

PARISH OF MAINS AND STRATHMARTINE.

PRESBYTERY OF DUNDEE, SYNOD OF ANGUS AND MEARN'S.

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I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name, Boundaries, &c.—THE original name of Mains was Strath-dighty; and no name could have been more descriptive, the parish being in the form of a valley or strath, and the rivulet of Dighty running through its whole length, and dividing it into nearly two equal parts. It appears to have been afterwards called the Mains of Fintry, the castle of that name being the principal object in the parish. The church and manse adjoining were considered pertinent, and were designated accordingly. For a number of years past, the parish has been called by the name of Mains.

It is not very clear how the name of Strathmartine came to be applied to the other parish. There is an erect stone on the north side of it called *Martin's Stone*; and there is a traditionary story that this was erected in memory of a hero of the name of Martin, who killed a dragon which had devoured nine maidens. It is probable that the whole parish derived its name from this personage, and was called Martin's Valley or Strath.

The united parish is six miles long, and from one to three broad, and contains about twelve square miles. A part of the parish of Murroes is said to belong to it *quoad sacra*; but it is probable that no other annexation took place than that the people preferred to attend the church of Mains, as more convenient for them in respect of distance than their own.

The parish is bounded by Dundee on the south, Liff and Auchterhouse on the west, Tealing on the north, and Murroes and Dundee on the east.

Topographical Appearances.—The rising grounds on each side are nearly all cultivated; they scarcely deserve the name of hills,

and are not 400 feet above the level of the sea. The valley has always been considered a pleasant spot, affording a diversified landscape of considerable richness and beauty.

Climate.—As the valley extends to the sea, it is subject to easterly winds and fogs, and the harvest is not so early, nor is the climate so genial, as in some of the inland parts of the country. The Dighty, being the most considerable stream of water in the vicinity of Dundee, is used as a powerful engine in different manufactures; but since public works have been erected in the parish, the picture of pastoral life has been withdrawn, and the eye of the spectator is presented with a busy scene of human industry, and of the arts brought into practical operation for the benefit of man. There are few improvements that are not accompanied with some mixture of evil; volumes of smoke are now seen issuing from engines along the whole line of the valley; the bleachfields have rendered the water unfit for the use of cattle and for domestic purposes; the fish have disappeared; the fumes emitted from the works are offensive to travellers, but still more to those residing on the spot, whose first sensation in the morning when they awake is that of the dilation of their lungs from a mixture of muriatic acid and chlorine gas. The health of the inhabitants, however, does not seem to be impaired; nor are they peculiarly subject to fever or any other disease.

Hydrography.—The Dighty, the only stream of water in the parish, rises from two lakes in the parish of Lundie, and running with somewhat of a uniform declivity, falls into the sea, near the bar of the River Tay, in the parish of Monifieth; its whole course not exceeding fifteen miles. It seldom overflows its banks, nor does it fall so low in dry weather as many streams of greater magnitude.

As the branches or small rivulets that run into the Dighty are often dry in summer, and the water in the river itself adulterated, and rendered unfit for ordinary use, pit wells have become necessary, not only for the accommodation of houses and farms, but frequently for the benefit of grass-fields.

There were formerly some bogs and marshes in the parish; but they have now all been drained, and only a few traces of them can be distinguished. There is only one spring that claims to be noticed. It is called Sinavey, and issues from the crevice of a perpendicular rock at the castle of Mains. It fills the whole aperture even in the driest weather, and consequently suffers no diminution. The water is considered in the neighbourhood as peculiarly sweet

and salubrious. It has not as yet been analyzed with any correctness.

Geology.—The greater part of the parish abounds with strata of gray slate; the direction of which is chiefly to the north-west, and the dip an angle from 20° to 25° with the horizon. Beds of trap, however, are frequently interspersed, and the different knolls on the elevated situations are composed of that rock. The soil is almost entirely black loam, incumbent on rock, gravel, or clay. It abounds in alluvial deposits; and there are numerous ridges adjoining the Dighty which are masses of gravel or pure sand.

The land is of ordinary fertility, and its situation near the harbour and town of Dundee affords the means of high cultivation. With the exception of some pieces of moor and rocky knolls, which are generally planted, it is all under the plough; and few opportunities remain of observing what plants are indigenous to the soil.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Historical Notices.—The union of the parishes of Mains and Strathmartine took place in the year 1799. The object of uniting these parishes was to lessen the pressure of the parochial burdens to the heritors, and to augment the living of the clergyman. A central church and manse was built soon after the union was effected; and adjoining them a piece of land was allotted to the minister in lieu of the former glebes; and though the two schoolmasters continue, and there be now three burying-grounds, in all other respects the parishes are regarded as one.

There are few historical events connected with the parish that have been preserved, and probably few that, if recorded, would be of much interest to the general reader. The present proprietors have acquired their lands in recent times; and any events that might be memorable in the lives of their forefathers, will fall to be recorded elsewhere. The chief proprietor for some centuries was Graham of Fintry. He was originally a cadet of the house of Montrose, and acquired his property in this parish and county by his marriage with a daughter of the Earl of Angus. His lands in this parish are now held by Mr Erskine of Linlathen, and the mausoleum in the church-yard is the only vestige of the ancient possessor. It may not be improper to mention, that Claverhouse, the residence of Lord Dundee, is likewise situate in this parish, and that an edifice, in the form of a ruin, has lately been erected on the site of

his mansion, by his lineal male descendant, Mr Webster, formerly Graham of Balmuir.

Two obelisks, and some vestiges of a Roman camp, are the only objects that excite the curiosity of the antiquary.

Parochial Register.—The register of Strathmartine does not extend farther back than the year 1783. The school-house having accidentally caught fire at that time, the parish records were consumed. The parish register of Mains commences with the year 1633, and for a considerable time all the miscellaneous transactions of cash, as well as baptisms and marriages, and the numerous cases of discipline, which were carefully taken up and minutely examined at that period, are recorded promiscuously, as the events occurred, in one volume. From the nature of the offences that were subjected to public censure, and the examination of the witnesses, much information may be obtained concerning the morals, habits, and customs of the people. Incidental information is likewise procured concerning the state of agriculture. It may be true, that parochial discipline has relaxed as the people have become more refined; but the cases reported in this register do not give us a favourable view of the morals of the seventeenth century.

III.—POPULATION.

In 1801, the population of the united parishes amounted to	-	1442
1811, - - - - -	-	1738
1821, - - - - -	-	1779
1831, - - - - -	-	2011

If the register of baptisms has been correctly kept, (and there is evidence that it has not been neglected,) we may calculate pretty nearly what has been the population of Mains for the space of two centuries. The number of baptisms in 1636 amounted to 24; in 1685, to 33; in 1734, to 31; in 1783, to 19; and in 1832, to 31. It is probable that the parish, after the middle of the seventeenth century, reached to its present amount of population; and that, after the middle of the eighteenth century, it reached its lowest point of depression. It is admitted, that, after the Union, Scotland did not flourish for more than half a century. The capital engaged in trade was of trifling amount, and, by the suppression of the Scottish Parliament, no small proportion of the rental of the kingdom being spent in England, labourers were thrown out of employment, and the spirit of improvement was restrained. When commerce began to flourish, agriculture revived; farms were enlarged; cottagers, finding that higher wages could be ob-

tained in manufacturing labour, removed into towns, and the division of labour effected a more complete separation between our town and country population.

The yearly average of births in the united parish for the last seven years is 50; of deaths, 17; of marriages, 27. The average number of persons under fifteen years of age is 766; upwards of seventy, 41.

The number of unmarried men, bachelors and widowers, upwards of fifty years of age, is 13; and of unmarried women upwards of forty-five, 6. The number of children in each family is from 4 to 5. There are two insane persons in confinement. There is also one fatuous, and one blind.

The number of families in the parish is 354; whereof 89 are chiefly employed in agriculture, and 204 in trade, manufactures, and handicraft.

Land-owners.—The number of proprietors of land of the yearly value of L. 50 is ten. Only Sir John Ogilvy, Baronet, of Inverquhar, and Mr Laird of Strathmartine, have mansion-houses in the parish; and at the present time there is not a resident proprietor.

Character, Manners, &c. of the People.—A considerable improvement has taken place in the language of the people within the last forty years. Many Scottish phrases are becoming obsolete; and a number of trades-people speak English with considerable propriety. The low price of cotton and other stuffs has enabled the people to effect a great improvement in their dress. Their houses, with few exceptions, are white-washed in the inside, once, and many of them twice a-year; and there is an appearance of comfort wherever there are habits of industry or virtuous conduct. It would have been satisfactory to add, that there was also an improvement in morals, and in the discharge of religious duties; but, while there are many instances of zeal and real piety among the labouring classes, it must be admitted, that there is also much coldness and neglect.

The introduction of *bothies*, or apartments where servants are lodged by themselves, though advantageous in an economical point of view, has an opposite effect in regard to moral and intellectual improvement. The natural intercourse that subsists between the members of the same family ought to be very cautiously interfered with, or the young will inevitably suffer. A boy, when training to the labour of husbandry, and lodged in the same apartment with others of riper years, has often to listen to conversation which is but an indifferent substitute for parental instruction, prudent dis-

cipline, and affectionate reproof. In *bothies* attached to manufacturing establishments, the evil is felt more severely, as the number of inmates is greater; and, being assembled from a greater distance, their modes of life are more varied, and bad example is more forcible and pernicious.

The food of the male servants engaged in husbandry is a weekly allowance of milk and oatmeal; while, among tradesmen, fish, butcher-meat, pork of their own rearing, sugar, and tea, are in constant use. No article of food has increased so much in consumption as potatoes, which now constitute the chief sustenance of the poorer classes for one-half of the year.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture and Rural Economy.—The whole extent of land in the parish is about 7063 imperial acres. Of moor, rocky knolls, and steep banks that cannot be ploughed, there are 144 acres. A considerable part of the latter might no doubt be cultivated, but the capital at present would not be profitably laid out. There is scarcely any natural wood in the parish; but the number of acres planted is 436. A considerable proportion of this wood is fir and oak, planted on ground unfit for tillage; and the thinning of the firs as they advance in growth is certainly too much neglected. The extent of ground occupied by roads, water-courses, houses, gardens, fences, plantations, moor, &c. is about 880 acres,—so that the amount of acres in actual cultivation is 6183.

The parish is well-wooded; hedge-rows are generally found on the boundaries of fields; and the gentlemen's seats are adorned with thriving plantations. On moors of inferior soils the larch is not found to live above thirty or forty years. All the ordinary sorts of forest trees have been planted. The easterly winds, however, seem rather adverse to their growth. At one glance it can be observed that the beech is the most prosperous. There is a beech on an eminence at the castle of Mains seventeen feet in girth, a foot and a-half above the level of the ground, and, when in foliage, the appearance of its head is truly majestic. The names of numerous visitors are cut out on its trunk and branches. Its age is unknown. It is probable, however, that it has withstood the blasts and hurricanes of nearly two centuries.

Rent of Land.—The average rent of cultivated land is nearly L. 2, 10s. per acre; but in this calculation is included a considerable extent of moorish ground, which has not been a long time in cul-

tivation. The old infield is let at L. 3, 5s; but there are fields which, if let by themselves, would not yield more than 12s. or 14s. per acre, and obviously do not pay the expenses of their improvement.

Rate of Wages, &c.—The average rate of wages during the year for males employed in husbandry is L. 12; for females L. 6, inclusive of board. Labourers, without victuals, receive 1s. 8d. per day in summer, and 1s. 6d. in winter: Masons, carpenters, &c. 2s. 6d. in summer, and 2s. in winter. Artisans, however, are now seldom paid by the day, but contract for different pieces of work. A plough will cost L. 3, 3s., a cart L. 14, the shoeing of a farm-horse for a year 12s.

Husbandry.—The usual period of a lease is now only nineteen years. The character of the husbandry of the parish is derived from its vicinity to the populous town of Dundee, where abundance of manure can be procured, and where a ready sale is found for grass, turnips, and potatoes. The crop that yields the highest price is the most extensively cultivated, though the rules of good husbandry should be for a while suspended. A rotation of, 1. oats; 2. turnips or potatoes; 3. barley or wheat; 4. grass—was for sometime commonly adopted. This rotation is now abandoned, and the land allowed either to remain above one year in grass, or the cropping is otherwise extended, so as to prevent the necessity of sowing with grass every fourth year. Some of the farmers, instead of selling their crops to the Dundee cow-feeders, have extensive dairies themselves; and several persons reside in the parish who have no land, but keep a number of cows, and are every day busily employed in conveying the crops they have purchased from the neighbouring farmers to their abodes, and again, in disposing of the produce of their dairies among the inhabitants of Dundee.

A large extent of waste ground has been reclaimed within the last sixty years. About the year 1772, Mr Graham of Fintry began to improve an extensive waste in the neighbourhood of Dundee; and in 1790, Admiral Laird was actively employed in various improvements on the estate of Strathmartine; and the plantations which he reared, particularly on the higher grounds, enrich the landscape, improve the climate, and afford a useful supply of timber for agricultural purposes. The agriculture of the parish remains very much in the same state to which it was raised by the high prices of grain during the war. The land may be said to be all drained; and yet a little is still done in this

way every year, to render the operation more complete. Most of the fields are inclosed with stone dikes and hedges; and the farm-buildings are in tolerable repair; but it cannot be said, that in the last twenty years either houses or fences have been in any respect improved.

The parish, however, has not suffered so much by the fall in the price of grain as many others. The great increase and prosperity of the town of Dundee has afforded a ready market for green crops; and there has not been a failure among the tenants during the existing leases.

Quarries.—Perhaps there is no part of the country better supplied with stone for every useful purpose than this district. Quarries abound everywhere, furnishing stones well adapted for every kind of building and inclosure; and if the roads be not in excellent repair, it is not from the want of the best materials.

In stating the gross amount of the raw produce raised in the parish, it is not easy to approach to anything like exactness. The quantity of produce, the price, and mode of cropping, vary in different years. The following statement, however, may give a general view of the subject to the reader:—

1236	acres of oats at L. 7,	-	-	L. 8652	0	0
809	———— barley at L. 8,	-	-	6472	0	0
404½	———— wheat at L. 11,	-	-	4449	10	0
618	———— turnips at L. 8,	-	-	4944	0	0
618	———— potatoes at L. 10,	-	-	6180	0	0
1236	———— new grass at L. 6,	-	-	7416	0	0
1236	———— pasture, at L. 2, 10s.	-	-	3090	0	0
	Uncultivated pasture,	-	-	36	0	0
	Pasture in woods,	-	-	72	10	0
	Thinning of woods,	-	-	210	0	0
	Produce of gardens,	-	-	192	0	0
	Total value of raw produce,	-	-	L. 41,714	0	0

Manufactures.—It has already been remarked, that the water of the Dighty is employed as a powerful auxiliary in the Dundee manufactures. Every fall that it affords is occupied with machinery; and three-fourths of the population of the parish are employed in works that have been established on its banks. There are four bleachfields, two of which are of great extent, and four flax spinning-mills; and the machinery of the whole of these works is partly driven by steam. Besides the yarn that is cleaned at the bleachfield, there are other five mills of inferior construction, where yarn is washed and prepared for the loom. There

are two flour-mills, one of which, built two years ago by the Baker Corporation of Dundee, is of large dimensions, and in which steam is used in aid of the water-power. Several of the oatmeal-mills were displaced to make way for these manufacturing establishments; five of them, however, yet remain, which, being better constructed than formerly, are quite sufficient for manufacturing all the oatmeal consumed in the neighbourhood. A saw-mill, and several of the thrashing-mills are likewise driven by water.

The hours of labour in the spinning-mills are from six in the morning to eight in the evening: the hours at the bleachfields are from six in the morning to seven in the evening; and in both cases two intervals during the day are allowed for meals. The work at the bleachfields cannot be considered as very heavy, as the materials to be moved are light, and the labour, in general, performed in the open air. There are, however, sometimes extra hours of working; but the wages are increased in proportion to the time employed; and while this labour is optional, it is expected that only the strong and healthy will engage in it.

Though the wages given at the public works furnish the means of procuring the necessaries of life, and employment to those who may not be engaged in agricultural labour,—though a ready market be thus afforded for the produce of the soil, and the wealth of the country be greatly increased,—it is very questionable whether these advantages be not counterbalanced by greater and very obvious evils. The Irish and Highlanders that are sometimes employed at the bleachfields are not of such habits as to improve public morals.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Market Town.—As the parish reaches to the outskirts of Dundee, it is conveniently situate in regard to a market town. It is to Dundee that all the produce of the parish is carried for sale; and it is there that all the articles required by the parishioners are purchased. Besides the two market days, Tuesday and Friday, there is an intercourse every day with the town. The articles of manufacture are constantly passing from the one place to the other; labourers from Dundee are employed every day at public works; children from the parish attend the seminaries in town; and country lodgings in this parish were at one time eagerly sought after by the inhabitants of the town during the summer months.

Means of Communication.—Three turnpike roads pass through

the parish, in length nearly eight and a half miles. On the one, leading from Dundee to Forfar, there are several public coaches. There is likewise a railway from Dundee to the fertile vale of Strathmore, undertaken in the memorable year 1825, and since executed at an expense of nearly L. 100,000. At present it terminates on its entrance into the Strath; and, as there is no trade in the district to which it reaches, it is not supposed that it can be a profitable concern until branches be formed to the nearest towns. In the meantime, it has opened up some excellent quarries, which supply the town and neighbourhood with stones at a cheaper rate than formerly. There are nine bridges over the Dighty, all of which are of small dimensions.

Ecclesiastical State.—The church is conveniently situate near the centre of the parish, and none of the inhabitants are distant from it above three miles. It was built in the year 1800; and contains 900 sitters. There are twenty-eight free sittings in it. When it was built, it was thought to be too large for the parish, and some space was left unoccupied. Seats to accommodate 100 persons have been lately erected by the kirk-session; and are let annually at the rate of two shillings to each sitter. The manse was built in 1801, is commodious, and kept in a good state of repair.

The new glebe consists of twenty-two acres imperial, and might let for L. 3 per acre.

The stipend consists of 3 b. 2 f. 1 p. 2½ lip. wheat; 63 b. 2 f. 1 p. barley; 106 b. 1 f. 1 p. 2 lip. meal; L. 72, 0s. 2½ d.; and the teinds are exhausted. The total yearly amount of stipend, on an average of the last seven years, converted to money, is L. 251 Sterling.

There is only one place of worship in the parish. Many of the labourers at the public works have no fixed residence, and spend the Sundays with their friends in Dundee or elsewhere. The number of families belonging to the Established Church is 328, and of Dissenters 32. Two of these Dissenters are Irishmen, who have married natives of the parish, and are Roman Catholics. There are no Episcopalians at present. The parish church has hitherto been well attended, and the average number of communicants is 720.

There is an annual collection for the Dundee Infirmary, which gives free admission to all the sick-poor of the parish. There is also an annual collection for religious purposes. The amount of such collections is generally about L. 10 a-year.

Education.—There are two parochial schools; and two parochial

schoolmasters, who have all the emoluments and accommodations which the law requires. Practical mathematics, Latin, and sometimes French and Greek, are taught. Each of the schoolmasters has the maximum salary, L. 34, 4s. 4½d., and handsome dwelling-houses of two stories, lately built.

The average amount of school fees received by the schoolmaster at Strathmartine is L. 30; at Mains, L. 40 a-year. The yearly expense of a scholar for learning merely to read is 10s.; when writing is added, the expense is 14s.; with the addition of arithmetic it is L. 1. The charge for Latin is L. 1, 10s.

There are no persons belonging to the parish that cannot read, and few that cannot write; but there are about sixteen children employed in the spinning-mills, some of whom have not been taught, and others can read very imperfectly. There is also a female school endowed by Dowager Lady Ogilvy, and two others, chiefly for sewing, taught by females. A subscription school in the parish of Dundee accommodates a few children who are farthest distant from the school of Mains; but, in general, the distance from the schools is attended with little inconvenience.

Poor.—The average number of persons receiving parochial aid is 28; but the greater number of them have families. The allowances vary from L. 2 to L. 10 yearly. Four orphan children receive L. 22, 2s. besides clothes. L. 16 is paid yearly to the Dundee Lunatic Asylum.

Annual amount of collections at the church for behoof of the poor,	L. 82	1	1
dues of hearse and mortcloths,	9	16	9
seat rents,	14	4	0
interest of money,	19	9	6
finer,	0	19	1
beadle's house rent,	3	10	0
contributed by heritors,	9	11	0
	L. 139	11	5

There is certainly less aversion in the public mind to receive public aid than there was fifty years ago. With many, however, the spirit of independence is not yet broken, and some are ready to submit cheerfully to much inconvenience, rather than endure the degradation of receiving public charity. In this parish some coals are supplied gratis to the poor at the new year.

Fairs.—There are two fairs held in the parish: one on the 26th of August, the other on the 15th of September. Sheep, cattle, and horses, are exposed at these fairs; and servants are engaged. The dues of one of the fairs belong to the town of Dundee;

the dues of the other to Lord Douglas; and disputes are settled by persons appointed by his Lordship.

Alehouses.—There are six small alehouses in the parish, three of which are toll-houses. They are felt as a great nuisance to the sober and industrious part of the population.

Fuel.—Coals from Sunderland, imported at Dundee, are the only fuel used in the parish; and the carriage by water is not a heavy addition to the expense.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

Since the last Statistical Account was written, many changes of much importance have taken place in the parish. The increase of population has been in the manufacturing, and not in the agricultural class. By the introduction of machinery and improved implements, the manual labour employed in husbandry is gradually diminishing; and, notwithstanding the extent of ground that has been reclaimed from barrenness, perhaps the number of agricultural labourers was never smaller than at the present moment.

It is said in the last Statistical Account of Mains, that the erection of the first spinning-mill was then scarcely completed. Its history is not one of continued prosperity. Great profits were occasionally realized, cherishing sanguine hopes, which were blasted by sudden and extensive losses. The property has frequently changed owners; and about twelve years ago, the works were diverted from their original purposes, and now constitute a part of the premises of the Claverhouse Bleaching Company. The mills that were erected at a later period have undergone similar changes. In the course of the last ten years, however, the linen trade has been greatly increased; improved machinery has been introduced; a much greater quantity of work has been performed; experience has taught us how former errors may be avoided; the mills have been greatly enlarged, and have been actively, and for the most part profitably, employed.

The bleachfields have likewise been greatly increased and improved. Not only has the linen trade been much extended; but a finer fabric of cloth is now manufactured. Improved modes of bleaching have been adopted; and this branch of business is now in such a flourishing state, that new works would be erected if they were not opposed by the neighbouring proprietors as a public nuisance. Trade and manufactures have advanced more within the vale of the Dighty, in the course of the last forty years, than they

had done during the whole period that has elapsed since any of our race settled on its banks.

The progress in agriculture has not been nearly so distinguished; but here also the improvements have been many and valuable. It is in this period that thrashing-mills have been introduced; that the land has been drained; that the alternate husbandry has been practised; that wheat has been regularly cultivated; and there can be no doubt that the culture of potatoes has increased from 70 to 80 per cent. Many of the inhabitants of Dundee take a piece of ground from the farmers annually, plant, hoe, and take up their potatoes themselves; and the exercise is considered to be salutary to those who are used to sedentary employments. It was formerly the custom, particularly among small farmers, to raise a quantity of flax annually, which the females were employed in spinning during the winter months; and the cloth when manufactured, and not used for household purposes, was sold, and constituted one of the items of profit or of rent. The spinning-mills have abolished this practice,—the sound of the wheel is no longer heard in the farmer's dwelling,—for this good reason, that the cloth can be bought at a cheaper rate than the former expense of spinning, which has been reduced from 2s. to 2½d. per spindle. Females who formerly gained their livelihood by spinning, have now taken to weaving, and under certain restrictions, they do not suffer from the change of employment.

There can be no doubt that our agriculture is susceptible of much improvement. The great evil under which this parish is now suffering, is the frequent repetition of the same crop on the same soil. There is a steady demand in Dundee for turnips, potatoes, and grass; and these crops, particularly the grass, have become deficient from frequent repetition. Indeed clover is now so commonly a failure, that tares are not unfrequently sown as a substitute. Turnips, potatoes, and sown grasses, have been introduced at a comparatively recent period. The appearance of the whole face of nature has thus been changed; and the value of the produce of the soil has increased to an extent that cannot be well conceived.

December 1833.