

PARISH OF ST CYRUS OR ECCLESGREIG.*

PRESBYTERY OF FORDOUN, SYNOD OF ANGUS AND MEARNES.

THE REV. ALEXANDER KEITH, D. D., MINISTER.

THE REV. ALEXANDER KEITH, A. M. *Assist. and Successor.*

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Names.—In the former Statistical Account of this parish, it was stated, for no better reason, so far as is now known, than that Ecclesgreig is nearly *idem sonans* with "*Ecclesia Gregorii*,"—that the ancient name is evidently of Latin origin, and probably derived from the dedication of the church to St Gregory the Great, or to some other Romish bishop or missionary of that name. Perhaps it may be more probably referred to the Gaelic, in which language, the words, *Eaglaiscreag*, or *gen. Eaglais-craige*, signify "the church of the rock," and well describe the singularly picturesque situation of the ancient church of the parish,—"*the rock*," forming the most prominent object in the picture, being a lofty sea-cliff, of nearly two miles in extent, under the shelter and close to the base of which, the "church" stood. No remains of the church now exist, but its site is marked by a church-yard, still used as the principal burying-ground in the parish. Towards the close of the last century, the parish came to be generally known by the name of St Cyrus, the original designation, as it appears, of that district of the parish in which the modern church is

* Drawn up by Mr James Murray, parochial schoolmaster of St Cyrus.

† This clergyman, whose name was David Campbell, appears, according to Wodrow's "roll of ministers who were banished, turned out of their parishes, or confined in 1663," to have been the only clergyman in the "Presbytery of the Mearns," who did not conform to Prelacy at that period.

The name Ecclesgreig, it may be mentioned, was at one time applied exclusively to that section of the parish, called, in an old charter of the lands of Kirkside, "the ecclesiastical lands of Ecclesgreig, *alias* Kirkyde."

situated, and conjectured to have been derived from the residence of a Romish ecclesiastic of that name on the adjacent lands of Criggie, or Mount Cyrus, where a field and a spring of water still retain the name of the saint.

Situation, &c.—The parish lies at the extreme southern angle of the Mearns, and is separated on the south-west side from the parishes of Montrose and Logiepert by the river North Esk, which here also marks the confines of the counties of Angus and Mearns. On the north-west, north, and north-east, it is bounded by the parishes of Marykirk, Garvock, and Benholme, and on the south-east, by the German Ocean. Its length, in a direction parallel to the general line of the sea-coast, from the North-water bridge to the hill of Bridgeton, is about 5 miles; its breadth at the former place, about $3\frac{1}{4}$; at the latter, about $2\frac{1}{2}$; and its area, about 14 square miles. Its figure is nearly that of a parallelogram.

Surface, &c.—Part of the chain of low hills lying between the great valley of the Mearns and the sea, passes through the parish. From the summit of Garvock to the sea-coast, the breadth of the chain is about four miles, and the descent from the former point, which is said to be from 800 to 1000 feet above the sea-level, is by an irregular succession of elongated little hills, which run nearly parallel to the axis of the range, that is, from north-east to south-west. At the western extremity of the parish, the continuity of the range is interrupted by the defile through which the North Esk flows, and again, near the eastern extremity, by another defile intersecting that portion of it lying within this parish, between the hollow of Garvock and the sea. The hills of Bridgeton and Jackston, in the east, and of Morphy and Pitbeadlay, in the west, may be stated at about 500 feet high; of Snadon, at 450; and Brand's hill and Woodston hill, at 630 feet above the sea; the last being the most prominent object in the parish, and situated near its centre. From the circumstance of most of these elevations being insulated from each other by deep valleys and ravines, the surface presents many rapid inequalities, and much pleasing diversity of outline.

The coast, from the mouth of the North Esk to within half a mile of the fishing village of Johnshaven, is five miles in extent, and juts out into three low rocky promontories, the most southerly forming, with Montrose-Ness, the two headlands, between which

lies the fine crescent-like bay of Montrose. Behind these promontories, and removed in some parts, more or less, from the present limit of the highest tides, is a steep and almost continuous escarpment, varying from 50 to nearly 300 feet in height, the barrier, according to geologists, of the ancient ocean. This escarpment, is in several places a perpendicular cliff, and is prolonged with somewhat less elevation along the right bank of the North Esk, from its mouth to the junction of this parish with that of Marykirk.

The only inlet for vessels on the coast is at Sea-greens, where a small harbour has been formed for the admission of the smallest class of coal-ships; but it is too much exposed to the effects of easterly gales to be secure, and can only be approached in smooth water. In northerly gales, when, from the configuration of the coast, it is found impossible for vessels to proceed in their course northward, the bay of Rockhall affords a convenient anchorage; and there, it is no unusual sight to observe from twenty to thirty vessels moored under the shelter of the cliff.

About a mile of the coast from the mouth of the river is lined with a flat beach of fine sand, held together by the usual sea-grasses; the remaining part of it, by belts of shingle, or fragments and exposed strata of low rocks, covered at low water with seaweed, which has for many years been allowed to vegetate, undisturbed by the kelp-maker.

Temperature, &c.—Observations of the thermometer indicate a mean annual temperature of from 45° to 46° Fahrenheit. The mean level of the parish is about 300 feet above the sea, and its temperature must be considerably lower than that of the adjoining parish of Montrose. The springs in the parish give a range of 47½° in September, and 43° in March. With regard to the general aspect of the seasons on this part of the coast, it may be observed, that, on the cessation of the easterly winds, which are continued in some seasons from the beginning of March to the middle of June, and which, whether dry or moist, always occasion a keener sensation of cold than might be expected from the indications of the thermometer, the first summer rains are usually the result of electrical changes; that a much less depth of rain falls on this part of the coast, than in the immediate vicinity of the Grampians, during the summer months; and that, while the spring and winter are distinguished by gloomy and often dismal weather,

the autumn is for the most part the most delightful season of the year.

Hydrography.—The alluvial soil is of great depth over a large proportion of the surface, and springs are in consequence not frequent; and not a little inconvenience and expense are occasioned from this cause, both as regards the supply of water for domestic purposes, and for inclosures. Wells not entirely perforating the clay give neither a large nor constant supply, nor of good quality. Trap rocks usually afford abundance of water, but always containing a large quantity of lime; and the whole of the springs from sandstone and clayey gravel are more or less impregnated with iron. One in particular, near the village of Milton, is saturated with iron, and had the reputation some years ago of working cures, or of alleviating the symptoms of various complaints.

Each den (of which there are six in the parish) has its burn, pouring its inconstant stream into the North Esk, or into the ocean. The largest of these is that which rises on the heights of Garvock, and, collecting the waters from about eight square miles, issues through the romantic Den Fenella to the sea, near the east end of the parish, and is chiefly noticeable on account of the beauty of the scenery in the neighbourhood of a waterfall which occurs near its termination. The course of the burn in its upper part is through a wide ravine, with not a bush or tree to vary the uniformity of its uninteresting slopes; below, it enters into a broad band of trap rock, through which it has channelled a deep and winding passage, and towards the termination of its accelerating progress to the sea, is precipitated in a cascade (taking the adjuncts of trees and rocks into the account) of no little interest and beauty. The Fall of Den Fenella is, in the Mearns, next in celebrity to the admired scenery of "the Burn," and has given occasion, as may be supposed, to many attempts at poetical as well as pictorial description,—banks and trees, chasms and crags, dark foliage and festoons of flowering plants, the furious gush of the waters, &c. forming the chief ingredients in the description, and the principal grouping in the picture. There are two handsome bridges across the den, one of which is directly over the fall, and about 120 feet above the pool into which the waters are poured, while the fall itself is accomplished in a single perpendicular leap of 65 feet.

The river North Esk, it has been already stated, flows along the western boundary of the parish, and marks the limits of the counties of Angus and Mearns. The course of the river, from its

source in the mountains of Angus to the sea, is about forty miles. Of the Mearns, it drains a surface equal in area to about ninety miles, and receives the waters of about 140 miles of the county of Angus. Its basin may thus be estimated at 230 square miles. Taking the mean depth of rain over the district which the basin comprehends at 28 inches, and its area as just noted, the volume of rain falling on it would be nearly 15,000 millions of cubic feet annually. In a mean state of the river (in 1837), its breadth at the confluence was 141 feet, mean depth $1\frac{1}{2}$ foot, and velocity per minute, 110 feet. The annual discharge was therefore 12,228 millions cubic feet, leaving a difference of about 2733 millions cubic feet, as the value of the evaporation and absorption. In 1826 the whole water of the river was carried away from many parts of its channel into the mill courses on its margin. In July 1835, and in April 1839, the discharge was reduced to about one-sixth or one-eighth of its average amount. From the nature of the materials composing the channel at and near the mouth of the river, its direction is subject to considerable changes. By one of these, two farms are at present disjoined from the parishes, of which they had originally formed, and still, *quoad civilia*, form a part; and in the memory of not very old persons, the river poured its waters into the sea, at a point about two miles eastward of its present mouth. Embankments are in one or two places necessary to preserve the contiguous lowlands from heavy floods, which come down with greater suddenness and impetuosity, since the universal drainage of the cultivated land; and a small portion of the haugh land next to the mouth of the river is guarded in like manner from the access of the higher spring tides, which are felt nearly two miles up the stream.

Rocks.—These are old red sandstone and trap. Of the former, the upper division consists of beds of spotted silicious and calcareous sandstones, beds of red clay, with and without nodules of concretionary limestone, called by the lime-workers the seed-bed; layers of a calcareous conglomerate or gritstone; and two layers of compact veined limestone, of from 8 to 14 feet thick. These have generally a slight dip eastward. The second division consists of a reddish micaceous sandstone, composed of grains of quartz and felspar, and a large portion of the matter of trap, together with a conglomerate of rolled boulders of granite, jasper, &c. The third division comprehends a series of fine-grained mi-

KINCARDINE.

8

caceous gray flagstones. All these rocks are well exposed in deep sections, and are observed to be directed in conformity with the axis of the range in which they are situated, and have, with the exception above noted, a considerable dip to the north-west.* *2dly*, Trap. The whole elevations in the parish are probably owing to the presence of this rock. It is found universally at the summit of every hill, and mound and ridge, presenting a more or less abrupt step near the top, on the south-east side, and rounding off the hill in a convex sweep towards the north-west. It does not appear to have disturbed the lie of the sedimentary strata, with which it occurs interstratified occasionally, but for the most part conceals these rocks, by having been poured out over them from a number of separate vents throughout the parish. It contains often large fragmentary masses of the blue and green shales from below, which are scarcely distinguishable from the older clay-slates.† The varieties of trap observed in the parish are, amygdaloid, greenstone, claystone, and a trap conglomerate, composed wholly of the matter of ancient trap rocks, in rounded nodules of different porphyries.

The imbedded minerals are, agates, agate-jasper, quartz (white and brown, and occasionally in the form of a rough amethyst), zeolites, calcareous spar, (rhomboidal, dog's tooth and satin), heavy-spar, green earth, and steatite.

Outlying boulders are seen along the sea shore, and on the summits of the hills. They are principally granites, quartz, gneiss, and mica slates with garnets, none of these rocks being found *in situ* nearer than twenty miles. Some of the boulders are of enormous size.

The action of the sea on the coast of this parish is noticed by Mr Lyell, (Geol. Vol. i. p. 399), and particular reference is made to the destruction of the village of Milton of Mathers, by an in-

* No organic remains were observed in any of these rocks prior to this year, (1841), when in the gray sandstones of Canterland den, which correspond in geological character to the paving stones of Turin, immense quantities of vegetable remains were discovered to exist, by Mr James Peter of Canterland. These consist of broad tapering leaves, fragments of the stems, branches, and leaves of fuci, called *fucoides*, and rounded masses of oval or circular dots, resembling the compressed seeds of the strawberry, and supposed by Mr Millar to be the roe of an extinct species of gigantic lobster.

† So similar are these hardened shales to their ancient types, that the author of the account of the parish of Tannadice has been led from observing some of them in this neighbourhood, into the error of supposing a seam of the ancient clay-slate formation to run from Johnshaven to Easdale.

road of the sea, towards the close of the last century, The facts ascertained from persons still living, and who were inhabitants of the village at the period referred to, are these: The village stood on a low beach, a little to the east of the headland of Rockhall. It was protected, on the other side, by a ledge of limestone rock, running across the bay in front of it, and acting as a break-water against the incursions of high tides, to which it was much exposed. This rock was quarried for lime, and as its removal proceeded, the sea was allowed to expend its fury on the beach. By this action, continued through several years, a large part of the village was carried away, and in order to check its further inroads, a stone rampart was erected, which is still kept up for the protection of that portion of the village which remains. The new village (Tanglehá,) is built on the old line of the coast, a little to the south of Milton. Mr Lyell's narrative is given below.*

An illustration of the agency of running water is also derived, by Mr Lyell, from this parish. "In the bay of Montrose," he says, "we find the North Esk and the South Esk, rivers pouring annually into the sea large quantities of sand and pebbles, yet they have formed no deltas; for the tides scour out the channels, and the current setting across their mouths, sweeps away all the materials. Considerable beds of shingle, brought down by the North Esk, are seen along the beach." Eastward of the mouth of the river, there was, about sixty years ago, a broad range of *bents*, upwards of a mile in extent. In subsequent years, this range was entirely carried away by the sea, and it is again gradually, but very perceptibly forming, by the addition of a fresh ridge of sand and sea-grasses, in the course of every five or six years.

Soil.—The soil is very various; but its general character is that of being rich and productive in a very high degree. There is a deep deposit of clay mingled with numerous small boulders and angular fragments of different rocks over a wide range of the parish; and, where this deposit exists, it would seem that the ferti-

* "On the coast of Kincardineshire, an illustration was afforded at the close of the last century, of the effect of promontories in protecting a line of low shore. The village of Mathers, two miles south of Johnshaven, was built on an ancient shingle beach, protected by a projecting ledge of limestone rock. This was quarried for lime to such an extent, that the sea broke through, and, in 1795, carried away the whole village in one night, and penetrated 150 yards inland, where it has maintained its ground ever since, the new village having been built farther inland, on the new shore."

lity of the soil had little or no relation to the rocks lying below. In some parts, the trap is close to the surface, and, in this case, the soil appears to derive its productive qualities, in a great measure, from the decomposition of that rock. This description of land is found chiefly in the southern division of the parish; in the other sections of it, the clayey soil, for the most part, prevails.

Zoology.—The list of mammiferous animals, exclusive of the common domesticated animals of the country, does not contain more than 20 of the 52 species indigenous to Great Britain. The most remarkable of these are, the stoat or ermine, found in Canterland den, and the badger, said to be extinct in the vicinity of the Grampians. The hedgehog, formerly not observed in this district, is now common; the polecat and otter are much less frequent. The fox and roe-deer are found, at present, in considerable numbers. Seals and porpoises frequent the rocks and river-mouth, and individuals of the whale tribe are occasionally stranded on our shores.

The species of native birds do not, so far as is at present ascertained, exceed 58, and nearly as many have been enumerated as occasional visitants. Of the former class may be noted, *Falco peregrinus*, *Numenius arquata*, *Totanus calidris*, *Larus ridibundus*, *Sterna hirundo*, and *Anas Crecca*. The latter class are chiefly aquatic birds, which frequent the bay and mouth of the river in immense numbers. Specimens have lately been shot in the parish of *Ardea cinerea* (an accidental and rare variety distinguished by its white plumage), *Sturnus roseus*, and *Coracias garrula*.

The following is a list of such fishes as are more or less frequently found in the river and adjoining sea :

Murena anguilla	Bleennius viviparus	Sparus Raii
—— eonger	Cottus estaphræctus	Labrus tinca
Anarrhichas lupus	—— scorpius	Gasterosteus (3 species)
Ammodytes tobianus	Pleuronectes hippoglossus	Trigla gurnardus
Calionymus lyra	—— platessa	—— lævis†
Gadus Æglefinus	—— fiesus	Scomber scomber
—— Morrhu	—— limanda	—— trachurus
—— merlangus	—— microscephalus	Salmo salar
—— carbonarius	—— solea	—— trutta
—— Molva	—— maximus	—— fario
—— trichratus	—— limaadus	—— eperlanus
Bleennius Gunellus	—— rhombus	Esox Balone

* In very great numbers in the stake and bag-nets.

† This beautiful species is not unfrequently caught in the stake-nets.

Mugil cephalus
 Clupea harengus
 — pilchardus
 — sprattus
 Syngnathus acus
 — Ophidion

Cyclopterus lumpus
 Lophius piscatorius
 Acipenser Sturio*
 Squalus Canioula
 — catulus
 — acanthias

Raja Batis
 — Oxyrhynchus
 — clavata
 Petromyzon marinus
 — fluviatilis

Along the sea-shore are found various species of *Loligo*, *Actinia*, *Asterias*, *Medusa*, *Echinus*, *Cancer*, with the following Testacea :

Chiton marginatus
 Cardium aculeatum
 Dentalium entalis
 Donax trunculus
 Maetra solida
 — lutraria
 Nerita glaucina
 Helix aspera

Pholas crispata
 Venus Islandica
 Patella lacustris
 — ungarica
 Mya truncata
 — arenaria
 — margaritifera

Serpula spirorbis
 Solen ensis
 — vagina
 Strombus pes-pelecani
 Murex clathratus
 Tellina radiata
 Turbo cimex.

Botany.—Some notices of the botany of this parish, contributed, among others, by the Rev. Mr Chrystall of Arbuthnott, are to be found in Dr Murray's Northern Flora. In general, the native vegetation of St Cyrus more resembles that of the parishes of Montrose and Craig, situated directly to the south of it, than that of the district of the Mearns, with which it is immediately connected, the soil and rocks having a nearer affinity to those of the former than of the latter; and, accordingly, not a few plants common to this with the southern parishes, either entirely disappear, or their distribution is much less extensive, on advancing a little northward beyond the limits of this parish. In the upland parts, adjoining to Garvock, few or no plants are observed which seem worthy of notice, except, perhaps, *Menyanthes trifoliata*, *Parnassia palustris*, *Trollius Europæus*, and *Anagallis tenella*, which are, by no means, uncommon in the neighbourhood; but, in the more shady dens, on the banks of the north Esk, and particularly along the base and in the recesses of the cliffs of St Cyrus, where there is a genial exposure to the south, the vegetation of native plants is luxuriant and beautiful. Among these, may be enumerated the following, which are found associated with the gray sandstone, but chiefly with the trap formation :

On moist or marshy ground,—*Valeriana officinalis*, *Alisma Plantago*, several species of *Epilobium*, *Aira aquatica*, *Aquilegia vulgaris*, with numerous *Carices*, among which may be specified *C. dioica*, *C. distans*, *C. intermedia*, *C. riparia*, and *C. pendula*, the last very sparingly in Den Fenella; and *Lemna trisulca*, of which no specimen appears to have been met with in the north of Scotland

* Several specimens of which have been caught lately.

prior to 1837, when it was discovered by Mr Alexander Croall of Montrose, in the dam of Stone of Morphy.

On banks, fields, and by way-sides,—*Primula veris*, with its hybrid relative *P. elatior*, *Anagallis arvensis*, *Convolvulus arvensis*, *Gentiana campestris*, *Saxifraga granulata*, *Pimpinella saxifraga*, *Agrimonia Eupatoria*, *Antirrhinum linaria*, *Cardamine amara*, *Sisymbrium Sophia*, *Carduus acanthoides*, and *Avena alpina*.

In salt marshes,—*Scirpus maritimus*, *Potamogeton pusillus*, and *Aster tripolium*; and on dry, sandy, or gravelly banks in the neighbourhood of the sea, *Phleum arenarium* and *nodosum*, *Poa maritima*, *Elymus arenarius*, very abundantly along the outer range of the bents from the mouth of the north Esk eastward, with *Arundo arenaria*, *Triticum junceum*, and *Carex arenaria*; *Hyoscyamus niger*, *Viola flavicornis*, *Salsola Kali*, several species of *Arenaria*, *Origanum vulgare*, *Cakile maritima*, *Eryngium maritimum*, and *Lithospermum maritimum*, of which two last plants, though said to have been met with, some years ago, not a single specimen can now be found in the parish.

In the shady dens of Fenella and Morphy,—*Poa nemoralis*, *Festuca sylvatica*, *F. elatior*, *Bromus giganteus*, *B. asper*, *B. sterilis*, *Asperula odorata*, *Galium boreale*, *Allium vineale*, *A. ursinum*, *A. oleraceum*, *Paris quadrifolia*, and *Adoxa Moschatellina*.

In the recesses and on the sloping sides of the cliffs of St Cyrus,—*Campanula glomerata*, *Dianthus deltoides*, *Silene nutans*, *Lathyrus sylvestris*, *Vicia lutea*, *V. sylvatica*, *V. lathyroides*, *V. angustifolia*, *Solidago Virgaurea*, *Pyrethrum maritimum*, *Eupatorium cannabinum*, *Carlina vulgaris*, *Echium vulgare*, *Geranium pratense*, *G. sanguineum*, *Tragopogon pratensis*, and *Trifolium scabrum*. This last was observed by Mr James Cruickshank of Dumfries, in 1838, on the peninsula of the Kaim of Mathers, and also on a spot about half a mile westward, and, though common in England, is only known to exist in other two stations in Scotland, the nearest of which is on the coast of Haddington.

Plantations.—The whole of the woods in the parish have been planted, and cover a surface of somewhat more than 300 acres. They consist of the usual sorts of evergreen trees, mingled with the hard-woods, ash, elm, beech, and a few oaks. The soil is not unfavourable to the growth of any of the sorts of trees employed in the formation of plantations; but, being exposed to the influences of the sea breeze, their growth is necessarily slow, though, on this very account, they are said to produce timber of

superior durability. The mansion-houses in the parish are generally surrounded by clumps of hard-wood trees of considerable age and size; and, in one instance, on an elevated spot, close by the sea shore, there is a goodly collection of ash and other deciduous trees, which appear to have withstood for centuries the fury of the eastern gales. The hill of Woodston was planted about eighty years ago, and yields excellent timber, though of small size. At a later period, the plantations of Mount Cyrus were laid out, and have been considerably extended by the present proprietor. The plantations of Lauriston are just about to be further enlarged, by the addition of a pretty large extent on the north side of the estate.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Land-owners.—The land-owners in this parish are, Mr Lyall of Lauriston; Mr Dingwall Fordyce of Brucklay, proprietor of Woodston; Mr Grant of Mount Cyrus; Mr Fitzmaurice Scott of Comeston; Mr J. R. Scott of Stone of Morphy, a minor; Mr Graham of Morphy; the Earl of Kintore; Captain Orr of Bridgeton; Mr Grahame Straton of Kirkside; Mr T. Newman Farquhar of Jackston; and Sir Alexander Ramsay of Balmain, Bart., proprietor of Muirhead.

Parochial Registers.—The oldest minute book of the kirk-session commences with the date May 24, 1696, and the register of baptisms and marriages with that of April of the same year. Both have been continued with some irregularity to the present time. There are blanks in the minutes from 1732 to 1744, from 1791 to 1797, and from 1810 to 1816; and the volume containing the register of marriages, from 1776 to 1834, appears to have been lost.

Antiquities.—The Castle of Lauriston, which was situated towards the east end of the parish, and about a mile from the sea shore, appears to have been a place of some note in ancient times. It was called by Lord Hailes the "Fortress of Lauriston." It was built in the tenth century, and sustained repeated sieges by the troops of Edward III. In 1336, it was captured and garrisoned by that monarch, and, towards the termination of that year, was recaptured and demolished by the Guardian Murray, along with "the fortresses of Kineff and Dunoter" (Hailes's Annals, p. 191, and Guthrie's History). The castle and lands of Lauriston continued in the possession of the Straton family for a period of 400 years prior to 1695, when the estate was sold to "Sir John Falconer

and Elizabeth Trent, his wife," from whose representatives it was purchased, about fifty years ago, by its late proprietor, Mr Brand. At that time, the only parts of the building remaining were, a portion of a very strong circular wall, which had formed the western enclosure of the castle, a tower of a square form at one extremity of this wall and built on a projecting ledge of the precipice, along the edge of which the wall was carried, and a portion of the ancient chapel. These remains of the fortress are preserved, by having been incorporated, some years after the purchase of the lands by Mr Brand, into a spacious and elegant modern mansion.*

The Kaim of Mathers, or camp of Mathers, so called from its situation on the lands of Mathers, is a ruin on a rocky and almost inaccessible peninsula, overlooking the sea, about a mile and a-half southward of the house of Lauriston. The isthmus, connecting the rock with the mainland, was guarded by two rows of battlements, one of which still remains in a state of considerable preservation. There are traces of building around the greater part of the rock; and, on its sea-ward extremity, there are the remains of a square tower, which can only be approached by a leap over a chasm of about 60 feet in depth. This place is supposed to have been the residence of certain of the ancestors of Mr Barclay of Ury, and to have been used as a place of retreat, by one of that family, in the time of James I. The tradition respecting it is connected with the story of the death of Melville, Sheriff of the Mearns, and appears, according to Sir Walter Scott, to have had some foundation in fact; while, according to the author of the *Agricultural Survey of the Mearns*, "the origin of the Kaim of Mathers is generally cited in testimony of the truth of the extraordinary manner of Melville's death, just in the same way as Queen Fenella's journey from Fettercairn to Den Fenella, on the tops of the trees, is alleged, as proof positive, that the country was then thickly covered with wood."†

* The lands of Lauriston and Easter Mathers were purchased this year by Mr Lyall, from Miss Watson, to whom they had fallen, as heir-at-law, on the death of Mr Brand in 1839.

† In a note on the story of Lord Soulis, in the *Minstrelsy of the Border*, Sir Walter says,—"The tradition regarding the death of Lord Soulis, however singular, is not without a parallel in the real history of Scotland. The same extraordinary mode of cookery was actually practised (*horresco referens*), upon the body of a Sheriff of the Mearns. This person, whose name was Melville of Gleubervie, bore his faculties so harshly, that he became detested by the barons of the county. Reiterated complaints of his conduct having been made to James I., (or, as others say, to the Duke of Albany), the monarch answered, in a moment of unguarded impatience, "Sorrow gin the Sheriff were sodden and supped in broo!" The complainers retired perfectly-satisfied. Shortly after, the lairds of Arbuthnott, Mathers, Lauriston,

Another fortress in the parish was the Castle of Morphy, on the property of Francis Graham, Esq. and said to have been a residence belonging to the Noble family of that name. It is believed to have been a place of some strength, was defended by a wall, ditch, and drawbridge, and occupied a commanding position on the brink of a romantic ravine uniting with the valley of the North Esk. Its site is now a ploughed field.*

The Stone of Morphy.—This is an obelisk situated on the lands of the same name, in the western division of the parish. With reference to it, the writer of the former Account says, that it is difficult to determine whether it had been erected to preserve the memory of some gallant warrior of the name of Graham, to which Noble family the lands of Morphy originally belonged, or whether it may be a remnant of a Druidical temple; while, at the same time, he appears not to have been aware of the existence of a tradition, which says, that it was erected in memory of a son of Canus, or some other important personage in his army, who was killed here in an engagement with the Scots, after the defeat and death of the Danish leader at Panbride. The Danes, on that event, immediately retreated northward, and, according to the tra-

and Pittarrow, decoyed Melville to the top of the hill of Garvock, under pretence of a grand hunting party. Upon this place, still called the Sheriff's Pot, the barons had prepared a fire and a boiling cauldron, into which they plunged the unlucky Sheriff. After he was 'sodden,' as the King termed it, for a sufficient time, the savages, that they might literally observe the Royal mandate, concluded the scene of abomination, by actually partaking of the hell-broth. The three lairds were outlawed for the offence, and Barclay, one of their number, to screen himself from justice, erected the Kaim (i. e. the fortress) of Mathers. The Laird of Arbutnott is said to have eluded the Royal vengeance, by claiming the benefit of the law of the clan Macduff. A pardon, or perhaps a deed of replegiation, founded on that law, is said to be still extant among the records of the Viscount of Arbutnott."

* An illustration of the popular superstitions of Angus-shire is derived from the building of this castle, in a poem by Dr. Jamieson in the *Minstrelsy of the Border*, in which the exploits of the water-kelpy are recorded. From time immemorial to that of "John o' Arnha," the water-kelpy has, according to popular belief, been an inhabitant of the North Esk, and the Castle of Morphy, being in the vicinity of that part of the river where he was thought to be most frequently seen, it is said that he afforded most material service in its erection. A stanza of the poem referred to is as follows:—

When Morphy's laird his biggin rear'd,
I carryt aw the stanes,
And mony a chiel has heard me squeal
For sair birz'd back and banes, &c.

In a note by the writer, it is said, "The water-kelpy celebrated the event of carrying stones for the building of the castle in rhyme; and that for a long time after he was often heard to cry with a doleful voice,

Sair back and sair banes,
Carrying the Laird o' Morphy's stanes.

To which a later edition of the history has added,

The Laird o' Morphy will never thrive,
So long as Kelpy is alive.

dition, encountered the Scots near the Stone of Morphy; and that a battle had there taken place, is probable, from the immense number of stone-coffins, containing human bones, which have been found, particularly in and near a field called "the sick man's shade," close by the stone. The farm adjoining that on which the pillar stands, bears the name of Comeston, or, as it is written in old records, Camuston. The names of Wardroperton and Scotstown, two farms bordering on the latter, seem to indicate the position of the Scottish army; and a den quite close to the pillar is called Dannie's den, which seems easily convertible into Danish den. The form of the stone, which is a plain unsculptured obelisk of 13 feet in height above the ground, and tapering from 4 feet in breadth at the base, to 2 at the top, seems also to correspond with the description of other Danish monuments in different parts of Scotland.

The Camp of Pitbeadlay.—On the most prominent part of the hill of Pitbeadlay (i. e. *the grave of the house on the hill*), there is a small circular camp, which, within a few years, was in a state of tolerable preservation. It is nearly forty yards in diameter, and had a ditch, and a wall of turf and stones, and a central building constructed of stone. Some remains of human bones were lately exhumed within its inclosure. There is, however, no tradition connected with it.

Den Fenella.—This place takes its name from Fenella, daughter of the Earl of Angus, who, on attempting to escape from her castle of Kincardine, in the parish of Fordoun, after the murder of Kenneth III., was overtaken here by her pursuers, and put to death. This is the traditionary account given by John Major, in his *Antiquities of the Mearns*.

Some notices from the session records, regarding the state of the parish in the years 1715 and 1716, are transcribed below.*

* "October 9, 1715. This day Mr John Lamy, sometime prelatieall incumbent here, did violently intrud himself upon this church and parish, being assisted by ane armed band of ruffians brought from other parishes, especially from Fernall and Kin-naird, who did violently deforce our minister when he was coming to perform divine worship, as he had done twenty years before; but such was the fury of the mob, that they would not suffer him to come near the churchyard, Mr Lamy in the meantime being possess in the pulpit, so that he was forced to retire to his own house, where he preached to such as could have access to hear him." There is a blank in the record from this date to February 5, 1716, when it thus proceeds:—"This day, the rebels having all past by this church about two a clock in the afternoon, the minister ordered the bell to be rung, and repossess himself again of his pulpit, to the great satisfaction of all present; and there being but few that day in the church, it being about three a clock befor divine worship could be begun, the minister lectured from the 3d Psalm so long as the day would permitt." "February 12, 1716. This day,

The Stratons of Lauriston.—“The Stratons of Laurieston were a good family in the Mearns, but they are now decayed, though some Stratons, particularly Straiton of Kirkside, and some of Laurieston, are standing.” (Nisbet’s Heraldry). A branch of the Lauriston family obtained a charter of the ecclesiastical lands of “Ecclesgreig, *alias* Kirksyde,” in 1582. “Alexander de Straiton de Lauranton,” fell with several of his sons at the battle of Harlaw, in 1411.* “George Stratoun of Lauranton” was one of the first persons of rank and respectability who embraced the reformed doctrines, anno 1540. He sat in Parliament for the shire of Kincardine in 1567. His son, “Sir Alexander Stratoun, Knight,” also sat in Parliament in 1597; and, in 1605, held the situation of Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly, which met in Aberdeen in that year. The conduct of “Laurieston” on that and subsequent occasions is adverted to by the different historians of the church. (See Calderwood’s History, M’Crie’s Life of Andrew Melville, and Cook’s History of the Church of Scotland).

Mansion-Houses.—There are mansion-houses on the estates of Bridgeton, Lauriston, Mount Cyrus, and Kirkside, all of late erection. None of them, however, are at present occupied by their proprietors, with the exception of that of Mount Cyrus. The

the parish being full of Swees and Dutch souldiers, the people could not leave their houses, so that there was this day in the church some Swees officers, and some heads of families. The minister lectured from Exodus xiv. 13 and 14, v.” (for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see no more for ever). “The Brigadier had sent word to the minister that he could not stay above three-quarters of an hour.” “February 19, 1716. The parish also this day being thronged with Swees and Dutch souldiers, only some few heads of families were in the church. They could not stay from their houses for fear they should be spoiled and plundered, as many were that day.”

• “And then the worthy Laird Saltoun,
The stout undaunted Laird of Drum,
The stalwart Laird of Laurieston,
With ilk their horses all, &c.

And then the Knight of Laurieston
Was slain in his armour schene,” &c.

Laing’s Metrical Ballads.

“The Stratons were a race of men remarkable for size and strength. Their attachment to Laurieston in St Cyrus was so great, that they changed the name of every other place where any of them settled into Laurieston” (Former Account). The brother of George Stratoun of Lauranton, David Stratoun, had a dispute with Patrick Hepburn, Bishop of Moray, and Prior of St Andrews, regarding the tithes of his fishings, and gave directions to his domestics to throw every tenth salmon into the river, saying, “Let the Bishop seek the tithes where my servants get the stock.” The remarkable conversion of this person is noticed by cotemporary historians. He was a disciple of Erskine of Dun, and being cited for heresy, and having refused to retract, he was led to the stake, and suffered with great constancy and resolution, 27th August 1534, at Greenside, near Edinburgh, with Norman Gourlay, a priest.

mansion houses on the other estates are in the occupancy of the respective tenants of the lands. The house of Bridgeton is pleasantly situated on a rising ground near the eastern extremity of the parish. There is an excellent garden attached to it; and, from the regular disposition of the grounds, and some belts of wood lately planted, the place has altogether an appearance of much neatness. The mansion-house of Lauriston, a little to the west of Bridgeton, occupies the site of the ancient fortress of Lauriston. It is a spacious, elegant building, erected some years after the purchase of the lands, by their late proprietor, Mr Brand, and united, as before-mentioned, to a portion of the old castle, which was then standing. The situation, on the brink of a perpendicular precipice, overhanging a deep wooded ravine, is exceedingly romantic, and the walks, approaches, bridges, and plantations by which the grounds are adorned, render this place one of the most delightful residences in the county. The mansion-house of Mount Cyrus, the property of Mr Grant, stands on a rising ground to the north-west of the church and village of St Cyrus. It is a substantial and graceful building, with a neat approach and extensive lawn in front, and, with its young and thriving plantations, by which it is on all sides surrounded, imparts an agreeable aspect to this part of the parish. The house of Kirkside, which, with the estate, lately came into the possession of Mr Graham Stratton, on the death of his relative, Lieutenant-General Sir Joseph Stratton, is a substantial modern building, situated near the southern extremity of the parish, and commanding a prospect of the bay, town, and basin of Montrose, with the rich and diversified scenery around.

The materials employed for building, and of which the parish affords an abundant supply, are, for the most part, the red sandstones of Lauriston and Woodston. Some of the older buildings are constructed of the sandstones of the Whitecraig, others of the trap rocks of the cliff of Kirkside, and a few houses on the west side of the parish, are built chiefly of the flagstones and shales of the den of Canterland.

III.—POPULATION.

Since the date of Dr Webster's enumeration, there have been ten returns of the population. The returns from the years 1781 to 1792 inclusive, are copied from the former Statistical Account. They appear to have been made by the incumbents of

the parish, and in the last of these years, the name of every individual, with his place of residence, occupation, and age, is entered in the minute-book of the kirk-session.

The following table shows the state of the population from the time of Dr Webster's account to 1841.

Years.	Population.	Years.	Population.
1755,	- 1271	1801,	- 1622
1781,	- 1687	1811,	- 1664
1785,	- 1704	1821,	- 1641
1788,	- 1750	1831,	- 1598
1792,	- 1763	1841,	- 1600
1798,	- 1638		

The population appears to have remained nearly stationary since the year 1798. The larger returns from 1781 to that year are accounted for, by the circumstance of the lime-quarries of Milton and Mathers being then in full operation, and the diminution in 1798, by the removal from the parish of a number of families dependent on the prosecution of these works, which, about that period, were partially, and not long after, entirely abandoned.

Population of villages.

Kirktown of St Cyrus,	179
Roadside, (including Burnside),	105
Lochside, (including Whitehill),	112
Milton and Tangleha',	50

Statement of births, deaths, and marriages.

Years.	Births registered.			Deaths registered.			Banns published.
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	
1831,	24	19	43	11	18	29	...
1832,	20	18	38	8	16	24	...
1833,	14	22	36	22	13	35	...
1834,	19	23	42	18	18	36	...
1835,	22	20	42	5	9	14	10
1836,	20	21	41	13	13	26	17
1837,	22	19	41	24	19	43	11
Averages,			40			28	12

Classification and analysis of the population.

Average number of persons under 15 years of age,	601
between 15 and 30,	369
30 and 50,	231
50 and 70,	231
upwards of 70,	51
Number of individuals of independent fortune, not proprietors of land, in the parish,	3
Number of landed proprietors of whom only one, Mr Grant of Mount Cyrus, is at present resident,	11
Number of unmarried men, bachelors, and widowers, upwards of 50 years of age, 30 women, upwards of 45,	112
Number of families,	372
inhabited houses,	362

Number of houses partly ruinous and uninhabited, building,	30
Children in each family, nearly	0
	3

Insane, 1; fatuous, 2; blind, 2; deaf and dumb, 3.

	No. of families.	No. of children in these families.
First class, farmers employing from 6 to 10 horses,	16	41
Second class, farmers employing from 2 to 4 horses,	26	79
Third class, being crofters employing 1 horse,	24	52
Fourth class, crofters employing no horse,	18	46
Fifth class, agricultural labourers married,	66	152
Employed in trade and handicraft,	35	108
Day-labourers chiefly employed in agriculture,	16	13
Employed in salmon-fishing, (some of these being crofters and labourers,)	34	86
No. of unmarried females or widows residing alone,		47
two or more together,		22
having children dependent upon them, and residing with them,		37
No. of children or relatives dependent on the former class,		50
unmarried agricultural labourers residing in bothies, the houses of their masters,		62
servants, apprentices, salmon-fishers, &c. residing in bothies, female servants,		16
		125
No. of persons residing in the families of some of the above classes, not being children,		75

There are in the parish, 6 grocers, 1 cooper, 5 house and cartwrights, 7 blacksmiths, 1 turner, 4 corn or flour millers, 9 shoemakers, 5 gardeners, 30 persons occasionally employed as handloom weavers, 4 tailors, 1 slater, 1 saddler, 3 whitefishers, 51 salmon-fishers, 1 farrier, 9 masons, 11 carters, and 11 stone-masons. A surgeon resides in the Kirktown of St Cyrus.

The introduction of spirits by the Highland traders, so prevalent some years ago, has been entirely suppressed; and poaching for game has become much less common of late years, from the active measures employed by a game-association, instituted among the principal landed gentlemen of the county, for the punishment of this species of delinquency. The practice of poaching for salmon still prevails, as, notwithstanding the care with which the river is guarded, fresh salmon may, it is said, be privately obtained at all times during the close season, from parties in the town and neighbourhood of Montrose, by whom this illicit trade is carried on.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—View of distribution of lands according to returns taken from Mr Robertson's survey in 1807, and returns obtained from the different landed proprietors in 1837:—

	1807.	1837.
Under tillage, . . .	5480 imp. acres.	6234 imp. acres.
Plantations, . . .	255	316
Improveable, . . .	1108	780
Waste, &c.	1684	844
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total,	8477	8174
Not accounted for,		903

The extent of undivided common is stated at about 200 acres. It is, at present, together with the greater proportion of the waste lands, almost entirely valueless. Much, however, might be done in the way of planting and cultivation, there being but very few acres in the parish which are not fitted for these purposes. The usual sorts of trees planted are ash, beech, plane, elm, birch, larch, Scotch and silver fir. A great variety of other trees have been introduced into the policies of Lauriston, and have been found to succeed well. From the preceding statement of the number of acres under cultivation in 1807 and 1837, it will be observed, that about 800 acres of land have been brought into tillage, during the thirty years intervening between these dates, the rate of improvement being about one-quarter of an acre per cent. annually.

Rental.—Comparative view of rental in the years 1791, 1807, and 1837 :

	1791.	1807.	1837.
Land rent,	L.2928	L.6757	L.9631
Salmon fishings,	850	2000	2991
Thinnings of wood, say	-	-	70
Sandstone quarries,	-	-	103
Lime quarries,	-	-	0
			<hr/>
Total rental,			L.12,795
Valued rent,			L.6277 2 4
Average rent per imperial acre, about			1 10 6

Wages, Rates of Labour, Prices, Breeds of Live-Stock.—It is unnecessary to enter into any detail regarding these, as the information already published in accounts of contiguous parishes is applicable in every particular to these matters, in regard to this parish. It may just be added, with reference to the price of grain, that, though the sale is effected nominally by measure, the farmer is in fact paid according to the weight of the article, a standard weight being assumed for the bushel, and the price ascending or descending with every pound weight above or below the fixed point. Since the introduction of this mode of computation, a considerable deterioration has taken place in the value of inferior land.

It is not customary in this parish to graze cattle or sheep by the head. There are scarcely any sheep kept permanently in the

coast district of the Mearns. During winter, flocks from the mountains are pastured on the lowlands, at a fixed rent for the season; and grass enclosures are rented by the acre for summer grazing of cattle.

Husbandry.—The alternations of cropping usually adopted are the fourth and fifth-shifts, according to the character of the soil, and the command of manure. The proportion of land employed, about thirty years ago, in the cultivation of wheat, was very nearly one-tenth part of the whole arable surface, and this proportion amounted to about two-fifths of the entire surface sown with wheat within the county. At present, about one sixtieth part of the arable land in the parish is laid out in the production of this kind of grain. Beans, pease, and barley also, enter less extensively into the system of cropping than formerly, while the breadth sown with potatoes is relatively greater than that in any parish in the county. Flax is not now cultivated. Barley and oats are sown in the proportion of about one acre of the former to three of the latter. On some of the upland farms, no barley is sown at all.

Leases are, for the most part, held at a fixed rent in money, and for a period of nineteen years. The farm-dwellings are substantial and comfortable, and the farm-offices usually slated, and fitted up in a very superior manner.

The lands have been, in most instances, subdivided with regularity; but there are few enclosures, hedge-rows, or belts of wood, excepting in the immediate vicinity of the principal mansion-houses, and the richest tracts of land in the parish are destitute of shelter and permanent fence of any description. In these respects, and in the want of more capacious and comfortable cottages for the farm-labourer, the chief obstacles to improvement appear to be experienced.*

* Among the names mentioned in connexion with the earlier agricultural improvements of the county are those of William Graham, Esq. of Morphy, in this parish; Sir Alexander Ramsay of Balmain, whose improvements were more or less extended over all the lands of which he was proprietor, including those of Snadon, in this parish, and Robert Scott, Esq. of Dunninald, whose improvements on the farm of Milton, also in this parish, form, with a single exception, the earliest instance on record of the introduction of the modern system of husbandry into the county. Mr Scott became, in 1750, tenant of that farm, and of the lime-works on it, and from that period carried on his improvements with so much vigour and success, that his plans came to be generally adopted throughout the parish, and in the short space of twenty years, the rent of land rose from 10s. and 15s. to L. 1, 10s., and in some instances to L. 2 an acre. More recently, the state of the parish, as to agricultural improvement, is described as having been such, that "though there are two or three pa-

Quarries.—Trap or *scurdy* rock is obtained at the expense of quarrying and carriage, in various parts of the parish, and there are several quarries of sandstone, which yield an abundant supply of good building materials. The stone of the Whitecraig on the lands of Kirkside, is a white sandstone, well fitted on account of its beauty and durability for ornamental architecture, but too expensive, from its hardness, for general use in building. The quarries of Woodston and Lauriston afford the principal supply of sandstone to the district within a circuit of ten miles. The stone is a reddish soft sandstone, easily wrought, and very durable. Both quarries, which are within a few yards of each other, though on different properties, are at present in the hands of one tenant, who holds a kind of monopoly of the trade. The value of stones exported from these quarries, is estimated at from L.800 to L.1000 a year. Prices at the quarries as under : 6d. and 8d. per load of rubble ; 4d. and upwards, according to size, per foot, for blocks ; ridge-stones, 6d. per running foot ; pavement, 3d. per square foot, dressed ; carriage to Montrose, six miles and a half, 3s. per ton of 12 cubic feet.

The tile-stones of Morphy were at one time used for roofing, but after a trial, were discontinued, having been found to yield so rapidly to the influences of the atmosphere.

The most extensive lime-works in the county were at East Mathers, in this parish. They are said to have been wrought for a very long period, and to have produced, during a space of eighty years, an average of 20,000 bolls annually. The limestone lay, in detached masses, along a portion of the sea shore, and was for a time quarried at a trifling expense, but the rock passing inland under a deep bank, the labour of mining became at last so expensive, as to cause an entire suppression of the works about the year 1836, for several years before which time not more than 1000 bolls having been burnt annually.

Fisheries.—There are several very valuable salmon-fisheries connected with the properties of Stone of Morphy, Comeston (and Kinnaber), Kirkside, Woodston, and West Mathers. The fishing belonging to the last mentioned estate was alienated from it some years since, and now belongs to Mr Grant of Mount Cyrus. The proprietor of Lauriston also derives a small revenue from a fishing lately established on the coast adjacent to his lands.

ishes in the county that have a greater proportion of arable land, there are none in which the powers of cultivation are more vigorously exerted, or in which the lands in general yield a greater return, or are let at a higher rent."

The whole of these fishings, which comprehend the entire extent of the sea-coast, and of the North Esk river, from its mouth to the boundary of the lands of Morphy, brought, in 1837, a rental of L.3591. The fishing of Comeston and Kinnaber includes part of the river and sea coast, and the latter property being in the parish of Montrose, a moiety of the value of this fishing, which is the joint property of the respective proprietors, falls to be deducted from the above rental, and the remainder, or L. 2991, was the revenue in the year referred to, from the fishings connected with this parish. Reports of the number of fish caught at some of the stations are given in the minutes of evidence before a committee of the House of Commons in 1825. So many as 3000 fish, including salmon, grilse, and trouts, are said to have been caught in one day in July 1835. The number of men employed is about sixty; wages, from 8s. to 15s. a week, with fish-money, or an additional allowance according to the number caught. Prices of salmon vary from 8d. to 2s. 6d. per lb.; and the greater part of the fish is transported in ice to the Edinburgh and London markets.

There has been, for many years, a small white-fishery carried on by the inhabitants of the village of Milton. In 1781, the village contained 46 families, comprising 170 individuals, and had three boats, with six men to each, engaged in the white-fishing. But in 1792, the village was, as before mentioned, partially destroyed, and the fishermen were, at the same time, deprived of their harbour. Since that time, not more than one or two small boats have been employed, and the population of Milton, with that of Tanglehá, is now reduced to fifty souls. One boat is still engaged in the white-fishing, and affords support to two or three families.

Produce.—For the purpose of arriving at an approximate value of the raw produce, it has been attempted to ascertain, with as much precision as possible, the number of acres under each kind of crop, and the average produce of each acre. The following results have been obtained :

Grain crop.—

Wheat,	109 imperial acres,	4 quarters per acre,	412 qrs.
Barley,	750 do.	4½ do. do.	3375 qrs.
Oats,	1952 do.	5 do. do.	9760 qrs.

Green crop.—

Turnips,	835 imperial acres,	10 tons per acre,	8350 tons.
Potatoes,	263 do.	25 bolls do.	6575 bolls.
Beans & pease,	135 do.	4 qrs. do.	540 qrs.
Fallow,	170		

Hay and pasture.—

Hay, 400 imperial acres, 170 stones per acre, 68000 stones.
Pasture, 1626.

The value may be estimated as under:—

Grain.—

Wheat,	412 quarters,	at L.2, 12s. per quarter,	L. 1071	0	0
Barley,	3375 do.	at L.1, 10s. do.	5062	0	0
Oats,	9760 do.	at L.1, 2s. do.	10,736	0	0

Green crop.—

Turnips,	8350 tons,	at 7s. per ton,	-	L.2922	0	0
Potatoes,	6575 bolls,	at 7s. per boll,	-	2301	0	0
Beans, &c.	540 qrs.	at L.1, 6s. per qr.	-	702	0	0
Fallow.						

Hay and pasture.—

Hay,	68,000 stones,	at 4d. per stone,	-	L.1133	0	0
Pasture,	1626 acres,	at L.1, 12s. per acre,	-	2601	0	0
Straw,	14,087 quarters,	at 5s. per quarter,		3521	0	0

Total value of grain, green crop, hay, &c.	L.30,049	0	0
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Value of wood sold yearly	-	-	70	0	0
Quarries, say	-	-	1000	0	0
White fisheries,	-	-	100	0	0
Salmon fisheries,	-	-	6000	0	0

Total value of raw produce,	L.37,219	0	0
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In this account is not included the value of hill and sheep pasture, and of gardens, which has not been ascertained.

The value of disposable produce, including grain of all sorts, potatoes, hay, cattle, pigs, poultry, and dairy produce, has been estimated at from L.17,000 to L.18,000. With regard to dairy produce, it may be mentioned, that, on a small farm in the parish, there has been a manufacture of sweet-milk cheeses, to a considerable extent, for a good many years, which originated under the patronage of James Andrew Sandilands, Esq. of Aberdeen, and the demand for them, under the name of Canterland cheese, from various quarters in England and Scotland, is much beyond what can be supplied.

Manufactures.—About thirty hand-loomers are employed in the manufacture of coarse linen during winter. In summer the number is less, several hands being then more profitably engaged in salmon-fishing.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Market-Town.—The nearest market-town is Montrose, distant three miles from the south-western boundary of the parish, and five and a-half miles from the village of St Cyrus.

Villages.—The village or kirktown of St Cyrus consists of about forty houses, for the most part straw-thatched cottages, disposed without much regard to neatness or regularity around the parish church. The situation is exceedingly damp and exposed, and appears to possess no other advantage than that of showing off the church, which has rather a respectable appearance, when seen from a distance. Burnside and Roadside form a line of cottages along the north side of the public road, at a short distance from the Kirktown; and, a little to the west of these, there is another hamlet, inhabited, as the others generally are, by feuars and crofters. The united population of these villages, which are included within a circle of one mile from the parish church, amounts to about one-fourth of the whole population of the parish.

Means of Communication.—The parishioners have now the benefit of a branch post-office at Bush of Woodston, before the establishment of which there was often an irregular and expensive conveyance of letters from Montrose, and there is a delivery of letters throughout the parish daily. Two mail-coaches pass daily to and from Edinburgh and Aberdeen. Steam-boats touch four times a week on their passage to and from Inverness, Aberdeen, Leith, &c. at the village of Johnshaven, which is half a mile distant from the eastern extremity of the parish; and there is a communication between Montrose and Newhaven twice a week by steam, during the summer, and by sailing vessels during winter. The public roads and bridges are generally in good condition. The bridge across the north Esk, on the line of the great north road which passes through the parish, a distance of five miles, was built in 1775, at a cost of L.6500; and a small but handsome bridge, on the same line, was erected in 1817, at an expense of L.600. The small harbour of Sea-greens, in the vicinity of the lime-works, is capable of admitting vessels of 50 or 60 tons burden.

Ecclesiastical State.—The church, which was built in 1785 to contain 870 feet of sitting room, or one foot of space for every two persons then in the parish, was enlarged in 1830, and now can accommodate about 50 per cent. of the population, at the rate of 15 inches to each person. The situation is more accessible by the major part of the parishioners than that of the ancient parish church, being about three-quarters of a mile to the north of it, and at a short distance from the turnpike road. It is, however, at an inconvenient distance from many families both in the eastern and western districts of the parish, some of whom have to travel to it

three and four miles by indirect roads. The sittings in the older part of the church are set apart to the heritors and their tenants, and such seats as the latter may not require, are let to feuars and other inhabitants, in some instances at a nominal rent, and in others at 1s. 6d. or more for a sitting. The newer part of the church has not yet been divided. There are two services during six months, from April to September, which are usually well attended. The average number of male heads of families is 225, and the whole number of communicants 700.

The manse was built in 1797. It has since undergone some slight alterations, and is now in good repair. The glebe is four Scotch acres in extent, including the sites of the manse, offices, and garden, and may be valued at L.10 per annum. The stipend is 17 chalders, half meal and half barley, and with L.10 for communion elements, amounted, by the fiars prices of 1837, to L.241.

In the year 1798, according to a census of the population recorded in the session minutes, there were, in the parish, 15 families of Seceders, 2 families of Bereans, and 8 families of Episcopalians, comprising in all 112 individuals. Since then, the number of Dissenters from the Establishment has been very much diminished. In 1837, there were only 27 individuals in the parish who were not in communion with the Established Church. Twenty-three of these were persons belonging to a congregation in the neighbouring village of Johnshaven, in connection with the United Associate Synod; 3 were Bereans; and 1 Episcopalian. There are, besides, one or two individuals who do not profess to be in communion with any body of Christians. Since 1837, one family of Seceders, consisting of 11 individuals, has come to reside in the parish.

A parochial association for religious purposes, under the direction of the minister and elders, was instituted in 1836. The contributions in that and the following year, for the Assembly's India Mission, and Highland Schools, amounted together to L.50. In 1838, the sum collected for the same objects was L.30. Contributions of nearly equal amount have since been made for the other schemes of the Assembly; and the collections at the church doors, for charitable purposes, average about L.15 a-year.

Education.—There are at present six schools in the parish, besides the parochial school. Five of these are conducted by females, who teach reading, sewing, and knitting, and, in one case, writing; and one is conducted by a male teacher, who is qualified

to instruct in reading, writing, and arithmetic. There are usually classes in the parochial school, for geography, Latin, and French, besides the branches ordinarily taught in country schools. The master of the parochial school has a salary of L.33, school fees, amounting to L.30 a-year; a commodious house, much larger than what is considered the legal provision; a garden, and separate school-room. The private schools are all unendowed, and appear to be kept up without any subscription by the parents of children attending them, or by others, beyond what is paid to the teachers in the shape of school fees. The attendance at the parish school is from 60 to 90, occasionally upwards of 100, for whose proper accommodation the room is much too small. The average number of children in constant attendance at all the schools is 200, which is exactly one-eighth part of the whole population of the parish.

There are Sabbath schools at five different stations in the parish, under the conduct of the assistant minister, and other individuals, who take an interest in the religious instruction of the young. There are also classes kept by the assistant minister, on the afternoon and evening of Sabbath, for the instruction of male and female servants, each of which is attended by from 30 to 40 persons. All the young persons in the parish above seven years of age, are in the course of being instructed in reading and writing. The people, in general, shew much anxiety to have their children educated, and use every means to keep them at school as long as possible.

The deed of settlement of the late Sir Joseph Straton of Kirk-side contained a bequest of the sum of L.500 to the heritors and kirk-session of this parish, "for the purpose of promoting education within the parish." The parties in whom the management of this fund is vested have the power of applying it in "such manner as may appear to them best calculated to promote" the intended object, and they have resolved, in the meantime, to lay out the interest arising from it, in the education, at the various schools in the parish, of such children as may be selected by the kirk-session from among the poorer classes of the people.

Library.—The parish library, which has existed for a number of years, under the management of the minister and kirk-session, contains about 750 volumes, chiefly of a religious kind. It was formed by a collection at the church doors, and by a subscription among the parishioners, and has had very little pecuniary support

since its institution. The use of the books is free to all the inhabitants of the parish, and the librarian has given his gratuitous services for an hour every Sabbath morning since the library was established. Smaller libraries, containing sets of the Religious Tract Society's Sabbath School Libraries, are deposited at the different Sabbath school stations.

Savings' Bank.—A branch of the Montrose National Security Savings' Bank was instituted in May 1841, and the deposits, up to the date of this report, amounted to L.180.

Friendly Society.—A society, under the name of the St Cyrus Friendly Society, existed from 1796 to 1834, when it was dissolved.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—In the following table, shewing the state of the poor and parochial funds, at intervals, from 1781 to 1835, are represented, (1.) the number of poor receiving stated monthly allowances; (2.) the number of poor receiving half-yearly allowances; (3.) the amount of collections at church doors; (4.) the amount of interest from stock-funds; (5.) the dues from funerals, marriages, &c.; (6.) the annual expenditure; (7.) the average monthly allowance to each pauper; (8.) the average half-yearly allowance to each pauper in the years (9.) specified.

1.	2.	3.			4.			5.			6.			7.			8.			9.
		L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.	
12	25	10	10	9	16	13	0	2	4	0	29	7	9	0	1	9	1781
18	25	25	11	1	16	13	0	2	13	11	44	18	0	0	1	9	1791
19	14	29	16	5	7	10	0	5	18	0	40	11	9	0	2	0	0	3	6	1806
22	33	45	13	1	8	11	0	8	6	8	99	12	1	0	2	5	0	4	8	1815
25	17	70	6	4	7	13	2	12	11	0	97	15	0	0	3	5	0	7	9	1825
36	24	72	17	1	7	0	0	3	18	6	125	0	0	0	3	10	0	7	0	1835

The funds at the disposal of the kirk-session have been insufficient, for a number of years, for the support of the poor. During the twenty years preceding 1836, contributions to the average amount of L.14 a year were received from the heritors of the parish: and in the same period, donations and legacies from persons not so directly connected with the parish were received to the amount of L.294. In the year just mentioned, the voluntary contribution from the heritors was L.30, and it has since been augmented to L.62, 10s. a year. The number of poor persons on the monthly list is at present 36. Three of these are males above the age of sixty years, three are females under sixty, and the remainder, thirty, are females above the age of sixty years. There are, besides, fourteen persons who have half-yearly allowances varying from 6s. to 12s., and four who receive quarterly allowances of 5s. each. The stated monthly payments range

from 3s. to 14s. The stock-funds in the hands of the kirk-session are, 1st, The residue of old session funds, amounting to L.150; 2d, L.100, a donation from William Dorward, Esq. of Montrose, subject to a payment of L.3 per annum as interest during Mr Dorward's life; 3d, L.20, a legacy received from the representatives of the late Mr Brand of Lauriston, as executor of Mr Duncan of ———; 4th, L.50, a legacy from Miss Shank of Laurencekirk, daughter of the late Rev. Alexander Shank, minister of this parish; and 5th, L.500, a legacy from Sir Joseph Straton of Kirk-side. The last-mentioned bequest, which was received in 1840, and is managed as a separate fund from the ordinary funds of the kirk-session, is to be applied, according to the express will and intention of the donor, "strictly for the relief of poor persons within the parish, and in such a way as may be best calculated to encourage provident habits on the part of such poor." The collections at the church-doors have varied since 1837, from L. 70 to L.80 a year. The expenditure has been raised to above L.140 a year. This has been occasioned partly by the admission on the poor's list of two or three families who have required, for some years past, allowances varying from L. 9 to L. 13 a year, and partly by a payment of about L. 8 a year to poor persons travelling through the parish to their homes, or from town to town in search of employment. Each traveller is allowed 3d. or more; and the whole number relieved in a year cannot be under 500.

Ale-houses.—There is one ale-house near the Kirktown, another towards the east end of the parish, and a third at the North-water-bridge toll. The consumption of spirits at all these places is said to be enormous.

Fuel.—English coals are the chief article of fuel. They are obtained at Montrose and Johnshaven at a cost of 1s. 1d. to 1s. 3d. per barrel; carriage, five miles, 2d. to 3d. per barrel.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

In the foregoing report the more important differences have been mentioned between the existing and former state of the parish, as described in the account of 1791. It will have been observed, that a large extent of waste ground has been brought into cultivation. At the same time much arable land has been efficiently drained; many large farm-houses, and steadings suited to the extended size of farms, have been erected; one large and several smaller bridges have been built. Others have been heigh-

tened, and their approaches improved; and the whole of the public roads have been reconstructed.

The number of poor and their stated allowances have been increased two-fold. There has been for many years little or no indoor employment for aged females, a much earlier application for parochial aid is therefore generally made by this class of persons than would have been needful under other circumstances. At the period of the former account it was estimated "that 500 spindles of coarse yarn, for the manufacture of sail-cloth, were spun by the two-handed females of the parish, from which about L.310 a year were brought into the parish. There were besides the proceeds from the manufacture of finer sorts of yarn for linen and drapery for family use." There is no work of this kind now to be obtained, and the want of it has been much felt by many whose age and growing infirmities render them unfit for more severe employment.

A very obvious alteration has taken place in the habits and style of living of the principal farmers. *They* have certainly advanced at a railroad pace in the march of, at least, physical improvement. On the other hand, the condition of the farm-labourer has remained nearly stationary, though he enjoys more enlarged means of education and intellectual improvement.

December 1841.