

- held in different parts of the country for engaging farm-servants. The best sign of the times is, when the servants are scarce, and wages high.

January 1840.

PARISH OF OLD DEER.

PRESBYTERY OF DEER, SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

THE REV. JOHN MORISON, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE word Deer, which gives name at once to the parish, to the village that lies contiguous to the parish church, and to the presbytery of the bounds, appears, on a review of ecclesiastical and other records, to have been spelled differently at different periods, but always to have been composed of letters which, when spoken according to the ordinary rules of pronunciation, would have invariably produced the same sound. The intelligent author of the last Statistical Report of the parish traces the origin of the name Deer to a Gaelic word signifying the worship of God; others, again, have traced its etymology to a Saxon word signifying hollow or valley.

Extent, &c.—The parish is situated about the centre of the district of Buchan. It is not less than 11 miles long in its greatest dimension from south-east to north-west, and from 5 to 6 miles broad, where it is widest. At an average, it may be computed as being $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length, by $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles in breadth; thus containing upwards of 40 square miles of surface, or about 25,000 imperial acres. Mr Robertson, in his map of the counties of Aberdeen, &c. estimates the extent of the parish in Aberdeenshire at 22,940 acres, and in Banffshire, 2777 acres; an estimate which agrees pretty nearly with that above given. The less portion is generally supposed to be a detached part of a great barony, the body of which constitutes the parish of St Fergus, that belonged to a family of the name of Cheyne, once hereditary sheriffs of the county of Banff, who had their castle or principal residence at Inverugie. These lands came into the possession of the Marischal family, in consequence of an alliance by marriage of one of the

Keiths with the heiress of that house, about the middle of the fourteenth century. The parish is of an irregular shape, and in many places without any distinct or natural boundary, bearing some resemblance to the usual form of a cross tree, a sort of *yoke* that embraces the neck, and stretches over the shoulders,—from the ends of which, persons, for the sake of ease and convenience, often suspend and carry water buckets or such like burdens. The space corresponding with the cavity that receives the neck is on the east side, and belongs to the parish of Longside; and the site of the parish church is in the line of that encroachment, little more than a mile from the junction of the two parishes, and about $10\frac{1}{2}$ miles by the public road from the nearest sea-port, at the parliamentary burgh and market-town of Peterhead.

Topographical Appearances.—The surface is undulating, presenting to the eye of a spectator, placed on an elevated situation, a group of eminences of various sizes and forms, separated from one another, and in some instances altogether surrounded by rivulets or rills. Many of these eminences, the highest of which it is probable, though no exact measurement of their altitude has been taken, does not exceed between 200 and 300 feet above the level of the sea, are cultivated to the top; and most of the interjacent valleys are now brought under tillage, to which great encouragement has been given by several proprietors, particularly of late, in cleaning and straightening water-courses, so as to facilitate the means of drainage, and prevent flooding.

The peninsular situation of Buchan, at least the distance it stretches into the sea, and its general want of shelter from hills or woods, render the climate upon the whole rather humid and chilly, although it is no doubt undergoing an improvement by the removal of stagnant water and marshes, and the increase of plantations and quickset hedges.* Yet the number of individuals of both sexes that reach a very advanced period of life, and the rareness of epidemics or any prevailing ailment, would warrant an inference, that the locality is rather salubrious than otherwise. Of late, however, to whatever cause it may be owing, the stone and urinary complaints seem to be on the increase. Instances, too, of natural small-pox, owing most probably to the omission or improper application of vaccine matter, have become much

* In the beginning of the year 1887, when this Account was drawn up, there were living in the parish no fewer than five persons, each above ninety-five years of age, and one of them just approaching the end of a century.

more frequent of late than they used to be, though rarely fatal. Much credit is due to the medical practitioners, who not only bestow gratuitously upon the sick poor their skill and attendance when required, but also often supply them with medicines and cordials at their own expense.*

* The following statement of the times at which the oat seed and oat harvest commenced and ended, on farms that may be regarded as being rather above the average in point of earliness, during the period which has elapsed since the publication of the last Statistical Account of the parish, will be of use, not only in showing the general character of the seasons during that time, but as furnishing a means of comparing the climate of this district of country with that of any other where similar information can be procured.

Sowing of Oats.		Oat Harvest.	
Commenced.	Ended.	Commenced.	Ended.
1796, Mar. 18,	Apr. 12.	1796, Sept. 20,	Oct. 20.
1797, Do. 6,	Mar. 31.	1797, Do. 13,	Do. 13.
1798, Do. 26,	Apr. 11.	1798, Aug. 27,	Sept. 16.
1799, Do. 24,	Do. 24.	1799, Oct. 6,	Nov. 12.
1800, Do. 26,	Do. 11.	1800, Sept. 9,	Oct. 12.
1801, Do. 8,	Do. 10.	1801, Do. 2,	Do. 1.
1802, Do.	Do. 8.	1802, Do. 29,	Do. 26.
1803, Do. 25,	Do. 23.	1803, Aug. 27,	Do. 4.
1804, Do. 31,	Do. 30.	1804, Sept. 10,	Do. 5.
1805, Do. 14,	Mar. 27.	1805, Do. 23,	Do. 24.
1806, Do. 31,	Apr. 11.	1806, Do. 22,	Do. 15.
1807, Apr. 8,	Do. 23.	1807, Do. 15,	Nov. 7.
1808, Mar. 14,	Do. 9.	1808, Aug. 27,	Oct. 3.
1809, Do. 15,	Do. 12.	1809, Sept. 19,	Do. 23.
1810, Do. 30,	Do. 26.	1810, Oct. 2,	Nov. 5.
1811, Do. 18,	Do. 15.	1811, Sept. 13,	Oct. 18.
1812, Apr. 7,	Do. 23.	1812, Oct. 7,	Nov. 16.
1813, Mar. 16,	Mar. 26.	1813, Sept. 9,	Oct. 4.
1814, Apr. 2,	Apr. 25.	1814, Do. 21,	Do. 22.
1815, Mar. 6,	Apr. 3.	1815, Do. 9,	Do. 9.
1816, Do. 29,	Do. 20.	1816, Oct. 14,	Nov. 28.
1817, Do. 17,	Do. 3.	1817, Do. 1,	Oct. 31.
1818, Do. 24,	Do. 15.	1818, Aug. 31,	Do. 8.
1819, Do. 13,	Do. 10.	1819, Do. 24,	Sept. 18.
1820, Do. 20,	Do. 17.	1820, Sept. 11,	Oct. 5.
1821, Apr. 3,	Do. 28.	1821, Do. 13,	Do. 6.
1822, Feb. 28,	Mar. 23.	1822, Aug. 16,	Sept. 10.
1823, Mar. 16,	May 2.	1823, Sept. 19,	Oct. 28.
1824, Apr. 5,	Apr. 16.	1824, Do. 9,	Do. 11.
1825, Mar. 21,	Mar. 29.	1825, Aug. 26,	Sept. 29.
1826, Do. 6,	Do. 21.	1826, July 31,	Aug. 29.
1827, Do. 27,	Apr. 6.	1827, Sept. 3,	Oct. 25.
1828, Do. 11,	Do. 23.	1828, Aug. 23,	Sept. 17.
1829, Mar. 23,	Apr. 24.	1829, Sept. 7,	Oct. 9.
1830, Do. 18,	Do. 12.	1830, Do. 10,	Do. 13.
1831, Do. 23,	Do. 18.	1831, Aug. 13,	Sept. 10.
1832, Feb. 27,	Mar. 31.	1832, Sept. 11,	Oct. 13.
1833, Mar. 27,	Apr. 23.	1833, Do. 2,	Do. 10.
1834, Do. 3,	Do. 10.	1834, Aug. 15,	Sept. 2.
1835, Do. 16,	Do. 4.	1835, Sept. 2,	Do. 25.
1836, Do. 19,	Do. 12.	1836,† Aug. 29,	Oct. 25.
1837, Do. 4,	May 9.		

† An intense frost, followed by successive falls of snow, set in on 9th March this year, and continued almost without intermission for nearly six weeks. Between the evening of the 29th and the morning of the 30th March, the snow fell at an average from 10 to 12 inches in depth. The seed cast into the ground before the beginning of this severe weather did not appear to have sustained much damage, unless where it was imperfectly harrowed in.

Hydrography.—There is no natural lake of any consideration in the parish. But within the park or pleasure-ground of Pitfour, the seat of George Ferguson, Esq. Captain R. N., there is an artificial one in front of the house, covering more than 25 acres, tastefully designed, abundantly stocked with tench, carp, and Lochleven trout, and crossed in its branches by three neat stone bridges, one with three arches which open approaches to the mansion. This irregular piece of water, made by means of a deep embankment on one side to fill a winding hollow, is skirted nearly round by large trees or young thriving plantations, and has had lately erected on its brink, at the place where the flow or spare water escapes, a very elegant small temple, constructed after the plan of that of Theseus at Athens, and surrounded by thirty-four granite columns. The interior is neatly fitted up as a cold bath. This lake, besides supplying a peculiar and beautiful object in the landscape, and serving as a breeding-place or depôt for fresh water fish, has become the constant habitation of a colony of tame swans, and, at particular seasons of the year, it may be seen occasionally almost covered with flocks of wild ducks.

The only streams of any considerable size that pass through the parish, are the south and north branches of the Ugie, which blend their waters in the parish of Longside, and flow into the sea together scarcely a mile N. W. of Peterhead. Owing to the small acclivity of the ground, and the numerous bends or turns of the valleys through which they pass, they make in general a very sluggish and meandering course; and where pains have not been taken to deepen and straighten their channels, or raise proper embankments, they are apt to overflow after falls of rain, and, unless in particular spots, or in very dry times, to keep wet the flats on each side. Containing as they do a plentiful supply of black or burn-trouts, they afford abundance of what is called sport to the angler; but very few of the salmon tribe, beyond mere fry, are to be found at this distance from the sea. The principal stream, where it passes the church, has not run, perhaps, above ten miles from its source in New Deer, and the surface from which it collects the water that springs from and falls upon the earth, does not exceed fifty square miles. There are several tributary streams of less size, rising in the parish, and some of them driving machinery as they pass along. Most parts of the parish are well supplied with pure spring water; but there are a few situations ill accommodated in this respect, where pits have been dug in vain forty feet deep. Chalybeates,

pretty richly impregnated with iron, are far from being scarce, but they have been rarely used for medical or other purposes.

Geology.—The only rocks that have been wrought and turned to account are granite and limestone. Several of the ridges or small hills seem to be composed entirely of the first named species of fossil, of different degrees of hardness, and varying, not only in size of grains, and the proportions of constituent materials, but also in colour, from a light to a dark gray. Veins or larger masses of an impure species of lime rock have raised their crops in different places, particularly at Hythie, Clochcan Elrick, and Broomhill of Annochie, where the stone has been quarried and burned; but owing to the smallness of the commodity, or the cost of manufacturing it, occasioned chiefly by its depth, when the crops are taken off, or the way in which it is overlaid, and in some cases rendered very impure by heterogeneous and solid materials,—the works have been discontinued for some time, and it is likely will not soon be resumed at the three first named places. At Annochie, there is still within reach a considerable body of lime rock, interspersed, however, with dikes, veins, and blocks of gneiss, which, though they present pretty much the same appearance as the limestone in many respects, experienced workmen can in general distinguish by the eye, without applying any other test. The limestone itself is of an impure description, adulterated with a mixture of magnesian earth, which renders it a deleterious manure, especially for hot and light soils, though it is in high repute, and usually preferred to lighter and purer lime, for building purposes. The stone, detached from the rock by iron crows, large hammers, and blasts of gunpowder, is broken by smaller hammers into fragments, as if intended for the substratum of a turnpike road, and calcined in small clump kilns by peats. Sometimes in wet seasons, when peat fuel is scarce or bad, a sprinkling of coal is used in the process. The lime, when burned, is slacked or reduced to powder by the application of water. The heterogeneous substances which the fire has not decomposed, or the fused slug caused by the excess of heat, are separated from the dust by a riddle or sieve wrought by the hand, and what passes through the instrument is sold at from 8d. to 10d. per Linlithgow boll. The tenant reports that, for several years back, at an average, he has disposed of 2500 bolls on these terms, and that he has sold, besides, yearly upwards of 180 cubic yards of unburned stone, which people in the neighbourhood purchase at the rate of 9s. a quarter, as it is called,—that is, a heap of

stones built rudely into something like the form of a cube, 5 feet on each side, four of these measures, or 500 solid feet, being estimated to yield 100 bolls of lime.

Within two furlongs of the lime quarry, on the lands of Annochie also, are numerous large blocks of pure white quartz, some lying on the surface and others imbedded in the earth. Towards the south side of the parish, and in several other detached districts, such rocks and stones as are found partake chiefly of the silicious character, and can with difficulty be forced by the hammer or any instrument into proper shapes for building. The high ground south of the house of Kinmundy, and the top of the hill of Skelmuir, fully more than one mile and a-half to the westward, and separated from the other by a pretty deep and broad valley, are overspread with nodules and fragments of flint. The heart of most of these nodules, when they are broken, contains a cavity, and discloses the impression of a sea shell.

In digging gravel pits to find materials for making roads, the constituent parts of granite, felspar, quartz, and mica are often met with; all regularly disposed, and exhibiting, till touched, somewhat of a rocky appearance, but without the least cohesion among the particles. Phenomena of this kind, and well marked symptoms of stratification, may be traced at different elevations, in some instances from one side of a valley to a corresponding level on the opposite.

There have been, at some period, immense fields of peat moss occupying the low ground, and filling up cavities where there was stagnant water in more elevated situations. But in consequence of the heavy demand that has been long made upon it for fuel and other purposes, and the little care taken to promote its growth, there are but few places now where it is not altogether or almost exhausted, and the spots where it existed either left an unseemly waste, or reduced to tillage. Nor is the destruction of this substance much to be regretted; for it manifestly tends to deteriorate the climate, by reason of the facility with which, like a sponge, it receives and retains moisture and frost. And if due allowance be made for the time, money, and labour consumed in procuring this commodity, when the place where it is found lies several miles distant from that where it has to be used, the same quantity of heat may be obtained at less cost from sea-borne coal, provided a horse can go by a tolerable road to the port, and return with a load the same day. Boles or logs of hard-wood trees, principally oak, rarely

if ever fir, some of them considerable as to girth, but of no great length, are found now and then in a tolerable state of preservation in the mosses.

Soil.—The soil, as might naturally be expected in such a variety of surface, is far from being uniform. In some cases, the clayey or argillaceous, and in others the sandy, gravelly, or silicious ingredients prevail. Small, indeed, is the quantity that can be regarded as alluvial. In several flats and braes, or hill-sides, such soil as there is seems to have been torn with difficulty from a light coarse sward overlying a mass of ferruginous matter, impervious to water, and next to impenetrable; or from an inert ochrey sand, to which it is scarcely possible by any means to impart life and fertility. It seems utterly beyond the power of man to make a good or profitable subject of such materials as these, although the introduction of bone-dust as a manure, and one that appears from use peculiarly well suited for a situation like this, gives the tenant of a dry and hazelly field an advantage which he did not previously possess. It is a pity, however, to see a farmer bestowing a more than due proportion of culture and cost upon ground where, though it is easy to make the plough pass, he can expect no adequate return, while he may have in his possession, and leave neglected, tracts of wet or boggy land, that may be dried and cultivated at an expense, doubtless, great in the first instance,—but for which in the end, especially if those having a permanent interest in the ground give him a proper degree of assistance, he would be much better remunerated. The tops of several bare hills, now covered with nothing but stunted heath, appear to have been cultivated at some former period. There are still visible upon them the marks of crooked ridges, which in all probability were successively gathered and cropped, till they became, in spite of any treatment which the skill or enterprise of the day could employ, absolutely effete, leaving balks or intervals between them from which the mould was entirely scraped off, wider than the ridges themselves. Though this be rather an unfavourable representation of the actual state of several localities, yet it is but fair to state that the parish in general contains, perhaps, fully as great a proportion of generous and workable soil as is to be found in most districts of the country. In old times, it was the practice to keep a portion of the land near to the farm-steading perpetually in crops of barley, oats, or pease, and to treat the rest as an out-farm, on which they pastured and folded the cattle, and from which they transferred to the dung-pit such

earth as they could lift, to form with the animal manure dropped in winter, and peat-ashes, a compost for deepening and enriching by turns the fields which were destined to constant aration. This plan of management served to impoverish one part of the farm, while it benefited another, and was the cause of a distinction which is still observable and spoken of, between *infield* and *outfield*, notwithstanding a long-continued attempt to bring them nearer to a state of equality by a different and improved system of husbandry.

Botany.—The following is a list of a few plants culled by a scientific friend, which he reckoned as being of the rarer species in the district, viz.—

Pepelis portula	Listera cordata	Subularia aquatica
Parnassia palustris	Trientalis Europæa	Botrychium Lunaria
Menyanthes trifoliata	Veronica scutellata	Hippuris vulgaris, &c.
Fumaria claviculata	Montia fontana	

It is not saying much to state, that there is more growing wood in this parish, and much of it in a more thriving condition, than is to be found in any other district of Buchan of an equal, or even of a much greater extent. The late James Ferguson, Esq. of Pitfour was at great pains and cost in forming plantations: and the present proprietor, while he attends carefully to thinning, pruning, and nursing the woods that he found upon the estate, has done a good deal to extend their limits. It is to be regretted, however, that much of his labour and money are lost, as the greater number of the plants put into the ground are either totally destroyed by deer, hares, and rabbits, or so much injured as to leave little hope of their ever coming to be trees. About 1100 acres of the property in this parish are occupied by plantations.

The father of the present proprietor of Aden was also at singular pains in raising forest trees, and ornamenting his place or manor. When he succeeded to the property it was rather naked; but he left on the portion of it immediately attached to the domain, a great many acres of thriving wood, not short of 300 acres, I should suppose, in masses, clumps, belts, and hedge-rows.

Mr Ferguson of Kenmundy is not much indebted to his ancestors for the care they took to enrich and beautify the estate he inherited in this way; but since he came to have the command of it, he has himself planted fully 90 acres, a considerable part of which, though young, bodes well.

On the estate of Dens, belonging to the Rev. John Stuart Burnett, an English clergyman, there is a plantation, embosoming or skirting some corn fields, probably altogether 70 or 80 acres in

extent, of pretty well-grown Scotch fir, interspersed with some hard-wood, and some larch more recently planted.

Beech and spruce seem to be the kinds of wood that generally thrive best; but there are to be seen in different places, fair specimens of most other species of trees, natural or domesticated, in the north of Scotland, particularly ash, elm, silver-fir, larch, and our own native pine. The cold saline piercing blasts from the sea, meeting with little to temper or turn them aside as they sweep over the surface, are undoubtedly adverse to the growth of wood.

Zoology.—There is not much curious or rare in the zoology of this parish. It may be noticed, however, that rabbits have so multiplied within the protected grounds, as to have become a pest to farmers and foresters. Their number and prolificness may in part be judged of from this fact, that, notwithstanding about half a score of years back, they were scarcely known to exist in a wild state; nearly 12,000 were shot or snared in the course of one year, principally in the policies and woods that lie round the house of Pitfour. In the north, which is the best wooded side of the parish, roe-deer and fallow, the progeny of a few that escaped from a neighbouring park, now become wild, are also pretty numerous. Hares, where care is bestowed in protecting the game, are, many think, more than sufficiently plentiful for all useful purposes, while in several respects they are obviously destructive. The cultivation of moors, mosses, and bogs has not favoured the increase or preservation of grouse and snipes, so that of these there are comparatively few. Several varieties of wild ducks are far from being scarce. Wild geese occasionally visit the country in seed-time. Partridges in good seasons are abundant. Of woodcocks, many scores have been shot in the course of a winter. The ordinary birds of passage, cuckoos, plovers, corn-rails, swallows, &c. never fail to come and go at their stated times. Captain Ferguson some years ago introduced a brood of pheasants, which, from being well attended to and protected, have prospered and spread in the quarter.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Deer, if not the first, was probably one of the first places in Buchan where a Christian church was erected. There is a legend, that when some pious individuals formed the design of building a house for the worship of God, and selected such spots, one after another, as their own judgment, inclination, or convenience

might have led them to prefer, while they saw no person, they heard a voice thus accost them :

“ It is not here, it is not here,
That ye're to big the Kirk o' Deer,
But on the tap o' Tillery,
Where many a corpse shall after lie.”

A church accordingly was built on a knoll or small mount, embraced by a semicircular bend of the Ugie, and, as was customary, a piece of ground around it was set apart for a burial-place, so that the weird is fully verified, in the great number of interments that have taken place, during the lapse of centuries, in a wide and populous parish.

There are visible proofs still remaining that this parish was formerly the scene of warfare, occasioned by family feuds, civil strife, or the invasion of the country by foreigners. On the top of the hill of Bruxie, and at Den of Howie, near Fetterangus, there are traces of fortifications and encampments; and near the foot of Arkey-brae, there is a cluster of tumuli, pointing out the graves of warriors who fell in a bloody contest reported to have taken place between Edward, the brother of King Robert Bruce, and Cumming, the Earl of Buchan, with their followers and clansmen.

In the insurrection of 1745-6, there were risings in behalf of the exiled Stuarts, many of the heads of families being attached to the Jacobite interest. That rough partizan of the fallen cause, Gordon of Glenbucket, instead of attaching himself to the main army, extended his barbarities into the lowlands; and as the Laird of Kinmundy was known to favour the opposite side, he shewed some of his rude civilities to that house, particularly to the lady, who was left in command of the garrison.

Present State of Property.—The three principal landholders reside in the parish, Captain Ferguson of Pitfour; Mr Ferguson of Kinmundy; and Mr Russell of Aden. There are six others who have estates here, viz. the Honourable William Gordon of Eilon, proprietor of Skelmuir; the Rev. J. S. Burnett has Dens and Little Crichtie; Mr Buchan of Auchmacoy, Knock; Mr Gordon of Nethermuir, Kidshill and Greenbrae;—Lord Lovat a portion of Skillimarno, at the north extremity of the parish; and Mr Forbes Irvine of Schivas, the pendicle of Cairncummer. Besides what belongs to these individuals, between a fifth and a sixth part of the whole parish, estimated according to the valued rent, is mortified property, appertaining to various charitable trusts. Clachriah, &c. purchased lately from Pitfour, belongs to the Trustees of the late Mr Gor-

don of Murtle, who are vested with discretionary power, and have applied the greater part of the proceeds to the endowment of a school for educating poor girls in Aberdeen, and the establishment there of something like parochial schools; Upper Crichtie, Annochie, and Elrick, to the Trustees of the late Andrew Simpson of Collichill, who destined the first-named place to endow a hospital, now conjoined with that of Mr Gordon of Sillerton's, for educating the sons of poor burgesses in the same city, and the two last for the behoof of the ordinary poor there. Kinaddie was likewise left by the late Mr Burnett of Dens for the same purpose, as long as it should not be necessary to have recourse to a legal assessment, and, in that event, to pass to the Infirmary or Lunatic Asylum. The same gentleman bequeathed a small property, yielding at present upwards of L. 40 of gross rental, under a certain trust, to the kirk-session, for the benefit of certain descriptions of poor on his own estates in the parish. He has stipulated, however, that it shall revert to the heir of the family estate, seven years after the permanent establishment of a poor rate shall be found necessary.* This small fund is eminently beneficial, and the application of it is so judiciously guarded, that it holds forth no encouragement for paupers to settle on the estate from the prospect of sharing in the benefit. It is intended chiefly for those, who, after an industrial residence of seven years, have been reduced to straits by the infirmities of age or severe sickness, a preference being shown to persons of good character.

Parochial Registers.—The parochial and session registers are incomplete. It is generally alleged that the registers anterior to the death of Mr Keith, the last Episcopal incumbent, and the settlement of Mr Gordon, 1710–11, were carried off. The Episcopal clergyman at Old Deer has or had in his possession a register of baptisms previous to that period, in a good state of preservation. There are no records of proceedings that stretch farther back; and, besides that most of the books seem at times to have been imperfectly kept since, there is many a hiatus to interrupt their continuity.

Antiquities.—The only ruinous building within the parish entitled to notice, is the Abbey of Deer. What remains of this ancient edifice is now situated within and protected by the high wall which encloses the fruit and kitchen garden of Pitfour. Before pains were taken to preserve the ruins, the fabric, which appears from the

* This apprehended contingency has now taken place.

ground plan, yet marked by the remaining fragments of walls, to have been originally a very extensive though rude piece of masonry, was in a great measure dilapidated for the purpose of constructing houses and dikes in the neighbourhood, and till a late proprietor of Pitfour took the trouble of clearing away part of the rubbish, and repairing some of the principal walls, according to the original plan of architecture, if the phrase may be used in respect to so plain a style of building,—the form and dimensions of the edifice could not be ascertained. The church, situated on the north side, has been of considerable size, built in the form of a cross, with chancel, nave, and transept, in fair proportions. The greatest length, taken internally from east to west, is 150 feet, and the greatest breadth, where is the transept, 90 feet. The roof of the nave, itself 38½ feet wide, appears to have had, besides the support of the walls, that of a row of stone pillars, the bases of which are still visible, extending from end to end about 17 feet distant from one another, and considerably nearer the north than the south side of the building. This religious house was founded about the beginning of the thirteenth century, by one of the Cummings, then Earl of Buchan, and first occupied by a colony of Cistercian monks from the Abbey of Kinloss, in Moray. A namesake of the founder was the builder. Not many years ago, a lintel over a door in the ruinous castle of Inverallochy, parish of Lonmay, was removed, which is said to have had on it this inscription, or words to the same effect:

“ I, Jordan Cummin, indwaller here,
Got lands of Inverallochy for building Abbey Deer.”

The abbey was suppressed at the Reformation, and erected into a temporal lordship in favour of Robert, the Earl Marischal's second son, created Lord Altrie. The newly created peer dying without issue, the title became extinct, and the estate was incorporated with that of the head of the family. The revenue of the institution, as appears from the collector's books, still or lately extant, is stated at L. 572, 8s. 6d. of money; 65 chalders, 7 bolls, 1 firiot, 3 pecks of meal; 14 bolls of wheat; and 14 chalders 10 bolls of bear. If we advert to the extent of territory set apart for the support of the house, and to the rents which the lands may be supposed to yield to their proprietors at the present day, the annual income of this monastic establishment must have been considerable.

Among the ancient erections we ought to include the Druidical

temples, or circles, as they are commonly called. These appear to have been more than usually numerous here, although vestiges only of four or five now remain. The rest have been destroyed for the sake of the stones, or to clear the way for cultivating the ground they occupied. The one that is most entire and best exposed to public view, is on the top of the hill of Parkhouse. The principal or altar stone, placed as usual on the south side, and lying with its ends east and west, is $14\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet broad, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet deep. If a third part of the solid contents or measure which these dimensions would yield, be deducted for defects or inequalities in the stone, the gross weight of it, at 11 cubic feet per ton, would still exceed 21 tons. The stone belongs to the primitive trap. The diameter of the space inclosed, or comprehended by the circle, is 48 feet. Only four of the upright stones remain, and are about 14 feet asunder.

“At the distance of 500 yards, on the north side of the same hill,” observes the author of the last Statistical Account of the parish, “were not long ago the ruins of a small village, supposed to have been the residence of the Druids,” (but commonly called by the country people Pights’ or Picts’ houses.) “A number of little yards were to be seen all around it,” every vestige of which is now obliterated by the process of culture. “It consisted of 50 or 60 mossy huts, from 6 to 12 feet square, irregularly huddled together. Hence it got the name of the *bourachs*. The walls were built of stone and clay; the floors were paved with stones.”

Modern Buildings, State of the Population, &c.—The three resident heritors have neat, commodious, and, for the extent of their estates, sufficiently spacious houses, with suitable courts of offices, either entirely built, or extensively repaired and greatly enlarged by themselves. The mansion of Pitfour, including furniture, and what has been laid out in constructing its various useful and ornamental appendages, improving the park and policies, making approaches, &c. has cost the present owner, according to his own admission, and that of his men of business, nearly L. 80,000.

III.—POPULATION.

Owing chiefly to the building and increase of two villages within the last sixty years, viz. Crichtie or Stewartfield and Fetterangus, the former containing, according to a list of inhabitants recently taken, 573, and the latter, 216 souls; and the settlement of crofters and cottagers in spots which used to lie waste,—the population of the parish has increased greatly since 1750, and is still in the

increasing ratio. The only other collection of inhabited houses entitled to the name of a village is that of Old Deer, contiguous to the parish church. This village contained, at the time the census of the other two was last taken, 211 persons of all ages, and has received little increase or alteration for a long time.

In the year 1787 or 1788, a careful census was taken of the people, distinguishing the different religious denominations, with a view to ascertain what accommodation it would be expedient to provide for those belonging to the Establishment in a new church, which was then about to be built. The gross population at that time is reported to have been 3267, of whom 962 are set down as being Episcopalians, Papists, or Seceders, amounting together to considerably more than one-fourth of the whole people. According to the census made by order of Government in 1831, the number of inhabitants had grown to 4110, and in 1836, it would appear, from a careful investigation of the matter, to have then increased to no fewer than 4428 individuals. The number of religious sects or persuasions is much greater than it was in 1788, and, if the investigation alluded to be correct, the proportions among such sects as then existed have been greatly altered; but the ratio which the various Dissenting bodies now bear to the Establishment, seems to remain much the same, since the total number of full-grown persons presently in full communion with the Established Church appears to be 1708, and of those in the same state belonging to all other denominations of Christians, 645.

As no register of burials is kept, and parents, particularly those belonging to Dissenting communions, are far from being punctual in getting their children's baptisms or ages recorded, an account to be depended on cannot be given of the number of births and burials that happen annually. But the average number of marriages for the last seven years, counting a marriage only when the female belongs to the parish, is 26. There are 259 families in the three villages, and 725 in rural situations, thus giving on an average in the former case nearly 4, and in the latter somewhat less than 5 individuals to a family. Of these families, reckoning by the religious persuasion of the person who is at the head of each, there are 714 belonging to the Established Church; 83 Episcopalian; 157 of the Original or United Secession; and 30 of different Dissenting bodies, chiefly Congregationalists.

Only one person, a boy, is known to be altogether deaf and dumb; but there are 4 totally blind. No fewer than 10 persons

belonging to the parish, all related to poor families, are unhappily possessed of disordered or weak understandings, two of whom are violently insane, and the rest fatuous or imbecile.

The following may be relied upon as a pretty accurate statement of the present population in respect to professional employments, &c.

Apothecary,	1	Innkeepers,	6
Bachelors and widowers above 50 years of age,	92	Labourers,	134
Bakers,	6	Male servants above 20 years,	250
Blacksmiths,	24	Ditto under ditto,	168
Brewers,	2	Male teacher on own adventure,	1
Carpenters,	46	Maltsters,	4
Carriers,	5	Masons,	26
Clergymen,	5	Merchants or shop-keepers,	19
Crofters with a piece of ground,	401	Millers,	10
Dress-makers & seamstresses, about	20	Painter,	1
Dyers,	5	Parochial schoolmasters,	3
Excise-officer,	1	Physicians,	3
Farmers, or persons occupying a portion of land sufficient to employ one plough at least, about	140	Resident proprietors,	3
Farriers,	4	Shoemakers,	47
Female servants above 20 years,	259	Slater,	1
Ditto under ditto,	127	Tailors,	23
Female teachers,	9	Turners,	2
Flethers,	4	Unmarried women above 45 years,	249
Gamekeepers,	3	Watchmakers,	3
Gardeners,	9	Weavers, male,	51
		Do. female,	22
			73

It were much to be desired that more attention were paid to cleanliness and cheap comforts by the common people, than is the case. But, upon the whole, we think that even the lowest of the peasantry are not in this particular a whit behind those of the same class throughout the district.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

State of Agriculture and Manufactures.—Such is the general state of agricultural knowledge that most farmers, and even crofters, are disposed, as they are usually bound by their tenures, to observe, from beginning to end of their leases, a regular plan of tillage. A five-course shift was the one that for some time till of late, was most in vogue, viz. first year, oats from lea; second, turnip, potatoes, and, when the manure failed, naked fallow; third, barley, oats, or sometimes wheat, with a due quantity of clover and rye-grass seeds; fourth, hay or pasture; and fifth, pasture. Some tenants had, besides these lots, another section, at least, a *paddock* or small field, in perpetual grass. This short rotation, however, has been found by experience, particularly on loamy and open soils, one that cannot be persisted in with profit, because the frequent ploughings and croppings it requires have a tendency to

exhaust the land, and render it too open and loose; and it has, in general, been deemed expedient to lengthen the series to six, seven, or eight years, that the land, from getting more rest, as it is called, may become more consolidated and productive. How far the evil that arises from loosening the soil to excess, is remedied by the agricultural instrument lately invented and called a *compressor*, is yet here only the subject of experiment. The ground, whether naturally dry or wettish, is still laid out in flat, straight, and narrow ridges, from sixteen to twenty feet broad. Furrow-draining,—although stones in general are pretty plentiful,—is not practised to great extent; but some trials of it have been made with good effect. Enclosing fields by stone dikes, deep ditches in wet land, and shallow ones in dry situations, with a mound on one side cropped with stones, where stones are not easily provided, or little or no allowance is granted by the landlord for fences,—has become very common of late.—Cattle are found to thrive better when they are allowed to eat, drink, roam, and rest at pleasure, free from the control of a herd, and the confinement of a house or pen during the heat of summer; and more of them can be kept within the same bounds enclosed than open.—Hedges of hawthorn, beech, or other wood plants suitable for the purpose, are rare, unless near gentlemen's seats, on account of the expense of rearing them, and the difficulty of making them by any care sufficient fences in this climate. It would be judicious, however, to encourage the growth of them, at least, to a certain extent, for the sake of shelter, in conjunction with other means of enclosure.

Several persons, the resident heritors especially, have laid out a considerable quantity of land, not under 600 or 700 acres, in permanent pasture, which they let annually at a rent, it may be stated, varying from L. 1, 10s. to L. 4 per acre, to cattle-dealers, graziers, and farmers, who can keep a greater stock of bestial in winter than summer on the produce of their farms, when they are kept in the ordinary course of rotation. Both the soil and climate are thought to be better suited for oats, turnip, and pasture, than for wheat or barley. The last two species of grain are on that account sparingly sown. The varieties of oats in most common use are of an early kind, such as white or English barley oats, early Angus oats, potato oats, &c. In dry and warm soils, liable to be affected by drought, recourse is usually had to those of a later quality, such as late or gray Angus oats, Kildrummy, or what is considered the natural oat of the county, Hopetoun oats, &c. The usual quantity

of seed is from six to six and a half bushels per imperial acre; and the returns may be stated, taking an average of seasons, on a good farm, from five to six and a half; on a bad one, three to four; and on those of a mixed or indifferent quality, at the various intermediate degrees. From an after statement it will appear that the average return is rather above than below four and a half. Since the turnip husbandry has been fully established, and bone-dust could be purchased at a moderate price, from 2s. 2d. to 2s. 6d. a bushel, to supply the deficiency of home manure, —the growth of peas has been almost discontinued.

It is long since farmers used to fatten a part of their winter stock of cattle for the home consumption. That demand, however, was very limited. But of late, the practice of conveying cattle alive in good condition by steam or sailing vessels to London, where a much better price is commonly obtained, has induced many to keep the stots or full-grown animals, which they used to dispose of in some of the summer markets, to English or south country dealers; and, when they are fully stall-fed, either to send them directly from themselves, to be sold for their behoof by a commission-agent in the southern metropolis, or to pass them into the hands of a dealer at home, who traffics in that commodity. It is not unusual for country graziers or dealers to continue their trade through the winter, and to bargain with farmers for what they can spare of their turnips at so much, from L. 5 to L. 10 per acre, to be consumed upon the farm, receiving therewith house accommodation, and a competent quantity of straw for fodder and bedding. Nothing, for many years, back has contributed more to improve the condition of the farming interest in this part of the world than the discovery and general use of bone manure for the raising of turnips, and the easy transport of cattle fattened by them to a distant market. With lime, reckoned favourable, particularly on its first application to the growth of green crops, the bulk of the land had been saturated, and in many cases supersaturated, so as by an excess of cropping, which almost invariably followed, to have become in many cases a *caput mortuum*. Feeding, more than forcing manures, were then wanted; and this desideratum the bones of animals have helped greatly to supply. Had it not been for the favourable circumstances alluded to, in connection with a moderate price for oats, the staple produce here, during the last two or three years, the very low rate of farm produce for a long period before, with little exception, had it continued much longer in a depressed con-

dition, would in all probability have placed both the owners and the occupiers of the soil, with many others who depend upon them, directly or indirectly, in a new and perilous situation. Tenants ordinarily are not possessed of much capital beyond what they have invested in stocking and improving their tenements, to enable them to bear up under a heavy and protracted pressure; and unless their rents could be so adjusted by reference to the current prices of what their farms chiefly yield, so as to rise and fall with the fluctuations in the value of produce, there is a risk of a series of cross seasons obliging them to relinquish their places and vocations; and if this should ever unfortunately be the case, to any considerable extent, it may be difficult to find another set of men possessed of capital, skill, and enterprise to succeed them. It would, therefore, be wise in landlords and tenants to make such arrangements with one another, as may enable them to meet, so far as a prudent foresight can avail, without any serious shock, this, to say the least of it, not very improbable contingency. Adverting to the ordinary course of seasons and events, and taking, moreover, into account, how the agricultural, like other great national pursuits is liable to be affected by the unsettled and restless state of legislation, which has for some time perplexed and disconcerted many classes of the community, we have no right to presume on a lasting continuance of even such prosperity as that with which the country has been for some time providentially favoured. Besides such clauses in leases as those to which I have just referred, it would be politic, as well as just in land-owners, to encourage their tenantry, by assisting them to execute all substantial and costly improvements wanted, such as roads, water-courses, ditches, drains, fences, &c. because they thereby put them into a better state for settling with themselves at term time, and, happen what may, provided the occupier pays a due proportion of the expense, these improvements, if judiciously planned and properly executed, must add, beyond what they have cost them, to the value of their property. Indeed, it properly belongs to the proprietor, who either has of himself, or by concert with his neighbours, may get the command of a district, to project and execute many improvements, which, in order to be effectual, require to be extended over a wider space than the limits of a single tenement. Farms, commencing with such as occupy a pair of horses, and are in the hands of one individual, vary in size from 30 to 500 acres. There are about five score of tenements that can be managed with greater or less

ease by one plough; above thirty that require two ploughs; seven or eight that cannot be wrought by fewer than three ploughs, at least; and two that furnish sufficient employment for five, six, or seven. Several of the others, although they have a less field for their operations, are entitled, we doubt not, to a proportional share of credit; but the occupiers of the two largest farms, both gentlemen, well educated, of public spirit, and possessed of some funds, have, in the course of a few years, effected an admirable change, both as to appearance and value, in the land under their management.* Besides the tenements above-mentioned, there is a very considerable number of small possessions, the holders of which continue with one horse either to associate with a neighbour similarly circumstanced, or to mount a yoke of their own, by providing an ox, a stot, or even sometimes a cow, to go alongside his horse in the spring season. Most villagers, and some with small crofts in the country, hire for labouring their lots of ground, or doing other similar services, the ordinary charge being at the rate of 1s. 6d. to 2s. for a horse per yoking. The total number of ploughs presently required, or rather actually used in the parish, is as follows, viz. 244 drawn by a pair of horses; 25 by a pair of oxen; and 27 by a horse and a nolt animal of some description for a fellow. It is utterly impracticable, for obvious reasons, to furnish an accurate statement of the amount or value of agricultural stock; and yet this, if it could be procured, appears to be a very important matter, as it would afford data for comparing the state of the country at one period with that at another, and marking the change for the better or the worse that takes place during the interval. As a near approximation to the truth, however, the following may be given as the gross amount of live-stock, of all ages which have been usually kept, summer and winter, for a few years back throughout the parish, taken from lists carefully made up by different individuals acquainted with the several districts, viz. 4347 black cattle, 721 horses, 1019 sheep, and 216 swine. An attempt was made at the same time to ascertain the quantity of grain sown and grown yearly on the several possessions. Owing principally to the irregularity of seasons, there is still greater difficulty in ascertaining the fact here than in the former case. The following, however, may be stated as the result:

* Much to the loss and regret of many, one of these gentlemen has paid the last debt of nature since this paragraph was written.

Imperial quarters of oats sown,	4451,	raised,	20,196
of barley,	72	do.	447
of wheat,	24	do.	21

Rent of Land.—The rent of land, as may be readily supposed, is still more various than its quality. Some acres in the immediate vicinity of a village let as high as L.3, 10s. There are farms of a moderate size above L.1, 10s. per acre at an average; and there are others, fully a worse bargain, under a third of that charge. Rent is now generally paid in money, at two terms. In a few late agreements for leases, a limited portion, not exceeding a half, is allowed to fluctuate according to the fair prices of victual. Servitudes, once very common, are now rarely exacted; and what used to be a great and general grievance, when almost every estate was thirled or astricted to a particular mill, and obliged to pay a heavy assessment, usually from an eleventh to a sixteenth part of the whole grain crop (with the exception of an allowance for seed and horse-corn,) whether the produce was sold or ground,—is now happily removed, the last of the multures having been converted last year. There are eight meal-mills, six of them with, and two of them without, drying kilns attached. Several of these, lately built, are on a pretty large scale, with granaries, large meal ginals, and a separate machinery for dressing pot-barley, so that the tenants of these mills are enabled to lay themselves out, not merely for working to the *sucken* and others who may require their services, but also for speculating a little themselves in the purchase of grain, and converting it into meal at their convenience, for a home or distant market. Instead of the miller receiving for workmanship, as was the practice till lately, a specified portion of the produce, the ordinary charge for drying and grinding oats is now sixpence per boll of meal. The only fuel employed to dry the grain is the sides or husks of what has formerly gone through the process. This, compared with the old usage, when all dried their victual at home, and were obliged to keep a kiln on the premises for the purpose, is a very economical arrangement in several respects.

Agricultural Live-Stock.—No one has any thing like a flock of sheep, unless it be the proprietor of Pitfour, who has generally from 200 to 400 of various kinds, which are pastured upon the lawn and some contiguous grass fields. What the family do not require for their own use, are usually sold fat to butchers. There are a few Merinos and Bakewells; but the ordinary animals to be found about farm towns, or in the custody of crofters, are of mixed and miscellaneous breeds. The prevailing species of black-cattle,

for which the district has obtained some celebrity, is dodded or humble, of good symmetry, rather above the middle size, and upon the whole good milkers. Within the last dozen of years, the Teeswater has been introduced and propagated, pure or as crosses, to considerable extent. The blending of the two breeds has tended much to increase the size, though some allege to deteriorate the quality of the stock. Of this, however, there is scarcely any doubt, that a great increase of carcase and value may be obtained, without much additional cost, from a judicious mixture, and with moderate keep, now that the necessity of making cattle travel southward is removed, and they can be sent direct to London on shipboard at no very high charge. A first cross from a Buchan cow and a Teeswater bull is commonly accounted the most profitable beast for the market. Some have begun to make experiments on the Hereford breed; but the process is not yet sufficiently advanced to warrant any practical conclusion as to the suitability of this stock to our pasture and climate. Calves are in a few cases allowed to suck, but generally are fed from the pail. There is nothing particularly deserving of notice in the kinds of horses used and bred for husbandry purposes. As the soil is generally light, and the greater proportion of the fields free from steep ascents, the animals usually preferred are rather of a slender and active than of a heavy make, and are of a moderate size.

Agricultural Association.—There is in the district an Agricultural Association of many years standing, though of late remodelled, which holds its regular meetings here, for promoting and suggesting improvements in husbandry. Each member pays 5s. annually to form a fund for premiums, given for the best specimens of breeding stock, the best samples of seed oats, &c. as awarded by judges selected for the purpose. An additional half-crown is contributed by several, if not by most, of the members for procuring a few periodicals and books upon agriculture, to be circulated among the contributors.

There are still two lint-mills kept up, and occasionally but imperfectly employed. The culture of flax was almost entirely discontinued a few years back, but of late a little more has been done in that line.

There are two wool-mills, with spinning jennies, and looms for weaving woollen cloth. At one of them, Millbrake, the copartnership of proprietors, the most of whom are operatives themselves, besides working to the public, to which the operations

of the other, at Aden, are chiefly restricted, manufacture, on their own adventure, considerable quantities of the coarser sorts of woollen cloth, and of yarn for stockings. The number of hands of both sexes and of all ages, usually employed in the different departments of the work is about 30, receiving from 12s. to 13s. weekly of wages. This larger establishment has a dye-house and a waulk or fulling-mill. There are other two dyers in separate stations possessed of similar mills, who find pretty steady and abundant employment from the country.

Connected with manufactures, there are, in addition to such as work almost exclusively for people in the country, no fewer than about 47 persons, some male, some female, presently employed, for the most part, in the village of Stewartfield, weaving linen yarn of different degrees of fineness, for the large house at Broadford, Aberdeen, which was erected by Mr Maberly, and now belongs to Messrs Richard and Co. As the hands are paid by the piece, they are not obliged to labour any precise number of hours a day. An expert and active individual would earn at the present rate of prices, about 6s. or 7s. in the space of ten or twelve hours. Were any change of circumstances to remove or greatly diminish this employment, many a poor villager and cottager, who derives from it a moderate livelihood, would be at a loss how to earn their bread. The state of the country, especially as it affects infirm or aged females, is altered much for the worse, by the introduction and extensive use of machinery for spinning flax, and knitting stockings. No farther back than the beginning of the present century, any woman could have found more work in this way than it was in her power to accomplish, and, if she was tolerably acquainted with the business, could have won with ease, and by a species of work well suited to the sex, from 3s. to 4s. a-week. Now, it requires no small interest to find even occasionally something to do in that line, and the allowance is scarcely a third of what it then was. This cause alone, though it stands not alone, might account for the increase of pauperism, and the proportionate demand on public charity. If those in better circumstances could devise means for procuring employment, and giving moderate remuneration, to such as need and could profit by it, relief administered in this form would be incomparably more serviceable than a direct alms of the same value. It would do much to keep alive that honourable spirit of industry and independence, so far as independence consists in a desire not to be burdensome to others,

which has long adorned our peasantry, and been a fair feature of our national character. Associations of benevolent and patriotic individuals formed with this end in view at Elgin and in other places, are said to do much good at little expense.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Roads and Public Conveyances.—There are only two turnpike roads in the parish, crossing one another at Mintlaw in Longside, the one in the direction of north to south, leading from Fraserburgh to Aberdeen, and the other of east to west, from Peterhead to Banff. The former extends in Old Deer over a space of about eight miles; and the latter, of four. Mail-coaches pass and re-pass along both lines daily. A stage coach also, for the greater part of two years back, has been in the use of travelling between Aberdeen and Old Deer every day in summer, and twice or thrice a week in winter. It is much against the ease and speed of journeying in the direction it takes, that the road for five miles from the starting-place here is very imperfectly made, and fully worse planned. A new road is much wanted, and has been long projected, passing nearly in a straight line from the Banff turnpike near the village of Old Deer towards Ellon, and through an extensive tract of waste or ill cultivated country, which is of difficult access at present. The opening up of a communication in this route would be a matter of great public utility—shortening the distance to Aberdeen by several miles. Were some of the heritors, through whose ground it would pass, to make the greater part of the road at their own expense, it is probable they might soon find that they were not great losers in so doing. Nor is this the only direction where the want of good roads is felt. Several other districts are very ill situate in this respect. Indeed, unless the landed interest in general see the policy of pursuing the course chalked out for them by several spirited proprietors, and make roads where they are wanted in their own estates at their own expense, the money levied by statute might be found sufficient to keep them in a proper state of repair, but in most cases is utterly inadequate to accomplish the whole object.

The nearest post-town is Mintlaw in Longside, about two miles from the village of Old Deer, and three from Stewartfield, from both of which places a runner, paid by the public, goes twice a day to the post-office.

State of the Parish Church and other Ecclesiastical Matters.—The parish church, fitted up to contain 1200 sitters, was built in

1788, and the manse in 1832. The offices are of different ages. The stipend, as settled and modified by the proper court in 1824, consists of 16 chalders of victual, one-half barley (Linlithgow measure), and the other half oatmeal, paid according to the *fiar* prices, which, whatever be the cause, are almost invariably for the county of Aberdeen, the lowest by far throughout Scotland. The glebe is considerably above the statute and common size; and, owing to the improvements it has received from the present incumbent and his predecessors, though in all probability the greater part of it some time ago was a profitless waste, might be let, situate as it is, at from L. 40 to L. 50 a-year.

A neat chapel, capable of containing about 700 sitters, was built in 1834 in the south-east extremity of New Deer, by which a portion of this parish lying to the south is so far accommodated, as well as part of New Deer, Ellon, and Tarves, comprehending altogether a population of at least 1500 souls, the nearest of whom to any other place of worship connected with the Establishment is distant between three and four miles. The expense of erection was defrayed by subscriptions from the heritors and tenants of the district, collections from most of the churches belonging to the presbyteries of Deer and Ellon, and a liberal grant from the General Assembly's Committee on Church Extension. There is no debt upon the building; and the four clergymen whose parishes are accommodated have agreed, with the assistance of a licensed preacher, to have in it every Sabbath the regular order of public service, until some better provision than a small sum arising from seat rents, the only revenue at present, can be obtained for the settlement and support of an ordained clergyman specially invested with a pastoral charge. The collections are appropriated to the benefit of the poor.

Another chapel was contracted for and built in 1837, on the south extremity of Lonmay, and near the north boundary of this parish, from resources similar to those above specified, for the accommodation of the most remote inhabitants of Strichen, and of the other two parishes just named.

Could means be procured for building and endowment, there is also much need of a church, with its requisite appendages, towards the south-east corner of this parish, which would be within a convenient distance of the remote parts of Longside, Cruden, and Ellon.

Collections, not illiberal, have been made in the parish church

ABERDEEN.

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from time to time, for the propagation of Christianity in foreign parts for the education of youth, and for the purposes of Church Extension.

There has been for many years a Bible Society in Buchan, which has usually held its annual meeting in the church at Old Deer.

The number of communicants, hitherto increasing much in the same ratio as the population of the parish, that may be stated as attending on any particular occasion of dispensing the Lord's Supper, is about 1500; but the total number of persons in full communion is about 1700.

Poor.—The average amount of collections for the poor, augmented also of late with the necessity, though not in the due proportion, may be set down at about L. 110. This, with the interest of some money placed under the management of the kirk-session, arising from bequests, donations, fines, &c. has enabled them to distribute for the relief of the poor, and some small contingent expenses, as follows, viz. in 1831, L. 139, 3s. 3½d.; in 1832, L. 155, 0s. 4d.; in 1833, L. 168, 18s. 8d.; in 1834, L. 175, 16s. 2d.; and in 1835, L. 184, 3s. 7½d. The average number of persons, or rather of families getting supply, each of these years, is considerably above 100, varying, according to circumstances, from L. 7 to little more than L. 1 to regular pensioners, and descending to still smaller sums for some of those who require and receive only occasional aid. The poor's funds are much assisted by the rents of the piece of ground mortified by the late Mr S. Burnett of Dens, already noticed, and by the periodical receipt of L. 50 from a fund left by the same munificent gentleman, under the management of the synod of Aberdeen, for the benefit of the poor throughout all the parishes within the county. To complete an account of the means which the kirk-session presently possesses for helping the poor, it remains to be stated that, in addition to the interest of a legacy of L. 100 from two parishioners (Mr and Mrs Florence, late at West Crichtie,) for the special behoof of pauper lunatics, most of the Dissenting bodies are in the practice of making a collection annually for the same purpose, and that L. 4 a year have been received from the proprietor of Pitfour to be distributed among the indigent on his own estate, and half that sum from the trustees on the lands of Clachriah, to be disposed of in a similar manner.

Education.—There are three parochial schoolmasters provisioned by statute since 1829. Each of their seminaries is between three

and four miles distant from the others. The two last established, at Shannas and Clochcan, had for a few years a teaching apartment and other accommodations provided for them voluntarily by the heritors and people, and a small salary each from the General Assembly's Committee on Highland Schools. The land-owners, however, much to their credit, at the last adjustment of salary in terms of the Act 1802, not only agreed to give the maximum salary required, in the case of there being more schools than one established in a parish, L. 51 and odds, but have since, of their own accord, very generously assessed themselves for L. 20 more, in order to bring the two worst provided teachers within reach of getting the benefit of the Dick Bequest. The original, and what may be considered as the principal, teacher, from the site of the school being at Old Deer, has L. 31, 6s. 7d. of yearly salary, and each of the other two L. 20. The number of scholars fluctuates according to the season of the year and other circumstances, from 40 to 100 at each. The school-fees actually collected average about L. 30, and the teachers have hitherto received nearer L. 30 than L. 20 from the Trustees of the late Mr Dick. There are other two parochial schools, the one at Mintlaw in Longside, and the other at Denhead in Lonmay, that lie contiguous to, and accommodate, certain districts of this parish. There is also a teacher, whose school is well attended and well taught, settled some years ago, with a small salary furnished by the representatives of one of the heritors, and some of the principal tenants, on the west boundary between Old and New Deer, about one-half of the scholars being from this parish. And in the village of Stewartfield, there is seldom wanting a person who keeps a school on his own adventure, without receiving any other remuneration for his services than what arises from fees. Different females, here and there, receive girls and children to be taught needle-work with reading; so that, at the seasons of the year most convenient for school attendance, nearly 500 young persons are attending some educational institution.

Libraries.—There is no library yet instituted, strictly speaking parochial; but there are fully 200 volumes belonging to the original parish school, purchased from the interest of money left for the purpose by a Mr Shirras, a native of this parish, who died in America.

Friendly Societies.—There remains now only one of these, the Society of Hammermen, which is in a tolerably flourishing state.

Savings Banks.—A bank of this description was opened here in 1825; and the stock, lodged chiefly, if not solely, by persons of small capital, in the rank of servants or mechanics, has been gradually augmenting. The amount of funds presently, or, at the time of the last annual meeting, under the charge of the directors, is L.1576, 5s. 10d. belonging to 98 depositors.

Mrs Ferguson of Pitfour, with a very praiseworthy intention, has been mainly instrumental in organizing a Penny-a-week Clothing Society, after the model of some similar institutions that have been tried and found beneficial in England. The object in view is to promote a spirit of industry and economy among the poor, by inducing them to pay a penny every week to a collector, in the hope that some individuals in better circumstances will encourage the scheme by an equal payment for the behoof of one or more in whom they may feel a special interest,—so that by the accumulation of both sums, amounting to 8s. 8d. at the end of the year, means may be obtained to purchase for them some comfortable and often much wanted articles of wearing apparel or bedding.

Fairs, &c.—The principal fairs are Aikey, held on the Wednesday after the second Tuesday of July O. S. and Dustan or St Dustan's, on the corresponding day of December, both principally for the sale of cattle and horses, although, not many years back, there used to be brought to them a considerable quantity and variety of commodities manufactured at home. It seems to have been the intention, if not the usage, to have a fair here every month throughout the year; but, with the exception of the two mentioned, and three others of inferior note, viz. on second Thursday of January O. S., on second Thursday of March O. S., and one lately established in September, all the rest have entirely disappeared.

Fuel.—There is no very extensive and deep field of peat moss remaining. Yet there are several districts or spots where fuel of that kind is still procured, Hythie, Clachriah, Greenbrae, Clochcan, Annochie, Blackpots, Skelmuir, and Kinmundy. The Moss of Deer, as well as some of those just mentioned, is nearly exhausted; but this circumstance is not much to be regretted, because, all things considered, sea-borne coals can be procured at fully as cheap a rate in most cases, and because it is to be expected that when these damp and soft wastes are removed, and the places where they were, brought into tillage, the climate in the vicinity will be greatly improved.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

Upon the whole, we conceive, that within the last forty years, great improvements have been made upon the value, comfort, and aspect of the country. In course of that period, the two great lines of communication by turnpike roads have been opened up, several other useful roads have been formed anew or greatly repaired,—much barren land has been brought into cultivation,—a greatly improved system of husbandry introduced,—mill-multures with thirlage to mills abolished,—more attention paid to the selection and breeding of live-stock,—leases of moderate duration substituted for liferent tenures,—a greater facility of market provided for farm produce,—and a more liberal allowance granted by proprietors generally to their tenants for houses, fences, and drainage, —while they themselves, in consequence of improvements made by themselves or their tenantry, the changed value of money, and an excessive competition for tenements, when encouragement or opportunity is afforded for it,—have had their rent-rolls greatly increased. The actual state of the different properties in the parish in this respect, at present, has not been ascertained; but, reasoning from known facts, there can be little doubt that, if the ground in the natural occupation of the heritors were fairly let, the gross rental would exceed by about a half in sterling money, the old Scotch valuation of L.7127, 16s. 8d. Nor is there a less marked alteration in the dress, diet, furniture, and manners of almost every class of the people. Whether the real piety, virtue, and happiness of the community have progressed in the same ratio, may well be questioned.

January 1840.