

for the relief of the poor and distressed over the whole of their bounds, appointing the interest thereof to be paid in rotation to the several kirk-sessions of the synod, the lowest allowance to any kirk-session being L. 20. In general, our poor have shown great unwillingness to accept parochial relief. This feeling is now, however, less prevalent than formerly.

July 1842.

PARISH OF DAVIOT.

PRESBYTERY OF GARIOCH, SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

THE REV. THOMAS BURNETT, MINISTER.

L.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—DAVIOT,—in Keith's Catalogue of Scottish Bishops spelled also Davot,—may perhaps be a modification of the Gaelic *Dabhoch*, pronounced Davoch, of which, in a dictionary of this language, is given the following account: "*Dabhoch-oich*, sub. fem., a farm that keeps 60 cows: *Ager sexaginta boves pas-cens. Davata. Law Lat.*—In the Hebrides a Davoch of land is a farm adequate to the pasture of 320 cows. Scot. *Dawache* of land."

Extent, &c.—Its average length is about 3 miles, and its average breadth about 2. It is bounded by the parish of Fyvie on the north; the parishes of Fyvie and Meldrum on the east; the parishes of Bourtie and Chapel of Garioch on the south; and by the parish of Rayne on the west.

Two *quoad sacra* annexations were made to Daviot by act of Assembly in the end of the seventeenth century, viz. part of the parish of Fyvie lying on the north-east, and part of the parish of Chapel of Garioch on the south, so that ecclesiastically its extent of surface is now about $8\frac{1}{2}$ square miles.

Topographical Appearances.—A gently undulated ridge passes through the middle, and traverses nearly the whole length of the parish from north to south, and two shorter lateral ridges of inferior elevation, one on each side, slightly undulated also, complete the figure of the parish.

The climate of the parish is, on the whole, dry, airy, and salubrious, and accordingly the inhabitants enjoy in general good health.

Soil.—There is a considerable variety of soils in the parish. On the higher grounds, a gravelly thin soil,—on those of less elevation, a rich loam and strong clay,—and on the lower grounds generally, a bluish clay underneath a formation of peat of inconsiderable depth; and these soils rest partly on rocks of whinstone and iron, and partly on granite of inferior quality.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Parochial Registers.—The parochial records are neither voluminous nor of an early date. The first entry in the record of baptisms appears to have been made on 10th March 1728; that in the poor's cash register on the 3d March 1731; and that in the record of discipline on the 30th May of the same year.

Antiquities.—On the lands of Mounie, and on the highest ground in the parish, the remains of two Druidical temples are still observable. The remains of a third were to be seen, within the last twenty years, in the grave-yard; but the stones were some time ago removed, and employed as materials in building the walls of a dwelling-house.

There is a small enclosure on the lands of Fingask, which appears to have been used formerly as a burial-ground. And in this enclosure were to be seen the remains of what was believed to have been a Roman Catholic place of worship, from the circumstance of a silver crucifix being found by the workmen in digging for the foundation of a mausoleum, erected by the late proprietor on the spot about forty years ago; and of there being a well in its immediate neighbourhood, which still bears the name of “The Lady's” or “Our Lady's Well.” The foundations of a building, said also to have been a Roman Catholic chapel, with a well close by, occasionally attracted notice a few years ago on the estate of Lethenty. The well is still visible; but no vestige of the building now exists.

In a field of a farm on the property of Glack was dug up, in 1833, a species of battle-axe, which is now in the proprietor's possession. The handle and head are both of iron,—the former 30 inches long, and the latter 5 inches long on the one side and 3½ inches on the other, and varying from 4 to 4½ inches in breadth. Both sides of the head appear to have been sharpened. It is supposed to have been used at the Battle of Harlaw, fought in the adjoining parish of Chapel of Garioch in 1411.

There is now in the writer's possession a silver coin, which was dug up in some years ago, in a small kitchen garden, wherein stood formerly the old manse. It is larger but thinner than a shilling of the present coinage. On one side is Elizabeth: D: G: Ang: Fr: et Hi: regina, around the Queen's head, and on the other, the royal arms, surrounded by the following inscription; . . . Posui Deū adiutorem meū;* but there is no date upon it.

A small pot or cooking utensil, of rather an elegant shape, was turned up on a waste part of a field, of a farm on the property of Mounie in 1834, and is now in the farmer's possession. It is made of bronze, has evidently been subjected to the action of fire, and may probably have been left by the troops which crossed this part of the country in 1745-6. Its depth is seven inches, its diameter, where widest, eight inches, the diameter of its neck, where narrowest, four inches and three-fourths, and the diameter of its mouth six inches, all inside measure.

In 1834, a handsome substantial mansion-house was built by the present proprietor on the estate of Fingask, in the erection of which the stone chiefly employed was granite.

III.—POPULATION.

According to return made to Dr Webster the population in 1755 was	975
The population in	1801, 644
	1811, 698
	1821, 651
	1831, 691
	1841, 643
The average number of males born during the 7 years preceding 1836, is	11½
females,	9½
deaths,—no record of deaths being kept in the parish,	
supposed to be about,	10
Number of persons under 15 years of age is,	249
between 15 and 30,	242
30 and 50,	190
50 and 70,	82
upwards of 70,	22

There are five proprietors of land in the parish, (under the minister's pastoral charge,) the yearly value of whose properties is above L.50; and of these, two are resident.

Unmarried men, bachelors, and widowers above 50,	6
women above 45,	15
The number of families in which both parents are alive,	85
The average number of children procreated by these,	4½
The number of families in which only one parent is alive,	16
The average number of whose children, is	4½
The average number of their children taking all together, is	4½

* The two letters before posui are effaced, and the remainder of the inscription is posui Deum adiutorem meum.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

The industry of the parish may be best exhibited in the following tabular form, which shows the employment of its respective householders: Resident proprietors and farmers, 2; ministers, 1; schoolmasters, 1; farmers, 49; farmers, merchant tailors, and inn-keepers, 1; farmers and inn-keepers, 1; farmers and wrights 1; farmers and millers, 3; crofters, 16; crofters, merchants, and spirit retailers, 2; crofters and dress-makers, 1; crofters and masons, 2; crofters and wrights, 3; crofters and blacksmiths, 2; crofters and shoemakers, 2; crofters and tailors, 1; crofters and weavers, 2; crofters and fish-carriers, 1; crofters and labourers, 10; manufacturers, 1; gardeners, 1; midwives, 1; merchants and wrights, 1; wrights, 2; blacksmiths, 2; shoemakers, 1; labourers, including decayed old men and women, householders, 34; total, 144. Male-servants above twenty years of age employed in agriculture, 65; do. under twenty, employed in agriculture, 44; female servants above twenty, 36; female servants under twenty, 28; male servants above twenty employed in handicraft, 5; do. under twenty, employed in handicraft, 2; total, 180 = 324; and the married women, and such of the inhabitants' children as are not in service, and continue to reside in the parish, make up the remainder of the population. The whole population of the parish may be thus classified; 144 occupants of houses; 99 married women, 362 children, and 180 servants.

Agriculture.—The land in the parish under tillage measures about 3700 acres; the waste land, 150, of which 120 will, at no distant period, be improved; in wood, 180; and in moss, 100; in whole about 4130 Scotch, or nearly 5250 imperial acres. The plantations within the parish are chiefly of Scotch fir and larch. These continue to grow for about forty or fifty years, seldom attaining any great size, and then begin to decay. No good mode of thinning has been sufficiently attended to; and consequently the value of the whole is comparatively small. The soil seems much better adapted for the growth of hard-wood, chiefly beech, elm, and ash; and of these there are some very good specimens in the parish, and especially around the mansion-house of Glack. The mode of filling up blanks where they have occurred in these plantations, when they are somewhat advanced, seems to have been utterly unprofitable. Young plants stuck in among trees of twenty or thirty years growth have either died out, or rapidly shot up to a great height, without attaining any useful

or profitable thickness. The error of this method has now become evident, and a plan, apparently more judicious, is adopted, namely, rooting up and removing those parts of the plantations which do not seem thriving, digging large pits, (in many cases trenching would be preferable,) and planting the young trees in masses, and such kinds only as appear to have thriven best in the soil.

Rent of Land.—The average rent of arable land in the parish per acre is a little above L.1, 1s.

Rate of Grazing.—An ox or cow may be grazed for L.2, 10s., and a full-grown sheep for 10s.

Wages.—The wages of a labouring man in summer is 1s. 6d., and in winter 1s. per day with victuals. Those of tradesmen 2s. per day in summer, and 1s. 6d. in winter, with victuals also.

Live-Stock.—The common breed of cattle in the parish, till within the last few years, was the Aberdeenshire, and the animals of this breed were by no means generally of the finest quality. Much more attention, however, has been paid of late to improve the quality, and produce the greatest weights in the shortest time; and accordingly, a cross of the short-horned with the breed of the county is found to succeed well,—for the bullocks of this cross attain a greater weight in three years with good keep than the pure Aberdeenshire in four; and, from the facility with which they can be conveyed by steam, without loss of weight, to the London markets, they yield a much greater remunerating price to the feeder.

Few sheep are reared in the parish, and these only for family use.

Husbandry.—The mode of husbandry pursued is believed to be good. A seven-shift rotation is that generally adopted, viz. three grasses, two grain crops, one green crop, and one grain crop again, and with the seed of this last crop are sown rye and red and white clover grass seeds for the hay crop of next year. A few individuals have, instead of a seven, adopted a six-shift rotation, that is, one instead of two grain crops after the third year's grass, and they affirm that the proceeds are as great, while the land is less exhausted than by following a seven-shift rotation. As the six-shift rotation, however, gives a less breadth for grain crop than the other, some time may yet elapse until its advantages be satisfactorily established and duly appreciated. There are other two shifts occasionally permitted and practised, namely, a five-shift rotation, with one grain crop after two grasses; and a six-shift rota-

tion with two grain crops after two grasses. But both these rotations, it is believed, are injurious to the interest of the landlord, and over a nineteen years no less injurious to the tenant. Where the land has been previously well managed, and of good quality, they may prove advantageous to the tenant during the first years of his lease; but, towards the end of it, he may discover his error, and that his loss exceeds his gain.

Wheat is seldom attempted to be raised in the parish, as neither the soil nor the climate appears to be adapted to its growth. Barley and bear are raised but in small quantities. The grain chiefly sown is oats, and considerable attention has been paid to have the seed frequently changed and of good quality, and the advantage of the change is now universally admitted. The species of oats which appear to suit both the soil and climate best is that of those denominated Scotch barley and early Angus; although no backwardness is shown to introduce other kinds which promise to be more productive. Accordingly, potato oats, Hopetoun oats, and sandy oats have been sown in the parish. The potato and Hopetoun oats do not bear much hardship, and begin to be discontinued. The sandy oat is rather in greater favour.

The land in the parish seems well adapted for producing green crops; in proof of which it may be stated, that the turnips which grew on a Scotch acre of second-rate infield in 1835, weighed, with the tops, 33 tons, 6 cwt. 8 lb., and without the tops 28 tons, cwt. 1 qr. 4 lb. They were, however, the old Scotch yellow, and sown in drills only $22\frac{1}{2}$ inches apart,—the common width being from 26 to 28 inches. In the same year, and on land of the same quality, the weight of the potatoes raised on a Scotch acre was found to be 14 tons, 5 cwt. 2 qr. 24 lb.

A good deal has been done lately, and is still doing, in reclaiming the low and marshy waste land in the parish. Several leading ditches for carrying off the water have been cut at the proprietors' expense, while the tenants have cut and filled the necessary drains, and the work has in general been efficiently executed, the tenants are already reaping the fruits of the proprietors' liberality and their own industry, and so manifest is the advantage resulting from this operation, that it is not doubted, that, in a few years, the whole of the waste land susceptible of cultivation will be under profitable tillage.

The leases are now almost uniformly of nineteen years duration,—a period apparently sufficient to allow the tenant to derive

the full benefit of such judicious expenditure as he may make for the improvement of his farm in the early part of his lease. The stipulated rents have, till lately, been principally in money. A change, however, has taken place on the property of the principal heritor. He now receives a half-money and half-corn rent for every possession above the size of a croft,—the corn rent payable by the fiars of the year ranging, however, between a certain maximum and minimum per quarter. This mode of payment, when the minimum and maximum are judiciously and fairly fixed, must be alike advantageous to landlord and tenant.

The farm-houses are in general substantial, convenient, and comfortable, and the steadings sufficiently large and commodious.

There may be from 800 to 1000 acres enclosed with stone fences, several of which have been erected within the last few years. The advantages of enclosures seem now to be fully appreciated, and stones are being laid down for the erection of a good many more.

Produce.—The average gross amount of raw produce raised in the parish may be nearly as follows:—

Produce of grain of all kinds,	L.7155	0	0
straw of do.	2385	0	0
potatoes, turnips, and other vegetables raised in the fields,	3000	0	0
hay cultivated,	500	0	0
land in pasture,	3250	0	0
gardens and orchards, say	100	0	0
the annual thinning and periodical sales of wood,	50	0	0
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	L.16,440	0	0

Manufactures.—A manufactory for carding and spinning wool was, some time ago, established in the parish by a spirited individual, the machinery of which cost him L.270. There are commonly four hands employed, who work ten hours a-day. In the year 1831, the Board for the Encouragement of Manufactures, in consequence of a representation of the manufacturer's enterprise, granted him a premium of L.35, 10s.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Means of Communication.—The parish enjoys neither market-town nor post-office. There are, however, very good commutation roads through a considerable part of it. That which passes the church from north to south divides itself into two branches about half a mile south of it,—the one leading to Old Meldrum, and the other to Inverury, both markets and post towns; the former distant about four and the latter about five miles from the parish church. In 1835, a turnpike road was made to connect the east and west

branches of the Great North Road from Aberdeen to Inverness. It commences at Old Meldrum, and terminates near to Sheela-green, in the parish of Culsamond. Its length in the parish, traversing the east and north sides, is nearly four miles. No public coach, as yet, runs through the parish on this road.

Ecclesiastical State.—This parish is said to have formerly been a parsonage or prebend in the diocese of Aberdeen, and to have been given as an alms' gift by Malcolm Canmore to the bishop of that diocese. The Established Church, the only place of worship in the parish, being nearly in the centre of it, is very conveniently situated for the parishioners, not being above three miles from the most distant of them. It was built in 1798, and is at present in good repair. It affords accommodation for 400 persons, allowing 18 inches, or for 450, allowing 16 inches for each person; and by re-arranging the seats, and adding a couple of galleries, it might, if necessary, be made to contain 600. The inhabitants have sittings in the church gratis, as occupants of houses and land rented from the heritors, and there is no person in the parish who does not enjoy this privilege.

The manse was built in 1799–1800. A thorough repair, and comfortable addition to it, together with a new and complete steadying of offices, were very liberally and handsomely given by the heritors in 1830.

The extent of the glebe, including the grass land, is about $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres, which might be let for L.12 annually. The stipend arising from the teinds of the parish of Daviot proper, and increased by an annual payment from Her Majesty's Exchequer in Scotland, amounts to L.150.

The number of Presbyterians in the parish, old and young, was in May last 664; of Episcopalians, 112; of Seceders, 5; and of Quakers, 4.

Divine service in the Established Church is generally well attended, and the average number of those who regularly communicate there is 350.

Education.—The parochial school is the only one in the parish. In it are taught English reading, English grammar, writing, arithmetic, geography, book-keeping, mathematics, Latin, and Greek. The Assembly's Shorter Catechism is also carefully taught, a portion of the Bible daily read, and God's blessing on the business of the seminary daily implored. The schoolmaster's salary is L.30, and the average annual amount of his fees about L.20. He also par-

ticipates in the Dick Bequest. The heritors of the parish, putting a just value on the services of an acceptable and successful teacher, have, greatly to their credit, given him, in a large and comfortable school-house, much more than the legal accommodation. The annual expense of education varies, according to the branches taught, from 8s. to L.1.

There is no one, it is believed, in the parish, between six and fifteen years of age, who is unable to read or write, none above fifteen who cannot read, and not above fifty, chiefly old women, who cannot write. And it may be here stated, as a proof that the parishioners are quite alive to the benefits of education, that, during last year, there were no fewer than 107 young people attended school.

Charitable and other Institutions.—There is no savings bank in the parish. The nearest is that in Old Meldrum, established, in 1834, by a few private individuals. A National Security Savings Bank was established in Inverury in June 1837.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The number of persons receiving parochial aid is generally about 12, and the annual allowance given to each ranges from L.1, 10s. to L.5, 11s. 6d. The average annual amount of collections in the church for their relief is L.25, 11s. 4d.; of interest of money belonging to the poor, L.7, 10s.; and of donations, &c. given and applied for their benefit, L.11, 6s. 6d. It rarely happens that application, in the first instance, is made by the individual requiring parochial assistance; and in more cases than one, when inquiry has been made, with all possible delicacy, if parochial aid was wanted, or would be acceptable, the reply has been, "that their own means were not yet exhausted, and till then they could not bear the thought of becoming burdensome to the parish."

Fairs, Inns, &c. and Fuel.—In the parish no fairs are held. There are two inns, besides two other houses in which ale and spirits are retailed; but these being situated on the sides of the principal lines of road in the parish, appear to be required for the accommodation of the public. Almost all who occupy land in the parish have, in terms of their leases, the privilege of cutting turf and peat for fuel in the proprietors' mosses. There is also a considerable quantity of coals brought from Inverury into the parish for fuel, at the expense of about 5s. 6d. per boll, exclusive of carriage.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The most striking variations between the present state of the parish and that which existed at the time of the last Statistical return, are, a diminished population, produced chiefly by the gradually improved arrangement effected by the proprietors in the division of their lands; the adoption of a regular rotation of cropping, which was then but just commencing; an increased and increasing desire, on the part of the tenant, encouraged by his landlord, to lay out his fields tastefully, and to bring every foot of them under the plough; a more intimate acquaintance with the best modes of draining, whereby the greater part of the low and wet lands in the parish has been, and is being dried and rendered productive; a more enlightened and systematic attention bestowed by the tenantry in improving the breed of their cattle, and in bringing them as early, and as far as they can, into the best marketable condition; and the generally improved position of the farm-houses and steadings, in reference to every part of the farm, and the consequent discontinuance of the assemblage of several farm-houses and steadings in one locality, which proved a source of no small inconvenience and annoyance to their respective possessors. Subletting has, since then, also been almost completely prohibited, and the proprietors, while they gratuitously give houses and small patches of ground for a garden to the well-behaved on their own estates, who have fallen into decayed circumstances, and otherwise humanely assist them, at the same time prevent the settlement of those who have no such claim upon them, and are likely, at no distant period, to become burdensome to the parish; and it is believed that, if this plan were more generally adopted, the poor in each parish would have their necessary wants amply provided for, and mendicant vagrancy would, to the great comfort of the community, be ere long entirely discontinued. The roads in the parish also have undergone a great improvement since the date of the last Statistical Account. The old lines of road have in several parts been improved, and the roads themselves put in good repair. A new line of turnpike has since been made along the east and north sides of the parish, and another was finished in 1839, on which a stage-coach now runs daily betwixt Aberdeen and Huntly.

Drawn up in 1837.

Revised August 1842.