

## PARISH OF RAYNE.

PRESBYTERY OF GARIOCH, SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

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### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—THE name *Rayne* was sometimes written *Raine* in the records of the seventeenth century, but more frequently *Rain*, the orthography which is still retained in Old Rain, the post-town. It was probably derived from a Gaelic word of similar sound, *Raan*, signifying a field of good ground,—a term sufficiently appropriate to this parish, which consists of open and continuous fields, generally of good soil, and under productive tillage.

*Extent, &c.*—This is a landward parish, of moderate extent and compact form, being about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles in each direction, and containing 11 square miles. Its figure is not perfectly regular, but approaching to a square: it is bounded on the south side by the parish of Oyne, and divided from it by the water of Ury; on the west, by that of Culsamond; on the east, by parts of Daviot, and Chapel of Garioch; and on the north, by parts of Fyvie and Auchterless. It forms the northern boundary of an inland district of Aberdeenshire called the Garioch, which is divided from that of Formartine, by the hill of Rothmaise in Rayne, about 850 feet above the level of the sea. With the exception of this hill, the parish consists of undulating fields, and gentle acclivities, with a long tract of peat-moss or bog, towards the north side, reaching from the west boundary to the east, where Daviot begins.

*Climate, &c.*—The temperature is of a moderate range, and on the whole remarkably equal, the mean height of the thermometer being in 1837.

	Morning.	Evening.	
For January,	39°. 2	35°. 8	} Fahrenheit.
July,	57. 0	56. 13	
December,	38. 23	33. 61	

The atmosphere is comparatively dry, from the circumstance of

there being no mountains of sufficient magnitude to attract the clouds and vapours, which are drawn towards the higher ridges of Bennachee on the south-west, and Foudland on the north-west; so that while the summits of these are frequently enveloped in dense mists, and copious showers of rain and snow are precipitated along the sides of them, little of the falling moisture, comparatively, reaches this lower level; and sometimes the air continues quite clear and dry.

*Hydrography.*—The springs of water are perennial, but not very abundant; there are no lakes within the parish, nor any considerable mountain streams, the Ury only bounding it for two miles on the south side.

*Geology and Mineralogy.*—The stones which prevail here are of the species usually called whinstone, of a deep blue colour, hard texture, and great weight. They are found of various sizes and qualities, according to their situations, sometimes detached and near the surface, and sometimes in large and continuous masses under ground; which last, being split by means of gunpowder and wedges, and squared with the hammer, form the chief material of the country buildings, and are very durable. There is no granite here, although it is abundant both in quarries and outlayers on Bennachee, a mountain three miles southward; neither have slates been discovered in the bounds, though they are found in a hill three miles northward; but it is probable that there is slate in the hill of Rothmaise, which appears to be a continuation of the Foudland and Culsamond hills, in which are many bush-quarries of valuable slates. The chief alluvial deposit is that of peat moss, of which there is an extensive flat, already mentioned, above three miles in length, varying in breadth and depth, and comprising above 500 imperial acres. In one part of this flat, peats were found about sixty years ago, containing a large portion of adipose or fatty matter, and having a white and unctuous appearance on the surface, and which when ignited emitted a flame and light as bright as those of a tallow candle. On this account they were commonly called “creeshy clods,” *i.e.* greasy small peats; and were burned sparingly, as a cheap sort of light, in the winter evenings by all who could procure them. But the quantity of this peculiar kind of peat appears to have been small, and has been long exhausted. The chief remains now found in the moss are pieces of hazel, birch, oak, &c. which indicate that this tract had once been covered with natural wood, and trees of goodly size.

The soil of the best fields is loam on a bottom of clay, more or less mixed with gravel, and which, with good culture, bears abundant crops; the residue is a poorer soil, of less depth, and on a harder bottom, in some parts of till, and in others of rotten rock, here called *chad*. But this ground also, when manured, produces grain of fair quality, though in much smaller quantity than the former; and the green crops and herbage raised on it are found to be less succulent and nutritious than those which grow on the rich infield grounds.

The soil and climate cannot be called favourable to the larger species of fruit, being neither a carse, nor a mountain-sheltered strath; and few fruit trees are planted here, except in the gardens of proprietors; but a taste for growing gooseberries, and currants for preserving, is gradually advancing among the tenantry; and these small fruits are produced of very good quality. There are no rare species of wild plants in this locality, nor any forests of natural wood; but there are a few enclosures of moderate compass planted with larch and Scots fir, which last grows rapidly in the early stages, but begins to show symptoms of decay after the fortieth year. Ash and elm, beech and plane trees, which are here planted in belts and rows, and around gardens, grow to a goodly size, and yield timber of excellent quality.

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

*Eminent Men.*—One native may be mentioned on account of the eminence which he attained abroad, viz. William Leslie, second son to William, the fifth laird of Warthill, in this place. Born in 1657, he got a classical education in the parochial school, and, having completed his academical studies at one of the universities in Aberdeen, became schoolmaster in the parish of Chapel of Garioch for some years; but, being there persuaded by Count Leslie, a member of the Balquhane family, and his own cousin-german, to embrace the Romish faith, he went to Rome with the Count in 1684; and there became so noted for his learning and piety, that, at the age of thirty-three years he was chosen to be Professor of Theology in the College of Padua, and was afterwards made Bishop of Laybach in Carniola, and a Prince of the German empire, which honour, along with others, he retained through life: he died at his see in 1727. During his long residence abroad, he faithfully corresponded with his brother Alexander, the sixth laird of Warthill, and sent him at one time an original portrait of himself, esteemed a good picture, and which, with

many of his letters, is still in possession of William Leslie, Esq. the present proprietor of the family estate.

*Land-owners.*—In 1674, there were fifteen land-owners in this parish; but in less than a century after, they had decreased in number to seven, afterwards to five, and now there are six, viz. Sir Robert Dalrymple Horn Elphinstone, of Old Rain and Logie-Elphinstone, Baronet; Sir Alexander Leith, of Freefield and Cushiestown, K. C. B.; William Leslie of Warthill and Tocher, Esq.; Alexander Gordon, of Meiklewarthill and Loanhead, Esq.; Alexander Forbes, of Rothmaise and Blackford, Esq.; John Gordon, of Kirktown and Lentush, Esq.

*Parochial Registers.*—The Session records commence in 1672, and amount to ten volumes, comprising accounts of the poor's funds, church discipline, and register of births and marriages, but none of deaths. The baptismal record has been regularly kept during the last twenty years; and that it was not so previously, was owing to the negligence of the parents.

*Antiquities.*—In the south-east part of the parish is a conical hill, called a *law*, on which, according to tradition, trials were held of old, and doom pronounced, and at times, perhaps, summarily executed. This little hill, of which the top is now covered with fir trees and furze, has given the name of *Lawesk* (now *Louesk*) to the adjoining farms, extending to several hundred acres. About a mile westward from it was a well, called *St Lawrence Well*; and, at the distance of another mile west, is the village of *Old Rain*, where is held an annual market, named *Lawrence Fair*. On a small rising-ground in the middle of this village, and which was surrounded by a moat, there was once a house of residence for the Bishop of Aberdeen, who, upon the union of the Episcopal sees of *Mortlach* and *Aberdeen* in 1137, received from King *David*, in grant to himself and his successors, the lands of *Old Aberdeen*, *Sclattie*, *Clatt*, *Kildrummie*, *Daviot*, and *Raine*, by which the see was greatly enriched. It is recorded, "that *Alexander Kinninmonth*, who was made bishop in 1329, passed the winter in *Mortlach*, the spring in *Aberdeen*, and the summer and harvest at *Fetternear* and *Raine*, that he might the more commodiously discharge his office in every part of his diocese." And he it probably was, that built the residence referred to, the foundation of which was discernible in the last century, but has since been effaced, and the ground brought under tillage. Here also is a market-cross, consisting of an upright pillar of hewn gra-

nite, raised on a pedestal of circular steps, and measuring nearly 12 feet from the ground to the top. Above the middle of this pillar is an iron staple with links, the remains of the *jougs*, in which offenders were wont to be exposed to public shame; and half of the iron collar which clasped the neck of the delinquent remained attached to the chain about half a century ago, but is now gone. This cross was probably erected in the end of the seventeenth century, when John Horn of Westhall, superior of Old Rain, was empowered by charter to constitute it a burgh of barony, with regular markets and bailie courts,—which last were held accordingly in the eighteenth century.

Four hundred yards eastward from this village, is a Druidical circle or temple; and at the like distance from this to the north-east, in the line of the church road, is part of an ancient cairn, called Drum's Cairn, said to mark the spot where Irvine of Drum was slain, while pursuing Donald, Lord of the Isles, after the battle of Harlaw, 1411. Another tradition bears that he was slain nearer to the field of action, about four miles to the south-east, and buried at Drum on Deeside, the seat of that ancient family; a discrepancy which may be reconciled, by supposing that he was wounded near Harlaw, but able to pursue the enemy to this place, where, from exhaustion, or fresh wounds, he fell. The cairn was opened and partly removed eight years ago, on the road being widened at the place; but nothing was found confirmatory of the above tradition; and though a field in the near vicinity is named "*Drum Fauld*" it may have acquired that name from its round and convex form, various other places of the like appearance being also called *Drums*. Half a mile eastward from Drum's Cairn is another small one, in the Moor of Rayne, called Tillydaff's Cairn, as marking the place where Tillydaff, laird of Mains of Warthill, was killed in 1530. Having assaulted a neighbouring land-owner, Leslie of Warthill, second son of Wardhouse, in Lawrence fair, he was pursued by Wardhouse and his other sons for several miles, and fell by their hands at this spot; now a small green mound, which does not appear to have been opened. A third cairn, of larger dimensions than either of the former, is found near the summit of the hill of Rothmaise, now called the Black Cairn; but of the origin or intantion of which there is no tradition extant. About fifty years ago, it was partially opened, and removed by the then proprietor, when a stone-coffin was found, and a key of rude workmanship. Another Druidical circle is seen

on the east side of the same hill ; and on the top of it are two large stones, not far apart, called the Crichton Stone, and the Federaught Stone, which are probably commemorative of some feud, or fatal encounter betwixt the Crichtons of Fren draught in Forgue, and the family of Federaught in Deer. The west of this hill looks to one about a mile distant, in the neighbouring parish of Culsamond, called *Cairnhill*, whereon are several cairns or barrows ; by which passed a Roman road, leading, as is supposed, from the large encampment south of the river Dee, to the camp of Glenmellan near the Ythan, (*castra ad Ithunum*,) and with this latter the Black Cairn may have been in some way connected. At Freefield, a mile southward from Cairnhill, is an artificial grassy mound of 60 yards in circumference, and 18 feet in height, probably a signal post, having relation to the supposed Roman way, above-mentioned. Near the church is a large flat-headed rock, called Bowman Stone, where archers may have met in ruder times to practise with the bow ; as at the *Bowbutts* in other places. Half a mile east from this, is a rising ground named Saint Andrew's Hill, on which fetes may have formerly been held in honour of the patron saint ; and a mile eastward from that, is a round knoll or eminence on the lands of Meikle Warthill, called the Earl of Marr's Reive or Ree.

*Modern Buildings.*—The church is a plain structure, erected in 1789 for L.350 Sterling. The mansion-houses are those of Freefield and Rothmaise, built in the last century ; and that of Warthill, in the present century. Freefield is surrounded with ash, beech, larch, and pine trees, of great height and beauty, and also with some Spanish chestnut trees, which blossom but do not bear fruit. There are five meal-mills in the parish, of which three are slated ; and forty-four thrashing-mills for grain, of which ten are moved by water, and the rest by horses.

### III.—POPULATION.

In 1755, the population was estimated at 1131, and fifteen years after at 1143 persons.			
1794,	.	at 1173, showing an increase in 39 years of 42	
1801,	.	at 1228, by the census, increase in 7 years, 55	
1811,	.	at 1249, by do. do.	10 years, 21
1821,	.	at 1374, by do. do.	do. 125
1831,	.	at 1484, by do. do.	do. 110

Making a total increase in these 76 years of 853

There are two villages or rather hamlets in the parish, namely, Old Rain, already mentioned, containing 23 dwelling-houses and 96 persons ; and Meiklewarthill, containing 40 dwelling-houses and 152 persons.

The yearly average of births for the last seven years was	44
deaths	37
do. do.	12
marriages, do. do.	1510
The number of parishioners in this year is	
of which 734 are males, and 776 females.	
Of the whole, there are under 15 years of age,	557
betwixt 15 and 30,	378
30 and 50,	296
50 and 70,	220
upwards of 70,	59
Of the last and most aged class, there are above 80 years of age,	12
90	do.
	4

One old woman has been insane for five years, and an old man has been blind above twenty years; but there are none deaf and dumb. Within the last fifteen years, a man died aged 97 years, and his wife aged 95: a husband and wife, with his sister, lived in one house, until their united ages amounted to 250 years, each of them being above 83: and the like instance of longevity was witnessed in another house.

Only two of the heritors are resident within the bounds, both gentlemen of good family and fortune; and the others have property and domiciles in different parishes.

The people appear to enjoy the comforts and benefits of society, without extravagance. They are not addicted to poaching, smuggling, or such like demoralizing pursuits, but are generally of industrious and peaceable habits, and, with very few exceptions, attentive to their moral and religious duties.

#### IV.—INDUSTRY.

##### *Agriculture.*—

Four-fifths of the whole superficial contents of this parish are cultivated, and under regular tillage, i. e. in imperial acres,	5620
Moors reserved for market-stances and other pasture, not worthy of cultivation,	390
Under wood, chiefly plantations of larch and Scots fir, with belts and rows of ash, elm, &c.	360
Peat-moss, and pasture connected therewith,	730
	<hr/>
In all,	7300

The valued rent of the whole lands is £. 2544 Scots. The real rent, consisting partly of grain, commuted at the county fiars, is variable; but that of the best ground or old infield may average per imperial acre £. 2 Sterling; and that for outfield, varying according to the quality, from 12s. to £. 1, 4s. per imperial acre; and the latter, comprising about four-fifths of the land in tillage, while the former is only one-fifth, reduces the average rent to something less than £. 1 Sterling per arable acre; and makes the gross rental of the whole, £. 5650. There are no grass fields

let in the parish; and the rates of grazing cannot be correctly stated.

*Wages.*—The farm-servants are engaged for six months, and, being chiefly unmarried, they lodge and eat in their masters' houses, and receive, besides, in money-wages half-yearly, for ploughmen, L. 5 to L. 7; for lads, L. 3 to L. 4; and boys for herding cattle, &c. L. 1, 10s. to L. 2, 10s.; women servants receive in winter, L. 2, in summer, L. 3; labourers working by the day, earn 2s. or 1s. 6d. with meat; masons earn 3s. per day; carpenters, 2s. 8d.; and all other tradesmen charge by the piece of work done.

*Live-Stock.*—A great many black-cattle are reared here, as in all the inland districts of Aberdeenshire, principally of the country breeds, horned and bald; but some breeders are crossing this kind with the Teeswater or short-horned cattle, and thereby adding greatly to the size and weight of the carcass, when fed, but not, it is thought, to the fineness of the quality and grain of the meat. The number of milk-cows, kept by the crofters solely for dairy produce, and by the farmers for that and breeding, exceeds 500; and that of other cattle of all different ages, from calves to oxen of four years growth, 1300. Very few oxen are here yoked in the plough, though in the end of the last century it was the general custom to have ten of these ploughing on each of the principal farms. Most of them are now fed at three and four years' old, and sold to the butchers and exporters, weighing from 6 to 9 cwt. Our horses, though much larger than those of the country breed of former times, cannot be called heavy; but they are hardy and active, and fit both for ploughing in pairs, and carrying the grain to market in single carts, at the rate of four quarters to each horse. Of these the number used solely for husbandry is 220; as pleasure horses and ponies, 20; young horses bred for sale or use, 40; making of this kind, 280. There being no extensive range of hill or moorland pasture, the number of sheep kept is very limited, not exceeding in all 440; viz. of the Scots black-faced breed for feeding, 200; and of a large cross-breed, for wool for home use, and raising lambs, kept in small lots, 240.

The system of agriculture pursued in this parish, and generally through the district of Garioch, may be reckoned good, when viewed, as it ought to be, in relation to the soil and climate, the distance from sea ports and grain markets, and other local circumstances. One peculiarity to be noticed is the great variety in the size of

the farms, from that of two horses labour to that of six horses; besides which, are numerous small crofts for tradesmen keeping a cow, and other possessions, of eight, twelve, and twenty acres, occupied in lease by industrious tenants, labouring with their own hands, and usually tilling with a horse and ox yoked together. These multiplied subdivisions of the ground, into portions so small, may no doubt be adverse to the adopting of new and improved modes of culture, on a large and uniform scale; but this disadvantage has long appeared to the writer, to be counterbalanced by the powerful encouragement thereby afforded to the practice of honest industry and prudence, among the labouring classes of the community. In counties that are under a different management, and which have no gradation of possessions betwixt the cottar's acre and the grain farm of 100 acres, or the sheep farm of 1000 acres, the man who begins life as a farm-servant, day-labourer, or tradesman, how diligent and economical soever he may be, is almost precluded from the hope of bettering his condition, by the occupancy of a small farm, suited to his means and industry, and must limit his views to the cottar's croft, realizing, in most instances, the English adage, "once a hind, always a hind." But in Aberdeenshire, which has been sometimes called "the poor man's country," a farm-servant or labourer, after having established his character by activity, temperance, and economy, has little difficulty in getting a possession proportioned to the amount of his savings, on which, by exertion and foresight, he may live comfortably, and bring up a family, in the like industrious, peaceable, and independent way. And, in proof of the efficiency of this stimulus, there are at present within the bounds of this small parish, many instances of persons, who, from very humble beginnings, have gradually risen, by their own exertions, to be thriving and intelligent agriculturists. And though the small possessions are proportionally higher rented than the large ones, they have always more competitors for occupying them; and if there be less capital invested, *in cumulo*, for carrying on expensive improvements, (which is doubtful), there are more of the necessary sinews of industry employed in comparison, and much more caution, sobriety, and contentment, exercised in bad seasons, which tend to secure equal and regularly paid rents to the land-owners; consequently, on well-managed estates in this place, arrears of rent are of rare occurrence, and small amount.

The leases are usually granted for nineteen years; and as wheat

is not much cultivated, the turnip husbandry, with oats and bear, hay and pasture, is generally followed, under the various rotations of five, seven, and six years. Of these, the last may be considered the best, for keeping the ground both rich and clean, and also producing most luxuriant crops; having three-sixths of the whole possession in grass, two-sixths in grain, and one-sixth in turnips, which are uniformly drilled and hoed. The manure chiefly employed is animal dung, with the addition of bone dust when required; and it is now very customary to give the outfield lands a top-dressing, (with a compost of earth and lime, or earth and dung,) on the pasture grass, before ploughing it for a crop of oats.

The farm-houses are plain substantial buildings, mostly of one floor, and thatch-roofed; but a few of them lately erected have two floors and slate roofs, and as there are slate quarries in the neighbouring parish, it may be hoped that both the dwelling-houses and offices hereafter built on the principal farms will be slated. Very few of the fields are enclosed, either with hedges or dikes; from the difficulty of watering the enclosures sufficiently for grazing cattle, and of procuring good stones for dikes at a moderate distance and expense. The only uncultivated ground likely to repay the cost of improvement, is the area of the moss that has been exhausted of peat, and which, on being dried and tilled, bears luxuriant crops in ordinary seasons; and of this kind of ground lying along the sides of the moss, 400 acres have been brought into cultivation since the beginning of the present century, adding so much to the dimensions and value of the respective estates.

*Produce.*—It is not easy to give a correct statement of the amount or value of the whole yearly produce, as that of many small possessions is in great part consumed by the occupiers and their families, and no account thereof regularly kept. But, computing the annual returns of oats and bear (big) to be  $6\frac{1}{2}$  quarters from each acre of infield land in crop, and 4 quarters from each acre of outfield in crop, (which are fair estimates for ordinary seasons,) the gross yearly produce of these crops is 10470 quarters, yielding at the average of L. 1 each, L. 10,470 Sterling; cattle reared and sold from the parish, viz. oxen of three and four years old, 400 at L. 10, L. 4000; butter, cheese, and eggs, &c. sold, L. 1500; total, L. 15,970. Of the corn produced, there are required yearly for seed, 1800 quarters; for food to 1500 persons, at 30 stones of meal to each, 3200 quarters; leaving for

malt, horse-corn, sale, and all other purposes, 5470 quarters, = 10,470 quarters. From the gross value of cattle sold, a deduction should be made for grass parks rented by the tenants annually, amounting to about L. 400. But this outlay is much more than compensated by hay sold, and potatoes and other farm and dairy produce consumed at home, but of which the value cannot be ascertained.

The cheese made here is mostly from skim-milk, and does not bring a higher price in the market than from 3s. to 4s. per imperial stone. But butter is made in great abundance and of good quality by the farmers, and also by the crofters, who have little other produce to spare for the market. It is bought up by the country merchants at 7d. to 9d. per imperial pound; salted in casks and sold in Aberdeen, for city consumption, or exportation. The annual value of butter, cheese, and eggs, sold from the rural parts of this county, was estimated some years since at L. 90,000 Sterling; of which considerable revenue it may be affirmed that Rayne, with its numerous small possessions, drew an adequate share; it being ascertained, that, on farms of L. 80 rent, the yearly value of dairy produce sold has been L. 20, or one-fourth thereof.

The corns throughout this whole county are now cut down with the scythe, which is found to be much more expeditious for oats and bear than the sickle, and consequently, more profitable, by preventing the hazard from over-ripening and shaking. The thrashing, on all farms of two horses' labour and upwards, is accomplished by machinery, or thrashing-mills, which are now very numerous. Formerly, the oats were milled, and the meal sold in the Aberdeen market; but now the greater part is sold in grain and carted to Inverury, whence it is conveyed by the canal barges to Aberdeen for being milled or exported.

*Manufactures.*—Almost the only manufacture carried on here, is the knitting of woollen stockings, &c. with wires, as mentioned in the Statistical Account of 1794. All the women and some old men were employed in knitting coarse stockings for the Dutch market, and thereby brought into the parish about L. 400 Sterling yearly. This easy and lucrative manufacture was for a time interrupted, and nearly annihilated, by the war with France, and Holland under its sway; but through the persevering enterprise of a few eminent capitalists in Aberdeen, it was succeeded by one of a similar kind, viz. the knitting of coarse worsted vests or under-jackets, for seafaring persons, and of blue woollen bonnets, com-

monly worn by labouring men and boys, which are also knitted with wires, and afterwards milled. This is the common employment of all the aged, and many of the young women in the district of Garioch; and at the rate of 3d. to 4d. for knitting a jacket, and 1d. to 2d. for a bonnet, it will yield, with some coarse stockings, to those of this parish alone, about L. 600 per annum.

#### V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

*Market-Town.*—There is no market-town within the parish, and the one nearest to it is Inverury, a small royal burgh about eight miles distant, on the turnpike road to Aberdeen.

*Means of Communication.*—There is a post-office in Old Rain, two miles from the church, and the Royal Mail from Aberdeen to Inverness passes and repasses near to it every twenty-four hours, as does also another daily coach, on the same road, so that travellers are well accommodated. A new line of turnpike was lately opened, from the Huntly road at Garden's mill, to Old Meldrum, joining the line from that to the port of Newburgh. This turnpike is made through Rayne, about three miles from west to east, and though not yet much frequented, it may, from its vicinity to the slate quarries, become very beneficial to the country.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The church is situated most conveniently for the parishioners, being nearly in the centre of the parish, and not more than two miles distant from the extremities of it. It was built in 1789, and made to contain in the area and two galleries 500 hearers, a number too limited when the population exceeded 1100; and though by the addition of two other galleries, the sittings have since been augmented to 700, they are still too few for the parishioners, now above 1500, besides about 30 persons annexed *quoad sacra* from the large adjoining parish of Fyvie. All the seats in the area being divided among the land-owners, in proportion to their valued rents, are by them apportioned to their tenants, free of charge, according to their real rents; and a few sittings are set apart for the poor gratis. Three of the galleries, having been erected by the curators for the poor, are annually let by them to the parishioners, at the very moderate rate of 1s. each sitting, and yield above L. 14 Sterling yearly to the poor's funds, besides affording some free sittings to those who require them.

The manse was built in 1751 for L. 1000 Scots, and was last repaired and enlarged in 1826. The arable glebe contains six imperial acres of good ground, and there are above two acres of

grass glebe, with 18s. Sterling in lieu of the residue of grass. The stipend was last augmented in 1823, when the heritors surrendered their whole teinds, amounting in Sterling money to L. 167, 11s. 8d.; meal, at 10 imperial stones to the boll, 65 bolls, 3 pecks,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lippies; bear, in Aberdeenshire measure, 12 bolls, 3 pecks,  $0\frac{1}{2}$  lippies, the victual of both kinds being made payable, with consent of the present incumbent, at the highest fair prices of the county.

There are no Chapels of Ease, Government churches, missionaries, or catechists, nor any Episcopalian, Catholic, Seceding, or other Dissenting chapels within these bounds; but in the parish of Fyvie, and about three miles from hence, there is an Episcopal chapel, with a numerous and respectable congregation. Thirty-four families in Rayne, comprising 100 persons of all ages, attend there; 14 persons grown up attend various Dissenting meetings at a distance; and all the other families, amounting to 276, and comprising about 1400 persons, attend the Established Church, where the average number of the congregation is 700 persons, and of the communicants, 750. The amount of annual collections for the poor on the roll has risen to about L.48, 10s.; and of extraordinary collections for the Aberdeen Infirmary, the Pauper Lunatic Fund, and the General Assembly's Schemes, about L.14 yearly. It is but justice to add, that the church contributions of the householders form only a small proportion of their alms, as they are daily bestowing meal and provisions on their indigent neighbours, and also on many wandering mendicants.

*Education.*— Besides the parochial school near the church, there is one in Meiklewarthill unendowed, and another in Old Rain, unendowed, and presently taught by a Dissenter. In the latter two, the ordinary branches of reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught, which yield of yearly emolument to each of the teachers scarcely L.20. In the parochial school, Latin, Greek, and mathematics are taught, when required, in addition to the ordinary branches, and for which the teacher has the minimum salary of L. 25, 13s. 4d.; school fees and other dues, L.30; allowance from Mr Dick's Trustees, L.28; total, L.83, 13s. 4d.; also a house with the legal accommodation, and an enclosed garden of one-fourth of a Scots acre.

The quarter fees, payable at entry, are very moderate, viz. for reading and writing, 2s. 6d.; with arithmetic, 3s. 6d.; Latin,

Greek, or mathematics, 5s. The parents are generally anxious to give their offspring an education suitable to their station; so that there are few young persons above six years who have not had an opportunity of learning to read, write, and cypher. None are precluded by distance from attending the parochial school; but as it was built thirty years ago, and for only eighty scholars, it could not accommodate the number of youth who now apply to education during the winter months, or from the close of harvest to the seed-time, being above 200, or one-seventh of the population: hence the success of the two unendowed schools in the villages, each of them about two miles distant from the parish school, and equally well filled with it.

There is no parish library, strictly so called; but a reading society was formed about eight years ago, by thirty members, which affords the means of instructive and religious reading, at a very trivial expense, to all who desire it; and may tend also to increase the number of readers in the rising generation.

*Friendly Societies.*—Of several Friendly Societies formed here, only one remains, called The Freefield Ploughmen Lodge, which remodelled its rules agreeably to the Act of Parliament, and seems to flourish.

*Savings Bank.*—A District Savings Bank, on the security of the national funds, was opened in Inverury at Whitsunday last; and the industrious classes in this and other surrounding parishes have availed themselves of the means of providing for the wants of age; the deposits in six months, chiefly by male and female servants, being about L.1500, and in two years amounting to nearly L. 6000.

*Poor and Parochial Funds.*—Of poor persons on the parish roll, the average is 40, and the amount distributed quarterly in sums from 8s. to 15s. according to their relative circumstances, is L.20 or L.80 per annum. The yearly amount of church collections is L. 48, 10s.; rents drawn for seats of three galleries, L. 14, 5s.; interest of poor's funds lent, L. 7, 10s.; donations, legacies, and other casual supplies, L.12; total, L.82, 5s. There is one fund for the poor of all the parishes in the county and synod, (except those in Fordyce, and two others which have assessments,) which deserves to be recorded, in memory of the benevolent donor, the late John Burnett, of Dens, Esq. a citizen of Aberdeen, who bequeathed a considerable part of his residuary estate for this charitable purpose. This having been realized and invested

in land, yields an annual rent of L.400, which is managed by the provincial synod, and distributed through the several presbyteries in rotation, in sums from L.20 to L.50 to each parish, according to the relative numbers and necessities of their poor. And from this fund the poor of Rayne have received three distributions during the last twenty-three years, amounting in all to L.82.

The first applications for relief from the poor's funds are generally made with reluctance; but aid being granted chiefly to the aged and infirm who have no relations able to support them, and widows with helpless children, the feeling of shame is in them gradually overcome by the fear of want.

*Fairs.*—The principal fairs in the parish are the Tryst of Wart-hill, a large cattle-market held annually about Whitsunday N.S.; Lawrence fair, at Old Rain, also a considerable market, held yearly at Lammas; a new market in the same place in October; and Andersmas fair at Kirktown, after Martinmas O.S., besides two feeing markets for servants, held near Old Rain, before Whitsunday and Martinmas respectively.

*Alehouses.*—There are at present four alehouses licensed to sell spirits; a number much greater than is requisite for the accommodation of the parishioners and lawful travellers.

*Fuel.*—The fuel most used is peat, dug from the extensive bog or moss already mentioned, about Whitsunday, dried there for six weeks, and carted home and built in stacks in July.

#### MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The chief variations betwixt the present state of the parish, and that in 1794, are 1. The increase of population from 1173 to 1510; 2. The rise of rent from L.1300 to L.5650.

Better parish roads, leading to the several turnpikes, would be a valuable means of improvement here.

October 1840.