

## PARISH OF BANFF.

PRESBYTERY OF FORDYCE, SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

THE REV. FRANCIS WILLIAM GRANT, MINISTER.\*

### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—IN some ancient writings, the name of the town is given in each of the following ways,—Bainiffe, Boineffe, Bainffe, Banife, thus, most probably, drawing its origin from the word *Boyn*, the name of a district in which Banff is situated. *Boyn* (found in older writings under all the different orthographies of Boynd, Boyne, Boynde, Boin, Bouyn, Buyne, Buyn, Boyen,) is apparently the Gaelic word *Buinne*, a stream; and the district appears to have received its name from a stream passing through it, now called Burn of Boyne. On the bank of this stream, near its entrance into the sea, is the ancient castle of Boyne; and the neighbouring parish of Boyndie was formerly called Inverboynde or Inverbaindy, i. e. mouth of Boyn. *Boyndie* is pronounced *Beendie* or *Bee-nie*,—resembling, in this respect, the Gaelic word, more than its present orthography would seem to indicate. The sound of *f* occurring in the word *Banff*, has probably originated from nothing more than a peculiarity of pronunciation,—as *Murray* is found to have been, at some former periods, spelled *Murreff*; *Strathisla*, *Strathileff*; *Bailiary*, *Bailiareff*.

*Extent, Boundaries.*—The greatest length of the parish is about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  miles, its greatest breadth, which is nearly in the middle, about 2 miles. Its superficial extent is probably below 9 square miles. As indicated by the measures now given, it is in shape long and narrow, but with a *bend*, the inner side of which is towards the east: the inland extremity tapering to a point exactly like a leaf. It lies longitudinally from N. E. to S. W.

The parish is bounded on the north by the sea of the Moray Frith. The river *Doveran*, for a distance of about a mile and a half from its entrance into the sea, forms the eastern boundary. On the opposite side of the river, up to a rivulet falling into it about

\* Drawn up, in the indisposition of the Minister, by Alexander Smith, M. A., author of the "Philosophy of Morals."

half a mile from the sea, is the parish of Gamrie; above the rivulet is the parish of King Edward. From the point where it ceases to join the river, the parish of Banff is bounded, to its most southerly extension, by the parish of Alva; then, for a very small distance, by Marnoch;—and, from that to the sea, by the parish of Boyndie, from which it is, in part at least, divided by the burn of that name.

*Topographical Appearances.*—In the lower end of the parish, the ground rises in the centre to an elevation of from 200 to 300 feet above the level of the sea, forming an eminence called the Gallowhill,\* a prolongation of which stretches southerly, (but gradually descending, with a sweep,) concave towards the east. In the upper part of the parish, there are one or two eminences exceeding the Gallowhill in height, but, being less raised above the surface of the adjoining lower grounds, (there considerably higher than the level of the coast,) they present merely the appearance of slight swellings, and the surface there is altogether of the most uninteresting character. On the east side, the Gallowhill slopes down into a fine plain or meadow, of about a mile and a-half long, enclosed within a circular bend of the river. On the north side, the slope being more gradual, necessarily makes a more abrupt termination as it approaches the sea, and the shore consists, in the parts more adjacent to the river mouth, of precipitous rocky banks overhanging the beach; more towards the west, there is left between the abrupt descent and the sea, a fine plain or links. On its western side, again, the Gallowhill declines gradually, but with occasional knolls and undulations, towards the burn of Boyndie.

Near the town and harbour, low rocks stretch out into the sea from the beach; more to the west, and adjoining the mouth of the burn of Boyndie, is a sandy bay called Boyndie Bay. About midway between the extremes of the coast boundary, a rocky promontory is cleft in the middle into a sort of recess, (called the Elf Kirk,) about six or seven yards deep, and two yards broad, having perpendicular sides of rock to a considerable height. The recess has, however, rather the appearance of being scooped out by the action of the sea, than formed by the tearing asunder of its sides.

*River and Scenery.*—The river Doveran takes its rise in the parish of Cabrach, just on the confines between the counties of Aberdeen and Banff. Its source is 27 miles† due south of the mouth

\* Anciently the place of execution.

† These distances (all reckoned by the straight line) are taken, somewhat loosely, from the scale on Irvine Ross's map.

of the Spey, which is 22 miles west of Banff—thus making the general course of the Doveran to be nearly north-east, and the distance from its source to its mouth 35 miles. But its course is far from a straight one. Thus, from Rothiemay to where it approaches Turriff, a distance of eleven miles, its course is, though with many meanderings, from west to east. From that point to Banff (9 miles) its course is from south to north. Nearly a mile above the point where, passing from between the parishes of Alva and King Edward, the Doveran first touches the parish of Banff, it enters, with a sudden turn, into a rocky gorge, whose precipitous sides crowned with wood are here joined by a semicircular stone arch. From this, the view stretches, above, into the open country, bounded by the hill of Alva; below, it is closed by a succession of naked rocks and steep wooded banks, among which the stream is seen to lose itself. The grounds on the margin of the river continue abrupt and precipitous, for nearly a mile farther down, when they gradually recede, opening out into a fine valley, round the eastern side of which the river takes a wide sweep, enclosing the plain on which Duff House is situated. Opposite to this plain, on the eastern side of the river, the ground is cut by the rivulet already mentioned, issuing from a woody ravine. Above, is a fine declivity, crowned on the top, and fringed along the water's edge, with wood; its surface diversified with breaks and swellings, and adorned with patches and rows of trees. Below, rises a green hill, presenting to the river and sea shore, a face of considerable height and steepness. The road from Edinburgh and Aberdeen winds round the verge of its southern inclination; and brings the traveller arriving in that direction, upon a prospect of rather uncommon attraction. On the extremity of the seaward slope of the hill, where it stretches out into a point skirting the bay, stands the town of Macduff. Just where the bend of the river commences, rises, on the western side, a high abrupt bank; on the summit of which, emerging from the gloom of a thicket, is a Gothic mausoleum, (the burying place of the Fife family)—near to which, on the verge of the bank, stands a funereal urn, containing bones dug up on the spot, of old the cemetery of a Carmelite monastery. A little above, on the same side, is a remarkable round hill, which tradition represents as being artificial and the work of penance, and which, now, crowned with a small summer-house or temple, forms a striking accessory to the beauty of the scene. In one or two places, small islands, covered with wood, separate the stream of the river into branches; and its whole course between the two

bridges of Banff and Alva, (a distance of two miles—all comprehended in Lord Fife's park,)\* affords a succession of beautiful or romantic scenes; though even, perhaps, as it is, the "capabilities" of the ground have not received full justice: the walks not being always led with sufficient skill to catch the finest points of view, nor the necessary openings for the same purpose left in the wood.

The breadth of the river where it washes this parish does not, perhaps, in any place, exceed 130 yards. Its depth is very unequal, and liable to great fluctuations from shifting masses of sand and gravel. In some places, it runs in shallow streams; in others there are pools of 10 or 12 feet, or even of greater depth. Under the arch of the bridge of Alva, where the stream is forcibly confined, it is said to be of 15 fathoms depth.

On some late occasions, the river, especially when aided by high tides and northerly winds, has overflowed the low part of the town, and occasioned much mischief and inconvenience. In 1799, in 1829, and in 1835, such inundations occurred, with a less considerable one between the two latter periods. On these occasions, there have been five or six feet of water in some of the streets, the inhabitants being rescued from their houses by boats. In 1829, three horses of the mail-coach were drowned, in attempting to pass through the Market-square.

*Springs.*—The parish is well supplied with springs, and water may be found in most places by digging. In general, the water is slightly impregnated with carbonate of iron. There is a spring perceptibly chalybeate to the taste, about half a mile west of the town; and a very strong chalybeate (of great use as a tonic) about a mile farther west, in the parish of Boyndie.

*Geology and Mineralogy.* †—The general direction of the strata within this parish is about from north-east to south-west; and the parish being narrow, and running in a direction parallel to that of the strata, and including only within its range a limited number of beds of rock, affords but few remarkable geological features.

The prevailing rocks are clay-slate and graywacke, although an intermixture of various other seams of rock is frequently met with.

From the river mouth for about half a-mile, as far westward as

\* A high degree of liberality is shown by the Noble proprietor in the freedom granted to the public, of walking in his grounds.

† For the section on *Geology* and other valuable assistance, the compiler has to acknowledge his obligations to James Christie, Esq. solicitor.

Boyndie bay, a bed of clay-slate is found reposing on graywacke ; the latter, at different points, protruding through the clay-slate, and rising, adjacent to the harbour, to the height of about forty feet. The clay-slate is found resting on the graywacke in a conformable position, and following its windings in thin strata as far as they can be seen, till dipping or covered again by the soil or other beds of sand and shingle resting upon them. The elevation of the strata is different at different points. Where it is in conjunction with the graywacke, it may be at an elevation of from  $60^{\circ}$  to  $80^{\circ}$ , and gradually declining to a less angle of elevation as it recedes from the graywacke and approaches the surface of the bed of clay-slate. The clay-slate and graywacke at their junction alternate with each other in thin veins for a small space, and are interspersed occasionally with thin veins of graywacke slate. A little to the westward of the rock called the Elf Kirk, at low water-mark, a small portion of the old red sandstone formation makes its appearance, and seems, to the eastward, to be in conjunction with the graywacke. Above the old, rests a thin stratum of the new red sandstone ; but neither appear again at any other point within the parish. Adjacent to the harbour, thin veins of quartz, in a variety of ramifications, run through the graywacke. Around these veins the graywacke is changed to a brown, as if the heat of the quartz, poured in a liquid state into the crack, had changed its colour. The thickness of these quartz veins, in some places, may be about a foot, decreasing in size, in the different ramifications, till they totally disappear. In general, the colour of the graywacke is changed, in a greater or less degree, at all points where the veins of quartz are found.

Towards the western side of the parish, there is a bed of mica-slate of a fine grain, resting on secondary gneiss, which is in conjunction, near Whitehills (in the parish of Boyndie) with the graywacke, on which it appears to be reposing. This bed affords many specimens of what is termed undulated mica-slate, and is traversed, farther to the westward, by thin veins of lime, which, below the flood-mark of the sea, is perforated with different kinds of pho-las, which pierce the vein till obstructed by a vein of graywacke slate, or some other of the siliceous rocks. This bed soon enters the parish of Boyndie, passing to the south-westward near Blair-shin-noch.

The only point where granite appears, is at a place called Cairn of Ord, the most south-westerly part of the parish. There, on a

piece of rising ground, the granite comes to the surface. In one part of the bed, the granite is excellent; but in other parts, at the same point, it passes into secondary granite, or syenite, in which the quartz is either entirely wanting, or only found in very small quantities. The felspar is white and small-grained, and appears quite free from iron or any other colouring matter. Hence it retains its beautiful white colour, without being changed by the action of the atmosphere; and, on that account, has been much esteemed for building.

This rock passes into gneiss and coarse mica-slate, which appears at different points a little to the eastward, but which has never been employed for any useful purpose.

Various beds of sand, shingle, and clay, of different depths at different points, cover these strata; but none of them appear worthy of any remark, unless in so far as regards a bed of lias clay, which is found in patches at different points within the parish. This bed is of very considerable extent, stretching over a surface of more than twenty square miles. Belemnites and ammonites are found in it at all places where it has been wrought. It has long been wrought at Blackpots, a little to the westward of the boundary of this parish, for bricks and tiles, and also within the parish adjacent to the town, for the same purposes; and the belemnite and ammonite have been found there in great abundance, as well as various other shells peculiar to that formation.

There are no hornblende rocks *in situ* within the parish, but there is abundance of rolled blocks of that mineral scattered over the surface, as well as of hypersthene and augite. Rolled blocks of granite, having the felspar red, are also found. Porphyritic hornstone in water-worn nodules is also found on the moors and along the sea-beach.

Alluvial deposits are very scanty, being mostly confined to a few patches along the line of the Doveran.

The soils are extremely varied, partaking in some measure of the nature of the rocks on which they severally repose; being, on the slate rock, of a clayey and soft nature, and very fertile.

*Meteorology.*—The climate is singularly changeable and capricious. At no time can a continuance of any particular sort of weather be in the least depended on. Winter is often comparatively warm, and summer cold. In 1831, the difference between the temperature on the 24th June at half-past eight at night, and the 11th December at the same hour, was only 5°. In

1832,\* in like manner, the thermometer stood so low as 50 on the 6th July; so high as 49½ on the 23d January,—on both occasions at half-past eight in the evening. May and June are generally characterized by severe droughts, and piercing northerly and easterly winds. The trees are scarcely in full leaf at midsummer; about which time, very often storms arise that blacken and wither their foliage. The steadiest and most pleasant weather is generally in August and September.

The following meteorological tables for the year 1832, are the result of observations taken under the direction of the Banff Scientific Institution.

	BAROMETER.					THERMOMETER.				
	Highest.		Lowest.		Mean of the Month.	Highest.		Lowest.		Mean of the Month.
	Morn.	Even.	Morn.	Even.		Morn.	Even.	Morn.	Even.	
Jan.	30.4	30.2	29.1	29.2	29.7	50.	49.5	30.	27.2	39.6
Feb.	30.5	30.4	28.8	28.8	29.9	52.	50.	34.4	33.3	39.7
Mar.	30.2	30.2	28.8	28.8	29.6	49.	48.3	35.	33.6	41.3
Apr.	30.5	30.5	29.2	29.2	30.	55.9	54.	41.	40.	47.2
May,	30.5	30.5	29.3	29.3	29.	58.	59.	42.	41.	49.4
June,	30.3	30.3	29.	29.3	29.8	65.	66.	49.	49.	55.8
July,	30.4	30.4	29.5	29.6	30.	68.	66.	52.	50.	57.7
Aug.	30.2	30.3	29.4	29.3	29.8	67.5	66.	51.	48.	59.5
Sept.	30.4	30.5	29.5	29.5	29.9	62.	58.	49.	48.	54.4
Oct.	30.5	30.4	29.0	29.1	29.8	59.	57.	40.	43.	50.5
Nov.	30.4	30.4	28.7	28.9	29.6	49.	47.	31.	36.	41.3
Dec.	30.2	30.2	29.1	28.7	29.6	44.	42.	32.	32.	38.

(The observations were taken at half-past nine A. M., and half-past eight P. M.)

## WINDS AND RAIN.

	N.	N. E.	E.	S. E.	S.	S. W.	W.	N. W.	Inches of Rain.
January,	6	0	1	10	21	18	3	3	0.78
February,	1	0	0	2	35	16	3	1	0.2
March,	0	2	0	5	16	22	11	6	1.04
April,	7	5	3	11	17	5	6	6	3.
May,	19	10	1	6	5	1	15	5	1.25
June,	6	4	5	14	8	2	10	11	2.57
July,	12	3	1	6	3	14	11	12	1.25
August,	13	4	2	6	13	7	10	7	3.50
September,	3	0	0	4	16	4	26	7	2.10
October,	0	0	0	0	18	28	14	2	2.44
November,	0	2	0	1	26	21	1	9	1.8
December,	1	0	0	1	9	29	11	11	2.82
									22.25

It is somewhat remarkable, that, notwithstanding the cold northern exposure of Banff, and the general variableness of the cli-

\* These years have not been selected for this singularity, which is probably not peculiar to them, but as being the only years of which a register of the weather is to be had.

mate,—cold and hot, dry and damp, succeeding each other with the greatest rapidity and irregularity,—the town is not only subject to no peculiar complaints, nor to a peculiar severity of any complaints, but is in every respect, and in a high degree, healthy.

What one would least expect in such a climate, pulmonary complaints are both rare, and of a gentle type when they do occur. Consumption is far from frequent. Hooping-cough is only found in a mild form. Patients in the latter complaint are often brought to this neighbourhood from some distance; and, in the opinion of some, the locality is favourable to their recovery, in a degree beyond what the mere change of air (known to be always beneficial in this disorder) can sufficiently account for.

*Zoology.*\*—I. MAMMALIA.—This section of natural history does not seem to require any particular notice; the animals comprehended under it, in this parish, being such only as are common throughout the counties of Aberdeen, Banff, and Moray. It may, however, be remarked, that of late years several instances have occurred of the hedgehog (*Erinaceus Europæus*,) † having been found in the parish, where at no distant period it was unknown. It is probable that this animal advances with the progress of cultivation, and especially with the planting of hedges and trees. The hare (*Lepus timidus*) is, on the contrary, and for the same reason, decreasing in numbers, especially in the more immediate vicinity of the town, and, it is conjectured, is retiring to those open grassy wastes, and sea side downs, which are more congenial to its habits. The roe-deer (*Cervus capreolus*) is found wild in Lord Fife's woods.

II. BIRDS.—1. *Land Birds.*—The red grouse (*Lagopus Scoticus*) is found sparingly in the upper and heathy districts of the parish. The partridge (*Perdix cinerea*) is common, and we have been informed by a sportsman well versed in these matters, that he once met with a specimen of the quail (*Coturnix vulgaris*,) in a cultivated part of this parish. The pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*)

\* For the section on *Zoology*, the compiler of the account is indebted to the kindness of the Rev. James Smith, rector of Banff Academy.

† The scientific names here given are taken from "Fleming's History of British Animals," published in 1826. That subdivision was necessary, and, to a great extent in the *genera* established by Linnæus, cannot be doubted. It appears, however, to be questionable, whether, in the above-mentioned work, the learned author has not shewn a tendency to approach the opposite extreme, and to exalt unnecessarily, into distinct *genera*, a number of animals which hitherto have ranked only as *species*. The frequent and excessive change of *genera* and *species* is one of the most annoying obstacles which the student of natural history has to encounter; and, except where clearly and absolutely necessary, the practice ought as much as possible to be discontinued.

abounds in Lord Fife's plantations, and the ring-pheasant (*Phasianus torquatus*;) now considered by naturalists as a distinct species, may there not unfrequently be met with. The ring-dove (*Columba palumbus*) is abundant in every plantation. The rock-dove (*Columba livia*;) although frequent in the adjoining and rocky parish of Gamrie, is not to be found in this parish, the nature of the coast not being suited to its habits. The kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*;) common. The merlin (*Falco aesalon*;) rare. The kite (*Milvus vulgaris*;) here called the *glead*;) not common. The hen-harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) not common. The sparrow-hawk (*Buteo nisus*;) not uncommon. The horn-owl (*Otus vulgaris*;) the barn-owl (*Aluco flammeus*;) screech-owl (*Strix stridula*;) common. The swallow (*Hirundo rustica*;) the martin (*Hirundo urbica*;) the sand martin (*Hirundo riparia*;) the swift (*Cypselus apus*;) In ordinary seasons, the first of the swallow tribe have been observed to arrive in this parish about the 10th of May. The goatsucker (*Caprimulgus Europæus*) has been occasionally met with. The cinereous shrike (*Lanius excubitor*;) rare. The waxen chattering (*Bombycilla garrula*;) rare; a specimen shot here preserved in the museum of the Banff Institution. The misel-thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*) has of late years increased in this part of the country, and is in some places as numerous as the common thrush (*Turdus musicus*;) The fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*;) here called the *Highland pyot*;) on the approach of winter descends in flocks from the more mountainous regions. The blackbird (*Turdus merula*;) common. The dipper (*Cinclus aquaticus*;) the water ouzel;) common on the Doveran. Also the fallowchat (*Saxicola œnanthe*;) here called the *chackert*;) the whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*;) the red-breast (*Sylvia rubecula*;) the white-throat (*Curruca sylvia*;) the hedge-sparrow (*Accentor modularis*;) The golden-crested wren (*Regulus cristatus*) appeared here a few years ago, in a large flock, on the links, during winter. Its nest has been found in the top of a tall whin bush. The following also are found: The common wren (*Troglodytes vulgaris*;) The white wagtail (*Motacilla alba*;) here called the *water wagtail*;) The yellow wagtail (*Motacilla flava*) not common. The sea titling (*Anthus petrosus*;) The meadow titling (*Anthus pratensis*;) The cross-bill (*Loxia curvirostra*) has been occasionally met with. The yellow bunting (*Emberiza citrinella*;) here called the *yellow yirling*;) Common bunting (*Emberiza miliaria*;) The snow-bunting (*Emberiza*

*nivalis*, snow-flake,) seen occasionally about the rocks in winter. The field-lark (*Alauda arvensis*.) Cole titmouse (*Parus ater*.) Blue titmouse (*Parus cæruleus*.) Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula vulgaris*.) Green grosbeak (*Coccothraustes chloris*, provincially green linnet.) House sparrow (*Pyrgita domestica*.) Chaffinch (*Fringilla cælebs*.) Brown linnet (*Fringilla cænabina*, provincially *lintie*.) Mountain finch (*Fringilla montifringilla*.) Siskin (*Fringilla spinus*; a winter visitant.) Goldfinch (*Fringilla carduelis*.) Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) sometimes appears in flocks on the coast. Magpie (*Pica caudata*.) Raven (*Corvus corax*,) breeds near the bridge of Alva. Carrion crow (*Corvus corone*.) Hooded-crow (*Corvus corni*.) Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*.) Rook (*Corvus frugilegus*.) Common creeper (*Certhia familiaris*.) Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*) rare. The cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*.)

2. *Waders*.—The following occur: The heron (*Ardea cinerea*.) The bittern (*Ardea stellaris*.) A beautiful specimen of this now rare bird was shot in 1831, a few miles from Banff, and is now in the museum of the Institution. The crake or corncrake (*Ortygometra crex*.) Common water hen (*Gallinula chloropus*.) Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) is sometimes to be seen among the rocks by the sea side. The whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) has been heard in this parish flying overhead, being easily distinguishable by its singular notes; but has never been observed on the ground, nor as a regular visitant of the parish. Throughout this part of the country, generally, it is much less frequent than its congener the curlew. The woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*.) The great snipe (*Scolopax major*.) A snipe, described, by the gentleman who shot it in this parish a few years ago, as much larger than any he had ever seen, is supposed to have been a specimen of this rather rare bird. The common snipe (*Scolopax gallinago*) is decreasing fast, in this and the adjoining parishes, in consequence of the improvements in agriculture, and especially the draining of marshy and boggy ground. Jack-snipe (*Scolopax gallinula*.) \* Lapwing (*Vanellus cristatus*, here called the *teuchet*.) Gray plover (*Squatarola cinerea*.) Sanderling (*Calidris arenaria*.) Golden plover (*Charadrius plumbealis*) descends to the sea shore in storms. Ringed plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*, provincially *sanny laverock*.) Oyster-catcher (*Hæmatopus ostralegus*.)

\* *Dunlin* (*Tringa alpina*) in this part of the country called the *dorbie*. Purple sandpiper (*Tringa striata*,) has been observed on the rocks, near the harbour, during spring. Not common. Figured by Bewick as the *knot*.

3. *Water Birds*.—Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*.) Shag (*Phalacrocorax graculus*, provincially *scart*.) Gannet (*Sula Bassana solan* goose,) is frequently to be seen in the bay here. Golden eye duck (*Clangula vulgaris*), a winter visitant of the Doveran, where it may be seen in considerable numbers. Long-tailed duck (*Clangula glacialis*, here called *coal and candle light*), frequent during winter in the bay, but never enters the river. In a calm day, their singular cries, resembling the words *coal and candle light*, may be heard all over the bay. \* Scaup duck (*Nyroca marila*), in severe winters sometimes appears in considerable numbers on the Doveran, where it is known by the name of *Norwegian teal*. On its first arrival from the north, it suffers itself to be closely approached, but soon becomes more wary. Common mallard or wild duck (*Anas boschas*), found in great numbers on the Doveran, in Lord Fife's grounds, where no one is allowed to molest them. The wigeon (*Anas penelope*.) The cracker or pintail duck (*Anas acuta*.) The writer of this has never seen but a single specimen of this duck on the Doveran, during the course of nine or ten years. It occurred in 1830, and associated with a flock of the common wild duck. Gargany or summer teal (*Anas querquedula*;) a single specimen only of this duck has been met with within the writer's knowledge. The teal (*Anas crecca*) is found in winter in great numbers near the bridge of Alva. Brent goose (*Anser brenta*;) a fine specimen of this goose was shot, near the sea coast a few years ago. The wild swan (*Cygnus feras*.) Goosander (*Mergus merganser*.) In severe winters, these beautiful birds may be seen on the Doveran sometimes in flocks. The red-breasted goosander (*Mergus serrator*) has never been observed on the Doveran, but a specimen was shot some time ago among the rocks at some distance from Banff. The razorbill auk (*Alca torda*), and the puffin (*Fratercula arctica*), are frequently to be seen in the bay, and along the shore; making excursions from those stupendous rocks on the adjoining parish of Gamrie, where is to be seen one of the most extensive and most magnificent breeding places of these and other birds, known by the name of *sea fowl*. Little grebe (*Podiceps minor*.) Northern diver (*Colymbus glacialis*;) a specimen, in possession of a gentleman in this town, weighed, when killed, twelve pounds. The guillemot, here called the *queet*, (*Uria troile*), and the Greenland dove, or black guil-

\* Pochard (*Nyroca ferina*;)—a specimen of the male of this species was killed during this winter (rather a severe one) on a mill dam in this parish. White eye, or castaneous duck (*Nyroca leucophthalmos*), a very rare visitant.

lemot, (*Cephus grylle*, here called the *testie*,) may often be seen in the bay. The arctic skua (*Cataractes parasiticus*.) Black-backed gull (*Larus marinus*.) Herring gull (*Larus argentatus*, here called the *pewel*, from its cry.) Common gull (*Larus canus*.) Kittiwake (*Larus rissa*, provincially *kitty*,) one of the *sea fowl* found in greatest abundance on the Gamrie rocks. Common tern or sea swallow, (*Sterna hirundo*, provincially *piktarrock*,) not resident in this parish, but may occasionally be seen on its way to flat and sandy coasts, its usual places of abode.

III. FISHES.—The sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*) has been occasionally caught. It is termed the *lamper eel*. Common dog-fish (*Spinax acanthias*,) caught in immense quantities during the herring season, and sold by the cart-load for manure to the ground. The thornback skate (*Raia clavata*.) The common skate (*Raia batis*.) Sturgeon (*Acipenser sturio*.) A sturgeon, about 5 feet in length, was caught in the bay in the summer of 1833. Salmon (*Salmo salar*.) Bull-trout (*Salmo eriox* and *Salmo hucho*.) The bull-trout occurs occasionally in the Doveran. Sea-trout (*Salmo trutta*) found in great numbers. Finnock (*Salmo albus*,) also found in great numbers, and by the most experienced judges regarded as a species perfectly distinct from any other of the genus *Salmo*. Common burn-trout (*Salmo fario*.) Herring (*Clupea harengus*;) taken in great quantities from about the middle of July to the middle of September. Gar fish, sea-needle or sea-pike, (*Belone vulgaris*.) Minnow (*Leuciscus phoxinus*.) Lump-fish, cock-paddle, (*Cyclopterus lumpus*.) Common cod (*Morhua vulgaris*.) Haddock (*Morhua æglefinus*.) Whitehills, a fishing village in the vicinity, is famous for its smoked or yellow haddocks. These by many are reckoned equal, if not superior, to the celebrated *Finnon* haddocks. Ling (*Molva vulgaris*,) not so frequent as the cod and haddock. Whiting (*Merlangus vulgaris*.) Coal fish (*Merlangus carbonarius*.) The young in their least state are called *gerracks*, afterwards *podlies*, *sethes*, &c. Turbot (*Pleuronectes maximus*,) here called the *roan fleuk*. Till of late years the value of this fish was but little known as an article of food, and by the fishermen themselves it is still but little esteemed for that purpose. It is, however, now eagerly bought up by those who are fond of good living. Brill (*Pleuronectes rhombus*;) but little inferior to the preceding species, for which it is not unfrequently taken. Sole (*Solea vulgaris*,) not common. Plaice (*Pla-*

*tessa vulgaris*,) here called *plash fleuk*. Flounder (*Platessa flesus*,) here called *grey fleuk*. Holibut (*Hippoglossus vulgaris*,) here called *turbot*. Common eel (*Anquilla vulgaris*,) Common launce, (*Ammodytes tobianus*;) Sand-eel, or, as it is here termed, *sannel*. Blade-fish (*Trichiurus lepturus*,) In the autumn of 1829, a fish, supposed to be of the above species, was found among the rocks near this place, dead, but in a perfect state of preservation. It measured about 6 feet in length, and about 20 inches in breadth, where widest. The dorsal fin was of a brilliant red, and extended the whole length of the back. The body was of a silvery bluish-white appearance. The head was not unlike, in miniature, to that of a horse. The body was excessively compressed, being scarcely more than three or four inches thick. Sea perch (*Serranus Norvegicus*,) not uncommon at particular seasons of the year. Wolf fish (*Anarhichas lupus*,) here called the *sea cat*. Angler (*Lophius piscatorius*,) here called the sea devil, on account of its hideous appearance. Gray gurnard (*Trigla gurnardus*,) here called the *croonach*. Gray mullet (*Mugil cephalus*,) This fish is frequently taken here: it seems to delight in a rocky bottom. Mackerel (*Scomber vulgaris*,) found here during the herring fishery in great numbers. John Doree (*Zeus faber*,) Mr Robinson informs me, that about half a dozen of this rare fish were caught in his salmon bag-net, in the summer of 1834, and two others during last summer. Stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus*,) here called *banstickle*.

The bay here abounds with shrimps (*Cancer crangon*,) which have been occasionally fished for with success.

The mussel (*Mytilus edulis*) is not a native of this coast. Immense numbers of them, however, are annually brought by the fishermen from the shores of the Cromarty Frith, and are deposited among the rocks here, for the purpose of being afterwards used for bait. The lobster (*Cancer gammarus*) is abundant, and also the crab (*Cancer pagurus*,) here called *parten*. The crab, however, obtained here is not reckoned nearly so good as those brought to the Aberdeen market. A specimen of the cuttle-fish (*Loligo officinalis*,) is occasionally seen.

*Botany*.—The parish has never been made the subject of an exact botanical survey; but, comprehending as it does, hill and dale, wood, water, and sea-coast, with no small variety of soil and exposure, it no doubt possesses an extensive and interesting Flora. The plants of the parish of Banff are, however, confined to the "woody

region," or "agricultural and upland zones," (as fixed by Hewett Watson;) for no part of it is sufficiently high for *Carex rigida*; and although *Corylus avellana*, which is found in the lower grounds, ceases in the upper, *Calluna vulgaris* grows vigorously at the highest point. Of the plants observed in the parish, the following are chiefly worth enumerating:—*Adoxa moschatellina*, *Agrimonia Eupatorium*, *Arenaria rubra*, *Cardamine amara*, *Gymnadenia conopsea*, *Habenaria bifolia*, *Hyacinthus non-scriptus*, *Lepidium Smithii*, five or six species of *Hypericum*, *Polygonum viviparum*, *Trientalis Europæa*, &c. Upon the coast in the immediate neighbourhood of the town, we have *Arenaria marina* and *peploides*, *Cochlearia officinalis*, *Glauz maritima*, *Plantago Coronopus*, with the beautiful *Lithospermum maritimum*, and the rather rare *Blysmus rufus*. To these may be added *Pyrethrum maritimum*, for which, indeed, one of the oldest recorded British stations is "rocks at Doun, near Banff, in Scotland." The most interesting feature, however, in the Flora of the parish, is undoubtedly *Scilla verna*, spring squill, with its fine blue fragrant flowers, which was discovered in spring 1835, by Mr George Campbell Smith. The species has long been known to be frequent in Orkney, Shetland, and the western parts of Britain, but it was considered very rare upon our eastern coasts, and, indeed, was not known to occur there until a few years ago. *Digitalis purpurea* abounds in the parish, and is used for medical purposes.

*Planting*.—Duff House park, extending along the river side for a stretch of above two miles, and having many rides or paths branching out into the adjacent country, contains a considerable extent of ornamental planting; the south-eastern and western slopes of the Gallowhill are also partially wooded. A few large ash trees near the principal gate of Duff House park are supposed to have been in existence since the Airly family resided there. The soil of the parish (though perhaps not in a high degree adapted for timber of any sort) permits the growth of every species of forest tree, particularly larch and Scotch fir. Unfortunately, however, the greater part of its surface is directly exposed to the fierce blasts that sweep over the north sea, so that planting only thrives in the few localities that afford a little shelter in that direction. Trees exposed to the north are almost invariably bare on their northern side, and bend their branches towards the opposite quarter, as if turning away from the fury of their ruthless enemy.

## II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

*Documents.*—There is a manuscript, entitled “History of the Town and Parish of Banff,” written about the end of the last century, by the late William Rose, Esq. of Mountcoffer, a gentleman noted for his singular acquaintance with the history of landed property and proprietors in the north of Scotland. It is now in the possession of his son, Patrick Rose, Esq. Sheriff-clerk of the county, who has kindly allowed the use of it to the writers, both of this and the former Statistical Account of the parish—into one or other of which accounts much of its contents have been transferred.

A variety of papers relative to the former circumstances and transactions of the burgh have also been left by the late William Reid, Esq. town-clerk: with the use of which the compiler of this Account has been favoured. A good many of these relate more exclusively to municipal concerns; the others are chiefly extracts from Mr Rose’s manuscript, with additional remarks.

*Parochial Registers.*—The earliest date of the parochial registers is 1620. The registers are pretty voluminous, and seem to have all along been kept with regularity.

*Surveys, &c.*—There does not appear to have been any survey ever made of the parish, as a parish. The estates of each of the different proprietors have been surveyed, but none of them lately, with the exception of that of Sir Robert Abercromby. There is a six-sheet map of the counties of Aberdeen, Banff, and Kincardine, with parts of adjoining counties, on the scale of an inch to an English statute mile, published in 1822 by James Robertson, A. M. F. R. S. It has a table of the superficial contents of each parish, and of the height of the most remarkable hills. It also delineates the varieties of surface, &c. There is also a four-sheet map of the counties of Aberdeen and Banff, on a scale of two-thirds of an inch to a British statute mile, by Alexander Irvine Ross, land-surveyor, published in 1826. Perhaps there may be other maps.

*Transactions.*—The history of the parish is rather destitute of interest. Beyond the various revolutions of property, it presents few materials for narrative. Certain of the lands of which it consists, seem anciently to have constituted part of two different thanedoms—that of Boyne, and that of Mowbray. The thanedom of Boyne belonged, in the time of Robert Bruce, to Randolph Earl of Moray, and subsequently passed to the Ogilvies, a branch of the family of Deskford. The thanedom of Mowbray (which in-

cluded part of Inchdrewer and some adjoining lands,) belonged, at one time, to the Barclays of Towie. Walter Barclay, of this family, was sheriff of Banff in 1304. Another part of Inchdrewer (probably comprehended in the lands of Strathalva) belonged, in 1414, to Alexander Lindsay, Earl of Crawford, from whom it passed to the Ogilvies of Auchterhouse. Margaret Ogilvie (of this family) inheriting the lands of Strathalva and Doune, married James Stewart, Earl of Buchan, brother of James II.; and these lands were then formed into a new thanedom, called Glendowachie, or the Glen of Dow; \* Banff Castle being at the same time made the messuage of the earldom of Buchan, and thanedom of Glendowachie.

The town lands included all that is now called the liberties of the burgh, or burgh roods, that is, a tract extending along the whole sea coast boundary of the parish, and from half a mile to two miles inland, but excepting out of this the immediate demesnes of the castle (which was a constabulary) and the church lands. The town also possessed the river fishings for an extent of some miles, except two nets nearest the river mouth, one of which, with the sea fishing to the east, belonged to the Earl of Buchan, as holding the thanedom of Glendowachie, the other to the thane of Boyne. To the town belonged the sea fishing opposite to and west of, the river mouth as far as the western boundary of the parish.

Prior to the year 1470, the town's lands and fishings seem to have been all enjoyed in a state of common. In that year, in order to defray certain public expenses, † the fishings were let out to individual burgesses on leases of nineteen years. In 1595, the salmon fishings and the greater part of the lands were (by virtue of a royal

\* This is the Gaelic word signifying *black*. Dowerane or Doveran is *black water*—still the name of the river at its source. Doune or Dowan, the name of the estate on which Macduff is situated, and *Dow*, or *Dowhaugh*, on which Duff House stands, are probably from the same root.

† “For the infesting and fundanation makkin of a perpetuale chaplainry to sing in the peel heif of the said burgh (the old churchyard) for our Sovereigne Lorde the King and the Quyne, their predecessors and successors, the founders, for all Cristione saullis, for the theicking of the kirk with sclate, and the bigging of the tolbuthe, and for quhat the burgh has not substance.” James Ogilvie of Deskford, for three nets of the water was to pay L. 6, and “bound to defend the burgh in their guid and honest quarrelles and freedom of the water, and if masterly vaxit, to bring the fish back fra the vaxars.”

On an occasion of leasing the fishings that occurred in 1551, “a nett of the King's water and an aughten part of Urack (name of a particular fishing in the river) were given to Elizabeth Ord to be reserved to Marjory Grantully, her guddame, beand widow, for her life, and the profite of the aughten part to Elizabeth her education and nourishing in less age, and this for curtassie as her father fell at Pinkie and was slain, and when she comes to 12 years to marry a burges residing.”—Who was the burges that was eventually blessed with this well endowed helpmate, does not appear.

charter obtained for that special purpose) let out in perpetuity at a small annual feu-duty, which, however, appears to have been the *actual rent* at the time.

*Land-owners.*—The principal landholders at present are, the Earl of Fife, Earl of Seafield, and Sir Robert Abercromby of Birk-enbog, grandson, by the mother's side, of the last Lord Banff.

To a comparatively late period, the town seems to have been a very insignificant place, little more than a fishing village, an appendage to the monastery and castle. The streets were not paved before 1551; and, at the beginning of the succeeding century, few houses besides Lord Airlie's, Lord Banff's, and the Laird of Auch-medden's houses, were slated. The harbour was formerly within the river.\*

*Historical Events.*—The town has never been connected with any historical event of importance, but some visitations to which it was subjected in the troublous times of old, have no doubt been reckoned of sufficient importance by the inhabitants. Spalding relates that, in March or April 1644, "There went down to Banff the lairds of Gight, Newtown, and Ardlogie, with a party of forty horse and musketeers, brave gentlemen. They took in the town, without contradiction, meddled with the keys of the tolbooth, took free quarters, and plundered all the arms they could get, buff-coats, pikes, swords, carabines, pistols, yea, and money also. They took frae Alexan-

\* The following effort of "the vision and the faculty divina," is the production of no less famous a person than Dr Arthur Johnston, being one of his "Epigrams upon severall of the Royall burghs in this kingdom; as may be found in his poems printed at Middle-Burgh, 1642. Translated into English by I. B." (elsewhere more fully designed, "Mr John Barclay, person of Cruden.")

BANFF near the Ocean doth thy self confess  
 In Bulk then Trica, or Hypæpe less:  
 Yet art acknowledg'd by the neighbouring lands  
 To be their Regent and the Boyne commands:  
 Nor cornes nor pastures wanting are to thee,  
 Nor stately ships which do launch forth to sea.  
 Thou art adorned by a temple great,  
 And by the Muses and Astrea's Seat.  
 A place is near which was a field untill  
 Our ancestors did raise it to an hill,  
 Hither the sea flows up to Diceron's flood,  
 A stately castle also on it stood,  
 A warlick fort, its rubbish yet appears,  
 The sea's consum'd by time, which all things wears.  
 The buildings which joyn to the marcat-place,  
 The Parian pillars which uphold them grace:  
 Strong for defence and spacious to the sight,  
 In them doth dwell a noble ancient knight:  
 A vertuous people doth inhabite thee,  
 And this, O Banff! thy greatest praise must be.

BANFF.

B

der Winchester, one of the baillies, 700 merks, whilk he had as one of the collectors of the taxations and loan-silver of Banff; and siklike took frae him 400 merks of his own gear; and frae — Shand in Down, they plundered some monies. They caused their baillies (for Dr Douglas, their provost, had fled,) and townsmen, subscribe and swear the band, denying the last covenant, and obliging them to follow the king and his deputies, in his service, as ye have before. They took also frae George Geddes, another of the said four collectors, 500 merks of taxation and loan-silver; and Gight kepted all the monies."

The upshot of this transaction, so far as "Gight" was concerned, is told in the following words: from which we gather that the good laird's purposes had been sorely misinterpreted by a censorious world. It is to be feared that even Baillie Winchester himself may have been vexed with some ungenerous suspicions.

"Now the parliament goes on against Sir George Gordon of Gight, and John Gordon, his brother, who was also had over with him to Edinburgh. He is accused upon divers matters, but denies all; he is accused upon the plundering of Banff, whilk he denied, except some monies he *received in borrowing upon promise of restitution*. It is referred to his oath; he depones conform, and subscribes his deposition; they craftily summoned over witnesses out of Banff, to prove him perjured, and thereby guilty of death; at last his process is continued to the 8th of January 1645, that the parliament should sit down, through whilk delay he escaped prison."

In 1645 the Marquis of Montrose seems to have bethought himself of negotiating a *loan* among the capitalists of Banff—doubtless on the same sort of terms, as to interest and security, as erewhile in use with that eminent financier the laird of Gight.

"Thereafter he marches to Banff, plunders the same pitifully, no merchant's goods nor gear left; they saw no man on the street but was stripped naked to the skin. Some two or three worthless houses were burnt, but no blood shed, and so they left Banff."\*

The visitation of the laird of Gight and the other "brave gentlemen" seems to have been mere child's play to this. There is yet extant a "humble supplication of the distresst burgh of Banff," made "Unto the Honourable and High Court of Parliament," in 1647, and which "Humbly sheweth—That for our zealous affection, adherence, and concurrence to the covenant, and

\* Spalding.

extending our utmost powers for prosecuting the ends of that same, we have not only spent a great part of our means in keeping of the dyets that were ever in the north, as we were desyrit be those who were authorized to require us yearly, but likewise at last our haille means, both horses, nolt, cloaths, corn, and merchant guidis with our buiths, none whereof having been gotten removit, were all spolizit and away taken be James Graham, and his most cruel, unnatural, and merciless associates, in the month of March 1645—our plenishing of timber all burnt, with some of the houses in our toun, so that nothing was left unto us except the bare walls of the houses; and thereafter, when we were in small and mean condition, we were striving to live thereafter be the assistance of our well affected friends and countrymen, there did still fall upon us, ever as they had occasion to be in the country, and never was we free either of them, in special the name of Gordon Harthill, Lodwick Lindsay, or Captain Mortimer, or otherways we were not free of our awn forces, the one coming in upon us, as the others were removit, even untill this day, as is notourly known, &c.”—“ So that now our condition is so miserable that we have nothing whereby either to labour our land, or use our trade, and dare not any of us frequent or haunt any burgess by reason of our debts restand be us for the guidis that were taken from us, for fear of the warding of our persons.”—“ And now our kirk, tolbuith, scholl, ferry-boat, and all being demolisht and broken down, we have no kind of subsistence neither for ourselves to live, neither to repair these common works.” The supplication, after stating that the burgh had debts of nearly 9000 merks, adds—“ All the haille foresaid sums having been spent upon commissers to the General Assemblies and Parliaments for outering of our proportion of our levies to England, and for the expenses of mayn guards and watches when General-Major Middleton, Lieutenant-Colonel Hew Montgomery, Lieutenant-Colonel John Home, Colonel Robert Montgomery, and ——— Lockhart, and the foot regiments belonging to the Earl of Lowthean, and Lairds of Lawers and Buchanan, were at several occasions quartered in our town, and sundry sums of money taken from us be several officers, to hold us free of quartering of horses when our corns were growing on the ground, being even threatned whether they had orders or not, with plundering of our houses, and destroying of our cornes.” In the concluding petition for relief, a shrewd hint is given how to lay the saddle on the right horse, thus: “ And that your Honours will give us warrant

from this Parliament to be reparit thereof out of the first end of any sums shall be exactit, either be fineing or borrowing, from any of these within our awn schyre, or about our awn toun, who have been actually airt and part, or personally assistant to the away taking of our said means, or any part thereof, in this bygan tyme, and quha one or all of them are partly lying in our toun in a worse disposition nor ever they were of before." The copy is indorsed "Supplicatione, Toun of Banff Bodies 1647." The petitioners obtained a grant of their own excise as a means of relief.

The Duke of Cumberland's troops passed through Banff on the 10th November 1746, on their way to Culloden. The only exploits by which they signalized their visit were, the destruction of the Episcopal chapel, and the execution, or rather murder, of a poor man named Alexander Kinnaird, (from Culvie, in the parish of Marnoch.) Being found with a stick notched, or seen notching it, in a way supposed to take account of the boats passing the river with troops, he was taken for a spy, and immediately hanged on a tree, near the site of the present chief hotel.\*

The last warlike visitation that befel the town was in the year 1759, when Thurot, a French commodore, appeared off the coast, with intentions which were at once conjectured to bode no augmentation of the common good. The Provost, wisely considering this an emergency in which the united wisdom of the community should be called to exercise itself in the most solemn mode known or in use, forthwith convened a head court of the burgh. Here, however, dumb consternation was found to prevail—every one looking unutterable things on his neighbour. Luckily, in this prostration of the faculties of the "whole heritors, feuars, burgesses, and other inhabitants liable to stent and taxation," who composed the court, there was one person capable of forming a determination, and this, as became his high dignity, was the Provost. His opinion being anxiously called for, was given with instant promptitude in favour of—running away!—A somewhat less decisive course, however, found favour in the eyes of one of the bailies, namely, that an endeavour should be made to compound with the foe for a certain sum; but to this the Provost objected, that, as such a sum

\* A friend of the compiler's, who had lately occasion to inspect the town's records, has remarked it as a curious circumstance, that there is not a syllable to be found in them which could indicate that the country was not, at that period, in a state of the most profound calm; and shrewdly conjectures, that the magistrates had, with the characteristic caution of the nation, purposely avoided committing themselves by any written expression of opinion, which might stand in the way of their joining the party that should eventually prevail.

as would be accepted could not be immediately raised, hostages would inevitably be required—and who was to be thought worthy of this distinction? This difficulty appeared to the court a mere bagatelle. “The Provost”—was at once shouted from all quarters; to the chief-magistrate, as of right, the honour in question was tendered by acclamation; but, by that dignitary, most resolutely declined, and cordially offered to the bailie, out of whose proposal the occasion for conferring it had originated. Luckily in the course of the deliberations, or at least before the enemy had opportunity to secure any contributions, a means of deliverance more effectual than any which burghal wisdom had succeeded in devising, arose in the shape of a severe storm, which compelled the marauder to take his departure, leaving his anchors behind him for a memorandum,—some of which, it is said, were lately found.

Subsequently to this, the idea seems to have occurred, that a few eighteen and twenty-four pound guns, planted on the heights above the harbour, might facilitate any negotiations, for which occasion might chance to arise, with visitors of this description; and accordingly the town expended the sum of L. 400 (for the interest of which, by the way, we are assessed to this day,) in constructing a battery, guns being furnished by government, and certain of the citizens trained to work them. The battery was dismantled of its guns at the peace; and we have perhaps reason to reckon ourselves as safe without an enemy as with our guns.

*Persons of note.*—Only two persons of any note have been connected with this parish; and their respective histories present some curious points of contrast and resemblance.

James Sharp, the famous Archbishop of St Andrews, was born in Banff Castle in May 1613. His father (son of David Sharp, a merchant in Aberdeen,) was Sheriff-clerk of Banffshire; his mother a daughter of the laird of Kininvie. He studied at Aberdeen, and gave early proofs of superior talents. He afterwards visited the English universities, where he formed an acquaintance with several eminent divines. After his education was completed, he was, by the interest of the Earl of Rothes, to whom he was related, elected a Professor of Philosophy in St Andrews. He was, at a subsequent period, appointed Professor of Divinity in the same University; and was also, at one time, minister of Craill, in Fifeshire, an office which he is said to have discharged with diligence, fidelity, and kindness. In the course of

the religious and political disputes of his times, he was sent on a mission to Oliver Cromwell, which he executed with such apparent skill as to draw from the shrewd Protector the remark, that "this gentleman might well, according to a Scottish phrase, be denominated *Sharp of that Ilk.*" The succeeding events and tragical termination of his life are matter of general history. A letter from his son Sir William Sharp of Stonyhill, to Sir James Baird at Banff, describing the circumstances of the archbishop's murder, will be found in the former Statistical Account, Volume xx. p. 373.

James Macpherson was an illegitimate branch of the family of Invereshie in Inverness-shire. His mother was a gipsy. He was reared at his father's house until the death of the latter, when he was taken under his mother's charge, and acquired the habits and pursuits of the race to which she belonged. He was remarkable not only for strength and beauty of person, but for the degree of talent which he displayed for certain mental accomplishments, for the cultivation of which his mode of life might seem to have afforded little opportunity. I am not aware that any of his poetical productions are known to exist except his *Lament*; but he seems to have been celebrated, during his lifetime, for his skill on the violin. It is said, too, that his conduct often afforded evidence of his being imbued with those feelings of generosity and pity which the fine arts are supposed to generate; and it does not appear that any cruel or atrocious act was ever laid to his charge. After several escapes from justice, to which he had made himself obnoxious by his lawless habits, he was eventually apprehended by the Laird of Braco and some of his followers at a Keith market: Braco himself being the first to seize upon him. So desperate, however, is said to have been his resistance, aided by one Peter Roy, that it was only by blankets being thrown over his head from the windows above, that his numerous assailants could obtain any advantage over him. He was thus compelled to fly; and seeking to reach the gable of the church, parrying the attack of his enemies by the way, he fell over a grave-stone, when he was secured, and lodged in the jail of Banff. His sword is yet in the possession of Lord Fife (Braco's descendant,) at Duff House, and is a weapon of such weight as only a most powerful man could wield. M'Pherson was brought to trial along with James Gordon and Peter and Donald Brown, before the Sheriff of Banff, on the 7th November

1700. A claim was put in on behalf of the Laird of Grant for repledging the two Browns, as being his vassals, and subject to his jurisdiction; and on this claim, and on some preliminary objections urged by the prisoners' counsel, an argument ensued of considerable length, and apparently by no means wanting in legal knowledge or acuteness. In an interlocutor, the Sheriff "sustains himself judge, notwithstanding the offer to repledge, in respect to the answer thereto, as being knoune habit and repute wagabonds, soroners, and Egiptians; and repells all the rest of the defences and replies, in respect of the answer, (except that of robberie, which he does not sustain himself judge in;) and finds the libel relevant as to the rest of the articles, of being knoune habit and repute to be Egiptians and wagabonds, and keeping ye mercats in yr ordinarie manner of thieving and purse-cutting, or guiltie of the rest of the crimes of theft, and masterfull bangstree and oppression, to infer the punishment lybelled, and admitts the same to the knowledge of ane assyze." After the jury were impannelled "the Sheriff" (so it is in the record) "ordains the pannels for the satisfaction of the assizers to rehearse the Lord's prayer," &c.—but it is not stated how far the prisoners either did or could afford this "satisfaction." Twenty-one witnesses were then examined, fourteen of whom were able to sign their depositions. Most of them depone, that the pannels were habit and repute Egiptians, and that these Egiptians went about armed in bands; some adding, that they spoke a language which the deponents did not understand, and "which was not Irish." But otherwise few well-defined or very serious charges appear in evidence against the accused individually.\* The evidence being heard, the jury, of which James

\* As presenting a curious picture of the manners of the time and district, I have thought it worth while to transcribe all the material parts of the evidence. "The assisers craving Mr John Scot, minister at Diple, to be examined upon what wes contained in the libell, and that yr were payt offered him for what skaith he sustained in manner libelled, deponed, that at St Rufus fair wes a year yr wes 40 libe stolne from him, and he going in pursuit of the taker yrof at Couper Milne's tent, he wes interrupted by Peter Brown, who took him by the brest, while the woman who tooke the money threw herself on her face on the floor, and (as he heard) delivered to the woman yt kepted the tent ane blaek purse such as his wes, and which may be yet proven. But immediatly yrafter Peter Broune, knowing the money wes conveyed of, came civilie and craved pardon, and offered the woman should be dackered, and made a shara kind of dackering after the money wes gone, and yt this day James Grant of Elcheis offered repayt of the 40 libe if he should not appear agt Peter Broune at this tyme; and this is truth as he shall anser. to God. (Signed) JONX SCOTT.

"Compeared John Shand in Maislie, aged 40 or yrby, married, purged *at supra*, and interrogat, deponed, that at St Rufus fair wes nyne years, yr came three women and took possne of his kill, and he being at work he sent word to his wife to put ym

Gordon of Ardmellie was chancellor, gave in a verdict finding the pannels to be "fyled, culpable, and convick" of the crimes lybel-

off, but they would not, and told that Peter Broune was coming to take up quarters with them, and that he came and stayed yr with his company for a month, and took nothing but peats from him, and yt yr was sixteen of them in number, and that Peter Broune went sometymes to Elchies and played on the viol; and deponed that they soft milk and cheese with yr ounie money, and no more but ane leg of mutton, which his wife saw them buy, and knowes not yt M'Pherson was yr, but yt he was ane night in his house at yt tyme, and drank with the rest and danced all night, and depones, that the door was made open, but knowes not what way, and depones that they were sometymes in Joekalyses, in kills, but knowes not how many of them were yr, nor how long they stayed. (Signed) JOHN SHAND."

Lachlan M'Pherson, in Delmanny, depones—"That he was pnt when the chest was sealed, but the seals wes not rufled, but he heard that they had taken out the back of the chest, and put it in again."—"heard Isobel Gall (one of the gipsies) would have been sent off and come weel loadene with money."

(This deposition, and some parts of the others, cannot be fully understood for want of the indictment, which is lost.)

Patrick Reid, tacksman of the excise, "On the 7th of Septer 1698, he happened to be at Keith, and saw about the number of twenty-seavene men in armes, with a piper, and, as he heard, Peter Broune was on the head of them, and M'Pherson on the rier, it being on the Saturday after St Ruffus fair, and now depones he knew Peter Broune wes on yr head, and that James Robertson told him that they were these called the Egyptians."

John Fraser in Cuperhill—"One day they (the Egyptians) being in Keith, and as they went home to Hillockhead, yr came a boy to him, and told him that his cott was broken, so he went up to see, and fand it was so, and after telling of his sheep, he missed one, so the next morning a woman neer by told him that the Egyptians had taken his sheep, and he went and dackered yr house, and could not find it, but saw some holes yrin that did not look weel, and after direct inquire he went to the corn-yard, and yr found some of the Egyptians with bloodie pocks, his spainiall dog being with him, found the intrails of the wadder near to that place, in ane muir; at last Alexr. Phyn of Achanasie, under whom they resided at yt time, came to the said John Fraser, and comuned with him anent payt. of his wedder, and did accordinglie pay him for the same, or at least promised, and further told him that he had granted the favour of yt house to Patrick Broune, and declaired unless he were payed they should not reside any longer in yt place, but declares that he did not see any of the pannals yr; and that is truth, &c."

Archbald Grant in Maynes of Achluncart,—"Some Brounes and oysr came and took possne of some pairt of Auchluncart, and that he dispossessed them, and that he heard a rumor of Patrick Broune's having Orton's cloak, and that yr wes a man in Achluncart that had a bile, whom M'Pherson took in hand to cure, and took away two mairs from the man, and pretended yr was a paction betwixt the man and him, and kepted one of the mairs, and the deponant took the oyr from him."

George Ogilvie in Keith,—"has seen boyes in mercats yt were called yr servants."

William Robertson—"seed about twelive men with a pyper, come into Keith at St Ruffus fair wes two year, whereof the pannals were a pairt,"—"and that M'Pherson came to his house and spilt his ale, and stobbed the bed seeking the deponant, and that he wes forced to fle to Kinminintie's, who is one of the assysers, who knowes the truth, for refuge, for whom Kinminintie purchas'd a protectione from my Lord Seafield, and a warrand to apprehend M'Pherson."

Patrick Grant in Snter Croft—"has seen ordinarily 5 or 6 men together in armes, whereof Peter Broune and M'Pherson were a pairt,"—"has seen little boys with them, yt were thought to be yr purse-cutters,"—"and that the pannalls are said to be of male foms, and that he heard that Edintore gott his money again, and that contrair to his desire James M'Pherson took possne of his chamber, and was forced to put oysr out of yr room for them."

Peter Dunstan in Picturg—"that he bought a white plaid and payed yrfor, and

led—whereupon the Sheriff pronounced the following sentence: “For sae meikle as you, James M’Pherson and James Gordon, pannals, are found guilty, by ane verdict of ane assyse, to be knoune, holden and repute, to be Egyptians and vagabonds, and oppressors of his matie’s free lieges, in ane bangstrie manner, and going up and doune the country armed, and keeping the mercats in ane hostile manner; and that you are thieves, and receptors of thieves, and that you are of *pessima fama*: Therefore, the Shireff-depute of Banff, and I, in his name, adjudges and decernes you, the sds James M’Pherson and James Gordon to be taken to the cross of Banff, from the tolbooth yrof, where you now lye, and yr upon ane gibbet to be erected, to be hanged by the neck to the death, by the hand of the comone executioner, upon Friday nixt, being the 16 Nover instant, being a publick weeklie mercat-day, betwixt the boures of two and three in the afternoon, and, in the meantyme, declairs their haill movele goods and gear to be escheat and inbrought to the fiscall, for his matie’s interest; and recomends this sentence to be seen put in executiounes by the magistrats of Banff.

(Signed) NICOLAS DUNBAR.

“And farther, the Sheriff-depute ordains ye three young rogues, now in prison, that this day yr ears be cropt, publiclie scourged throw the tounes of Banff, and burnt upon the cheek by the executioner, and banished this shyre for ever, under paine of death.

(Signed) “NICOLAS DUNBAR.”

two of James M’Pherson’s men came to his house and broke up his pantry door and took out the plaide, and James M’Pherson came yrafter, and said that his house was broken, and alledged the deponent had his goods, and threatened to carry him to the tounes of Elgin, and to put him in the pitt yr, and a while yrafter he came and took the deponent and carried him a good piece from his house, and then let him goe.”

Alexander Young in Whiteley—“that he was informed that James M’Pherson and Jonathan Grant stole his oxen with some oys, which he sould prove if he ware putt to it, and that James Robertson in the Maynes of Allanbuy did search after the oxen, and that James M’Pherson threatened them for alledging that he was one of the stealers, and came to his house with Peter Broune and sevrall oys of yr number, till they forced James Robertson to give them ten dollars, which the deponent declairs James Robertson was craiving from him as being injured upon his account, and that Peter Broune and James M’Pherson offered to ——— (word unknown,) the oxen for two score of dollars.”

Thomas ——— in Jockleys—“that the Egyptians took possesne of yr kill in Jockleys, they being whiles of men and women about 24 in number, and that Peter Broune and James M’Pherson came sometimes yr, and also Donald Broune.”

Thomas Milne in Jockleys—“that the Egyptians, among whom were the pannals, took possne of his house, and stole his peats and kail, and that sometymes they were twentie in number, and stayed 3 or 4 days yr at one tyme, and forced his neighbors to give them some fire weshells.”

John Sellar in Jockleys—“that the pannals took ane kill at yr ousne hand, and that they feared yr women, and that they were armed, and that they took yr kail, and missed sheep after they were gone,” &c.

The most extraordinary part of the transaction is, that the guilt or innocence of the "three young rogues" seems to have been thought a matter not worth inquiring about. There is no appearance whatever of their having been named in the indictment, or produced in court, or of any endeavour to identify them or charge them with a crime. The mere fact of their being in prison, the good Sheriff seems to have thought "relevant to infer the pains of law." Very possibly, however, the "young rogues" may have got substantial, though not formal, justice.

The two Browns were sentenced, on the 21st February following, to be hanged on the 2d April. It appears, however, that M'Pherson alone of the four was executed. Probably Gordon was pardoned. The Browns are thought to have escaped. M'Pherson performed at the foot of the gallows, the "Rant" and Pibroch of his own composition, and then made offer of his violin to any one who would receive it as a remembrance of him. The gift being declined, he broke the violin, and threw the fragments into the grave prepared for his body.

The story of M'Pherson's being executed before the time specified in the sentence, in order to prevent his being benefited by an expected reprieve, is discredited.\*

*Antiquities.*—The parish is almost wholly destitute of any remains of antiquity. Two cells of the Carmelite monastery (mentioned as existing at the time of the last Statistical Account) have for several years been removed, and given place to modern houses. Not far from the site of these, a small vaulted chamber, supposed to have been a sleeping cell, now affords accommodation to the boiler of a steam-engine employed at the foundery. Some arches, apparently parts of similar cells, yet exist behind the inn called the Royal Oak; and persons alive till a late period remembered of there having been a continuous line of such cells between the two points now indicated. This range of cells seems to have terminated the buildings of the monastery to the east, unless that an hospital, of which there is a tradition as existing about the site of the

\* Very little tradition of M'Pherson remains in this the scene of his death. Several of the above particulars I owe to a notice in the *New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. i., and a note to "M'Pherson's Lament" in the *Etrick Shepherd's* edition of Burns. One very old man informs me of being told by his grandfather, who was one of the guards at M'Pherson's execution, that the verses commonly circulated as spoken by M'Pherson on that occasion were really those uttered by him. A few of them that were repeated by my informant, corresponded most (if I rightly recollect) with the first set given by the *Etrick Shepherd*.—The execution took place on the Gallowhill.

present bede-house, may have formed one of its appurtenances. The *yards* or garden grounds of the monastery, with its chapels and other dependencies, are supposed to have extended beyond the present southern limits of the town, and as far as the small remnants of the "Lodging" of the Earl of Airly in Duff House kitchen garden.

The precise time when this religious house was first established here is uncertain. It is supposed, on what authority I know not, to have been as early as the time of Malcolm the Maiden, or even of Malcolm Canmore. The charter granted by Robert Bruce evidently implies that it had existed before, probably long before, the date of that instrument, since it goes merely to confirm "Deo, beatæ Mariæ virginis, et religiosis viris Fratibus de Monte Carmele, capellam beatæ Mariæ juxta villam de Banff, una cum solo ad eandem capellam pertinente, ad ædificandum ibidem Ecclesiam et aliis domos sui ordinis, et ad inhabitandum dom. locum cum fratribus ejusdem ordinis, prout a summa pontifice eiisdem fratribus specialiter est concessum; præterea damus et concedimus hac presenti cartâ nostra confirmationis, fratribus ibidem deo servientibus, et servituris, illam davatam terræ cum pertinentiis quæ ad dictam capellam ante presentem collationem nostram pertinere solebat, ad inveniendum panem vinum et ceram ad cultum domini ibidem devotius exercendum."

It is not perfectly clear whether the chapel of the blessed Mary here mentioned was one on the present site of Lord Fife's mausoleum, or the old church (formerly called St Mary's) on the burying ground of the town, but more probably the latter.

At the time of the Reformation, it is well known that many of the religious houses, foreseeing the difficulty of preserving their possessions, adopted the plan of feuing them out at a low consideration to powerful laymen; and a ready chapman of this description seems to have presented himself to the Carmelite brethren in the person of Sir Walter Ogilvie of Dunlugas,—an individual who appears to have been gifted with a rare turn for the acquisition of property.\* In a charter dated 1544, the friars make over to Sir Walter the *Dawhaugh* and its pertinents, but reserve a certain space of ground (adjoining the site of Lord Fife's mausoleum,)

\* His tombstone, built into the old church wall, is one of the oldest monuments in the churchyard. The wonder is, that he did not contrive to get all the churchyard to himself.

and the grant makes no mention of, and cannot be supposed to comprehend, the houses and gardens of the monastery in the town. Sir Walter, however, appears to have subsequently become possessed of the whole, at least there is evidence of his descendants being soon after in possession; and these continued to hold the *yards* till a late period, parts of which, indeed, are still held by them, either in possession or as superiors.\* Through these yards was formed, about the year 1770, the street called Bridge Street, now one of the principal thoroughfares of the town. The rest of the Carmelite lands, extending southward from the town, were successively conveyed (in 1680) to Lord Airly, and (in 1690) to Lord Fife. The superiority and feu-duties, which, in the year 1617, had been gifted by James VI. to King's College, Aberdeen, were also bought up, in 1752, by Lord Fife.

A few very old persons can yet remember some large massy ruins, standing on the space now occupied by the plainstones, called the *Towers*. These have probably been originally a part of the monastery, but are known to have been latterly a residence of the Lords Banff. In some old rights this building is styled a *palace*—a distinction it is supposed to have acquired in consequence of having been the temporary abode of certain of the Scottish kings, who, as appears from the date of some old charters, had visited the town. This building was demolished by General Monro, in August 1640, as is thus related in the *History of the Gordons*, (Vol. ii. p. 339,) “ Monro having marched to Bamff, (as said is,) encamped in Sir George Ogilvy, (afterward created by the King, Lord Bamff,) his garden, inclosed with excellent stone-walls, and planted with the best fruit-trees then could be had. All of which they immediately hewed down, not leaving one fruit-tree, or barren, young or old, standing; and they dug up all the hedges by the root. They entirely demolished his house there, one of the state-liest and finest in the north, and carried away all the timber and iron work in it, leaving nothing standing but the ruinous walls. When this barbarous act was told the King ('tis reported) he said, as for the house, it mattered not much, money could build it up again in a short time; but it was a cruel thing to destroy the garden, which many years could not repair.” Spalding also speaks

\* The Magistrates of Banff pay a feu-duty for the site of the town-house to this day.

of the destruction of "the pleasant planting and fruitful young trees bravely growing within the laird of Banff's orchard and gardens," and of his "stately house of Banff," as "pitiful to see!" The gardens were the *yards* of the monastery, already mentioned.

The lands on which the sea-town now stands belonged to the chapel of the Holy Rood. This chapel is supposed to have stood on the Rose Crag (towards the present northern extremity of the castle-grounds;) another supposition is, that it was on the site of the old church.\* The lands of this chaplainry were, in the year 1552, feued in perpetuity, by certain bailies and burgesses acting as commissioners of the town, with the consent of Mr James Currier or Currier, chaplain of the Holy Rood, to Sir Walter Ogilvy, then provost, for payment of forty shillings yearly to the chaplain. The moving causes for this conveyance are stated to be "*ob augmentationem rentalis dictæ capellanix Sancti Crucis de Banff pro perpetua sustentatione capellani ejusdem omni tempore affuturo sien. ob divini cultus venerationem et exhibitionem et ad extirpandam heresim tamdiu eminentem ut omnis prorsum earum ambiguitas et recidat. quod fieri non poterit nisi interveniente et propitio magno dei numine et cum proximorum procerum ac primatum orthodoxam fidem tenen. et servan. ac precipue auxilio et defensione nobilis viri Walteri Ogilvie de Dunlugas, militis et prepositi nostri burgi de Banff, de nobis semper bene meriti, hinc igitur dedisse,*" &c. Two of the commissioners could not sign their names to the deed. From Sir Walter Ogilvie the lands were conveyed, along with the Carmelite lands, to the Laird of Braco; and, by him, in exchange for some lands near Duff House, to the town of Banff, to which they now afford a feu-duty.

Another chapel (dedicated to St Thomas the Apostle) is supposed to have stood somewhere between the sites of the present parish church and St Andrew's Chapel. Names still existing, St Ninian's, St Catherine's, &c. evince the once consecrated character of various localities in the town.

It is known that the Knights-Templars anciently held property in the burgh, and a house is still remembered (standing in the water-path, at the south corner of the lane passing between it and the Castle Street,) which bore the iron cross, the usual token by

\* All existing notices regarding the chaplainry of the Holy Rood, and that on the site of the old church (whether the same, or different, or how endowed) are confused and obscure.

which the fraternity marked their possessions. A short distance from the town is a place called *Spittal mire*, supposed a corruption of *hospital mire*, perhaps from a house of that description belonging to the templars. It appears that when, on the abolition of the order of Knights St John, who succeeded the templars, their possessions were erected into a lordship in favour of Sir James Sandilands in 1563, many parts of these possessions were found to be so much scattered, and let for such insignificant rents or feu-duties, as not to be worth the attention of the new proprietors; and, in this way, probably, the possessions of the templars in this town have passed at length into common burgage tenures.

All that now remains of the ancient castle is a part of the outer wall and of the ditch. The house where Archbishop Sharp was born was pulled down about twenty years ago. One or two pieces of lettered freestone taken from it have been built into the churchyard wall, at the burial-ground of the Sharp family.

The castle was a constabulary or lodging for the King when visiting this part of his dominions, and where he, or, in his absence, the thane, or constable, or sheriff administered justice. These officers being named by the King, and moveable at pleasure, the castle seems always to have been public or royal property, until the Earl of Buchan, (who married, as formerly mentioned, Margaret Ogilvie of Auchterhouse,) was appointed hereditary thane or constable. From the Buchan family, the castle was conveyed to Robert Sharp, sheriff-clerk of Banff, elder brother of the famous archbishop, (the father, William Sharp, having had it before in feu.) The archbishop was murdered in 1679, and after Robert's death the castle descended to his brother's son, Sir William Sharp of Stonyhill, who resigned it to Leslie of Kininvie, from whom it passed to the Earl of Findlater \*—whose heir, Lord Seafield, still holds it. Lord Seafield, it may be noted, was descended from the family of Auchterhouse, who formerly held the Castle.

The old Castle of Inchdrewer, supposed to have been built about the time of James IV. or V., is still so entire as to be habitable by the family of a tenant of Sir Robert Abercromby's. Its appearance possesses no peculiar feature of interest, and the only incident connected with it is the death of a Lord Banff who was burned in the year 1713, under some circumstances not very well explained. It is said that, having embraced the Roman Catholic

\* The office of Sheriff was resigned by the Earl of Buchan to Baird of Auchmedden, and by him to Lord Findlater, who held it till the abolition of heritable jurisdictions.

religion, he had gone for some time to Ireland, engaged probably in some of the intrigues then carrying on in behalf of the Pretender; and it was suspected that the persons in whose charge he had left the Castle, having pillaged some of his valuable property, murdered him immediately after his return, and set his apartment on fire, for the sake of concealment. By some, it seems, the event was viewed as a judgment on his apostacy, and particularly with regard to some threats used by him, of burning the Protestants. This event might well have entitled the old castle to be haunted; but I have never heard that it enjoys that reputation.

A vaulted aisle of the old church still remains in the churchyard, and is a burying-place of the family of Lord Banff.

Adjoining Lord Fife's mausoleum is a very curious ancient monument, on which is represented the figure of an armed warrior recumbent, with the inscription, "Hic jacet Johannes Duf, de Maldavat et Baldavi, obiit 2 Julii 1404," &c. This monument, with the ashes of the deceased (an ancestor of Lord Fife,) was brought from Cullen.

Some years ago, in levelling a small hillock on Provost Cameron's farm of Poddocklaw, a stone coffin or case was found, inclosing a vase of baked earth, in which were some ashes and fragments of bones. In a tumulus dug into on a neighbouring farm, several of such vases were found, placed on a sort of stone bench, supported on blocks. On this bench some of the vases were inverted, others had a flat stone on the top, the whole being covered over with earth.

Within a few years also, in the course of digging the foundation of a new house on the *high shore*, at the foot of the Castlehill, a vessel was found containing a quantity of silver coins. They are about the size of sixpence, but very thin and greatly defaced, and covered with a green rust. Six of these coins (which the writer has seen) are in the possession of J. A. Cameron, Esq. Solicitor, —other six are in the museum of the Banff Institution. Of these coins one only presents a crowned head in profile, and the name *Alexander* is traceable round the edge. The obverse is quartered, in each quartering a star, and, around, *Rex Scotorum* is pretty visible. The other eleven are ascertained to be of the coinage of Edward II. of England.

In a small plantation of Lord Fife's on the Gallow-hill is a tumulus, having some appearance of being an ancient sepulchre; but it has never been opened.

*Modern Buildings.*—In the list of modern buildings, the first,

or rather the only one, as a piece of architecture, deserving mention, is Duff House, the splendid mansion of the Earl of Fife,—splendid as it is, still more so if the design were completed. It was built eighty or ninety years ago by William Lord Braco, after a design by Adams, the first of the celebrated architects of that name, at an expense of about L. 70,000. The style is purely Roman. The body of the house (for the wings have never yet been added) is of an oblong shape, and consists of four lofty stories. The first is a rustic basement, over which rise two stories adorned with fluted pilasters, and an entablature of the style of the temple of Jupiter Stator at Rome. Over this entablature, which goes round the whole structure, there is an attic story, surmounted by a balustrade. The four corners of the building have projections resembling towers, which break and vary the outline, and also rise to a greater height than the other parts of the attic story. These towers are adorned at the angles by an upper range of pilasters, with an entablature of the composite order, and are crowned at top by domical roofs, on which octagonal pedestal chimneys are placed. Both the entrance and back façades have also central projections surmounted by pediments, on which the family arms are cut in bas relief, which, with the appended achievements, fill the entire spaces of the face of the pediments. The entablature and capitals of the pilasters, as well as the smaller ornaments, are exquisitely carved, though some of these last, for what reason I know not, have been left unfinished. The back and front of the building are precisely alike, except that the basement part of the projection in front is occupied by an outer stair, of two circular ascents, with carved stone balustrades. The principal entrance is thus on the second story. From an arcade below the landing-place of the outer stair there is an entrance to the servants' hall.

Duff House, to be seen to advantage, requires to be beheld pretty near. There is too little variety of outline, and the colour of the material (freestone) is too dingy to strike at a distance. It is besides desirable that the eye should be diverted from the confused assemblage of chimneys and slated pavilions by which it is surmounted, which seem to create an incongruous mixture of the castellated and the classic styles. Seen so near as to discern the elaborate ornaments, the appearance of Duff House is in the highest degree rich, graceful, and majestic.

Duff House contains a large collection of paintings, many of which are interesting and valuable, either as specimens of art, or

as portraits of celebrated characters, and examples of the costume of various ages and countries. Among the more excellent of the former class may be enumerated a portrait, in perfect preservation, of the Constable de Bourbon, by Titian. This has been allowed by the best judges, both in this country and on the continent, to be one of the very finest specimens of the great Venetian colourist. A head of Charles I. by Vandyke, esteemed a most characteristic specimen of that master; a portrait, three-quarters length, of Lord Strafford, and a full-length of Lady Herbert, both by Vandyke, and regarded as very fine; a full-length portrait of the present Earl of Fife by Raeburn; an original portrait of Moliere; various portraits, chiefly of females, by Sir Peter Lely; portrait of Sir Godfrey Kneller by himself; portrait of Henderson, the Scottish preacher, by Jameson; portrait of Mrs Abingdon by Sir Joshua Reynolds, esteemed a beautiful specimen of that master; landscape by Ruysdael; a flower-piece, beautifully coloured, and esteemed a first rate specimen of art; a candle-light scene, by Schalcken; cattle-piece, by Cuyp; dog and monkey, with still life, by Snyders; a large landscape by Wynants; a landscape by Wouvermans; an infant Christ by Murillo; Virgin and child by Corregio; philosopher and skull by Quintin Matsys, the blacksmith of Antwerp; sea-piece by Backhuysen; shepherd with his flock by Rosa da Tivoli; landscape by Domenichino; head of Charles I. by Velasquez; two specimens of the rare Spanish painter Cano; a painting by Luca Giordani; Ostade's mother by himself, and several other excellent specimens of the Flemish and Dutch school, &c. Among those of the second class may be noticed, portraits of most of the English kings, from Henry V. to George II., including a full-length of Henry VIII. by Holbein, formerly in the possession of Sir Joshua Reynolds; portraits of Cromwell, Marlborough, Marshal Villars, Prince Eugene, Charles XII., Peter the Great, John Duke of Argyle, small head of Ludovico Caracci, &c. Respectable strangers are readily admitted, at all times, to view this collection.

Two years ago, a very handsome though small chapel was erected for the Episcopal congregation. It is in the Gothic style. The west front, of dressed freestone, is flanked by two carved minarets, and otherwise chastely but tastefully ornamented. The inside is finished in an appropriate manner, and has a very pleasing effect. The chapel possesses a good organ.

The parish church stands at the south side of the town, on the

highly advantageous site, being on a sort of platform projecting forward from the declivity on which the town is situated. In its outside appearance the church is perfectly plain. "The spire" (says the worthy writer of the old Statistical Account) "still remains in an unfinished state, which gives the whole building a heavy and awkward appearance. It is intended, however, to resume the work next season." I regret to say that the same words are still descriptive of the position of affairs in this particular, if, merely for "intended," we read "*not* intended." An attempt was lately made to raise funds by subscription for erecting a spire, according to a very handsome design, furnished by Mr Robertson, architect, of Elgin, but this purpose has not as yet succeeded. The inside of the church is sparingly but very tastefully decorated. The pulpit and galleries are of uncommon height; and the whole character of the interior is in a high degree light, airy, and spacious. A few years ago the church was very handsomely fitted up (by subscription) for burning gas lights.

In the interior of the church (though the parish burying-ground is not adjoining—the old church-yard\* being still used for that purpose,) are four handsome monuments of marble, built into the walls. One of these is a very fine piece of sculpture by Bacon. It was erected, in addition to another in the cathedral church at Calcutta, by Sir David Ochterlony and the army under his command, to the memory of Lieutenant Peter Lawtie (a native of Banff.) It represents a soldier leaning over a funeral vase in an attitude of deep grief. The figure and draperies are exquisitely carved.

Of the other monuments, one is erected to the memory of the late Mr John Cruickshank, Rector of Banff Academy, by his former pupils; another to the memory of the late Mr A. Cassy (elsewhere mentioned as a benefactor of the town) erected by subscription. The remaining monument is a private one.

The town-house, built about forty years ago, is a very large, but entirely plain building, forming two sides of a square, with a spire rising from the external angle. The spire, which is much older than the house, is a sort of fluted cone, of very graceful proportions, rising from a square tower. The whole height of the spire is 100 feet. The tower, spire, and front of the house are built of dressed sandstone. The house is of three very lofty

\* It may deserve mention that the burying-ground affords a favourable specimen, on a small scale, of what may be called *church-yard gardening*, being tastefully laid out, and adorned with flowers and shrubs.

stories. It contains a hall, two large drawing-rooms, Town-council Chamber, Sheriff-court Room, Town Chamberlain's and Sheriff Clerk's offices, and prisons. The staircase and landing-places are spacious.

There is a Trades' Hall, mason lodges, &c. but neither these nor any of the other buildings in the parish are, as buildings, deserving of any notice. It may be mentioned, however, that a few of the more considerable private houses lately built in the town have been designed with some degree of regard to architectural symmetry and decoration, and present rather handsome fronts. Almost every kind of building material is easily procured. Plain walls are generally built of a sort of soft blue slate. Window ribs, or whole fronts, are of dressed granite or sandstone. Bricks are also employed for slighter or more temporary purposes.

### III.—POPULATION.

The population of the parish, at different periods, has been as follows :

	In 1801 the population was	3571
	1811, - - -	3603
	1821, - - -	3355
	1831, - - -	3711
Males in the town in 1831,	-	1229
Females, - - -	-	1706
Total in the town,	-	2935
Males in the country,	-	360
Females, - - -	-	416
		776
Total,	-	3711

The decrease between 1821 and 1831 is ascribed, in the Government return, to absence of public works and emigration.

The average of registered births for the last seven years is 62; of marriages, 25. There is no official register of deaths; but, from a private list kept by the grave-digger, the average number of burials, annually, in the church-yard of Banff, appears to be 55.

Lord Fife is the only heritor that has a residence in the parish. His Lordship has been living constantly at Duff House for more than two years past. Perhaps it would be difficult to name more than one or two other persons of independent fortune in the parish. There are only three proprietors of land of the yearly value of £. 50 or upwards.

The writer can learn of only 1 insane person in the parish, and 4 fatuous; of none blind (from natural causes;) nor of any deaf or dumb.

*Language.*—Among the higher and better educated classes, the English language may be heard spoken in tolerable purity, both

as to idiom and pronunciation: there are few who cannot express themselves in English, still fewer who do not familiarly understand it when distinctly spoken. Unmixed Scotch is never to be heard. The most common dialect is a mixture of Scotch and English, the Scotch used being of the somewhat vicious kind, known, I believe, by the name of the *Aberdeenshire*. The Scotch, however, is gradually wearing out. Every person remembers the frequent use, in former years, of terms and phrases that are now seldom to be heard but among the older and more secluded. Even, however, in what is called, by courtesy, speaking English, or using English words, there is often a sore lack of the genuine English pronunciation. The defect is not so much in the accentuation, as in the vowel and diphthongal sounds. Thus the three different sounds of the letter *a* in *far*, *fat*, *fault*, are all given alike, as in *far*. The sound of *i*, as in *him*, is made the same as *e* in *her*,—unless when some, flying from this Scylla of orthoepy, fall into the Charybdis of pronouncing it as if spelled *heem*. No difference is made between the two sounds of *o* in *pop* and *pope*, and the *oa* in *broad*. *Rod*, *rode*, *broad*, are all made to rhyme together. The long *a* (as in *made*) is pronounced like the English short *e*: *fed* and *fade* are pronounced just alike. Unaccented vowels are generally lost, or sounded like the French *e* in *le*. *Regular* is pronounced *regler* or *regeler*; *prelate*, *prelet*; *absolute*, *abselet*. Even in the matter of pronunciation, however, there is a great and progressive improvement.

*Character and Circumstances.*—Generally speaking, the intellectual, moral, and religious character of the people deserves to be favourably mentioned; though, undoubtedly, among particular sections of the population, profligacy and vice is to be found prevailing in no inconsiderable degree. Perhaps vices of sensuality are more to be noted than those of injustice or inhumanity. Of poaching or smuggling there are scarcely any instances in the parish. The people are also, in general, very cleanly in their habits.

The poorer classes in the country subsist mostly on meal, milk, and vegetables, particularly potatoes, and kail, or colewort. Nearer the coast, fish may be easily had.

Both in town, among the trading and labouring classes, and in the landward part of the parish, among the crofters and small farmers, there are a considerable number of persons, who, if not in absolutely destitute, are in very straitened circumstances; and who, neither in regard to freedom from worldly anxiety, nor suf-

ficiency of even the necessaries of existence, can properly be said to enjoy a reasonable portion of the comforts of life. Even among these, however, discontent with their lot is not a remarkable feature—though (and particularly in the town) the want of the wholesome excitement which a prosperous course of industry creates, is often sought to be supplied by that which is to be derived from the use of spirituous liquors. Nor is it probably too favourable a judgment to pass on human conduct, to say, that habits of inebriety are, at least, as often the effect as the cause—they are undoubtedly both—of depressed worldly circumstances.

It is supposed that from 40 to 45 cases of illegitimate birth have occurred within the last three years.

*Amusements.*—It can scarcely be said that the people of the middle or lower classes now devote any but a mere insignificant part of their time to what could properly be called amusement. It would almost seem as if men had now outgrown the relish for amusement, or find amusement in what was once the business of life. Even children seem indifferent to the sports and pursuits with which the children of former days appeared to be absorbed. There is now a harder competition for the means of livelihood—anxieties inconsistent with the pursuit of amusement have taken hold of men's minds. An improved state of the practical arts makes every profession more difficult of acquisition, furnishes new occupation for ingenuity, new aims for mental activity, new subjects of emulation,—the diffusion of knowledge has created new desires, new ideas, new sources of excitement. From the increased diffusion of newspapers and cheap popular prints, a taste for reading has sprung up to a considerable extent. Such works as Chambers's Journal are frequently bought by farm-servants and artisans. Newspapers are circulated as long as the texture of the paper holds together, or its colour can be distinguished from that of the printer's ink. The recent political excitements, indeed, whatever may be their good or evil tendencies otherwise, have doubtless tended to increase or create an appetite for knowledge: there being few political questions that do not, at least indirectly, excite a curiosity, and lead to inquiries, touching a variety of extrinsic subjects in history, geography, statistics, arts, commerce, &c. A man who sets up for a politician finds occasion to learn a great many things besides politics.

#### IV.—INDUSTRY.

*Agriculture.*—The extent of cultivated land in the parish is 3778 imperial acres; of uncultivated and pasture lands, 1161

acres. Of the last mentioned, there are 215 acres (on the estate of Sir Robert Abercromby,) the improvement of which has been conditioned for. Some maintain that there is yet a quantity of waste land in the parish that might be profitably improved, others that cultivation is already over extended. There is no undivided common. The number of acres under wood is 223. \*

In the grounds of Duff House, which comprise most of the planting in the parish, are to be found ash, elm, beech, plane, birch, lime, maple, oak, horse-chestnut, mountain-ash, and various species of firs. Here there seems to have been rather too little done as regards the affairs of thinning and pruning, &c.—(principally, it is alleged, from an indisposition to diminish the shelter for the game,) and much of the wood is of very slender growth.

What other planting is in the parish belongs to Lord Seafield, and consists mostly of firs; but, from age and thinning together, may be described as rather verging to decay. Sir Robert Abercromby is at present in the intention of planting some belts and clumps on his property in the upper part of the parish, and about fifty imperial acres have been laid off for that purpose.

About a mile from the town, is a very considerable nursery for plants of all kinds, suitable to the climate.

*Rent of Land.*—The average rent of arable land in the parish may be stated at about 16s. per acre. It varies from 5s. to L. 2.

\* This statement is made up from the best existing data, namely, from accounts procured of the lands belonging to each proprietor in the parish: but, as there have been, as regards the greater part, no late survey, its exact correctness cannot be warranted. The total amount which it furnishes is 5162 imperial acres; and after making allowance for the space occupied by the town of Banff, roads, &c. the whole extent of the parish would fall short of that stated in Robertson's map, viz. 6312 acres.

The map, however, includes in the parish of Banff a tract of perhaps 100 acres, on the river side, (from about the cruive dike to the bridge of Alva,) considered by the agent of Lord Fife, the proprietor, to be in the parish of Alva, and not included in the present computation—also a space, which may be guessed at 500 acres on this side of the burn of Boyndie, similarly stated, by the agents of Lord Seafield, the proprietor, to be in the parish of Boyndie.

The boundaries of the two parishes are thus fixed in the decret of disjunction 1635: "Ye said parochine of Banff to have includit yairintill ye toune of Banff, with ye pendicles of ye samyn as it had of before, and to have adjoyned yairto out of ye said parochine of Inverboindy ye landis of Ord, Inchdrower, with ye pendicles yrof; the lands of Blairshinnoch, Kilbeuchlie, Paddocklaw, and Cullinorttis, ye whilk haill landis and parochine lyes on the eist side of the burne of Inverboindy; and the said parochine of Inverboindy to have includit yairin as the particular boundis of ye parochine of the samyn, the haill lands lyand betwixt the burne of Boyne at the west, the burne of Inverboindy at the east, the sea on the north, and the landis of park of Corncairn at the south pairtis."

It seems the general understanding at present that, at least, the lands of Easter Baldavie and Raggal, with the plantations of Baldavie (all on this side of the burn of Boyndie,) belong to the parish of Boyndie—and these lands are not specified, (unless under the name of "pendicles") in the enumeration of those which compose the parish of Banff.

The average rent of grazing is at the rate of about L. 1, 15s. per ox or cow grazed, or 7s. per ewe or sheep.

*Wages.*—The ordinary wages of farm-servants is from L. 4, 10s. to L. 6 half yearly.

Farm-labourers, according to the length of the day and other circumstances, receive from 9d. to 1s. 6d. per day; country wrights, 1s. 4d.; masons, 2s. 6d.:—all these rates with victuals.

*Prices.*—Wool is sold at 1s. 6d. to 2s. per pound of 22 oz. Other species of raw produce for home use are rarely bought or sold, being generally grown by each consumer for his own particular use. Riddles cost from 2s. 6d. to 4s., sieves 3s. 6d., but these are now seldom used, most of the mills being furnished with sifters; corn baskets (called blind sieves) 1s. 6d.; coarse wicker baskets for carrying weeds, peats, potatoes, &c. 1s.; a sort of bass made of heather is sold for 2s. 6d.

Mason work varies from L. 1, 5s. to L. 2 per rood. Carpenter's work for the various descriptions, as follows: Flooring and joisting from 3s. 6d. to 5s. 6d. per yard; slate roofing, including rafters, from 5s. 9d. to 8s. 6d. per yard; tile roofing, including rafters, from 3s. 9d. to 4s. 9d. per yard; windows, from 2s. 3d. to 2s. 9d. per foot; double lath partitions (with plaster) 2s. 6d.; doors from 10s. to 18s.; stairs 4s. 6d. to 10s. 6d. per yard.

*Live Stock.*—The parish is not a sheep district; the small number kept in it are mostly of the Cheviot breed. The breed of cattle is the result of various crosses, which do not appear to have tended much to its improvement; and they have occasioned the loss of a very good breed, formerly known by the name of the old Banffshire breed. Altogether, the parish is not conspicuous for its improvements in this department. Perhaps, however, the now extensive use of bone manure, by which an increased quantity of winter keep is produced, may be the means of improving the breeds of cattle. At one period cattle was rather the staple produce of the district: latterly, it has become more a grain country. The plan of husbandry in universal use is the rotation of crops for five, six, or seven years, the latter period being most common.

*Husbandry.*—In the course of the last forty years, perhaps one-fifth of the present arable land in the parish has been brought into cultivation. Draining has also been effected to a very large extent. On one farm alone (Blairshinnoch, in the occupation of Mr A. Milne,) 16,000 ells have been formed in the course of the last six years.

Still there is great room for improvement in this way—perhaps more in this than in any other way that could be mentioned.

Some years ago a considerable improvement was effected by the straightening of the burn of Boyndie.

The ordinary duration of lease is nineteen years. This, if not generally complained of, is by some considered to be of too short duration, in respect that, as farms may be generally supposed to be left, by outgoing tenants, in a somewhat impoverished condition, the new entrants can scarcely have time, in a period of nineteen years, to bring them properly into condition, so as to reap the benefit of their outlay before the termination of the lease.

The greater part of the lands in the parish are enclosed and subdivided with substantial stone dikes; and the farm-houses and offices good and sufficient—some of them superior to the generality of farm accommodation, even in an improved district such as this parish. Any deficiency that exists in this respect may perhaps be owing to its being the more general practice in the district, that the *tenants* erect the farm accommodations, receiving an allowance at the end of their lease; and the consequent inducement they have to lock up, in this way, as little of their capital as possible.

*Quarries.*—The granite at Cairns of Ord (mentioned in the *Geological* section) is of excellent quality for building, and has been wrought for that purpose; but, owing to its distance from the sea, not to such an extent as it would otherwise have been. The different species of rocks already described as existing in the parish are also in some places quarried for building materials; but (unless at the time when the new pier was constructing) there have never been any considerable operations in this way; partly because the peculiar sort of stones afforded are not much prized for building, and partly because there is no great quantity of building going on to require stones of any sort.

*Fisheries.*—All the different kinds of white fish used for food that are to be found in the sea adjoining the parish are fished for, and brought to market, but only by individual fishermen on their own account, and therefore not on any great scale. It is the opinion of some, however, that if the cod, ling, and turbot fishery were prosecuted in this parish on a scale of sufficient extent, it might soon become of importance. These fish are said to be very plentiful about twenty-five or thirty miles off the coast.

Lobsters and crabs are sold in the local markets, and peri-

winkles, besides, have of late been sent to the London market to good account. There is also abundance of shrimps to be found, but they have never been fished for to any extent.

The rent of the salmon-fishing in the river (Lord Fife, proprietor,) is L. 1600 a year. There are also bag-net fishings in the sea on each side of the river's mouth. That on the east side is Lord Fife's, and included in one tack with the river fishing. That on the west side is let by the town of Banff for L. 191 yearly; but their right is called in question by Lord Fife, and at present the subject of litigation.

The salmon are sent by steam, either pickled or packed in ice, principally to the London market.

The herring fishery on the east coast of Scotland was for many years almost exclusively confined to the coast of Caithness and Sutherland; but about the year 1815, owing to the encouragement given by Government in the shape of bounties, together with the assistance of well qualified persons to superintend the cure and brand the herring barrels, the fishing of herrings was commenced on the coasts of Aberdeenshire, Banffshire, Morayshire, and Ross-shire. It was soon discovered that the herrings were of as good quality on the south side of the Murray Frith as on the north, and equally abundant; and this trade, from a very small beginning, has grown to be flourishing and extensive; and, though the bounties have been withdrawn, the herring fishery is still carried on with great spirit.

The quantity cured in the district of the Banff Fishery Officer, which extends from Gardenstown to Portsoy, in favourable seasons, is about 30,000 barrels. Of this quantity, nearly one-half is exported to Germany; a considerable part is sent to London for the supply of the West India islands, and the remainder goes generally to Ireland. The following table exhibits the state of the herring fishery, as regards the port of *Banff* alone, for the last five years.

	1831.	1832.	1833.	1834	1835.
No. of barrels cured,	1759	1959	1265	998	691
— boats employed,	14	16	18	22	8
— fishermen,	56	64	72	88	32
— women in curing and packing,	41	46	48	60	21
— coopers,	6	6	6	8	4
— curers,	5	5	5	6	4

About the year 1819, the number of herring boats from the port of Banff was perhaps not short of 70. The decrease latterly I have never heard accounted for in any way that does not mainly resolve into mere matter of chance, or otherwise, by reference to some of those unaccountable prejudices and superstitions

which people connected with sea-faring employments are so apt to take up. The two years preceding the last were indeed eminently unsuccessful; but any discouragement thence arising does not seem to have affected the district generally, as it has done this particular port. There is no doubt a want of space near the harbour for the erection of suitable premises; but even the space that exists is not now employed. The existence of a higher rate of shore dues at Banff than at some neighbouring ports is also stated to have a discouraging effect; but still this cause does not operate in a higher degree now than formerly.

*Shipping.*—The number of vessels now registered at Banff Custom-house is as follows:

<i>No. of Vessels.</i>	<i>Denomination.</i>	<i>Tonnage.</i>
1	Brig,	155
18	Schooners,	1567
48	Sloops,	2579
<hr/>		<hr/>
Total, 67		4301

Of these 10 schooners (878 tons,) and 11 sloops (657 tons,) belong to the port of Banff; the remainder belong to the creeks of Fraserburgh, Gardenstown, Macduff, Portsoy, Port-Gordon, and Garmouth, in the district of the port.

The vessels of this and the neighbouring ports are generally employed in carrying grain, herrings, salmon, live cattle, and cured pork to London, and some other places in the south, and return with coals, groceries, &c. &c. Some of them take occasional voyages to Sweden for iron and deals; to Russia for hemp; and Holland, for flax. They also in autumn go frequently to Hamburgh with herrings, from whence they get cargoes of grain, wool, bark, hides, &c. to London, Hull, and the Frith of Forth. A great proportion of the herrings which are sent to the Prussian ports in the Baltic is shipped by Prussian vessels, because these vessels, having to return home at any rate, take them for a somewhat lower freight, and the Prussian merchants who purchase the herrings frequently order them to be shipped by their own vessels. But British vessels are also employed in carrying herrings to the Baltic; and, upon the whole, this part of the trade is pretty fairly divided between the ships of Britain and Prussia.

There are four vessels (a schooner and three smacks) regularly engaged in the London trade, two in the Leith, and two principally in the Aberdeen trade.

The exporting of live-cattle to London was first tried, as a speculation, in 1826, and since that time has formed a regular branch

of trade. During the year 1834, 440 head of live-cattle were sent to London by sea, besides 911 pigs, and 156 sheep and lambs.

The exportation of grain from this port has increased in a very great degree during the last twenty years. In the course of the year 1834, 29,790 quarters of oats were shipped at *Banff*, all, with a trifling exception, for London;\* 1174 quarters of wheat, and 976 quarters of barley and bear, mostly for Leith and London; also a small quantity of oatmeal, pease, and potatoes. 194 bags of potato flour were shipped for Leith.

Very few foreign vessels land at Banff harbour, though many come into neighbouring ports within the range of the custom-house of Banff. These are principally from Norway, with birch timber for herring barrels.

In the year 1813 a Greenland whale fishing company was formed, and two vessels fitted out. In the course of a year or two, however, one of the vessels was wrecked in a storm soon after going out of the harbour; the insurance was only recovered after a litigation; and as, besides this discouragement, the vessels had been unlucky in their fishings, and the price of oil was falling, the concern was abandoned at a very serious loss to the partners.

Banff is the principal station of a party of the coast guard. The commander's district extends from Speymouth to Rattrayhead. Their watch-house is at the battery.

*Manufactures.*—There are premises on the high ground above the harbour, fitted, both by extent and supply of water, for carrying on the brewing trade on a large scale. Of late, however, the business has been little farther extended than to supply home consumption. It is stated that the demand for malt liquor is immensely reduced by the increased distillation of spirits. The brewery employs 9 or 10 persons.

The foundery was established about nine years ago by Messrs Fraser. They execute every species of cast metal work, machinery, grates, ploughshares, &c. &c. and to a very considerable extent. A blast fanners attached to the furnace is driven, and mechanical power supplied for all departments of the work, by a steam engine of six horse power, constructed on the high pressure

\* In the list of places in the whole kingdom supplying the London market with grain, Banff ranks among the highest as regards amount; but this is taking in the importations from all the ports from Fraserburgh to Garmouth, inclusive, vessels from which *clear out* at the custom-house of Banff. The total quantity of grain exported from Banff (including these other ports) in 1834, was 192,377 quarters of grain, and 660 tons of meal; in 1835, 94,067 quarters of grain, and 362 tons of meal.

principle. This engine was wholly made by the Messrs Fraser, the proprietors. There are about 10 persons employed at this establishment.

The distillery is at Mill of Banff, about a mile from the town on the Huntly road. From 11,000 to 12,000 gallons of spirits at proof are produced here yearly. There are 6 or 8 persons employed—generally about fifteen hours a day.

There is a small manufactory of ropes and sails for home use. Ship-building is only carried on occasionally.

A somewhat considerable thread and stocking manufactory, which was carried on here at the time of the last Statistical Account, was discontinued about twenty years ago. The proprietors enjoyed a patent for a species of stocking-frame, but farther improvements in machinery enabled the English manufacturers to undersell them. The thread manufactory was kept up for a considerably longer period; but the increasing use of cotton instead of thread was gradually lessening the demand for it.

#### V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

*Town.*—The town of Banff consists of two parts, completely separated, of which the first (which may be called the body of the town) lies partly on the lower extremity of the plain on the river side, already described, partly on the declivity; the other part (called the sea-town) on an elevated level, which generally terminates abruptly within a small distance of the sea, by which it is bounded. Seen from the low ground beyond the river, the sea-town appears to stand on a long ridge, having the battery at its northern extremity. On a piece of table-land projecting midway from between the town and sea-town, stands the castle, nearly opposite the river mouth, and commanding an extensive and varied prospect, the sea, the town, and hill of Macduff, the sweep of the river and beautiful opposite slope, surmounted by the wood of Mountcoffer. The castle is a plain modern building with wings.

The streets, though composed of houses of unequal size, are generally straight, and not deficient in width. The High Street, Castle Road, and a street in the sea-town terminating in the battery, form a continuous line from south to north, of above half a-mile in length. Within the last few years, many of the older houses have been pulled down and replaced by others; and there is scarcely a building now remaining which would indicate the antiquity of the town.

Some years ago it was proposed to form a new street to the south-

west of the town, entering from the Huntly road, and passing through to St Catherine Street; but the scheme was abandoned from want of the concurrence of some of the proprietors in the proposed line.

A gas-work was established by a joint-stock company in 1831. The quantity of gas consumed in the year ending May 15, 1834, was 456,213 cubical feet; in 1835, 463,547 cubical feet.

In 1830, a new and very commodious market-place was laid out in a central part of the town, with complete accommodations of sheds, stalls, &c.

A few years ago, public baths were erected by a joint-stock company. They are fitted up in a very convenient manner for hot, cold, and shower baths. They are open every day in summer, and once or oftener a-week during the remainder of the year.

Notwithstanding that about L. 1100 was laid out in the year 1810 for the conveyance of water into the town by pipes, the supply in the summer season, in the public cisterns, is often extremely deficient. On many premises, however, there are pump-wells.

*Means of Communication.*—The post-office in the town of Banff is the only one in the parish; but this office has three sub-offices attached to it, at Aberchirder on the road to Huntly, and New Pitsligo and Brucklaw on the road to Peterhead; also a penny post-office at Macduff. There are daily mails to and from Aberdeen and the south, to and from Inverness and the north, and to and from Peterhead; also a direct mail three times a-week to and from Fraserburgh, and the same to and from Huntly. The revenue of the post-office of Banff, stated at the period of the last Statistical Account to be but L. 800, was, in 1829, (after deduction of dead and re-sent letters) L. 1284; since that year the revenue has been regularly decreasing, being for the present year (1835) ending 5th December, only L. 1131. A very considerable portion of the revenue is derived from the correspondence with the northern parts of the continent, on account of the herring fishery.

The length of the turnpike road passing through the parish in the line from Aberdeen to Inverness, and extending from the west end of the bridge of Banff to a bridge across the burn of Boyndie, is (exclusive of a part which forms the High Street of the town) about two miles and a-half, perhaps a little more.

The turnpike road from the harbour of Banff to a point on the south-eastern boundary of the parish (at the road leading to the farm of Wardend) when it enters into the parish of Alva, is also two miles and a-half.

There is a daily stage-coach to and from Aberdeen, and to and from Elgin; and a daily mail-coach to and from Peterhead; an open car also runs daily between Huntly and Banff; a coach twice a-week between Keith and Banff; occasionally there have been others. All the mails (except to Peterhead) are conveyed by gigs or foot-posts.

The Doveran is passed, near the town, by a handsome and substantial stone bridge of seven semicircular arches, having a free water-way of 142 yards length. The parapets and abutments are of freestone. The bridge was built at the expense of Government in 1779. The burn of Boyndie, on the west of the parish, is passed by a stone bridge of two arches. Both these bridges are in complete repair. Lower down on the burn of Boyndie, and where it is crossed by the old road, is another bridge of two arches. Along the whole line of the turnpike roads in the parish are substantial stone fences or hedges.

*Harbour.*—The harbour of Banff is situated at the western extremity of a circular bay, at the opposite extremity of which is the town and harbour of Macduff. The two extremities of the bay are rocky. The middle of it is a beach of sand and shingle cast up by the meeting of the river Doveran with the sea. The mouth of the river is sometimes at one, sometimes at another, part of this beach, but is most commonly near the land, and along the roadway leading from the town of Banff to the harbour.

The old or inner harbour (completed in the year 1775) is a triangular space enclosed within two piers and the land, the entrance being at the exterior angle facing the N. N. E. In 1816, however, a new pier and break-water covering the old entrance was constructed to the north of the old harbour, and a basin formed in the intervening space, according to a plan furnished by the late Mr Telford. The expense of these improvements amounted to about L. 18,000, one-half of which was furnished by Government out of the proceeds of the forfeited estates. Unfortunately the new basin was found not to be a safe haven, as was sufficiently proved by the circumstance of vessels being wrecked when fairly moored within it. It has since, too, been almost filled up with sand, an increase of which it has also been the means of creating in the old harbour. Still the new pier has been of considerable use in several respects. It prevents all swell and agitation in the old harbour, which is now perhaps the safest artificial haven in the Moray Frith. It also affords some additional facilities for bringing vessels in or out. It is

supposed by some that, by means of flood-gates, the new basin might yet be rendered a safe place for shipping.

The present depth of water at the extremity of the new pier is, at low-water of spring tides, 4 feet 7 inches; of neap-tides, 6 feet 11 inches. A vessel drawing 12 feet water can enter the new basin at high water of ordinary neap-tides; one drawing 15 feet at spring-tides. This depth, however, is only towards the outer part of the basin, owing to the accumulation of sand farther in. A vessel can enter the old harbour at high water of ordinary neap-tides, if drawing 8 feet, spring-tides 10½ feet.

A Morton's patent slip apparatus is now in the course of being laid down at the harbour.

*Municipal State.*—The circumstance, that William the Lion gave a toft and garden in the burgh of Banff to his chaplain Douglas, Bishop of Moray, in 1165, (similar gifts being made in Inverness, Nairn and Cullen, all royal burghs at this period,) makes it probable that Banff possessed the privileges of royalty before that time. Tradition makes these privileges to have been conferred by Malcolm Canmore. They were confirmed by Robert Bruce, Robert II., in 1372, again confirmed them, together with such privileges and liberties as were enjoyed by the town of Aberdeen. Farther confirmations were given by James VI. and Charles II.

In the municipal government of the burgh, there has all along been this peculiarity, that the burgh taxes and assessments are imposed, not by the magistrates and council, as is the usual practice in other burghs, but by the inhabitants assembled in head court.

There is no regular police or night watch in the town. Two town serjeants perform all the duties of police officers. Offences against the peace are taken cognizance of by either the Sheriff, the Justices, or the magistrates, in their respective courts, to each of which is attached a separate procurator-fiscal of its own, whose duty it is to prosecute offenders.

When the property of the town (in lands, fishings, &c.) is balanced against its debts, the residue would appear to be rather inconsiderable. The sum of L. 482, 9s. 11d. is raised annually, by assessment on the inhabitants, for the defraying of current expenses, as streets, water, lamps, &c.

Banff, on the whole, can scarcely be pronounced a thriving place. It is not increasing either in size or population; and probably few if any of the inhabitants are accumulating capital. Families seem to be dying away or becoming dispersed faster than new ones come

in their places. Yet few towns of its size present more attractions than Banff. It possesses both coast and inland scenery of a superior description; is particularly healthy; has excellent schools, variety of places of worship, abundant markets, regular and frequent posts, baths, literary institutions, society equal to what is generally to be found in a remote country town. No very good reason can be assigned for its want of prosperity, unless, perhaps, the deficiency of space about the town for manufacturing or commercial purposes, or for the erection of suburban villas. The town is hemmed in on two sides by great proprietors. On the one hand, Lord Fife is pushing us into the sea, on the other, Lord Seafield jams us close to the river; yet, to say the truth, there seems little use made of even what space exists. A linen manufactory was lately projected, but failed. Indeed, most enterprizes of any extent that have ever been attempted in the town have turned out unfortunate.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The church was built in 1790, and is capable of containing 1500 persons. It is substantial and in complete repair. The average number of communicants is 700. The age of the manse is not very well known; indeed it has been built at different times. Soon after the settlement of the present incumbent, in 1821, it was in contemplation to erect a new manse; but the incumbent agreed to accept, instead, an annual allowance with the old manse. The glebe contains 7 acres or more, and at one time rented so much as L. 45, but now falls very considerably short of that value.\* The stipend, about four years ago, was augmented to 18 chalders, half meal, half barley.

A chapel in connexion with the Established Church has just been completed at the upper end of the parish, about half a mile from its extremity. The expense of its erection and that of a manse (together about L. 400) has been raised by church collections and subscriptions of heritors and others. It accommodates, without galleries, 300 persons. All the sittings have been rented, and demands made for many more. The minister's living is derived from the seat rents, L. 20 being added from the Royal Bounty.

The number † of families composing the Roman Catholic con-

\* An arrangement has just been made, under which an act of Parliament is about to be applied for, to authorize the feuing of the glebe; and the lower part of it is already fixed upon as the site of the educational institution about to be erected by Mr Wilson's trustees.

† The numerical statements regarding the different congregations are only to be considered as furnishing a general idea, the accounts being, in some cases, mostly matter of guess, and appearing to be not always made up on similar principles.

gregation is 17. The number of persons altogether, 84. For about ten years past, there has been no resident clergyman of this persuasion in Banff. Service is performed once a fortnight, by a clergyman who resides at Portsoy. His living arises from seat rents, with some addition from the general fund of the Catholic church. The Bishop (of Germanicia) resides at Priestholm, in the parish of Rathven.

The number of persons attending the Episcopal chapel is about 300, of whom about 250 reside in the parish.

The congregation established here in 1780, in connexion with the Relief body, separated from that connexion in 1808, and adopted the Independent form. A new church, capable of containing upwards of 400 persons, was completed for the service of this congregation last year, at an expense of about L. 500. The number of families regularly attending is about 45; of persons altogether about 220, of whom, however, only about 90 reside in the parish.

A congregation in connexion with the United Associate Synod was formed in 1822, and a substantial and commodious church erected in the low part of the town, at an expense of about L. 800. It is capable of containing 500 persons. The number of families attending is 50; of persons altogether 200; but of these about 100 are from other parishes.

The livings of the ministers, respectively, of the Episcopal, Secession, and Independent churches, are made up from the seat rents and collections or subscriptions,—a certain *minimum* amount being, in each case, guaranteed by the hearers.

A congregation of Wesleyan Methodists was first formed in Banff about the year 1775, but a chapel was not erected for their special accommodation until 1820. It cost about L. 320, is without galleries, and capable of containing 300 persons. The whole number of persons regularly attending is about 100, (about 40 of whom belong to the parish,) of families 20. The ministers are maintained partly by an allowance from the general funds belonging to this religious body, partly by contributions from their hearers.

At all the places of worship in the parish divine service is in general well attended.

A branch of the Bible Society, auxiliary to the Edinburgh institution, was formed here in 1824. It has generally from 60 to 80 members or contributors, and its funds average about L. 15 annually.

At each of the parish, Secession, and Independent churches,

BANFF.

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there are monthly or weekly meetings held, and contributions made for religious purposes. The whole amount thus collected will probably not exceed L. 25 per annum.

The average amount of extraordinary collections in the parish church for the last five years, (after deduction, in each case, of a sum equal to an ordinary collection,) has been L. 25. About three-fifths of the amount has been devoted to charitable, the remainder to religious purposes.

*Education.*—An academy was formed in 1786,\* under the directions of Dr Chapman, formerly rector of the grammar school at Dumfries, and author of a work on *Education* of some character at that period. The classes are taught by a rector and two masters: Latin, Greek, and French by the rector; writing and mathematics, together with book-keeping, geography, and navigation, by one of the masters; English reading, elocution, and grammar, by the other. Drawing is also taught by a separate master. The expense of education varies, of course, according to the number and description of branches in which each pupil takes lessons; but the highest expense for a (principally) classical education, does not ordinarily exceed 12s. 6d. per quarter; for a trading education, 9s. 6d.; an elementary, 6s. Course of book-keeping, L. 1, 1s.; navigation, 10s. 6d.; French, 10s. 6d.

The number of boys attending the academy has, of late years, been about 150; of girls at separate hours, about 20. Each of the masters, besides the fees of his class, receives a certain fixed sum from the town. The rector also has the salary of parish schoolmaster.

The academy has 16 bursaries, one of which (in the disposal of the Presbytery of Fordyce) is of the annual value of the interest of L. 600. The value of the other 15 is from L. 2 to L. 3, 4s. †

\* There is evidence of there having been a grammar school at Banff, as far back as 1544. The charter (formerly mentioned) granted by the Carmelite brethren, to Sir Walter Ogilvie of Dunlugas, bears to be witnessed, among others, "Gulliermo Clerk, proceptore scholæ grammatices de Banff."

† In the year 1595, Bishop Cunningham of Aberdeen granted a charter, confirmed by James VI. in 1592, assigning the tenths of the King's rents of certain lands in the county, for the maintenance of grammar schools in Banff; the teacher to be appointed by the Provost, Bailies, and Town Council of Banff, but the trial of his fitness to be with the Bishops of Aberdeen, or, failing them, the principal of King's College, Aberdeen. These tenths amounted to L. 44, 10s. 6d. per annum; but it does not appear that they have, up to a late period, or even ever been drawn. The charter, (but recently discovered,) has been printed, with some additional notices regarding the ancient state of the school.

† Three of these were endowed by Bailie Winchester,—of whom, as formerly mentioned, the Laird of Gight borrowed a trifle in 1644.

There is a private unendowed school in the town, called the Commercial School, at which the number of boys attending as regular day-scholars, varies from 40 to 60; of other boys, at separate hours, from 15 to 20; of girls, at separate hours, about 30. Here the fee for reading and writing together is 4s. 6d. per quarter; for English reading and grammar, writing and arithmetic, together, 6s. 6d. per quarter; geography and higher mathematics, 7s. 6d.; navigation, 10s. 6d.; book-keeping, single, 7s. 6d., double, 15s.

In 1804, Mr Alexander Pirie, merchant in Banff, left the sum of L. 1100 in trust to the town-council and kirk-session, for the maintenance (from the yearly interest) of a free school,—a feu in the sea-town, and an additional sum of L. 100, being at the same time assigned by him for the erection of a school and schoolmaster's house. The school is open to all poor children (able to read the catechism) whom the trustees may admit; and instruction is given in reading, writing, arithmetic, and church music. The usual number of scholars of late has been from 70 to 80.

There are several unendowed boarding and day-schools for young ladies under the direction of highly accomplished teachers; the branches taught, and terms, being such as are usual in other similar establishments.

There is a female charity school, under the management of the parish minister and a committee of ladies. The salary of the teacher is made up from subscriptions, and a small annual payment from a charitable bequest. The number of girls generally attending is from 50 to 60. They receive instruction in reading, writing, sewing, and knitting. One penny a-week is paid by each scholar to assist in procuring school-books and stationery. The right of admitting scholars is vested in the subscribers.

The exact number of persons in the parish who cannot read or write is not ascertained; but after inquiries made among a great variety of persons, I feel warranted in saying, that, if there are any cases of this description, the number is altogether insignificant. This is sufficient evidence of the value attached to education by the people of the parish; but matters having been always pretty much the same in this respect, there are no data, in the particular case, for calculating the effect produced on moral habits by increased facilities of instruction.

Similar circumstances to those that created occasion for an additional church in the upper part of the parish, make an additional



school in the same place to be also wanted. The want would be greater, but that there is, at present, a private school in the upper part of the parish of Boyndie, so near the boundary of this parish as to accommodate a part of the population of its middle and upper districts.

*Literary Institutions.*—A Literary Society was instituted in 1810, by five boys (the most advanced of whom had only obtained the standing of three sessions at College.) The institution originally embraced two objects,—the formation of a library, and meetings for delivery of essays and discussion of literary subjects. But the latter object was, after a time, necessarily abandoned, from the paucity of persons having resources for contributing to it. The library now contains above 2000 volumes.

Connected with the Literary Society by a sort of *federal* union, is the reading-room, where have been usually taken in five or six of the principal quarterly and monthly periodicals, two daily London, and some Edinburgh and provincial newspapers. Some difficulty, however, has been found of late in supporting the expense of this establishment, and its continuance seems somewhat doubtful.

In 1828 was founded an institution for the cultivation of science, and the discovery and encouragement of native talent. The institution has occasionally held meetings for scientific discussions; but similar difficulties, as in the case of the Literary Society, have been felt in carrying this part of its plan into complete effect. Its conductors, however, have succeeded in collecting a museum of natural history, antiquities, and curiosities, which would do no discredit to ampler time and means, than have actually been enjoyed by them, and which, it is believed, few, if any, collections north of Edinburgh can equal. In particular, the collection of shells, consisting of many thousand specimens of the rarest and most beautiful kinds to be met with in Java, and throughout the eastern Archipelago, are well deserving of notice. There is a considerable variety of dresses, weapons, manufactures, and utensils of the natives of India and Australia; many mineral and zoological specimens, coins, idols, &c. The institution also possesses some valuable books; among others, the printed Public Records of Great Britain, presented by Government; and, for scientific purposes, they are furnished with a transit and clock, a six feet reflecting telescope, together with an assortment of meteorological instruments from the best London makers.

By the kindness of the magistrates, the two large drawing-rooms

in the town-house have been allowed for the accommodation of the Literary Society and Scientific Institution.

The Established Church, Episcopal, Secession, and Independent chapels, have each a small library belonging to it. There is also a trades' library, open to master, journeymen, and apprentice, tradesmen. All these libraries are maintained by voluntary donations, or subscriptions almost nominal. The collection belonging to the Independent chapel was begun in 1814, and contains 320 volumes. Here also there is a juvenile library of 364 volumes. The other collections are smaller. The advantages to be derived from these libraries, though not neglected, do not appear to be so eagerly sought after as might be wished. Probably the means at the disposal of the conductors will not always afford the selections best adapted for the readers.\*

*Benevolent Institutions.*—About the year 1755, or soon after, Dr Alexander Strachan, physician in Banff, built a small house in the low part of the town, and left it, under the management of the magistrates and kirk-session, as a residence to four poor persons, bestowing, at the same time, a small sum of money and additional space of ground, now jointly yielding (after payment of certain feu-duties) an annual sum of L. 1, 3s. 6d. applicable to the upholding and repairs of the house.

By a will, dated at Bombay, 7th November 1769, Mr George Smith, a native of the parish of Fordyce, in the county of Banff, vested in the magistrates of Banff the management of such residue of his estate as might arise out of certain legacies bequeathed by him to relatives of whose existence at the time he was uncertain; and which, after the lapse of five years, might remain unclaimed by them: appointing the sum of L. 1000 to be applied to the endowing of an infirmary in Banff or Fordyce; L. 25 yearly to be paid to the minister of Fordyce; and L. 40 yearly to a school-master, to educate, at Fordyce, as many boys (of the name of Smith) as could be maintained, at the rate of L. 25 each, out of the interest of the final residue of the estate. As the handiest way of managing the affair of the *infirmary* or *hospital*, (for which L. 1000 was held to be a rather slender provision,) the magistrates formed the design of laying out a part of the town-house for a *broth* or *soup-kitchen* to the poor, in consideration of which they resolved on applying the sum in question to the general expense of that

\* There is a collection of books in the academy, but mostly so antiquated or incomplete as to be of little use.

structure;—and this under the idea, it may be supposed, that they thereby, in effect, established an *hospital* for the admission and relief of persons labouring under the disease of an *empty belly*. Patients of this class were accordingly, for a time, admitted, and dismissed relieved. These, however, were soon succeeded by others of a different class, whose malady consisted in an *inability to pay the penalties inflicted by excise courts*; and, at present, the only patient in the hospital is the Sheriff-clerk, whose complaint was *want of room* in the apartments otherwise allotted to him. To speak more plainly, the broth-kitchen became a prison, the prison a writing-chamber or record office; but the departure, in this instance, from the testator's intentions, was more of chance or necessity than of design; and, as there is now an ample provision for an infirmary otherwise, it needs not be regretted.\* Besides the bequest for the hospital, however, the magistrates realized the sum of L. 10,297, 16s. 6d. three per cent. consols; and the yearly dividends (L. 308, 18s. 8d.) thence arising, are duly expended according to the directions of the will: nine boys, chosen by the magistrates, receiving maintenance and education for five years each, in the manner specified.

On the 2d July 1799, Mr James Wilson of the island of Grenada, directed, by will, “the whole stock” (of his property, after the death of certain liferenters nominated,) “to be drawn from the funds, and remitted to the magistrates of the burgh of Banff, North Britain, to be by them laid out as a charitable fund, in the best manner possible, and to remain under the directions of the acting magistrates from year to year,” and without any more specific instructions whatever.

The last of the liferenters died only last year, and the magistrates have realized L. 3561, 16s. 1d. 3 per cents., and L. 2647 of cash,—which, however, is less than half the actual sum left; the remaining, and greater part, being lost by the failure of the house in London to whom it was remitted. Every species of poverty and distress in the parish being already as well provided for, otherwise, as can be beneficially done, it has been resolved to apply Mr Wilson's bequest, jointly with some funds from other sources, to the purposes of education; † and with this view, the

\* In regard to this matter, the Commissioners on Municipal Corporations observe, that, “while the proceeding is not an example to be followed, it can hardly be censured.”

† In the case of Cassy's fund, afterwards mentioned, counsel were of opinion that education fell clearly within the objects of the bequest.

magistrates propose to erect a building \* sufficient to embrace at once accommodation for an infant school, for a free school on the Madras system, and for class-rooms for the academy teachers, (besides a library and museum;) it being intended to admit the more promising boys from the free schools to the benefit of a more complete education in the classes of the academy.

By a will dated 8th February 1819, Mr Alexander Cassy, a native of Banff, and then residing at Pentonville, near London, left the residue of his estate, (after payment of certain legacies,) in trust to the magistrates and town-council of Banff,—appointing “the interest accruing therefrom to be expended half-yearly, and every half-year, towards the support of poor, aged, and infirm persons, of both sexes, incapable of maintaining themselves by labour, born within the precincts of the said burgh, and helpless orphans, and other deserted children of both sexes, born as before, until they attain the age when they may be deemed capable of providing for themselves. And I hereby declare it to be my desire, that those who become objects of this charity, shall be selected at the discretion of the majority of the aforesaid town-council, always giving the preference to the most necessitous.” These are the whole directions contained in the will as to the mode of bestowing the charity; but the magistrates, previously to entering on the administration of the funds, procured, for their more specific direction, an opinion of counsel, by which they have since been guided in the selection of cases for relief.

Under the provisions of this will, the annual sum of L. 300, being the dividends upon L. 10,000, 3 per cent. consols, fell, in the year 1824, to the disposal of the magistrates. A farther sum of L. 7000, 3 per cents., together with the value of a house at Pentonville, will fall in on the demise of certain liferenters named in the will.

The average number of aged and infirm persons receiving relief from this fund since July 1824, is 59; smallest number at one time, 55; greatest, 66. The average number of families of children (of one to six in each family,) 28; smallest number, 24;

\* A chaste and classic design, (furnished by Mr W. Robertson of Elgin, architect,) has already been adopted by the trustees. The eastern façade is designed to be 154 feet long, and to consist of a portico in the centre, in the Grecian Ionic style, with side buildings and two protruding wings at the extremes, adorned with pilasters and entablatures in the same taste. The situation of the building on the ascent on the south-west of the town will be such as to give it every advantage, particularly when seen, from the road that approaches from the south, across the river, and over the trees environing Duff-House park.

greatest, 85. Average of both classes, 87; smallest, 82; greatest 96. The average payment at last distribution (to each old person or young family,) was at the rate of L. 2, 15s. per annum; the highest being L. 4, 10s.; lowest, L. 1. L. 10 per annum is paid to the teacher of Pirie's school for instructing boys, and L. 5 to the teacher of the female charity school for instructing girls on the bounty.

By a will dated 7th May 1825, Miss Elizabeth Wilson, an unmarried female residing in Banff, pursuing an intention that had been mutually formed between her and her deceased brother, Mr John Wilson, baker there, bequeathed, to certain official and private trustees, the whole heritable and moveable property of which she should die possessed, with directions to apply the yearly produce of the same, (with immaterial deductions,) in equal annuities, to six tradesmen and six maiden women of the age of fifty years or upwards, and who have resided in Banff twenty years. The will also directs that L. 2 yearly should be laid out in the purchase of books (selected by the minister) for the use of the annuitants; each of whom is farther to receive, on appointment, a Bible and book of devotion. Annuitants are named by a majority of the trustees. The average amount paid to each hitherto has been L. 9 or L. 10 per annum.

Alexander Chalmers, Esq. of Cluny, who died last year, left a settlement, jointly executed by himself and spouse, by which he appointed the whole of his heritable and moveable property (subject to certain legacies and annuities, and to Mrs Chalmers's life-rent,) to be vested in trustees, for the "founding, erection, and endowment of an hospital and free dispensary of medicines," to be called "Chalmers's Hospital,"—"for the support, maintenance, cure, and relief of destitute sick paupers, lunatics, and other diseased and poor infirm persons of both sexes, born, domiciliated, and resident in any town or parish of the said county of Banff, the inhabitants whereof shall make collections (for the institution) at their respective parish churches," &c.—the site of Mr Chalmers's residence in the sea-town of Banff being at the same time assigned as that of the hospital to be erected. The trustees named for the management of this bequest are the Lord Lieutenant of the County; Member for the County; Sheriffs-depute and substitute; Provost; Ministers of Banff, Gamrie, and Marnoch; President of Society of Solicitors, and Peter and John A. Cameron, Esqs.—three a quorum.

The whole value of heritable and moveable property which will eventually be available for this charity is supposed not to fall short of L. 40,000.

A Female Clothing Society has been for some years established, which expends about L. 13 annually, (raised by subscription among members and others,) in providing clothes and fuel to poor persons. There are besides one or two annual distributions of coals in the winter season, from bequests made by benevolent individuals.

*Provident Institutions.*—The friendly societies which have had their regulations sanctioned under the new act, are, Solomon's Lodge of Gardeners, instituted in April 1778; Adam's Lodge of Gardeners, and the Mason's Operative Lodge. These, with St Andrew's Mason Lodge, are all the friendly societies (unless the trades' incorporations, whose objects are similar, may be reckoned such,\*) existing in the parish. The Graystone Friendly Society (established in 1792;) the Ploughman's (1801;) the Sailors' (1813;) and some more of later birth, have been dissolved within the last few years. Few of the members of them were inclined to take the trouble of conforming to the new act,—as few (it is suspected) averse to a present division of their funds. All these institutions, however, have gradually been suffering decay. In this, as in most other things, there is a fashion; and here the fashion has declined. Indeed, such societies are seldom entered so much with prudential objects in view, as for purposes of amusement and good fellowship. It is remarked, too, that these associations were never conducted upon sound principles,—the allowances being graduated, not according to a scientific calculation of the average proportion between contributions and claims, but in the ratio of the absolute number of contributors. The allowances granted at present by any of these societies are inconsiderable.

To the principle of friendly societies the objection has been made, that they bear, in some respects, too near an alliance to a game of chances; and that each person, trusting too much to the benefit he himself may enjoy at the expense of others, is thereby led to neglect sounder precautions against future necessity. From this objection, it is added, savings banks are free: here each man gets just his own savings, and hence, as alleged, the superiority of the savings banks over friendly societies. But though some, on

\* At the present moment (June 1836,) the trades' incorporations are in the course of being broken up, and the funds divided.

these grounds, prefer the principle of savings banks, still friendly societies seem generally to be reckoned highly beneficial in their nature,—supposing their management such as to let their operation have fair play.

The Banff Savings Bank was established in 1815. For the last six years, the number of contributors, with the amount deposited by them, has been as follows, viz.

Years.	No. of Contributors.	Amount deposited.
1830,	295	L. 2477 12 4
1831,	288	2424 8 4
1832,	285	2347 9 1
1833,	274	2293 11 10
1834,	297	2629 15 3
1835,	304	2776 15 3

The amount of funds from this bank in the hands of the Commercial Bank of Scotland is about L. 2900. The investments are generally made by men and women servants from Banff and neighbouring parishes.

*Pauperism.*—The poor of the parish are provided for, partly from the funds of the kirk-session, partly by an annual subscription among the inhabitants.

Besides the ordinary church collections, the kirk-session draws annually in rents and interest the sum of L. 28, 9s. 4d.

A certain number of poor persons in the parish receive, directly from the kirk-session, a regular weekly or quarterly allowance, at the rate of from 5s. to L. 2, 12s. a-year each.

The kirk-session has a farther expenditure for extraordinary aids, and for allowances to persons residing out of the parish, but who have acquired a claim to relief by former residence.

The affairs of the remaining poor of the parish are managed by a committee chosen annually by the subscribers to the fund, and which is divided into sub-committees for the several districts.

Along with the amount of the subscriptions, and occasional windfalls, the committee have L. 100 annually placed at their disposal by the kirk-session.

Cases for relief are selected, and the rates to each individual fixed, by the committee, which meets twice a-year. The allowances are, for the most part, paid weekly, and range from 6d. to 1s. 6d. to each person,—a few quarterly from 2s. 6d. to 10s.

The following table presents a view of all the particulars now mentioned for the last five years :

Years.	Ordinary church collections.	Subscriptions, donations, &c.	No. of persons receiving ordinary allowances.				Average weekly allowance to each.	Amount of extraordinary aids.
			From kirk-session.		from general poor's fund.	Total.		
			Resident.	Non-resident.				
1831,	L.112	L.101	12	4	96	112	10d.	L. 9
1832,	111	148	11	4	94	109	9½d.	6
1833,	111	103	11	4	91	106	9½d.	10
1834,*	160	113	12	5	95	112	9½d.	10
1835,	170	116	18	5	98	121	9d.	20
Average of 5 years,	L.133	L.116	13	4	95	112	9½d.	L. 11

The system now described was first adopted in 1817, chiefly with a view to the suppression of common street begging, an end which it has effectually enough answered,—though by no means so as to supersede the necessity for private almsgiving, and occasional collections for special cases of distress; and, taken generally, as a plan of pauper management, its operation appears to have been, on the whole, satisfactory.

It is, however, a circumstance well worth remark, that an additional annual expenditure since the year 1824 of nearly L. 300 (from Cassie's bounty, as already described,) has had so far from a proportional effect in lessening the amount required to be raised otherwise.† Few or none, indeed, of the persons on the general poor's fund are those who are receiving, at the same time, an allowance from Cassie's bequest. But the latter class of persons, being only the next above the former, and that from which the ranks of the regular poor may be supposed to be filled,—the two funds may, in estimating the effect of an increased provision for the poor, be set down as one. It would, of course, be an error to say that Cassie's bounty has not been productive of benefit: it must, to its extent, have saved distress or privation that would have been otherwise felt: but an additional proof has been afforded by it, in the present instance—if, indeed, experience were needed to prove what may be pronounced before hand—that an increase of funds for the maintenance of the poor will not lessen the *number* of the poor.

\* For the last two years there have generally been three services in the church each Sunday, and a resident heritor's contribution to the collections.

† The average sum expended by the Poors' Committee for eight years, 1817-24, was L. 327; number of poor, 156; average sum for five years, 1831-35, L. 216; number, 95; making only a reduction of L. 111 on the sum, 61 on the number. It is believed, too, that it is not so much a lessening of the demand as of the supply that occasions even this difference—several families who were liberal contributors having died away or removed.

Applications for assistance from charitable funds are stated to be increasing in frequency in the parish; and it seems to be the opinion of all who have the means of observing, that feelings of disinclination to resort to such assistance are fast wearing off. There is good reason for suspecting, besides, that the existence of so many charitable institutions in the parish has been the means of attracting poor persons to come from a distance to settle in it.

*Prison.*—The number of prisoners confined in Banff jail for three years has been as follows :

	1832.	1833.	1834.
Debtors, - - -	22	17	9
Criminals, - - -	15	16	45
Revenue offenders, - -	5	4	2
Total each year,	42	37	56

Looking to the strength of the walls of the prison, the solidity of its window gratings, and the ponderous iron door which shuts in its main passage, one would scarcely suppose a prisoner could have much chance of escape; yet, in some instances, escapes have been made from it, and in others, attempts to escape have only been discovered when almost on the point of success.—Some years ago, a few Crown debtors were confined for enormous penalties, incurred for contravention of the excise laws; and on this occasion, so little dependence were the inhabitants disposed to place in the power of walls or bolts to retain the captives, that, having the fear of the Exchequer before their eyes (it being understood that the town would be liable for payment of the penalties if the prisoners escaped,) they turned out, every night, in companies of four or six by rotation, to guard the doors and windows of the prison. Still the prison may be said to be well secured. It is also entirely fire-proof. But it is decidedly deficient in accommodation. There are only two apartments for the reception of civil prisoners, each 19 feet square; and it is understood that a burgher of the town, if confined in one of these, has the power to exclude from it all others who may not possess that happy distinction. Unfortunately, he cannot exclude them from the prison altogether. Instances have occurred in which ten or twelve persons have been huddled together, day and night, in one of these apartments, or with only the additional accommodation of the narrow passage into which the apartments open. There are frequently six or eight persons in one of them. The situation of the prison is airy enough,

but there is no court-yard to which the prisoners have access. There are, besides the civil prisons, two cells for criminals. In these there are no fire-places; and, even in the depth of winter, the wretched inmate has nothing furnished him but a bed-stead. Light and air are admitted through a narrow slit in the wall, which, till lately, was unglazed. So unfit, however, have these dungeons been conceived to be, for the reception of any human being, that criminals have, in fact, necessarily been allowed to encroach on the accommodation of the debtors. These prisons are on the second story. On the ground floor is a pretty large vault, with windows opening into a narrow court, in which female prisoners are generally lodged together, without respect to the cause of their detention. There is also, on the ground floor, a dungeon, (lately constructed) which, assuming that the office of a dungeon is to make human existence wretched, seems to want nothing that can contribute to such a purpose, except the being fairly under ground. It is entirely in the interior of the building, and cut off from all direct communication with external light or air,—the small grating in the door opening only into a half-dark passage. This is said to be intended only for the temporary reception of persons disturbing the public peace by brutal drunkenness or other outrageous behaviour. It does not appear, that until within these few months, any regular means were employed for preserving cleanliness, either as regards the apartments and furniture, or the persons and dress of the prisoners, (except that water was carried in to them by the jailors.)

The jail is entirely under the government or superintendence of the magistrates. Criminals are allowed 3d. a-day, paid by the county, before conviction; by the burgh, after it. Debtors without other means of subsistence receive an aliment from the imprisoning creditor, the amount of which is fixed by the magistrates. It varies generally from 8d. to 2s. 6d. per day.

*Fairs.*—The town is allowed by charters to hold seven or eight fairs or markets yearly, but only four are held; and of these but one (Brandon fair, at Whitsunday,) is of any magnitude. This, as well as the Martinmas and Lammas, are feeing markets. There are no cattle-markets.

*Inns and Alehouses.*—There are 38 inns or shops licensed for the sale of ale and spirits,—all within the liberties of the burgh. The general opinion seems to be, that the number of such houses adds to the prevalence of tippling, and undoubtedly this vice pre-

vails in the town to a considerable extent. But while some suppose that habits of drinking have their origin in causes which would work alike, independently of the greater or smaller number of licensed houses, others, admitting the evil of licensing a house, but from necessity, in a district where there is yet no other, maintain that a *small* number of taverns or alehouses in a neighbourhood where there *must be some*, has a direct tendency to increase dissipation, from the greater number of visitors who must necessarily resort to one place, and the consequent more frequent and easy formation of drinking parties.

A strong belief seems to be generally entertained of the pernicious effects of spirit-shops, as distinct from inns or taverns, in so much as the former (more especially when furnishing, as some of them do, a private room for tippling,) afford opportunities and temptations to many persons who would be averse to be seen frequenting the tavern.

*Fuel*—Coals; but as there is a peat-moss at the inland extremity of the parish, peats are, especially in its vicinity, more or less used. The average price of coals (mostly from Sunderland) is about 1s. 0½d. per barrel of 2½ imperial bushels. Carriage in the town about 1d. per barrel more. Peats, in the town, cost from 2s. to 3s. per load, according to the size of the cart.

#### COMPARATIVE STATE.

The chief differences that have occurred in regard to the state and circumstances of the parish since the last Statistical Account was drawn up, have been sufficiently indicated under the different heads comprehended in the present report. The extension of cultivation, and the use of an improved mode of husbandry,—the establishment of the herring fishery,—the increase of the corn exports, and introduction of the system of exporting live cattle,—the formation of turnpike roads, and multiplication and improvement of the means of communication,—the discontinuance of smuggling,—the expensive, though not quite efficient, additions to the harbour,—the establishment of new congregations and places of worship,—the institution of libraries,—the valuable bequests and endowments made to the town,—the increased conveniences from gas lights, baths, and the like—may just be referred to as among the most striking alterations. In regard to moral and social changes, there is not much to remark. Like all other places in the kingdom, the town partook of the fictitious and temporary prosperity arising from the anticipations of the national revenue made during

the war ; and, like all other places, when the product of these anticipations was once expended, and the permanent burden they entailed began to be felt, it suffered from the transition. In the first period, there was a general start upwards of every rank in society, each occupying the place of the one next above it. The revulsion was necessarily in proportion. Numerous failures among the merchants and tradesmen took place after the peace ; and no little difficulty was sustained by others, whose circumstances were not so necessarily made apparent. Perhaps the increased facilities of bank accommodation which began to be afforded about that time, augmented the evil. But the worst is now past ; matters have returned to their natural level ; and nothing seems wanting, but the continuance of foreign and domestic tranquillity, to enable the community to realize as much prosperity as, under national and local circumstances hardly admitting of alteration, the human condition is usually known to allow.

July 1836.

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## PARISH OF DESKFORD.

PRESBYTERY OF FORDYCE, AND SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

THE REV. GEORGE INNES, MINISTER.

### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—THE present name of this parish, there is reason to believe, is the only name which it has borne since its erection ; and is supposed to have reference to its situation and climate with regard to Cullen, with which it has, of all places, the most intercourse. Deskford lies to the south of Cullen, and being farther from the coast, the climate is naturally colder than that of Cullen ; hence, the name Deskford has been derived from *Chess fure*, which signifies “ a cold place to the southward.”\*

*Extent and Boundaries.*—The length of this parish is rather more than 5 miles, and its breadth somewhat above 3. It is bounded, on the south, by Grange ; on the west, by Rathven ; on the

\* Fordyce, from which Deskford was probably disjoined, is said to have the same etymology. The climate of the greater part of both is similar, and the name, (inverting the syllables.) is also similar.