considerable number of small farms of different sizes have been lately let on similar terms, and are now in progress of improvement. More than a hundred acres, which, a few years ago, were worth nothing, are now in cultivation, and bearing good crops.

Mr Lewis Crombie, on a farm of North Loirston, belonging to Dr Alexander Crombie, has improved, by trenching, draining, enclosing, and manuring, at a very great expense, thirty acres of the most barren untowardly ground that can well be supposed, and brought it to produce rich and abundant crops of grain, turnips, potatoes, and carrots, &c.

Mr James Ferguson, proprietor of Altens, (which property he purchased only two years ago,) has improved sixty acres of waste lands, and built new dwelling-houses, covered with slate, and new steadings to his tenants.

Similar improvements have also of late years been made on South Loirston.

Planting.—There are about fifty or sixty acres of planting in the parish. The trees planted are chiefly Scotch firs, pines, larch, oak, beech, elms, planes, alders, &c. In favourable situations, where they are sheltered from the sea, they thrive tolerably well: in exposed situations, they fail.

Rent.—The average rent of arable land per acre in the parish is about L. 4 or L. 4, 10s. per acre,—as on the lands of Tullos and Middleton, and in other places in the parish, which are cultivated by crofters, possessing from five to twelve acres each, the rent of which they principally pay by selling milk; many of whom also have other means of livelihood, such as quarrying, and driving stones to Aberdeen. Some, in the upper part of the parish, cast and drive peats from the mosses to Aberdeen for sale.

Some of the subtenants are poor, and unable to do much in improving their small patches of ground. But the other farmers in the parish, particularly on the river side, and on the sea-coast, are substantial, and some of them opulent, managing their farms in the most improved style. They follow a five rotation course of cropping.

Mr Menzies's principal farm in this parish, (Torry farm,) which is mostly enclosed with substantial stone dikes, and in a high state of cultivation, is managed by an overseer; as are also the lands of Balnagask and North Kirkhill, in the proprietor's own possession. Some of these lands are let annually in crop for potatoes, at the rate of from L. 10 to L. 14 per acre. And some of them are let, on a short lease, at the rate of L. 5, 5s. per acre.

From the system pursued on these farms, little attention is paid to the rearing and improvement of cattle. The horses employed in agriculture by the substantial farmers are of the best kind. Fifty or sixty years ago, sheep were in great abundance in this parish; but the new mode of agriculture has reduced their number. As the climate is mild, and snow seldom continues long on the ground, some shepherds come every winter from Strathdon and Perthshire, with flocks of sheep, which feed on the hills during winter, and return home in the beginning of the lambing season.

Manure.—A manure commonly used by farmers in the neighbourhood of the Bay of Nigg, is sea-ware. It consists of green slake washed down the river, and of various marine plants, torn from the rocks by storms. It is brought to land in the Bay of Nigg, at the mouth of the river, and at the Bay of Grey-Hope, after a storm. The wind which blows from the land, and which would carry out to sea a substance floating on the surface, brings into the shore this substance swimming at the bottom, in a contrary direction. Another manure used is street dung, which is purchased at Aberdeen, from 3s. to 5s. a load, according to the quality.

Substantial and convenient houses of stone and lime, and covered with slate, are now built for the tenants, with excellent steadings of the same materials. Several of these were built on the lands of south and north Loirston some years ago. And Mr Ferguson is at present building houses of that description on his lands of Altens, and enclosing his fields with substantial stone dikes.

Recent Improvements.—The principal improvements which have recently been made in this parish are the following: Between thirty and forty years ago, an Act of Parliament was procured for a turnpike road to the south, with a gradual ascent from the bridge of Dee, on the south-west part of this parish. And about five years ago, another turnpike road through the middle of the parish, for about three miles from north to south, was made. At the north extremity of it, a suspension bridge, which connects it with Aberdeen, was erected. The bridge and the road were made at the expense of the heritors, and cost about L. 10,000 Sterling. A pontage is collected to pay, in part, the interest of that sum. There are several other cross roads in the parish, one particularly, which was made many years ago, from the old Bridge of Dee to the Bay of Nigg, and which is kept in repair from the commutation money. And last year, Mr Ferguson of Altens made, at his own expense, a new road for the benefit of his tenants, extending from the middle turnpike to the sea-coast, above a mile.

Quarries.—There is only one kind of quarries in the parish, viz. stone quarries. The stone of the mountains and sea-coast of this parish is a very hard granite. The stones are principally wrought for the London market for pavement, called causeway-stones. They are formed into oblong squares of a wedge-like form, 6 to 12 inches long, 6 broad, and 9 deep. They are much better

shaped and dressed than formerly. There are two separate departments in the business,—that of the quarrier, who blocks out the materials, and that of the causeway-man, who dresses them. The latter, if a good hand, will make nearly double the wages of the former. When the quarries were first opened about seventy years ago, there were 600 or 700 men employed in them; of late, the demand from London has in a great measure ceased, and most of the hands have left the parish, and gone to other places in quest of employment.

Fisheries.—There are two kinds of fisheries carried on in the parish, viz. salmon and white-fishing. Salmon-fishing is carried on in the river Dee, at the mouth of the river, in the Bay of Nigg, and along the coast. On the river, the salmon-fishing is still carried on, as in former times, by coble-nets; but at the mouth of the river, on the sea, and in the Bay of Nigg, and along the coast, by bag-nets. This is a modern invention, and is universally used now in fishing for salmon on the sea-coast. Stake-nets and fly-nets are used on the sea-beach, and bag-nets in the inlets on the sea-coast. This mode of fishing has been carried on, only for a few years, in the Bay of Nigg. About fourteen years ago, a few partners got a lease of the salmon-fishing in the Bay of Nigg from the magistrates of Aberdeen, for twelve years, at the rent of L. 10 a-year for the first seven, and L. 20 a-year for the remaining five years of the lease. When the lease expired, the liberty of fishing in the Bay of Nigg was again advertised to be let by public roup, and carried by the same partners at the astonishing yearly rent of L. 660; fourteen years before, this fishing was not worth a farthing. These partners have carried it on for two or three years on the new lease; not as formerly, by drawing their nets to land, as in coble-fishing, but by bag-nets, a mode which requires fewer hands, but more expensive materials. The same mode of fishing is now carried on at the Cove, at Altens, and other places in the parish, and considerable quantities of salmon are caught in these places, as well as in the Bay of Nigg.

The salmon-fishings are very much encouraged by the quick conveyance of the fish in ice to the London market, by steam-boats.

Some years ago, these fishings were much annoyed by seals in the Bay of Nigg. At last, one of the partners contrived a net for the purpose of catching seals, which has been found to answer. The plan of the *seal-net* is very simple. It nearly resembles the

net used in killing salmon, but is much less. A salmon, as a bait, is made fast in the bag of the net, and to the fish is fastened a cork, which floats on the surface. As soon as the seal catches hold of the fish, the cork instantly goes under water, which being observed from the shore, the door of the net is immediately closed by pulling a rope. The seal then becomes an easy prey, being confined in the net.

The salmon-fishermen generally engage for a certain rate of wages per week, and according to the quantity of fish caught. Those who reside in this parish have, for the most part, a small piece of ground, which they cultivate at leisure hours; others employ themselves in different kinds of labour.

White-fishing.—There are three fishing villages in this parish, viz. Torry, Cove, and Burnbank. The villages of Torry and Cove are inhabited by persons of different trades and occupations, as well as by fishermen. Burnbank is inhabited exclusively by the latter. In Torry, there are now fewer boats and fishermen than in former times: but there are still three boats, with six men to each. In the Cove, there were, in former times, only five boats; now there are nine, with six men to each. In Burnbank there are three boats, with six men to each.

The employment of the fishermen varies according to the season of the year. In January and May, haddocks are in season, and are taken not far from land. In this fishing there is often much annoyance from dog-fish, which destroy the lines, and even eat off the haddocks from the hooks. Fishing with the great line takes place in March and April. Cod, ling, turbot, &c. are caught at the distance of several leagues from land.

There is great difficulty in procuring bait for the white-fishing; and mussels are brought for the purpose from Montrose and other places, at considerable expense: but now the mussel-beds or scalps, that have been formed in the spill water channel of the river Dee, will supply the neighbourhood with abundance of good bait, at a moderate rate.

Saith fishing with rod and fly-hook forms an amusement in the summer to many, and considerable quantities of this small fish are taken, in this way, from the rocks at the sea-side and the mouth of the river.

The fishermen in Torry carry haddocks and other fish directly to the Aberdeen market. But the fishermen of Cove and Burnbank, after gutting, cleaning, splitting, salting, and then smoking

them with turf in a particular way, sell them in Aberdeen and other places as Finnan haddocks; and they are equally good and as well cured as those of Finnan, and relished by many as a great delicacy.

Herring Fishing.—In the middle of July, the herring fishery commences on the north coast. From Torry three boats proceed for the purpose; from Cove, nine; and from Burnbanks, three. The boats are from ten to fourteen tons burden, and fitted up with masts, sails, cordage, and nets, at considerable expense. They carry each five or six men, partners in the adventure. Each boat is under an engagement to some merchant, to furnish a certain number of crates or barrels of herring, perhaps 250. Last year, they were very unsuccessful. Indeed, the herring fishing, upon the whole, has been an unprofitable concern for the fishermen. They are generally absent at the North-Sea-fishing, for six weeks or two months.

Shell-Fish.—Lobster and crab are fished at Cove and Burnbanks: and the method of catching them is by a cylindrical basket or creel, with a small hole in it for entrance, so constructed that the fish enters in and cannot get out again. In this, they place a bait and sink it in the sea, at a little distance from the rocks.

Produce.—The average gross amount of raw produce is as follows, viz:

1. Produce of grain, oats, and barley,	L. 4022	0	0
2. Turnips,	1682	0	0
3. Potatoes,	560	0	0
4. First year's grass,	1780	0	0
5. Pasture grass,	712	0	0
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	L. 8756	0	0

About two-thirds of the turnip crop raised in the parish is consumed at home, for the purpose of procuring dairy produce, which meets with a tolerable demand in Aberdeen. The other third is carried to the same place, and sold to cowfeeders at about a third more price, as a compensation for the carriage.

Manufactures.—Some years ago kelp was manufactured in the bay of Nigg, and gave employment to a good many young women, but for many years past it has been discontinued, there being no demand for it. There was also, several years ago, a salt manufactory in the bay of Nigg, but it also has been given up. Lint was formerly sown and manufactured by private families in the parish; now there is no manufacture of the kind.

KINCARDINE.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Market-Town, &c.—The nearest market-town is Aberdeen. There are two bridges over the river Dee, in this parish, viz. the old Bridge of Dee, of seven arches, built by Bishop Dunbar, three hundred years ago, and a suspension-bridge about a mile below, nearer Aberdeen, called Wellington Bridge, erected in 1829 at the sole expense of the heritors.

Ecclesiastical State.—The old church (which was situated in the north-east extremity of the parish) having fallen into decay, a new one was erected by the heritors in a central situation, in the year 1829, the distance of which from any part of the parish is not more than two miles and a half. It is a handsome church, with a square tower for a bell and clock, built on an eminence, and seen at a great distance. It cost L. 1800. The Crown is patron. It affords accommodation for 900 sitters,—a larger number than usually resorts to it. It was built with a view to the increased population of the parish, which it was supposed would take place in consequence of the suspension-bridge across the Dee; but that increase of population has not yet been so great as was expected.

The manse was built in 1759. It has frequently been repaired and enlarged. It is two miles from the new church.

The extent of the present glebe is about ten acres of ground, as good as any in the parish, and of the value of L. 5 per acre. Some acres of the glebe being marshy, and often covered with water, were drained and very much improved, at considerable expense, by my predecessor, Dr Cruden, who lived for forty years after, to enjoy the profit of his improvements, and left the glebe in a high state of cultivation to his successor. The stipend being one of the small livings of the church, is made up to L. 150 by the augmentation of L. 67, 16s. 6d. yearly from the Exchequer.

There are no chapels of ease, nor any Dissenting meeting-houses in this parish, and very few Dissenters of any kind. Divine service at the Established Church is generally well attended. The average number of communicants is 603.

There are not more than two or three Dissenting families in the parish.

Education.—There are four schools in the parish.—1. Parochial school. The schoolmaster has the medium salary, a pretty good house, and small garden. Amount of school fees about L. 20; emolument from session clerk's fees and perquisites, L. 6.—2. School at Cove. The schoolmaster has a small house and gar-

den, with a small salary arising from the interest of money bequeathed by Dr Cruden and others, amounting to about L. 6 per annum, besides school-fees, amounting to about L. 15 per annum.

—3. School at Charlestown. The schoolmaster has a small house and garden, with school-fees amounting to about L. 12. For two years past, he has received each year L. 5, a donation from the Trustees of the late Mr Donaldson; but it is uncertain whether or not this will be continued.—4. There is another school in Torry. The schoolmaster has no free school-house, and no salary. He depends for his living upon the small school-fees.

A few scholars are taught to read, by women, without any salary; one in Torry, and another in Cove.

There are very few persons betwixt six and fifteen years of age, or above it, that cannot read or write. The people in general are alive to the benefits of education; but among the white-fishermen and others, there are some so poor as to be unable, however willing, to give their children the necessary education. The session pay for some poor scholars, from the interest of small sums bequeathed for that purpose, and recommend others to be taught *gratis*, which is readily done by all the teachers.

There is no part of the parish so distant from school as to prevent attendance of the children. Those in the Bridge of Dee and Legart district have to go more than two miles to any school in the parish, and a school there would be of very great service.

Friendly Societies.—The Friendly Societies in Torry and the Cove, began in the year 1772, it was found necessary, some years ago, with the consent of all parties concerned, to dissolve. There are still two deposit Societies at the Cove.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of persons receiving parochial aid is 57: the average allowance per annum a little more than L.1, 10s. Average amount of collections at the church for the poor, L.53, 19s.; donations, penalties, mortcloths, &c. L.33, 0s. 5d.; interest of money left, L.29, 13s. 5d. The average expenses are L.11, 12s. viz., for the session-clerk's fee, the precentor's and officer's salary, &c.

Mr James Cakder, late merchant in Aberdeen, gave L.500 to the poor of the parish. Some of the heritors give an annual donation for the same purpose; and several sums have been bequeathed by others.

Inns and Public-Houses.—There are about ten or twelve public-houses in the parish, one-half of which would be sufficient.

Fuel.—Peats and turf are used a good deal in country houses, and by the white-fishermen in Cove and Burnbanks for smoking and curing Finnan haddocks; the turf being procured from the mosses belonging to Mr Menzies and others, in the upper part of the parish, and in Nether Banchory. But many use coals, particularly in Torry and neighbourhood.

Revised 1838.