

PARISH OF DUNNOTTAR.*

PRESBYTERY OF FORDOUN, SYNOD OF ANGUS AND MEARNS.

THE REV. ALEXANDER IRVINE, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY

Name.—DUNNOTTAR, anciently spelt *Dunotyr*, is said to be a compound Gaelic word signifying *a place of strength on a peninsular promontory*. Such was the Castle of Dunnottar, within the walls of which formerly stood the parish church.

Extent, &c.—The area of the parish is an irregular three-sided figure. The eastern side runs from Stonehaven, southward along the coast, to and inclusive of the fishing village of Crawton, a distance of about five miles. From Crawton, the boundary runs about five miles north-westward, in a zig-zag line, abutting first on the parish of Kinneff, and then on the parish of Glenbervie, passing with the latter over Carmount moor, to the summit of Carmount hill, and thence descending into Carron Water, at the base of that hill, where Dunnottar and Glenbervie are met by the parish of Fetteresso. On the northern side, the Carron, winding a course of about five miles, from where it leaves the territory of Glenbervie, till it enters the sea at Stonehaven, forms, with some small exceptions, the boundary with Fetteresso. According to a map of Kincardineshire, by Mr Francis Garden, in 1744, the parish contains 8156 “English acres,” or nearly 13 square miles.

Topographical Appearances.—The seaward boundary of this parish is a continuous chain of rocks, consisting partly of detached masses and bluff headlands, but chiefly of a range of cliffs rising

* Drawn up by Peter Christian, Esq. Writer, Stonehaven.

perpendicularly, from 150 to between 200 and 300 feet out of the deep water washing their base. The height of the cliffs, the fantastic forms of the huge insulated masses, and the great disruption appearing throughout, have rendered the Dunnottar shore one of the most romantic on the east coast, as it is to the land-locked mariner, in easterly storms, one of the most hopeless. Its inhospitable aspect is here and there softened by receding coves or little bays, accessible from the land by grassy slopes, but fenced by sunken rocks against approach from the sea. In several places, large caverns are hollowed in the cliffs, most of them terminating under ground, but some passing from side to side of projecting rocks. Of these, a remarkable one, named *the Long Gallery*, runs under a high promontory, from one bay to another, a distance of more than 150 yards. This singular cavern, or marine arcade, formed in the solid rock, admits the passage of an ordinary sized boat, and the navigation of it is seldom omitted by boatmen conducting parties of pleasure. South of this, about a mile of uninterrupted cliff, the very highest of all the range, has the name of *Fowlsheugh*, well known as the hatching place of myriads of sea-fowl of various descriptions, whose nests occupy and whiten the whole face of that extensive portion of the rock. The privilege of taking eggs and birds from this place is let to a tenant, who, for the purpose of collecting them, suffers himself to be lowered by a rope from

“——— the dreadful summit of the cliff,
That beetles o'er his base into the sea.”

From this dangerous employment no accident is known to have ever happened, although a few years ago, the malicious act of cutting the rope nearly through, was perpetrated over night, but discovered in the morning just in time to save the climber from destruction. From the height of the coast, and the ascent of the land towards the interior, the area of the parish is, generally speaking, of considerable altitude. Of the cultivated land the more elevated part is towards the south and west. In that quarter, the ascent is gradual from the sea cliff to the moor of Carmount, a level heath of between 400 and 500 acres. At the further extremity of that waste, Carmount hill rises probably 800 feet above the level of the sea. Again, from the sea-coast, a short way north of Crawton village, the land, in its ascent, assumes the shape of successive ridges or knolls, which, sweeping north-westward for about three miles, fall in with the low hills of *Glaslaw* and *Toucks*; and

these continuing the sweep to the bank of the Carron, are followed on the other side of that stream by corresponding eminences in the parish of Fetteresso, which again sweep round to the *Garron*, the north headland of Stonehaven bay. In this manner, are embosomed, in the two parishes, eight or nine square miles of highly cultivated land, sloping towards the centre, and embellished with plantations, gentlemen's seats, and cheerful villas. On a plane nearly on a level with the sea, and intersected by the Carron and the Cowie, stands the town of old and new Stonehaven, where these streams unite and fall into the ocean. The scene thus imperfectly described comprehends the venerable ruins of Dunnottar Castle, the two parish churches with their manse, and other picturesque objects, and forms with the wide and deeply indented bay of Stonehaven, its bold headlands of *Downie* and *Garron*, and its margin of pebbly beach, along which the town ranges, an attractive and generally admired landscape. On the further side of the hill of Toucks, lies the district of *Auquhirie*, sloping towards the Carron, and forming with the *Brae of Fetteresso*, another valley well cultivated and diversified with neat farms and extensive plantations. The only other topographical appearance proper to be noticed, is a deep ravine cutting the high bank of the Carron, close by Stonehaven. This is the outlet of a hollow which divides the parish from south to north, corresponding with and forming the northern extremity of the valley of Strathmore.

Climate.—From proximity to the coast, Dunnottar, in common with similar localities, is exempt from very rigorous winters, but is subject in spring to fogs and gales from the sea, which frequently prove hurtful to vegetation. The following table, constructed from a register kept at Stonehaven, exhibits, for the last three years, the number of days in each month on which the wind blew from different quarters; the highest and lowest monthly temperature, indicated by a thermometer exposed to the north, and the greatest monthly height and depression of the barometer, at about 25 feet above the level of the sea.

Months.	1887.						1888.						1889.												
	Winds.*		Thermom.		Barometer.		Winds.		Thermom.		Barometer.		Winds.		Thermom.		Barometer.								
	Days				Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Days				Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.							
Southerly.	Easterly.	Northerly.	Westerly.	Southerly.							Easterly.	Northerly.	Westerly.	Southerly.					Easterly.	Northerly.	Westerly.				
January,	23	0	3	5	48	34	30.25	29.85	22	0	1	12	45	19	30.70	29.90	16	0	3	8	48	18	30.60	27.35†	
February,	24	0	2	2	49	38	29.92	28.30	18	5	5	12	29	9	30.70	28.08	25	0	2	1	48	22	30.25	28.78	
March,	15	0	10	6	47	17	30.34	29.25	21	8	5	12	55	28	30.67	28.56	17	6	3	3	46	24	30.40	29.11	
April,	12	4	9	5	53	27	30.80	29.25	11	1	14	4	54	27	30.35	29.25	20	2	5	3	61	27	30.82	29.2	
May,	16	4	9	3	62	34	29.94	29.36	12	11	1	2	74	31	30.63	29.4	16	1	12	3	65	22	30.49	29.2	
June,	23	1	8	0	78	41	29.92	29.54	16	7	4	3	66	39	30.35	29.2	13	11	6	0	70	36	30.35	29.0	
July,	19	5	6	1	68	41	29.97	29.15	21	3	6	3	72	50	30.30	29.7	23	3	5	0	70	47	30.35	29.90	
August,	17	5	6	3	79	40	30.4	28.47	20	1	6	4	80	39	30.18	28.70	17	3	11	0	67	43	30.30	29.20	
September,	19	5	6	0	63	37	30.60	28.50	15	2	6	1	65	39	30.45	28.27	24	4	0	2	62	36	29.95	29.12	
October,	26	0	0	3	61	29	30.75	29.45	21	0	6	4	57	29	30.74	28.55‡	21	7	2	1	58	36	30.60	29.30	
November,	27	1	0	2	54	29	30.30	28.43	19	6	3	3	50	27	32.43	27.70§	19	11	0	0	51	24	30.30	28.86	
December,	25	2	2	2	51	28	30.75	29.30	16	0	2	1	55	30	30.50	28.64	22	9	0	0	49	25	30.35	28.55	
	246	27	58	33					226	44	65	90					223	57	53	29					

* Under the term *southerly* are comprehended the points from south-east to south-west; *easterly*, the points from south-east to north-east; *northerly*, the points from north-east to north-west; and *westerly*, the points from north-west to south-west.

† This depression took place on 7th January 1889 during a gale, with snow, from south-west, corresponding in time with a hurricane, attended with disastrous consequences, on the west coasts of England and Scotland.

‡ This depression happened during the memorable hurricane from north-west on the 11th of October 1888, when great damage was done to crops, plantations, and buildings. On General Forbes's estate, in this parish, many thousand trees were uprooted or broken down, some of them vigorous beeches and oaks, which had withstood the blasts for more than 100 years.

§ This occurred during a violent storm, with heavy rain, from south-south-east on 29th November 1888.

Hydrography.—No spring sensibly impregnated with any mineral has been discovered in Dunnottar. Several little burns have their sources in the parish, and most of them are tributary to the Carron. The chief of these is the *Burn of Glaslaw*, issuing from the den or ravine already noticed as the termination of Strathmore. Its junction with the larger stream gives the name of *Invercarron* to a part of the territory of Stonehaven. The Carron, from its rise in the parish of Glenbervie, runs a course of only eight or nine miles. In times of protracted drought, its whole stream, uncollected, would hardly suffice to turn a corn mill, but in floods it assumes the appearance of a large and rapid river, destructively overflowing its banks, and occasionally inundating the streets of Stonehaven. Running water has not yet, in this parish, been applied as the moving power of machinery of any importance, but there are situations in which it is considered it might be used with advantage for manufactories.

Geology and Mineralogy.—The sea coast, all the way from Stonehaven to near Crawton, is formed of the rock termed plum-pudding, having a strong compacting cement. In exposed surfaces, the cement has yielded to atmospheric action, and exterior boulders being displaced, leave cavities which, in precipices, the sea-fowl appropriate for their nests. On the surface of a ledge of rock at Crawton, a small portion of columnar basalt appears, and throughout the parish, large boulders of granite and of gneiss are not uncommon. In a moor above Fowlsheugh, stones have occasionally been quarried from what is said to be one of the trap formations, and in the moor of Carmount, a stratum of what is understood to be porphyritic granite affords useful stones for rubble building. But, apart from the coast, the prevailing strata of rock are of coarse brown sandstone. Indeed, at the harbour of Stonehaven, the cliff changes to a stratum of that formation, which, under a deep covering of red clay, appears to run in a southerly direction, and probably all along bounds the plum-pudding rock at no great distance from the sea. In the bottom of that harbour, there is a stratum of pipe-clay, but neither limestone nor marl has been discovered in this parish.

Soil.—Dunnottar possesses the usual diversity of clayey, loamy, gravelly or sandy, and moorland soils. They are not distinguished by any peculiar local arrangement, the varieties occurring in all parts of the parish, often, indeed, on one farm and in one field; for although clayey soils, more or less friable, and black or hazelly

loam, more or less deep and cohesive, prevail near the coast, yet even there a thin covering of moorland soil, or the lightest sandy soils, may be seen under tillage, while in the more inland parts, where generally the soil is light, clay and loam, comparatively fertile, are not unusual. No calcareous earth, unless what is adventitious, forms a component in any of the soils, the sand and gravel which they contain being what is commonly understood as siliceous. In many instances, the subsoil is the indurated combination of clay and gravel known by the name of *till*, and this more commonly where the supersoil is scanty, or a recent conversion of moorland earth. Some of the clayey soils, from long melioration, are of considerable fertility, but instances of clay soils incumbent on sand or open gravel, are very rare; and consequently lately cultivated clays are for the most part of difficult and precarious management.

Zoology.—In the recollection of persons not yet very old, seals were numerous on the coast of Dunnottar. They were then to be seen in herds, basking on the rocks or sporting in the bays, and the hunting of them in the caves was practised both for amusement and profit. Now, they have nearly abandoned the caves to which they resorted as their breeding-places, and only a solitary one is to be seen occasionally, skulking for prey at the foot of the rock. The fox and the fougarte have both become rare in this parish, and the peaceable brock and harmless urchin are seldom met with. The otter's cry is hardly ever heard, affording as it was wont a foreboding to the superstitious. The whitteret or weasel still frisks about the stack-yard, and the Norway rat overruns the land, having, however, nearly exterminated the race of his black brother. What are said to be wild-cats are occasionally found in solitary places, but there is reason to doubt whether they are not merely such as have escaped from a state of domestication. Herds of roe-deer are to be seen in the woods, or, in the pinch of winter, visiting the turnip fields, and even the stack-yards. Hares are numerous, and the whole country is grievously infested with rabbits, from a colony planted in this parish five and twenty years ago, before which period that animal in a wild state was unknown in this quarter.

In the feathered race, the numbers and variety of birds inhabiting or frequenting the rocks and caverns of the sea coast, form the chief object of attention. The common gull has appropriated to himself a district of the cliff where he nestles to the exclusion of all others. The kittiwake or tarrock is migratory, arriving in

spring, and taking its departure early in autumn. Its nests occupy nearly a mile of cliff, but are intermixed with the nests of several varieties of the *genus Colymbus*, as the marrot or foolish guillemot, the norie or puffin, and three or four others. Besides the myriads of sea-fowl in these rocks and caverns, several land-birds breed there, as the stock-dove, raven, jackdaw, sparrowhawk, and gentil falcon or gamehawk. Of the latter, it is said more than one pair is never observed in one season. The parish abounds in partridges; and wild-duck, teal, and snipes, are by no means rare. There are a few pheasants, and in their seasons, landrails and woodcocks. Occasionally, a covey or two of red grouse are produced in Carmount Hill, and blackcock has been seen in the woods, but not probably bred there. Cushats or ring-doves are very numerous, although not so much so as before the late severe winters. Besides the howlet and barn-owl, a beautiful, and, it is believed, rare variety of this genus, is found among the rocks of the sea coast. Its solemn broad face has a short and erect covering resembling hair, encompassed by white silky down disposed in the form of a narrow ring. The belly is of pure white, and the back a cinnamon colour, mottled with bright spots and with longitudinal stripes of a darker tinge. It is believed neither the carrion nor the hooded-crow breeds in Dunnottar; nor has the rook ever yet built in it, but a large rookery at Fetteresso Castle, on the border of this parish, sends forth visitors in sufficient numbers to all the neighbourhood. Magpies do not abound here of late, having, as well as other birds of prey, suffered under the proscription of game preservers. Since the formation of plantations, there has been a great increase in the number and variety of singing-birds, and between the extremes from the thrush to the wren, more than a dozen of different species are to be found, all common to this part of the country, and therefore not necessary to be particularized.

*Botany.**—In the inland part of the parish, the botany affords nothing worthy of remark; but the sea-coast, abounding in sheltered coves of rich soil, presents a varied and luxuriant vegetation. Perhaps in no district is there a greater number of species in so small a space, though no one is known as peculiar to this locality, or even very rare. Among the most remarkable, may be noticed narrow-leaved blysmus, Scottish lovage, sea-lungwort, cowslip, bittersweet, scarlet pimpernel, perwinkle, white saxifrage, agri-

* From information supplied by the Rev. Robert Sim, schoolmaster of Dunnottar.

mony, marjoram, sea-rocket, wood-vetch, common carline, sea feverfew. Several species of rather rare carices are also to be met with as, *Carax distans*, *C. incurva*, *C. intermedia*, *C. vulpina*, and others. Wallflower grows abundantly on the ruins of Dunnottar Castle, and in the neighbouring rocks, undoubtedly wild. Henbane, a plant very rare in the north, if it be indeed indigenous, is stated in the Northern Flora to be "plentiful near the Whigs' vault," in the castle, but, from its being confined to a spot of peculiar soil, it may be doubted whether it is to be considered a native. Oxlip primrose (*Primula elatior*) occurs sparingly. A variety has been found, having the corolla red with a yellow eye, very similar to some varieties of the garden polyanthus.

Plantations.—In Dunnottar, extensive plantations, chiefly on the estate of General Forbes, comprehend all the common varieties of hard-wooded trees, and trees of the pine and fir tribe. The greater part is of sixty, and very little under thirty, years growth. In general, these plantations have succeeded well, the exception applying principally to Scotch firs in situations where there is a deficiency of soil and an excess of moisture. In more favourable situations, good timber is produced, and this more particularly around Dunnottar House, where, notwithstanding its adjacency to the sea, ash, elm, beech, oak, and other hard-wooded trees, spruce, larch, and Scotch fir, are healthy and thriving. On the land of Auquhirie, in the western district, the soil seems peculiarly favourable to the growth of oak, ash, and beech. Some old trees of the latter sort at the house of Auquhirie have attained a great size; and several of them yet in exuberant foliage, which were uptorn by the hurricane in October 1838, showed marks of the growth of more than 100 years. It is to be regretted, that the rearing of oak had not met with more attention, as much of the ground occupied by firs has proved more adapted to the growth of that valuable timber.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Land-owners.—These, taking them in order according to the extent of their properties, are Lieutenant-General Nathaniel Forbes, Lady Keith-Murray, the Trustees of Donaldson's Hospital, Robert Duff, Esq., and the Trustees of the late Lord Viscount Keith, as superiors of the burgh of Stonehaven.

Parochial Registers.—The records of the kirk-session commence in 1693; but they contain no remarkable entries.

Antiquities.—Among the mouldering relics of ancient Scottish

edifices, the ruins of Dunnottar Castle hold a prominent place. They occupy an area of between four and five acres on the top of a precipitous rock, separated by a deep chasm from the mainland, and almost surrounded by the sea. The great tower, still nearly entire, and the ranges of buildings adapted to the various purposes of a garrisoned place, present, in their majestic position and bold and varied outline, an object at once grand and picturesque. Nor is less interest derived from an examination of the interior, where, shut in by a portcullised gateway, and secured at every assailable point by walls and ramparts, are to be seen, suffering less from time than from the hand of the spoiler, the halls and chambers, now roofless and deserted, which once were animated by the pomp and circumstance of war, and all the splendour of baronial greatness. It is stated in the last Statistical Account, that there were in the custody of the late Mr Keith of Ravelston, and doubtless there now are in the possession of his grandniece, Lady Keith-Murray, to whom the ruins belong, some old papers establishing that, during the contest between the parties of Bruce and Baliol, a fortress was built on this rock by an ancestor of the family of Marischal, who acquired the right, on the condition of his erecting, in a more convenient situation, a parish church in lieu of that which formerly stood there. Another account is, that a Sir William Keith suffered excommunication for having built the castle on consecrated ground, and that, by a bull from Rome in 1394, his excommunication was removed, on condition of his building a new church, and making recompense to the clergy. It is certain, however, that Dunnottar Castle was in existence long before 1394; and that it had existed even before the contest between Bruce and Baliol, is to be inferred from the fact mentioned by Buchanan, that when at the commencement of that contest, Wallace had assumed the Regency, Dunnottar, "sufficiently manned and fortified," was one of the fortresses then held by the English, which were reduced by him. "By an unexpected assault (says the historian) he carried Dunnottar castle, which he garrisoned." This, it is believed, is the earliest historical notice of the castle; and while it seems to establish that it was then not a recent erection, it leaves the origin of it in obscurity, from which, probably, it will never be extricated. There is indeed a tradition that the great tower, in appearance the oldest of all the buildings, was the work of the Picts. In this, there is at least no improbability, for although dismantled, and left to all the influ-

ence of the elements, for now more than 100 years, it has yet suffered wonderfully little dilapidation, and its strength and durability having been such that it has so well withstood decay since the days of Wallace, it may well enough be conceived that it had existed for ages before his time. This castle was one of the more considerable of the fortresses of Scotland, and is supposed to have been, before the use of artillery, altogether impregnable. So late as 1651, it held out, with but "a scanty garrison," for the period of six months, against a body of Cromwell's troops, and it was only after the siege had been turned into a blockade, and when pressed by famine and mutiny, that Ogilvy, the governor, was induced to capitulate. In former times, it had frequently changed hands, by what means does not particularly appear, unless that, when it was carried by Wallace, it is said to have been by surprise. To this day, the name of Wallace is attached to an aperture near the great tower, through which he himself is said to have gained the interior, and by that means opened the gate to his followers. The family of Marischal is understood to have taken its rise from a well known incident—the slaying of the Danish General Comus, by a young nobleman of the name of Keith, whom the second King Malcolm rewarded for his valour, by bestowing upon him certain lands in Lothian, with the title of Great Marischal of Scotland. The date of that event is the year 1010; and subsequently, but at what particular period does not appear, the castle with the whole parish of Dunnottar came into possession of the Marischal family. By the accession of George, the last Earl Marischal, to the rebellion of 1715, the title and extensive estates of the family were forfeited, and the castle, which, about thirty years before had been purchased by government, was completely dismantled. The placing of the Regalia of Scotland in Dunnottar castle during the Commonwealth, and their having, before the castle was surrendered to Cromwell's General, been conveyed away and secreted under the intrepid and ingenious management of Mrs Ogilvy, the governor's lady, and Mrs Granger, the wife of the parson of Kinneff, are facts too generally known to require particular mention. Neither, as it is matter detailed in history, is it necessary to do more than allude to the imprisonment here, in 1685, of the Covenanters, who, to the number of 167 men, women, and children, were confined in one dungeon, still known by the name of the Whigs' vault, where they suffered the greatest tortures under Keith of Whiterigs, at that time governor of the castle. In the church-yard of the parish, a plain

stone records the names of nine of these persons, "who (as the epitaph runs) "all died prisoners in Dunnottar Castle, anno 1685, for their adherence to the word of God and Scotland's covenanted work of Reformation." It was while employed in his habitual task of clearing the simple but expressive inscription of this monument, that "Old Mortality" was first seen by Sir Walter Scott, then on a visit to the late Mr Walker, minister of the parish. On that occasion, a circumstance occurred which has some resemblance to an incident in "the Antiquary." Sir Walter had proposed and superintended an exploration of the large but dilapidated well in Dunnottar Castle, in the bottom of which, according to tradition, was buried the family plate of the Earl Marischal. On the second day of a laborious search, an ancient vessel was found among the stones and rubbish, which, it was not doubted, was a part of the hidden treasure; but, after an anxious examination of it, much amusement was occasioned by one of the party* confessing that it was an old brass tea kettle which he had found means to have thrown into the well the previous night. A roofless building in the church-yard, having the name of *the Marischal Aisle*, had at one time been the family sepulchre. In an underground vault, are fragments of leaden coffins, and small boxes of the same material, containing no doubt the relics of some of the once noblest of the land, but, *sic transit gloria mundi*, neither inscription nor tradition now tells their history, or even their names. The only other noticeable matters of antiquity in the parish are two tombstones, which lay on what was formerly a piece of waste ground close by the town of Stonehaven, and were lately taken up and erected near the spot. They covered the graves of persons who, it is understood, died of the plague. One of them, on which the word "Pest" is still legible, bears to have been in memory of "Magnus Taillour," who died in 1606, and the other is dedicated to the memory of two children, "an honest man's bairns," of the name of Brockie, who died in 1646. It would appear from these monuments, as well as from the tradition connected with them, that the plague had visited this parish at these two periods.

Modern Buildings.—The only gentleman's seat in the parish, is Dunnottar House, now the property of General Forbes. Its erection was begun forty years ago by Alexander Allardyce, Esq. who,

* The late Francis Logie, Esq.

having realized a large fortune in Jamaica, had purchased of the creditors of the York Buildings Company, the greater part of the Marischal estate in this parish. It is a plain, but extensive and commodious building, embosomed in plantations formed by Mr Alardyce. In forming the gardens attached to it, upwards of £. 10,000 are said to have been expended. The unpretending mansion of the Ogilvies of Barras, whose ancestor, for his gallant defence of Dunnottar Castle, and the preservation of the regalia, had the unsubstantial reward of a baronetcy, was once to have been numbered among the buildings of note in this parish, but it has long ceased to be the residence of that family, and is now used as an ordinary farm-house.—In the town of Stonehaven are the county buildings, containing a spacious hall, appropriately fitted up as a court room, with committee rooms, and offices for the sheriff-clerk, and on the basement are cells for prisoners, with a gaoler's house. Some late additions have greatly improved the appearance of these buildings; but the huge precipitous roof of the main building is a deformity which still remains to be remedied. About fifty years ago, the magistrates of Stonehaven, with the savings of their "common good," erected a square tower with a spire; but it is to be regretted that this expenditure was made to effect nothing more than accommodation for the town clock. The other public buildings in the town are an Episcopal chapel, in the form of a cross, built, it is believed, early in the eighteenth century, and a Methodist chapel, erected a few years ago, in the humble style of such buildings. As a *quasi* public building, the "Mill Inn" deserves notice. It has lately been altered and improved so as now to add greatly to the appearance of the place, and to the accommodation of travellers.

III.—POPULATION.

Although in the course of the last sixty-eight years, the population of the parish underwent some fluctuations, it is nearly the same now as it was at the commencement of that period. Thus, in 1772, the number of inhabitants was 1862, and by the census in 1831, the number was 1852. The division into town and rural population at each of these dates was as follows :

In 1772,	town, 923,	rural, 939	total, 1862
1831,	do. 941,	do. 911,	do. 1852

The number of males in 1831 was less than the number of females in both localities. Thus there were at that time

Males in Stonehaven,	426	
Females in do.	515	
		941
Males in the country,	442	
Females in do.	469	
		911
		1852

In the period since 1772, the greatest amount of population occurred in 1792, when it reached to 1962, of which, 1072 belonged to the town. In the country, the numbers have not at any time greatly varied, and it might seem singular, that in the seaport of Stonehaven, the population since 1792 has apparently decreased. But this admits of explanation. The ground within the bounds of the burgh, which is the Dunnottar part of the town, having been nearly all occupied, building between fifty and sixty years ago began to extend to the north side of the Carron, in the adjoining parish of Fetteresso, where a new town was planned, and feu-rights granted, by Mr Barclay of Ury, on his lands of Ardu-thie. In this way, Stonehaven had increased so as to contain in both parishes, according to the census of 1831, a population of upwards of 3000, being more than triple the town population of 1772. It is supposed a farther increase has taken place since the date of that census.* The average annual number of marriages in Dunnottar is 14, and of births 34. There are five insane persons maintained at the expense of the parish, and there is one deaf and dumb person, a young man, educated at the asylum in Aberdeen, who is industrious and intelligent, and affords a gratifying example of the important benefits flowing from such institutions. Each of the land-owners of the parish possesses property greatly exceeding in revenue the sum of L.50. Not one of them is resident. No feuar in the Dunnottar quarter of Stonehaven has a rental of that amount. The people in general are attentive to their religious and moral duties. Indulgence in the use of intoxicating liquors is fast disappearing.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—The cultivated land in Dunnottar amounts to about 4860 imperial acres. About 690 acres are in wood; and

* By the census of 1841, the population of Dunnottar parish is,

Males in Stonehaven,	425	
Females in do.	513	
		938
Males in the country,	476	
Females in do.	446	
		922
		1860

of the remaining portion of the area of the parish, about 1740 acres consist of tracks of moorland, or patches of natural pasture, interspersed among farms. Of these 1740 acres, about one-half may be considered capable of being cultivated.

Rent.—The average rent of arable land is about L. 1, 7s. the imperial acre, the range being from 15s. to L. 3, 3s., with the exception of some land near Stonehaven, which, enhanced by its locality, rents as high as from L. 10 to L. 16 per acre. In a few instances, rent is made dependent on the fiars prices of grain, fluctuating annually as these prices rise or fall, a mode of adjustment which may inconveniently affect the tenant, as it may happen, from deficiency of crops in bad seasons, that his rent is in an inverse ratio to the amount of his receipts at market.

Leases.—The usual term of leases is nineteen years. In some instances, a shorter term is conditioned, but in no case is a lease for a longer period now granted. Formerly, when, instead of the present great demand and competition for farms, it was difficult to find tenants, leases on lives, or for two or three times nineteen years were very common. Of such leases only one now remains in this parish, which was granted in 1784, upon a life still surviving.*

Live-stock.—Sheep farming is not practised in Dunnottar. Of late, some attention has been paid to the breed of farm-horses and cattle. The former are of middling size, active and hardy. They have been improved by crosses from stallions of the Suffolk, Clydesdale, and other approved breeds, but the original defects in the blood of the mares have not yet been eradicated. The cattle are chiefly of the black polled breed. The average weight of oxen reared and fed in the parish may be about fifty stones imperial, but feeding is not practised here very extensively, most of the tenants selling their stock when two years old, off the grass, or from the straw-yard. Pigs, not long ago to be found only at corn-mills, are now reared and fed in considerable numbers by the farmers and cottagers. They are in general of the improved short nosed-breed, and the pork is cured chiefly for the London market.

Husbandry.—A complete reformation of the practice of agriculture in this parish followed the great improvements introduced and accomplished on his estate by the late Mr Barclay of Ury.†

* It may be noticed as a curious fact, that, in this case, the tenant, when the lease was granted, had a family of eight healthy children, and that the only survivor now was the fourth child, on whose life the lease was taken.

† An interesting account of Mr Barclay's improvements is to be found in Robertson's Agricultural Report of Kincardine shire.

Under the salutary, and in this quarter all-pervading influence of his example, the alternate "butt and baulk," and the serpentine ridge disappeared; land was cleaned, drained, and limed; regular fields were formed: artificial grasses and turnips were introduced, and the system of convertible husbandry finally banished the antiquated and rude management by "outfield and infield." After this, the rotation for some time observed was one of six years, including two years of grass and two grain crops in succession; but this having in most cases been found deteriorating to the soil, the management was gradually changed to a rotation of five years, admitting but one grain crop, after two years of grass; or to a rotation of seven years, under which two successive grain crops are permitted, but the severity of them modified by a previous rest of three years in grass. These are the rotations now in general use, unless where a rotation of four years has been introduced, as supposed better suited to some peculiar soils. In this way, within the last sixty years, the greater part of the land in Dunnottar has, from the worst mode of management, and comparative sterility, been advanced to a pitch of improvement, not inferior to that of any district in this part of the country. Hardly any farm in the parish is now without a thrashing-mill, moved either by water or animal power, and one spirited tenant in it has lately attached a steam-engine to his thrashing-machine.

Quarries.—In this parish, the only quarry of noticeable extent is in the sandstone cliff above the harbour of Stonehaven, which has been wrought for a great many years, and has furnished stones for the greater number of the houses in that town. It has the name of the *Redcraig*, and from a part of it called *Slatecoves*, a lumpish sort of flag was formerly taken, and used for the purpose of slate. With these some of the primitive houses in the town are still covered.

Fishings.—There is no salmon-fishing in Dunnottar, although it is thought some of its headlands admit of the lately introduced mode of fishing with bag-nets. White fishing in the sea is the sole occupation of the villagers of Crawton, and it is carried on by the crews of five or six boats at Stonehaven. The parish is thus well and cheaply supplied with various kinds of fish, as haddock, whiting, cod, ling, skate, halibut, flounders, and occasionally turbot. Lobsters and crabs are caught in abundance, and of excellent quality. Herring-fishing is now prosecuted with enterprise at Stonehaven, where curing establishments have been formed; and the

position on the coast which the harbour occupies is so favourable, the access to it is so easy, and its internal accommodation so convenient for the purpose, that it is likely to become prominent as a station in the herring-fishery.

Manufactures.—Cotton and linen weaving is carried on pretty extensively at Stonehaven, under the agents of several houses at Aberdeen. A good many females find employment in this way, and of the men so employed in the winter time, some become fishermen in summer, particularly during the herring season. The manufacture of coal gas was lately commenced at Stonehaven by a joint-stock Company, with a capital of L. 2500. The works, though on a limited scale, are very complete; and the gas produced is of the best quality, and is now used in lighting almost every shop and dwelling-house in both old and new town. Some manufactures are carried on in the Fetteresso quarter of Stonehaven, but these fall more properly to be noticed in the account of that parish.

Trade and Shipping.—The imports at Stonehaven consist chiefly of lime and coals. Of the former, the average annual import during the last fourteen years is 18,000 bolls, and of the latter 13,000 bolls,—the range of quantities over that period being from 11,000 to 26,000 bolls a-year of the one, and from 10,000 to 19,000 bolls a-year of the other. The other imports include bone-dust, salt, slates and tiles, paving-stones, groceries, and other shop goods. Of the articles exported, the principal is grain, the quantity of which shipped annually during the period mentioned has varied from 4800 to 14,000 quarters. Among the other exports are potatoes, whisky, cured-fish, and occasionally timber and live-stock. In the trade of the port, ten or eleven vessels, owned by individuals in the town and neighbourhood, are usually employed; but vessels belonging to other places are engaged in it. The average revenue of the harbour during the last fourteen years was L. 512. In 1826, it was L. 604. In 1835, it fell to L. 412, since which it has been again increasing; and in 1839, it amounted to L. 482. Formerly this harbour, though one of the most easy approach in easterly gales, was interiorly so ill defended from the sea, as to be shunned by vessels during the winter months. In 1825, it was placed, by Act of Parliament, under the management of a Board of Commissioners, who, raising money on the security of the harbour dues, laid out L. 6000 in its improvement. The improvement consisted of the removal of a mass of

high rock at the entrance, and the erection of an extensive pier on the south side, brought out in a direction towards the old pier on the north side, and leaving between their extremities an opening towards the sea for the admission of vessels. A large space of harbour room, with commodious wharfs, was thus enclosed; but the state of the funds had not admitted of completing the plan, by the erection of a break-water, designed to proceed from the north side, so as to cover and protect the entrance; and the consequence was, that the harbour was far from being yet safe in great easterly storms. This defect has, however, been completely obviated by the recent erection of interior piers, or it may be said of one line of pier, running from the point of, and at right angles with, the great new pier, to the shore, and having an opening just sufficient to admit a vessel. In this way, an inner harbour has been formed, so well protected that vessels with but slight mooring ropes now lie still and safe in any weather. Under the authority of the Commissioners of Northern Lights, guiding lights have of late been erected, corresponding with the line of the fair way; and, upon the whole, Stonehaven harbour, to the advantage it has always possessed of being accessible in easterly gales, when few, if any, of the other harbours on the east coast could be approached, now adds the advantage of ample interior accommodation and security; and, accordingly, the masters of coasting-vessels, who formerly preferred the risk, often very great, of keeping the sea, or running for one of the firths, to any shelter which it afforded, now willingly and gladly avail themselves of it when overtaken by adverse weather. The steam-ships plying between Leith and Aberdeen call in the bay on their passage to and fro, and the landing and embarking of passengers and goods by these vessels, add something to the business and revenue of the harbour.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Means of Communication.—No parish is better accommodated with roads than Dunnottar. Along the sea-coast it has the road by which the Edinburgh mails pass. It is kept in excellent condition under the management of turnpike trustees. The great Strathmore road, also turnpike, and in equally good condition, runs through the interior of the parish. These roads meet at Stonehaven, giving it the advantage of a thoroughfare. Besides these great lines, cross roads scarcely inferior to them pass over the parish in all requisite directions. These are maintained by

trustees under an act for the conversion of Statute-labour, and have greatly promoted the agricultural improvement of the parish.

Ecclesiastical State.—The former parish church was taken down and the present one built on the same site in 1782. The manse was built in 1786. Both are tolerably substantial and commodious, although neither contains the accommodation which is necessary, and which a very little additional expense would have afforded. The stipend, excluding small fractions, is 127½ bolls of meal and 92½ quarters of barley, with L.10 of money. The teinds are exhausted. The glebe contains four acres arable, and a portion of grass land in an adjoining den. There are several fine old ashes in the churchyard, and a good many thriving trees on the glebe. The situation of the church and manse, surrounded with plantations and grassy dells, is highly agreeable. The distance from Stonehaven is about one mile.

Education.—The parish school is at Stonehaven. The schoolmaster's salary is L.34, 4s. 4½d., with a dwelling-house and the statutory extent of garden. The number of scholars varies from 20 to 30. There are several private schools in the parish, and the minister is, *ex officio*, one of the trustees of a free-school, lately endowed in the new town, under the will of Mr William Donaldson, at which this parish has the privilege of placing 20 scholars from six to twelve years of age.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The number of paupers receiving permanent relief is about 50, and there are five pauper lunatics in asylums or boarded at the expense of the parish. The annual expenditure in this way, for some time past, has not been under L.260, while the income has been as under; weekly collections, L.66, 6s.; seat rents, L.11, 12s.; interest of stock, L.20; penalties, &c. L.2, 15s.; total, L.100, 13s.

The excess of expenditure over income has hitherto been made up by the heritors by a voluntary assessment, and thus not only has a sum of L.400 of stock been kept entire, but the necessity of resorting to a legal assessment has been avoided.

Burgh of Stonehaven—At what time Stonehaven was erected into a burgh of barony is not known. Very probably the erection was contained in a Crown charter in favour of one of the Earls of Marischal, which is not now to be found. Its existence as a burgh was at an early period recognized by the Legislature, and an Act of Parliament in 1607, c. 10, ordains "the said Burgh of Stonehaven to be in all time coming the head Burgh of the She-

riifdom of Kincardine." In 1624, William Earl Marischal, the superior, entered into a contract with the feuars of the town, by which it was agreed that two resident *burgesses of the burgh*, yearly presented by the inhabitants and chosen by the Earl, should be bailies, and should have power "to choose their own members, and to hold courts, and to decern anent their own civil and common affairs." The late Viscount Keith purchased the superiority of the town in 1797, and after his death, the old constitution, which, since the Rebellion in 1715, had been in a great measure in abeyance, was restored by his trustees, in whom the superiority is vested. Since 1823, when that restoration took place, the feuars have annually presented a leet of four resident feuars, out of which the trustees choose two to be bailies, and these two choose a council consisting of three councillors, a dean of guild, and a treasurer, and appoint a town-clerk, a procurator-fiscal, and two town-officers. The superior of the town, the magistrates, and three feuars chosen annually, are, with the Member of Parliament, the sheriff, and the convener of the county, commissioners under the Harbour Act of 1825. Previously, the harbour revenue formed part of the "common-good." The present amount of it has been already stated. The revenue, separate from the harbour dues, is about L. 30. The town is charged by the Convention of Royal Burghs with the sum of L. 4, 10s. 4d. annually, for the privilege of trade, and this is assessed among the traders.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

At the date of the former Statistical Account in 1793, the quantity of land under the plough was about 3600 Scotch, or 4539 imperial acres. Of that quantity about 60 acres have since been planted; not less than 40 acres have been occupied by roads; and as there are about 4860 acres now under the plough, it appears that about 421 acres have been brought into cultivation since 1793.

At that period it is stated, "The most general crops of grain were *bar* and *oats*, with very little *barley*, and *no wheat*;" and turnips, it was said, "are commonly sown *broadcast* with most advantage." At the present time, *barley* is raised more commonly than *bar*; *wheat* and also *beans* are cultivated on several farms, and a single field of *broadcast turnips* is never to be seen in the parish.

In the former Account, the whole rent of the parish is said to

have been about L.2100. At present, the rental amounts to about L.6600, being more than a threefold increase since 1793.

A remarkable effect of the introduction of machinery in manufactories appears on reference to the former Account. At its date, "there were wages given to spinners in this neighbourhood, by persons in Stonehaven, who gave out flax for manufacturers here and in other places, to the annual amount of L.2652, 9s. 6d." This sum was earned by females employed at the spinning wheel. That employment has long been almost entirely superseded by spinning mills, and the sign board formerly so common, bearing the intimation, "Flax to be spun, given out here," is now nowhere to be met with.

January 1842.