

PARISH OF INVERARITY.

PRESBYTERY OF FORFAR, SYNOD OF ANGUS AND MEARNS.

THE REV. GEORGE LOUDON, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—UNDER this name are comprehended the contiguous and united parishes of Inverarity and Meathie. Like most parishes in Scotland, where the Celtic language formerly prevailed, it seems to owe its name to its particular locality. The situation of the church generally suggested its own appellation, and that of the whole parish to which it belonged: and it appears to have done so in the present case. For till 1754, when it was built on its present site, the church of Inverarity had, for a considerable period at least, been situated near the present house of Fotheringham; at a small distance from which, the river Arity, running from east to west, is joined almost at right angles by the Corbie Burn. The name of this parish, therefore, refers to that spot where the Arity and Corbie Burn form one river.

Extent and Boundaries.—The parish is about 3 miles square. It is bounded on the north by the parish of Forfar; on the south by the parishes of Monikie and Murroes; on the east by those of Guthrie and Dunnichen; and on the west by Kinnettles, Tealing, and Glamis. Its figure approaches that of a circle, the circumference of which forms, in general, an elevated boundary, from which the radii descending, may be conceived to meet at the centre, occupied by the church.

Topographical Appearances.—Although consisting principally of a valley or little strath, yet none of its crowning eminences can claim the name of mountains. But, “*si parva componere magnis liceat,*” from whatever point the traveller approaches this valley, he may be conceived to experience, in some degree, sensations resembling his who, having crossed the rugged Alps, finds himself at length descending to the tranquil plains of Italy, watered by the Po, and sheltered by the Apennines; for, on almost every side are

wooded hills, such as Fothringham, Kincaldrum, Lawrence, and Carrot,—ascending gently from the valley, and terminating the landscape as it recedes to the horizon. From its natural position, this parish contains no small portion of low flat land, admitting of the best divisions for agricultural convenience and ornamental landscape.

Climate, &c.—The atmosphere, from the neighbourhood of the parish to the coast, and its comparatively low situation, is in spring and autumn often foggy; but during the other seasons is mild and dry. The east wind, blowing almost directly from the sea, prevails in the early part of the year, and, towards evening, frequently during summer.

Freestone and gray-slate quarries abound here, and are converted to the most useful purposes. The soil is various,—principally clay,—in many parts alluvial, and rests upon beds of freestone or slate; and in the more elevated districts, a dark loam, on sand-coloured freestone.

Roe-deer abound in the parish, and find a ready shelter in the numerous young plantations. The birds mentioned in the former Account, such as dotterel, rails, wood and black-cock, still visit, and abound in, the parish. The small squirrel, not noticed in the former Account, is found on Fothringham hill.

Botany.—There are many plants here, though not of a kind peculiar to the place. On Fothringham hill, *Trientalis Europæa*, *Oxalis acetosella*, *Vaccinium Vitis Idea*. In other parts of the parish, *Erica tetralix*, *Veronica beccabunga*, *Ranunculus*, *Menyanthes trifoliata*, *Parnassia palustris*, &c. There has been a very great increase of plantations since the last account of the parish was written. The property of Fothringham is ornamented with extensive and varied plantations, consisting of oak, beech, plane, spruce, ash, larch, and Scots fir. Near the house of Fothringham are several beech trees of very large size; and the approach to it from the south, through a winding den, presents clumps of spruce trees of distinguished beauty. On the other properties, the greatest attention has been paid to the improvement of waste land, and to the ornamenting of enclosures and fields, by plantations, and with handsome trees. In this respect, Colonel Lawrenson, of Inverighty, has earned a just claim to distinction in this district for his judicious and successful disposal of such trees, of considerable size, as are both suited to the soil, and an ornament to the neighbourhood. The soil, indeed, seems well fitted for trees in

general; and the thriving plantations, which, at the publication of the former Account, had not commenced their growth, prove that every encouragement is held out to continued perseverance in such improvements.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Eminent Men.—Among those who have reflected honour on this, the place of their birth, we may mention James Webster, Esq. Student of the Inner Temple, fifth son of the Rev. John Webster, minister of this parish. After discovering great acuteness and ardour, and securing the highest opinion of his instructors, in the prosecution of his academical studies in Scotland, this young gentleman, with a view to practise at the English Bar, betook himself to his studies at the Inner Temple. The pious impressions of his earliest life afterwards prompted him to pay a visit to the countries of the east. With this object he travelled to the continent; visited Egypt, and parts of Turkey; and, with increasing ardour, at last, set off for Mount Sinai, and ascended its memorable heights. The effect of this fatiguing expedition, however, on his return to Cairo, was a fever, which, in a few days, cut him off.*

Land-owners.—The chief land-owners are, Colonel Fotheringham, Robert S. Graham, Esq., and Captain Lawrenson.

Parochial Registers.—The parochial registers, consisting of four volumes, regularly kept, commence in the year 1710.

Antiquities.—As mentioned in the former Account, there is a Roman camp, called “Haer Faads,” in one extremity of the parish, or rather partly in the parish of Guthrie, on the property of Carbuddo. The outer ditch and rampart can still be traced, though the ground is now planted and covered with wood. It possesses the rectangular parallelogram of the Roman camps. Several tumuli are met with on the ridges of the hills, containing, when examined, stone coffins and charred bones, as in other parts of Scotland.

III.—POPULATION.

The ancient population was greater than the present; being, about 100 years ago, 996. At that period, many cottars were attached to farms that do not now require them. The improved state of agriculture, and the enlargement of farms, have rendered fewer

* A Memoir of his life has been prefixed to an account of his Travels: and remains, as a faint delineation to his parent and friends, of the many valuable qualities, which his character and talents already possessed.

hands necessary for the labours of the field, and led many families to betake themselves to towns. The whole population resides in the country.

Under 15 years of age, the number of persons may be	-	-	560
Between 15 and 30, the number may be	-	-	140
30 and 50,	-	-	120
50 and 70,	-	-	46
Upwards of 70,	-	-	20
The average annual births for the last 7 years may be stated at	-	-	20
deaths,	-	-	10
marriages,	-	-	9
The number of families in the parish is	-	-	176
chiefly employed in agriculture,	-	-	81
trade, manufactures, or handicraft,	-	-	52

The only families of independent fortune residing in the parish are those of Fotheringham and Kincaldrum. The number of proprietors of land of the yearly value of L. 50 is 5. The number of bachelors and widowers upwards of fifty years of age is 11; and of unmarried women upwards of forty-five, 10. The average number of children in each family may be stated at 3. The people are of an ordinary size,—few of them tall. There is one deaf and dumb boy, and one deaf and dumb girl. The boy has been well educated at the institution in Edinburgh; the girl is a mere child. The inhabitants are a contented people; disposed to revere the institutions of religion, and distinguished for their morals and good conduct.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture and Rural Economy.—The number of cultivated acres in the parish is about 4000. The number of acres of waste or uncultivated ground, consisting of plantations, moor, &c. may be stated at 2000. The number of acres under wood may be about 1000. The trees generally planted are, larch, spruce, plane, beech, Scots fir, and oak. There is much more attention paid to thinning, periodical felling, and judicious pruning, than formerly, there being sales of wood about twice a-year.

Rent of Land.—The average rent of arable land is L. 1. The average grazing for an ox or cow is L. 2.

Husbandry.—The common breed of cattle is what is denominated the Angus, or black-cattle of the county, which, from the Associations for the improvement of stock in this country, is rapidly improving. The husbandry is that pursued in the most agricultural parts of the country. As the parish has been almost completely drained, and the farms almost all subdivided, and enclosed by stone dikes or hedges, little is left for original improvement of waste ground. Nineteen years form the duration of leases.

Produce.—The yearly raw produce of the parish may be estimated as follows :

Oats, barley, and wheat, 12,290 bolls,	-	L. 13500	0	0
Potatoes, turnips,	-	1136	0	0
Hay, cultivated,	-	1505	0	0
Pasture grass,	-	1100	0	0
Annual sales of wood,	-	100	0	0
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		L. 17341	0	0

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Market-Town.—The nearest market-town is Forfar, four miles distant. A turnpike-road from Forfar to Dundee passes through the parish, for four miles. Two public coaches travel on the road daily, one from Aberdeen to Edinburgh, the other from Brechin to Dundee.

Ecclesiastical State.—The parish church is conveniently situated for the parishioners, being three miles from the extreme points of the parish. It was built in 1754, is in a good state of repair, and can accommodate 600 persons. The manse was built long ago, but has been enlarged and repaired at different periods. The last alterations and additions were made in 1831, soon after the admission of the present incumbent.

The glebe is upwards of twelve acres in extent, equal in quality to the average land of the parish. In 1813, the Court give a stipend of 14 chalders, and L. 8, 6s. 8d. for communion elements. All the families in the parish attend the Established church except six; consisting of four Independents, five Seceders, and three Episcopals. The Established church is well attended, and the people are much attached to our national establishment. The communicants amount to about 400. The amount of church collections for charitable and religious purposes annually is about L. 6.

Education.—There are two schools in the parish, the parochial and a private one, taught by a female. In both, English and writing are taught; in the parish school, Latin and the ordinary branches of education. The salary of the parochial teacher is the maximum: and the yearly amount of his school fees is about L. 27. The school fees vary from 2s. to 10s. 6d. per quarter. There are no persons, from six to fifteen years of age, who cannot read. The parents, in general, have a becoming sense of the value of education. Some parts of the parish are pretty far from the parish school, but there is a subscription school in the neighbourhood. The total number of scholars at schools in the parish is 80; but there are also about 30 attending schools on the borders of the parish.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of persons receiving parochial aid is 15, at the rate of L. 3 a-year each. The amount of collections for their relief, being those in church only, is, on an average, L. 50. But the proprietors on whose ground they reside furnish many comforts to the poor, which lessen their claims on the poors fund of the parish. They do not generally apply to the fund of the parish till necessity compels them; and, even then, they attach a degree of degradation to their allowance.

Alehouses—There are four alehouses in the parish, at present, which have no good effect on the morals of the people.

January 1835.