

gularly given by Mr Forbes of Boyndlie, as his probable collection if he was attending the church (for he is an Episcopalian), L. 61, 18s. 8½d.; the average interest of L. 467 Sterling, lodged in the hands of the Banking Company in Aberdeen, L. 12, 4s. 1d.; the average interest of L. 618, 18s. 4d. bank three per cent. annuities (Major Phillips's legacy), L. 17, 15s. 8d.; average amount of mortcloth money and penalties, L. 6, 5s.; total, L. 98, 8s. 5½d. That sum has been divided in proportions suitable, as far as can be judged, to their respective necessities, among 87 poor persons, 69 of whom were on the ordinary and permanent poor's roll, and who have 18 dependents on them; while other 18 are only occasionally supplied with aid. It must be adverted to, that almost all are able to do something for themselves by means of their personal industry, and that there is a silent active spirit of charity abroad in the parish, which contributes to eke out a subsistence to the necessitous. There is also a very considerable relief afforded to many poor families by the distribution from the proprietor's grange at New Pitsligo of seventy-two bolls of meal, at the rate of one-half peck per week to each individual. This charity, furnished by the liberality of Sir John S. Forbes and his ancestors, is, however, confined to indigent and decayed feuars of that village.

*Fairs, Inns, Alehouses, &c.*—Four cattle-markets are annually held at New Pitsligo, and each of these uniformly takes place in the months of March, May, August, and September. A fortnightly corn-market has been recently established there. There are two respectable inns and six alehouses in New Pitsligo.

## PARISH OF CULSAMOND.

PRESBYTERY OF GARIOCH, SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

THE REV. F. ELLIS, MINISTER.

### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Boundaries and Extent.*—On the north-east, north, and north-west, this parish is bounded by those of Auchterless, Forgue, and Drumblade; on the west, and south-west, by Inach; on the south, by Oyne; and on the east, by Rayne. Its extent from north to south is about 4½ miles; from west to east, about 3.

*Name.*—It is written Culsalmund and Culsamond. A variety of etymologies may be assigned to it, of which only one need be mentioned,—namely, *Cul-Sal-Mon*, these words signifying in Gaelic the end of the hill-lands.

*Rivers.*—The only stream to which the name of river can be applied, either in the parish or district, is the Urie, which, from its source, till it passes the church, is called the Glen Water. It runs along the whole length of the parish, and conducts to the Don almost all the smaller streams which arise in the upper part of the Garioch, such as the Colpie Burn, the Kellock, the Shevock, and the Gady. It has its source in the parish of Gartly, and terminates at Inverury, where it empties its water into the Don, traversing an extent of country of about eighteen or nineteen miles. In its course it passes the foot of Foudland, and betwixt the hills of Culsamond and Culmeaddin, receiving during this part of its progress several rivulets from the Foudland Hills on its northern border.

To the west of the Culsamond Hill is a fine view of Belrines, and to the north-west are seen the hills of Caithness, with a distinct view of a great part of the Moray Frith, and of the Buchan district.

In some parts of the parish, the soil consists of a deep clay loam, in others, of a thin sandy loam, much mixed with small stones; but, in both, the ground is very fertile, and, in general, the crops are early ripened.

About seventy years ago, plantation commenced on Cairnhill; and latterly, on the estates of Newton and Sheelagreen. Much wood has been sold from these properties since, especially from Newton. About 250 acres have been planted on the hill of Culsamond since 1804, by the late Mr Fraser of Williamston, and a variety of belts and clumps around the manor house by his son. The late Mr Leith, of Freefield, and his son, Major-General Sir A. Leith, have also done a great deal in that way on the small farm of Cairnhill, which belongs to that family.

*Slate Hill of Culsamond.*—The stratum to which the masses in this hill belong begins at Melross, near Maeduff, on the north-east, makes its first appearance here, and proceeds north-westward by Culmeaddin, Foudland, and several hills in the parish of Gartly. It seems to have been formed horizontally, and afterwards to have been raised up and split asunder by some force acting from beneath it. The blocks are now, in general, vertically inclined,

though there be now and then found a few almost perpendicular to the horizon. The broken pieces have corresponding juttings out, and openings, evidently shewing that they had been originally united. The spaces between are often filled with gravelly matter, which had originally been lower than the slate. Sometimes other earthy matter crosses the slate. Blocks of slate are sometimes found at considerable distances from the masses to which they originally belonged.

The slate in both the hills of Culsamond and Foudland, at a certain depth, is of a fine blue colour, but the Culsamond slate is considered heavier and more durable. Great quantities are taken from both hills annually, and sent to considerable distances. No good slate has hitherto been found in Culmeaddin Hill. It is a curious circumstance, that none of these cubical, pale, brassy-coloured, crystallized pyrites, so plentiful in the Easdale slate, and in the slate in the west side of Foudland, have as yet been found either in the slate on the east side of Foudland, or in the Culsamond slate. In the Melross slate they are found. Those on the west side of Foudland are in a rotten state, being composed mostly of iron, which rots sooner than copper.

It may be observed here, that of the beds of rock which run through Culsamond, the slate-rock is the first on the north, and that it comes as far south as the northmost part of the Kirktown Farm. This is succeeded by the Waukmill Bluestone Quarry, without any split, as the masons call it. There is then, still going south, a small bed of limestone, which is workable, and has been burned above Largie, to the west, in the parish of Inch, and, what is remarkable, at the same distance from the slate-rock as it is found on the sea-coast south of Troup, near the Melross slate-quarry. South of this limestone bed, the ironstone begins at a place called the Lady's Causeway, and extends to the south of the farm of Meikle Ledingham, in this parish. This is the ironstone direction, north and south. On the west, it extends beyond Dunnideer, in Inch, and east, through Culsamond, Rayne, and Daviot. Between this ironstone rock and the granite of Bepeshee the southern boundary of the Garioch, is another bed of limestone, which was worked near Likelyhead, in the parish of Premnay. It is observable that these beds have been deranged in many places, so that they do not always appear in the same direction, the dislocated parts being filled up with stones of a dif-

ferent nature, a plain proof of violent convulsions in the bowels of the earth at some period.

*Alluvial Sand.*—On the farm of Pulquhite is found, at various depths below the surface of the ground, from 6 inches to 35 inches, a bed of rough sand, evidently broken down, and formed of Benoches granite, and deposited there by the agency of water, in which it had previously been suspended.

*Mountain Subterranean Moss.*—On the northern part of the same farm, at a place now called Mutton Hillock, is a moss about three feet below the surface of the ground, extending to the distance of 30 or 40 yards from north to south, and, in some places, more than 8 feet deep. The superincumbent soil has been brought from a distance after the formation of the moss, as it consists of a variety of materials,—coarse gravel, flint stones, (of which an immense quantity is dispersed over a great part of the Garioch,) and stones of various sizes and kinds, some of them fragments of slate-stone from the adjoining hill of Culsamond. The field in which the moss alluded to is found, is a plane inclined to the south-east, and the slate-rock is to the north-west of it. It may therefore be inferred, that the direction of the great mass of water which superinduced this disposition was from north-west to south-east.

*Ironstones and Iron-ore.*—A considerable quantity of ironstones are found on or near the surface of the ground, and also a large vein of ironstone stretches from west to east, through the whole length of the district, passing through the parishes of Insch, Culsamond, and Rayne. Some of the blocks were sent to Carron, and, it is said, produced plenty of good iron. The water which runs over these iron-rocks carries away part of them, which it deposits in various hollow places, forming bog-iron ore.

*Bog-Iron Ore.*—At the bottom of the inclined plane already mentioned, there were found, in cutting a ditch, about eight feet below the surface, large quantities of this swamp-iron ore mixed with pulverized oak-wood, part of it in various stages of decomposition. The mixture was of a beautiful light blue colour, in consequence of the decayed wood being impregnated with the iron.

*Mineral Well at Saughanloan.*—Some years ago, a mineral well was discovered here, but it has not as yet been much frequented. It is said to have been of use in scrofulous complaints and in calculi.

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

*Heritors.*—Of these there are five; Gordon of Newton; Fraser of Williamston; Leith Lumsden, of Tullymorgan; Gammel of Sheelagreen; and Leith of Cairnhill. The valued rent of the parish is L.2100 Scots, the real rent supposed to be upwards of L.4000 Sterling. In 1790, it was rated at L.1150.

*Antiquities.*—There is, in this parish, part of an ancient highway. It crosses the hill of Culsamond, near its top, from the north-west, and had formerly been the road which people took when travelling on their way to St Lawrence Fair, at Old Rayoe. It still retains the name of the Lawrence Road, and is, to all appearance, nearly in the same state in which it had originally been, many hundred years ago. In times long since past, when the woods were haunted by ferocious wild beasts, and the valleys overrun with rivers and swamps, it was dangerous to travel in low-lying grounds. Hence, the most ancient roads traversed the tops of the hills, and, from this circumstance, were properly termed highways.

There appear to have been at least three sacred fountains in this parish; St Mary's Well, on the farm of Colpie; St Michael's, at Gateside; and another, at the foot of the Culsamond Bank, a little west of the Lady's Causeway. On the first Sunday of May, multitudes resorted to them from distant parts, in the full faith that, by washing in the stream, and leaving presents to the saints, as their heathen ancestors did to the spirit presiding over the well, they would be cured of all loathsome or otherwise incurable diseases. Pieces of money were always, accordingly, left in the wells, corresponding to the ability of the diseased person. In digging a drain, at the foot of the bank, some years ago, when the workman struck his pick into the bottom of the well which had been there, a large quantity of water sprung up into the atmosphere, in which he observed a shining substance, which proved to be a gold piece of James I. of Scotland, in as good preservation as when it came from the mint. It is now in the Freefield Cabinet.

The standing-stone in the woods of Newton, near Pitmachie, has an inscription upon it, supposed to be in Runic character. Some drawings of it have been published in the Monthly Magazine, and also by Pinkerton, but they are far from being accurate. There is another standing-stone, near the house of Newton, with figures upon it.

Several arrow heads and axes have been found in this parish and neighbourhood. In one of the cairns on the farm of Moss-side,

in this parish, was found a large stone-axe, which is now in the possession of Sir A. Leith of Freefield. These axes were of different sizes, and made of different kinds of stone. A small one of flint was found in the parish of Inch about 1827, and is now in the Freefield cabinet. The finest were of flint. They were used by our Celtic ancestors, in ages long prior to the Roman invasion, as battle-axes, spears, or tools for domestic purposes. The largest were generally made of coarse, but very hard, grey-stone, for home use. The smallest were manufactured from the finest flint, and used as warlike instruments, and in different ways.

*Druidical Temples.*—Two of these were on the farm of Colpie, although now almost obliterated. Several urns were dug up in making a road near one of them.

A Druidical place of worship anciently stood on the spot which is now the church-yard or burying-ground, and about the middle of it. It consisted of a circle of twelve upright large granite stones from Benochee, which were overturned when the first Christian temple was erected. One of these stones was taken out of the ground in 1821, and now remains above ground, near the spot from which it was dug up. The other eleven are still under ground. This is a proof that the first Christian missionaries, in this country, erected their places of worship as near as possible to the holy hills of the heathens, that the people might be more easily persuaded to assemble there. In digging out the foundation stones of an ancient but small building, to which the last kirk of Culsamond had been attached, there were found below them, side by side, and at right angles with the wall, the skeletons of two men in perfect preservation. This happened in the year 1821, when the new kirk-yard dikes were building.

*Burial Cairns.*—Of these there were, at one time, a considerable number. There are several on Cairnhill, on the north-east side of Pulquhite; two on Moss-side, on opening one of which the stone-axe, already mentioned, was found; one on Mellingside; one near Gateside; and two on Colpie. The one on Moss-side and another at Gateside have not been opened. But the most remarkable one was discovered on the farm of Mill of Williamston in the month of May 1819, in an enclosure called the Liav-park (Bixen Law-hillock Park). In preparing a field for turnip, the plough, at a spot from which a large cairn of stones and moss had been removed about thirty years before, struck against something which impeded its progress. On examination, this proved to be a

wooden coffin of uncommon size, and of the rudest conceivable workmanship. It had been formed from the trunk of a huge oak, divided into three parts of unequal length, each of which had been split through the middle with wedges and stone axes, or perhaps separated with some red hot instrument of stone, as the inside of the different pieces had somewhat the appearance of having been charred. The whole consisted of six parts, two sides, two gavels, a bottom, and a lid. Only a small part of the lid remained, the greater part of it having been splintered and torn up by the plough at different times since the removal of the stones and moss. All the rest of the pieces were entire, and, when put together in their original position, had somewhat the appearance of the body and shafts of a cart. The coffin lay due east and west,—the head of it being in the east end of the grave. The sides were sunk into the ground  $13\frac{1}{2}$  inches below the bottom piece. In the middle of them, were grooves of rough and incomplete workmanship, and of the same length as the length of the bottom, and a very little wider than the thickness of the bottom. Under the bottom was a bed of tough blue clay three and a half inches thick, on which and on these grooves it rested. The projecting parts of the sides rested on a hard oval substance, much mixed with ashes which had undergone the action of a very strong fire, and on which part of the grave evidently had been erected the funeral pile. The gavel pieces were sunk into large holes, and the empty spaces around them filled up with fine blue sand. In a corner of the inside of the coffin was an urn, which was broken in the digging out. It had been formed of a mixture of clay and sand, narrowest at the bottom, very wide at the top, and about ten or eleven inches deep. After the different pieces were placed in the grave in their proper order, it appears to have been surrounded with a double row of unbewn stones to keep the parts firm together, and then covered over with the moss and stones formerly mentioned. This antiquity must probably be referred to a period prior to the Christian era.

*British Camp.*—On the north-east side of the Hill of Calsamond are the remains of a British encampment, protected on the north-west side of the hill by double lines of entrenchment, still very distinct. These lines are in the immediate neighbourhood of a farm town named Cadden, which name signifies warlike entrenchments, or a place where soldiers had been stationed to watch the motions of an invading enemy. There are also still distinct traces of military works on the west bank of the glen water opposite to Cadden.

Lines of entrenchment are also still visible on the east side of the hill and camp to protect it on that quarter; and, about two and a half miles north of this British camp is the Roman camp at Glenmeallin, enclosing about 120 English acres. The Romans, in their march northward, had a camp at Devana, on the north side of the Dee, in the parish of Peterculter. They must have had also a fort or camp on the eastmost top of Benochee, about twelve miles from Devana. This is evident from the remains still visible upon the top, and the existence of a paved Roman road, 14 feet wide, which, though long covered with heath, has been traced for upwards of a mile to the north-east. This road points upon a small fortified post opposite to Pitcaple, placed apparently for the protection of the Benochee camp, and there is another larger work on the summit of the Barra hill, near old Meldrum, to protect it from any attack from the east, and which, in all probability, as a castellum, served also to protect the *castra æstiva* at Glenmeallin.

What was the exact direction of the route of the Romans from Devana to Benochee may admit of a dispute. Some think they marched on the right of Achlae, Fiddy, and Kinmundy, and from thence in a north north-west direction, till they reached Kintore at Don, and thence by the strath of the river to the ford of Don at Ioverury, which is very near Benochee. Be this as it may, it is certain that they had a station on the eastern summit of Benochee.

### III.—POPULATION.

Amount of population in 1801,	780
1811,	764
1821,	836
1831,	1136

### IV.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The far greater part of the inhabitants regularly attend the parochial church,—only a few families attending a missionary meeting-house on the farm of Pulquhite. There are also a few Seceders and Episcopalians, but these have no chapel in the parish.

The stipend is 124 bolls, 3 firlots, 3½ lippies of victual, one-third of which is bear by the Lighthgow measure. The meat eight stones per boll. L.60, 18s. has since been added by Government to make the stipend up to L.150. Glebe about ten acres.

*Education.*—The schoolmaster's salary is the minimum, but he enjoys the benefit of the bequest of the late Mr Dick.

*Poor.*—The poor are provided for from the weekly collections, seat-rents, and fines. Besides this, the late Rev. Mr Pindlay,

minister of Clat, whose grandfather had been minister of Culmmond, left the interest of L.800 for the purposes of assisting the aged poor. The late Mr Gordon of Premnay and Sheelagreen bequeathed to the poor the interest of L.600.

## PARISH OF ECHT.

PRESBYTERY OF KINCARDINE O'NEIL, SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

THE REV. WILLIAM INGRAM, MINISTER.

### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—THE etymology of Echt is not known with certainty. An old tradition refers it to the Gaelic word "Each," which signifies a horse. It bears that a division of an ancient Caledonian army having encamped in this parish, the officers and men, in the time of a severe drought, were reduced to great straits for want of water, when a horse which had been brought to the camp was seen to gallop to a spot where he had been accustomed to drink; and that, by pawing and scratching with his feet, some signs of water were discovered; in which spot, a well having been dug, afforded relief from thirst to the army. In memory of that event, this particular district, and afterwards the parish, is said to have been designated by the above term.

*Extent, &c.*—The parish of Echt lies west from Aberdeen, the eastern extremity nearly ten, and the western fourteen miles from that city. It is almost of a square form, each side about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles. It is bounded on the east and north-east, by the parish of Skene; on the south-east, by Peterculter and Drumoak; on the south, by Banchory-Ternan; on the west and north-west, by Midmar; and on the north, by Cluny.

*Topographical Appearances.*—The hill of Fare lies about one mile south-west from the church. The base of this mountain is nearly eighteen miles in circumference, and its height about 1994 feet above the level of the sea. Its surface is now divided among the proprietors whose estates surround it, and contains 7700 acres, 2 roads, 29 fells imperial measure; of which 1926 acres, 1 feld, 4 fells belong to this parish. Mr Forbes of Echt has a thriving plantation of young firs on its north-east corner, and has