

in each of which there are above 300 volumes. One of them contains books only on religious subjects.

Fuel.—Peats are obtained from the hill of Fare, already mentioned, and from some inland mosses, several of them now nearly exhausted.

Inns, &c.—Besides the inn in the village, in which all the district courts are held, there are not fewer than ten or twelve houses or shops in the parish in which spirits are sold.

July 1842.

PARISH OF TARLAND AND MIGVIE.

PRESBYTERY OF KINCARDINE O'NEIL, SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

THE REV. AND. WATSON, }
THE REV. J. WATSON, A. & S. } MINISTERS.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name, &c.—THE name is of Gaelic extraction, and signifies a "flat or level land." The parish of Tarland is separated by a burn from Coull, on the south; on the west, it is bounded by the parish of Logie-Coldstone; on the north, by the parish of Leochel-Cushny; and on the east, by the parish of Coull to near the end of the Cromar district. Its length is nearly 4, and its breadth 2 miles.

The church in the annexed parish of Migvie is situated near the west end of the Cromar district, and is distant from the parish church of Tarland about three miles westward. The parish of Migvie is bounded on the south and west, by the parish of Logie-Coldstone; on the north, by the parishes of Towie and Coldstone; and on the east, by the parish of Coldstone.

At what period these parishes of Tarland and Migvie were united cannot be ascertained either from record or tradition. Public worship is at Migvie church, every third Sunday through the year. A detached part of the parish of Tarland lies in Strathdon, distant twelve miles from the parochial church of Tarland, and containing a population of 191 souls. This part of the parish of Tarland is bounded on the south by the river Don, three or four miles in extent. It is about two miles in breadth, and bounded on the west, north,

and east, by the parish of Strathdon. It consists of two or three hills and glens, said to have been appropriated as pasture-grounds in the forest of Mar, for the accommodation and benefit of the Earl of Mar's vassals, who were proprietors of ground in Cromar, and especially in the parish of Tarland, holding of his Lordship as superior.

In more civilized and modern times, these glens, &c. were partially cultivated, chiefly along the sides of the Don and Ernan, and were consequently disposed of and purchased by neighbouring proprietors in Strathdon, who still hold of the Earl of Fife as superior of these lands; but they always did, and still constitute a part of the parish of Tarland. In the immediate neighbourhood of this part of Tarland parish, a missionary, upon the Royal Bounty, is stationed, and discharges all parochial duties to the Tarland parishioners, with exception of Church discipline, for which they are amenable to the kirk-session of Tarland. There is also a detached part of the parish of Migvie, six miles north-west from the church of Tarland, and three miles north from Migvie church. This part of Migvie parish is bounded on the south by the water of Deskrie, which separates it from Coldstone and Towie parishes; on the west, by Strathdon; on the north, by the river Don; and on the east, by the parish of Towie. In extent it may be about two miles long and nearly three broad, and it contains a population of 144 souls. The minister of Tarland discharges all parochial duties here, when called to do so; but his reverend and friendly brethren in Strathdon and Towie kindly save him much trouble and inconvenience.

In that part of the parish of Tarland and Migvie which is bounded by the Cromar hills, the general temperature of the atmosphere is mild, varying from 50° to 80° in summer, and from 12° to 25° in winter. Springs flow from the adjoining north hills, which constitute a part of the parish, and supply the burn of Tarland in the plain, whose course extends, as before described, until it falls into the river Dee. In regard to soil, from the flat and low grounds about the town and burn of Tarland, to the highest part of the cultivated north hills, there is great variety. In the low grounds along the burn side from Tarland, for three miles eastward, and a quarter of a mile in breadth, the soil is generally rich, deep, and fertile. The subsoil about the village consists mostly of shingle and pure sand, with surface soil of rich loam, from eight to twelve inches deep.

Along the burn, on both sides eastward, the strata and beds are various, consisting of rich loam, clay, peat, gravel, with logs of oak, alder, fir, &c. imbedded six or eight feet deep. The surface soil consists of various alluvial deposits from two to three feet deep. As the ground rises, say 10 or 12 feet from the level of the plain and burn, the soil is various, being, for the most part, of light and moory surface, with subsoil of shingle and pure sand. From 10 to 20 feet higher, and approaching the north hills, the soil is generally much improved, consisting chiefly of rich loam mixed with clay, and the subsoil solid clay. Along the side of these hills, so far as cultivated, the soil appears mostly pure clay. The same soil prevails from the one end of the parish to the other, eastward about four miles, and is very productive in grain, bear, and oats; and though about a fortnight later in ripening than the ground in the immediate vicinity of Tarland, it is less exposed to hoar frost and mildew, and is productive of more substantial grain of any kind or quality which suits the climate. Dry solid rocks of white, grey, blue, and sand-coloured granite abound from one end of the parish to the other, all acknowledged to be of superior quality; and along the side of these north hills, the soil contains many clay boulders (boulders), from 20 to 50 feet in circumference, the surface consisting of wet mossy turf, from 2 to 6 inches deep, then a stratum of moss, but more frequently of thin white and blue clay, of the consistence of lime prepared for harling or plaster-work. Plantations in the parish are very limited, and much wanted. The soil seems congenial to most sorts of timber, especially common Scotch fir, larch, ash, and hard-wood of every description. Some enclosures and plantations have been lately made on moory ground upon the Earl of Aberdeen's property, which promises to do remarkably well, and will tend much to improve the climate, and prove beneficial to the tenantry.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Land-owners.—The chief land-owners in Tarland and Migvie parishes, within Cromar, are the Earl of Aberdeen, and Marquis of Huntly; and the proprietors of Invercauld and Finzean. In the detached part of Tarland parish in Strathdon, and of Migvie on Deskrieside, the proprietors of New and Edinglassie, of Inverernan, of Candacraig, and of Freefield, are heritors; in all, eight.

Parochial Registers.—Parochial registers of baptisms and mar-

riages are regularly kept in those parishes, and have been so since the year 1768. Prior to that period, no register or regular record of entry exists.

Antiquities.—About half a mile south from the church of Tarland, and in the parish of Coull, there is a small hill or eminence, about 150 feet in height above the level of the Tarland burn; its summit of conical form, about 100 feet in circumference, consisting of solid rock and beautiful granite. On this summit may be seen the distinct ruins of a distinguished Druidical temple, containing two circles formed of large erect stones, at short intervals, from 4 to 5 feet in height, 3 broad, and 2 feet thick. The hill or eminence is known by the name *Tomnaverie*, a word of Gaelic extraction, and said to signify “the hill of truth, or worship, or of judiciary trial.” About 100 feet from this summit westward, are two distinct inclosures, each about an acre of stony and uncultivated ground, which might have served for camps, or such accommodating purposes as the assembling worshippers required. On the east side of the eminence, and about 200 paces from the temple, there is about an acre of cultivated ground which was formerly enclosed, and is known by the name of the “hangman’s yard.” From the centre of the temple, pointing to the north-east, and about one mile distant, there may be seen the site and ruins of a lesser Druidical temple, as if intended for more frequent and ordinary worship. From the same centre, at the same distance, and pointing to the north, are to be seen the ruins of another Druidical temple: and from the same centre, at the same distance, and pointing to the north-west, and upon the boundary which separates Tarland from Coldstone parish, may be seen the ruins of another Druidical temple,—all three uniform in size, and equidistant from the larger temple upon *Tomnaverie*. On the north-west point of the eminence, and close by the large temple, are to be seen evident traces of strong fire, which has shattered the solid rock several feet deep. It may be worthy of remark that, in the immediate neighbourhood of the lesser temple alluded to in the north-east, there was lately found in the cultivated soil, a small stone of very hard texture, about 3 inches long, and 2 thick, tapering at one end, and, though quite smooth, altogether of rugged-like surface: the other end, impressed with two distinct circles, beautifully polished, and in high preservation.

About 300 or 400 yards south from the church of Migvie may

be seen, on a small eminence, the ruins of a castle, the *quondam* property and residence of the Earl of Mar, and where the feudal duties of the proprietor of Blelach, in parish of Logie-Coldstone, were appointed by his charters to be paid annually to the superior. At what period this castle was reduced to ruins cannot be ascertained. Its site is now all under green turf; but it might be an object worthy of the attention of the proprietor, Mr Farquharson of Finzean, to excavate the ruins, and expose its original plan and dimensions.

III.—POPULATION.

Amount of population in 1801,	.	922
1811,	.	932
1821,	.	964
1831,	.	1074
1841,	.	1093

There are no residing heritors in these parishes, with the exception of the proprietors of Inverernan, Edinglassie, and Candacraig.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture, &c.—The average rent of land in these parishes may be stated at L. 1, 10s. per acre, with the exception of the ground adjoining the village of Tarland, which rents at L. 3 per acre. The spirit of agricultural improvement has shone very conspicuously throughout the district, for these twenty years past. Lime and coals are brought from Aberdeen and other places equidistant. The general duration of leases is nineteen years, and the farm-buildings are generally substantial and commodious. Tarland is the only market-town in these parishes, or in the Cromar district. There are seven annual markets: Breagfair, held at Martinmas; Yule market, in January; horse-market in March; Rood-fair, at Whitsunday; a market for cows the week following; Luag fair in July; and Lammas fair in August. A weekly market was held for many years in the burgh, but has been discontinued for twenty or thirty years past. To these markets, cattle, horses, sheep, and such commodities as the country and seasons furnish, are brought; and much commercial intercourse with the district is thereby promoted.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Village.—The village of Tarland is a burgh of barony, and consists of 68 houses and families. Prior to 1799, four tenants held the whole village and ground attached (say 150 acres) in lease from the Earl of Aberdeen, the proprietor; and all other house-

holders in the village were tenants at will, and subject to many changes and services required by their respective landlords, who held of the proprietor. This arrangement was found hostile to industrious improvement and ordinary comfort, and to promote indifference, idleness, dissipation, and immorality. When new leases were required and granted in 1799, these lands were surveyed and measured, and every householder in the village was supplied with his portion of ground, which he held in lease from the proprietor for nineteen years. This arrangement had the most desirable effects. The first object with the villagers was to build comfortable houses, and to put their little patches of ground in preparation for a regular rotation of crops. Such laudable exertion in a few years evinced its happy effects, when each villager might be seen possessed of his cow and horse, as circumstances required, maintained through summer and winter, and the family supplied with meal and malt, butter and cheese, and vegetables equal to their consumpt.

In the village, there is a commodious and well-frequented inn; 5 alehouses; a daily post and stamp-office; 8 shops containing grocery, and all other articles generally required for domestic and agricultural purposes. There is an excellent mill, with approved machinery, in complete repair, and well managed. A neat and substantial bridge of one arch, 22 feet span, was built over the burn of Tarland, and close by the village, seven years ago, and completes the communication between Dee and Don-side. From this bridge to the end of the Cromar district eastward, a distance of three miles, a new and straight course for the burn was planned and executed twelve years ago, and has proved of immense advantage to the neighbourhood, by improving the climate, draining the low grounds along the plain to the end of the district, and adding not less than 140 acres of superior rich alluvial soil, which, for time immemorial, had been a tract of green pasture, consisting of moss, mire, and lake, and generally known by the name of Bogmore. From the village of Tarland to the city of Aberdeen, a distance of thirty miles, there was lately made a turnpike road, passing through the parishes of Coull, Lumphanan, Kincardine O'Neil, and Midmar. The cross roads, too, are in good repair, and much improved since the commutation of statute labour.

Ecclesiastical State.—The church of Tarland was rebuilt in 1762, and is at present in good repair. It contains about 500 sitters, and is well furnished, at the expence of the heritors. The

number of communicants in both parishes within Cromar does not exceed 400. The sacrament is dispensed at Tarland church only. The communicants from the Strathdon and Deskrie-side are generally accommodated at the churches of Strathdon and Towie, where they find it more convenient to attend.

The present manse of Tarland was built in 1800, and is in good repair. The glebe at Tarland is about $4\frac{1}{2}$ imperial acres, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres at Migvie. The amount of stipend is L.54, 3s. 5d. Sterling of money, 74 bolls, 3 firlots, 2 pecks, $2\frac{3}{8}$ lippies of bear, and 101 bolls, 1 peck, $1\frac{1}{2}$ lippies of meal, valued and paid according to the fiars of the year. There are no places of public worship in these parishes besides the churches of Tarland and Migvie, the latter of which was rebuilt about sixty-five years ago, and is at present in good repair. It accommodates between 200 and 300 sitters. Divine worship at the Established Churches is generally well attended; and, with the exception of a few Roman Catholics, there are no Dissenters nor Seceders in these parishes. The average amount of church collections, including penalties, yearly, may be stated at L.30.

Near the centre of the district of Cromar the church and manse of Tarland are situated, on a plain, and by the side of a burn or rivulet formed by the springs and auxiliary streams from the adjoining hills on the north side.

Education.—The parochial school at Tarland is the only seminary of learning in these parishes. The branches of instruction generally taught are, Greek, Latin, English, arithmetic, writing, book-keeping, and the principles of geometry and mathematics. The schoolmaster enjoys the legal accommodation, the minimum salary, and school-fees; which, with other perquisites, may amount to L.40 annually. The school is well attended: but an additional school is very much wanted at Migvie. The teacher participates in the Dick bequest.

The parochial school of Tarland has been supplied with qualified and successful teachers for a century past, and a considerable number of young men from the district have been distinguished for genius and talent in civil, ecclesiastical, and commercial departments.

Poor.—The poor's funds in these parishes are very limited, not exceeding L.80 Sterling. There are, at an average, 16 paupers on the roll, but no travelling poor belong to these parishes. Two

unfortunate and destitute poor are now in the Lunatic Asylum of Aberdeen, and occasion a heavy expense upon these parishes.

Library, &c.—A parish library has been instituted in the village of Tarland; and a Savings' Bank, (under the patronage of the Earl of Aboyne,) has been in operation for six years past. It is intended for the accommodation and advantage of the labouring classes. It consists of monthly deposits, none exceeding L.10 Sterling; and when such deposits amount to L.60, the same are to be withdrawn. The stock now amounts to L.500 Sterling.

August 1842.

PARISH OF CLATT.

PRESBYTERY OF ALFORD, SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

THE REV. ROBERT COOK, A. M. MINISTER.

L.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE name Clatt, or, as it was formerly written, Clet or Clett, is obviously derived from the Gaelic word Cleith, pronounced Cleit, which signifies *concealed*. This etymology of the word is in strict accordance with the locality of the parish. It is concealed from the view on every side.

Situation.—This parish is situated in the western extremity of Garioch,—one of the five divisions or districts of the county of Aberdeen.

Extent.—It is about 4 English miles in length, and varies from 2 to 3 English miles in breadth, comprehending a space of nearly 9 square miles.

Boundary.—It is bounded on the west by the parish of Auchindoir, in the lower district of Marr; on the north, by the Water of Bogie, which separates it from the parish of Rhynie; on the east, by the parishes of Kennethmont and Leslie; and on the south, by the Suie and Coreen Hills, forming part of a mountain range that extends from east to west upwards of twenty miles. With the exception of those parts which lie on the declivity of the southern boundary, and some rising grounds on the north-west, the parish of Clatt forms an uninterrupted plain; and, from the centre, the spectator has a distinct view of nearly its whole extent.