

STATISTICAL
ACCOUNT OF 1840

ly resided in it for a considerable time. The annual amount distributed has been generally about L. 150 Sterling; but last year it was nearly L. 200 Sterling, and there is no appearance at present of its diminution.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

From the foregoing statement, it appears that the town and parish of Fraserburgh have participated in the general improvement of the country since the publication of the former Statistical Account; that its population has had an increase of 865 souls, with a corresponding enlargement of the town; that a new, capacious, secure, and excellent harbour has been erected, and the herring-fishery, and other branches of trade, have been carried on to a considerable extent, and with much success; that a savings bank has been established, which is now prospering; and that great attention is paid to the proper education of the young. Various other improvements are in contemplation, which, by the favour of Divine Providence, and the spirit of enterprise which now exists, will, ere long, be accomplished.

January 1840. *The Stat. Acc.*

PARISH OF ABERDOUR.

PRESBYTERY OF DEER, SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

THE REV. GEORGE GARDINER, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE name of the parish seems to be derived from a small rivulet, which falls into the sea, a few hundred yards below the manse. The term *Aber* in Gaelic signifying a *mouth* or *opening*, Aberdour may here have been applied to the *mouth* or outlet of the *Dour*.

The form of the parish is extremely irregular, extending from east to west along the sea coast about 7 miles, while its greatest length from north-east to south-west, including a vast extent of moss and moor, is not less than 10 or 11 miles. There are three farms at the south-east extremity, completely cut off from the rest of the parish of Aberdour by that of Tyrie. Some suppose that these farms were originally grazings for the cattle belonging to the tenants upon the

sea coast; but it is more probable that, at the time the parish was erected, they formed a separate estate, belonging to the then proprietor of Aberdour, who would naturally wish to have all his landed property in one parish. At the rate of 640 imperial acres to each, the whole extent of the parish contains about 24 square miles.

Boundaries, &c.—The parish is bounded on the north by the shores of the Moray Frith; on the east, by the parishes of Pitsligo, Tyrie, Fraserburgh, and Strichen; on the south, by New Pitsligo, (which forms part of the parish of Tyrie,) New Deer, and King-Edward; and on the west, by the burn of Nethermill, which separates it from Gamrie, and which forms the boundary between the counties of Aberdeen and Banff.

Topographical Appearances.—There are, properly speaking, no high mountains in the parish, but the whole estate of Auchmedden, which forms the west side of it, is elevated 200 or 300 feet above the level of the sea; while the estate of Aberdour, or eastern division, is comparatively flat and low, with little inequality of surface. The mosses, moors, and barren land bear a very great proportion to that which is under cultivation. The soil of the farms along the coast is, in many places, good, consisting of a strong-loamy clay, and producing, when properly managed, excellent crops of grain. It may be proper to remark, that the estate of Auchmedden is intersected by several dens, or deep ravines, which have a romantic appearance, and afford a rich field for the botanist. There are various caves along the coast, having their entrance from the sea. The most remarkable is that called Cowshaven, on the farm of Ironhill, at the north-east corner of the parish, and which served as a hiding-place to the late Lord Pitsligo after the battle of Culloden. The interior of this dungeon is now of difficult access, the mouth being choked by the earth falling from above, or by sand and pebbles thrown up by the sea. In the centre of this apartment is a well, cut out of the solid rock, by the hands of the Noble Lord himself, during his confinement in this subterranean cavern. The mother of my informant, then a girl of sixteen years of age, procured him tools for this purpose, and supplied him with food and other necessaries of life; but at last he was compelled to quit his prison-house, his dreary abode having been discovered by her footsteps in the snow. The whole of the sea coast is bold, picturesque, and rocky, particularly to the westward of the manse, about a mile from which, upon the estate of Auchmedden, is Pitjossie, a stupendous natural arch, through which the tide flows at

high water, and which, when viewed from the top of the adjoining cliff, has a striking and awful appearance. This colossal arch is said by those who have seen both, to equal, if not surpass, the celebrated *Bullers of Buchan*. There are three bays or inlets of the sea, namely, Aberdour, Pennan, and Nethermill. The beach at Aberdour consists of a vast accumulation of stones, washed down the burn of Dour, and forced back by the raging of the sea in a storm; and the beaches of Pennan and Nethermill are formed of similar materials, carried down by the burns of the same name.

Meteorology.—There is no meteorological table kept in the parish, but the climate is mild, and the temperature of the atmosphere not very variable. There being no high mountains in the district of Buchan, it has been generally observed that less rain falls along the coast, during the summer season, than in the interior of the country, where there are extensive ranges of hills to attract the clouds.

2 There are no diseases peculiar to this parish, the district being uncommonly healthy, the people living to a great age. This is in a great measure to be attributed to the pure air which they always breathe, the atmosphere being constantly impregnated with saline particles from the spray, which is raised by the sea dashing against the precipitous rocks, which bound the coast, and also to the total absence of *Doctors*.

3 *Hydrography.*—There are mineral springs in almost every corner of the parish, but one more remarkable, and more frequented than the rest, called *Mess John's Well*, issues from a rock, about 200 yards west of the burn of Aberdour. It is a strong chalybeate, and famed for its medicinal qualities. A small basin, in the shape of a cup, for the reception of the water, which trickles down the rock, is said to have been cut by a John White, Laird of Ardlawhill, at the time that Presbytery and Prelacy contended for the mastery. Neither of the parties, during the heat of the contest, had regular worship at the parish church, but John attended every Sunday, prayed, sung, and read a chapter from the precentor's desk, then prayed again, and concluded the service by singing another psalm. This he continued to do till Presbyterianism was fairly established, and hence he was designated *Mess John* by the people, and his well *Mess John's Well*. Upon the farm of Kinbeam, at the south-west extremity of the parish, there is a fresh water loch, called the Loch of Monwig, situated in the midst of an extensive deep moss. It is 200 yards long and 22 broad, the

dark mossy water being in some places of considerable depth, and frequented at certain seasons by great flocks of geese and ducks. This is the only loch or lake of any description in the parish. There are no large rivers, and almost all the small streams or rivulets discharge themselves into the Moray Frith, which forms the northern boundary of the parish.

In the Den of Dardar, near Pitjossie, there is a cascade, which sometimes in the winter season, and after a heavy flood of rain, has rather a grand and striking appearance. The water dashes from the top of a rock into three successive basins, and upon reaching the bottom, glides smoothly into the Moray Frith, at the distance of about 100 yards.

Geology and Mineralogy.—The geology and mineralogy of this parish would afford materials for a small volume, and the task could only be undertaken by a scientific man, after visiting and minutely examining the localities. The rocks which bound the shore are highly interesting, of stupendous height, and various formation. A coarse sandstone prevails along the coast, often passing into conglomerate of various degrees of coarseness, and connected with a greywacke slate. This sandstone, I am informed, is accounted at present of the oldest secondary formation, and is destitute of all traces of organic remains. This is the case also with the slate. The outlying blocks of loose stone, or boulders, are primary trap or granite. A few years ago, in the neighbouring parish of Gamrie, there was an accidental development of *fossil fish*, imbedded in rolled masses of clay or limestone; and it is the opinion of an eminent geologist, who has favoured me with a communication upon the subject, that interesting facts might be brought to light, by searching the dens or deep ravines which run inward from the coast in this parish, and in which it is not improbable that something similar might be discovered. With these brief remarks we shall leave the subject to those who are capable of doing it justice.

4 *Zoology.*—At one period, there was a pair of eagles that regularly nestled and brought forth their young in the rocks of Pennan, but, according to the tradition of the country, when the late Earl of Aberdeen purchased the estate from the Bairds, the former proprietors, the eagles disappeared, in fulfilment of a prophecy by Thomas the Rymer, *that there should be an eagle in the Crags, while there was a Baird in Auchmedden*. But the most remarkable circumstance, and what certainly appears incredible, is,

that when Lord Haddo, eldest son of the Earl of Aberdeen, married Miss Christian Baird of New Byth, the eagles returned to the rocks, and remained until the estate passed into the hands of the Honourable William Gordon, when they again fled, and have never since been seen in the country. These facts, marvellous as they may appear, are attested by a cloud of living witnesses. What is called the Aberdeenshire or Buchan breed is almost the only species of cattle reared in this district. Some attempts have been made to introduce the short-horn or Teeswater breed, but to cattle of this description neither farmers nor graziers appear to be at all partial.

The Moray Frith abounds with a vast variety of fish of the best quality. Those taken by the fishermen of Pennan, according to their own statement, are the following: Haddocks, cod-fish, ling, tusk, skate, mackerel, whiting, cole-fish, turbot, halibut, sole, grey flounders, spotted flounders, herrings, dog-fish, cat-fish, horse-mackerel, hake, thornback, guard-fish, black brim, lump-fish, seasow, gurnet, Blind Harry, miller's thumb, sharks, kettock, lobsters, crabs, conger-eels, &c. A few salmon are sometimes seen at the mouth of the fresh-water streams which run into the sea, but, owing to the scantiness of their number, and the rocky nature of the coast, there never has been, and in all probability never will be, any regular salmon-fishing. The produce would not defray the expense. There are countless myriads of cockles, limpets, &c. which the fishermen catch, not so much as an article of food, as for bait to their hooks. For some years back, in the months of July, August, and September, the herring-fishery has been prosecuted to great extent along the shores of the Moray Frith, to the impoverishment and demoralization of the fishers, and with but little advantage to the curers.

The caterpillar, green fly, and that insect, whatever its name may be, which causes the disease in fruit trees, called American blight, are the great scourges of the gardens, and the tory, or grub-worm, of the corn fields.

Botany.—The dens of Auchmedden, the property of Sir Charles Forbes, Bart. are perhaps the richest field for botany in the united kingdom. Here, in the summer months, Flora pours forth all her treasures. Besides the plants common to almost every part of Aberdeenshire, here are to be found, within the compass of a mile or two, many of the rarest species. The following are a few specimens, in the order of the sexual system laid down by Linnaeus:

Hippuris vulgaris	Epilobium montanum
Veronica Chamadrys	Saxifraga oppositifolia
Iris Pseud-Acorus	Silene inflata
Eriophorum vaginatum	Oxalis Acetosella
Alopecurus geniculatus	Agrimonia Eupatoria
Sherardia arvensis	Chelidonium majus *
Asperula odorata	Cistus helianthemum
Plantago maritima	Ranunculus hederaceus
----- Coronopus	----- bulbosus
Potamogeton natans	Stachys palustris
Myosotis versicolor	Bartsia Odontites
Lithospermum maritimum	Scrophularia nodosa
Anehusa sempervirens	Cakile maritima
Symphlytum tuberosum	Coellearia officinalis
Anagallis tenella	Geranium Robertianum
Viola palustris	Fumaria capreolata
Hydrocotyle vulgaris	Anthyllis vulneraria
Daucus Carota	Vicia sylvatica
Conium maculatum	Eryum hirsutum
Cherophyllum tenuilentum	Hypericum pulchrum
Parnassia palustris	----- humifusum
Drosera rotundifolia	Tanacetum vulgare
Allium ursinum	Pyrethrum maritimum
Hyacinthus non-scriptus	Rhodiola rosea
Tricentalis Europaea	Scelopendrium vulgare

This last is considered a very rare plant, and not to be found, so far as is known to the writer of this report, in any other station in Aberdeenshire. The above are a few species selected almost at random from the different classes,—for the variety in the dens is so great, that the bare enumeration of them would occupy more space than can be afforded in a statistical account.

About fifty or sixty years ago, as I am informed, the medical men from the Infirmary at Aberdeen were in the practice of paying annual visits to the dens of Auchmedden, for the purpose of collecting plants for medicinal purposes, and their labours, no doubt, were richly rewarded.

At the commencement of the present century, there was not a tree to be seen in the parish, with the exception of a solitary mountain ash upon the glebe, below the old church; but there is now a considerable plantation upon Sir Charles Forbes's property, in a tolerably thriving state, consisting of Scotch firs, larch, spruce, alders, ash, plane-tree, &c. Throughout the greater part of Buchan, wood is of very difficult growth, the country being flat and bare, and destitute of shelter.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

There is no reason to believe that there is any ancient or modern history of the parish, either printed or in manuscript, extant, the former Statistical Account excepted. The parish has been

* This plant I have never seen, but in the garden at the manse; it is therefore doubtful whether it be indigenous to the parish.

repeatedly surveyed, and there are plans of the separate estates in the possession of the respective proprietors. The estate of Aberdour was surveyed about twenty years ago, when it was purchased by Mr Dingwall of Brucklay from Mr Gordon, the former proprietor; and Auchmedden was surveyed in 1810, and again in 1839. There are only two heritors in the parish, John Duff Dingwall, Esq. of Brucklay, proprietor of the estate of Aberdour, comprising three-fifths of the whole, and Sir Charles Forbes, Bart. of Auchmedden, proprietor of the two remaining fifths.

Parochial Register.—The parochial register of this parish was supposed to be the oldest in the Church of Scotland, but, by some unaccountable accident, the most ancient part of it was lost about the year 1815, and what now remains commences at the year 1698. It is very regularly kept, but the baptismal register is very defective, owing to the extreme negligence of parents in getting their children's names inserted. It is hoped that this evil will soon be remedied by legislative enactment.

Antiquities.—At a place called Chapelden, in the land of Auchmedden, the ruins of a Roman Catholic chapel are still to be seen, on a haugh opposite the Toar of Troup. The walls are completely demolished, and nothing remains but a heap of stones, which have been held sacred by the husbandman; for although in the midst of a cultivated field, they have never been touched by the plough. The only fort, or castle, in the parish is that of Dundargue, for a particular description of which, reference is made to the former Statistical Account. In addition to what is there stated, it may be proper to observe, that when Edward Baliol came to claim the kingdom of Scotland, Sir Thomas Beaumont accompanied him, and took and garrisoned the Castle of Dundargue in right of his wife, she being the eldest daughter of Cummine, Earl of Buchan, who had no male issue, and to whom the castle belonged.

There are numerous cairns and tumuli scattered through the parish. Such as have been opened have been found to contain a rude stone coffin, enclosing the bones or ashes of a human body. A cairn on the farm of Towie, on the estate of Auchmedden, called *Brodie's Cairn*, deserves particular notice. My informant remembers three cairns of the same name, but with regard to this one in particular, the tradition is as follows: A farmer of the name of Brodie murdered his mother, whose body was brought to the gate of the church-yard of Aberdour, and every individual in the parish called upon to apply the hand to the naked corpse,

under the superstitious belief that the blood would gush upon the murderer. It was observed, that during the time this was going on, her son carefully kept at a distance, and showed great reluctance to approach the body, and that, when recourse was about to be had to compulsion, he confessed the murder. The tradition farther states, that the murderer was drawn and quartered, and that his four limbs were buried on the sides of four roads leading to the church of Aberdour. So much for ancient superstition.

Modern Buildings.—There are no modern buildings of any note in the parish, with the exception of the church and manse, of which afterwards. The meal mill at Aberdour was lately new roofed and slated, and there was a mill of the same description lately erected at Nethermill, for the accommodation of the tenants on the estate of Auchmedden. They are built partly of granite, and partly of a sort of red rock or sandstone, which abounds in the parish, and which, when harled, is very durable.

III.—POPULATION.

At a remote period, the parish must have been very thinly peopled, as is evident from the extensive tracts of waste and uncultivated ground at the present day, notwithstanding the stimulus given to improvement by the high price of agricultural produce during the last war. Some hundred years ago, there is reason to believe, that the land upon the sea coast alone was cultivated, and that what may be called the back-settlements of the parish, was little better than a barren wilderness. The population has progressively increased since the commencement of the present century. This increase is partly to be attributed to the erection of the village of New Aberdour, in the year 1798, and which contains 300 inhabitants; but arises chiefly from the annual number of births exceeding the deaths by more than one-half. Last year (1834) the number of births was 44, of deaths, 20. Deducting from the gross population in 1831 the inhabitants of New Aberdour, amounting to 302, and those in the fishing village of Pennan, which may be stated at 180, there remains 1066 as the sum total of the population residing in the country. There being no regular and complete register of births, deaths, and marriages, it is impossible to ascertain, with perfect accuracy, the annual average for the last seven years. The following is near the truth: births, 40; deaths, 18; marriages, 14.

The number of persons under 15 years of age is 620	
betwixt 15 and 30,	383
30 and 50,	343
50 and 70,	209
upwards of 70,	91
Total,	1646

Thus it appears, that if the last census was accurately taken, which is very doubtful, there is an increase of nearly 100 since 1831.

The number of unmarried females above 45 is	50
men and bachelors above 50,	10
widowers upwards of 50,	20
widows,	48

The only person of independent fortune residing in the parish is William Gordon, Esq. the former proprietor of the estate of Aberdour, and who still occupies the family mansion and manor farm.† There are two proprietors of land of the yearly value of upwards of L. 50, both non-resident. The average number of children in each family may be about 3.

Character of the People.—The people, for the most part, are of the middle-size, muscular, and well-proportioned. There is no insane person in the parish, only two of rather weak intellect, two partially blind, and none deaf.

The language spoken is the *broad Buchan*, or real Aberdeenshire, and this dialect is much the same as it was forty years ago. There is nothing peculiar in the popular customs, games, and amusements which prevail in this district. The habits of the people are sober and industrious, and, as far as their circumstances will admit, cleanly in the highest degree. In their style and manner of dress, there has been of late years a marked improvement. The principal food of the peasantry consists of bread made of oatmeal, pottage, brose, milk, and potatoes. Scotch kale or cabbage, which at one period constituted an essential part of the food of the lower orders, is not now in very general use. The people, notwithstanding the pressure of the times, are contented and happy, of a social and obliging disposition, shrewd and intelligent, regular in their attendance upon public worship, and the ordinances of religion, as well as in the performance of the duties of life. Strangers to that fanaticism which acts as a nurse to sedition, and that pharisaical hypocrisy which serves as a cloak to the

* These numbers refer to the year 1835, since which time there may be a slight alteration.

† Mr Gordon died in the end of last year, and his establishment is about to be broken up.—January 1840.

most heinous sins, their maxim is, “to fear God, honour the King, and not meddle with those that are given to change.”

There is little scope for poaching in the parish, as game is very strictly preserved, and the only persons accused of violating the game laws are the fishermen, almost all of whom are possessed of guns, ostensibly for the purpose of killing sea-fowl, for the sake of the oil and feathers, and who may, perhaps, occasionally take a shot at a hare or a partridge. Smuggling, at one period, was carried on here to a great extent; the almost inaccessible rocks and caves on the shores of the Moray Frith affording peculiar facilities for this species of traffic. Since the establishment of the Preventive Coast Guard, however, it has been completely suppressed, there being no such thing as an attempt ever made to land a single anker of brandy, a keg of gin, a box of tea, or a bale of tobacco.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

The number of imperial acres cultivated is	5873
which never have been cultivated is	9105
that might be cultivated perhaps with profit,	2000

No undivided common.	87
Number of acres under wood, all planted,	101
occupied by houses and roads,	

The wood generally planted consists of Scotch fir, spruce, larch, alder, ash, elm, plane-tree, and mountain-ash. In the hollows and sheltered situations, it is in a very thriving state, but upon the high grounds, where it is more exposed to the sea blast, the plants are extremely stunted, and making little or no progress. It is much to be regretted that due attention is not paid to thinning, pruning, and filling up the vacant spaces with fresh plants. It is only by patient perseverance, and supplying the deficiencies as they occur, that wood can ever be raised in a country so bare and exposed, as is the greater part of Buchan. The average rate of grazing for an ox or cow may be stated at L. 2, and for a full-grown sheep per annum at 15s.

Rate of Wages.—Servants are almost universally engaged for six months, and the rate of wages for a first-rate man servant is about L. 6; for a second rate servant, L. 5; and for a third rate, L. 3. The wages of the women vary from L. 1 to L. 3, according to their qualifications. Artisans are chiefly paid by the piece. Masons, when employed by the day, receive about 2s.; and carpenters much the same, without victuals. Smiths are always paid by the piece.

Husbandry.—There is nothing very peculiar in the style of husbandry pursued in this parish. The best land in it yields a yearly

rent of from L. 1, 10s. to L. 2, 10s., and the inferior qualities from 10s. to L. 1. The average may be considered about L. 1 Sterling.

Leases.—The leases in this parish, and, indeed, throughout the whole of Aberdeenshire, are generally granted for a term of nineteen years. A lease for a shorter period would certainly be very much against the interest of both landlord and tenant, as it would operate as a bar to improvement, and, consequently, to any increase in the value of the land.

The only inclosures in the parish are upon the manor farm of Aberdour, Coburty, Ironhill, and Powburn, there being a great deficiency of stones for building dikes, and little encouragement given for inclosing. The steadings upon the principal farms are tolerably good, for the most part covered with thatch or tiles, and but few of them slated. So long as farm produce afforded a remunerating price to the agriculturist, the spirit of improvement, which was so conspicuous during the war, was kept alive, and a great deal of waste land brought into cultivation, but unless the rents are greatly reduced, now that the agricultural capital is in a great measure exhausted, land of inferior quality, of which there is a great proportion in this parish, must be allowed to go to heather.

Between twenty and thirty years ago, the late Mr Dingwall of Brucklay purchased the estate of Aberdour, containing three-fifths of the parish, and found every thing connected with agriculture and rural economy in a most backward state. There were scarcely any roads, bridges, or fences, and the arable land was in many places intermixed with, or surrounded by, bogs, mosses, and moors. Any drains that had been cut were very inefficient, in consequence of there being no open ditches, or leading drains to receive the water. The fields were laid out in a very irregular manner, and no proper rotation of cropping was observed. Mr Dingwall's first object was to open up the communication by repairing such lines of road as were capable of repair, and making new roads where wanted, and this indeed was everywhere. Bridges also were built where necessary, and open ditches and water-courses executed at his expense. The general aspect of the whole property has undergone a change greater, perhaps, than any one in the district. But the value of this estate has been chiefly enhanced by a new line of road of upwards of seven miles, which runs through the whole property, from one end to the other, planned and executed in the most judicious manner. The management of this estate has shewn, in the most convincing manner,

that the interests of landlord and tenant are the same, and that the only way of promoting the former is to cherish and give encouragement to the latter. The neighbouring estate of Auchmedden, the property of one of the most honourable and kind-hearted landlords in existence, affords a striking contrast to this.

The obstacles to improvement arise chiefly from the low price of agricultural produce, the want of capital, the high rents, the trifling allowance given for building, inclosing, and draining, and with regard to the estate of Auchmedden, in particular, the non-residence of the proprietor, and the consequent gross neglect and mismanagement of the estate.

Quarries.—Besides several quarries of granite and sandstone, there are two millstone quarries in the parish; one upon the estate of Aberdour, called the Quarry of Coburty, which is not now wrought, and one in the rocks of Pennan, the stones taken from which are said to be the best in Britain. Formerly twelve able-bodied men were employed in cutting the millstones from the rock, the base of which is washed at high-water by the sea, but of late it has greatly decayed, in consequence of the high price put upon the stones. At one period the Pennan stones were sent to the south and west of Scotland, the demand being universal, but now there are only four or five men employed, who can scarcely earn a livelihood, as a single cargo, shipped to Aberdeen, may be said to be the whole annual produce of the quarry, although the rock is inexhaustible. L. 6 Sterling is now charged for a stone 14 inches thick, nearly double the former price. The rent of the quarry is L. 50.

Fishery.—There is a white-fishing at the sea-town of Pennan, on the estate of Auchmedden, consisting of six boats, with a complement of four men each, employed in taking the several species of fish already enumerated. Five long-boats have for some years gone to the herring-fishery at Macduff, Banff, and other stations upon the Moray Frith, there being no harbour at Pennan, and no proper accommodation for curing herring. The six white-fishing boats pay a rent of L. 20 Sterling to the proprietor, besides some dried fish annually.

Produce.—The average gross amount of the raw produce of the parish, so far as the same can be ascertained, is as follows:—

130 acres potatoes,	L. 780	0	0
629 turnips,	1258	0	0
200 bear and barley, with fodder,	900	0	0
2317 oats, with fodder,	7963	2	6
300 hay,	600	0	0
2217 pasture,	1881	8	0
	<hr/>		
	L. 13,382	10	6

The produce of the quarry may be stated at	L. 130	0	0
Of the sea-fishing,	360	0	0
The gross rental of the parish is—Aberdour,	2700	0	0
Auchmedden,	1745	0	0
Total,	L. 4935	0	0

The sizes of the farms are, 2 of 200 acres; 4 of 150 do.; 8 of 100 do.; 12 of 60 do.; the remainder varying from 5 to 40 acres.

Husbandry.—The rotation generally followed in the parish is the seven-shift course:—1. fallow and turnip; 2. barley or oats; 3. grass, partly cut for hay, and partly for green food; 4. pasture; 5. do.; 6. oats; 7. oats. In two or three instances the following rotation is adopted: 1. fallow and green crop; 2. oats and barley; 3. grass; 4. pasture; 5. oats; 6. oats. Both of these rotations are, in the opinion of some practical farmers, liable to objections, particularly the latter. In the village lands of New Aberdour, the four-shift course is sometimes followed, but the glebe is the only land in the parish farmed upon the favourite five-shift course.

Manufactures.—There is scarcely any manufacture in the parish that deserves the name. The making of kelp from sea-weed, which was formerly carried on along the whole breadth of the shore, from east to west, is now almost entirely abandoned,—the price of kelp, in consequence of taking off the duty from Spanish barilla, having fallen so much, that it would not yield a fair remuneration for cutting, drying, and burning the ware, to say nothing of rent for the shores. This manufacture, previous to the repeal of the foresaid duty, afforded employment, during the spring and summer months, to about twenty individuals, who are now reduced to the necessity of betaking themselves to other occupations, for which they are ill qualified, and find great difficulty in gaining a livelihood.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Market-Town, &c.—There is, properly speaking, no market-town in the parish; the nearest is Fraserburgh, distant 8 miles. New Aberdour, the feuing of which commenced about forty years ago, and the sea-town of Pennan, are the only villages in the parish.

Means of Communication.—The only means of communication enjoyed by the inhabitants is a post-runner, who goes for letters and newspapers three times a-week to Fraserburgh, to which there is a daily mail-coach from Aberdeen. He receives a penny for each letter carried to and from the office, and also an allowance for parcels. The turnpike road from Fraserburgh to Banff touches the parish of Aberdour at two points, namely, Bridgend, at the

eastern extremity, and Cowbog at the western, but would be of little advantage to the parishioners, were it not for the great junction road made by Mr Dingwall, already mentioned, and which is equal to any turnpike.

Ecclesiastical State.—The parish church stands at the northern extremity of the village of New Aberdour, fronting the High Street, and is very conveniently situated for the greater part of the population. There are several farms in the moors, at a considerable distance from the church, some of them not less than six or seven miles, but the families upon these farms attend other places of worship that are less distant, and to which they will soon, in all probability, be annexed *quoad sacra*. The church was erected in 1818, and is in good repair. It was built to contain 800, but will, if well packed, accommodate 1000. The sittings are all free.

The manse was built in 1822, after a lengthened litigation with the principal heritor, who maintained, *inter alia*, that, by the Act 1663, a minister was entitled to no more than L.1000 Scots, or L. 83, 6s. 8d. Sterling, for building a manse, offices, and garden walls. The House of Peers, however, were of a different opinion, and affirmed the decision of the Court of Session, ordaining the heritors to build a competent manse and offices, the expense not exceeding L.1000 Sterling, exclusive of the old materials. The benefit of this decision, however advantageous to the church at large, was in a great measure lost to the present incumbent, in consequence of the Procurator and Agent for the Church, (over whom the minister had no control, as the cause had been taken up by the church, to be conducted at their expense,) having sanctioned a plan, which was executed for about L.600, and allowed the clergyman, after eight years' delay, and a triumphant victory, to put his hand into his own pocket, and furnish himself with about one-third of the accommodation which was absolutely necessary for his comfort.

The glebe, including grass ground, and the site of the houses, is between 7 and 8 acres, and may be considered worth about L. 2 per acre. The stipend is 15 chalders of victual, half meal, half barley, paid according to the fiars, with L. 8, 6s. 8d. for communion elements. There are no chapels of ease, Government churches, missionaries, catechists, Dissenting or Seceding chapels, Episcopalian chapels, or Catholic chapels within the parish. There are a few individuals, scattered through the parish belonging to other persuasions, but, with the exception of one wea-

ver and his household, almost every family in the parish attends the Established Church. The only sectarians are about half-a-dozen of Seceders, two Scotch Episcopalians, and one Roman Catholic. In short, the population may be said to be wholly Presbyterian. Divine service at the Established Church is well attended, and the average number of communicants is about 600. The probable average amount of church collections for religious and charitable purposes is about L. 39 per annum.

Education.—In addition to the parochial school, there is a school on the lands of Auchmedden, chiefly for the accommodation of the children of the fishermen in the sea-town of Pennan. The teacher receives from the church-session the sum of L. 2, 1s. 8d. Sterling, out of the interest of money mortified for that purpose, by a Lady Jane Hay, a daughter of the Earl of Kinnoul, of which mortification the church-session are constituted trustees. There are several other elementary schools in the parish, some of them taught by unmarried females, and which are very useful for preparing children for the parish school; but none of these schools are endowed, and the teachers depend solely upon the trifling fees paid by the scholars. Reading, writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, navigation, English grammar, and Latin are taught at the parochial school, and also at the school of Auchmedden. The salary of the parochial schoolmaster is L. 32 Sterling, and the fees may amount to L. 15 yearly. He has, besides, an excellent house and garden. The fees per month are, reading and writing, 1s.; arithmetic, 1s. 4d.; reading only, 10d.; Latin, 1s. 6d.; book-keeping, L. 1 for a whole set. All betwixt six and fifteen years of age can read, and a considerable proportion can also write. All above fifteen years of age can read, and the greater part can also write. The people in general are very much alive to the benefits of education, and send their children regularly to school. There are several families at the distance of five or six miles from the parochial school, but their children attend schools in the adjoining parishes, which they can do without much inconvenience. It would be of much advantage if the school of Auchmedden were regularly endowed, and an adequate salary provided for the teacher, as the children of the fishermen depend upon it alone for education. For the present salary, (L. 2, 1s. 8d.), together with an annual gratuity of L. 5 Sterling from Sir Charles Forbes, no person, duly qualified, can be found to teach.

Friendly Society.—There is one Friendly Society in the parish,

instituted on the 15th August 1815, for affording relief to aged and indigent members, and also for the benefit of the widows and children of the deceased. The number of members is 75. The money is invested in a chartered bank, in terms of the act of Parliament, and amounted in 1835 to L. 279, 12s. 7½d.

There is no savings bank in the parish. The nearest is in the parish of Strichen, about seven miles from New Aberdour. It was established about six years ago, and is said to be in a flourishing condition. As yet, the transactions with this bank consist chiefly of investments of money by farm-servants, of both sexes, and also by crofters and tradesmen.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of persons receiving parochial aid is 36, and the average annual allowance to each is L. 1, 4s.; the contributions for the relief of the poor arising from church collections, L. 39, 14s. 6d.; donations, L. 5; interest of money, L. 6, 4s. 9d.; penalties, L. 3, 10s.; average annual amount of poor's money, L. 54, 9s. 3d. The poor scarcely ever apply for parochial aid until compelled by dire necessity, manifesting a laudable spirit of independence, and a desire to support themselves by the fruits of their own industry.

Fairs.—There are 4 annual fairs lately established at the village of New Aberdour, for cattle, merchandise, and engaging servants, but they are not well attended, as the place where they are held is within a mile of the margin of the sea. Two of them are held at the two terms of Whitsunday and Martinmas, one in the middle of April, and another in the middle of August. There is also a fair, called Byth market, held twice a-year, in the months of May and October, upon a moor in the southern division of the parish, where a few cattle are bought and sold.

Inns and Alehouses.—There are 5 licensed ale and spirit-houses in the parish, three in the village of Aberdour, and two in Pennan, and there is also a gin-shop or two, of inferior note, in the more remote corners.

Fuel.—The fuel chiefly used is peat, of which there is an inexhaustible quantity in the parish. The expense varies according to the distance; but it costs at an average, before it can be laid down on the stack-hill, about 2s. per cart load. Considering the expense of cutting, spreading, setting, and driving, it is very doubtful whether the people would not be gainers by using coal instead of peat.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

Since the former Statistical Account was written, many alterations, and some decided improvements, have taken place in the state of the parish; but, with the exception of the erection of the village of New Aberdour, the principal part of these improvements have been made within the last fifteen years, and in that portion of the parish comprehending the estate of Aberdour, the property of Mr Duff Dingwall of Brucklay. Upon the estate of Auchmedden, the want of internal communication has been severely felt, and until roads are made, it is to be feared that little can be done by the tenantry in the way of improving that property.

*Drawn up 1835,
Revised January 1840.*

PARISH OF KING-EDWARD.

PRESBYTERY OF TURRIF, SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

THE REV. WILLIAM FINDLAY, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THOUGH the name of this parish has long been written King-Edward, yet, by the people in this part of the country, it is often pronounced Kinedart. The name is supposed to be derived from two Gaelic words, which signify the head of the valley; and the situation of the ruins of the castle of King-Edward, which stands near the western extremity of the narrow valley in which the church is situated, may give some countenance to this derivation.

Extent and Boundaries.—The parish extends in length from west to east about 11 miles; its breadth varies from about 2 to 5; and it contains about 28 square miles. It is bounded on the south, by the parish of Turriff; on the west, by Alvah; on the north-west, by Banff; on the north, by Gamrie; on the east, by Aberdour and New Deer; and on the south-east, by Montquhit-ter. The river Doveran separates it from Banff and Alvah; but a part of the latter parish, about a mile in breadth, which lies on the east bank of the Doveran, and which meets the parish of Gamrie, completely cuts off the north end of this parish from the

rest. The farthest extremity of this disjoined part, which comprehends the estate of Montcoffer, lies within half a mile of the town of Banff, and is about four miles and a half from the parish church. The distance of the manse from Aberdeen, the county town, is forty miles.

Topographical Appearances and Climate.—This parish is of an oblong, irregular figure. It is diversified with high and low grounds, though there is no hill of any eminence within it. The temperature in the western part is rather milder than in the eastern. In the eastern quarter, however, the climate has of late been much improved by extensive draining. Snow seldom lies long on the banks of the Doveran, or in the valley in which the church is situated. The eastern part abounds in mosses, which considerably affect the temperature,—in consequence of which the different kinds of crops are rather later in coming to maturity than in the western. The north-west wind is the coldest which blows here; the east wind is generally accompanied with rain, which is pretty frequently predicted by clouds thickening in the west.

The climate, as has been stated, varies a little in the opposite ends of the parish, but, upon the whole, it may be said to be healthy, as instances of longevity are not rare. The late minister, Dr Duff, held the living for sixty years. An old woman on the estate of Eden died in 1833, at the age of 108; and her eldest son, who at the time of his mother's death was aged 88, died last winter at the age of 93. An old woman also died here last winter, who was supposed to have reached 100. Consumption and rheumatism are the diseases to which the inhabitants are most liable.

Hydrography.—The parish is intersected by a considerable number of rivulets. The river Doveran, which flows into the sea at Banff, runs along the western boundary of it for several miles. There is a fine large stream, named the Burn of King-Edward, which runs from east to west along the valley of King-Edward, and joins the Doyeran about a mile to the west of the church. The source of one of the branches of it is near the church of Gamrie, within a mile and a half of the sea, and about eight miles and a half from its junction with the Doveran. The point of junction is about five miles from the mouth of the river. The parish is, upon the whole, well supplied with excellent springs.

Geology and Mineralogy.—In so extensive a parish, as may be supposed, there is a great variety in the nature of the soil. In