

44 bolls, 3 pecks, and $\frac{1}{2}$ lippy meal. The glebe consists of $5\frac{1}{2}$ acres. The manse was built in 1803. The number of families belonging to the Established Church is 400; of Dissenting or Seceding families, 40.

Education.—There is at present only one parochial school in the parish, and two private schools; but the parish would require additional schools, which it is hoped will soon take place. The parochial schoolmaster's salary is the minimum, but he receives a share of the donation bequeathed by the late Mr Dick to the schoolmasters in the counties of Aberdeen, Banff, and Moray. His fees may amount to betwixt L. 24 and L. 32 per annum.

Poor.—The average number of the poor of all classes in the three years preceding 1838, 77; average on the permanent roll, 24 $\frac{2}{3}$; average of those not on the permanent roll, 43. Average amount distributed among poor on the permanent roll, L. 46, 19s.; average amount distributed among poor not on the permanent roll, L. 14, 16s.; average amount distributed for support of lunatics, L. 14. Average amount from church collections, L. 55; from other voluntary contributions, L. 11, 11s.; from mortifications, mortcloth dues, &c. L. 24, 10s.

January 1840.

PARISH OF DRUMBLADE.

PRESBYTERY OF TURRIFF, SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

THE REV. GEORGE R. DAVIDSON, MINISTER.

L.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE ancient name of this parish seems to have been *Drumblait*, which signifies in Gaelic, hills or braes covered or fledged. The modern name is written *Drumblade*.

Boundaries, &c.—It is bounded, on the north and east, by the parish of Forgue; on the south, by Inch and Gartly, in a glen called Foudlin, in which, though of small extent, no fewer than five parishes meet; on the west, it is bounded by the river Bogie, which in that point separates it both from Huntly and Gartly.

Extent, &c.—The parish is considerably diversified by small hills, mostly cultivated, and gently sloping valleys, with one flat on the

north and west of large extent, so level, that the draining of it hitherto has not been very complete, from the want of proper fall for the water. This flat is still called the Knightland Moss, though it has long ceased to possess that character, being now either under the plough or in pasture. The length of the parish from north-east to south-west may be 7 miles; greatest breadth between 5 and 6 miles; in some places, however, the breadth is less than 2 miles.

Meteorology.—The temperature in general may be described as moderate, and the atmosphere wholesome, and the draining through the parish being now very extensive, and for the most part effectual, the climate must in consequence be greatly superior to what it had been in former years. The north-west wind is perhaps the most prevalent.

Hydrography.—The only stream of any consequence in the parish is the Bogie, which divides it on the west from the town and parish of Huntly. There are other insignificant streamlets or burns in the parish, and dividing it in part from neighbouring parishes. Of these, the burn which on the east divides the lower part of the parish from Forgue, is to be mentioned,—and the Knightland Burn, which again divides part of the north district of the parish from Kinore, once a separate parish, but which is now united to the other old parish of Dumbennan,—they forming together the more modern parish of Strathbogie, or, as it is more generally designed, Huntly.

There are some mineral wells in the parish—none, however, of note. Their quality is chalybeate. There are others that are called saints' wells, and which are still distinguished by the saint's particular name, or a corruption of the same—as one at Burnside, in the neighbourhood of the church, called Teller's Well, an evident corruption of St Hilary's. The time has been when peculiar virtues were attributed to these, not from any mineral properties which they were supposed to possess, but from the blessing of the saint whose name they bear; but these and other similar superstitions have, from the greater enlightenment of these Protestant times, now very properly died away.

There are no lakes or lochs in the parish. A few years ago there remained a small specimen of such at Silverhillock, the waters of which, it has been affirmed, ebbed and flowed like the tide, but, as may be supposed, on no kind of evidence that can be substantiated. Within these few years, by the application of proper

draining, it has disappeared, and hardly any trace of it can now be observed.

Geology and Mineralogy.—There is nothing very remarkable to state under this head. Besides blocks of common whinstone (greenstone) that are found in many parts of the parish, there are likewise rocks both of limestone and granite—the former, however, of a description so inferior, as not to be used for its mineralogical property. The granite, again, of which there is a considerable quarry on the farm of Corvichen, within a short distance of Huntly, is of good quality, and not inferior, it is believed, to the well-known granite so extensively worked in the vicinity of Aberdeen, and equally beautiful. When newly dissevered from the parent rock, it is softer, and much more workable than after it lies for a time exposed to the action of the air—which renders it peculiarly adapted for building purposes, where durability is of first rate consequence. The granite rock in this place is covered almost exclusively with small gravel of a granular kind—consisting, in fact, in a great measure, of the same elements with the granite itself beneath, though of a yellower and somewhat dirtier colour, showing that it is the same in a state of decomposition. The subsoil throughout, in this part of the parish, is of a gravelly kind, consisting of yellow sand and round stones, of a colour that would indicate the presence and action of iron or other metallic influence.

Fossil Organic Remains.—It may be mentioned, that hazel-nuts, in a state of great preservation as to external appearance, have been found deeply imbedded in moss, with roots and branches of the parent trees from which they sprung. In the moss of Thomastown, in particular, now under cultivation, when drains were cut to the extent of several feet, these were found in considerable quantity, and in such preservation without, as to indicate almost the possibility of some remaining freshness within them.

On the farm of Cocklarachy, in the year 1833 or 1834, an oak of large dimensions was discovered about five feet below the surface, imbedded also in moss—about 100 yards above the bridge that crosses the Bogie toward the Huntly and Rhynie turnpike, about the same distance from this river, and not much above its level. It was nearly black, and the bark for the most part rotted off. Being very heavy, the thick part of the trunk was raised in two pieces—one about 10 feet long and the other 12—the average girth was about 7 feet, and the two pieces contained from

60 to 70 cubic feet of timber. The top of the tree was not raised, so that its full size was not ascertained. These solid parts were sent to Gordon Castle, where, after having been left for a time to dry gradually, they were cut up for cabinet purposes. The extremities of several such oaks may still be seen sticking out from the bank of the burn, a little below the church and glebe of Drumblade, on the farm of Baggry Mill, parish of Forgue.

Soil, &c.—The soil in this parish, though presenting considerable variety, may be said in general to be of a superior kind, consisting, for the most part, of a deep rich loam, capable in favourable seasons of yielding abundant crops, and if the climate (still susceptible of great improvement, were more attention paid to hedging and planting), were equal to the soil, it would, it is believed, be found particularly adapted for wheat culture, which has begun of late years to be somewhat attended to. There is at the same time in many places a coldness of subsoil, which is not very encouraging, arising, perhaps for the most part, from a still imperfect drainage, which the ordinary system practised does not seem fully to overcome, not only from the soil being unusually stiff and retentive, but from a hard crust often found beneath, which, it is hoped, the trench, or subsoil plough, now begun to be introduced, may do much to remove. While the greater part of the parish consists of this stiff heavy soil, there is yet a very considerable difference between the western district, to the south and west of the Aberdeen and Huntly turnpike, and the other districts. The former being of a lighter and sharper description, with a subsoil consisting generally of loose sand and gravel, and somewhat earlier than the other parts.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Historical Events.—The most interesting event that falls to be noticed under this head, is the circumstance of King Robert Bruce having lain encamped here during a time of severe sickness, while he kept in check at the same time Comyn, Earl of Buchan, who had followed him hither, and who was then and long before one of the most powerful of the Scottish barons. This seems to have been just before the battle of Barra, which was fought between the same parties in the year 1307.

History and tradition have pretty uniformly pointed to Sliach in this parish as the place so distinguished,—a certain height upon which is called Robin or Robin's Height at this day. Indeed, this point seems never to have been disputed until within the last few years, when Mr Tytler, in general, the most accurate and philoso-

phical historian of our country that has yet appeared, has been pleased to transfer this honour from Sliach in Drumblade, to Slains, a bleak and rocky district on the Buchan coast, but without stating any authority for the change.

It is certain that tradition, universally prevalent here, as well as what can be gathered from the metrical historian Barbour, are both against him. For although the name given by the latter (Slanach) is not the same as either, yet there are circumstances detailed in his narrative that render it not only extremely improbable, but quite inconsistent, that Slains should be the place referred to. King Robert, that historian relates, had come over the "Mounth" to Inverury:—at Inverury he was taken sick. It was not judged expedient by his adherents to meet the enemy while he lay in this condition, and, instead of continuing, therefore, exposed in the plain, they resolve to betake themselves to some place of strength, and for this reason the Slenach is preferred. Experiencing there, however, some want of provision, and having daily to encounter the archers of Earl Buchan in their endeavours to supply it, they determine to carry the king in a litter to Strathbogie, (now Huntly), which, in spite of all opposition, they accomplished accordingly.

Now, taking Mr Tytler's account, there is not only the improbability to contend against of the king's being carried so far in a litter as from Slains to Strathbogie in his present infirm condition, but Earl Buchan, as appears, seeing the intrepidity of the king's party at their very outset, lost courage, and "went back to Buchan," which leads to this farther inconsistency, that, had Slains been the place, he and his men were in Buchan already.*

Antiquities.—On the same height above-mentioned, there were some years ago entrenchments to be seen, said to have been the remains of a Roman camp. The probability is, however, that these remains were connected with Bruce's encampment above referred to, or with the strength or fortress which probably then existed upon it. Immense masses of large stones lie at the foot of this hill, and some have been found, it is said, with inscriptions upon them, none of which, however, are now to be seen.

* Vide Barbour's Bruce by Jamieson, Vol. 1. pp. 169-70-71, where the above view seems to be confirmed.

The traditions current here are completely accordant with this account by Barbour, who, it is to be remembered, wrote his history of "The Bruce," at no distant period after the event took place, and whose work Fordun describes as perspicuous and elegant. The hill on Sliach, as stated above, is still called Robin or Robin's Height. The king's sickness was flux, as local tradition has it, and a well in the vicinity is still pointed out, the water of which is represented as having been instrumental towards his recovery.

In the same vicinity, stand three tumuli, the largest at the base of Robin's Height, called Meethillock, and the other two at no great distance, and on the same level ground below. It is conjectured that these tumuli were raised by Bruce's army as posts of communication for his soldiers. None of them have been opened. So far as the plough can yield information, there is every appearance of their being artificial. From the examination of one of them, the second in size, called Tarry Duncan, on the farm of Cairnhill, excepting about four inches of black mould in the surface, the soil beneath appears quite soft, and without any stones. From observing that the ridge on which it stands has little on its surface but clay, it would seem that the mould from it had been cleared away to form this tumulus.

The third mentioned is indeed beyond the boundary of the parish, but still so near the others, that they have all evidently been connected in their origin. It is on the farm of Causeway End, Kinore,—this farm being so called, it is said, because here terminated a Roman causeway, which, running through the old moss called Knightland moss, connected this place with Sliach.

Another tumulus, at one time, stood at the north-east end of the same range of high ground that forms at the west extremity, Robin Height, and nearly two miles distant from it. Many still remember it. When opened, a number of great stones, placed in a circular form, were found within; but it is not reported that any of them bore inscriptions. The stones were used for fencing the plantation which now covers this ridge, and all trace of the tumulus seems to be removed. A little way below this, and between the properties of Newton Garry and Lessendrum, the head of a spear or javelin, of large size, was found some time ago, as have likewise been smaller ones, like arrow-heads, in other parts of the parish.

There is another hill in the parish, and not far from Huntly, denominated the "Battle Hill," that deserves notice as the scene of a conflict said to have taken place at a later period between the Cummins and Gordons. Hardly any thing connected with it has been handed down beyond the name. It stands not far from Corvichen, a farm on the Gordon property, once a separate domain, where a strong house or castle appears once to have stood. Some remains of its foundation are still to be traced. On the opposite side of the hollow, and standing over against the Battle Hill, Corvichen, is the Ba Hill, taking its name very probably from a game

once common, that of foot-ball, at which large parties would often meet, and eagerly contend together for the palm of victory.*

Parochial Registers.—The oldest parochial register commences 1702, and ends 1738. It is simply a register of births and baptisms, containing no details. The second, commencing 1743, is much fuller, and contains, along with such register, a record of the session's discipline and diligence down to 1790. From that time to 1821 the record had again passed into a simple register, with session's collections and disbursements for the poor, and the names merely of those subjecting themselves to discipline, set over against the money-penalties which had been exacted from them. With the exception of deaths and burials, of which there has been no register kept, the record has lately been much more full, and contains now a general entry of all that is ordinarily transacted in the session.

There are four silver communion-cups, two of them gifted by George Chalmer, a minister of the parish in the times of Episcopacy; the other two by Mr Abel, also minister, who died in 1794. There is also a hand-bell of considerable antiquity, with the name George Biset upon it, 1504.

There have been in all eight ministers of this parish, from the period of the Revolution, or rather from the death of the last Episcopalian incumbent, to the present time. The first Presbyterian, Mr John Turing, ordained and admitted 16th March 1703, died 1st February 1733; Mr John Stuart, translated from Longbride, and admitted at Drumblade 1st February 1734, died January 1743; Mr George Gordon, translated from Bourtie, and admitted at Drumblade, 19th October 1743, died 8th December 1763; Mr William Biset, translated from Foot-Dee, and admitted at Drumblade, July 11th 1764, translated to Dundee 22d May 1765; Mr George Abel, ordained and admitted April 2d 1766, died September 1794; Mr Robert Gordon, ordained and admitted May 1795, died 27th November 1820; Dr Robert J. Brown, ordained and admitted 25th September 1821, translat-

* Among the family papers at Lessendrum, there is still extant an old and curious deed of surrender, by which Walter Byset makes over his whole lands to the Pope's Legate, to be held by the Holy See. It is drawn up by Willermus Lenix, clerk of the diocese of Brechin, and runs as follows:—"In ye name of ye Lord, Amen.—In ye year after ye incarnation 1379, on the 14th day of July, in ye 2d of ye indiction, and in ye 1st year of ye Pontificate of ye most holy Father in Christ, Clement, by Divine Providence, Pope 7th of that name. In the presence of my notary," &c. &c. The original is in Latin, and written on vellum.

N. B. At the date of this instrument there were two Popes, Urban and Clement; the former was acknowledged by England, but the latter by Scotland.

ed to the Greek chair, Marischal College, Aberdeen, in December 1827; Mr George Ramsay Davidson, the present minister, was ordained and admitted 8th May 1828.

At one time, there was evidently a chapel or religious house in the parish besides the church. There are now no remains of the building; but the form of a burying-ground is still seen, now fenced and planted, and a well called the Chapel Well.

Land-owners.—There are altogether five heritors, viz. the Duke of Richmond, who now inherits the Gordon property, and possesses exactly half the valued rent of the parish; William Bisset, Esq. of Lessendrum; Archibald Duff, Esq. of Drummair, (lands of Dummuies); John Humphrey, Esq. of Comalleggie; and John Lawson, Esq. of Chapelton.

Modern Buildings.—The only mansion-house in the parish is that of Lessendrum, William Bisset, Esq. who is the only residing heritor. It is partly an old and partly a modern building, it having recently undergone a very extensive addition and repair at the hands of the present proprietor.

III.—POPULATION.

According to Dr Webster the population amounted in 1750 to 1125
in 1790 it was reduced to 886
of whom 427 were males; and 459 females.

There were then belonging to the Established Church, 812; Seceders, 40; Episcopalians, 30; Papists, 4.

The population in	1782 was	876	
	1783	892	
	1784	887	
	1786	914	
	1787	913	
	1788	874	
By the Government census in	1811 it was	780	
	1821	871	
	1831	987	
Average number of births during last seven years, about			22
marriages,			5
persons under 12 years of age,			205
under 15,			310
No. of unmarried men, bachelors, and widowers upwards of 50 years of age,			17
women and widows upwards of 45 years of age,			35
Number of families,		171	
Average number of children,		5½	
Number of uninhabited houses,		2	

Number of illegitimate births in the course of the last three years has been 16, making an average of 5½ in the year; 4 of these have been antenuptial cases, and 2 of them adultery.

There is 1 insane person belonging to the parish; 3 fatuous, two males and a female; 4 deaf and dumb.

Character of the People.—The people are, for the most part, open, frank, and intelligent. They are hospitable in their man-

ners; and their charity, not always discriminating in regard to wandering poor, seems to be dictated pretty much by a simple feeling of humanity. Though not inferior, it is believed, to the other districts around, the standard of religion and morality cannot be rated very high. Impurity and intemperance, though both, it is hoped, are on the decline, are still not unfrequently to be met with. In the class of farm-servants, the former vice particularly has been very prevailing. The ordinances of religion, and the services of the sanctuary, are generally well attended, as also those of a more private or local kind, on week-days.

The practice of advertising sales, &c. by proclamation at the church-doors, after divine service, is now abolished, as also all fines or penalties formerly levied by the session in cases of discipline,—this being left to the civil magistrate.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

The inhabitants of this parish, with very few exceptions, are employed in agriculture, as farmers, crofters, labourers, or farm-servants. The only considerable works of a public kind carried on in the parish are a distillery, bleachfield, and two potato-flour manufactories. At the distillery there are 13 persons employed, and there are annually sent from it upwards of 40,000 gallons of superior spirit, made from malt only, and thus yielding to Government about L. 10,000 a-year in duty. There are also two meal-mills, a barley-mill, a lint-mill, and two wool-mills in the parish. Mills had at one period been more numerous, as the names of several farms still denote where no mills now exist.

Of handicraftsmen, &c. there are only 2 masons, 1 square-wright, 1 cooper, 1 weaver, no tailor, 5 shoemakers, (including 3 workmen,) 3 blacksmiths, (including 1 workman,) 1 baker, 4 merchants or shop-keepers, one of whom retails spirits; 4 publicans and 1 maltster. There are thus not more than from 60 to 80 individuals, reckoning both parents and children, that are not either directly employed in agriculture, or have their dependence chiefly upon it—and of those even here set down as artisans, many of these cultivate a small croft besides attending to their other business.

Agriculture and Rural Economy.—The superficial extent of the parish may be estimated at 6400 acres (Scots,) 5000 of which are arable, 1000 unimproved, and about 400 under plantation, consisting for the most part of larch and Scotch fir, with occasionally an intermixture of spruce and beech. Of the unimproved

ground, there may not be above 100 acres now remaining, that, with any profitable application of capital, could be added to the cultivated land.

Rent of Land.—The average rent of land may be stated at L. 1 an acre. For one description and another, it may be said to range from 5s. to L. 2, and some smaller portions upwards. Some few possessions might, perhaps, be pointed out as decidedly too high, while others, again, may be somewhat under a fair average rent. The difference between value and actual rent that may occasionally occur, is attributed by some to surveyors from a distance being employed as the valuers, as often as farms come into the market, unassisted by practical farmers personally acquainted with the district. Such instances, however, cannot be by any means many—but the evil that operates most extensively in causing at any time a high rent is, that when a possession vacates, a competition arises among offerers themselves, occurring more particularly in the case of crofts and smaller possessions, which, from this cause, are almost invariably dearer than large.

Under the valuation system now commonly introduced, it cannot be said, unless in very peculiar circumstances, that lands here have often changed hands.

The valued rent of the parish is only L. 3066, 13s. 4d. Scots, while the real rent must be about L. 5000 Sterling.

Wages, &c.—The rate of labour for an ordinary farm-servant may average about L. 12 for the year, exclusive of board; expense including both may, therefore, be L. 20 and upwards. They are seldom engaged for more than half a year at a time, and as they do not in general renew their engagements except in a feeing-market,—a system by no means favourable to morals,—there is hence a great deal of shifting about among them at every term. Besides the direct temptations to which they are exposed in these markets, when they appear there, it follows that they are not so dependent on character for a new engagement as, on an improved system, they would and ought to be. The wages of out-door female servants, of whom there are not a few, vary from L. 2, 10s. to L. 3 for the summer half year, and from L. 1, 7s. to L. 1, 15s. in winter. A mason will ordinarily earn from 16s. to 18s. a-week; a wright, 16s. It is very common for young people from ten to sixteen years of age to be employed in herding, for which they earn for themselves or parents from L. 2 to L. 3, and maintenance during the summer months. This system, though a considerable help for a poor man's family;

is not favourable, one would think, to the promoting of active habits, and is a material drawback upon their education; however, were it not for the trifle so gained at this part of the season, they might, perhaps, from want of means, be deprived of it, to a still greater extent.

The principal crops raised in the parish are oats, viz. potato, early Angus, and what are called sandy oats:—these last, which are neither so late nor so tender as the potato, and produce, besides, a greater bulk, it is said, of straw for fodder, and a good mealing oat, seem now to be much in favour. There is also the Hopetoun oat, which, however, does not appear to have taken here, though still sown partially; and bear or bigg, of which there is generally a proportion after green crop, and a few parcels of wheat, which it wants climate only to bring into more extensive culture.

Prices of Provisions.—These are not high. Fresh butter from 5d. to 6d. the imperial pound; eggs 3d. to 4½d. a dozen; fowls 1s. 8d. to 2s. a pair; chickens 8d. to 10d.; beef and mutton 5d. and 5½d. a pound; veal seldom to be had either in the parish or neighbourhood.

Husbandry.—The ordinary husbandry pursued is the five and seven-shift course, particularly the latter, being three grasses and two white crops for the seven, and two grasses and one white crop for the five,—which in dry land is found to answer very well, while in wet or clay land, the third year's grass becomes inferior.

Live-Stock.—This being very much a rearing district for cattle, these fall particularly to be mentioned. The breed is for the most part Aberdeenshire, mixed with highland. Some few of the short-horned have lately been introduced. As they have not yet been long or extensively tried, they cannot be so decisively pronounced upon. They seem, however, to promise well, giving greater strength of bone, which was much wanted, and shewing a tendency to feed sooner. The returns arising from cattle may not be stated at less than from L.3000 to L.3500 annually within the parish; and the amount arising from dairy and poultry produce may be stated at something between L.1700 and L.2000.

Improvements.—During the last thirty years, the improvements that have taken place in reclaiming waste lands have been very considerable, almost doubling, perhaps, in that time the whole cultivation, and, at all events, the produce of former years. They have been accomplished for the most part by draining and liming, carried on chiefly by the occupiers themselves, and at an expense of

their part of not less, it is considered, than L.12,000. These seem to have been begun by tenants taking advantage of the march ditches formed by the proprietors, by directing division ditches, &c. into them, and which giving good promise of utility if carried to a larger extent, the people began generally to adopt the practice, and have certainly, without much encouragement otherwise, evinced very considerable industry and judgment in carrying forward, in almost all cases at their own expense, the work of improvement, and with undoubted benefit both to themselves and the proprietors. By one farmer alone there have been 150 acres improved, for which the Highland Society awarded him their gold medal some years ago,—and by another there have been improved about 100 acres.

In 1817, another gold medal was awarded by the Society of Arts and Manufactures, to a proprietor in this parish, for planting forest trees (to the extent of 235 acres, on a property consisting altogether of 571 acres.) This gentleman deserves credit also for other improvements, and for the enlightened encouragement he gave to his tenants at a time when such stimulus was much wanted. He began by casting drains with the view of improving his property; for those on the boundaries he charged his tenants nothing, but for the drains through the fields he charged them 5 per cent., by which they were considerable gainers, and were enabled to pay their rents more easily, while the property at the same time was much improved. The drains proving effectual, the advantage of liming soon became apparent, but the times being then very backward for tenants in general, he advanced money for that purpose to those having leases, at 5 per cent.; and to those just entering he agreed to furnish a certain quantity, taking the value likely to be received into consideration, and charging it accordingly, all which proved most beneficial to proprietor and tenant. The improvement of a property in some such way as this, and the dealing with tenants on fair and reasonable terms, where especially any difficulties on their part are experienced, is in many respects preferable, one may easily suppose, to the plan adopted sometimes by other proprietors, from a principle equally laudable, of giving discounts in less favourable seasons, and serves more effectually to keep up that proper spirit of independence which is so important and praiseworthy in every condition of life.

Produce.—The average gross amount of grain now raised in the parish, as nearly as can be ascertained, may be put down at 10,000

quarters, with a due proportion of green crop, according to the husbandry, consisting of potatoes and turnips, for cattle and for domestic uses. Of the grain there may be 6000 quarters exported.

The ordinary duration of leases is nineteen years, and the rents are paid generally in money, or with a small proportion, perhaps, in meal. The paying of rent by the fiat prices, with a maximum and minimum, which many think would be the fairest plan, has not yet been introduced here.

Farms vary in extent from 250 to 20 acres; but there is a number of crofts, besides, considerably smaller, and this variety does not seem to work unfavourably.

Farm-Buildings.—The farm-houses and offices (and the former more especially) are not in general in proper keeping with the value of the farms to which they are attached, nor with the amount of capital of which the occupants must necessarily be possessed in order to carry them on, owing to the very limited encouragement generally given for this purpose.

It may be mentioned that the system usually practised is, that the whole burden of the houses falls upon the occupant, for which he is allowed a certain return at the end of his lease, provided they shall then be declared of that value, and whatever additional buildings in the course of his lease his growing industry may require, he may erect the same if he please, but it is entirely at his own risk and responsibility, the landlord holding himself bound to no more than the certain modified sum originally specified, whatever now may be their additional value. Here it is evident the terms are unequal. Should dilapidation ensue the tenant may get less than the sum agreed upon at entry, but should the value be never so much increased by additional or improved accommodation, that allowance becomes no more. The tenant's interest in the buildings accordingly being thus limited to the duration of his lease, with the exception of the small sum above referred to, which seldom, it is believed, nearly covers his outlay, he has no encouragement either to make them substantial, or even to build them to an extent equal to his requirements; and thus, in fact, there is a constant building and patchwork going on, of the most inferior and unsubstantial kind. There is a twofold evil manifestly arising out of this system. 1st, The general inferiority of the farmer's accommodations; and 2d, The circumstance that a certain portion of his capital should, through the full currency of his lease, be made to lie thus wholly unproductive, which, were the necessary accommodations afforded

by the landlord, (whose interests in the property are permanent), and a moderate per centage merely charged upon them, he would have had freely in hand, to lay out in improving and enriching his farm. In other words, the practice, while straitening to the tenant from the very outset, appears to be favourable in the end neither to him nor to the landlord; and here, without doubt, the entail system operates in a way that is by no means favourable to the march of improvement.

Enclosures.—Notwithstanding the extensive improvements which have taken place in cultivation, there is still much wanted in the way both of plantation and enclosures. Belts of the former more generally interspersed, and hedges, with ditches, would be both ornamental, and would increase greatly both convenience and shelter; and were due encouragement given by proprietors to this end, much would undoubtedly be done, and many corners now lying waste would be profitably and ornamentally occupied.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Market-Town.—There is no market-town nor village in this parish. The nearest town, and that on which the inhabitants are mostly dependent both for post and market, is Huntly, which is four miles distant from the church, but considerably nearer to the great bulk of the parishioners. There is no post or regular course of conveyance from the post-office in Huntly to this parish, if we may except an individual who passes on foot once a-week to Forgue, carrying letters and newspapers to those in his immediate line of road at a moderate charge.

Means of Communication.—A regular post conveyance or runner from Huntly to Turriff, with receiving-houses at different stages, would be a vast convenience to the inhabitants of that large and in many respects important inland district, a great part of which is at present very badly situate in this respect. Letters from this to Turriff and neighbourhood, a distance of twelve miles, put in at Huntly, usually go round all the way by Aberdeen, (above seventy miles), before they reach their destination. The other towns with which this parish maintains considerable communication, are Banff, Macduff, and Portsoy, eighteen and nineteen miles distant, and Inverury, which is about twenty. These, particularly the two first, are the towns to which the grain is chiefly carried for export. There is considerable extent of turnpike road within this parish, say ten miles, six of which consist of

the Aberdeen and Huntly or Inverness great post-road, and four the Huntly and Banff turnpike.

There are three coaches, the Mail, the North Defiance, and Duchess of Gordon, that pass through the parish north and south daily.

Ecclesiastical State.—The division of this and the neighbouring parishes is as preposterous as can well be imagined. The church is placed within a few yards of the boundary on one side, though four and five miles from the opposite point, while the people resident there, in order to attend their parish church, have to travel three or four miles farther, than they would have to attend one in a neighbouring parish—nay, have actually to pass the one at a very short distance, to get at the other, with which they are parochially connected. The consequence is, that the strictly parochial system is broken in upon, and that beautiful reciprocity of interest and of feeling which ought ever to subsist between a minister and his own people to a certain extent impaired. Besides the west end of the parish, which has already been stated as five miles distant from the parish church, there are other points three and four miles distant, and nearly two-fifths of the population are at a distance of two miles and upwards. Were an arrangement entered into of giving and taking, with some of the parishes adjoining, a very important improvement to all would be effected; indeed, were a general revision of parishes to take place, and some great Legislative measure founded upon it to be introduced, the benefit resulting therefrom would be almost universal.

The church was built in 1773, and received some improvements in 1829, and certain additional sittings have been made out since. There is accommodation for between 500 and 600 persons. The sittings for the most part are portioned out to the occupiers of the land, who pay something for them at entry on a lease, to the outgoing tenant. They may all be said, therefore, in a sense to be paid for, though the payment, it is believed, is not large. It would be of some consequence at any general re-letting of farms on a property, that the right and extent of church room attached to each should be revised, and a new arrangement made where necessary; both as considerable changes are from time to time occurring in the disposal of families, and because the leaving of this important matter to private settlement between outgoing and incoming tenants, has frequently led to great irregularities in this respect. In some instances seats have been improperly transferred alto-

ther from the farms with which they originally stood connected, and a general indistinctness and confusion prevail otherwise upon the subject. The session let upwards of 100 sittings at from 1s. to 1s. 3d. each, and there are some lately erected to which they admit gratis. These consist of forms wherever there was space to admit them, and may accommodate upwards of twenty persons. They are chiefly occupied by old people and children attending the Sabbath school. There are no seats unlet that are set apart for letting, and these and others are in general fully occupied.

Mortifications.—Two benefactions of L. 100 each are upon record, one in the year 1793, by the Rev. George Abel, some time minister of the parish, and another by his widow, several years subsequent; also a share in common with the other parishes in the synod, of what is called Burnet's Mortification. L. 20 has been the portion hitherto received by this parish, and as it goes from presbytery to presbytery in turn, it comes to be paid in each parish once in a number of years.

The manse was built in 1824, is quite near to the church, and in good repair. The glebe, one-half of which is beside the manse, the other at some distance, consists of nearly 10 acres, and is all arable.

The stipend of Drumblade amounts in all to 84 bolls, 1½ lippy of oatmeal; 9 bolls, 3 firlots, 2 pecks, 3 lippies of bear, mostly paid in kind; and L. 41, 17s. 7d. in money, paid by the heritors from the teinds of the parish; and L. 51, 9s. 11d. paid by the Exchequer, to augment the same to the annual value of L. 150.

There is no other place of worship, either Chapel of Ease or Dissenting, within the parish, besides the parish church. There are, however, a few preaching stations occupied by the parish minister for week-day services, and which continue to be well attended.

There are in all 171 families or householders, male and female, in the parish, 152 of which belong to the Established Church, and 19 in all to the various classes of Dissenters. Reckoning the whole population at 970, which, though somewhat less than the return made at the last Government census, is all that have been found at this date, there are belonging to the Established Church, 856; Episcopalians, 50; United Secession, 20; Independents, 40; Roman Catholics, 4. The average number of communicants (parishioners) in the parish church is from 840 to 850, and, including non-parishioners, may be about 60 more. The sacrament of the Lord's supper is now dis-

pensed twice a-year, and all communicants who request such privilege here for the first time, however frequently they may have communicated before in other parishes, are strictly examined anew when they bring their testimonials, previous to their admission—which practice has been found to be attended with most beneficial effect.

There is an association instituted for religious purposes—denominated the Drumblade Bible and Missionary Association, the contributions to which have hitherto been gradually increasing, and the sum now raised annually is from L. 24 to L. 25. This sum has been divided among the home and foreign objects now carried forward by the Church of Scotland; the Edinburgh Bible, and the Scottish Missionary, Societies.

Library.—There is also a parish library, the contributions to which are likewise on the increase; and, though yet of no great extent, it is still in a promising condition. The books appear to be pretty extensively read, and the institution appreciated.

There are usually three Sabbath schools in the parish,—one taught by the parish minister, and three assistant teachers under his superintendence, and two in other parts of the parish, taught by respectable Dissenters.

Education.—There may scarcely be said to be any school within the parish but the parochial—one female teaches a few children sewing and knitting. The numbers attending the parish school vary from 46 to 72—the former being about the number in summer, the latter in winter. The branches taught are, reading, writing, English Grammar, arithmetic, geography, Latin, and mathematics, including mensuration. The schoolmaster's salary amounts to L. 30; probable amount of school fees, L. 24, 10s.; emoluments arising from the Dick Bequest, in common with the other parochial teachers in Aberdeen, Banff, and Morayshires, session-clerkship, &c. may be stated at L. 35. The school fees are by no means expensive, and the advantages of education are generally secured more or less by all classes of the community. There are none brought up in the parish who cannot read, and few of the rising generation under fifteen years who cannot both write and account. Persons have occasionally been met with from other parishes unable to read, and, with some exception, these have not been found in general much disposed to undergo the labour of overcoming that deficiency. There are many parts of the parish inconveniently distant from the parish

school, yet this is in general so far supplied by their proximity to others without the bounds. A respectable female or girls' school for branches not exclusively elementary, would be an important improvement. The improved methods of education have been generally introduced, and, whatever may be the result in point of morals or otherwise, nothing can be more apparent than that the youth of all classes now enjoy advantages and facilities for acquiring information, intellectual and spiritual, far beyond what was common in former times.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of paupers actually on the roll does not exceed five or six, though as many others, perhaps, as poor householders, are in the way of receiving occasional supplies. The maintaining of a lunatic, however, in the asylum at Aberdeen, has of late been a considerable burden upon the funds. The ordinary mode of keeping up the fund is by church collections, the average amount of which for the last five years has been about L. 27; the rest is made up from certain sums lying at interest, and from church seats let by the session, and, were it not for the heavy charge above-mentioned, would be amply sufficient for maintaining the small number, both of the ordinary and occasional poor.

The reluctance to fall upon a parish fund is not, perhaps, what it once was; yet, on the whole, that laudable spirit of independence may not be said to be lost in this quarter; and it is certain, that, looking back to former records, the number of poor receiving relief had been considerably greater than now.

Fair.—There is scarce any market or fair now held in the parish, if we except one which has not hitherto gained much notice, on the Saddlehill, in place of Sliach Market, formerly well known and much frequented. The new station not appearing to take well with the country, one has been got up in Huntly at the same time, to which the business formerly transacted at Sliach has been for the most part transferred, and from the additional accommodations and conveniences there afforded, the change, it is believed, is not felt to be any grievance to the public.

Inns.—The number of inns or other places for the sale of spirituous liquors in the parish is unquestionably too great,—there being no fewer than five.

Fuel.—Fuel is not abundant in the parish. There is a very small extent of peat moss, and that mostly of an inferior description. Neither is turf extensive. The tenants, however, in Lessendrum

have a servitude, or right of casting peats over some part of the extensive moss of Foudlin, in the parish of Forgue, where they have an abundant supply. English coal carted from the port of Banff or Macduff is also a good deal used.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

Looking to this parish as a whole, and marking the many changes which have taken place in it since the date of the former Statistical Account, it may safely be said, that it has not been behind others in the march of general improvement. Agriculture, in particular, has made wonderful progress, and that, not more, perhaps, in the greater extent of ground cultivated, than in the superior management and direction, exhibited in every department of farming details. Many bars to husbandry have been removed—new roads have been cut—mill mounds, at one time very heavy, amounting to one-seventeenth part when work was done, and to one-twenty-first independent of any work, have now for the most part been extinguished. The standard of comfort among the people has become elevated, their ideas less contracted, their knowledge and information more extensive, and their manners and habits more refined; and it is hoped that, in matters still more important and sacred, improvements also have taken place.

January 1840.

PARISH OF FYVIE.

PRESBYTERY OF TURRIFF, SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

THE REV. JOHN MANSON, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name, Boundaries, &c.—*Fyvyn* is the name given to this parish in most of the old charters and public writings connected with it. It is of Gaelic etymology, and derived from *Fia Chein*, signifying Deer-hill. There is a hill in the parish which still goes by the name of Deer Hill, and the names of several of the estates and farms have also been clearly traced to Gaelic original. Fyvie is one of the largest parishes in Aberdeenshire. Its extreme length from north-east to south-west is 13 miles; and its extreme breadth 8 miles;