

riage, and sold at about 1s. 8d. per barrel, which is equal to about L.1, 5s. per ton; and fir wood, procured at about 3s. per cart load, from the thinnings of the neighbouring woods. Long splinters of resinous pine are also used, chiefly in the country houses, as a substitute for lamps.

November 1842.

UNITED PARISHES OF ABOYNE AND GLENTANNER.

PRESBYTERY OF KINCARDINE O'NEIL, SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

THE REV. ROBERT MILNE MILLER, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—ABOYNE is compounded of the Gaelic words, *A*, a ford, and *boinne* or *buinne*, a current of rippling water; a name very descriptive of a ford in the Dee, a little south of the church. Glentanner is compounded of the Gaelic words *Glean-tan-ar*, signifying *the glen of scanty arable land*. The two parishes being now united are generally known by the name of Aboyne.

Boundaries and Extent.—The united parish, on the west and left bank of the Dee, is bounded by Tullich, and on the right bank by Glenmuick; on the south, by Lochlee and Birse; on the east, by Kincardine O'Neil; and on the north, by Lumphanan, Coull, and Logie-Coldstone; the boundary line being generally formed by mountain-crests, the river Dee, or some of its tributary streams. A detached part, containing a population of about 60, is situated on the left bank of the Feugh, not far from the north base of Clach-na-bein, and about nine miles south-east from the church. Between this detached part and the church, almost the whole of Birse intervenes. The form of the parish is very irregular. Its length from east to west may be 18 miles, and its breadth from north to south, 12 miles. These, however, are taken from extreme points; and its whole area may be calculated at 37,000 imperial acres. Glentanner is on the right bank of the Dee, bounded on the north by that river, and

on the west, south, and east by ranges of the Grampians. The arable part is formed into two divisions by the hill of Bellrory, sloping eastward near to the Inver of the Tanner, which flows through the south-east division, or what is generally known by the name of Tannerside. The other division slopes from Bellrory in a north-east direction towards the Fan.* About a mile east of the Fan, on the right bank of the Dee, are the ruins of the old church of Glentanner, with an enclosed burying-ground still around it; which, having been thatched with heather, was known by the name of the Black Chapel of the Moor. Previously to Glentanner's being united to Aboyne, it formed a separate chaplainry. Aboyne, which is mostly on the left bank of the Dee, was then united to Tullich, with an intermediate chapel at Braeroddach equally distant from the churches of Aboyne and Tullich. At what period Aboyne and Glentanner were formed into one parish, is unknown to the writer; but, previously to 1763, there was a church at each, in which the incumbent performed Divine service in the rotation of two Sabbaths at Aboyne, and the third at Glentanner. That part of Aboyne on the north or left bank of the Dee formed the barony which, in the words of Gordon of Straloch, "titulos Baronis Paralammentarii dat Marchionis Huntlæi filiorum uni." Its burgh, called Charlestown, (formerly Buntly,) stands near Aboyne Castle. The tolbooth was demolished about fifty years ago; and all traces of the pot and gallows also are nearly effaced.

Climate.—The banks of the Dee and braes of Marr have long been celebrated as favourable to health, and although so far inland as Aboyne, (the parish being between the twenty-fourth and thirty-seventh mile-stones from Aberdeen,) heavy falls of snow in winter, accompanied with intense frost, do often occur, yet the general salubrity of the air is not destroyed by those sudden alternations of heat and cold which are frequent in localities nearer the coast, and more under the influence of the sea breeze. The dry and sandy soil of Strathdee, the shelter of its close and numerous woods, and the reflection of the sun's rays from the mountains which tower on either side, all combine to raise the temperature, and render the climate remarkably genial. Hence many strangers resort in summer to this district, for the recovery or invigoration of their health, by breathing the salubrious air, and drinking

* *Fan*—"a descent." The river here, in a confined channel, passes with great impetuosity over a ledge of rocks.

goat whey, or chalybeate water. The most of these visitors are contented for exercise, with a walk along the shaded banks of the river, while a few, more to brace their constitutions, may be seen threading their way through heath and alpine forests, or scaling crags and lofty hills, from whose summits may be seen the dense smoke of Aberdeen, Montrose, &c. curling in dark clouds on the distant horizon.

Hydrography.—The river Dee, which runs either along or through the parish for fifteen miles, rises in the highest ground of Britain, the mountains which separate Braemar from Badenoch; and, after a north-easterly course of nearly one hundred miles, it falls into the German Ocean at Aberdeen.

The Tanner, which rises from Mountkeen, the Allachy and the Gairney, both issuing from the Firmonth and other hills of the Grampian range, all flow for miles through the natural forest of Glentanner, then unite in one body, and, after intersecting the arable part of the strath in a north-easterly direction, fall into the Dee on its right bank, about half a mile west of the church.

The Feugh, which rises in the forest of Birse, waters the detached part of Aboyne, and empties itself into the Dee opposite to Banchory-Ternan.

The burn of Dinnet, which is the western boundary line on the left bank of the Dee, is formed by the united streamlets disem-bogued from lochs Kinord and Dawin, in the adjoining parishes of Tullich and Logie-Coldstone.

The burn which flows past, and forms a picturesque moat round Aboyne Castle (also on the left bank of the Dee) bears different names in its course through Cromar; and, after reaching the parish of Aboyne, is generally called the burn of Aboyne; but here its ancient name was Allach. This name has been dropped, except in one place, where a bridge over it near the castle is called the Allach Bridge.

The burn of Dess, which, on the same bank of the Dee, divides the parish from the old barony of O'Neil on the east, flows about a mile from the loch of Auchlossen into the river, and is remarkable for a high and romantic cascade, called the Sloc of Dess.

Several other streamlets in the parish, such as the Aultroy, Aultdinny, Contullich Burn, the Rossachy, &c. might be mentioned.

At some remote period, before the waters forced natural bar-

riers which had intersected the present courses of the running streams, extensive lakes must have existed. One striking place, where such a barrier to the Tanner appears to have stood, is near the influx of Aultroy, and another at Bridge of Ash. Before these barriers yielded to the Tanner, the upper glen must have formed the bed of a lake. The several heights at which the water, after different disruptions, had stood, may be traced,—the same, on a smaller scale, as the famed parallel roads in Glenroy. The most considerable lakes still remaining, are those of Braerodach and Auchlossen. The extent of the former may be about 60 acres, and of the latter 300. The greater part of the latter, however, is in the parish of Lumphanan, and, previously to its outlet at Drumduan, in the parish of Aboyne, having about 150 years ago been deepened with the view of draining the whole lake, must have been of more than double its present extent, and its waters had then reached the strongly fortified mound of Peel Bog, under whose fosse Macbeth received his death wound.* Within the policies of Aboyne Castle, there is also a lake covering 32 acres, artificially formed, and interspersed with wooded islets. From the higher grounds overlooking this lake, the view is extensive and interesting.

Numerous channels, in which it is evident the Dee has formerly run, many of them at a very considerable altitude above its present bed, are distinctly visible; at which period, as already noticed, lakes must have stood on some of the land basins, now filled with water borne debris, gradually excavated from the higher grounds by the descending river. The water power within the parish, of which the only use now made is to drive a few mills for country purposes, would be more than sufficient to supersede the steam required for moving the machinery in all the public works in and about Aberdeen; and to render the power more available, a railroad along the banks of the Dee could be formed more easily than in most localities, the gradient being only 420 feet on 31 miles, and it is thought no tunnelling would be required.

Geology and Mineralogy.—The geognostic appearance of the parish indicates little beyond the primitive formation of granite, and of that little the student, without the sinking of shafts, may, by examining the face of the mountains, easily inform himself.

* Macbeth maintained himself for three years in this district after the battle of Dunsinane, before he fell at the Peel Bog of Lumphanan.

The granite is various, and, as its component parts of quartz, mica, felspar, and hornblende predominate, differs in hardness of grain, and is diversified in colour from the white to the black tinge and the red. Some of the red has been beautifully polished. It much resembles that of Peterhead, but is more variegated in size of grain and shades of colour. Along the valley of the Dee, to the east of Lochnagar, rolled masses of the primitive rock of that mountain are to be found; and it is also remarkable, that, at a lower level, fragments of the black ferruginous rock, of which the ledge at the Linn of Muick is composed, can be traced along the same valley, but in a line frequently diverging from the present channel of the Dee, and only found to the east of the confluence of the Muick with the Dee. To account for this, the appearance at the Linn indicates that the river, in some of its fitful risings, had swept before it a huge mass of the opposing rock,—hence the disruption in its fall, and, tossed by the maddened stream against harder formations, it had been split into fragments, and deposited along the then channel of the Dee. In the hill of Glentanner, topazes fit for the lapidary are often found. Crystallized quartz, both pale and rose, are frequently picked up, and occasionally, in the heart of granite blocks, beautifully studded nests of them are disclosed. Gneiss is common in the parish, and, in a few localities, limestone (not very pure) on both sides of the river; also ironstone, and, in stray river boulders, faint appearances of manganese conglomerating with quartz occur, but no traces of any organic remains.

On the left bank of Aultdinny is fuller's earth, which has been successfully tried as a substitute for soap. In the hills are extensive peat-mosses, in some of which, after the removal of the peat formation, at the depth of five or six feet, the original surface appears covered with charred oak, hazel, and birch. The soil along the banks of the rivers is thin; from the rapidity of the streams, the only alluvial deposit formed, is of sand and gravel; but ascending from the rivers the fields improve, and some of them are of either a black or clayey till.

Botany.—For the following list of plants and trees indigenous in the parish, the writer is indebted to Mr A. Thomson, the parochial schoolmaster,—a gentleman who has devoted much attention to botany.

1. A list of a few of the rarer plants and trees to be found indigenous in the united parishes:—

<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	<i>Verbascum Thapsus</i>	<i>Comarum palustre</i>
<i>Veronica scutellata</i>	<i>Lonicera Periclymenum</i>	<i>Nymphæa alba</i>
----- <i>humifusa</i>	<i>Gentiana campestris</i>	<i>Cistus Helianthemum</i>
----- <i>hederifolia</i>	<i>Sanicula Europæa</i>	<i>Aquilegia vulgaris</i>
<i>Pinguicula vulgaris</i>	<i>Meum athamanticum</i>	<i>Trollius Europæus</i>
<i>Valeriana officinalis</i>	<i>Sambucus Ebulus</i>	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>
<i>Scirpus fluitans</i>	<i>Parnassia palustris</i>	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>
----- <i>setaceus</i>	<i>Statice Armeria</i>	<i>Geranium sylvaticum</i>
<i>Iris Pseud-Acorus</i>	<i>Oxyria reniformis</i>	<i>Ononis arvensis</i>
<i>Calamagrostis epigejos</i>	<i>Vaccinium Oxycoccus</i>	<i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i>
<i>Arundo phragmites</i>	<i>Pyrola media</i>	<i>Hypericum pulchrum</i>
<i>Melica cærulea</i>	<i>Saxifraga aizoides</i>	<i>Arctium Lappa</i>
<i>Briza media</i>	<i>Silene maritima</i>	<i>Cnicus heterophyllus</i>
<i>Festuca vivipara</i>	<i>Roseda Luteola</i>	<i>Orchis maculata</i>
----- <i>sylvatica</i>	<i>Prunus Padus</i>	<i>Goodyera repens</i>
<i>Avena alpina</i>	----- <i>spinosa</i>	<i>Corylus avellana</i>
<i>Galium boreale</i>	<i>Pyrus aucuparia</i>	<i>Populus tremula</i>
<i>Alchemilla alpina</i>	<i>Rosa spinosissima</i>	<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	<i>Rubus saxatilis</i>	<i>Lycopodium clavatum</i>
<i>Potamogeton oompressa</i>	----- <i>fruticosus</i>	----- <i>alpinum</i>
<i>Radiola millegrana</i>	----- <i>Chamæmorus</i>	<i>Equisetum fluviatile</i>
<i>Primula vulgaris</i>	<i>Potentilla Fragaria</i>	----- <i>sylvaticum.</i>
----- <i>veris</i>		

2. A list of the more common plants and trees to be found in abundance in the united parishes :—

<i>Veronica Beccabunga</i>	<i>Vaccinium Vitis-Idæa</i>	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>
----- <i>officinalis</i>	<i>Polygonum Convolvulus</i>	<i>Sonchus arvensis</i>
<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	<i>Arenaria rubra</i>	<i>Leontodon Taraxacum</i>
<i>Eriophorum angustifolium</i>	<i>Arbutus Uva Ursi</i>	<i>Hieracium Pilosella</i>
<i>Aira cæspitosa</i>	<i>Stellaria media</i>	----- <i>murorum</i>
----- <i>flexuosa</i>	<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>	<i>Carduus acanthoides</i>
<i>Holcus mollis</i>	<i>Cerastium vulgatum</i>	<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>
<i>Poa pratensis</i>	<i>Spergula arvensis</i>	<i>Gnaphalium dioicum</i>
<i>Triodia decumbens</i>	<i>Spiræa Ulmaria</i>	----- <i>sylvaticum</i>
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	<i>Rosa canina</i>	<i>Tussilago Farfara</i>
<i>Bromus mollis</i>	<i>Rubus idæus</i>	<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>
<i>Triticum caninum</i>	<i>Potentilla anserina</i>	----- <i>Jacobæa</i>
----- <i>repens</i>	<i>Tormentilla officinalis</i>	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
<i>Montia fontana</i>	<i>Anemone nemorosa</i>	<i>Chrysanthemum Leucan-</i>
<i>Scabiosa succisa</i>	<i>Ranunculus aquatilis</i>	----- <i>themum</i>
<i>Galium verum</i>	----- <i>Ficaria</i>	----- <i>segetum</i>
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	----- <i>repens</i>	<i>Achillæa Millefolium</i>
<i>Alchemilla vulgaris</i>	<i>Caltha palustris</i>	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>
<i>Myosotis arvensis</i>	<i>Mentha arvensis</i>	----- <i>cyanus</i>
<i>Menyanthes trifoliata</i>	<i>Teucrium Scorodonia</i>	<i>Euphorbia Peplus</i>
<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>	<i>Lamium purpureum</i>	<i>Carices.</i>
<i>Viola canina</i>	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
----- <i>tricolor</i>	<i>Euphrasia officinalis</i>	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
<i>Bunium flexuosum</i>	<i>Rhinanthus Crista-Galli</i>	<i>Urtica urens</i>
<i>Conium maculatum</i>	<i>Pedicularis palustris</i>	<i>Quercus robur</i>
<i>Linum catharticum</i>	<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	<i>Betula alba</i>
<i>Narthecium ossifragum</i>	<i>Capsella Bursa-Pastoris</i>	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>
<i>Juncus conglomeratus</i>	<i>Draba verna</i>	<i>Salices.</i>
<i>Luzula campestris</i>	<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>	<i>Empetrum nigrum</i>
<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	<i>Sinapis arvensis</i>	<i>Myrica Gale</i>
----- <i>acetosella</i>	<i>Polygala vulgaris</i>	<i>Juniperus communis</i>
<i>Trientalis Europæa</i>	<i>Ulex Europæus</i>	<i>Atriplex patula</i>
<i>Erica Tetralix</i>	<i>Genista anglicans</i>	<i>Pteris aquilina</i>
----- <i>cinerea</i>	<i>Cytisus Scoparius</i>	<i>Aspidium Filix-mas.</i>
<i>Vaccinium Myrtillus</i>	<i>Orobus tuberosus</i>	

Forests and Plantations.—A remnant of the ancient Caledonian

Forest, extending to about 4500 acres, still exists in Glentanner. It is now very open, but if preserved, the most of the hills and valleys would soon be again covered with natural alpine fir; and it is observable that this tendency to extend itself is generally towards the east; the prevailing wind, at the time the seed is ripe and falling, being from the west. The plantations about Aboyne Castle contain 2144 acres, consisting chiefly of Scotch fir, but with a considerable proportion of larch, oak, ash, beech, elm, and other species of hard-wood and ornamental trees.

The plantations on the Balnacraig property amount to about 1400 acres. They are almost exclusively of Scotch fir, and very advantageously situated on the banks of the Dee, for transmission of the timber to Aberdeen. The whole of the woods in the parish are flourishing, and give every indication that the soil and climate are congenial for their support.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Eminent Men.—The chief characters of eminence connected with this parish have been the Earls of Aboyne and members of that Noble family; but an account of the more distinguished of these is to be found in the general history of Scotland. It may not, however, be out of place here to state, that George, fifth Earl of Aboyne, succeeded to the Marquisate of Huntly on the death of George, fifth and last Duke of Gordon, eighth Marquis of Huntly, on 28th May 1836. The pedigree, as on that occasion proved before the House of Lords, shows that the late Earl and his son, the present Marquis, have been seized in the estates of Aboyne since 1732, the unusual period of 110 years; and that since the lamented death of the last Duke, S. P., the Marquis has become chief of the Gordons, a clan ever *bydand*; and that the loyalty which held the Crown on James II.'s head, "*animo non astutiâ*," has never been wanting in their chief.

Adam Gordon of Aboyne, second son of George, second Earl of Huntly by his Countess the Lady Jean Stuart, daughter of James I., became Earl of Sutherland by marrying Elizabeth, sole heiress of John, thirteenth Earl of Sutherland. This Countess Elizabeth died in 1535, and her husband, Earl Adam, in 1537, both at Ferrack, (now Ferrar) in Aboyne; and were buried there. (Sir R. Gordon's History of the Sutherland family, page 103.)

William Bisset of Aboyne, and chief of the tribe, was accused of burning the House at Haddington, in which, 1242, Patrick, Earl of Athol, and two of his servants were consumed. Bisset

proved, by the evidence of the Queen, that he was that night at Forfar. The *Chronici Scotiæ* even state that he was in "Castro suo de Obeyne." He offered to assert his innocence in single combat; this was declined; and some of the Aboyne vassals having been that night seen at Haddington, and enmity subsisting between Athol and the Bissets, William was afraid of the power of his adversaries, the Cummines, and did not stand his trial, but passed over into Ireland, where, as stated by Buchanan, lib. vii. cap. 57, he left a noble family. This family is now extinct. In the parish of Aboyne, there is not now a single person of the name of Bisset; and within less than a century (1835) the Earl of Athol and other two Cummine chiefs fell in Edward's army at Culblean, six miles from Aboyne Castle.

The late Thomas Innes, A. M., Principal of the Scots College at Paris, was born at Drumgask, in the parish of Aboyne. He is well known as one of the most learned of Scottish antiquaries. He published a *Critical Essay on the Ancient Inhabitants of Scotland*, two vols. 8vo, London, 1729. His elder brother Lewis was his predecessor in said college; and more lately, their nephew, the Reverend Henry Innes, was procurator of the same college. This individual died at the advanced age of eighty-eight, and was buried at Aboyne in 1832; and it is remarkable of him, that he was probably the last individual in this country who corresponded with the unfortunate Charles Stewart. Two of that Prince's letters addressed to him, the one dated "Florence, 18th July 1777," and the other, "Florence, 13th February 1778," and signed Charles R., are now before the writer.

The late James Cromar, A. M., a very successful teacher of youth, and who died rector of the grammar-school of Aberdeen in 1826, was a native of this parish.

Alexander Ross, author of the *Fortunate Shepherdess*, and of many popular songs, was translated from the office of parochial schoolmaster at Aboyne to that of Lochlee.

As connected with the parish, it may be also mentioned, that the adventurous Peter Williamson, who, about 1740, was kidnapped at Aberdeen and carried to Virginia, and there sold for a slave, was, as stated in his autobiography, born in the parish of Aboyne, if not of rich, yet of reputable parents.

Land-owners.—These are, 1. the Marquis of Huntly, whose valued rent in the parish is L.1631, 17s. 8d.; 2. John Farquharson of Finzean, with a valued rent of L.200, 4s. 6d.; 3. Miss Farquhar-

son, Mrs Lynch, and their sisters, Misses Catherine and Louisa Farquharson, (L. 173, 6s. 8d.) who succeeded as heirs-portioners to their brother, the late Lewis Farquharson Innes of Balnacraig and Ballogie. Their father was male representative of the ancient house of Inverey, and on succeeding to the lands of Ballogie and Balnacraig, &c. in this and the neighbouring parishes of Birse and Kincardine, assumed the name of Innes, that of his relatives, the former proprietors. One of his authors, Findly Farquharson of Inverey, was killed carrying the Royal banner at the battle of Pinkie, 1547. 4. The Earl of Aberdeen, who is proprietor of a small farm in the parish, but to which no valued rent is attached.

Historical Events.—There are no papers or writings of which the writer is aware, that can throw much light on events of former times, and tradition furnishes but few particulars respecting the early history of Aboyne; hence at what time even the castle was first built, the writer is unable to obtain distinct evidence.—Possibly this might be supplied by the Huntly charters, and the date of the royal permission for its erection ascertained. It may, however, be inferred, from the circumstance of the castle being placed in a swamp, and having (till in recent times the water was lowered) been accessible only by boat or drawbridge, that it was erected about the tenth or eleventh century,—the moat fortification being then followed for castles, as previously and subsequently duns, rocks or some eminence secure from sudden attack were selected for strongholds and baronial castles. In 1242, it was possessed by William Bisset, who being then, as already noticed, accused as accessory to the death of the Earl of Athol, was summoned to stand his trial at Edinburgh. He went there, and offered to peril his life with any of his accusers, but his challenge was not accepted, and he being afraid that his judges might be concussed by his inveterate and powerful enemies, the Cummines, went with a number of his relations into voluntary exile in Ireland. From the chartulary of Aberdeen, it appears that the Bissets gave the lands of Aboyne to the Knights Templar, and it is a remarkable fact, that some fields near the castle still bear the name of "*Tiran Teampull*," i. e. the 'Templars' ground, which circumstance is evidence that Gaelic was then the vernacular language about Aboyne, but which has long since retired farther west. Regarding the possession of the castle by the Earl of Marr, there is also an order from Baliol, recorded in the "*Rotuli Scotiæ*." From the Knights Templar the lands of Aboyne passed to the Frasers

of Cowie, and from the Frasers to Lord Keith, progenitor of the Earl Marischal. Lord Keith's daughter, Elizabeth, was married to Sir John Gordon of Huntly, and with her the lands and castle of Aboyne passed to the Gordons, with whom they have since remained. Sir John was killed at the battle of Otterburn, 1388, and his only daughter and heiress was married in 1408, to Sir William Seaton of Seaton Mallonally, descended from a sister of Robert I.

Their son Alexander was, in 1449, created Earl of Huntly, and resumed the surname of Gordon. This Earl Alexander was succeeded by his son George, in favour of whose second son Adam (who afterwards became Earl of Sutherland,) it is stated, in Gordon's history of the clan, that James II. granted a novodamus of the lands of Aboyne. They seem, however, to have reverted to the Earl of Huntly, and to have been bestowed successively on the second sons of that noble house, first, on John, who was cruelly burned to death at Frendraught, on 30th April 1630, and secondly, on James Viscount Aboyne, on whose death they passed to his next brother Charles, who was created Earl of Aboyne, and of whom is lineally descended the present Marquis of Huntly.

In 1671 the castle was repaired or rather part of it rebuilt, by Charles first Earl of Aboyne, and in 1801, his great grandson, the present Marquis of Huntly, added the east wing or half to it, corresponding in appearance and architecture to the west, on which occasion, the old foundations, which had been laid on brandered oak above peat moss, were raised of what had once been the baronial hall. The old mansion-house of Balnacraig,* in which the former proprietor resided, is in the parish, and on the Balnacraig property is also the House of Carlogie, now occupied by Admiral Sir Arthur Farquhar. At Tillfoudie, once the seat of a branch of the Gordons, but now forming part of the Aboyne property, are to be seen the ruins of the proprietor's house.

Antiquities.—On Knockbeg, or little hill of Tillfoudie, are the remains of a circular building,† (diameter 83 feet,) composed of

* While a party of military were preparing to burn the house of Balnacraig in 1746, a soldier thrust his head into a jar of honey, from which he could only, amid the jeering of his comrades, be extricated by breaking part from the mouth of the jar,—during this scene a counter order to save the house arrived. The honey jar, with its broken lip, has been preserved by the representatives of the family.

† The writer has seen the remains of similar stone buildings, extending in a line across Sutherland. The most entire one he has met with is on the Blackwater, Strath Brora, and called "Castle Coull."

There are also a few of the round "turf forts or pits" close to the turnpike road, two miles east from Fort George:

stones regularly laid, and the foundation partly imbedded in rock, but without mortar or cement; and at the base of the hill, in a corn-field, about half a mile to the north-east, may be traced the site of another erection, said to have been similar; and connecting them are to be seen the remains of two parallel dikes, forming a fenced avenue or roadway. This avenue, thus secured on each side and in no place under the breadth of fifteen feet, though in many places more than double that extent, leads to the east over the adjoining moor of Drumduan, and can be traced for miles, in the direction of the hill of Fare, where, the writer has been told, it is connected with similarly raised structures, known by the name of Pict's houses or forts. The line extends also westward to the hill of Knockice, and Kinord, and is there too connected with a number of these Picts' houses, though none of them, like the one on Knockbeg, has been erected entirely of stone. From Knockice, the enclosed line branches off towards a ford in the Dee, and appears on the opposite side in Glentanner, with more of these ancient ruins planted, at intermediate spaces, along it. The same is observable at Tillphoudie hill (distant from Knockice five miles,) leading also towards a ford in the Dee, and not far from either bank are two of these raised forts, placed like lunettes to protect the passage. Both the diverging lines seem to point to a pass through the Grampians, directly leading to Catterthun, the great Caledonian fort, about twenty miles distant, in the braes of Angus, and thought by some to have been a stronghold of Galgacus. The main line may be traced nearly parallel with the north bank of the Dee, for about fifty miles from hill of Fare by Knockice to Braemar, said to be the Tamea of the Romans, and these parallel dikes (a line of them branching also northward from Knockice) have been represented by some antiquaries as the remains of itinera of that people. The dikes, however, appear always in connection with these round forts or pits, which was the form adopted by the Picts and the ancient Scots for their places of strength. Those of the Romans were rectangular, and the stone one on Little hill (to and from which the iter evidently led,) had been erected without lime or mortar, which would not likely have been the case had it been of Roman origin. At Knockice, along the south face and base of Mulloch hill,* are the ruins of three rectangular stone en-

* Mulloch, Gaelic, "the top or highest part of the mountain." On this Mulloch or summit of the hill, there is a cairn 60 yards in circumference, and the average depth of the stones 2 yards. There is a confused tradition that this cairn marks the

closures, all close to and connected with each other. The westmost one, 140 yards by 88, the next larger, and the eastmost about double the size of the other two. All the three have been apparently open on the south side, except in so far as naturally secured by a small rill of water and marshy ground. There are two smaller enclosures, of from 12 to 18 yards diameter, a little out from the north-west corner of the smallest of the three, on steep rising ground, and overlooking the whole. The road or diked avenue from Kinord leads to the westmost of the three, and is lost in it. It again appears skirting the other two, except in one place where it is blocked up by the wall of the inclosure, to form which the stones of the two dikes appear in that place to have been removed. Hence if these be the remains of a Roman encampment for the troops of Domitian or Severus, as some have inferred, the encampment and the iter must have been formed at different times, and if by the Romans, it is not likely they would, in an enemy's country, have blocked up their iter without the formation of a new line. It may be noticed, that the enclosures had been mere fences of loose stone and turf, without any outside ditch, and present nothing of the formidable appearance of a Roman rampart. Three sides of the hill slope as regularly as if they had by art been formed into a glacis; and contain several deep trenches, of no great length, like so many redoubts to check an advancing army; and the whole ground is covered with cairns, many of them within the inclosures; and the tradition of the country is strong, that more than one severe battle had been fought on this ground, but when, or by whom, an opinion cannot well be formed. One tradition is, and some authors have stated it as a fact, on what evidence is unknown to the writer, that the Romans did pass to Moray by Braemar, and were signally routed at Knockice. Severus indeed, with his son Caracalla, did attempt, in the year 208, the entire conquest of Scotland; but, after losing 50,000 men in one campaign, was glad to retire south of the Tyne, and the Romans never again evinced any desire to face the six Scottish knights,

Sir Moss, Sir Moor, and Sir Mountain,
Sir Rock, Sir River, and Sir Duntan.

Among other antiquities in the parish there is, close to the turnpike road near the bridge of Dess, a large round stone with a

spot on which some Danish King or general fell. It is not, however, raised conically, but flattened like cairns on other hills (and several of them can be seen from it,) on which beacon fires are said to have been lighted.

hole in the centre, somewhat like that of a millstone, and supposed to have been used for the erection of a gibbet-tree. It was, about twenty years ago, with the view of examining it, placed on its hem, and, on raising it from the flat bed on which it rested, there was some difficulty experienced, in consequence of large stones which had been laid around to firm it. That it was a gibbet-stone, may be the more readily inferred from its being placed at the foot of a natural tumulus, which bears the significant name of *Tiremòd*, i. e. "the court-ground."

Six years ago, a canoe, neatly formed out of a single block of oak, was dug out of the peat-moss at Drumduan, on the south side of Auchlossan Loch. It was quite entire; but being in an unsound state, and left on the bank to dry, it was unfortunately broken by the rude handling of some herd boys.

On a knoll near Aboyne Castle stands a sculptured stone, six and a-half feet high. This stone formerly stood on an eminence nearly fronting the land-end of the drawbridge which had communicated with Ceanmore's fortified island in Loch Kinord, but, in commemoration of which of the many eventful occurrences connected with that locality, no evidence exists beyond its carved hieroglyphics; and as these contain what appears intended to represent a cross, curiously and very laboriously cut, it may be inferred to have been erected within the Christian era. It was removed by the Earl of Aboyne from its original site to that which it now occupies near a small Druidical circle; hence its history may, at some future period, puzzle the antiquary.

About a mile and a-half north-west from the church, there is a stone with a cross cut on it, and standing near a well. This stone, when removed at some olden time, is said to have been miraculously brought back by Muchrieha, the guardian of the well. Near the cross formerly stood a stone of considerable size, with a hollow rudely cut in it, and called Muchrieha's chair. This chair some masons, about thirty years ago, unawed by Muchrieha, split into pieces to assist in the building of the neighbouring farm-house.

On the hill of Little Tullich, overlooking the site of the old Castle of *Cean-na-coil*, are the remains of what is called "My Lord's House," consisting of five courses of a square stone building, the wall at the base course 12 feet thick, and diminishing about a foot each course, so that the five courses present, on the outside, the appearance of a stair of as many steps on each side.

The entry is from the west, and the apartment within is $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet each side. The base course also projects inwardly from 12 to 15 inches, forming a seat or bench all around; and in laying the courses no cement had been used. It may have been originally arched or roofed in, but it is now open, and the height of the apartment within from 5 to 6 feet. The use of this building is reported to have been for obtaining a view during a deer-hunt; and this part of the ancient forest of Marr being the nearest to the old Castle of Kincardine (about fifteen miles distant,) which was frequently honoured with a royal visit, it is thought it was in this locality his Majesty, Alexander III., was saved from an infuriated stag by Colin Fitzgerald, of whom were descended the Earls of Seaforth. The charter in favour of Fitzgerald for the lands of Kintail is dated "Apud Kincardine ix. die Jan. anno regni nostri xviii." or 1267; and the interesting occurrence which becomes associated with the date and locality of this charter, was, as recorded by Sir George Mackenzie of Tarbet, "about that time when Alexander was on a hunting excursion in the forest of Marr, an exasperated stag, hotly pursued by the hounds, made a dead push at the place occupied by the King, when Colin bravely interposed his own person, and adroitly shot, with an arrow, the infuriated assailant."

Half-way between the castle and the old church is an old tree called the Skeulan tree, and a well called the Skeulan Well. They are still held in great veneration, and the name appears to be a corruption of St Eunan, to whom the parish and church of Aboyne were anciently dedicated. Within a short distance of the Skeulan tree, there is another well called the Lady's Well.

At Newton of Tilliecairn, in 1828, several urns, containing calcined bones, were dug up while trenching some ground, one of them perfectly entire; and the gentleman into whose possession it has fallen has either lately presented it, or intends to present it, to the Museum of Marischal College. About fifty yards distant from the tumulus in which the urns were found, the soil has a blackish appearance, with small pieces of charcoal imbedded in it, the whole appearing to have been under the action of strong fire; and here, it is presumed, the bodies had been burned, preparatory to the calcined remains being placed in the urns. And it may be remarked, too, that the site is near some Picts' houses, or, as they are here called, *Mullochies*, on the communication branch

of the parallel dikes which diverge from Knockice on the opposite side of the Dee.

Nearly a mile to the east of Newton, on the top of a ridge on which are several small cairns, is one of great extent called Cairnmore, which, in 1818, was partly opened for the purpose of obtaining stones for the erection of a house, when a number of bones were found, and a small gold chain of four links, attached to a pin of such size as might have been used in a brooch for fastening the Celtic plaid. The bottom of the cairn was neatly paved, and about one-tenth part of it only has been explored.

On the summit of the hill of Mortlich, in this parish, has been a pretty large enclosure, apparently an extensive encampment. Now this is the only Mortlich or Murtlach in Marr; and Buchanan writes (Lib. vi. cap. xlix.) that Malcolm II., after a hard-contested action ad Murthilacum in Marria, and taking advantage of a *præsidium* or old strength, fortified by a wall and ditch, gained a signal victory over the Danes. The Peel Bog, about two miles east from this Mortlich in Marr, most exactly corresponds with the description given by Buchanan of the *præsidium* or old strength. Some, however, think, that the enclosure on the top of Mortlich may have been used for a more ignoble purpose than that of an encampment of warriors, and that it was a fence, difficult of access and easily guarded, for securing the cattle of the country during the foray of any hostile clan or inroad of pillaging foes.

In 1834, there was dug out of one of the cairns at Ferrar a silver coin, (hammer struck,) bearing on the obverse, within a double tressure, or leaves of a rose, (except the bust, which extends to the legend,) the king's head in profile, with an open crown fleury, before him the sceptre fleury, with the legend, DAVID DEI GRA REX SCOTORVM. On the reverse, a cross potent extending to the edge, with a spur-revel of five points in each quarter. In the inner circle VILLA EDINBURGH, (the place of coinage.) In the outer, the legend, + DNS-PTECTOR-MS + LIBATOR MS, (being the contraction for Dominus Protector Meus et Liberator Meus.) It bears no date, neither is the king's name designated by any numbers. It may, therefore, be presumed to have been of the reign of David I.,* sixth son of Ceanmore, and who, in 1124, succeeded his brother Edgar; but those acquainted with the history of

* Since the above was sent to press, the writer has seen a copy of "Numismata Scotiæ," from which the coin would appear to have been of the reign of David II., and that the legend (being common) was not assumed in reference to the liberation of that Sovereign.

Scotch coinage may be able to determine whether this piece be of the reign of David II., who, when only eight years of age, succeeded his father, "the Bruce," in 1329. Of either reign, it would fall within the date (1335) of the battle of Culblean, fought about two miles to the westward; and in the direction of Ferrar it is generally admitted the routed Baliolites fled, closely pursued by "the Gordon" and his gallant band. Some of the fugitives are reported to have rushed into the mill at Dinnet, and there (except two saved by the address and bravery of the miller,) cut down by their fierce pursuers. From this incident the name of the mill was changed from that of Dinnet, *Dion-aite*, (*sheltering place*,) to *Muillean donas* (*the mill of mischief*). The *sucken* considered their mill polluted. A new one was erected about one hundred yards distant; but the old site is still called *Muillean donas*. Connected also with the chase from Culblean, a small rill, nearly a mile north of Aboyne Castle, is called "the bloody burn," the tradition being, that, for twenty-four hours, the water was reddened with the blood of the slain. But "bloody burn" being expressed in Scotch and not in Gaelic, it may be inferred, that the occurrence from which arose the name must have been of more recent date than the battle of Culblean. If, too, the coin be of the reign of David II., and if the legend have reference to the liberation of that monarch from England, (1358,) the piece (and bones found with it in the cairn) must have been deposited on some memorable occasion subsequent to the rout, in 1335, from Culblean. Cairns (some of great size) and tumuli are to be found on every hill and moor in the parish. Some of them may mark the graves of the Sassenach and the Dane; but many of them may be claimed by every Celt in the north as a "*Carn na Cuimhne*," a cairn of remembrance over a clansman of his own, who fell either in nobly repelling a foreign foe, or in the direful conflict of chief against chief. But it is not to be supposed that all these tumuli and cairns owed their origin to the casualties of war. Around the Druidical places of worship, there were no cemeteries. Such convenient spots* as, amid their pastoral and migratory life, might at the time occur to the surviving relatives, were selected, and the grave secured against the ravenous wolf † by a heap of stones. "*Curri mi cloch er do charne*," I

* The writer knows some remote Highland parishes in which still are many places of interment which have never been connected with any place of worship.

† At a hunting in forests of Athole and Marr, so late as 1528, a wolf is mentioned among the game killed by James V.

will add a stone to your cairn, is still a complimentary expression among Highlanders.

Parochial Register.—The parochial register only extends back to 1752. It contains minutes of the kirk-session meetings, and a record of marriages and births, but not of deaths. The births have been very irregularly entered, from the neglect of some parents, and the disinclination of others, to have their children's names recorded.

III.—POPULATION.

In 1755,	the population amounted to	1695
1831,	- - - - -	1169
1841,	- - - - -	1138

This falling off may be accounted for from the increased size of the farms and a diminution of the cottar system.

The people are orderly and industrious, shrewd and intelligent, well informed in the principles of religion, and regular in their attendance upon its ordinances. A very intelligent and respectable farmer of the name of Gillanders, who, since the incumbency of the writer, died in the parish, was the eighteenth oldest son of the family, who, in succession, had been born on the same farm. The adjoining farm is now rented by his oldest son; and others in the parish are possessed of evidence that they, and those they represent, have lived under the Earls of Aboyne from the time that noble family succeeded to their honours, and were ever ready to follow their feudal chief to the field. In more recent times, though the Earl of Aboyne did not formally embark in the unfortunate risings of 1715 and 1745, yet did his tenants zealously support "the Prince" with their services.*

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—The arable land in the parish is 2178 Scotch acres; and the gross rental is L.3300, (exclusive of shooting-grounds), which would be at the rate of about L.1, 10s. per Scotch acre. If, however, the arable were let without the extensive moorlands and natural pastures attached, the average rent of the arable would perhaps range from L.1 to L.1, 5s.

* In 1715 the Earl of Mar, to mature his plans and collect his hounds, invited his sporting friends to a deer-hunt in Glentanner, and to meet him at *Cean-na-Coil*. Thence, with the men of Aboyne, he proceeded to Braemar Castle, and there unfurled the banner of James VII. In 1745-6, a battalion, named by Lord Lewis Gordon "the Aboyne battalion," and commanded by Farquharson of Monaltree, beat the Macleods at Iuverury; and, in the fierce onslaught at Culloden, cut through "Burrell's Blue." The survivors who returned from that eventful field are all now beyond the din of war. The writer remembers seven or eight of them, and has often heard from them an account of their disastrous adventure.

per Scotch acre. The usual system of cropping followed in the parish, as generally throughout the district of Marr, is the seven years' shift; and to observe this rotation most of the tenants are bound by their leases. A less exhausting course, however, is beginning to be introduced, viz. the six years' shift, which only differs from the former by taking one grain crop instead of two after lea. The only grain crops to which the climate is found congenial, are oats and big. The surplus grain is carried to market at Aberdeen, and the carts return loaded with lime, coals, or bone-dust. There are only three farms in the parish exceeding 100 acres arable. Most of them are only from 20 to 50 acres, and many of them mere crofts, extending from 5 to 12 or 15 acres; and the smaller the farm, generally the higher the rent, arising chiefly from a competition among steady farm-servants, who have saved from their wages as much as is sufficient to stock one of these small holdings. The usual duration of the leases granted is nineteen years. There is improvable ground in the parish, perhaps equal in extent, and not inferior in natural quality, to what is already arable, but which, on a nineteen years' lease, would scarcely repay the expense of bringing it into tillage. In cutting down the crops, the sickle has of late been superseded by the scythe.

Farm-Buildings.—The farm-houses with *lum* and earthen-floor have entirely disappeared, and in their stead plain and comfortable erections have been built with chimneys, and one end at least floored with wood; and those erected within the last few years are slated, and generally of two stories. An improving style of offices has also begun to be introduced. This better system has chiefly arisen from the houses becoming more generally the direct property of the land-owners, in place of being built or paid for by incoming tenants. Some of the farms, too, have of late been well enclosed with stone fences at the expense of the proprietors.

Under this head, it may be also mentioned, that traces of the plough are visible far up the brows of the hills, and at greater elevations than it is thought any grain would now ripen. These alpine rigs are all straight, arising, it is presumed, from the plough*

* The plough with a single handle is said to have been then used. The writer has seen such a plough at work in the higher district of Caithness, and was struck with its resemblance to the old Roman plough as described by Virgil, *Georgica*, lib. i. 162. Ovid, too, alludes to the single-handed plough, "*stiva*" (not *stivis*) "*innixus arator.*"

having been drawn by the *amlin-mor* (great yoke,) to which the cattle were attached abreast. In connection with these rigs, the more limited operations of the spade or *cas-chrom* appear in small cleared patches, from which the grubbed up stones have been collected into heaps. From the mountain's brow, cultivation would appear to have gradually descended to the richer and stiffer soils of the glen, as it became cleared of wood and water, and there the straight rig of the *amlin-mor* appears to have been succeeded by the curvilinear of the ten-oxen-plough.

Live-Stock.—Much attention is bestowed on the rearing of black-cattle. These are generally of the Aberdeenshire horned, or of the Buchan polled breeds; but they have of late, on several farms, been crossed with the short-horned, much to the improvement of the weight, and a year's earlier maturity of the animals for the market. A few are fed either for the Aberdeen fleshers, or for exportation by the steamers for the London market; but a greater number are disposed of in a lean state to the south of Scotland and English dealers. From any of these quarters, however, there has been little demand, and at greatly reduced prices, since the ports were opened for the admission of foreign cattle. On the hills and moorlands, from 5000 to 6000 sheep, mostly of the Linton breed, are pastured; and a few pigs are also to be seen about most of the farm-steadings. The average amount yearly sold of these different kinds of stock has been calculated at rather more than half the rent paid to the landowners. The horses are not heavy, but hardy; and, from the lightness of the soil, a pair of them is sufficient for drawing a plough, and one of them for carrying in a cart four quarters of bear to the Aberdeen market.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Market-Towns.—The united parish is distant from Aberdeen, the principal market-town, from twenty-four to thirty-seven miles. Stonehaven is two miles nearer, but with it, though there be turnpike roads leading to both towns, the intercourse is very limited. In the village of Charlestown, within the parish, and a quarter of a mile east of the church, there is a very commodious inn, noted for the excellent manner in which it is kept: Also a post-office; bake and brew-house; shop for general goods; meal, flour, barley, and malt-mills; shoemakers, carpenters, tailors, and a saddler. Through the village, a mail-coach to and from Aberdeen passes daily, and several carriers weekly.

Means of Communication.—The turnpike road from Aberdeen, (which is joined by the one from Stonehaven at Banchory Ternan), terminates at Aboyne; but the communication is continued by excellent commutation roads, on both sides of the Dee, to Ballater and Braemar. The Parliamentary road to Alford commences in the parish; and there are also, leading from Aboyne, good commutation roads in the direction of Tarland, of the Cairnamonth and to Inchmarnoch, by either side of Bellrory. Over the Tanner, there are two stone-bridges, and five over other tributary streams of the Dee, all arched, besides several other smaller bridges, either of wood or of stone, but not arched. At the place where the ferry-boat now passes the Dee, between Kin-cardine O'Neil and the lands of Balnacraig, in the parish of Aboyne, a wooden bridge was erected, by Durward of Coull, in the fourteenth century, but of which all traces have long since disappeared. Two miles further east, on the verge of the parish, there is now the elegant stone-bridge of Potarch, of three arches, and each pier founded on rock. At Aboyne, and nearly opposite the church, the much admired* chain or suspension-bridge, was erected by the Earl of Aboyne in 1831, and solely at his Lordship's expense. A previous one, on the same site, and nearly on the same design, had been constructed in 1828, but which was unfortunately carried away by the great flood of 4th August 1829. The two bridges cost his Lordship from L.6000 to L.7000, and there is no pontage. The stability of this bridge being now tested, and there being an excellent road, either turnpike or Parliamentary, from Huntly to Aboyne, a continuation of the line southward, through the Grampians, is naturally indicated, and a very inviting line as to levels and facility of formation has been surveyed, from Aboyne, through the top of forest of Birse, lower part of Glenesk, Clash of Wurren, and parish of Menmuir, to join the great Strathmore road at a point near the bridge of Finhaven, distant about twenty-five miles from Aboyne. Were this projected road formed, (and the estimated expense is less than what the bridge at Aboyne cost), the saving which would be gained in travelling from many of the northern counties is not only obvious, but property along its tract would be greatly enhanced, and a spur given, in a neglected district, to

* Length of suspension portion, 230 feet; do. of two iron trussed arches, 60 and 50 do.; and length of two stone arches, 30 and 20 feet; depth of the foundation of the two principal piers under the level of the river, 11 feet.

that spirit of improvement which is generally carried on along a new line of road, by which easy access is afforded.

Ecclesiastical State.—The church is very handsome and comfortable, and seated for 628. It was erected this year at an expense, exclusive of carriages, of about L.900. The manse was built in 1790, and two new rooms added in 1835. The stipend is L.150, of which the sum of L.12, 16s. 2½d. is paid by the Exchequer. The glebe extends to nearly twenty imperial acres, but of such worthless soil, that it has never repaid the expense of labouring it. The old glebes of Aboyne and Glentanner, of excellent soil, were, on the occasion of a central church being built for the united parish in 1763, excambed for double extent of a bleak moor, which had evidently at one period been the bed of the Dee, and which had scarcely any soil on it. It is only fit for growing furze and broom, or stunted firs. The minister has the privilege of a peat-moss, four miles distant, on the top of a very steep hill.

Education.—The salary of the parochial schoolmaster is L. 28, which, with allowance from the Dick bequest and school fees, may raise his income to L. 80 per annum, with house and garden. The usual branches of education are taught, and the number of scholars last winter was as high as 140. From the school there is at present one student at Marischal College and another at King's, both holding competition bursaries. In the Glentanner division of the parish, there is a school established by the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, with a salary of L. 16, and the usual accommodations from the heritors. The average number of scholars, 60 : but their fees do not amount to much. From remote corners of the parish, several children attend neighbouring parochial schools, to which they are nearer than to that of Aboyne ; and in winter, some are instructed in adventure schools. The minister, parochial and society schoolmasters, are natives of the parish.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The number of persons on the poor's roll has nearly doubled within the last few years. They at present amount to 34. Among them, in proportion to their respective wants, are divided, by quarterly distributions, about L.35 per annum, arising from church collections, amounting on an average to L.23 ; interest of money, L.3 ; and the balance from voluntary contributions by some of the heritors and others. There are no beggars in the parish ; and the paupers on the roll derive much

of their support from the kindness and beneficence of their more affluent neighbours. Whenever any urgent case occurs, a contribution in meal and money is immediately made in the vicinity for its relief.

Fairs.—There are five great markets held on a green admirably adapted for the purpose, between the village of Charlestown and the church, viz. at Candlemas, Michaelmas, and Hallowmas; one also in June, and another in July.

Inns.—There is an excellent inn, the Huntly Arms, at Aboyne, and four secondary ones in the parish.

Fuel.—Bog peat and hill turf are used for fuel. There is also much wood, particularly fir, burned; and many drive coal from Aberdeen.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

Fifty years ago, the fields were regularly checkered by baulk and rig. Drill husbandry and green crops not to be seen, save in a few rare patches of grass or turnip in some of the farmers' kailyards, and perhaps a head-rig or some odd corner in potato for a *bonne bouche* in harvest. The breed of cattle light, and of an inferior stamp; the horses (though mettlesome) mere highland garrons; the sheep small in carcass, and scanty in wool. The houses of simple structure: lums for chimneys, and wooden boards for windows. *Currocks*, and *creels*, and *litter trees* supplied the place of carts; *winnowing weights* that of fanners; and hair and moss-fir *tethers*, or willow and birch withes, were substitutes for hempen ropes. The *querne* was partially used; and though the *laddle mill* had disappeared, it had been only superseded by the *cog* and *rung*. Clumsy and ill-constructed ploughs were drawn by ten or twelve oxen, with the "*curvus arator*" slowly turning the huge furrow, and the gadman's whistle, in autumn and spring, heard on every side. The roads were wretched; and the nearest post-office and bake-house at Aberdeen. Many of the young men appeared in kilt, hose, and brogues; and all, old and young, at church and market, with breacan and bonnet. The women, too, were dressed mostly in home-made stuffs, and gudewives adorned with the barred plaid. The grain raised was little more than sufficient for the wants of the parish. From seed-time to harvest many of the men were employed in the manufacture of tubs, harrows, plough-beams, &c. which they carried to Old Rayne fair, the Aberdeen timber and Auldton markets. In summer, the women were employed in spinning the wool of their sheep; and many a web was ready for the

gudewives to start with for Bartle fair of Kincardine. A new order of things has now gradually sprung up, and the dress and habits of the people are similar to those in other rural parishes in the county.

It may be also observed, that, fifty years ago, many a legendary tale, blended with some historical facts respecting the parish, was told; it is said that, at some very remote period, an irruption had been made through the Grampians by an overwhelming host of invaders; that these were assailed by the natives from the woods, rocks, and hills, and finally routed at Knockice;* that a line of tumuli and cairns marks the graves of fallen Danes and northern marauders; that Macbeth fled from Dunsinane, and maintained himself for three years among the fastnesses of Marr; and that, in one of his flights for life, and unattended, through Aboyne—himself exhausted and his *mare* jaded—he dismounted to drink from a well situated at the point† from which he could first see his castle of Peel Bog, distant about two miles, and, obtaining a bit of bread from a herd boy, asked him the name of the well, and, being told that it was Brien (Braon), he ejaculated, “wo is me, the spell is gone, and my doom is sealed.” It is said also, that feuds and conflicts often raged between the Forbeses and the Gordons, the Gordons and Farquharsons; and that, after one memorable foray, orphan children were carried towards the banks of the Spey; and that some of their descendants are still to be found there bearing the name of “*Strathdee*.” It is said that the vassals of Aboyne suffered in Marr’s year, the 45, and in the wars of Montrose and Dundee; and that Mackay, after “*Killiecrankie*,” visited Strathdee with fire and sword; and, in forcing the pass of Ballater, that, with *hand granades*, he fired the heath and burned the forest of Culblean, encamped at Tarland, and, with other parishes, laid Aboyne under contribution. Hence the couplet,

Wo to the day John Tam was married,
Culblean was burn’d, and Cromar was harried.

Instead of listening much to such traditionary tales and imperfectly recorded facts, the people now take an interest in reading standard works on history and general science, and have provided themselves with a pretty extensive parochial library.

* Knockice, *i. e.* (Gaelic) *Cnochdi*, derived from a little hill, and many cairns in its neighbourhood.

† The pass in which the well is situated is known by the name of Tilliebreen, *i. e.* *Silleadh* (the *dh* quiescent) *draon*—water formed by rain falling on opposite hills, and running along their base. One of the hills here alluded to is Mortlick, (the slack of death,) on the base of which, and in a mountain pass, Macbeth now stood. Hence the name of the hill rather than that of the well might have conjured up sad forebodings to his superstitious mind.

December 1842.