

PARISH OF RATHVEN.

PRESBYTERY OF FORDYCE, SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

THE REV. JAMES GARDINER, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name, &c.—"RATHVEN," according to the writer of the last Statistical report of this parish, "is said, by those conversant in the Gaelic language, to be derived from two original words, the one signifying 'brake' or 'fern,' and the other 'rock, eminence, or hillock.'" In support of this derivation he adds, "that there is a spot in the neighbourhood of the church called Brakenhaugh, and a farm named Rannachie, *i. e.* the Brakenfield." This, however, is quite an erroneous derivation of the name. The spelling of the term in Gaelic is "*Rath-bheann*," or "*beann*,"—the former meaning a "circle of stones," and the latter "a hill" or "mountain." That this, therefore, is the true etymology of the name, we have only, in order to satisfy ourselves, to look to the Benhill, which overhangs that part of the parish situated towards the south, and examine the numerous cairns found in various parts of it, especially on the Bauds, which shall be duly noticed under the head Antiquities.

Extent and Boundaries.—This parish is situated in the district of the county named Enzie. It extends along the coast, from east to west, 10 miles, and nearly 5 in breadth; and is bounded on the north, by the Moray Frith; on the east and south-east, by the parishes of Cullen and Deskford; on the south, by Deskford and Keith; and on the west, by Bellie. It contains 27,000 Scotch acres, or 33,750 imperial, and 42½ square miles. Annual value of the real property in the parish, as assessed in 1815, L.7336.

Topographical Appearances.—Its figure is rather irregular, but approaches nearer to the form of a parallelogram than any other, though the square diminishes considerably towards the east. There is an extensive range of hills stretching from the Benhill on the

south-east, which bounds the southern part of the parish westward. The Benhill, the highest, is 945 feet above the level of the sea, and serves as a land-mark to the fishermen, being seen by them, according to their calculation, at fully fifteen leagues distance. The other two hills, Maud and Adie, are of less elevation, and covered with heath to their summits. They extend, in a westerly direction, to the boundaries of the parish. The Benhill has been much improved of late by the Earl of Seafield causing a carriage-road to be made, which, by a circuitous course, leads to its top, the view from which, in all directions, is most extensive and commanding. Previous to 1744, this hill was covered with heath, but it was then richly planted to the very summit.

Climate and Soil.—The greatest part of the parish has a north-west exposure, and suffers severely from the storms which blow from that quarter. The most prevalent complaints are rheumatism and catarrhs, brought on by the alternations of heat and cold, particularly among the fishermen, who are exposed to all vicissitudes of weather. It may be remarked, that, in the year 1794, notwithstanding the large population of this parish, no medical man thought it worth his while to settle within its boundaries. At present, there are two surgeons and one apothecary in the village of Buckie.

Surface, &c.—The surface may be described as rather mountainous, with some low-lying ground of good quality and considerable breadth from the sea-shore to the base of the hills on the south. The hills, as already mentioned, are covered with heath or moss, and afford very little pasture, the soil being either hard gravel, or of a mossy character resting upon a bottom of clay very retentive of moisture. On the low grounds, part of the soil is a light loam, rich, with a clay bottom; in another part, it is rather thin, and rests on a red kind of clay formed from the debris of the old red sandstone, but at the same time is very productive. Along the sea-shore it is sandy, and covered with an immense quantity of small stones, evidently rounded by the action of the sea, which, during ages long gone-past, must have flowed over this part of the country.

Hydrography.—The Moray Frith bounds this parish from east to west, towards the north, for ten miles. There is nothing remarkable with regard to the nature of the water, as to colour, temperature, luminousness, saltness, or the flowing of the tides. The shore abounds with Medusae, or sea-jellies. The depth of

water at the village of Findochtie, the property of Earl Seafield, is 24 feet, and the breadth of the entrance into the bason, which is well protected, 270; thus affording sufficient water and safe anchorage, if converted into a harbour, for ships of very considerable tonnage. This parish is intersected by several rapid running burns or streamlets, all of which have their source in the high grounds within its bounds, and empty themselves into the sea at Portgordon, Buckie, and Gollachie. There are several medicinal springs. One of these is situated at Burn of Oxhill, and is much resorted to by people from the inland parts of the country with their children, while labouring under hooping-cough; but the benefit resulting from it is believed to be more imaginary than real, as change of air is always known to be of great advantage in this complaint. There are also two chalybeate springs, one at Gollachie, and the other in the immediate neighbourhood of New Buckie, much frequented, particularly the latter, by people who come thither for sea-bathing, and drinking the water of this well. At Findochtie, a spring of a purgative nature, issuing from a rock considerably within flood-mark, is occasionally drunk by the inhabitants, and those who reside in the neighbourhood. There is an abundant supply of perennial spring water, free both from the carbonates of lime and iron.

Mineralogy.—The prevailing strata along the coast bordering this parish, are rocks of the primitive Neptunian series, viz. gneiss, mica-slate, clay-slate, and schist; and the direction of the strata is from north-east to south-west; and the dip of the rocks is north-west and south-east. The angle of elevation varies at different places. Adjacent to Buckie, where the rocks have been laid bare by the action of the sea, some are perceptible at an angle of about 25°, others at 90°. At the north-east part of the parish, near the burn of Cullen, the old red sandstone commences, which is in conjunction with greywacke to the eastward; and the thickness of that bed extending to the westward is very great, particularly where the new red sandstone is found overlying the old red sandstone formation. The new red sandstone appears at that point in nearly horizontal strata, and dips to the south and south-east. The greywacke here, and along the coast, alternates with clay and mica-slate, which reposes on the greywacke. The bed appears to be of considerable thickness. Its direction is from north-east to south-west; and it is the prevailing rock within the parish. But the greywacke is protruded through the clay and mica-slate

at different points along the coast, and in the interior as far to the westward as Buckie. There the clay and mica-slate alternate with thin veins of coarse limestone, till a short way to the westward of the town, where the greywacke and greywacke-slate alternate with seams of mica-slate, and veins of limestone of a reddish colour, arising from the oxide of iron. Within the village of Buckie, there is a part of the old red sandstone formation seen reposing on clay-slate and mica-slate, which is again reposing on greywacke. This micaceous clay-slate is of a greyish colour, and covers a great part of the interior of the parish. Towards the south, it crops out at different points, and is quarried for roofing slates by the Duke of Richmond at Tarriemount and Upper Aldyleth, and by Sir James Gordon, Bart. on his estate of Letterfourie. Limestone is found and wrought at Nether Buckie. At Tarwathie the red sandstone already mentioned is quarried, and used in building. Indeed this is the only quarry of the kind found in the whole county. A very pure quartz rock is found in the Benhill, the same as at the hill of Durn, near Portsoy. None, however, of the beautifully variegated serpentine, alternating with beds of marble, talcaceous schist, and hornblende rock, as found at Portsoy, occurs here. Boulders or detached masses of granite and gneiss, intermixed with mica, having their surfaces and sharp edges smoothed down and rounded, evidently by the long-continued friction of water, or action of the air, are of frequent occurrence along the sea-shore, and the Bauds moor. These boulders are sometimes found at the distance of many hundred miles from the rocks from which they have been originally detached, as is the case here, no granite appearing within the parish. These transportations point out the agency of currents and immense irruptions of the ocean passing over the land in particular directions, and with such impetus as to carry along these large and ponderous bodies. From the position of these masses, the direction of such currents can often be ascertained with great certainty. Another most remarkable feature of this part of the country is, that the upper or vegetable soil is so densely mixed with water-worn stones, that, in many places, under a rotation of excellent cropping, these stones appear to form nearly a third part of the surface. They are chiefly of quartz, although intermixed with nodules of lime, felspar, and mica. The felspar, as being in combination with potass, is easily affected by the action of the atmosphere, and a considerable portion of it annually dissolved, which

forms a very productive soil. The nodules of lime produce the same effect.

Zoology.—The ordinary indigenous wild animals found in this parish are, the fox, the polecat, the weasel, the ermine or stoat, the black-rat, now nearly extirpated in many parts of Scotland by the brown or Norway rat, common; the water-rat, the short-tailed field-mouse, the common shrew, and the mole. The roe-deer is found wild in Lord Seafield's woods, near the manse; and the fallow-deer, the hare, the rabbit. The hedgehog, though rare in this county, was found last summer both on the farm of Rannes and in the woods at Letterfourie. The otter breeds every season among the rocks at Findochtie, and in the bogs of Rannes. Along the shore, the porpoise, the grampus, the spermaceti whale, and the seal, are frequently seen. The latter is very destructive to the stake-nets during the salmon-fishing season.

Birds.—The osprey, or sea-eagle, is occasionally seen. The kite, commonly called the glead, is known to build on the lofty trees at Rannes and Cullen House. The kestrel, the goshawk, the merlin, and the sparrow-hawk, with the hen-harrier, not common. The long-eared owl, the barn-owl, and the screech-owl are common. The great ash-coloured butcher-bird, though rare, has been seen in the woods of Letterfourie. The raven, the hooded-crow is very abundant, and destructive to the eggs of the partridge and pheasant; common crow, jack-daw, and carrion-crow.

The starling, the thrush or mavis, the blackbird, the missel-thrush, and the fieldfare, with its companion, the red-wing, occur here in large flocks on the approach of winter. Among the strong-billed smaller birds, we have the yellow bunting, the snow-bunting, the common bunting, and the black-headed bunting. The bullfinch, greenfinch, chaffinch, goldfinch, brown-linnet, mountain-linnet or twite, and house-sparrow are common.

Among the soft, or subulated billed birds, we may enumerate the red-breast, red-start, sedge-sparrow, white-throat, pied-wag-tail, yellow-wagtail, seen on the banks of small burns; whin-chat, stone-chat, and sky-lark, the common wren, golden crested-wren, willow-wren, common creeper, and the hedge-sparrow. The great titmouse, blue titmouse, cole-titmouse, and long-tailed titmouse, though rare, have been seen in the manse garden.

The summer birds of passage are, the house-swallow, martin, swift, generally visible from the 1st to the 12th of May; stone-curlew, landrail, cuckoo, and goat-sucker or night-jar, occasionally

seen at nightfall, flying with great rapidity round the manse and garden.

Birds of Game.—The common grouse, partridge, pheasant, much on the increase, as also the wood-pigeon. The rock-pigeon is found in considerable numbers among the high rocks between the villages of Findochtie and Portnockie.

Gralla.—The heron, water-hen, woodcock, common snipe, jack-snipe, lapwing, golden-plover, ringed-plover, grey plover, sanderling, and the oyster catcher.

Aquatic Birds.—Cormorant, scart or shag, kittiwake, common gull, black-backed-gull, and the herring-gull. The eider-duck, velvet-duck, teal-duck, common wild-duck, and coot. The red-breasted-merganser, razor-billed-auk, puffin, little grebe, and northern diver, in severe winters.

Fishes.—In the burns of Tynet, Gollachie, and Buckie, salmon is sometimes taken, but only when there is a high flood. A considerable number, however, is taken in the stake-nets at Porteasay and Portgordon, on their passage to the mouth of the Spey. The common trout and the eel are the only other species found in these burns.

Along the coast, the following are taken; viz. gowdie, haddock, cod, whiting, coal-fish, (the fry called podleys, colmeys, and sethes,) ling, tusk, halibut, erroneously called turbot; plaice, flounder, sole, sea-perch, and mackerel. The herring, most abundant in this parish some years ago; pilchard, and sprat or garvie; sturgeon, taken lately in a stake-net at Portgordon; skate or flaire; thornback, distinguished by a row of strong spines running along the back; sea-dog, accompanying the shoals of herrings, and used as manure; wolf-fish, sword-fish, and lump-fish, or lump-sucker, with the John Doree, taken occasionally.

The lobster, and crab or parten, are abundant; and, about forty-six years ago, the fishers on the coast entered into a contract for five years, with a London company, to fish for lobsters. The Company furnished the skiffs and tackling, and were reimbursed by instalments. They took all their lobsters at 2½d. a-piece, provided they measured six inches from the point of the nose to the end of the boss; and, when under that size, two were esteemed equivalent to one. The success of the white and herring-fisheries, and the amazing quantities of lobsters caught on the coast of Caithness, which the company purchased at a considerably lower price, put an end to this branch of industry.

The oyster and mussel are not found on this coast. The latter, however, is brought from the Friths of Cromarty and Dornock, lodged among the rocks here, and used as required for bait by the fishermen.

Botany.—In this parish, no particularly rare plants have been found. The peach-leaved bell-flower, and giant bell-flower, are seen in great beauty in the woods around Cullen House. The hemlock, foxglove, agrimony, brooklime, spotted dead nettle, sea tree-mallow, common mallow, hoary plantain, and lesser spearwort, occur in the parish.

Along the shore there are, sea-spurry, sandwort, common sea milk-wort, scurvy-grass, and squill.

In the pleasure-grounds of Cullen House, which mostly lie in this parish, there is a great deal of very valuable wood, consisting of oak, ash, elm, beech, larch, and Scotch fir. Some of the beeches, in point of height and dimensions, may vie with the finest in Scotland. The grounds are extensive, and possess much natural beauty, and are intersected with many lovely walks, and kept in the highest order. The utmost attention has been paid by Sir James Gordon, and Mr Gordon of Cairnfield, in pruning and thinning their plantations; and they have now the pleasing satisfaction of seeing their respective properties highly ornamented and improved, by a great variety of thriving forest trees. The grounds around their mansions are laid out with great taste, and neatly kept.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Eminent Men.—The only man of learning and genius, as far as can be discovered, a native of this parish, was the celebrated Dr Alexander Geddes. He was born at Pathheads, in the year 1737, and was descended from parents who had no claims or pretensions to worldly opulence or honours. His father, named also Alexander, the second of four brothers, was a small crofter on the Arradoul estate. The maiden name of his mother was Janet Mitchell; she was a native of Nether Dalachy, in the parish of Bellie. In their religious tenets, both were Roman Catholics; consequently, young Geddes was of the same persuasion. He was taught to read in the humble mansion of a schoolmistress, whose name was Sellar, and whose goodness of heart he was occasionally accustomed to make mention of to the latest period of his existence. Having exhausted all the

store of knowledge which Mrs Sellar could impart, Geddes was next placed under the care of a student from Aberdeen, whose name was Shearer, and whom the Laird of Arradoul had engaged to educate his two sons. In the family of this gentleman, his instructions were gratuitous. How long he remained at Arradoul is uncertain; but, upon leaving the laird's hospitable mansion, he was, at the age of fourteen, removed to Scalán, a free Roman Catholic seminary in the Highlands, limited to boys destined for that church, whose studies are to be completed in some foreign university. The vale in which this seminary was situated was so deeply excavated and overhung by surrounding hills, as almost to require the perpetual use of the lamp.*

Having attained the age of twenty-one, he was removed from Scalán, in October 1758, to the Scotch College at Paris, where he remained six years; and, although pressed to take a share in the public labours of the college, he returned, however, to Scotland in 1764. Immediately after his arrival, he entered into holy orders, and was appointed to officiate at Dundee. Here he was scarcely settled, when he received an offer to reside with the Earl of Traquair. This offer he readily accepted, and became an inmate of his Lordship's family in May 1765. At this time he had reached his twenty-eighth year, and had resided in his Lordship's for more than a year, when a female relation of the Earl openly professed for him an affection which he could not return, having taken the vow of perpetual celibacy. In a sketch of this kind, it is not expected that we should trace the learned Doctor through the whole course of his eventful life. With regard to the merits of his various literary productions, we think it unnecessary to give an opinion, farther than to state that they exhibit great proofs of talent, perseverance, and profound research; and that there are few, if any, who will not allow that he was an accomplished scholar. He died at London, rather suddenly, after suffering excruciating torture from the nature of his disease, on the 26th February 1802, in the sixty fifth year of his age; and, at his own particular desire, his remains were interred in Paddington

* The reader may form some idea of its dark and melancholy aspect, from the following reply Geddes made to one of his fellow-students, who had obtained leave to visit his friends, and who asked him if he had any commands he could execute. "Pray, be so kind," replied Geddes, "as to make particular inquiries after the health of the sun, and tell him I still hope I shall one day be able to renew the honour of a personal acquaintance with him."

Church-Yard. The late Catholic Bishop Paterson of Edinburgh was also a native of this parish, and the son of poor, but industrious and honest parents.

Land-owners.—The chief land-owners are, the Earl of Seafield, to whom belongs Rannes and Findochtie; His Grace the Duke of Richmond, proprietor of Couffurrach, Leitchieston, and Burnside; Sir James Gordon, Bart. of Letterfourie and Nether Buckie; John Gordon, Esq. of Cluny, owner of the lands of Freuchnie, part of Buckie, and Gollachie; Adam Gordon, Esq. of Cairnfield; and the Misses Stuart of Tannachy.

Sir James Gordon, Bart., Adam Gordon of Cairnfield, and the Misses Stuart are resident. John Gordon, Esq. of Cluny, resides occasionally, during the season, at Buckie Lodge; and Dr Kyle, Catholic Bishop of Germanicia, at Presholm.

Parochial Registers.—The earliest records of discipline commence on the 25th December 1698, and have been very regularly kept till 1736. During that period, however, they really contain nothing, in any degree, particularly interesting, except the summoning delinquents before the session, who, upon confessing their guilt, and after severe penance in sackcloth, and many sharp rebukes before the congregation, were restored again to communion with the church. From 1787 till the present time, these records have been regularly kept.

Registration of marriages began at Whitsunday 1716, and that of baptisms in the same year. Great regularity has been observed in both from the above date till 1746; but, from this time till 1791, and even down to the present day, many Episcopalians and Roman Catholics do not register their children. No registration of deaths has ever been kept in the parish.

Antiquities.—There are many remains of antiquity in this parish, particularly of Druidical temples or cairns. The most remarkable and striking of these is one on the heights of Corriedown, called the *Cove Stanes*. A considerable portion of the stones of this cairn was employed in building the present mansion-house of Letterfourie. Mr Gordon, the father of the present proprietor, examined three of them to the foundation, and found only charcoal, and a whitish substance resembling the ashes of wood or bones. He supposed that the low grounds, in the vicinity of his house, had abounded in wood, as large pieces of oak and fir were dug out of the hollows now under cultivation. There is a large collection of stones on an eminence in one of Earl Seafield's en-

closures, near the farm of Woodside, south of the public road, commonly called the "King's Cairn." Tradition has handed down that it is the grave of Indulph or Indulphus, the 77th King of Scotland, who, after obtaining a complete victory over the Danes, was unfortunately killed near this spot. It is a well-known historical fact, that Indulphus's reign was much disturbed by descents of the Danes. There is, however, some dispute regarding the precise period when this event took place. Abercrombie says that it was in 961; Buchanan in 967. We agree with Abercrombie, as Indulphus reigned from 952 to 961, and was succeeded by Duff, who fell by a conspiracy of his subjects in 965. The above event was distinguished by the name of the Battle of the Bauds, at that time an extensive moor, now the property of Lord Seafield.

A great many small cairns are still visible on this moor, between the village of Findochtie and that part of the Bauds now planted, supposed to be the burial places of the Danes who fell in the battle with Indulphus. About seventy-five years ago, a countryman found, on the lands of Rannes, in a tumulus or cairn which he was removing, a stone-coffin, containing human bones of a large size. "Having obtained permission," says the late Rev. Mr Donaldson, "to ransack this grave, I found it covered with a large stone, 4 feet long, 3 broad, and about 14 inches in depth. On removing this, we found four other stones set on their edges, which served as a coffin to part of a skull and jaw-bone, with several teeth, and some fragments of a thigh-bone. The dimensions of this coffin were 3 feet 1 inch in length, 2 feet wide, and 1 foot 10 inches deep. There was no stone in the bottom. The bones were removed into a similar chest a few feet northward of this one, in the same tumulus. This last one was discovered, four or five years ago, by a man in the neighbourhood, who was removing a few more of the stones for building a house. It is of smaller dimensions than the other, and was originally covered with two stones, one of which was off. No bones were found in it. There are many other cairns near this one, but none of them has been searched. They are at no great distance from the House of Rannes, on a farm lately improved out of moor, called Westerside. The ruins of the House of Findochtie, of an old chapel, near the farm-house of Farskape, and of some buildings on the tops of two hills, on the east and west side of the harbour of Portnockie, the former called the Green Castle, and the latter the Tronach Castle, are still to be seen;" but by

whom they were built is unknown. On the moor of Rannachy, to the right, at the distance of 100 paces from the high road, is an eminence evidently artificial, called 'Tarrieclerack, supposed to be a burial-place.

Caves.—The most remarkable of those along the coast, which are found on the property of Lord Seafield, are, 1st, Farskane's, so called from the proprietor having, in 1715, retired into it, along with two other gentlemen, to avoid trouble during the Earl of Marr's rebellion. In it they lived comfortably for five or six weeks, and returned to their own houses, when all apprehension of danger was past. 2d, Janet Corstair's cave, so named from a mad woman who took up her residence in it; and, 3d, The Cross cave, so denominated from its taking a direction to the east and west, at some distance from its entrance. The extent of none of these is known. There is a well of fresh water on the north side of a green hill, surrounded by the tide, called Priest's Craig-well, betwixt Findochtie and Portnockie.

Coins.—In 1805, a small square box was turned up by the plough, on the moor of Arradoul, the property of Mr Gordon of Cairnfield, containing some coins of Queen Mary, James VI., and Charles I. Several of them are in the possession of Mr Gordon and Sir James Gordon, Bart. They were in a very good state of preservation. A silver handle of a sword also was found by Sir James Gordon's father, on the grounds of Letterfourie; but the blade was completely destroyed by rust, so that no idea could be formed of its antiquity.

Modern Buildings.—The chief of these are, Letterfourie, Cairnfield, Tannachy, Burnside, Buckie Lodge, the Roman Catholic chapel, and the Bishop's dwelling-house at Presholm. There are four corn-mills, besides one for grinding flour and making pot-barley, and another for carding wool. There is a distillery at Gol-lachie, but it has not been in operation for a considerable time past.

III.—POPULATION.

The number of souls in this parish, as returned to Dr Webster in 1755, was 2898. By a minute of visitation in the presbytery records, dated at the kirk of Rathven, 29th August 1720, the population is stated at 1700 catechisable persons, and 600 Papists, by a moderate computation of those above ten years of age, by Mr Robert Gordon, the minister, in presence of the heritors.

In 1793, exclusive of that part of the east end of the parish annexed to Cullen *quoad sacra*, the date of which annexation cannot be found out, the population was 3019, of whom 1408 were males, 1411 females; 1766 Presbyterians, 303 Episcopalians, 950 Roman Catholics; and 720 families. At the same date, the annexed part contained 505 persons, of whom 271 were males, 234 females; 498 Presbyterians, 2 Episcopalians, and 5 Roman Catholics.

Population in 1801,	-	3901
1811,	-	4374
1821,	-	5364
1831,	-	6484
1841,	-	6826
The yearly average of births for the last seven years,	-	126
marriages,	-	46
deaths, as nearly as can be calculated,	-	92

The increase of population since 1821, viz. 1126, is altogether to be attributed to the encouragement given by Lord Seafield for the improvement of waste lands, and the flourishing state of the various fisheries, particularly of the herring-fishery; which, however, has been for several years past on the decline, within the bounds of this parish.

There are two insane persons in the parish, and four fatuous. There are two blind, and two deaf or dumb. Two only of the six are supported by the session, one at L.6, 12s. and the other at L.2, 12s. per annum.

Character of the People.—The farmers, whether Presbyterians, Episcopalians, or Roman Catholics, are men of plain and unaffected manners; open and sincere in their intercourse with others; friendly and obliging among themselves; charitable to the poor in proportion to their means, and not inhospitable to strangers. Many of them are intelligent men, and by no means deficient in intellectual, moral, and religious attainments.

The fishermen, as individuals, are nearly placed upon a footing of equality. Their pursuits are similar; hence their language and dealings are almost the same. It is said, "that the voice of one puts all in action, and that the example of one is frequently followed by all; and yet, what is singular, no one seems to possess a character decisive enough to take the lead, or to rise to superiority by the strength of genius, or the arts of address." There cannot be the slightest doubt of the truth of this statement; as I have often marked, on hearing them talking of the success of one fisherman over another, that they never would attribute this suc-

cess either to the superiority of their neighbours' skill in fishing, or of his nets, lines or hooks, but, like all in similar circumstances who are of a superstitious turn of mind, and believe in fate, to what they called "good chance."

The boys go to sea as soon as they can be of any service to their fathers; on that account their education is much neglected, or, at least, much interrupted, so that little progress is made. At eighteen years of age they become men, and, whenever they acquire the share of a boat, they marry, as it is a maxim with them "that no man can be a fisher, and want a wife." They marry, therefore, at an early age, and the object of their choice is always a fisherman's daughter, who is generally from eighteen to twenty-two years of age. These women lead a most laborious life, and frequently go from ten to twenty-five miles into the country, with a heavy load of fish. They seldom receive money for this fish, but take in exchange meal, barley, butter, and cheese. They assist in all the labour connected with the boats on shore, and show great dexterity in baiting the hooks and arranging the lines. When stormy weather prevents the boats from fishing, the men are employed in mending their lines and nets, or in making new ones. They are stout, well-formed, of good stature, capable of undergoing great fatigue, and are the most expert and intrepid seamen in her Majesty's dominions. The women are, in many instances, handsome, good looking, and the very picture of health. Many of the fishermen are sober, industrious, and well-behaved men, and have laid up considerable savings. Others are thoughtless, and too frequently spend foolishly what they have earned with so much danger and hardship.

Every thing in their power has been done by the session to promote temperance at marriages, baptisms, and funerals. Previous to a marriage taking place, the session exacts a pledge of half a guinea from the parties that there will be no rioting or fighting. If there is, the pledge is forfeited to the poor; if it turns out otherwise, it is returned on the following Sabbath, provided the elder of the district certify the same. The fishermen generally are a sober, hard-working race of men, and those who act with common prudence enjoy all the comforts of life in a reasonable degree. In proof of this, the industrious and saving have good houses, mostly slated, and well furnished, consisting of two or three apartments. The women, some years ago, went to church bare-headed, but now they put on white muslin caps, or straw bonnets, with red cloaks or

Horses.—The horses, particularly those for agricultural purposes, have been much improved in size and shape, and this in a great measure has been owing to the spirited exertions of the Agricultural Society, instituted some years ago at Cullen. A handsome premium is given from the Society's funds to the owner of the best stallion that appears at the annual competition, and the successful competitor is bound to keep his horse for the season within the limits of a certain portion of the district. There are now many valuable horses for agricultural purposes in this parish, which in price may vary from L. 20 to L. 35, and some even bring so high a sum as L. 40.

The fields are properly laid out, cleaned, drained, and in many instances enclosed with dry-stone dikes. The furrows are straightened, run-ridge is abolished, and a regular rotation of cropping is strictly observed. The six years' shift is most general. The rents are from L. 30 to L. 500, according to extent and quality. The farm-steadings and office-houses, with few exceptions, stand very much in need of improvement.

Manures.—Various kinds of manure are used. Farmers residing near the coast, after a storm has loosed the sea-weed from the rocks, and driven it to the shore, procure large quantities, which they spread in summer on ley to the extent of three hundred cart loads to the acre. This process is renewed every second year. Dung, purchased from the fishing villages, and composed of the offals of the large fish, when mixed with moss or earth, is accounted a valuable manure for raising green crops.

Produce.—

Grain of all kinds,	L. 27,800
Potatoes and turnips,	8,040
Hay and pasture,	7,096
Annual thinnings of wood,	600
Fisheries from the sea,	45,000
Slate and lime quarries,	300
	<hr/>
	L. 88,936

Manufactures.—About seventy-nine years ago, linen was manufactured to a very considerable extent in this parish, which at that time gave employment to sixty hand weavers, besides the great number of females who were employed in the spinning of the flax. It was mostly Dutch, and sent dressed or hackled from Aberdeen, Fraserburgh, Banff, Portsoy, Cullen, Huntly, and Fochabers, to different agents, to the amount of 348 cwt., which, given out to

the spinners at the average price of 1s. per lb., brought in annually L.1948, 16s. At present there are only four weavers, who are chiefly employed by different families in weaving a little napery, linen, and plaiden for family use. A small manufactory for spinning ropes is still carried on at Buckie.

The following are the imports and exports at Port Gordon for the following years.

1833. Salt imported, 1981 tons.	English coal imported, 1348 tons.
Grain exported, 3520 quarters.	
1834. Salt imported, 2474 tons.	English coal ditto. 1458 tons.
Grain exported, 6359 quarters.	
1835. Salt imported, 2108 tons.	English coal ditto. 1233 tons.
1836 to the 30th September 1837.	Salt imported, 2856 tons.
English coal imported, 2068 tons.	Grain exported, 12538 quarters.
1837. Salt imported, 1872 tons.	English coal ditto. 1452 tons.
Grain exported, 7564 quarters.	
1838. Salt imported, 1656 tons.	English coal ditto. 1245 tons.
Grain exported, 10,344 quarters.	
1839. Salt imported, 1427 tons.	English coal ditto. 1357 tons.
Grain exported, 11,243 quarters.	
1840. Salt imported, 2130 tons.	English coal ditto. 2056 tons.
Grain exported, 8927 quarters.	
1841. Salt imported, 1380 tons.	English coal ditto. 3517 tons.
Grain exported, 6223 quarters.	
Register tons, 3231.	

There were imported at Buckie last year, several cargoes of coals and one of salt; at Porteasy, one also of coals; and one at Findochtie.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Some years ago, two fairs were annually held in this parish; but now there is only one, which takes place in the end of July for cattle, sheep, cheese, &c. At Buckie Burn, there is a post-office, with a daily delivery. There is no regular market for butcher-meat; but at Buckie, and the other villages, wheaten bread and groceries can be procured.

Villages in the parish.—There are six villages, viz. five fishing; Buckie, Porteasy, Findochtie, Portnockie, Port Gordon, and Rathven, which requires no description.

Buckie is situated at the mouth of the Burn of Buckie, and belongs to Sir James Gordon, Bart., on the west side of this burn; and on the east of it, to John Gordon, Esq. of Cluny. According to the last census, it contains a population of 2005. The west side has been a fishing station for nearly 200 years, and is the oldest in the parish. At what time the other side became a fishing station, cannot be ascertained with any degree of certainty.

During the year 1723, a fishing-boat and crew, belonging to the Duke of Gordon, removed from Gollachie, which is situated about a mile westward of Buckie, as being a safer and more commodious situation. About that period, the proprietor of Nether Buckie, who held his lands in feu from the Duke, had only one boat; and as he was out of the kingdom, and considerably in arrears of his feus to the Duke, the desired accommodation was the more readily obtained. At present, there are 117 large boats, and 28 small, employed in the various fisheries.

Porteusy.—This village is situated nearly two miles east from Buckie. In the year 1727, it was known as a fishing-station, and contained five houses, which were built by Hay of Rannes, at that time the proprietor, for the accommodation of the original fishermen, who came from Findhorn, in Morayshire, to settle there. The writer of the last Statistical Report says, “that he obtained this information from a man aged ninety, who was a native of this parish, and helped to man the first boat.” This village contains a population of 420. They have 27 large boats, and 12 small ones.

Findochtie.—Findochtie lies two miles from Porteusy, and contains a population of 414. A colony of fishermen settled here from Fraserburgh in 1716. They possess amongst them 24 large boats, and 15 small.

Portnockie.—Portnockie, the property of the Earl of Seafield, contains a population of 800, and attached, *quoad sacra*, to Cullen, is two miles to the eastward of Findochtie. “The following anecdote,” says the late Rev. Mr Donaldson, “ascertains its origin as a fishing-station. About twenty years ago, died Kattie Slater, aged ninety-six. Like many old people, she was unable to tell her age precisely; but she recollected that she was as old as the House of Farskane, as her father had often told her that he built the first house in Portnockie, the same year in which the house of Farskane was built; and that she was brought from Cullen to it, and rocked in a fisher’s scull, instead of a cradle.” Now, from the date on the house of Farskane, it appears to have been built in 1677. Thus the origin of this village is fixed with sufficient accuracy. It contains 800 inhabitants, and has 70 large boats, and 27 small.

Portgordon.—This village, of which the Duke of Richmond is now proprietor, was named from the late Noble Dukes of Gordon. It contains a population of 470, and is attached, *quoad sacra*,

to the Chapel of Ease at Enzie. There is a tolerably good harbour, and, as has been stated, considerable business is done in exporting grain, and in importing salt and coals. There are 7 large boats, and 10 small.*

Herring Fishery.—About Christmas, the fishermen engage with the curers in the herring fishing, at the various curing stations on the coast of Caithness, at Fraserburgh, Peterhead, and Aberdeen. They receive from the fish-curer a bounty on each boat from L.8 to L. 10, and 10s. 6d. for every cran which will contain from 600 to 700 dozen, with four pints of whisky weekly. Each boat requires four men, and sometimes a boy. In a successful season a boat may take in one night upwards of 40 crans; from 150 to 180 is reckoned an excellent fishing for the season. The number of boats in this parish is 245; and, taking the average of each boat at 100 crans at 10s. 6d., the amount will be L. 18,375.

Means of Communication.—The roads, upon the whole, in all directions, are good, and kept in an excellent state of repair. The post-road runs through the parish from east to west for ten miles. A coach from Elgin to Banff passes and repasses daily along this road, affording an easy and expeditious conveyance to various parts of the county. The condition of the bridges and fences is good.

Harbours.—There are two harbours, one at Buckie and the other at Portgordon. Ships of considerable burden enter the harbour at Portgordon, where, as has been stated, considerable business

* The large boats are from 12 to 14 tons in weight, and the small ones between 4 and 5. The price of a large boat is L.27; masts and sails, including cordage, L.16; each net is from 45 to 50 yards in length, and costs L.3, 10s. In fishing cod, ling, and haddocks, a large boat requires eight men; and each boat has, from February to April, nine lines, containing 800 hooks at a yard's distance. From this period, when the season for taking large fish begins, till April, the fishermen seldom go farther from the shore than fifty miles. From the end of April, or beginning of May, they frequently sail out to the distance of eighty miles in search of skate, and then each boat has eighteen lines. Skate is found in great abundance in a particular spot of Caithness, called the Skate Hole. Cod, ling, halibut, tusk, and skate, are the only large fish caught in any quantity in the Moray Frith. They are salted in pots on the beach, and dried on the rocks, or on a temporary frame made for the purpose. Skate, however, is dried without salt, and the halibut is used fresh. The ling and skate are most valuable, on account of their livers yielding a considerable portion of oil, which is sold from 10d. to 1s. per pint. Cod, ling, and tusk, are in season from May to February; skate is good at all seasons; and halibut in high perfection about July. In June, the dried fish is packed in the large boats, and carried for sale to the different towns along the Fife coast, to Edinburgh, Glasgow, and occasionally to Ireland. A cargo is valued at L.100.

The crew of a small boat consists of five men, with a boy. The small boats are used for taking haddocks, whittings, flounders, &c. Mackerel is caught from July till the end of August, by a line sunk with lead, and the hooks baited with any substance of a bright or red colour. They are also frequently taken in the salmon stake nets in large quantities.

is done in importing and exporting salt, coals, and grain. The one at Buckie is used chiefly as a landing place for the fishermen, and a protection for their boats. In summer, coals and salt may be landed with safety.

Ecclesiastical State.—The situation of the parish church is both central and convenient for the greater part of the population, its distance from the extremities being four miles and a-half, and from the nearest boundary about two. It was built in the year 1794, and since that time, has only undergone some slight repairs upon the roof. Its present state, therefore, is good, and 1000 persons, allowing eighteen inches to each, can be comfortably accommodated. The sittings are all free, and the right of occupancy arises from the families living upon the properties of the different heritors, to whom seats were allocated in proportion to their valued rental.

The manse was built in 1778, and underwent considerable repairs in 1827, and at present, including the office-houses, is in good habitable order. The extent of glebe is seven acres of arable ground, which may be valued at L. 17, 10s. The amount of stipend is 120 bolls of barley, and the same number of meal, converted into money at the highest fiars of the county, with L. 10 for communion elements. Sir Andrew Leith Hay of Rannes is patron.*

* Alexander Macdonald, Esq. Register-Office, supplied me with the following intelligence relative to this parish.

“The Provestrie of the College Kirk of Cullane fundat onlie upon the fruittis of the vicarage of Rathven, pertaining to Sir George Duff, Provost, liand in the diocis of Abirdene within the shirefdom of Banff. Being at all times collectit bi the said Sir George himself, sen his entres thairto. The yeirlie avall estimate to L merkis.

“Quhairof he payis to Sir Andro Hay, vicar pensioner of Rathven xx merkis yeirlie,—Sic subscribitur, Sir George Duff, Provost of Cullane. Provestrie of Culane quhilk is the vicarage of Rathven. In the hail, xxxiij ti vj. s. viij. d.; 3 thairof, xj ti ij s. ij d. ot., &c.

“The rental of the personage of Rathven with the annexis therof, liand within the diocesis of Abirdene and Murray, respective sherefdoms of Banff and Murray respective. In the first the teind silver of the parochin of Rathven vijxx vjti. The malles of the baronie of Rathven, xxxi merkis vij s. liij. d. The fermes of the Loynhead aikkeris and mylne miltures extendis to vxx bollis beir. Item, the kirk of Dundureus set for xl tib. Item, the Kirk of Kinlallartie, xxiij ti. Item, the landis of Murven, liand in the parochine of Dundureus, xvj merkis. Heirof deduct of ordinar chargis to sex bedmen xliij merkis. Item, to their habittis, vij ti. liij s. Item, to the staller Abirdene. Item, geiven furth of Dundureus to the Abbey of Kinlos v. ti, sic subscribitur, G. Hay with my hand.

Personage of Rathven, the beidmen's pensionis and daith deduct, In the hail, ije vj. ti x s.; 3 thairof, iijxx viij ti., xvj s. viij d.; beir, vj chalders, liij bollis; 3 thairof, ij ch., j b. j pc. 3 pt.”

In “the registre of ministers and thair stipends sen the year of God 1567,” published by Alexander Macdonald, Esq. one of the members of the Maitland Club, we find that Maister George Hay, minister of Rathven, in the diocis of Abirdene, for the year 1576, had for his stipend, ij. c. ti.

The present incumbent raised a process of augmentation of stipend before the Teind Court, which, however, was refused in November 1838, on the ground that his ministerial labours were diminished on account of the erection of a chapel at Buckie, on the Church Extension principle.

There are three Chapels of Ease attached to the Established church in this parish; one situated at the Enzie, which was built in the year 1785, and seated for 404. This chapel was erected from money raised by a general collection made through all the churches of Scotland, as recommended by the General Assembly. It is endowed, and the fund arises from lands left by a Mr Anderson, which were purchased by Alexander, late Duke of Gordon, and the price received was more advantageously vested in other property. It is under the management of the Committee of the Royal Bounty, along with the constituent members of the presbytery of Fordyce, within whose bounds it is situated. The clergyman receives annually from the Procurator of the Church the sum of L. 62, 8s. His other emoluments arise from seat rents, which are let so low as from 1s. to 3d. annually, and a glebe of eight acres, for which two bolls of barley are paid to his Grace the Duke of Richmond. The ground is rather of an inferior quality, and its value may be about L.1 per acre. There is no manse, but the clergymen resides in a very comfortable house attached to a farm which has always been let to the incumbent. The whole emoluments, exclusive of what may arise from the profits of the farm, may amount to L.70 per annum. There are no free sittings, but as the seats are let at so very moderate a rate, this really can scarcely be felt as any inconvenience. The funds arising from the weekly collections are under the management of the kirk-session. The yearly amount varies from L.18 to L.21. Out of this sum, as they have no benefactions, they maintain their own poor, whose number at present on the roll is 33, and pay the church officer and precentor. The population is 1703, and divine service is well attended. Communicants 340.

The other chapel connected with the Establishment is situated

“ Thomas Hay, reidar at Rathven, his stipend xx ti, &c.”

In the same register for the Schyre of Tueddail, parochin Ettlilstoun, the following is recorded, which we think worthy of a place in this report, “ Mr George Hay, minister and persoun, the thryd of this personage and Rathven, alsweill by runis as to cum extending to lxvij to xvj s viij d j chalder j boll beir of Rathven,—iiij chalder, ix bollis of meill for Ettlilstoun. Providing always he insist diligente in the ministrie, and als cause his kirk quhar he makis not continuall residence to be sufficiently servit, and that he charge the kirk with na farther stipend.”

in the village of Easter Buckie. It was built in the year 1835, chiefly by subscription, and cost the sum of L.800. It is free of debt. The clergyman was ordained to this charge in the month of July 1837, and has a bond for L.80 per annum as stipend. This chapel contains 800 hearers. There are no free sittings, provided they possibly can be let. The highest charge is 3s. 6d. and the lowest 1s. No part of the weekly collections has hitherto gone to the support of the poor. The heritors and kirk-session are now, however, entitled to the half of these collections, according to the decision given by the Court of Session in the cause of the heritors against the managers of the Chapel of Ease in Brechin. The population assigned is upwards of 2000, which comprehends the whole of the village of Buckie, and a small portion of the landward part lying towards the south. Number of communicants, 400; unlet seats, 300.

The third chapel in connection with the Established Church is situated at the village of Portnockie. It was finished and opened for public worship some time ago. It contains 450 sitters. The whole seats are already let, and the members of Presbytery have agreed to preach in rotation weekly till such time as a clergyman be ordained. It is called Seafield Church, and, when formed into a parish, will comprehend the part of this parish attached *quoad sacra* to Cullen, and a few families residing in the immediate neighbourhood of Portnockie. It was built by subscription, and cost L.400, of which the Honourable Colonel Grant, now sixth Earl of Seafield, contributed L.100.

There are two Episcopal chapels,—one at Arradoul, and another in Buckie. The one at Arradoul was built about fifty-four years ago, and contains 211 sittings, of which 139 are let at 3s. 6d. each. The other, in Buckie, was purchased about a year ago from the Methodists, and contains 200 sittings.

There are two Roman Catholic chapels in this parish, one of which is situated at Presholm, and the other at Buckie. The one at Presholm was built in 1786, and contains 800 sitters; the other, which was lately fitted up, holds 400. The attendance at each chapel averages 400. The amount of Catholic population is 1500. The bishop resides at Presholm, and has three priests who officiate and live with him there, whose incomes depend solely upon what the bishop may give them. The collections at both chapels are given to the poor of their own persuasion.

Divine service at the Established Church is well attended. The number of all ages belonging to the parish church is 1820. Average number of communicants, 700. The amount of extraordinary collections, during the last five years, for charitable purposes, was L.20, 10s. 10½d. One of these collections is annually made in behalf of the Aberdeen Infirmary.

Education.—The number of schools in the parish is fourteen. Six of these are endowed, and the other eight are supported by fees.

The master of the parochial school has a salary of L.32, 1s. 6d., with the legal accommodation, and an annual sum from the Dick Bequest of L.25. The branches of instruction are, reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar, geography, Latin, and the elements of Greek when required. The fees charged for reading English are 2s. per quarter; for arithmetic and writing, 2s. 6d.; English grammar and geography, 3s. 6d.; for Greek or Latin, 5s. Average number of scholars during the year, 80. He is not session-clerk, consequently he has no emoluments from that office. Amount of school fees, L. 23, making in whole about L. 80 annually. The school is ably taught.

The Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge has endowed two schools in this parish, one at Buckie, a most important station, and the other at the village of Couffurach, in the immediate neighbourhood of the Enzie chapel.* The number of scholars, according to the last report, was 46. At Couffurach, the master has a free dwelling-house and school-room from His Grace the Duke of Richmond, and L.15 of salary from the society above-mentioned. He teaches only the common branches of education. Number of scholars, 31. An efficient and active teacher is much wanted at this station. There is another school at Port-Gordon in this district. The Duke of Richmond pays the teacher a salary of L.15, and allows him a free house and school-room. This is also an important station, and the school is most successfully conducted. The number attending is 90.

* The school in Buckie has been withdrawn by the Society, on the ground, that the school-house has been allowed to fall into decay. This is deeply to be regretted, because Buckie, from its great population, is one of the most important stations in the north of Scotland. It is therefore to be hoped, that a commodious house will be speedily provided by the proprietor, and that a zealous and efficient teacher will be forthwith appointed.

Besides the school endowed by this Society, there is another in Buckie, kept by a woman, who teaches reading, along with sewing and knitting, to little girls. She receives a salary of L.4; number of scholars, 30. There is another school, for the same purpose, taught by a female at Findochtie. She receives L.1, 1s. annually from Earl Seafield, and has a free house. Their charges are a mere trifle per month. In the populous village of Portnockie, the Noble proprietor, the Earl of Seafield, has built an excellent school-house, and gives L.10 annually to the teacher, who is allowed to charge the same fees as at the parish school. It is numerously attended, and well taught by the present master. There are also five Sabbath schools in the parish, attended by about 300 scholars.

In an extensive parish of this kind, it cannot be very easily ascertained what number of the young, betwixt six and fifteen years of age, cannot read or write. There are few, if any, who are not able to read; but a considerable number cannot write.

The people, in general, are alive to the benefits of education; but many of the poorer classes, particularly the more indigent of the fishermen, are compelled to take their children from school as soon as they are able to do any thing for their own support.

There are no parts of the parish so distant from some one of the schools, as to prevent attendance.

There can scarcely be a doubt, that, in general, a visible change in the conduct and morals of the people has taken place, since the facilities of education were increased, though there is still great room for farther improvement.

Library.—A public library was instituted some years ago in the village, or kirk-town of Rathven. It contains a considerable number of valuable works, and is supported by a quarterly contribution.

Charitable Institutions.—Bede-House.—The origin of this institution is mentioned by Spottiswood in his Account of Religious Houses in Scotland, and is as follows: "Rothsan, John Bisset gives to God, and the Church of St Peter's of Rothsan, for sustaining seven leprous persons, the patronage of the Kirk of Kyltargy, to pray for the souls of William and Alexander, Kings of Scotland, and souls of his ancestors and successors, about 1226."*

* "Donatio Johannis Byseth de jure patronatus ecclesie de Kytargy.

"Omnibus has literas visuris vel audituris Johannes Byseth, eternam in Domino

The Bede House is still standing in the village of Rathven, and was very lately repaired; and two of the six Bede men, who are still maintained on the establishment, at present live in this house. When a vacancy occurs, the kirk-session merely recommend, as the appointment is invested in the Earl of Seafield, who is proprietor of the lands of Rannes, and their yearly income is as follows: From the lands of Rannes, each bedeman has half an acre of good croft land during his life, and one boll of oatmeal annually; from the lands of Findochtie, 8s. 1½d.; and, from John Gordon, Esq. of Cluny, as proprietor of the lands of Freuchnie, which formerly formed part of the estate of Rannes, 1s. 4¾d. making in whole, 9s. 6d. The half acre, when let, which they are allowed to do, brings L.1, 1s. per annum.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The number at present on the poor's roll is 69, besides many others who occasionally receive relief. There are also two fatuous persons supported from the session funds, one at 3s. 6d. per week, and the other at 1s. Hitherto no assessment has been made; but in a very short time, it must become unavoidable.

The present funds for the support of the poor are the ordinary weekly collections at the church doors, which, for the last eight years, have averaged L.44, 4s. 11¾d.; from interest of money vested with the Honourable Colonel Grant, L.2, 10s.; from fines last year, now not exacted, L.22, 11s.; from mortcloth, L.2, 6s.;

salutem, universitate vestre significo me caritatis intuitu et pro anima Domini, Wilhelmi Regis Scotie, et pro salute Domini mei Alexandri nobilis regis, nec non et pro salute animarum antecessorum et successorum meorum dedisse, concessisse et hac presenti carta mea confirmasse Deo et ecclesie Sancti Petri de Rothfan ad sustentationem leprosorū ibidem Deo servientium jus patronatus et quicquid habui in donatione ecclesie de Kytalargy quantum ad meam pertinet donationem, habendam et possidendam sibi, et successoribus suis de me et heredibus meis adeo libere quiete plenarie et honorifice in liberam puram et perpetuam eleemosinam; sicut aliqua ecclesia ab aliquo milite vel barone in regno Scotie liberius, quietius, plenius, et honorificentius tenetur et possidetur. Preterea dedi domui tantum de rebus meis et averiis unde placati sunt et fideliter, mihi et heredibus meis promiserunt et per pupplicum et solempne instrumentum se obligaverunt, quod unum capellanum ibidem Deo sacra ministrantem et septem leprosos et unum famulum illis servientem pro redemptione peccatorum suorum in perpetuum sustenebant, ac illis singulis in necessariis competenter ministrabant. Cum autem aliquem illorum infermiorum mori contigerit, vel de domo predicta recesserit; donec predictus numerus compleatur per me vel heredes meos alius presorutabitur et instituetur. Quod ut ratum et firmum in perpetuum habeatur presens scriptum, cum sigillo meo dignum duxi roborandum. His testibus, domino Andrea episcopo, F. decano, H. archodiacano Moraviensi, H. decano Rosensi vicario Moraviense, Thoma hostiano [vicario] de Inuernys, W. Prath [vicario] de Inuernarrin, B. [vicario] de Forays, W. fratre meo, H. Corbeth, Symone vicario de Dulbathlach, H. cappellano meo, qui hanc cartam scripsit Wadeno scutifero meo et multis aliis, Tabula, p. vii. fol. 29, Chartulary of Moray. Actum anno gratis, 1500^oxxvz. mense Junie, die mensis ejusdem decimo nono apud Inuernys."

from dues of proclamation, L.2, 12s. 6d. Total, L.74, 4s. 5½d. Last year, however, the sum of L.96, 14s. 5d. was disbursed, which included expenses of every kind; but, in order to make up this amount, the session were under the necessity of taking up the remainder of the money lodged with Earl Seafield.* The poor, according to their necessities, receive from 5s. to 7s. per quarter. In addition to this, Lord Seafield gives annually a certain quantity of meal to those on the poor's roll who reside upon the lands of Findochtie and Porteasy.

This part of the country was wont to be greatly infested with vagrants; but the establishment of the rural police in this and the neighbouring counties has completely suppressed promiscuous begging, and conferred a great boon on the district.

In a poor and populous parish such as this, we have much pleasure in stating, that the poor, in most cases, manifest no particular disposition to seek parochial relief, unless forced by necessity alone, or unexpected bereavement; many melancholy and heart-rending cases of which too frequently occur among the fishermen.

Inns or Alehouses.—In the village of Buckie there are ten licensed houses for retailing ardent spirits; in Porteasy, two; in Findochtie, four; in Portnockie, four; in Portgordon, six; two by the turnpike road; two in the village of Rathven; making in whole 30,—a number by far too great, and which must tend, and that in no ordinary degree, both to impoverish and demoralize the people, particularly the fishermen.

Fuel.—The principal fuel used is peat, or dried turf. It is procured at a great distance from the different villages, consequently it is very expensive. A small cart-load costs from 1s. to 1s. 6d. According to the last report of this parish, it is stated, “that, when the load is sold at 1s., the consumer pays at the rate of a halfpenny for four peats and one turf.” Coals are sold at Buckie, and Portgordon, about 1s. 6d. per imperial barrel, ten of which make a good cart-load, weighing nearly 18 cwt.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The valued rental of this parish in 1792, was from L. 4000 to L. 5000 Sterling; in 1813, it was assessed at L.7336. Since the

* Since the above was written the whole funds have been exhausted, so that the kirk-session found themselves under the necessity of calling a meeting of heritors, to take immediate steps to provide for the wants of the poor. They met accordingly, and assessed themselves for the ensuing year to the amount of L.95 Sterling.

last Statistical report was published, immense improvements have taken place. Many hundred acres of moor-ground have been reclaimed. The Earl of Seafield gives a bounty of L.5 for each acre thus improved. On the extensive moor grounds lying on the north and south sides of the turnpike road leading from Cullen to a little westward of Rannachie, from the encouragement thus given, the appearance of the face of the land has been most completely changed: and, in addition to this, many comfortable and commodious houses have been built, which, with their neat enclosures, add very much to the beauty of the surrounding country. By the premium thus offered, many industrious and enterprising poor people obtain a decent and respectable subsistence. The improvers, besides receiving the L.5 for each acre reclaimed, possess it rent free for five years; after that period they pay a rent according to the quality of the ground improved. Prejudices in favour of old practices are speedily dying away; and every intelligent and cautious man is anxiously looking around him to discover what is most conducive to his own interest. Great improvements have been made in agriculture, particularly in draining and turnip-husbandry. Thrashing-mills have been erected wherever the farms are of any considerable extent, several of which are driven by water. Much corn is still thrashed with flails. The people are, in every respect, improved, both as to intelligence, food, clothing, and lodging. The roads and bridges are kept in good order, affording an easy and ready access to markets, and every part of the surrounding country.

March 1842.