

ADDENDUM.

While these pages have been passing through the press, I have been informed by Dr Anderson of Newburgh, to whom I am indebted for the geology of the parish, that an omission occurs in the series of deposits, as described by him, and that, immediately after the second paragraph in which the yellow sandstone is noticed, several other beds should be stated as following in the order of superposition. Immediately above the yellow sandstone, a series of alternating beds of sandstone, coal, ironstone, and shale occur. There are two thin seams of coal, the lowest of which may be observed cropping out at the farm steading of Cults-Dam, and the other beds have been quarried about a mile to the westward. The thickness of the whole appears to be about 200 feet.

For "orthocerates," in the next paragraph, read "orthoceratites."

PARISH OF BALMERINO.

PRESBYTERY OF CUPAR, SYNOD OF FIFE.

REV. JOHN THOMSON, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name, &c.—THE name of this parish, according to the most ancient orthography, is *Balmurynach*, *Balmerinoch*, and more recently *Balmerino*,—terms obviously of Gothic origin, and compounded of two words signifying "Sailor's Town." It would appear that the name was first applied to a small village of remote antiquity, pleasantly situated on the banks of the estuary of the Tay, and which, so early as the thirteenth century, attracted the notice of the court as an eligible summer residence,—Queen Emergarde having frequently visited the place for the benefit of her health; and close to which, in testimony of her gratitude, she founded an abbey. Naughton, the residence of the principal heritor in the parish, is likewise a term of Gothic origin, which according to the manuscript register of the priory of St Andrews, was anciently written *Doldanha*, afterwards *Chondrohedalion*, *Hydrat-nachten*, *Hadnachten*, all now smoothed down into the short, and to modern ears less dissonant, epithet of Naughton. The Picts, according to the best authorities, had sole possession of the whole of this district of the

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county, for a period of at least a thousand years; and no wonder that, in the course of that time, their language should have given names to every locality within their dominions, many traces of which are still to be found in this immediate neighbourhood.

Boundaries and Extent.—The parish stretches along the south bank of the estuary of Tay, from near the mansion-house of Birkhill, on the west, to the Wormit Bay on the east. From these two points, it ranges in a semicircular form towards the small stream of Motray, which constitutes its boundary on the south. Its length along the Tay from east to west, is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and its breadth from north to south about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles. It is bounded on the north by the Frith of Tay; on the west, by the parish of Flisk; on the south by Kilmany; on the east by Forgan or St Fillans. Within this area there are contained about 8 square miles.

Topographical Appearances.—Two hilly ridges traverse the parish from east to west, and run nearly parallel to each other. The Scurr Hill and Coultrey Hill form the loftiest points of their respective ridges; the former, which rises in the northern division of the parish, attains an elevation of about 400 feet above the level of the Tay; and the latter, which occupies the southern division, is about 500. The manse and church are beautifully situated within the intervening valley, which at this point is very narrow, but gradually stretches out to considerable dimensions in its progress eastward. About the centre of the southern ridge, there is a considerable extent of high table-land in which the village of Galdry is placed; the ground slopes gently down on the south towards the valley of Kilmany, and is terminated on the east by the ravine of Wormit-Den, which here separates the parish from Forgan: the hamlets of Coultrey and Corbie Hill lie towards the western extremity. The northern ridge declines more rapidly towards the Tay, the shores of which, along the whole boundary, are extremely bold and rocky, rising in some places into precipitous, mural cliffs. The villages of Kirkton and Balmerino are both situated on the western slope of the Scurr Hill; and a little to the south lie the ruins of the Abbey, where the ground gradually declines towards the banks of the Tay. The house of Naughton is built on the southern acclivity of a small isolated ridge, which rises abruptly a little to the east of the church, in the centre of the valley, on the summit of which the ruins of an old castle are still to be seen. A beautiful picturesque dell lies immediate

ly beneath, from the bottom of which the rock springs perpendicularly to the height of ninety or one hundred feet, and which is overhung by the walls of the building; presenting no mean idea of the strength of a place that must have frequently been put to proof by the rude assailants of a former age. The parish is well wooded, every spot almost, which is less adapted for tillage, being covered with thriving plantations, and without which, many of the grounds, from their elevated situation, would suffer much by their exposure to the easterly gales.

Climate.—Few places in Fife can boast of a healthier climate. The soil is generally dry, resting immediately, over the greater part, on whinstone rock; and there is neither bog nor marsh to interfere with its general salubrity. Ancient history, as well as modern experience, attests its superiority in this respect. Martin takes notice of the fact in his history of the See of St Andrews. “Magdalene, Queen of James V. being,” he says, “a tender Lady, the physicians choosed this place (St Andrews), and the Abacie of Balmerinoch, as having the best aers of any places in the kingdom for her residence and abode.” In subsequent generations, dames of meaner degree have been no less indebted to the excellence of its “aers,” as the following well authenticated facts clearly prove. The writer of the former Statistical account says, “The wholesomeness of the climate appears also from the fruitfulness of the females. The present incumbent has often, in the course of ten years, had an opportunity of baptizing twins; and there are two families in the parish at present, one of whom has had thrice twins, and the other had five sons at two births.” I may be permitted to add, that that individual, during his incumbency, baptized, in the parish, *three times trines*.

Few parishes of equal extent contain a greater number of very old people. There are at present 35 individuals bordering on or upwards of eighty years. One woman is in her ninety-fifth year, and another died last year in her hundredth. From March 1836 to March 1837 six individuals died, whose united ages amounted to five hundred and twelve, giving an average of eighty five-years to each. The last incumbent died in March 1836, in his ninety-first year.

Hydrography.—The Tay, as already noticed, washes the northern boundary of the parish, and, possessing a considerable proportion of saline matter, affords, everywhere along the coast, excellent opportunities of bathing to the inhabitants. The estuary is

here about four miles broad, but, as high sand-banks stretch outward for nearly a mile, vessels of limited burden only can approach the harbour. No river or stream of any consequence passes through the parish, but there are various springs from which a copious flow of water continually issues, which, along with that collected from the drainage of the land, affords power enough for three thrashing and one corn-mill. The springs have obviously served, in other days, a more dignified and important end than the practical and economical one to which they are now applied. This appears from the names by which some of them are still designated, viz. the Lady Well, Prior Well, St John's Well, &c.

*Geology.**—The rocks in this parish belong exclusively to the sandstone and trap families. Of the former there are two varieties, both of which belong to the old red sandstone formations. One of these is the gray sandstone, which is considered by Dr Anderson (Edin. Phil. Journal, July 1837,) as the lowest member of the series, and which, from the organic remains imbedded in it, he regards as the same with the beds that traverse the Sidlaws, Strathmore, and the upper part of Strathearn. These remains are exclusively vegetable, being the culms, leaves, and fruit of the order Gramineæ, and which are found in great abundance in one of the softer beds of the deposit that emerges a little to the west of Wormit Bay. From this point, where it may be traced across the frith to Invergowrie bay, the sandstone ranges westward through the parish, cropping out at Demmons, and various other places on the estate of Birkhill. It is an extremely compact and durable rock, and is admirably adapted for building operations. The bed in which the organic remains are found, is friable and soft, and seems to abound more in aluminous than silicious matter. The mica is also very abundant in this part of the deposit.

The other variety of sandstone is of a reddish colour. It crops out immediately at the harbour, and ranges westward to Birkhill, where it may be observed on the beach beneath the mansion-house. It contains a considerable quantity of quartz nodules, and portions of other primitive rocks. A scale—only one—has been found in it, similar to those which occur so abundantly in the Parkhill and Clashbennie beds, also at Dura and Drumdryan, and from this circumstance, it may fairly be regarded as a continuation of these interesting rocks. The bed at the harbour is coarse

* For this geological description I have been indebted to the Rev. Dr Anderson of Newburgh.

grained, compact, and hard, and at one time was much sought after for oven floors.

The trap or whinstone consists of several varieties, namely, amygdaloid, trap tuffa, compact felspar, clinkstone, and claystone porphyry. Interesting sections of each may be seen along the shore, from the harbour towards Wormit Bay. The amygdaloid is generally coarse and tuffaceous, but gradually passes, in many places, into a finer variety, which may be considered as approaching to the characters of a *greenstone*. The numerous cavities contained in the coarse kind are lined with white amethyst, flesh-red calcareous spar, white felspar, calcedony, agate, green earth, and common quartz. In these nodular masses, the calcedony appears to have been first deposited and the quartz last. The Scurr Hill is well known to the lapidaries and other collectors of these beautiful minerals, and no part of the island, perhaps, affords in such abundance, as well as such rare and choice specimens of the several varieties of agates. The compact felspar becomes porphyritic, is of a deep flesh-red colour, and susceptible of a fine polish. The whole of these rocks, as may be seen at Wormit Bay and Birkhill, are intimately associated with the stratified deposits, and afford the student in geology an interesting view of the manner in which the igneous matter has been injected amongst the sedimentary beds; as well as the induration and disruptions among the latter, that have resulted from the intrusion of the former. The sandstone is, in many instances, by the intrusion of the trap, split up into thin laminæ, varying from an inch to a quarter of an inch in thickness; it is sometimes tossed into a vertical position; and in other cases, as at Birkhill beach, the two rocks are so blended and mixed up with each other, as to render it difficult to distinguish them, or to separate the amorphous from the stratified portions.

Boulders of primitive rocks are to be found in every locality along the shore, as well as on the highest ridges. One of huge dimensions, which lay a little to the north of the manse, excited no small degree of attention, as well as speculation, among the people, as to the means by which it had been placed, bridge-like, across a stream there. It measured about twelve feet in length by nine in breadth, and was of great thickness. By the last incumbent, who was fonder of practical agricultural improvements than of plausible and ingenious speculations, it was unceremoniously committed to the blasting influences of gunpowder, when, after being blown into an hundred fragments, it afforded employment

of many days hard work before it could be carted away to the enclosures on the grass glebe. It was a primitive hornblend, or greenstone rock, and must have been transported from beyond "the far distant Grampians" by the agency of floods, of which we have now happily no experience.

Soil.—The soil is in general thin, of a black loamy quality where it rests immediately upon the whinstone; and is fit for carrying crops of every description. This is generally the character of the fields which range along the southern and northern divisions of the parish. Much of the intervening valley consists of either a light and gravelly soil, or of a strong plastic till, but, through the operations of an enterprising tenantry, it has been rendered completely fertile.

Botany.—The plants which occur in this parish are such as are common to the general flora of the Ochils, and, as it can boast of neither lake nor marsh, few aquatics are found within it. Along the shore, the following are to be met with: *Scirpus maritimus*, *Agrostis vulgaris*, *Hordeum maritimum*, *Triticum loliaceum*, *Glaux maritima*, *Rumex maritima*, *Statice Armeria*, *Alisma plantago*, *Cochlearia Anglica*, *Artemisia maritima*. Throughout the other districts of the parish the following occur abundantly: *Fedia olitoria*, *Iris pseudacorus*, *Briza media*, *Parietaria officinalis*, *Primula vulgaris*, *elatior* and *veris*, *Agrimonia eupatoria*, *Geum rivale*, *Bartsia odontites*, *Geranium sylvaticum*, *Malva sylvestris*, *Scrophularia nodosa*, *Euphorbia paralia*, *Silene inflata*, *Lychnis Flos-cuculi* and *dioica*, *Tussilago petasites*, *Tulipa sylvestris*, once abundant at the Abbey, but now very rare.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Under this head, few particulars can be gleaned, from any authentic sources, of sufficient importance to be communicated to the public. The history of the Monastery, which will be noticed in its proper place, is connected with the earliest transactions that are to be found in the records of the parish; and as there are no chartered towns in it, or corporations of any kind, nothing of a civic or burghal description requires to be stated.

Eminent Men.—Among the list of eminent men, however, its annals can justly boast of two, if public notoriety or a tragical end entitle any to that distinction. One of these was the celebrated Lord Balmerino, who suffered for his share in the rebellion of 1745, and whose history is too well known to need repetition here. The family estate was in this parish, and pas-

sed, after its forfeiture to the Crown, into the hands of the York-Building Company, from whom it was purchased by the family of Moray, and is now in the possession of Francis Stuart, Esq., nephew of the present Earl. The other individual alluded to is Andrew Gullan, who was also a native of this parish, and was hanged on Magus Muir as an accessory to the murder of Archbishop Sharpe, being convicted of the crime "of holding Halkerstone of Rathillet's mare," while the principal conspirators were engaged in that bloody deed.

A name of less questionable distinction than either of the above remains to be noticed,—Mr Peter Hay, son of the laird of Megginsh, and who became proprietor of Naughton about the beginning of the seventeenth century. This gentleman was author of a work entitled "The First Blast of the Trumpet," printed in 1627, and which is well known to have had considerable influence on the stirring events of that reforming age. It excited the special displeasure of Archbishop Spottiswood, as appears from the records of the synod of St Andrews, in which the following allusion to it occurs: "The Synod haldin at St Androis, 2d October 1627, my Lord Archbishop desyred that the purpose concerning Mr Peter Hay of Naughton his buik, suld not be mentioned in the Publict Synod, and declaired that his Lordship would not be present if the sam war spoken of."*

Parliamentary Constituency.—The number of persons who are qualified to vote for a Member of Parliament, in consequence of the Magna Charta of 1832, amounts to 22.

Land-owners.—The principal proprietors in the parish are, Mrs Bethune Morison of Naughton; Henry Scrimgeour Wedderburn, Esq. of Wedderburn and Birkhill; and Francis Stuart, Esq. of Balmerino. There are five additional heritors, whose properties are comparatively small. Two of the principal, and three of the small, heritors reside in the parish.

Parochial Registers.—The earliest records of the session, including births and marriages, date from 1652, and have been tolerably well kept.

Antiquities.—The ruins of the Abbey of Balmerino constitute the chief object of attraction under this head. The site of the building has been admirably chosen, as a place at once of beauty, comfort, and convenience, standing on an eminence in the immediate vicinity of the Tay, and commanding a full view of that

* The Synod of Fife, printed for the Abbotsford Club, 1837.

noble estuary, as far up as its junction with the Earn. It is situated on the south bank of the Frith, about twelve miles from its mouth, and overlooks, towards the north, the rich and fertile Carse of Gowrie, where the eye is presented with a wide range of pleasing and impressive scenery, with the lofty peaks of the Grampians towering majestically above the whole; forming such a richly diversified and striking panorama, as may vie with those of greater celebrity.

This monastery was founded by Alexander II. in the year 1229, at the suggestion of his mother, Emergarde, widow of King William the Lyon, in consequence of the beauty of the situation, and the benefit she had derived to her health by her occasional visits to the district. It belonged to the order of the Cisterians, whose earliest settlement in this country was at Melros, and was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and St Edward the Confessor. The dress of the Cisterians was a white cassock, whence they were called "*Monachi albi*," with a narrow scapulary, over which they wore a black gown when they went abroad, and a white one when they went to the church. The rules of the order were those of St Benedict, which, in regard to food and other necessaries for the table, enjoined the utmost plainness and abstinence, in the shape of everything that approached to luxury. Flesh was allowed only to the sick. They might use the common herbs of the country, but pepper and the foreign spices were forbidden. It was directed that their monasteries should be situated in the most retired and solitary places: and that the monks were to live by the labour of their hands, in cultivating the earth, and keeping cattle. When any of them went abroad, they were obliged always to go two together, to guard and witness each others conduct, and to prompt each other to good thoughts. They all slept in the same dormitory, which was a long room, not divided into separate cells; and each monk had a bed to himself, furnished with a mat, blanket, coverlet, and pillow, which was prescribed to be only a foot and a half long. The superior ecclesiastics took considerable pains to cultivate and promote learning, so that from the strictness of the rules, and the works that resulted from their labours, the Cisterian order soon acquired celebrity, and speedily came to have monasteries in every country in Europe, all of which had the privilege of being independent of the bishop within whose diocese they were situated *

* *Annales Cistertiens.* Monastic Annals of Tiviotdale, by the Rev. J. Morton, B. D.

The Abbey of Balmerino seems to have been richly endowed, when we consider the abstemious habits and severe rules enjoined upon the order. Queen Emergarde bestowed upon it the lands of Cultrach, Balmurynach and Ardin, which she bought from Sir Adam de Stawell for 1000 merks Sterling;* and she left 200 merks, to be bestowed by her executors in purchasing from Laurence de Abernithy, a full resignation of his interest in the lands of Cultrach, Balnedan, Balnedart, Corteby and Balmurynach. King Alexander granted the foundation charter on 3d February 1230,† and added to the lands bestowed by his mother, the church and lands of Lochmure (?) in Angus, and Petgornoc and Drumdol in Fife. David de Lindesay gives it an annuity out of his mill of Kirkhuet, which was confirmed by King Alexander II. in 1233. The preceptory of Gadvan, near Denbog, in Fife, with the house and lands, belonged also to this abbey; and two or three monks of their order constantly resided in that place. ‡

Balmerino, in the course of the thirteenth, or early in the fourteenth century, received several benefactions from persons of the family of Kynner, of lands in the territories of Kynner and Cotholoc; a fishing in Tay from Sir David de Berkeley of Brechin; the quarry of Nydin from Hugh de Nydin; and numerous small burgage possessions in Perth, Dundee, Crail, and Anstruther. In the year 1561, at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries, the revenues of this abbey were, in money L. 704, 2s. 10½d.; wheat, 4 chalders; oats, 1 chalder, 14 bolls, 1 firloft, 3½ pecks; meal, 15 chalders, 12 bolls, 2 firlofts; bear 21 chalders, 12 bolls, 3 firlofts, 1½ peck; total 43 chalders, 6 bolls, 3 firlofts, 1 peck; and 763 poultry.

The monks of Balmerino did not always adhere rigidly to the rules of their order. With the progress of their wealth, and the benefactions which were from time to time bestowed upon them, they became gradually more and more relaxed in their habits, till they came, according to the Franciscan of Buchanan, to share in all the corruptions of the times. In 1533,§ a special commission was appointed to visit and reform the monasteries throughout Scotland. The faults which particularly called forth this animadversion, were infringements of the rule which forbade the brethren to possess any private property, but to have all things in common:

* Anno 1225, Chartul. of Balmerinoch, Advocates' Library. † Ibid.

‡ Keith's Scottish Bishops, edited by Dr Russell, 1824.

§ Harleian MSS. 2363. Monastic Annals of Tiviotdale.

It was found that many of the monks, especially in the abbeys of Melros, Newbattle, and Balmerino had not only portions and pensions allowed them for their food and clothing, but that each monk had also a garden appropriated to his own particular use and pleasure. The visitor, therefore, in his visitation roll specified these things as illicit indulgences, which he enjoined them forthwith to relinquish. With this the monks did not comply, and after a convocation of them had been held at Edinburgh, it was agreed that they might retain their private gardens, provided no monk had a larger one than another, and that a common way was made through all the gardens by opening a passage from one to another, the productions of the whole being made a common stock, and applied to the use of the convent. The garden ground of this monastery seems to have been immediately around the building, as is still indicated by the name, viz. the orchard and over-yards, by the richness of the soil, its black loamy character, and the abundance of oyster shells contained in it, and must have comprised an extent of many acres.

The abbey was demolished by the Lords of the Congregation on their way from St Andrews in 1558.* The last abbot was Sir John Hay, probably of the family of Naughton. He was master of requests in the reign of Queen Mary † in 1561. After the Reformation, the abbey was erected into a temporal lordship, in favour of Sir James Elphinston of Barnton, created Lord Balmerinoch, 20th February 1604, whose rise to power, and subsequent condemnation and disgrace, are matters of public history.

The building is now a complete ruin, a small portion of the walls and a few pillars being all that remains to indicate the ancient magnificence of the monastery. One arched room, indeed, and a cell or dormitory, is still pretty entire; but to what part of the erection these belonged, it is impossible to conjecture. The pillars are clustered, and the corbals or capitals from which the arches spring, and some of the key-stones, bear marks of the elegance with which they have been originally finished; on many of which the likeness of fruit, flowers, and religious emblems, as well as more grotesque figures, may still be traced. A drawing of the building as it stands may be seen in Swan's Views in Fife, now in the progress of publication.

The old Castle of Naughton, already alluded to, is equally now

* Lealy, &c.

† Sibbald's Fife, Ed. 1803.

"the shadow of a shade,"—all that remains of it being a few fragments of the lower parts of the side walls. This place is said to have been built by Robertus de Lundon, a natural son of King William. Soon after, Naughton was acquired by John de Haya, the third son of William de Haya, the first of the family of Errol.* The Hays are mentioned as Lairds of Naughton about King Alexander III.'s reign. † In 1494, Sir Patrick Crichton got the lands in marriage with Janet, the daughter and heiress of Sir James de la Hay. ‡ From the Crichtons, Mr Peter Hay, § a son of the Laird of Megginsh purchased the lands in the beginning of the seventeenth century. In the year 1737, the estate was brought to a judicial sale by the creditors of Robert Hay of Naughton, and purchased by William Morison, Esq. the great grandfather of the present proprietor, Mrs Bethune Morison.

Here, according to Sibbald, there was an establishment of Culdees in connection with that of St Andrews. Three churches are particularly mentioned in "Extracts from the Large Register:" one at Forteviot, one at Monechata, or Moonzie, and one at Doldanha or Naughton. These buildings, it appears, were all of wood; and, of course, conjecture as to the site of the erection here would be vain. Monechata is supposed by Dr Jamieson, in his history of the Culdees, to be Monikie in Forfarshire; but if Doldanha be an allowable transition into Naughton, there can be no reasonable objection upon this ground, to the change of Monechata, into Moonzie, which, along with Forteviot, was ever afterwards attached to the see of St Andrews, when the Culdee establishments gave way to the monastic institutions.

There is a field in the parish called the Battle-law, where the Scots, it is said, attacked the Danes after their retreat from Luncarty, again defeated, and forced them to flee with precipitation, on board their ships, then lying in the mouth of Tay. Near this field, have been found stone-coffins, bones, and pieces of broken swords. At the farm of Peashills, about a mile north-east of the above-named field, were found some years ago two pieces of gold, of the value of L. 14 Sterling. One piece was in the form of a ball, and appeared to have been the knob usually attached to the hilt of a sword; the other, which is in the possession of Mrs Morison of Naughton, has evidently been an ornament of some kind

* Wood's Peerage.

† Sibbald's Fife, 1803.

‡ Writs of the family of Naughton.

§ The author of "The first Blast of the Trumpet," already referred to.

or other; but whether it adorned the helmet, the breast-plate, or the sword handle, antiquaries have not yet fully agreed.

Modern Buildings.—There is little to be noticed in this respect. Birkhill, the seat of Henry S. Wedderburn of Wedderburn and Birkhill, is a very elegant and commodious mansion, beautifully situated amongst extensive plantations, on the banks of the Tay. Naughton House was erected in the end of the last century, and has since received many alterations and improvements. The church and manse were built,—the first in 1811 and the other in 1816; the former is rather small for the increasing wants of the parish; the latter, with an excellent set of offices, is suitable and commodious. They are all built of stone found in the parish.

III.—POPULATION.

The population of the parish has been steadily on the increase for many years past, owing to feuing, and to its vicinity to Dundee, where employment can easily be procured in the manufacturing of linen, &c.

The population in 1755 amounted to	565
1491	703
1821	965
1831	1055
1837	1070

The yearly average of births for the last seven years is 27, of marriages 6. There is no register of deaths kept. The average number of persons, their ages, employments, and families is as under:

In 1831 the number under 15 years of age was,	430
betwixt 15 and 30	236
30 and 50	221
50 and 70	138
above 70	30
Number of families at present,	215
houses,	213
Average number of children,	3
Number of communicants,	458
male heads of families,	148
Dissenters, about	80
inhabitants in villages,	550

The number of individuals employed in weaving is about 150. The rest are chiefly engaged in agriculture. There are in the parish 5 grocers, 3 wrights, 4 shoemakers, 3 blacksmiths, 3 tailors, 1 medical practitioner, and 5 publicans.

Character of the People.—The inhabitants are justly entitled to be regarded as honest, industrious, sober, and extremely exemplary in their attendance upon the ordinances of religion. They are strongly attached to the Established Church, and less than ordinarily given to the following of divisive courses.

During the last three years, there have been three illegitimate births in the parish; and a long time has elapsed since any suffered, either for theft or disturbance of the public peace.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture and Rural Economy.

In cultivation there are 2694 imperial acres.
 In wood 467
 Unarable, roads, &c. 185

Total, 3346

Rent of Land.—The valued rent of the parish amounts to L. 4085, 10s. Scots. The real rent is about L. 4800 Sterling. The average rent of arable land is about L. 1, 16s. per imperial acre.

Rate of wages.—A ploughman's wages averages from L. 10 to L. 12, with 6½ bolls of oatmeal per annum and a pint Scots of sweet milk per day; female house-servants have from L. 5 to L. 6 per annum; labourers 1s. 6d.; and female-field labourers 8d. per day; masons and wrights have from 16s. to 18s. a week; a good weaver labouring twelve hours per day will average about 2s.

Produce.—The amount of produce may be estimated as follows:

Value of all kinds of grain,	L. 8500
potatoes,	1200
cattle,	1440

L. 11,140

The produce of the salmon-fishings, which used to be immense, has not for some years past paid rent and wages, exclusive of material.

Cattle are sold off fat, rising three years old, and bring from L. 10 to L. 15 a-head. Turnips and hay are consumed by the stock, except in very rare instances. About 105 cattle are yearly fattened for the butcher, and as many calves reared. There are in the parish 14 thrashing-machines, three of which are driven by water power, 47 ploughs, and 98 horses for agricultural purposes.

Husbandry.—The method of cropping varies according to the nature of the soil. On the strongest soils, a rotation of six years is adopted, viz. fallow a potatoes, wheat, green-crop, (turnip or pease), barley, grass, and oats. On the lighter soils, the rotation is, potatoes, wheat, barley, grass (to lie two years) and oats: and on the lightest, green crop (turnip eaten off with sheep), barley, grass (to lie two or three years) and oats. The farmers generally take grass parks for their young stock, to supply the want of pasture at home.

Fishings.—The salmon-fishery, once so productive here, is

now very inconsiderable, being confined exclusively to the *toot-net* method of capturing the fish. The net employed is from 50 to 80 yards long, and differs little from the common *seine* or sweep net. Instead of being constantly kept in motion, as the latter is, it is attached to a boat at anchor, and only hauled when the *toots-man*, who watches in the boat, observes a fish strike the net. It is totally unsuited to estuary fishing.

The number of boats connected with the fisheries in this parish amount to 7, and they keep employed 14 men during the open season. The fisheries belong to Mr Wedderburn of Birkhill, Mrs B. Morison of Naughton, and Mr Stuart of Balmerino, and are rented at about L. 50 per annum.

The spirling fishery was once productive here also; but for several years back, it has not been pursued, as the spirlings seem to have abandoned this part, (probably on account of the increase of the sand-banks) and are only to be found at some of the rapids farther up.

The inhabitants of this district deeply lament the suppression of the stake-net mode of fishing, which was abolished by a decision of the Court of Session in 1812, upon a complaint of the upper heritors, and affirmed by the House of Lords upon appeal in 1816. This decision was founded upon certain old acts of the Scottish Parliament, which were directed against a particular kind of *river* fishing, termed *weir*, *yair*, or *cruive*. There is an infinite variety of such engines in use; but there is one peculiarity common to them all, viz. that they prevent the ascent of the fish except by a particular channel, in which a trap for detaining them is inserted. This mode of fishing, practised at a very early period, is noticed by the most ancient writers, and is the subject of legislation in our earliest statutes. It is obvious that fixed engines of this description, when employed without restraint, would have the effect of shutting up the river, preventing the ascent of the fish, and destroying the fry. In consequence, the use of such engines in *rivers* was forbidden, except where they had existed for a long course of time. Even in those cases, the engines were placed under certain restraints, which seem to have been considered sufficient for protecting the spawners, and young fish. This mode of fishing, efficient in rivers, cannot, it is obvious from its nature, be applied with similar success in estuaries and the open sea. Accordingly, there has been little fishing, until of late years, except in the rivers,—so little, indeed, that the salmon has been vulgarly re-

garded as a river-fish. The seals and grampuses have remained in undisturbed possession of the salt water fishing.

In the year 1797, the stake-net was introduced in the Solway Frith (where it is at present legal !) and in the Frith of Tay. This engine was constructed by driving strong stakes in a row, from the shore towards low water mark, and nearly at right angles to the tide. On these stakes, were stretched nets with open meshes, three inches from knot to knot, or twelve inches round. Thus a wall of open netting was constructed, sufficient to intercept the large fish, but through which the water, and all small fishes, could pass freely. In this wall of netting, were placed courts or labyrinths. The salmon, influenced in their movements by the tide, met this netted wall, and, seeking along for an opening through which to pass, entered these courts, where they were detained and taken out at low water. By means of these nets, great quantities of salmon, of the first quality, were caught, and exported in boxes packed with ice to the London market. The proprietors of the river fisheries now got alarmed for their monopoly, and, taking advantage of the antiquated statutes referred to above, some of them passed by the Scottish legislature more than four hundred years ago, and long before it was ever dreamt of that salmon-fishing could be successfully carried on in the friths or seas, applied for an interdict, and ultimately succeeded in prohibiting the use of such fixed machinery: the courts having held, that, as these statutes had never been repealed, any infringement of their provisions must be held illegal. The effect of this decision has been greatly to deteriorate the estuary fishery; while the proprietors of the river fishings enjoy a monopoly price in the market.

In framing these regulations, the object of the Scottish Legislature must have been to protect the public interests and prevent injury to the fishery generally; and this is the only ground upon which they can yet be defended. Experience, however, has proved that this defence of them cannot be maintained. At the early period when these regulations were framed, little was known regarding the salmon; but from what is now known of its habits and history, it is perfectly well ascertained, that while in the friths and in the sea, (where alone stake-nets can be used,) none but fish in the best condition are caught; in the rivers, salmon of inferior quality, and often in a foul and unwholesome state, are taken;—that it is in the *rivers*, and in these alone, that any injury can be done to the spawn, or salmon fry, by the heavy ground ropes which

are drawn across the spawn-beds;—that the stake-nets do not interrupt or interfere with the river fishings, as it has been proved that the quantity caught in the river, since the stake-nets were abolished, does not exceed the quantity caught when these were in use;—that, in short, the effect of the prohibition has been to secure a monopoly price to the river-fishers, while the myriads of salmon which escape from the rivers and find their way to the sea, and which might become a valuable article of commerce, and be made available as a rich and nutritious article of food to the public, at a moderate price, are totally lost, or only abandoned as a prey to the monsters of the deep.

The extent of the loss in the Tay generally, in consequence of the suppression of these nets, has been estimated at from 200 to 300 tons, or from 20,000 to 30,000 head of salmon annually. The whole estuary does not now produce above 3000 fish. (Evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons, 1827.) In this parish alone the loss may be estimated in rent at L. 1000 to L. 1200 annually to the different proprietors; and about L. 1000 in the shape of wages. Other evils also have resulted. The aged females and others have been deprived of an excellent and healthy employment in the working of nets, while a hardy and expert race of seamen were regularly trained through means of their connection with the fishery. Let us hope that an enlightened and paternal legislature, under whose revision the fishery laws are again to be brought, will speedily remove the present oppressive restrictions upon this lucrative branch of industry, by which not individual proprietors alone, but the community at large, must be so extensively benefited, and in the decision of which question they have so deep an interest.

Manufactures.—Since the destruction of the stake-net fishery, many of the individuals employed in that amphibious kind of occupation have betaken themselves entirely to the trade of weavers. None of them, however, have as yet risen to the dignity and professional importance of manufacturers, but derive their webs, at second hand, from those of this class in Dundee. About 150 men and women are engaged at the loom with materials supplied from this quarter. The linens which they weave are called Dowlas and Osnaburg, and, as has been elsewhere stated, an expert weaver will earn about 2s. per day. Some of the young men thus employed in the winter months, are engaged in the Greenland whale-

fishery during the season of that now hazardous and precarious employment.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Markets, Means of Communication.—The nearest market-town is Cupar, distant about seven miles. The nearest post-office is Newport, and is distant about four and a half miles from the manse. There are no turnpike roads in the parish; but the statute labour roads are in good condition, and the means of communication with other places are various, and of easy access. There is a passage-boat which sails from Balmerino pier to Dundee once a week, or oftener if required. Considering the population of the parish, this department of our statistics is rather meagre in its details. There is neither baker, brewer, nor butcher within its bounds. The navigation or shipping interest is upon an equally limited scale. Only the passage-boat, which is a joint-stock concern, belongs to the parish. Many vessels with coals, however, discharge their cargoes during the season. About fifty years ago, according to the last Statistical Account, this harbour was the chief place on the south side of Tay for shipping grain; now not a single boll is shipped here, if we except such parcels of wheat as the farmers in the immediate neighbourhood send by the passage-boat to the Dundee bakers. The Messrs Rintoul, however, carry on a considerable trade in potatoes, which are sent up to the London market. In some seasons, upwards of 6500 bolls have been shipped from this port by these gentlemen, besides what has been exported by them from other places.

Ecclesiastical State.—The church is situated about the centre of the parish, and is seated for about 400. It was finished in 1811. It is a plain building without any ornament, but considerably deficient in point of accommodation for the parishioners. The heritors, however, have it in contemplation to enlarge its dimensions. The manse was built in 1816, and is one of the most commodious in the presbytery. The glebe consists of about eight acres, and the grass glebe as much, including the site of the manse, &c. and both are of inferior quality. The stipend is 16 chalders, half meal, half barley, and 7 bolls of wheat, with L. 8, 6s. 8d. for communion elements. The collections, exclusive of extra, average about L. 18 per annum.

The number of families attending the Established Church is 195; of Dissenting or Seceding families, 20.

List of Ministers of Balmerino from the Reformation.—Mr AR-
FIFE.

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chibald Keith, admitted 1560; Mr Patrick Auchinleck was minister in 1571; Mr Thomas Douglas, admitted 1580; Mr Walter Greig, admitted assistant and successor to Mr Douglas, died 1672; Mr Andrew Bruce, admitted 1673; Mr James Gairns or Gairdner, admitted 1676, translated to Carnbee 1678; Mr George Hay, admitted 1678; Mr John Auchterlony, admitted —, outed 1689; Mr Andrew Bowie, admitted 1690, translated to Ceres 1692; vacant from 1692 to 1696; Mr James Hay, admitted 1696; Mr Kerr, admitted assistant and successor to Mr Hay 1st May 1722, died December 1741; Mr Thomas Stark, admitted 27th May 1742, died 5th March 1772; Mr John Stark, admitted 22d April 1773, demitted 30th October 1781; Mr Andrew Thomson, ordained September 5th 1782, died 6th March 1836; Mr John Thomson, appointed assistant and successor to his father in 1824.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The poor of the parish are supported by the collections made at the church, and by the liberality of the heritors and inhabitants. Those upon the roll get from 3s. to 6s. a month; others get occasional relief at the new year and sacrament, in money, coals, or meal, according to circumstances; and the resident proprietors of Naughton and Birkhill distribute, during winter, coals and meal to the most necessitous. The proprietor of Balmerino has given, for some years back, L. 10 to the poor on his own estate. The heritors also assess themselves to the amount of L. 20 per annum, for the maintenance of two idiots. The number of persons receiving parochial aid is 12 or thereby. The average annual amount of church collections for the poor is L. 18.

Education.—There are two schools in the parish—the parochial school, and one taught by a female. There are in winter generally from 120 to 130 scholars attending the former, and about 40 at the latter. The salary of the parish school is the maximum, and the fees amount to from L. 25 to L. 30 per annum. The branches taught in it are, English reading, writing, arithmetic, mathematics, geography, &c. :—Greek and Latin are not much required. The teacher is eminently qualified for his situation, being possessed not only of all the requisite information in no ordinary degree, but peculiarly fitted for communicating it to his pupils. A decided improvement has taken place, as well in the amount as in the standard of education, since his appointment to this parish;

and it is pleasant to find that his labours are duly appreciated by the inhabitants at large.

Fuel.—This article of domestic economy consists entirely of coal, and is chiefly imported from Newcastle and the Frith of Forth. The farmers who have the command of carriages supply themselves occasionally and their servants from the coal-pits in the southern parts of the country; from the nearest of which the parish is distant about twelve miles. English coal is obtained at the shore, at the rate of from 4s. 6d. to 5s. 9d. per boll of six cwt. according to quality; and the Scotch at about 6s. per boll of 8 cwt. The price of the best coal at the nearest pit, which is Drumcarro, is 1s. 10d. per load of 4 cwt.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The improvements in husbandry and agriculture are abundantly manifest in the district, since the date of last Account. Many wastes have been reclaimed, marshes have been drained, and thriving plantations are everywhere rising up for shelter and protection. The systems of wedge draining and subsoil ploughing are being adopted. Turnips are extensively sown; and the practice of eating them off with sheep, in suitable situations, is general. The roads through the parish have also been much improved, and are, in general, kept in excellent repair. Many of the farm-steadings are newly erected, and some of them may vie with any in the country, either in extent of accommodation, or in neatness and elegance of structure.

22d February 1838.

PARISH OF FLISK.

PRESBYTERY OF CUPAR, SYNOD OF FIFE.

THE REV. GEORGE MARSHALL, MINISTER.*

TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—FLISK appears to have been the ancient, as well as modern name of the parish. It is possibly connected with the word

* Drawn up by the Rev. Robert Traill, A. M. Assistant *pro tempore* to the Rev. Mr Marshall.