

FRASERBURGH:

PAST AND PRESENT,

BY

JOHN CRANNA

Harbour Treasurer.

ABERDEEN:

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1914



Photo by Morgan, Aberdeen.

THE AUTHOR.

TO EVERY TRUE LOVER OF
HIS NATIVE PLACE, THIS BOOK
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

“FRASERBURGH: PAST AND PRESENT”—in existence—is the realization of an ambition long cherished by the Author. The work of compiling facts and figures and writing the book, has been truly a labour of love to him, and now that the task has been completed, he feels in a condition like unto one who has no further literary mission in the world. Although boasting of no glorious past history, or excelling in Nature’s beauty, Fraserburgh, cold and bare though its surroundings are, must ever remain a dear, revered spot to its natives, whether residing at home or abroad. Who that was “born and bred” in Fraserburgh will ever forget the Castle Braes, the Rumbling Goit and Bath-peel, the Boatman’s Shorie, the Bathalonian Brae, and that mighty (?) river, the Kethock? Every spot recalls pleasures and happy frolics of youth. Any native who is capable of letting these “classic” places fade from his memory is no true Brocher.

The Author has made no attempt at producing a book with pretensions to literary merit. When he undertook the self-imposed task of “trying his hand” (as the late Sir Alexander Anderson would have said) at a book on Fraserburgh, he considered his mission was simply to write a plain, “unvarnished story,” of his native place. He has adhered to his original intention. The Author hopes the perusal of his book will give pleasure, not only to natives, but also to people having a business or a family connection with the town.

While the great bulk of the book is the result of original research, the Author is indebted to several writers, lecturers, newspaper and magazine proprietors for information on Broch affairs. He specially desires to thank the following for assistance in various ways, viz.:— Rev. J. B. Davidson, East Parish Church, Peterhead; Mr. P. J. Anderson, Librarian, King’s College, Aberdeen; Dr. J. Maitland Anderson, Librarian, St. Andrews University; Rev. Peter Milne, late of Fraserburgh, now in India (for full use of his articles entitled “Kirk Session Records”); Mr. Alexander Weatherhead, late of Fraserburgh, now in Carlisle; Proprietors of *Chambers’s Journal* for permission to use article on

PREFACE

“The Herring - Fishery and Fishermen”; Mr. William McConnachie of Knowsie; The Secretary of the Scotch Fishery Board; Mr. George Cormack, Fishery Officer, Fraserburgh; and Mr. William Noble, Fishcurer, Fraserburgh.

Instead of mystifying the reader with a multiplicity of authority footnotes on the pages of the book, which the ordinary “man in the street” does not care for, and, as a matter of fact, often does not understand, the Author has given in an appendix the names of the publications, etc., from which information has been obtained.

FRASERBURGH, March, 1914.

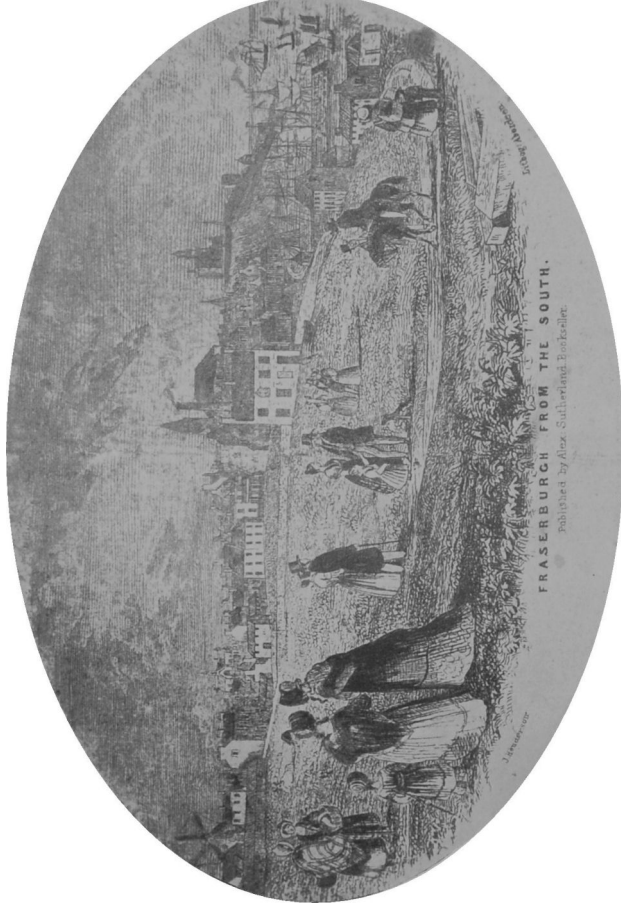
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FRASERBURGH IN THE EARLY PART OF LAST CENTURY.

THE HOUSE STANDING ON THE LINKS IS THE OLD SCHOOL. THE BIG BUILDING TO THE LEFT, WITH THE GABLE WINDOW IN IT, IS THE OLD MANSE. SALTOUN PLACE, WHILE THE HOUSE STILL FURTHER TO THE LEFT, SHOWING FOUR WINDOWS, IS THE BRICK LODGE.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL HISTORY (EARLY).

The bluff upon which the Castle of Kinnaird is built, is held to be the "Promontorium Taixalium," referred to by Ptolemy. Kinnaird Head was geographically known nearly 1500 years before the present town of Fraserburgh was founded by Sir Alexander Fraser towards the close of the sixteenth century. The identification of the place is further confirmed by the ancient geographer in question saying that the eminence stood at the entrance of the "Æstuarium Varariæ," which means the Moray Firth. Kinnaird Head must have been an important landmark in ancient days, when mariners had no compass, or other nautical instruments, to guide them on their watery way. Trade by sea was confined to Europe and the African and Asian coasts abutting the Mediterranean, and it is probable that, comparatively speaking, Kinnaird Head was a more important shipping landmark 1,750 years ago, than it is to-day. Whether Ptolemy ever stood on the Castle green and admired the Moray Firth on a beautiful summer day, there is no means of knowing. He wrote very familiarly on the subject, but almost any author will give a charming description of a place he has never seen. Ptolemy was an ancient Egyptian who lived in Alexandria in 140 A.D., and it is to be feared he never explored the wilds of Buchan. He was not so much an original investigator, as one who took up the researches of earlier geographers, and edited them in a full and exhaustive way. At any rate, he deserves the credit of first having brought Kinnaird Head to the front. The man who advertised the headland of Kinnaird one thousand seven hundred and seventy-two years ago, deserves the homage of every Brocher.

Although there is no direct written record on the subject, it is believed by many, who have thought over the matter seriously, that the Roman Emperor Severus must have touched the Fraserburgh district, when he made his famous invasion of North Britain. History says that in A.D. 208 he reached the shores of the Moray Firth. Kinnaird Head was one of the places in the North of Scotland best known to the ancients, and naturally Severus would direct his march to a place known by repute. In attempting to overcome the wild natives of Scotland, he found it a hopeless task to pursue them among their mountain fastnesses. They hung upon his rear and swooped down upon his soldiers, doing them great damage. No doubt Severus had been obliged to betake himself and his army to the level open country by the coast, and if he adopted this route of march, he must have first looked upon the Moray Firth from the

headland at Kinnaird, or from some neighbouring spot. Some people declare that Severus could never have been in Buchan, otherwise there would have been some Roman remains or other evidence in the shape of coins, utensils, etc., found in the district to prove his presence. It must be remembered that Severus never settled down in the north. He merely marched north, and immediately

marched back again, and it is quite possible that he could have been on the shore of the Moray Firth without leaving any tangible token of his visit. Of course, the story is very largely problematical, there being no written evidence defining the exact spot where Severus first beheld the waters of the Moray Firth. The argument claiming Severus as a visitor to the Fraserburgh district when the A.D. world was young, must therefore be accepted for what it is worth. *

One of the greatest figures—St. Columba—in the early ecclesiastical history of this country, may have also paid a visit to old Faithlie, when civilization was beginning to take shape in Scotland. After building a monastery in Iona, he set himself the task of converting all the rude Pictish people living beyond, or north of, the Grampians. He laboured with great success in the western islands, on the mainland, and in the Orkneys; but for the Book of Deer, his operations in Buchan would probably never have been heard of. That invaluable volume tells that St. Columba, and St. Drostan, the patron saint of New Aberdour, found their way to Aberdour. Their visit to Buchan would have taken place some time towards the latter end of the Sixth Century, a period when all the people, not only in Aberdeenshire, but all over the north spoke Gaelic. In his evangelizing work, there is little doubt that St Columba had passed through the Fraserburgh district. The people may have been particularly stubborn and in love with their heathenish gods, so that St Columba's harvest of converts in the neighbourhood of "Promontorium Taixalium" may have been a particularly barren one! This, let it be humorously assumed, is the reason why the zealous saint left nothing on record to indicate that he had tried his hand at converting the inhabitants of Faithlie. He found his way from Aberdour to Deer, where it is supposed he founded the ancient Celtic monastery. The village of St. Combs, whose name has no doubt been modernized, was called after him, and in his wanderings between Aberdour and Deer, there is every reason to believe that St. Columba passed over where Fraserburgh now stands. In the Book of Deer such places as Aberdour, Banff, Ellon, and Turriff are mentioned, but no reference is made to Faithlie or

* Two years after the foregoing was written, viz., on 9th December, 1913, Professor Haverfield, lecturing to the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, in Burlington House, London, said with reference to excavations made at Ythan Wells, Aberdeenshire: "the results obtained were somewhat indefinite in the shape of finds, but they made it perfectly clear that at least one of these earthworks was a Roman Camp of a temporary nature. . . . But the gates to the ramparts . . . were sufficient to enable them to say that this was a Roman Marching Fortress for an army operating in the North which was there for a short time, and *therefore left very few traces.*" After all, there may be more truth in the story about Severus' visit to Kinnaird Head than the author at first imagined.

Philorth, unless it be under some name that cannot be understood as applying to this district.

The matter touched upon thus far, has been of a very general and indefinite nature, dealing with pleasing possibilities, but certainly not with facts. This every reader must clearly understand.

The historian has no difficulty, thanks to the Philorth charter-room records, in fixing the date of the foundation of the present town of Fraserburgh. That was in 1588, but in dealing with the village of Faithlie, which it is understood occupied the same site for many generations, prior to the date given, one is lost in the dim and distant past. There are no tangible materials or documentary evidence available to light up the gloom which surrounds the history of the old Faithlie or Philorth that existed probably 500 or 600 years ago. This is disappointing, but it may reasonably be supposed that like other obscure fishing villages planted along the Scottish coast in those days, it was a too unimportant and a too "out of the world" place, to be worthy of the chronicler's pen. No great events could have happened near it, either by sea or land, that were of historical value, and the inhabitants of Faithlie had come upon their little stage of life, played their insignificant parts, and made their exits as quietly as they had made their entrances. Thus had long years rolled on, without any change in the people's life, or any perceptible advance in the town's importance, until Sir Alexander Fraser, the founder of Fraserburgh, came upon the scene and lifted the place out of its former obscurity.

Of course, as everybody in the district knows, Fraserburgh owes its origin, and its name, to the Frasers of Philorth. This noble family descends from the Frasers of Touch-Fraser, in Stirlingshire, whose head in the early part of the fourteenth century was Sir Alexander Fraser, Lord Chamberlain of Scotland, and brother-in-law of King Robert the Bruce. Through his close marital connection with the great Scottish king, this Sir Alexander Fraser acquired considerable influence and power in the northern parts of Scotland. There was much fighting and bloodshed in the north of Scotland about this time, and it is interesting to note that in 1307, Henry Beaumont, who represented the powerful Comyn family, and possessed and occupied the castle of Dundarg, situated half way between Rosehearty and New Aberdour Bay, was besieged in the castle by Sir Andrew Moray, and obliged to capitulate. Though storm and sea swept, and by no means in an ideal situation, the ruins of the castle bespeak its once greatness, strength and grandeur. The eminent ancestor of the Saltoun family just referred to—Sir Alexander Fraser—died gloriously on the field of battle in 1332 in Perthshire while fighting valiantly against the invading force led by Edward de Baliol. He was succeeded by his son John, who in turn was followed by Margaret Fraser, his only daughter, who married Sir William De Keith, the Marshal. Their eldest son became united to a daughter of King Robert II while other members of their family made matrimonial alliances with some of the most powerful families in Scotland.

Another outstanding Fraser was Sir Alexander of Cowie and Durris, and the first of Philorth, who married Lady Johanna de Ross, daughter of William Earl of Ross, and received the lands of Philorth in something of the shape of a marriage dowry. The lands in Buchan up to this time belonged to the Comyn family, but when they were overwhelmed by the supporters of Bruce, the king divided the land among those who had espoused his cause, the Earl of Ross being one of them. This Fraser took a prominent part in the state affairs of Scotland, and was one of the leaders in the desperate battle of Otterburn, which ended in such a brilliant victory for the arms of Scotland. After this Fraser, none of the Lairds of Philorth were outstanding figures, until the appearance of Sir Alexander Fraser, the seventh Laird, who immediately preceded the founder of Fraserburgh.

With regard to the site of old Faithlie or Philorth, it is held by many, and among others by the late Mr. J. M. D. Smith, sculptor, Fraserburgh, a man whose opinions and investigations are of considerable value, that ancient Faithlie was located near the cemetery—to be particular—to the south and east of the old churchyard. The kirk of Philorth was there, as noted under the ecclesiastical history of the town, and where there is a village or town, it is natural that the church should be in close proximity to it. As a matter of fact the name Kirk-town, corrupted into Kirkton, forces one strongly to the belief that a town of some kind must have had at one time existed in the neighbourhood of the churchyard. There never has been legendary lore of any kind floating in the district, giving the distinctive name of any village in the immediate neighbourhood of Fraserburgh except Faithlie, and that the original village of Faithlie was founded on the site here claimed for it, seems altogether most likely. It is quite possible that as time went on, a new Faithlie, or a branch of the old Faithlie, was founded under the shelter of the high ground, where Kinnaird Head lighthouse now stands. For practical purposes, now that the value of the sea fisheries even in those far back days was beginning to be vaguely understood, the new site would be infinitely preferable to the old. From remains that have been unearthed, which will be described afterwards, there is evidence that the inhabitants of old Faithlie were fishers as well as workers on land. One can easily understand the danger that the frail, tiny craft of those days would run in making for the beach or the sands opposite Kirkton, especially if the weather was in any way rough or the wind north or easterly. That the beach opposite the opening where the first artillery target was wont to stand, was the landing place of these primitive fishermen, being directly opposite their village, may be reasonably supposed. The high, benty hills overlooking the sands are of comparatively recent creation. When the late Mr. Burnett of Kirkton was a young man, he could from his bedroom windows at Kirkton House see the greater part of the bay of Fraserburgh. It therefore can be easily imagined that in the days of old Faithlie there was an open sandy beach with a gentle rise, from high water mark, up to the village at Kirkton.

As recently as the early sixties of last century there was a regular cart road through the gully in the bents at Kirkton to and from the sands, and it was considered of so much importance that when the railway was extended to Fraserburgh in 1865 the railway company had to provide a level crossing for the convenience of those using "the sand's road." As has been already indicated, the dangers of landing on the sands had probably culminated in some serious disaster, which had driven the people to new quarters near Kinnaird Head. From the latter spot the fishermen, in their frail craft, could put out to and come in from the sea in perfect safety at times that landing on or leaving the beach would have been out of the question. It is therefore not unreasonable to argue that it is quite possible that Faithlie had its primary origin at Kirkton, but that owing to circumstances such as have been alluded to, the people moved from the old to the better situated new Faithlie at a time when only movements of national importance were recorded.

Mr. Smith in an article on "The Topography of Ancient Faithlie, and some surmises thereon" has the following passage: "I have often in my mind's eye pictured those primitive craft, probably made of skins as these coracles were, coming up with the flowing tide, and being drawn up on the slightly sloped beach, abreast of what forms the addition made in 1866 to the burial ground, the then site of a village. For around this part there is indisputable evidence of the existence of a village. Often in past years I had my attention drawn to a thick, hard, black loam, some three feet or thereby from the surface, and of about one foot in thickness, above and below which was pure sand, while shells of different kinds were occasionally to be met with scattered and impregnating this loam. What to make of this I could not conjecture, until the formation of the new cemetery, when, on the southern side of this 1866 addition, in opening graves we came on numerous ash middens, with whole bucketfuls of shells mixed up with the ashes. In several instances these middens were built round with stones. The hazy conjecture which I had before come to indulge in is at once burst upon me. Here, said I, is the answer to all these problems. This early village very likely was divot formed, with their little gardens lying around them and composed of the rich, dark loam, no doubt brought from some little distance to induce growth, became in due time to be abandoned, and being divot formed, soon became absorbed in the soil leaving only their built middens of stone and of shells as an evidence of their existence. . . . The three feet of sand over the black loam can easily be accounted for by the sand drift, a process going on to the present day. Speaking of these conjectures of mine anent the existence of this primitive village to the late Mr. Burnett of Kirkton, I was told by him that around the graveyard, to the south side, his men had come frequently on these ash middens in the process of their digging." At one time the farmer of Kirkton was able to trace a road which ran from the south-east corner of the churchyard, the probable site of the village, through the benty field extending on the west side of the railway line from Kirkton bridge to the boundaries of

the Home Farm of Philorth. Traces of this same road were said to have been discovered on the Home Farm, and the opinion was formed, and is still held by those interested in the matter, that it was continued along the "Laichs of Philorth" until it struck the bridge which spans the burn below the cottage which was occupied by the late Mr. George Hay, schoolmaster, and merged in the road which runs past New Mill. The question of the existence of a prehistoric Faithlie at Kirkton has agitated the breast and brain of many a thoughtful and patriotic Brocher. A generation or two ago the legend was often discussed and it was generally believed that such a Faithlie existed, but the evidence which is now given has been collected only within the last forty years. It is evident that the Faithlie of Kirkton or Philorth had been a very primitive village of probably only a few turf built houses, which had quickly disappeared in the face of the opposition from the better situated and "booming" Faithlie, better known as Fraserburgh, built in the bight at the extreme north end of the bay of Philorth.

The first distinct and historically accurate reference to Faithlie, and it is the Kinnaird Head Faithlie that is spoken of, is met with in the late Lord Saltoun's book, "The Frasers of Philorth." Speaking about the landowners in this district in 1370, Lord Saltoun says: "About two miles northward of the Sinclair Hills, near the north-eastern corner of the coast, stood, at that date the village of Faithlie (the site upon which, in after ages, the town of Fraserburgh was built), which, with a small tract of land around it, including the high bluff of Kinnaird's Head (probably of old 'Ceann ard,' the high head), the 'Promontorium Taixalium' of Ptolemy seems to have been then distinct from the lordship of Philorth." It can thus be seen that the Kinnaird Head Faithlie had been in existence for some time prior to 1370. When this is the case it is quite evident that the Kirkton Faithlie must have been a creation of a very much earlier period, indeed quite into the dark ages. Those were the wild days of rapine, feuds and killing, when man's highest ideal was

"That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can."

In those tumultuous feudal times, the holders of the land must have been regularly "on the move." That is to say the over-lordship of the land often changed with the changing fortunes of battle, or the cool, calculated murder of the proprietor or chief. In the history of the ancient Scots, murder or assassination was a tragedy that was often acted with brutal savagery, and it is therefore impossible to say who was proprietor of the land about Fraserburgh when the rude Faithlie at Kirkton was in existence. It is the popular opinion that Fraserburgh has belonged to the Frasers of Philorth from time immemorial. But that is not so. About 1370, or shortly thereafter, Faithlie was the property of Sir Walter de Leslie (a great favourite of David II. of Scotland) and his wife, Euphemia, Countess of Ross, daughter of the Earl of Ross. They jointly held the village and the ground immediately surrounding it until 1381, when they sold them to Andrew Mercer, in the possession of whom and his descendants they

remained until 1504. That year they became the property of Sir William Fraser of Philorth. It is thus seen that though proprietors of the adjoining lands, the Frasers of Philorth did not become the actual superiors of Fraserburgh until the year last mentioned. Many changes have taken place during the last 406 years, but one tie has remained unbroken during that long period, and that is the close connection that has all along subsisted between the people of Faithlie and Fraserburgh and the successive lairds of Philorth. Unlike the usual experience on the East Coast of Scotland, the spirit of friendliness and confidence which has characterized the intercourse between the superior and the inhabitants of the town all these hundreds of years, strongly resembles the feeling of devotion and respect felt by the Highland clansmen for their chief, and by the chieftain for his fiery followers. The rapid march of events from a social and political point of view in recent times has had the effect of eliminating much of the clan spirit from among the people, but that such a spirit was most marked in this district until well into last century, nobody will deny.

It would appear that in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, several different proprietors held land in the immediate vicinity of Fraserburgh. To students of place names one local spot is interesting. Where is the Brocher that does not have affectionate recollections of the Sinclair Hills, the woods thereof, and the Red Loch? It will be interesting to them to know that the Sinclair Hills derived their name from a proprietor of the name of St. Clair, who in 1370 held the lands of Easter Tyrie on which the hills stood. The family did not remain long in Buchan, but soon migrated to other possessions in Scotland. Whether the family was a branch of the St. Clairs of the Isles, or was connected with the Sinclairs of Caithness, has never been definitely elucidated, locally at all events. It is quite possible, however, that though the names are differently spelt, the one family is a collateral branch of the other. From 1370 to 1504 there are no historical references to Faithlie, and had the village and the town's lands surrounding it not been purchased by the Frasers of Philorth in the last named year, probably there would have been no mention of it then. The next, and really the first definite reference with a purpose in it to Faithlie, is recorded in the year 1546. The proprietor at this time was Alexander Fraser, seventh of Philorth, who, like his grandson the founder of Fraserburgh, was a man of energy and enlightened ideas and keen business capabilities. In connection directly or indirectly with a dispute and strife between Alexander Forbes of Brux and the people of Aberdeen, of which Gilbert Menzies of Pitfodels (the father-in-law of the laird of Philorth) was Provost in 1530, Alexander Fraser got into trouble. He espoused the cause of his father-in-law the Provost, and in the course of the feud had the misfortune to kill one David Scott. Tempers were quick, insults keenly resented, and consequently killing was a common occurrence in those days. Either the laird of Philorth had acted in self-defence or had received great provocation, because at his trial at an itinerant court held Aberdeen in July 1530, justice was satisfied when he tendered a payment of ten pounds to the deceased's nearest relatives, besides providing masses for

the repose of the slain man's soul for a year, and undertaking to make such a pilgrimage as the Lords in Council might impose upon him. He was ordered to make a pilgrimage to St John of Amiens, in France. This he did, but being a man of "grit" and enterprise, he must have made up his mind to "kill two birds with one stone." After doing penance at the shrine of St. John of Amiens, no doubt in a suitably chastened mood, he had made up his mind to see a bit of the world, with the view of benefiting by his experiences. He remained for several years on the Continent and no doubt had done the "grand tour," which at that and later ages, was an essential part of a young man's education. Having a keen eye to business he benefited by his travels abroad, which made him ambitious of enhancing the value of his family heritage. On his return home in 1534 or 1535, he immediately set himself the task of helping on the "march of improvement." In 1542 he received from James V. a charter of all the fishings opposite his lands, extending from Cairnbulg to Coburty. Next he turned his attention to the improvement of his estates and the extension of the same. Then follows the outstanding step in his career, which identifies him so closely with Faithlie, and is the excuse for these details of his life. Up to 1546 there had been no attempt at forming a harbour at Faithlie. The fishermen and tiny traders of those days frequenting the place, had to use the little sheltered nook or beach lying below Kinnaird Head, that now forms the Balaclava curing stations, as the place of arrival and sailing. The laird of Philorth and superior of Faithlie saw and realized the great difficulties under which the people laboured by having no harbour. His experiences abroad, and his naturally keen business instincts, told him that without facilities trade could not develop. He therefore resolved upon a forward policy. He began building a harbour, and upon application received a charter from Queen Mary creating Faithlie a free burgh of barony. The charter is as follows:- "At St. Andrews, 2nd Nov., 1546. Whereas Alexander Fraser of Philorth for the convenience of his neighbours dwelling within the Sherifffdom of Aberdeen has built a harbour upon the sea shore within his lands of Faithlie in the Sherifffdom of Aberdeen in which ships and vessels overtaken by storms may be able to find refuge, both for the good service thus and otherwise rendered by the said Alexander, and for the purposes of hospitality, etc., erect the town of Faithlie into a free burgh of barony; granting to the inhabitants the power of buying and selling, etc., and that there may be burgesses and bailies, etc., annually elected, and that they may have a market cross and weekly markets every Monday and Saturday, with free yearly fairs at the feasts of Michaelmas and St. John the Baptist, to endure for eight days, with tolls, etc."

The year 1546 will ever remain a red letter day in the history of Fraserburgh, and he is no loyal native who does not treasure it in his memory. No doubt the harbour built then had been a most modest one, but it was suitable to the needs of the age. The great point is that it formed the parent from whom has sprung the spacious harbours of to-day, tidal harbours that are not excelled on the whole East Coast

of Scotland. Who knows but that the anxiety and demand for harbour improvements which has all along characterized the people of Fraserburgh, may be the spirit of the community's ancestors of 1546 transmitted down the ages. Not only did he form a harbour in 1546, but for his public spirit and faithful services, the laird of Philorth received a royal charter from King James I erecting Faithlie into a free burgh of barony, which carried with it special privileges to the burgesses, and authority to hold markets and to practise trades, etc. The trading privileges which the charter gave to the people of Faithlie seem to have some little time afterwards aroused the ire and jealousy of the authorities and business citizens of Aberdeen, for in the City records of 1564 there is an entry as follows: "the haill toun being warnit, etc., etc., grantit and concentit to the final end the action and cause movit and perservit be thame against Alexander Fraser of Philorth anent the privilege usurpit be him of ane fre burght in the toun of Faithly, contrar the libertie and privileges of this burght, presently dependan before the Lords of Council." It can thus be seen that Aberdeen, which sometimes is accused of swallowing up all the trade in the north-east of Scotland to the detriment of smaller towns situated within a certain radius of the granite city, began practicing "the game" early. But the efforts of Bon-Accord to prevent the establishment of the Burgh of Faithlie, and to arrest the progress of her trade and business importance, were rightly doomed to failure. Fortunately the Lords of Council took a broader view of things than did the citizens of Aberdeen, otherwise the town of Fraserburgh would not have made the progress it has done. Under the seventh laird of Philorth, Faithlie must have made considerable progress. Reading between the lines, one can see that the value of the sea fishings was beginning to be realized, and appreciating Faithlie's excellent geographical position, the laird wisely resolved to take advantage of these, and the benefits and profits accruing from sea-borne trade generally, by providing the harbour already referred to.

The eldest son of the seventh laird of Philorth was also an Alexander, who married in 1534 Beatrice, daughter of Robert de Keith, Master of Marischal. Unfortunately he who should have been the eighth laird of Philorth died in 1564 after a married life extending over exactly 30 years. He left four sons, the eldest of whom was Alexander, the founder of Fraserburgh.

During the life of the seventh laird of Philorth, there occurred a shipwreck in what may be called the Fraserburgh district, of outstanding interest, an account of which is given, before taking up the life of the eighth laird. The tragedy of the wreck and the great loss of life and valuables, stand out in bold relief, but beyond this, the detailed account of the catastrophe, as given by Hakluyt in his "Voyages," shows how rude and uncivilized the people inhabiting these shores were three hundred and fifty years ago. In Chambers' "Book of Days," the wreck of the "Edward Bonaventure," which happened on 10th November, 1556, is said to have taken place "near Kinnaird Head," whereas Hakluyt says the vessel was lost in a bay named Pettislego, which would indicate that the accident happened in the vicinity of Rosehearty. There was

a legend current and common in Fraserburgh up to forty years ago, that at one time long, long ago, a large vessel laden with a rich cargo of furs, silks and wine, etc. went ashore half-way between Kinnaird Head and Broadsea Hole, and that all on board perished. The author's grandmother told him the story repeatedly, but no local records confirmed it, and it was put down as a groundless myth. Now light has been thrown upon the legend. The wreck of the *Edward Bonaventure* in 1556, is the substantial foundation upon which the old story was built. This shows that some of the old district legends have a genuine substratum of truth in them after all. Richard Chancelour, a daring English navigator of the sixteenth century, was captain of the ship "*Edward Bonaventure*," and was "pilot-general" of the unfortunate expedition, which was headed by Sir Hugh Willoughby, which left England in 1553 in search of a north-east passage to India. Richard Chancelour was brought up in the family of the father of Sir Philip Sidney, and must have been inspired to great deeds by that remarkable scholar and soldier, whose chivalric disposition has probably never been excelled by any "Flower of Chivalry" in the whole history of the world.

Besides the "*Edward Bonaventure*" there were other two vessels, viz, the "*Bona Esperanza*" and the "*Confidentia*." A gale separated the ships. While the "*Edward Bonaventure*" managed to get safely into the White Sea, the other two headed for the north, and actually sighted Nova Zembla. They were, however, driven down upon the Lapland Coast, and though the vessels wintered safely, Sir John Willoughby with every man comprising the two crews, was frozen to death by the extraordinary cold. The two ships were afterwards brought round to where the "*Edward Bonaventure*" lay in the White Sea. Learning of the recovery of the ships, Richard Chancelour on his second or third voyage to the White Sea took out with him from England seamen to man the two unfortunate craft and bring them home. It was a pity they had ever been found, for death and disaster seemed to be constantly with them. Chancelour, a splendid seaman and a great favourite of Edward VI. of England escaped the fate of Sir John Willoughby in 1553, only to be engulfed in the sea near Roseheart three years later. The four vessels, "*Edward Bonaventure*," "*Bona Esperanza*," "*Confidentia*," and "*Philip and Mary*," belonging to the Governor, Consuls and Company of English Merchants, loaded with most valuable cargoes, left St. Nicholas, in the White Sea, bound for London. On board of Richard Chancelour's vessel, the "*Edward Bonaventure*," was Osep Napea, sent by the most high and mighty Emperor of all Russia, etc. etc., Ivan Vasilivich, as his ambassador and orator to the English Court. This was the first Russian ambassador that ever trod English soil, and it was something like a miracle that he did so. The ambassador had with him costly sables and skins etc., as presents from the Emperor Ivan to King Philip and Queen Mary of England. The ships left their anchorage in the White Sea under favourable conditions, but when they had made some progress across the North Sea, they were overtaken by a fierce gale and driven far northwards again. The "*Philip and Mary*" after a voyage of nine months, crossing the North Sea, safely reached

London. The “Bona Esperanza” was never heard of, and must have foundered at sea. The “Confidentia” was wrecked on the coast of Norway and every soul on board perished, while the “Edward Bonaventure,” after being buffeted about in the North Sea for four months, was finally dashed to pieces on the rocks to the west of Rosehearty, on 10th November, 1556, and only a few, including the Russian ambassador, of the large company on board saved.

Hakluyt, whose “Voyages” have become classic, gives a most picturesque account of the shipwreck in old English, which must appeal to readers of the present day who have never come across the story. The following is the account of the actual shipwreck in Hakluyt’s own words: “The ‘Edward Bonaventure’ traversing the seas foure months, finally the tenth day of November of the aforesaide yeare of our Lorde, one thousand five hundred, fiftie and sixe, arrived within the Scottish coast in a Bay named Pettislego, where by outrageous tempests, and extreme stormes, the said ship being beaten from her ground tackles, was driven upon the rockes on shore, where she brake and split in pieces in such sort as the grand Pilot (Chancelour) using all carefulnesse for the safetie of the bodie of the sayde arnbassadour and his trayne, taking the boat of the saide ship, trusting to attaine the shore, and so to save and preserve the bodie, and seven of the companie or attendants of the saide ambassadour, the same boat by rigorous waves of the seas, was by darke night overwhelmed and drowned, wherein perished not only the bodie of the saide grand Pilot, with seven Russes, but also divers of the Mariners of the sayd ship: the noble personage of the saide ambassadour with a fewe’ others (by God’s preservation and speciall favour) onely with much difficultie saved. In which shipwracke not onely the saide shippe was broken, but also the whole masse and bodie of the goods laden in her, was by the rude and ravenous people of the Countrey thereunto adjoining, rifled, spoyled and carried away, to the manifest losse and utter destruction of all the lading of the said ship, and together with the ship, apparell, ordinance and furniture belonging to the companie, in value of one thousand pounds, of all which was not restored towards the costs and charges to the summe of five hundred pound sterling.”

It is quite evident that the “Edward Bonaventure,” after a voyage of great hardships, instead of safely reaching the port of London, whence she was bound, had been driven, by the violence of the weather, in upon the shore on either side of Rosehearty. Chancelour had cast anchor, thinking to weather the gale, but alas, it was a forlorn hope. He did not know how terribly the breakers rolled ashore there in a northerly hurricane. The ship broke from her anchors, or as Hakluyt puts it “from her ground tackles,” and was dashed to pieces upon the rocks. The brave Chancelour, a fearless navigator who had courted death in many unknown seas, lost his life on the borders of his own home. His son, and many of the mariners who had accompanied him in several of his previous perilous voyages, perished with him. In fact very few on board the ship reached the shore alive. Chancelour was very solicitous

for the safety of his distinguished passenger, the Russian ambassador, and it was remarkable that the most distinguished man on board the ship, the first Russian ambassador to England, should have been saved when so many perished. It was well that it was so, because if the ambassador had perished, there is no knowing what fantastic theories the Russian Court might have conjured up in connection with the sudden disappearance of their accredited agent. Sudden disappearances of great public men in Russia in those days were quite common occurrences!

Following the tragedy of the wreck and loss of life was thy comedy of the stealing on the part of "the rude and ravenous people of the Countrey" of everything cast ashore. This is a dreadful character to give the good people of the Aberdour and Rosehearty districts of three hundred and fifty years ago. No doubt many of their descendants are now living in the ancient burgh of the Rose and Heart, who would not care to have their ancestors' misdeeds, or they might think virtues, too glaringly published abroad. There is another way of interpreting the story which does not show the natives in such a bad light as the above. In the sixteenth century, the people in the out of the way places of Scotland were extremely ignorant and untutored so far as many of the laws of the land were concerned. They would have probably thought that what was thrown up by the sea was the property of him who first secured it, and accordingly the natives of "Pettislego" had helped themselves to the spoil cast ashore from the wreck of the "Edward Bonaventure" without any remorse of conscience or thought that they were doing a criminal act. It is not so very long ago since the professional wrecker, on some parts of the coast of England earned a precarious living at this nefarious business, and did not think he was doing anything very far wrong. It would be interesting to know if the big folks in the district shared in the spoil. No doubt some of the ladies of the gentlemen living in the district would have aspired to wear a real sable of great price when a favourable opportunity of doing so presented itself, and one is inclined to believe that some of "the upper ten" had benefited by the wreck of the "Edward Bonaventure." No doubt some of the small lairds or big farmers had been on the outlook for a share of the rich wreckage whether they got it or not.

As soon as information of the casualty reached London, which was on 6th December, twenty-six days after the accident, steps were at once taken to give assistance to the ambassador, and to secure a restitution of the stolen property. Queen Mary of England (of evil memory) applied to her cousin, Mary Queen of Scots, to give assistance in the matter. It will be more interesting that Hakluyt be allowed to continue his story in his own unique style. It is as follows: "As soone as by letters addressed to the said companie, and in London delivered the sixt of December last past, it was to them certainly knowen of the losse of their Pilote, men, goods and ship, the same merchants with all celeritie and expedition, obtained not onely the Queenes majesties most gracious and favourable letters to the Ladie Dowager, and Lordes of the

Councell of Scotland for the gentle comfortment and entertainment of the saide ambassadour, his traine and companie, with preservation and restitution of his goods, as in such miserable cases, to Christian pitie, princely honour and meere Justice appertaineth, but also addressed two Gentlemen of good learning, gravitie and estimation, videlicet, Master Lawrence Hussie, Doctor of the Civill Lawe, and George Gilpin with money and other requisites into the Realme of Scotland, to comfort, ayde, assist, and relieve him and his there, and also to conduct the ambassadour into England, sending with them by poste a Talmach or Speachman for the better furniture of the service of the sayde ambassadour, trusting thereby to have the more ample and speedie redresse of restitution: which personages using diligence, arrived at Edenborough (where the Queenes Court was) the three and twentieth day of the saide moneth of December, who first visiting the saide ambassadour, declaring the causes of their comming and Commission, shewing the letters addressed in his favour, the order given them for his solace and furniture of all such things as hee would have, together with their daily and readie service to attend upon his person and affaires, repaired consequently unto the Dowager Queene, delivering the letters." The London merchants who owned the "Edward Bonaventure" must have been men of great influence, when they were able not only to secure the assistance of Mary Queen of Scots, but the Lords of the Council of Scotland also, in giving help to the unfortunate Russian ambassador. It would appear that the latter had remained as short a time in this district as possible, for he had reached Edinburgh on his way to London before Messrs. Lawrence Hussie and George Gilpin had arrived at the Scottish capital. The ambassador, it was quite evident, had not been at all impressed with the people among whom he had been cast, and he made it a point to bid them farewell at the earliest possible moment. In Court and aristocratic circles much sympathy for the unfortunate ambassador had been aroused, and everything was done to help him in his forlorn and shattered condition. That the first ambassador that Russia sent to England should be wrecked upon an inhospitable shore was bad enough, but that he should be robbed of all his property was a stain upon the fair name and fame of England, that everyone in authority was anxious to see removed. Hence the elaborate arrangements made for rescuing, if possible, all the property belonging to the ambassador.

As the first sentence in the next quotation from Hakluyt shows, Queen Mary had received Messrs. Hussie and Gilpin with great kindness, and keenly interested herself in the steps being taken for the recovering of the ambassador's property. What poor success in the way of the recovery of the said property resulted from the arrangements made, is told by Hakluyt in the following interesting account: "Whereupon they received gentle answeres, with hope and comfort of speedie restitution of the goods, apparell, jewels and letters: for the more apparance whereof, the Queene sent first certaine Commissioners with an Harold of armes to Pettislego, the place of the shipwracke, commaunding by Proclamation and other Edictes, all such persons (no degree excepted) as had any part of such goods as were spoyled and taken out or from the ship to bring them in, and

to restore the same with such further order as her grace by advise of her Council thought expedient: by reason whereof not without great labours, paines and charges (after long time) divers small parcels of waxe, and other small trifling things of no value, were by the poorer sorts of the Scottes brought to the Commissioners, but the jewels, rich apparell, presents, gold, silver, costly furies, and such like, were conveyed away, concealed and utterly embezelled. Whereupon, the Queen at the request of the said ambassadour, caused divers persons to the number of 180 or more, to be called personally before her princely presence, to answer to ye said spoile, and really to exhibit and bring in all such things as were spoiled and violently taken, and carried out of the same, whereof not onely good testimonie by writing was shewed, but also the things themselves found in the hands of the Scottish subjects, who by subtile and craftie dealings, by connivence of the Commissioners, so used or rather abused themselves towards the same Orator and his attendants, that no effectual restitution was made: but he, fatigated with daily attendance and charges the 14 day of February next ensuing, distrusting any reall and effectuall rendring of the saide goods and marchandizes and other the premisses, upon leave obtained from the said Queene, departed towards England, having attending upon him the said two English Gentlemen and others (leaving neverthelesse in Scotland three Englishmen to pursue the deliverie of such things as were collected to have bene sent by ship to him in England)."

It is seen that Mary Queen of Scots attached so much importance to the question of the recovery of the ambassador's property, that she sent some of her Commissioners with a Herald of Arms to Old Pittligo so that they might, by public proclamation impress upon the people the necessity for giving up any or all the articles they had taken from the wrecked ship, or picked up on the shore. As already indicated, there is reason to fear that the better class people residing in the district shared in the plunder. The authorities in 1557 must have thought so too, as the words "(no degree excepted)" indicate this. The indictment against the better class people is further emphasized by the further declaration that only small parcels of wax and other articles of trifling value were given up to the Commissioners by *the poor people*. Notwithstanding the strenuous efforts of the authorities, the jewels and costly furs, etc., never made their appearance, at least to any material extent. If the poorer classes had attempted to wear these, they would have been pounced upon at once, and as the costly articles mentioned could only have been used by those occupying the highest positions in the district, it is to be feared that they were in great measure responsible for their non-appearance.

It would be interesting to know if any, or how many of the 180 people summoned before Queen Mary had put in an appearance. It was a long cry from Rosehearty to Edinburgh in 1557, and it is most unlikely that anyone, unless carried, had obeyed the summons. There is no account in the history of the disaster of anybody having responded to the call, the "Pettislego" people evidently not being particularly

anxious to have an audience of the Queen. If the Commissioners sent from Edinburgh in the interests of the ambassador shut their eyes to irregularities what could be expected of the people living in the district. The folks about Rosehearty, and there must have been a good many inhabiting the quarter when so large a number as 180 were summoned to Edinburgh, were too clever for those sent north to force restitution, and very few of the valuable presents on board the ill-fated vessel found their way to the ambassador. "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." Osep Gregorywich Napea, waiting till he was tired, gave up hope of ever getting any of his property from the "subtile and craftie" Scots, left Edinburgh and proceeded on his journey to London, where he was right royally received and hospitably entertained.

The following is extracted from a memorial written in London dated 1st May, 1557 on the subject of the ambassador's visit to the country: "Forasmuch as it may bee doubted how the ship named the 'Edward Bonaventure' suffered shipwracke, what became of the goods, howe much they were spoiled and deteined, how little restored, what charges and expenses ensued, what personages were drowned, how the rest of the ships either arrived or perished, or howe the disposition of almightie God hath wrought his pleasure in them, how the same ambassadour hath bene after the miserable case of shipwracke in Scotland unreverently abused, and consequently into England received and conducted, there intertained, used, honoured, and finally in good safetie towards his returne, and repaire furnished, and with much liberalitie and franke handling friendly dismissed to the intent that the trueth of the premisses may bee to the most mightie Emperor of Russia sincerely signified . . ." Very few, if any, of the chief officers on board the "Edward Bonaventure" had been saved, otherwise they would have been able to have given satisfactory reasons why the vessel suffered shipwreck. Most probably they had all found a watery grave. It can be seen that jealousy existed between Scotland and England at this time. The memorial points out the ill-treatment the ambassador received in Scotland, but waxes eloquent on the good times he had after reaching England. Had the "Edward Bonaventure" been wrecked on some of the outlying parts of England, there is no doubt the ambassador's belongings would have been treated by the natives there in exactly the same way as they were by the good people of the parish of Pitsligo. In connection with the story of the wreck, an interesting inventory of the presents sent to the King and Queen of England, is given as follows:—

"Giftes sent to the King and Queenes Majesties of England by the Emperour of Russia, by the report of the ambassadour and spoyled by the Scots after the shipwracke.

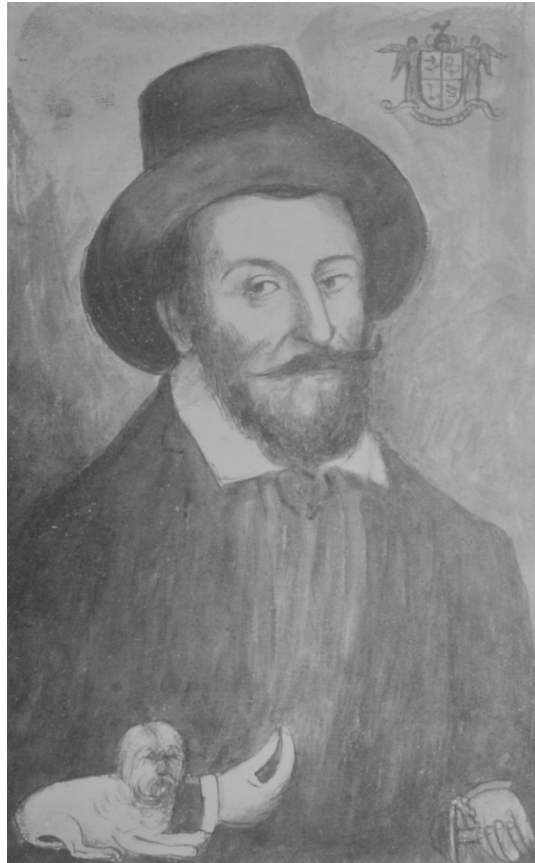
- "1. First. Sixe timber of sables rich in colour and haire.
- "2. Item. Twentie entire sables exceeding beautifull with teeth, eares and claws.
- "3. Item. Foure living sables with chaines and collars.
- "4. Item. Thirtie Lusarnes large and beautifull.

"5 Item. Sixe large and great skinnes very rich and rare, worne onely by the Emperour for woorthinesse.

"6 Item. A large and faire white Jerfawcon for the wilde swanne, crane, goose, and other great fowles, together with a drum of silver, the hoopes gilt, used for a lure to call the sayd hawke."

The list of presents is not formidable, but the value of the whole must have been very considerable. The Emperor of Russia did things in a most lavish way, and the occasion of sending the first ambassador to England was a fitting opportunity for making a little ostentatious display. It was a pity the embassy came to such a tragic end. If the costly sables and skins did not reach the King and Queen of England, no doubt after the hue and cry about them had blown over, they had adorned the persons of the gentry of Buchan. The large and fair white hawk had also found a watery grave, and was thus destined never to show its prowess and skill in hunting circles in England. No doubt the silver drum still lies in the sea among the rocks near Rosehearty, and it is not impossible that it is due to its dulcet tones, brought forth by some fair mermaid, that fish of all kinds have been lured in great shoals to the Pitsligo coast. Thus has Rosehearty become famous as a prolific producer of fish. Probably no shipwreck in Scotland ever attracted so much Royal attention, and caused so much stir in Court and official circles as did that of the "Edward Bonaventure." It is for that reason that so much space is devoted to it here. It advertised "Pettislego," but unfortunately it did not add to the reputation of the people! After a lapse of three hundred and fifty-six years, the people of Rosehearty can now snap their fingers at the vile insinuations of the English, and put forward a testimonial for honesty and an otherwise unblemished character that cannot be excelled by any other community in the north!

Returning to the history of Fraserburgh proper, it has to be pointed out that the founder of Fraserburgh and eighth in succession, was one of the most outstanding figures in the whole line of the Frasers of Philorth. The seventh laird died in April 1569, and at the age of 32, Alexander, his grandson, afterwards Sir Alexander Fraser, became the eighth of Philorth. The new laird would probably have been born about 1536 or 1537, so that for a considerable number of years he would have been associated with his grandfather in the management of the estates, and had thus become infected with his grandfather's opinions, which developed into much higher ideals than the old man ever dreamt of. Report has it that he was a very erudite man having received a liberal education in Edinburgh, and one can well believe this because no ignorant man could have played the part in life which he did. He was undoubtedly a man of great force of character, able, and of most progressive views. He held high the lamp of progress, and became a well-known figure in the councils of the country. His enlightened policy and business acumen attracted him to King James (I. and VI.), whose fast friend, and sometimes adviser, he became. He was, as has been already noted, the founder of Fraserburgh, and his brilliantly



Sketched by A. Webster.

SIR ALEXANDER FRASER, THE FOUNDER OF FRASERBURGH.

conceived schemes and laudable ambitions on the lines of progress for the betterment of the people, showed that he was a man ahead of the times in which he lived. At the mention of his name, no Brocher but should raise his hat as a token of respect to the memory of one who left no stone unturned in his efforts to benefit the people in an age when such an inspiring policy found few imitators among the owners of the land. Although some of his projects failed (the establishment of a University for instance) owing to their most ambitious nature, he is to be none the less commended for the grand and noble way in which he thought and acted. Had he been better circumstanced and had had more congenial surroundings, there is no knowing what great results might have flowed from his lofty aspirations. To push forward as he did, and to his own loss in the end, the causes of education and trade marked him out as a pioneer of progress and public spirit, whose splendid efforts in those far back primitive days call for the appreciation and encomiums of all generations.

It may not be out of place to mention here that the founder of Fraserburgh was twice married. Firstly to Magdalen Ogilvie, daughter of Sir Walter Ogilvie of Dunlugus, and secondly to Elizabeth Maxwell, Lady Lochinvar, daughter of Lord John Herries. The last mentioned was a close friend and supporter of the ill-fated Queen Mary.

Immediately after "coming into his own," he started the ambitious scheme of improvements at Fraserburgh, which has made his name famous in the district ever since. The first work he set his hand to was the building, in 1570, of the Castle of Kinnaird Head, to be occupied as the family seat or official residence. Up to this date the family residence was the manor-house of Philorth, now known as the Castle of Cairnbulg. All the surrounding estates belonged to the Frasers of Philorth at one time, and for several generations the Castle of Cairnbulg belonged to and was occupied by the Fraser family. Imbued with the idea of making Fraserburgh a great port and place of trade and learning, he wished to be in close touch with it, and planted his Castle in such a position that from its windows he could look down with paternal interest upon his creation, and watch its steady growth.

The site of the Castle was not an ideal one from the point of view of comfort. During two or three months in the summer season it would have been a desirable place, but exposed, as it is to this day, to all the winds that blow and the fury of the Moray Firth, it must have been a cold and inhospitable residence during a great part of the year. Trees could not live in such a place, and its only beauty was the grassy slopes below the Castle and the placid and shining water of the Moray Firth on a fine summer day. But it was near Fraserburgh, and that was enough for the founder of the town. The Castle, it seems, comprised a number of buildings clustering round the central tower, which were occupied by the family and retainers, etc. These have all disappeared ages ago. Only the central tower now remains. It belongs to the Commissioners of Northern Lights, and is widely known as Kinnaird Head.

Lighthouse, serving a humane purpose, which is quite in keeping with its noble builder's ambitious dreams. The exposed situation of the Castle really made its desertion by the family a necessity, and one of the early successors of the founder of Fraserburgh built a residence where the present Philorth House now is. In fact, some of the original building, it is understood, is incorporated in the Philorth House of to-day.

Sir Alexander Fraser having in 1570 laid the foundation stone of Kinnaird Head Castle, built a new church near it the following year. "Near it" means on the site, or practically on the site of the present parish church. Up to this time there had been no church at what was afterwards called Fraserburgh, the inhabitants having to worship in the church of Philorth, situated quite close to, if not adjoining, the west end of the churchyard of Kirkton.

Having begun the building of a castle and church, this energetic man commenced the ambitious task of forming a new town on modern lines—modern for that age—on the site of Faithlie, which had been created a burgh in 1546. No doubt some of the squalid huts or houses of old Faithlie had still remained, but these would be confined to the old part of the village and would be in large measure effaced by the superior houses erected in the new part of the town, on a methodical plan drawn up by the proprietor.

That he aimed high and destined Fraserburgh to be a port and place of great importance there can be no doubt. His forceful personality and ambitious schemes had been noised abroad, for the writer Crawford, in speaking of him, said, "he continued to beautify and enlarge the town with public buildings and fine streets." He deserved the compliment this old writer paid him, for some of the streets he laid off were 40 feet wide, a most unusual thing 340 years ago.

Having got the town into respectable shape, under his own personal superintendence evidently, this man of restless activity started in 1576, the building of a new and convenient harbour at Fraserburgh, of which he himself laid the foundation stone. His grandfather, exactly 30 years before, constructed the first harbour that Fraserburgh ever possessed. Evidently the venture had been a success, and it may be reasonably assumed that the traffic had outstripped the accommodation. The founder of Fraserburgh, wise man, was determined to take advantage of the flowing tide, and he built a harbour that kept Fraserburgh in the forefront among East Coast ports of that age.

The position of Fraserburgh in 1912 is due to the energy and foresight of these ancestors of Lord Saltoun. Had these harbours not been made in 1546 and 1576, without which no development in the shipping and fishing industries would have been possible, Fraserburgh would not have reached the leading position it now occupies. It would have been just like any ordinary fishing village in the Moray Firth with one or two stone walls doing duty for a harbour, which would have practically emptied itself dry at low water.

Having carried out these great improvements, remarkable for their day, Sir Alexander Fraser wished the status of his practically new town officially recognized, and the rights and privileges of the inhabitants protected. He

therefore applied to and received from King James a charter in April, 1588, in which "a grant of novodamus was inserted, erecting Faithlie into a free port and burgh of barony." Still pushing forward his schemes for the advancement of Faithlie, he in 1592 received a further charter in which the town became a burgh of regality with a free port, and declaring that "the same shall in all time coming be called the port de Fraser." The fact that Fraserburgh was now a free port, was an epoch in her history which called for special notice. That there had been rejoicings among the inhabitants there is no doubt, but the form which they took must be left to the imagination of the reader. There were no daily newspapers in those days to describe the social life of the people, and even burgh records were an unknown quantity until a hundred and seventy years later. The event, however, was done honour to by the Rev. David Rattray, then minister of Fraserburgh, who composed a Latin epigram in celebration of the higher status to which the town had been raised. The following is the English translation of the verse:—

"The King, O Fraserburgh! has given to thee
A name through ages known to knightly fame;
Long flourish thou! upheld by piety;
And aye be mindful of thine honoured name."

Posterity is indebted to the old writer, Crawford, for putting the epigram on "black and white," and thus saving it from being lost at an age when much that was interesting in the way of writing disappeared. Of course, the name "known to knightly fame" refers to the Frasers, whose martial deeds were the proud heritage of the family.

Fraserburgh has not become a city of world-wide fame, but the inhabitants may take the credit of having tried, and not altogether without success, to live up to the standard which the spirit of the couplet demands.

Shortly after this date the founder of Fraserburgh received the honour of knighthood at the hands of the King. The date was August, 1594, and the occasion the baptism of the King's son, Prince Henry. A third charter was obtained in 1601 which ratified and confirmed the grants and privileges mentioned in the two previous charters. The charter is a most interesting document, if only to show the enormous extent of land held by the Philorth Frasers in the beginning of the seventeenth century. Another remarkable feature about the document is the drastic powers given to Sir Alexander Fraser with regard to the punishment of transgressors, whom he could dispose of at will by "beheading, hanging, drowning and burning." "The good old times" had some weak spots, and somehow one feels more comfortable living in these days than in 1600. The "Rose" mentioned in the charter as payable for Kirkton, Tyrie and Kairtmyres (Kirkmyres), does not refer to the flower, but to a gold coin then current and known as the "Rose," or more particularly "Rose Noble." In the reigns of Edwards III. and IV., its value was respectively 6s. 8d. and 8s. 4d. It must

be remembered that the pound meant pound Scots, equal to 1s. 8d. The following is a copy of this historic charter.—

At Holyrood Palace, 4th April (1601).

The King has confirmed to Sir Alexander Fraser of Phillorth and Fraserburgh, knight, the lands and barony of Phillorth, and the lands of Aberdour in the sheriffdom of Aberdeen, the lands of Tiberty and Utelaw in the sheriffdom of Banff extending to Twenty pounds of old extent and of old united into the barony of Phillorth; the lands of Scatterty with salmon fishings upon the Water of Deveron, Phaithlie and Tyrie with harbour of Faithlie, and the town and burgh of barony thereof now called Fraserburgh, in the barony of Kynedwart; the lands of Kirkton of Tyrie in the barony of Aberdour, with castles, manorplaces, mills, woods, fishings, tenents, etc., and advocacy of the rectories and vicarages of the churches and parishes of Phillorth, Tyrie, Cremond and Rathin, with the chaplainries and prebends of all altarages thereof; the lands of Inveralloquhy, with the fortalice, manorplace, loch, fishings, mills, mill lands, water-race from the loch to the mill, with the lands of Foirtre and Inverurie and mill thereof called Denend and which the said Alexander resigned. Moreover the King for great sums of money paid down of new grants the before-written to the said Alexander, including likewise the town and lands of Carnebulg with boats and fishings, the links, rabbit warrens.... Furthermore the King erects the said town and burgh of Fraserburgh with the whole lands within its bounds of old called Faithlie, and their whole pertinents, into a free port and free burgh of barony and a free regality, with power to the said Alexander to appoint and choose bailies, a treasurer, dean of guild, councillors, three burgesses, etc., and with power to the burgesses to “pack” and “peill,” buy and sell, etc., with power also to have a tolbooth, market cross, and two weekly markets on Monday and Saturday, with free fares twice in the year, namely, at the feasts of Michaelmas and St. John the Baptist, for eight days, with the tolls. etc. with power also to the said Alexander to uplift the customs, and anchorages, and haven silver of the said port both by sea and land and to apply the same for the support of the said harbour, and to dispose of the salmon fishings, etc., both in salt waters and fresh within the bounds of the said burgh and harbour, with the “wrak” and “wair” and fish-“bait” there, at his pleasure; with power also to the said Alexander Fraser to receive resignations of the lands of the said burgh and to dispone the same to any persons having right thereto; and to hold burgh courts and courts of regality and to punish transgressors even by beheading, hanging, drowning and burning, and with power to the said Alexander to build a college or colleges within the said burgh, to erect and endow a univer-

sity, to elect Rectors and other needful members and to depose the same, to make statutes, etc.; and he has incorporated all the foregoing into the free barony of Phillorth ordaining the fortalice and manorplace of Phillorth to be the chief messuage: To be held by the said Alexander and the heirs male lawfully procreated of his body and their assignees, whom failing, his lawful and nearest heirs male whomsoever bearing the surname and arms of Fraser and their assignees: Paying for the said burgh with its pertinents one penny; for Kirktoun, Tyrie and Kairtmyres, one rose; for the said advocation one penny in name of Blench farm; and for the rest one suit at the head court of the sherifffdom of Aberdeen at the feast of Michaelmas, with the customary rights and services; taxing the ward and nonentry at three pounds yearly, and the marriage at two thousand pounds; provided that if the said Alexander or the other heirs of taillie should die without having heirs male procreated of their bodies, the heir succeeding to the said barony shall pay to the heirs female procreated of the body of the deceased heir, one or more, twenty thousand pounds. Witnesses as in other charters, etc.

There can be no doubt that under the enlightened policy and careful “nursing” of the eighth laird of Philorth, Fraserburgh’s trade developed wonderfully. This is borne out by the expressions contained in a confirmation obtained by Sir Alexander about this date which says:—

Our Sovereign Lord and the three estates of Parliament, understanding that Alexander Fraser of Fraserburgh has obtained a new infeftment of his barony of Philorth, etc., in which also he has obtained the town and burgh of Faithlie now called Fraserburgh—to be created a free burgh of barony, with express liberty to erect a University, big, and mak colleges, and place masters and teachers, with all the privileges and immunities that may pertain to a free University—since which time the said burgh has greatly flourished in bigging, repair, and resort of people, so that sundry gentry of the county are becoming inhabitants and burgesses of the said burgh.

The harbour improvements and other business facilities offered at the port, drew the attention of traders from what would have been considered distant parts in those far back days. The people themselves must have been possessed of a spirit of enterprise; or were their trading instincts inspired and fostered by their Superior? Whatever the reason, there is no doubt that at this time the activity of the merchants of Fraserburgh was a real force, which was causing trouble to their competitors at neighbouring ports. It appears that in 1573 the loading of a Flemish vessel in Fraserburgh for a foreign port again raised the ire of the authorities of Aberdeen, who thought that in doing so the people of “port de Fraser” were trespassing on the privileges and rights of the traders of Bon-Accord So alarmed were they that the new “upstart” might become a serious menace to the trade of the county town, that in March, 1573, “the Provosts Bailies, and Council of Aberdeen sent a petition to the Regent”

(Morton) on the subject of the loading of the Flemish ship as being "in hurt and prejudice of the privilege of this burght, comoditie, and jurisdictione of the samen." (Council Register of Aberdeen, Vol. II, p. 10). It appears that the petition was presented to the Regent by a Mr. Patrick Menzies of Aberdeen, who is spoken of as the Town Council's "Commissioner."

There is no evidence to show that the Town Council of Aberdeen ever received any reply to their petition. It is not likely that they did, for at this troublous time Regent Morton was too busy with serious affairs of State, among others the reduction of Edinburgh Castle, to pay heed to a petty petition from the somewhat selfish natives of the Granite City. The Aberdeen worthies must have kept a keen and a "green" eye upon the development of Fraserburgh for the thirty years following the date of the presentation of the petition to Regent Morton. It appears that in 1605 the Aberdeen Town Council raised an action in the Court of Session with the view of obtaining a declarator that the rights and privileges of trade secured by Aberdeen from former monarchs included the whole county of Aberdeen, and that as a consequence "the creation of Fraserburgh as a burgh of regality and a free port was illegal." (Council Register of Aberdeen, Vol. II., pp. 279-284.) The object of the good people of Aberdeen was no doubt to prevent the ratification of the royal charters to Fraserburgh by Act of Parliament, on the plea that their action had not yet been decided.

There is no doubt that these long protracted legal proceedings had cost Aberdeen a considerable sum of money, and raised much ill-feeling on the part of the community of Fraserburgh towards those who were trying in the most determined manner, and at all costs, to stifle the laudable business efforts of a young community. The persistent efforts of these dignitaries of Aberdeen, in their policy of wiping out the trade of Fraserburgh, so far succeeded that in 1606 they obtained letters of horning against the founder of Fraserburgh and his tenants in Fraserburgh, directing them to "desist and ceas from using any merchandise, packing or peilling within the said toune, or hauldin of oppin (open) buiths thairin, using or usurping the libertie of frie burgesses of gild in tyme coming." As may be imagined, Sir Alexander Fraser was not a man who would submit to such a selfish, tyrannical, and unjustifiable order. He immediately applied to the Court, and to some purpose. He was promptly granted letters of suspension which made null and void the letters of horning. The people of Aberdeen kept "hammering" away at the matter for another ten years. Meetings, sometimes of a stormy nature, were held to discuss the question of further action. (Council Register of Aberdeen, Vol. II., p. 336). The machinery of the law moved slowly then as now; and besides this, Sir Alexander Fraser seemed to have been too clever for all the Provosts, Baillies and Councillors of Aberdeen put together. His great knowledge of the affairs of State was a big asset in such a dispute, and every move his opponents made, he was able to checkmate. They must have seen this, for they gradually desisted from active opposition, and in the end Fraserburgh was left in un-

disputed possession of the rights and privileges of trading, etc., which the foresight and enlightened policy of Sir Alexander Fraser had secured for her.

Having swept away the tide of opposition to free trading, Sir Alexander made an important move which showed that the town of Fraserburgh was more than a village, and that her trade was on the upgrade. The year 1613 was a very important one for Fraserburgh, for that year saw the dawn of self-government and local rule established in the town. Sir Alexander Fraser believed that in putting responsibility upon the people, they would rise to the occasion and quit themselves like men. His policy in this respect never failed. His contract with the Feuars of Fraserburgh, entered into in the year 1613 is the Magna Charta of the people of Fraserburgh, and the first official municipal document which the town can boast of. The terms of the contract have been modified and changed from time to time, but the ground work of the old document is really the principle which rules and guides the Feuars' Managers of the present day. The contract is of too inordinate a length to be quoted here in full, but one or two extracts from it will be interesting, if only to show the style and language of a Buchan official document of the patriarchal age of nearly 300 years. The following is the opening part of Fraserburgh's first official document:—

CONTRACT
between
Sir Alexander Fraser, of Fraserburgh,
Knight,
John Forbes, of Pitsligo,
Alexander Fraser, of Dorresbeltie,
and others,
ANENT THE BURGH OF FRASERBURGH

Dated 1613
Registered 10th July, 1627

“At Frasarbrughe The day off rexve the year off God ane thowsand sax hundrethe and threttein yeares: It is apointit contractit faithfully obliggitt, endit, and agriet betuix ye richt honorabill Sr Allexander Frasar, off Frasarbrughe, Knycht, vithe expres consent and assent off ane honorabill man, Androw Frasar, off Steanewoid, as donator to ye gift of non entres of the landis vnder vreitten. Outhred Mackdowall, off Mondurk, as donator to ye sad Sr Allexr, his simple escheitt, Thomas Giffert, off Sreffhall, as donator to ye gift off escheitt off ye said Sr Allexr his lyfrentt, and vithe consent of James and Symon Frasar, his lawfull sones, for yair entres, and for yamesellffis on ye ane pairtt and ane honorabill man Jhone Forbes, off Petslego, vithe expres consent and assent of ye said Sr Allexander and boithe of yame vithe mutuall consent of vtheres and vithe consent of ye said Symone Frasar on ye

second pairtt, and Allexander Frasn, off Dorres Beltie, Robert Frasn, his eldest lawfull sone, Hewe Crawford, off Quhythill, James Frasn, off Cairness, Villiam Birny in Frasnbrughe, Mr. George Nory, Villeam Frasn, Androwe Sandersone, Constanttein Ramsay, Archibald Grig, Angus Murray, Thomas Reid, Thomas Sympsone, Allexander Thomsone, Magnus Frasn, Jhone Irwing, Allexander Morisone, Michall Craig, Jhone Grig, Villeam Maderes for himselff, and as cationer for James Scoitt and ye said James Scott yair, James Birny ther, Patrik Allane, Androwe Ritchy, Wm. Baxster, Patrik Hendersone, Jhone Rany Smythe, Androw Brydy, Wm. Robertso, Androwe Clowb, Allexr Findlay, Jon Law, Allexr. Birny, ther.

“And ilk are off thame for yam sellffis, and as representting ye bodie off ye said Brughe on ye thrid paird for yame, thair aireis, exrs, and successores in maner forme and effect efter following. That is to say for same-ikill as ye haill Landes lyande vithin ye boundes of awld callit Faithlie, pairttes, pendikilles, and pertinenttes yairoff, vith towrand fortalice off ye said brughe, vind and vater milles, and Loiche off ye same, vithe all and sindrie howsses, biggings, yares, Landes, tenementes, Lie yares, akares, ruides, toftes, croftes, owt seattes, pairties, pendikilles, and yare pertinenttes vithe all collages and vniversities vithin ye same ar be owr sowerane Lord vnder his hienes gryt seall for ye cawses therin conteanitt Erectit, maid, constitut and creat to ye said Sr Allexander, his aires meall and assignayes quhatsumewer. In ane frie port, frie brughe in barony, and frie regalitie, vith frie cheappall, and frie chanslarrie, vith all priwilages, immuties, and jurisdictiones off frie regalitie. To be callit in tymes cuming ye burgh, port, and regalitie off Frasnbrughe, withe full and speciall power to ye said Sr Allexander and his forsaides, Baliwes, thesowrar, deane off gillitt, cownsolowres, burgesses, friemen, sarjandes and quhatsumewer vyer officeres and gowernowres necessar vithin ye said brughe and regalitie for rewling of ye same. To mak, elect, constitut, and creatt and yearling, to impuit and owtput ye same for ressonabill cawses at his plessowr. . . . And to hawe and hald frie marcattes and faires vithin ye said brughe, videlicet, ilk Monday and Setterday vickly, and tua frie and public faires or common marcattes ilk yeares, ane at Sanct Michall day the Archeangell, and ane vther at Sanct Jonhes day ye Baptist, and ilk ane thereof to continowe and be haldin for ye spaice off awcht dayes; and vithe vther liberties specifiet in ye said Sr Allexr., his infeftment grantit to him thervpone, off the daitt at Halliruidhows, the fowrt day of Apryll, ane thowsand sax hundrethe and ane yeares.”

The markets established by Sir Alexander Fraser in 1663, on the two saints' days named, were held regularly right down to about 1865 or 1866, a period of 250 years. For a long time they seem to have been very important marts of business, where numerous and considerable transactions took place in all sorts of goods, commodities, and live stock. They gradually lost their importance, and the business became more limited year by year. Trade developed on different lines, and the opening up of the country by railways completely swept away the small provincial fairs. The older inhabitants of

Fraserburgh will remember the last of the once famous Broch Markets, They were held on the links on a space opposite the Admiralty Buildings, and comprised a somewhat limited number of small stands, kept by old women, who retailed "fairin," "sweeties," "ginger bread horses," "clagam," and a host of other such like delicacies, dear to the lads and lasses of a past generation. In the end their chief function was to attract schoolboys to "play the truant," for which the latter often had to pay a reckoning to their schoolmasters at the parish school, first Mr Woodman and then Mr Murray. As has been already indicated, the markets, after a rather sickly old age, finally flickered out about the year 1865, or it may be 1866.

The contract further specified that the feuars living at the time the contract was made became the burgesses of the burgh and the members of the Guild thereof. The burgesses and freemen undertook to maintain the works and name of the town, and to use as their Common Seal the arms of the Frasers. In respect of this, Sir Alexander handed over to the feuars, for the good of the town, the customs and harbour market dues, and the right to gather bait and take fishing boats out of and into the harbour. Some land adjoining the town was also handed over to the community for the public good. What is really interesting is that the document discloses what were the important trades carried on in Fraserburgh in those far back days. After referring to the old Tolbooth, School and Cross, returning back again and appertaining to the said Sir Alexander, the contract says, "vithe power to ye said burgesses and frieme off ye said brughe lawfully electit, resawitt, and admittit to ye liberties yroff. To pak and peill by, and sell vyne, vax, Linning, volue nerrewe and brod and all vther mrchandies and steppill guid vithin ye bounds off ye said brughe, Libertie and regaletie off ye same, and to have resaive, and admit baxsteres, browsteres, flescheres, fischeres, selleres off fische, bleicherer, vobsteres, vakeres, massones, smythes, vrichtes, vyweres one prikes, saidilleres, barbores, tailzeores, barkeres of ledder, cordoneres and all vther craftsmen necessar and belonging to ye libertie off ane frie brughe. And vithe power to ye said craftesme, burgesses, and frie men and yair successores to vs and exers ye saidis craftes as frily as ony vther frieme or burgesses vthin yis roewme, and to debar and stope all vnfrieme frome tred off mrchadies, and frome vssing off ye said craftes in tymes cuming."

Except to the student of old history accustomed deciphering such a dialect, the above will no doubt look like a foreign language, and for the benefit of the general reader it is made into English as follows:—

"With power to the said burgesses and freemen of the said burgh, lawfully elected, received and admitted to the liberties thereof, to pack and peel, buy and sell, wine, wax, linen, woollen goods broad and narrow, and all other merchandise and staple goods within the bounds of the said burgh, liberty and regality of the same, and to have, receive and admit, bakers, brewers, fleshers or butchers, fishermen, sellers of fish, bleachers, weavers, dyers, masons, blacksmiths, wrights or joiners, knitters, saddlers, barbers, tailors, tanners, shoemakers,

and all other craftsmen necessary and belonging to the liberty of a free burgh. And with power to the said craftsmen, burgesses and freemen and their successors to use and exercise the said crafts as freely as any other freeman or burgess within his room, and to debar and stop all non-freemen from trading in merchandise and from engaging in the said crafts in time coming."

It is seen by the above that protection was in full swing in Fraserburgh 300 years ago, and that unless he was a freeman or burgess of the town, no man could start business on his own account therein. This was a common thing all over Scotland at this date, and the conditions laid down at Fraserburgh were no worse than those regulating the trade of other Scottish burghs. Sir Alexander Fraser, with that broad outlook and lofty ideal which characterized all his policy, had a significant saving clause in the contract which ensured that any unreasonably selfish position taken up by the privileged traders calculated to hinder the development of Fraserburgh, would not be tolerated by the Superior. The clause referred to stipulates that Sir Alexander and his heirs, etc., reserve to themselves the right to create new burgesses, etc., with the view of furthering the prosperity of the town. No doubt the original burgesses and freemen had not liked this clause, and it may be assumed that they had protested against the facilities proposed to be given to opposition traders, but Sir Alexander was too strong a man to be influenced by the narrow-minded, and the clause found a permanent resting place in the contract.

It is rather startling that some of the trades which were in existence in 1613 have died out. This is not due to the want of energy on the part of the people, but to inventions and machinery displacing or greatly changing the old order of things. The wax trade is gone, because gas has "snuffed" out the old-fashioned candle. Bleachers, weavers, dyers, knitters and tanners have, so far as Fraserburgh is concerned, disappeared, and the wine trade, as a wholesale concern, has long ago been wiped out of the field of local industries by the potent and all-conquering power of the national beverage—whisky.

Another point about the contract of 1613 which will interest Fraserburgh people and those having a Fraserburgh connection, is the number and names of the worthy feuars who were parties to the agreement, and who first helped to make the Broch a town of importance on the North-East Coast. Certainly the list is not a formidable one, totalling only 32. The names are as follows: Patrick Allane (Allan), Wm. Birny (Birnie), Jas. Birny, Wm. Baxster, Androw Brydy (Brady), Alexr. Birny, Hewe Crawford of Quhythill (Whitehill), Michall Craig, Androwe Cloub (Clubb), Alexr. Fraser of Dorres Beltie, Robt. Fraser (son), Jas. Fraser of Cairness, Wm. Fraser, Magnus Fraser, Alexr Findlay, Archd. Grig (Greig), John Grig, Patrick Henderson, Jhone Irwing (Irving), Jon Law, Angus Murray, Alexr. Morisone, Wm. Maderes (Mathers), Geo. Nory (Norrie), Constanttein Ramsay, Thos. Reid, Androwe Ritchy, Wm. Robertso (Robertson), Androwe Sandersone, Thos. Sympson, Jhone Rany Smythe, Allexander Thomsone. The foregoing are the persons who were the third party to the contract, but in another part of the document

appear a good many additional names, so that the number of feuars at this date seems to have totalled about 44. The names of Fraser and Birnie pre-dominated, and there were a couple of Grigs, while there were also a Tailyeor (Taylor), Cowie, Cardno and Patersone. A good deal of liberty is taken with spelling, but the full effects of the education given in the Fraserburgh College had not yet permeated the community! The document is written in Scotch, and considerable allowance must be made for this, but it does seem curious that the Christian name "John" should have been spelt "Jhone," "Jon," and "Jone" in rapid succession.

As already indicated education was "far back" in those days, for the great majority of the feuars were unable to sign their names to the document, and this had to be done by proxy. According to a pencil note in the Kirk Session Book, from 1612 to 1623, it appears that the names of the two Fraserburgh baillies in 1616 were Alexr. Stewart and Wm. Pendrich. It is rather remarkable that the name of neither appears among the signatories to the contract of 1613. One would have thought that persons in the leading positions of baillies would have been feuars in the town, and would have signed the contract.

Sir Alexander Fraser was much troubled with financial worries in the closing years of his life. His prodigal expenditure on his pet scheme of making Fraserburgh an outstanding town in the north quite exhausted his resources, and estate after estate had to be disposed of to relieve his financial stress. He came in to an enormous extent of land, but he left an estate of only a moderate area. Often the pioneer of civilization suffers for his exalted notions, owing to the inability of his fellows to rise to his standard. This was evidently the fate of Sir Alexander Fraser. He lived to the age of 85 years, and made his own will a few days before his death which occurred in July, 1623.

The will is remarkably well composed, and seems to have been written by Mr. Wm. Forbes, minister of Fraserburgh. Part of it is very interesting to Fraserburgh people. The will is written in Scotch, but the following is the English of the part which will interest Fraserburgh readers: "I commend my soul into the hands of my Heavenly Father, and I ordain my body to be buried at the south side of the Kirk of Fraserburgh, and an aisle to be built there, and a little vault to be built upon my corpse that my body may rest till the glorious appearance of my blessed Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, at which time I hope for a glorious resurrection with the rest of God's saints: my will is that the aisle be vaulted and a chamber be built above the vault, to be a session house or chamber for the minister. The aisle to be thirty feet of height, and as much in length, and a steeple to be built on the aisle, and a bell to be put therein, and passage to be made on the east side, that the minister may go in thereat to the pulpit." It can easily be seen that the aisle which was built by orders of the founder of Fraserburgh, was erected on or near the spot which is the family burying vault of the Saltoun family at the present time. Of course, the church has been rebuilt since Sir Alexander's day, and no doubt the

Saltoun mausoleum has undergone changes and improvements in the course of the last 280 or 290 years, but it may be safely concluded that it was Sir Alexander Fraser who fixed the site of what is the Saltoun family burying ground of to-day.

Sir Alexander Fraser was a remarkable man. His will, written at the close of a long and strenuous life, shows the beauty of his character. With his decease and the cessation of an active policy, having for its end the development of the town, a long period intervenes, during which there is not a single word in any local records bearing upon Fraserburgh. No doubt some events of public importance had happened in the town during a period of 80 odd years, but evidently no scholarly chronicler lived in the district at the time, and as there were no regular records kept by the Feuars Managers at this early period, the greatest part of the seventeenth century is almost blank, so far as a record of public life in Fraserburgh is concerned.

In his geographical collections, Mr. Walter Macfarlane, who was born in the end of the seventeenth century and died in Edinburgh in June, 1767, at an advanced age, has a reference to the Buchan district, written in Latin, of which the following is a translation: "In skirting the shore from Banff, a hill is seen where is the house of the Barclays, Barons of Towy. Then follows Troup House built on a rock on an isthmus, now neglected. Then follows on the shore Pennan, where there is a well-known quarry for mill-stones, which are carried far and wide. Pitsligo is next, the seat of the Parliamentary Baron of the family of the Forbeses, almost adjoining to which is the Farm House of Pitullie, belonging to the Barons of Philorth. Then is seen the small promontory of Kynards Head and near it the little town of Fraserburgh, where Alexander Fraser planned a town 50 years ago. He was a famous knight, Baron of Philorth, and liberties being granted by the King he increased the place. He also cast into the ocean, at great expense, a pier of stone, first in a rather unsuitable place, then the works being transferred to another place, he built a harbour, whence to-day the place is more populous. The Parliamentary Barons of the Frasers, a name famous in previous centuries, have now vanished from a lack of male heirs for many years. Of those who survive, the most ancient is this of Philorth to whom all of that name around Inverness scattered in many ——? and possessing wide estates, owe their origin." (Volume II., p.236.) Another fragment from Macfarlane reads as follows: "The river of Philorth divides Rathen from the Parish of Fraserburgh to the North. In this Parish is situated Philorth, the dwelling place of the Lord Saltoun, and a little to the North is the town of Fraserburgh. It is a burgh of Regality. The Lord Saltoun is Superior. Here is a good harbour for ships of a considerable burden, and a road for anchoring. There is a Tolbooth. The Parish Kirk is in the town, with the family of Saltoun's burying place adjoining it. On the North side of the town stands the Castle of Kinnaird's Head, the jointure house of the Dowager of Saltoun. This is the northmost place on the coast, as the Castle of Peterhead is the most easterly." (Volume I., page 40.) Evidently this last

extract had been written some considerable time after the publication of Latin reference to Fraserburgh.

The Kirk Session of Fraserburgh kept a regular record of their proceedings all through the seventeenth century, and though these mostly deal with the spiritual side of life, much quaint information is contained in them, which is given in a separate chapter. The records divulge the fact that one of the baillies of Fraserburgh in 1670 was named John Craibe. The reason why his name figures in the Session records is due to the fact that he was foolish enough, or bad enough, to appropriate to his own use, a sum of £8 of the poor's money. At the Session meeting held in August, 1670, Craibe promised to refund the money at Martinmas, and he had no doubt done so, as no further reference is made to the matter in the minutes.

The old Poll Book has filled up a gap in many parishes, and the local historian, when stranded for want of matter at a particular period, blesses the government that passed the Poll Act. Without it, valuable information regarding the people at large would not have been available. It appears from the Poll Book that the following were the pollable seamen, each liable in a tax of 12s., living in Fraserburgh in 1696: 3 Ritchies, 2 Cowies, 2 Taylors, 1 Walker, 1 Hay, 1 Prott, 1 Noble, 1 Fraser, 1 Smith, 1 Clark, 1 Brown, 1 Dickson, 1 Finlayson, and 1 Donald.

Among the general public the name is given of James Urquhart, heritor of Knockleith, above £300, valued £9 6s. There appears the name of "Mr. Jas. Moor, minister at Fraserburgh, poleable as a gentleman, his wife, two sons, and two daughters, £4 16s. And. Dalgardnoe, schoolmaster, 6s."! Education could not have been placed at a high value in those days, and the schoolmaster must have occupied a very inferior position in the community when his poll tax was valued at only 6s., while a poor Broadsea fisherman's was appraised at 12s. The fisherman's financial, if not his social status was valued at 100 per cent. more than that of the parish schoolmaster. Times have changed, and changed for the better. Among others mentioned in the Poll Book are Alexander Craib, heritor, £80 valued rent, and his wife, £4 12s. George Wilsone, inhabitant, above 500 merks of stock, and his wife and servant at £6 of fee, £3 11s. Thomas Donaldson, merchant in Fraserburgh, stock valued under 5,000 merks, and for himself, his wife and two children in family, £3 14s., 7s. being paid as poll for a servant whose fee was 4s. Alexander Gordone, Notar publict, and his wife and sister-in-law, £4 18s., three children and a servant without fee, £1 4s. Among the Broadsea (it must have been no mean village, as villages went, as far back as 1696) fishermen liable in poll tax at the rate of 12s. each were: 6 Watts, 6 Nobles, 2 Lessells (Leslies), 1 Stephen, 1 Ritchie, 1 Taylor, 1 Martin, 1 Masson, and 1 Glennie. Lessells, Martins and Glennies have disappeared. but descendants of all the others may be found at this date in the village or in the Braeheads. The poll tax for the parish of Fraserburgh in the year 1696 yielded £543 4s., by no means a bad "show" for a town only 100 years old.

Some of the more important place names in the neighbourhood of Fraser-

burgh at this date were: Fingask, Chapelton, Hattoun, Middleburgh, Pitblae, Gask, the Milne of Philorth, Pitblea, Kinglasser, Toadholes, Kinbey, Smiddielands, Fairniehill, Kirkton, Heughhead, Mains of Techmuir, Burntack, Dunmerk, Milntack, Carnoe, Craighill, Tarvathie.

An interesting political incident took place in Fraserburgh in 1692, when the laird of Inverallochy, Lord Charles Fraser, and a number of his friends and tenants sojourned to Fraserburgh, and there at the town's Cross in right royal style proclaimed James II. King of Great Britain. They drank to the health of their Stuart idol and his son, the pretended Prince of Wales, and poured maledictions on the head of William. They indulged in the firing of pistols and guns and the brandishings of swords, and generally behaved in a way in the quiet Square of the burgh that created quite a scene of unusual excitement and turmoil. The old chronicler who transmitted this item of news down the ages said that Lord Fraser forced others to drink James's health, but it can be imagined that this would not have been a task very difficult to overcome, as, in addition to the perennial thirst of the natives of Buchan, it is well known that a large proportion of people in Fraserburgh and district at this time were notoriously Jacobite in their feelings and leanings.

This Lord Charles was one of the Scottish peers who held out longest against taking the oath of allegiance. For his disloyal escapade in Fraserburgh he was tried and fined the sum of £200. As proof of the Jacobite feeling in Scotland at the time, great difficulty was found in getting a jury to try the accused; seven peers and eight gentlemen of distinction having paid fines rather than be jurymen. Lord Charles moderated, for the time being at least, took the oath and his seat in the Scotch Parliament in 1695, supporting the union with England in the Parliament of 1706. Although not having any direct reference to Fraserburgh, it is interesting to follow the further career, not very extended, of this hot-headed nobleman. For a time he remained quiet, but when the attempted rebellion of 1715 was made, he was once more up in arms in an aggressive way on behalf of the Stuart cause. The collapse of the movement on behalf of the Pretender, left Lord Fraser a fugitive, with a price upon his head. Poor man, he must have suffered intensely flying from the hands of justice during the following five years. His end was pathetic, as was the end of many of the Stuart followers. While trying to elude his pursuers, in October 1720, by climbing up the face of a very precipitous rock in the neighbourhood of Banff or Macduff, his foot slipped and he fell to the foot of the crag, receiving such injuries that he died almost on the spot.

Towards the close of the seventeenth century, superstitions, providences and belief in the power of "ill prayers" seem to have been rampant in the north. Besides this the reign of Presbyterianism, which had succeeded Episcopacy, was most austere, and gave quite a gloomy touch to life. Anyone who did not conform to the "black bordered" routine laid down by the minister was practically condemned to eternal punishment. Wodrow, the church historian, who lived in the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the

Eighteenth century, in his "Analecta, or a History of Remarkable Providences," gives a number of cases in Scotland of the terrible results of "tempting Providence." As one of the remarkable cases of Providence quoted refers to Fraserburgh, the story should prove interesting, if not fearsome, to present day natives. Wodrow's version is as follows: "He (Mr Fordyce, in Aberdeen) tells me this following accompt, which he had from personal observation: when he lived near Frazerbruge, in the North, there was a minister settled there jure devoluto, the town being biggoted against Presbytery to a pitch, and only two or three that had seeming liking that way. After the minister is settled, he expected much encouragement from one Ougstoun, I think his name was, who had professed much respect for him and that way. A while after, in some difficulty, the minister came to him and desired his countenance and assistance in the difficulty. He at first put the minister off with delay; and within a litle plainly mocked him, and would doe nothing. The minister came from him to my informer, who lived a little from the place, and gave him ane account (of) what had befallen him and said, 'I expected much from that man, and reaoned upon his help and assistance in soe comfortless a settlement as I have ventured on; and he has not only disappointed me, but mocked me.' And the minister was like to sink under the thoughts of this carriage; and after some silence, he said, very peremptorly, 'I am much mistaken, yea, I'll say it, God hath sent me, and spoken by me. God will visite that man, and something more than ordinary will befall him and his!' My informer was very much stunned and grieved at such a peremptory declaration. However, it was accomplished, to my informer's personall knowledge. The man was a trader, who was very rich, worth near four or five thousand pounds sterling in stock. He had two sons and two daughters. Within some little time, one of his sons turned distracted, and I think continues so still. The other son, in some distemper, turned silly, and little better, and dyed. His daughters, one was maryed, and her husband lost all his stock at sea, twice or thrice; his goodfather stocked him once or twice, and all was still lost, and they and their children are miserable. The other daughter fell into a distemper, wherein she lost her reason. The man himself, after that time, never throve; his means wasted away insensibly; and throu all things, he fell under melancholy, and turned silly, and dyed stupide. All this fell out in some feu years after what had passed above; and my relator kneu all this particularly, and had occasion to be upon the man's bussiness and affairs." (Buckle's History of Civilization in England," Oxford University press edition, Vol. III., p. 217.)

The foregoing gives a vivid picture of how the people of Fraserburgh lived and how they thought in those far back days. The record does not reflect much credit on the Christian or charitable spirit of the ministers who lived fully two hundred years ago. The story is somewhat like a shout of triumph on the part of the parish minister of Fraserburgh (presumably Rev. Alexander Auchinleck), over the dire calamities which overtook poor Mr. Ougstoun and his family. In those days the minister could not even be contradicted, whether he was

right or wrong. Happily the times have changed, due to education and unceasing evolution. The extract is interesting from another point of view. It shows that even as far back as 1700, Fraserburgh must have been a town with a considerable trade, whose merchants and traders had had the virtue of energy and enterprise strongly developed. To have amassed a fortune of £4,000 or £5,000 in Fraserburgh over 200 years ago meant a big overturn of business. This will be better understood when it is said that £4,000 or £5,000 in 1700, would probably be equal to £50,000 to-day.

An incident of an amusing nature happened in Fraserburgh in 1715 in which some people from Peterhead played a prominent part, and rather insulted the citizens of Fraserburgh. Possibly this little episode was the beginning of the ill-will and jealousy which, it is alleged, exist between the communities of the two towns! Although many of the Fraserburgh and district people were strongly in favour of the Stuarts they were very discreet, and did not openly parade their opinions. Besides, the then Lord Saltoun was a uniform supporter of the House of Hanover, and this must have had a restraining influence upon the tenantry and others round him. It was otherwise at Peterhead. There the Keiths were out and out supporters of the Chevalier, which no doubt influenced the feelings of the common people, and accounted for their being strong followers of the Stuarts. The Chevalier would not have landed at Peterhead if he had not known all this. The episode referred to took the form of an expedition of Peterhead Stuart supporters under the command of a George Lamb, to Fraserburgh to demand cess, and to compel all and sundry to acknowledge the Chevalier as James VIII. The company, it appeared, had been well armed, but, with the usual discretion of Buchan people, they did not come to blows, and no blood was spilt. The gang met Lord Saltoun a short distance out of Fraserburgh, and demanded of him to agree to the terms mentioned above. His Lordship treated the Peterhead rebels with great contempt and instead of showing timidity at the gallant band, told them that "he heeded them no more than he would a footman, and, at a whisil he could raise an hundred men, and caus them feight all their present."

Finding they could make nothing of Lord Saltoun, the bravadoes continued their march to Fraserburgh, where they "proclaimed the King with all the solemnity we could, which we found did obleidged the most of the inhabitants of that town." This declaration of the Peterhead "deputation" making James Stuart the King was quite a repetition of the mad prank played by Lord Charles Fraser 23 years previously at the Cross. The people of Fraserburgh, though many must have felt strongly for the Stuarts, evidently wanted to live quietly, and it must have been rather annoying to them to see outsiders coming into the town and proclaiming kings for them. No doubt the then Brochers had thought that they were quite fit to think the question out and proclaim kings for themselves. The statement of the Peterhead raiders bears out that there was sympathy with the Stuart cause in Fraserburgh, but it is very questionable if it was so pronounced as the strangers wished outsiders to believe. No doubt they would put

the best face possible on it. These visitors from Peterhead did not behave altogether like gentlemen, for they admit having taken away from Fraserburgh "twenty-four stand of new firelocks, proof marked, and all with A.R. upon them, which firelocks were all charged with powder and ball." If the Peterhead folks thought they would be able to stir up active and open support on behalf of the Stuarts in Fraserburgh, they made a mistake. It was, however, a tactical blunder of the Peterheadians to steal the Brochers' firelocks, because even though the latter had inclined towards the Chevalier, their support was not of much value without their arms. This bloodless campaign of Peterhead worthies, as was to be expected, ended in smoke, and not in great deeds.

The Saltoun family continued consistent supporters of the reigning House, and when the rebellion of 1745 affected so many of the landed gentry and aristocracy of Scotland generally, the Saltouns remained firm in their allegiance to George II. There is no direct evidence from local public records of the definite doings of the people of Fraserburgh at this exciting period, but a letter taken from the diary of an Aberdeen clergyman (*Spalding Club Miscellany*, Vol I., p.368), dated January 8, 1746, throws a glimmer of light on political life in the town at the time. The letter says, "I hear it likewise said, but I believe it is a story, that one in the habit of a gentleman came in the Kinghorn boat to Fraserburgh, asking about Lord Strichen, and was told he was then at Philorth, Lord Saltoun's, whereupon he immediately went thither. The Jacobites in Fraserburgh, repenting they had let him out of their grips, came to Philorth, would have the stranger, who seeing that, called Lord Strichen to another room, gave him despatches, returning to where they were, gave his watch and money to Lord Strichen, then gave himself up to the Fraserburghers, who made him their prisoner, but finding nothing about him, could have been content they had not made him their prisoner. Immediately Lord Strichen horsed for London. I write you such stories as an amusement for lack of news, but I have seen the day when the Fraserburghers would not have dared to surround Lord Saltoun's house. It was a pity they did not carry the two Lords with them prisoners also."

By the above interesting fragment, it is seen that Prince Charlie had his quota of active followers in Fraserburgh, who were bold enough not only to beard Lord Saltoun in his ancestral home, but actually to seize as a prisoner a gentleman who was on a mission to this district as the representative of the reigning House. It was a daring step to take, and though no record shows anything in Fraserburgh about it, it is quite possible that the ringleaders were adequately punished. The incident showed how well posted up "the secret service" of the Jacobites was as to the doings of the established government of the day. The individual "in the habit of a gentleman" was too 'cute for the Jacobites of Fraserburgh. The smart way he transferred his despatches, etc., to Lord Strichen must have been very galling to Charlie's Broch followers after they had made up their minds that they were to make a capture of most valuable information.

All available information and facts, in all conscience meagre enough, bearing on the general history of Fraserburgh up to 1745, so far as local data is concerned, having become exhausted, the following chapter is devoted to "Old records and historical notes" on the town, which take up the thread of the story in very satisfactory chronological order.

CHAPTER II.

OLD RECORDS AND HISTORICAL NOTES.

There is nothing more interesting to the general reader than the folk lore of the country, or quaint old-world facts, gleaned from the official records of the burghs of Barony in the North, whose minute books are still available to "tell their tale." The ancient records of many a Scottish town, that had been full of striking historical facts, and pregnant with the mode of life of bye-gone ages, and touches of nature which then made the whole world kin, are lost to the country for ever. During political troubles in the past history of the country, these books often contained minutes unconsciously embodying the popular sympathies and feelings of the people of the district so glaringly conspicuous, that "he who ran might read." People in those days had to be careful in not unduly offending their political opponents.

As Shakespeare said, "the whirligig of time brings in his revenges," and the ancient fathers who glibly dictated their minutes at one period of their rule, as town and district legislators, had, at the next throw of the political dice, to secrete or destroy their official records in order to save their necks. This, no doubt, accounts for the complete disappearance of so many of the older records of many other Scottish burghs. At the same time, in numerous places, no adequate value was placed upon them, and no systematic plan was laid down in the olden times for the preservation of official records, with the result that, being "kicked from pillar to post," they were ultimately destroyed as so much waste paper. It is greatly to be deplored that so much interesting lore of this kind should have been lost to the country for ever.

Fortunately, in the case of Fraserburgh, a number of the old official records of the town are still available, and it is upon these that a good deal of this chapter is based. Some of the younger generation may think the subject a dry one; but there is no doubt that any glimpse got into the past well repays all the trouble of exploring dusty books and deciphering the peculiar and now fading writing of "ancient days." When fully engrossed in the subject, one can almost imagine one's self as forming one of the characters who trod the public stage in Fraserburgh, and loomed large in the eyes of the community 150 to 200 years ago. Just as the characters in a favourite novel become like personal friends with whom a reader is sorry to part, so do the Fraserburgh men of the past, whose actions and aspirations have helped to build up the prosperity of the town, become, through much reading concerning them like acquaintances of long standing, whose friendship one values

and whose company one is sorry to lose. A peep into these old records gives an excellent view into the manner of life almost 150 years ago, and shows the simplicity of the people's ways then as compared with those of the present time. There is a great amount of matter of one kind or another in the old Town Council books that could be dealt with, and that would no doubt prove interesting, especially the long controversy between the superior and the feuars about 1786-1787 regarding the contract then made, but the author, while making liberal use of these, has to a considerable extent drawn his materials from the Barony Court Book, which gives the oldest-dated matter referring to the affairs of the burgh.

The members of the august Barony Court met in the Tolbooth, which occupied the site upon which the present Town House is built. It was a very humble and small erection, and while one part formed the local Palace of Justice, the other was the jail in which all delinquents were confined. The Court and the culprit were never far separated; but these were the days when caste in a community was not so distinctive as it is now, and when the worship of the "Golden Calf," in preference to intellect and culture, had not been introduced. The stocks were often in evidence in front of the building, with unfortunate prisoners firmly pinned into them. The jail in the Tolbooth was a very dark and damp place, and whether the culprits were put out for the sake of an airing or for the delectation and amusement of the passing crowd, readers are left to judge. One advantage the stocks had over the present system of imprisonment was, that the delinquent could have a chat with a friend, make love to his sweetheart, or abuse his enemies. The old Fraserburgh stocks, it is interesting to know, still survive, being now in the possession of the Fraserburgh Town Council, and may be seen by the curious, in the Council's premises in Mid Street, where they are in the custody of the Burgh Surveyor. So far as is known, only half a dozen towns in Scotland, including Edinburgh and Glasgow, have still their stocks—emblems of law, justice, and punishment—remaining as a direct link, which had bound so many, with the past.

The first Barony Court Book begins on the 16th day of April, 1633, and ends on the 19th April, 1650. There is a blank from June, 1647, to April, 1650, and a blank from the April (1650) minute till 1654. Volume II. begins 30th November, 1654, and ends 5th October, 1676. From 1676 to 1746—a period of seventy years—there is a complete blank. Whether the minutes had ever been in existence and had been destroyed for political or other purposes will never be known. It must be remembered that towards the close of the Seventeenth Century, life in Fraserburgh was complete turmoil, owing to the overthrow of the Episcopal Church. This was followed by the troubles in Scotland, consequent on the Stuarts' claim to the Crown of Britain, which unsettled the people in the North for nearly half a century, more or less. These dynastic and political troubles may have had something to do with the disappearance of the Barony Court minute books from 1676 to 1746. Fraserburgh and district were understood to have had leanings towards Jacobitism,



Photo by Norrie, Fraserburgh.

THE FRASERBURGH STOCKS.

and no doubt some brave "Brochers" rallied round Prince Charlie's banner, under the leadership of the gallant and good Lord Pitsligo, who had a goodly contingent of Buchan men under his command. There is distinct evidence that the usual course of social and business life had been greatly upset in the district during the sojourn of Charles Stuart in Scotland; the Barony Court Book, which is really the official record of public life in Fraserburgh in early times, contains a minute in the year 1750 embodying the fact and suggestion that, as no stentmaster had held office since 1744, and as the Burgh cess had been lost three years, the Court should proceed to the appointment of a stentmaster, with the view of returning to the regular collection of the Burgh cess and petty customs.

The transactions recorded in the seventeenth century minute books of the Barony Court are mostly confined to the agricultural classes, and deal with the settlement of disputes, peat casting, and directions as to the meal mills and blacksmiths' shops which tenants had to patronize. There are some exceptions and a few of these minutes will be dealt with. The very first minute in the first Barony Court Book is dated 16th April, 1633, and is somewhat interesting; as, in addition to the amusing case of theft dealt with, the minute gives the names of the leading people in Fraserburgh and district at the date mentioned. The Court dignitaries were:—Baron Bailie, Alexr. Fraser of Kinbog; Clerk of Court, Wm. Ogstoun, Notar Publict; Officer, Gavin Scott; Dempster, Alexr. Dailgarno; while the "Assyiss" or jury who tried the criminals were as follows: Thos. Fraser, in Kinbog; Jas. Ga, in Bankwall; Alexr. Raittie, in Carnmure; Michael Taylor, in Bungzeatown [Mains of Philorth]; Alexr. Ga, in Kinglasser; Jas. Raittie, in Kinglasser; Adam Tailzeor, Gaschehill; Jon. Rany, Smyt; Andro Tailzeor, at ze Walkmill; Andro Leask, in Dowallye; Wm. Bruce, in Fraserburgh; And. Park, in Bungzeaton [Mains of Philorth]; Wm. Reid, ther, and Wm. Keithe, in Kinbog. The case is as follows: Issobell Reid, servant to Thos. Burnett, in Bungzeatoune, is charged by the Bailie with stealing from her master, and after evidence the Court "convictis ye said Issobell Reid for oppning of the said Thos. Burnett, her maister, his pantrie and houis durris with ane wrang key, steilling and away taking off his meill, lintt-yardis, cornis, and mye (more) geir, and giving of ye sam to . . . ye said Issobell to be scourgeit and banisheit. . . ." The Barony Court must have been a terror to evil-doers in these far back days; but it was the fashion at this time to punish the lower classes for any misdemeanour with altogether unnecessary severity. Horse-whipping and banishment from the district for such a trivial offence seem outrageous!

It would appear that in the seventeenth century ordinary people living in the North of Scotland carried swords, even when "wars alarms" did not call for the armed man. A case dealt with by the Barony Court on 16th July, 1644, proves this. The minute says, "Johne Darger . . . accusit for the hurtinge, wondinge, blood drawinge of Andrew Robertstone. . . Witness deponis that on the 14 of this month, about 11 o'clock 'he sawe the saidis

parties in hand grippis and at the grounde warslinge' (wrestling) 'and eft (after) ther rysinge upe again and sindringe' (separating) 'from ther mutuall grippis . . he sawe the said John Darger draw his sword and strick at the said Andrew Robertson yrwith' (therewith); 'the first straik skentit, but at the second straik he cuttit his heid, qrfra' (wherefrom) 'cam blood in abundanis, but he saw no blood giffin to the said Johne Darger, because the said Andrew Robertsons haid no wapone'" (weapon). The Court fined Darger £20, which was allocated as follows: "£16 to the laird for the wronge forsaid, and £4 to Andrew Robertsons." One is inclined to think that the poor man who received the injuries and not the laird, was entitled to the lion's share of the penalty. It is rather amusing, if not interesting, to find that all through the earliest minute books—which means the greater part of the seventeenth century—three-fourths of all the fines, no matter what the crime, were always voted by the Court to the laird. The latter had really to provide the machinery of the law, and preserve order within his lands, and no doubt the fines had been voted to him by way of recouping him to some extent, for his administrative outlays.

When Montrose was defeating the Covenanters all over the country, the people in the Fraserburgh district had not been idle spectators. How far they actively engaged in any of the battles will never be known, but that they prepared for service, the following minute, dated 22nd November, 1644, shows: "I. s. d. for the Barronye Alexr. Crawford, in Rathen; Alexr. Fraser, in Newmilne, of Arglassie; John Grant, in Ardmakron; Alexr. Fraser, younger, of Memsies; John Fraser, in Kinboige; John Grige, in Craighill; John Fraser, in Wast Tyrie, for his father; Alexr. Couper, in Tarwathie, and Wm. Blythe, in Ardlay, ar nominat appoyntit and sworne accordinge to ther knowlege for donne settinge and upgiffinge of sic personis namis within ye" (the) "said barronye and lands of Tyrie as sall be found fittest and abill to go one in servise upon the present secund leavie in the publict serrvice but respect of personis or partialite; and to doe the same with all diligenis, and to be secreit in the matter, and the stent to be the just half off first stent. . . . Ilk ane of the said barronye upone Tuesday next to meitt at the said Carmuir with ther best horss." The minute throws a lurid light upon the unfair way of administering justice, as it distinctly gives instructions to be strict with certain persons, and show partiality to others.

Another minute, dated a year later, shows that the Court and people were still absorbed in military affairs. The sack of Aberdeen by Montrose's troops in September, 1644, must have exasperated Presbyterians all over the North, and induced them to prepare to give the Highlanders a hot reception, if an opportunity to do so ever presented itself. It is well known that the desired chance never came, owing to Montrose's rout at Philiphaugh, in September, 1645. The minute about to be quoted, is interesting in so far as it shows how carefully military preparations were made in the Fraserburgh district nearly 270 years ago. The minute reads: "November 7, 1645. The number of such persones as ar nominat for Abdein conform to ye intima'nes maid out of

ye poupeit within the parochines" (parishes) "followinge . . . for ther awn ptes. under the laird of Philorth. In the first Kinglasser, four men and one horss, ilk man to have two grottis monie and ane peck of meil. Item, Bankwall, Kirktoone of Philorth, Mill yr of "(Mill Philorth)" and Hous of Hill, four men and ane horss; Item, Kinboge and Ardmacrone, four men and ane horss; Newmilne and Raithin, four men and ane horss; Memsies, four men and ane horss; Ardglassie and croftis of Raithin, four men and ane horss; Bonzetoun, four men and ane horss; the landis of Pettulies, sex men and two horss; the landis of Tyries and Cardno, sextein men and four horss; the toune of Fraserburgh, twelff men and thrie horss. Ilk man to heive a sexpenis and ane peck of meill, and two pounds Scots to be considerit for ilk man to be giffin to ye attendares that sall be nominat duringe the wark of Abe—in; all to be in Raidines" (readiness) "and meit ye morne Tuisday at Raithin sufficiently prowtydid with spaidis [spades], schoiles [shovels]. and currecks [panniers] for ye horsses; and ytsomever [whatsoever] persone contraveines ther chairge the law to strike againes them conforme to the severall publicanes furthe of the said pupeits By the punischment of ther persones at the heretoures will. The said day it is statint that qtsamever persone within the landis or parochines forsaid sall furnishe out ane horss or horsses conform ther neirest nichtboures qu [who] ar frie of the same to helpe the said horss warke p'portionallie ilk day as he sall be requyrit the tyme of his absence." Some sixty-two fighting men and sixteen horses were a good show for the Fraserburgh district, and well for Montrose's hirelings never to have met them! The lands of Tyrie and Cardno must have been very thickly populated in the seventeenth century, seeing that while Fraserburgh had to provide only twelve men, Tyrie and Cardno had to send forth sixteen fighters. It can be seen that the commissariat department was easily managed in 1645; probably the soldiers had to depend more on plunder than on regular supplies furnished by their leaders. The concluding part of the minute shows that the authorities had some real consideration for those whose horses had been called up. Neighbours who could spare a horse were called upon to help the horse work of those who were behind with the affairs of the farm, owing to the levy of horseflesh.

It may be pointed out that the spelling in these old minutes is most irregular. Sometimes a word is spelt one way and sometimes another. The Clerk of Court must, in this connection, have been a law unto himself. For variety, Buchan spelling in the old days would have been hard to beat. It is rather severe upon the researcher of the present day, for any standard Scotch dictionary is of no use for Buchan Scotch of 270 years ago. This is no reflection upon the dictionary!

It would appear that a number of soldiers had been quartered in the Fraserburgh district in the spring of 1647; for, at a Court held on "Merche" 2, 1647, an important action is heard at the instance of Alexr. Crawford, in Raithin, against Maister Alexr. Davidson [evidently a relation of the then minister of Rathen, as he is the only defender honoured with the title of "Maister"] Alexr.

Grige (probably an ancestor of Grieg, the great Norwegian composer), Wm. Gae, Georg Jaffay, Jas. Third, and Alexr. Shirrold, claiming their share of the expense of feeding and lodging the soldiers billeted in Rathen. The minute is especially interesting, as it gives the names of the commanders whose men were in Buchan at this time. The record gives the information in a quaint way, such as: "*Sir Patrick Mayie*, his men— 17 days," "*Mongomries* men, 5 days," "*Kircubries* men," "*My Lord Dahuises* men," "*Captain Agnew*, his men." The Civil War in England kept up the warlike excitement in Scotland and accounted for the coming and going of the soldiery in Buchan. Each faction was jealous and suspicious of the other, and even stolid Buchan shared the feeling. A meeting of the Court, held 25th June, 1647, admirably illustrates this. It runs as follows: "I. S. D it is paromptly statint ordenit yt [that] no persone nor persones, man or women, boy or maide, younge or old, in tyme cominge, till farder considerd, come within the groundis of this barrony in this *dangerous tym* sall recept [shelter], mentein [maintain], or entertein ony stranger, poor or ritche, traiveller, beggear, or ony wyer of our awne c'trey people come from any suspect part, without ane sufficient testimony first scheron to ye balzie of ye ground foresaid and minister of the parochie, under the paine of fortie pundis mol toties quoties to be payit by the traveniar to the heretour of ye ground by the punischment of ther persones at his and the said balzies pleasure."

Whether the people in the Fraserburgh district had been good Covenanters, or of the other party, the records give no indication. This is like canny Aberdeenshire—Say little and run no risks! There was great religious and political excitement and unrest in Scotland between 1647 and 1650, and it may be due to this that the Barony Court records are completely blank between the years named.

The first minute which appears after the blank of three years is worth reproducing. It is as follows: "April 19, 1650. (Clerk of Court, Wm. Stewart). Comperiat Geo. Smith in Memsie and ther was producit befor him sum woll qlk [which] was found under the theiking of his hous qn [when] the baillie dakerit [searched] the same, and the said George confessit the same to be veritie, and affirmit that Margt. Smith, his dochter, had put the same ther, and she being lawfullie warnit to this Court to answer for the same, and divers tymes callit failzeit [failed] to compeir, and therfor was declarit fugitive for theft, and ordaint to be taken qr eiver [wherever] sche may be found within the said baronie and put in ane prison and *markit with burning*, and banished out of the said baronie. And ordanit the said Geo. Smith to be removit furthe of the saidis landis with all expeditionn, and not to recid or *dwell therin under the paine of hanging*, or if any man recept [shelter] him within said baronie heirafter he sail be comptable [accountable] for all that he sall doe, and pay fourtie pundis for the recepting of him." The minute shows what a serious offence stealing was in the dark days of history, when it affected things agricultural. "Branded as a thief" is a most opprobrious epithet to hurl at any one in these days, but to be actually "market with burning"

[branded] for stealing a small quantity of wool, seems, in modern eyes, most savage punishment. If Margaret Smith's punishment was severe, that of her father was a hundred times worse. No doubt the father had been a party to the theft, but his treatment was most Spartan-like. Not only was the poor man cleared out of his holding, but if ever found there, he was to suffer the extreme penalty of the law, viz, hanging. This was almost as bad as "Jeddart Justice," and proved that "pot and gallows" law was practically in full swing in the district in 1650. The Barony Court Books show that wool stealing was a very common crime about this time. The *modus operandi* was this. After nightfall one neighbour, with the "capable" members of his family assisting him, went out to the fields and clipped or "plukit" all the wool off his neighbour's sheep, secreting the night's "harvest" at home. The animals might have had beautiful coats in the evening, but next morning, as if by a miracle, their fleecy covering had gone. So rampant became the evil that an enactment was made (*vide* Barony Court books) that no cotter or crofter in the district was permitted to be in possession of wool, unless he could produce shorn sheep belonging to himself, equal to the amount of wool in his possession. This was a very practical cure for the disease.

In connection with a minute dated 23rd November, 1666, as to the "bigging the minister's houses at Rathen," the interesting fact is disclosed that "there are 20 pleuchs [ploughs] in that parish belonging to the laird of Philorth." The laird had to take the initiative in most things in those days, and teaching his tenantry the art of husbandry was a real awakening of the countryside. The Frasers of Philorth have all along been pioneers in progress, and the one that lived in 1666 worthily upheld the traditions of the family.

In the Barony Court Book of date 14th December, 1670, the term "The Laird" is now changed to "My Lord," which is ever afterwards used. This is an important fact, and one worth recording.

The last minute in Volume II. of the Barony Court Books, dated 5th October, 1676, contains an "item of news" which is rather unique and amusing to people living at the present day. The minute is very short and reads: "George Wobster (and 4 others) fined be [by] the bailie for yr [their] absence frome ane buriall at Boundlie, ilk ane of them in ten poundes." It is well known that in the far back days Church discipline was most exacting; but it is not so well known that the civil authorities extended their jurisdiction as far as enabled them to deal with the attendance, or rather non-attendance, of persons at funerals. It is almost a pity the old powers in the matter of funeral attendance do not hold good to-day. If they did the coffers of the Magistrates' Court would soon be overflowing! It must be remembered that the "ten poundes" were ten pounds Scots, equal to 16s. 8d.

The town of Fraserburgh must have been of very limited extent at this date. In connection with the examination of persons desiring Church membership, a minute of the Kirk Session, dated 4th December, 1672, in dividing the town and parish for such examination, describes the former as follows:

“Shoregate; East-End of the Firthsyde; The Head of the Toune; North Syde of the Toune; About the Crosse; The Midgate; Broadsea and Suburbs . . .” It is interesting to note that Fraserburgh possessed a Cross and that Broadsea was in existence as far back as 1672.

The first minute of Court of any public interest in the volume commencing in 1746, is dated 6th April, 1749, and refers to an action by William Fraser, Lord Saltoun's factor who lived in Kirkton House, against one Alexander Will, merchant in Fraserburgh, craving decree for eleven pounds Scots as the year's rent of the Lodging Yard of Fraserburgh from Marts. 1747 to 1748. Will, in his defence, said that the rent was justly due, but the curious part of the case is that he craved compensation in respect of damages done, as the minute has it, “to some summer kail and parsnips which the defender alleges were rooted out of the ground and pulled up, to his prejudice, and altogether referred the loss and damage thereof to James Collie, gardener at Philorth, who was empowered by the Lady Saltoun to examine the said yard, and who best knew the defender's damages.” At next Court, held a couple of days later, the proceedings were reported as follows: “Colie, the gardener, being examined and interrogate on his great oath and being purged of malice, said there was a parcel of cabbage roots and widered winter kail which the defender's servant came out and pulled with her own hands. Besides this defender's wife got some shot carrots and turnips, which she sold to one Jane Ogston. On the whole, witness declared that defender was not skaithed of more than two shillings Scots.” As the result of witness's evidence, Will was found liable in the year's rent and two pounds Scots of expenses, minus two shillings Scots of damages. This minute shows that though the times were simple, there lived the litigious man, an individual (necessary for the lawyers, of course) peculiar to every age. The mantles of those who, with questionable taste, or rather sense, love law and lawyers, are handed down from generation to generation, but certainly our present-day lawyers would not grow fat on such a brief. The expenses allowed, amounted to 3s. 4d., and the damages deducted from the pursuer's account totalled the wonderful sum of twopence! But people were not satiated with money in those days. In this case the action was settled within three days, which shows that in some things the past can give an object lesson to the present generation.

At the Court held on 13th April, 1749, a matter is dealt with which shows that vagrancy must have been rampant at the time. The minute says: “There was given in a petition by the feuars, merchants, and others of the burgh and barony representing that whereas the town has been of late infested with a great number of vagrant people, some probably, and many without the least testimonial or evidence of their honesty or good character, who cannot give satisfaction anent the divers complaints that have been of late made against the great outbreaks of stealing peats, kail, etc., besides another complaint given in by the said feuars against the porters in order to get their dues regulate from the exorbitancy and imposition they have of late imposed

upon their employers that their dues ought to be regulate, that a certain number be ascertained and each person to find caution in a respectable trading man, and failing this that they will be expelled from the town and society, and their landlords prohibit from allowing them any residence in their houses, and the other vagrants, both male and female, who cannot attest themselves nor show sufficient living for their subsistence, will be publicly and infamously extraded, and their landlords amerciate in the towns and private families damages. The baillie found the desire reasonable, and ordered the porters to find the necessary caution to his satisfaction under the failzie [penalty] of ten pounds sterling for each man's fidelity, or go to prison till they obtain the same, because of the many outrages and disorderly practices that have been acted of late and a great while past." The baillie—one Alexander Ritchie, who, judging from the powers entrusted to him, must have been a man of outstanding importance in his day—certainly dealt with the porters in a drastic manner. One would have thought that if the men could not find cautioners, they would have been suspended, but instead of this, the baillie, unlike our impressionable and big-hearted magistrates of the present day, coolly and cold-bloodedly sent them to prison.

About this time the work of the Court, day after day, is taken up with the granting of licences to porters, and the minute brings out that as far back as 1749 the great business of the town then as now, was done at the harbour.

On 2nd November, 1749, the Barony Court meets to expose to roup for one year, the harbour shore dues, and the occasion is so important that not only the Barony Baillie, Alexander Ritchie, but the then Lord Saltoun himself attends the meeting, in addition to the ordinary members. Bids are received for three days, and on each succeeding day offerers can increase their bids, the highest bid on the third day securing the right to the dues for a year. Among the bidders were David Whyte, Richard Henderson, Alexander Harlaw, William Cruden—all merchants—and George Smith, a shipmaster in Fraserburgh, whose bid of 350 pounds Scots was accepted. Smith's cautioner was David Whyte, one of the competitors, so that there was evidently a "stand in" among those old worthies, the harbour officials hoodwinked, and the harbour robbed of its legitimate revenue. It is worthy of remark that the signatures of the shipmaster Smith and the David Whyte referred to, who both sign the minute of roup, are really excellent. Whyte's signature is a specially bold and striking one, and it is interesting to note that the name is spelt with a "y," which is characteristic of this district. The revenue of the harbour of Fraserburgh in 1749 was modest in the extreme. Three hundred and fifty pounds Scots would equal £29 3s. 4d. of English money at the present day. The duties of the Harbour Treasurer of Fraserburgh, or the Collector of Rates in 1749 could not have been very burdensome, but there is no doubt that like all public officials, he had the faculty of magnifying the importance of his office and the multifarious nature of his duties.

One can in imagination fancy he sees the collector of shore dues discharging his duties 160 odd years ago. His field of operations was confined to the upper

half of the North Pier. That was all the harbour Fraserburgh could boast of in 1749, and strange to say, this wonderful structure, as it was then considered, was finished in 1745—the year before Culloden. It must be remembered that the place was completely open to gales, which often dealt destruction to the big fleet of small craft that did the carrying and fishing trades of those days. It has often been wondered how shipping craft in these early times, exposed to the fury of our northern storms, were not always smashed to pieces. But it has been found by research that the shipping was so small before anything like a harbour was at Fraserburgh that when the weather portended a storm, all the people turned out and drew the craft up on the beach, beyond high water mark, just as do the fishermen of the present day at the villages of Cairnbulg, Inverallochy, and St. Combs. At the date spoken of, the south side of the Middle Jetty, which is now part of the south harbour, was a mass of rock, near which no vessel could come.

Sir Alexander Fraser built Kinnaird Head Tower, which is now Kinnaird Head Lighthouse. Kinnaird Head Tower was bought by the Commissioners of Northern Lights in the end of the eighteenth century, and it is interesting to find that Kinnaird Head was the first lighthouse property permanently owned by the now important public body known as the Commissioners of Northern Lights. This makes the building doubly interesting from a historic point of view. It is quite evident that the foundations of Fraserburgh were laid about the Braeheads or the “Garvitch.” It is natural that the first building should be in close proximity to the original pier, which, as has already been said, lay in the corner of Balaclava Harbour below the Baths. This is the reason for safely assuming that the north end of Shore Street and that part of the town formed the nucleus of Fraserburgh. Besides, there are different proofs in favour of this argument. The greater number of Fraserburgh and district people will be surprised and interested to learn that in the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of last century, the only Bank in Fraserburgh conducted its business in the house at the head of the North Pier, now known as the Oak Tree Inn. The Bank was on the upper floor, and access to the office was by a stone stair leading from Shore Street, up and down which the dignitaries of the town were privileged, or at least, expected to go. Who among the common crowd in those early days could have any dealings in a bank? An ordinary tradesman—poor man!—had no chance of an overdraft at the time spoken of, as money was scarce and dear. The herring had not yet come in their millions to tickle the speculative fancy of the enterprising inhabitants and raise up in Fraserburgh the modern Midas. That the whole banking business of Fraserburgh in the beginning of last century was infinitesimally small may be judged from the size of the safe, which, until recently, had a place below the little window on the first floor of the room in the Oak Tree looking on to the North Pier. The safe was about the size of a fairly large hat-box. Within these walls the financial downfall of some leading man or the good fortune of another had no doubt been discussed. Big schemes of public improvement

(big in their day), pregnant with all that was good for Fraserburgh, may have originated in solemn conclave inside the old Bank office. Verily, buildings, like individuals, are liable to strange vicissitudes! At the same time as the old Bank was in full swing, the Post Office was situated within a stonethrow of it. The Postmaster was a man named Lind, said to be a relative of Jenny Lind, the great vocalist, whose name will last so long as Lind's Brae remains. What was the Post Office still stands, with Lind's initials on it, almost immediately opposite the opening between the old and new lifeboat-houses. That the northmost part of Shore Street abutting the sea was the most important of Fraserburgh in the dark ages is proved by the Bank and Post Office both being there. Postmaster Lind, whose forbears came from Scandinavia, was a man of much intelligence, and greatly beloved and esteemed by the community. Of course, Fraserburgh was not ambitious at this time, and the people were not above having a Postmaster who eked out his income by selling sugar and tea, ale and whisky, men's and ladies' clothing, etc. etc. The old man prospered amazingly, and a good deal of property belonged to him in the vicinity of the Balaclava Inn, Lind's Brae, and farther northwards.

It was only the other year that an unspoken message of the past was received. While some workmen were digging out earth for improvement purposes, in the house where the Post Office was wont to stand, they threw up a number of French copper coins, dated about the end of the eighteenth century. One can understand French fishermen or sailors who had sought refuge in Fraserburgh, finding their way to the Post Office, and a picture can easily be drawn in imagination, of Old Lind behind his bales of cloth, trying to do business with the voluble Frenchmen. Another evidence of the importance of Shore Street was the fact that the only butcher's shop in Fraserburgh was situated where the store belonging to the Harbour Commissioners at the foot of Duke Brae now stands. If the population was limited in those days, the amount of meat eaten was still more limited. The present generation can scarcely believe that in the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, the eating of beef was a luxury confined to the better classes and sailors. Many of the forefathers of the present generation in Buchan at least, did not see beef from one week's end to another. Vegetables and fish, to an accompaniment of milk, was the staple food upon which grandfathers and great-grandfathers prospered and grew muscular. After this explanation, it can easily be seen that there was no need of more than one butcher's shop in Fraserburgh. The main part of the building which was only demolished some fifteen years ago by the Harbour Commissioners to make room for the present store, was occupied as the killing-house for nearly half a century after the butcher's shop had been removed to a more central and convenient part of the town.

Lads of the present day have no idea of the style of houses in Shore Street forty or fifty years ago. Of course, the earlier the more primitive were the buildings, but many in Fraserburgh can remember that the houses in Shore

Street, north of the Oak Tree Inn, were, with but one or two exceptions not higher in the walls than five or six feet, with roofs covered with a mixture of clay, mud, and straw. On entering these houses one had always to take a step down. To give increased height in the house the old people dug down. Whether this was done to save the cost of wall building or was the last vestige, of the barbarous forefathers who lived in caves and dug-outs, the learned people of to-day can judge.

Although Shore Street is not exactly a Grattan Place or a Strichen Road, it has undergone a great change for the better in recent years, and if old William Stephen, Massie the shoemaker, or Joseph Dalgarno were brought back to view it again, they would scarcely know their bearings, unless the last-mentioned managed to locate the brewery.

Before leaving Shore Street, another fact may be brought forward which strongly illustrates the great social improvements of the present day. About the middle of last century, and probably a little earlier, there were no fewer than twenty-seven public-houses on Shore Street, between the Garvitch and the World's End. Those were the days when spirits were practically duty-free, or at least when one could luxuriate in the pleasures, or horrors, of whisky at 1s. per bottle. Of course, the hostelrys spoken of, were not like the Saltoun or the Station Hotel, Fraserburgh. Some natives living now, will remember the style of the places in Shore Street. The keepers of these houses were almost all old women, generally widows, who sold the dram towards eking out an honest livelihood. Of course, licences were easily obtained, and there were no worries of the Licensing Courts and breaches of licences in these days to disturb the peace of these female vendors of spirits. The old wives were wont to complain bitterly about the poor overturn of business. One does not wonder at this. When their customers could get hilarious upon sixpence, there was no encouragement to the enterprising man here! The times were so hard that in mostly all the houses there appeared hung upon the walls, in large letters, the sagacious but rather personal motto, "Cash to-day and tick to-morrow." The man who originated the line must have been a financier of the first water.

Coming back to the Barony Court Book, the minute of a Court held on 8th February, 1751, contains a very curious and amusing case. The minute says:—"The said day there was a complaint given in to the said baillie, at the instance of Alexander Kirkaldy, shipmaster, in Kinghorn, with concurrence of the said procurator-fiscal, against William Chrystie, butcher in Fraserburgh, mentioning that when the defender, shaking off all regard of the laws of the land, sold and disposed, upon the oath of those present, three legs of grottey and leiper pork, pretending at the time of the agreement the same was free and quite safe without any such fault, but no sooner did your complainer carry the same on board his ship and paid the price, than it plainly appeared that the said pork was quite full of the faults above mentioned, and not 'famous' (that word stands for 'fit') to be sold; that the law requires such dealers of the leiper pork not only to be punished but also the meat so affected to be confiscated

(spelt confiscated), burnt, or distributed to the poor, and the defender being guilty of the crime, ought to be punished as a great symbol of the said pork being presented in face of the Court, where the veracity of the matter plainly appeared to the ocular inspection of many persons. May it therefore please you to take the merits of the case to your serious consideration, and to ordain the defender, William Chrystie, not only to take back the foresaid three legs of leiper pork, but also to return and repay the sum of four pounds and four shillings Scots money as the price paid down for the foresaid pork. Besides to amersheat him at discretion to be a terror to others."

The mate and a seaman on board of Captain Kirkaldy's ship gave evidence in support of the complaint, whereupon "The baillie having considered the foregoing libel, with the production of the two pieces of pork in the Court which, being a part of the three legs libelled which were found to be full of leiper grotts and none of it famous (fit) for being disposed to sell, and in regard the same is contrary to this and quite discouraging to the inhabitants of the place, as well as strangers, therefore the baillie amersheats and fines the said William Chrystie in the sum of five shillings sterling for the crimes libelled, and ordains the said William Chrystie instantly to repeat and pay back the said four pounds four shillings Scots to the complainer, or continue in prison till the same be paid, and ordains the two pieces of the pork lying in Court immediately to be confiscated and distributed to the poor of the place by the officers."

Some parts of this minute wax quite eloquent, and the language used sounds strange in present-day ears. One can picture, in imagination, the two pieces of tainted pork being brought into Court for the information and inspection of the baillie and the Court officials. The room in the old Tolbooth, it is well known, was a very small one, and it is most probable that the aroma from the decaying pork was not a delectable treat to the Clerk of Court. His "ocular inspection" of the meat must have inspired him to put his feelings into such free and flowing language as the minute contains. This phase of the matter is interesting, but the great humour of the case is the wonderful order of the Court—that diseased pork, unfit to be eaten by seamen or for human food generally, should be given to the poor. This is perfectly delightful! The poor nowadays do not revel in the lap of luxury certainly, but they are considered human beings.

The butcher, William Chrystie, who sold the diseased pork to the Kinghorn shipmaster, must have been a bad lot, for in the minute, only a few days after the last case was disposed of, his name is again before the Court, this time, as the book says, "for threatening to rip up his wife." He was committed to the Tolbooth, but after a short imprisonment, as he could not produce a respectable cautioner, he was set at liberty on his own security. The minute wound up with the following sage remark: "His application of guaratory caution accepted, as he could find no better than his own security, those whom he offered being as insolvent as himself." The Chrystie referred to, who tormented the powers that were 162 years ago, must have been one of the "orra" butchers

of his day, having no regular shop, but doing the butchers' business at one time, and the "horse couper," cattle dealer, or stealer at another.

The Burgh Barony Court must have had a very miscellaneous sort of business to transact, because the next case of importance dealt with is that of a fisherman from Broadsea, who was before the Court for deserting his boat and crew. The case throws some light upon the curious business arrangement prevailing among local fishermen 160 years ago. The minute runs as follows: "Whereas James Milne, seaman, in Broadsea, having taken flight without any disobligement, cause or occasion to elope, run off, and desert his duty, a boated man in the said seatown, thereby not only throwing a boat waste, but otherwise giving an evil example to others to commit the like practices, and in regard he was reclaimed and brought back, and after a due sense of his wicked design, craved his father, Andrew Mill, seaman in the seatown, to stand bail and bondsman for him under the falzie (penalty) of one hundred pounds Scots that he shall never commit the like practices, nor make any future elopement or breach of services in time coming." By the minute which follows, Andrew Mill, the father, undertakes to guarantee his son's future good behaviour. The word "elopement" occurs very often in the minute, and one is interested to note how the application of that word has changed since 1753.

The next important criminal case dealt with by the Court (in 1760) also came from Broadsea. The minute ran as follows: "Whereas upon an information given into James Gordon of Techmuiry that Alexander Mc. Beth son of Alexander Mc. Beth, carrier, was so indisposed by being beat and bruised by Alexander Noble, son to Alexander Noble, elder, in Broadsea, and as he was in the utmost danger of his life, that Techmuiry would grant a warrant of committment to George Rennie, constable, to apprehend the person of the said Alexander Noble, younger, within the Tolbooth of Fraserburgh, and detain him there aye and until he was liberate in course of law, recommending the constable to charge the baillie of Fraserburgh and keeper of the prison house there to receive the said prisoner." The minute enters into a number of details among which is an undertaking, given by the father, that in the event of the death of the lad Mc. Beth, young Noble would be forthcoming for punishment. Evidently no fatal or serious results had followed as the case is not again referred to in the minute book.

Some old town's papers which were discovered revealed interesting facts about certain curious customs that formed part of the regulations or conditions affecting the conduct of fishing operations in the old days. It was always understood that when crews were arranged, that each fisherman brought his part of the sail or other furnishing of a boat with him. Whatever items were brought, were returned at the end of the season. The sail, lines, etc., run a great risk of being destroyed or lost, and, no doubt, the settling up at the end of a fishing was not always of the most harmonious kind. Again, at a fishing which was called "the great-line shots," a term now completely obsolete, but which, it is understood, stands for "the shooting of the great-line," or more

simply "great-line fishing," each boat's crew had their own particular area at sea set apart, wherein they cast their lines, and no other crew would have thought of intruding upon their neighbours' ground.

The old Barony Court Book, which contains much far-back records of public business done in Fraserburgh, was commenced in 1748 and closed in 1765. Alexander Ritchie, who must have been a man of outstanding importance, was baillie throughout the whole period, and he signs the first and last minutes written into the book. During the life of the book two Lord Saltouns occupied Philorth. The signatures of both are frequently appended to minutes. The Lord Saltoun who held the title when the book opened, was the Right Honourable Alexander Fraser, while the one who lived when the book closed in 1765, was the Right Honourable George Lord Saltoun. It is interesting to note the names of the civic rulers of Fraserburgh in 1762. Their names are as follows:—Alexander Ritchie (Baillie), and Councillors William Urquhart, Richard Henderson, Alexander Harlaw, David Whyte, Andrew Ritchie, Patrick Urquhart, James Brown, Thomas Shirras, Alexander Smith, Dr. Findlay, J. Forrest, shipmaster; Alexander Robertson, merchant; Thomas Kilgour, merchant; William Mitchell, merchant; and William Craik, shipmaster. One likes to compare the names of people in the town 150 years ago with those of to-day. With the exception of Harlaw, Forrest, and Kilgour, all the names in the above list have abundant representatives in the town at the present day.

Among the first matters dealt with in the old book is the question of dealing with vagrants and beggars, etc. Strange to say, the same matter is agitating the minds of the legislators of Fraserburgh at the end of this book. One of the last minutes in the volume refers to a declaration made by the Kirk Session on the question of suppressing vagrancy and beggary in the town and parish. One paragraph from a very long minute on the subject will be sufficient to show the troubles that afflicted the just in those days when trampdom and beggardom were powers in the country. The paragraph is as follows: "Certified by proper testimonials and regular Blaisens given out by the said Kirk Session whereby the charity bestowed on the said vagrants will be better applied and augmented to the needy poor of the town parish, and if any of the said beggars shall afterwards be found begging within the said town in direct contempt of the Session's resolutions and this present Act of Council corroborating the same, warrants shall be granted for incarcerating these persons for a certain time, that the town be not infested by such as commonly go under the name of cairds, randies, and sturdy beggars, or even by any poor but their own," etc. This sounds amusing in the ears of the present generation, but before Poor Laws were introduced, or systematic provision made for the poor, the country was infested by a horde of beggars, many of them simple, half-witted creatures, but others blackguards, well deserving of the names applied to them in the minute. It is amusing to notice that the Kirk Session, always strong on giving, advises, no doubt in a spirit of charity, the people to give to the poor of their own parish, whether "cairds, randies, sturdy beggars," or not.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century the public exchequer of Fraserburgh must have been at a very low ebb. This was in keeping with things in general at a time when agricultural affairs were in their infancy, and when the whole trade of the country was in a languishing condition. In the beginning of 1781 the municipal rulers of Fraserburgh were struggling to collect money with which to finish the "Shore House." This building was placed at the harbour and was used for the storage of goods, shipped and unshipped at the port. The authorities had managed to build the walls and put a roof on the building, but the exhaustion of their resources had made further progress impossible. These ancient fathers were modest men, and did not exalt themselves nor think that though public dignitaries, they might not be very practicable and modest in their methods of raising money for the public weal. The councillors hit upon a very original way of replenishing the public purse, with the view of effecting the completion of the "Shore House." A minute of the Town Council of date 16th March, 1781, has the following: "The baillie and Council being met to settle proper regulations for the races, etc. intended and formerly advertised to be at the ensuing March Market, and to give directions for further advancing the finishing of the 'Shore House,' came to the following resolutions, viz.:— That a saddle should be given to the owner of the horse winning the best of three heats; to set off from a stoop fixed on the Gallow Hill, run down the road by the school, and from thence round by John Camine, the posts to the same stoop for each heat. That none but Buchan-bred horses shall run, and not less than three horses admitted to start. That an ornamented bonnet shall be run for round the same course by men; one heat—none but Buchan men to run, and not less than three permitted to start. That a fine silk handkerchief be run for by women round the same course; one heat—not less than three women start. That the above articles be provided by Doctor Findlay, whose account the treasurer of the harbour stock is to pay, and who is hereby appointed judge of the races. That a tent be erected for the baillie and Council upon the Market Ground, provided with strong ale, whisky, and oven cakes, in which every person who buys or sells cattle or horses of any kind, or who is judged by any of the Council to promote the interests of the market in any eminent way, shall be served with a chappin ale, a dram, and an oven quarter of bread." The prize list is certainly a modest one, but the needs of the people were modest in those days, and no doubt a good field of competitors was drawn together, not so much for the capturing of £. s. d., as for the pure love of sport. The minute gives an interesting peep into the management of sport, in a remote corner of Scotland, 124 years ago. Whether the bait offered of "a chappin ale," a dram, and "an oven quarter of bread" was the means of crowning the market and games with financial success, succeeding records do not tell. Of course, whisky and ale were very cheap in those days, and the bribe appears, in modern eyes much bigger than it really was.

At a time when the erection of the works of the new Consolidated Pneumatic Tool Company, Limited, at Fraserburgh has practically shut up the



Photo by Norrie, Fraserburgh.

THE OLD KETHOCK BRIDGE, FRASERBURGH, RECENTLY DEMOLISHED.

old Cairnbulg Road, along which the fishermen and women of the villages of Cairnbulg, Inverallochy, and St. Combs have come to and gone from Fraserburgh for over 120 years back, it is interesting to note that the road was formed in 1786. The minute bearing on the subject is dated 9th June, 1786, and is as follows: "And how soon the committee of the district of Deer meeting have fixed upon the road to be made in the Links from Fraserburgh to the March at Kirkton of Philorth, the said committee are to oversee the work of the said road, and to take their direction from the Council what sort of bridge may be necessary on the Kettack, and, if necessary, to employ Sergeant Riddle as an overseer for the work, and pay him for so doing." Some people have recently hazarded the opinion that it was questionable if there was any right-of-way over the ground referred to. One can scarcely believe an opinion of this kind possible of expression in Fraserburgh, but if there were any doubts on the subject the foregoing minute sets the matter at rest. It shows that not only was there a right-of-way, but actually a road made and paid for by the people of Fraserburgh. The road for many years was a public road over which much traffic went. The road until recently was open as far as the Kethock, but it has now been practically closed.

Much was heard in Fraserburgh some years ago about the contract of 1787, which superseded that of 1613, and which was executed between the feuars of Fraserburgh and Alexander Lord Saltoun in the year first named. The Town Council records are at this period—1787—full of correspondence between his lordship and the feuars on the subject, and reading between the lines, one can see that feeling ran very high at times during the negotiations. In giving up certain rights under the old contract, the feuars made some compensatory demands, which seem to have excited his lordship very greatly, and incurred his dire displeasure. Some very sharp passages of arms took place between his lordship and the feuars in consequence.

As an example of the virility of the Superior of 1787, the following extract from one of his letters dated May 7, 1787, is sufficient. "I must observe that from the tenor of your letter of proposals you certainly have either considered me set upon an agreement with you to the blind extent of a fool's desire, or must overvalue those points which you propose to yield up, and undervalue those which you demand, exceeding therein the predeliction, the covetousness, and even the griping avidity of the miser to his hoard, or the degrading opinion of a pawnbroker on the property proposed to be left in his clutches."

The person who, evidently, first approached the Superior on the subject of a readjustment of the contract of 1613, was a Mr. Alexander Hacket, merchant, Fraserburgh, who afterwards became a famous figure in Edinburgh as the last outstanding and publicly conspicuous Jacobite who lived in Scotland. The memory of such a remarkable Fraserburgh character must not be allowed to fade into oblivion, and some particulars about him should prove interesting, not only to natives of the town, but to people all over the country. Notwithstanding that a hundred years have elapsed since Hacket lived in Fraserburgh, some lore

about him, which has been handed down from generation to generation, can still be gleaned among the older people of the town. He carried on business as a general merchant in the property in Cross Street on which the late Mr. James Thomson, baker, raised such a handsome pile of buildings. It is understood that he came from the Parish of Lonmay, and, it is believed, though he spelt his name differently, that he was a relation of the unfortunate George Halkett, the Rathen schoolmaster and Jacobite poet, who wrote the beautiful song or ballad, "Logie o' Buchan."

Alexander Hacket sold tea and sugar, hats and boots, whisky and clothing, etc. etc, in fact, was an old school Whiteley in a very modest way. Customers were not allowed inside his shop, probably because of his big stock and limited accommodation. The shop windows were exceedingly small, and the door was divided into an upper and lower half. The lower portion was always kept securely barred, and persons had to stand on the pathway and do their business there, all purchases made being handed out at the open upper half of the door. Not many years have elapsed since there disappeared the little hook at the shop door in Cross Street to which the horses of customers on horseback were attached, during the time the people purchased a suit of home spun, or indulged in a mutchkin of whisky.

Hacket was a dignified and rather handsome man, and being, as already indicated, an out-and-out Jacobite, could not tolerate the notion of the masses having an ambition to better their condition, with the view of coming a little nearer to the level of their superiors. The effects of the French Revolution were felt even in the wilds of Buchan, and near the close of the eighteenth century there was visible among the people, the first indications of a feeling that their social condition was not what it should be. The laudable desire of the poorer classes to improve their surroundings and assume a better class of clothing was rank heresy in the eyes of Mr. Hacket, and if any poor looking individual demanded a hat or clothing superior to that offered, the irate shopkeeper would refuse point blank to give him such, and would declare that the articles offered were quite good enough for one in the position of life of the proposed purchaser. "At any rate," he would add, "if you do not take what I think suitable for you, you will have none other."

Like many of the old Jacobites, Mr. Hacket had a great penchant for smuggling, and, in his opinion, the rigorous measures taken in his day to prevent it, were solely due to the hated House of Hanover, against which he was continually railing. Hacket freely indulged in smuggling for many years, and it is likely that his means were materially added to, through carrying on this nefarious traffic. It appears that the gin, brandy and other excisable goods imported duty free by Hacket, were landed about the Loch of Strathbeg and secreted in the woods of Cairness or Crimonmogate, until a favourable opportunity presented itself for having them conveyed in safety to Fraserburgh. It is probable that Mr. Hacket had been interested in the cargo of the vessel referred to in the following paragraph, which appeared in the *Aberdeen Journal*

of 16th September 1782: "On Saturday was brought in here" (Aberdeen) "a sloop belonging to Fraserburgh, Stewart Master, with 170 ankers of spirits and 6 matts of tobacco on board. She was taken off Colleston on Friday by the boat belonging to Captain Brown of the revenue yacht." The vessel had evidently been making for the recognized landing place, a short distance north of Rattray Head, when she was captured. Hacket was caught at last, or at least implicated in a serious smuggling case, for which he was mulcted in a heavy penalty. The penalty took the shape of a royalty on his Cross Street property, which was payable annually to the Kirk Session at Crimond. This payment was made yearly by all the subsequent owners of the property, until the time of the late proprietor, who, a few years ago, and after considerable legal trouble, managed to get the royalty remitted.

The Jacobite proclivities which Hacket was continually parading before his fellow townsmen, became irritating. A great change had taken place in the political opinions of the community in the fifty years that followed Culloden, and the steps taken by the then Town Council to punish Hacket for his intolerable partisanship, had a grim humour about them which the present generation even can appreciate. The name of the street running west directly opposite Hacket's shop, was named Puddle Street, not a very high certificate of character to a street which to this day stands rather low in public estimation. The Council changed the name from Puddle to Hanover Street, and painted the new creation in strikingly large letters. The hated name was the first thing that Hacket saw in the morning and the last at night. The outrage upon his feelings was more than he could bear, and as soon as circumstances would permit, he sold everything he possessed in Fraserburgh, left the town, and took up his abode for good in Edinburgh. He would never acknowledge the House of Hanover, and in Edinburgh, with all its Stuart traditions and associations, he had a field wherein he could give full rein to his feelings of veneration and reverence for the dynasty that had for ever been shattered to pieces.

In order to be near the historic scenes of old, Mr. Hacket took up his abode in the old towns and lived in a shabby genteel house, near Holyrood, which had once been a grand town house of some of the noblemen who were attached to the court when the Stuarts occupied the Royal Palace. Mr. Hacket only occupied part of the tenement, and that as a lodger, but nevertheless, his means enabled him to afford the necessary repairs on a rather tumble down place, and he lived in comparative comfort. One of his rooms was cased round with white painted panelling in imitation of the grand old style, and in his apartment were hung pictures of the later race of Stuarts, prominent among them being the old and the young Chevalier. The windows of his room looked out on one hand upon the cloistered portions of Chessel's Court, and on the other on the grey turrets and spires of deeply honoured and revered Holyrood.

Invariably dressed in clothes of antique and striking appearance, he became a well-known and remarkable figure on the streets of Edinburgh. He insisted

on perpetuating the fashions of a bygone age, and on Sundays and holidays he donned a sort of Court dress, and with a cane worthy of a pedant, he walked with more than ordinary stateliness and importance. On all occasions of importance he assumed this garb, particularly so on a certain day in each year, when he made a State visit to Holyrood, to do honour to the memory of his beloved Stuarts. The late Robert Chambers, LL.D., wrote a most interesting short sketch on this very remarkable and eccentric man, from which much of the description of Hacket's life in Edinburgh is taken. Dr. Chambers gives an excellent description of how Hacket used to do a pilgrimage to Holyrood as follows:—

“On the morning of the particular day on which he was thus wont to keep holy, he always dressed himself with extreme care, got his hair put into order by a professional hand, and after breakfast walked out of doors with deliberate steps and a solemn mind. His march down the Canongate was performed with all the decorum which might have attended one of the State processions of a former day. He did not walk upon the pavement by the side of the way. That would have brought him into contact with the modern existing world, the rude touch of which might have brushed from his coat the dust and sanctitude of years. He assumed the centre of the street, where, in the desolation which had overtaken the place, he ran no risk of being jostled by either carriage or foot-passenger, and where the play of his thoughts and the play of his cane-arm alike got ample scope. There, wrapped up in his own pensive reflections, perhaps imagining himself one in a Court pageant, he walked along, under the lofty shadows of the Canongate, a wreck of yesterday floating down the stream of to-day, and almost in himself a procession.

“On entering the porch of the Palace he took off his hat; then, pacing along the quadrangle, he ascended the staircase of the Hamilton apartments, and entered Queen Mary's chambers. Had the beauteous Queen still kept Court there, and still been sitting upon her throne to receive the homage of mankind, Mr. Hacket could not have entered with more awe-struck solemnity of deportment, or a mind more alive to the nature of the scene. When he had gone over the whole of the various rooms, and also traversed in mind the whole of the recollections which they are calculated to excite, he retired to the picture gallery, and there endeavoured to recall, in the same manner, the more recent glories of the Court of Prince Charles. To have seen the amiable old enthusiast sitting in that long and lofty hall, gazing alternately upon vacant space and the portraits which hang upon the walls, and to all appearance absorbed beyond recall in the contemplation of the scene, one would have supposed him to be fascinated to the spot, and that he conceived it possible, by devout wishes, long and fixedly entertained, to annul the interval of time, and reproduce upon that floor the glories which once pervaded it, but which had so long passed away. After a day of pure and most ideal enjoyment, he used to retire to his own house, in a state of mind approaching, as near as may be possible on this earth, to perfect beatitude.”

As might be expected, this sentimental idealist and self-appointed representative of the Stuart line was a rigid Episcopalian, and belonged to what then was called the primitive Apostolical Church, which lent all its weight and influence to the Stuart cause, the disastrous collapse of which is too well known to call for detail. The chapel in which the fragment of people adhering to the old tenets, worshipped, was situated in an obscure part of the old town. The congregation was a mere handful, and naturally Hacket was an outstanding figure among them. On account of the anti-Catholic and anti-Episcopalian feeling in the country, few people during the service ventured to pronounce the responses aloud. Not so the bold Hacket. He responded in a loud tone of voice, and while the liturgy was gone through he assumed a most pious attitude, which was more impressive by his practice of out-stretching one arm at full length, in devotional appeal, as it were. The eccentricity of his character may be judged from the fact that at one part of the service he showed absolutely no reverence. He would never join in the prayer for the King, and when this part of the service was reached, he indulged in loudly blowing his nose, as a mark of his contempt for the House of Hanover. In order that the name might not offend his eye or his feelings, he always used a prayer-book that had been in use before the Revolution, in which the prayers offered up were for King Charles, the Duke of York, and Princess Anne. He was most intimately acquainted with all the Episcopal Church forms of worship, and was very punctilious in regard to their observance. He was a recognized leader in the church in this respect, and his rising up and sitting down was the signal for all the other members of the congregation to follow his example.

As already indicated, he was very finical about dress, and, being a lonely bachelor, occasionally became very hypochondriacal in regard to his state of health. It appears that towards the later years of his life some of his friends, of a jocular turn of mind, could make him believe that he was on the point of death, when there was really nothing the matter with him. He lived in his own little world, typical of a past age, to the end. This antique figure passed away 1825, at a ripe old age. With his last breath he declined to acknowledge the House of Hanover, and thus fell to Fraserburgh the privilege of claiming as a son, "The Last of the Jacobites."

The records of the Barony Court of Fraserburgh, between the years 1766 and 1788 both inclusive, seem to have been lost or destroyed. Although these 22 years are blank, there is nothing known in the local history of the town at the time that would have prevented the usual meetings of the court being held, and there is no doubt but that the book representing the period named, had inadvertently been lost sight of, and probably been unconsciously destroyed, as books and important documents often are. One of the Barony Court's books commencing in 1789 and closing in 1803, contains nothing but proceedings connected with the fishermen of Broadsea, which was always designated "the sea-town." The authorities had a great deal of trouble with the villagers, who evidently were not the quiet, respectable race of fishermen who hail from Broad-

sea at the present day. It appears that on all the fish landed in Broadsea, a due or tax of one-sixth of each boat's catch had to be paid by the fishermen. These dues were let by the Superior to a tacksman yearly, who as it appears from the minute, had much difficulty with the fishermen. The men tried in every way to evade the tax on their fish, and in order to punish the tacksman, punished themselves by staying ashore or only prosecuting the fishing in a half-hearted manner. There is evidence that the tacksman invariably supplied the boats and put crews into them, these crews being obliged to remain in particular boats as domestic servants, etc., do in their situations at the present day for a fixed term. The fishermen seem to have been continually leaving their boats, as the business of the court is much taken up with cases of the kind. A John Cumine, who was tacksman in 1789, has a long list of deserters before the court, among the names cited being, as the minute has it: "Andrew Noble (Cooper), Andrew Noble (Noblie), James Noble (Gunner), and William Noble (Bonnie Willie's son), all foremen in the said Seatown of Broadsea, who went to the Barrahead fishing last summer, and who were bound to pay the tacksman half of the dues that the boated men did who were absent." This part of the minute is interesting, and is quoted to show that the fishermen of 1789 went as far afield as Barrahead in search of the spoils of the ocean. This was enterprise, indeed, seeing that the fishing boats of that day were mere cockle-shells, and compares favourably with the best efforts of the fishermen of the present period.

The list of able-bodied capable fishermen fit for the manning of boats in the Seatown at this time (1789) totalled 42. There were 7 boats belonging to the place, each boat being manned by 6 men, one of whom was designated skipper, another foreman, and the remaining four being known as "boated men." Of the 42 fishermen living in Broadsea toward the close of the eighteenth century, the excessive proportion of those bearing the name of "Noble" is striking. The list of 42 is made up as follows: 29 Nobles, 5 Watts, 3 Crawfords, 2 Taylors, 1 Stephen, 1 Lessles, and 1 M'Leman.

The tacksman who held the dues immediately after John Cumine, was one John Milne who, judging by the complaints he made of the fishermen's behaviour, must have been a pretty severe taskmaster, and an unusually keen man of business. This John Milne, who was a farmer at Broadsea, it will be interesting to note, was the father of the late Milnes of Muirton, Memsie, as also that of Mr Simon Milne, harbourmaster at Fraserburgh about the middle of last century. This family was noted for its extraordinary physical strength; in proof of this it may be mentioned that one of the sons, named George, somewhere about the close of the first quarter of last century, swam out to a French vessel lying in distress near Fraserburgh harbour entrance during a hurricane, and having effected rope connection with the shore, was the means of saving the lives of several of the crew, besides a woman and child who were on board. Another son, William Milne, who died at Muirton, once fought a fair and square fight with Molyneaux, the famous professional pugilist of his day, and beat him. The victory, which was due to sheer strength and stamina, was hailed with great acclamation in the north.

On the 1st of December, 1789, the Court is taken up with a complaint of Milne's, bearing upon the unsatisfactory way the Broadsea fishermen were carrying out their contract. The minute is rather long, but the minuteness with which it enters into the tacksman's grievances makes it amusing and interesting, and worth producing. The minute is as follows: "Whereupon compeared the said John Milne, tacksman of the said fishing boats of Broadsea, and gave in a complaint against sundry of the fishermen of Broadsea, setting forth that he gets no share of the foremen's fish, though he is entitled to a sixth part thereof, as he also is to an equal share of each boated man's fish, and craving that it be enacted that when the boats come ashore from the fishing that none of the fish be carried from the shore by boys, or any other persons until such time as they are divided. That it has sometimes been customary for some of the fishermen when they go to the fishing to carry out guns with them and frequently kill sea fowl, whereby the fishing is neglected, not only to the prejudice of the tacksman, but also to the hurt of the other fishermen in such boat or boats who have no guns, and the tacksman further represents that it has been a practice of sundry fishermen to leave cods, staiks, tusks, flounders, or other fish upon their lines in purpose to defraud the tacksman of his share thereof. The said John Milne also represented that he gets no share of the lobsters taken among the rocks called hole lobsters, and on that account part of the lobsters taken in the nets are often called hole lobsters, in order to defraud the tacksman of his dues... That sundry of the boys have made it a practice to go and fish in yawls from the nether-shore of Fraserburgh and give the tacksman no part of the fish so taken. In particular Walter Crawford, although at his own complaint and desire the tacksman provided a new yawl and berthed him therein as one of the hands, yet for three months after he went every day that the boat could go to sea and fished from the shore of Fraserburgh; that he also caught 294½ lobsters, for which he received two pounds nine shillings and one penny sterling; that the tacksman demanded his share thereof, being 9s. 8d., but which he refused to pay. That when the dog fishing came on, the said Walter Crawford came back to his yawl without speaking a word about it. That Andrew Noble ("Tamie") and crew were about nineteen lawful days after the complainer's entry, with their big boat, selling their fish, and brought coals to Peterhead, as was Andrew Taylor and crew, and brought coals to Fraserburgh, and the said John Milne claims three pence sterling per day for each man then so absent from the fishing."

The foregoing minute clearly illuminates the primitive ways in which fishing operations were carried on 120 odd years ago. The fishermen, as already noted, appear by this minute to have been little more than hired servants, and one can sympathize with them in their faint efforts at modest smuggling. The more fish the boated men and foremen could get smuggled ashore unknown to the tacksman, the greater would be the poor fishermen's profit, and one can therefore imagine how the boys would surreptitiously remove fish from the boat and steal along the shore to favourite hiding places, where the fish could lie

until a favourable opportunity presented itself for having them removed to the fishermen's houses in the village. The complaint as to the shooting of sea birds is quite comical, and seems a far-fetched grievance against the fishermen. In those days it must have been all work and no play for poor Jack, when complaint was made about such a simple affair as the shooting of a few sea birds. How solicitous the tacksman was for the interests of the other fishermen when he reported that it "was to the hurt of the other fishermen in such boat or boats who have no guns"! Well, this was a very generous remark, but one can fancy in whose interest it was really made. That the fishermen should leave cod, staiks, tusks, and flounders on their lines to cheat the tacksman of his dues on them, appears strange to the present generation, but it must be remembered that in 1789 the trawlers had not denuded the Moray Firth of fish, and that all kinds of fish were so abundant as to be of comparatively little value. There were no railways or even decent roads in those days to permit of the fish being distributed over the inland parts of the country, so that the markets were confined to the villages along the coast. It is a notorious fact that in the more inland parts of Scotland, in the eighteenth century, sea fish were practically an unknown quantity to the greater part of the population. The staple articles of diet then were kail, turnips, potatoes, and oatmeal brose. The supply practically always exceeded the demand, so that the fish became of little and sometimes of no value whatever. The minute of complaint proves this, for 294½ lobsters caught by Walter Crawford only realized £2 9s. 2d., or 2d. a-piece. What a golden age for lovers of the lobster!

It was an old story in this district long ago that the dog fishing was wont to be prosecuted regularly from these shores annually, but the statement is beginning to be looked upon by the present generation as a myth or a legend. It is very interesting to find that the minute last referred to, thanks to the tacksman's complaint, establishes the fact of the dog fishing beyond the shadow of a doubt. Those were the days when the electric light, gas, or paraffin had not been heard of, and when even a tallow candle was considered a luxury. For illuminating purposes the lamp used was known by the name of the "Eelie Dolly." It was an iron vessel with double shells, and was a thing of most primitive shape and manufacture. A common "rash" or rush peeled, served as a wick, while the oil used was that extracted from the dog-fish. Burning the midnight oil in those days was a caution, seeing that the lamp always gave a modicum of light but an excess of smell, before which the odours of a herring-offal factory would have been immediately overwhelmed and utterly annihilated. Not only was the dog-fish important for the purposes of oil extraction, but it was also esteemed a very valuable fertilizer or manure, and was in great demand by the farmers for a radius of many miles round. It is a curious fact that so long as the dog-fish remained on this coast, the herring fishing continued a failure.

A list of the Broadsea fishermen given at the close of 1789, some 120 years ago shows that the total number had increased to 48 men. The most interest-



Photo by Norrie, Fraserburgh.

THE VILLAGE OF BROADSEA, KNOWN IN THE OLDEN DAYS AS THE SEATOWN.

ing feature about the list, is the fact that the same tee name has been handed down from generation to generation. Indeed, the list of 1789 might well represent the villagers of the present day. Here are a few of the old veterans whose representatives are still about the town, and who will be readily recognized as follows: Andrew Noble ("Skipper"), Alexander Noble ("Shankie"), Andrew Noble ("Nobilie"), Andrew Noble ("Bobin"), Andrew Noble ("Bengie"), John Noble ("Bangie"), William Noble ("Rockie"), William Noble ("Skipper"), Andrew Noble ("Onzie"), William Noble ("Elder"), William Stephen ("Rossie"), and John Watt ("Greeshie"). The list has a very up-to-date sound about it, and proves that heredity in distinguished names obtains as strongly among the humble fisher folks of Broadsea as among the aristocratic and noble of the land. And as to Nobles, where can Broadsea be beaten? In 1802 Mr. Milne, the tacksman of the Broadsea fishings, has again a long complaint before the Court concerning the non-payment to him by the fishermen of his share of their catches. The minute discloses an interesting fact, viz: That the fishermen had to give so many fish weekly, which was known as teind fish. These fish were what the fishermen had to contribute towards the minister's stipend; but the Broadsea men must have been a graceless lot in those days, for they systematically evaded contributing their teind fish, and Mr. Milne complains in his petition that "He has to pay it regularly each half year in the name of the minister's stipend along with the rent." The old building off Caroline Place or School Street, which was long the joiner's shop of the late Dean of Guild M'Allan, was the old Teind Barn, and it was there that the Broadsea fishermen delivered, when in a religious mood, the fish that went to swell the Parish minister's stipend.

In an earlier part of this chapter the fact is mentioned that in the olden times each fisherman, or rather boat crew, had a particular area at sea in which to fish with great line, and on which no other crew would think of trespassing. This old custom is confirmed, for a minute of the Barony Court of April, 1801, deals with a trespasser of this kind named Cripple Gibb, whose crew took possession of the "Shott," as it is called, "of Alexander Stephen at the great line fishing." The Court disposed of the case as follows: "The baillie finds from the evidence that the crew of Gilbert Noble's boat had no right or title to the before-mentioned Shott, and therefore prohibits and discharges him and all and every one of his crew from any right thereto or from troubling or molesting the crew of Alexander Stephen's Boat in the occupation thereto under the penalty of Ten shillings." It is wonderful that a man with a deformity such as Cripple Gibb must have had, should have been able to overawe a crew, sound in body and limb; but it is a strange phase of human nature, that deformed people are often of a very masterful temperament, and strongly developed in both body and mind. Cripple Gibb must have been one of the warriors and characters of his day, and his quaint description in the old minute book brings fresh to memory the names of Cripple Johnnie Noble and Cripple Jamie Pyper, two Fraserburgh seafaring worthies of a later date. The

decision in Gibb's case is signed by Baillie William Kelman, whose portrait is one of the few that hang in the Town Hall of Fraserburgh. The practice of setting apart a given piece of the ocean to certain crews came to an end in the early part of last century. The latter-day fishermen were not so amiable as their progenitors, and the squabbings, quarrellings, and tresspassings upon the other's ground, became so frequent and "infamous," as the minute often has it, that the whole system had to be departed from.

The last minute written into the Barony Court Book, particularly kept for recording Broadsea affairs, deals with rather a tragic matter, in rather a business-like way. The minute is dated 12th May, 1804, and is as follows: "William Noble being obliged to leave the sea town of Broadsea on account of one of his sons having accidentally shot, while firing at sea fowls, a son of George Crawford's, and being continually molested by his family, the house William Noble leaves, the factor gives to M'Leman, son of Donald, a deserving young fisherman." The story is very baldly told in the minute, but one can easily understand the feeling and excitement that would arise in a small village over such a painful accident as one lad shooting another dead, even though by accident. Reading between the lines, it was quite evident that a perfect feud had arisen between the parties, necessitating William Noble and his family leaving the district altogether.

Having exhausted the interesting portions of the Barony Court Book, it is necessary to retrace our steps somewhat, and pick up the thread of life in the town as told in the Town Council records.

The outbreak of the French Revolution echoed from shore to shore and country to country, and the spirit which animated the Parisians, had extended in some measure to the people of other countries. The privileged classes were becoming uneasy lest the people of their country should imitate the terrible doings of their French neighbours, and it would appear that even in the Far North the simple peasantry were viewed with suspicion. This fear, along with the Jacobite "bogey," must have possessed and greatly alarmed the powers that were all important 120 years ago.

A minute of the magistrates and Town Council, dated 14th January, 1793, shows how the representatives of the people vindicated their loyalty. The minute runs as follows: "The meeting having taken into consideration the present state of the country, are happy to find it the unanimous opinion that no symptoms of discontent or sedition exists in this neighbourhood. At the same time, considering the alarm which has of late so greatly prevailed, they cannot omit this opportunity of declaring their warm and sincere attachment and loyalty to our Gracious Sovereign and the House of Brunswick, and to the principles of our happy Constitution, and their determination to discourage the distribution of seditious writings, if introduced into this corner; or the holding of disorderly meetings, and to aid and assist the Civil Magistrates in preventing, by every proper and just means, any attempt to disturb the tranquillity of the country. Resolved that the thanks of this meeting be

presented to the Right Honourable Lord Saltoun for his attention in calling the meeting, and for his very proper and becoming conduct as preses." A copy of the minute was ordered to be transmitted to the Right Honourable Mr. Dundas, who was then the principal Secretary of State for the Home Department. This Mr. Dundas became Viscount Melville and Dunira, and it was to his memory that the huge column in St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh, was erected.

The councillors at their next meeting, far from deliberating on important affairs of State, were taken up with the prosaic question of the neglecting and letting loose, without anyone being in charge of them, of horses on the streets. The first charge dealt with in the minute, that of leaving horses yoked to carts unattended on the streets, is common to this day, and the records of the Police Courts for the past year or two, would tell how often cases of this nature are dealt with. The second offence dealt with by the Councillors is quite unique, and shows how simple life was in Fraserburgh about the close of the eighteenth century; but the minute, which is dated the 26th August, 1793, will best tell its own story. It is as follows: "The meeting having taken into consideration the many complaints given in by the inhabitants, of servants riding in their carts, and going into houses, leaving their horses and carts on the streets without any person to take care of them, to the great danger of children who are going about. It is, therefore, to put a stop to such practices in future, the meeting therefore empowers the officers to detect all such who shall be found transgressing, and bring them before the baillie and Council that they may be punished according to law. The meeting also prohibits and debar all persons from letting their horses go about the streets at large to eat grass at the sides of houses when there is no person to attend them, to the eminent danger of children who are walking about. Appoints public intimation of these resolutions, and orders to be made on Saturday first by drum through the town, and a copy affixed on the church door on Sunday thereafter, so that none may pretend ignorance."

The idea of horses grazing on the sides of the streets must seem disagreeable in the ears of the present generation of Fraserburgh people, who have a pretty considerable idea of the importance of their go-ahead town. No doubt the then carters of the "Broch" thought it was an advantage to get free grazing so near home! At the time the grave civic rulers of Fraserburgh deliberated over the grazing question, the traffic must have been extremely limited, or else "the Street Committee" had scandalously neglected their duties. One can easily imagine the state of things in those far-back days. There had been no regularly formed water channels, no pavements, and only rudely-made streets, but all were sufficient for the needs and ambitions of the times. There was certainly a semblance of authority existing; but its orders were more honoured in the breach than in the observance. The burgh officials were generally old, infirm, and useless individuals, who joined the public service because they were not fit for anything else. They did not care to assert their

powers too much, and when they did so (on rare occasions, it is to be feared) the public only laughed at them, or at least winked at their orders. And yet the town, in some respects, was, about the time referred to, ahead of the Fraserburgh of to-day.

The present generation will be surprised to learn that in 1797 Fraserburgh was a military depot, and that a detachment of real soldiers was stationed in the town. Aged people who died comparatively recently were wont to tell how their fathers and grandfathers related to them stories of the days when soldiers were quartered in the town, and when the gay uniforms of the military, seen for the first time in any number, acted like a magnet on the feelings of the young men in the town and district, and induced them to accept the King's shilling by the score. The aggressive military attitude of the French at the time threw the whole of Europe into an armed camp, as it were, and the fighting spirit, so natural to the times, seemed to have penetrated to the most outlying and isolated parts of Scotland. The fear of the French landing took possession of the people, and every able-bodied man considered it a patriotic duty to give his services in some shape or form to the State, so that the French might get a hot reception if they ever managed to reach these shores. No doubt it was with the view of keeping up the military spirit that detachments of soldiers were scattered all over the country, even in the most obscure corners. From real evidence, handed down from generation to generation, it appears that the military, when sojourning in Fraserburgh, were quartered in a block of houses in Barrack Lane. Whether the old houses in the corner of the Barrack Yard, belonging to Messrs. Alexander Bruce & Company, are the same buildings in which the soldiers were quartered is not exactly known. Possibly they are, as they are very old; but there is no doubt that the name "Barrack" Lane is entirely due to the soldiers' residence in it in the end of the eighteenth century.

The subject of the councillors' minute with regard to the soldiery is rather amusing, if not trivial, but it affords proof positive that the old story which many people had begun to doubt, of soldiers having been once located in the town, is perfectly true. It is quite evident that the town's exchequer must have been at a very low ebb in 1797, otherwise the town's dignitaries would not have tried to "wriggle" out of their responsibility for the small allowances claimed by the military. The minute referred to is as follows: "The baillie took into consideration the purport of the meeting, which was an application given in to him by Lieutenant George Rae, commanding a detachment of the first Battalion Breadalbane Fencibles quartered here, craving an allowance from the town of coals and candles for the accommodation of his men mounting guard during the night; and having no precedent of the nature, the baillie thinks proper to allow the guard a sufficient quantity of coals and candles until he shall be more fully advised by Dr. Daune—Lord Saltoun's Commissioner—whether or not the town is obliged to provide a guard with their necessaries during the night." Whether or not the modest claim of the Fencibles was agreed to, there is no means of definitely knowing, as the matter

is not again referred to in the minutes. The Dr. Dauney mentioned above as Lord Saltoun's Commissioner was an Aberdeen gentleman, and an advocate, who became Sheriff-Substitute of the county, and was, on 9th January, 1793 (along with Dr. William Thom) appointed Conjunct Civilist and Professor of Law at King's College. He received the LL. D. from the College (see P. J. Anderson's "Officers and Graduates of King's College"; New Spalding Club, 1893). Dr. Dauney died 14th July, 1833, aged 84. He was a man of outstanding ability, as all his communications to the Council, and the minutes of meetings over which he presided, are couched in beautiful English, far in advance of the language generally met with at the time.

Shortly after the date of the last meeting, the town and district seem to have been overrun with mad dogs. The nuisance became so rampant that the Town Council had to take the matter up, with the view of ridding the quarter of such dangerous pests. The services of the military were called in, and if these never had the privilege of crossing swords with Frenchmen, they had the opportunity of cultivating valour, and showing their gallantry in the battle of "the mad dogs." Besides, they would no doubt, be glad to participate in the hunt, if only to show their gratefulness for the supply of coals and candles which, it is reasonable to infer, had been granted them by the Council. The latter could scarcely have suggested military assistance unless they had done some service to warrant such a request. The minute on this subject runs: "The meeting having certain information of a Mad Dog being in this town yesterday, and of his having bit several Dogs within this place and Broadsea, and proceeding from thence had bit a Child of John Cardno, in Tailholes, and a Cow of James Chalmers, in Pittendrum, already known, the meeting therefore have taken into their consideration the fatal consequences of such accidents. And, therefore, Authorize and Enact that the Town's Officers and any of the Soldiers to be named by their Officers Quartered here, shall forthwith kill all dogs within this town and Broadsea town which have been seen in Company with said dog after intimation has been made by Tuck of Drum desiring the Owners of such dogs to kill them. And to kill and confine all others for the space of six weeks from this date. And that thereafter all dogs who shall be seen going at large shall not only be killed by any person, but the Owners also fined in a Sum not under Twenty Shillings Sterling, over and above all expenses. And Authorize George Lind to pay either the Town's Officer or Soldiers Sixpence per each Dog killed by them going at large after this intimation." There must have been an effectual crusade against the unfortunate dogs, because no further reference is made to the matter. Although it was a war to the death, the Council's cash accounts do not show how many sixpences were earned by the town's officer or the soldiers. No doubt that expenditure had gone under the very useful heading "Incidental Expenses."

The next minute of any importance, which is dated 10th April, 1798, sees the Council again concerned with the affairs of State. Living in this age people can have no idea of the deadly ill-will that the natives of the country

bore the French 100 years ago. And there was good reason for it. France as already indicated, had been opposed to Britain for generations back. Under Napoleon the aggressive and domineering spirit of the French was still more unbearable, and as nation after nation on the Continent was laid in the dust, the people of this country wondered when their time was coming. The word "French" came actually into use as a term of reproach or fear when applied to young people. The spirit which animated the whole country is shown in the following minute penned by douce men of Buchan, who showed their patriotism by putting their hands into their pockets: "The meeting have met for the purpose of taking into their most serious consideration the Avowed Declarations of our inveterate Enemies, the French, of attempting to invade the Country, and being most desirous to show an attachment to our King, Country, and Constitution, resolved to open a Voluntary Subscription in aid and support to Government for enabling them to carry on the present just and necessary war, and that it be recommended to obtain subscriptions from the Country part of the Parish to be reported along with that of the town. The meeting appoint the bailie, Mr. Gray, and Mr. Gordon, to do their endeavour to obtain subscriptions from the Town's people, and after the subscriptions are completed, appoint some one as Collector of the money, which is to be paid into the bailie, and him to transmit the same to the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, along with a respectful letter from the bailie; and a majority of the meeting thought proper to Authorize Mr. Gray to subscribe Thirty Pounds Sterling from the Harbour Stock." If the country was suspicious of the French nation, the British Government was determined not to be caught "napping," and most complete military preparations seem to have been made all round the coast of the British Isles. The people took the matter up with enthusiasm, and from Land's End to John O'Groats the country must have been very much like an armed camp. From its geographical position Fraserburgh was a place where French privateers would make a "friendly" call. To be prepared for emergencies, in consequence of some visits to the neighbouring district by French sloops, the war authorities by definite action, as the following minute proves, showed that they were alive to the necessity of all likely points of attack being adequately protected. In connection with a systematic plan of defence which the Government was anxious to have completed, the following Minute of the Town Council of October, 1798, shows what the people of Fraserburgh were prepared to advise: "The meeting took into their consideration a Circular Letter from his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's Forces in Scotland, requesting to know how many Cavalry and Infantry the Town of Fraserburgh could quarter. The meeting was of opinion that the number which could be quartered are as follows:—If Infantry only...a Company from 60 to 80. The meeting also request the bailie will inform his Excellency that there is very fine Link ground for exercising the Cavalry and also good water within a quarter of a mile of the Town for the Horses. Also that Hay and Corn will be had upon as reasonable terms as any other Town in this County. But doubtful of proper accommodation within the

Town for Stabling. Only have to observe that Lord Saltoun's Stables, at the distance of less than two miles from the Town, are very good, and could accommodate from 20 to 30 Horses."

The town could not boast of stabling worthy of the name, and however proud the people would have been to have had cavalry in their midst, they had to "own up" that the proposal was out of the question. Their observation as to Lord Saltoun's stables was rather irrelevant, because if his lordship supplied stabling for the horses, he would also have had to provide barracks for the men. The good water referred to as being available within a quarter of a mile of the town, refers to the Kethock Burn, the water of which, before the iron water from the moss of Cardno was introduced into it, was very good. These quaintly-worded minutes, and continued references to military affairs, even in this hum-drum part of the world, reflect the anxious state of the country at the time. Excitement ran high in Britain during the gloomy days of the late South African War, but the country was then fighting a foe, from whom, had it come to the worst, the homeland was safe. It was not so then. Bonaparte was preparing his great fleet of flat-bottomed craft with which to bring his victorious legions across the Channel. Not only on the English Coast, but in the more remote parts of Scotland, the possibilities of invasion were contemplated, and the minute preparations made everywhere, as indicated by the foregoing minutes, to meet such, showed the tension of feelings and anxiety which must have prevailed in every corner of the country. The last war in South Africa touched the national pulse very markedly, but the state of excitement here, great though it was, could scarcely have equalled that of the humble dwellers in Buchan in the closing years of the eighteenth and the dawning years of the nineteenth century, who must have truly apprehended with fear and trembling that the day would come when they would have to leave their homesteads and roof-trees at the mercy of "Boney" and his terrible soldiery.

Mixed up with the military business discussed at the meeting of October, 1798, the minute contains a most interesting fact and one far removed from "war alarms." This is nothing less than the settling of the preliminaries for the establishment of the first Sunday school started in this part of the country. The Sunday school movement only reached Scotland in 1795, so that having taken the matter up in 1798, Fraserburgh did not lag behind. Of course, when Sunday Schools were started, the population did not warrant each congregation having a school attached to it, and in places like Fraserburgh, at anyrate, one school did duty for the town. The minute on the subject is as follows: "The meeting, upon the suggestion of the Revd. Mr. Simpson and Bishop Jolly, of the propriety of establishing a Sunday School for the Education of the Children within the Town and neighbourhood, approve of the same and appointed the said Revd. Mr. Simpson and Bishop Jolly, with Mr. Milne of Broadsea and John Henderson in Watermill, two of Mr. Simpson's elders, Mr. Greg and Mr. Laing, two of Bishop Jolly's elders, along with any members of

the Council who may choose to take the trouble to attend, as a Committee for carrying the intention of said school into effect, and the meeting Authorized the Committee to receive from Mr. Gray, the Treasurer, Two Guineas as a Subscription for the support of said school, and One Guinea from Lord Saltoun's factor on account of his Subscription."

Thus was inaugurated the Sunday school movement in this corner of Aberdeenshire, a work which developed greatly as time sped on, and from which incalculable good has sprung. The Rev. Mr. Simpson referred to, was Rev. Alexander Simpson, minister of the parish of Fraserburgh. Mr. Simpson's associate was the saintly Bishop Jolly, so long incumbent of St. Peter's Episcopal Church here. Although a strict Episcopalian, he was a most enlightened and tolerant man, and his public actions and public appearances were so far removed from offensive sectarianism that he secured the warmest regard, if not the affection, of the whole community. A halo of sanctity and goodness, a testimonial which has been handed down from generation to generation, still encircles his name. It was meet that his name should be associated with the great work of founding the first Sunday school in Fraserburgh.

The next minute noticed is not of great importance, but is worthy of reproduction as throwing a sidelight on the very primitive postal arrangements obtaining in Fraserburgh fully 115 years ago. Besides, the whole minute dated 16th November, 1798, has a quaint ring about it, which makes it rather interesting. The minute runs: "They (the Council) took into their consideration the inconvenience which the inhabitants are at by the running Post not blowing his Horn when he arrives. Resolved that the Town at their expense furnish a Horn, and that Mr. Lind, the Postmaster, in future order his runner or substitute to blow the Horn so soon that he enters the Town coming in and when he goes out. And also that the Runner, instead of coming in the Shore, come in and go out through the middle of the Town by Mrs. Gordon's." The "running Post" is a curious term, and it is difficult to determine whether it means that the postman ran on foot or drove in a vehicle. At the time spoken of, the Fraserburgh mail bag would be a very light one, and if the postman was on foot, it was very unkind to burden him with a horn, as the latter would certainly be much more unwieldy than the mail bag. One can well understand the complaint of the post "coming in the Shore," because the post-office was situated in Shore Street, and the postrunner, who brought the Aberdeen and south letters coming in the Aberdeen turnpike road, would gravitate to the links for "a near cut," and would naturally land on the shore, or Shore Street, beside the World's End, to which the Links practically extended in those days. The inhabitants wished the postman coming into and leaving the town to take a more central route, and it was for this reason that they suggested what is now known as Broad Street. No doubt the poor postman of 1798, like badly-used post office officials of the present day, had to obey the behests of the Council.

The Council, in March, 1803, had before it an application for ground for a business which rose to be an important industry, reached its zenith, began to

decline, and ultimately wholly disappeared. The minute in question reads as follows: "It was represented to the meeting that Alexander Malcolm, from Aberdeen, intended to establish a rope and sail work at Fraserburgh, and for that purpose he had applied for liberty to carry on the same upon the Link ground, marching with Bellsleys. The meeting desirous to countenance and encourage any public work of that nature resolve to grant liberty to Mr. Malcolm to carry on that work along the south dyke of Bellsley Park—not exceeding 20 feet breadth from the dyke—nor to extend his works farther than within 50 feet from the Public Road leading to Middleburgh, Reserving consideration in name of rent until further considered of." The works were duly established, and formed a great addition to the industries of the town. In consequence of the works having stopped some 40 or 50 years ago, the present generation know nothing of the attractions of the roperie to those who were boys 50 or 60 years ago. On a fine summer day it was a grand sight to see a big staff of men on the Links spinning the yarn, to the accompaniment of the peculiar whirring sound made by the hand jenny then in use. It was an especially great day with the youth of the town, and alas was the cause of many playing truant, when horses were employed to drive the capstan in connection with the operations of stretching the heavy ropes. This only took place on rare occasions. The fact that such a thing was to happen, generally leaked out early enough to let the boys prepare to be present at, to them, the great "function." The horse employed to drive the capstan belonged to auld Tam Ha'kett, and both animal and owner were a good deal the worse of the wear. The capstan stood a little to the northeast of the present northmost entrance to the Links, but it disappeared many long years ago.

The works did a big business, and not only met the wants of local fishermen and shipowners, but supplied large quantities of ropes and sails to people along the shores of the Moray Firth. As a result there was continually a large staff of men employed at the roperie, and about the middle of last century, sailmakers formed a very important class in the community. As tradesmen, sailmakers and ropespinner were well paid as the times went, and were in constant demand, with the result that boys were rather anxious to learn the business. Many of these had a great ambition to see life, and after finishing their apprenticeship, did not stay in Fraserburgh, but shipped on board big southern going vessels as sailmakers, and sailed in all the seas of the world, from "Greenland's Icy Mountains," to the fair Pacific. Some of these, whose brawny arm and elastic step of youth have given place to the palsied hand and the tottering gait of old age, declare that in all their wanderings, they never witnessed a prettier sight than they had often looked upon from the roperie on a fine June day, a view which took in the bay, the sands, and the woods of Philorth, with Mormond in the distance. One can understand this feeling in an old native, whose flights of fancy dwell upon the days of youth when everything seemed roseate, and when, on looking back, the very path he trod seemed strewn with roses. This feeling of veneration for the past, and especially the emotion from which

evolves a love of country, may be expressed in Goldsmith's words as follows: —

“Such is the patriot's boast where'er we roam,
His first best country ever is at home.”

The decline of sailing ships was a great blow to northern roperies or rope works, and this combined with the opposition from the big rope works, favourably situated in the south, and equipped with all the newest machinery ultimately “killed” Fraserburgh. Mr. Alexander Malcolm struggled gamely with the roperie for many years, but about 1864 or 1865 no headway could be made against the irrepressible opposition from the big centres, and the works had, with many regrets on the part of the proprietor and the community generally, to be closed. The grandchildren of Mr. Alexander Malcolm, the founder of the business, still live in Fraserburgh.

In the first two years of last century, much appears in the minutes about the building of the present Parish Church. There was considerable friction for some time between the feuars and the landward heritors as to the proportion of the cost of the building payable by the respective sides, and Dr. Dauneay, Lord Saltoun's factor, had a very troublesome job on hand in getting the contentious leaders on both sides to see eye to eye. He was, however, a man of consummate skill in dealing with people, and in course of time he brought the somewhat stormy negotiations to a peaceful and successful issue. The church was built and paid for, but unfortunately no funds remained with which to erect the steeple. The Parish Church without a steeple was a thing that could not be thought of, and accordingly a meeting of the Council was called to consider what steps should be taken towards removing the indignity and reproach, which would be the heritage of the town, so long as it possessed a steeple-less auld kirk. A minute of the Council dated 10th May, 1803, reads: “The bailie took this opportunity of representing to the Town Council that by the plan of the new Church of Fraserburgh a spire was intended to be carried up from the Tower, estimated at £90, but that there were no funds for the purpose. He therefore submitted to the meeting the propriety of something being contributed from the public funds of the town towards defraying the expense necessary for carrying forward the foresaid Spire. The meeting being satisfied of the propriety of carrying up the aforesaid Spire, Resolved to contribute a sum not exceeding £20 Stg., to be paid equally from the Harbour and Water funds— and authorize Mr. Gray to pay the same accordingly, when the building of the Spire is contracted for.”

The balance of funds was raised, and the steeple went up, but to the artistic eye it has proved anything but “a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.” For downright, honest and striking ugliness, the steeple of the Parish Church of Fraserburgh would be hard to beat, and broad Scotland might safely be taken into the contest. It excels in its ugliness, and therein lies its virtue, for it is better to have an attribute of some kind than none at all. A story still survives about Mr.

Alexander Morice, the builder of the church, to the effect that finding his offer too low, he adjusted the bevel plumb rule to a more obtuse angle, which, bringing the steeple to a speedier finish than was bargained for, spoiled the proportions of the pile, but saved the pockets of the sagacious mason. If the steeple was not quite equal in appearance to the Campanile of Venice, it was quite as useful. For not only was it the medium through which the people were invited "to the house of prayer," but it was also, for more than half a century, the distinguishing landmark which guided the weary and storm-tossed mariner into a safe channel for taking Fraserburgh harbour. Until the old church was swallowed up by loftier buildings, its steeple was always given in Mariner's Guide Books and Tide Tables as a mark to steer for, from a given point of the compass, in running for Fraserburgh. And after all, what matters outward appearance in a thing of the kind. To a citizen of Fraserburgh, the old steeple recalls many sacred memories of the past. Fathers, mothers, lovers, have come and gone; yes, those who in the dim past, listened for the curfew bell, and wandered at midnight towards the old steeple, to join in welcoming in the New Year, saw nothing but lovely lines, and highly finished work in the old edifice. Dear old innocent folks, their wanderings had been limited! They never had seen a grander pile, and if their impressions gave an inflated value to the building, their opinions had best be measured by their scanty knowledge and experience of the world. The Alexander Morice who built the Parish Church was a man of some importance, and a bit of a joker. About 40 years ago a good many stories were wont to be related of the man by the oldest inhabitants. Mr. Morice built the Saltoun Hotel immediately before starting the Parish Church, and he was often heard to boast that when he had finished catering for the spirituous needs of the people in one direction, he attended to their spiritual necessities as a secondary consideration.

The continued successes of Bonaparte in his campaigns against Austria and Prussia, kept the people of this country in a perpetual state of alarm, and drove them towards a military life, whether they cared for it or not. Ever since the French Revolution, and the rise of Napoleon's star in "the tented field," the people of Buchan had, in a more or less general way, to adopt the profession of arms, the duties of which, especially in the more remote parts of the country, must have been discharged in a very rough and ready manner. Still the bone and muscle, and unmatched fighting spirit were there, and a little drilling at home gave the young men a taste for martial life and paved the way for their entrance into the regular army. The people of Fraserburgh in the end of 1803, are still in a fighting mood, as a Council minute of that date says: "The bailie laid before the meeting a letter from Captain Fraser of the Fraserburgh Infantry Company of Volunteers stating that he had applied for ammunition and begged to know where it was to be placed on its arrival; the meeting are of opinion that the Tower in the Castle Park would be a very secure place, as a magazine or place of safety for the ammunition. . . ." The Tower was given by Lord Saltoun's representative for use as a powder magazine, but the gift did not turn out a success.

At a subsequent meeting of the Council, a communication is read from the officer commanding the soldiery, complaining that damp and water percolating the roof had completely destroyed a large quantity of ammunition stored in the Tower. The place was thoroughly overhauled. The minute discloses the fact that it was at this time that all the windows of the Wine Tower, with one or two exceptions, were built up with bricks, evidently for the better protection of the ammunition and arms stored in the place. The thirst for military glory, and a determination to annihilate the French, should the ever attempt a landing on the Buchan coast, still remained the chief characteristic of people of Fraserburgh. In the eighteen months that had elapsed since the Wine Tower was put into a fit state to receive ammunition, the military preparations at the "Broch" had made rapid strides. The worthy citizens were not content with possessing plain infantry volunteers, but had the ambition to include field artillery in their plan of campaign. The minute, dated July, 1805, bearing on the subject of artillery, is as follows: "It was represented by Captain Kelman to the meeting that he had been furnished by Government with two Brass Field Pieces, Ammunition Waggon, and Stores for the same, and that it was necessary that a place of safety should be provided for the same. The meeting having taken the same into their consideration are of opinion that there is no convenient place belonging to the town in which the same could be lodged other than the shed at the back of the Merchants House on the Shore, Resolved to apply it for that purpose, but as the roof of it is in a wretched and ruinous state it is necessary that the same should be repaired and a wide door made in the west gable to receive the carriages. . . ." The alterations were carried out, and the two field pieces "safely lodged" in the shed at the back of the Merchants House. To what practical use they were put, history does not say, but one can easily picture in imagination the excited and admiring crowds that would repair to the Links when the local Field Artillery were going through their evolutions there. One thing is certain, the guns never fired an "angry shot," or were pointed against an enemy; and if any harm had ever befallen any of the citizen soldiers while engaged at drill no doubt the fact would have been noted in the minutes, as a gentle hint to Government that brass pieces had actually been put to use. Whether it was the presence of the two brass field pieces in the town, or the battle of Trafalgar that relieved the tension, it is difficult to say, but the fact is, the French invasion bogey, after 1805, seems gradually to have died away in the district, for the minutes contain no further reference to military preparations in Fraserburgh.

There is an old fable still current in Fraserburgh to the effect that the clock in the steeple of the Parish Church was the town clock of Banff when Macpherson, the freebooter, was hanged in 1700. The story goes that the Banff worthies, hearing that a reprieve for Macpherson was nearing Banff by horse at breakneck speed, determined that the notorious cateran should not again be let loose "to ravish and to plunder" the countryside. Accordingly, in order to evade the terms of the reprieve, which was dangerously near at hand,

the authorities of Banff, with business-like shrewdness, advanced the hands of the town clock a quarter of an hour. Macpherson had just time to play his rant and smash his fiddle, when the clock struck twelve. He was hurried to the scaffold and summarily hanged. Ten minutes after twelve noon, by Banff time, the reprieve arrived. It was in ample time by the Aberdeen town clock, to save the unfortunate man's life, but the proverbial smartness of the Banff people saved the situation, and poor Macpherson had already spent ten minutes seeking fresh conquests in the happy hunting grounds of his prehistoric forefathers, before the pardon had arrived.

The proceedings were considered disgraceful, and cast such a slur upon the fair fame of the city by the Deveron, that the ill-favoured town clock had to be smuggled out of the way somehow. Fraserburgh was in want of a town clock. Sentiment did not enter so much into the philosophy of the Broch dignitaries, as did a downright good business bargain. Though the clock had been the cause of twenty people being innocently hanged, such a trivial incident would not have weighed with a "Broch" purchaser. A good clock—cheap, and the transaction was finished. Such is the story, somewhat elaborated, that has made the Fraserburgh town clock famous in the eyes of the natives. It is a pity to destroy such a pretty legend, but the historian must tell the truth, and the minute which follows shows that the clock, which has kept the people of Fraserburgh up to time for fully a hundred years, has no claim to the romantic history which is attached to it. A minute dated 1st September, 1804, says: "The bailie mentioned to the meeting that when in Aberdeen he was informed by Mr. Gartely that he could furnish a new brass Clock for the town at £50, which the meeting having taken into their consideration, and that the expense of repairing the old may amount to £30, and perhaps not give satisfaction afterwards, Resolved to have a new Clock made by Mr. Gartely at the sum, and authorize the bailie to contract with him accordingly. The expense of which to be defrayed by the different Boxes in the town, and subscriptions from individuals." It is thus seen that the present Fraserburgh town clock is a substantial, well-made Aberdeen article, which has been a faithful and dependable servant of the public all these years. It has never done an injustice to any man, and certainly it has never gone too fast. If it erred at any time, it erred on the safe side of going too slow. Occasionally, after a severe gale, it would make a complete halt as a protest against unmerited bad-usage, but beyond this, the public have never had to complain of vagaries that could not be excused. The fine new clock that Sir George Anderson recently put into the steeple of the South U.F. Church has rather overshadowed his ancestor at the Cross, but the old friend still bravely tells the story of the flight of time, and to the older generation at least, his kindly face will never let them forget past favours.

The butchers of Fraserburgh in the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries must have been an ill-conditioned lot. In one of the early chapters of these records, reference was made to the trouble the authorities had with a butcher who sold diseased pork to a Bo'ness shipmaster.

In June, 1803, complaint was made to the Council that people who wished to purchase meat could not get it, on account of the only regular butcher of the town, William Still, having practically retired from business. An extract from the minute will explain the difficulty. It is— “And those acting as butchers in the market paying very little attention.” The Council resolved to advertise in an Aberdeen newspaper, asking a butcher to whom all their support would be given, to come and settle in Fraserburgh.

To return to the troubles which afflicted the people of Fraserburgh a hundred years ago on account of the bad behaviour of the peripatetic butchers, who then did an irregular business in the town, it is satisfactory to know that the advertisement inserted in a city newspaper had the desired effect. Some three months after the advertisement appeared, a minute of the Council reads as follows: “The bailie mentioned that in consequence of the advertisement respecting a butcher to settle here, John Keith, butcher in Aberdeen, came forward, and expressed his desire to settle at Fraserburgh in that way—providing he received the custom of the town. The meeting, sensible of the want of a butcher, resolve to give him every countenance and encouragement while he continues to deserve it, and to give him the exclusive freedom of a shop as mentioned in a former resolution.” It is most probable that the man came up to expectations, and conducted a respectable and dependable business, because the minutes contain no further reference to trouble with butchers. This Keith from Aberdeen must have been the forerunner of the fine class of butchers that now supply the needs of the people of Fraserburgh.

Practically a month after the Battle of Trafalgar was fought and won—an event which the Council did not deem worthy of notice—the dignitaries of the town were discussing a very interesting question, *viz.*, securing for the port the first lifeboat that had ever been in these northern regions. The moving spirit in the project, Sir William Forbes, of Pitsligo, was a pioneer of civilization and a humanitarian worthy of his day and generation. The minute is dated 22nd November, 1805, and says: “The bailie stated to the meeting that Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo had most generously and humanely ordered a lifeboat for Fraserburgh and its neighbourhood from Mr. Greathead, which was now arrived at Peterhead. That Sir William had formerly subscribed fifty guineas towards procuring a lifeboat, but seeing that the subscriptions were coming very slowly up, and anxious to have the boat at Fraserburgh before the winter, in case of misfortune, he intimated to the bailie that he would order the lifeboat and take his chance of such subscriptions as might be obtained. . . .” A subscription list attached to the minute shows that Lord Saltoun contributed £21 to the fund, the Gardners’ Society £10 10s., and the Freemasons’ Society £5 5s. Including Sir William’s donation of £52 10s., the whole sum collected amounted to £114 4s. At the foot of the list, embodied in the minute, is the significant note—“Sir William Forbes most generously paid the balance.” Fraserburgh, from its geographical position had a great reputation for shipwrecks and loss of life (a very questionable reputation,

indeed) and Sir William Forbes, with his big, human heart, was the first in the district to appreciate and grapple with the evil in dead earnest. His name was long held in reverence by mariners from far and near, who were moved to this, not only by practical help received from the Fraserburgh boat, but by the noble example set by Sir William in directing public attention to an evil that robbed hundreds of homes of their bread-winners every winter. The Fraserburgh lifeboat did splendid service in her time, and many were the poor sailors who, stranded and in the midst of great peril, found in her a deliverer.

Having ordered a new clock for the steeple of the new church, the authorities wisely determined to have a bell in keeping with the clock. The matter is not of first-rate importance, but as many stories have been circulated in the town from time to time, about the age and experience of the bell, the facts about it are given in order that sentimental romance may stand corrected. On 7th August, 1807, a minute of the Council says: "The meeting having taken into their consideration that the present Bells in the Church are not heard at any distance, and as there is a new clock making for the steeple, The meeting agree to employ Thomas Mears & Son, of London, to make a new Bell, agreeable to the price mentioned in his letter of 29th April last, of from four to five hundredweight, and to have the old Bells at the price mentioned in said letter." It is thus seen that the bell is the outcome of a purely business transaction, and that it was made in London over a hundred years ago. The letter of Baillie Kelman, dated 23rd September, 1807, ordering the bell is rather quaint style, and is worth producing. It is as follows:

"Thomas Mears & Son.

"Gentlemen,

"The Town Council of Fraserburgh have resolved to take a new Bell of 5 cwts. at the price you mention—20d. per lb.—you taking in exchange our old Bells, at 14d. a lb. The sooner you can get the new bell the better. I trust you will make her good. When she arrives the Old Bells shall be forwarded to you, with the balance.

"I am, Gentlemen,

"Your Most Humble Servant,

"(Signed) WM. KELMAN."

That which was the new bell of 1807, is the old bell of to-day. It has a robust, but not unmusical tone, and the lusty sound it sent forth removed all cause of complaint of the bell not being heard sufficiently far away. Before its advent, a certain class of people who did not attend church very regularly evidently put the blame of their "sin" on the inadequacy of the old bells, but the loud-tongued new-comer robbed these delinquents of the old excuse. The bell has done excellent service all these years, and it speaks today in as clear a tone as it did 100 years ago. Since it first raised its voice here, many changes and ups and downs have taken place in the town. The public dignitaries, the

successful business men, the obscure and poor struggling specimens of humanity have all trod the little local stage, played their parts, and made their final bow, but the old bell that has rung the curtain down on so many, still discharges the sacred and secular functions with unimpaired vitality. In the community's joys and sorrows it has made its voice heard for fully a century, and has thus become one of the most respected institutions of the town. It is therefore no wonder that its voice has become like that of a venerated friend to the inhabitants and to natives located in the farthest corners of the earth, who one and all must sincerely wish that its tongue may wag for at least another 100 years. It may be interesting to note here that the old custom of ringing the curfew bell still survives in Fraserburgh. On each evening of the week (Sunday excepted) at 8 o'clock, the old bell warns the natives to put out fires and lights; but, so far as can be seen, both warning and injunction are treated with the greatest contempt. Still, the custom is a pretty one, and it is to be hoped it will be long kept up.

It would appear from history that not only were the butchers of Fraserburgh a disreputable lot in the beginning of last century, but that the bakers also were a class that did not exactly command the confidence of the community, and had to be looked after. In fact, their swindling methods of business became so notorious that the natives rose in rebellion and the authorities had to step in to see fair play between the two. Everything of food kind, especially oatmeal and flour, was extremely dear at this time, when the Continent was seething with war, and very little of light weight to the customer meant a big profit to the baker. The minute, dated November, 1807, referring to the subject, is as follows: "The bailie also stated to the meeting that he had received numerous complaints from the inhabitants of the burgh against the Bakers for making their bread far under the common assize of the county, which grievance ought to be removed. The bailie and Council, therefore, Resolve in future to regulate and affix the assize of bread periodically in the same way as is done in the County Town and agreeable to the price of flour imported into the Burgh for which purpose they recommend to the bailie to procure periodically the assize of bread as fixed by the Magistrates and Council of Aberdeen as a data to proceed by." The old worthies deserve credit for their fatherly interest in the people, and their example might well be copied by our present-day rulers, in regard to certain articles consumed by the people of to-day. The present race of bakers in Fraserburgh are above suspicion in all their dealings, although the price of bread is sometimes rather stiff in the fishing season, when the poor natives are victimized along with the innocent stranger!

The Council minutes tell that the people of Fraserburgh observed with due loyalty and rejoicing the jubilee of George III. The rejoicings on the occasion of course, did not equal the splendour of those organized when Queen Victoria reached the fiftieth year of her reign, but the natives did their best, and it is satisfactory to note that, what has always been a redeeming feature

in the character of the British people, they did not forget the poor. Not out of their abundance, but out of their scanty means, the worthy rulers of the town in 1809 voted £5 to the poor. The meeting was held on 17th October, 1809, and the minute is as follows: "The meeting was held for the purpose of settling a plan for celebrating by Jubilee His Majesty's Entry into the fiftieth year of his reign, when it was unanimously agreed upon that they should meet in the Town Hall on Wednesday, the 25th current, at 11 o'clock forenoon, from there to walk in procession to the High Street, there to meet the Fraserburgh Lodge of Freemasons, and walk in procession together with music through the principal streets of the town. On returning to be drawn up in regular order, when a 'Feu de Joie' is to be fired by the local Militia. At 3 o'clock the Council, and such Gentlemen as chose to meet them, will dine in the Saltoun Inn for the purpose of drinking His Majesty's health. On this occasion the Council agree that a Hogshead of Porter be given to the Militia and the workmen at the Harbour; and as an expression of the gratefulness and thankfulness to divine providence for the blessing they are about to celebrate, they vote five Guineas from the Town's funds for benevolent purposes to the poor of the Town, and they trust that individuals will also come forward for this charitable purpose." Although the present generation, after reading the minute, may think the efforts of their forefathers in the way of celebrations, rather insignificant, they must remember that the people of those days were somewhat primitive in life and thought, and accordingly, must be given credit for acting up to their light and means.

The next minute to be noticed is interesting, in so far as it gives expression to the people's first outburst of joy and gratitude for the turn of the tide of battle, which told in no uncertain way that Napoleon's victorious course was being checked. Wellington, though contending against great difficulties, was slowly forging ahead in the Peninsula. His rather mixed army, which had little cohesion at the start, began to pull itself together, and those who commenced the campaign as raw recruits, had now become seasoned veterans, full of fight. Instead of being frightened to meet the invincible French troops that had laid all the armies of Continental Europe at their feet, they were only too anxious to cross swords with them. By this time Wellington's men were full of confidence and "feared no foe." Time after time they beat the Frenchmen back, and closely followed on their heels, till the sacred soil of France was within measurable distance. In June 1813 the important battle of Vittoria was fought and won by Wellington. Meanwhile the allies, the Austrians, Prussians and Russians had not been idle, and within four months of Vittoria the brilliant victory of Leipzig was won by the allies. This was the most humiliating defeat that Napoleon had thus far in his career sustained. Naturally, the news of these victories filled the people of this country with transports of delight. The people in expressing their joy were almost delirious in their fervour, and demonstrations of thankfulness possessed the country from one end to the other. One can easily understand this. Since Napoleon had

begun his fighting career, the Powers with which Britain was identified, had suffered defeat after defeat. There was not one little beam of brightness for Britain from the eternal black war cloud that darkened Europe, only one monotonous procession of defeats—apart from Nelson's glorious work—year after year. The country could not stand the strain, financially and otherwise, much longer, and despondency was beginning to "edge out" hope, even with the most sanguine. It can be thus seen what an electric effect the news of the crushing defeats sustained by the armies of Napoleon would have on the people of this country. It raised hope to a high pitch, and people began to breathe freely again.

The following minute, dated 1st December, 1813, gives an indication—one has to read between the lines for the reality—of the feeling in Fraserburgh: "The meeting was called for the purpose of considering whether it would be proper to have an illumination in honour of the late signal victories obtained by our allies over the French; and considering that there was a general illumination last night, and that there would not likely be candle in the Town sufficient to light the whole Town, resolve that no illumination shall be requested at this time." The closing part of the minute was rather amusing, and shows the native simplicity of the age. Evidently tidings of some of Wellington's victories had been received sometime previously, and an illumination in honour thereof given the previous night. News travelled slowly in those days, and the meeting of which the above is a minute, was probably called on receipt of the intimation of the great victory at Leipzig. Unfortunately, the illumination of the previous night had exhausted the stock of candles in Fraserburgh, and however loyal the people might be, their resources denied them the honour of celebrating in a fitting manner, what the Germans and Austrians called "the Battle of the Nations," consequent on so many different nationalities taking part in it. It was said that the poor people of Fraserburgh could not provide the necessary candles. The natives of the present day will probably blush to find such history dragged out of oblivion, and regret an illumination of facts that should be kept strictly in the dark; but the innocent and simple way in which the councillors give themselves and the public away in the matter of the candles, is the feature of the minute. Although the then burghers did not burn candles, no doubt they had celebrated "the great massacre" of Frenchmen at Leipzig in an appropriate way (?) of which biographers withhold details.

It was expected that the minutes would contain some interesting references to the Battle of Waterloo, but though the then Lord Saltoun commanded a brigade at, and was one of the heroes of the great fight, the minute is eloquently silent on the subject. This is the more to be wondered at, as the return of Lord Saltoun from the campaign was signalled by rejoicings in the town on a very elaborate scale, the particulars of which old people of last generation were wont to relate with great pride and gusto. At Lord Saltoun's expense, the fun was kept going "fast and furious" for days on end, and yet a grate-

ful (?) people did not think the fact worth recording in their official minutes. The noble Superior of the town, who was a great favourite of the people of Fraserburgh during his long reign over them, died in August, 1853, deeply deplored by the town's people and his tenantry. He was a man of outstanding character full of energy and activity, and added fresh lustre to the name of the noble family from which he sprung. None of the race ever upheld the traditions of the family better than he. On the battlefield he served his country as few of his contemporaries did, and during the whole length of the Napoleonic wars he knew practically nothing of life, but the roar of battle, and the clash of arms. He carried his life in his hands in many a sanguinary contest, and though the ranks of his fellow-officers were decimated in the course of the long contest, he who had often led his men into the hottest corner of the battle, who had had horses shot under him, and his headgear riddled with shot, emerged from his thirteen years of the severest fighting that the world had ever seen with practically not a scratch. A few years after succeeding to the title and estates, his nephew, the late Lord Saltoun, out of respect to the memory of his distinguished predecessor, presented a marble statue of him to the town. The statue now stands sentry over the Town House door, but the severe climate of Fraserburgh has greatly destroyed what was at once a striking and fine piece of martial sculpture work. The statue was unveiled by Lord Saltoun in October, 1859, and in connection with the ceremony, an address, drawn up by the late Baillie Chalmers, was presented to his lordship. The address is embodied in the Town Council minutes. The publication of a copy of the document will be greatly appreciated by the people of Fraserburgh of the present day, as it gives a succinct and interesting history of the Saltoun family, and a specially bright biographical sketch of the military hero who played a leading part in the historic campaigns which ended in the complete overthrow of the arch-dictator Bonaparte.

The address is as follows:—

“Address by the Magistrates and Town Council of Fraserburgh to the Right Honourable Lord Saltoun, upon the occasion of the presentation by his Lordship to the Town of a Marble Statue of the late the Right Honourable Alexander George Fraser Baron Saltoun and Abernethy, a Baronet of Scotland and Nova Scotia, Knight of the Thistle, Knight Commander of the Bath, Knight Grand Cross of Hanover, and a Knight also of the Foreign Orders of St. George of Russia, and of Maria Theresa of Austria; Lieutenant-General in the Army, Colonel of the Second Foot, and a Representative Peer of Scotland.

“We, the Magistrates and Town Council of Fraserburgh, and as such representing the Inhabitants of that Burgh, assembled this day to receive from your Lordship's hands the Statue which you have already

intimated your intention to present to this Town, and to inaugurate that Presentation, desire to convey to your Lordship our thanks in such a way as to show not our appreciation only of your generosity in conferring on the Town a gift of its intrinsic value, but also the estimate we put upon the motives which led your Lordship to choose for your gift a monument to the memory of your noble Predecessor so deservedly respected and beloved by every inhabitant of Fraserburgh; but particularly so by those who had the opportunity of enjoying his more intimate acquaintance.

"Your Lordship's uncle Alexander George Fraser Lord Saltoun was the Sixteenth Peer of your Ancient House which, since the reign of Alexander II., has distinguished itself as well in the Cabinet as in the field, whose ancestors have been ever foremost in fighting the battles of their Country, have fallen fighting in its defence, for their loyalty suffered imprisonment and death, and have also occupied the highest offices both in the Church and State.

"Like his predecessor Simon Fraser who, joining Sir William Wallace in the year 1302, commanded the Scotch Army and routed the English at Roslin, or his immediate successor Sir Alexander Fraser taken fighting valiantly by the side of his King, Robert I., at the battle of Methven was released to share with him the glories of Bannockburn and afterwards to die on the battlefield of Duplin in the year 1332; or, later still, like the famous Sir Alexander Fraser, who fell with King James III. in the field of Sauchieburn, or, Sir Alexander Fraser of Saltoun who, zealous in the service of King Charles II., carried a Regiment to Worcester on his own charges.

"Your Lordship's uncle, entering the Army in 1802 at the age of Seventeen, was engaged in Sicily in 1806-7, fought at Corunna, and served with distinction in the Peninsular war, was present at Nivelles, Nive, and Bayonne; gained imperishable fame at Quatre Bras, on the field of Waterloo, and at the capture of the maiden fortress of Peronne:—WE cannot but look back with pride to his determined and most successful defence of the Chateau at Garden of Hougomont, when, along with Sir John Macdonnell he contested against an overwhelming force, every tree and sapling in the wood outside of that Garden until, we are informed by historians, the firing became so intense that almost every branch was cut through by numerous, some as many as 20 shots; and only retired to the Garden and Chateau when it was impossible, in spite of the utmost efforts of its heroic defenders to hold it longer.

"He it was who, along with Colonel Woodford, not only regained the orchard, but held it the rest of that memorable day, and afterwards, with Colonel McDouell, and notwithstanding that Napoleon's howitzers were playing on the building and till it was in part burned down, still held the Court Chateau with unconquerable and indomitable resolution.

"Inheriting, as it were, the martial ardour of his gallant Predecessor, and when, from his years it might have been expected that he would have retired from active strife, satisfied with the laurels he had won, he, on a moment's notice embarked for China; and to show his Country's estimate of his services there, received on his return the insignia of a K.C.B. and the thanks of both Houses of Parliament for the energy, ability, and gallantry he then displayed.

"He was described by the Duke of Wellington as a pattern to the Army 'both as a man and a soldier.' Nor were his services confined to the Patriotic Acts and heroic deeds of the soldier, but as his illustrious; ancestor Alexander Lord Saltoun not only did the Battles of his Country, but, as we are told, was an eminent speaker in its Parliament, and had the honour of some share in bringing about the Restoration of his King; so also did your late uncle, at the early age of Twenty-Two, aid the deliberations of the Government; for, chosen at that time one of the Representative Peers of Scotland, he did, much to his credit and honour, hold that distinguished position for no less a period than 46 years.

"Like his illustrious ancestor, also, Sir Alexander Fraser who, we are told, enjoyed in an eminent degree the favour of his sovereign King James VI., and built at Faithlie, where his predecessors had formerly only a Burgh of Barony, a large and, as we read, more beautiful Town called Fraserburgh, the Tower of Kinnaird, the Church, the Harbour, the Town House, and other public buildings—so also in his time did the late Alexander George Fraser Lord Saltoun, much for the enlargement and improvement of the Town:—by and of his influence, energy and pecuniary assistance, the North and South Piers, Middle Jetty, and new North Harbour; in fact, we may say the whole of the present Harbours of Fraserburgh were constructed at a cost of £46,292 and the receipts from a nominal sum of £45 at his succession increased to its present revenue of £2,000:—The ancient, the unpretending Town House, grown ruinous from lapse of time, replaced by the substantial structure, into the niche in which, proud (if we may so speak) to receive its founder, has this day been placed, by your Lordships generosity and good taste, this beautiful and lasting monument to our much beloved and ever to be remembered and respected late noble Superior:—

"We feel, my Lord, unable to do justice to our subject and wish we could with more faithfulness delineate some of the more salient points in the character and conduct of him whose deeds will for ever be engraved on the records of mankind.

"But while we feel proud in the highest degree in the possession of a memento of your noble uncle, so durable as a gift in itself, so valuable, so rare a specimen of the sculptor's art, we feel also gratified beyond expression that this gift should have emanated from you. We assure you that its value is much enhanced to us as inhabitants of this

place by the fact that it indicated the kindest feelings on your part toward us, an interest in aught that pertains to the Town over which you preside as hereditary Provost, so friendly, as to induce this presentation by you so munificent and so tasteful."

Baillie Chalmers might have mentioned in the address that the Waterloo Saltoun was an ardent musician and an accomplished violinist. Probably he did not know that Lord Saltoun wiled many a weary hour away at the front with his fiddle as his companion. Like many an enthusiastic musician he loved to take part in trio or quartette playing, which was a proof of his refined musical taste. When he received the China command, he wanted players to make up either a trio or quartette, and he went to the Horse Guards to see if he could get a Brigade-Major who could play the violoncello. He got Sir Hope Grant, who afterwards attained great distinction as a soldier.*

The accession of Queen Victoria to the Throne of Britain seems to have excited little interest in Fraserburgh, and the great demonstrations in the town, when the late and present King came to the Throne, contrast strangely with the peaceful and formal proceedings which took place in 1837. The people had probably not been impressed with the idea of a female being head of the State, but if they had known the remarkable qualities of the woman, and the wonderful influence she had for good during her long reign, the natives of Buchan would no doubt, have been much more demonstrative in their rejoicings and given her a heartier welcome when she took up the responsibilities of a Queen. The minute is dated 26th June, 1837, and is as follows: "The bailie (Chalmers) stated to the meeting that he had received instructions to proclaim the Princess Alexandrina Victoria Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland saving the rights of any issue of his late Majesty King William the Fourth which may be born of His late Majesty's Consort, in terms of a printed form which he had received for that purpose; and he requested that the Council would accompany him to the Market Cross, and assist in making proclamation, which was accordingly done at four o'clock p.m." The proclamation was made in a perfunctory manner, and it does not appear that the Council assembled to drink (a part of the programme which was never forgotten in the old days) the health of the newly-proclaimed Queen.

Fraserburgh was first visited by cholera in the year 1832. Though there are no details of actual facts connected with the outbreak given in the Town Council records at the time, from information supplied by Mr. George Bruce, Fishcurer, who was a lad of eighteen years at the time, great excitement, if not panic, possessed the inhabitants. Deaths were numerous, and the miserable and dirty condition of the dwellings of the poorer classes of the inhabitants seemed to favour the spread of the disease. As proved to be the case in the two succeeding visitations, the victims were mostly confined to the fishing and seafaring populations; in fact, the infection was said to have been brought to

*See "The Story of a Soldier's Life": Wolseley: page 343.

Fraserburgh by a local seaman who had been trading in "foreign parts" and whose clothes had been on board a cholera-infected vessel. It is a curious coincidence that nothing of any public interest appears in the Town Council minutes from the date of the Proclamation of Queen Victoria's accession to the Throne, till the question of the second outbreak of cholera in the district is taken in hand.

From the minutes of the Police Commissioners it appears that in October, 1849, there was quite an alarming state of excitement in the town, consequent on the outbreak of cholera at Cairnbulg. On the 3rd, stringent regulations were published as to the order of cleanliness to be observed by the inhabitants, and their abstinence from spirituous liquors, etc. The people must have been in a very nervous condition, for on the following day, the 4th, a meeting of the Commissioners was held, the finding of which was as follows: "The Chairman stated that the meeting had been called in consequence of representations from several parties and from Dr. Grieve as to the crowding into the town of the inhabitants of the infected district of Cairnbulg. The meeting recommend that the house holders be warned under the pains of law, not to receive into their houses individuals from the infected district, and that Constables be employed, or the services of the Coastguard requested, for that purpose." The last part of the minute is not very intelligible, but as the cholera fright had no doubt extended to the writer, one must judge leniently, and excuse a slip of the pen in the circumstances. It is amusing to learn that it had been contemplated to call in the services of the gallant Coastguardmen to aid the police. How the Coastguard viewed the questionable honour has never yet been divulged, as the proposal never got beyond the regions of the minute. A couple of days later another meeting was held at which it was resolved "for the purpose of providing a place for the reception of the inhabitants who may be in the immediate vicinity of individuals seized with Cholera, the Chairman was instructed to make offer to Mr. Woodman of his present rent for the old Schoolhouse as a receptacle for such parties."

It was an ignoble purpose to which to put the old "Broch" temple of learning, but like the prospective employment of the Coastguard as policemen, the project was never fulfilled. Fortunately, the cholera did not break out in Fraserburgh on this occasion, and all the precautions and formidable arrangements made for combating the fell disease, had never to be put to a practical test. The cholera had been brought to Cairnbulg by the crew of a boat that had gone south for mussels. The disease was of a most virulent kind, and very soon the death-rate assumed terrible proportions. Scarcely a house in the village escaped the stern Messenger of Death, and panic made matters doubly worse. People who retired to rest perfectly well at night, were discovered to be corpses in their beds in the morning. The condition of affairs became so bad that husbands could not get anyone to assist them to coffin their dead wives, and vice versa. Brothers dropped down and died before sisters, and sisters before brothers. All who could, cleared out of the village, and it was with great

difficulty that a sufficient number of people could be gathered together to bury the dead. Many of those who could not afford to go to the country, lived in overturned boats lying on the beach some distance from the houses. At the first outbreak of the disease in the village, the victims were mostly of the drunken and "orra" folks. For this reason the self-righteous section of the villagers, at its outbreak, dubbed it "the godless disease." By and by the sinner and the godly man were treated alike, and as a consequence more of the latter were taken than of the former, with the result that the elect could not bear to hear of the term of reproach—"the godless disease"—although it was their own invention. The primitive sanitary condition of the village in 1849 no doubt contributed much to the spread and retention of the trouble. There was a slight outbreak in 1866, but the condition of things has greatly changed for the better since then, and it is to be hoped that no local scribe will ever again have to depict the horrors of a visitation of cholera "ower the water."

It has to be noted again that there is nothing in the minutes of the Fraserburgh Police Commissioners of any public interest from 1849, the year of the cholera at Cairnbulg, till the outbreak of cholera in Fraserburgh in 1866.

It is a remarkable fact that a period of seventeen years elapsed between the first and second outbreak of cholera in the town, and exactly the same number of years passed when the third outbreak of the plague took place. The older people living at the time who believed in events repeating themselves in cycles of years, dreaded the approach of 1883, but the sanitary condition of the town, and the houses in which the poorer classes lived, had undergone a great change for the better, and the completion of the third cycle brought no trouble, thus "the evil spell" was at an end.

The herring fishing was started in 1866 in the usual way about the middle of July, and all went well until almost the close of the month, when one or two people died quite suddenly of a very suspicious disease. The inhabitants were startled and alarmed, when public intimation was made that the mysterious trouble was cholera. On July 28 a meeting of Commissioners was held and the minute thereof reads: "This meeting was called for the purpose of taking measures for the prevention of the spread of cholera through the town. Drs. Grieve and Mellis being present stated that the nurses for the sick would require to be immediately got, a house for Hospital, and if necessary, a medical man. The meeting decided that two or more nurses should be provided. Mr. Anderson proposed that the Rope Work or any other fit place that can be got be procured for an Hospital. It was also agreed that a special Medical man be procured, if necessary." The chief portion of the rope works, which stood at the south end of the Bellslea Park, was secured, and played the important part of Burgh Hospital, during the weary four months that cholera had possession of the town. On account of the serious spread of the trouble, a committee of the Commissioners met every day to receive reports and help the executive to combat the disease. A Dr. M'Rae from Aberdeen and special nurses were engaged to look after cholera cases alone. Notwithstanding all precau-

tions, the disease spread and quite a panic seized the people. This especially applied to Highlanders and other strangers employed at the herring fishing, who "bolted" in such numbers that outside fishermen had to proceed home with their boats, while district men had to "lay their craft ashore." The fleet dwindled away to a mere shadow of its former self, the final result being a paralysis of the local herring trade.

When news of the outbreak of cholera at Fraserburgh had penetrated to the furthest corners of the country, the town was thoroughly boycotted. Nobody came to Fraserburgh that could avoid doing so. The pushing and hustling "commercial," who certainly is not easily put past one's door, was conspicuous by his absence. He even, took the "funk," which was a fair indication of the evil reputation which the town had earned. Of course there was always the adventurous spirit among the travellers, such as the late well-known Mr. John M'Lennan, who rather liked the idea of braving the dangers of the plague-stricken town, but on the other hand, the great body of the commercials gave the place a wide berth. Matters came to such a pass that natives going to neighbouring towns, or cities in the south, were often placed in a very uncomfortable position. Whenever it became known that they had come from cholera-afflicted Fraserburgh, people with whom they were speaking, became visibly uncomfortable, and took the first opportunity of beating a hasty retreat. Even business people in the south did not care to come into too close personal contact with some of their best customers from Fraserburgh. Many instances could be given of this feeling of dread having been shown by strangers. One conspicuous example of it arises in the minutes, where it is clearly shown that "funk" got possession of the people at Peterhead. Terror—and it is said that only the terrors of death itself will frighten a Peterhead man—made the good folks of Peterhead break the laws of our realm, and gave the authorities of Fraserburgh an opportunity of dealing a smart correctional blow at them, a chance which the Broch people willingly embraced. The minute explains itself. It is dated 17th August, 1866, and says: "The meeting directed the Clerk to write the Secretary of the Board of Supervision for his opinion as to the legality of the Local Authorities at Peterhead prohibiting the entrance into their Harbours of open Herring Boats prosecuting the fishing at Fraserburgh, and which may be driven to Peterhead by stress of weather." The minute shows the state of public feeling at the time.

In those days there was not much love lost between the inhabitants of Fraserburgh and Peterhead; but going the extreme length of denying refuge to the storm-tossed Fraserburgh fishing boats, and risking the crew's lives at sea, were carrying the cholera scare rather too far, thought the "Broch" dignitaries. They promptly communicated with Edinburgh, and at a meeting held on 21st August, the minute reads: "A letter from the Secretary to the Board of Supervision was laid before the meeting, in which he stated that the Peterhead Authorities had exceeded their powers in printing bills prohibiting the Fishermen of Fraserburgh taking shelter in Peterhead Harbour." It is thus

seen that the Fraserburgh people got the better of their Peterhead friends for once. It was an unusual achievement, and, no doubt, so far as the troublous times would allow, there had been great jubilation over the incident in the "Broch." Of course the Peterhead folks must have known that a "Broch" boat would never have gone to Peterhead if it could have gone elsewhere.

When the epidemic was at its height, the death-rate was very high, and the duration of illness in many cases, only a few hours. It had a terribly depressing effect on one to find a person, whom one had seen on the streets in the evening, dead and buried by twelve o'clock next day. One typical case, showing the dreadfully fatal nature of the trouble, may be given. On 30th August a hired man from the Highlands named Hugh Ross, who was perfectly well, left the south harbour in his boat in the afternoon, bound for the fishing ground. When the craft was nearing Cairnbulg Point, it was noticed that she lowered her sail, reset it on the other tack, and made for the harbour. On arrival, the man Ross was landed, quite doubled up and writhing in agony, being wholly in the strong clutches of fully developed cholera. He was carried on a stretcher to the hospital, but died shortly after being admitted. On this occasion the seizure, illness, and death occupied only an hour or two. This particular case is referred to in the Police Commissioners' minutes, but the author as a boy was a witness of the boat sailing, returning again to the harbour, and the landing of poor Ross, whose face was quite distorted with the agonizing pain which was overwhelming him. People who died of the disease were buried at once, with the result that interments took place morning, noon, and evening. The hearse was much in evidence wending its way to Kirkton, and the town for a long period had quite a sepulchral air. At funerals the mourners were conspicuous by their absence, as it was a popular belief that getting near a coffin, in which there was a cholera corpse, meant almost certain infection. This was the explanation of the difficulty sometimes experienced in getting interments quickly carried out. The regular staff employed at the work had some sort of liquid medicine or antidote, doses of which they took when closing and lifting the coffin, and of which they partook again at the churchyard before taking the coffin out of the hearse or from the carriers. This was supposed to ward off infection. Sometimes at the grave side it was evident, from the peculiar movements of the gravedigger and his assistants, that the antidote they had partaken of, had been prescribed by themselves. And one could easily pardon them, for in those trying and terrifying times they were not altogether to be blamed for taking something to give them "Dutch courage." They may have taken the patent liquid as "medicine," as do some teetotallers of the present day.

As evidence of the forsaken appearance of the town at this time, it has only to be mentioned that on the two sides, especially on the east side, of Broad Street, north of Mid Street, grass grew luxuriantly. Such a crop has never grown again. There were one or two exceptions, but deaths from cholera, as a rule, were confined to the poorer and ill-fed classes and fisher folks, who lived huddled together in wretched houses and in unsanitary surroundings in

the out of the way parts of the town. It is a perfect truth that many people brought on the trouble through sheer fright, and died in consequence. Young people, who had not the sense to appreciate the danger, were practically immune from the trouble, although they roamed through all the infected areas at their own sweet will.

The site of the cholera hospital and the nature of the building have already been referred to. It was a modest place. One half of the ground floor was the hospital, the other half was the convalescent "home," while the loft, next the tiles, in which all kinds of ropemaking material were wont to be stored, was the "sanatorium." The names sound grandly, and no doubt the patients had been impressed with them, but the exact nature of the accommodation had not appeared so refined to the poor patients after actual experience. A stranger who was here during the cholera panic, was passing the hospital, and expressed surprise to one of the Commissioners who was with him at the miserable appearance of the place. "Gweed aneuch for folk to dee in," was the reply of the feeling-hearted Commissioner. Cheapness was the man's ideal of the perfect life!

Notwithstanding all the excitement and "fear and trembling" of the times, the humorous side of things turned up occasionally. Witness the following: "The meeting"—held 4th September, 1866—"instructed the Clerk to pay Lachlan M'Phail his expenses to Aberdeen in search of stolen clothes taken away by Mrs. Philip, Cholera nurse." The nurses were not overpowered by their pay. Mrs. Philip had been paid off a week previously and considering the critical and dangerous nature of her duties, and the inadequacy of the remuneration, she had no doubt satisfied herself that it was no sin to "annex" anything about the hospital that could be easily carried away. Had the people of Aberdeen known that Mrs. Philip had imported into the city clothing that had done duty in Fraserburgh Cholera Hospital, what a hue and cry there would have been! The crime of theft would have sunk into insignificance before that of carrying the cholera into Aberdeen. Nothing happened, and ignorance was bliss in this case.

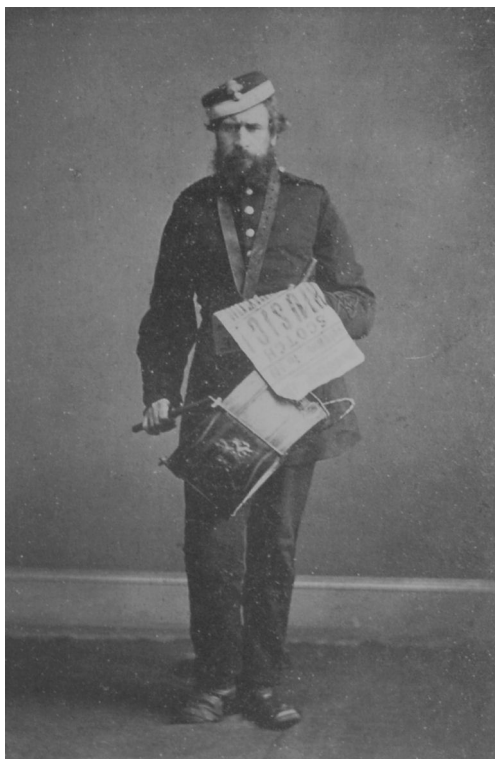
Another nurse from Aberdeen named E. M'Leod, who had been paid along with Philip, found herself stranded in the town. She did not steal with the view of realizing a little capital, but made a formal application to the Commissioners for assistance, and she got it. The minute says: "A letter was handed from E. M'Leod, late Cholera nurse, stating that she was very ill off and had no where to go. The meeting considered that she had no further claim on the Committee in consequence of her having given up her situation two or three different times, and was therefore dismissed for neglect of duty; but on account of her not getting work, in consequence of her being a Cholera nurse, the meeting agreed to give five shillings." Prodigious! Five shillings! What an inducement to steal; honesty evidently does not always pay: as between the two women, Philip, the thief, had certainly the best of it.

When the cholera epidemic had exhausted itself, the matter of fact side of

affairs began to be discussed. The Commissioners had a long serious discussion as to what rent should be paid for the hospital buildings, which included the "hospital," "convalescent home," and "sanatorium." The following minute shows that they were shrewd business men, and capital financiers: "The subject of rent for the Rope Work, occupied as a Cholera Hospital and Sanatorium was under discussion and the meeting was unanimously of opinion that five pound would be a fair and reasonable rent." This is worthy of comparison with the 5s. awarded the impecunious nurse, and showed how careful the municipal rulers of Fraserburgh were in those days. Times have changed greatly. There was lately erected an Infectious Diseases Hospital for Fraserburgh at a cost of between £6,000 and £7,000, which will cost the ratepayers nearly £1,000 per year for maintenance. Such a violent change in the old order of things is enough to make the careful authorities of the past turn in their graves. With regard to the Fraserburgh Cholera Hospital, it is most probable that the Commissioners got off for payment of the £5; for nothing more is heard of the subject in the minutes. The cholera outbreak at Fraserburgh extended from the end of July to 30th November, 1866, and the whole expense thereof to the town, as contained in a minute of January, 1867, amounted to the very moderate sum of £230. No doubt the people of that day thought it big enough, as it necessitated the imposition of a rate of assessment of 1s. per £, which rate shows that the assessable rental of the burgh 40 years ago was only £4,600. If the Commissioners got off cheaply with the rent of the Cholera Hospital, they made a still better bargain in purchasing it outright. Financiers, such as ruled the destinies of Fraserburgh 47 years ago, are not agoing nowadays, and in these days of extravagant finance, local public men might well ponder over the following minute of date June, 1867: "The meeting authorized the Clerk to pay John Wallace £13 15s. as the purchase price of the House formerly occupied as an Hospital at the Links." Here is an object lesson in finance! The ratepayers surely could not have expected to buy a thorough-going, fully-equipped epidemic-hospital at much less than £13 15s.! They were determined to provide a cholera hospital for the next outbreak, whatever the cost might be! Fortunately, cholera never again made its appearance in Fraserburgh; and the old building, after doing service as an infectious hospital for a good many years was at last razed to the ground, the only tangible memorials of both the ropework and the cholera outbreak disappearing together at "one fell blow."

After this date (1866) the records of the Police Commissioners become very prosaic and matter of fact, and yield no suitable return to the gleaner after the quaint and curious. The author is therefore obliged to bid them farewell; but he does not leave them without being deeply sensible of the vast amount of "interesting information" which it has been his good fortune to draw from them.

Further general information relative to Fraserburgh will form the concluding chapter of "Fraserburgh—Past and Present."



THE LATE WM. WILSON ("BOBBIE LINKIE.")

ANOTHER FRASERBURGH CHARACTER, WHO WAS TOO SIMPLE-MINDED
TO BE A SOLDIER AND WAS PRESENTED WITH HIS DISCHARGE, BUT
WAS GOOD ENOUGH TO BE THE TOWN CRIER OF FRASERBURGH FOR
SOME YEARS.

CHAPTER III.

FRASERBURGH CHURCHES AND MINISTERS.

In the olden days, the history of the Church was practically the history of the people. The spiritual head of a town or parish, whether situated in the north or south of Scotland, was the central figure among the people, whose influence with a poorly-educated class, was, one can easily understand, second only to that of the King upon the Throne. Whether the early inhabitants of the town and parish of Fraserburgh were remarkable for their piety, there is no means of knowing. No doubt there had been the bigot, and also the religious enthusiast in the days of religious stress and struggle, but no surviving records refer to any great religious outburst in this district in covenanting times, telling how Buchan zealots defied the enemy for conscience' sake, and bared their breasts to the sword of the hireling dragoon, rather than surrender principles which were dearer to them than very life itself. No! there are no great heroics to tell in connection with the past religious life of the Fraserburgh district, by means of which the historian would be able to paint in grandiloquent language, sufficient to move the feelings of even the philosophic religionist of to-day, a story of the devotional virtues, or splendid fortitude, in the midst of the rising tide, or the burning pile, of the persecuted worshippers of Buchan of 350 years ago. No doubt, at the Reformation, at the Disestablishment of the Episcopal Church in 1689, and again at the Disruption of 1843, feeling must have run high in Fraserburgh, as it did everywhere else; but there has been at no time any outburst of popular feeling sufficiently important to illumine a page of history. For a good many years after 1689 there was a great deal of bickering between the Presbyterians and Episcopalians—reference to which will be afterwards made—for possession of the church, and, as is well known, the Disruption in 1843 created deadly feuds between families, and much ill-feeling in the town; but, on the whole, the religious history of the parish lacks that brilliancy and wealth in splendid deeds of self-sacrifice which make glorious for ever the names of many sequestered spots in the south of Scotland.

If Aberdeenshire coldness robs the inhabitant of the imaginative impulsive, and highly-strung nature of the Greek, the Italian, or the Spaniard, whose country's glorious past history, in the fine arts, literature, and on the battlefield, is the outcome of temperament, Aberdonians have compensating qualities, possessing strength of character, a dogged determination that scarcely knows defeat, and a masterful will that has brushed aside all opposition

and carried them to the front rank in the battle of life all over the world. Although the religious life of the ancient natives of Buchan, in keeping with the traditional quiet of a district far removed from the busy centres of commerce and political activity, has been handed down to the present generation unadorned by great deeds of self-devotion and self-sacrifice on the part of the old forefathers, the present-day people cannot, for that reason, be excused for not being interested in any particulars that may be forthcoming regarding Fraserburgh Churches and ministers, past and present, however quiet and uneventful the story may be.

At the time of the Reformation in 1560, and long before that time, the parish now known as Fraserburgh was named Philorth; Fraserburgh then, presumably, consisting of a few huts inhabited by poor fishermen. It has been accepted by several authorities that the old Church of Philorth stood in the old churchyard, and it was assumed by a modern writer that the east and west walls of the low-roofed, little house which still stands in the old churchyard and forms the mausoleum of the Frasers of Park, were the remains of the walls of the last Church of Philorth. This theory has proved entirely wrong. While the last extension of the cemetery was being carried out in 1910, the workmen came upon the foundations of the old church walls, and actually found, judging from its size and shape, the key of the door of the Church of Philorth. The foundations were so substantial and well-defined, that there is not the slightest reason to doubt that the exact location and dimensions of the ancient edifice have been finally and unquestionably settled. The church stood at the west end of the old or original churchyard, and part of the foundations were found outside and part inside the west enclosing wall. What a story the old stones could tell of the religious life of the district, when the Church of Rome reigned supreme, and when the jovial monks of Chapelton and those of Chapelhill, fraternized with the easy-going priests of Philorth! It has been declared that the Roman Catholic Church was her own executioner in this country, as well as in Germany. Grown effete through the luxurious and easy-going life of her clergy, the Church was unable to withstand the burning eloquence and furious assaults of Luther and Knox. The people wanted a real living religion that would be daily and hourly with them, as a talisman to guide and shape their lives. The gorgeous service and elaborate ritual of the Romish Church, beautiful and impressive though they be, did not suit the religious tendency of the age, and hence the Reformation. When one thinks of the barren and sparsely-inhabited condition of Buchan 350 years ago, one has some excuse for the monks and priests of the age indulging in a little free enjoyment. For that time of day, these priests were highly educated men, many, no doubt, having attended colleges on the Continent. The natives were entirely destitute of education, some, indeed, scarcely coming within the pale of civilization. It was therefore natural that the priest and the people should have little in common, the single-minded, evangelical, and hard-working priest not asserting himself in those days. Too severe strictures must

not, therefore, be passed upon the monks and priests of old, who had charge of the Fraserburgh district up to the middle of the sixteenth century. They must often have had a weary and tedious time in a cold, inhospitable climate.

One can imagine the Chapelhill monks trudging over the Gallowhill and past Fatson's Loch, while the Chapelton worthies would take a bee-line past Tyronhill, both parties shaping their course for Kirkton, where the cares of duty and a feeling of ennui begotten of loneliness would be, for one brief night at least, forgotten at the festive board of the worthy brotherhood. The last remains of the Chapel of Chapelton, which was situated on the old Strichen road, somewhere between Tyronhill and Broomhead, and which originally was "run" by the monks of Deer, disappeared only in the beginning of last century, having been utilized by sacrilegious farmers in the district in the building of stables and byres, etc., which formed a mighty descent from the uses to which the consecrated buildings were originally put by the holy fathers of a past age. The monks of Deer were Cistercians, and seem as a rule to have been men of high character. Their last Abbot was Robert Keith, brother of the Earl Marischal, "famous for learning and purity of life." His Prior, one Samuel (buried at Rosslyn) was an eminent mathematician. Attached to the Chapel or College of Chapelton, in the dark ages, was a famous well, which is mentioned in the old statistical account. Hundreds of years ago, people were wont to come and drink of the well, believing that its waters had the power, if a token or trinket were left for the Chapel, of curing various bodily or mental ailments. If the stories and lore of the old people of the district, most of whom are dead long ago, could be believed, the neighbourhood of the well was a favourite meeting-place of the fairies and witches and warlocks of the district. It can well be imagined that in the moonlight, at this secluded sylvan spot, some of the lady fairies had addressed their lovers in the language of Venus:—

"Bid me discourse, I will enchant thine ear,
Or, like a fairy, trip upon the green,
Or, like a nymph, with long, dishevelled hair
Dance on the sands, and yet no footing seen."

Many of those who came in search of the healing waters of the well, and at a late hour, from a distance, were said to have seen strange figures floating about, and to have heard unearthly sounds, which had a much greater effect upon the poor invalids than gallons of the holy water. This old-world lore is no doubt like other fables, but the story is a pretty one for the dour district of Buchan, and it would be a pity were it blotted out of the memories of the present and coming generations.

The site of the Chapel of Chapelhill is still marked on the Ordnance Survey map, and is situated in a field in the immediate vicinity of Glenbuchtly. It is greatly to be deplored that no records survive to tell the story of the religious life and movements in this immediate quarter prior to 1560, when the

Pope was the Head of the Church. It is not likely that any great event or series of events happened in the life of the Church in or around Fraserburgh, otherwise some part of the story would have been handed down orally from generation to generation, or have found its way to the light of the present day in written form, however mutilated and fragmentary the evidence might have been. According to an old authority "the old Church of Philorth stood among the sands. It was dedicated to Saint Medan, a Bishop in great favour with King Couran about 503." It is said that history repeats itself. Some day, when the people have travelled far enough along the road of High Churchism, an attempt may be made to sanctify old Zion, by the issue of a sacerdotal fiat, proclaiming that from that day forward the old house in Saltoun Square shall be known only by the name of Saint Modan. At one time the old Church of Philorth was a Prebend of Aberdeen, which meant that the minister of Philorth was attached to the Cathedral Church of Aberdeen, part of the maintenance of which came from Philorth.

The exact year when Philorth was dropped and Fraserburgh substituted, as regards the Church, has never been quite definitely ascertained, but that it was in the beginning of the eighteenth century there is no reason to doubt. In the churchyard one tombstone describes the Rev. James Moore, who died in 1703, as "Parson of Philorth and minister of Fraserburgh," while another tombstone, erected to the memory of his son in 1717, designates him "Minister of the Gospel at Fraserburgh." The last named was superseded by another minister in 1707, and it may be safely assumed that the drastic change of suppressing the name Philorth, by which the church had been known from time immemorial, and putting in its place that of Fraserburgh, took place about the year last mentioned. That was the year when Episcopacy received "a knock-out blow" and when Presbyterianism was, for the first time, firmly established in Fraserburgh. The fight between Presbyterian and Episcopalian raged most furiously among the people and the ecclesiastical leaders of reform, and the triumph of Presbyterianism in 1707 may account for the change in the name of the parish. Naturally the Presbyterians, in sweeping away all Episcopal memories would also wish to place in oblivion all names that recalled the Roman Catholic and Episcopalian lease of power, and that among the things that had to go, was the name Philorth. This, at any rate, is a reasonable theory to propound, and a fair conclusion to come to on the point.

The church at Kirkton did duty up to 1574, in which year a new church was built by Sir Alexander Fraser, the founder of Fraserburgh. This church occupied the site on which the present Parish Church now stands, a site that is unequalled for the purpose in Fraserburgh, and another proof of the sagacity and wisdom of this wonderful man. Although the church built in 1574 disappeared more than a century ago, it was understood to be a wonderful building for the age in which it was erected, and much superior to anything of the kind in the district at the time.

Immediately after the Reformation in 1560, there was no regularly-

appointed minister in Fraserburgh. When the Roman Catholics were expelled from power, there was not a sufficiently large number of men of the new persuasion in Scotland well enough educated to undertake the duties of pastors. Indeed, the whole staff available or qualified for the ministry over the length and breadth of Scotland totalled under a score of men. The leaders of the Reformation had to do their best under the circumstances, and their first work was to appoint, not ministers, but readers to the different parishes. This arrangement may appear strange in the eyes of people of the present day, but these readers were a necessity of the age which called them into being. They were devout men, sincere in their belief of the necessity for the Reformation, who were able to read the Scriptures and the prayers from Knox's Liturgy to the people. They were in short a stop gap, until fully qualified ministers should be available to fill the pulpits all over the country. Some of these readers got the length of propounding the Scriptures, and a few of them ultimately found their way into pulpits as ministers of the Church. Being an out-of-the-way and unimportant parish, Fraserburgh and Philorth had to be contented with a reader as its spiritual head for a period of sixteen years. Who the reader in Fraserburgh was during the first few years that followed the Reformation, history telleth not, but from 1567 to 1574 the position was filled by a Mr. David Bradie, who, judging by his name, must have come over from Ireland.

The times were dark when Mr. Bradie laboured in Fraserburgh, and only his name remains to testify to his work. The dawn was beginning to appear, however, and the light of knowledge had made sufficient progress to enable the authorities to appoint, in 1576, the Rev. David Howesoun to be parson of Philorth and minister of Fraserburgh. The difficulty the people had in finding "supply" at this time may be judged from the fact that not only was Mr. Howesoun parson of Philorth and Fraserburgh, but had also charge of the parishes of Aberdour, Gamrie, and Tyrie. Many of the old Church records of this district are full of charges against, and punishments inflicted on "sinners" and backsliders of various kinds and degrees; but really, when one reads that a single minister had care of the spiritual needs of four parishes so widely apart, one can somewhat excuse the poor people, in those days of ignorance and easy morals, for slightly wandering from the strict path of virtue. The maligned population could not have been so bad as was painted. At any rate, if a comparison is to be drawn between the people of 300 years ago and those of to-day, the present population, with a dozen of preachers for one in the old days, should be all saints.

Mr. Howesoun laboured in Fraserburgh till 1593, when the Rev. David Rattray, from Bervie, was appointed minister of the parish. There is evidence that he was a scholarly man, for when Faithlie received the name of Fraserburgh and was created a free port and burgh of regality, Mr. Rattray celebrated the event in a Latin verse of lofty strain, which is already referred to. He severed his connection with Fraserburgh in 1598, having that year been appointed to the parish of Cruden. He was followed by the Rev. Charles

Fairholme, or Ferme, who in 1598 became parish minister. Mr. Fairholme became an outstanding figure in his day, partly on account of his scholarship and strength of character, and partly on account of his position as Principal of the University of Fraserburgh. Further notice of Mr. Fairholme is given in the reference made to Fraserburgh University in the chapter on "Schools and Schoolmasters."

The next minister of Fraserburgh, who was translated from Kinbattock parish, was the Rev. William Forbes. He conducted the religious affairs of the parish for a quarter of a century without any noteworthy event being recorded. Happy man to leave such a record in times of struggle and strife! Mr. Forbes was succeeded, in 1643, by the Rev. John Hay, A.M., minister of Rafford. The ecclesiastical temperature of Fraserburgh must have been rising to an unhealthy level at this time. Mr. Hay's constitution evidently did not take kindly to the climate of the parish, for after struggling for seven years to preach peace and concord to the hearts of the people, he must have failed, as he resigned and cleared out of inhospitable Buchan about 1650 or 1651. Scott's "Fasti" says: "He [Mr. Forbes] wrote a censure of the Service Booke, which was presented to the Assembly, 7th Dec., 1638, who thought it should be printed with others on that subject."

The next minister of Fraserburgh—Rev. Arthur Forbes, A.M.—came from the parish of Inverwick. The fight between the Presbyterians and Episcopalians in the parish was waxing hotter and hotter, and the evil reputation of the people had evidently become public property all over the country. It would appear that Mr. Forbes had been a sweet-tempered and amiable man, little able to control such an unruly and obstinate people as the inhabitants of Fraserburgh then were. The mass of the people of the town and district were intensely Episcopalian, and made "a dead set" against the introduction of anything that pertained to Presbyterianism. Every advance made by the latter in connection with Church matters, was met with tumultuous opposition from the Episcopalians, and so unenviable a character had the people earned for themselves that the Presbytery of Edinburgh was afraid to sanction the settlement in Fraserburgh of such a mild mannered man as Mr. Forbes. The Synod however, had a different opinion, and made the appointment. Mr. Forbes proved a greater success than was expected, for he remained in office for seven years and died in Edinburgh in August, 1663.

The man that became minister of Fraserburgh after Mr. Forbes was the Rev. James Moore, a stalwart Episcopalian, who never budged an inch from the tenets he believed in. Authorities seem to differ as to the date when he became "parson of Philorth and minister of Fraserburgh." Scott's "Fasti" puts it at about 1666, whereas Moore's tombstone says that he died in March, 1703, after having been minister of Fraserburgh for a period of forty-four years. This would bring his appointment at Fraserburgh down to 1659.

During the Commonwealth of Cromwell, Presbyterianism forged slowly ahead in the North; but in Fraserburgh the people did not seem to take

kindly to it. The official recognition of the Presbyterian form of religion by the State came to an abrupt end in 1660, when Charles II. ascended the Throne. The Episcopal ritual became the State religion in 1662. While the poor Covenanters of the south strongly objected to this, and were being hunted, harried, and killed in consequence, the people of Fraserburgh and district apparently favoured the change. There are no indications in old records of any discord in the parish—far less martyrs. The northern air was evidently too strong for a healthy growth of the true and soul-stirring Covenanting spirit, concerning which the south-western counties of Scotland will ever remain a sort of Mecca for the religious enthusiasts of the true Protestant persuasion. Samuel Rutherford, exiled to Aberdeen, found the people “cold and unco.” The Rev. James Moore remained in undisturbed possession of the parish, and discharged his pastoral duties as Episcopal parish minister with credit to himself and much satisfaction to his people for a long term of years.

The lengthened calm in Buchan was rudely broken by the Accession of William and Mary and the abolition of the Scottish Episcopal Church in 1689. At this date the number of Episcopalians in the district must have considerably exceeded that of Presbyterians, because Mr. Moore remained in charge of the parish without serious question for a dozen years after the Disestablishment. Had Fraserburgh Presbyterians been in the majority and had had a minister ready to “step” into the pulpit, the Episcopalians would have got short shrift. But as a matter of fact, so weak was Presbyterianism in Aberdeenshire at this period, that the Presbyteries of Deer, Ellon, and Garioch were conjoined as one. Mr. Moore had no doubt, got many formal notices to quit, but those at the head of the new order of things being impotent to enforce their orders, he defied the changed law and remained in possession of the church and manse till the day of his death on 23rd March, 1703. His remains were interred in “the ministers’ ground” in Fraserburgh Churchyard and a tablet, placed in the wall, to his memory has the following: “Here lyeth the Body of the Reverend Mr. James Moore, Parson of Philorth and Minister of Fraserburgh, the space of 44 years, who died 23 March, A.D. 1703, and of his age 73.” A shield and open book, surrounded by a scroll, appear on the stone with a Latin inscription, which has been translated as follows: “This open book denotes a diligent pastor, such as the testimony of his flock proves deceased to have been. He faithfully discharged his apostolic office, praying and working, and his deeds at length follow him. He shines with greater brilliance than the stars, he lives secure from eclipse, and surpasses the sunbeams in splendour.” (Henderson’s “Aberdeenshire Epitaphs, Etc.”). Mr. Moore may have been a good man and a devout and hardworking minister, but the eulogy here is distinctly extravagant. Fancy a man who was probably never heard of beyond the bounds of the Presbytery of Deer shining with greater brilliancy than the stars and surpassing the sunbeams in splendour! The writer of the lines must have been referring to the stars seen on a foggy night in Buchan. It would be interesting to know what the ardent Presbyterians of that day thought of this

panegyric. They must have shut their eyes every time they passed out and in at the churchyard gate.

The next minister of the parish, according to Scott's "Fasti," is the Rev. Alexander Moore, A.M., son of the immediately preceding pastor, who is named as succeeding his father in 1703. Strictly speaking Mr. Alexander Moore was never minister of the parish of Fraserburgh. He was a strong Episcopalian, and notwithstanding that Presbyterianism was now the State form of religion, he absolutely refused to conform to its tenets. He seems to have been highly respected by the people, and to have had a strong following in the parish, a circumstance which probably accounts for his having taken unlawful possession of the church and manse. From the day that he commenced pastoral work in the parish there was nothing but turmoil and strife, notably on the part of the people and the minister on the one side, and the Presbytery of Deer on the other. The district authority instituted by law, *viz.*, the Presbytery and Synod, never recognized Mr. Moore as minister of Fraserburgh, and as he remained a strict Episcopalian to the last, it is rather a misnomer to call him minister of Fraserburgh.

From 1703 to 1707 the Presbytery of Deer had a very trying time in endeavouring to get the charge at Fraserburgh filled by a minister of the true Presbyterian faith. Time after time their efforts in this direction were baffled by Mr. Moore and his supporters, who were numerically very strong and possessed of the sympathy of some of the leading men in the district. One of these was William Fraser, the eleventh Lord Saltoun, a man of undoubted grit and capacity. He it was who was married to a daughter of Archbishop Sharp, of St. Andrews, who was murdered by a party of Fife Covenanters, headed by Balfour of Kinloch, on Magus Muir, in May, 1679. It may not be amiss to mention here that Archbishop Sharp was a native of Banff, his father having been Sheriff-Clerk of Banffshire in the early part of the seventeenth century. The Lord Saltoun referred to, although an Episcopalian, was an out and out supporter of the reigning House, and although his sympathies were with the adherents of the disestablished Church, he showed great prudence and circumspection in dealing with the various phases of the dispute and the people who were the cause of it. The Presbytery saw quite plainly that Mr. Moore was popular with the people, and that the enforcement of their authority was to be somewhat delayed, but they continued the struggle with dogged determination, and in the long run were rewarded with victory, which put an end to the "insurrection."

A series of very interesting articles, entitled "A Ten Years' Conflict," bearing on the fight in Buchan between Presbyterians and Episcopalians in the early years of the eighteenth century, appeared in issues of "The Scottish Chronicle" during the latter half of 1906. The subject-matter of these articles is based on the records of the Presbytery of Deer and is therefore not only interesting but accurate. The extracts of minutes only, are taken from those articles. The amount of matter referring to the Church of Fraserburgh, and

the duel fought for its possession, which the articles contain, would almost make a volume in themselves. To a certain class of readers every word would be interesting, but only extracts that are likely to afford enjoyable reading to the bulk of Fraserburgh people and the general reader, have been selected for the purposes of this book.

The first minute of any importance on the subject is dated 7th April, 1703, and refers to the death of the Rev. James Moore, who had, as already shown, been minister (Episcopal) of the parish for over forty years. The minute reads as follows: "This day, upon sufficient information of the death of Mr. James Moor, late minister at Fraserburgh, the Presbytery appoints Mr. James Brown to go to the town of Fraserburgh upon a week day, with his first convenience, taking with him a nottar and witnesses, and to require the keys of the Church door, first from the Kirk Officer, next from the present Bailiff of the town, and, in case of refusal, to require them from my Lord Saltoun, and if he also deny them he is to take instruments in the hands of the nottar upon every one his refusal, and in case of getting access he is to preach at the Kirk of Fraserburgh on Sabbath come eight days."

It is quite evident from the wording of the minute that the Presbytery anticipated trouble to their representative, Mr. Brown, at Fraserburgh. They knew the temper and the religious convictions of the people in the past. This was the reason the Presbytery and Synod did not attempt the removal of Mr. Moore, sen., from office during his lifetime. He was an old man and they considerately, it must be allowed, permitted him to occupy the manse and preach in the church till death removed him from the troubles that beset him and his Church on every side. When the old man died the Presbytery determined to delay action no longer, and the battle began. Mr. Brown, one of the ministers and a member of the Presbytery, went to Fraserburgh as directed, but his mission failed. One can quite understand that the first attempt to force Presbyterianism on a people almost wholly given to Episcopacy was doomed to failure. Considering the temper of the people, it was to be expected that the emissary of the Presbytery would meet with a "hot" reception, but instead of that, he seems to have been treated with cold indifference and scant respect. His position as ambassador was not to be envied, as the following minute shows:—

"Sessio 2da May 4, 1703, at Deer."

"Mr. Brown reporteth that he went to Fraserburgh, and required the keys from the several persons as he was appointed, and, being denied the same, he took three instruments thereupon in the hands of John Bisset, nottar public, and witnesses, which instruments, being drawn up in due form, are sent south to John Blair, agent for the Kirk, that application be made to the Privie Counsell, according to law. The Presbytery approves Mr. Brown his diligence in the said affair."

Mr. Moore, son of the previously mentioned Mr. Moore, would not withdraw his claims to the charge, and much of the time and attention of the

Presbytery during 1703 was taken up with the dispute at Fraserburgh; but month after month passed without one step of progress being made. This did not mean that the Presbytery sat with folded hands and allowed things to drift. That would be totally unlike the Presbytery of Deer. They represented the case to the Commission of the General Assembly, who in turn placed it before the Scotch Lord Chancellor and the Privy Council; but as the Scotch Parliament and Crown officials were busily engaged arranging the Union, such a paltry affair as a Church row in Fraserburgh would have to work itself out, or wait till the important affairs of State were disposed of. The result was that the dispute was as near a settlement at the close as it was at the beginning of 1703. The years 1704 and 1705 passed over with the dispute still raging. Had Mr. Moore, though reared an Episcopalian, accepted the tenets of the Established Presbyterian Church and subscribed the Confession of Faith, it is probable that he would have been appointed minister of Fraserburgh without further ado, but he unreasonably, and one would almost say foolishly, claimed the church while remaining a full-fledged Episcopalian. The position was an absurd one to take up, and time showed that it was untenable. Meanwhile the fight went on. About this period of the dispute the Presbytery expressed great anxiety for the lamentable state and condition of the town and parish of Fraserburgh. They said there was a great increase of wickedness in the place, and that "there were many fugitives from discipline." Of course, the Presbytery would make the most of this lamentable state of affairs, and no doubt unconsciously exaggerated it, in order to hurry on the appointment of a Presbyterian minister. Old Church records all over the country continued continually to refer to "the wickedness of the people." Truly, the patriarchal ministers must have been all saints, in their own estimation, or had coined the phrase as some excuse for their existence. People could not have been constituted worse in those days than they are now, and it would be a libel to say that ministers then were better men and more spiritually minded than those of to-day.

The Presbytery made another appeal by letter, to Lord Saltoun to help them to get a minister appointed to the vacant charge, but his lordship replied to their representative verbally, that he and the other parishioners had signed a call to Mr. Moore, which call had been offered to the Moderator of the Presbytery at his own house. The Presbytery's representative pointed out that this step was irregular and that the application should have been made to the Presbytery and not to the Moderator. Just about the close of 1705 the Presbytery got somewhat anxious about Mr. Moore's movements and his visit south for ordination purposes, and at a hastily-called meeting the brethren resolved upon a more active policy, with the view of curbing the ambition and "clipping" the ecclesiastical wings of this troublesome divine. The minute containing the Presbytery's resolution on the subject is as follows:—

"At Aberdour, December 4, 1705."

"The said day the Presbytery being mett pro re nata, the several brethren

being advertised by a Letter from the Moderator; present Mr. Udny, Moderator, Mr. Brown, Mr. Law, Mr. Farquhar, and Mr. Anderson.

“The Moderator reported the reason of his calling the brethren at this time, which was, that being informed that Mr. Alex. Moor, intruder at Frazerburgh, is gone South to Angus upon the design, as is supposed, to be put in orders by the late Bishop of Aberdeen, and to return to Frazerburgh to officiate and minister there. The brethren having heard the Moderator did approve of his diligence in calling them together, and after serious consideration of the said affair, resolved to draw up a true and impartial information of Mr. Moor, his carriage and behaviour towards the judicatures of the Church, as also an account of the Presbytery’s lenity and tenderness to him all along, before and since his father’s death—and the samens in two doubles to be sent South, one of them to Mr. George Meldrum, minister of the Throne Church of Edinburgh, and the other to Mr. David Williamson, minister of the West Church of Edinburgh, to be by them represented to Her Majesty’s Advocate. Also a Letter is appointed to be written herewith to the said Lord Advocate, and another to John Blair, Agent, that they, being fully informed of the said matter, may be in a condition to obviate any evil design with respect to the Church of Frazerburgh; as also to inform the Agent to cause put in one, Mr. Alex. Craig, in the said Council Letters, who ofttime intrudeth into the said Church of Frazerburgh. All which were done before the rising of the Presbytery, and were given to Mr. Anderson to be transmitted with all haste. And so the meeting closed with prayer.”

Owing to the political excitement of the times, the machinery of the law moved slowly, and this accounted for the continued defiance of the Presbytery’s orders by Mr. Moore, who, as predicted by the Presbytery, on his return from Angus, continued to “officiate in the Parish Kirk as before.”

The long drawn-out battle between the Fraserburgh Episcopalians and the Presbytery of Deer was slowly moving towards a crisis, the result of which was, in view of the laws of the land, the inevitable defeat of the former. The first substantial note of encouragement for the Presbytery reached them on the 1st January, 1706, and was a real New Year’s Day gift. It took the shape of Scottish Privy Council letters against the Rev. Alexander Moore and the Rev. Alexander Craig, citing them to appear before the Privy Council in Edinburgh, to answer for their conduct in having kept possession of and, as Episcopalians, preached in the Parish Church of Fraserburgh, against the law. Unfortunately the documents arrived too late to be served on the accused to give them time to arrive in Edinburgh on the day named in the libel. The vagaries of the mails in these days could not be fathomed, as they were regular in their irregularities. The postmen were not overpowered with a sense of the responsibility of their office, and it would seem that the convivial hospitalities of an inn or a farm house appealed to the postman with far greater weight than any considerations of duty. The proverb, “Time is money” was evidently not known in the North in the beginning of the

eighteenth century. If it was, its moving spirit and great principle did not trouble our forefathers very much. On account of the citations having "missed fire," a couple of months elapse before the Presbytery can do anything. To their relief the documents came to hand in the beginning of March, as notified:—

"At Crimond, March 12, 1706."

"This day reported by the Moderator that Council Letters are raised against Mr. Moor and Mr. Craig, intruders at Frazerburgh, and the samen are execute by a messenger."

It would appear from the next meeting of Presbytery, held on the 2nd April, 1706, that Mr. Moore and Mr. Craig, though formally cited to do so, did not appear before the Scottish Privy Council. Probably the Council were not sorry at this, as their time was, at this particular juncture, too much taken up with weighty affairs of State to be bothered with the dying embers of an ecclesiastical fire which had so long desolated the land. The object of the Privy Council's edict had, however, been amply fulfilled, as the minute says:—

"At Crimond, April 2, 1706."

"The Moderator reported that Mr. Moor and Mr. Craig, who were cited before the Privie Council, have not gone South, but have desisted from preaching in Frazerburgh, and so there was no sermon in that Church the last Lord's Day. Whereupon Mr. Law is appointed to go to Frazerburgh on any day this week that his convenience can allow him, and to make offer to the magistrates to come and preach on the next Lord's Day, and in case he get access he is to have sermon as said is, and declare the Church vacant."

Mr. Moore and Mr. Craig finding the meshes of the law closing in upon them, and the ruling dynasty firmly established on the throne, with little chance of a change of ruler favourable to their pretensions, "threw up the sponge" and did not attempt to preach again in the Parish Church. This is an interesting epoch in the ecclesiastical history of Fraserburgh, as it would appear that in the month of March, 1706, was the last occasion on which an Episcopalian occupied the pulpit of the Parish Church. Seeing that Episcopacy was overpoweringly strong in the town and district, the last service of that body in the Parish Church must have been a trying one for the minister and his people. As already indicated, the covenanting feeling had never taken any serious hold in the North. In fact, the sympathy of the people was on the other side, and living under these conditions one can understand how bitter would be the feelings of the Episcopalians in this quarter in being so unceremoniously dealt with and ejected from all the churches which they and their parents had worshipped in. Although occupying an illegal position, there are extenuating circumstances in the case, and Mr. Moore has to be excused if he was deeply imbued with loyalty to his Church and fought her battle to the bitter end. He would have been a craven servant if he had not done so. After a touching service, in which the feelings of the pulpit and pew must have been severely tested, one

can imagine the congregation leaving what had been their own church, for the last time on a cold, bleak March day. It must have been a sad dispersal, both for minister and people; for, no doubt, round the old building, from which they were practically debarred for ever, clung many blessed memories of the past. No doubt the Presbyterians had gloried in the discomfiture of their enemies, as the latter had done when the former came to grief at the Restoration. It is a psychological paradox that nothing in this world creates so deadly ill-will, life-long feuds, and want of charity in a nation as do religious differences.

Although Mr. Moore desisted from preaching in the Church and practically renounced all claims to it, the Presbytery could not obtain possession of the building owing to the opposition of the people, who were still determined to oppose, by fair means or foul, the introduction of the Presbyterian form of worship in the town. And so the battle goes on.

At a Presbytery meeting, held on the 3rd April, 1706, very important business was discussed. A letter was read from the Lord Advocate addressed to Lord Saltoun—to be forwarded—“desiring his Lordship to give access to the Presbyterie to preach at Fraserburgh.” Another communication was addressed to the Laird of Boinly (Boyndlie), as a Justice of the Peace, desiring him to assist the Presbytery in getting possession of the church. It may be presumed that the then Laird of Boyndlie was a good Presbyterian. How men and minds change in the course of centuries! The present Laird of Boyndlie is as far removed from Presbyterianism as possible, being a devout Catholic. In conformity with directions the Presbytery appointed the Laird of Boyndlie and the Rev. Mr. Farquhar to proceed to Fraserburgh and take possession of the building, Mr. Farquhar being required to preach the church vacant. The reception which the two peaceful representatives of the Presbytery received at the hands of the populace had better be given as recorded in the Presbytery minutes:—

“At Deer, May 8th, 1706.”

“Also the Moderator reported the reason of calling the Presbyterie at this time that he received a letter from the Laird of Boinly, bearing an account of the great abuse and violent opposition that he and Mr. Farquhar met with at Fraserburgh with some others that were with them, that they suffered a most fierce rable by throwing of stones and other indignities that were done to them—that they got open the Church doors, and Mr. Farquhar did pray in the pulpit, and declared the Church vacant, but was forced out again and could not get opportunity to preach. The Presbytery did approve the Moderator’s diligence in calling them together at this juncture, after which the said affair was taken to their most serious consideration, they did appoint a true representation of the said rabble to be drawn up and sent to John Blair, Agent, to prevent false reports that might be made of the samen, which was done before the rising of the Presbytery. And further, considering that the Synod was to sit next week, they thought fit to refer the whole matter to the said judicatorie for direction and advice.”

It is quite evident that the progress of the two delegates had not been exactly that of "conquering heroes," and reading between the lines, the episode does not reflect very highly on the character of the Fraserburgh Episcopalians of 200 years ago. Still, one need not judge too harshly. It must be remembered that the people were ignorant, and the times pregnant with the spirit of combat, and, above all, *that none can be so ungodly, when vindicating their belief, as a religious mob*. One can well imagine the reception which the Laird and Mr. Farquhar received before entering the church. The people, or "rabble," as the Session picturesquely has it, were not content with booing, groaning, and hurling epithets at the deputation of two, as they made their way to the church, but went to the unreasonable and unfair length of throwing stones at them. The two worthy men must have had a hot time of it "running the gauntlet," and if they escaped the missiles, they must have been experts at "dodging" the shafts of their enemies.

One would have expected that once within the precincts of the sacred building, the Laird and the minister would have been free from further molestation and been permitted to carry out their mission in peace. Not by any means. "Consecrated" ground, even, did not shut the mouths or stay the hands of those determined old Episcopalians. Amidst continued noisy interruptions and angry innuendoes, no doubt Mr. Farquhar managed to pray and declare the church vacant; but when he essayed to preach, it was more than the congregation or "rabble" could tolerate, and a mad rush was made for the pulpit, from which the reverend gentleman was forcibly ejected. He was no coward however, and time after time returned to the pulpit, to be as often forced out of it again by the mob. In "facing such fearful odds," Mr Farquhar showed excellent fighting pluck. It is evident that the Presbytery of Deer, whose militant moods are proverbial all over the North, began to cultivate the art of war early!

While the discreditable scene was being enacted, the tumult, confusion, and noise in the church must have been extraordinary and shocking to those who had any respect for "the House of God." So great was the uproar that the minister's voice was drowned in the noise, and knowing that preaching by dumb show did not save the souls of men, he gave up the attempt and postponed his sermon to a time when the people would be better able to appreciate it. If he and his friend the Laird, did not emerge from the church with that dignity and deportment which would have characterized their movements on any ordinary occasion, no doubt they had been glad to possess their skins whole when they got clear of the crowd. Naturally, the Presbytery was indignant at the scandalous treatment meted out to the Laird of Boyndlie and their representative, and they sent a full report of the proceedings to Mr Blair, Agent of the Church in Edinburgh, so that the Lord Advocate might be able to take legal proceedings against the offenders.

A meeting of the Presbytery was held on the 25th June, 1706. It having been reported at a previous meeting that the Rev. Alexander Moore had

desisted from preaching in the church and town of Fraserburgh, the Presbytery judged it advisable that another attempt at obtaining peaceable possession of the church should be made, and the Rev. James Anderson, minister of Rathen, being nearest, was deputed to make the trial. He reported to the meeting that he had made the attempt but had failed. Mr. Anderson had scarcely finished reading his statement when a communication was received from the Lord Advocate saying that peaceable possession of the church could now be had. It is thought that the dissipation of opposition on the part of the populace was due to the influence of Lord Saltoun, who knew well enough that further breaches of the law and public riot would bring severe punishment upon the foolish and ignorant offenders. In the face of the report from the Lord Advocate and the changed aspect of affairs, the Rev. James Anderson and the Rev. William Law were appointed to preach in Fraserburgh on two successive Sundays. This they did without any opposition or disturbance.

In addition to Lord Saltoun's good advice, it is presumed that the good behaviour of the people may have also been due to a belief that their favourite, the Rev. Alexander Moore, would ultimately be appointed minister of the parish. The outburst of popular feeling that took place when the Presbytery proceeded to appoint another man, showed that there must have been something of this kind in the people's mind. The Presbytery determined, evidently in a quiet way, that the minister to be appointed to the parish of Fraserburgh should be the Rev. Alexander Auchinleck, Probationer, from the parish of Ellon. From the month of July, 1706, when the Presbytery obtained possession of the church, till February, 1707, when the ordination of Mr. Auchinleck was fixed, the services were conducted in the church by members of the Presbytery without any trouble. No doubt the Presbytery, judging by the apparent calm, had imagined that the storm of passion and prejudice had subsided, and that the future would be all plain sailing. If they believed this they were destined to have a rude awakening.

The Rev. Mr. Auchinleck's trial sermons having been approved of, it was decided that he should be ordained minister of Fraserburgh on 4th February, 1707. When this fact became generally known, the people once again worked themselves into what can only be described as violent and unreasonable passion. Episcopalian writers of the present day excuse them—and one can forgive these apologists on the plea that "blood is thicker than water"—on the ground that the attitude of the people was due to disappointment because the Rev. Mr. Moore was not appointed their minister. But this is not a very legitimate excuse. It must be remembered that Mr. Moore could not be an Episcopalian and a Presbyterian at one and the same time. He chose to remain an Episcopalian and therefore could not possibly be Presbyterian minister of Fraserburgh in 1707. It is therefore plainly seen that, denuded of sentiment and a verbiage of words, the Episcopalians of Fraserburgh had no case and no real grievance in fact. In creating an imaginary one they were only pursuing a "will o' the wisp."

The 4th May, 1707, the day fixed for the ordination of the Rev. Alexander Auchinleck, was a memorable one in Fraserburgh, and the scenes enacted in Broad Street and the church do not speak highly of the civilization of the times. The populace having heard that their favourite was not to be appointed to the Church of Fraserburgh, organized a strong and unscrupulous opposing to the induction of Mr. Auchinleck, an opposition that created an uproar seldom equalled in the town. The members of the Presbytery that had the courage to brave the opposition of a lawless mob were: Rev. Andrew Guthrie, Peterhead (Moderator); Rev. James Brown, Aberdour; Rev. Thomas Udney, Strichen; Rev. James Anderson, Rathen; and Rev. John Webster, New Deer, who were accompanied by three members of the Presbytery of Ellon, viz., Rev. David Anderson, minister of Foveran; Rev. William Forbes, Tarves; and Rev. Henry Liklie, Meldrum, as correspondents. The Presbytery must at the last moment have had some premonition of possible disturbance, as instead of going straight to the church, they first landed at the house of Baillie Hay, which, if not a hotel or inn, must have been an establishment of some importance. When installed here they resolved to test the feelings of the people before proceeding to the church. Mr. Anderson having answered that he had served the edict for the ordination of Mr. Auchinleck, the officer of the Presbytery was despatched to call at the principal door of the church if there were any present who objected to the life and doctrine of the presentee, and if so, that they should repair before the Presbytery and state their objections. The opposition must have been well organized, for it had met in the Council House, on the site of which is the present Town House, and was headed by no less a personage than the Master of Saltoun. All the mode of procedure had been carefully arranged for an immediate answer in writing was sent to the Presbytery's challenge, signed by many people, desiring the Presbytery not to settle Mr. Auchinleck, as he was not acceptable to them. To this a verbal reply was despatched to the effect that all the members of the Court had not arrived, but that an answer would be sent immediately the Court was constituted.

The story of the stormy reception accorded the Presbytery, as told by themselves in their minutes of 4th February, 1707, is interesting. It is as follows:—

“The said day the Moderator inquired at Mr. Anderson if he had served the Edict for Mr. Auchinleck as he was appointed—to whom he replied, that he had obliged giving the same duly execute and indorsit, whereupon their Moderator caused their officer to call at the most patent Church door where the Presbytery was convened if there were any to object against the life and doctrine of the said Mr. Auchinleck, that they might compear before the Presbytery. There was none that compeared to object against the life and doctrine of the said Mr. Auchinleck, albeit there was great opposition to the said work by a rable of people, whereof follows a short and true account.”

“The Master of Saltoun being in the town Counsell house with the Magistrates and several other inhabitants about the tyme that the ministers

came into the town the said day, sent a letter subscribed by many hands to the said brethren in their quarters, or ever they went to church for to constitute and call the foresaid Edict, showing that they desired the Presbytery not to settle Mr. Auchinleck among them, because he was not acceptable to them, but gave no particular objection against him as said is, the brethren returned this answer to the bearer by word of mouth, that they had not as yet mett, their members not being all come up, but so soon as they were convened, and constitute, they should consider the samen and return an answer. After which they went to the Church—but as they were going thither they were assaulted on the high street wit a rable of people, who threw stones and dub or mire upon them, pursuing them into the Church with the same weapons, so that they were forced to retire to a corner under a loft that they might think on an answer, and being greatly hindered by the mob foresaid, they sent one of their brethren to speak with the Master and Magistrates foresaid, who were still in the counsell house hard by the Church. Some officers were sent into the Church, who made some shew of silencing them, but to no purpose, the noise and insolent carriage of the said rable still increasing—in the meantime the Edict foresaid was called at the Church door as is above said. At length the Master and Magistrates turning impatient for an answer to their letter, which was retarded as said is, they came into the Church with a great rable at their back, and the said Master being in passion, called furiously for an answer in write, to whom the Moderator answered that he and the Magistrates, being personally present there needed no answer in write, to which the Master replied that if he got not a satisfactory answer in write, he would not undertake to keep off the rable, but let them loose on the Presbyterie, upon which Mr. Thomas Udney, Minister at Strichen, protested that the said Master and Magistrates should be liable for whatever molestation or trouble the Presbytery should sustain in going about this work in settling the place with a Minister, and thereupon took instruments in the hands of Mr. Henry Liklie, Minister at Old Mildrum, clerk *pro tempore*, the Master and Magistrates hereupon removing and expecting an answer as said is; yet the noise of the rable rather increased, so that with great difficulty they got the answer to the letter finished.

“The Presbytery, considering that they could not get the ordination of Mr. Alex. Auchinlek gone about, resolved to retire into their quarters to Baillie Hay his house, and in the meantime appointed three of their own number to carry the said letter to the Master and Magistrates sitting still in the Counsell house, *viz.*, Mr. Guthrie, Mr. Brown, and Mr. Anderson, which they delivered to the said Master who, having read the samen, and not finding it satisfactory, returned this answer that they would come to their meeting to protest against their procedure. The Moderator, Mr. Guthry, in the name of the Presbytery, required of the said Master and Magistrates that they should by their power and authority compesce the rable and tumult, that no disturbance might be given to the worship of God, and if the said disturbance should not be stayed he declared that they behaved to take such methods for settling of the minister

as necessity would allow—upon all which he protested and took instruments in the hands of Alex. Gordon, town-clerk of Frazerburgh, present in the said Counsell, after which these Commissioners did remove to their quarters to their brethren, and in their way thither they mett with great trouble from the rable, as had also the rest of the brethren in their return from the Church. And while they were taking the said affair into their consideration the said Master of Salton with Magistrates came in with a great rable about them, and gave in a protestation in write against the procedure of the Presbtyery in settling Mr. Auchinleck, and thereupon required and took instruments in the hands of Mr. James Anderson, clerk of the Presbyterie; and, while they were removing, one of the Bailies returned and told the Presbyterie that they were going to burn their answer to the Master's letter, and so the rable removed to attend the said solemnity in the meantime.

"The Presbyterie, considering that there was no objection made against the life and doctrine of the said Mr. Auchinleck, as also that they could not set about the said work in that orderly way as it required, resolved to ordain the said Mr. Auchinleck in the same chamber where they were, and Mr. Udney, after prayer, proposing the usual questions to him, and he returning satisfactory answers thereto, he was ordained to the function of the holy ministry by prayer and imposition of the hands of the Presbyterie according to the laudable practise of this Church, before several gentlemen and others present as witnesses, after which the brethren gave him the right hand of fellowship. During this time there was great quietness, because the table was convened about the Cross with the beating of a drum to see the Presbyterie their answer burnt or else a double thereof; and so the work was very peaceably gone about at that tyme."

The Presbyterie, on leaving Baillie Hay's house to proceed to the church, met with the reception that was accorded the Laird of Boyndlie and his reverend friend only a short time previously. They were followed by a howling and threatening crowd, who indulged in stone- and mud-throwing, the bombardment of the ministers continuing even inside the church.

Church disputes in Fraserburgh in recent times have bulked largely in the ecclesiastical horizon, and have created the bitterest ill-feeling among wide circles of people, but the disputants never indulged in mud-throwing, except by word of mouth, not to mention stone-throwing. The Presbyterie must have had a very hot time of it, and there is no doubt but that some of the ministers must have born marks of the fray after many days. The savage nature of the attack may be judged from the fact that the members of the Presbyterie had, for self-preservation, to retire to a sheltered corner below the gallery, which was then very low, so that they might be able to frame, in a partially sheltered nook, a reply to the communication received from the Master of Saltoun. Even there the mob continued to insult and annoy them. While one can sympathize with a people, with strong Episcopalian leanings, in opposing the procedure of the Presbyterie, there can be no doubt that their

rather outrageous conduct was due to the sympathy of the Master of Saltoun and the Magistrates, who seem to have shown considerable want of judgment, in aiding and abetting those ignorant people who were obstructing and hindering the carrying out of the ecclesiastical laws of the land. No written answer having been forthcoming, one can picture the scene that must have taken place in the church when the Master of Saltoun, followed by an unruly and excited mob, appeared upon the scene and demanded, in indignant and furious tones, that the Presbytery should furnish a written reply to the letter that had been sent them on the subject of Mr. Auchinleck's appointment. The ministers intimating that this was unnecessary, the Master, in a still more furious manner no doubt, threatened to let loose the rabble upon them, whereupon the minister of Strichen, the Rev. Thomas Udney, who seems to have been a man of considerable backbone, boldly came forward and warned the Master and Magistrates of the punishment that would be meted out to those who molested the Presbytery in their work. This rebuke had the desired effect, and the Master of Saltoun and the Magistrates withdrew. As the noise made by the mob in the church increased rather than diminished, the Presbytery left the church and proceeded to the house of Baillie Hay. Their written reply to the people's objections to the settlement of Mr. Auchinleck created another storm, and the Master of Saltoun and his followers invaded the house of Baillie Hay and loudly protested against the settlement. The Presbytery ignored all the threats and quietly proceeded to the induction of the man whom they had chosen to be minister of Fraserburgh.

The Presbytery's reply had given great dissatisfaction to the people, and to show their contempt for the document they resolved to publicly burn it at the Cross, the inhabitants being summoned by tuck of drum, to witness the interesting ceremony. This demonstration suited the Presbytery to perfection, for while the mob were engaged in the useless freak of burning a piece of paper, the ministers, released from the annoyance of the rabble, embraced the opportunity of quietly engaging in the practical work of settling a parish minister. There can be no doubt but that the church must have been greatly wrecked by the mob in connection with the attempts made to induct Mr. Auchinleck. Some time afterwards items of expenditure appear in the Session books for glazing and repairing windows, etc., on an extensive scale.

Although the Episcopal Church in Scotland was disestablished in 1689, it was not till this stormy meeting—on 4th February, 1707—that the Presbyterian form of religion was established in the town. It thus took the authorities about eighteen years to oust the Episcopalians from the parish church and manse, a proof of the enormous preponderance of Episcopalians in Fraserburgh at the date in question.

Having got their man appointed minister of Fraserburgh, the Presbytery immediately proceeded to frame a case against the mob who disturbed their proceedings and assaulted them, and to take the necessary steps to prohibit the two ex-Episcopal ministers—Mr. Craig and Mr. Moore—from exercising their

ministerial functions in the town. This last-mentioned matter seemed to have greatly exercised the minds of the Presbytery, for the minutes are full of the "intrusions upon the Church and Paroch" by the two Episcopal clergymen named, who, it was alleged, had undertaken to remove from the parish, or at least refrain from preaching, baptising, or marrying people in it. They continued to discharge their ministerial duties, but the Presbytery held that "They were highly disaffected to the Government, both civil and ecclesiastical, and were not qualified conform to the laws of the kingdom," and therefore they set themselves to have them removed from the parish, root and branch. The two delinquents were summoned firstly before the Presbytery of Deer, and, as they did not tender their submission there, secondly, before the Synod of Aberdeen.

Before giving the result of these proceedings it may be well to look back and see how the Presbytery was progressing with regard to its action against the mob who behaved so disgracefully on the day of the ordination of the Rev. Mr. Auchinleck. It is quite evident from the minutes that the Presbytery had as great difficulty in dealing with the mob as with the two Episcopal ministers, and their difficulty in satisfactorily and promptly settling both matters, is one more proof of the overwhelming preponderance of Episcopal feeling and opinion in the town and district at this period. For a long time nobody could be got in Fraserburgh who would serve summonses on the rioters, but at length one Walter Gabriell, Messr. [Messenger-at-Arms] in Fraserburgh, undertook to discharge the disagreeable task. This limb of the law, unlike the usual scribe, must have had a short memory and great faith. It would appear that at this time he was due Lord Saltoun two hundred merks, who, hearing that he had accepted instructions from the Presbytery, at once pursued him for payment of the sum due. The following is the Presbytery's minute on the subject:—

"At Strichen, May 20th, 1707."

"This day the Presbytery received a Letter from John Forbes of Boynlie, representing the distressed condition of Walter Gabriell, Messr. at Frazerburgh."

"The Presbytery considering the same, and being well informed that he is persecute for the interest of the Gospel, and think fit to commissionate Mr. Auchinleck to deal in their behalf with James Wells, Merchant in Frazerburgh, to advance the money for him, and to give him security; and hereby the Presbytery obliges themselves to give each person his proportion of that two hundred merks, for which my Lord Saltoun is pursuing him, if no other way can be fallen upon for his relief."

"At New Deer, June 7, 1707."

"Mr. Auchinleck reports that he, according to the Presbyterie's appointment, had been active in Mr. Gabriell's affair, that he had prevailed with James Wells to advance ane hundred merks, if their Presbytery would give their bond to be paid at Dustan Day ensuing; the Presbytery were satisfied therewith, and desired Mr. Auchinleck to have the bond in readiness against the next meeting, and they would subscribe the same."

Gabriell never executed the summonses, but after getting other people to pay his debt to Lord Saltoun, removed to Leith. His name appears in the minutes once or twice after this date in connection with the Presbytery's efforts to recover what they had advanced to Lord Saltoun on his behalf. It is to be feared the debt turned out a bad one, as there is no mention in the minutes of it having ever been paid.

The exchequer of the Presbytery at this time must have been very low, as there are indications of the reverend gentlemen, as a public body, being continually "on the rocks." Nobody in Fraserburgh would take up the work left undone by Mr. Gabriell, but the Presbytery prevailed upon a Mr. John Lindsay, Messenger-at-Law, New Deer, to deliver the citations to the Episcopalians who had resisted the induction of Mr. Auchinleck. The records prove the impecunious condition of the Presbytery by the difficulty Mr. Lindsay had in getting his bill squared. Notwithstanding the persistency with which the Presbytery pushed the machinery of the law against the rioters, nothing in the minutes, so far as published, show that any regular punishment was ever meted out to them. Probably this was due to the influence of the then Lord Saltoun, who now appeared upon the scene. In a position to know the trend of events and the popular feeling of the people all over the country at this time, which the rank and file of the inhabitants of far-away Buchan were oblivious of, his lordship no doubt saw that further resistance on the part of the Episcopalians to the law of the land might bring him and them into conflict with the Government, the results of which would probably be serious to all concerned. Lord Saltoun indicated that he was prepared to treat with the Presbytery, with the view of ending the conflict between the Presbyterians and the disestablished Episcopalians, and here is the Presbytery's minute on the subject:—

"At Rathen, 9th June, 1707; pro re nata."

"The Moderator informs the Presbytery that he had received a Letter from Mr. Anderson, minister at Rathen, acquainting him that Mr. Alex. Moor, son of the late Incumbent at Fraserburgh, was at his house, shewing that my Lord Saltoun was desirous of peace, and that he was content to speak with the Presbytery or any appointed by them, that differences between his Lordship and them might be taken up. The Presbytery approve his calling them together pro re nata."

"This day also William Fraser, Bailie in Fraserburgh, informed the Presbytery that my Lord Saltoun was ready to discourse the Presbytery, and had sent him thither to know when and where the Presbytery would be pleased to meet with him."

"The Presbytery taking the said desire to consideration, did think fit to wait upon his Lordship at the Old Kirk of Philorth at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and made intimation thereof to the said Bailie, as also in the meantime the Presbytery thought fit to condescend upon and draw up some proposals to be made to my Lord Saltoun in order to ane agreement with him anent Fraserburgh."

“The articles of agreement are as follows:—

“1stly.—That Mr. Alex. Auchinleck, minister at Fraserburgh, shall have free and peaceable access to the exercise of his ministry in the town and paroch of Fraserburgh.”

“2ndly.—That he shall have his stipend paid him at the ordinary terms conform to the decreet of Parliament without any law suit, as also access and peaceable possession of the manse.”

“3rdly.—That there shall be no restraint directly or indirectly put upon any person or persons from submitting unto or attending upon the ordinances dispensed by him.”

“4thly.—That there be no meeting house in the town of Fraserburgh.”

“5thly.—That none say public prayers in the church without Mr. Auchinleck’s allowance.”

“6thly.—That all the Registers and utensils belonging to the Church of Fraserburgh be delivered up to Mr. Auchinleck.”

“7thly.—That there be access to establish a schoolmaster, and precentor, as also a kirk officer who may have the usual emoluments.”

“8thly.—That the windows of the said kirk which were broken by the rabble be repaired.”

“9thly.—That my Lord and Master of Saltoun, with the magistrates of the town, oblige themselves to the performance of the premises.”

“OLD KIRK OF PHILORTH.”

“Eodem die Hora quarta post meridiem.”

“The Presbytery, according to their appointment, did repair to the Old Kirk of Philorth, where they met with my Lord Saltoun, but not having conveniency to constitute and formally sitt, the Moderator after somewhiles discourse with his Lordship, did give in the preceding articles, shewing his Lordship that if he would condescend to them, then the Presbytery would take up the process against him and the rabblers in Frazerburgh, but after long dealing and reasoning with his Lordship on the head, and he continuing peremptorily to refuse, the Presbytery assured his Lordship that they would carry on their process, and they parted with him. Mr. Auchinleck is appointed to go south to prosecute the process.”

It is seen that the meeting did not further matters to any appreciable extent. “Bad blood” still possessed the people, and while the Episcopalians took their “defeat” with rather bad grace, the Presbyterian ministers did not show much Christian charity, but rather pursued their case with relentless energy.

The articles of agreement show that the machinery of the law was not very perfect, effective, or respected in the Far North in 1707, when the minister of the parish had to stipulate with the heritors that he was to have “free and

peaceable access to the exercise of his ministry." By law he was entitled to this, and the clause shows the unsettled state of the country and the bitter opposition and preponderating influence of the Episcopalians in the district.

Clause 2 shows again that the law was practically a dead letter in Buchan and that the Episcopalians had all the sympathy and moral support of the heritors, otherwise the parish ministers would not have had to appeal to the latter for the regular payment of their stipends. The clause reveals the fact that even at this late date the new Presbyterian parish minister had not got actual possession of the manse, the Episcopalians fighting strenuously for their old privileges, and only relinquishing them at "the point of the bayonet."

By the next clause it would appear that the Presbyterian services in the parish church were being boycotted by the crowd, and that those who were disposed to worship there, were evidently afraid to do so, in consequence of intimidation and threats on the part of the supporters of Episcopacy, who, it must be remembered, were as three or four to one of the recently-established persuasion.

It is more than likely that Clause 4 was the rock on which the negotiations between Lord Saltoun and the Presbytery were made shipwreck. The clause distinctly forbade the erection of an Episcopal Church in Fraserburgh. The Puritanical Presbytery, with grim sarcasm, declined to use the word church, preferring to designate the Episcopal Sanctuary as a "meeting house." At this time of day one is inclined to condemn the Presbytery as regards this clause, as acting in an intolerant and un-Christianlike way. It would have been better policy if the Presbytery had ignored the Episcopalians, who were now tasting the bitters and living in the shade of defeat, and had allowed them to erect whatever places of worship they desired. But it must be remembered that instructions for a definite line of action, common to the whole Church in Scotland, may have been issued from headquarters in Edinburgh, and that the Presbytery were only obeying instructions in taking the steps which they did in Fraserburgh. It must also not be forgotten that feeling ran very high at this time, and that men were blinded by passion and devoured with a spirit of revenge. The members of the Presbytery were only mere men, and with the comparatively recent dreadful atrocities perpetrated upon the poor Covenanters in the south-west of Scotland still ringing in their ears, the Presbytery cannot be altogether condemned, even by their enemies, for unhesitatingly "clipping" the ecclesiastical wings of their Episcopalian opponents. Episcopacy was at the time banned by the State, and if Episcopalians were not allowed to worship openly in the way they loved, they were only experiencing, in a much milder form, the treatment which they had deemed good enough for the Covenanters. Fraserburgh Episcopalians still think, and one can admire their patriotism and veneration for their Church and beautiful service, that their brethren and Church ancestors in the town were shockingly treated in the closing years of the seventeenth and opening years of the eighteenth centuries; but viewed from the vantage ground mentioned above and

analyzing all the changing events of the times, any unbiased mind will come to the conclusion that the Presbytery took up a reasonable, though a severe, position in dealing with Episcopacy at this juncture.

By Clause 5 it would appear that the Presbytery were afraid that an Episcopalian might gain access to the parish church and conduct a service, in which the Book of Common Prayer would bulk largely. This was not to be tolerated, and the Presbytery invoked Lord Saltoun's aid in the matter.

The Episcopalians were slow to move from the church and manse, and by Clause 6 of the agreement it would appear that they were equally unwilling give up the registers, records, and property of the church. No doubt, "utensils" included the Communion cups and other appointments. Episcopalians argue that as these cups, etc., might have been purchased by their members and presented to the church, the deposed ministers were justified in retaining possession of them. This is bad logic and equally bad law, because not being the personal property of anyone they must necessarily be the corporate property of the church, and as such, fall to be dealt with in the same way as the fabrics of the church and manse.

Clause 7 deals with the appointment of officials. These having been chosen under the Episcopal regime, would no doubt, in their feelings and sympathies, be completely out of touch with those of the new persuasion, and it was quite natural and reasonable that the Presbytery should have a schoolmaster, a precentor, and church officer of their own choosing; men who shared the same sympathies and wide Presbyterian feelings as themselves. In fact, to continue the old officials would have been like putting a square peg into a round hole.

The request in Clause 8, that the kirk windows broken by the rabble be repaired, was a very reasonable one. The church was in a very dilapidated condition, but the records bear out that the windows were not repaired for very long after this date.

The obligation which Lord Saltoun and others were asked to undertake in Clause 9 was not assumed.

The discussion between Lord Saltoun and the Presbytery over the articles of agreement was a very protracted, and at times, a very heated one. Lord Saltoun would not agree to the Presbytery terms, and the meeting broke up without any satisfactory step towards a settlement being come to. Lord Saltoun, the Master of Saltoun and the Magistrates, who were probably all good Episcopalians, would probably have agreed to the Presbytery's terms had Section 4 been deleted. One can imagine the wrangle between the disputants over the question of the Episcopalians having a "meeting house" in Fraserburgh. Saltoun and his henchmen determined that the deposed Churchmen should have their Church and service in Fraserburgh, while the resolute members of the Presbytery as bitterly opposed it. No doubt this was the point reached which marked the parting of the ways and made the proposed agreement and interview of no value.

The concluding portion of the minute is of the greatest possible interest to Fraserburgh people, as it reveals the fact that the old Church of Philorth in Kirkton Churchyard was, at this meeting—June, 1707—publicly used for the last time. This fact brings crowds of thoughts to the minds of the imaginative. The place had been little used, if used at all, for 100 years previously, and the accommodation was so limited that the Presbytery could not conveniently sit in it. This meeting-place had not much to commend it for business purposes. But it appealed to the religious instincts and veneration of the Episcopalians, because within its walls had been heard only the elaborate service of the Catholic and the ritual of the Episcopal Church. No mention is ever made of this old church having been again used. It must have been in a bad state of repair then, and with the advent of the Presbyterians, who had no respect for, but a good deal of ill-feeling towards Catholic and Episcopal sacred edifices, the old kirk in the churchyard was allowed to go quickly to ruins. In the eyes of the newcomers, the life of the old kirk was not worth saving, and thus a most interesting relic of the dim and very distant past was allowed to disappear, “unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.”

Fraserburgh affairs do not occupy much of the time of the Presbytery for almost a year, and it is probable that the ministers were hanging on their oars, so to speak, until they should see how the waters of ecclesiasticism moved. They may have thought that the people would more willingly conform to the new order of things if they were not hustled so much. From June, 1707, until May, 1708, practically nothing is heard of the Fraserburgh case, but on the 12th May, 1708, at a Presbytery meeting held at Aberdeen, at the time of the Synod, to deal with intruders and disorderly preachers, the minute has the following:—

“Next, that Mr. Alexr. Moor and Mr. Alexr. Craig are intruders at Fraserburgh, have got up the English Service there, and though in their worship they stick close to the form of words in that book, yet when they come to that paragraph wherein the Queen’s Majesty is mentioned, they do pass it by, praying for our dread Sovereign—they are not qualified, are supposed to be of erroneous principles, do admit scandalous persons to the sealing ordinances, do hugg and countenance excommunicate persons.”

Notwithstanding all the energy displayed by the Presbytery, the two Episcopalian ministers, Moore and Craig, continued to remain in the town and discharge their ministerial functions. This must have been a great annoyance to the Presbytery and trying to the dignity of the members, whose powers the two Episcopalians, backed by the crowd and the nobility, treated with practical contempt. The opinion expressed in the minute shows how little the Presbytery thought of Moore and Craig. It would appear that they admitted that the Episcopalians adhered to the prescribed English service, until they came to the paragraph where the Queen’s Majesty should be prayed for. Instead of doing this they substituted the words “our dread Sovereign,” which no doubt, meant a supplication on behalf of the exiled King, who was then living at the French Court. This was rank heresy and disloyalty in the eyes of the

Presbytery, and was no doubt a very serious offence at the time. The Presbytery questioned if the two ministers were in holy orders and legally qualified to act as ministers, even of the Episcopal Church—their principles were supposed to be altogether unsound. They were further charged with allowing grossly bad people to participate in the ordinances of the church, with fraternizing with and encouraging people who had been excommunicated from the Presbyterian Church for serious offences.

The next Presbytery meeting held to deal with the recalcitrant “Broch” Episcopal ministers was held at Lonmay on 23rd November, 1708. The minute on the subject is as follows:—

“The execution of the summons against Mr. Craig and Mr. Moor being orderly brought in, they were called at the most patent church door, one Mr William Symson, Chaplain to my Lord Saltoun, compeared in their name with a written commission, togidder with several inhabitants of the town and paroch of Fraserburgh—in the said commission were contained Mr. Moor and Mr. Craig their defences, which were read paragraph by paragraph; and Mr. Auchinleck gave answers thereto viva voce, and, after much reasoning and many debates hinc inde, the Presbytery, considering that witnesses behaved to be summoned to prove their intrusion, therefore the Moderator, in name of the Presbytery, summoned the said Mr. Symson and Mr. Alexander Davidson, Chaplain in Pitlilly; Mr. William Huison, son to the deceased Mr. Huison, sometime intruder at Lonmay; Robert Taylor, at Wakmill of Philorth; William Forest, merchant in Fraserburgh; Alexr. Gordon, Town Clerk there—all personally apprehended, apud acta, to appear as witnesses in the affair of Mr. Craig and Mr. Moore against the next Presbyterie at the Kirk of Rathen, in hunc effectum, on the 9th day of Decr. next to come, be eleven hours in the forenoon. As also the Presbytery appoints their office to summon the said Moor and Craig to the said dyet.”

Notwithstanding that there was “much reasoning and many debates hinc inde,” as the minute has it, no real progress was made with business at the above meeting, and the meeting was adjourned till the 7th December in order that the necessary number of witnesses might be summoned by warrant.

This meeting proved to be a very important one, as the following minute shows:—

“At Rathen, December 7, 1708.”

“The Presbytery, considering that this day was appointed for examining the witnesses against Mr. Moor and Mr. Craig, and the officer giving in the execution of the summons duly and orderly proceeded in both against Mr. Moor and Mr. Craig, and the witnesses who, beside those summoned apud acta, were, by a warrant from the Moderator in the interval of the Presbyterie, appointed to be summoned, viz., Alex. Robertson, present Bailie in Fraserburgh; James Urquhart, late Bailie there; John Chein and William Fraser, late Baillies there; George Shand, apothecary there; William Willocks, merchant there; George Pirie, barber; George Huison, indweller in Fraserburgh. In the first

place the Presbytery sustained the warrant for summonding the foresaid persons as being all habile witnesses in the said affair. They appointed their officer to call Mr. Moor and Mr. Craig at the most patent church door, who, being called, compeared not. Although Mr Moor was present at the church door he would not come in, whereupon the witnesses were called, both those summonsed apud acta, and the rest who compeared for the most part, except Mr. Symson, Mr. Alexr. Davidson, and one or two more. The Moderator, in the name of the Presbytery, proposed to them that they were to declare upon oath what they knew as to the intrusion, as also whether they prayed for Her Majesty Queen Ann, and if they observed fasts and thanksgivings, which particulars had been intimate to them in their summons. Also, it was found that Mr. Moor and Mr. Craig had gotten a list of these witnesses, and had not objected against any of them. The whole witnesses, when the Moderator was about to administer the oath to them, declined, refusing altogether to depone in the matter libelled against Mr. Moor and Mr. Craig, upon which the Moderator, in the name of the Presbytery, represented to them that they would be forced to depone before a higher judicature and farther off. As they were going away the Moderator enquired at them who were present Baillies, and at those who had been Baillies if they had in their custodie any of the utensils belonging to the Kirk, who declared they knew nothing of the affairs about the Kirk Session of Fraserburgh. The Presbytery appointed the whole affair anent these intruders to be represented to the agent for the Kirk, Nicoll Spense, at Edinburgh, that they may be enrolled in order to be summoned before the Circuit Court that is to be in May next to come."

"This day Andrew Couper, Peter Coutts, and William Ogston, the havers of the Church utensils, were called, having been duly summoned by their officer, and they compeared and acknowledged that they had such things in their custody, but refused to give up any of them till a decret were obtained against them for their warrandice; whereupon Mr. Auchinleck is appointed to pursue them before the Commissary of Aberdeen for obtaining the said utensils."

Although not much business was done at the meeting, the minute is interesting in so far as it plainly reveals the fact that the local nobility were clearly and openly in sympathy with the Episcopalians at this juncture Mr. Symson was chaplain to Lord Saltoun, and Mr. Alexander Davidson, chaplain of Pittullie, was no doubt in the employment of the Forbeses of Pitullie Castle. While one can understand the Forbeses, always strong adherents of the Stuart line, supporting the Episcopalians, it is rather surprising that the Saltoun family, firm supporters of Queen Ann and the House of Hanover, should have taken such a prominent part in trying to secure terms for the two unfortunate Episcopal clergymen, whose persuasion from that day to this has been doomed to take a position of equality with the other dissenting bodies of Scotland. Whatever his political opinions were, it is evident that the then Lord Saltoun was a devout follower of Episcopacy. Another interesting feature of the minute is the informa-

tion given as to the surnames of those laymen, presumably Episcopalians, living in Fraserburgh, who took a prominent part in ecclesiastical affairs of this stormy time, and who were summoned as witnesses by the Presbytery. All the names mentioned are still quite common in the town or district, with the exception of the last one—Huisson—which has been altogether extinct in the district for many generations back. The name is evidently of Shetland or Orkney origin. This is a most likely thing, as the traffic in those early days between Fraserburgh, whose excellent geographical position favoured it, and the Islands, was great. Sailing vessels were then very small and unfit for long voyages, and therefore mariners and traders were under the necessity of resorting to the best and most favourably-situated port.

With regard to the business dealt with in the minute, it appears that the Rev. Mr. Moore turned up at the church, but though called upon to appear before the Presbytery, he declined to enter the building. This was judicious on Mr. Moore's part, as, finding out that his two principal henchmen and champions, Chaplains Symson and Davidson, had not turned up, he did not care, without their expert assistance, to cross swords with the astute and determined members of the Presbytery. The rest of the witnesses called, almost all of whom appeared, were questioned as to what they knew of the Episcopal services carried on by Messrs. Moore and Craig, and if these two worthies prayed for our "dread Sovereign" or for "Her Majesty Queen Ann." This was a cute move taken by the Presbytery, as they doubtless wished to raise the question of treason. The witnesses were plied with questions as to the observation of fasts and the offering up of thanksgivings, but when the Moderator was about to make the proceedings more judicial and formal by administering the oath to the witnesses, they promptly refused to give any evidence in the case against Mr. Moore and Mr. Craig. Naturally the Presbytery was annoyed and disappointed that the people had once more defied them, and it is not to be wondered at that the Moderator warned these witnesses that the result of their defiant attitude would end in their having to give evidence in a higher Court some distance away, *viz.*, the Circuit Court in Edinburgh or Aberdeen. The Presbytery resolved to have the case represented to Mr. Nicoll Spense, the agent of the Church in Edinburgh, so that arrangements might be made to have it tried in the following May. On being questioned before leaving, the baillies denied all knowledge of the church property, and no doubt they had received a warning of what would happen if the church utensils were not forthcoming without delay. It is amusing that immediately thereafter Andrew Couper, Peter Coutts, and William Ogston appeared and admitted that the church utensils were in their custody. The members of the Presbytery must have enjoyed this part of the proceedings! The three worthies however, declined to give up the articles until a legal warrant had been obtained forcing their delivery, and Mr. Auchinleck was instructed to take the necessary legal steps in the matter.

After all, the Presbytery had made very little headway up till now. The

whole of the year 1709 passed without the Presbytery getting one step further ahead. Minutes of February and March, 1710 are interesting:—

“At Strichen, Feb. 22, 1710.”

“This day Mr. Auchinleck desired the Presbytery to appoint their next meeting at Fraserburgh upon several weighty affairs to lay before them, and especially that the fabric of the Kirk of Fraserburgh be visited by them, and workmen be appointed for that effect, and that some course be taken for getting the Church utensils of Fraserburgh to be delivered to him. The Presbytery appointed their next meeting at Fraserburgh for the foresaid and other affairs, and appointed Mr. Auchinleck to serve an Edict tymously, as also that warning to these having the said utensils to compear before the presbyterie on the fourteenth day of March next at the Kirk of Fraserburgh. Mr. Auchinleck gave in a complaint against one James Dugall, in the parish of Pitsligo, who came into the Church of Fraserburgh on the Lord's Day drunk in tyme of Divine worship, and made some disturbance. The Presbytery appointed the Clerk to write to Mr. Swan, minister at Pitsligo, to cause summond the said Dugall to the said dyet at Fraserburgh.”

“At the Kirk of Fraserburgh, March 14th, 1710.”

“Mr. Auchinleck reported that he caused serve an Edict tymously in due form for the reparation of the fabric of the Kirk of Fraserburgh, the execution whereof was given in. The Presbytery caused their officer call in all the parties according to the tenor of the said Edict, which being done, none of the heritors of the said parish compeared, nor none in their name, whereupon Mr. Auchinleck did present three sufficient workmen [to intimate the necessary repairs and expense].

“Mr. Auchinleck reported he caused summond the havers of the Church utensils, viz.: Andw. Couper, senior, merchant in Fraserburgh; Patrick Coutts, present schoolmaster there; and William Ogston, late Kirk officer, who being called upon, compeared—first Andrew Couper, who declared that he had only the mort cloaths and some mort cloath money, but refused to give up the same till he should get a charge of horning; the said Patrick Coutts and William Ogston being called, and, not compearing, the Presbytery appoints Alex. Gordon, present Church Treasurer in Fraserburgh, to go on in diligence against them all.”

The protracted fight between the Presbytery and the two Episcopalian ministers and their supporters, had so engrossed the attention of the first named, that they had not been able to take up the question of the repairs to the church. The destruction done to the building during the great riot of 4th May, 1707, had not been repaired, although three years had almost elapsed since the damage was done. The windows were all smashed and other parts of the interior of the church destroyed, but it may be taken for granted that the members of the auld Kirk were “so few and far between” at this date that any sheltered corner of the Church was sufficient to protect the congregation (?) from the sharp “teeth” of Boreas' blasts. The dignity of the church and the congregation

however, had to be maintained, and Mr. Auchinleck was instructed to call the heritors together so that arrangements might be made for having the necessary repairs on the fabric carried out. An instruction was also given with the view of obtaining the utensils of the church from those who still had them in their possession.

The concluding part of the minute is amusing, and the incident referred to, shows that life was somewhat "rough" in those far back days. It is probable that the man Dugall, who came into the church drunk and interrupted the worship, had a grievance. Might he not have been an Episcopalian from the adjoining parish, who, inspired to do great things by the potency of his drink, appeared in the church to protest against what he considered gross ill-treatment meted out to his co-religionists in Fraserburgh. Or was his unseemly conduct the natural outcome of the rowdyism of the times? The minister of Pitsligo was asked to order Dugall to appear before the Presbytery meeting three weeks afterwards, but whether Mr. Swan, who was a staunch Episcopalian, had himself given poor Dugall a severe reprimand or not, he did not appear at the Presbytery meeting, and his case is never referred to again in the minutes. He must have been beyond hope.

The next meeting of the Presbytery must have been a great disappointment to its members. No doubt the meeting had been looked upon as a very important one, and the ministers in view of a passage of arms with the heritors, had most certainly girt on their elocutionary armour, ready for the fray. But alas, no enemy appeared and all the warlike preparations, which it is presumed had been made, were utterly wasted. The heritors, upon whom proper notices had been served, were called at the church door in the formal way, but none of them put in an appearance. Being no doubt all Episcopalians, they would naturally resist till the very last, paying anything towards the cost of the repairs of the church.

Had the country been in a more settled state, people could not have afforded to have defied the law of the land on every hand as was the invariable rule with the dispossessed Episcopalians of all classes at this time. The Presbytery was determined however, to set the machinery in motion with regard to the repairs of the fabric of the church, and had three qualified workmen present, who reported on the repairs necessary and the estimated cost thereof. The Presbytery then proceeded to deal with those who had possession of the church utensils. Of the three men charged, only one, *viz.* And. Couper, merchant, appeared in answer to the Presbytery's summons. He intimated that he had only the mortcloths and some fees which he had received for the use of these funeral palls, but he absolutely refused to give the property up unless compelled to do so by warrant. The other two delinquents, Patrick Coutts, the parish schoolmaster, who had probably filled the office of session clerk or an equivalent to that, and Wm. Ogston, the ex-beadle, did not condescend to put in an appearance. No doubt these worthies had defied the Presbytery at the instigation of the leaders of the Episcopalian party occupying a higher social plane altogether. They would

not have dared to act as they did without the moral support and advice of people of real weight and importance. The Presbytery were determined the defaulters should be brought to justice and disgorge the church property, and instructions were given to the Church Treasurer to take legal proceedings against the three.

The closing part of the minute gives an interesting peep into one phase of life at the time. Sabbath breaking was much more rigorously punished in those days than it is now. Indeed, if the same church discipline were observed now, the ministers would be so much taken up with police duties, that they would never find time to write sermons and preach. The minute on Sabbath breaking is as follows:—

“This day Mr. Auchinleck gave in a complaint against W. Forrest, George Keith, George White, and Andrew Cooper, junior, all merchants in Fraserburgh, for breaking the Sabbath in bringing some boats full of goods from on board a ship passing by the road; the Presbytery appoints them to be summoned to the next meeting.”

It is rather amusing to note that one of the accused is a son of the man Cooper who admitted having in his possession the church mortcloths and some mortcloth money. It is most likely that Mr. Auchinleck, exasperated by the rabid opposition of the Episcopalian ex-office bearers, had thought that this was a golden opportunity of having a “shot” at one of them. Christian charity again! which is so dear to the godly ministers. No doubt the vessel had been a regular trader, either from Aberdeen or Leith. There had probably been a dearth in the town of the goods landed, which made their landing a necessity, or else there had been a storm threatening and the timorous mariners had been anxious to get away to the friendly shelter of the upper part of the Moray Firth before the hurricane burst out. The crime was not a very serious one, and no doubt the Presbytery had tempered justice with mercy in finally dealing with the transgressors.

The Presbytery had great trouble in getting a congregation gathered together in Fraserburgh, but having managed to get a small flock into the fold, the minister with considerable difficulty conducted the affairs of the church without a properly constituted session. The following minute corroborates this:—

“At Crimond, May 23, 1710.”

“This day Mr. Auchinleck representing the lamentable condition of the parioch of Fraserburgh through the want of a constitute Session, and that now after long and serious dealing prevailed with them to accept of the office of Eldership, viz.: Alexr. Gordon, merchant in Fraserburgh; David Greig, merchant, there; John Henderson, tailor, there; Andrew Greig in Craighill; James Fraser in Hall Town—the last two being already ordained, the one in Rathen, the other in Tyrie, and just now come out of the said parishes to this, the Presbytery considering the said affair, appointed Mr. Auchinleck to examine the foresaid persons betwixt and the next Presbyterie, and to bring an account of their fitness.”

The meeting deplores the lamentable state of the parish owing to the want of a session. No doubt the parish had been in a bad way in the eyes of the Presbytery, in so far as the people stuck to their Episcopal form of worship, and obstructed the Presbytery at every step. This must have been "galling" to the ministers, whose progress in establishing Presbyterianism on a firm basis in the parish, was hopelessly slow. That Mr. Auchinleck had difficulty in getting people to accept office as elders in his church may be taken for granted. Public opinion in the town was all against the change and the five worthy men, two being farmers already ordained, who had accepted office, deserve credit for being the first to enter the breach, as there is no doubt their doing so brought much obloquy upon their heads. Mr. Auchinleck was instructed to examine them on their fitness for the holy office. This had been merely a form, as the Presbytery, it is almost certain, would have accepted anybody for an elder who had the semblance of respectability.

The church and congregation at Fraserburgh are gradually getting into order, for which no doubt the Presbytery had been thankful. The following minute shows that the church property is at last to be given up:—

"At Crimond, June 20th, 1710."

"Mr. Auchinleck reports that Alex. Gordon, present Kirk treasurer has given a charge of horning to Andrew Couper, merchant, there; Patrick Coutts, precentor to the meeting house there; and W. Ogston, late Kirk Officer, persons who refuse to give up the utensils and other things belonging to the Kirk, and that therefore some of them, viz., Couper and Coutts, are willing to give up such things as they have to a Session when constituted in the place; the Presbytery considering that a Session will be very shortly erected, therefore refers that affair till then."

Legal proceedings having been taken against Couper, Coutts and Ogston, all staunch Episcopalians no doubt, the first turn of the tide in favour of the Presbytery distinctly manifests itself. The erstwhile officials of the church, under Episcopal rule, see that the game of opposition to the law is almost up, and they indicate their willingness to surrender the property in their possession belonging to the church. They do not come frankly forward to the minister, as they might have done, and deliver up the articles to him without further parley. They cover their retreat and put the evil day off a little longer by stipulating that the articles will be forthcoming when a regular Session has been constituted. There is little question that the trio were smarting under great disappointment, and that they were acting under the advice of "bigger men" behind the scenes. To the enthusiastic and patriotic Episcopalian the "shelving" of their church and its privileges must have been a bitter experience. We of the present day, can hardly appreciate the bitter ordeal through which Episcopalians passed here some 200 years ago. The wound is too old to carry the memories of its pains over such a period of time; and it is well that it is so.

The new elders were ordained by Mr. Auchinleck on the 9th September, 1710, and thus was the machinery of the Presbyterian parish church of Fraser-

burgh properly set in motion for the first time. All the utensils and property of the church which were in the hands of Episcopalians had no doubt been given up, because no further complaints on the subject appear in the Presbytery minutes. The long drawn out duel between the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians of Fraserburgh was at an end, and the former were now firmly established in power. The Presbyterians had come to stay, and the Episcopalians were doomed to play a minor part in the ecclesiastical affairs of Scotland for hundreds of years, if not for ever. This conflict in Buchan was a fierce one, and the followers of Episcopacy made a splendid fight. The Episcopal Church, as already indicated, was disestablished in 1689, but it took the Presbyterians 18 years, *viz.* to 1707, to get possession of the church and ordain a minister. Three more years elapsed before the congregation was in complete working order, so that it took the long period of 21 years to have the Presbyterian form of worship thoroughly established in the town. Farewell must be bid to this interesting episode in the ecclesiastical history of Fraserburgh, and a return made to the personal history of the ministers of Old Zion. Although Mr. Auchinleck experienced troublous and stormy times in the first few years of his ministry, affairs settled down and he enjoyed the placid calm of a parish minister's life in Fraserburgh for a very long period indeed. He married Elizabeth Fraser, who lived to an old age and died in January, 1767. They had a son George, a very estimable boy, who died in July, 1733, in his fourteenth year. The Rev. Alexander Auchinleck died on the 11th September, 1753, in the 47th year of his ministry.

The next parish minister was the Rev. Alexander Fraser, M.A., a graduate of Aberdeen University, who was presented to the charge by Lord Saltoun (patronage having been restored in 1712), in December, 1753. He married in 1755 Jean Arbuthnot, third daughter of And. Arbuthnot of Broadlands. There are no historical facts extant regarding this minister, and it may be inferred that he was a man of no outstanding character. He probably preferred to remain on friendly terms with those who differed from him on religious forms, and chose to discharge his ministerial duties in a quiet, unostentatious way. He died on 17th August, 1779, in the twenty-sixth year of his ministry in Fraserburgh. His wife long survived him, dying in November 1810.

The next minister, Rev. Alexander Simpson, M.A., was a man of energy and progress. He was a graduate of Aberdeen University, and was presented to the charge in June, 1780, marrying in June, 1786, Rachel Scroggs, daughter of Alexander Scroggs, merchant in Aberdeen. She outlived her husband and died at Lochhead, Aberdeen, on 18th August, 1819. The great landmark in his career was the building of the present church, which occupies the site of the previous parish church. The old church, which was built in the form of a cross and had done service for over 230 years, must have been getting out of date, and it redounds to the credit of Mr. Simpson that active steps were taken to have a modern church substituted for the old building.

The existing church was built by a mason named Morrice, who had just completed the erection of the Saltoun Hotel, when he started the church. He must have been something of a joker in his way. When asked by some innocent person why he built the hotel before the church, he replied that "he thought it would be wisest to have a comfortable house at hand in case the building of the church was unduly prolonged." Plain as the church now appears to us, it was considered an imposing place when built, and continued to be so during the first half of last century. For a lengthened time it was the finest building in Fraserburgh, and its commanding position was such, that for a long period of years it was the landmark for guiding vessels safely into the harbour. So much was this the case that the Auld Kirk was long quoted as a steering point in shipmasters' guide-books, in fact, until more important public buildings went up and detracted from the glory and importance of Old Zion. It is interesting to note here, that the parish church, which was opened in September, 1803, is now the oldest ecclesiastical building in use in Fraserburgh.

Mr. Simpson was a thorough reformer and initiator. One of the first reforms which he set his hand to was the abolition of "public censure" in church. Evidently this antiquated form of punishment was distasteful to Mr. Simpson, who intimated that he found "public censure for ecclesiastical offences very disagreeable." He had some difficulty in overcoming old forms and prejudices, but gradually the imposition of fines and penalties took the place of public rebuke and the stool of repentance, and in 1809 these old "terrors" completely disappeared from the code of church discipline in Fraserburgh. Mr. Simpson was the first to institute diets of catechising throughout the parish. He also inaugurated the system of having two services in church each Sunday, but what was certainly one of the greatest achievements of his "reign," was the establishment, in conjunction with Bishop Jolly, and under the patronage of the Town Council, of a Sunday school in Fraserburgh "for the education of the children of the town and district." This historic event took place in 1798. No doubt Mr. Simpson had been active in other directions, of which no records have been kept. Highly respected to the end, he died in July, 1814, in the 75th year of his age and 35th of his ministry. A mural tablet to his memory in Fraserburgh Churchyard bears the following tribute, "Farewell! After death thou enjoyest the reward of a life of faithfulness." Of his family, one son named George Alexander became minister of Tyrie, while another named William, was an Aberdeen advocate, who became procurator-fiscal and ultimately was proprietor of Glenlyth.

If Mr. Simpson had a long ministry in Fraserburgh his successor, Mr. John Cumming, had a still longer. He was a man of strong and somewhat eccentric character, who was the ecclesiastical figurehead of the parish for 42 years and ruled it with the rod of a martinet. He was descended from a well-known Kilmarnock family, his father, grandfather and some other progenitors having been provosts of that town for many years. He was licensed in 1795, and his first appointment was as an assistant in Dundee. He was thereafter librarian



Photo by Norrie, Fraserburgh.

THE FRASERBURGH PARISH CHURCH, OPENED IN 1803.

at Glasgow, but in 1814 he was presented to the parish of Fraserburgh by Lord Saltoun. He was one of the old school, who for the greater part of his life wore knee breeches, silk stockings, and shoes with silver buckles. Notwithstanding his impulsive temperament, which was sometimes strikingly exhibited, he was a man of much polish and refined tastes, and his sermons were spoken of as compositions of beautiful English and thoroughly evangelical in spirit. He was one of the few men living in the north who had come across the poet Burns. When Mr. Cumming was a boy he chanced one time to be living with relations in Ayrshire, and while roaming the country he met the poet. Burns had just crossed a stream and was carrying under his arm his "hose and shoon" when Mr. Cumming passed him. The intellectual face, and especially the brilliancy of the poet's eyes, were so striking that Mr. Cumming could never forget them. This meeting with the poet, the minister often related with great pride to parties gathered at the Manse. Mr. Cumming was never married, but he had a housekeeper named Jean Black (whose direct descendant was the late Mr. Geo. Hay), who ruled the house, and the minister too, with as much power as the minister ruled the parish.

Mr. Mackie, in his Broch lectures, says that "When Mr. Cumming came to Fraserburgh in 1815, buying and selling at the church door on Sunday, especially between the forenoon and afternoon services, were common. The practice of making market on Sunday was again and again rebuked and denounced by Mr. Cumming, and in course of time it ceased. One forenoon, on leaving the church somewhat earlier than usual, he saw a crowd gathered a short distance off, and found an officer proclaiming a sale of corn and cattle. Mr. Cumming went forward, ordered the man to stop, denounced the practice, and threatened the application of the ancient laws of Scotland against such an outrage on religion and religious feeling, and the nuisance was put down." Mr. Cumming had a strong taste for music, and a keen musical ear, and any breach of the canon of good taste in singing in the church, immediately called forth a strong rebuke from him. Once—the occasion was before the date of the Disruption—a cooper came from the south to work in Fraserburgh. He had a very strong voice, but the quality was of the rasping saw order, quite atrocious, and such as would quite unhinge the feelings of anyone of a nervous texture. The singer prided himself on his lung power. The minister bore with him for two Sundays, but the third proved too much. At the conclusion of the first psalm, Mr. Cumming jumped up and pointing in the direction of the vocalist, said—"Will the man sitting over there, who has, by his awful voice, been annoying me and the congregation for the last two or three Sundays, kindly desist from singing in future. If he will not acquiesce in this, he must not enter the church at all." Needless to say, the man accepted the latter alternative.

Another story about Mr. Cumming. Although very old and really in his "dotage," he retained the Chairmanship of the Parochial Board, or what stood for it. A doctor having recommended that some pauper should get wine, Mr. Cumming started up in a white heat and said, "If they were going to do

this sort of thing their paupers would live long enough” Still another comical story is told of the minister. He was reading from the Old Testament, when a stray dog made its appearance in the church. Without ever stopping his reading he gave his orders to the beadle as follows: “The Lord said unto Moses—Put out that dog, John!” The titter in the congregation was most pronounced. On another occasion the Rev. Mr. Hume, of Pitsligo, was preaching in the church and Mr. Cumming was sitting in the minister’s seat alongside the pulpit. Mr. Hume had a mannerism of beginning his prayers in a very subdued tone, gradually rising to a considerable pitch. He had no sooner begun his first prayer on the occasion in question than Mr. Cumming jumped to his feet and angrily exclaimed, “Speak out, sir; the people won’t hear you!” Mr. Hume was rather startled, but knowing the ways of his friend, he took no notice of the interruption, and quietly proceeded with the service.

Of all the eccentricities of Mr. Cumming in the church the worst took place on a Sunday in the year 1853. The assistant and successor—Rev. John Storie—had just entered the pulpit, when Mr. Cumming rose from his seat and denounced Mr. Storie in most forcible language for having usurped his (Mr. Cumming’s) position. He even threatened to enter the pulpit and eject Mr. Storie from it. He continued his interruptions all through the service, and excitement ran so high that a good many people left the church. He had naturally a quick temper, but when these and other similar episodes took place, Mr. Cumming was close on 80 years of age, and it is only charitable to assume as an excuse, that second childhood had set in.

Mr. Cumming was in Fraserburgh at the stirring time of the Disruption of 1843. Prior to the final act in the great drama, Mr. Cumming was a strong non-intrusionist and played a prominent part in the struggle by delivering fiery speeches, etc., in support of the views of that side. Up to the last moment almost, Mr. Cumming was claimed by the Evangelicals, but when the climax came, he changed his mind and stuck to Old Zion. This was deeply resented by his former friends, now of the Free Church, and it took many years to heal the sore. Although the stipend was not affected, the membership of the church, before and after the Disruption, showed a remarkable change. Before the Disruption the membership ran about 900, whereas at the first Communion after the event Mr. Cumming could only muster an attendance of 205. For the last eleven years of his ministry Mr. Cumming had—unwillingly, no doubt—to call the help of assistants and successors. Mr. Cumming died at Cove, Roseneath, in the 85th year of his age and 42nd of his ministry. A handsome obelisk stands in “the Ministers’ Ground” to his memory. It has the following inscription: “In memory of the Reverend John Cumming, for 42 years Minister of the Parish of Fraserburgh, who died on 26th January, 1857. ‘For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.’”

When the infirmities of age began to tell upon him, Mr. Cumming asked for an assistant and successor, and in 1846 Rev. John Lockhart, LL.D., was

appointed to the office. He was a man of distinguished appearance, tall and of fine physique, and what was of primary importance in a minister, was a scholar of repute. Unfortunately, his connection with Fraserburgh, which was expected to be of great advantage to the church and the parish, was sad in the extreme. His conduct on several occasions had not been such as became a minister of the Gospel, and a case against him was raised before the Presbytery at the instigation, it is supposed, of his senior colleague. A good story is told of Jean Black, Mr. Cumming's housekeeper, already referred to, in connection with this fama. The representatives of the Presbytery who had the case on hand, came to Fraserburgh to gather evidence and examine probable witnesses. One of the questions put to Jean Black was, "Did you ever see Dr. Lockhart under the influence of liquor?" Jean's reply was worthy of her reputation "Could ye tell me which member o' the Presbytery I haenae seen fou?" was her answer. Dr. Lockhart could not withstand the proof brought against him, and the unfortunate man was deposed by the General Assembly in 1852—a once bright and shining light thus coming unexpectedly to total eclipse. How inexpressibly sad!

The Rev. John Storie was in 1853 appointed assistant and successor in room of Dr. Lockhart. Like his predecessor, he, as already indicated, had the greatest possible trouble with his aged colleague, whose eccentricities and outbursts at all places and at all times, were well nigh unendurable. Mr. Storie was a man of a fine temperament and a kindly disposition, and he bore with these bickerings with commendable restraint. As already stated, Mr. Cumming died in 1856, and next year Mr. Storie was inducted to the charge. It may be mentioned that Mr. Storie married Miss Chalmers, a daughter of the first and a sister of the second Baillie Chalmers. Although he did not fraternize much with the fishing and sea-faring people of the town, which was rather resented by them, he was on account of his gentleness, much respected and esteemed by the general body of his congregation. He was of a very delicate constitution, and his frequent absence from home in search of health was against the well-being of the Church. His health rapidly gave way, and while yet a young man on the threshold of his life's work, his spirit fled. He died on the 14th October, 1860, at the early age of 34, after a ministry in Fraserburgh of three years only.

Sometime elapsed before a successor to Mr. Storie was appointed, and in the interval the parish got into a rather disorganized condition. The situation required a strong man, and the man for the task was forthcoming in the person of the Rev. Peter McLaren, whose name will long be a household word in the parish. Mr. McLaren was a native of Ardoch, Perthshire, where he was born on 2nd August, 1824. He was a graduate of Edinburgh University, and on finishing his divinity training he was licensed as a preacher in 1851. Immediately thereafter he was appointed assistant to Rev. Dr. Stevenson, Dalry. In the following year he was called to be minister of the Chapel of Ease of Newark, in Port-Glasgow. His energy and perseverance brought

immediate success to his labours, and in the course of a few years the chapel was erected into quoad sacra church. The result of his nine years ministry in Port-Glasgow was a most successful harvest for the Church, and was a presage of what might be expected of Mr. McLaren in the future. He arrived in Fraserburgh in 1861 and continued a central figure there for the remainder of his life. It is very interesting to note that he was presented to the parish by Lord Saltoun, on the suggestion of Rev. Dr. James Robertson, the well-known founder of the Endowment Scheme of the Church of Scotland, and a brother of the late Mr. Robertson, of Ardlaw.

Mr. McLaren was truly a muscular Christian, being a man of great physical strength; but though he had this quality and was in temperament inclined to be aggressive towards those of other denominations in public questions, he was at heart one of the kindest of men, and though bold as a lion in a fight, was, in times of trouble and disease, the bravest of the brave and the embodiment of kindness. He was a great administrator, and his restless energy found vent in a long list of works, etc., carried out by him, which have been of immense value to the parish. Although he could not be called a born pulpit orator, Mr. McLaren was an excellent preacher, his sermons being always practical and marked by sound common sense, while his expositions of the Scriptures were always most helpful to his congregation. In the Church Courts and in local educational affairs Mr. McLaren was a central figure. He was the inspirer of the Church party and the central figure in the never-to-be forgotten historic School Board election in 1873, the first under the new Act, when the parish church party fought all the other denominations of the parish combined, and succeeded in achieving a glorious victory, securing the majority of members, and consequently the Chairmanship, which was given to the late Sir Alexander Anderson. On Sir Alexander's resignation, Mr. McLaren was appointed Chairman of the Board, and he occupied this position until the day of his death. He did much to further the educational interests of the town, not only as Chairman of the School Board, but as Chairman of the Managers of Strachan's School.

In the discussions of the Presbytery of Deer Mr. McLaren was a leading figure. He was an admirable debater—quite fiery in his style, and a merciless “trundler” of his opponents. He was the “darling” of the reporters because he never, as a rule, intervened in debate without furnishing excellent copy. His fierce invective and resource in debate, and his outspoken and masterly way of dealing with his opponents, at once marked him out as a leader of men. This his opponents repeatedly acknowledged. His fearless character and overflowing energy sometimes found vent at the annual meetings of the Fraserburgh Temperance Society, the North-East Coast Mission, etc., which he would attend, and at which he would—amidst the greatest uproar—denounce to their faces the leaders of the organizations, as meeting once a year for the purposes of self-glorification and paying compliments to each other as being very superior persons. This showed the fearless and straightforward nature of his character. So striking were his personality and masterful methods that he became known all over East

Aberdeenshire as the "Pope of the Parish." He was a many-sided man, and while he was a leader in church government, educational questions, poor law administration, political questions, etc., etc., he had time to know intimately not only his own congregation, but almost every individual in the town to whichever Church they belonged. He had a high ideal of his office as minister of the parish, and had a kindly word for everybody. Children he was extremely fond of, and all the little ones of his congregation he knew by name. He was practically, if not wholly, a teetotaller, but nevertheless he was always the bright and shining star at the social board. His wonderful sense of humour and his fund of admirable stories, kept his friends in a continual ripple, or rather "roars," of laughter. A marriage without the minister's sallies of humour was flat and uninteresting, and his assistance in this respect began to be looked upon as quite as valuable and necessary as his services as the minister elected to tie the nuptial knot.

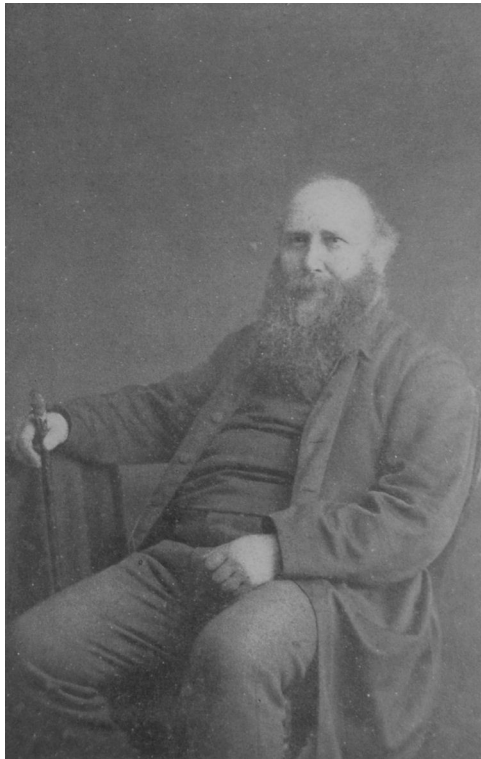
Mr. McLaren has left many monuments—apart from the one in Kirkton Cemetery—to his memory, which testify to his herculean energy and love of work. He had not been long here till he set to work, and had the fine manse at the entrance of Strichen Road built somewhere about 1862. Up to that time the parish manse was the house in Saltoun Place now occupied by Mr. George Walker, sailmaker. Next he established the Techmuiry and Broadsea Missions in connection with the parish church, and set the Techmuiry school agoing. After this he inaugurated a scheme of church improvement, which included a new roof and ceiling to the fabric, and the erection of a new vestry in Kirk Brae. He was an enthusiastic supporter of church extension, and it was entirely due to his initiative and persistent energy that the West Church and Parish of Fraserburgh became accomplished facts. This in itself was a great work, of which any man might be proud. He created and started the Fraserburgh Building Society and the Fraserburgh Benefit Society, and was Chairman of both till his death. These two societies have done incalculable good to the working people of Fraserburgh.

Mr. McLaren was Chairman of the old Parochial Board for many years before his death. His life was full of activity and incident, but the outstanding feature of his long and faithful career in Fraserburgh was the heroic services which he rendered the community during the fearful outbreak of cholera during the herring fishing season of 1866. When the fishing opened, there was the usual array of missionaries and deputies in the town, sent to look after the spiritual needs of the stranger fishermen and girls. These men held meetings at the Cross nightly, and in their loud-mouthed way proclaimed their undying interest in the salvation of the people, and denounced in unmeasured terms as hopelessly lost those who did not believe in their propaganda. The Rev. Peter McLaren was one who did not like the methods of the superfine Christians, and had no hesitation in saying so whenever an opportunity presented itself. For this he made himself most unpopular with these itinerant preachers and their followers, and many a time was his name denounced, as a popular peroration with the gaping crowd.

He had his revenge much sooner than he expected. As cholera developed, the panic proportionately increased, and among those who earliest showed the white feather and were in the front rank of the run-a-ways, were our doughty preachers and missionaries who, after hearing them speak at the Cross, one was inclined to think actually regretted being so long denied the joys and bliss of paradise. How quickly their tune changed whenever danger became acute! The realms of bliss had not such an attraction for them then. At least they did not run any unnecessary risk of quickly seeing them, for they took their flight from the plague-stricken town with lightning speed, till not one of "the glorious company of preachers" was left. Their hasty flight showed the hollowness of their professions. If these men had a mission to fulfil in preaching to fishermen and others, surely that mission became doubly necessary when the disease broke out.

Those ministers and missionaries could have done a power of good, with their spiritual armour on, tending the sick, visiting the widows and orphans and helping the doctors, but as already indicated, they left this work to be done by the "bad parish minister." And nobly and single-handed—so far as ministers were concerned—did he discharge the trying duties which he was called upon to perform. The sudden flight from the town of his brethren of the Cloth, he referred to in terms of contempt and scorn; and applied himself with wholehearted earnestness to rescue the perishing and tend the dying. He was undoubtedly the central figure of the outbreak of cholera in 1866. As brave as a lion where danger was, and tender-hearted as a child when the sorrowing heart was bowed down with grief, the Rev. P. McLaren worked night and day, we might say, among cholera-stricken families. The manse was practically turned into a soup kitchen, and the minister was continually carrying soups and other foodstuffs to infected houses, into which other people would not venture. He had no fear, and he gloried in the work, going out and in to the slums where cholera corpses lay, as if he bore a charmed life. His labours in Broadsea, among the dead and dying, were herculean in their extent. When the fright and the trouble were at their height, and the nurses were overpowered with work, and no outsider would offer any assistance, Mr. McLaren was known on numerous occasions to help to dress and coffin a corpse, and on account of abject terror preventing people offering aid, was obliged to be one of the carriers of the coffin to the grave side. His work was heroic, because he took his life in his hand every day; and yet he never had a ten minutes' indisposition during the whole of the trying time. Indeed, he seemed to have been given the strength of a giant, adequate to bear the severe strain which was put upon him.

The minutes of the public boards contain no motion thanking Mr. McLaren for his devoted services; but though this is not on black and white in the official records of the town, his noble labours on behalf of suffering humanity, at a time when the very name of the terrible disease caused the strongest heart to retire from the breach, will be an everlasting monument to his memory. The people



THE LATE REV. PETER M'LAREN, PARISH MINISTER,
THE CHOLERA HERO.

did not forget his deeds. As a mark of appreciation of his invaluable work during the cholera outbreak, Mr. McLaren was presented with several pieces of costly sterling silver plate, subscribed for by a most grateful community.

Mr. McLaren's power, splendid business qualifications and knowledge of forms were quickly being recognized throughout the Church, and in his latter years he was repeatedly asked by the Assembly to give the benefit of his knowledge and practical methods to committees, etc., of the Church.

He was acting on a Commission, appointed by the General Assembly, at Lochs, near Stornoway, when he died with startling suddenness. He was sitting enjoying a smoke after lunch, and was chatting with the other members of the Commission, when he suddenly fell from his chair to the floor and died on the spot. He left home in excellent health only a few days before and the intimation of his death, received by telegram, fell with the effects of a thunderbolt upon the community. The grief of his congregation was very deep and sincere, and the tokens of sorrow shown in many different phases were proof of the great regard and affection in which he was held by the members of his congregation. They truly felt they had lost their tried and best friend. Mr. McLaren's death was deplored almost as much by members of other denominations as by those of his own congregation, a proof of his unique position in the town. In death, all the remembrance of his once fiery and strenuous opposition was forgotten, and only the many good deeds of the departed recalled. The great and impressive funeral service which was held in the church, and at which many touching scenes were witnessed, was a fitting close to a remarkable life. Well might be applied to Mr. McLaren at the close of his life the words, "I have fought a good fight." A very handsome granite cross has been erected immediately outside the old churchyard gateway to the memory of Mr. McLaren. It bears the following inscription:—

"In affectionate remembrance of The Reverend Peter McLaren, for 26 years Minister of Fraserburgh. Born at Ardoch, Perthshire, 2nd August, 1824. Died at Lochs, in the Island of Lewis, on 1st August, 1887, while serving on a commission appointed by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Also of Jane Glasgow or McLaren, his wife. Born at Port-Glasgow 7th March, 1834. Died at Fraserburgh 30th April, 1885. Erected by their family and inhabitants of Fraserburgh, and surrounding district. 1889. 'They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.'—Dan. xii., 3."

Mr. McLaren's successor was the Rev. M. P. Johnstone, who still remains minister of the parish. Prior to coming to Fraserburgh in July 1888, Mr Johnstone was for 11 years minister of Cadzow, in the Presbytery of Hamilton, and so successful was his work there, that he was recognized by those in the church as one eminently fitted for a far more important charge. Before coming to the particulars of his settlement in Fraserburgh, it may be interesting to refer to some of his forbears, seeing that this can be done without unduly trying the patience of the reader.

On the paternal side, Mr. Johnstone is truly a son of the manse. His grandfather, the Rev. Thomas Johnstone, was minister of Dalry, Ayrshire, where he died in the end of the eighteenth or beginning of the nineteenth century. His son, the father of the minister of Fraserburgh, was the Rev. Michael Shaw Stewart Johnstone, D.D., minister of Minnigaff, Kirkcudbrightshire. He was inducted to Minnigaff about 1836, and, like a true lover of his flock, remained there throughout the whole period of his ministry, a space of 55 years. He was much beloved by his congregation, and the mutual affection existing between pastor and people accounted for his persistent refusals to listen to any proposals for his translation to more important charges elsewhere. Had he cared he might have occupied the Moderator's chair, but such honours he did not covet, and this, the goal of every ambitious churchman, had for him no glamour or attraction. He was happiest among his parishioners at Minnigaff, and like a true philosopher he did not care to leave the Elysian fields. He was minister of Minnigaff from 1836 to 1891.

The minister of Fraserburgh's grandfather on his mother's side was no less a figure than Admiral McKerlie, who fought under Nelson at Trafalgar. Admiral McKerlie, who was the son of a substantial Galloway farmer, found himself, through the agency of the press gang, in the Navy, without his leave being asked or given. It was rather an unceremonious way of creating a patriot, but once on board ship, McKerlie had no alternative but fight for the honour of his country. This he did to some purpose. Entering the Navy a man before the mast, he finished an Admiral. During a fight in Bantry Bay, McKerlie was speaking to a companion when a cannon ball shattered one of his hands, and carried off the head of his companion. The result of this shot cost the future Admiral his arm. He saw much active service thereafter, and like Nelson, the lost arm was no hindrance to his energy and activity as a fighter. To all his stirring experiences, the part he played at Trafalgar was the climax. There he was second in command on the "Spartiate," a 74 gun ship, and though modest on the subject of the achievements of his own particular ship, was always proud to be associated with Nelson in connection with one of the greatest naval victories on record. An interesting notice of Admiral McKerlie, which appeared in the *People's Journal* in September, 1912, contained the following unique experience which the old Admiral had:—

"After his retirement from active service, Admiral McKerlie on one occasion went to Edinburgh to pay a visit to relatives. They took him to see a panorama of the Battle of Trafalgar which was attracting the Metropolis. The showman, who was describing the stirring scenes as they passed across the platform, at one particular part of the exhibition said, 'You will notice here, this is the Lieutenant of the 'Spartiate'—the figure with the right arm gone.'

"Carried away by the impulse of the moment, the bluff old sailor sprang to his feet and shouted: 'I am the man, and there is the arm!' and he waved the stump triumphantly before the crowded house.

"This dramatic and unrehearsed item of the programme created an immense

sensation, and before he had quite realized what he had done, Admiral McKerlie found himself the object of a great ovation."

The forebears of the Rev. M P. Johnstone, M.A., B.D., are a credit to him.

When Mr. Johnstone was nominated for the Fraserburgh charge a party in the congregation raised objections to his appointment, and for some considerable time quite a clamour was kept up by the discontents. The controversy was carried to the church courts, but all the time a considerable majority of the congregation was in favour of Mr. Johnstone, and the matter therefore could have but one ending, *viz.*, the appointment of Mr. Johnstone to the Fraserburgh charge. His induction took place in July, 1888, and from that month to the present, his ministerial work has been abundantly blessed. By his example and excellent spirit he lived down all opposition. He had not been long in the parish when those who had most opposed him, impressed by his breadth of mind and high, dignified character, became his warm supporters. Armed with an excellent University education and a classical turn of mind, Mr. Johnstone has proved a very able and eloquent preacher. All his oral work he prepares with the greatest of care, and to this is due the uniformly high standard which his preaching attains year in and year out.

If any minister had an ideal of what his church work should be and lived up to it, that minister is Mr. Johnstone. Although an ardent Churchman, Mr. Johnstone appreciates the convictions and opinions of those belonging to other denominations, and thus it is that he is respected and esteemed in Fraserburgh by all beyond the pale of Old Zion. His splendid work in Fraserburgh has truly justified the gallant fight which his supporters made for him at the time of his election. Not only is he an eloquent preacher, but also is a lecturer of first rate ability, who in this respect persistently hides his light under a bushel.

Besides being a much respected spiritual guide to his people, Mr. Johnstone has shown great energy in carrying out ambitious and much needed improvements in connection with the church. The praise was not up to the standard of the age, and Mr. Johnstone, backed by the bulk of the congregation, raised funds and put a very handsome pipe organ into the church at a cost of £750. The next work of importance which Mr. Johnstone saw carried out, was the complete structural alterations and highly successful renovation of the interior of the church in 1898. The work was in the hands of Mr. Alexander Marshall Mackenzie, the well-known Aberdeen architect, and was carried out at a cost of £1,500. From being like the hold of a ship, the roof of the church resembled the interior of a quaint, old sacred edifice. The appearance of the interior of the church was further greatly enhanced by the insertion in the east gable of a magnificent stained glass window by Sir George Anderson, treasurer of the Bank of Scotland, in memory of his father and mother. His father, as is noted further on, was for many years preceptor in the church, and, most appropriately, the window is a glorious exposition of music as contained in the 148th psalm.

A notice of the parish church would be incomplete without some reference to the precentors who occupied the "lattern" and led the praise since the church

was opened. Until the last quarter of the last century, the precentor was a great institution, and one can readily picture the worthy individual surveying the congregation from his perch on high, and afterwards hear the "dirl" of the tuning-fork on the book-board as the key was being taken preparatory to the singing being started. Although the number of verses taken could be measured by the yard, the precentors' repertoire of tunes in the very olden days was generally very limited. Among the favourites which were often heard were the syllabic tunes "Coleshill," "Balerna," "Tallis," "St. Paul's," "St. Ann's" and "French"; and of the melodic, "New Lydia," "St. Lawrence," etc. As a full dress effort of a most ambitious and silver-throated precentor, "St. Asaph" was often sung.

Of course, a choir is a modern innovation, and for the greater part of last century the congregation psalmody in the parish church here was led by the precentor alone. In those days the precentor was the only man who stood at the singing, the entire congregation remaining seated, but though the people did not rise they joined heartily in the praise, and did not stand like stoics as is now the fashionable order of the day. To the young generation of the present day the want of a choir would appear a terrible thing, but when it is known that the congregations of the past took the place of the choir the matter presents a different aspect altogether. It can easily be understood that the music was not classical nor the rendering of it refined or delicate, but what it wanted in quality it made up in quantity, and it seemed suitable to the taste and requirements of the age. Still one can imagine that unaided by a "box o' whistles," a precentor's place in the old days was much more difficult to fill, and involved a much heavier responsibility than the duties which pertain to the present-day choirmaster, the modernized definition of the dear old word "Precentor."

It is difficult to know the name of the precentor who "sang" the church, when it was opened in 1803, and officiated in the period immediately following that year. It is, however, understood that a man Mackay filled the office of precentor in the early part of last century. Oral tradition, handed down from generation to generation, credits this man with having a very fine tenor voice. Following Mackay, or somewhere about that time, came Mr. John Anderson, grandfather of Mr. F. J. R. Anderson, town clerk. Mr. Anderson had a glorious tenor voice, and was a singer of rare power, until old age began to tell upon him. He occupied the precentor's desk when the stormy times of the Disruption rent the congregation in pieces. Mr. Anderson elected to go out. He shook the dust of Old Zion from his feet and gave up what was then considered a fair salary, to sing to the new Free Church congregation for love.

Mr. Anderson's musical gifts came down in large abundance to his descendants. His son, the late Mr. Robert Anderson, solicitor, was a most gifted singer, his beautiful tenor voice often delighting the people of Fraserburgh. He was a successful composer and published a good deal of music, mostly church music. Than Mr. Robert Anderson no man ever did more for music in Fraser-

burgh. His ideal of the divine art was of a very high order, and he spared neither time nor money in trying to foster a taste in the community for classical music. Some of those who at the present day take a leading part in musical affairs in the town are disciples of Mr. Anderson. It may not be out of place to note here that when Mr. Anderson was choirmaster in the West Parish Church in the late seventies, the singing of the church choir was the best ever heard in Fraserburgh—before or since the date mentioned. Another son of the late Mr John Anderson, Sir George Anderson, the treasurer of the Bank of Scotland, has all his life had a strong taste for music. The late Mr. J. M. Anderson, though never conspicuous as a performer, had a thorough knowledge of music, and always took a keen and sympathetic interest in matters musical. The members of his family have inherited in an eminent degree the musical tastes and talents of their forebears, all excelling either as instrumentalists or singers.

On the resignation of Mr. John Anderson in 1843, a stranger named Fuller was appointed to the precentorship. This man remained in office for a short time only, having received a better appointment of a similar nature in Buckie. On the departure of Mr. Fuller, the vacant place was offered to and accepted by the late Mr. Geo. Ingram, clothier, here. Mr. Cumming, the minister, as already indicated, was a very critical, though by no means profound musician, and he and Mr. Ingram did not pull together. As a matter of fact, Mr. Ingram was precentor for only a Sunday or two, when he threw up the job, seeing that he and the minister could not agree. On the last Sunday that he officiated, the tailor had certainly the best of the minister. After morning service the precentor went as usual, into the vestry, to which the minister had preceded him. When Mr. Ingram made his appearance the minister at once set upon him and roundly abused him for his poor singing, and the unsatisfactory and clumsy way he led the praise. After the minister had emptied the vials of his wrath, Mr. Ingram quietly looked up and said: "I'll tell ye this, Mr. Cumming, the sing wis gweed eneuch for the preach." This was the last of Mr. Ingram's appearances as precentor. He intimated his resignation next day.

His successor was a man well-known and highly respected in his day, viz., Mr. George Hay, also a clothier. Apart from his capabilities as a musician, Mr. Hay was a man of strong intellectual power, and deeply read in the best literature of past and contemporary ages. Few men in the town, in any walk of life, reached his standard of intelligence. He was a great favourite with Mr. Cumming, his strong character and highly developed intellect appealing to the tastes of the minister. He had a magnificent pure bass voice of remarkable compass, which was best shown to advantage in the grand solos from the Oratorios. His tastes all went in the direction of classical music. From the middle sixties to the late seventies, his house was the rendezvous of the musicians of the town, and many a delightful musical night was spent by the devotees of the musical muse, in the big back room of the little house in Cross Street. Mr Hay was for nearly 40 years precentor in the Parish Church, and during that long period not only was he greatly esteemed by the congrega-

tion, but much beloved by those who assisted him in the choir, the members of which he gathered around him, and thus formed the first regular choir in the Church.

In many country churches at this time it was nothing for the precentors to make a false start or break down and start at the beginning of the verse again. Mr. Hay was too fine a musician to be classed among this nervous band, but when he sometimes took a holiday, his substitutes occasionally came to grief in the manner above stated. The late Mr. Thomas Winchester, hairdresser, sometimes officiated in Mr. Hay's absence, and through sheer nervousness it was no uncommon thing for Mr. Winchester to have two or three tries before getting fairly under way. The congregation was accustomed to such accidents when a stranger was officiating, and thought nothing about them. Of course, a man's nerves, standing as he did alone in an elevated place, were much more severely tried than they are now-a-days, seeing that the precentor has now an organ at his back and a big choir around him.

Mr Hay's shop in Cross Street was for many years the meeting place of the leaders of thought in the town, where imperial and local politics were discussed, and where international affairs and difficulties affecting the world, from China to Peru, were always satisfactorily settled. It was quite a common thing to see "the board" strewn with the ancient classics, the *Contemporary* or *Blackwood's* or some of the newest publications on Mathematics.

Mr. Hay was not what could be called a humorist, but some good stories are told of him. Mr. Hay was to some of the old fashioned people not very orthodox in his views. He and a lady friend had a strong altercation one evening, and exasperated beyond measure he exclaimed, "Ah, go to the d——." The lady, thinking she was to score, replied promptly, "Some folks dinna believe in a personal d——." Sharply replied Mr. Hay, "Sae lang as you're alive, naebody need deny that." On one occasion a farm servant went into the precentor's shop to give him his marriage banns. He wanted the "cry" done all on one Sunday, the charge for which was 15s. The man grudging this sum very much, Mr. Hay humorously remarked, "Whis! grudge 15s. for a wife. This is only what the auld brewer's chairgin' for young pigs." The man promptly vanished. Mr. Hay had one most amusing experience as precentor many long years ago. A local fisherman, known by the fancy name of "Dir," resolved to take unto himself a wife, said to be his second one. "Dir" thought he would do the "genteel," pay 15s. and have the calls all made on one Sunday. The intended, a woman of Swedish extraction named Chirsty Scherberg, unaware that "Dir" had got the banns proclaimed all on one Sunday, went to church the following Sabbath to hear her own name called. After the first psalm had been sung, Chirsty, in a great state of perturbation, got out of her seat, slipped quietly up to the "lattern," and tapping Mr. Hay on the shoulder, asked in suppressed but indignant tones why he had not called her name and "Dir's" so Mr. Hay, taken quite aback, whispered to her that the calls had all been made the previous Sunday. Chirsty returned to her seat with an air of great im-

portance, and her beaming countenance during the rest of the service told that her thoughts were more devoted to the coming union than the subject of the minister's sermon. Mr. Hay removed to Lancashire, and died there a good many years ago. Old Hay's memory and reputation as a musician will last for generations. On his resignation, the appointment was given to a teacher named Mr. Stevenson, who at the same time was made teacher at Broadsea.

Mr. Stevenson did not stay long in Fraserburgh, and the place was again vacant. Mr. McLaren, not a little jealous of the fine singing in the West Parish Church, due to the enthusiastic musical work of the late Mr. Robert Anderson, who was choirmaster, was determined to have nothing but a "clinker" of the first order, appointed as precentor. Somehow or other Mr. Finlay Dunn, the well-known professional singer, was consulted, and he recommended as a suitable man a Mr. Wm. Brown, a shoemaker from Jedburgh, Galashiels, or some border town. Mr. Brown got a salary of something like £40—twice as much as Mr. Hay's—and he came with a great flourish of trumpets. He was a very intelligent, amiable man, but he lost hold of the congregation and the session, and resigned. He had very wide knowledge of music, and his resignation was much regretted by a large circle of friends.

When Mr. Brown retired from the precentorship, a Mr. Anderson was appointed to the dual offices of teacher at Broadsea and precentor in the Auld Kirk. Mr. Anderson was a good singer and organizer, and he got a regular choir about him, which was certainly the best that had ever been in the Parish Church up to that time. It should have been mentioned that some time before this a "kist of whistles," in the shape of a harmonium, was introduced into the church. It was played by Miss McLaren, now Mrs. Calder, and was a great success and a decided help to the singing of the congregation. A harmonium did duty in the church till the fine new pipe organ, already referred to, was introduced.

After being located here for a few years, Mr. Anderson secured a better scholastic appointment somewhere south of Aberdeen and left the town. The same double arrangement was made with his successor, who proved to be the great W. L. Cockburn. Mr. Cockburn had a voice of extraordinary power, and he certainly was the greatest baritone that ever resided in the north of Scotland. His voice and method of singing improved greatly after a few years' residence in Fraserburgh, and his fame as a soloist soon spread all over the country. In due course he was engaged to sing as a soloist at first-class concerts in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Inverness and other important centres in Scotland. All the time he carried on his work as teacher of Broadsea and precentor in the Parish Church. He studied singing for a session with Herr Henschel of London, and thereafter his offers of singing engagements became so numerous that he resigned his appointments here, and settled down in London, where he now is. It is seldom that a singer of Mr. Cockburn's calibre is found so far north and it may be taken for granted that many years will circle round before such a voice as Mr. Cockburn's is found in Fraserburgh. He was a most kindly hearted

man, a master at the festive board, and an all round good soul, whose departure south left the town poorer in many ways.

When the new pipe organ was put in, Miss Bisset, Frithside Street, was appointed the first organist, a place which she held with much acceptance to the congregation for several years, first along with Mr. Cockburn as choirmaster, and thereafter with Mr. Broome, Mr. Cockburn's successor, in the same capacity. Mr. Broome held the appointment of choirmaster for an uneventful year or two.

In consequence of some proposed changes, Miss Bisset and Mr. Broome both resigned their positions, and Mr. Grant Smith was appointed organist and choirmaster. Mr. Smith was an excellent organist, so far as playing was concerned, but he had no powers of organization or command, and the choir became hopelessly out of date and almost an unknown quantity. Mr. Smith felt his weakness and wisely resigned. He was succeeded by Mr. Robert Robson, assistant in the office of Mr. A. G. Brown, Lord Saltoun's factor. Mr. Robson struggled manfully for a year or two to wipe out the unfortunate legacy of a derelict choir, left by Mr. Smith, but his success was not very marked until Mr. Cranna, the humble author of this book, took over the duties of choirmaster. Under the fostering care of the two, the Parish Church choir reached a high standard of excellence. Mr. Robson having obtained an appointment in Aberdeen, had to vacate the position of organist in the Parish Church, Mr. Cranna resigning shortly afterwards. Mr. Robertson, cashier in the British Oil and Guano Company's office, who had officiated as an organist in Aberdeen, received the vacant appointment, and he still occupies the position.

The author, having transmitted the articles which appeared in the *Fraserburgh Advertiser*, on "Precentors of the Parish Church," to the late Dr. John Clark, Professor of Mathematics in the Polytechnic College (of Engineering), Gizeh, Cairo, a distinguished native of Fraserburgh, received a very gratifying acknowledgment from him. The following is an extract from the letter received, which will be appreciated by natives, seeing that it refers to local musical efforts:—

"Many thanks—and congratulations—for your charming articles on the Precentors of Fraserburgh. Everyone who took delight in the Divine Art in the old days, or who helped to keep the lamp aflame, will read your articles with the greatest pleasure and appreciation. What a beautiful atmosphere was that of the early days, say of *George Hay's* time—the days of the dawning of music. It was not so much the excellence of the music achieved (for, now-a-days, probably more ambitious work is done) but it was the purity of the faith—the faith of pioneers seeing for the first time into a new and beautiful country: and the pleasure was greater and the ideal higher in consequence. Now they are not pioneers, but all tillers of the soil, with minds occupied with the details of tilling (5-finger exercises, counter-point, correct voice production, etc.) and they have lost the atmosphere of mystery and imagination of the pioneer days. It is nice to have these days recalled again."

Dr. Clark further addressed to the author, along with the letter, the following clever and amusing verses, which may quite fittingly appear in this part of the book. The poem is as perfect an example of pure Buchan doric as has been printed for many a day, and completely controverts the accepted axiom that mathematicians are devoid of sentiment and humour:—

THE EVOLUTION OF AULD KIRK MUSIC.

I.—PREHISTORIC MELODY.

Oor forebears in the Auld Licht days
A God o' anger praised,
And in a dolefu' dooble-bass
Their dour devotions raised.

A' harmony sae jimp and nice
The unco-guid abhorred,
"It's jist," said they, "the human v'ice
That's pleasin' to the Lord!"

II.—THE PRECENTOR.

But as they sometimes tint the tune
Thro' want o' ane to lead,
The *Sooter*, wha could mak' maist soun',
To start the Psalms agreed.

Fu' mony a Sawbath, ook by ook,
The *Sooter*, gollied sair,
As, keepin' stot we heed and buik,
He warstled wi' the air.

III.—THE ORGAN HERESY.

Syne cam' some carlins frae the Sooth
That spak' o' organs grand,
An' ca'd oor simple Psalms uncooth,
An' spread *scism* i' the land.

They kirked the Scriptur's through an' focht
In maist unseemly tussles;
By text and categiz they socht
To uphud their "kist o' fussles."

But up spak' God's app'inted twa—
Famed Kennedy and Begg,
Wha kent the Scriptur' an' the Law
Eneuch the Deil to fleg:—

"We mauna deeve His holy lugs
Wi' bellows-blavin' din:—
It's nocht (said they) but papish drugs
To soothe your sowl in sin!"

IV.—THE ORGAN TRIUMPHANT.

When they twa godly men had gaed
 Their gaet, and crossed the burn—
 The anti-organ fecht was deen,
 And nane was left to mourn.

I kenna wha wis richt or wrang—
 But this I'll say for choice,
 That when the unco-godly sang,
 'Twas an ungodly noise.

The organ mayna jist be a'
 That's best by wey o' soun',
 But losh! It's nae sae raspin'-raw
 As Psalms sung oot o' tune!

So praise to Jubal! Gleg was he—
 The first great organ-vricht!
 It's ta'en a hantle years to see
 His theories were richt!

Having touched on the precentors, it would scarcely be fair to leave the subject of the Church without referring to the beadles, or at least some of those important individuals, acting under the Session, who rang the bell, carried the Bible into the pulpit, and until the closing sixties or the early seventies, acted as parish grave-diggers. The beadle was a great institution in his day, and often from his close connection with the minister, was a more important individual in the parish than the precentor. The changes in the law and the altered condition of the people have robbed the beadle of his importance, and the church officer of the present day is an unimportant individual, as compared with his predecessor of 50 or 100 years ago. "Thistledown" depicts the old beadle, now, alas! defunct, as follows: "Fond of snuff and susceptible to the allurements of a sly dram. He is proud of his office—the more solemn and conspicuous duties of which he performs with a dignity of deportment and solemnity of countenance which casts the minister into the shade. He is heard to speak of 'me and the minister'; and should there chance to come a young probationer to occupy the pulpit for a day, who appears flurried and nervous just before he is to ascend to 'the place of execution,' he (the preacher) will receive a kindly tap on the shoulder and be warned not to let his feelings get the better of him. 'I can never see a young chap like you gaun up into the poopit,' he will continue, 'without bein' reminded o' the first Sawbeth that I took up the Bible. I shook like the leaf o' a tree! I dinna shak' noo; an' ye'll get ower yer nervousness, too, sir, wi' practice, just as I ha'e dune. I faund it the best plan—an' dootless sae will ye, gin ye'll try it—never to think about what yer doin', nor wha's lookin' at ye, but just stap up the stair an' gang through the business as if ye didna care a rap for a livin' soul o' them.'"

There are hundreds of choice stories about the ready wit, humour and repartee of last century beadles. The following is one of the best told by

"Thistledown":—A certain country beadle had been sent round the parish to deliver notices at all the houses of the catechising which was to precede the preparation for receiving Communion. On his return it was evident that John had partaken rather freely of refreshments in the course of the expedition. The beadle pleaded the pressing "hospitality" of the parishioners. The minister would not admit the plea, and added, "Why, John, I go through the parish, and you do not see me return home fou' as you have done." "Ay, minister," replied John, with an emphatic shake of the head, "but, then, ye're nae sae popular in the parish as I am." It is to be feared that, though some of the beadles of the Parish Church of Fraserburgh were characters in their day, none of them left a heritage of sparkling wit and humour sufficient to place them on a level with many of their fellows, especially in the south of Scotland, of the same generation. Possibly this is not due to any want of originality on the part of the "Broch" beadles, but to the absence of an appreciative chronicler, competent and careful to note and bequeath to posterity the humours of life as they were presented to him. How often, on account of this, does an original character, whose sayings and doings deserve to be perpetuated, pass into oblivion.

The man who held office as beadle and bell-ringer of the church and gravedigger, at or about the time the present building was opened, was named John, or rather Johnnie, Brown. He held office for a great period of years, and was one of the institutions of the town. It was during his early tenure of office that the beadle was an individual of some importance in the parish, and Johnnie Brown seems to have been a fairly good specimen of his class. It is difficult, at such a distance from the time he lived, to get any personal "lore" about him, but he appears to have liked a dram. This cannot be surprising as it appears that prior to the first temperance wave in 1838, inaugurated by an English enthusiast and reformer named Mr. Gray Mason, drinking was universal in the district. It may not be out of place to mention here that a venerable and highly respected citizen, Mr. George Bruce, Moray House, took the pledge at Mr. Mason's meeting held in August, 1838, and has kept it ever since. Unfortunately, Johnnie Brown did not see his way to join the temperance band. That there was humour in Brown is proved by a reply he gave to the Rev. John Cumming, parish minister. A funeral party had arrived at the churchyard before the grave was ready. Johnnie was digging at his very hardest, but seemed rather unsteady in his movements. The minister saw that John was "fou," and rebuked him accordingly. John got out of his difficulty by the following naive reply: "Ah, Mr. Cumming, if you were down amon' the smells that there are here, ye wid be glad o' a dram tae." Of course, before the days of gas, worship took place in the forenoon and after noon, but when any service was held in the evening the church was lit by the aid of candles. These had to be periodically snuffed, and Brown had to lower the chandeliers before this could be done. This, and the snuffing of the candles, afforded much amusement to the young people. Johnnie lived to a ripe old age,

and his remains now lie quietly in Kirkton churchyard. The late Mr. John Mackie, the once well-known editor of the *Northern Ensign*, was a grandson of Johnnie Brown's, Mr. Mackie's mother being Brown's daughter. The beadle had a son named Peter Brown, who had a blacksmith's shop, when last century was about a quarter old, at the foot of Commerce Street, where the office of Mr Ritchie, stave merchant, is. This Peter Brown went to America a lifetime ago; but though he lost all connection with his native town, no doubt his descendants are worthy citizens of the United States.

On the death of John Brown, a successor was appointed of the name of James Stewart, a Highlander from Inverness-shire. Stewart was in the service of the Saltoun family, either at Castle Fraser or Ness Castle. He came down to Philorth, and it was while in service there that he received the appointment of beadle of the Parish Church. In addition to filling that office, he was bell-ringer, gravedigger, and also "minister's man." He was a quiet, inoffensive man, who discharged his duties faithfully and with becoming decorum. He had however, a good head, but he never came before the public in any extravagant way, as did many of the beadles in his day. His intelligence came out in some of his descendants. One of his grandsons—a son of the late Mr. Stewart, merchant and tailor, Rathen—was the Hon. Frederick Stewart, Principal of the Institute of Education, Hong Kong, and who was at one time a secretary of Lord Elgin's, when that administrator held office in the Far East. The Hon. Frederick Stewart, who was a graduate of Aberdeen University, was a brilliant Chinese scholar, and was greatly beloved and respected by the Chinese people. He died quite suddenly, when he was just about to retire from the service on a handsome pension. Another grandson who saw some life, was the late Mr. Joseph Bowie. Bowie, who served his "time" to be a tailor, found life rather flat in Buchan, and long, long ago found his way to the United States. On the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, Bowie joined the Federal Navy, and remained there throughout the contest. During his four or five naval experiences, he saw many "angry shots" fired, bombardments, blockade running, and other thrilling experiences, which were such a marked feature of the naval branch of the war. At the conclusion of the war, Mr. Bowie joined the U.S. Army and remained in it ten years. He long enjoyed a handsome pension at the hands of the United States Government. Old Stewart died a little before or a little after the Disruption. The year 1840 is approximately given as the year of his death.

One of the old church beadles, who was rather a character, and who was one of the outstanding officers of the church for many years, was John Taylor, commonly known as "Clola John," otherwise Jock. The district from whence John came may be guessed from his tee name, and he was credited with being one of the leading auld lights. John was a tall, heavy man of rather ungainly appearance. Like many of the country beadles, he was a great snuffer, and was also a good "judge" of a dram. He was however, a man of considerable intelligence, and had the Bible at his finger-ends. As an expounder of the

Scriptures he was second to none among his fellows, and nothing delighted him more than to start an argument on some Biblical subject with some of the representative non-intrusionists, as they were then called. John was a joiner to trade, and besides acting as beadle, which included the duties of ringing the bell, he acted as gravedigger. As already said, he was a strong snuffer, and the congregation was often reminded of the fact when the Bible was being taken up to the pulpit. John had often to put the Holy Book very hurriedly down on the reading desk, pull a very large coloured and patriarchal looking handkerchief from his pocket, and as hurriedly apply it to his nose. He was always however, very self-possessed, and there was no office in the church that he did not think he could competently fill.

It must be admitted that he had a wonderful power of extempore prayer, which was not so much practised among the rank and file of the people in those days as it is now. In this respect he was head and shoulders above the crowd. In the early days of the Rev. Peter McLaren's ministry in Fraserburgh, none of the elders cared to risk their hands at public prayer, and when the minister could not at any time attend the Sunday school, John Taylor took charge of the school, and offered up a prayer that would have done credit to one with the bands on his breast. Indeed, so capable was he in this respect that Mr. McLaren often left the Sunday school under the charge of the beadle. Mr. George Hay, the precentor, with all his brilliant ability, could never muster up the courage to lead the prayer in the church Sunday school, and had therefore often to play "second fiddle." "Clola" had once a rare opportunity of shining, and he embraced it. The minister was from home, and "the supply" did not turn up, neither did he send any explanation. The congregation assembled, and at 11 o'clock no minister appeared. The three elders in the church, which included the parochial schoolmaster, the late Mr. George Murray (whose memory is deeply cherished and revered by many in Fraserburgh who were his pupils), became uneasy. At a quarter past 11, on the pretence of going out to see if the missing minister was coming, an elder left the church. Ten minutes later another elder left to look for the one that had first gone to the gateway (?). Neither returned, and Mr. Murray went to the door to look for them, but the worthy pair had completely vanished, the reason for which can be roughly guessed. Mr. Murray at the half-hour ascended the "lattern" and read a chapter. John, the beadle, then engaged in prayer, and taking advantage of his opportunity, gave the congregation unmistakable proof of his talents in this respect. A paraphrase having been sung, and the Benediction pronounced by the beadle, the congregation was dismissed and the difficulty overcome much better than the deserting elders ever could have imagined.

John Taylor's little shop in Frithside Street was frequented in the evenings by many of the working people, and the town's gossip discussed and amplified. John was often employed making coffins for the poorer classes in the country and the villages. He got the credit of being a very rough-and-ready workman, and it was a common saying that the beadle's coffins were so carelessly put

together that, when they were being carried to deceased's residence, John had to sit in the cart and apply nail after nail, otherwise the jolting of the cart would have had the coffin in boards before it reached its destination. "Clola" had great faith in nails, and was wont to declare that "twa dooble doobles wis worth a' the glue in the world." In connection with his coffin-making John once made a coffin too short, and those in the house were complaining of his carelessness. "Oh," said John, "ye needna mak' a' this steer; canna ye jist birs' doon her knees a bit?" John took the contract for the joiner work of Sandie Milne's house in Manse Street. As indicated, he could take a dram, and evidently he had been imbibing too freely when he made up his estimates. After the work had progressed for some time, he began to see that there was a leak somewhere. On looking into the matter he found, to his horror, that he had omitted to take into account the cost of wages and nails! Poor John was severely hit on this occasion. As years advanced he took a dram more freely, and to eke out their income, his better half started to sell penny ale in a little tiled house in Frithside Street, on the site of which is the property belonging to Mr. Reid, the slater. John degenerated, and it was no extraordinary sight, when young folks went for a bottle of "penny wabble," as it was called, for them to see John lying on the floor "blin' fou," and Mrs. Taylor raining blows on his body with his boots; and they were boots of some size and weight! John had tremendous feet. Of all things in the world, Mrs. Taylor had a way of complaining of a light death-rate. If anybody at such a time had asked how she and John were getting on, she would reply, "Ah, things are awfa' flat; there's naething dein' in the 'yard ava jist noo."

An incident happened in John's experiences as gravedigger, which, though it might have had a tragic ending, had its humorous side. John and his assistant were engaged digging a grave which was pretty deep. On mostly all occasions of this kind John provided a bottle from which to refresh himself and his friend in the course of their labours. Both had a good "refresh," and then started operations. After getting the grave pretty well to its depth, John said he would go and have a drop, and then return to work and let his companion go and have his drink. The man continued working, but no John made his appearance, and he began to think his chance of a second drink was a very remote one. The man in the grave knew exactly the stone below which the bottle was hid, and as he could not see out of the grave, he put down his spade and stood upon the iron part of it, with the object of being raised as much higher as would enable him to see if his "boss" was doing fair with the liquor. At this moment the sides of the grave fell in, and the poor fellow was enveloped in sand up to the shoulders, and as helpless as an Egyptian mummy. Had the man been digging and bending he would certainly have been smothered, as "Clola" was by this time helplessly "fou." Fortunately the funeral party was at hand, and amid considerable excitement, the man was dug out of his rather gruesome prison house.

John was gravedigger during the great cholera outbreak of 1866, and he

had often great difficulty in getting the coffins carried from the hearse to the grave. The funeral company seldom exceeded two or three, and these were so frightened for infection that often they would not touch the coffin. People who had to face the ordeal, always carried a cholera mixture with them, and often in the early night, when most of the funerals took place, the strange sight could be witnessed at the churchyard gate of the company taking a dose of their mixture before handling the coffin. "Clola" was not always guilty of paying promptly those with whom he did business. His first wife's son was once expatiating, to one to whom John was due a pretty big account, on the splendid books on divinity which the beadle had in his homely library. "Ah," sarcastically replied the gentleman, "I am well aware that your father confines his religious principles to his library." John's wife was a decent, well-doing body, who, by her appearance, seemed to be a good many years older than her husband. Mrs. Taylor ultimately fell sick. Some days before her death she sent for her husband and addressed him in something like the following terms: "Noo, John, I'm gaun tae leave ye. Fin I'm awa ye'll be better o' anither wife. Ye're turnin' o'er tae years, and ye'll be better o' somebody tae look aifter ye. Wull ye promise me tae look oot for somebody fin I'm awa?" John most unfeelingly and gruffly replied: "Ach, I've deen that already." And it seems he told the truth, for his first wife was not very long dead when he took a second to his bosom. John came down the hill, poor man, and shortly afterwards resigned his offices. He went into Aberdeen to seek employment, but the last that was heard of him in Fraserburgh was that he was hawking the country trying to sell either books or tea. Considering his age when he left Fraserburgh, there is no doubt but that John Taylor has by this time joined the great majority.

John Taylor's successor as beadle in the church was another Highlander named Neil Sutherland. He was a joiner to trade, and it is said, came to this part of the country to work at the building of Sandhaven Harbour. He did not take up the duties of gravedigger, etc., but merely discharged the work of church officer. Neil was a very quiet, respectable man, with a strongly marked religious tone pervading his character. He was all over, though in humble circumstances a very worthy citizen, and an exemplary beadle. Indeed, his life was an example to those around him, and one would have searched the country in vain for a beadle whose better qualities reached the high level of those possessed by Neil Sutherland. He took a great interest in the Sunday school, and for several years he carried on prayer meetings, in what was then the village of Broadsea. He was a great favourite with the Broadsea people, and his meetings were invariably very well attended. An off-shoot of this kind from the Auld Kirk in those days was enough to make the people think that the world was coming to an end. Neil plodded on however, and his work prospered showing that the times in which a man lives are not of so much consequence to the welfare of the world as the man whose individuality of character and strength, makes the times and the history thereof.

Neil Sutherland died about the close of 1873, having discharged the duties of beadle for about five years. Some of his family have made the world better than they found it. His eldest son, George, was a teacher, who, with unusual enterprise, went to France, after serving the usual period through which a pupil teacher passes. He settled down in the eastern part of the country, somewhere about Metz or Strasbourg, and taught there for a good many years. After perfecting himself in French, he paid a brief visit to his native place, and then betook himself to Canada, where he has since remained. The second son, William, is now the Rev. William Sutherland, D.D., M.A, the well-known Indian missionary. William was born for good work. Even at school he was known and respected by his schoolfellows as a saintly boy. His character was gentleness itself. He was never known to say a harsh, not to approach a bad word, as boys would term it, and he was always anxious to be the peacemaker and help those who were in trouble. He had nobility and strength of character besides, and his life and work in his matured years are just an improved edition—the simple school days give place to the strenuous battle of life—of the period spent at the Parish School, Saltoun Place, under Mr. George Murray. Mr. Sutherland married a daughter of the late Mr. William Slessor, sometime farmer at Philorth, thereafter at Auchmedden.

Shortly after the death of Mr. Neil Sutherland, Mr. William McRae, sawyer, was appointed to the office of beadle and bell-ringer. His personal appearance was all in his favour, and the way that he all along discharged his onerous duties could scarcely have been equalled, certainly not excelled. His dignified movements about the church in the discharge of his duties during the service, put him down as a past-master of ceremony. Under his care the church was cleanliness and tidiness itself. What a change since the days of "Clola." During the latter's regime, the dirt on the window glass was such that the rays of the sun had a struggle to pierce it, and as for the interior of the church, the dust was so carefully preserved that one could write the Lord's Prayer on the seat of a family pew without any trouble. Willie saw many changes in the Church during the time he carried the Bible up to the pulpit. He acted under two ministers; he was in office when no instrument assisted in the praise; he saw the harmonium introduced and it in time supplanted by the fine pipe organ which now so strongly appeals to the eye and ear of those attending the church; he was an official when the inside of the church was one of the ugliest in broad Scotland, and he continued in office until the interior had been transformed into one as beautiful as any reasonable person need expect to find in these northern regions. After completing nearly 40 years faithful service, William McRae resigned.

WEST PARISH CHURCH.

This church, as already indicated, owes its creation to the Rev. P. McLaren, who, despite the clamour for disestablishment which was then (1875) agitating the country to an uncommon extent, saw possibilities of church extension, and

did not fear to materialize his views. To succeed in the project meant much work, but Mr. McLaren laboured ungrudgingly, and supplicated financial aid over the length and breadth of the land. The Baird Trustees gave a handsome grant, but much was required beyond this, and it reflected greatly on Mr. McLaren's unceasing energy that he never ceased working until the prize of the necessary cash was won. The Church, which is of a handsome Gothic style, occupies one of the most commanding sites in Fraserburgh, and is one of the landmarks of the town, "seen from afar." Unfortunately, on close examination the church loses its beauty in consequence of the dark red sandstone of which it is built. The edifice cost about £4,000 and is seated for well-nigh 900 people. Its accoustics are perfect, and singing in the church is heard to great advantage. The bell, which was presented to the church by the late Mr. Alexander Whitelaw, M.P., is huge, and dominates all the other bells in the town.

The church was opened by the late Rev. Dr. Marshall Lang, the well-known and eloquent Principal of Aberdeen University, in September, 1876. The first minister was the Rev. Thomas Rogers, B.A., son of Professor Rogers, of Belfast, a man singularly gifted as an eloquent speaker, who at the time Mr. Gladstone disestablished the Church of Ireland went from one end of Ireland to the other, pleading the cause of the doomed Church. The Rev. Thomas Rogers came to Fraserburgh with a great reputation as a scholar, having studied both at Edinburgh and Oxford. The nucleus of a congregation was formed for him by transferring a proportion of the Parish Church members to the West Church. By and bye Mr. Rogers was left to his own resources, and as time went on, the congregation gradually increased till it assumed very respectable dimensions. Mr. Rogers was no orator, but his sermons were the perfection of English, and his Irish humour could not be wholly suppressed, even in the pulpit. His matter was weighty and excellent and in the hands of a clever and easy speaker would have earned for such a person a great reputation. He was impulsive, and in heat said very bitter things, for which he was always ready to apologise next day. He was no opportunist, and stuck to an opinion which he had formed, although by doing so he knew that he would give mortal offence to "the powers that were." His independence of mind was one of the features of his character; another was the Samaritan-like goodness of his heart. It overflowed with kindness to the poor and needy, and only his closest friends knew of his continual acts of charity. Trampdom soon "spots" the consistent giver, and in course of time the West Manse was invariably the first house in town which the "commercial" traveller visited. He was widely read in the cream of literature of almost all nations, and in the social circle it was an education to hear him talking on learned topics. For many years he was a pretty regular contributor to the local press. His pungent sarcasms were a terror to those who came under his lash, and he was not very particular who formed the subject of his text. Social position was no protection to those who had "put their foot in it" on any public question. In the later years of his ministry his health became precarious, and

he lost much of the fire and combativeness of character which marked his early career in Fraserburgh. Proceeding with Mrs. Rogers to Harrogate for the sake of his health, he died there most unexpectedly in September, 1890, after a fourteen years' ministry in the West Church, his first and only charge.

Like every mere man, Mr. Rogers had his faults, but the good outweighed the weaknesses a hundred-fold, and his memory will be held in affectionate remembrance by the West Parish congregation for many years to come. Indeed, with the older members of the congregation, Mr. Rogers' name will never be disassociated from the West Church. Many of Mr. Rogers' gems of humour still float about the town, and it would be unfair to leave the subject of the West Church without letting the outside public have the benefit of one or two of them. Here is one: A musical stranger once worshipped in the church. Mr. Rogers was sitting in his own pew, and hearing the stranger's voice, courteously handed him a book with the music in it. The stranger appreciated the kind thought, and when the "ladle" was handed round, he put a shilling into it. At the close of the service next Sunday evening, Mr. Rogers made a reference to the unsatisfactory nature of the collections, notwithstanding all that he said on the subject Sunday after Sunday. He wound up as follows: "But, brethren, there was a satisfactory feature in connection with the collection last Sunday evening. There was actually a silver coin in the offering; but I suppose that can be accounted for from the fact that there happened to be a stranger in church," immediately followed by the Benediction. In the course of a sermon on one occasion, he said that in Jewish times speaking evil against one's neighbour was such a serious offence that it was punishable by the cutting out of the tongue. Continuing, he said: "If this law were in force in Fraserburgh just now, and a public meeting of the inhabitants called, there would be less noise at that meeting than there was at the building of the Tower of Babel." Mr. Rogers had rather a poor opinion, in a humorous sort of way, of dissenting Churches, and he often directed a shaft against them. A poor wandering waif had called at the manse twice in one evening and had received assistance from the minister on each occasion. Thinking he had truly a "soft mark" on hand, the tramp came the third time and solicited alms. After a pretty lengthened altercation the minister wound up the interview by saying: "If you don't clear out at once, I'll kick you into the Baptist Church!" To kick the unfortunate into a dissenting Church, which was on the opposite side of the street, was the greatest indignity which he could heap upon him. The humour is intensely quaint.

Mr. Rogers was succeeded in the West Church by the Rev. George Wauchope Stewart, B.D., a native of Edinburgh. Mr. Stewart had a brilliant career at both George Watson's College and Edinburgh University. At the latter he and Mr. Clyde, the eminent K.C., were the two outstanding students, and the prizes and medals they did not divide, were not worth taking. Mr. Stewart finished by graduating with first-class honours in Philosophy. He studied Divinity in Germany for some years, and became an expert German scholar.

On returning to this country he was for a short time assistant at Girvan, thereafter at Pollokshields; from thence he came to Fraserburgh, in February, 1891, on the unanimous call of the congregation. Although not blessed with that gift of eloquence which, though the sermon be "thin," often moves a congregation much more than an intellectual sermon plainly delivered, Mr. Stewart is a practical and very forcible preacher, far above the average man who "wags his held in a poopit." His intellect is brilliant, and his literary work in various directions marks him out as a man of whom more will be heard. He is minister and writer combined, and with all his gifts is the most modest of men, and kindest of pastors. When in Fraserburgh he was continually going out and in among his people; he knew every member of his congregation by name, children included, and his fatherly attentions and kindly interest in their welfare, called forth their warmest regard. He had earned this to such an extent that when he intimated his resignation, the blow was felt as nothing short of a calamity. Under his charge the church flourished greatly, and all its agencies worked with great success. A beautiful violinist, and one of the best all-round amateur musicians in the North of Scotland, Mr. Stewart took charge of the choir and raised it to a high state of excellence. He was the originator of the Fraserburgh Musical Club, and the conductor of the Fraserburgh Choral Society, and in both he laid down a high ideal of what music should be, which still bears fruit. He was only the "lion" at odd times, when the chorus of the Choral Society made particularly bad discords, or floundered desperately at a jaw-breaking chromatic passage of eight or ten bars in some of Bach's "playthings." The "lion," however, was quickly the lamb again, and his shafts of irony were accepted by the members as Benedictions. Mr. Stewart went from Fraserburgh to Rosemount, Aberdeen. After five years' work there he was, in 1906, offered and accepted the beautiful charge of Fyvie parish, from whence he was shortly called to the charge at Haddington.

The Rev. J. A. Stokes Little, M.A., the present minister of the West Parish Church, succeeded Mr. Stewart in February, 1902. Mr. Little is a native of Greenock, and for some time taught in Ayr Academy. He afterwards studied at Glasgow University, where he consistently took a conspicuous place in the prize-list throughout his college career. He greatly interested himself in the "side" work of the University, and in the end became President of the University Union. Before coming to Fraserburgh he was Assistant in St. John's Parish, Glasgow, and in Dunblane Cathedral. At both places his services were greatly appreciated, and he came to Fraserburgh armed with the very best credentials. A preacher of refinement, with delightful imagery and solid argument always at command, the composition of his sermon closely resembles that of his lamented predecessor, the Rev. Thomas Rogers. His command of the English language is a rare gift, and when preaching, his beautifully-turned sentences, combined with an earnest spiritual tone which always pervades them, never fail to make a deep impression on his hearers. Mr. Little's tastes distinctly run in the literary groove, and he has

done much writing in his time, though he is yet comparatively a young man. Two or three years ago he published a volume of sermons, entitled "Salt and Peace," which was very favourably received, and showed the literary gifts of the writer. A city charge is his true place in the Church. There his cultured style and scholarly qualities would be best appreciated. Mr. Little has also delivered numerous lectures in town and district, with much success.

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

Among Episcopalians this church is looked upon as their Mecca in the North. When Episcopacy was disestablished in 1689, the members of the old faith conscientiously considered that a great wrong had been done them, and it was with the greatest reluctance that they gave up the parish churches and manse, which they had possessed so long. In no part of Scotland did Episcopalians so strongly resent the new law as in Buchan, and in no part of Buchan was the opposition to the new order of things so determinedly manifested as in Fraserburgh. It may appear strange, but it is nevertheless a fact, that in out-of-the-way Buchan, Episcopacy had a stronger hold upon the people than, probably, in any other part of Scotland. The poorest were rigid Episcopalians, as witness the prominent part which the Broadsea fishermen and their wives took in the stormy times which immediately preceded the final ousting of the Episcopalian minister from the church and manse of Fraserburgh in the beginning of the eighteenth century. So violent partisans of Episcopacy were they, that the then Lady Saltoun, herself an Episcopalian, considered it her duty to call upon them and earnestly beseech them to desist from their lawless conduct. They did take her ladyship's advice, but in doing so declared: "But ye ken, yer ladyship, that theirs (the Presbyterians) is nae religion" The fight for the kirk and the manse of Fraserburgh, and the gallant defence made by Episcopalians before quitting them, in the end of the seventeenth century, is so fully detailed under the heading of the "Parish Church" that to refer to them here would be an unnecessary repetition. Suffice it to say that the historic glamour of these persecuting days, with their details of self-sacrifice and personal surrender, which have been handed down, orally and otherwise, from generation to generation, has focussed itself strongly in the minds of present-day Episcopalians. As a consequence, their disestablishment heroes and progenitors in Fraserburgh, who were probably the last in Scotland to submit to the new order of things, and who maintained unimpaired, their beloved form of worship in spite of all prosecutions and obloquy, have in the course of the centuries, become immortalized as saints and martyrs.

There can be no question but that at this period (1715) the Episcopalians were in rather a sorry plight in Fraserburgh. The Presbyterians, having at last got the upper hand, showed little mercy to their opponents. At Mr. Moore's death their affairs got into rather a chaotic condition, but, unfortunately the authentic records of the Episcopal congregation, from which full particulars

of what happened between 1717 and 1746 might have been had, were either lost or destroyed by fire when the church in Mid Street was demolished by the orders of Lord Ancram, who was one of the commanders under the Duke of Cumberland in 1746. Thus the records of the struggling, and therefore most interesting days of the Episcopal Church in Fraserburgh have been lost for ever. It is sad to think that the times were so intolerant that such vandalism should have been possible. These records would have given us "a peep behind the scenes," and no doubt also some interesting revelations of the hard experiences and heroic devotion of the then Episcopalians of Fraserburgh.

The last regular minister of Fraserburgh, when Episcopacy was the State religion, was the Rev James Moore, who died on the 23rd March, 1703, aged 73 years. He was succeeded on the same date by his son, Rev. Alexander Moore, A.M., who, though an Episcopalian, was in the eyes of the law, a dissenter, and as Scott's "Fasti" has it, "an intruder." He must have been a superior man as Bishop Keith said of him "the best of men I ever saw." The changed condition of his Church's fortunes and the continual fight and struggle with the now ruling ecclesiastical powers, must have told severely upon his health and spirits, for he died in 1717, aged about 56 years. There would appear to have been no regular Episcopal minister here after Mr. Moore's death, for a year or two. The next Episcopal minister mentioned is Mr. Swan, who in July, 1721 "set up an Episcopal meeting house in Fraserburgh." This Mr. Swan was the Rev. William Swan, A.M., minister of "Pitsligo," under the Episcopal regime, who was deposed in July, 1716, for "complying with the rebellion, etc." Reading between the lines one can see that Mr. Swan was not only a rigid Episcopalian, but also a strong supporter of the House of Stuart. He staked all on the cause—and lost. Evidently his work in Fraserburgh was not success, for after the labours of a few years he withdrew from the town, and, according to the "Fasti," "removed to a house at the Cairns of Pittulie, where he preached to a congregation of some fifteen or twenty till near his death, which took place in 1742, aged about 84." It is rather sarcastic of the Presbyterians to term the Episcopalians' place of worship a "meeting place" and not a church. It is one more proof of the intolerance of the age, and the non-Christian spirit which invariably characterizes the combatants in all great religious (?) disputes. Men's minds have broadened, and an era of loftier thought obtains to-day, which makes the present generation look back with bitter regret to the barbarous times, when persecution, first of one persuasion and then of another, was like nectar to the party in power for the time being.

Although there is no direct evidence to prove it, it is assumed that Mr. Swan set up his "meeting house" in Mid Street, which afterwards became the site of St. Peter's Episcopal Church. After he left, it would appear that there was no regular Episcopal minister in Fraserburgh for some years. At anyrate, a letter from Lord Saltoun to Bishop Dunbar, of date 12th August, 1734, says: "We all unanimously agreed to become suitors to you to prevaile with the Rev. Mr. William Walker to settle among us as our pastor forwith. . . And

we propose to send one of our number to attend the Countess of Erroll and Mr. Hay at their House of Slaines, to entreat their concurrence in so good a resolution, that Mr. Walker may the sooner be settled among us, and because the congregation have now been so long without one established pastor, they and I jointly doe put up our humble request to you to apply to my Lady Erroll and Mr. Hay in our behalf for Mr. Walker soon as possible may be, etc.” The petition had the desired effect. Mr. Walker accepted the charge, and proved an earnest, diligent, and successful pastor. He had stormy times to face, and heavy odds to fight, but he emerged from the conflict with great credit to himself. His first great disappointment and it was nothing short of calamitous was the destruction of his church.

It would appear that the bulk of the north-country Episcopalians distinctly sympathized with, if they did not actively and openly support, the cause of Bonnie Prince Charlie. After the disastrous reverse at Culloden all the Stuart sympathizers and supporters were, as is well-known, drastically dealt with. Among the public institutions marked out for special attention were Episcopal churches, whose destruction took place in many towns. Thus, in 1746 the first St. Peter's Church in Mid Street was burned to the ground. It is only some twenty years ago that a portion of the east wall of this old church that was burned, could be seen, immediately to the east of the gable of what is now the West U.F. Church. All the Episcopal Church records were, as already mentioned, burned with the church. Indeed, those records would have carried us back to the dark ages almost, because in those days the Church was the only institution that kept anything approaching an account, if it may be so named, of the doings of the people. After having so comparatively recently been evicted from the parish church and manse, these new troubles pressed heavily upon the struggling Episcopalians of those days, and their lot was certainly not a happy one. Sometime after Mr. Walker's appointment penal laws were passed, and vigorously enforced, prohibiting Episcopalians from worship or assembling in greater number than four. The gist of the law was to the effect that any clergyman found conducting illegal Episcopal services got for the first offence six months' imprisonment, and for the second, transportation for life! In face of this prohibition, the Episcopalians did not think of rebuilding their church in Mid Street, but betook themselves to the residence of their minister Mr. Walker, at Middleburgh, where they worshipped in comparative peace. The old proverb, "Necessity is the mother of invention," was confirmed in the experience of the Episcopalians at this time. They overcame the provisions of the new enactments by partitioning the house at Middleburgh into a number of small compartments. The minister occupied such a position that when preaching or praying, the occupants of the different small rooms could distinctly hear him. Thus for many years did the persecuted Episcopalians have worship. Force or coercion has never blighted a laudable ambition or changed the conscientious views and feelings of a sincere body of people. This philosophy may be applied with equal force to an individual as to a nation.

Instead of being obliterated or disheartened by these petty annoyances and impediments to worship, which were put in their way, the Episcopalians prospered and actually increased under Mr. Walker's charge. Mr. Walker must have had a very modest living, but like a true churchman, love of the old faith outweighed all other considerations. The seat rents at Middleburgh for the year 1760 totalled the large (?) sum of £7 0s. 9d. A detailed list of the seat-holders and the rents paid by them for the year named is still extant. In the list not a few leave no sum opposite their names in the column "Paid," but one will be charitable and assume that this dereliction of duty was due to want of means and not want of will. The names of quite a large number of Cardnos appear in the list. Some of these, no doubt, are the progenitors of Mr. James Farquhar Cardno of Ardaros. At this date people were not so fastidious as they are now about the quality of their seats when at worship; and one can imagine what the ordinary mortal in those days would have thought if he had been asked to sit down in a velvet-cushioned seat. The modesty and simplicity of the times may be understood when the people were quite happy at worship sitting upon an old-fashioned bed. One of the entries in the list of seat-holders is: "Seat upon long saddle bed," which was occupied by "Lizzie Murray and Mr. Alexander, Lizzie Arnot, and Mother, and Will, Donald, Wife, and Sister." This bed would have probably been so many planks nailed together, after the fashion of the beds furnished by fishcurers to Highland gutting girls.

After a very earnest and strenuous ministry, and pastoral duties discharged in the face of many difficulties for a period of thirty-two years, Mr. Walker was on 9th November, 1766, to his Father's. Mr. Walker was succeeded by the Rev. John Durham, about the length of whose ministry in Fraserburgh there is considerable doubt. It appears there is no definite documentary evidence available to settle the question. The Rev. Alexander Jolly was appointed minister in 1788, but whether Mr. Durham remained in full charge of the congregation up to that date, is veiled in mystery. It is known however, that sometime after being settled in Fraserburgh Mr. Durham was visited by severe family affliction. These troubles which sometimes overtake a family, so completely overshadowed Mr. Durham's life and usefulness, that he was obliged to resign under a cloud of misfortunes. He was succeeded by Bishop Jolly, the most outstanding ecclesiastic that has ever been located in Fraserburgh. Mr. Jolly was incumbent at Turriff, where he was doing excellent work, and rapidly building up the fallen fortunes of the Episcopal Church in that district.

Through the misfortunes which had overtaken Mr. Durham, the congregation at Fraserburgh had fallen on evil times, and naturally a man of the type of Mr. Jolly was needed to restore St. Peter's to its wonted prosperity. Therefore, at the urgent wish of the Bishop of Aberdeen he took charge of the congregation and settled in Fraserburgh in 1788, although very loth to leave his people in Turriff. Mr. Jolly was not endowed with brilliant intellectual gifts, neither was he a pulpit orator who could sway the feelings of the people. As to his pulpit style, he tells a good story against himself. Shortly after he

came to Fraserburgh, he passed through the congregation as it was dispersing, after service. While doing so he overheard one man remark to another, "Fat'n cheepin' body's that the Bishop sent's?" What was it then, that earned for him the respect and admiration, not only of his own people, but of the members of all denominations? Simply his self-denial, overpowering affection and love for those among whom he lived. He existed not for himself but to do the work of his Master among the people of Fraserburgh. His simple and picturesque personality won hearts where a masterful mind and brilliant orator would have reaped a barren harvest. His intense humanity, which knew no barriers of sect, was the secret of his success through a long and earnest life. His virtue endeared him to the people of Fraserburgh and causes his name still to be known in the town as the "saintly Bishop Jolly."

Mr. Jolly was a native of Stonehaven, having been born on 3rd April, 1756. He received his early education at the school there. He was of a very earnest and serious turn of mind, and while still a lad indicated that his ambition would be to enter the Church. Though living in a humble walk in life, his parents liked the high aspirations of their son, and, though no doubt at some sacrifice to themselves, they were able to send their son to Aberdeen University. No doubt the old Jollys, like many other Scotch parents before and since, were anxious to "see their son's heid wag in a poopit." Being shy, the young man's attention was not taken up with the usual attractions of youth, and thus he made good progress with his studies. His piety at this early age was a distinct phase of his character.

After completing his University course at Aberdeen, he was appointed tutor in the family of Mr. Leslie of Rothie. The family consisted of four brothers and two sisters, whose average height was six feet, and who were facetiously dubbed "the sax-an'-thirty feet" by the people in the district. Those giants gave Mr. Jolly, physically of small proportions, a "hot time" of it now and again. One can understand how these young Hercules' would delight in gaining the upper hand and resisting the orders and instructions of their insignificant looking tutor. Their rebellious conduct reached such a pass on one occasion that the assistance of Bishop Petrie had to be called in. He administered such a reproof to the young people that Mr. Jolly had little trouble with them afterwards.

On completing his engagement with Mr. Leslie of Rothie, he went to Meiklefol, where he read for holy orders with his former protector, Bishop Petrie. He finished his studies with Bishop Petrie in the summer of 1776, and on the 1st July of that year he was ordained Deacon at Peterhead by Bishop Kilgour of Aberdeen. On the 19th March of the following year, he was raised to the priesthood, and immediately thereafter placed in charge of the congregation at Turriff. Mr. Jolly was not 21 years of age when he settled in Turriff, but what he wanted in years he made up in good common sense, prudence, and a devotional disposition which had a powerful influence among the members of his congregation. His salary at Turriff was miserably small, but he worked as hard, and this was a striking trait in his character, as though he had been one

of the highly paid dignitaries of the Church. Thus he became highly attached to his people and they to him. While residing in Turriff a great bereavement overtook him. He had living with him a sister and a brother named James, who was a merchant in Turriff. On one occasion, when Mr. Jolly and his sister were from home, his brother went to bathe in the Deveron, and unfortunately was drowned. This loss was keenly felt by Mr. Jolly and when he went into the room on his arrival home to see his brother's remains, he bolted the door and remained for several hours in solemn meditation and prayer beside the dead body. He was wont to visit his brother's grave at regular intervals up to the year of his death.

The church in Fraserburgh was much in need of an earnest, working pastor, and Mr. Jolly took up the duties in April, 1788. The congregation up to this time, had never made any attempt to have their church rebuilt, and it is understood that after leaving Middleburgh they worshipped in an upper flat of that building on Mid Street, immediately to the west of the church, which still stands, and is known as the old chapel buildings. Shortly after coming to Fraserburgh, Mr. Jolly determined to have their church raised upon the ashes of its predecessor. His labours were crowned with success, and within eight years of his settlement in Fraserburgh St. Peter's Church again adorned the landscape. The Episcopal Church was disestablished in 1689, so that the Fraserburgh congregation was for the first time, after a lapse of fully 100 years, able to worship in comfort and unmolested in their own tabernacle.

On the 24th June, 1796, or 8 years after coming to Fraserburgh, Mr. Jolly was consecrated Bishop of Moray, jointly with Bishop Macfarlane. To receive such a mark of distinction at the early age of 40 years, was surely proof of his sterling worth and saintly character, and a mark of appreciation of the work he had already done for Episcopacy in Aberdeenshire. There was a division of opinion among the other Bishops as to the expediency of the appointment, and the Primus (Bishop Skinner) was absolutely opposed to it as uncalled for. The majority of the Bishops however, looking to Mr. Jolly's high qualifications and power of gaining the affections, respect and confidence of the people as likely to strengthen and increase their somewhat attenuated congregations in the north, persisted with his appointment. Personally Bishop Jolly did not seek the position, and for two years his occupancy of the office was quite nominal. A way out of the difficulty was found by giving Bishop Jolly the sole Episcopal charge of the lowland diocese of Moray. As already indicated, Bishop Jolly was no showy ecclesiastic, nor was he an aggressive Churchman given to belittling the representatives and tenets of other denominations. Although not a legislator, he was a capable administrator, and under his beneficent and paternal care, the diocese prospered wonderfully. He was tactful, considerate for and kind to others, which compelled success. He paid regular visits to all parts of his diocese, and by his big heart, lowly demeanour and anxiety to tender service to all, no matter at what expense and trouble to himself, he became known as the "Good Bishop."

When paying his diocesan visits in the early days of his Bishopric, he rode on horseback, and one can well imagine that "the gallant and gay horseman" was not the part that the meek and mild Bishop would care to play. Probably he had not "cut a dash" on horseback. Later he did his journeys in a carriage, sometimes of not the most approved pattern. On one occasion he hired a very antiquated and dilapidated carriage, which very long before had seen better days in Fraserburgh. On his journey through the country the antediluvian looking vehicle must have created much fun among the country people, old-fashioned though they were. When leaving the inn at Huntly, where the party put up for the night, the inspector addressing Mr. Pressley, who accompanied the Bishop, said: "Well, I suppose you think us a set of half civilized Highlanders up here, but I wouldna' be seen in a thing like that."

The Bishop had a great faculty of writing, and his epistolary work was of signal value to those seeking his advice. On questions of rule, order and discipline, he was a recognized authority, and his opinion on those subjects was being continually asked and given. Offers of preferment were repeatedly given him, among others the charge of the central diocese of Dunkeld. But all offers of advancement were alike refused. He unduly depreciated self, and this with a pronounced repugnance to change, no doubt accounted for his unhesitating declinature of offers of advancement. While faithfully carrying out his duties as Bishop, he was a loyal and devoted pastor to his flock in Fraserburgh, by whom as well as by members of all denominations in the town he was simply adored. His kindness to children was proverbial, and if he had not always a "bawbee," he always found a "sweetie" in his pocket for any youngster by whom he was accosted on the street.

Although a man of sound learning, clear headed and of mature judgments the Bishop did not, as already mentioned, shine as a pulpit orator. His sincerity, great earnestness and devotional appearance in the pulpit more than compensated for oratory and style, and made Bishop Jolly the success he was in the church, and among his fellow clergymen of all grades. The saintly Bishop truly lived "the simple life." His house was in Cross Street, where he lived all alone. It was afterwards long occupied by the late Mr. George Hay, clothier, and on its site is built the Polytechnic Drapery Warehouse occupied by Mr. James L. Macdonald. Of his household arrangements, it is said in Walker's "Bishop Jolly": "As he kept no servant, his only attendance was the occasional services of a mason's wife who came every morning, opened his door, made his fire, arranged his bed and did any other menial services he required. He prepared his breakfast, and then was left alone till dinner time, when the woman was again seen coming down the street carrying a very small pot in her hand with a wooden cover on it, and something else beneath her apron, which was the whole preparation for the Bishop's dinner. If any person had to call on the Bishop, there was no admittance to him but by the agency of Mrs Rettie, who came with her pass-key, opened the door, and went up and told him who it was that wished to see him. When the visitor departed, he conducted him

downstairs himself, locked the outer door, and was again left in his usual solitude." Although he practically lived the life of a recluse, there was a social element in his character which appeared at rare intervals. A man with such a big soul and wide sympathies could not but have a social touch in his constitution. His sacred calling and his retiring disposition no doubt strongly governed the social element in him, but that he was not a self crucifying hermit can be understood when it is mentioned that after the annual meeting of the church trustees, he regularly entertained the gentlemen in his own house, the repast finishing up "with a huge bowl of rum punch," which was invariably mixed by the late Rev. Charles Pressley, who was then his assistant.

In the early years of his ministry, Bishop Jolly devoted much time, said to be four hours daily, to the composition of his sermons, which were most carefully written. Later in life he preached without any MS., and it is alleged by some of his contemporaries that during the whole of fifty years' ministry in Fraserburgh, he wrote but four sermons. In the course of his life Bishop Jolly published some books and pamphlets on theological subjects, but it was more as a voluminous correspondent that he shone. The Bishop was as primitive and simple in his clothes as in his mode of living. It would seem that in the early years of the century his whole wearing apparel, even for that plain age, was dreadfully out of date. He appeared at some church meetings in the south wearing a wig so old-fashioned and ogre that his brethren were both amused and shocked. When George IV. visited Edinburgh in 1822, it was arranged that the Scotch Episcopal Bishops should attend and present a loyal address. His brethren were in a state of great trepidation lest Bishop Jolly should appear in outrageous attire, including the barbarous wig, and shock the King. Instead of this he turned up well groomed, wearing a beautiful wig, which had been presented to him by Lord Saltoun. The saintly Bishop had the instincts of gentleman and the manners of a courtier. Instead of being a cause of ridicule, "His Majesty was particularly struck with the venerable appearance of Bishop Jolly, whose reverential deportment in the royal closet was very remarkable."

One of the outstanding incidents of Bishop Jolly's life was his meeting at Aberdeen in the beginning of January, 1823, with Bishop Hobart of New York, a very eminent American divine. The two spent a couple of days in intercourse with one another, and it is difficult to say which was the more impressed by the other. Of Bishop Jolly the American Bishop said: "You go from the extremity of Britain to America to see the Falls of Niagara, and think yourselves amply rewarded by the sight of this singular scene in nature. If I had gone from America to Aberdeen and seen nothing but Bishop Jolly as I saw him for two days, I should hold myself greatly rewarded. In our new country we have no such men, and I could not have imagined such without seeing him. The race, I fear, is expired or expiring even among you."

Another interesting event in the Bishop's life was a visit made to him by Mr. Robert Chambers of W. and R. Chambers, the well-known

publishers of Edinburgh. This literary genius was delighted with his visit to the old man, and wrote of him in "Chambers' Book of Days" as follows:

".. He found the amiable prelate living at the fishing town of Fraserburgh, at the north-east corner of Aberdeenshire, where he officiated to a small congregation. . . . In a plain two-storey house, such as is common in Scotch towns, having a narrow wooden stair ascending to the upper floor, which was composed of two coomceiled apartments, *a but and a ben*, and in one of these rooms the beautiful old man—for he was beautiful—sat, in his neat old fashioned black suit, buckled shoes, and a wig as white as snow, surrounded entirely by shelves full of books, most of them of an antique and theological cast. Irenæus or Polycarp could not have lived in a style more simple. The look of the venerable prelate was full of gentleness, as if he had never had an enemy or a difficulty or anything else to contend with in his life. His voice was low and sweet, and his conversation most genial and kindly...."

After a life full of work and honour he died in 1838, at the advanced age of 82 years, having been found dead in bed on the morning of the Feast of St. Peter of that year. In accordance with his desire, he was laid to rest alongside his brother in the churchyard of Turriff. Some twenty or thirty years ago, many of the older inhabitants were wont to retail most interesting personal reminiscences of the saintly Bishop, but to the present generation his name is only a most pleasant memory of the dim and distant past. As a grateful appreciation of his valuable services to the Church in Fraserburgh, the members of St. Peter's have most appropriately named their handsome new place of worship in Charlotte Street the Bishop Jolly Memorial Church.

Bishop Jolly had a most worthy successor in Rev. Charles Pressley, M.A., a native of Fraserburgh, who acted as assistant to the Bishop during the last twenty years' ministry of the latter at Fraserburgh. Mr. Pressley, who was by nature a quiet, unostentatious, but delightful man, benefited much by his training under the Bishop. What he was as a youth he remained all through life, and this gained for him the esteem and respect of all within and without the pale of his church. He took no part in ecclesiastical wranglings, where sect was assailing sect, neither did he become a combatant in the great social and political fights which raged during his ministry. As a lover of home and his sacred duties he never loomed large in the public eye, and as for "popularity" with the crowd, that was the very last thing he would have thought of courting. He lived up to a much higher ideal and was appreciated accordingly. Having for many years practically carried on the ministerial work of St. Peter's, the death of the Bishop added very little to the weight of his responsibilities. The work went on most smoothly, and the young minister was an immense favourite with his congregation.

He was a great lover of music, a taste which developed and became "a hobby" throughout his life. His musical tastes decidedly ran in the classical groove, but there was an old English glee—"Since first I saw your face"—which he never tired of hearing. Whether he associated the words with the romance

of his courtship and happy memories of his short married life, together with the great loss he sustained in the death of his wife, no one will ever know, but one is induced to think so. The death of Mrs Pressley in 1849, after only six and a half years of wedded life, was a deadly blow which he never forgot. With regard to music, Mr. Pressley was a very capable performer on the violin, and possessed quite a number of fiddles. One—a “Duke”—was a very fine instrument. Musically he was ahead of his time, and to him is due the credit of first introducing a “kist o’ whistles” into Fraserburgh. In the year of his wife’s death he introduced a pipe organ to assist in the service of praise in St. Peter’s. No opposition was offered to the “innovation,” and the congregation found the instrument a great help in the service of praise. Shortly before Mr. Pressley died a new organ was placed in the church, and, after being greatly improved, is still in use in the new church in Charlotte Street. The old organ that was first placed in St. Peter’s was disposed of to the Evangelical Union Congregation, and continues to do duty in the Manse Street Congregational Church. When the Fraserburgh Musical Association was established in November, 1869, for the study and performance of higher class music, Mr. Pressley was its first president, a position which he retained uninterruptedly till his death. He was a sincere worshipper at the shrines of Orpheus and Polyhymnia, and it was an inspiration to the members of the association to see the old man sitting near the orchestra in the upstairs room of the Academy, listening with deepest interest to the weekly practisings, and noting with unfeigned pleasure the progress made by the singers.

During his 57 years’ connection with the church—nineteen as assistant, and thirty-eight as sole incumbent—the congregation made substantial progress. His people truly looked up to him as their “guide, philosopher and friend,” and the confidence reposed in and the esteem and love shown him, made his pastoral work a very pleasant duty indeed. In sweetness of disposition and beauty of character, he bore a strong resemblance to his predecessor Bishop Jolly. In his time, in addition to introducing an organ in connection with the praise of the congregation, he originated and saw carried through considerable structural alterations and other improvements on the church in Mid Street. Mr. Pressley died in November, 1877, aged 77 years. So highly was he esteemed and appreciated that the community accorded him a public funeral. It may be mentioned that his daughter is the wife of Rev. W. W. Hawdon, B.A. of Banchory-Ternan.

The vacancy in St Peter’s caused by the death of Mr. Pressley was filled on 24th March, 1878, by the appointment of Rev. Rayner Winterbotham, M.A., of Northampton. Before coming to Fraserburgh, Mr. Winterbotham had earned the reputation of a most scholarly man, consequent on his valuable contributions to theological literature. He proved a deeply religious man, who devoted himself strenuously to the work of the church. To all the different fasts and festivals he adhered with a steadfastness and sincerity which won the admiration of even those who were inclined to jeer and scoff at some of the

high churchmen's extreme forms of worship. On the whole he was of a retiring and studious disposition, but the work of the congregation did not suffer on that account. He was an excellent preacher and a most assiduous visitor among his people, by whom, notwithstanding his natural shyness, he was deeply esteemed.

With strong literary tastes, he was not only a writer of merit, but was also a most successful lecturer. His scholastic knowledge was widespread, and when he stood at the School Board election of 1879, he was returned at the head of the poll. He was unanimously elected Chairman, and for three years discharged the duties of that office with zeal, discretion and knowledge. In 1881 considerable alterations were made on church and parsonage at a cost of £650, a large proportion of which was raised by means of a bazaar.

After devoting eight of the best years of his life to the church in Fraserburgh, and adding much to the prosperity of the congregation, he resigned in 1886, having accepted a call to Holy Trinity Church, Edinburgh. His resignation caused unspeakable regret among his people, who looked upon his departure as a great loss to the congregation and a probable check upon its progress.

The appointment of a successor to Mr. Winterbotham proved a stiff and unprofitable task, so far as the congregation was concerned. The members divided themselves into cliques, each of which wanted a pastor of its own choosing. A "preaching match" was arranged and different ministers, aspirants for office, occupied the pulpit. Some good men appeared, but the wrangling and spirit of opposition got worse and worse. Neither party would give way to the other, with the result that the statutory time elapsed and the election fell into the hands of the Bishop of the Diocese. He, wise man, passed over the candidates who had been mixed up in the quarrel, and appointed Rev. Henry Fyfe, B.A.

Mr. Fyfe was a graduate of University College, Durham. He was ordained a deacon in 1880 by the Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway, and a priest in 1881 by the Bishop of Brechin. He had held curacies in several places in the south before coming to Fraserburgh, and was well equipped for the responsibilities of his office here. At first he was looked upon as an intruder, and was rather coldly received by the congregation. He soon lived down the opposition, and set about repairing the breaches which the conflict had caused in the congregation. In this he was wholly successful, and the various agencies of the church which he set agoing have worked successfully ever since. He considered the church and the parsonage in Mid Street out of date, and set to work in 1890 to provide new buildings worthy of the times and of the congregation. In this work he was eminently successful. The magnificent "Bishop Jolly Memorial Church," and the handsome rectory, are monuments to his industry. The foundation stone was laid with great ceremony by Lord Saltoun on 20th August, 1891. The church is a most handsome building of the Norman

style of architecture, the interior being very beautiful and quite "classical" in appearance and tone. The nave, chancel and vestry were first erected at a cost of £4,000, and afterwards the massive Scotch tower was added at an expenditure of £1,600, making the total first cost of the church £5,600. The exterior material used is pink granite from Corennie Quarries. The church accommodates 500 worshippers. The rectory is one of the most imposing private residences in the town. It is also Norman in style, and is so unique in appearance that it at once arrests the eye of a discerning stranger, who pauses to admire, mentally compliments the architect, and then passes on. Two such handsome buildings will always redound to the memory of their founder.

Besides his church work, Mr. Fyfe had much to do with the management of St Peter's Schools, and the successful educational work which has been done at these seminaries is in no small degree due to his paternal interest in them. As a member of the School Board and as one of the governors of the Academy, he did excellent service to the community on behalf of education. He was chaplain of the 3rd V.B. Gordon Highlanders, first under the old regime, and thereafter under the territorials. He took a great interest in his military duties as becometh a good volunteer. Mr. Fyfe fell into a precarious state of health in the end of 1908. He lingered on till 5th July, 1909, when he peacefully passed away in a nursing home in Aberdeen in the 55th year of his age. His remains were interred in Kirkton Cemetery.

Shortly after Mr. Fyfe's death, Mrs. Fyfe took ill and died. Their son and only child, who was a young officer in the Army, fell into consumption, and became a victim to that terrible disease in an incredibly short space of time. The whole family was carried off within a period of twelve months. The terrible mortality, which swept away a whole family with lightning rapidity, made the case a truly tragic and pathetic one.

The vacancy caused in St. Peter's by the death of Mr. Fyfe was filled in the autumn of 1909, by the appointment of Rev. F. W. S. le Lievre, M.A., from Bielside. Mr. le Lievre is a native of Guernsey, and a graduate of Oxford University. He is a most accomplished French scholar, and acts as examiner in that language at the said famous seat of learning. Mr. le Lievre is a man of broad sympathies and unbounded energy, and he had not been long in Fraserburgh till his strong personality was markedly illustrated in the numbers, life and activity of his congregation. The healthy tone of a church is the best testimonial to the energy and successful work of the pastor. Mr. le Lievre has not taken as yet any active part in public work, but if he should elect to do so, his wide experience of the world would make him a valuable addition to the galaxy of public men who are presently "making" history in Fraserburgh. Mr. le Lievre is a distinct addition to "the men of merit" in Fraserburgh, and it is hoped that he will be long spared to adorn the position which he now holds. St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Fraserburgh can claim to have history, probably more interesting than that of any other church in the north of Scotland, with traditions that appeal strongly to every Episcopalian in the land.

THE FREE CHURCH, SOUTH U.F.

The Free Church of Fraserburgh, which was founded amid the excitement of the Disruption times by a band of able and earnest men, has had a career of strength and usefulness which has left its impression deeply marked in the Ecclesiastical history of the town. As in almost every parish of Scotland, the crisis over the patronage question stirred the feelings of the people of Fraserburgh to a serious extent, and a great meeting was held in the Parish Church on the 30th January, 1843, protesting against the Civil Courts over-riding the spiritual freedom of the Scottish Church, and threatening that if the legislature homologated the decision of the courts, the protesters would secede from the Establishment, and form themselves into a Free Presbyterian Church. The leading figures at this meeting were:—Messrs. Robert Tindall, Jun.; Stephen Gatt, William Reid, George Low, George McDonald and John Anderson. All the above heroes of the conflict have long ago gone over to the “great majority,” except Mr. Tindall, who, one of the outstanding figures of the movement, still remains on the scene, hale and hearty. For a time the Rev. John Cumming, the parish minister, gave his sympathy to the non-intrusion party, and it was understood that if a split followed, he would leave the Establishment. When the die was cast however, Mr. Cumming unexpectedly changed his opinion and remained minister of Fraserburgh. Among other Disruption leaders in Fraserburgh were Messrs. Alexander Bruce, James Morgan, Robert Hendry, Edward Galloway, John Mundie, James Burnett and Andrew Noble.

Immediately after the Disruption, the Free Church congregation worshipped in a granary in Love Lane. The meeting place was unlovely, but the congregation was in earnest, and forgetting their local surroundings, rather looked to “a temple not made with hands,” certain that in the end their mission would be crowned with success. The people had great difficulty in getting a site whereon to erect a church, but at last a way out of the difficulty was opened up to them. Ground in School Street, then an obscure lane, was secured, and the old Free Church erected upon it.

Having erected the church, which is now the property of the Highland people, the congregation set themselves to securing a minister. This at first proved as difficult as the obtaining of a church site. The following ministers were invited to accept the charge:—Mr. Mathieson, afterwards of Forgue, and thereafter of London; Mr. Anderson of St. Fergus, thereafter Dr. Anderson of Morpeth; and Dr. Longmuir of Aberdeen, but for various reasons all declined the appointment. At length the Rev. William Donald, belonging to Montrose, accepted the charge and was ordained to it on the 4th April, 1844. The first office-bearers shortly afterwards appointed were:—Elders—Messrs. George Low, James Skinner, Alexander Bruce, William Cruickshank, Robert Tindall, Adam Blackhall and Alexander Stephen; Deacons—Messrs. James Smith, James Morgan, John Anderson, Robert Hendry, James Walker, Andrew Stephen, George Simpson, James Burnett, Alexander Middleton, George Yule, Alexander Kerr, Alexander Burnett, William Taylor, George McDonald and Alexander

Syme. Mr William Cruickshank was appointed session clerk, an office which he held for a very lengthened period of years.

Mr. Donald was a deeply earnest and religious man, who devoted much of his time to the needs of the poor and afflicted of his congregation. This greatly endeared him to his people, and his memory is deeply revered by the older members of the church. He had his difficulties in enforcing strict discipline with his congregation, but that he outlived these, his popularity, as noted above, proves.

The congregation was energetic and enterprising, and in 1856 they erected a school and schoolhouse which cost very nearly £1,000. The school was carried on with success till 1873, when it was handed over to the School Board. Mr. Donald was granted leave of absence to proceed to Australia on private business. He intended returning to his charge in Fraserburgh, but once in Australia he changed his mind, and, to the great regret of his congregation, sent in his resignation. For two or three years the church was without a regular minister, but the work of the congregation was efficiently carried on by two probationers—First Rev. Mr. Smith, and second by Rev. Mr. Martin. The first named found his way to Pietermaritzburg, Natal, where he was made a D.D., and eventually Moderator of his Church. Mr. Martin was appointed minister of Dunrossness, Shetland, where he remained throughout the remainder of his active ministerial life, in the end retiring to Glasgow. Mr. Smith had a great reputation, and worked the congregation up to a high state of prosperity.

After the long vacancy the Rev. William Paterson was approached and accepted the charge. During his ministry the congregation prospered immensely, and made great strides forward. Mr. Paterson was decidedly evangelical in temperament, and took a great interest in mission and revival work. He was an excellent platform speaker and possessed literary gifts of no mean order. As an expert on Church history, especially on the question of Protestantism as opposed to Roman Catholicism, he was an authority, and many a time, by pen and speech) did he smite his Catholic opponent with the power of a Samson. Some years after his appointment, Mr. Paterson was provided with a manse in Frithside Street at a cost of £900, but the crowning event of his ministry in Fraserburgh was the erection of the handsome church in Seaforth Street, which is as beautiful as the old Free Church in School Street was ugly. The church, which was erected at a cost of £6,700, was opened for worship on the 2nd October, 1880, by that eminent Free Church divine, the Rev. Dr. Marcus Dods. Among his other qualifications, Mr. Paterson was an artist who could ply his brush with skill and wonderful effect.

Consequent on failing health, Mr Paterson in 1890 applied for a colleague and successor. Mr. Paterson retired to Edinburgh and died there some years ago. The appointment was not made without many stormy congregational meetings. Two or three names were brought forward, some of whom have become famous ministers, but a proportion of the congregation had set their hearts on the Rev. Joseph Forrest, formally minister of Douglas, Isle of Man,

and his supporters carried the day, in other words, the election. Feeling ran so high that the minority left the congregation, and formed the West Free Church, a short notice of which will follow. Mr. Forrest was a devoted minister and an earnest preacher, who never spared his own pocket when the needs of the congregation demanded his assistance. He was a very hard working pastor and faithfully discharged his duties for sixteen years, but the split in the congregation seemed to have left a sore, the effects of which it appeared impossible to completely eliminate from the spirit of the congregation. During the latter part of his ministry, the work of the church was not marked by that harmony so much to be desired, and this combined with a breakdown in health, caused Mr. Forrest to place his resignation in the hands of the congregation in 1906. His congregation had a high reward for his qualities of head and heart and when he formally retired, they showed their appreciation of his services in a substantial and whole hearted way.

The vacancy caused by Mr. Forrest's resignation was filled by the appointment of Rev. W. D. T. Black, M.A., who had formerly been the assistant of Rev. Adam Renwick, of Cowcaddens Free Church, Glasgow. In introducing him to his Fraserburgh charge, Mr. Renwick paid high testimony to Mr. Black's character as a man, and abilities as a student and preacher. Experience proved the truth of the testimony. Mr. Black was an enthusiastic worker, and the good of his congregation was his first and last thought. His services were much appreciated by his people, and under his care the congregation made marked progress. Mr. Black was called to Rutherglen in 1913, and was succeeded by Rev. W. Galbraith Taylor, M.A., a native of Glasgow. Under his care, the future of the congregation is bound to spell prosperity.

WEST U.F. CHURCH.

The smaller Disruption which took place in 1890, when Mr. Forrest was appointed Free Church minister in Fraserburgh, resulted, as already indicated, in a second Free Church congregation being formed in the town. It was named the West Free Church. The congregation was first temporarily "housed" in the Manse Street Congregational Church, the hours of worship being 12.30 and 6 p.m. The Episcopal Church, Mid Street, opportunely coming into the market, was secured by the new congregation for £1,200, and this historic church, or rather the site thereof, is now known as the West United Free Church. The Rev. John Robson, who came to take charge of the station in its "infancy," was elected minister of the congregation after the charge was formally sanctioned by the Presbytery. Mr. Robson studied at Glasgow University, but took his divinity course at the Aberdeen Free Church College.

The congregation has been a very active and forcible one, marked by a go-aheadness that for some years left all the other congregations in the town quite behind. Many of the members were men of "light and leading" in the town, but the enthusiasm of the congregation was in a great measure inspired

by the high Christian ideal placed before them by their minister. Mr. Robson has remained the first and last minister of the church. A man of strong convictions and marked individuality of character, he has proclaimed the gospel message with power and effect ever since he first addressed his people here. Devoted to the duties of his office, he not only "illuminates" from the pulpit but delights in pastoral work, a valuable asset which many ministers do not possess. By the general public he is highly respected and esteemed, while by his own people he is admired and loved. No wonder, because he really enters in a direct and personal way into "all their joys and sorrows." The West U.F., though a real living and progressive congregation, has not shown the same activity in recent years as it did the first period of its existence.

SALTOUN PLACE U.F. CHURCH.

The Saltoun Place United Free Church, formerly the United Presbyterian Church, has had an excellent record among the local Churches. In the days of the "Seceders," in the early years of last century, the representatives of the brethren had a precarious existence in Fraserburgh, but their enthusiasm enabled them to keep their flag flying. There was no meeting place in Fraserburgh, but their spirits and convictions were equal to their difficulties, and in order to worship according to their convictions and beliefs, the brethren and probably the sisters too, walked each Sunday as far as Whitehill, near New Deer, returning to Fraserburgh at night. Ministers of their own communion occasionally paid visits and conducted worship in Fraserburgh, notably a Rev. William Barlas and the Rev. John Bunyan of Whitehill. After a time regular supply was given to the local brethren, but the indiscretions of the preacher were such that the arrangement collapsed, and the Burgher Dissenting Congregation in Fraserburgh was again like a flock without a shepherd.

A congregation, with a minister, having taken root in Rosehearty, the Fraserburgh brothers and sisters repaired there weekly for worship. This went on for many years, but the numbers increased to such an extent that it was resolved to form a congregation in Fraserburgh. After protracted negotiations and reports from ministers deputed to investigate the prospects of an independent congregation in the "Broch," the Presbytery in 1862 agreed that a preacher should be located in the town. In July, 1863, the Presbytery formally recognized the congregation and granted a charge. The pioneers must have been sanguine men. The preliminary membership totalled only 19 persons, and these gallantly undertook to contribute a sum of £70 annually towards the minister's stipend.

The first meeting place was the Bethel Hall, Brae Heads, where for many years revival meetings were held, just as each cycle of excitement came round. After worshipping for some years in the Bethel Hall, the congregation rented a building in Hanover Street, which had formerly been occupied as a smithy. Though never "a thing of beauty," the smithy was made decent for worship

through the indefatigable efforts of old Mr. David Hay, gas collector, who was ably assisted by Mr. James Davidson, fishery officer; Mr. John Bell, farmer; and Mr. John James, fishcurer, etc. Immediately before the 'seventies of last century, the congregation was in a very languishing condition and dissolution was even whispered in some quarters, but by the bravery of the above named and others, who supported them, the situation was saved. In 1870, the fateful year of the Franco-Prussian War, it received a stimulus which worked wonders. A divinity student named John Smith was sent to take charge of the congregation. No trumpets heralded his coming, but his own pulpit elocutionary powers, erudition and literary style, had more power over, and effect upon the people than ever had fanfare announcing a grand monarch's approach. He was a man of splendid gifts, and during the preliminary short years he was in Fraserburgh his personality and powers worked wonders in the congregation. It seemed to have received a second life, every branch of work in the congregation going at high pressure speed.

From 1871 the congregation set themselves to possessing a church of their own, and they secured the feu in Saltoun Place on which the church and manse now stand. By their energy, hard work and self denial, money flowed in upon them, and on 23rd June, 1875, the church was formally opened by Rev. Dr. R. S. Scott of Glasgow. The congregation had only one man in view for their minister. That was their old friend the Rev. John Smith, M.A., who, since leaving Fraserburgh, had been U.P. minister of Burghead. He accepted the call, and was inducted to the charge on 13th October, 1875. He was famous as U.P. minister of Fraserburgh, but he became still more famous as Dr. Smith, minister of Broughton Place Church, Edinburgh, and virtually leader of the United Presbyterian Church.

In Fraserburgh his preaching attracted, and deservedly so, from all denominations crowds to his church. He was "head and shoulders" above the average preacher, and in the pulpit he had a power that fascinated his hearers. His erudition, beautiful imagery, charm of expression, felicity of quotation, and change of mood from the fiery to the angelic, made it a positive luxury to hear him. Out of the pulpit he was what an ordinary member of his congregation would have called "a jewel." He was of the saintly order, and was the essence of all that was good and kind. To his congregation he was the Alpha and Omega of ministers. He was a brilliant lecturer, and the special articles which he was wont to contribute, in the later 'seventies, to the *Fraserburgh News*, edited by the late Mr. James Davidson, would have brought literary fame to anybody. It was impossible that such a brilliant minister could be long kept in Fraserburgh, and to the inexpressible regret, not to say sorrow, not only of his own congregation but of the whole community, Mr. Smith in June, 1878, accepted a call to Berwick. He shortly afterwards removed to Edinburgh, but he ever evinced a paternal interest in the Fraserburgh church, and came at regular intervals to preach to his old congregation. Dr. Smith died in Edinburgh in December, 1905, regretted by none more sincerely than by his old attached flock in Saltoun Place.

For fully a year after Dr. Smith's departure the church was without a regular pastor, but ultimately the Rev. J. Kennedy Scott, B.D., accepted the charge and was inducted in September, 1879. Though a native of the parish of New Cumnock, Ayrshire, in early life Mr. Scott engaged in commercial pursuits in Liverpool. It was after he was over twenty years of age that he thought of the ministry. He then went to Glasgow University, where he graduated in 1877. Thereafter he studied theology at Leipzig, which accounted for his fluency in speaking and writing German. Mr. Scott was not what could be called a "showy" preacher, but his sermons were marked by depth of thought and sound reasoning, and he never failed to carry his hearers with him. He was a deeply earnest and serious minded man, who was like a giant in fighting wickedness and denouncing the depraved tastes of those whose indulgence in strong drink was a reproach to the community. At the side of the sick bed he was gentleness itself, and had the great gift of bringing comfort and peace to those in the last extremity of an illness. He took a great interest in education and was for many years a valued member of the School Board. He was also a conspicuous figure on the temperance platform, and in the Church Courts he took a leading part. Mr. Scott was greatly respected by his congregation. between whom and him a strong bond of union existed. After a lingering illness Mr. Scott died in Edinburgh, and was buried in Fraserburgh in the early part of 1909.

At Mr. Scott's death, the Rev. John Robertson, a native of Kirkcaldy, came as temporary preacher. His services gave so much satisfaction that the congregation unanimously asked him to become their minister, and in due course he was inducted to the charge. He studied Arts at St. Andrews University, and Divinity at Aberdeen Free Church College. His services are giving much satisfaction to his flock, and altogether he is proving a worthy successor to Mr. Scott. His outstanding talent is the great personal interest he takes in every individual family of his congregation.

MID STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

The seeds of Congregationalism were sown in Fraserburgh in the year 1799, by James Haldane, the pioneer of independency in Scotland. His visit to Fraserburgh was not an unqualified success. The mass of the people did not understand the new religion propounded by Mr. Haldane, and the parish minister, Mr. Simpson, and Bishop Jolly naturally gave him "the cold shoulder." They looked upon him as an interloper poaching on their preserves. Mr. Haldane had a big meeting place—the open air—because nobody would give him a church or a hall. He preached on the Square, where so many evangelists, etc. generation after generation have spoken, and probably the first local man to enlist under his banner was Mr James Park, the grandfather of the late Provost Park.

As the result of Mr. Haldane's visit, a few enthusiasts banded themselves together in 1801, and it is said that their first meeting place was a weaver's shop in Mid Street, quite near where the Congregational Church now stands. The charter to the place stipulated that the brethren's proprietary rights to it lapsed

if the pulpit was vacant any one Sunday. Many a time they had "a near shave" of losing the place for want of supply, but an old Inverallochy fisherman named William Buchan, one of the enthusiasts gifted with a ready tongue and "the power of prayer," could always manage to save the situation. Clad in long blue cloth coat, with cut away tails, adorned with big brass buttons, and the orthodox knee breeches, old William would, when the danger signal appeared, mount the pulpit with his broad bonnet in his hand, and hold forth till all risk of losing the place was out of court.

The first regular minister appointed to look after the spiritual welfare of the limited body was the Rev. Udney Anderson. Though nothing very definite is known, it is understood that his induction took place in the second or third year of last century. Documentary evidence as to the early life of the Mid Street Church is practically nil, but it is understood that Mr. Anderson was a strict disciplinarian, and considered the least levity of behaviour a heinous offence. For instance, among the brethren at this time, it was considered a grievous sin for one to take tea in a neighbour's house on Sundays; while a constitutional for health's sake on the Sabbath day meant courting the pains of hell for ever. Under Mr. Anderson, Congregationalism did not make much headway in Fraserburgh, while in the charge of his successor, Mr. Brown, it practically came to a standstill. Mr. Brown was only a short time minister. Unfortunate disputes in the congregation over the question of baptism brought his ministry to a speedy end.

The successor of Mr. Brown was one who added lustre to the church, and made the congregation a real "living thing" in Fraserburgh. This was Rev. Alexander Begg, M.A, who really laid the foundations of the Mid Street Church. He was an indefatigable worker, and his enthusiasm infected all those around him. Practically day and night he attended to his pastoral duties. He addressed prayer meetings and conducted young men's Bible classes every day of the week, except Friday and Saturday, in Fraserburgh, Pitullie or Inverallochy, etc. He had great personal charm of manner, and was tactful in the extreme. His pulpit style was most finished for the time in which he lived, and still he could appeal as readily to the minds and intelligence of the commonest, simple fishermen, as to the intellect of the most educated member of his congregation. His was a useful life. He found the membership of the church at 20, and he left it at 200. He died in 1840, and his death was keenly felt by Congregationalism in the north-east of Scotland.

Some years before his death he had practically become blind, and therefore received the assistance of Rev. Alexander Munro, M.D. This gentleman afterwards married Miss Begg. He took charge of the ministerial work after Mr. Begg's death, but coming after such an outstanding character, he found the duties not quite congenial, and accepted a call to the Congregational Church in Forres. He and his wife afterwards took over the management of the Clunyhill Hydropathic Establishment, and did so with much success.

The Rev. Archibald Duff accepted a call to the church, and took up his

duties in Fraserburgh in 1841. All went well for the first year or two, and Mr. Duff found the work of the congregation "prospering in his hands," but in the course of the year 1844 an unfortunate difference took place. The new evangelical views of Rev. James Morison of Kilmarnock were claiming the attention of dissenting churches, and the Morisonian theories were being favoured by not a few ministers and many of their people. Duff was one of these, and after "hanging fire" for some time, he finally and unreservedly threw in his lot with the Morisonians. He preached his last sermon as a Congregationalist in the Mid Street Chapel on the last Sunday of 1844 and immediately thereafter founded the first Evangelical Union congregation in Fraserburgh. There came out with him three deacons and fifty-six members, and these constituted his first congregation.

The work laid down by Mr. Duff was taken up in 1845 by Rev. Adam G. Forbes. Every prospect did not please when Mr. Forbes took up his work. The mimic Disruption in Mid Street had rather shaken and decidedly weakened the congregation, but Mr. Forbes set to work and by steadfastness, conciliation and real hard work, soon "built up the broken walls," and made "the rough places plain." He was a good preacher, and his kindly manners and keen interest in his people's welfare brought the success which they deserved. During the first visitation of cholera in 1850 Mr. Forbes did heroic work, and won local fame for himself. His departure in 1853 was greatly deplored.

His successor, who was appointed the same year, was the Rev. James Sime of Wick. He was of entirely a different temperament from his predecessor. Mr. Sime was of a quiet, gentle and retiring disposition. Though serious minded and scholarly his preaching was not his strong point, and his timid nature made him no match for the masterful and emotional local fishermen, who formed the great bulk of his congregation. After a time he secured what appeared to be the confidence of his people, but it is said he never seemed to be thoroughly happy in his surroundings, and as his health, delicate at the best, gave way. He accepted a charge in Thurso and removed there in 1858 after a residence of 5 years in Fraserburgh, during which time the congregation moved into the present Mid Street Church.

The next minister to occupy the pulpit in Mid Street was the Rev. James Robbie, who came from Kirkcaldy. Mr. Robbie was probably the ablest minister that the Mid Street congregation ever had. Though not an orator, his sermons were deep and ably thought out. His scholastic acquirements were such that he rose to be one of the eminent men in the Church. He remained seven years in Fraserburgh, and during that time he gained a considerable reputation as a man of erudition and a preacher of considerable weight. He went back to Fife in 1865, and some years later was appointed professor of Hebrew in the Congregational Union Theological Hall in Edinburgh.

In 1866 Rev. John Wemyss was ordained as minister of the Mid Street Church. He came with a good reputation as a preacher and a worker and this reputation he well maintained in Fraserburgh. He was a ready platform speaker,

and took a very successful part in temperance crusades. It was to his forceful character that the congregation owed the realization of a long dream, viz, the possession of a manse. Mr. Wemyss inaugurated the movement, and the congregation took it up so heartily that the fine manse in Saltoun Place was quickly an accomplished fact. After being six years in Fraserburgh, Mr Wemyss was offered and accepted the pastorate of Hope Park Church, Edinburgh, where he worked for many years with much success. It may be mentioned that Mr. Wemyss married Miss Park, sister of the late Provost Park.

Rev. James Hill, M.A., followed Mr. Wemyss as minister of Mid Street Church. He was inducted in October, 1873, and for some ten years discharged his duties with great success. He was an accomplished scholar and a superior preacher. He was extremely widely read, and had decidedly literary tastes. Being a man of superior intelligence, he was broad-minded, but his views did not always please the tastes of some of his untutored members, who went in for "the hell fire and brimstone" style of religion. Finding his health giving way under the rigour of our northern climate, he made up his mind to emigrate to the colonies. He resigned in 1883 and immediately thereafter he received a call, which he accepted, to be minister of the Burke Street Congregational Church, Sydney, Australia, where for many years he laboured with great success, beloved by a devoted congregation.

The next minister to fill the Mid Street pulpit was the Rev. James Stirling, one of the ablest ministers that ever was located in Fraserburgh. Mr. Stirling was educated at the Cavendish College, Manchester. When quite young he was minister of City Road Congregational Church, London, and thereafter of the Congregational Church, Sligo. His reputation as a minister and a preacher was such that he was elected chairman of the Congregational Union of Scotland an honour that marked him out as a leader of men. Mr. Stirling's brilliant preaching soon filled the church to overflowing, and an extension had to be made to meet the growing demand for seating accommodation. Mr. Stirling proved a real pulpit orator, and as a lecturer he achieved great success. In all truth he was a brilliant man for the position he occupied, and as a result prosperity shone upon the congregation all round.

Some congregations are fickle, and when "Home Rule" obtains, the minister often has a hot time of it. Whose the fault was, need not be discussed here, but the fact remains that a very serious quarrel took place in the church in which the combatants were the minister and his supporters versus the leading office-bearers and a majority of the congregation. The battle was fought with great fury and bitterness, and created immense interest not only in Fraserburgh, but over the whole north-east of Scotland. The end was that in 1898 Mr. Stirling resigned. Shortly afterwards he took up the pastorship of the Manse Street Congregational Church, where his supporters from the Mid Street Church joined him. After doing splendid work in this church for a few years, Mr. Stirling resigned and now lives in retirement in Cults.

Mr. Stirling's successor in Mid Street Church the Rev. A. J. Parker. He

found the congregation in rather a derelict condition, but by energy, perseverance and tact, Mr. Parker soon had all its agencies in perfect working order. It must be admitted that the Mid Street Congregation deserves credit for its recuperative powers. It may be partially wrecked, the finances all at sixes and sevens, and general chaos in command when, Phoenix-like, the congregation resolutely set themselves to having matters put right, and it is at once done without any apparent effort. Mr. Parker proved a very faithful and popular minister, and the congregation expanded very much under his kindly charge. Mr. Parker's family got into bad health, and his medical adviser recommending a change, the reverend gentleman in 1907 left Fraserburgh to become minister of Wollerton Congregational Church, Shropshire.

The vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr. Parker was filled by the appointment of the Rev. Thomas Johnstone, of Panmure Church, Dundee, who was inducted to the charge on 17th March, 1908. Mr. Johnstone was trained at Nottingham College, and before coming to Fraserburgh had wide experience of ministerial world. He has an excellent pulpit style, and is a very interesting preacher. As a lecturer he takes a very high place. He has a charming manner, and all round is a minister of which any congregation might be proud. Under his fostering care the Mid Street Congregational Church is making good progress.

It would be unkind to leave this particular church without making reference to the long and close connection which the Park Family had with it. From the day of the congregation's foundation, about 1801, until within a few years ago, the Parks were the outstanding figures in the church. In fact among the youth of the town forty years ago, the Mid Street Church was known as "Park's Kirkie." And they were no mean supporters. The liberal, nay more than generous financial support which they gave to the church will never be known, but their memory will ever remain green and flavour sweet in the annals of the church. Alas for the irony of fate! The name of Park is dead so far as the Mid Street Church is concerned. Not one of the name now worships within her walls!

MANSE STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

As mentioned in the notice of the previous church, this place of worship long known as the Evangelical Union Church, had for its first minister the Rev. Archibald Duff, who seceded from the Congregational body on the last Sunday of 1844, when minister of the Mid Street Church. Before coming to Fraserburgh Mr. Duff had been engaged in what may be called mission work in Canada. In 1836 he returned from Canada and entered the Congregational College, Glasgow. On completing his college course, he came to Fraserburgh in 1840. He laboured with much spiritual success in the Manse Street Church for two or three years, after which he went to Liverpool, thence to Hawick in 1849, and finally to his beloved Canada in 1856, where he laboured till he died at a ripe old age.

From 1847, when Mr. Duff resigned, till 1849, the Manse Street Church was without a regular minister, and in the last named year Rev. Alexander Davidson was ordained to the charge. Mr. Davidson was educated at Glasgow University and the E.U. Theological Hall, Kilmarnock. One of the professors there at this time was Dr. Morison, who founded the Morisonians. Mr. Davidson came straight from the Theological Hall to be minister of the Manse Street Church. The induction services were conducted by the well-known Professor Fergus Ferguson of Glasgow, who was the long and trusted friend of Mr. Davidson. Mr. Davidson was a very popular preacher, and an earnest and devoted worker among his people. The progress of the congregation was the best proof of Mr. Davidson's success as a minister. His reputation as a preacher spread abroad, and in 1853 he left Fraserburgh to take up the charge at Barrhead. It will be of interest to many to know that Mr. John Davidson the eminent poet and litterateur, who came to a tragic end by drowning in the English Channel in the early part of the year 1909, was a son of the Rev. Alexander Davidson. Fraserburgh cannot claim the poet as a son, as he was not born till a year or two after his father left Fraserburgh. After Mr. Davidson's departure five ministers followed each other in quick succession, viz., Mr. Anderson, Mr. Denison, Mr. Hutchison, Mr. James A Gray and Mr. T. G. Salmon.

The church had rather a checkered career at this time, and but for the courage, energy and trustfulness of the congregation, must have collapsed altogether. Mr. Salmon resigned in 1871, and the Rev. John Cameron, who had a charge at Hamilton, received a call to Fraserburgh and accepted it. Mr. Cameron did seven years' faithful service in Fraserburgh, and then removed to Rhynie.

Mr. Cameron was followed by Rev. R. W. R. Trenwith, who was ordained towards the close of the year 1879. Mr. Trenwith, whose early connections were with the Wesleyan Methodists, was a great favourite with his congregation. He had a wonderful way of getting round the people, and his enthusiasm was such that his little congregation caught the infection, with the result that all the different branches of church work were in complete working order. After 9 years' fruitful work in Fraserburgh, Mr. Trenwith accepted a charge at Bellshill. It may be mentioned that the reverend gentleman was a gifted singer, a quality that enhanced his value as a minister.

Mr. Trenwith was succeeded by Rev. James Cown, Rev. Joseph L. King, and Rev. Alexander Macaulay. The latter had a very dramatic pulpit style, which was sometimes carried to an extent that did not captivate his hearers. His Canadian training may have had something to do with his exuberant and impassioned delivery. Mr. Macaulay went to Anstruther in 1900, returned to his native Canada, and then came back and became minister at Port Erroll.

As already noticed, Rev. James Stirling occupied the Manse Street Church pulpit with great acceptance from 1900 to 1904, and in the following year Rev. W. G. Jeffrey was inducted minister. Mr. Jeffrey, who was educated at the Congregational Union Theological Hall in Edinburgh, came direct to Fraserburgh. He was a young man of great energy, heartily devoted to his work and

exercising marked influence over his people. His ministry galvanized the congregation into new life, and the various agencies of the church were never stronger or in better working order than under his care. He interested himself in the young, in temperance work, and in every movement that went for the welfare and amelioration of the condition of the masses. He started a bright little monthly magazine called the *Kinnaird Home Messenger*, which he edited with great success until his departure from Fraserburgh in 1907. That year Mr. Jeffrey was ordained minister of the Stoney Lane Congregational Church, Birmingham.

After being vacant for a short time, the Rev. J. W. Gillies of Muirkirk was inducted to the charge of the Manse Street Church. Mr. Gillies had considerable experience as a missionary in India, and thereafter at pastoral work at home. Since coming to Fraserburgh in the early part of 1908, Mr. Gillies has discharged his pastoral duties with devotion and efficiency. It is hoped that he will be long spared to minister to the needs of the Manse Street congregation.

BAPTIST CHURCH.

The Baptist faith was an unknown quantity in Fraserburgh till nearly the middle of last century. Without meaning anything disrespectful, and purely recording facts, it has to be pointed out that the fisher people of this district have all along had a decided penchant for embracing every new form of religion that came round. It would almost seem that the more extreme the views from the standards of Old Zion, which at this time was a hated if not despised church, propounded by offshoot after offshoot, each one claiming greater spiritual perfection than the other, the greater attraction had they for the fisher people. Some new body with strong claims for all that was good, as it opened its doors in Fraserburgh received its quota of supporters. Another new body with still greater claims of finer dogma and Christian perfection followed. So many seceded from the older bodies and joined the latest arrival, and so the movement went on *ad infinitum*. The simple life and emotional temperament of the people had no doubt much to do with the religious revolution which was so marked in this district during the first three quarters of last century.

The first disciple representing the Baptist faith who proclaimed the cause in Fraserburgh, was Mr. G. C. Reid, who visited Fraserburgh in 1840. He represented what at that time, was known as the "Campbellites," and his great doctrine was immersion. This first visit must have been encouraging, for he returned to Fraserburgh in the spring of the following year. His mission took practical shape, for several people applied for admission to the Church, and this being granted, were immersed in the water of Philorth, where many baptisms have since taken place. The first meeting place of the little band was in the house of one of their number. Thereafter in a room in Cross Street, and next in the old Episcopal house in Mid Street. Afterwards a schoolroom the same street was secured. For years these Baptists had no minister or preacher, the services being conducted by the leading lights among themselves,

many of whom had a wonderful power of extempore praying and preaching. The great revival "ower the water" about this time greatly helped the latest addition to the local Churches. Many people left other bodies and joined the Baptists. Such was the increase that the congregation had to remove to the Town Hall, where they worshipped for many years. Among the outstanding leaders who helped to found the Baptist Church here was Mr. George Bruce, Moray House, who at the age of 96 is still hale and hearty, and a regular worshipper at the Baptist Church.

The congregation had now reached a stage that demanded the services of a regular minister, and in 1872 Rev. James Stewart was appointed to the charge. With a minister of their own, the congregation now moved for a church, and in 1877 the nice little church in Victoria Street was opened for service. The building, which is seated for 300 persons, cost £1,800. It is a most comfortable, up-to-date church, with a baptistry immediately in front of the pulpit. Mr. Stewart was an earnest, evangelical minister, who discharged his duties with zeal. Mr. Stewart retired in 1879, and still lives in Inverallochy, ready to perform a Christian duty if called upon to do so.

Rev. A. Monro followed Mr. Stewart, but after two years' successful ministry he, on account of ill-health, had to seek a milder climate. The church was vacant for a year, and then Rev. Walter Richards was ordained to the charge. This was in 1883. Mr. Richards, who was educated in Spurgeon's Pastors' College, London, was an energetic and devout minister with decided evangelical leanings. For the greater part of Mr. Richards' pastorate the congregation made marked headway, and much was the regret of the congregation when in 1895 he accepted a call to Rattray Street Church, Dundee. Mr. Richards had occupied the pulpit in Victoria Street for the lengthened period of 12 years.

The next minister was the Rev. Ernest Hughes, an eloquent Welshman, whose preaching was of a high order. He was also a scholarly man, and altogether above the average preacher. He would have made a name for himself had he remained here, but having been long abroad, the climate was too trying, and after a four years' ministry, he betook himself to a sunnier clime.

He was succeeded in 1899 by Rev. David D. Smith, who was one of the most popular ministers that ever occupied the pulpit. In his preaching he showed a native eloquence that was wonderful. He was a great visitor, and had a genial and kindly manner that greatly endeared him to his people. His acceptance of a call to Elgin in 1903 caused deep disappointment in the congregation.

He was succeeded by the Rev. Mitchell Hughes, who was ordained minister in 1904. A native of Pittenweem, Fife, he was educated at Glasgow University and Dunoon Baptist College, from the latter of which he came straight to Fraserburgh. Mr. Hughes' excellent services gave much satisfaction to the congregation, and the watchword during his incumbency was "Steady progress ahead." A good pulpit man, Mr. Hughes was gifted with a kindly manner and a well stored mind, which made him a welcome guest, not only among his own people, but among all circles in the town. He was a devoted worker in every

good cause, and he gave his services ungrudgingly all over the district. Mr. Hughes having been appointed to a charge in Broughty Ferry, resigned his pastorate here in January, 1911.

Some little time afterwards Rev. Wilfrid T. Farrar was inducted to the charge. Mr. Farrar is a native of Elland Edge, near Huddersfield, Yorkshire, and comes of strongly marked Baptist stock. He was educated at Manchester Baptist College and Manchester University. Mr. Farrar is quite a young man on the sunny side of thirty but he is an impressive and forcible preacher, who catches and keeps his hearers' ears and feelings. He has any amount of enthusiasm and "go" in his constitution, and this, combined with a genial and attractive manner, augurs well for his future career. Already he is a great favourite with his congregation. He is a good sportsman having during his college days excelled both at cricket and football.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

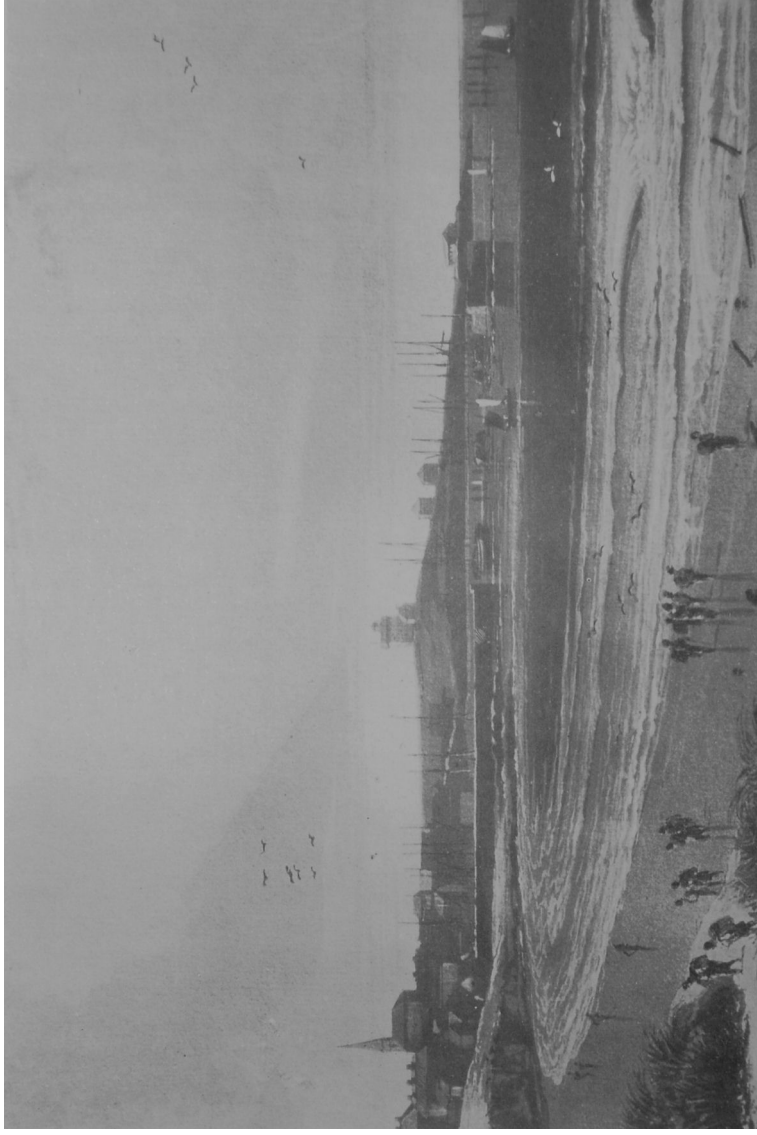
In making the notice of this Church the last on the list, some persons will be inclined to think the position invidious, and exclaim "the first shall be last," but after all, though Roman Catholicism bulks very largely in some parts of the world, it is comparatively speaking, a very small quantity in Buchan. As a matter of fact in point of membership, the Catholic Church when compared with other denominations occupies the position in this book which its relative local importance gives it. Prior to the Reformation, Catholicism must have ruled supreme, or pretty nearly so in this district, but there are really no records of those early days left to tell their tale. No doubt the abbots and monks (superior men in their day) who were located in Buchan in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries would have kept records of the times, which would have been a most valuable replica of the daily life of the natives in those far off days. Mostly all such records, which would have been of inestimable value to-day, were swept away at or about the time of the Reformation, owing to the fanaticism and ignorant fury of the people. It is for this reason that the local records of the branch of this great Church, which should have dated back to the dim and distant ages, commence only comparatively lately. A chapel was maintained at Strichen, said to be a legacy or a survival of the days of the Frasers of Lovat, for a lengthened period, and the priest who was stationed there began to conduct regular services here at a date well into last century.

For the greater part of last century there was scarcely such a being as a Catholic known in Fraserburgh, so that the services of the Roman Church until about the seventies were quite unnecessary here. Among the priests resident in Strichen who conducted regular services in Fraserburgh were:— Rev William Smith, some 20 years in the district, Rev. William Farquhar, Rev. Andrew Fleming Thomson, now of Peterhead and Rev. James Henderson. The last mentioned, a man of a very sanguine and enterprising disposition, saw to the old arrangement of making Strichen the headquarters of the Church was entirely out of date, and against the interests of the majority of Catholics

in the district. The Rev. Father Gerrie started the movement for having a church in Fraserburgh, but it was Father Henderson who really "forced the pace," and carried the idea to a successful issue. A good many Catholic families had become resident in Fraserburgh before the close of last century. Besides this, quite a multitude of Catholic Highlandmen and girls annually came to Fraserburgh to engage in the herring fishing. The need of a place of worship became actually pressing, and the partially done work left by Father Gerrie was vigorously pressed home by Father Henderson. A property was acquired in Commerce Street, at the south-east corner of School Street, and through the energy and business-like methods of Father Henderson, sufficient funds were soon raised to justify the work of church building.

The church was soon an accomplished fact, and the building a credit to the congregation. It was designed by Messrs. Ellis and Wilson, architects, Aberdeen, and is seated for 400. It is unpretentious on the outside, but its interior is beautiful. The High Altar is a rare bit of carved work, from the workshop of M. Beyaert of Bruges. It was presented to the church by Mr. McGraith of Beaulieu. The church was opened on 18th June, 1896, the dedication services having been conducted by Right Rev. Bishop Hugh Macdonald. Father Henderson took a prominent part in the services. It was truly pathetic that within a year his remains should have been interred within the walls of the church which was practically his own creation. He died, quite a young man, on 28th February, 1897, sincerely mourned for by his own congregation and by his brethren in the Church.

Father Nicol followed, and though only comparatively a short time in Fraserburgh, he by diligence and industry succeeded in wiping off the balance of debt on the church. Father Nicol was succeeded by Father Wiseman, a native of the Dufftown district, who still remains in Fraserburgh, having already ministered with much success to his flock here for a period of ten years. He is much beloved by his own congregation, and held in the highest estimation by the general Public. In all works likely to benefit the poor and the afflicted, Father Wiseman has taken a very keen and active interest. His genial disposition and kindly nature have endeared him to a wide circle of friends of all denominations. A most capable musician and a singer of quality, Father Wiseman has done much in promoting an interest in and taste for music of the higher class. He has been President of both the Fraserburgh Musical Society and the Fraserburgh Club, the two premier musical organizations of the town. In his capable and tactful hands the Catholic congregation continues to grow steadily in numbers. Among the present members are Lady Saltoun and Mr. J. C. Ogilvie-Forbes of Boyndlie, both of whom are warm supporters of "Our Lady the Star of the Sea," the name of the Catholic Church here. The departure of Father Wiseman from Fraserburgh would be considered a public loss, and it is hoped that he will be long spared to go out and in amongst his own people, and to take an active interest generally in the welfare of the people of Fraserburgh.



From a Painting by W.Daniell. Photo by J. H. Low.

FRASERBURGH HARBOUR AND SANDS IN 1822.

CHAPTER IV.

KIRK SESSION RECORDS.

The Parish Church Session Records give a wonderfully vivid view of the manner of life in Fraserburgh and district from 200 to 300 years ago. The matter dealt with by the Sessions which is used in this chapter, is not that which touches upon important ecclesiastical questions, but which deals rather with the lot and the life of the common people. The minutes throw a flood of light upon their simplicity, beliefs and failings, and show what an important body "the Kirk Session" was in those far back days. Some may think the Session wielded an uncalled-for power long ago, but people must remember that, educationally, the age was one of darkness, and that the parish minister and his colleagues formed practically the only light in the community. But for this light, as evidenced in these minutes, the people of to-day would have been without the quaint and interesting information which these records furnish. The period spoken of starts in 1612, since the Session Records, from which the information is drawn, begin at that date. It would be quite possible to go back to 1571, the year in which the Church of Fraserburgh was first built, or even to the time of the old Church of Philorth—the name by which the parish was known previous to the birth of Fraserburgh as a port and burgh of barony. From existing documents there could be drawn an interesting sketch of the pre-Reformation Fraserburgh, but the charters for those days and such dry material extant do not possess the interest of the "human documents" that live and move through the Session Records.

In the first chapter of this book it is claimed that "Faithlie" or "Faithly," the "progenitor" of Fraserburgh, was situated somewhere near Kirkton of to-day. This claim is rather startlingly confirmed by these records. On 15th May, 1622, there is given in two columns a list of elders and deacons, one for the burgh, and one for the landward. Among the deacons for the landward district there comes first the name of "Alexander Thomson for Faithly"—which would plainly indicate that Faithly was, at that date at least, in the landward part of the parish, as distinguished from the burgh. It would appear that the new town near Kinnaird Head had at its first start, taken the same name as the hamlet at Kirkton—Faithly—and had been so known until Sir Alexander Fraser gave the former the name of Fraserburgh. That there were two "Faithlies" existing at the same time, is proved by the minute or record above quoted, and, the one here given, dated 10th July, 1614: "The

said day James Robertson callit as lawfullie summoneit thairto compeiris not and farther answer is said be his master that he is fugitive and is run out off the countrie wt some claithis of his maister's. Qrfoir the keiper of the paroche and haill inhabitants of Faithlie at requyrit to adverteis the sessioun quhowson he suld returne into the countrie agane, or gif they can git wit quhair he remanes." On the face of it, one is inclined to believe that the above refers to the new burgh, but it is rather peculiar that the town should be called "Faithlie," as in the minute, long years after it had received the new name of Fraserburgh. Would both records refer to the old village at Kirkton? The record that follows, tends to give an affirmative answer to the query. Fraserburgh therein receives the dignified title of "citie," which may make readers smile, but which had no doubt been chosen by the writer of the minute for the purpose of distinctly differentiating between the old village at Kirkton, and the new Fraserburgh. The minute is dated 7th February, 1616, and is as follows: "The said day compereit James Anderson as lawlie sommoneit thairto and because he was newlie enterit in the citie and service with Johne he is chargit as ane stranger to produce ane testimonie of his former conversaoune honest and Christiane from the pairts Q'rin he liwit befor." The Scotch of some of the records is rather difficult to understand, but if read slowly the sound of the words readily conveys their meaning. A translation of each minute could be given for the benefit of those who do not know Scotch, but such a thing would make the chapter too heavy and prolonged.

In the Session Records there are unfortunately several blanks, and at some of the most interesting periods of our national history. The first two volumes, which stand out by themselves, cover the period from 1612 to 1631, with a blank from 1616 to 1618. As already seen, the language they are written in is "gweed braid Scotch." Here is an example, and others will occur. A woman is reported to have left one parish "on maid (made) her repentance." This is an idiom in common use in the Buchan dialect of the present day, but it may be questioned if it would be understood outside Aberdeenshire. When it was tried upon some Ayrshire people they were found to be "not in it." The handwriting of the records is very beautiful, especially in the second volume. Indeed, it would be difficult to find its equal for evenness, regularity, and neatness. The writer was John Ogston, who combined in his own person the offices of "Reidar" and "Clerk to the Session." The reader has no equivalent in modern ecclesiastical life, but in those days he was a kind of stop-gap, reading the lessons on Sunday, conducting the weekly prayer meeting, and presiding at the morning daily worship, which was held in the church, and even on occasions doing duty for the minister. Sometimes the reader was also precentor, but in Fraserburgh there was a certain William Burnet "Wha taikis up the psalme in the kirke," and for that he got in 1627 "four pundis money, and twa puires tries, and ane puires trie to help up with his house." Neither of these gentlemen occupied the position of schoolmaster, so that even at that date the ecclesiastical household of Fraserburgh was not a

small one. The form of the handwriting is quite different from the current hand of this age, not more than six of the letters being the same. Age has not improved the clearness of the writing, but from the first the ink was none of the blackest. Indeed, were it not for an occasional visitation of the Presbytery, at which the supply of ink was renewed, the modern reader would begin to feel his eyes smarting with staring steadily at the yellow lines.

REFORMATION ECHOES.

There are not a few echoes of the Reformation throughout these early volumes. It is only necessary to remember that the Reformation was but some fifty years past, and then think of the Disruption, in order to realize that the Reformation struggle would be a living memory to the people of Fraserburgh and elsewhere in 1612. Two examples may be given. In 1615 William Anderson and his wife are reprov'd for "departing the toune into the superstitious dayis of yuill." In 1616 three men are accused of "show fires bigging at Hallow evening." The men admit that through oversight they were present, though they were not the "biggers" of the fires. After being taught the superstition of such practices, and warned against the "novelty of superstition re-entering," they promised to amend, and never be seen again where such things are in hand. To be told that Hallow Even bonfires are a mark of superstition would be a surprise to those living now, but to the men of those days anything that savoured of Popery was superstition, and the observance of festival days and saints' days (as "keeping Hallowe'en" is, seeing that it is All Saints' Day) was an abomination to be avoided.

MISCARRIED WITH AN EVIL SPIRIT.

Contrast these cases with an event that took place in 1614. A certain Alexander Ranie appeared before the Session and confessed his sin, but in self-defence he pleaded that he did these things, being at the time "miscarried with some evil spirit, and not his own man." Whereupon the Session solemnly "counsellis him to draw near to God, that Satan get na further possession in him to his gryter hurt." The finding is perfectly orthodox; but there is a temptation to ask if this man's defence does not betray a greater measure of superstitious belief than either William Anderson and his wife, or the three Hallowe'en bonfire offenders. To say that Alexander Ranie was something of a humorist is not a legitimate explanation. There is no element of human nature—from the point of view of the chief actors—that is more dismally awanting in these Session Records than the element of humour. It is an unknown quantity.

FRASERBURGH "A CITIE."

There are no direct references to the college in the Session Records. But Fraserburgh (or Frasersbruche, as it is frequently called) is sometime styled "the

Citie"—a name already referred to that further implied that the inhabitants looked upon themselves as deriving a dignity from the University such as the modern "Brochers" would never dream of laying claim to. There are some references in the records to the "scolleris," or scholars, but it is doubtful if that name could be so stretched as to be applied to the students at the college. Yet there seems some likelihood that it was so, as there appears to have been sundry tussles between "town and gown." Sentences are passed for "perturbing of the kirk in time of preaching and dinging of the scolleris;" and public intimation is made against "abusing the scolleris and enticing them to evil."

MARRIAGE CUSTOMS.

The subject of marriage is one that occupies a prominent place in the Session Records. The marrying seasons—for there were such in those days—were usually after the Terms and about the New Year. There was nothing like the modern horror against getting married in May. The order of events was as follows:—There was first the betrothal, which was celebrated by a "spree." This comes out in the case of the man who was "miscarried with the evil spirit." He and his father and others absented themselves from public worship, and it was found that they had stayed at home "drinkand and bindand up marriage betwixt" Alexander Ranie and the woman who became his wife. Then there was gone through, before the Session, some solemn form of contract or espousal; the parties compear "before the Session, and make promiseis of marriage ilk ane to wyrs" (others). One interesting espousal of this kind may be given. On September 4, 1622, "there was a mutual contract of marriage betwixt James Forbes of Blacktoun and Magdalen Fraser, dauchter to Alexander Fraser, eldest lawful sone to Sir Alexander Fraser of Fraserburghe, Knyt." Along with the contracting parties there appeared two cautioners, who became security that the marriage should be celebrated within 40 days under a heavy penalty. But this caution clause gave rise to complications, and it was afterwards considered safest to cause the parties themselves consign 10 merks, which should be forfeited in case of failure or of impurity.

BREACH OF PROMISE PENALTIES.

It was true in that day, as in this, that the course of true love never did run smooth. There are cases of "brak of promiseis" on the part of the man and on the part of the woman. There is even the case of a woman appearing before the Session and saying that a man had promised to marry her, and was only now seeking to delay time. She was called upon to "qualifie" or prove her case, but as she had no witnesses, and as the man was quite willing to swear that he was perfectly innocent of the charge, the woman lost her suit—and a husband. For in less than three months the faithless young man appeared before the Session "craving his banns to be proclaimed" with another woman, to whom

he was ultimately married—but not happily. It may be asked, Was this a case of Nemesis for his cruel treatment of his former love? When breach of promise was proved against either party there was nothing given in the shape of solatium or damages. It was with the Session that the offender had to settle accounts. In a case which gave the Session considerable trouble this finding was come to, that “it was nocht in the default of the said Jane Birnie, wha had oftymes requyrit performance of the promiseis, but in the default of the said John Mylne. Wherefore the Session convicts the said John, and ordains him and his cautioner to pay the penaltie of 20 merks.” In a similar case the parties before the Session “discharget ilk ane wyrs (others) of the promiseis above mentionat;” but while the woman had her caution money returned, the man had his forfeited.

THE PERILS OF LOVEMAKING.

In the matter of love-making, people had to be very careful. If a couple had been seen going out to the fields late of a summer evening it was no uncommon thing for “honest women to follow them het fuit,” to their manifest annoyance. Married women especially had to be very careful in their treatment of single men. The wife of a man much her senior had been so unguarded as to give a skinner boy, who was about to leave for Aberdeen, “ane tait of hir hair to be braselottis.” The old man had died soon after, and she was charged with “giving him his deid” by her levity—a charge from which she was happily able to free herself without difficulty. Another couple were so unwise as to “sitt on Sondag at even in William Scottis hous all the haill nicht togither kissing and clapping the ane with the uther.” They were able, however, to establish their innocence, but the woman was requested—whether politely or not, history doth not say—“to remove off the toune under all highest pain and charge that efter may follow.”

A SEPARATION CASE.

There is no reference that could by any possibility be twisted into a reflection upon the ubiquitous and proverbial mother-in-law. But there is a striking case of a hopeful and trustful son-in-law, who seems to have had a desire to get assistance from his wife’s relations. James Scott was accused of non-adherence to his wife, and answered “that hous to set her in for the present he had nane, and seeing that her father had baith his awn hous and housses to set for maill, if it would please his guid fayther he would interdyt himself and all his handling to his guid fayther for securitie that he would discharge dewtie, is sa be that his guid fayther would aither suffer him to have frie access to his spous in his awn hous, or let him have a hous for maill.” The “guid fayther,” however, was inexorable, and declined to treat with his son-in-law. The wife of his own bosom even turned against him, and told him to his face that she wad “tak’ na pairt with him except he giff her ane hous to dwell in.” The

Session, recognizing that the cause of the evil was “mair into ye spous and hir fayther than in ye husband,” exhorts them to embrace him with Christian love that he may meet them with Christian duty.

WIDOWS NOT TO MARRY TOO SOON.

Widows, too, came into the region of practical politics; and a public intimation was made that no widow was to marry before her deceased husband's estate had been finally settled up, because such second marriages were often detrimental to the interests of the heirs, who were mostly young children.

ATTENDANCE AT FUNERALS.

Burials were a subject that frequently engaged the attention of the Session. For instance, there is an Act passed and publicly intimated that people are to convene “mair frequentlie to burialls nor they do.” Especially with regard to the burial of the poor was this duty enjoined; and in this respect they teach us of the twentieth century a lesson in neighbourly decency. It comes out, too, that the Civil Magistrate used the weight of his authority to enjoin the citizens to attend burials. This appears from the case of a man who was absent “from his awn kirke on the Sabboithe”—a punishable offence. His defence was that he had been “straitit” by the Magistrate to repair to a funeral in the next parish. It did not strengthen his case much, however, when it was proved by witnesses that he had not been there. So he had to change his ground to maintaining that “the corps was liftit befor he wan the length.” This case—not to mention many others—brings out the fact that burials were common on the Sunday. Occasionally a Session meeting is not held because of some important funeral, and once at least there is “na preaching” because the minister and “haill honest men” were absent at the funeral of some of the neighbouring gentry. Often the Session had to bear the expenses of the funerals of the poor. Coffins are not mentioned in the accounts. The moneys paid were always for “winding sheittis,” which cost about eighteen shillings a piece, or one shilling and sixpence of our money.

SEAFARING MATTERS.

In seafaring matters there was considerable activity. This was to be expected, for Fraserburgh had recently been erected into a free port, and a harbour had been built. A fisherman of that day was seldom called a “fischer;” more commonly a “sieman” or “seyman.” There were no sailors: nothing but “mariners.” There is an occasional reference to a “Southland schappe.” Some of the inhabitants went to Shetland and stayed there for a year at a time. Wrecks were not unknown, but the shipwrecked mariners were kindly treated and sent away with a little money in their pockets out of the poor's box. For

a time there was a ship that made an annual voyage to “Noroway,” with and for what articles of merchandise can only be conjectured.

SUNDAY SAILING FORBIDDEN.

There must have been a lively scene at the harbour one Sunday morning in the beginning of December, 1624. Some women were convicted of “brak of Saboithe in perturbing certain shipmen and hauling fast the shippis towis, when they war going furthe out off the herbeire.” If sailors then were anything like what they are now, we can well believe that a serious “brak of Saboithe” took place, and that there was great “prophaning of the Lordis day.” This little scene, however, gave rise to legislation on the subject of setting sail on Sunday, and an Act was passed forbidding any ship to go to sea under the pain of a heavy penalty. Even before this (in 1612) two “sessionaris,” or elders, got into trouble for heavily offending God and “sclandering thair calling in profaning the Saboth day and loosing thair crair (or craft) foorth of the port.” Such iniquity was followed by its own punishment, and these erring elders were brought into great danger of their lives by the “hand of God, which had justly been against them.” Over and above, they were ordained to make public profession of their sin before the congregation, and acknowledge “God his mercifull deliverance.”

SABBATH-BREAKING FISHERMEN—FEW FISHING BOATS 283 YEARS AGO.

Fishermen frequently got into trouble for putting to sea on Sunday in search of their lines, and bringing them back full of fish. Other “customabill braks of Saboithe” on their part were gathering bait, taking eels at the crags, and catching fowls in girns. As an evidence of the growth of the fishing industry it is interesting to learn that at a meeting where the “haill seymen of the Braidsey” were assembled there were only three skippers, which means that there were only three boats. This was in 1629. To-day there are of Broadsea boats engaged in the herring fishing not less than 30, and these are no doubt as large as the “schippis” of 1629 were. In addition to these there are several crews of old men and boys engaged in the haddock fishing, and yet there are—the proverb says—as good fish in the sea as were ever taken out of it.

IMPROVEMENT IN FISHERMEN'S BEHAVIOR.

In behaviour, too, as well as in numbers, the fishermen of 1629 would compare unfavourably with their descendants. It was a common practice among them to engage “in banning and sweiring in the boating,” and particularly in the “selling of their fische” were they demonstrative in this way. Indeed, so prevalent had the practice become that the fishermen were “certifeit that they would be punishit therefor in the highest measour.” It is different

nowadays. If there is one fault more than another that fishermen as a class are guilty of, it certainly is not swearing or blaspheming the name of God. There may be exceptions, but profanity is not one of the fisherman's weaknesses.

HARD TIMES.

In these times, agriculturalists may have periods of depression, but it will comfort the present generation of farmers to be told that times were often worse in days gone by. In the period under review there does not appear to have been at any time a superfluity of wealth, and there are numerous cases of some hapless offender pleading that he "had na geir" to pay his penalty with and desiring bodily punishment instead. When the Session was quite satisfied that what had been said was true—and they put themselves to some trouble to find out—the suit of the appellant was granted, and more than likely he was sent to stand so many Sundays in the "joggis" or joughs. But there are two years in particular that appear to have been very bad. In the month of August, 1613, the minister is ordained to make intimation to the people to "prepare themselves for ane solempne humiliation the next Saboithe save ane." The reasons which prompted this grave step were "the sinnis of the land and; imminent judgments, and the present intemperat weather in the entrie of the harvest." The other year so remarkable for its badness was 1616. At the beginning of it, in the dead of winter, there was great poverty, and some families were reduced to the verge of starvation.

HUNGER AN EXCUSE FOR SABBATH-BREAKING.

About the middle of February the wife of William Whyte was accused of "brak of Saboithe by grinding on ye cuirnes." The woman quite readily admitted her offense, but excused herself "through ye hunger and necessitie of hir selff and hir young anes, havand ye roche corn giffin hir the same morning." The finding of the Session is one that does credit to their finer feelings and their sympathy with distress. They convict her of break of Sabbath, but "oversie her repentance upon ye alledgit necessitie." On the same date there is the case of three men who had been found guilty of bringing corn down from Aberdour, where they had been working, to their homes in Fraserburgh on the Sunday morning. They also plead necessity and the hardness of the time, and are demitted with an admonition.

AMUSEMENTS FORBIDDEN DURING HOURS OF CHURCH SERVICE.

On the subject of amusements the Kirk Session appears to have been tolerant. It was strictly against the law, however, that amusement should be indulged in "in tyme of preiching." It was the duty of the elder-visitors who went round the parish during the time of divine service to see that no one was

absenting himself from public worship without necessary cause, and to report every kind of misdemeanour that they saw. In all cases that came before the Session the qualifying phrase “in tyme of preaching” is used, which points to the fact that the observance of Sunday—in Fraserburgh at least—was much laxer than it afterwards became. There can be no question that on even occasion when anyone was accused of breaking the Sabbath by indulging in some form of amusement, it was only because he had done so during the hours that he should have been in church. Other forms of Sabbath breaking, such as getting drunk and creating a disturbance, are seldom accompanied with this phrase. Hence, apart from independent testimony, there is reason to believe that out-door amusements were permitted without molestation, except when the players absented themselves from the kirk. By and by the law got stricter, and even the harmless “constitutional” came to be regarded as serious desecration of the Lord’s Day.

CHILDREN’S GAMES—PUNISHMENTS.

“Playing at the gouff” was a common pastime. But for indulging in this game, instead of going to church, a boy was sent to the “maister stool for correction.” This will remind those who can remember the days of the old parochial dominie of half a century ago or more of some of the experiences of their own youth. Usually there was a bench in the school over which they had to fold themselves in an attitude—but they know themselves. It was this ignominious punishment that John Burnett was consigned in the year of grace 1613. Other forms of amusement were “Playing at the tangill ba’,” which may be identified with the modern “scuddy,” and “Mowing the bime,” which is perhaps the modern “coup the ladle.” These were mostly children’s games. The older people occasionally diverted themselves of a Sunday forenoon with “playing at the cardis” or “throwing of the dyis” (dice). Conjoined with these there was usually “hauling out the visitors”—that is, refusing admission to the members of Session appointed to see that no Sabbath breaking was taking place, just as publicans are punished now-a-days if they keep their doors locked against the police. Children as a rule got off with an adm

Was found drunk thereafter. Indeed, the drink question was one that demanded a large share of the Session's attention. In 1613 the visitors reported that although "maister and hussie (housewife) were in the kirk yet there was left at home some servand with keys and cuir, and that by that occasion drunkenness was entertained in tyme of preaching." Accordingly an Act had to be passed putting a stop to that. Drunkenness and "nicht walking" were offences that had their measure of punishment meted out to them. Two men were accused of being out at midnight and drinking in William Craik's house the "same nicht that James Burnetis' buith was broken." Their defence was that they "had not sowpit till then"—rather late hours for supper. They were warned, however, that if they persisted in such habits there might ensue graver consequences than a charge of drunkenness, as the experience of that night should teach them. "At the same time," the record adds, "the Session was not to dippe into sick particularis."

PLACE NAMES.

A name that is continually occurring is the Howfuird or Hollowfuird of Faithly—which it will take a little research to identify. Instances of other names unknown could be given, but it is unnecessary to make an exhaustive list. On the other hand, many well-known names occur frequently, Fingeis (not Phingask, it will be observed), Pitblae, Carnes, Kinglessor, Kinbog, Tarwathie, Hatton, and others. There were few roads throughout the parish, and what there were, were very poor. This comes out in the excuses given for absenteeism from the church. In several places throughout the parish there were small townships where a few cottars and small crofters lived together and cultivated an acre or two out of the surrounding heath or moss. Such townships were at the places already mentioned—Fingeis, Pitblae, Kinglessor and Kinbog, etc. The name of Cardno was not there at this time, as the following extract bears out: "July 11th, 1615. The same day compeireit the toune of Kinbog being summeneit thairto upon the impriamatioune of Andro Crudane thair Maister, and being found customabill outlyeris from the Kirk upon the sabbath day are orderit by ye Sessioune ewerie man to be answerabill for his haill hous yat yay sould all be heireris anes in the twa sabbothis and if thrie Sabbothis past ony persone was found not to have been at yr awin paroche Kirk in ony of ye thrie, then ye Maister of ye hous to pay fourtie pennies to ye poor toties quoties and the said Andro Crudane to gather up ye same and to be answerabill to ye Kirk. The haill Maisteris of ye families of ye toune of Kinbog agries heir unto."

Broadsea, or, as it is called, Braidsea, is found very early in the records as is instanced by the following: "September 16th, 1612. The said day comperit the haill seymen of the Braidsey quha being challengit with brak of Sabboth, for the grytst pairt they denyit the same, yet confessed that thair was among them gross iniquiteis quilk be tryell of the sessioun as particularlie . . Inionit to sanctifie the Sabboth day are admonischit, etc."

The records show how the Session did its business. For instance the whole business as done at the first meeting in 1613 is given. The first entry is the case of Andrew Sutor, who is found not to have satisfied the discipline of Aberdour for some offence, and is ordered to get the admonition. The second entry is about an "ooolest and insemelie thing in the toun"—a case of misdemeanour on the part of some of the inhabitants. The third is the case of John Smoking, who had not appeared at the summons of the Session and is to get a second citation. The last entry, dated 6th January, 1613, is given in full. It says: "The said day upon declatioune fra the Kirk of Rathine giffen up be Mr William Davidson, Minister thair, agnis Adam Sympson and Michael Burnett concerning their misbehaviour in the house of Alexander Scot of Kindrot at their turning fra Durstan Fair. The saidis personis are orderit to be summoncit to the next day that from the Sessione they may be remit to satisfie the Kirk of Rathine and that pro secundo in respect of their noncompeirance." So that it seems as far back as 1613,

"St. Drostan Fair in Auld Deer,
Is the shortest day o' a' the year."

for the dates seem to agree.

The last day's business in 1621 was done on the 26th December. As it is brief, it is given in full.

"Collectit ye last day 15 shillings and put into the box.

"Collectors ye next day Michael Fraser and John Reid.

"Isobell Thrid ane Sabbothe on the stuill.

"The said day Andro Noble, his sonne Jon Wat and his wife, James Steiwin, Richart Hay and his wyfe ar dilait for brak off Sabboth ar orderit to be chargit to the next day.

"Chrysten Watson 7 Sabbothis at the croce."

AS A SPIRITUAL COURT.

In its spiritual oversight of the parish the work of the Kirk Session was characterized by its thoroughness. It saw that every man who came to reside in the parish was a man of honest and Christian reputation and behaviour. No one was allowed to take up his residence within the bounds of the parish without producing a testimony from the parish he came from that he was free from church discipline and a single man and that his conduct was exemplary in all things as became a Christian. The parishioners had to give regular attendance upon the preaching of the Word both on Sundays and on Wednesdays. Regarding the Wednesday preaching, the following is the minute of 18th August, 1619: "The said day it is ordainit to be hail Session all in ane woce that the hail inhabitants within the toun off Fraserburghe keip the Wednisdayis preaching and that they lay aside all thair affairs within thair houssis sick as bloking, bying, drinking, in tyme off the preiching and as they salbe dilait be

the visitors that sall wisit thame. Illk persons that byddis away shall pey 6s 8d off penaltie according to the ordinance." This act is intimated periodically with a few variations. At one time "na merchandise is to be sauld, na drink, na buithis to be openit." For a time the hour of service is nine, but latterly it is changed to eight o'clock in the morning. As to the communion, it was held in the spring of the year—on more than one Sunday, with the interval of a Sunday or two between. There were public examinations to which all the communicants had to assemble and be catechised. There was preaching on Wednesday as usual, the examinations and exhortations on Friday, preaching on Saturday, but at this period there is no intimation of preaching on Monday. All the communicants had to attend once a year, and if any did not they were summoned before the Session and censured unless they could give good and reasonable excuse. In discipline the Session was very severe and, apparently, there was great need of the severity. They had a curious method of dealing with the man who was disobedient to discipline. He had first to be delait to the Session, then ordered to be summoned by the officer. If he did not appear he was summoned a second time, or *pro secundo*; and again a third time, or *pro tertio*. The third summons sometimes took the form of being publicly "callit at ye Kirk dhur." If he did not appear he was admonished *pro primo*, *pro secundo*, *pro tertio*, and if he still refused to put in an appearance he was sometimes handed over to the Magistrate to be "tane order with." More frequently process was taken out against him preparatory to his being excommunicated, but he always yielded before the final blow fell. Many a time some unfortunate individual is at the point of excommunication but he appears at the last moment. There is, however, an intimation of excommunication which may be given as illustrating what the sentence meant. Two extracts are given from 1st February, 1629: "The said day the minister maid publick intimation out of the pulpit that Wm. Fraser, brother of Jon Fraser of Techmuirie would be excommunicat the next sabboith day according to ane proces led and deducit againis him befor the Presbytry unles he saveit the same." "The said day the minister maid publick intimation out of the pulpit that the Laird of Cowie and his lady, and the lady of Kinmundy was excommunicat and that all the kingis liegis is inhibeit that they intercommoun not receipt or confer ayr (either) by word or wreit, nor hav na deilling with tham, nor na wyr (other) excommunicat persoun and that nane in this paroche do the sam under the painis conteinit in the letteris." In other words, an excommunicated person was cut off from all intercourse with his fellow men.

The Session was not by any means too lenient with its own members, if they came under its censure. On 31st March, 1613, the following minute is written: "The said day in respect that sundrie tymes the Elders and Deacons convenis nocht sa frequent as they ocht, and the necessitie of thair offic cravis thairfoir by common consent of the Elderis and Magistrat, it is enactit that quhasomever ather Elder or Deacon, beis absence in tyme to co wtout excuse allowit be the Session, he sall underly ane penaltie, the Elder 40 pence, the Deacon 2s. quhow

oft soever they be found to fail." On 2nd February, 1625, the Elders penalty is given as "sax shillingis aught penyis." Again a member of the Session Cuthbert Findlater by name, is found guilty of flyting and sent to the magistrate to repair the wrong—a thing which in these days would scarcely be considered consistent with the dignity of the Eldership. On another occasion another Elder got into difficulties as follows: "February 14th, 1621. The said day compeitit Wm. Hay, Elder, James Stewin, Johne Hay, Alexander Hay, Johne Stewin and confessit brak of Sabboth be ganging to the sie in tyme of preaching, and seeking thair lynnies and bringing thame hame full of fischis, are convict and orderitt ilk person to repair to the stuill on Sabboth and confes thair fault and pay ewerie one off the saids persones 6s. 8d. off penaltie."

Occasionally, too, the Session felt it to be its duty to demand a Confession of Faith from certain individuals, as the following extract will show: "July 4th 1615. The said day John Pentrick callit *pro secundo* and not compeirand orderit to be delait be ye minister to ye Presbitrie to be summoneit befor ye brethren yairoff to giff confession of his faith in respect he has been aff ye countray, and since his return shawys na takin but off prophantie and apostacie."

Banning and swearing appear to have been common as is seen from the following extract, 30th January, 1628: "The said day the minister reportit that thair was ane act off the Assembly (i.e. Synod) aganis banning, sweiring, and blaspheming off the name of God, and seing that vyces was comon in all partis, it is thocht meit that the minister mak publick intimation out of the pulpeit the next Sabboithe day of the said act, awa that giff ony in this parochie being fund deing the same they sall be censourit yrfoir preceisly and sall be cawsit to pay sutche penaltie as the Session sall think meit." Enough has now been said to show the manner in which the Session discharged its spiritual duties to the parish.

There is another thing that should be referred to under this head, though it is perhaps as much a civil as it is a spiritual matter, the subject being marriage. It cannot be better introduced than by giving a minute of the date 29th November, 1614: "The said day compeitit Andro Reid and Janet Donaldson creawing yr bandis of mariage to be proclomit and findis cautioune according to ye order to keip thame seiff frie of fornicatioun untill the pformance of ye band and yat nather of thame could go back in the present promise of ceis to pforme ye present promise in tyme convenient. Andro Webster (caution) for the man. Thomas Fraser in Cairne becomes cautioune for the woman under pain of ten marks in ilk syd in caise of failzie." It so happens that this is an interesting case from another point of view. It ultimately ends in a breach of promise trial and in various other complications. But before passing on to consider it from this standpoint, attention may be drawn to the quaint, old-fashioned way in which the minute is worded, and to the careful, business-like manner in which the Session managed its affairs. It was part of their duty to see that the parties betrothed conducted themselves in a way that should not bring scandal upon the congregation and the community, and did not prove

unfaithful the one to the other. To come now to the breach of promise and the Session's way of dealing with it. They did not know it by that name, but the affair is translated into modern language. On 3rd January, 1615, this was the state of matters: "The said day compeitit Andro Reid and Janet Donaldson quha being chargit to proceed to thair mariage according to ye up giwing of thair bandis the said Andro Reid grantis to go forward according to promise and cautione but the said Janet refusis qupon both are summondit apud acta to be present ye next day together with yr cautioner and the said Janet to render a relevant cause of her backslyding or else her cautioner to be chargit penaltie."

Accordingly we find that some weeks after the said Janet appears—only however, after she had been summoned at the Kirk door—and refuses to give herself in marriage to Andro Reid or to render a lawful "cause of refusal." The result is that she and her cautioner are handed over to the magistrate to, "satisfie according to thair cautionrie." The next meeting brings a stormy scene in the Session. Janet's cautioner, who is Thomas Fraser, of Falcunass Cairns, an Elder, simply declines to pay the penaltie and draws down on his head the solemn rebuke of the minister, "qlk reproof ye said Thomas taking passionatlie depairtis aff ye sessioun and sen syne has nocht hauntit thairto." But the magistrate is again appealed to, and we have no doubt but the matter was finally settled to the Session's satisfaction. It is an incident worth noting that alongside of this breach of promise case there is running another where the man is the "backslyder," but it can only have the one termination.

Soon after this there is another case which illustrates another phase of the breach of promise question. On 30th August, 1615, "Jhone Forbes. . . being poissit giff he was yit myndit to mary the said Jenatt Rychie he takes that matter to adwyssment till he speiks his awne freindis and hirris quhairfoir the Session ordainis hime to be at his wittis end and report the next day." It seems that "Jhone" did reach his "wittis end," and to escape consequences went out of the neighbourhood for a time, and when he returned it was only to find that the Session was biding its time. Before, probably, he knew where he was, he found himself sentenced to the stool of repentance, and was by and bye glad to come craving the bands of marriage to be proclaimed. Before the Session consented to this step the minister was enjoined to see John's parents and report their mind on the matter—which he did in these words: "He hes fund yame howbeit not willing to yet marriage altogither yit sua myndit that thay will mak no impediment but giffs yr blessing to ye sonne and his marriage." And thus the happy union was consummated.

The "cautionarie" clause in the marriage arrangement was apparently found to be unsatisfactory and by consent of the Session of 1st December, 1619, the parties themselves became security. "The said day the haill Sessione all in ane woce ordenis that na persones quhatsomever commis to the Kirk to be inbuikit for performance of the band of marriage salbe inbuikitt till first they consigne 20 merkis to be applyiet to the wyss (use) of the puir or common guid

off the Kirk incase they fall in fornication befor the solemonation of marriage or incase they both or anie off thame failze in performing off ye marriage. And the Sessioun ordenis the mynister to mak publick intimation to the haill parochin the next Sabbothe of this ordynance." And so hereafter the marriage formula is in terms of this ordinance and no cautioner gets into trouble because of "failze to perform the band."

AS A PAROCHIAL BOARD.

It will now be interesting to refer to the work of the Session corresponding to the duties of the Parochial Board of to-day. To the Session belonged the care of the poor. There were no poor assessments in those days, and the paupers would be maintained partly by the generosity of their neighbours, and partly by the doles of the Session. It is found that annual distributions to the poor and occasional contributions to various individuals, were made throughout the year. The day of the distribution was intimated a week before, and all the poor "injoinit" to be present. On the 30th January, 1631, this is the official minute of the Session: "The said day the puris siluer distribuit wtout intimationne maid befor becaus som hade gottin already and many cam that had na entres." Then there follows the list of those who received the "puris siluer." The amount given varies from 3s. to 16s.

Another part of the Session duty in this connection was the superintending of funerals. On 6th December, 1615, "All ye affaires of ye Sessione ar continuit to ye next day be reasoun (na Sessiounne haldin) of ye goidman of Tyries burial." It seems from various similar entries, to have been the fashion of the "haill inhabitants," Kirk Session, and minister, to attend funerals of those of any note on the Sunday, doubtless curtailing the service for that purpose, and holding no Session meeting in the afternoon. The Session had also to bear the expense of burying the poor. January 8, 1623, "Itam giffen to Andrew Grig, fourtie shillingis in part of payment of 4 merks aucht penyis restand to him for thrie winding schets to thrie puir, viz., William Stevinsones wyff, John Grantis dauchter, Antonie Jaffray." They even took upon themselves the duty of seeing that everything was carried out with due decency; for they passed an Act of Session to this effect on 7th August, 1622: "The said day it is ordenit that the people be admonischit be the minister publickly out off the pulpeit conveyin mair frequentlie to burialls speciallie of the puir nor thay used to do."

This quasi Parochial Board, however, did adopt measures to throw its own burdens upon other parishes, as its modern representative is so ready to do. They were quite willing to give to "ane stranger pyr." They gave even to foreigners. March 8, 1626: "The said day the minister reportit that thair was certain strangeris Hungarians in thir partis seikand support, and thay were partlie in pthead (i.e. Peterhead) qrfoir it is orderit that Mr. Patrick Chalmers, Magnus Fraser, William Cardno, and Alexander Hay collect in the Kirk efter the preaching to thame upon the Sabboithe the 19th of this instant, and the

minister is orderit to mak intimation . . . desyring the parochinaris to bring with thame the 19th day, sik support that they will of cheritie bestow upon the saidis strangeris." In the same way they give to "certain Inglische ship brokenmen," and at the request of the King to "the distressit peopill of the Palatinate." They had as it was said, no rates to keep down.

AS ROADS TRUSTEES, ETC,

A short description of their County Council work is now given. It is needless to mention that it is most unlikely that they had any salaried officials in the shape of Sanitary Officers, Medical, or otherwise, or framed bye-laws that vehicles on springs should carry lights after sunset. Indeed, there would be very few vehicles of any kind without springs and none at all with them. All their traffic would be carried on either by sea or on horseback, and it can be imagined that the people here had a hardy species of shalt or pony—suitable for the state of the road—like the Highlanders of the present day. Then they would use as strictly beasts of burden. At the same time the Session would doubtless have the supervision of the roads in the parish; and most certainly took upon themselves the care of the bridges. There are frequent references to the "brig at the Mylne of Philorth." On the 10th May, 1626, this is their wages bill: "Giffen to the workmen that geid to Kinglessor to helpe to heill ane trie to the brig at the Mill of Philorthe." This aspect of the Session's work comes out more plainly in the succeeding volumes, but at present the view is confined to a certain period; and during it there is little of active interest in the transactions of the Board.

AS POLICE AUTHORITIES.

There is another concomitant of modern life which had its representative in the Session of old—*viz.* police supervision. One is inclined to think that they owe this wise provision for the safety of their persons and the security their goods to Robert Peel, whom they sometimes honour by calling the gentlemen in blue by the names of "Bobbies" and "Peelers," but about 1612 and after that there was in the parish of Fraserburgh a man who was known as the "keiper of the paroche." His uniform was a simple affair and consisted of a plaid which he received annually; and it was very nearly all the wages he got. There is only one entry to be seen of money paid to him, and that was on 20th July, 1625, when he got "saxteen schillingis." His chief duty was to keep the parish clear of vagabonds, cairds, sturdie beggars, and other objectionable characters. It is well known that these grew to be an almost intolerable nuisance in the country, and gave rise to very stringent legislation, and Fraserburgh was not behind. On 30th June, 1619, "It is ordanit that the act off the Assemblie anent strangers, sturdie beggars, be put to execution and that all the strangers and sturdie beggars be chargit out off the pulpit to remove thamselffis

out of the toun and landwart, and that nane, nether in town or landwart, resett ane off the saidis personas under the paines of fyve poundis according to the ordynance of the Assemblie.” Accordingly it is found that this act was put into force on 28th June, 1620: “The said day it is fund that Mathew Hay and Jhone Hay are nocht parochineris but vagabond cairdis off a werie louss, prophane, and scandalous behaviour and thairfore the Sessioun orderis thaim to be chargit to remowe out of the paroche and the resetteris and interteineris of thame after intimatioun of the act to pay 5 libris according to the ordynance of the Assembly.”

Another extract which was given above about the man returning from St. Drostan’s fair shows that the Session charged themselves with the duty of maintaining order among the people, seeing that they kept the peace. Flying and quarrelling were punishable offences.

AS A SHERIFF COURT.

The Session was also a Sheriff Court in a kind of way, and the method of trial was really trial by jury. All kinds of cases came before it—from filiation cases to cases of slander. The method of procedure is this: The aggravated party comes before the Session complaining, or giving in “ane bill of complaint” against defender. He gives the names of his witnesses, and all the parties are summoned against next Session day. The defender is asked to plead, and if he pleads not guilty the matter must go to proof. But before proof is taken, complainer must pay 40s. into the poor box as caution that he will succeed in establishing his case. If he succeed the sum is returned, but if he fail the money is forfeited and goes to the poor. This was doubtless to prevent the Session from being troubled with every petty quarrel in the parish. Some of the bills contain charges like these: “Callit a witche,” “Had lyin 20 nichts in a witches oxter,” “Callit a gouk,” “A mensworne old Carle, and blerit old Carle,” “A common thieffe,” “A witche and had stown sheip,” “A witche and had sauld sour aill.” One day a woman broke out in the church on the Sacrament Sunday on the minister and the Session and called them everything, directing her venom chiefly against the “reidar,” who subsequently gave in “ane bill of slander” and got her punished. There is one very amusing case which is given herewith in full. It is under date 13th February, 1614: “The said day (compeirit) Patrik Forbes and gaif ane bill complainign upon Janet Downie that sche had publickly upon the open streit sclenderit him that he had stown peitis from her stak and bigit thame up in his awn. Qrupon the said Janet beand sumondit and callit compeiris confessing that sche had said na less quilk she was able verifie by the sicht of discreit men presentlie in respect that hir husband quha cuist her peitis haid in his peit spaid are mid irne tapein quilk sa rattit the mid peit that his peitis wer kenspecke by (compared with) ony in the toun. Of quilk sort gif thair were nane fund in Patrick Forbes’ stak she would be content to be callit a slanderer. For this cause the Sessioun

sends forth to see this matter presentlie. Quha returning reportis that thair peit stakis stuid contiguiss and that thair was in the narest end of bathis the stakis sum markit and sum anmarkit swa that giff the said Janet Downie's word stuid concerning the marking of her peitis, sche had mar of Partick Forbes peitis in hir stak nor Patrik Forbes had of hiris, for excuss quharof Andrew Smith the said Janet's husband answeris that if his peitis sum ar markit and sum anmarkit, quilk was thought to be ane schift. And thairfor the said Janet rebuikit for her outcrying without ane caus the said Andrew Smith and Patrik Forbes an exhortit to feir God and nether to hurt the uther that they micht lief peaceable as becam Christians."

The "sclenderer" does not always get off so easily, for the usual sentence on conviction is a fine of 6s. 8d., and a public profession of repentance on the stool on the Sabbath. This latter part of the sentence means that the offender had to appear on the stool and at a certain part of the service come down and make confession of his sin, crave pardon of God and the party offended, and promise amendment in future.

AS JUSTICES OF THE PEACE.

There was local option, too, in those days, though, perhaps, not of the kind contemplated by our temperance reformers. The Session had a large measure of control over the liquor traffic. On 2nd February, 1625, there are two acts of Session chiefly bearing on the subject. "The said day it is ordenit that nae hostillar may in burghe or landwart sell aill in tyme of diwyn service on the sabbothe under the pain of fourtie schillingis *toties quoties* and the minister is ordenit to mak intimatioune heirop the next sabbothe day out off the pulpit." "The said day it is also ordenit that quhasewir they be man or woman that beis fund drinkin in ony tyme heirafter ilk ane of them to pay *toties quoties* thrie poundis penaltie and the minister is ordenit to mak intimatioune heirop the next Sabbothe day out off the pulpit that nane plead ignorance."

The Session had, as appears from this, the power of fixing the time of sale, and otherwise restricting the traffic in drink. Occasionally these acts were broken, but never without punishment. There is an amusing case of a man who had got drunk and kissed a woman, and "is ordenit to pay thrie pounds penaltie and sit ane Sabboith on stuill and confess his faultis." (i.e., "drunkenness and misbehaviour."). On 4th November, 1613, another worthy of mention. "The said day comperit Robert Allane in Kinglessor and Alex. Fraser in Bankwell, quha being accusit ar convict for drinking in Archibald Cardnois hous in cheppeltoun and thairfor are orderit to satisfie according to the order, and the said Alexr. Fraser speciallie repruifit becaus he was recentlie cum from under the wisiting hand of God by ane dangerous fewer yit had resortit to the taverne befor he repairit to the Kirk for praising his God for his delyverance."

“CHARMING.”

The subject of investigation, perhaps as interesting as any in these records is that of charming and witchcraft. There are no entries, as were found in a parish in Fifeshire, of payment for coals to burn witches. The following is a case of charming. A certain youth—Constantine Kennedy—admitted before the Session in “Ketrein Millaris Presence that she laid him ower the fire, and said ‘Through the fire, and throu’ the fire: the dwynaud feveris licht upon the fire wuid’” (wood)—surely a very harmless and ineffectual way of trying to cure a fever. The case appeared to the Session to be one of so grave moment that they referred it to the Presbytery, and eventually the guilty parties were ordained to sit one Sabbath on the stool clad in “sackcloithe in humbill maner,” and to confess their fault. The next case is one of “consulting and synding with ane dumb man.” Two women were the accused, but they pleaded that they did so in ignorance, and in a “jesting maner,” not giving credit to his synding. However, they had to be made an example of, and were ordained to publicly confess their faults, that others might take warning.

TRYING TO DISCOVER A THIEF.

The next case is one of an original, if inconclusive, method of discovering a thief. Alexander Fraser, in the township of Kinbog, confesses that at the desire of John Philip, who “wantit ane serk,” he had written the names of all the people in Kinbog on pieces of paper, and thereafter cast them into water “to try the thift, supposing that to be the guiltie persone whose name did sink.” The case was one of such novelty and seriousness that the sentence was not passed till next day. Accordingly, when the next Session day came round it was found that this manner of trying theft was one that had “na warrand in the Word of God, nor in the Civil Law, nather to have any ground in nature or reason; “and Alexander Fraser was convicted for an unlawful practice, and ordained to make his repentance “in Sackcloithe and bair fuittit.”

COMPLAINTS ABOUT WITCHCRAFT.

Belief in witchcraft was apparently very common. To be called a witch was one of those things which the female portion of the community of that day would not stand. There are many “bills of sclander” brought before the Session, in which it is alleged that the defender had “sclanderouslie callit her a witche.” On one occasion John Cardno had been so indiscreet as to say that Beatrix Doverly had “skaithit him 100 merkis yearly, as also sche had lyne xx. nichtis in ane witchis oxtor.” For that little speech the said John had to make his repentance publicly, and crave Beatrix’ pardon, and pay 20 merks. On another occasion Elspet Milne was summoned before the Session, at the request of the Session of Tyrie, to bear “sooth fast witness concerning Janet Wilson, whom John Gray had given up as a witche.” This giving up of witches—or

giving information concerning them—was duly enjoined by an Act of Assembly which the minister had publicly intimated from the pulpit. Elspet's deposition was very much in favour of Janet, who had been a servant of hers some 30 years before, when she was about 17 years of age. But during that time and through all their subsequent acquaintance Elspet had been unable to detect in her friend "onie thing concerning witchcraft." After this it is to be hoped that the Session of Tyrie would see fit to acquit Janet and pass a severe sentence of censure on John Gray for his ungallant attack upon an innocent woman.

"YETTING" A CHILD.

The most interesting case of this kind that the records contain is one of "yetting or zetting a child." In the words of the original, the form of zetting was this: "Agnes Duff tuik leid and meltit it, and pat on ane sieve on the bairnis held, and ane coig with watter in the sieve, and ane scheir [pair of scissors] abein the coig; and the leid was put in through the boull of the scheir among the watter." The Session at once set about making investigations but they could get no trace of any other such uncanny proceedings on the part of the accused. Moreover, they did not think themselves equal to dealing with a case of such gravity, but referred the matter simpliciter to the Presbytery. Ultimately, after no end of trouble, the sentence was that the accused "should mak' their repentance in sackclaithe ane Sabboithe or mae untill the Sessioun war content therewith." It may be explained that the small pieces of lead which were found in the water were closely examined. If a piece was found resembling the heart then the sufferer was afflicted with an ailment of the heart; if a piece resembling the liver was found he was pronounced to be the victim of a bad liver, and a cure was prescribed accordingly. People may think that such a ludicrous method of attempting to cure a child of some of its childish ailments would never be resorted to in this age of enlightenment. On the contrary, however, there is the very best authority for asserting that the same thing has been practised within recent years in a fishing town on the Moray Firth. It is not known how much superstition still lurks in some dark corners of the human mind.

Some interesting matter is found in the records between 1666 and nearly to the close of that century, which is brought before the public for the first time. For the greater part of the period referred to, the Episcopal Church was in power, and the records from 1666 to 1689 are really written under Episcopalian auspices and direction. The first minute in the book stamps it at once as Episcopalian. It runs as follows: "July 29, 1666. It is found that Mr. Alexr Garden minister at Dear preached before noone and according to a commission granted unto him by the right Reverend father in God, Patrick bishope of Aberdeen gave institn and collatione to Mr. James Moore laite minr at Rathin and entered him to the office of the ministrie of the Gospell in the Kirk and paroche of Philorth and Fraserburgh and to the benefice qrof" [thereof], etc.

This Mr. Moore and his son were the two who were responsible for all the ecclesiastical strife, called "The Ten Years' Conflict," in Fraserburgh after the Episcopal Church was abolished in 1689. The two kept the Presbyterians at bay, and refused to give up the church and manse to the Presbytery of Deer, defying the latter until the dawn of the following century.

The next minute touched on, which is dated 26th August, 1666, is on an altogether different subject. It reads: "The minister made publict intimatione of a solemne thanksgiving to be kept Thursday next Aug. thirtie by order from the King and his Counsell for giving thanks to God in every Kirk of his Kingdom for the Victorie which God hath blissed his Majesty's Navy with at sea against the Dutch fleet and therefor he required all the peopell of the parochie to be in the Kirk the day appoynted for that end." The attendance could not have been very large as the collection was only 14s. 4d. against an average of about £2. Of course, in those days the labouring man would not have been permitted to leave his work and go to church on a Thursday, even to celebrate a naval victory. The victory referred to was probably the fight off Lowestoft, when the ships of Charles II. had the better of the Dutch. The latter turned the tables next year with a vengeance. They sailed up the Thames, destroyed Sheerness, and burned a number of warships at Chatham, an episode in the history of Britain which will ever spell disgrace to Charles and his minions.

As already indicated the Session's functions were far-reaching. Not only did it look after the spiritual needs of the people, but it also took oversight of their material wants. The administration of benefits and assistance to the poor and deserving were not nationalized at this time, and the direct way in which the same poor people were cared for by different Sessions all over Scotland appears strange in modern eyes. Witness the following: "26 Augt. 1666 . . . by order of the Synod of Aberdeen there must be in every Kirk a collectione for two Pollonians Students of Divinity in the University of Aberdeen for supplying their necessities, and for Jon Deans distressed Merchant in Stanhyve [Stonehaven] and for Jon Mackie a distressed man in the parish of Cerisbury . . . and also the Session . . . appeared some distressed person of Portpatrick having publict recomendans desyring supplie. It is yrfor ordanit yt [that] the minister the next Lords Day desyr the whol c/qregan to provyd against the Lords Day yrfor a Liberall alms for the forsd persons which shal be collected in the Kirk." On 10th October the minister reports having learned at the Synod that the man who came representing those of Portpatrick was "a deceiver," and the money (£4) was ordered to lie in the minister's hands. The Pollonian students would probably refer to some poor Highlanders whose dress in former times was named a "Polonie." What would the present-day inhabitants of Stonehaven think if "the hat" were passed round all the churches on behalf of some of their merchant princes who had failed in business? The Portpatrick man's trick shows that there have been unscrupulous sharpers in every age.

The years from 1670 to 1675 must have been unpropitious and the weather

especially bad in the Buchan district. The crops had evidently suffered severely because notices of religious services on the subject appear in the Church records, season after season. One dated 19th October, 1673, will illustrate the whole. "Pub. [public] Intimn. Next Lords day by appointment of the Synod to be a solemne day of humiline [humiliation] for imploring from God a blissing upon the hervest." There is evidence that the times must have been hard, and much want among the people, because collections on their behalf were being made regularly.

The ramifications of the Session, or rather the Church, in regard to collections were widespread and covered all kinds of deserving objects. The following are a few of those made in the Church of Fraserburgh: "April 28, 1678. Collection for Prisoners taken be [by] Turks, belonging to Montrose and Borrowstounnes £16 14s" "Feb. 20, 1681. Collection for the Harbour of Portsoy £6." Ap. 3, 1681. Collection for the Bridge at Envernesse [Inverness] £5 2s." "Jany. 9, 1678. By Order of Synod and Presby. a Collection for the harbour of Heymouth [Eyemouth]. 27, 1678, £6 collected in Church and £6 from the seabox." A minute of 4th May, 1681, says: "The minr. produces discharges for the collections for the Bulwarks at Peterhead," etc., so that Peterhead had also benefited by the generosity of the "Broch" people. It is not to be presumed that the Peterhead folks reciprocated. More self-denying and generous actions on the part of the inhabitants of Fraserburgh are: "Decr. 21, 1682. Voluntary Contribn. for Roseheartie Harbour. Coll. £14 6s. Collection for Invernesse Prisoners taken by the Turks" [sum not mentioned]. "27th July, 1684. A collection for the Bridge of Leaven [Leven]. Coll £5 4s." "Feb. 10, 1686. Colln. for some Englishmen taken be [by] the Turkes £6 10s."

The Turks must have been a source of great trouble and danger to the enterprising British seaman of the seventeenth century. Books give graphic stories of the capture, in far back days, of European people, especially beautiful women, by pirates and corsairs inhabiting the western Mediterranean shores of Africa, and the Levant, but it was never supposed by North of Scotland people that some of their forefathers had actually suffered at the hands of these marauders. It is left to the old Kirk Session records to divulge this interesting, if somewhat unpleasant, secret. It also lets posterity know that Scotsmen of the North possessed a spirit of adventure in those days of gallantry, equal to that of their English brothers.

The Session was strong on the observance of Sunday, and any mariner who dared to sail on "the Sabbath day" was severely dealt with. Here is a warning to the sailors who took advantage of a fair wind on Sunday: "Oct. 24, 1666. The Session finding yt [that] the Sabbath is profaned by ships going out of the herber yrfor [therefore] they ordained yt no person whatsoever shall give thir assistance to any stranger ships for helping them out of the harber one the Lord's Dayes and yt no townes ships berks nor boats shall go out of the herber upon the Lord's Dayes and the cjtrairveeners [contraveners] to be censured as Sabbath breakers, etc."

Adulteresses were very sharply taken on hand, and punished without mercy. Here is a typical case: "Nov. 7, 1666. Margret Burnett . . . an Adulteress . . . enter in the publick profession of hir repentance befor the Congregane in sackloth barefooted and bearylfe[d] [bare-handed] in the joggis [an instrument of punishment placed on the offender's neck] and at the pillar."

The duties of the Session were certainly multifarious, and their charity widespread. Why merchants in the south of Scotland should come wandering away to such out-of-the-way places as Fraserburgh, supplicating charity is rather remarkable; at least it must appear so to the present generation. It would be interesting to know if needy North of Scotland folks returned the compliment. The Wm. Mackie referred to in the minute following must have been a very "genteel" sort of beggar before the Scottish Parliament would have bespoken assistance for him. The minute runs: "Decr. 5, 1666. Compeared Wm. Mackie, Merchant in Dumbarton, recommended by the Parliament and the Assembly to the charity of all the persons within the Kingdom, supplicating some supply. . . . Got the £4 in the minister's hands." The Session members were, among their other superior qualities, good financiers. It will be remembered that at the Session meeting of 14th October, 1666, the minister reported that the man who pled for "some distressed persons of Portpatrick" was a deceiver, and in consequence it was resolved that the £4, set aside for him, should "lie in the minister's hands." The £4 (which in English money amounted to 6s. 8d.) was voted to Wm. Mackie; so that, instead of going to the Solway Firth, it went to the Clyde—not so wide of its original destination after all!

There seems to have been a good deal of superstition surrounding the ordinances of baptism and marriage. If two children were to be baptised at the same time, the one that was first baptised had the charmed and "lucky" life. The parents sometimes came to blows on the question of precedence, and created quite an uproar in the church in consequence. An incident of this kind happened in the church on 6th February, 1667. The minute on the subject says: "The Session taking into cjsideratione the scandalous and open strugling betwixt Wm. Knight in Kinglasser and Wm. Wobster in Fingask in the face of the C'gregat'ne at the presenting ther children to baptism . . . each aknowledge his sin before the pulpit and pay 6s. 8d." The Session generally had an eye to business, and accompanying the penalty of Church discipline, was invariably the more mundane, or material, punishment of a fine. The Session, it is seen, was a police, as well as a spiritual, court. The superstition in connection with marriages is referred to by the Session at a meeting held on 8th June, 1681, as follows: ". . . making a great tumult in the Kirk when the minister was praying after ther marriage and endeavouring to be out at the door before two other persons that were married at that time, as if they had the happinesse of ther life from being out first at the doors. . ." The case was referred to the Presbytery, but what punishment was meted out to the two delinquents

(whose names could not be deciphered) is not known, as the case is not again referred to in the minutes of Session.

From the time of his restoration in 1660, the Session regularly each year directed the congregation to attend a special service, giving thanks for the birthday and restoration of Charles II. The following will serve as a "sample" of the lot: "May 5, 1669. . . May 29 was the day appointed by the law of the land for giving thanks to God for the King's birth (it being his birthday) for the Lords making that day of the month remarkable in restoring the King to his throne and yrfor desyred all the peopell to be present in the Church the sd day." Another evidence of the people's loyalty to the Stuarts, whether pretended or not, is given: "June 24, 1688. Intimation was made of a thanksgg to be observed Thursday next according to the Councill's order for the birth of the Prince of Wales." This individual, it will be remembered, became well known as the Pretender. Reading these minutes one is convinced that the people were backers of the Stuarts till the last ditch. They must have been dissemblers to a considerable extent, and, like "the Vicar of Bray," ready to be on good terms with whoever was in power. Within eleven months the following appears in the Session book: "May 12, 1689. Intimation was made of a thanksgiving to be Thursday next for deliverance from popery." This was followed by a still more partisan minute dated 28th September, 1690: "This day a proclamation was read for a solemn thanksgiving the next Lord's Day to be observed for the preservation of the Protestant Religion and King William's safe return out of Ireland." This referred to King William's landing in England, after the historic Battle of the Boyne. If the Stuarts had firm supporters in the Kirk Session of Fraserburgh, the new dynasty received the same enthusiastic patronage. Allusion has been made to the regular appearance of minutes ordering thanksgiving services for the birth and restoration of Charles II. After the accession of William and Mary to the Throne, the tune changed, and the Session played up to the new King and Queen with a vigour that deserved reward. Minutes of this nature positively "tumble over each other." The following extracts from one or two of them will show their style. "May 24, 1691. The minister did intimate from pulpitt a proclamatione from King and Councill appointing Weddnisday next to be a day of solemn humiliation and fasting for praying to God for K. William's happy success to his arms, for the preservation and establishment of the Protestant Religion . . ."

"22 May, 1692. The minr. did read in the pulpit a proclamn from K. and Q and Councill appointing a monthly fast every last Wednesday beginning. . .praying God for his blessing upon K. William and Q. Mary and yr persons and Councils and begging the Lord to grant success to his Matis [Majesty's] army by sea and land for the preservn and Establishment of the Protestant Religion at home and abroad. . . ."

The profanation of the Lord's Day seemed to have exercised the minds of the Session very much. Playing games, frequenting ale-houses, or setting lines on Sunday are cases that are often dealt with, but the following is rather

unique: "Octr. 20. 1669. Elders report that the Lords Day Octr. 10 was sadly profaned by many in the toune and parish and many out of other parishes that conveened in time of divine service and throughout the whole day at the watermouth of Philorth (when the shipe going to Virginia was broken upon the night before by a violent storm) and carried away goods and pieces of the broken shipe from the shore against the will of *those few that were left alive* in the ship and against the will of the deput admirall who required them to forbare from doing injury.... The minister to ask the Presbitery's advice." This minute reveals a sad story. It can be easily seen that the greater part of the crew of the unfortunate vessel was drowned. Many vessels have been wrecked and hundreds of lives lost on the sands of Fraserburgh since October, 1669. With regard to the wreck particularly under notice, not only did the people profane the Sunday, but they acted the part of thieves and wreckers, and well deserved the censure of the holy fathers. Evidently the crowd of offenders had been too great to be dealt with, as no notice of their punishment appears in the Session records.

Before the Poor Laws came into being, the authorities had much trouble with their own poor and with wandering vagrants from other districts. The Kirk Session was really the Parochial Board or Parish Council in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Many may not know that in these days beggars were formally licensed to beg, and none that were not so licensed were entitled to claim, or at least expect to receive, charity at the hands of the people. A record of the Session, dated 8th December, 1675, contains the information that a meeting of heritors and "honest men" was held "to take course with the poor within the parish." A list of the poor was compiled and it was ordained "that the Kirk Treasurer shall cause lead tokens be made and to be given to those of the poore wham the Session shall think fit to beg within the parish." This was protection certainly, but it was necessary to give "fair play" to local beggars, who seemingly had not been able to compete with the more loquacious professional beggars from the south.

A minute dated 19th May, 1680, is most quaint, if not a little gruesome. It shows the simplicity of the times, and likewise the ingenious method adopted by the Session in getting the walls of the Churchyard built. The minute in question runs: "Condescended by the Session that every honest man in the town and parish shall have about ten foot of length and breadth in the Kirkyard sett by to him for burying himself and his friends providing they build ten foot of the Kirkyard dieks [dykes] in a decent way by the advize of the Session." People were not anxious to die and be buried in those days any more than they are now, and it is not to be supposed that there was a rush of people anxious to "build ten foot of the Kirkyard dieks," even though tempted by the charming reward offered by the Session.

On 26th March, 1687, Peter Gleny, Jon Meson, and Peter Watt, fishers, were charged with going to sea for fishing purposes on the *fastday*, 'Ad yrfor they are ordained to appear before the congregn tomorrow [Sacrament day]

and confess their fault and be rebuked the pulpit and be absolved, and each of them to pay half a merk of penaltie." The Session were strong against those who did not properly observe Sundays and Fast days. If they were living now, they would have their work "cut out."

Some of the items of expenditure mentioned in the Session books give an idea of the peculiar duties which the Session had to discharge in far back days. Some of these are as follows:—

"Nov. 6, 1667. Item for making Iron Shekels to Patrick Mers a dementit man £1 6s. 6d.

"Oct. 27, 1669. For Candle every morning in the Kirk at the time of the morning prayers and reading 6s.

"July 20, 1670. To a distressed gentleman, Thomas Gordone, recommended by the Assembly £1 4s.

"Nov. 12, 1672. To a poor scholar 6s.

"Oct 19, 1673. To Alexr. Cock for curing a byle [boil] £1 4s.

"Jany. 27, 1681. To a dumb woman 12s.

"Aug. 21, 1681. To a woman, recommend by the Synod, having Cancer 12s

"Sept. 4, 1681. To a criples Souldier 10s."

There are many entries in the Cash Book of a similar nature, but too many examples would tend to become wearisome to the reader.

Towards the beginning of the eighteenth century the records continue to give a very clear account of the habits of the common people and their mode of life. Life must have been of a very free and easy kind, and it is quite evident that the minister and elders had often had their hands full watching and correcting the doings of the common people. Whether the sinners felt truly the penitence they professed, is open to very serious doubt. Here is a little comedy with regard to the practices of the people after baptisms, contained in a minute dated 17th October, 1722: "The Session considering that when children from the country are baptised on the Lord's day when the parent and people are returning home from the Church they sometimes go into Change Houses [public-houses] where they feast and drink. That a check may be given to such practices, the minister is appointed next Lord's day to intimate from the pulpit the sinfulness of such courses, warning all to beware thereof with certification that the guilty will be censured." Warning was duly made from the pulpit and, it is to be hoped, with effect. The proud parent and his friends were to be excused for indulging in a "dram," at the conclusion of the baptismal service, if only to wish the youngster luck. What would these old worthies think if they were "looking up," in, say, London, or any one of the big English cities, and see all the public-houses open on Sunday afternoon? They would consider that they had been too hard upon one who had taken "a drink" in celebration of his child's baptism. At the same Session meeting an Alexr. Milne, weaver in Tarwathie, is severely dealt with, "for profaning the Lord's day by working on his Loom." At a subsequent meeting Milne appeared and put forward an original defence, viz., "that he being of great age, and his

sense and reason much failed, he had done these things not knowing it was the Sabbath." It was a funny excuse! Evidently the church services had not troubled Milne very much; but having bowed to the authority of the Session and expressed contrition for what he had done, he was let off.

Another amusing drinking case is dealt with at the Session meetings of November and December, 1722, in connection with which the culprit gets the better of his accusers. The first minute says: "John Rheny, Blacksmith in this town, was delated [charged] as guilty of drinking a whole forenoon upon the Lord's day in Isobell Cogli's house." At the following meeting Rheny appeared and put in the following defence: "That he had been walking by himself in the field until the last bell should ring, and that there came on an exceeding great shower, to shun which he went into Isobel Cogli's house until it should be over and only drank one choppen of ale, and thereafter came to the Church to the public worship." The Session deliberated long over the case, during which one of the members said he had made private enquiry and found that Rheny's statement was correct. The worthy smith was, therefore, not censured, but what was almost as bad, a resolution was passed "to exhort him to a strict observation of the Lord's day in all time coming."

The following unique case shows the sacerdotal humbug which the spiritual authorities sometimes lent themselves to. At a meeting held 1st March, 1723, the following is recorded: "Also that day was dilated Jean Clerk spouse to Walter Falconer in Kinglasser for carrying in two bucketfulls of water from the well about the very time the people were coming to the Church to public worship upon the Lord's day which gave great scandal and offence to those who saw it." That the poor people were to be without water until all the church-going folks had passed was intolerable. It must have been some spying elder who had reported the case. For hypocrisy the Scotch race would be hard to beat.

That the Session took a wide survey of sinners is instanced by a minute dated 29th April, 1723. The Broadsea people, who seem to have been "a thorn in the flesh" to the Session from earliest times onwards, were again named among the offenders. The minute reads: "The Session considering that several persons frequent the rocks for gathering dilce, and also sit in ale-houses drinking on the Lord's day, and likewise that the fishers in Broadsea spread out their fishes on the said day, the session appoints the minister to intimate next Lord's day from pulpit that such profanation of their Sabbath be forborn under pain of censure, and appoints the Collectors for the poor to notice the rocks and ale-houses, that the foresaid abuse may be suppressed and that two elders of the town with the officer shall go through the ale-houses, notice the rocks and the fishers in Broadsea, each Sabbath after sermons." From the foregoing it would seem that the elders in the olden days had duties of a most varied nature to perform.

By a minute, dated 23rd July, 1723, it appears that a Margaret Keith, spouse to Charles Jaffray, shipmaster, Fraserburgh, had, on account of the

pressure of creditors, to flee to Bergen, in Norway. In her hurry to get away, she employed men on a Sunday to take her household furniture to a ship lying in the bay, bound for Bergen. For breaking "the Sabbath day" she was hauled before the Session. She made a full confession, and explained that as the vessel would not wait till Monday, she was obliged to move her goods on Sunday, or else lose her passage. The minute afterwards says: "The Session having seriously deliberated upon the whole complex case and especially considering that the violent proceedings of some of the said Margaret Keith's creditors together with her husband's peremptory call to her to lay hold on the first opportunity of being transported to Bergen in Norway and considering also several other circumstances, did unanimously agree to call in the said persons, thoroughly rebuke them, and exhort them to repentance, etc." Margaret Keith and the men who assisted her, having admitted their guilt, were censured and forgiven; but the Session considered it necessary to instruct the minister to intimate from the pulpit that they "judged it their duty to enact that no towage men help vessels out of this port upon the Lord's day, under pain of being censured as Sabbath breakers, and that no person or persons liver or transport goods on the Lord's day, either by themselves or horses, under pain aforesaid." Had the present-day Session such powers and influence, fishcurers would be completely barred from buying a cheap shot of herrings on a Sunday morning.

Culprits who had to appear in church, in a conspicuous place, to atone for their sins, had always to don an attire suitable to the occasion. It is termed by the Session "sackcloth," and must have been often used, as a new one had to be obtained in September, 1723. The minute says: "The Treasurer was ordered to buy three ells of harden, to be a sheet for Adulterers."

IN DEFENCE OF THE OLD KIRK SESSION: AN ESTIMATE OF ITS WORK.

The Kirk was a veritable terror to evil doers; and there was no case that came under its jurisdiction but it sifted thoroughly and, to all appearance, with a remarkable measure of impartiality. The volumes of parish records show that the members of the Session were inspired by a very high sense of duty, and were zealous only for the rights of God and the sanctity of His Sabbath. The only point in their policy with which one would be inclined to join issue, is their rather harsh methods of compelling the keeping of the Sabbath. At the same time, people in general would prefer the old rigid observance, to the modern lax way of not keeping it at all, which is little short of a scandal to the present age. There can be no two ways as to which is the better for the character and life of the people, and of man, for whom the Sabbath was made.

The functions and powers of the Session were many and various. Not only was it a spiritual and ecclesiastical court, but it was also a court that discharged several civil and secular functions. Its first duty was, doubtless, to superintend the spiritual affairs of the parish, but that did not by any means

exhaust the list of its duties. It discharged the functions of the modern School Board, Parish Council, Road Trustees and County Council, Police Authorities, Sheriff Court (to a certain extent), and, probably, also the work of the Justices of the Peace and the Excise Authorities.

A word or two may be said against a prevailing notion that the Kirk Session in every parish was a kind of Inquisition, before which the long-suffering inhabitants were dragged, dumb and helpless, and sentenced to heavy punishments for the most trivial offences. It is no uncommon thing for the Kirk Session's conduct to be described as "dreadful, awful, cruel, not-to-be-tolerated-to-day," and so on. There can be no doubt but that the Kirk Session and its dealings were but a true reflection of the times; and when consideration is taken of the condition of the people, the state of morals and the habits of life, it can be seen that a vast step has been made towards appreciating the good service which this institution rendered to the country in its day and generation.

Several considerations may be urged in favour of this view. One is that the Session was as exacting in the case of its own members as it was in the case of the members of the general community. Elders were consigned to the stool of repentance to make public confession of their sins just as other men, and one at least was deposed for non-attendance at church. In justice to this man's memory, however, it should be said that he lived six miles from the church and the occasion was at the height of the harvest season, so that he was not altogether without excuse. It has also to be noted that the Session always took a lenient view of any personal offence committed against any of its own members. If the elder-visitor is blasphemed and abused, he is exhorted to "tak' it in patience, as the best rewaird to be luikit for at the handis of ane faithless generation for pains faithfullie taken unto the Lordis ministrie." Further considerations in favour of the Session are that no one ever made a reasonable request to them but it was granted, and that, even to the mitigation of a penalty. First offenders are very often sent away with an admonition, after agreeing that if "they be found agane in the lyk fault they sall satisfie according to the ordour." Some penalties inflicted were the result of the offenders' own stubbornness, or, as the writer puts it, "in respect that onrewlie persones eik stubbornness to their sin and disobedience." Acts of Session relating to classes such as sailors and fishermen are always made with "their own consent, or with the common consent of all."

These things, not to mention many others, are sufficient to turn one from an unfavourable to a favourable attitude towards the way in which these earnest and disinterested men laboured in the interests of religion and for the welfare of the community, without fee or hope of reward.

CHAPTER V.

SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLMASTERS.

No notice of the educational affairs of Fraserburgh would be complete without particular reference to Fraserburgh University. As a matter of fact, the University is the first educational institution in the town, made mention of in history; and though its career was of short duration, any facts concerning this ambitious scheme of Sir Alexander Fraser's must be interesting to natives of Fraserburgh, wherever located. That Fraserburgh once possessed a legally-constituted University, though known to the majority of the inhabitants, is quite unknown to "the stranger," unless he be one that particularly interests himself in such matters. Having formally established the town, the founder of Fraserburgh, in 1592, obtained power from King James VI. to erect it into a Burgh of Barony, and at the same time he received authority to build a University, with privileges equal to those of any University in the country. Part of the Charter of Novodamus runs as follows: "Insuper damus et concedimus plenarium libertatem et potestatem prefato Alexandro Fraser . . . collegium sen collegia infra dictum burgum de Fraser edificandi, universitatem erigendi . . . et generaliter omnia alia et singula immunitatem et privilegium unius universitatis concernentia, in amplissima forma et modo debito, in omnibus respectibus, ut conceditur et datur cincunque collegio et universitate infra regnum nostrum erectis sen erigendis, faciendi, agendi et exercendi." (Reg. Mag. Sig., xxxvii, 481). To build a university in such a remote corner of Scotland and so near the rival Universities of Aberdeen, was a bold step to take in those far back days, and an experiment which only a man of light and leading would have ventured upon. Sir Alexander Fraser took care never to let grass grow under his feet. Immediately on obtaining Parliamentary powers, he energetically set to work, and the new University buildings soon began to assume large dimensions. The outlay in connection with the erection of the University must have been a heavy tax upon the resources of Sir Alexander. This fact, and the national nature of the work which the genius of a true patriot only could have conceived, induced the Scotch Parliament to come to his aid and help him financially by a grant. Accordingly, in 1597—five years after he had been authorized to proceed with the building of the University—Parliament enacted that: "Our Souerane Lord and thrie estatis of this Parliament vnderstanding that Sir Alexander Fraser of Fraserburghe, knycht, being of deliberate mynd and purpois to erect ane



Photo by Norrie, Fraserburgh.

ONE OF THE ORIGINAL ENTRANCES TO FRASERBURGH COLLEGE.
THIS DOORWAY, WHICH WAS BUILT INTO AN OLD HOUSE IN HIGH
STREET DISAPPEARED WHEN THE ALEXANDRA HOTEL WAS BUILT.

Vniuersitie within the said brughe, with all priuelegis appertaining thairto, according to the tenour of hes infetment, his begwn to edifie and big vp collegis, quhilkis nocht onlie vill tend to the great decoirement [decoration] of the cuntrey, bot also to the advancement of the loist [lowest] and tint youthe in bringing them up in leirning and vertew, to the great honour and weill of our said Souerane Lord and nation, quhilk honorabill intention and pollicie maid and to be maid be the said Sir Alexander, vpone his exhorbitant and large expensis, aucht and sold be furtherit and advancit, and the said Sir Alexander nocht onlie allowit thairintill, but also helpit and supportit to do the samin; Thairfoir our said Souerane Lord and thrie estatis of the present Parliament, for the further advancement of the said brughe and collegis, and for the sustentatioun and intertenement of maisteris, teichearis and officemen, within the collegis of the samin, hes, with expres consent and assent of the said Alexander, dotit [donated], gewin [given] and mortefeit the personagis [parsonages], vicaragis, prebendareis, chaplanreis and altarageis of the parochie kirkis of Phillorthe, Tyrie, Kremound, Rathyn, haill teyndis small and great, landis, rowmes and possessionis appertening thairto, proffitis, dewteis, annual rentis, and emolumentis quhatsumevir, and *ad manum mortuam* disponit the samin to the saidis college or collegis ather[either] serve the cure [minister] of the saidis kirkis, or then the saidis maisteris, with advyis of the patron, furneis sufficient men for serveing the cure of the saidis kirkis, sua that the parochineris be nocht frustrat of the sacrementis, teicheing and preicheing of the word of God." (Acts of Parliament of Scotland, Vol. IV., p. 146; December 16, 1597). It is thus seen that the Scotch Parliament, in giving financial assistance to Sir Alexander Fraser, did not go far afield, but promptly hypothecated to him the funds, or teinds, etc., belonging to the parish churches of Philorth, Tyrie, Crimond, and Rathen. It was rather hard upon the parishes named, but the Act inculcated that notwithstanding the division of "the hard cash" in another direction, the spiritual needs of the parishioners were not to be neglected; and no doubt this injunction had been duly attended to.

Having overtaken the completion of the building of the College at the close of the sixteenth century, Sir Alexander Fraser proceeded to appoint a Principal. He hit upon the Rev. Charles Ferme, or Fairholme, M.A, minister of Fraserburgh, for the position. This man had only recently come to Fraserburgh, and there is no doubt that in making him minister of the parish the founder of Fraserburgh had in his eye, the future Principalship of the University. Mr. Ferme was peculiarly fitted for office, for before coming to Fraserburgh he acted as a Professor, or Assistant Professor, of Philosophy in Edinburgh University. Although he was said to have been "a man of obscure parentage but exceedingly pious" he seemed to have the fighting element in him also, for he declined to acquiesce in Sir Alexander Fraser's request to act in the dual capacity of preacher and Principal, unless commanded to do so by the General Assembly. This authority was quickly forthcoming,

for at a meeting of the Assembly, held at Montrose in March, 1600, the following resolution was recorded in the minutes of the meeting:—"Anent supplicatioun given in be the Presbiterie of Deir, Mak and mentioun that quher the Laird of Philorth having erectit ane Colledge vpon the toun of Fraserbrughe, and agreit with Mr. Charles Ferme to be both Pastour of the said brugh and Principal of his Colledge; quhilk burdein the said Mr Charles refuses to accept vpon him, without he be commandit be the Generall Assemblie: Desyreand, therfor, ane command to be given to the said Mr. Charles to accept both the said charges, as at mair length is containit in the said supplicatioun. The General Assemblie having at length considerit the necessitie of the said wark, and how the said Laird of Philorth has refusit to intertaine a Pastour at the said Kirk, vnlesse he vndertake both the said charges, therfor commands and charges the said Mr. Charles Ferme to vndertake and awaite vpon, as weill the said Kirk, as to be Principall of the College of Fraserbrughe."

It was typical of Sir Alexander's strength of character that he would not entertain the name of anybody to be minister of Fraserburgh parish who would not also undertake to act as Principal of the University. No doubt the Assembly had considered this "a strong order," but for once they could not "apply the screw," and for Mr. Ferme there was no path for retreat and further fighting. They had therefore to accept the inevitable and Mr. Ferme was ordered to take up the dual work of Principal and preacher. Mr. Ferme thereupon assumed office, and had as his Regents or Assistants, John Gordon, M.A., second son of Alexander Gordon of Lesmoir, minister of Crimond; Duncan Davidson, previously Regent in University and King's College, Old Aberdeen, minister of Rathen; and John Howesoun, son of Rev. David Howesoun of Aberdour, minister of Tyrie. It was a wise policy to make the teachers or Assistant Professors in the University the ministers of the parishes, whose emoluments had been largely diverted to the University. What they lost as preachers of the Gospel, they could make up as teachers at the University. In studying old history it is always seen that higher education was limited to a handful of people. No laymen, as a rule, were fit for any position where learning was essential, and the professorial chairs were always filled from the ranks of the divines. This was the case with the Assistant Professors at Fraserburgh University. No dazzling salaries had been offered to the Assistants at that fountain of learning, such as would have attracted the great minds in the south to this remote corner of Scotland, therefore the ministers of the three neighbouring parishes had to take up the work. It is most probable that, like the Principal, these ministers would have much preferred to have stuck to their pastoral duties, and those alone, but the power of the parish patrons and the fear of offending them were a leverage sufficient to induce the poor men to consent submissively to act as teachers in the University.

The work of the University was regularly carried on for five sessions, but with what success in the matter of attendance and teaching there is absolutely no information to show. It is most unfortunate that there should have

been no documentary evidence left to tell of the scholastic work done in the University during its short career. It would have been intensely interesting to have known how the roll of students stood, and if work had been carried on in keeping with the high status of the University. Reference is made in the Presbytery records to Fraserburgh University, but that was only in connection with the preliminary formal sanction given to the Principal to accept office and carry on the duties thereof. The University was not under the control of the Presbytery, which is to be regretted. Had the Presbytery had the supervision, there is no doubt their records would have made some reference to the workings of the institution, and such information would have been available to-day. The old records of the Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions of Scotland have been of immense value to the country. But for them, hoary local history of parishes, and incidents of the life lived in small towns in Scotland, would have been lost for ever. As it is, the life, manners, and customs, etc., of the people living hundreds of years ago can be presented with absolute fidelity to-day, and all through the medium of those valuable old records. Sir Alexander Fraser, the founder of Fraserburgh and builder of the University, lived till 1623, long after the University had been closed. He was such a man of "light and leading" that one would have imagined he would have had all the documents relating to the working of Fraserburgh University carefully preserved. It occurred to many that these valuable documents might still be lying in the archives of Philorth House; enquiries were made on the subject, and it was found that the late Lord Saltoun, father of the present peer, who wrote that most excellent book, "The Frasers of Philorth," had had every document in the Charter Room of Philorth House carefully examined. Had there been papers available, bearing upon Fraserburgh University, they would undoubtedly have been embodied in his lordship's book, at the place where he makes reference to the erection of the University. It is to be feared that, so far as authentic records of the working of the University are concerned, the idea of finding them must be for ever given up. In the olden days, public records were often burned as so much waste paper or troublesome rubbish. If there had ever been any documents in existence, giving particulars regarding Fraserburgh University, they have probably shared the fate referred to.

Mr. Ferme's position as minister of the parish and Principal of the University did not turn out "a bed of roses." He was a man of strong convictions evidently, and being "a great stickler for Presbytery," as the old records have it, his troubles were numerous. At this period, and for a long time afterwards, religion was at the root of all the turmoil in Scotland—Episcopalianism versus Presbyterianism being the war cry. Mr. Ferme was a pronounced Presbyterian, and "was one of those devoted sons of the Church who convened at Aberdeen and constituted the Assembly there in July, 1605, irrespective of the royal pleasure. For this he, with seventeen others, was denounced by the Privy Council, 18th of same month 'for unlawfully assembling

against the letters and charges of his Majesty'." He was pounced upon by the Earl of Huntly in the latter part of 1605, and placed under arrest. With Mr. Ferme away from the scene of his labours and no successor appointed in his place, teaching in the University of Fraserburgh collapsed, and the beginning of the end hove in sight. A deplorable failure of a noble effort! But for the cursed ecclesiastical quarrels of the seventeenth century, Fraserburgh University might have received such support in its infant days as would have enabled it to have grown up to be an active, living power to-day. As it was, the life of the University came to an untimely end in 1605, as already noted.

Principal Ferme suffered imprisonment in Stirling, thereafter at Doune Castle, and lastly, three years' detention in the island of Bute. He was restored to his charge at Fraserburgh about 1609. Some students of local history think it probable that after Mr. Ferme's return to Fraserburgh, teaching was carried on in the College for a few years, but that on his death, the College was closed and never again used as such under local administration. After his return to the town, he took up his work as minister and continued to discharge his pastoral and other duties with great energy and success. The effects, however, of harsh treatment and close confinement for so many years, together with the hard study which he indulged in, must have undermined his constitution, for he died in September, 1617, at the comparatively early age of 51 years. Of his literary labours, his best known work was a Latin Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Woodrow says of him: "In the year 1600 Mr. Ferme entered upon his work as minister of the town of Fraserburgh and master of the College there, and continued a burning and shining light, singularly useful in that place, and to the country round for 17 years, but sadly interrupted by the persecution of prelates for more than half that time." Another authority speaking of Mr. Ferme says: "Through his industry, by the divine blessing, such a light blazed forth that even children could render an account of their faith, and that not without some feeling of piety. A Tydeus in body, he was a Hercules in spirit." It is sad to think that the first and last Principal of the University of Fraserburgh should have had such a chequered career. But thus has it often been. Men of character, with high ideals before them of what is right, often, when bigotry is rampant, sacrifice their lives on the altar of duty, for conscience' sake. Such men often make themselves stepping stones by which succeeding generations attain to peace. The Rev. Charles Ferme was one of those men, and though his practical work as Principal of the University of Fraserburgh was blighted and killed by the winds of adversity, who knows but his strenuous life and personal, self-sacrificing example yielded a harvest of living grain, far more valuable than all the fruits of Academic renown!

Nothing is definitely known of any higher teaching having been done in the University after 1605. But, although this is the case, surmises that the building was afterwards used for local scholastic purposes, may not be altogether wrong. There is a popular belief that, after being closed as a University for thirty or forty years, the College was again called into requisition

as an advanced educational seminary, if not a seat of learning. It is said that the plague having broken out in Aberdeen in 1647, the students and professors of King's College took up their abode in the old Fraserburgh College in High Street, during the winter of 1647-48. This is probably a legend, as there is no documentary evidence existing that in any way confirms the story of the temporary sojourn of the Aberdeen professors and students in Fraserburgh. It may be well to say that the College buildings stood not far from where Denmark Street joins High Street. Unoccupied and neglected during the latter part of the seventeenth century, the buildings soon presented a state of premature decay. During the eighteenth century the stones of which the College was composed were used in building dwelling-houses in the neighbourhood. Some of the materials in the doorways and the window lintels of the property which was pulled down in the spring of 1898, to make way for the Alexandra Hotel, undoubtedly once formed part of the College buildings. A quadrangular tower of three stories, a portion of the College buildings, was, according to the Statistical Account of Scotland, standing as late as 1793. No doubt it was the materials of this tower that helped to erect and "beautify" the old house just referred to as having been pulled down in 1898. It may be taken for granted that the inscriptions which adorned the front of the said old house in High Street were those which were originally placed over the College entrance door. The inscription, which may still be seen on the original stones in the back court of the Alexandra Hotel, runs as follows:—

"Trust in God, for He is good.
His mercy is for ever:
Give him thanks for all you have,
For he is the only giver."

Another relic of the University building still remains in Fraserburgh. That is the slab with Moses and the Ten Commandments carved upon it, which long adorned the south wall of the old school on the Links, the site of which is now occupied by the South U.F. Church. This piece of carving, which is supposed to have been the altar piece of the University Chapel, has found a last resting place in the south wall of the vestry of the said church. It is well that the old carving has been preserved, much mutilated though it be; but it is rather a pity that it is practically hidden from public view. It is assumed by some students that the carved pendants in the roof of the Wine Tower had originally decorated some parts of the old University. If this is so, these, together with the inscriptions built into the Alexandra Hotel, and Moses and the Ten Commandments are all that remain to-day of Fraserburgh University, from which the noble founder of Fraserburgh expected so much.

Before returning to the scholastic affairs of Fraserburgh, it will be information to many local people to know that at the time Fraserburgh University was being built by Sir Alexander Fraser, that gentleman's uncle was figuring largely in the scholastic world on the Continent—a fact which showed

that the Fraser family were talented in a high degree, and born to be leaders of men in every age. "In 1596, John Fraser, the fourth son of the Seventh Laird of Philorth, and uncle to Sir Alexander, the founder of Fraserburgh, was elected to the highly honourable office of Rector of the University of Paris. He was Abbot of Noyon or Compiègne, and his reputation as a scholar must have been considerable to cause his elevation as head of one of the principal seats of learning." (From the late Lord Saltoun's speech, at the opening of the Central School, 13th September, 1882). The cause of education must have been a ruling passion with the Frasers about this period. No grander work could they have engaged in.

The following notes, up to the year 1812, concerning the Schoolmasters and the Scholastic affairs of Fraserburgh, are, with a few exceptions only, based on extracts from the records of the Presbytery of Deer, culled by the diligent and obliging hands of the Rev. John B. Davidson, minister of the East Parish Church, Peterhead.

The first reference to the educational affairs of Fraserburgh in the Presbytery records, do not reflect credit upon certain parties named, in so far as they refused to pay their proportion of the schoolmaster's salary. The minute is dated 5th (or something similar, but the figure is very indistinct) July, 1613, and is as follows: "The said day the complaint was giffen against The Laird of pitten Drum and the Tennents of Pitbla for refusal of their parts of the schuelmaysters provisions and therefor were ordered to be summoned to compeir the next [meeting] day at Rathen before the presbyterie." It has to be noted that the spelling even of the Clerk to the Presbytery of Deer was of a give-and-take nature in those far back days. Returning to the minute, it would be interesting to know the reason for the persons in question refusing to pay their due to the parish teacher. They were probably cranks. The reason will never be known, as, though summoned to appear at Rathen on 25th July, 1613, they did not turn up, and no further notice of the dispute appears in the minutes. A change of teachers seems to have taken place in 1616. The teachers in the old days seem to have been as inclined to change as they are now, and one is forced to the conclusion that the old dominie was as fond of "bawbees" and as mundane in his outlook as are the educational experts of to-day. The weakness can even be excused in the "latter day saints," as everything now is run on purely business lines. Sentiment is almost dead! The minute is dated "25th day of Julie, 1616," and reads: "The said day Maister Patrick Dunbar be [by] ane comone consent with adwys [advice] of the brethering of the presbyterie is adenitel schuilmaster and publict Reider into the Kirk of Fraserburgh quha [who] was exhortet be the moderatour to faithfulness and diligence in continwall [continually] on-waiting [waiting] upon his calling be [by] them in the one thing and the other quhilk [which] was promised be [by] him."

Apart from Rev. Charles Ferme, Principal of the University, who can scarcely be called a "schuilmaister," the above minute discloses for the first time

the name of a Fraserburgh schoolmaster. This is most interesting. Of course other schoolmasters had taught in Fraserburgh up to 1616, but Mr. Patrick Dunbar has the honour of being the first "Broch" teacher mentioned by name in history. No doubt he had early blossomed into a full fledged parson, for in three years' time the appointment is again vacant, or about to become vacant. On the 26th August, 1619, the Presbytery, at a meeting held at Crimond, record that "the said day comperit Mr. Wm. Jaffray offeren himselfe for to be tryit be the presbyterie in his literature seeing he intendit godwilling to be Schuilmaister in Fraserbrucht. The presbyterie allowing of the young man after adwysment referis the tryall of his literatoure and qualifcatione for that warke to Mr. Wm. Forbes, Mr. Archd. Keith, Mr. Wm. Davidsons, Mr. Wm. Chein, and Mr. Alex. Martein at narrest adjacent." The gentlemen mentioned above were respectively ministers of the following parishes:—Fraserburgh, Crimond, Rathen, Tyrie, and Longside.

Mr. Jaffray must have come up to the necessary standard of good scholarship, for he received the appointment of schoolmaster of Fraserburgh. He was laureated at the University and King's College, Aberdeen, in the same year as he was appointed schoolmaster of Fraserburgh. He remained in Fraserburgh a few years as "schuilmaister," but he must have been a man not only of merit, but of ambition. He became minister of the parish of New Deer in 1636, and afterwards that of the parish of King Edward, probably about 1645. There are no records to show what was the nature of instruction imparted to pupils at this time, but no doubt the curriculum had been a very simple one. The situation of the schoolhouse is also entirely unknown.

It is rather a remarkable fact that no reference to Fraserburgh's scholastic affairs is found in the records of the Presbytery of Deer, from August 1619, till June 1701, a period of 82 years. It will be remembered that the century was one of great political and religious strife. Though the fights and the feeling were not so strenuous in the north as in the south, evidently they were sufficiently keen in Buchan to cause the question of education of the young to be deemed of secondary consideration. This can be the only explanation of the great gap in the records on the subject of education. No doubt the education of the young had been carried on in a perfunctory sort of way by the local dominies; and these relieved of the officious oversight of the ministers, had considered that they were having "a grand time of it" Ministers of the Gospel were so busy quarrelling about different forms and creeds, and mixing themselves up in political disputes, that the important question of education of the young was relegated for wellnigh a century to the limbo of forgetfulness.

From the Session records of the Parish Church, it appears that in the early part of the seventeenth century at least, Fraserburgh possessed in addition to the ordinary parish school, a Grammar School. This is an interesting fact. No doubt the establishment of such a high class school in an out-of-the-way corner of Buchan, had been due to the initiative of the founder of Fraserburgh; and it may safely be assumed that the college buildings, although a failure as a

University, had become the Grammar School of this age. If not a University, better that the building should be occupied as a Grammar School. Such would be the conclusion that a level-headed man like Sir Alexander Fraser would come to. As the Fraserburgh Grammar School is only once or twice referred to in local or district records, it may be assumed that, like the college, this seminary of learning had had a comparatively short career, due to the dearth of scholars in this, then, sparsely populated district.

It is well known that all the education of the country was at one time under the care of the Church, and it does not take a very old man to remember the day when the Presbytery used to make its annual visitation to the old parish schools. Thanks to the Kirk Session records, little scraps of information regarding education and like matters, which, in other hands, might have been lost for ever, are still forthcoming to interest and amuse the present generation. The first reference to the "Broch" Grammar School in the Kirk Session records is a most curious and amusing one, and testifies to the multifarious duties the Session was called upon to discharge. Poor Effie Duncan, who appears to have come from the parish of Duffus, was stigmatized by "Maister" Martin as "a corruptor of his scholars by enticing them to wastefulness, and buying of such trash (apples, onions, pease) as she brought to sell them, etc., etc." The minute had better speak for itself. It is dated 16th January, 1614, and is as follows: "The said day compeirit maister Alexander Martine Maister of the Grammar Schuil, and complanit upon Effie Duncan as ane corruptor of his scolaris by entysing thame to waistris and bying of sick trusche (apilis, oanyeonis, peiss) as she brot to sell thame, quha for that caus being send about be the magrat and compeiring is inhibeit heirfa to sell onything to the scolaris or haud ocht to do with thame as also is comandit to produce ane testimonie fra Duffous quhair hir wantit remaining was betwixt and Witsonday, with cern (certification) giff she failzeit sche suld be baneist the toun."

On 10th January, 1615, this method of closure was made general by a public intimation. "The said day upon occasionne of some quha haud intysit young anes and scholleries to drinking and spending of silver into thair houses, ye sessionne ordanis that ye minister ye next sabbboth mak intimationne publikli that quhasoevir in ye citie in tymes coming to be fund into that fault of abysing ye youth they sall be put in the magistratis hand for punishment and mak thair repentance." The first conviction under this Act was made on 21st March, 1615, but the delinquent was taken on "private satisfacioune," having in the presence of the Session to "crave God forgiveness and the boyis parent and promeis newir to do ye lyk to him or ony uther."

If the Session was careful that the scholars should not misspend their money or be enticed to evil, they were not unmindful of them in other ways that would appeal more readily to the scholars, as it would to present day scholars. The following simple entry on 28th February, 1621, speaks for itself: "Item giffen to Andrew Jaffray pur scoller to buy ane pair of schene 6s." Another estimable practice on the part of the Session must not be overlooked.

For instance, on 18th April, 1621, this minute is to be found: "The said day giffen to Master Wm. Forbes, mynister, iut of the box to giwe to the bursaris in Aberdene 4 libris 10 sh. according to the yeirlie custome." This points to the fact that the Session did not forget the youths of pregnant parts who had gone up to Aberdeen to study at the University, and that they were mindful of their bodily necessities, laying aside an annual sum of £4 10s. for the purpose. It may be reasonably concluded that the students who had been voted such assistance, had gone from the Fraserburgh Grammar School.

The only other time that a reference is made to the Grammar School is on 12th September, 1624, when a minute of the Kirk Session says: "The said day efter noone comperit the Elderis and inhabitants of the toune and parochie and ane voce nominat Mr. Wm. Forbes, son to Mr. Wm. Forbes, to be Maister of the Grammar Schoole qfior it is orderit that the said Mr. Wm. be adwertisit and tesyrit keip Widnisday next the fiftieint off this instant and to giff his answer yr anent." Mr. Forbes appears on the date mentioned, and accepts the appointment, subject to the approval of the Presbytery. No doubt this had been given, and it may be assumed that Mr. Forbes had been duly installed "maister" of the Fraserburgh Grammar School. Whether the school had flourished under his guidance or whether other masters had followed him, is not known. It is feared that this was not the case, because no local records ever afterwards make any reference to the Grammar School of Fraserburgh.

The Mr. Wm. Forbes who was appointed master of the Grammar School in 1624 was probably a son, or other relation of Rev. Wm. Forbes, who was minister of Fraserburgh from 1618 to 1643.

It is a big jump from 1624 to 1701, but it is in the latter year that the subject of education or schoolmaster is referred to in the Presbytery minutes. At this time the Presbytery and the Episcopalians of Fraserburgh were engaged in a life and death struggle. The schoolmaster was named Alexander Simpson, and it is quite evident that he was an Episcopalian, because he evaded accepting the tenets of the Presbyterian Church. A record of the Presbytery dated Deer, 25th June, 1701 says: "Mr. Alexr. Simpson Schoolmaster at Fraserbrough called and not compeir-ing Mr. Brown reports that he had been speaking with him, who desires forbear-ance for some tym who is also continued untill the meeting of the Commissione of the Synod of Deer and Mr. Brown appointed to cause cite him against that dyet."

Mr. Simpson would not come to close quarters, no doubt owing to his Episcopal conscience. Whether he sacrificed his office as schoolmaster for his Church principles is not known, but the records show that though cited by Mr. Brown, he did not appear at the meeting of the Presbytery. The minute is dated Aberdour, 29th July, 1701, and is as follows: "The said Mr. Simpson Schoolmaster at Fraserburgh being cited to attend the Commissione at Deer in order to the subscribing of the Confessione of Faith he not compeiring Mr. Brown is appointed to cause cite him to the next presbyterie the rest delayed for some tyme." The Mr. Brown referred to, was the minister of Aberdour.

Nothing further is heard of Mr. Simpson, and it is to be feared that his insubordination had cut short his reign as schoolmaster at Fraserburgh, for next time the "Broch" schoolmaster is mentioned, his name is given as Peter Coutts. The minute is rather amusing, and bears proof of the ill-feeling that possessed all classes at this time, and all in the name of religion. The minute which is dated Lonmay, 23rd November, 1708 reads: "Mr. Auchinleck" [the minister of Fraserburgh] "representing that he cannot obtain the Church registers nor utensils with an accompt of the poors money, they being in the hands off Andrew Cooper, Merchant in Fraserburgh, Peter Coutts, Schoolmaster there, and Wm. Ogston, late Kirk officer. Those men are appointed to be cited to that dyet the Seventh of December att Rathen qch (which) is the tyme appointed for examining of witnesses in Mr. Craig and Mr. Moore's affair." Mr. Coutts must also have had leanings towards Episcopacy, otherwise he would not have resisted the Presbyterian Church authorities who had demanded the Parish Church property. Besides, the Messrs. Craig and Moore referred to in the minute, were the two resisting Episcopal clergymen, of whom so much is heard in the Ecclesiastical chapter.

Although nothing definite is recorded on the subject, in the Presbytery of Kirk Session records, there is no doubt but that Mr. Coutts had been early removed from the position of schoolmaster of Fraserburgh. His Episcopalian tendencies were too much for the Presbyterian proclivities of the then Presbytery of Deer. Although the Presbytery minutes are absolutely silent upon the appointment of Mr. Coutts' successor, fortunately the Parish Church Session minutes often refer to him, although not in a very flattering way. It is not his appointment, but his "moonlight flittin'" that bothered the Session.

No mention is made of the appointment of Mr. Watt, successor to Mr. Coutts, but he had probably settled in Fraserburgh from 1708 to 1710. He must have been rather an extravagant individual, for having got hopelessly into debt, he "cleared out" in 1718, taking with him part of the Session funds, and what was worse, the Session records and registers. The following minute of Session, dated 15th September, 1718, quaintly describes the dilemma in which the members of the Session found themselves: "The minister informed them that Mr. Wm. Watt, Schoolmaster and Session Clerk, having deserted the country on the 19th day of last month by reason of great debt he had contracted as is alleged; and the Magistrates being about to brake open his chamber door in the School House, had desired his presence, lest anything belonging to the Kirk Session might be in it: that accordingly he did go taking Alexr. Gordon, Kirk Treasurer, along with him, but when the said chamber door was broke open, nothing was found in it but a table, the heads of a bed, and some of the scholars write books, the bed hangings, cloaths, and all other things being removed; and in regard there was no account of the Register and Minutes of Session, the minister represented that he had called this meeting to adopt what was proper to be done, The Session approved of their being called on this occasion and finding they were destitute of a Clerk, they chose Mr. Jas. Taylor, Student in

divinity, and precentor, to be their Clerk. After entering upon the consideration of the foresaid report, anent their former Clerk and what a great disadvantage the loss of the Register and Minutes would be to the public, therefore appointed the minister and Treasurer to make all speedy and exact inquiry after the said Mr. Watt, and use all proper methods for recovering the Register and Minutes."

The minister and treasurer were not very successful in their hunt for the Session Register and Minutes, as the following extract from the minutes of a meeting of the Session, dated 13th October, 1718, shows: "The minister and Treasurer report that according to appointment, they had made all speedy and exact inquiry anent Mr. Watt foresaid, and that they were informed that he is gone for Ireland leaving upwards of four hundred pounds Scots" [£36 13s.] "of debt behind him in the town and also that he had in his hands consignment money of persons contracted for marriage, to the value of £4 or £5, several of the said persons having come to the minister, complaining of the loss and threatening to pursue the Session seeing he was their servant for whom they ought to be accountable. They further report that they heard and did not much doubt of it that the said Mr. Watt had some correspondents in the town or country, with whome he had left his Bed hangings, Cloaths, Books borrowed from the minister and others, with several other things he could not have taken along with him, etc."

The minute further sets forth that the minister, treasurer, and other creditors, endeavoured to unearth the correspondents referred to, but all to no purpose. If some people in Fraserburgh were in league with Mr. Watt, they were cute enough to escape detection. The parish schoolmaster was always looked upon as a pattern to a community, but this Mr. Watt was an exception to the rule. His conduct lowered the status of the schoolmaster in the eyes of the people. Probably he had been of a social disposition, and been too kind to himself and his friends. It is amusing to observe how carefully the minister noted in the minute, the fact that the books Watt had borrowed from him had disappeared. It would not have been surprising if the minister had claimed compensation for them from the Session! Watt evidently eluded all his pursuers, for there is no further reference to him in the minutes. No doubt he settled comfortably down in the Green Isle, turned over a leaf, and become a douce married man, and the father of a happy family.

A minute of the Kirk Session dated 23rd February, 1719, says: "Mr. Wm. Gordon being settled schoolmaster in the place was chosen Session clerk and precentor, etc." This individual must have been somewhat of a character. It was understood he was a successful teacher; and it may have been his eccentric conduct that caused him difficulty in obtaining payment of his salary. If the schoolmaster in question did not exert himself in furthering the cause of education in Fraserburgh, nobody could blame him, after reading the following minute which is dated Crimond, 29th May, 1728; "Mr. Wm. Gordon, Schoolmaster at Fraserburgh, desiring access to the Presbyterie was admitted. He presented a Petition Bearing that notwithstanding he was legally presented to the school

of Fraserburgh, authorized by the Presbyterie, and no objection hath ever been given in to the Presbyterie against him, yet the greatest part of his salary hath been detained from him for these four years bypast, whereby he and his numerous family have been brought to great straits. Craving therefore that the Reverend Presbyterie appoint a Presbyterial meeting at Fraserburgh for the visitation of his school and doing every thing convenient for the redressing of his foresaid grievances. The Presbyterie considering the said Petitions judged the same reasonable and appointed a Presbyterie to meet at Fraserburgh upon the thirteenth day of June next for the end forsaid and appointed an edict to be issued out and served timeously by Mr. Auchinleck for that effect. And the Presbyterie is then to advise Mr. Auchinleck with respect to Mr. Muirs (?) mortification."

If Mr. Gordon got his outstanding salary paid up through the good offices of the Presbytery, he was not very grateful to them for their assistance. At least he was not afraid to air his opinions, although he must have known he would get into trouble over it. The minute shows how feelings and opinions on subjects affecting religion have changed since 1733. The assertions and lampoons of Mr. Gordon, which would be thought nothing of in these days, were considered dreadful blasphemy one hundred and eighty years ago. In that simple age, ministerial supervision had a restraining influence and was beneficial for the people, because without it the ignorance of the classes might have led them to regrettable excesses. Mr. Gordon must have been a man of strong opinions and of an impetuous temperament, who, though probably a brainy individual, was not an ideal teacher of the young. The first minute on the subject of Mr. Gordon's conduct is dated Crimond, 30th May, 1733, and is as follows: "There was given in to the Presbytery a reference from the Church Session of Fraserburgh Bearing that upon a Declaration of a Fama Clamora that Mr. Wm. Gordon, Schoolmaster in Fraserburgh, had in the end of February last in a public company in John Buchan's there uttered some scandalous opinions, viz., That there was no use for ministers to marry people, but that they might go together as they were inclined, also that there was no need of ministers at all. But that when four or five persons were convened together they might choose one of that number to preach to them, and that any person might preach without a Call. Also that ministers needed not to study their sermons, and that no good man would take any stipend for his preaching. The said Church Session had proceeded to inquire thereanent And that it had been proven by the Deposition of witnesses (whose testimony Mr. Wm. Gordon acknowledged to be nothing but what was truth) That the said Mr. Wm. Gordon had at the time and place lybelled uttered these opinions and reasoned on them with those then in Company with him, and being desired to forbare insisting on these he said not at all, for that it was his declared mind; and that the said Session had referred the whole affair to the Presbytery for determination, and that Mr. Wm. Gordon had been cited to attend the Presbytery at this meeting. The Presbytery having read the whole process and con-

sidered the same found that the same had been regularly carried on, but as the day was far gone could not judge therein immediately, but delayed the same to next ordinary meeting.

“And the latter that

“The Presbytery were immediately informed that the said Mr. Wm. Gordon had profaned the Lord’s most holy name by horrid swearing in the house of George Ogilvie in Millhill the day of the last meeting of the Presbytery here in such words as these: By God Mr. Auchinleck is a damned villain, which the Presbyterie agreed to proceed to enquire into the truth of, and the said Mr. Gordon being present answered, That he did not remember that he had uttered the words as above narrated; and The Presbytery entered upon the consideration of the affair anent Mr. Wm. Gordon and as the Clerk of the Presbytery was adduced as a witness in that process Mr. Brown was appointed to officiate for him. And Mr. Gordon and the witnesses being called, the said Mr. Gordon compeared as also Mr. Thomas Anderson and George Ogilvie in Millhill. Mr. Gordon being told that the Presbytery were to proceed to the examination of witnesses in the affair taken before them at last meeting against him He represented that in obedience to the Presbytery’s citation he had compeared, But said that before he would answer an affair for which he was cited, he wanted to know who was his accuser, and at whose instance he was cited. And that if he was not satisfied thereanent he would on that account be obliged to protest against the Presbytery, And did immediately protest and appeal to the ensuing Provincial Synod of Aberdeen and took instruments in the Clerk’s hands, whereupon he withdrew, though the Presbytery desired him to stay and hear the witnesses examined and to offer any objections he had to make against any of them: that he was willing the Presbyterie might examine witnesses thereon without being at the trouble of giving him a formal lybel. Upon which the Presbyterie told him that Mr. James Cock, preacher of the gospel, Mr. Thomas Anderson, Student in Divinity, and George Ogilvie in Millhill were to be adduced as witnesses. And the Presbytery having resolved to proceed to examine them at next meeting at this place upon the 3rd Wednesday of July next. Mr. Wm. Gordon was cited apud acta to attend that diet to hear and see these witnesses examined, And the said Messrs Cock and Anderson being present were likewise cited as witnesses to attend that meeting, and the Kirk officer at Crimond was ordered to cite George Ogilvie the other witness to the said meeting likewise.”

The minute is one of inordinate length, but it tells the story quaintly, and the matter it contains is the excuse for its length. Mr. Gordon is a funny mixture! His views on marriage ceremony, preachers, etc., would coincide with the opinions of many serious religious thinkers and writers of to-day; but, alas! his swearing propensity rather spoils his otherwise picturesque individuality. He was not afraid of the Presbytery, and the confident way he tackled them as to “who was his accuser, and at whose instance he was cited” showed this dominie of Fraserburgh had all his wits about him.

The next minute, dated 18th July, 1733, gives the evidence of the witnesses against Mr. Gordon as follows:—"The Presbytery taking this part of his conduct into their consideration agreed to proceed to the examination of the witnesses, as Mr. Gordon was legally present, But previous thereto, that Mr. Gordon might have no cause of complaint, agreed to call him again to hear the witnesses examined; which being done he refused. Whereupon those witnesses were called and being seriously spoke to were put upon oath, and George Ogilvie being removed Mr. Anderson was first examined. And he an unmarried man aged about 23 years being solemnlie sworn and purged of malice and partial counsel Deponed That he was in company with Mr. William Gordon at the time and place lybelled when Mr. James Cock and George Ogilvie were present And that he then heard the said Mr. William Gordon utter these words By God Mr. Auchinleck is a damned villian, And this is the truth, as he shall answer, etc.

"(So Sign'd) THOMAS ANDERSON.

"JOHN MERCER, Modr.

"Then George Ogilvie in Millhill being called in Compeared, And he a married man aged about 30 years being solemnlie sworn and purged of malice and partial Counsel Depon'd That being in Company with Mr. William Gordon at the time and place lybelled He heard the said Mr. Wm. Gordon say By God, etc. (as above).

(So Sign'd) GEORGE OGILVIE.

"JOHN MERCER, Modr.

"Then the party taking the whole affair under Due consideration Did unanimously referr the same to the Synod of Aberdeen at their next meeting for Determination." How the case ended and what became of Mr. Gordon are not given in the Deer Presbytery records. Like many a man in this world, he could not dissemble. He was too honest in his convictions and too outspoken to be a success among his fellows. It is to be hoped that he became better understood, and gathering worldly wisdom with advancing years, found the last of life's journey better and brighter than the first.

In two years time, another reference is made to scholastic affairs in Fraserburgh, but on this occasion it is not the schoolmaster, but the schoolhouse that is referred to. The schoolhouse is in need of repairs at this time, and the Presbytery take the business on hand. It is most disappointing that there is nothing in the records to indicate where this "schoolhouse" was situated. Likely the information will be contained in some old Charter or Title Deed which nobody has taken the trouble to read.

The first minute is dated 20th August, 1735, and is as follows: "With respect to the Schoolhouse of Fraserburgh the Presbytery finding that nothing was done anent the reparation thereof appointed a meeting of the party to be held there on the 4th day of Sept. next for visiting the said Schoolhouse and issued out their edict for that effect so Mr. Auchinleck was appointed to serve

timeously, also appointed him to provide proper workmen and assessors to join with the Presbytery." The Presbytery promptly proceeds to business, and in the course of a fortnight have the matter well on hand.

The next minute is interesting, in so far as it gives the names of a number of tradesmen living in the town at the time. Broadsea must have been a place of importance in 1735, when the Presbytery thought it advisable to take, as one of their assessors, a resident of that place. The minute, dated 4th September, 1735, is in the following terms: "The Presbytery having read their former minute with respect to this day's meeting called for their Edict which was given in and found Duly execute, and it being called Compeared Wm. Webster, Merchant in Fraserburgh and George Mitchell in Broadsea two honest men in the parish as assessors to the Presbytery in the intended visitation who were received accordingly. Also compeared the following workmen, viz., Robert Gibson and John Hill for wright and glass work, Gibert Reid and James Clark for mason and sclate work, and John Rainie and Thomas Shirras for the smith work. The Presbytery with their assessors having gone through the Schoolhouse and carefully viewed the same found that it was in a ruinous condition and stood much in need of reparation and therefore agreed to put the workmen in order to their bringing in a joint account of what is necessary for repairing the said Schoolhouse, and they being accordingly put upon Oath were ordered to bring in their accounts as above.

"The Workmen being returned gave in the following accounts of what they judged necessary for repairing the said Schoolhouse. (Here follow specifications).

"The Presbytery found that according to the above Accounts the sum requisite for repairing the Schoolhouse of Fraserburgh amounted to one hunder pounds and thirteen Shill Scot money.

"The Presbytery appointed Mr. John Mercer to deal with the Magistrates to see to the reparation of their Schoolhouse before winter came on, to prevent the Presbytery's being obliged to proceed therein in a legal way."

The schoolhouse must have been sadly out of order, seeing that the Presbytery declared it to be "in a ruinous condition." No doubt the repairing work, so far as carried out, had been done with efficiency, but there is reason to fear that the schoolhouse had been some old building put into condition to do duty as a "schuile," and liable to get into disrepair again at no distant date. At any rate, the next time reference is made to things educational is after a period of 13 years, and the minute again directs attention to the "ruinous condition of the schoolhouse." One would infer from this that the schoolhouse had, as already indicated, not been a very substantial, or ornamental edifice.

The schoolmasters of Fraserburgh seem to have been mercurial in their movements. The last schoolmaster definitely identified was Mr. Gordon. His case was disposed of 15 years previous to the date of the minute now to be given. Whether other teachers had come and gone in the interval, will never be known; but it is, recorded on black and white that the schoolmaster in 1748,

was a Mr. John Smith. He must have been for some time schoolmaster at Fraserburgh seeing that the minute says, "He had a good many years ago apply'd to them to order such reparation, etc." Like the most of schoolmasters in those days, he had his eye on the Church, and was only filling in time as a teacher until he should be called upon to "wag his heid in a poopit." He had not very long to wait, for he was presented to the parish of Strichen by Sir Alexander Fraser of Strichen, and was ordained minister there on 23rd November, 1748, only three months after the date of the minute which described him as schoolmaster of Fraserburgh. In 1749 he married Elizabeth Auchinleck, no doubt a relation of Rev. Alexander Auchinleck, the then minister of Fraserburgh. Mr. Smith remained minister of Strichen for the long period of 36 years, dying there on 26th December, 1784, aged 77 years.

Mr. Smith's petition anent the dilapidated state of the schoolhouse is dealt with at a meeting of the Deer Presbytery, held at Crimond, 17th August, 1748. The minute says:—"There was this day given in to the Presbytery a Petition from Mr. John Smith, Preacher of the Gospel and Schoolmaster at Fraserburgh, Setting forth that he had found the Schoolhouse in Fraserburgh in a ruinous condition, and after being sufficiently certified that the repairing and upholding said Schoolhouse belonged to the Magistrate and Council of the Burgh of Fraserburgh He had a good many years ago appli'd to them to order such reparation as was necessary to be made, That they in consequence of this application had empowered him to employ workmen for that purpose, and that they should take care of any reasonable expenses he might incur there through being repay'd. But that nevertheless he has lyen out of his payment ever since and can think of no way of obtaining them without taking the legal steps for that purpose. And therefore entreating the Presbytery wou'd do what was incumbent on them to that effect, The desire of which Petition the Presbytery readily granted and appointed a meeting for that end at Fraserburgh the first day of September next, having issued out their Edict in such form as is common in cases of this Nature to be served by Mr. Auchinleck in due time."

The Magistrates and Town Council of Fraserburgh had not acted very fairly towards Mr. Smith, seeing that after encouraging him to spend his own means on the most necessary repairs, they refused to repay him his outlays. Things must have come to a bad pass, when the schoolmaster was actually thinking of taking the civic dignitaries into court. This threat had a distinctly beneficial effect, for the Presbytery set about having the matter adjusted without unnecessary delay. The minute on the subject, which is dated "Schoolhouse, Fraserburgh, 1st Sep., 1748," says: "The last minute relative to the reparation of the School of Fraserburgh being read The Edict thereanent was called for and returned by Mr. Auchinleck duly executed and endorsed; Mr. Auchinleck produced to the Presbytery James Fraser and Thomas Murray, two most honest and discreet men, parishioners of Fraserburgh, as Assessors to join with the Presbytery in the visitation of the said School who had been warned for that effect and whom the Presbytery received accordingly, Then the Edict

being called in one form Compeared Mr John Smith, Schoolmaster in Fraserburgh; as also Bailie Alexr. Ritchie and Bailie Wm. Urquhart in their own name and as having powers from the town people of Fraserburgh, which were read and sustained. Compeared also Alexr. Smith, Wright and Glazier, Thomas Shirras, Smith, Gilbert Reid, Mason, and James Clark, Slater, against neither of whom any objection was offered by those concern'd.

"Then the Presbytery read an extract of their minute 4th Sept, 1735, whereby it appeared that the Presbytery having mett for visiting the Schoolhouse of Fraserburgh Found it in a ruinous condition and that by accounts of workmen given in at that time the sum of £100 13 sh. Scots was necessary for reparation And thereupon the Presbytery having gone through said School house and found it well repair'd agreed to putt workmen upon Oath in order to their viewing said reparations and bringing in an account of what sum has been expended in finishing the same And they being solemnly sworn were ordered to review and bring in their accounts accordingly and till such time as they should be ready the Presbytery adjourned to the Session house in the Church of Fraserburgh the minutes of last settlement." The sum required in September, 1735, to repair the schoolhouse was £100 13sh. Scots, or only £8 7s. 9d. sterling. Evidently "the powers that be" could not raise that sum, as it appears the repairs were only partially executed then. This showed the scarcity of money in Scotland—apart from the opulent cities—at this time.

The last minute shows that the Presbytery are trying to meet the wishes of Mr. John Smith, and, at the same time, have the dilapidated part of the school left unrestored in 1735, put into a decent state of repair now. Evidently the work of repair had been overtaken, because there is no further mention of it in the Presbytery records, but the matter of the payment of the outlays due to Mr. Smith, seems to have been still hanging fire. No doubt that gentleman had become anxious to have his accounts squared, in view of his early departure from Fraserburgh. The minute, dated 19th October, 1748, says: "As to the affair of the reparations of the School of Fraserburgh, Mr. Mercer reported that the Committee waited on Lord Saltoun as appointed and that his Lordship gave them great ground to hope that the affair should be so taken up so that Mr. John Smith's payments should be made out and the Presbytery satisfied. The Presbytery taking this report to consideration did Delay the said affair till an after meeting." The question of the sum due to Mr. Smith never arises again, and it is to be hoped, for the credit of the public men of Fraserburgh, that the account was settled "in full" before Mr. Smith left the town. The Lord Saltoun of this day was a shrewd, capable business man, and no doubt his influence had promptly brought a satisfactory settlement about.

The schoolmaster of Fraserburgh that followed Mr. Smith was a Mr. William Cumine, who signed the Confession of Faith and Formula, and was formally installed in office by the Presbytery at a meeting held at Crimond, 6th June, 1750. Mr Cumine must have been a quiet man and a diligent teacher,

for his name is never heard of during the eleven years he had charge of the education of the young in Fraserburgh. He, however, saw the advantages of being a minister and having a church of his own. Accordingly he is ordained minister of Tyrie in August, 1761. Strange to say he occupied the pulpit of Tyrie exactly the same length of time as he acted schoolmaster of Fraserburgh, viz., eleven years. He was presented to the parish of Rathen by Lord Saltoun and was ordained minister of Rathen on 5th August, 1772. He died 8th February, 1800, in his 80th year, and 38th of his ministry.

On the departure of Mr. Cumine a Mr. William Fraser applies for, and obtains, the appointment of schoolmaster of Fraserburgh. The Presbytery minute on the subject is dated "Crimond, 24th November, 1762," and reads: "This day compeared Wm. Fraser, Factor for Lord Saltoun, and gave in his Lordship's presentation to the vacant School of Fraserburgh to and in favour of William Fraser, Student of Philosophy at Marischal's College, Aberdeen, which presentation was read and sustained; and instruments were thereupon taken in the Clerk's hands. Whereupon the said Presentee was called, and examined on his knowledge of the Latin language and of the Principles of the Christian Religion. And the Presbytery being satisfied with him, and with Mr. Fraser, Minister at Fraserburgh, his account of his moral character Did, and hereby Do admit him the said Wm. Fraser, Presentee aforesaid, to be Schoolmaster at Fraserburgh, and he being suitably exhorted to diligence in the exercise of his office, it was recommended to be in readiness to sign the Confession of Faith and Formula

"and an extract of this his admission was appointed to be given him, when called for." Although the minute does not appear very conclusive, Mr. Fraser was duly installed as dominie.

It is rather interesting to note that Mr. William Fraser, Lord Saltoun's factor, appears at the meeting on behalf of the applicant. It is understood that the factor, who resided in Kirkton House, was a scion of the Saltoun family, and keeping this and his sponsorship in view, any thinking person would incline to the belief that the new dominie was probably of the same stock. Research proved this to be the case. "Scots Fasti," in speaking of Mr. Fraser as minister of Tyrie, to which living he was presented when schoolmaster at Fraserburgh, says: "Wm. Fraser, A.M., son of a hair-dresser in Fraserburgh, and sprung from the noble family of Saltoun, took his degree at the Marischal College and Univ., Aberdeen, in 1764, became schoolmaster of Fraserburgh, was licen. by the Presb., 30th Nov., 1768., etc., etc." Mr. Fraser remained schoolmaster of Fraserburgh for a period of ten or eleven years. His fixed salary was ten pounds Scots, or the handsome sum of 16s. 8d. sterling per annum! These figures show the poverty of the times. No doubt he had received fees from pupils, but these would have been of very shadowy dimensions, and as often as not, left unpaid. In proof of this it may be mentioned that on one occasion Mr. Fraser received in the shape of arrears of salary, a sum of £27 4s. This meant a pretty lengthened period of salary unpaid, whether the figures

represent sterling or Scots coinage. As already indicated, Mr. Fraser was ordained minister of the parish of Tyrie on 5th May, 1773. He must have been a man of energy and enterprise for he was the means of a new church being built at Tyrie in 1800. He died in September, 1810, in the 69th year his age, and 38th of his ministry.

The factor had also a hand in appointing the teacher who succeeded Mr. Fraser, and it is rather curious that the presentee "hailed" from the same quarter as the factor himself. This does not necessarily mean that Mr. Shand was any relation of the last mentioned. Be this as it may, he must have been a capable man, as he was only a few years in Fraserburgh when he was called away to be a parish minister. The meeting at which Mr. Shand was appointed, was held at Crimond. It is worth pointing out that very many of the Presbytery meetings are held at Crimond. Whether the place was considered central and convenient, or had other attractions, is not known. It is, however, known that at this period the coast about Rattray Head was a great smuggling centre, and that those living in the district were liberally supplied with German Cognac and Holland Gin, for helping the smugglers in their operations! The date of the meeting at Crimond is 30th September, 1772, and the minute runs:—"Then the said Wm. Fraser prox aforesaid gave in letters of presentation from said Lord Saltoun to John Shand at Kirktown of Philorth to be master of the School at Fraserburgh, upon which he likewise took instruments in the Clerk's hands, and the Presbytery having read and considered the same and finding that Mr. Fraser, minister at Fraserburgh, concurred they unanimously sustained his Lordship's Presentation as undoubted patron of that School, and agreed to proceed to the Trial and Admission of the said Mr. John Shand in due time as Schoolmaster at Fraserburgh."

After successful teaching work in Fraserburgh, Mr. Shand was presented to the parish of Kemnay as minister, by the Earl of Kintore in October, 1778. In 1787 he was translated to Chapel-Garioch, and in 1799 was appointed minister of the parish of Kintore. He died 11th January, 1833, in his 79th year, and 54th of his ministry, and was buried at Kintore. He left a family of five sons and three daughters. One of his grandsons was the late Lord Shand, who was called to the bar in 1853, was made a judge in the Court of Session in 1872, appointed an Indian Commissioner of the Privy Council in 1890, and was created a Peer in 1892. He acted as an unpaid Lord of Appeal in the House of Lords, and it may well be remembered that if he had lived till judgment had been given, the decision in the historic case, Free Church versus U.F. Church, would have been given by the Lords in favour of the United Free instead of the Free Church.

The next schoolmaster of Fraserburgh was Rev. Alexander Simpson, M.A., who received the appointment in 1778. Mr. Simpson must have been teaching for some considerable time before receiving the Fraserburgh appointment, as he took his degree at Aberdeen in 1763, and was licensed by Presbytery in October, 1765. It is therefore seen that a period of 15 years had elapsed from

the time he had taken his degree till he came to Fraserburgh. He was ordained minister of Fraserburgh two years after his appointment as schoolmaster. As he is referred to under the "Ecclesiastical" chapter, further reference need not be made to Mr. Simpson here.

The next schoolmaster of Fraserburgh, who was appointed in June, 1780, was a distinguished native of Strichen, who, in 1778, gained the Gray mathematical bursary at Aberdeen University. Before receiving the Fraserburgh appointment, Mr. Greig was for a short time schoolmaster of Tyrie. Like the average Buchan man, Mr. Greig was imbued with the laudable desire to better his position in the world. All the former schoolmasters of Fraserburgh had been satisfied with an annual salary of ten pounds Scots, 16s. 8d. per annum. Mr. Greig did not think that the remuneration was sufficient, and few will differ with his opinion, so in 1781 he achieved the rather remarkable feat of inducing the authorities to double his salary. The Town Council thought they had been too generous, and next year, 1782, they withdrew the increase. Mr. Greig had not been a timorous man, for next year he demanded that the increase should again be allowed him. The Town Council agreed to his request, but subject to the condition that "the increase was to be paid only during his good behaviour, and under certificate that he does not preach too frequently without the bounds of the parish." Mr. Greig was a licentiate of the Church, and in order to eke out a slender income, he had been in the way of preaching in Churches all over the district for ministers who were ill, or had occasion to go from home. Certainly the schoolmaster, with a yearly salary of only £1 13s. 4d., required all the pickings he could lay his hands on, and it was rather contemptible of the Town Council to try and prevent him from earning such "extras."

Mr. Greig remained only a few years as schoolmaster of Fraserburgh, for in 1786 he was appointed minister of Pitsligo. His rather short life had quite a tragic end. Referring to this, "Scots Fasti" says: "By the wickedness of a female servant a poisonous drug was administered which affected his mind to such a degree that he was completely prostrated and set aside; though he partially recovered it undermined his constitution, and he died unmarried 15th October, 1803, in his 44th year and 18th min." Thus came to an untimely and lamented end a man, vigorous both in body and mind.

The schoolmaster of Fraserburgh who succeeded Mr. Greig was Mr. John Duguid, whose appointment is referred to in the following minute dated 3rd January, 1787: "This day there was given in to the Presbytery a letter by proxy from the rt. hon. Lord Saltoun to Mr. Alex Simpson, minister of Fraserburgh, to present to the Presbytery his Lordship's presentation as patron of the School of Fraserburgh in Favour of Mr. John Duguid to be Schoolmaster there, which presentation he gave in, and it having been read the Presbytery sustained both the letter by proxy and presentation, and thereupon they proceeded to take trial of the literature of the said Mr. John Duguid, with which they were well satisfied, and thereupon admitted him as Schoolmaster of

Fraserburgh to enjoy all the emoluments thereof according to the tenour of his Lordship's presentation." Although Mr Duguid remained only about six years in Fraserburgh, an event of great importance happened during his "reign." When Mr. Duguid came to Fraserburgh in the end of 1786, the schoolhouse was situated exactly where the red herring house of Messrs. Alexander Bruce and Co. stands in Commerce Street, at the entry into Commerce Lane. The schoolhouse was a very modest erection, but it was sufficient to give name to School Street, which has become a very much longer and more important street than it was when baptised in the end of the eighteenth century. The striking change which proclaimed a very considerable step forward, made during Mr. Duguid's residence in Fraserburgh, was the building and opening of the parochial school on the Links, where now stands the South United Free Church. The old school, near the Brick Lodge, had served its day and generation, and the scholastic requirements of the community had outgrown its accommodation. The opening of the new school, which took place in 1787, was an important event in the history of the town's amenities. It will make readers smile when it is stated that this grand new building cost the sum of £122 5s. 2d! Modest though the sum was, the old Town Council's records disclose the fact that the Council had some difficulty in raising the money to meet the contractors' demands.

Mr. Duguid left Fraserburgh in 1792, but where he went to, or what became of him, local records give no information. He was succeeded by a Mr. William Bannerman, whose appointment is referred to in the following Presbytery minute dated Crimond, 28th November, 1792:—

"Mr. Wm. Bannerman presented by Lord Saltoun—admitted and desired to take the first opportunity to qualify to government in terms of the law and to sign the Confession of Faith.

Note of his examination:

Explain a passage in Levy
Write some letters in copyhand,
and to solve some questions in arithmetic."

Like all the schoolmasters appointed about this time, Mr. Bannerman had also to act as Session Clerk and precentor in the Parish Church. Of all the duties, the precentorship was probably the most trying, because if not gifted with a natural voice, the ordeal of precenting must have been as great an outrage upon the feelings of the congregation as it was upon the shallow musical resources of the would be precentor. The Session did not, however, seem to be over severe in regard to the actual performance of the duties. It is understood that the Session Clerk could appoint a deputy to do the vocal duties for him.

In 1792, when Mr. Bannerman was appointed schoolmaster, the salary attached to the office, according to the Statistical Account of Scotland then published, was £30 per annum, which comprised Session Clerk's fees and other

emoluments. There were from 40 to 50 scholars attending the Fraserburgh Parish School on the Links at this time, and these were taught English, Latin, writing, arithmetic, book-keeping and navigation. No doubt during the first few years of his residence in Fraserburgh, Mr Bannerman had applied himself with assiduity to the performance of his duties, for early in his career he obtained the reputation of being a successful teacher. He must have changed his methods and lost his enthusiasm for his work as his residence in Fraserburgh lengthened out. He got into conflict with the Presbytery in 1808, some 16 years after his appointment was made. The reason for the "row" is explained by the following minute, which is dated Lonmay, 31st March, 1808: "Anent the visitation of the School of Fraserburgh the whole members of the Presbytery proceeded to the examination of the scholars in the different branches of education which are taught in the School. They were much mortified to find that the scholars were very deficient in all of them and to observe a great want of that order and method which is necessary to their progress. They also understood that the scholars were very irregular in their attendance. The Presbytery resolved that Mr. Bannerman the Schoolmaster should be particularly admonished on the subject, and warned of the consequences, if upon a future exam, the Presbytery should not find these defects remedied."

Mr. Bannerman must have become quite careless in his work, and instead of profiting by the Presbytery's warning, he either made up his mind to defy his ministerial masters, or resolved to let matters slide, rather than turn over a new leaf and work energetically. After a lapse of four months, the Presbytery make another official visit to the school, but they find matters in no way improved. Then began a war between Mr. Bannerman and the Presbytery for mastery, which extended over a period of about 3 years. The result of the Presbytery's visitation is contained in a long minute of meeting held at Rathen, 19th July, 1808. The minute says: "Anent the visitation of the School of Fraserburgh the Presbytery did not find the defects which they found in the former visitation remedied, and appoint some of their members to confer with Mr. Bannerman on the subject." The minute further says:—

Bailie Kelman gave in Petition and Complaint against Mr. Bannerman in name of Lord Saltoun and by other inhabitants of the town of Fraserburgh (here follows complaint) gross neglect of duty and cruelty.

"I.—Irregularities of conduct

Pupils with very few exceptions have never made any progress.

No subordination or dignity in the School—does not enforce obedience.

"II.—Takes no charge of morals of children nor instructs in principles of religion.

"III.—Chastises in most violent manner striking with hands and feet and leaving marks of violence on scholars.

"IV.—Does not teach the English language with proper pronunciation or accent and does not use the English Grammar.

"V.—Does not teach the scholars to learn the stops, or interrogations, vowels or consonants.

"VI.—No Catalogue or Roll Call. A scholar is allowed to come in just what he pleases and is allowed to play for hours together without any enquiry.

"VII.—Permits the scholars to write all sorts of nonesence (sic) on their books and even words of obscenity, at least it is done by them without being checked by him.

"VIII.—Children in some instances have lost under him what they had learned from a Schoolmistress, which has obliged the parents to take them away and put them to the Schoolmistress again . . . and in many instances his conduct has been childish and foolish.

"IX.—Never opens or closes the school with prayers nor desired his pupils to get prayers or any portion of Scripture by heart.

"X.—A scholar may sit for days upon a lesson or an account in arithmetic given out to work, without any enquiry or being put right to him.

"XI. —Guilty of using indecent freedoms with some of his pupils, which will be afterwards condescended on if necessary.

"The more opulent of the inhabitants have built and maintained a school at a heavy expense. (Here follows the prayer of the petition).

"Signatories

"WM. KELMAN for LORD SALTOUN

"JEAN DALRYMPLE

"JOHN DALRYMPLE, Junr.

"JOHN MILNE

"List of Witnesses 53."

The fight goes on with increasing zest, and many meetings of the Presbytery are held on the subject, but to detail them all would be tiresome to the reader. If Mr. Bannerman let the tone and teaching of his school fall off, it was not for want of ability. He must have been a shrewd, sharp man, for he appeared time and again before the Presbytery, and single-handed, beat them on points of procedure and form. It was his ability to point out flaws in their indictments that caused the case to run on for such a long time. Mr. Bannerman's case may not, in the eyes of some people, be of so much importance as to justify the lengthy extracts of minutes given concerning it, but these old minutes are an interesting reflection of the way men thought, and worded those thoughts, a hundred years ago. One can easily imagine the excitement that would prevail in the school during these visitations of the Presbytery, when they came to find fault and not to praise. There must also have been excitement and dissatisfaction among the inhabitants, as the previous minute tells that some parents took their children away from the parish school, and placed them with a schoolmistress. The following minute shows the Presbytery's opinion of the state of the school. It is dated Aberdour, 20th March, 1810:—

“Report of Presbytery visitation of Fraserburgh school.”

“Catalogue kept from January 15 to March 21.”

“10 learning Latin

“17 arithmetic

“the rest English

“most at writing

“Latin scholars unable to decline a noun, compare an adjective or conjugate a verb. Scholars in arithmetic know the rules pretty well, but showed great carelessness and inattention in making up their arithmetic. Very incorrect in reading, except two boys. Could neither spell nor syllabicate to any purpose. No grammar. Pronunciation indistinct and inarticulate.

“Mr. Bannerman explained—Parents would not give proper books. Rather than attend regularly scholars would leave the school. Seafaring people cannot always allow their children to give regular attendance. When asked why when one class were reading Cornelius Nepos they could not decline penna, he returned no answer.”

Meeting followed meeting without anything definite being done, but at last in January, 1811, there is noted in a minute of “his” [Mr. Bannerman’s] “nonacceptance of the offer made him by the Town Council of Fraserburgh of £10 stg. a year for life, unclogged with any condition except that of resigning voluntarily the office of Schoolmaster of Fraserburgh, etc.” Mr. Bannerman, who had fought keenly, and no doubt worried the Presbytery to an almost unbearable extent, saw his ground of defence slipping from under his feet, and thinking discretion the better part of valour, agreed to the Presbytery’s, or rather the Town Council’s proposals. The minute, which hails from the old favourite spot Crimond, is dated 13th February, 1811, and says:—

“An agreement having been entered into betwixt Mr. Kelman for himself and the other Complainers on the one part, and Mr. Bannerman on the other, a missive betwixt the two parties declaring the terms thereof was given to the Presbytery—of which the terms follows:—

“Manse of Crimond, 13th February, 1811.

“Sir,

I hereby as duly authorized by the Town Council of Fraserburgh agree to grant you a bond of Annuity for ten pounds a year to be signed by the Treasurer in name of the community, and which annuity is to be paid to you during the whole term of your life, you having of the date hereof granted an obligation to remove and give up your office of schoolmaster of the parish of Fraserburgh and all the emoluments and privileges connected with that situation, I oblige myself to deliver to you at the sight of the Presbytery of Deer a valid Bond to the above effect.

“I am, Sir, etc., (S S) Wm. KELMAN

“To Mr. Wm. Bannerman, Schoolmaster, Fraserburgh.

"Sir,

I oblige myself at the term of Whitsunday next to renounce and give up office of Schoolmaster of Fraserburgh on receiving the Bond above mentioned.

"I am, Sir, etc., (S S) WM. BANNERMAN

"To Wm. Kelman, Esq.

"In respect of the foregoing compromise the Presbytery sist all further proceedings in this complaint, and appoint Mr. Kelman to give in to next meeting of Presbytery a Draft of a Bond for the consideration of the Presbytery."

The dispute was thus brought to an end, and Mr. Bannerman's services dispensed with. He refused to leave the schoolhouse, and this clearance was not effected until two years after his successor was appointed. It was hinted at the time that he was not quite sane, but this did not seem the case when he declined to accept a bond of security for his annuity on the Water Fund on the ground that it was not financially quite safe. He demanded that the Harbour Fund should be given as a security, and to get rid of him, the Town Council agreed to his request.

Mr. Bannerman outlived his dismissal only three years. He seems to have been a favourite with the general community. At least, the following obituary notice, which appeared in the *Aberdeen Journal* of 6th July, 1814, speaks well of him: "Died at Fraserburgh on the 15th of May last, Mr. William Bannerman, Schoolmaster there. Mr. Bannerman possessed considerable abilities, which were assiduously exerted for the instruction of his pupils. He will be long remembered and regretted."

The assistant schoolmaster, Mr. Findlay, who was appointed in June 1810, and was practically the head of the school from that date, was promoted Schoolmaster of Fraserburgh on 30th September, 1810. Mr. Findlay, who was a native of Brechin, was a scholar of outstanding merit, having graduated with distinction at Aberdeen University in 1808. He taught with much success in the old school on the Links, having brought the school from a state of chaos, to a high standard of perfection. In 1818 he was called to an important appointment in a mathematical institution in Aberdeen, and in 1826 he was, through the initiative of the Earl of Fife, promoted to the office of minister of the parish of King Edward. He remained throughout a long life minister of his first charge, and by his kindness of heart and single minded devotion to duty, became the idol of his parishioners. "Scots Fasti" says of him: "A Nathaniel in character, he yet had a good knowledge of the world and of the workings of the human heart, so that his ministry was marked by a tenderness and wisdom that might almost be termed apostolic. On two occasions the parishioners testified their affection by handsome gifts. In 1866 they presented him with a purse of two hundred guineas, and on a previous occasion they presented him with silver plate of a like value." Mr. Findlay died 23rd October, 1869, in the 81st year of his age, and 44th of his ministry.

In 1819 Mr. Findlay was followed by Mr. William Woodman, a native of

Strichen, who became an outstanding figure as an educationalist in Buchan and who occupied the position of parish schoolmaster of Fraserburgh for the long period of 43 years. He was a strict disciplinarian, and though somewhat given to have, as the scholars termed it, "his favourites," he was much respected by his scholars. He was a hardworking and painstaking teacher, and he turned out some very fine scholars, who proved a credit to himself and to their native town. He was really the first teacher who put education on a sound basis in Fraserburgh, and his work in the Links and Saltoun Place Schools, will always remain a monument to his memory, grander than any sculptured marble. Although he never preached, Mr. Woodman was a licensed minister of the Church of Scotland.

After doing duty for exactly half a century, the old school was closed, and a new one opened in Saltoun Place. The Links school produced many famous men, who took distinguished positions in various walks of life, in all parts of the world. A halo of romance hangs round the old school, and it was held in most affectionate remembrance to the very last by old pupils, who a decade or two ago were quite numerous in the town, but who, alas! with one exception only—Mr. George Bruce, fishcurer, aged 98—have all gone over to the great majority. A striking feature of the school on the Links was the freestone carving of Moses with the Ten Commandments, already referred to, placed in a conspicuous position on the south wall of the school, as a warning and inspiration to the rising generation of the day, who were seeking knowledge in this temple of learning.

The day when the old school on the Links was closed, and the new one in Saltoun Place opened in 1838, was a great one for the scholars, who in their youthful way, attached great importance to the change from the old house, to what they considered palatial premises, on the road along which passed the Aberdeen Coach, and all important traffic to and from Fraserburgh. When the great day came, all the scholars were marshalled on the Links by Mr. Woodman, and thereafter marched in procession through the town. There was no Seaforth Street in those days, and the scholars made their way along a path at the east end of the school, past the site of the mineral well, which took them on to Dalrymple Street. Here they were again formed in martial array and taken up Commerce Street, along Broad Street, Back Street, now High Street, Cross Street, and Saltoun Place to the school. The outstanding figure in the demonstration was the late Mr. John Wilson, draper (who died only a few years ago), who, though only a small boy, headed the procession playing a flute, and in himself, constituting the band on the occasion. Mr. Wilson, who was a man with a keen sense of humour, was wont to refer to this incident in his life with great gusto, mixed with a little satire.

The pupil who outlived all his fellow processionists was the late Mr. James M. Anderson, draper, who had a very tender regard for the old school on the Links, and loved to dwell on the happy years of his boyhood spent in and around the old place. The following verses on the old building are attributed to his pen:—

TO MY SCHOOL CHUMS.

You remember the School on the Links, do you not?
 The old musty school where as infants we went
 To learn our letters: 'twas a curious spot;
 And tedious the hours that there we had spent.

You remember the road leading on by the shore,
 Along "World's End" and the Mineral Well?
 'Tis now a tradition, or scarce anything more;
 But round it the memory ne'er ceases to dwell.

And, also, the tablet built high in the wall?
 Whence Moses the Hebrew looked down with a frown:
 While the legends of him and of Aaron would fall
 From lips of the flippant, mayhap from our own.

And then the top-region: it was a weird place,
 Where fairies and witches and ghosts came to prayers?
 That none of us doubted; and the boldest of face
 Dared not to venture many steps up the stairs.

Who was it, do you know, whose temerity led
 To visit these chambers? when lo! shocking view!
 Were seen the old dominies (deemed o'er so long dead)
 Being baked into pies for the elfish crew!

Then, the desks and the benches moth-eaten with age?
 What tales they'd repeat had they had but a voice
 Of the thousands long passed from this changeable stage
 Who had sat like ourselves in their classes as boys!

You remember the green where as miniature men
 We strutted and danced and laughed at our plays?
 Think you the long years that have vanished since then
 Have brought us delights half so pure as those days?

But the scene has all changed: the home of the Goth
 Has razed the old School from its place on the Green
 And our class-mates have scattered, some here some a-forth
 With hardly a vestige to mark where they'd been!

Such alas! is our life! yet who knows but again
 We may gather and learn 'neath higher grade rule,
 When the silence of parting shall threaten in vain,
 And the home of the child-like shall then be our school?

Mr Woodman taught with conspicuous success up to 1862. He took ill suddenly in the church one Sunday morning. He had to leave his pew, a front seat in the south gallery, in the middle of the service, and was assisted home, suffering from a paralytic shock. He lived only a few days, dying on the 1st May, 1862. Many of the scholars, including the author of this book, who followed his remains to Kirkton Churchyard, are still living.

Mr. Woodman was succeeded in 1862 by Mr George Murray, who was a

teacher in Port Glasgow. He was a very able man, and as a mathematician, had few equals in the north. He was of great physical strength, and a terror to the evil doers in the school, but otherwise he might have been called the gentlest of men. He did not believe in the powers of the strap, unless the case was hopelessly bad. His methods of carrying on the school work were far ahead of the times, with the result that not only was he idolized by his scholars, but the actual scholastic progress made by them was never before equalled in the whole history of the school. He was the first teacher in Fraserburgh to take an interest in his pupils' sports, and as a return he expected them to do their school tasks whole-heartedly. This they did, and hence the results achieved. The scholars always rose to the occasion when the annual examination of the school by the Presbytery came round. Mr Murray impressed upon them the necessity for leaving nervousness at home on the examination day, and this advice was followed. But there were always the nervous few, whose knees began to knock against each other, and whose hands began to shake when the great day arrived.

Many readers will remember the occasion, no doubt some with fear and trembling, when in the early or middle 'sixties of last century they had to stand the questioning and cross-questioning of Rev. Peter McLaren, Rev. Charles Ogg of Inverallochy, Rev. Alexander Milne of Tyrie, Rev. John F. M. Cook of Rathen, Rev. Charles Gibbon of Lonmay, and Rev. Walter Gregor of Pitsligo. Alas! all have passed away, and others fill their sacred offices. The annual examination by "the ministers" is a thing of the past. The present generation do not know what it means. If they possess a little knowledge, it is only to smile when the subject is broached. Still, it is remarkable to what great and responsible positions men trained under the old parochial system of education attained to. If it had its weaknesses, it had also its equalising strong points.

Mr. Murray resigned his appointment here in 1869, on becoming a master in Glasgow Training College. He died in Glasgow, 31st March, 1890. His name will ever remain a happy memory with his Fraserburgh pupils, until they have, one and all, paid the last debt of nature. Among Mr. Murray's pupil teachers were Mr. George Monro, now Rev. George Monro, a leading minister of New Zealand, and son of the late Mr. Alexander Monro, clothier, Mid Street. Another was "Billy" Brebner, a brother of Bailie Brebner, who about 40 years ago went to South Africa. A third pupil teacher was a Mr. McBeath, from Broomhead. He will be easily remembered by those who were pupils about 1866 or 1867, when their attention is drawn to the fact that Mr. McBeath made himself notorious to the "loons" of the school by the enormous "supply" of hair oil that he was wont to apply daily to his hair, which unfortunately was very red. Mr. McBeath was a clever young man and a very capable teacher, but being from the country, he was looked upon as "light weight" by the town's lads, and his teaching days in the Saltoun Place School were not altogether sweet or elysian in their nature. He died a premature death under sad conditions.

On Mr. Murray's departure in 1869, a Mr Wilson was appointed parochial schoolmaster of Fraserburgh, but he was unable to withstand the severe climate, and after holding office for a few months only, he tendered his resignation.

He was succeeded in 1870 by Mr. John Allan Sutor, M.A., who was previously schoolmaster of Knockando. Mr. Sutor did well in his early years as teacher in Fraserburgh, but some years after the Education Act of 1873 came into force, things did not seem to work so smoothly between the School Board and the headmaster as could have been desired. In the eighties the combat heightened, and there was continual bitter warfare. A great proportion of the ratepayers blamed the headmaster for the continual quarrels, while Mr. Sutor's followers blamed the Chairman of the Board, Rev. Peter McLaren. Mr. McLaren was certainly a militant man when occasion required it, but he could scarcely have been the cause of the continual friction between Mr. Sutor and the Board, because after Mr. McLaren's lamented death in 1887, the warfare became if possible, even hotter than it was in Mr. McLaren's lifetime. Of course, if Mr. Sutor had been an ordinary teacher and not protected by the armour of an old parochial teacher, his wings, so to speak, would have been easily clipped. He knew his powers however, and fought on for mastery, till the School Board, seeing the injury that was being done to education in the burgh owing to the incessant strife, asked Mr. Sutor to retire on 15th August, 1904, on an allowance of £200 per annum.

Mr. Sutor had many good points in his character, and rightly guided, would have been a most successful teacher. His combative nature, however, practically ruined his career. By his behaviour at times, one was inclined to think that he imagined his special mission in this world was to fight his Board. It was a foolish idea, and spoiled what might have been a happy and most useful life. Mr. Sutor died, to the great grief of many friends who admired him through his many struggles with the Boards, very unexpectedly in August, 1906, in Aberdeen, where he and his family had gone to reside. He thus lived only two years after giving up his duties as Headmaster of the Fraserburgh Public School.

It was during Mr. Sutor's tenure of office that the handsome public school, now the Central School, in Charlotte Street, was opened. The exact date of opening was 12th September, 1882. The new school was a very marked improvement on its puny predecessor in Saltoun Place. Indeed, there could be no comparison made between the two. The new building in Charlotte Street cost £7,000. Whereas there were some 50 scholars in Fraserburgh in 1792 there were almost 1,500 when the Central School was opened in 1882.

Mr. Sutor was succeeded by Mr. William Reid, M.A., who spent most of his early years in Sandhaven. The educational atmosphere of Fraserburgh has undergone a complete change for the better since Mr. Reid came upon the scene. A man of strong personality, he has inspired his pupils with ambitious views for the future, which was entirely wanting under the old regime. The tone of the school, and the level of education, has been raised in a remarkable

degree since Mr. Reid has directed the affairs of the school. Discipline is perfect, and the whole machinery of the school works in a way that command and brings success.

In the olden days, higher education was starved in Fraserburgh, because of the meagre supply of eligible or promising scholars coming from the Charlotte Street School. It was always alleged by the late headmaster that as this boy was to be a "cooper" and the next boy to be a "cooper," there was no need to prepare them for higher work. The consequence was that very few "promising" lads were encouraged to aim at anything higher than a cooper. All this is changed now, and the Charlotte Street School has become a rich and copious feeder to the Academy. Every boy and girl "of parts," gets every encouragement and opportunity of doing well, and if education does not "boom" in Fraserburgh, it is not Mr. Reid's fault. The elementary school work of Fraserburgh is in what may be termed a splendid condition now, and it is to be hoped that Mr. Reid will long be spared to carry on his good work.

FRASERBURGH ACADEMY.

That Fraserburgh could boast of possessing an Academy for higher education, was due to the bounteous hand of Mr. James Park, some time clothier, Castle Street, Fraserburgh. Mr. Park saw that there was a link missing in the chain of education in his native town, the gap between the parish school and the University, and, with true patriotism, he set about remedying the defect. Single handed he caused the old Academy, in Mid Street, to be built. The building cost £2,500, and in addition to this, he endowed the establishment to a considerable extent. The Academy was opened in 1870, and the first headmaster, or rector, was Mr. William Macgill, a B.A. of London University. Mr. McGill was a brilliant scholar, and a man of all-round great ability, who was devoted to his profession. For a lengthened period he carried on the scholastic work of the Academy with marked success. As compared with present day staffs, he for many years achieved wonderful results with a staff that would now be looked upon as absurd. Mr. Macgill was not much of a business man,—brilliant scholars never are,—and some differences having arisen between him and the governing body of the school on the question of management, Mr. Macgill terminated his connection with the Academy on 7th April, 1898. Mr. Macgill did good work in Fraserburgh, and had Mr. Reid been headmaster of the public school at the time, and working in co-operation with Mr. Macgill, the results at the Academy would have been still better. As it was, Mr. Macgill worked against open opposition from the public school, and it is surprising that such successes were ever achieved. Mr. Macgill will ever be held in the highest respect by his old Fraserburgh pupils, many of whom have taken good positions all over the world. Since settling down in Tain, Mr. Macgill has devoted himself to literary efforts, and in this department of work he has achieved considerable success.

Mr. Macgill was succeeded by Mr. Percy Pankhurst, who only remained a few years in Fraserburgh. An Englishman by birth and education, Mr. Pankhurst did not seem to thoroughly understand the Scotch character, with the result that his work did not meet with the success which it deserved. He resigned his appointment here in 1903 and returned to England, where he has risen to an excellent position in the scholastic world.

On the resignation of Mr. Pankhurst early in 1903, Mr. Robert Lees, M.A., B.Sc., was appointed rector of the Academy. Mr. Lees came to Fraserburgh with a great reputation. His college career was a splendid one, and his testimonials as a teacher were outstanding. Since coming to Fraserburgh, Mr. Lees has lived up to his former reputation. The Academy work has undergone a complete revolution, and the results have been brilliantly successful. Such a thing as seeing a Fraserburgh name in the list of bursars at Aberdeen University would, at one time, have been considered well nigh impossible. Now it is practically a yearly occurrence, and not only so, but Fraserburgh can send out the first bursar, as witness the brilliant position taken by Mr. Alfred R. Murison the other year. Fraserburgh is fast coming to the front as a secondary school centre under the fostering care of Mr. Lees, and if the development continues, Mr. Lees will have the honour and glory of practically bringing to realization the ambitious dream of the founder of Fraserburgh, Sir Alexander Fraser, who, at the close of the sixteenth century wished to make Fraserburgh an outstanding centre of education, and with that end in view, went the length of building a University in the town. Mr. Lees, who is come of a most scholarly family, is a man, judging from past experience, admirably equipped for the position he holds, and if it is the good fortune of Fraserburgh to retain his services for some years to come, education in Fraserburgh will flourish as it has never flourished before.

Mr. Lees laboured away in the old Academy, Mid Street, for a good many years, but in time the attendance became so large that further "residence" there was impossible, if the requirements of the Department were to be conformed to. The School Board was obliged to build a new Academy, and the very handsome block of buildings in Dennyduff Road is a monument to the enterprise of the educational heads of the town. The new Academy, which is a very handsome pile, is thoroughly up-to-date in every detail. It cost £7,215, and was opened by Dr. Dunn, Chief Inspector of Schools, on 8th June, 1909.

STRACHAN'S SCHOOL AND BROADSEA SCHOOL.

Strachan's School and Broadsea School, which were managed by the Session of the parish church, carried on very successful educational work for many years in Broadsea village and High Street respectively, from the late 'fifties or the early 'sixties of last century, till a year or two ago. The buildings became obsolete and altogether out of date, and the Department pretty firmly indicated that they had better be closed, otherwise no grant would be given for them.

The Session, naturally, did not appreciate the drastic measures proposed by the Department, but as the School Board had proceeded with the erection of a very fine, up-to-date school in College Bounds, the Session closed both Broadsea and Strachan's Schools, and all the scholars were drafted to the new school, now officially known as the North School. This school is a credit to the School Board and the town, and the big roll of pupils attending it, and the successful work now being done, prove that the school was really needed. The school, which cost £5,050, was opened in June, 1909, on the same day on which the ceremonial opening of the Academy took place. Its headmaster is now Mr. James O. Black, a native of the "Broch" who received the appointment a year or two ago. Mr. Black is a strong man and a capital teacher, and there is no doubt but that under his care, the North School will do splendid work.

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL.

Yet one more school has to be spoken of, and that is St. Peter's Episcopal School, which has always had a female department and a female mistress attached to it. Although the notice will be brief, it must be said that much good work has been done at this school since it was opened in March, 1854. In its earlier stages, it was an outstanding centre for sailors studying navigation, this subject being specially taught. At the time mentioned, during the winter months, it was quite a common thing to see a dozen men going to and coming from the school along with the children. The effect appeared somewhat comical to the boys of other schools in the town, and the big sailor lads had often to "run the gauntlet" of a shower of not too complimentary epithets as they went to and came from lessons.

The first teacher was Mr. Farquhar Smith, who afterwards became a clergyman in the Episcopal Church. He was followed by Mr. Lund, who, after occupying the position for a good many years, resigned in July, 1865. A successor in the person of Mr. Roberts, took up duty the following month. He remained only a year and a half in Fraserburgh, having been promoted to a better position. The next schoolmaster was Mr. Hawdon, who though only a year and nine months in the town, became directly connected with Fraserburgh, having had the good fortune to woo and win the hand of Miss Pressley, daughter of Rev. Charles Pressley, incumbent of St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Fraserburgh. Mr. Hawdon is now an Episcopal Church minister on Deeside. When Mr. Hawdon resigned, Mr. William L. Hogg was appointed master of St Peter's School. After 5½ years' service, he accepted the position of master of Boyndlie Episcopal School. He afterwards became postmaster of Fraserburgh, a position which he occupied for many years. He now lives in Fraserburgh on pension. Mr. John Gray, a native of Fraserburgh, who had a school in Shetland, was appointed to fill the vacancy caused by Mr. Hogg's resignation. He taught faithfully and well for the long period of 30 years. He died with tragic suddenness. While teaching in the school in June, 1907, he dropped down and was lifted up

dead. It may truly be said of him that "he died in harness." Mr. Gray was succeeded by Mr. Mason, an Englishman, who now carries on the school with well directed skill and success. Mr. Mason has the "Virtue" of being an accomplished pedal organist, a great asset for a schoolmaster and a school.

INFANT SCHOOL.

The last but not least school to be noticed is the Infant School. It opened in September, 1901, at a cost of £6,000. A prettier or more complete up-to-date infant school there is not in the north of Scotland. Miss Duffus, who was headmistress when the school was opened, still continues to direct the affairs of the institution. It is not too much to say that a more successful, more efficient, and more respected mistress never wielded scholastic authority in Fraserburgh. Miss Duffus is an ideal teacher, and a lady of refinement at the same time, whose work has long ago made its force felt in Fraserburgh. It has borne abundant fruit yearly, and has always earned the highest grants given by the Department. In her work, Miss Duffus is conscientious to a degree, and this is the secret of her success.

In closing this chapter it will not be out of place to give, as the *finis*, the names of the members of the present (1914) School Board, a Board that like its immediate predecessors, has shown much enterprise and energy in building up and perfecting the educational interests of Fraserburgh. The names are:—Messrs. John Reiach (Chairman), Thomas P. Barnett, fishcurer; J. Garrett engineer; Rev. J. W. Gillies, Manse Street Congregational Church; Samuel McDonald, solicitor; Samuel Robb, barrel manufacturer; Alexander Smart, clothier; William Stephen, M.A., merchant; and Mr. James Tarras, solicitor.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HERRING FISHING INDUSTRY.

"Fish have no common rule of life assigned
Not to one place, or to one choice confined."

As Fraserburgh really owes her progress and her wealth, if such an imposing word may be permitted, to the harvest of the sea, it is due to this industry that a somewhat exhaustive chapter should be devoted to it. Unfortunately, during a great portion of last century, there was not much striking data to work upon which would make the chapter on the herring fishing industry of rousing interest. This, combined with the matter of fact nature of the subject to be dealt with, leaves no room for working up "the romantic." After all, the reader may prefer a simple story of the start and progress of Fraserburgh's staple industry. Before beginning with the history of the trade at Fraserburgh, it may not be amiss to glance in a general way at some facts connected with the prosecution of the herring fishing in olden times.

It is the opinion of many that herring fishing, as a valuable national industry, is comparatively new. This is a mistake, for old records show that in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Norway, Denmark and Holland attached great importance to herring fishing, and the annual supply of this valuable fish. As early as the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the herring fishing was of great importance to Yarmouth and adjacent towns, and many old Acts show that for certain concessions, Yarmouth had to pay tribute to succeeding English kings in the form of so many herrings annually. No doubt the kings had taken their value and left the herrings severely alone. Mitchell, from whom much of these preliminary facts are taken, refers to a number of other English towns where the herring fishing was a trade of importance in "the dark ages." Even in Scotland, Parliamentary records of 1240 refer to the Burgh duties chargeable on herrings landed. Again, an Act of Parliament of James I., dated 26th May, 1424, says: "Alsua for thay that mony thinges passes out of the realme withoutten Custome, it is ordained and decreeted, etc., that there be paid to the King for custome of ilke thousand of fresche herringe sauld, of the sellar, one penny, and of ilke last of herringe barrellled foure shillings; and of ilke thousand red herringe made in the realme, foure pennies."

The fact that the King demanded custom from those engaged in the herring trade, showed that the business, even in Scotland in 1424, was of real, if not

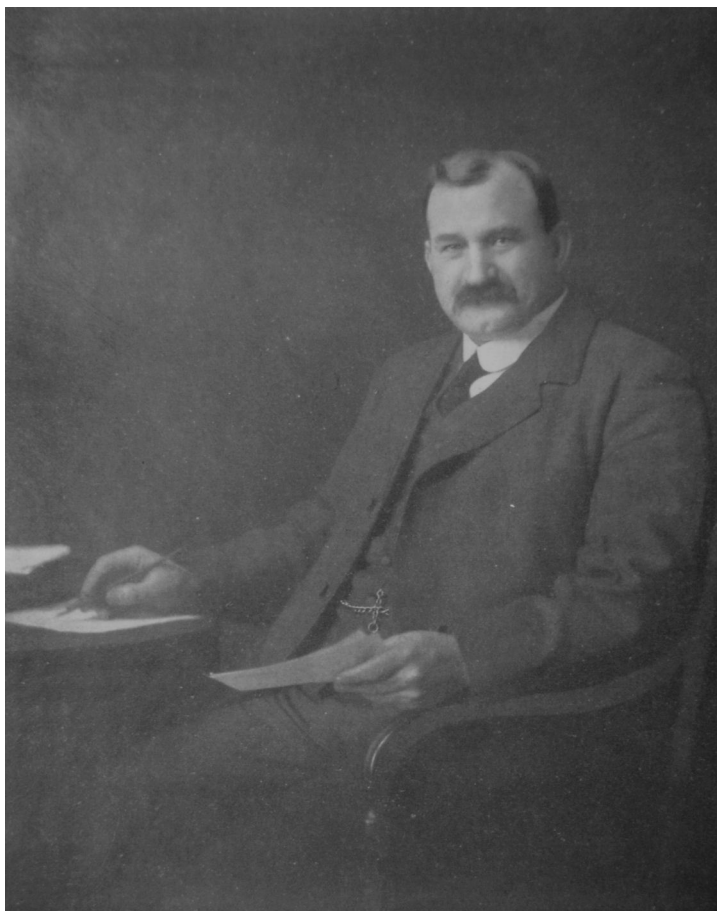


Photo by Morgan, Aberdeen.

MR. T. P. BURNETT.

AN ENTERPRISING AND SUCCESSFUL FRASERBURGH FISHCURER AND AN
EXCELLENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SCOTCH HERRING CURING TRADE.

national importance. If it had not been of considerable extent and taxable, such a burden would not have been put upon it. Fishcurers and others in the herring trade need not be shocked at the tax of four shillings per last of herrings barrelled. The coinage is Scotch, and the equivalent in English is fourpence, not a great tax after all on 10 crans of herrings. It is interesting to note that the standard measure in Scotland in 1424 was the "last," the measure which still obtains at Yarmouth and Lowestoft. Kings Charles I. and II., whatever other faults they may have had, paid great attention to the herring fisheries of Scotland, and these were in a very flourishing condition in the seventeenth century.

Up to the beginning of the eighteenth century the Dutch fishermen were the undoubted leaders in prosecuting the herring fishing in the North Sea, off the British coast and islands. It was a mine of wealth to them. A terrible disaster overtook their fleet in 1702 or 1703. Caught at anchor in Bressay Sound by a small fleet of French war vessels, the poor Dutchmen were fiercely attacked, and some four hundred busses completely annihilated. This was a blow from which the enterprising Dutchmen did not fully recover for a period of fully one hundred and fifty years.

About this time more practical and reasonable regulations as to herring fishing were framed, and bounties offered by the British Government to fishermen and fishcurers, to encourage them to develop the fishery. This liberality had the desired effect, and the Scotch curing business gradually but steadily increased. Notwithstanding this, the Dutchmen were still pre-eminent as catchers and curers, but owing to one Act of Parliament passed in 1750, and others in closely succeeding years giving substantial bounties to the crews of all home boats employed at the herring fishing, and the serious destruction dealt to Dutch fishing vessels by British cruisers during the Dutch wars, the latter's herring fishery gradually declined and the Scotch industry as gradually increased, until Scotland occupied the premier position, not only in Europe, but in the world, as a herring producing country. Fraserburgh played no insignificant part in the achievement of this great national trade victory.

As has been already shown, much was done by the British Government to encourage the industry, but of all the Acts passed, that of 1808 was the foundation upon which the great industry of to-day was raised. It provided among many other useful things, that a bounty of £3 per ton was to be annually paid to owners (a hirer to rank as an owner), whose fishing craft were fitted out according to regulations. Previous to this Act, it was a custom when shooting nets to employ a small boat to assist in the operation, but this was considered objectionable, and the Act stipulated that nets had to be shot and hauled directly from the busses without the aid of small boats. Nets had to have a mesh of 1 inch from knot to knot. One memorable feature of this Act was the creation under it of the first Fishery Officers. This now important body of civil servants was unknown until the Act of 1808 called them into being. They have certainly left their mark on the trade for good, whatever

evolutions in the business the future may bring forth. The Fishery Board and their officers have been the sagacious mentors of the trade, and to the wise, guiding and helpful hand of the former, much of the marvellous advance and solid prosperity of the trade is due.

With regard to barrels, it was stipulated that the staves had to be not less than half an inch thick, the barrel bound with at least 16 hoops and capable of containing 32 gallons, English wine measure. The learned experts who framed the Act and the fishcurers of these far back days would be rather surprised to contrast their 16 hoop barrel with the neat, highly finished iron-bound barrel of to-day. By the said Act, a bounty of 2s. per barrel was paid to all British fishcurers for every barrel of herrings cured by them in proper form.

The new form of curing must have greatly enhanced the value of the article, for an old document tells the fact, that in 1809 cured herrings were worth 32s. per barrel. By an Act of 1815, gutting by knife was made compulsory. The Dutchmen observed this method, but up to 1815 all gutting of herrings in Scotland was done by the fingers. The plan may have succeeded when the daily catch was confined to a hundred or two crans, but when a day's landings totalled from 10,000 to 20,000 crans, as has often been the case in recent years, gutting by the hand, or rather the fingers, was out of the question.

In 1815 the exportation bounty which had been regularly paid, and which amounted to 2s. 8d. per barrel, was repealed, but on the other hand, the bounty on herrings cured was raised from 2s. to 4s. per barrel. The latter rate was continued up to 1826, but in the three succeeding years an annual reduction of 1s. per year took place, and in 1830 the bounty was entirely and finally abolished. The fostering care bestowed by Government upon the herring trade was fruitful in great results; and Scotsmen who had at one time looked upon the Dutch fishery with all its technicalities as quite unapproachable, were gratified to find that the Scotch herring industry was destined to take first rank both in extent and excellence of cure. In the early period of last century all herrings cured to the satisfaction of the Fishery Officer were stamped B.F. Those intended for exportation were divided into two classes according to their destination. Those for the Baltic were marked B., while those for the East and West Indies, South America, Madeira or the Mediterranean, with the letter W. The sweeping changes in the trade and the centres of consumption, have been the cause of these rules or conditions dying a natural death. New conditions and new markets have arisen. Excellence of cure, that is putting the best possible article into the market, is the best passport to success. Holland and Germany as herring producing countries are yearly becoming more formidable competitors in the German and Russian markets; but if Scotsmen remain true to the traditions of their race and strive to outstrip all comers by energy, sagacity and honesty, they need not fear losing the prestige which their name as herring curers has carried with it into the remote parts of the Continent during the last fifty years.

Taking up the story of Fraserburgh's progress as a fishing port, it has to

be mentioned that the first genuine start at methodical curing on a business-like basis was made in 1815, so that two momentous events happened in that epoch-making year, viz., the final downfall of the great Napoleon, and the establishment of Fraserburgh as a great herring curing centre! Up to this date the curing was probably only done for home consumption, but from that year onwards, the business was prosecuted with the view of supplying the needs of those outside the bounds of Scotland, if not Great Britain, and establishing a substantial industry at Fraserburgh. The first distinct records of any kind affecting the herring fishing of Fraserburgh date from 1815, and but for the appointment of a Fishery Officer to Fraserburgh that year, the darkness obscuring the movements of the industry would have continued much further into the century. There is no doubt that herring fishing had been carried on in Fraserburgh and the adjacent villages in an irregular fashion in the opening years of last century, if not in the latter half of the eighteenth century. As a matter of fact the *Aberdeen Journal* of 11th September, 1805, says: "In the beginning of last week, a large shoal of herrings came off Fraserburgh, and immense quantities have been caught." The *Journal* of 31st October, 1810, speaking of the successful prosecution of the fishing that year said: "The quantity taken by the fishermen of Fraserburgh, a month ago, amounted to 4,000 barrels. Another *Aberdeen Journal* extract says:—

"Fraserburgh, September 2, 1814:—

"Within the last three days, the Herring Fishery was prosecuted here with uncommon success, the quantity caught is immense, no less than five vessels have already sailed from this port loaded with them, in the best condition; and the Shores are at present covered over with them, at the curing of which upwards of Four Hundred people are employed. It is much to be regretted, that although the shoals of this valuable Fish are here in such profuse abundance, that the Fishermen employed (few as they are) could bring in a Thousand Cranes in the course of a few hours, they are obliged to stop, in consequence of not having been furnished with a sufficient quantity of Salt and Barrels.

"As Fraserburgh is now proved, without a doubt, to be one of the best fishing stations on the coast as well from its convenient Harbour (which ought to be the primary consideration in fixing a fishing station) as that it is annually visited by vast shoals of Herrings, the Fishermen belonging to it, and others acquainted with the curing, will, it is hoped, be better prepared before next season, with Boats, Nets, and other essential articles. We are glad to hear that Fishermen from a distance, inured to such habits, and who have been engaged in the Fishing at this time are determined to return next season, and it is the duty of every British subject to wish them all manner of success.

"Lord Saltoun, the Superior of the Town, and Proprietor of it and the contiguous fine fishing village called Broadsea, will give every encouragement to Fishermen and their Families, who may wish to come and reside there, and also to Fish-curers, in building Store and Herring Houses, as well as 10 Merchants and Tradesmen of every sort, resorting to the place."

The fishing seems to have made continued progress. In the *Journal* of 14th September, 1814, an extract from a letter from its Fraserburgh correspondent, dated 6th September, 1814, says: "The Herring Fishery still continues successful on this coast; from four to five hundred tons of shipping have been loaded already, besides a far greater quantity remaining on Shore, and are so low as from 2s. 6d. to 5s. per crane of 32 gallons."

The oral evidence of the great-grandfather and grandfather of Mr. Charles Buchan of St. Combs, handed down generation to generation, bears out that herring fishing was early begun at Fraserburgh. Their "story of old" shows a quaint and primitive way the fishermen had of carrying on the trade of herring fishers in those distant days when herring fishing first began. It was to the effect that when the herring fishing was first started in Fraserburgh, it was customary for the boats to come on to a suitable part of the beach at high water. They lay there till the tide ebbed, when they fell over on their sides, the fishermen up to this time having shaken as many herrings as would move out of the nets into the hold of the boat. When the tide had receded sufficiently far, the nets were hauled on to the beach and spread there. The fishermen, who were assisted in the operation by their wives and daughters, then set to work, and picked off the herrings remaining attached to the nets. These were thrown into suitable receptacles and thereafter carted away, along with what was in the hold of the boat, to the fishcurers' yards.

Some curious rules and customs were observed among the fishermen in the prosecution of the fishing in the Fraserburgh district about this time. For instance, each fisherman had his own particular duty to perform on board the boat at sea, and if a boat's crew consisted of six men, 4 plied the oars, and this only, while the other 2 set and hauled the nets. If the fishermen were employed at the line fishing the rule was—4 men pulled the boat, 1 set the lines, and 1 picked the fish off the lines. One can fancy that the division of labour was not always very fair, because in nice breezy weather the men whose allotted task was to pull the oars, would no doubt set the sails and enjoy themselves. The poor men who had the other duties to perform, were not so fortunately placed, and could never shirk their work. Doubtless there had been many wrangles over this unfair division of labour, and it was probably on account of this that the system was departed from early last century.

The first Fishery Officer appointed to Fraserburgh was Mr. Alexander Sutherland, a native of Burntisland, who was the father of the late Mr. Robert Sutherland, Town Clerk, and grandfather of Baillie John Anderson. Mr. Sutherland's commission was dated 17th August, 1815. Those were not the days of luxurious travelling. He took passage by a sailing vessel and arrived in Fraserburgh, after a wonderfully quick passage, on 25th of the same month. On the very day of his arrival, he intimated to the Board of Commissioners, or, as it is hereafter called, the Fishery Board, through Mr. Dunsmore, who long held the office of secretary with conspicuous ability and rare administrative powers, that he had reached Fraserburgh and had assumed the duties of his

office. Mr. Sutherland was a man of strict integrity, who knew his duties thoroughly, and discharged them without fear or favour. He had rather an unkindly task to perform in having to mould the trade into the new and modern form prescribed by law. By some curers the changes were considered unnecessary innovations, and Mr. Sutherland had to fight such prejudices with a firm hand. In consequence, he was not always considered "a saint," but time was on his side, and by and bye he was looked upon by the Fraserburgh curers as a man who had the best interests of the trade at heart. His first and last station was Fraserburgh. He discharged his duties with great success for half a century. Though of rather a retiring disposition, he was a man of sound judgment and marked intelligence, and in the end of his days occupied all his time in the study of astronomy, a subject on which he became a recognized authority. He died in 1876 at the advanced age of 96 years.

Thanks to Mr. Sutherland, 1815 was the first year in which the curing business and curing methods were systematically established in Fraserburgh. Previously, curing had been done by rule of thumb, everyone being a law unto himself. But when, as in this year, curing was done to earn the bounty, the fishcurers had to conform strictly to the terms of the Act 48, Geo. III., cap. 110, section 36, which laid down stringent rules and directions as to how herrings were to be cured and dealt with. The growing importance of Fraserburgh as a herring catching centre must have been attracting attention, and it was certainly this development that compelled the Government to station a Fishery Officer at Fraserburgh. The trade had been gradually extending, and in view of the circumscribed curing accommodation in the town, the curers made application to the then Town Council for curing plots about the Links. A very interesting minute on the subject shows that the trade was looking ahead, and contemplated enlargements before the Fishery Board appointed an officer to represent them in Fraserburgh. At the start of curing, the fishcurers managed to carry on their very limited establishments on little patches of ground throughout the town, but as the trade developed, more accommodation was required, and the trade cast eyes on the part of the links abutting the sea shore, as suitable ground. The minute bearing on this subject is dated 21st January, 1815—about five months before Waterloo—and is as follows:—

"The Bailie stated to the meeting that about a month ago some applications having been made to him for lots of ground at the Links for the accommodation of the Herring Curers. And had caused the officer to warn a meeting at which only Mesrs. Milne, Dalrymple and Cumine, and the Bailie were present. That they went to the Links, and after viewing the ground and considering the propriety of encouraging such a beneficial business and at the same time to keep the herrings as much on the outskirts of the Town as possible. Resolved to let off Lots on the shore at the South end of the Town on Leases of five years, and requested the Bailie that he would cause the same be measured off was laid down on the Plan and thereafter advertised. The same to be roup'd some day thereafter. A Plan and measurement put in the different papers of

the County as well as that published in Leith and notice given by the public crier that said roup will take place on the twenty-seventh current at 12 o'clock noon. The Bailie also laid before the meeting a scroll copy of such articles for the roup as he thought might answer, of all which the meeting approve and order the articles to be engrossed in this book."

This minute which was pregnant with such vast consequences to Fraserburgh, was signed by Lewis Chalmers, Baillie, and William Milne, Charles Cumine, James Gray, William Stewart, and Charles Wemyss. Little did these ancient fathers think when they signed the minute, that they were unconsciously inaugurating a movement which was to revolutionise the trade of the town, and hasten its development to an extent they never could have dreamt of. The ground which was let for curing stations in 1815, was in the neighbourhood of the present railway station, or probably a little to the east and southeast thereof. Of course, the whole curing trade of Fraserburgh at this time was conducted on a very limited scale, the big herring curing station at the date being Wick. The Lewis Chalmers who signed the minute as "Baillie," assumed power about the beginning of the century, and he and his son, who succeeded him about 1853, ruled the destinies of Fraserburgh for a period of 65 years. The portrait of the elder Lewis Chalmers hangs on the wall of the Town Hall, and is a companion picture to that of Baillie Kelman.

The Fraserburgh fishery district in 1815 covered the coast from Peterhead to Banff, and entailed a good deal of travelling upon the district officer in the discharge of his official duties. It will be interesting to give a list of the fishcurers doing business in Fraserburgh in 1815, the first year that the curing industry was regularly established and carried on under Government supervision in the town. These pioneers of a great national trade, deserve their flames not only printed on paper, but engraved on marble. Although they no doubt started the business with the view of "turning" an honest penny and that alone, they were unconsciously playing the part of empire builders, whose preliminary work was to create an industry, the ultimate dimensions and benefits of which to the north of Scotland could not have been dreamt of in their philosophy. The list is as follows:—Charles Lawrance, Joseph Bruce, Robert Sanderson, agent John Barnet; Andrew Noble, Charles and George Simpson, George Coutts, W. Smith & Co., agent James Methuen; John Brown, Alexander Robertson & Co., agent William Paterson; John Nicol, George Milne, John and Alexander Leslie, George Bisset, Alexander James, agent David Kelly. In other parts of the Fraserburgh district there were the following curers doing business:—William Bruce at Inverallochy; Alexander Sim, George Sim, James Sim and William Sim, all at Pitullie; George Milne, at Rosehearty; Andrew Wilson at Peterhead; William Nicol at Gardenstown; James Lyall at Macduff; Alexander Glennie at Banff; and James Lovie and William Watson at Whitehills.

From the above list, it can be seen that Fraserburgh in 1815 towered above the other places, Peterhead included, in importance as a herring station. The Fraserburgh list comprised 14 firms doing business, which, though appearing

small in the eyes of the present generation, must have been looked upon with pride by the "Broch" folks of 1815. The people at that time were just getting a look into "the promised land," or rather the promised "sea," which was to yield up its treasures in such rich abundance to them in succeeding years. Fraserburgh's first consignment of herrings for a foreign market was made in the year 1815, and consisted of 278 barrels, of which 12 contained cured and gutted herrings, the remainder being ungutted, which was the most popular form of curing at this date. In the first place the consignment was sent coastwise to Greenock, where it would be shipped among the 28,705 barrels which that town that year sent to different parts of the world. Greenock had very close relations with the West Indies in connection with the great sugar industry of that day, and there is every reason to believe that the Fraserburgh cured herrings were despatched to the West Indies to feed the slaves on the plantations.

While only 278 barrels were exported abroad from the Fraserburgh district in 1815, there were 5,562 barrels cured, and 1,691 were branded for the £338 4s. of bounty that came to the town. Next year 7,267 barrels were cured, 2,398 were branded, and earned a bounty of £479 12s. The quantity exported rose to 1,902 barrels, which was a big jump from the previous, and showed the benefits to the trade resulting from the fostering care of the Government. People of the present day, unacquainted with the condition of things existing in 1815, will be surprised to be informed about the size of the herring boats then in use. The boats had no decks whatever, and measured about 20 feet of keel and 12 feet of beam. The crews depended as much upon the oars as the sails for going to and coming from the fishing grounds. The craft never went more than a few miles from the shore in quest of the herring. This accounts for the comparatively small loss of life at sea in these early years. Caught in a gale thirty or forty miles at sea, these cockle shells would have instantly foundered, with results which need not be conjured up. The crews, however, excellent judges of the weather, kept the harbour when lowering clouds appeared, and if at sea, smelt danger from afar, and promptly sought the friendly shelter of port before the fury of the tempest overtook them. Thus were they able nearly a hundred years ago to prosecute their calling in comparative safety, frail though their boats were.

In 1816 the fishing at Fraserburgh was very heavy, a new experience to the trade. Until this date no heavy shoals had ever been known, and the trade thus early began to assume a more important phase. September was wont to be the favourite month, but this season the shoals were struck much earlier. On the 21st August, many boats were in port loaded with herrings before 12 o'clock midnight. The fishing continued very heavy till the 27th August, when the stocks of salt gave out, and the curers were stranded. Those were not the days of telegraphs and trains, when a supply of salt could be had in a day or two. Besides, the herrings were always struck quite near the shore. The shoals did not in these days remain near the rocks for weeks as they do

on the distant grounds at the present day, but disappeared as quickly as they came. All the barrels were practically filled, and the fishing over by the end of August, leaving the community rejoicing over their good luck and bright outlook. The herrings must have been very abundant, for the Fishery Officer in the course of his report dated 27th August, 1816, says: "On Sunday night and Monday morning the herrings were on shore among the rocks, and the tide left great quantities of them in the hollows of the rocks at Broadsea, which is on the west side close by the town." The people of Broadsea, who in those days were in anything but affluent circumstances, must have been grateful for a liberal supply of herrings given "free, gratis and for nothing."

Broadsea Hole seems to have been a very favourite haunt of the herring long ago, because mention is made on several occasions hereafter of big shoals being netted in it. The water is very deep in Broadsea Bay, and the herrings would swim onwards, unaware of the danger ahead. Being somewhat like a Norwegian fiord, when the herrings were into the bay, the fishermen stretched their nets across the entrance to it, so that when the tide receded the herrings had either to go into the nets in their endeavour to escape seawards, or else be left high and dry among the rocks, as described by the Fishery Officer. Mitchell in "The Herring, its Natural History," in referring to the periodical visits of the herring says: "Along the coast from Banff to Fraserburgh, herrings are generally caught of similar quality" (Moray Firth fish) "and about the same time" (July to September). "The shoals off Fraserburgh are often very large. In the latter part of the month of August, 1816, the herrings came in close to the shore, and for some days the fishing boats were loaded with herrings of the finest quality, and from Kinnaird Head the shoals were seen to be pursued by a numerous body of whales, amounting to about 100, accompanied by great numbers of sea-fowl." The fishing of 1816 must have been considered an important one, not only to those in the locality, but to others interested in the movement of the herring from a scientific point of view. Whales chasing shoals of herrings have often been witnessed from the Castle green at Kinnaird Head, but the above is the earliest published notice of this interesting sight. Not for many years back has this unique "picture" been viewed by the people of Fraserburgh, and, owing to the altered condition of the trade, it is doubtful if it ever will be seen again, at least on such an extensive and vivid scale as in the past.

It is not usual for two heavy seasons to follow in succession, but 1817 proved a successful one, and coming after the results of 1816, further enhanced the reputation of Fraserburgh as a coming herring-catching centre. It has always been understood that until 1887, the boats fishing in Fraserburgh were engaged for the season for a certain quantity of herrings at a fixed price. This seems not to have been quite the case in the very early dawn of the industry at Fraserburgh. Whether the incident in question referred to the whole of the boats fishing at the port, or only to a part that may have been fishing on chance cannot, for want of evidence be determined, but there is indisputable evidence

available to prove that on the 19th August, 1817, in the face of a very heavy fishing, prices fell from 10s. to 4s. per cran. The fishing though still very successful for several days, afterwards began to ease off. Prices again gradually moved upwards, and by the 4th September, the general figure again stood at 11s. per cran. These officially reported movements of the prices, first downwards and then upwards, clearly indicate that if not the whole, at least part of the fleet was fishing unengaged in 1817. The report of the successful fishing at Fraserburgh in due time travelled to Wick, with the result that in the end August or beginning of September, a large number of Caithness coast crews repaired to Fraserburgh, where they remained to the close of the season. They and the local crews met with such success that by the time the season had quite ended, the stocks of barrels were all used up. This was a repetition of the good luck of the previous year.

The early part of the nineteenth century proved practically a complete cycle of successful years in the herring trade at Fraserburgh. The years 1815, 1816, and 1817 gave capital fishings, but 1818 gave results that simply overwhelmed all previous calculations and expectations. The supply, day after day, kept the people working almost incessantly for weeks on end, and all former records were broken twice over. The people in their simplicity could scarcely believe that such huge quantities of herrings could have been in the sea, or at least, would ever have been landed at Fraserburgh. As early as the 15th August the stocks of barrels of some of the curers became exhausted, and in face of continued liberal supplies of herrings, the price of empties rose to 10s. each—a remarkable figure for the year 1818. In the opening years of the century the herring boats were little bigger than yawls, as has been already indicated, but with the proper establishment of the trade on a firm basis in 1815, under Government supervision, the industry prospered, and fishermen went in for a larger sized boat, small in these days, but large in the eyes of those living in 1818. This larger boat was an important factor in the business, and there is no doubt but that the new and bigger boat had much to do with the increasing catch and increasing importance of the trade. The most successful boat at Fraserburgh this season landed 436 crans, figures that will tend to make people of the present day rub their eyes to see if they are reading aright.

The Fishery Board early anticipated the present handsome curing establishments here. They were, however, modest in their proposals. The herrings were cured at Fraserburgh and other places at this time in the open, without covering of any kind to shelter the workers and protect the herrings from the heat of the sun or the drenching rain. The Fishery Board, which about this time took quite a parental interest in and did remarkable pioneer work on behalf of the herring trade, a leading which has brought the industry to its pre-eminent position to-day, proposed to the curers that the gutting and packing should be done in tents. The idea was an excellent one in those days of small capital; but whether the suggestion made was adopted by any individual member of the trade, cannot be ascertained for lack of evidence on the point.

The Board was alive to the necessities of the trade, but it is to be feared that many long years elapsed after these recommendations were made, before gutting and packing sheds were erected for the protection of the workers and the preservation of the fish.

The remarkable results of the season of 1818 will best be seen by making a comparison with the figures of the previous three seasons. The figures are as follows:—

	No. of Barrels.		No. of Barrels.
1815 . . .	5,562	1817 . . .	7,428
1816 . . .	6,269	1818 . . .	24,398

In the face of the bounty of 4s. per barrel paid by Government for each barrel of herrings cured, the Fishery Officer exercised great vigilance in seeing that every barrel was up to the standard size and its contents of a sufficient weight of fish. This was particularly so in 1819. The officer evidently was anxious to impress upon the curers the necessity for endeavouring to excel all previous efforts at a high-class cure. Curers were continually being dealt with for having some barrels with insufficient contents, in consequence of which the bounty was deleted. Investigations invariably proved that no fraud was intended, but rather that the mistake was caused by the women or coopers putting too much salt into the barrels, a mistake which is not altogether uncommon at the present day. Cases of undersized barrels were also often being dealt with. The explanation and excuse invariably offered in these cases were that the barrels were purchased in small towns along the coast. Delinquent barrels, it was never admitted, were made in Fraserburgh!

It would seem that there were, along with wonderful wisdom and really excellent supervising laws, some very finical provisions in the Fishery Acts, in the beginning of last century. For instance, nets had to be shot and hauled between certain hours, and on no consideration were fishermen allowed to shoot their nets within one half league of the coast. Some poor Broadsea fishermen got into trouble on 15th August, 1819, for shooting their nets in Broadsea Hole and not hauling them within the time prescribed by statute. The "eighteen nets, measuring about 3,735 square yards," were seized "for His Majesty's use." This is a peculiar term, but it was much in use about this time, and any under-sized barrels or insufficiently-filled casks were always forfeited "for His Majesty's use." The Fishery Officer's declaration on the subject of the seizure of the nets is attested by "Lewis Chalmers, J.P." A complete fleet of nets had been shot in Broadsea Hole, and the lot had been hauled on Saturday afternoon, except the eighteen mentioned. These the fishermen intended to leave over Sunday, in the hope that a shoal of herrings "might strike them." Some "kindly" disposed person had informed the Fishery Officer that nets were set in Broadsea Hole, and, Sunday though it was, he seized them and hired men to bring them ashore. It was rather comical that one of the men (a John Noble, of Broadsea) that the officer employed to assist in landing the nets, admitted that five of the nets belonged to him and his crew.

None of the other owners turned up to identify their property, and it is not known if the nets were actually forfeited. The officer was sympathetic, at any rate, for in closing his report on the seizure he said: "I am of opinion that the people to whom some, if not the most, of them belong, are in poor circumstances." The Fishery Board, generally and properly, made a big display of being severe, but in the end they invariably showed leniency, and it may be reasonably expected that the poor Broadsea fishermen ultimately had their nets returned to them.

Notwithstanding many drawbacks, the herring fishing industry of Great Britain, and especially in Scotland, kept forging ahead. The annual reports of the Fishery Commissioners, or rather the Fishery Board, which had to be presented in accordance with the Acts of 1808 and 1815, gave striking evidence of the advances made. One of the truest indexes of the good done by these Acts is to be seen in the fact that, in consequence of the 1815 Act, eight new Fishery Officers were appointed in various parts of the country, *viz.*, an additional officer for Leith, Greenock, and Wick, and a new officer to each of the following districts: Lybster and Dunbeath, Fraserburgh, Liverpool, and Dover. For the year ending 5th April, 1816, there were only seven stations in the east coast of Scotland where any herrings were cured and branded for the bounty, *viz.*, Lerwick, Lybster, Wick, Helmsdale, Fraserburgh, Burntisland, and Leith. It follows that in Aberdeenshire, indeed, in the whole east of Scotland from Helmsdale to Burntisland, Fraserburgh was the pioneer of the herring curing trade. In the course of a year or two Portgordon followed, then Banff and Stonehaven. About the same time, districts were also formed for Orkney, Cromarty, Portsoy, and Eyemouth. For a time Banff shot ahead and contested the second place with Fraserburgh. Of course, Wick was an easy first. But while Banff was able to beat Fraserburgh in the number of her barrels, Fraserburgh won laurels for the excellence of her cure. The Commissioners made it their business to encourage the curers in every way, and frequently circulated recommendations for improving the quality and raising the name of British cure. As of old, they made the Dutchmen their model, and had a number of suggestions printed as to assortment and method to be employed. While other stations ignored these recommendations, one station in the south of the Moray Firth is singled out—not by name, but there is no doubt which it was—as having adopted them with universal satisfaction. Encouragement was also received from foreign markets, and in 1818 a memorial came from the city of Hamburg bearing testimony to the improvement of the quality of British herrings, and making several practical suggestions for further improvement. It is much to the credit of Fraserburgh that she should have been the first to adopt the method of assortment, which ultimately became general in the whole country. In 1820 the high water mark was reached, and not passed again till 1830. There were 34,267 barrels herrings cured by thirty-one fishcurers doing business in Fraserburgh in 1820. Of the quantity cured 28,958 barrels were branded earning £5,791 12s. of bounty, and 21,330 barrels were exported.

Among the fathers of the trade in Fraserburgh, the year 1820 was long remembered with anything but happy recollections. The trade had its ups and downs at that time, as well as now, and 1820 brought about a financial crisis which left its mark upon numerous curers for some years afterwards. As has been already shown, the season's catch was a very prolific one. The consumptive markets were then limited in extent, and such a huge supply was poured into them that they became completely demoralized, and prices fell to a mere fraction. The fishermen had entered into contracts with the curers for a given quantity, or for the season, at a fixed price. The fishermen were all right, but the curer's return for the cured article was only a small proportion of what he was paying the fishermen, with the result that many of the fishcurers were practically ruined. The season of 1820 was the first of "the Black Seasons" which Fraserburgh has had to contend against in the course of the last hundred years. Not only were the Fraserburgh fishcurers troubled with financial worries in 1820, but their cup of bitterness was added to by the Government of the day, who, in their anxiety to help Ireland, which seemed to have been in a very distressed condition at the time, passed an Act of Parliament giving the fishcuring trade and fishermen of that country concessions and bounties, far in excess of those enjoyed by people engaged in the fish industry in Scotland. The extreme preference shown the Irish people seemed to have raised a storm of indignation all over Scotland, and the people of Fraserburgh were among the first to formally lodge a protest with the Government on the subject. The protest took the form of a memorial, which fully explains the grievance complained of. The following is a copy of the memorial referred to:—

MEMORIAL AND REPRESENTATION OF THE MAGISTRATES, TOWN
COUNCIL, PRINCIPAL INHABITANTS, AND FISHCURERS OF
FRASERBURGH.

Fraserburgh,
8th April, 1820.

To The Right Honourable the Lords' Commissioners
of His Majesty's Treasury.

The Memorial and representation of the Magistrates Town Council, Principal
Inhabitants, and Fishcurers of Fraserburgh,
Humbly Sheweth,

THAT the Memorialists were highly gratified to observe the very flourishing state of the herring fishery in the North of Scotland, the prosecution of which has been carried on for several years, in many parts (particularly at this Station) with a degree of perseverance and success which could not have been contemplated; and was the means of giving employment to thousands of poor labourers who, without it, would have been in a state of extreme poverty.

Your memorialists, however, understand, with much concern, that by an Act passed at the close of the last Session of Parliament, Cap. 109, of the 59th year of the reign of His late Majesty George III., entitled, "An Act for the further encouragement and improvement of the Irish Fisheries," the British Fisheries are likely to be much affected; and those who have their capital embarked in that trade ultimately ruined.

The present Act for the encouragement of the British Fisheries allows bounties for cured herrings gutted, at the rate of 4s. per barrel; But, a bounty of 50s. is placed (by the Act above mentioned) at the disposal of the Commissioners of the Customs and Port Duties in Ireland; 20s. a ton to be paid to the owners of fishing vessels of the burden of from 15 to 60 tons; six shillings per barrel for cured Herrings gutted with a knife; four shillings for each barrel not so gutted; and four shillings for each barrel of ungutted fish, with four shillings per hundredweight of Fish for which the British Curers have no bounty; being a bounty to the Irish Curer, for gutted Herrings, of ten shillings per barrel, a preference of six shillings per barrel. And the Irish Curers are allowed other privileges and advantages by the said Act, which, together with the above preference, cannot fail to injure the British Fisheries and ruin the Curers.

Impressed with the importance of the Fisheries in a national point of view, your Memorialists humbly beg leave to pray:—

That your Lordships will take into your most serious consideration the case of the Scotch Fishcurers; and that the government of the country will place the subjects of the United Kingdom on an equal Footing as to Bounties and Privileges, or grant them relief as their case calls for; otherwise, the prospects which they had, of carrying on the Fisheries with advantage, will be entirely blasted, and Thousands of the Labouring Class dependent on their enterprise and perseverance rendered miserable.

May it therefore please your Lordships to adopt such measures for attaining the desired redress to the Scotch Fishcurers as in your wisdom may appear expedient; and your Memorialists will ever pray.

JAMES McALLAN.

JOHN MASSIE.

GEO. TAYLOR.

ANDREW PARK.

PAT. GRAY.

ALEXR. DAVIDSON.

GEO. LIND.

JOHN OFFICER.

ALEXR. MALCOLM.

C. & G. SIMPSON.

JOHN IRONSIDE.

CHARLES PRESSLEY.

WM. LAWRENCE.

ALEX. McBEATH.

W D. KELMAN.

ALEXR. REID.

J. CRUICKSHANKS.

JOHN PARK.

ADAM TAYLOR.

GEORGE BISSET.

ALEX. McALLAN.

JAS. FARQUHAR.

WM. TURRIFF.

LEWIS CHALMERS (Baillie).

CHAS. WEMYSS.

J. DALRYMPLE.

JAS. MILNE.

WM. STEWART.

JOHN WALLACE.

ROBT. MATTHEW.

The Irish people have never proved great or successful fishers, and the encouragement and enhanced bounties given them by the Government were not taken advantage of. Instead of flourishing after the Act of 1819 was passed, the Irish fisheries languished as before. The quantity of herrings cured was immaterial, and the opposition expected by the Scotch curers came to nought. Things remained practically as they were before, as regards opposition from Irish cured herrings. There was, therefore, really no necessity for giving concessions to Scotch curers, and the bounty of 4s. paid them, instead of being raised, was, as already explained, a few years afterwards completely cancelled.

The season of 1824 was a very poor one at Fraserburgh, the quantity cured for the whole district totalling only 24,079½ barrels. The fishing continued poor all through July and August, but the people were hopeful that as usual in seasons when July and August were light, heavy shoals would come upon the grounds early in September. These never made their appearance, with the result that the calculations of the trade were completely upset. Influenced by the big fishings of the few immediately preceding years, great preparations were made, and when the fishing was finally wound up, big stocks of barrels and salt were left over. Great destitution prevailed among coopers and fishermen during the winter, but the wants of the people were much more easily satisfied in those days than they are now. Dogfish were always more or less present on the fishing banks, but in the years 1824 and 1825 the immense shoals of these voracious and destructive pests that invaded the grounds were truly remarkable. The fishermen were almost driven from the sea by them, and when they did venture to shoot their nets, the damage which the latter received was heart-breaking and fit to drive the poor fishermen crazy. There is no doubt but that much of the failure of the fishing in those two years was due to the extraordinary visitation of dogfish.

The importance of Fraserburgh as a herring curing centre was steadily increasing, and as a district it was rapidly spreading its wings. The officer's duties became so onerous that assistance had to be given him. As a fishing district, Fraserburgh was, relatively speaking, of more importance about the close of the 'thirties of last century than it is to-day. People will scarcely credit it, but the Fraserburgh Fishery Officer had charge of the coast line, from Stonehaven on the one side, to Nairn on the other. Mr. Sutherland superintended the curing, and, with assistance, branded the herrings at all the places lying between the two points mentioned. He did his journeys by gig and coach, and seems to have exerted himself to the utmost to accommodate the curers all over the coast. When the head officer was on duty at other places, some of the local curers treated the assistant in a very cavalier way about this time. When the assistant dared to find fault with the mode of cure or the size of the barrels, a battle royal immediately took place, and the assistant was treated with scant courtesy. The local records contain an account of a passage-of-arms between a Mr. Bisset, fishcurer, and the Assistant Officer, named Nicol. The latter refused to brand a few barrels, out of a large parcel, on account of

some defects. Mr. Bisset, in a threatening manner, immediately ordered the officer out of his yard, telling him that he did not know his duties, and that he did not care a fig for him or any of his superiors. The matter was reported to the Board in Edinburgh, and after much correspondence Mr. Sutherland managed to get the quarrel amicably settled. Of course, a curer could not afford to quarrel with the Fishery Officer, and dispense with the brand. To do so meant a loss of 4s. per barrel, and in the end Mr. Bisset quietly submitted to the powers that were, and made amends for his somewhat unreasonable outburst.

It is interesting to get a peep at some of the side issues connected with the trade at this period (1825-1830), which probably are unknown to anybody now connected with the trade. One of these was the business done between local fishcurers and French fishermen, which seems to have reached considerable dimensions in 1826. In any case, in that year quite a large quantity of fresh herrings was sold to French fishermen by the local curers. The former, in developing this business, were not overwhelmed with a sense of patriotism, nor their conscience troubled by a direct breach of honour. The French Government, to encourage native fishermen to prosecute and develop the herring fisheries of France in distant waters, paid very high bounties to the crews for all the herrings caught, cured, and landed by them in France. The Frenchmen started from home with a full complement of nets and other equipment on board, to be the better able to deceive an indulgent Treasury. They tried the fishing in the North Sea, but were not very successful in their efforts, and found that it paid them much better to run to Fraserburgh and purchase the necessary quantity of herrings from the curers there. Although they bought from the curer, the local fishermen generally took their boats alongside the lugger, and delivery was made direct from the one craft to the other. On 26th August, 1826, there were as many as seven French fishing luggers lying in Fraserburgh Harbour, whose crews were purchasing herrings. The vivacious Frenchmen had, no doubt, kept the town lively; but so soon after Waterloo the strangers would be careful not to take too many liberties with the people. The latter, however, could stand a good deal of "nonsense" from "Monseer," so long as he proved "a paying guest." The Frenchmen did not gut the herrings, simply putting them into barrels in bulk. They were, however, very particular as to the proportion of salt they used to the herrings. Having made up their cargoes, they sailed for home, and having, on arrival there, represented the catch as the result of their labours at sea, were paid a handsome bounty by the unsuspecting Government officials. Like the saying "Murder will out," the fraud was found out and swept away, but in the meantime the "Broch" fishcurers, with their limited markets, were glad of the Frenchmen's custom, and must have regretted the compulsory stoppage of a traffic which enabled them to turn an "honest" penny.

In the early days of the fishing all the herrings sent to the Continent were as a rule, consigned—that is, sent to commission agents who sold them in

Germany on behalf of the fishcurers on this side. The following copy of an "Amount Sales" shows how the business worked out:—

Statement of herrings shippt by Wm. Bruce p. the Schooner James Henderson for Hamburg and sold by Cordes and Gronomeyer there, 14th December, 1827.									
Forty Barrels netted	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	£34	10 7
Charges									
Paid Insurance	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	£1	1 8
To Cash to account on the 27th Dec.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	20	0 0
Postages	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0	3 6
Interest of £20 from 27th Decr. to 3rd Feb.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0	2 1
Balance due 3rd February, 1828 .								21	7 3
								13	3 4

It is scarcely possible to get any record of the ruling prices for cured herrings about these years. The above Account Sale, fortunately, turned up, and by it is seen that the price of herrings in January, 1828, ran about 16s. 7d. per barrel. To this has to be added the bounty of 2s. per barrel, which was paid this year, bringing the real value to the curer as 18s. 7d. per barrel. Assuming the price paid to the fishermen to be 10s. per cran, the balance of profit to the curer, after cost of curing is deducted, is not princely.

The herring fishing industry made steady progress upwards until the year 1830. That was a memorable year in the history of the trade, and one that meant disaster to not a few firms. The bounty of 4s. per barrel paid by Government had been reduced yearly by 1s. per barrel up to 1829. That was the last year of the bounty, and 1830 was the first year in which the trade had to work out its own salvation, without any artificial support. A great many of the curers, shrewd, cautious men, took in the situation at once, and met the changed conditions in such a businesslike way that they were enabled to emerge from the crisis with "flying colours." Others, whose operations were bold but somewhat rash, were heavily hit. The loss of the bounty was a greater factor in the trade than these had anticipated; with the result that, within a year or two, quite a financial crisis took place in the trade. In 1815 there were fourteen curing firms doing business in Fraserburgh, whereas in 1828, before the loss of bounty began to tell, the list comprised twenty-eight names—exactly double in thirteen years.

A comparison of the names of the Fraserburgh fishcurers at different dates is always interesting, if only to note the changes that take place on the personnel of the trade, within even a somewhat limited period. The list for 1828 is as follows: George Bisset, Alexander Pearson, C. & W. Simpson, William Watt, William Turriff, Alexander Cockburn, of Montrose; Robert McBeath, James Gordon, of Dunbar; John Wemyss & Co., James Watson, of

Leigh; Thomas Walker, D. Milne & Co., James Reid, Thomas Brown & Co., of St. Monance; John Gray & Co., of Aberdeen; John Jaffray, George Walker, George Tawes, of Kinghorn; Alexander Thomson, Lewis McAllan, Alexander Bruce & Co., John Barnet, John McIver, Jun., & Co., of South Queensferry; H. Webster & Co., of Leven; John Hay, of Aberdeen; David Farfor, of Montrose; William Watt, of Macduff, and William Davidson. After the crisis of 1830, several of the firms named above promptly disappeared from the list. The failure of two of the firms in question was a staggering blow to the industry at Fraserburgh. These were Messrs C. & W. Simpson and Mr. William Watt, the two leading Fraserburgh curing firms at that time. Their collapse created quite a sensation in Fraserburgh. It is not so many years ago since the name of the Simpsons was wont to be mentioned with quite a strong feeling of respect by old people residing in the town, who had been youngsters when the collapse took place, or whose fathers had been contemporaries of the Simpsons. It is due to their memory, even though misfortune overtook them, to say that the early, if not the first, development of Fraserburgh as a herring fishing station, was in a great measure attributable to the initial enterprise of Messrs. C. & W. Simpson. The firm's first curing place was in Frithside Street, in the premises now occupied by Mr. Robert Gray as a coal store. Afterwards they moved to the Barrack Yard, which place they built. Prior to their taking off the ground, the area was a grass field.

Up to 1830 the fleet fishing at Fraserburgh consisted of Firth of Forth and local boats only, but this year some north country boats came to Fraserburgh at the beginning of the season, and they did so well that they continued to return to Fraserburgh. At this time and for many years afterwards, the current rate paid to fishermen under engagement, was 8s. to 10s. per cran, for 200 crans. The period of engagement was six weeks, beginning sometimes on the 10th and sometimes on the 20th July. Other perquisites attached to the agreement were 40s. for lodgings, net ground paid, and nets driven, with three pints of whisky weekly per crew of four men. The last item was one to which great importance was attached. Concessions on other heads might be made, but on whisky never a change, unless the allowance was to be increased!

The curing yards of a few of the firms about this period can still be traced through the agency of verbal lore. The Simpsons' yard has already been given. Of some of the others, Mr. Turriff's premises were at the Garvage, near the station, if not the station itself, recently occupied by Messrs. Stephen & Ritchie, at the foot of Duke Brae. Mr. John Ironside, whose name, strangely, does not appear on the official list just previously given, cured in the yard in Cross Street, long occupied by Messrs. J. & P. Park, and now held by the Commercial Company as a Coal Store. The yard of Mr. Watson, of Leith, was where Strachan's School now stands; while Mr. Davidson, of Aberdeen, carried on curing operations on the ground abutting Balaclava, which is now known as the Ice Factory property. Mr. McIver (spelt McKiever), of South Queensferry, another important man in his day, conducted his business at the top of the

North Pier, probably where the Herring Sale Market now is. Curing places were dotted all over the town, in the most out-of-the-way places. Messrs. Bruce, for instance, cured on a little bit of ground facing Broad Street and Shore Street, immediately to the south of the Crown Hotel. Curing plots were being freely let off at the entrance to the Links, about or near where the railway station now is, and several firms cured there. The trade was slowly but surely consolidating at Fraserburgh. In the year 1830 the catch of herrings in the Fraserburgh district, which included Peterhead, etc., touched the very respectable figures of 56,182 crans, while the number of curers for Fraserburgh alone was 30, being two more than in 1828.

The boats fishing in the district for the three seasons ending 1831 were as follows:—

			Fraserburgh Boats.		Peterhead Boats.		Rosehearty Boats.
1829	...	...	195	...	12	...	44
1830	...	...	214	...	24	...	34
1831	...	...	171	...	56	...	28

While Fraserburgh and Rosehearty were tending downwards at this date, Peterhead was moving upwards.

The year 1832 was a memorable one for Fraserburgh, in so far as it was the year of the first cholera scare, during the herring fishing season. Before referring to this disagreeable affair, mention may be made of an incident happening towards the close of the season, which, though considered of small importance at the time, was the precursor of a gigantic opposition that at one time, not so very long ago, threatened to overwhelm the industry on the East Coast of Scotland. The incident refers to a Shetland transaction. A small cargo of herrings in bulk was brought across from the island to Fraserburgh in September, and purchased by Messrs. John Wemyss & Co. for reds. This is the first mention of Shetland herrings in Fraserburgh, and at the time no one dreamt of the possibilities of Shetland ever becoming an opposing force. How changes come about! Shetland in 1832, as compared with Wick and Fraserburgh, was practically unknown as a herring producing centre, while recently it has been the great herring emporium of the world. History often repeats itself, and who knows but that the two Buchan towns will, in the near future, once again assert their superiority and lead all other producing centres.

With regard to the cholera scare at Fraserburgh in 1832, that terrifying disease broke out at Wick. The fatalities were so numerous that great fear seized the fishermen, and they fled, or rather hurriedly sailed away, from the plague- and panic-stricken town. They headed for Fraserburgh, but on arrival at the harbour entrance a number of the leading inhabitants went to the pierheads and dared the strangers from the cholera infected town to enter the harbour. The poor men, whose supplies had given out, asked for provisions, and these were lowered to them over the back of the South Pier. The unfortunate crews pleaded to be allowed to enter the harbour, as they desired to fish at Fraserburgh, but the authorities were obdurate. The fear of infection

and of a cholera outbreak at Fraserburgh, on the part of the inhabitants, sealed the fate of the strangers. Finding Fraserburgh Harbour shut against them, the fishermen set sail for Peterhead, where they were received without any restriction whatever. The result was that while the number of boats fishing at Peterhead in 1830 was 24, the total towards the close of the season in 1832 was about 200. The outbreak of cholera at Wick that year really laid the foundation of the herring fishing at Peterhead on a big scale. As a matter of fact, prior to this year, the greater part of the Boddam boats were wont to repair to Fraserburgh for the herring fishing season. The strangers were successful at Peterhead in 1832; they liked the place, and instead of going back to Wick next season to prosecute the fishing, many returned to Peterhead ever afterwards. The old Scotch saying, "It's an ill win' that blows naebody gweed," may be aptly applied in this case.

In 1833 the boats fishing at Fraserburgh numbered 222, with a season's average of 98 crans; Peterhead, 141 boats, average 139 crans; and Rosehearty, 35 boats, average 96 crans. The big average of Peterhead this year shows the enterprise and the energy of the BF. crews, even in those early days. These were the cholera suspects who returned to Peterhead in 1833 and changed the whole aspect of the industry at that place.

Though gradually increasing in size, the boats were, at this date, still comparatively small and clinker built. They were quite open, and the fishermen had no shelter whatever, no matter how cold the weather, and even though the fishermen were disposed to take a rest after the nets were shot. The fishing grounds were from three to ten miles off. The time of arrival of the boats from the fishing ground about this time (1833), and for twenty or thirty years afterwards, contrasts strongly with the approximate time of arrival at the present day. In those early days the first of the fishing craft began to make their appearance about 4 a.m., and the last would arrive at 8 a.m. Of course, this was in a great measure due to the nearness of the fishing ground. Gutters and coopers, at this time, had had to complain, not so much of late hours, but of early hours. Up to 1831, herrings were taken delivery of in a manner that must appear strange to the herring trade of the present day. The boats came into the harbour at high water and were grounded on the Beach, as far up as possible, quite away from a pier. They were propped up with supports on either side to prevent them from falling over. In the meantime all the herrings were shaken out of the nets into the hold. When the harbour was dry, carts came alongside the boats, and the herrings were emptied by the fishermen into the vehicles. The baskets were made by the fishermen themselves. They were rather rough, but accuracy of size was not of so much importance, as all the herrings had to be emptied into a cran measure, which was on board the cart. The system of taking delivery on the quay began first in 1832, and gradually the old mode of carts going into the harbour became obsolete. It may interest fishermen and other readers to know that a boat's crew at this period comprised four men and sometimes a boy.

The poor fishing landed at Fraserburgh in 1833 was due to very severe north-westerly gales, which raged at short intervals practically throughout the season. Fraserburgh Harbour was greatly exposed to winds from that direction before Balaclava Pier was built, and consequently boats could not venture out or in with any safety during the prevalence of such gales. Peterhead Harbour, on the other hand, was much more sheltered from storms coming from the direction indicated, and the boats there, were able to be much more regularly at sea than those working at Fraserburgh. This accounts for the greater measure of success attained at Peterhead.

An event happened in 1833 which had a startling effect upon the Scottish herring trade, and for a time filled those engaged in it with fear for the future. The abolition of slavery in the West Indies in 1833 rang like a clarion note throughout the land, and warned the curers to gird on their armour, prepared to fight another crisis in the trade. The battle to be fought was the conquest of new markets to replace the loss of the West Indies. They responded nobly and in the end conquered, displaying a "grit" and determination that was worthy of the best traditions of the trade. Prior to the emancipation of the slaves in the year named, their leading article of diet was salt herrings, which could be obtained at a moderate price, and which kept wonderfully well even in the heat of the West Indies. Nothing so cheap and preservable could be obtained, and accordingly on the slaves' "menu," morning, noon and night appeared in prominent letters the words, "Salt herrings." The poor niggers probably did not hate the salt herring in itself so much, as the memories it called up. In order to efface all recollection of their former degradation, they studiously avoided touching the herring after their liberty was secured. Thus was the herring trade of the West Indies lost. Many Fraserburgh cured herrings went to the West Indies, the ports of shipment being Greenock, London and Liverpool. In 1821 the Scotch exportation of herrings to the West Indies was 80,000 barrels; to the Continent of Europe, 89,524 barrels. In 1851 the respective exports were 2,367 barrels and 198,403 barrels, figures which show how determinedly the trade fought and won.

The catch during the season of 1834 was poor, but a new departure took place which is worthy of notice. This was the appearance for the first time at Fraserburgh of BF. (Banffshire) boats, some of which had been engaged to fish at this port by Mr. George Angus, a much respected man, who for many years cured about where the goods shed now stands. Mr. Angus was the father of Mrs. Alexander Stephen, widow of Captain Alexander Stephen, best known as the master of the *Greenlander*, "Alexander Harvey." The success of the BF. boats showed the wisdom of Mr. Angus' move, and other curers promptly followed his lead in succeeding years. The BF. crews, successful to begin with, have maintained their reputation for energy and big results to this day. There is no doubt but that the material welfare and steady progress of Fraserburgh is in a great measure due to the wonderful work, as catchers of herrings, done by Banffshire crews at the port.

Set in a series of very poor seasons, the year 1835 gave remarkable results at Fraserburgh. The season had been but fair up to the end of August, but Tuesday the 1st September, brought a change which was unprecedented up to that date. Boats began to arrive early, practically loaded with herrings, and such a stir commenced about the harbour and the town generally, as had never been seen before. Fisher wives ran to the piers to welcome and help their husbands. Crews scrambled for berths, which were not so numerous in those days when the harbours were practically dry at low water, and many had to wait at the harbour entrance until the tide rose. The whisky bottle passed freely round among the fishermen and their hired men, who considered themselves entitled to a double share of John Barleycorn on such an auspicious occasion. The curer, not accustomed to such a huge quantity of herrings on a single day, found his staff overwhelmed with the work thrown upon them. The town was hunted for supernumeraries to gut and pack, etc. at tempting rates. The carters looked with despair upon boat after boat coming in loaded with fish, thinking that it was impossible that they should ever be able to cart such huge quantities of herrings from the boats to the yards. The eye was deceived by such an unusual sight, for the whole of the herrings were put into cure, although some of them were late in reaching the curer's yard. The arrivals for the day totalled 225 boats, and as these averaged 42 crans, the catch for the day reached the splendid figures of 9,450 crans. Considering the small fleet and small number of nets then carried by the boats, the average of 1st September, 1835 is probably the most remarkable ever landed at any port in the history of the herring trade. Taking all conditions into consideration, it would be equal to an average of 126 crans per boat, at the present day. One fishcurer, whose fleet consisted of 7 boats, had 394 crans, which brought out an average of 56 crans per boat. One boat, owned by Mr. George Cowie ("Doddles") of Buckie, had 120 crans, the biggest single shot ever landed in Scotland up to that date. The proud curer to whom the boat was engaged and who scored this record, was the late Mr. Robert Hendry, whose curing yard, many readers will remember, was in Commerce Street, where now stand the Catholic Church and Chapter-house. This wonderful day's fishing remained long in the memory and imagination of the fathers of the trade, who in their old age delighted to go over striking details connected with the great catch.

It should be mentioned that up to, and including the season of 1834, Peterhead was comprised in the Fraserburgh district. As Peterhead forged ahead and became of considerable importance as a herring station, the curers there naturally thought they were entitled to a resident officer, and they made repeated applications to the Fishery Board that such should be appointed. In 1835 their request was granted, and Peterhead appeared for the first time in the report of the Commissioners, with a total of over 40,000 barrels of cured herrings for the season. The same year, Fraserburgh with 266 boats, cured 61,053 barrels. This was a record cure for the town, and no small feat, when

it is remembered that Peterhead was disjoined from it and the figures for that place withdrawn from the Fraserburgh heading. The big fishing brought on a salt famine, and the price of that article rose steadily till it touched £5 per ton.

A few facts bearing on the trade, as applicable to this period (1835), will be interesting. The figures don't refer to any particular season, but may be taken as figures obtaining during the thirties and forties of last century. For instance, a boat's gross earnings for the season averaged something like £65. The figure is insignificant as compared with the princely season's earnings of the present day, but the boats' outlay then for the herring season was very, very small. Besides this, the herring season was not looked upon by the fishermen of that day as of such vital importance to them as it is by the fishermen of the present time. Trawlers had not then come to deal destruction to fish life in the Moray Firth and on the banks off the Aberdeenshire coast in those far back years, with the result that the white fishing, for nine months of the year, yielded returns that gave a living, certainly a modest one, to the local fishermen.

At the same period hired men's earnings averaged about 14s. per week, or £4 4s. for the season of six weeks, which was then the period of engagement. The hired men were not expert seamen, and they didn't need to be, at such a miserable wage. The cost of a herring boat was £60, and it is pretty certain that the fishermen of those days had much more difficulty in raising £60 with which to procure a boat than have the fishermen of the present day in gathering together £3,000, the price of a steam drifter.

The measurements of a herring boat about 1835 were as follows:—Length of keel from 24 to 26 feet, and breadth of beam 14 feet. This shows but a slight increase on the dimensions given in 1815, a period of 20 years.

It is only by looking into these old commonplace facts that people are enabled to appreciate how cheap and plentiful money has become now, as compared with what it was in the earlier part of last century. A boat's "fleet" comprised 25 nets, and each net cost 50s. The price per cran paid the fishermen for a long time, till pretty nearly the close of the 'thirties, ran about 9s.

It is impossible to touch on the results of each successive year, and give figures and facts in reference thereto. To do so would be to exhaust the patience of the reader. Therefore, only such years as present points of interest and importance will henceforth be dealt with.

The season of 1838 was rather an eventful one, and the facts concerning it show how enormously the conditions of the trade have changed since then. The fishing had continued backward up to the end of August, and curers, fishermen, and the people generally, were becoming downhearted. They were hoping for a change in September, but that was not by any means certain, and the more thoughtful of the citizens were fearful of another failure, with resultant penury and distress during the winter. Like a quick change of scenery and surroundings in a play, the trade underwent a transformation on Tuesday, 1st September. Mr. John Mackie in his lecture on the "Broch," gives the following interesting description of the day's fishing: "On that morning there was an

excellent fishing, and the prospects of the week were good. About 8 o'clock a flag was hoisted by a Banffshire crew close inshore near the Lighthouse, scarcely a mile off the bay, and a boat being manned by Mr. James Low and myself, we were soon alongside the boat of old "Buckie O" of Portessie, whose disappointed look on seeing who were alongside I yet remember, and his remark, 'I needna speer if ye've ony phusky wi' ye.' His nets and those of other boats were at the ground, but were recovered in the course of the day. In the afternoon the usual preparations for going to sea in the evening were being made, when the cry went round the quays that the herrings were in Broadsea Hole. The stampede was tremendous, and by six o'clock nearly every boat fishing at the "Broch" had nets shot in Broadsea Hole. The scene was the most stirring ever witnessed in connection with herring fishing. The evening was beautiful. The braes and the shore from the Quarry to the rocks were covered with people, many of whom went on board the boats and assisted to haul the nets. Vessels bound up the firth hove to at the Castle Foot; the silvery myriads caught in the meshes were drawn up, and glistened like diamonds in the light of the autumn evening sun. The town was literally deserted. Not a net shot that night was hauled barren, and before many of the inhabitants were in bed, and next morning's average for the whole fleet was estimated at 25 crans, or more than 5,000 crans, being upwards of four millions of herrings caught out of that narrow bay at daylight. At the present moment (1875) I can yet see the animating sight as if it had been witnessed yesterday; hearing the shouting, the laughter, and the ringing cheers on land and sea; see the scaly treasures tumbling, and tossing, and glistening in the nets and boats, and join in the general joy at the herring triumphs in Broadsea Hole."

With regard to details, it may be mentioned that on the Tuesday in question, Messrs. Alexander Bruce & Co. had an average of 58 crans. By the end of the week all the barrels and salt in the town were used up, indeed the "tail end" of the catch had to be cured with "butter" salt. With the exception of 1835, the fishings from 1833 to 1837 had been very poor. The success of 1838 again raised the hopes of the community, and confidence in the future was once more restored. In the interval, however, it was a matter of "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." Trade was almost at a standstill and employment most meagre, with the result that many families, tired of waiting for better times, emigrated to America and Canada. The state of things in the 'thirties of last century seems to have been very similar to what it was in the town quite recently, *viz.*, a continual stream of natives to "the land of promise"—Canada. Many of these did well in the land of their adoption, and so long as they lived kept in touch with their native town, but their descendants, influenced by their cosmopolitan environments, lost the true Scottish love and veneration for the motherland, and Fraserburgh has become to them a name only, that carries with it no loving memories of the past.

Up to 1837 the price of herrings ran from 8s. to 10s. per cran, but for a good many years, beginning with 1838, the figure was from 11s. to 12s. per cran,

which meant much to the fishermen, who were a poor, struggling lot at this time.

The season of 1839 was a poor one, yielding only 36,806 crans, but 1840 gave the splendid catch of 54,158 barrels, being the second best on record. The average catch per boat was over 200 crans, which was wonderful work at that time, and which, after the success of 1838, established the trade of the town once more on a firm basis. Business boomed again, and for a time at least, the emigration fever subsided. Building of houses and shops was more active than it had ever been, and curing accommodation was in keen demand, owing to the ever increasing number of curers doing business in the town.

In the year 1828 the list of Fraserburgh curers, already given, was curiously enough 28, while in 1840 it totalled 46—a substantial increase in twelve years. The list in 1840 was as follows:—John Wemyss & Co., John Elder, Alexander Thomson, William McDonald, John Smith & Co., agent Charles Davidson; Thomas Guthry, John Chalmers, Andrew Duncan, David Milne, William Noble, George Thomson, John Birnie, jun., John Allister, William Thain & Co., George Low, Jones Reid, John Massie & Co, John Bisset, Alexander Pearson, G. and W. Davidson of Aberdeen, George Angus, Alexander Bruce & Co., John Cardno, Robert Hendry, John Gordon, John Levack, George Lyall, James Barclay, P. and A. McLaren of Leven, George McEachran, James Cruickshank & Co., Charles McBeath, James Fowler, Thomas Walker, Thomas Napier of Montrose, James Brown, Thomas Adie, George Farrier, David Farfor of Montrose, John McIver & Co., John Mundie, William Fyvie and John Pressley. Since the year 1828, a period of 12 years, there had disappeared from the local list the following firms:—C. and W. Simpson, William Watt, William Turriff, Alexander Cockburn, James Watson of Leith, John Gray & Co., John Jaffray, George Walker, George Tawes, Lewis McAllan, John Barnet, H. Webster & Co., John Hay, and William Watt of Macduff.

So many changes cannot be viewed but with feelings of pathos by the thoughtful reader. On paper, the substitution of names looks simple enough but an examination of the real facts of the case brings forth a tragedy which explains the changes. Many of the firms which a few years before had bright visions of future success, came upon evil days. The trade seemed out of joint, and respectable, hardworking curers, through no real fault of their own, encountered reverse after reverse, till a final financial catastrophe swept their names for ever from the brotherhood of fishcurers. These poor men, who had attained to some social position in the town and had earned the respect and esteem of their fellows, were at one fell blow reduced to the rank of the common cooper, destined in the future in most cases to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. It is here that the tragedy and pathos come in.

A somewhat exciting affair took place at Fraserburgh in the season of 1840, which deserves notice, not so much on account of its great importance, as showing the strong feeling which Scotch curers had against foreigners who attempted to catch herrings on the coast and cure them in harbour. Such an



Photo by Norrie, Fraserburgh.

THE HERRING FLEET IN PORT, 1890.

infringement of the fishery laws took place on the 25th August, 1840, the culprits being the crew of a French lugger. The craft came into the harbour one day with nets and other gear complete for fishing operations on board. After the crew had obtained a supply of fresh provisions and made themselves "at home," the lugger left with the local fleet for the fishing ground. What surprised the community was that the Frenchmen returned with the home boats next day and cured what herrings they had caught on board their own boat while lying in the harbour, which was contrary to law. This was sheer bravado and impudence, and the indignation of the fishcurers knew no bounds. They proposed force, if necessary, to stop the foreigners' action. The Fishery Officer called upon the Chief Officer of the Preventive Service, and asked him to place his men at his disposal in case of resistance on the part of the Frenchmen, but this the Preventive Officer declined to do. "Red tapeism" must have been even greater then than now, and the absence of the telegraph cut the officer off from speedy communication with his headquarters. Without authority he dared not run any risk of incurring official displeasure, and the only force in the town really suitable for insisting on international law being observed, was not available. No wonder the community felt sore!

The Frenchmen proceeded to sea for another night's fishing, having the effrontery to shoot their nets quite near the shore. They had heard about the "rumpus" in the town, and next day instead of coming into the harbour, the lugger anchored in the bay, and the crew proceeded to cure their herrings on board. The Fishery Officer intimated his willingness to board the French craft and forcibly seize the nets. He called for volunteers to assist him in carrying out the law, but the valour of the curers and fishermen was not equal to their fury, and it was night before a sufficient number of volunteers could be obtained to man the boat. At length the necessary number of "brave men" proffered their services to make the expedition possible. In the darkness of the night they rowed away to seek the foe, and one can quite understand that some of them had quaking hearts in view of possible hostilities. The boat was headed for the spot where the Frenchman was at anchor before darkness set in; but alas! when they reached it, the bird had flown. Apprehending trouble, the Frenchman had under cover of the darkness, promptly and wisely sailed away. It is not very charitable to say so, but it is most probable that Mr. Sutherland and his gallant crew were not displeased at the disappearance of the foe, that was by nature an excitable, and generally a combative character. The retreat of the enemy was the easiest way out of the difficulty. Mr. Sutherland could claim that he had done his duty, while the bravery of his crew could not be questioned. Some of those who had joined the expedition and taken their lives in their hands! declared that they were not volunteers, and demanded payment for their services. How unromantic! Mr. Sutherland made application on their behalf to the Fishery Board for payment, and no doubt those patriots had been duly rewarded. In a sleepy hollow such as Fraserburgh was in 1840, one can quite readily picture the excitement prevailing in the town while this little

drama was being played. All the actors in it have long since bade adieu to this world's stage, and only one of the vast audience— Mr. George Bruce—remains to voice his feelings and prevent the stirring incident from being completely relegated to the limbo of forgetfulness.

Up to 1840, a boat's fleet of nets still numbered about 25, or to quote an old veteran of the trade, from 22 to 30 nets, some crews preferring the smaller and some the larger number of nets. The nets at this date were all made of hemp, and were woven by the fishermen themselves, or by their wives and families. The duty generally devolved upon the wives and grown-up daughters, who, when their household duties were finished, steadily devoted themselves to net-making during the winter. Boys and quite little girls had also to do their share of this task. These nets were very heavy and cumbersome to handle as compared with the light cotton net now in use, and that accounted for the small number of nets carried in the early age of the fishing. Of course, the boats, comparatively speaking, were small then, but applying the test to those now, the crews could never handle the enormous "fleets" they do if the nets were made of hemp. It will surprise many connected with the trade to-day to know that up to this time (1840), and probably for a long period afterwards, the fishermen put their nets out to the green to dry every day. Many of the fishermen would not commence to discharge their herrings until every net was out of their boat. This seems to those connected with the trade now, an unnecessary work, but the hemp, with an insufficiency of "barking," did not withstand the sea water so well as do the cotton nets.

In the early years of the fishing, few hired men were required, as practical fishermen could easily be obtained to man the limited number of herring boats owned in the place. As time went on, outsiders had to be engaged, but plenty of local hired men could be obtained in the shape of labourers, etc., from the town, and "haflins" from the country. The trade developed however, to such an extent that the local supply became exhausted, and fishermen had to look some distance afield for the necessary assistance. The sturdy Highlander was tried, and became an instant success. Besides being crofters, many of them had little yawls with which they managed to supply the household with fish, and through this slender experience of the sea, they readily adapted themselves to the conditions on board a herring boat, and became valuable assistants to the regular crews. Highlanders were employed on board herring boats at Fraserburgh for the first time in the late 'thirties, or probably about 1840. They walked all the way on foot from their Highland homes, being mostly all Sutherland and Ross-shire men to start with, to Fraserburgh, and at the close of the fishing did the return journey on "shank's mare." The older race of inhabitants can well remember the days when in the beginning of July in each year, the west or Banff road would be crowded with Highlanders with their bundles on their backs, making for Fraserburgh weary and footsore after their great tramp. The youth of Fraserburgh were wont to gather in the neighbourhood of Broadsea Farm, and watch the arrival of the "Hielanmen," whose faces

lit up with pleasure as they neared the boundaries of the burgh, and contemplated the prospect of being at their journey's end. How changed are the conditions now! The Highlanders of these days are above doing "a forced march" to and from home. They in their small way, do the luxurious in this age of ease and comfort, and travel either by rail or steamer.

The herring trade was in a developing and transitionary state in 1840, and a few facts bearing upon the trade at that time will not be without interest. The Buckie, or rather Banffshire fishermen, were now playing an important part at the herring fishing at Fraserburgh, and naturally were looked upon with a jealous eye by the local fishers. The outstanding dress of the Banffshire men was a "sky blue jacket," which was greatly despised by the local fishermen, and was humorously dubbed by "Broch" people, "the Bulger's vomit." The word "Bulgers" meant the natives of Cairnbulg and Inverallochy, and is really the latter half of the former name, with "ers" added. The Buckie men mounted their nets differently from the Fraserburgh district crews. They placed a line of corks along the head-rope, a system not then adopted in this district. These corks caused the nets to drift much quicker in the tide way, with the result that they very often fouled the drifts of the local men. This was a cause of much ill-will between the two factions, and "the heads" of the town had great difficulty on occasions in keeping the peace and preventing bloodshed.

There was a theory held at this time that the shoals of herrings came upon the grounds inshore at three specific periods of the season, on which approximate dates only would successful fishings be obtained. Of course, the idea was that the herrings sought the inshore grounds for spawning purposes. The three periods in question were about the 20th to 23rd July, 9th to 12th August, and a late shoal about the first week of September. It is remarkable, judging from old records, how often the shoals paid their visits at the time expected, evidently to oblige the curers and fishermen! It became pretty much an established fact for many years, based on actual experience, that if the weather was favourable at the periods mentioned, the fishing proved a success; if stormy enough to keep the boats in the harbour, the season spelt failure. September often gave big results, but as often as not would whales be blowing, and other evidences forthcoming that big shoals were on the ground, but which, owing to a hurricane, could not be touched. This was no unusual experience in these days, an experience which was followed by a hard winter for the people of Fraserburgh. As has been indicated, comparative failures of the fishings were not uncommon in these days. Superstition, at this time, had not altogether disappeared from among the fishing population, though it may appear strange to say so. The following short description of a semi-superstitious ceremonial will prove the accuracy of the statement. The occult sciences were appealed to in different ways, and often in a hidden manner, to bring success to the efforts of the fishermen; but the favourite method which the Fishermen adopted in appealing to "the gods" to "raise" the herrings, was

the bringing forward of the "Burry Man." The burr, it may be mentioned, is the prickly spine of the common burdock, and is not so well known among the youth of the present day as it was to those of half a century ago, when their amusements were of a much simpler order than they are to-day. Great faith was placed in the virtues of the "Burry Man," who was made up as follows: A fisherman was dressed completely in woollen clothing, to which the burr readily adhered. His clothing was stuck all over as closely as possible with burrs, hundreds being used to cover one person. When thus adorned the "Burry Man" was carried all over the town on the shoulders of two other fishermen, followed by an excited crowd of men, women, and children. After perambulating the burgh, the "precious" burden was deposited at the Cross. When this form of incantation was brought to a finish, great hopes were entertained that the fishing would improve. Sometimes it did, and sometimes it didn't; but if a big catch did follow, the "Burry Man" got all the credit for it. The last time the "Burry Man" was appealed to in Fraserburgh was in 1864. The ceremony was on a much more elaborate scale than was the case in earlier times. The "Burry Man" was mounted on horseback and, in addition to the multitude of burrs on his clothing, there were suspended, heads downwards, from and round the brim of his hat, a number of red herrings. Besides this, the figure on horseback was preceded by a piper, who played suitable tunes while the procession marched round and round the town. Hundreds followed the "Burry Man," cheering and singing, and evincing the greatest possible excitement. Notwithstanding all the "trouble" taken, the season ended practically a failure, and the people were so disgusted with the shabby and unresponsive "gods," that they never troubled them again, and the "Burry Man" disappeared for ever from scenes where he was wont to be the important and central figure.

At this period the nets of the local crews were floated with bullock bladders, while those of the Buckie, or rather Banffshire, fishermen were kept afloat with the skins of dogs, which, when blown up, presented all the outlines of the poor animals with too much distinctness. Dogs were bred for this purpose alone, and the extensive slaughter of them was most repelling to the more humane-minded part of the population. A Buckie man's estimate of the value of a dog was not so much its fine points or purity of breed, but the suitability in size and shape to make a good net buoy. If it had the latter attributes, it was a first-class animal. It is to the credit of the local fishermen in those days, at any rate, that they regarded with abhorrence this "traffic in dog skins."

At this time the wages of coopers for barrel-making was from 10s. to 12s. per week, for four barrels per day, with ends made and staves dressed. In the fishing season the remuneration was 15s. a week, for ten weeks of a fishing, with a barrel or a half barrel of broken herrings as a perquisite. The rates allowed women were in proportion, viz.: Gutters, 1s. of arles, and 6d. per barrel for gutting and packing the herrings. When engaged at day's work, women were allowed one penny per hour. A barrel of herrings and a "rig" of potato-ground practically supplied the wants of a cooper's family during the winter.

It would be interesting to know what present-day coopers and gutters would think of the remuneration paid their predecessors seventy years ago. No doubt they would be inclined to believe that the facts and figures here given were fairy tales. They are nothing of the kind, but actually true to the letter. People practised "the simple life" then, and what appears starvation wages in the eyes of the present generation, were sufficient to meet the expenditure of a family, which was in proportion to the income. As a matter of fact, there is more want and unemployment in towns depending on the herring industry at the present time than in far back days, when there was less pretension to wealth and social distinction.

Fraserburgh fishermen seem to have very early taken up the work of prosecuting the fishing among the islands on the West Coast of Scotland. Mention is made of the industry in the Burgh Records towards the end of the eighteenth century. The intercourse with the West Highlands must have been regularly maintained, for about 1840 quite a large number of local crews were engaged at the fishing on the coasts of South Uist in the Outer Hebrides. While they reaped a considerable harvest from the sea for themselves, they showed an example of industry and enterprise to the natives, which was copied by them, and from which these natives benefited considerably. In the then remote islands of Barra, Coll, and Tiree, the "Broch" fishermen were practically the pioneers of the fishing, and the early development thereof was, to a large extent, due to them. It is not many years ago since the memory of these hardy, venturesome Fraserburgh, or rather Broadsea fishermen died out in the three islands named.

Things looked bright for Fraserburgh from 1840 to 1850, but the 'fifties, like the 'thirties, again showed a retrograde movement, and the inhabitants had rather a severe struggle for existence during the ten years ending 1860.

The season of 1840 was poor up to the middle of August, but thereafter greatly improved, and ultimately proved the most successful season up to date. The herrings were landed in a very regular and systematic manner, which enabled the curers to prepare them for the Continent better than they had ever been able to do before. This enhanced the reputation of Scotch cured herrings. The fleet of boats employed at the port this year was much smaller than it had been for a number of years back, but never before did the craft so regularly fish. This and the remarkably fine weather experienced during the season accounted for the record catch.

The year 1841 would not have been separately touched upon, if it had not proved a typical, "old-fashioned" season, in so far as it proved a practical failure for a great part of the time and then finished up by totalling a capital season's catch. Up to the 14th August the weather continued very stormy, and though fish were on the grounds, the boats could not get out to take them. The following week brought a welcome change. The weather improved, and the average catch for the five days was almost 100 crans per boat for the fleet operating from Fraserburgh. Famous Broadsea Hole, now

of no account whatever, again did noble work. The officer's report on the season says: "On the afternoon of Friday, 20th August, a considerable number of the boats caught very heavy shots of from 20 to 60 crans within 20 to 100 yards of the shore, in a creek called Broadsea, a little to the westward of this harbour." On account of the heavy fishing towards the end of the season, the price of the cured article fell very seriously, with the result that, though the fishing was a record one as regards quantity, it was a bad one for the fishcurers. Many of them lost a good deal of money.

The season of 1842 established a record catch at the port, which record was beaten the following season (1843), but by 525 crans only.

The season of 1844 gave a set back to the steady progress of the catch at Fraserburgh which had been recorded during several previous years. The short fishing was not due to any want of herrings on the coast, but entirely to the excessively stormy weather experienced during the season. Throughout the eight weeks no fewer than fifteen fishing nights, or three whole weeks, were lost to the fishermen owing to gales which raged. It was provoking that storms came on, when there were distinct appearances of fish on the grounds. A considerable business was done this season in the selling of herrings to the crews of French luggers. This seems strange in face of the resolution of the French Government to stop the traffic, but it is quite evident that the wily fishermen had discovered some way of getting to the "windward" of a too kind Government.

The season of 1845 was remarkable for two things, viz., great storms along the coast, accompanied by loss of life; and what was considered worse, an extraordinary visitation of dogfish, which came to the grounds in dense shoals and played terrible havoc with the fishermen's nets. There is no record of any loss of life at Fraserburgh, but of the dogfish there can be no doubt, as the few old worthy citizens still remaining, who can throw their memories thus far back, retain a vivid impression of the despair of the fishermen and the townspeople consequent on the almost irreparable destruction done by the dogfish. It is worthy of note that the last great visitation of dogfish was in 1825, after a period of exactly 20 years. Of course, dogfish were more or less annual visitors to the Fraserburgh grounds from 1815 up to 1865, but in many seasons they were so few as to interfere with the progress of the fishing to a very small extent. Although the season of 1845 was a poor one, the week ending 15th August gave remarkable results, viz., 25,300 crans. This left only 16,100 crans to be accounted for during the whole of the season, before and after the week named.

A curious incident happened in 1845, which, though not connected with the herring fishing at Fraserburgh, had to do with Fraserburgh fishermen, and for that reason is referred to here. Some Broadsea crews were engaged at the white fishing at Bayble, Lewis Island, in the spring of the year named. They had adopted the plan of shooting their lines on Saturday, and leaving them in the sea over Sunday. This "thoughtful" way of getting an extra day's fishing had come to the ears of the local people, and proved too much for the "unco"

sanctimonious Highlanders. A public meeting of ministers and others was held at Stornoway, at which strong protests were made against the "desecration" of the Sabbath day, and resolutions were carried ordering the Broadsea men to desist from the practice. Like the shrewd men they were, the latter desired to know if there were any public statutes that prohibited them from fishing in the way they had been doing. One of their number, a Mr. Andrew Noble, wrote, in May, 1845, from Bayble, asking the Fishery Officer at Fraserburgh if his crew could be legally prevented from shooting their lines on Saturday and leaving them in the sea over Sunday. Mr. Sutherland replied that there was nothing in the Fishery Acts which applied to their case, by which they could be legally prohibited from letting their lines lie in the sea over Sunday. This had been good news to the "Broch" fishers, and no doubt they had defied the over-zealous Highlanders and continued to work on the same lines as formerly.

A new and interesting feature was imparted to the industry for the first time this year. That was the purchase by Yarmouth people of large quantities of herrings at from 15s. to 26s. per cran. With the boats engaged at 10s. and 11s. per cran, the "deal" with the Yarmouth buyers must have paid the local fishcurers handsomely. The herrings thus bought were taken to Yarmouth and made into "reds" for the Mediterranean demand.

The season of 1846 was remarkable for only one thing, but that was of the very first importance, *viz.*, the size of the catch. Herrings were found in great abundance on the grounds, and the season finished up with the phenomenal total of 83,892½ barrels. This was far ahead of anything ever recorded before, and a total which was not beaten till the year 1868, a space of twenty-two years.

The season of 1847 gave fair results, but was light compared with the previous year. Yarmouth buyers were again in the field, but French luggers arrived in fewer numbers than had been the case for many years previously. The patronage of the latter was a distinct loss to the fishcurers. The year 1847 will always be remembered as the year of the famine in Ireland, a calamity which had a most disastrous effect upon the Scotch herring trade, and brought about a crisis which practically revolutionized the industry. Owing to the poverty of the natives and the great flood of emigration to America, the Irish herring trade, which was up to this time "the sheet anchor," so to speak, of the Scotch business, in a great measure collapsed. The Scottish exports of herrings to the Emerald Isle fell from 150,000 barrels to 20,000 barrels, and even less. For instance, the exports of cured herrings from Fraserburgh to Ireland in 1842 were 9,748 barrels, while in 1848 they were only 379 barrels. The industry did revive again a little, but never to any important extent, and the Scotch fishcurer had to look in another direction, if the industry was to survive, and the coast towns of the north-east of Scotland be saved from dire disaster. Fortunately, they turned their attention to Germany, and it was from about this date that the great Continental trade began to develop in real earnest. Not one of those who were the pioneers in laying the foundation of this trade had the remotest idea that it would develop to be the gigantic industry it is to-day. Russia was not

known as a herring-eating country, and a network of railways had not covered Europe in those days. Many other modern agencies have arisen, created by the necessities of the case, which have helped to develop this great herring industry on the Continent. It goes on enlarging with great possibilities still before it, if carefully and judiciously handled; and the men who founded an industry which has been such an unspeakable boon to the upper half of Scotland, deserve that their memories should not be forgotten.

The season of 1848 was long remembered as the season of the great storm. On the afternoon of the 18th August a gale from the south-east sprang up and, as the night advanced, it increased in violence till the sea became a raging maelstrom, dealing death and disaster to the poor fishermen. A few of the Fraserburgh boats went to sea in the afternoon. Those that did go out returned safely to the harbour before the gale reached its height. The wind being from the south-east, Fraserburgh was comparatively a safe harbour to run to. Things were very different at Peterhead. There the breakers rolled into the bay mountains high, and the harbour entrance was as dangerous as a bullet-swept zone in a battle. Some 28 boats were wrecked or foundered, and no fewer than 31 lives lost. It was a black day for Peterhead, and was long remembered with feelings of awe by fishermen and natives of the town.

The year 1849 deserves to be specially noted, were it only for the fact that in that season matties were cured separately, for the first time in Scotland. The quantity was not large, comprising the modest parcel of 16 barrels! The founders of the trade, who did not know such a word, would be surprised to know the important part the "Mattie," really an immature or fat herring, plays in the herring industry of to-day. Probably in the course of another forty or fifty years another selection unknown by name to the curers of this generation will figure as largely in the herring trade as does the mattie now.

The fishing of 1849 was a very successful one, and would have probably been much heavier but for the outbreak of cholera at Cairnbulg, which somewhat upset the fishing arrangements at Fraserburgh for a short time. Early herrings must have been of much higher value about this time than they are in these days. The shore dues cran, which represented payment of boat's dues for the season, was the first cran, or practically so, caught by the boat at the opening of the season. At the roup the said shore dues cran this year fetched 19s. 4d., which, considering that the engagement price for the season was 10s. or 11s. per cran, was a very handsome price. The year 1849 marked another step forward in connection with the herring industry at Fraserburgh. That year fifteen copies of the proceedings of the Fishery Commissioners (*i.e.*, the Annual Report of the Fishery Board) for the year 1848 were received by the officer in June, and were ordered to be "distributed among those in the district most interested in the welfare of the British Fisheries." This was the first time that such an important official document had been circulated in Fraserburgh, and the gentlemen who were recipients of it must have considered themselves highly honoured. These were: Baillie Chalmers, John Gordon, Esq.,

of Cairnbulg; Alexander Forbes, Esq., of Boyndlie; Mr. Skene, of the Customs; John Wemyss & Co., Fishcurers; Alexander Bruce & Co., Fishcurers ; John Bisset, Fishcurer; George Low, Fishcurer; Thomas Walker, Fishcurer ; Charles McBeath, Fishcurer; Robert Grant, Fishcurer; Gavin Dunlop, Rosehearty; Alexander Ritchie, Rosehearty; and Alexander Nicol, Pennan. A good many additional copies came in after years, but in keeping with the spirit of the saying, "Familiarity breeds contempt," the after distributions never gave the same pleasure or distinction to the receivers, as did the first allotment to those who received copies.

It has been already said that the 'thirties of last century gave very poor results on the whole. On the other hand, the 'forties were remarkable for the splendidly successful seasons which followed each other in regular succession. It was the first time in the history of the industry at Fraserburgh that ten successful seasons followed each other. This cycle of successful years did much to establish the business at Fraserburgh on a stronger and more permanent basis than ever. It appears rather striking to those following closely the evolution of the herring fishing at the town, in its earlier stages, to find that while the 'thirties gave poor results, the 'forties produced rich yields throughout. Immediately the 'fifties emerged, the succession of fine catches came to an end. Indeed, with the exception of 1858 the fishings during the 'fifties were all short and most disappointing, and created quite a depression in the community. With the one exception of 1862, the cycle of bad seasons went on till 1866, when a marked change took place, and the fishing became a permanently successful "institution." Many who have been connected with the trade all their lives, attribute the remarkable change and improvement in the fishings to the disappearance of dogfish, and there may be something in this theory, for it was in 1866 that dogfish finally disappeared from the Fraserburgh grounds. It will be interesting to see in tabulated form the run of fine fishings in the 'forties.

The following table shows the fishings at Fraserburgh district each year, number of boats fishing, and the exports to Ireland and the Continent:—

Year.		No. of Barrels Cured.	No. of Boats Fishing.	Exports to Ireland. Barrels.	Exports to Continent Barrels.
1840	... ..	54,158	214	7,149½	19,149½
1841	... ..	51,340	240	6,882	14,539
1842	... ..	67,608½	276	9,748	18,579
1843	... ..	68,133	308	3,810	30,256
1844	... ..	46,169½	346	2,074	20,936
1845	... ..	47,492	368	2,811	23,535
1846	... ..	83,892	362	1,163	40,070
1847	... ..	50,562	360	1,064	24,650
1848	... ..	54,449	347	379	23,953
1849	... ..	67,045	305	1,258	38,269

Owing to the prolific fishing at the different stations in 1849, and the difficulty the curers had in getting clear of their herrings, which occasioned no small

financial loss to many of them, the engaged price in 1850 was 8s. to 9s. per cran, instead of 11s. to 12s. per cran, which had been the ruling price for a good many years previously. This reduction in the price per cran looks small "at this time of day," but the fishermen of that period were much perturbed over it, and quite a considerable amount of excitement prevailed in the trade over what at one time threatened to become a deadlock between curer and fisherman. The latter gave in, however, but the importance of the episode may be judged from the fact that very old curers and coopers often refer to the year 1850 as the one when the engaged price of herrings was taken down from 11s. and 12s. to 8s. per cran. The sober fishings of the 'fifties soon sent the engaged price back to its old level, and the fishermen were once more happy.

Although the trade with Ireland was only a semblance of its former self, some business continued to be done with the Irish people, some seasons more and some seasons less. With regard to the Irish trade, Wick in former days was the important station from which Ireland drew the most of her herring supplies, but as Wick's prosperity waned and Fraserburgh's increased, the trade was largely diverted to the "Broch." Sligo was always a favourite place for discharging cargoes, but there were others, such as Limerick, Cork, etc., where cargoes were directed to, and afterwards distributed over the country.

It was a custom at times for several curers to despatch cargoes and then send a local man to stay in Ireland for a lengthened period, who either urged the sale of the herrings or saw that the agents in Ireland did not neglect the interests of the Scotch curers. Such a man who had to look after the interests of all, was one who possessed the implicit confidence of the trade. The man generally chosen for the mission was the late Mr. Alexander Bruce, of Fraserburgh, who was not only a sharp and keen man of business, but one whose integrity and honour were above suspicion. In fact, his name commanded the respect of the whole Scotch herring trade. Mr. Bruce spent many winters in Ireland, and when business was not satisfactory and the demand slack, he wandered all over the Emerald Isle seeking customers for his and his friends finest herrings.

A pillar in the herring trade of Ireland in those rather far back days was Mr. Andrew Walker, of Sligo, who acted as commission agent for the Scotch firms that Mr. Bruce represented. He lived to a ripe old age, and predeceased Mr. Bruce by a few years only. All the old methods have changed, and the local curers now, never need to leave the borders of their town for the disposal of their fish. The middleman has come to stay, and the marked changes in the trade are due to him. The trade has outgrown the old methods.

Up to the 'fifties the boats continued quite open from stem to stern. There was no forecastle in which the men could sleep or cook their meals. For cooking purposes a fire was bedded upon a heap of stones, in the hold of the boat, and the pot placed on the fire. This was the simple way of cooking up to the close of the 'fifties, and was found sufficient, albeit a little dangerous on a

gusty day. As for resting and sleeping, the crew had to find shelter under the sail. The simple minds suited the simple age.

It must not be omitted to be mentioned that on Tuesday, 27th August, 1850, the Fraserburgh herring fleet was overtaken by a most violent north-westerly gale. Ten boats were driven ashore on the sands, but fortunately only one life was lost. The day was one of great excitement and panic among the fishing population, and its terrors long held possession of the people.

The season of 1851 was uneventful. The average price paid the fishermen was 10s. 9d. per cran, against 8s. 6d. per cran the previous year. Like a good many seasons about this time, the operations of the curers in 1851 were unsatisfactory. Prices on the Continent maintained a low level. For fulls, the highest price touched was 17s. 6d. per barrel. Latterly, they had to be disposed of at 13s. per barrel, which meant bad business for the fishcurers. The fishing of 1852 was poor (39,640 barrels), but prices kept up well in Germany, and the curers made up a part of the previous year's loss. The Irish trade still continued to languish. While the exports of cured herrings to Germany amounted to 39,640 barrels there was not a single barrel sent to Ireland. The spirit of enterprise and progress among the fishermen seems to have been at a low ebb at this period, for a local report mentions that no change on the size or outfit of boats had taken place for a good many years back. The fishings were poor, the times hard and the unfortunate fishermen had really nothing to inspire them to strive after ambitious schemes of progress. They could not spread their wings for want of capital, and they had to struggle on the old lines until the times improved.

The year 1853 calls for mention, were it only from the fact that on the 31st March, of '53, Mr. Sutherland, Fishery Officer, retired on a handsome pension, after giving most faithful and valuable services, extending over a period of 38 years. He was succeeded by Mr. James Davidson, from Broadford, who took up his duties at Fraserburgh on 14th April, 1853. The value of the herring as an article of food was now beginning to be recognised, and an enhanced price was being paid for it all round. This year the average price, including bounty, paid to the fishermen was 13s. per cran, while branded fulls fetched from 18s. 6d. to 22s. per barrel. The feature of the season of 1853 at Fraserburgh was the large quantity of herrings that was repacked for Australia. The Australian trade boomed about this time, but it did not last. The Australians, especially those who had come from Scotland, were most anxious to partake of a genuine salt herring, but the tropical heat to which the herrings were exposed on board the vessels bound out, simply "boiled" the fish, and on their arrival in Australia only a small proportion of each barrel was fit for human food. Thus was a prospective good business "put out of court." New conditions have arisen, and the tinned herrings of Messrs Maconochie Bros., Ltd., of Kinnaird Head Works, can now be seen on any table in Australia in the most dainty and tempting forms. So that what the old generation failed to do, the present has carried through with marked success.

In 1854 the shore dues cran fetched 20s. 9d., being the highest figure yet touched, showing the increasing value of the herring. The prices at which curers contracted with buyers for branded fulls were from 20s. to 21s. per barrel; but some got from 22s. to 22s. 6d., and those who consigned to the Continental markets direct, got returns which averaged from 22s. to 24s. per barrel. These figures should be interesting to those in the herring trade at the present day. The year 1854 was a good one for the fishcurers, who had been pretty much in "the wilderness" during the previous ten seasons. While the shore dues cran in 1855 fetched 19s. 9d., the figure realized in 1856 was the remarkable one of 28s. 3d., which was a record far above the next best.

Although not herring trade information, an interesting item of fishing news may be given here. The local boats that had been engaged in the spring of 1856, at the white fishing on the West Coast, returned with earnings of from £160 to £176 per boat. Considering the crews' expenditure then, this is much better business than is being done by the fishermen on the West Coast at the present day.

Mr. James Davidson, Fishery Officer, resigned his appointment on 25th July, 1857, having received an important position with "The Great West of Scotland Fishery Co., Ltd.," with residence in Glasgow. Mr. Davidson had been scarcely four years in office in Fraserburgh. He was a most courteous and kindly man, and a very capable official, and his resignation caused much disappointment in herring trade circles. Like many other fishing companies, "The Great West of Scotland," notwithstanding its imposing name, was not a success. After a few years the concern was wound up, and Mr. Davidson returned to Fraserburgh and commenced curing on his own account. He lived to an old age, highly respected by the whole community. Mr. Davidson was succeeded by Mr. Couper, from Ardrishaig, who remained officer in Fraserburgh for a very lengthened period.

The season of 1857 was the poorest for a period of 30 years, and owing to the limited supply of cured fish, prices of branded fulls in the end of the season, rose to 36s. per barrel, and spents to 32s. In 1858 some crews made engagements at 21s. per cran and £35 bounty, being the first time in the history of the trade that the fishermen's price had reached 20s. per cran or upwards. Those figures were due to the poor fishing of the previous year sending prices of cured herrings up to an extravagant level, which enabled curers to do well in 1857. This was not altogether in their interest. They "lost their heads" over their success, and the above inflated prices to the fishermen was the result. These big prices, combined with a heavy fishing, upset everybody's calculations, and the season of 1858 turned out a very bad one financially for the fishcurers. The result was that the fishermen's prices for 1859 fell to a much more normal level.

About the middle of last century there was considerable division of opinion in the trade as to the utility of the brand. While the large proportion of the trade was in favour of the brand, a small but somewhat influential section was in favour of the brand being entirely abolished, so that the product of each



Photo by Norrie, Fraserburgh.

"LAIRDIE," A STRIKINGLY FINE PHOTO OF A TYPICAL BROADSEA FISHERMAN. "LAIRDIE" WAS AN EXCELLENT VOCALIST, HIS FULL DRESS EFFORT BEING ALWAYS "THE EWIE WI' THE CROOKIT HORN."

curer should be judged upon its own merit and quality, and on these alone. A good deal could be said in favour of the contention of the latter, but there is no doubt that the brand greatly helped to improve and consolidate the herring trade of Scotland. Its regulations for the improvement of the cure of herrings, and a standard size of barrel, were conceived in wisdom and foresight, and were wisely and faithfully carried out by the Fishery Officers. Working up to the requirements of the brand lifted the herring trade of Scotland on to a different and higher level altogether. Without the stringent regulations which the brand imposed, curers would have worked each on his own lines, and thus the trade as a whole, would have been probably some 20 or 30 years behind what it was without the business-like methods of the Fishery Board hurrying it on. From a financial point of view, the brand has greatly helped to develop the trade. Branded fish was a negotiable article, like a bill of exchange, when the trade was in its younger days, and many a poor curer who was not overburdened with an excess of capital, was, by the help of the brand, able to overcome the difficulties of finance and rise to a position of affluence and respect. Of course, it will be admitted by everybody that the brand was much more essential to the prosperity of the trade last century than it is to-day. Evolution is making itself felt in the herring trade, as in everything else, and though things have greatly changed for the better, as regards the methods of curing herrings, it is very questionable if even to-day the abolition of the Government brand would be in the interests of the trade as a whole, notwithstanding the success of some "trade markers."

The persistent agitation of the brand abolitionists in the early 'fifties was such that a Parliamentary Commission was appointed to visit all the chief herring centres in Scotland and to ascertain the true feelings of the trade on the subject, with the view of reporting the result of their labours to Parliament. So far as the herring trade of Fraserburgh was concerned, there were none decidedly opposed to the brand. Some five firms were neutral, while the remainder of the trade was in favour of the brand. The Commission visited Fraserburgh on 1st August, 1856, and heard evidence. For the neutrals there were examined the late Mr. Alexander Bruce, and Mr. John Park, father of the late Provost Park. For those in favour of the brand there were examined the late Messrs. Charles McBeath, George Low, and James Lovie. This incident looks small and insignificant in these days, but one can imagine the importance that had been attached to the visit of a Parliamentary Commission regarding the brand, and the excitement that had possessed the trade, when a number of well-known Members of Parliament visited the town on the question.

The Commission reported that not only was there an overwhelming proportion of the trade in favour of the brand, but that they were of opinion that the brand was altogether beneficial to the herring fishery. Not only was the brand continued, on the faith of the Report, but a fee of 4d. per barrel branded was imposed for the first time in 1859. The intimation, in 1858, that

a brand fee of 4d. per barrel was to be made in succeeding years, called forth a strong protest from the curing trade; and some of the Commissioners of Fishery even, thought branding should be continued free of charge. Many of the fishcurers threatened to ignore the brand, and intimated their determination to send their cure out to the Continent unbranded. This raised a protest from all the commission agents and buyers in the German ports. They sent to this country an ably worded petition, begging the curers to adhere to the brand, and pointing out the dangers to the trade if unbranded fish were consigned to Germany. The attitude taken up by the German merchants seems to have had a most decisive influence on the agitation in Scotland against the brand, for the fishcurers, without exception, continued branding for at least 30 years afterwards. The following list of signatures to the German petition for Stettin is interesting; but, alas! of the 20 names given, only one—William Reid—appears in the Stettin list of to-day. The list referred to is as follows: “Aug. Hoffschild, Richter & Theune, Wm. Reid, Albert de la Barre, Krüger & Dummer, Ludwig Wehr, August Krieger, Adolph Kirsteim, Friedr. Ferd, Rosentahl & Co., Carl Stephen, Carl Pommer, Goltdammer & Schleidi, Nachf., Proschwitski and Hoffrichter, Julius Rohleder, A. Silling & Co., B. Stumer, Victor Horn, Ed. Wellmann, Gustav Wellmann, and G. H. von Stade. The firm of Th. H. Schröder of Stettin, though not appearing in the above list, was formed in the year 1847. Its close business connection with Fraserburgh for many years entitles it to some notice here. The house of Th. H. Schröder was best known to the curers on this side in the old days when the latter consigned their herrings to commission agents in Germany for disposal. Now, the buyers, or middlemen on this side, have displaced the old German commission agents, whose names, since the business has taken a new form, are practically unknown in Scotland in these days. The firm of Th. H. Schröder is still in existence, in the very front of enterprising business houses, and has half a century’s history of success behind it, probably unequalled by any firm of herring merchants on the Continent. Its dealings with its Scotch patrons have been the acme of honour, and the traditions of the firm give it a standing and a strength which seem, unlike old-age generally, to increase as the years roll on. The worthy head partner of the firm—Mr. Casper G. Nordahl— has seen many changes in the trade in his day, but with true business instinct, he has met every period of evolution in the industry with success, and has established a business that is not only a credit to Stettin but will be a monument to his memory when he is gone.

It is rather a remarkable coincidence, and worthy of notice, that while the name of only one of the twenty Stettin firms that signed the petition in 1859 is still on the business list of the city, exactly the same result obtains with regard to the Fraserburgh fishcurers. Of the list of those in business in 1859, only one firm—Messrs. Alexander Bruce & Company—remains on the Fraserburgh list to-day in its original garb, a sad commentary on the ravages of time, and the financial uncertainty of the herring industry. The list of Fraserburgh

fishcurers, with the number of boats fishing to each given in brackets, in 1859, was as follows:—

George Angus (9).	William McDonald (1).
John Bisset (5).	J. McDuie & Company (4).
Alexander Bruce & Company (61).	John Massie & Company (15).
David Clark & Company (7).	Nisbet & Company (10).
A. & J. Duncan (10).	J. & P. Park (13).
Great West of Scotland Fishing Company (13).	John Pressley (4).
James Guthrie (9).	James Park, Jun. (7).
David Hay (2).	James Ritchie & Company (3).
Robert Hendry (5).	Alexander Syme (9).
George Low (12).	James Stephen (7).
James Lovie (13).	Gordon Thomson (4).
Lewis McAllan (5).	Peter Thomson (6).
Charles McBeath (8).	Alexander Wilson (13).
William Murison (6).	John Wemyss (8).
James Methuen (18).	Thomas Walker (11).

The above list shows a total of 30. In 1862 the list had dwindled down to a total of 17 firms curing in Fraserburgh—truly a deplorable state of affairs! In 1866 the fishcurers of Fraserburgh numbered only 18 firms, but that was the last season of dogfish, and thereafter the list gradually swelled out until for many seasons Fraserburgh's list of fishcurers touched 80.

A very significant change, or rather improvement, was introduced by the fishermen at the close of the 'fifties, which had a great influence on the fishing. It was about the year 1859 that hemp nets were discarded by the Scotch fishermen, and cotton nets substituted for them. The change had far reaching results. The boats were able to carry many more cotton than hemp nets, and the latter were much more easily handled by the fishermen. The result was that a "fleet" of cotton nets, when shot, presented an immensely increased space for herrings to go into than did a "fleet" of hemp nets. As a consequence, when herrings were on the grounds, far larger quantities of them were taken than formerly, so that the cotton net was a power for good, which only those in the herring trade in the early days can fully appreciate. It was also in the late 'fifties that the old-fashioned plan of waiting till the herrings came near the shore before attempting to catch them, was considered out of date. The fishermen gradually began to go farther and farther afield in search of the silvery spoils of the deep, and those who had the greatest enterprise among the fishermen, met as in every other industry with the greatest reward. Instead of considering a distance of 8 or 10 miles off as the limits of range, fishermen about this period began to proceed 20, 30 and even 40 miles off before shooting their nets.

The pioneers in offshore or distant ground herring fishing were undoubtedly the fishermen composing the Fraserburgh fleet, and the particular heroes who led the way were two Buckie skippers named George Murray ("Barron") and John Murray ("Gyk"). Like the explorers of old, these two hardy and enterprising fishermen ventured into what was practically "an unknown sea" to Scotch fishermen. Their temerity in going so far away from land in search of herrings, was considered "a tempting of Providence" by many of their fellows. They persisted, however, and they had their reward in outstanding success. While the average season's catch would have been from 150 to 200 crans, "Barron's" total would have been nearer 500 crans. "Barron's" success was not altogether due to his long distance fishing. He was a man of progress, and he was one of the first of northern fishermen to go in for cotton nets and an increased "fleet" from 25 to 50 nets. The two together accounted for his extraordinary success as a fisher of herrings. The present generation know nothing of this remarkable fisherman. Forty odd years ago, his was a name to conjure with all along the coast, and there is no doubt but that he is entitled to the credit of having introduced the modern style of herring fishing. Having given in tabulated form the most successful fishings of the 'forties, the following figures show the persistent bad luck which followed the fishing seasons in the 'fifties. As already noted, 1858 was the only exception.

Year.	Season's Catch, in Barrels.	Year.	Season's Catch, in Barrels.
1850 . . .	43,683½	1855 . . .	41,405
1851 . . .	47,606½	1856 . . .	40,517½
1852 . . .	39,640	1857 . . .	36,407
1853 . . .	53,755	1858 . . .	61,089
1854 . . .	44,215	1859 . . .	33,781

With the exception of 1862, the results of the fishing in the early 'sixties make melancholy reading. The repeated failures at this period were entirely due to the extraordinary visitations of dogfish, which worked as much havoc as did the plagues of locusts in ancient history. For instance, the fishing of 1860 for the district yielded only 28,800 barrels. This was the poorest fishing since 1833, a period of 27 years. Owing to the absence of dogfish during the season of 1862, the catch that year was the biggest on record, viz., 77,124 barrels for the district. The fleet of boats fishing at Fraserburgh that season was 176, and these landed a total catch of 43,253 crans, being, for those days at least, the phenomenal average of 245 crans per boat.

The experiences during the season of 1862 led the natives and the fishermen to believe that they had been delivered from the thralldom of dogfish, and they sang pæans of thankfulness for the removal of what was really the one obstruction to the progress of the herring industry. They looked forward to a steady advance in the future, but their sanguine hopes were short lived. Not only were 1860 and 1861 "great" dogfish years, but the season of 1863, to the surprise of all, turned out equally bad. The years 1860, 1861, and 1863 were

truly remarkable for the extraordinary "plagues" of dogfish. The sea seemed to be teeming with them, and the herrings were no sooner caught in the nets than the dogfish "rushed" at the toothsome morsel. Not only were the nets cleaned of the herrings or only pieces of them left, but the nets themselves were often so seriously torn as to be almost useless. It was a trying time for the fishermen, as they could not make a counter attack in the hope of extirpating the scourge, so extraordinarily numerous were they. It is well remembered by older natives that in 1861 when the Channel Fleet passed Fraserburgh, a rarer sight then than now and one not to be forgotten, the sea in this neighbourhood at the time was literally "alive" with dogfish.

During several of the seasons about this time, the fishermen, finding they could not get herrings, set to catching dogfish in order to eke out their income somewhat. The dogfish were in demand by farmers for the purpose of manuring the land. The agriculturist also extracted from the fish, oil which he used for lighting the house during the long winter months. The creatures were so voracious that they were quite easily caught. The process was as follows: When darkness had set in, a lantern was hung over the boat's side, in a position calculated to throw as much light upon the water as possible. Three herrings were tied together and suspended by a string over the surface of the sea. The boats were undecked, and a man could lie over the boat's side, having one leg on board, and the other hanging over the side. He was thus able to lean quite easily over till his hand touched the water. Whenever the light revealed the herrings, the dogfish made straight for them and when trying to reach them, the men picked them out of the sea by hand and threw them into the boat. The dogfish being so voracious that they made for the suspended herrings in hundreds, and the fishermen had no difficulty in soon filling their boats with them.

The herring industry of Scotland was brought to such a precarious state, owing to the depredations of dogfish that the Fishery Board, about 1850, thought that the prosecution of dogfishing might be made more profitable to the fishermen than the prosecution of the herring fishing. They therefore called upon the Fishery Officer at Fraserburgh to give a report on the feasibility of their proposals. In the chapter on "Burgh Records," reference is made to dogfishing, and the opinion is hazarded there that this business must have at one period been a regular industry at Fraserburgh. The conjecture is amply confirmed by the Officer's report to the Fishery Board, which is as follows:—

"In reporting on this subject, allow me to state that I am informed that 40 or 50 years ago" [about the beginning of last century] "the Fishermen here were in the practice of making the Dog-fishing a branch of their employment—that their lines were fitted for the express purpose, the hooks being longer in the shank so as to prevent the mouth of the fish coming in contact with that part of the line called the *snead*,—the sneads were about 15 inches long and placed about 3 feet apart on the line, that after extracting the livers they sold the fish to the Farmers for manure, as few of them were used for food; the price they obtained for the oil was considerably higher than could be got now, and

I may add that from all I can learn it is very unlikely that the Fishermen will again have recourse to the taking of Dog-fish as a branch of their employment.

"The Fishermen do not think that the skins would pay them for the trouble they would have in taking them off, although done in the easiest manner, *viz.*, by cutting all the fins, and cutting the skin open at back and belly so as to allow it to come off in two pieces; whereas the Six skins now sent required more time in skinning, as it was studied to keep them whole for the purpose of drying them quickly and keeping them in their natural form.

"The livers of the fish have usually been allowed to lie over for a considerable time before being made into oil, hence the oil had a disagreeable smell,—but in order to prevent this detriment, the livers ought to be made into oil as soon as possible, and I am informed that 3 or 4 days at most (in warm weather) is sufficient time for them to lie before being boiled.

"The Dog-fish when skinned and boiled is allowed to be wholesome and palatable food— but as they are got here in greatest numbers during the Herring fishing season they are of less esteem for food, and are generally bought by the Farmers *entire* at prices from threepence to tenpence per score; last season the price was about fivepence, the Farmers make manure of the fish after extracting the livers for their winter's oil."

Dogfishing at sixpence per score even, is a miserable business. The fishermen knew perfectly that "the game was not worth the candle," and as is well known, the proposals of the Fishery Board came to nothing. Fortunately the disease worked its own cure a few years later in the simplest possible way, *viz.*, by the mysterious disappearance of the dogfish. To show the desperate condition to which the curing trade here was brought by the plethora of dogfish on the grounds, the following figures are given:—

Year.	No. of Boats Fishing.			Average Crans.		Season's Catch Crans.	
1860	251	...	69	...	17,319
1861	175	...	95	...	16,625
1863	227	...	109 $\frac{2}{3}$	...	24,907

A season's catch of even 25,000 crans was altogether inadequate to maintain in anything like a healthy condition the general trade of the town, and it was no wonder that the "Burry Man" was appealed to for assistance. His efforts on behalf of the trade were not immediately successful, at all events, the years 1864 and 1865 saw the fishing dragging on its weary length, and giving such miserable results that the trade, sanguine as a rule, was in the depths of despair. The old enemy, the dogfish, accounted for the failure. Dogfish had been more or less in evidence on the grounds from the earliest times, some seasons in much more abundance than others, but the season of 1865 was particularly bad. Had the plague of dogfish continued as destructive in the immediately following years, there was a great probability of the industry collapsing altogether. But events were ordered otherwise. The year 1865 seems to have brought the dogfish "fiend" to a climax. Its ravages were worse

than ever, but its supreme efforts at destruction that season seem to have exhausted its potency for evil, for after waging a most destructive war against Scotch fishermen for hundreds of years, it practically retired from the contest at the close of the season '65. Dogfish have been met with on the grounds since then, notably in 1876, when the trade received quite a scare by the reports of the fishermen on the subject; but no serious developments took place, and it may be truly said that for the last 47 years dogfish have not counted as a factor of any consequence in the herring industry of the east coast of Scotland.

The outbreak of the war between Germany and Denmark in 1864 added to the troubles of the Scotch fishcurers, and the terrors of "the blockade" were conspicuously before them for a time. This was short lived, as the multitudinous legions of Germany soon overwhelmed the tiny, but brave army of Denmark, and left the "road" open to all the German ports. The statistics of the fishing for 1864 and 1865, show but a very small improvement on those of several of the immediately preceding very bad years.

With the disappearance, or practically so, of dogfish, the season of 1866 marked a very substantial improvement. Herrings were abundant on the grounds, and as the fishermen met with no obstacles in the prosecution of the fishing, the catch went up by leaps and bounds. Everything looked roseate, when unexpectedly cholera broke out, and all the machinery of the fishing season was knocked out of gear. As a full description of this cholera outbreak is given in a previous chapter, no further reference need be made to it here. The season of 1866 was the first real change in the fortunes of Fraserburgh, and the extent of the catch obtained, under the worst possible conditions, gave some indication of what would have been done had no outbreak of cholera taken place. The season's catch would certainly have been a record one. The cholera visitation was a very serious and appalling catastrophe, but the community, in a quiet way, held the opinion that their immunity from the troubles of dogfish more than counterbalanced the evil effects of the outbreak of cholera. During the season, herrings were got on the old inshore grounds in fair quantities, but the greatest success was achieved from 20 to 25 miles off. It was something entirely new for the boats, as a whole, to go that distance off in search of herrings, and '66 was practically the first season for offshore fishing. From that time the fishermen yearly went farther and farther afield in search of herrings, until now the crews of steam drifters think nothing of steaming 50 to 70 miles off before "shooting." Notwithstanding the serious interruptions to trade already referred to, the catch for the season of 1866 reached the considerable figures of 40,221 crans.

It is not generally known that the herring trade has produced poets. It is not a very sentimental or classical business that would tend to inspire the poetic genius, but still Fraserburgh, or rather Rosehearty, produced one fishcurer who had a penchant for the poets, and who wrote "slashing" prose, as well as poetry. The person in question was the late Mr. James Ritchie, fishcurer, Fraserburgh and Rosehearty. He had distinct literary ability, and wrote

regularly for the local press. About this time he wrote his best known effusion, viz., the "Herring Song," which has a distinct bearing on the herring fishing. The song was so much esteemed when it appeared, that it was set to music by the late Mr. Robert Anderson, solicitor, Fraserburgh, and published by Messrs. Novello, Ewer & Co. of London. Although the song was well known to many of the Fraserburgh curers of the 'sixties, it is a memory to only a few now living. To the present generation of fishcurers who have never heard of the song, the fragment must be interesting, and it is reproduced here for their benefit and in the hope that if there is any latent poetic talent in the herring trade of the present day, the noble example set by one of the old school may bring such poetic talent into evidence. The song is as follows:—

HERRING SONG.

They come, they come—the herrings come;
 They're growing every day;
 From many an off-shore bank they come,
 From many an in-shore bay.

The merchant buys; the merchant sells;
 The merchant gets his gain;
 The sailor leaves his home and dwells
 Away on the lonely main.

The herrings come in silver sheen;
 They bring the fisher bread,
 He bounds along the waters green,
 His brown sails bravely spread.

The proudest laird in all the land
 No freer is than he,
 He holds his charter by his hand,
 His birth-right is the sea.

They come they come—the herrings come;
 They're growing every day;
 From many an off-shore bank they come,
 From many an in-shore bay.

They come to keep "the bairnies ticht,"
 The tradesmen all to pay;
 They're meal and milk, "an' fire an' licht,"
 In mony a winter day.

The bonny bridal braws they buy;
 They fat the farmer's field;
 Our Frithside homes, our houses high,
 And shining shops they build.

God help the hardy herring men,
 Who keel the cold North Sea,
 In peace and plenty home again!
 They're helping you and me.

They come, they come—the herrings come:
 They're growing every day;
 From many an off-shore bank they come,
 From many an in-shore bay.

The seasons of 1867, 1868 and 1869 were not marked by any outstanding incidents. The first two seasons named were wonderfully successful, 1868 giving the biggest catch on record. The season of 1869 was rather a poor one, the average catch per boat being only 114 crans. It is worthy of note that up to and including 1867, Wick was the leading herring fishing station on the East Coast of Scotland. In 1868 Fraserburgh passed Wick in importance, and may be said to have maintained the lead ever since. Fraserburgh also left Peterhead behind, and occupied the premier position until the last season or two, when Peterhead's great steam-drifter fleet enabled her once or twice to pass her old rival.

An old custom in the trade, which is unknown to the present race of fishcurers, came to an end about this time. From the start of the fishing in the beginning of last century till about the year 1867, it was the custom of curers to lay barrels full of herrings out on the streets. This was done so that more curing room might be available in the yards, which were not very spacious in those early days. The herrings were gutted and packed in the yards, but immediately curing operations were completed the barrels were rolled out upon the street, where they were afterwards filled up and branded. Practically whole streets were sometimes lined with two or three rows of barrels on each side, leaving so little open space between the rows, that vehicular traffic was constantly being interrupted. People had, from long usage, become accustomed to the inconvenience, and thought little about it, but the nuisance became so marked that the Police Commissioners had to stop the practice entirely. It was all very well allowing such privileges when the town was in a sort of primitive condition, but when it had attained the status of an important burgh, modern regulations had to be enforced. The prohibition of barrels on the streets was looked upon by the curers as a great hardship, and many prosecutions took place before the Order was strictly observed. In the end, law and order prevailed, and the curing of herrings on the streets became a thing of the past.

The following complete table will show the progress of the herring fishing at Fraserburgh during the 'sixties of last century, a decade that will ever be memorable, seeing that it was in 1866 that the terrible dogfish practically finally disappeared from the East Coast fishing grounds.

FRASERBURGH STATISTICS.

Year.		No. of Boats Fishing.	Crans Average.	Season's Catch Crans.	Total Value of Exports.
1860	...	251	69	17,319	£20,250
1861	...	175	95	16,625	22,842
1862	...	176	246	43,253	54,093
1863	...	227	110	24,907	36,294

Year.		No. of Boats Fishing,	Crans Average.	Season's Catch Crans.	Total Value of Exports.
1864	...	229	117	26,825	38,376
1865	...	251	112	28,156	46,182
1866	...	250	161	40,221	65,428
1867	...	291	160	46,463	78,835
1868	...	389	168	65,290	105,606
1869	...	450	114	51,317	90,204

The above figures show the steady progress of the fishing at Fraserburgh during the 'sixties, especially in the number of boats fishing at the port. In the closing 'sixties the town seems to have quite sprung into fame as a successful station, although the last of the 'sixties gave very poor results, a state of matters that was common practically all along the coast.

The year 1870 was an epoch-making year. The outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War in July, 1870, created a panic in the trade, which, though its financial results were not nearly so disastrous as was expected, had never been equalled. The great crash of arms in 1870 is a landmark in the trade. It may also be said that the year 1870 saw the first start of the herring curing industry at Fraserburgh on ambitious lines, and it can further be asserted that the season of 1870 was the real foundation upon which all after developments were built. Fraserburgh's geographical position was a great asset, but without the enterprise and go-aheadness of the "Broch" curing trade at this stage of her history, the marvellous progress, from 1870 to this date, could never have been achieved. The community seemed to be able to meet the necessities and demands of the times in each succeeding decade. Hence the progress made.

To return to the actual facts regarding this exciting season, it has to be mentioned that all the fishcurers engaged their boats in the end of 1869 at 20s. per cran for a complement of 200 crans, and £40 of bounty. The early fishing in 1870 had commenced with success, and everything was going on smoothly and promisingly, when the declaration of war by France, on the 15th July, came like a bombshell upon the herring trade of Scotland. The fishcurers could not repudiate their engagements, no matter how serious the financial loss might be to them, and they proceeded to "face the music" with commendable courage. Germany, or rather Prussia, had next to nothing of a fleet in 1870, and the superior war vessels of France soon had every herring importing seaport of Germany blockaded and practically closed against Scotch herrings. The fishcurers took delivery of the herrings and cured them as if the road to Germany was open. Russia was practically an unknown land to the herring trade in those days, and shipment to that country was never thought of. Fortunately the fishcurers had not to pay the fishermen till the end of the season, and that relieved the tension for the time being very much indeed. At the first brush of hostilities, many fishcurers who, in the course of a long lifetime, had earned handsome fortunes, believed that by the perfidy and ambition of another Napoleon, they would lose their all, and be thrown penniless upon the world.

When "the baptism of fire" at Saarbrück, on the 30th July, was announced, things looked bad for the Scotch curer, and it was no wonder that, on the North-East Coast of Scotland, all the sympathies of the people were with the Germans. A protracted campaign, with France on the ascendant, meant ruin to the Scotch herring trade. The God of battle ruled otherwise, and the Scotch herring industry was saved to a certain and a substantial extent. Finding that vessels could not, on account of French warships, enter Hamburg, Stettin, Danzig, or Königsberg, herring laden ships were directed to a port in Denmark, from whence the herrings were railed to Stettin and Hamburg. It was a costly process, but it resulted in some return to the curer for his herrings. As the fortunes of war steadily went with the Germans, the rigour of the blockade somewhat relaxed, and venturesome skippers volunteered to try, and successfully ran the blockade. Only those fishcurers who were deeply involved in business, and behind the scenes, knew the excitement of those stormy times. But one or two fishcurers who were actors in the drama live to rehearse to the present generation the parts they played. As the Germans marched in triumph towards Paris, the French fleet was recalled to home ports so that the sailors might, as gunners, assist in the defence of the capital. This left all the German ports open, and the herring trade, so far as shipments were concerned, assumed its normal aspect. The removal of so many men from the country, who formed the vast armies of Germany in France, greatly dislocated business, and prices of herrings suffered considerably.

In the face of so many difficulties, the loss to the herring trade of Fraserburgh in 1870 was not only considerable, but very serious. Every curer tried, but few were able to meet their obligations to their fishermen in full, and a considerable share of the loss to the trade this season fell upon the shoulders of the fishermen, who meekly bore the burden. It is only fair to say that one or two firms, notwithstanding their losses, paid every crew they had engaged twenty shillings in the pound. One particular firm that had sixty boats engaged did not deduct one farthing from the sums they owed their fishermen, although deductions were the order of the day.

Great shoals of herrings were upon the grounds throughout the season, and had not the fishermen, out of sympathy for the curers, taken things easy and remained ashore when they might have been at sea, there is no doubt the fishing would have been a record one. For the average catch per boat, 1862 was first, 1870 second; but for aggregate catch, the last named season was an easy first up to that date, the landings for the season totalling 90,028 crans. The weather was favourable and the boats went long distances to sea in search of herrings. One remarkable feature about the season of 1870 was the large proportion of mattie herrings landed, that particular kind of herring having been practically introduced to the fishcurers this season. It has been a regular visitor ever since, sometimes greatly due to the very small meshed nets used by the fishermen. For nearly a quarter of a century afterwards, the season of 1870 was known to fishcurers and fishermen alike as "the year o' the matties."

The period from 1870 to 1879 saw wonderful developments in the herring trade, and great progress in general trade at Fraserburgh. The town, at this period, forged ahead at a remarkable pace, and at the close of the 'seventies the community was recognized as one of the most active and enterprising on the North-East Coast of Scotland. Fishermen from all parts of the coast showed great anxiety to find engagements to fish at Fraserburgh, which, at this time, was recognized on all hands, as the premier herring fishing station of the world. As an indication of the estimation in which the port was held by stranger as well as local fishermen, it has only to be mentioned that while the number of boats fishing at Fraserburgh in 1866 was 250, the fleet engaged in 1879 stood at 844, a total that was never equalled before, and has never been equalled since. The bitter experiences of the curers in 1870 caused them to make very judicious terms with the fishermen for 1871. Money flowed into Germany in great abundance after the war, with the result that business was in a very strong, healthy condition. Herrings found a ready market at good prices, and the profits of the fishcurers exceeded far and away their losses of the previous year. In fact, 1871 was one of the most profitable years ever experienced by the herring trade of Scotland. It was never recorded, however, that out of these handsome profits the fishcurers refunded the fishermen any part of the substantial abatements they helped themselves to in the previous year.

The steam drifter has now become an important factor in the fishing industry, and that the new craft has come to stay there is no doubt. The idea of introducing steam into herring fishing craft is not a thing of to-day or yesterday. As far back as 1873, George Cheyne and James Cheyne, of Fraserburgh, held strong opinions on the point. They purchased a wooden craft and had all the necessary machinery put into her, but somehow the venture did not succeed. The vessel floated too high in the water and the screw "raced," and threatened to pull the old craft to pieces. Owing to this defect no speed could be got out of the boat. George, however, had faith in his idea, and believed that success would ultimately crown his efforts. Many now living may well remember the craft lying in the South Harbour, opposite the Whitehall Hotel, and George Cheyne and his brother struggling with might and main to get the engine, which had a knack of disobeying orders, to work properly. The venture had ultimately to be given up as a failure, much to the chagrin and financial loss of the worthy skipper and his brother, James. The tragic loss of Captain George Cheyne and his crew in the North Sea, on board the ketch "Volatile," during a great gale a few years ago, will be easily recalled, if only for the pathetic message which came ashore in a bottle, on the coast of Norway. The message said that the vessel was slowly sinking, and that they (the crew) were patiently waiting their fate. What glorious fortitude on the part of humble men standing on the brink of eternity! This was the end of the bold pioneer, who anticipated so long ago a principle which has recently revolutionized the herring industry of Scotland and England, at least so far as the fishermen are concerned.



Photo by Norrie, Fraserburgh.

THE FRASERBURGH HERRING FLEET PUTTING TO SEA — DATE, ABOUT 1890.

The first half of the 'seventies of last century saw nothing but steady progress, and regular development of the herring trade at Fraserburgh. The fishings had been prosecuted with so much success, year after year, that a poor fishing was thought impossible, and it was, therefore, a great and unexpected blow to the community when the season of 1876 turned out a comparative failure. The fishing up to the 23rd August was practically a blank, but on that date the local boats which had shot quite near the shore between Cairnbulg Point and Rattray Head, returned with enormous catches. This was repeated next day, but that was practically the end of the fishing. The B.F. crews, who were afraid to risk their nets so near the rocks, did not participate in the golden harvest which was reaped by the Broadsea, Fraserburgh, Cairnbulg, Inverallochy and St. Combs fishermen. Owing to the dearth of supplies the prices of cured herrings rose to a very high level this season, and as the fishermen were engaged at the fixed price of 20s. per cran, with the usual bounty, etc., the fishcurers who had a large proportion of local boats engaged, came out of the season with very handsome profits. Some of the buyers also did well. The late Mr. Joseph Wood, of Aberdeen, who entered the field as a buyer here for the first time had extraordinary good luck, and amassed quite a small fortune before closing operations for the year. He thought he had struck upon the finest money-making business in the world, and plunged headlong into it as a blank seller next season. He had reckoned without his host, however. The season of 1877 was most unlike its predecessor, and in the end of it Mr. Wood, splendid business man though he was, found himself ruined. Many a man of substance who has ventured into the herring exporting business has been claimed as a victim, in the same way as was Mr. Wood.

As already noted, considerable quantities of dogfish were met with by the fishermen on the local grounds in 1876, and it was feared that the old "reign of terror" had come back again. The "dogs" remained in disagreeable evidence for a week or two, but gradually disappeared before the close of August. It was apprehended that next season would bring back the pest in increased force, and there was quite a feeling of trepidation among the fishermen and curers regarding the possibilities of such an invasion; but the dogfish had the good sense to remain away in 1877, and has practically done so ever since. Sometimes a few dogfish are brought ashore by the boats, and this has happened in comparatively recent seasons, but the shoals that were wont to paralyze the trade up to 1865 have never reappeared on the East Coast.

It was about 1876 that some of the old practices or methods of the trade began to suffer from the results of evolution. Of course, curers were wont to "contract" with buyers to take so many barrels of the first of their cure at a fixed price, such a bargain being often made before the season commenced. It was, however, a universal custom for the bulk of the fishcurers to consign a large proportion of their season's cure to commission agents in Hamburg and in the Baltic ports, who disposed of the herrings to inland buyers. Such agents in Germany remitted the price obtained, less expenses and agents' commission,

to the fishcurers on this side. During this, and immediately succeeding seasons, home and foreign firms entered the field and bought direct from the fishcurers here, disposing of their purchases direct to the inland dealers on the Continent. The trade developed steadily, and now such a thing as consigning herrings on commission to Germany or Russia is almost unheard of. The old commission agents, not to be wiped out of the field, assumed a new character, and entered the field as buyers on this side, taking the risk of finding a profitable outlet for their purchases in becoming the sellers of their own goods to the inland dealers. Some of these old commission houses are the largest buyers in the markets on this side. The fishcurer now practically confines himself to selling his cure either f.o.b. or c.i.f. and thus avoids the risks of violent fluctuations of the Continental markets. Still there was a touch of the spirit of—

“Hope springs eternal in the human breast:
Man never is, but always to be blest.”

about the consigning of herrings to the Continent in the expectation of meeting with big prices, that made the business rather an exhilarating one. No curer's sweetheart's letter, even in his young days, ever gave him greater pleasure than did the appearance of his Stettin or Hamburg agent's letter, with the blue cross upon it indicating that the precious missive contained a substantial remittance. If the Account Sales revealed the fact that his herrings had been sold at a big price, the curer's happiness was complete. All these pleasures—and disappointments sometimes—are unknown, practically, to the present day fishcurers.

The seasons of 1877 and 1878 gave good results, but in 1879 the catch was once more a very poor one. The town generally suffered owing to the failure, and the winter was a dull one for coopers and other tradesmen; but, paradoxical though it may appear, the season was a most profitable one for the fishcurers. Although they cured small quantities of herrings, they received most lucrative prices for their fish, and when they made up their accounts at the close of the season, nobody was more surprised at the very handsome profits shown, than the curers themselves.

The following statistics show the remarkable advance made by the herring fishing at Fraserburgh, and the greatly increased value of the catch, during the 'seventies of last century:—

Year.		No. of Boats Fishing.	Crans Average.	Crans for Season.	Value of Exports.
1870	...	480	187	90,028	£113,388
1871	...	432	216	93,586	155,158
1872	...	626	209	130,837	189,663
1873	...	630	214	135,071	209,033
1874	...	688	221	152,088	239,479
1875	...	740	224	165,903	239,830
1876	...	779	96	75,002	157,472
1877	...	736	176	130,000	231,300
1878	...	745	207	154,587	238,803
1879	...	844	104	87,526	195,987

It need only be remarked about the above figures that the remarkable increase on the fleet of boats in 1872, as compared with 1871, was due to the enterprise of the curers, begotten of the colossal profits of 1871. The nearness of the value of the exports of cured fish in 1874 and 1875 is very striking.

The 'eighties of last century were fraught with dire consequences to the herring trade of Fraserburgh. It was a decade that brought nothing but ruin in its train, and consigned to oblivion and penury many worthy men who had risen to good, even high, social positions by their own industry and talents. The decade began badly. The fishcurers, carried away by the financial success of 1879, rushed away in the end of that year and commenced engaging boats. The competition for the crews was so keen that prices were forced up to a ridiculously high level. In addition to 20s. per cran, the crews were given bounties of £50 and £60. Some of the favourite or champion fishing crews received even £70 of bounty, besides other small perquisites. The time of starting fishing was also moved a week or two forward, or else early caught herrings were to be taken delivery of at an agreed price. No clause in the agreement protected the fishcurer against small-sized herrings, and the fishermen took advantage of this to a most serious extent. The fishing began unusually early, and immediately after a start was made, herrings of a most immature and inferior kind were thrown upon the curers in enormous quantities. There was no escape from taking them.

The fishing continued heavy all the season through, and strange to say, the quality remained below "par" to the finish. The fishing was so prolific that curing stock rapidly disappeared, and thereupon there was a perfect scramble for barrels and salt. The price of the last mentioned rose to 42s. per ton, while barrels commanded 10s. apiece. At one time the railway sidings here and at Rathen and Lonmay were blocked with waggons of barrels being rushed to Fraserburgh. In the face of the heavy fishing and the inferior quality, prices of cured herrings fell to a minimum on the Continent. As a matter of fact, thousands of barrels of herrings that had cost the fishcurers from 20s. to 30s. per barrel to produce, were consigned to the dunghill. No wonder that the season of 1880 remained "a bad dream" to the curer for some time. The sorrows of 1880 were forgotten in the disasters of 1884 and the two succeeding seasons. The three intervening years 'twixt 1880 and 1884 were financially good, and the losses of the former year were being rapidly made up, when the fearful financial disaster of 1884 overtook the curing trade. The blow was irreparable. The conditions were very similar to those of 1880, only the curers' commitments were heavier and his losses therefore very much more overwhelming. As a matter of fact quite a large number of fishcurers were ruined. With the assistance of the bank, the fishcurers in the hope that they would redeem their losses, struggled on during the seasons of 1885 and 1886. Fate was against them. Instead of bettering their financial position, they sank deeper and deeper in debt.

The state of the trade at this time was truly deplorable. Owing to the

changed mode of carrying on the business, such a crisis can scarcely ever be equalled again. The results were truly pathetic, if not tragic. Many fishcurers who were worth from £5,000 to £30,000 in 1883, were left peniless in 1886. It is no wonder that fishermen thrived mightily at this period, and that Moray Firth villages were practically rebuilt in granite or marble, so to speak. A great proportion of the fishcurers' losses went into the coffers, in solid cash, of the fishermen. This is no reflection upon the morality of the fishermen, who were only implementing a bargain deliberately made by the curer with his eyes open and all his senses at his command. The fishermen would have been foolish if they had not embraced the "golden" opportunity. It is sad, however, to contemplate the changes made on the personnel of the trade during these stormy three seasons. Many fishcurers of an advanced age, who, three short years before, thought their financial position proof against the assaults of evil fortune, and conjured up a comfortable and easy old age, were ruthlessly swept away. Some sought refuge and obscurity in the wilds of Canada, while others found their way to friends in Australia, South America, and other parts of the world. This tragedy of 1884 is a chapter in the herring trade of Fraserburgh, which still wrings the hearts of those who were sympathetic witnesses, who looked on the drama while the leading players, worthy men, were being hurled, as it were, to their financial doom. Since the curtain finally fell in 1886, many of the "actors" have crossed the bourne, and are now sleeping quietly, free from all the harassing and devouring regrets which were ever present with them while in life. The lists of Fraserburgh fishcurers for 1883 and 1888 are given, so that the effects of the financial hurricane which overwhelmed the trade during the intervening years may be clearly set forth. The figures in brackets denote the number of engaged boats fishing to each firm.

FISHCURERS IN 1883.

Bain, Lewis (11).
 Bannerman, Alexander (5).
 Bisset, John (32).
 Blackhall, John (10).
 Bruce, A. & Co. (50).
 Bethune, M. (8).
 Burnett, J. & Co. (9).
 Black, Thomas (3).
 Cardno, James (30).
 Clark, D. & Co. (6).
 Chivas, George (15).
 Copland, P. (6).
 Davidson, George (10).
 Dickson, John (52).
 Davidson, A. B. & Co. (6).
 Downie, George (10).

FISHCURERS IN 1888.

Addison, Charles
 Bain, Lewis
 Bisset, John
 Blackhall, John
 Bruce, A. & Co.
 Bethune, M.
 Burnett Bros.
 Black, Thomas
 Burnett, Thomas P.
 Burnett, James
 Brown, T. & Sons.
 Cardno, James
 Clark, D. & Co.
 Dickson, John
 Davidson, A. B. & Co.
 Duncan, Andrew

FISHCURERS IN 1883.

Duncan, A. & J. (13).
 Duthie, Alexander (4).
 Fraser, W. (4).
 Gordon, G. & E. (20).
 Goodall, J. (4).
 Hendry, P. (7).
 Innes, Alexander (8).
 Innes, John (9).
 Low, William (21).
 Low, James (6).
 Low, John (16).
 Louden, P. (2).
 Loudon, J. & Co. (18).
 Milne, George (10).
 Milne, Alexander (28).
 Milne, A. (7).
 Mitchell, W. & Co. (11).
 Murray, F. R. (9).
 McCombie, J. & Co. (13).
 McConnachie, W. & Co. (31).
 Maconochie Bros. (17).
 McRae, James (7).
 Noble, James & Co. (6).
 Noble, John (6).
 Noble, G. & Co. (6).
 Noble Peter (15).
 Noble W. & G. (14).
 Oliphant & Lawrance (7).
 Park, J. & P. (32).
 Park, Wemyss
 Pressley, W. & G. (16).
 Ritchie, James (22).
 Ritchie D. M. (7).
 Robb, George (2).
 Simpson, H. (5).
 Skinner, Alexander (20).
 Skinner, John (7).
 Strachan, J. (3).
 Stephen, James (10).
 Stevenson, J. (6).
 Thomson, L. M. & Co. (3),
 Thorburn, William (6),

FISHCURERS IN 1888

Duncan, Andrew & J.
 Duthie, Alexander
 Davidson, J. P.
 Flett, Alexander & Co.
 Flett, James & Sons
 Gordon, Robert
 Hendry, Paul
 Innes, Alexander
 Innes, John
 Low, William
 Low, John
 Low, James
 May, William
 Milne, George
 Milne, A. Jun
 Meek, A. & Co.
 Mitchell, James
 Mitchell, W. & Co
 Murray, F. R
 McAllan, James
 McAllan, Innes
 McConnachie, W. & Co.
 Maconochie Bros.
 McRae, James
 McHardy, J.
 Noble, John
 Noble, J. & Co.
 Noble, W & Co.
 Noble, G. H & Co
 Noble & Watt
 Park, J. & P.
 Paterson, P. R
 Pirie, J. & J.
 Reid, Alexander
 Robb, Samuel
 Ritchie, William
 Ritchie, W. Millar
 Ritchie, Jonathan
 Simpson, H.
 Skinner, Alexander
 Smith, Sydney
 Thomson, James
 Thomson, L
 Thorburn, William

FISHCURERS IN 1883.

Trail, James (11).
West, George (6).
Whyte Bros. (6).

FISHCURERS IN 1888.

Watt & Co.
West, George
Whyte Bros.

It is thus seen that of the 61 firms engaged in the curing business at Fraserburgh in 1883, no fewer than 29 had disappeared from the list and others taken their places by the year 1888. A sad commentary on the speculative nature of the herring trade.

One of the most drastic changes that ever took place in the trade was effected in the year 1887. From the first start of the industry, with some slight exceptions in the early days, the crews were, as already explained, engaged by the fishcurers for the season at a fixed price per cran. The enormous financial losses of the three seasons ending 1886, showed that the industry would have to be remodelled, and the foundations laid on some new and safer principle. The evolution of the trade proved that the weak spot, which had brought so many fishcurers to shipwreck, was the engagement system. No matter how flat the markets and low the prices on the Continent, no matter how small and inferior the quality of herrings brought in by the fishermen, the curers had to pay the agreed upon price of 20s. per cran. The time was ripe for change, and instead of engagements being entered into, the season of 1887 saw for the first time the English mode introduced of selling the herrings daily by auction to the highest bidder. The change brought a new factor into the business, *viz.*, the fish salesman, who represented the fisherman, and looked after his financial interests. Some of the old fashioned fishcurers resented the appearance of the fish salesman in the field, and for some years would only buy herrings direct from the fishermen themselves. The fish salesman, however, had "come to stay," and notwithstanding their early protests, the dissenting fishcurers gradually fell into line with their other brethren, until every shot was either sold at "the bell," or went through the salesman's books.

The necessity for change was in a great measure due to the fishermen themselves. In their anxiety to secure enormous hauls of herrings, knowing that 20s. per cran would have to be paid for them, the fishermen continued to reduce the size of the mesh of their nets till nothing of the shape of a herring could escape them. The herrings, naturally, became more inferior year by year, and the great financial crash of the middle 'eighties was primarily due to the selfish and shortsighted policy of the fishermen in using a mesh which only caught what might reasonably be called "rubbish," and which when sent to the Continental markets, did not realize within 30 per cent. of what they cost the fishcurer. This was really the rock upon which the trade was wrecked in 1886.

The trade up to that time was carried on in a very loose and haphazard way, but somehow nature long continued kind, and money was made even by the most ignorant and slovenly curer. When the fishcurers saw the fishermen's

“game,” which they surely must have done, they should at once have had a clause inserted in the form of agreement, which was always completed, to the effect that the mesh of the nets used should not be less than a specified size. Had this been done, the small inferior herrings of 1884, 1885 and 1886 would not have been caught, and consequently not cured, and the season’s catches would have been greatly reduced in consequence. The result would have probably been that the consumptive demand on the Continent would have been equal to the supply, prices there would have been maintained at a respectable level, and finally the great financial crisis already referred to would have been altogether averted. The new mode of buying at the day’s price removed all chance of another financial Armageddon, such as happened in the middle ’eighties. Since engagements were abolished and the price of herrings gauged by the quality, a plethora of small, immature herrings in July and August, is now unknown. The simple reason for this is that the mesh of the nets has been greatly enlarged.

Mr. James Couper, Fishery Officer, a native of Caithness, who was appointed to the charge of the Fraserburgh district in 1857, resigned in May, 1882, and died in December of the same year. He was a man of marked principles and high character, and during his 25 years of official life in Fraserburgh he discharged his onerous duties in a way that earned for him the highest respect and confidence of all connected with the herring curing trade. During his term of office, the development of the herring trade at Fraserburgh was rather remarkable. In 1857, when he assumed office, the number of boats fishing at Fraserburgh was 254, and the value of the catch £21,250, whereas in 1882, the year of his resignation, the number of boats totalled 786, and the value of the catch reached £240,000. Not only was he respected as a public official, but also as a private citizen. His unceasing labours for the good of his fellow men, labours that were not marked by fits and starts or any display, but went on quietly for many years, were qualities that marked him out as a pattern to a community, and it was as such that he was looked up to in Fraserburgh. As a friend of the poor, the drunkard, and the shipwrecked sailor, Mr. Couper had few equals, and the greater part of his life was identified with institutions the object of which was to help and improve the lot of the poor and needy. Mr. Couper took great interest in Sunday School work, and he and his daughter conducted one in the Bethel Hall for the benefit of the poor and youthful outcasts for many years. He was Secretary and Treasurer to the Coal and Soup Fund, and local Secretary to the Shipwrecked Mariners’ and Fishermen’s Society, etc., etc., for many years. In recognition of his public services and private worth, Mr. Couper received, a month after his resignation, a testimonial from the inhabitants of Fraserburgh in the shape of a splendid gold watch, which was presented to him at a public demonstration held in the Town Hall. Mr. John Melville succeeded Mr. Couper as Fishery Officer at Fraserburgh in June, 1882.

Reference has already been made to single day’s heavy fishings. That of

Tuesday, 15th July, 1884, proved the heaviest recorded at Fraserburgh up to that date. Some 667 boats averaged 30 crans, equal to a total landing of 20,010 crans. During the afternoon and evening a number of Peterhead and Aberdeen boats heavily laden, made their appearance in the harbour, but though the crews of these craft perambulated the town and offered their fish to the curers for nothing, no carters could be obtained to cart the herrings from the boats. Traffic on the piers was almost at the stage of complete congestion. At night the whole of the curing yards spread over the town, were brilliantly lighted up, and the reflection in the sky had a striking effect. The gutting women worked all night, and at 11 a.m. next day many of them had not completed their tasks. Many boats late in arriving, with from 50 to 100 crans on board, could get no outlet for the fish, and next day some 4,000 crans were emptied into the bay. Besides this, hundreds of crans were carted into the country to be utilized by farmers as manure for the land. This memorable day's fishing, which meant such a loss to the curing trade, was long remembered as "black Tuesday." The herrings were very small and of inferior quality, and heavy showers of rain during the night added greatly to the troubles of the fishcurers. An effort was made to get the fishermen to lay aside their small meshed nets, but as unanimity among the fishermen on the point could not be reached, the proposal came to nought and the work of ruining the herring trade went on.

The 'eighties, though yielding some huge fishings and giving ample employment to workmen and good business to shopkeepers, etc., were on an average ten years of terrible loss to the herring trade of Fraserburgh. The closing years of the decade began to show a slight financial improvement, but it came too late to help those who had fallen in the slaughter of 1884, 1885, and 1886.

The following are the statistics of the fishing for the 'eighties:—

Year.			No. of Boats.			Average.	Season's Catch— Crans.
1880	...	...	789	...	239	...	188,687
1881	...	...	843	...	135	...	114,367
1882	...	...	786	...	162	...	127,631
1883	...	...	762	...	142	...	108,796
1884	...	...	680	...	270	...	183,588
1885	...	...	738	...	184	...	135,879
1886	...	...	580	...	217	...	126,176
1887	...	...	740	...	207	...	153,573
1888	...	...	600	...	158	...	95,039
1889	...	...	630	...	268	...	169,155

About this time the fishermen showed great enterprise in "going in" for a much larger sized and improved type of fishing boat. They were quite like trading craft, and were highly finished in every way. The sleeping accommodation for the crew was quite a revolution when compared with the old state of affairs. The cabin was quite as well fitted up as that of any trading vessel, and the crew could live on board in a state of comfort that left nothing to be

desired. An old fisherman accustomed to the open boat, ushered into such a cabin, would have imagined he was on board of a first class passenger vessel.

The following extracts from a couple of articles contributed by the author to *Chambers's Journal* of May, 1886, give a fairly interesting description of the herring fishing industry as carried on at Fraserburgh in the 'eighties of last century :—

"Having given a short sketch of the rise and progress of the Scotch herring business, some notes on the social aspect of the industry, and a general description of the present mode of catching and curing the fish, will probably prove interesting to those who have not been privileged to visit any of the great fishing towns during the months of July and August, a time of each year when the mighty herring constitutes the sole topic of conversation.

"At the harbours of the herring towns in the end of June and beginning of July, boats are arriving from north, south, and west laden with all kinds of household goods; and uppermost are the fisher-folk's beds and blankets, upon which are lying the wives and children, who have been taken by this route to save the expense of a trip by rail, but whose condition, from the effects of stormy seas, often demonstrates the folly of the fishermen's financial policy. In addition to the fishermen and their belongings, every train brings hundreds of Highlanders from Inverness, Sutherland, Ross, and the Isles in search of employment on board the boats; and they, in conjunction with the influx of crofters (to be engaged for carting purposes), tramps, itinerant dealers, preaching representatives of various denominations, etc., soon swell the normal population by many thousands, and form as motley a crowd as can be well imagined. The fishing towns of Aberdeenshire and more northern ports awaken, after a protracted period of somnolence, to the fact that the season of activity has arrived; and the streets which formerly looked bare and deserted, now teem with men, women, and children, all drawn together to share in the spoils of the deep. Order in such a miscellaneous population is sometimes not easily maintained, and the surging and unruly masses which on a Saturday night congregate about the leading thoroughfares tax the energies of the police to the uttermost; and if the Highlanders be on the "war-path" from the effects of too liberal potations of their own 'mountain-dew,' the question of local government has to be settled by military force. . . .

"The evening of the seventh day of the week is invariably one of confusion noise, and fight in every large fishing town; but throughout the other nights, all frivolities are cast aside, and the single aim of the whole community is to secure as rich a harvest of herrings as possible. Under ordinary circumstances, the sight afforded by the departure from the harbour of so many craft crawling lazily along in twos, threes, and half-dozens, is very pretty; but when the prospects of a good fishing are exercising the fishermen's minds, and everyone is anxious to reach the fishing ground early, the excitement and competition among the fishermen to secure a good start, transforms the harbour channel into a scene of the wildest confusion, where the fishermen shout, threaten, and at

times deal blows at each other, playing tragedy and comedy in turns, to the intense delight of those watching their movements from the piers. Should the weather be favourable, the boats keep constantly streaming from the harbour mouth; and if a fresh breeze prevails, a very short time will suffice to fill the bay with hundreds of the handy little craft, gaily ploughing their eastward course to the fishing-ground. By-and-by the horizon for a considerable stretch will be dotted with their brown sails, still holding onwards; and only when the sea and clouds join hands, do they finally disappear in the wide waste of waters.

“On leaving the harbour and getting the sails set and trimmed, the crew of the craft betake themselves to comfortable quarters among the nets and spare sails lying about the deck, where local yarns are told, and the Highlanders sing Gaelic songs, or rehearse the leading incidents of their life in the Western Isles since last ‘she’ was on the east coast; but as the fishing ground is neared, the stories cease, and everyone from the skipper down to the ‘scummer’ boy—the lad who is employed with a small hand-net to pick any herrings out of the water that happen to fall from the nets—eagerly scans the water in hopes of descrying indications of fish. Should the wished-for appearances be discovered, so much the better; but it so happens that no certain proofs of the existence of fish are obtained, and after reaching a distance where fish are supposed to abound, the sails are lowered, and the men commence to cast the nets into the sea in the dusk of the evening. In doing this, a small portion of the sail is hoisted, and while the craft moves slowly through the water, the fishermen continue casting their nets overboard, until their fleet of say, fifty nets, attached to one another, and extending in a direct line for a length of two thousand yards, are shot, the whole hanging perpendicularly in the water and suspended from a rope, to which is fastened skin or metallic buoys floating on the surface of the water. When the whole of the nets belonging to the boats engaged at a large station are set, the sea for a stretch of many miles is one complete network, from which the herrings can scarcely escape; and the work falling upon the fishermen nightly in shooting and hauling their nets may be guessed from the fact that the netting used by the Scotch fishermen, if stretched in a direct line, would extend ten thousand miles, or something like three times across the Atlantic.

“Having got the nets safely into the deep, the mast is lowered, the light hoisted, and everything put into its proper place for the night; and as the craft drifts slowly along with the wind or tide, surrounded by hundreds of other fishing boats, not a sound is heard save the occasional whistle of a steamer slowly threading its way through the floating hamlet, or the shrill cry of the expectant seabirds. On board the boats, the crew have retired to rest, with the exception of one or two left to act as the watch, but who, when their conversation runs dry, invariably seek change in the arms of Morpheus, and trust to Providence to fulfil the duties which they had undertaken. Once or twice during the night the skipper causes a net or two to be pulled up; and if the prospects of a successful fishing are good, the position occupied is retained; but if no herrings are in the nets, it is not uncommon for the crew to remove to

another spot, in hopes of meeting with better luck, where the labour of shooting the nets has again to be undergone.

"As the morning breaks, the crews bestir themselves, and at an early hour the work of hauling commences, which being accomplished sooner or later, according to the weight of fish secured, all canvas is set upon the craft; and as she speeds steadily through the sea, causing the wavelets rippling at the bow to sparkle brilliantly in the morning sun, the crew, all unconscious of the glorious panorama spread before them, actively engage in shaking the herrings out of the nets and otherwise preparing for discharging their catch on reaching the harbour. As the net hangs like a curtain in the water, herrings in their progress get their heads into the meshes, whence they cannot retreat, and are thus held captive till the nets are hauled on board and the fish shaken into the hold . . . On many occasions the herrings strike so densely that almost a whole complement of nets sink to the bottom, which often entails a loss upon a single crew of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty pounds; while at other times the craft are so deeply laden with the precious freight, that they run the harbour for a distance of perhaps forty miles, with the water occasionally playing upon their decks, and are only saved from foundering by the extreme calmness of the weather. In many seasons, the fishing proves a complete blank for a protracted period; and as the whole community in the fishing towns is entirely dependent upon the success of the industry, such occasions throw the spirits of everybody below zero, and the usual bustle and smiling faces give place to solemn countenances; and curers, coopers and others stand in groups on the piers and at the street corners discussing the fishermen's chances and prophesying the result of next week's fishing.

"The seafaring classes had a pious horror of hares and swine, and contact with them was held as portending some serious disaster or evil; and if any jocular coopers or fishcurers, anxious at a dull time in the fishing season to relieve the monotony of their daily life, surreptitiously placed a leg of either of those animals on board a boat, its discovery led to the greatest commotion among the crew, who would not on any account go to sea that night, lest some dreadful accident should befall the craft.

"After a period of scarcity, the unexpected arrival of a successful craft in the early forenoon with the report that the fleet had at length met a large shoal of fish and secured heavy takes, spreads like wildfire through the town; and the excitement manifested by all, from the largest fishcurer to the smallest fisher boy, is intense. The piers are soon crowded with visitors, interested spectators, and those directly engaged in the trade; and the effect produced by the loud-toned dialect spoken by the local fisherwomen mingling with the distinctive pronunciation of the natives of Fife, Berwickshire, Banff, and Moray, in addition to the highly pitched Gaelic of the Highland girls is unusually strange. As the boats round the breakwater, they are eagerly scanned by many anxious faces; and on reaching the piers, the crews of those craft that have been fortunate in securing unusually heavy takes receive, in a homely way, the congratulations

of their relatives, and form the centre of attraction to all those loungers about the harbour who have nothing particular to do.

"One of the first evidences of a successful fishing is the activity of the fisherwomen running hither and thither in hot haste armed with a plentiful supply of food for the breadwinners, which is soon after the boat's arrival put on board, and hastily partaken of ere the hard day's work commences. Before the meal is finished, the carters are waiting at the pier side; and should all the herrings be shaken out of the nets, the men at once don their oilskins, and placing themselves in a convenient position to fill the baskets in the boat's hold, the work of discharging commences. The skipper stands upon the pier to haul the baskets ashore, an operation in which he is often assisted by his wife, who, on many occasions takes the lion's share of the work. After working some time in the hold, the men gradually become covered with the silvery scales of the fish till their clothing assumes the appearance of a coat of mail, in which their stalwart figures and superb physique stand out in striking relief. Should the harvest of the sea be landed in larger quantities than usual, the stir both on the piers and in the curing-yards correspondingly increases; and amid a babel of tongues and uproarious good humour, the stream of carts loaded with herrings goes on incessantly; while fishcurers, whose heads are almost turned with the pressure of business, rush to and fro issuing orders to their servants and fishermen.

"On being brought into the yards, the herrings are emptied into large square wooden boxes called 'forelands,' many of which are under a roof, so that the women who gut the fish may be protected from the heat of the sun or the inclemency of the weather. To those who see them for the first time in a heavy fishing night, the gutters count one of the sights of the trade; and their persons, as they appear clad in oilskins and besmeared with blood from head to foot, remind one of an Indian in his war-paint fresh from battle. These women, from a life-long experience, show the greatest dexterity in their work; and the rapidity with which they seize a herring, enter the knife at its gills, remove the gut, and throw the offal into one tub and the fish into another, is one of the features of the business, and, in the eyes of a stranger, appears part of a juggler's education. In the course of an afternoon and evening, one crew of women—comprising two gutters and one packer—will have a good many rows of barrels at their credit, representing earnings of from ten to twenty shillings. On all occasions when the fishing is heavy, these women are obliged to work at any hour; and as it often happens that the boats, are late in arriving, curing operations go on all night, rendering a curing-yard, if not a pretty, an interesting sight. From end to end of the premises are rows of forelands heaped with herrings, whose silvery scales glitter in the light thrown from the blazing naphtha lamps suspended overhead, the rays of which, again, play upon the surface of the water in the harbour in a way which recalls memories of historic cities by sea and lake.

"Around the forelands the women ply the knife in a competitive spirit with

lightning speed; and while they work, the air is often filled with the strains of popular songs and hymns, interspersed with the Gaelic music of the Highland girls, sung by these toilers to while away the midnight hours. On such a night, a fishing town has an appearance quite unique. The lurid glare in the murky sky of the many lights burning in the yards, has a very weird effect; while the roll of carts and the shrill cries of the fisher-girls, mixed with the stentorian tones of 'the maister' issuing his orders at dead of night, give a romantic touch to the picture. Often among the gutters are to be found most respectable, educated females, who are tempted by the high remuneration paid to engage in the work, and who, when the fishing is over, assume another character, and may be seen at the Christmas balls in some of the smaller towns as the leaders of fashion. It may be noted here that after being gutted, packed and salted, the herrings are allowed to lie in barrels in the curing-yards for some little time. The barrels are then filled up, and otherwise completely cured; and having received the brand of the Fishery Board as a certificate of good quality, they are despatched to Germany and Russia and other centres where herrings form a staple article of food.

"One feature of the fishing which presents an unusually pretty and romantic sight may be seen on a dark night towards the end of August. At that time the boats are usually within a mile or two of the shore; and when the gloaming deepens and the nets are shot, the crew prepares to hoist the lights required to be exhibited by law to prevent accidents happening with passing vessels. As darkness sets in, light after light appears, till the sea for a stretch of many miles is transformed into what seems a gaily illuminated city; but instead of the din and bustle associated with such an occasion, not a sound is heard but the gentle ripple of the summer sea, as its wavelets frolic on the sandy beach, or thread their way round the rocks near the old tower. The sight is ever new, and one so pretty and so fascinating that on every occasion when it is available, the whole community, including those who have been privileged to witness it for a lifetime, eagerly seek the points of vantage where they can best view the fairy-like scene spread out before them.

"In mostly all the great herring fishery ports, the harbours during the winter have a most oppressive stillness, and often the trade done for a protracted period would comprise the arrival and sailing of a few colliers and a limited number of windbound ships. In spring the scene changes, however; and by July, every available inch of water area is appropriated to the use of craft employed in the staple industry; and at times so great is the pressure, that many vessels are obliged to lie in the bay and wait their regular turn before being permitted to enter the harbour. In addition to our own ships, a great many German vessels have been hitherto engaged carrying herrings; but within the last two years, Norwegian steamers, which were employed in the Norwegian herring business before steam was introduced here, have greatly taken up the carrying trade, to the serious exclusion of the British sailing schooners, which held the trade in their own hands for half a century, and

considered it strictly their own. In consequence of the altered aspect of affairs, a strong feeling exists among the old-fashioned mariners, especially the local skippers, against what they consider an unjust usurpation of their exclusive right, and many an aged salt may be heard sighing for the 'good old times.' But in spite of their quarter-deck arguments, which appear as old-fashioned as their craft, steam-carrying power is fast increasing; and it is more than probable that the once fleet of schooners, whose employment in the herring trade was wont to yield the year's dividend to the owners, will soon be practically a thing of the past.

"The social aspect of the fishermen engaged in the herring fishery has undergone a remarkable change within the last quarter of a century; and the noisy, hard-drinking, indigent toilers of the deep have given place to a sober, industrious, religiously inclined class of men, who in many instances have amassed and have at their credit in the bank large sums of money. On the north and north-east coasts, thirty or forty years ago, fishermen as a class were reckoned amongst the hardest drinkers of the population, and one curious custom then existing, but which happily disappeared many years ago, was rather a strong proof of the not very enviable character attached to the men in those days. Before finally settling the terms of an agreement with the curer, the skipper always satisfied himself that one important clause was safe, which was to the effect that the curer was bound to supply a gallon and a half of whisky weekly for the exclusive use of the crew while prosecuting the fishing.

"As years rolled on, the habits of fishermen gradually improved; and when the temperance movement spread its branches over the land, no class enlisted under its banners more readily, and no section of the community was more enthusiastic or adhered more firmly to the teetotal principles than did this section of the seafaring class. In a remarkably short time the thatched hovels gave place to neat stone and lime cottages; and the fishermen, instead of spending their evenings in the public house, preferred either to stay at home and mend the nets or join in some temperance or religious movement which often necessitated a walk of a good many miles to the chief town in the district where these meetings were usually held. The religious tone in most of the villages on the north-east coast and Moray Firth continues marked; and many of those whose conduct a generation ago was a reproach to their village, not only are now in comfortable circumstances, but take an active interest in all local affairs, and can conduct religious meetings in a way that would do credit to those regularly trained for the ministry.

"Fishermen are not naturally cosmopolitan in their nature, and take comparatively little interest in matters not directly affecting themselves; but if a trawling agitation is being promulgated, or if a sudden gale deals destruction to fishermen anywhere on the coast, the villagers evince the greatest anxiety to obtain the latest information. War or rumours of war exercise a strong influence on their minds, and the weekly newspapers are anxiously looked for,

and the reports on the subjects keenly discussed; but stirring questions of national importance seldom or never disturb the equilibrium of village life.

"As has been already indicated, fishermen do not trouble themselves with the affairs of State, and the result is that food for conversation limits itself to incidents in their daily life, which, though at times painfully exciting, is oftenest most uneventful. During the herring fishing season, when the men often do not see one another from Monday to Saturday, part of Sunday is invariably spent in discussing the results of the previous week's work. 'Between sermons,' three, four, and sometimes half a dozen fishermen congregate at a relative's or an acquaintance's lodgings, and having seated themselves, some on chairs, some on chests, and others on nets, and filled their pipes, proceed to narrate their experiences of the past few days; in the course of which, one man describes how, after sailing east-north-east, and putting Mormond Hill down, he shot his nets, and was rewarded with a good take, but got much destruction to netting in consequence of other boats having shot over his 'fleet'; while another recounts most minutely every night's work from leaving till returning to the harbour, and explains that they had been upon different grounds, they had failed to meet with any luck, although their neighbour Sandie, who was alongside of them, one night had got seventy crans. In this manner each skipper gives a little history of the week's labours; and the company having exhausted their store of news, take their departure to their respective homes, probably not to meet again till the following Sunday."

The years 'ninety of last century saw the fishing prosecuted at Fraserburgh on a scale which dwarfed all previous figures. The opposition from Shetland had not yet assumed any serious proportions, and Fraserburgh continued to be the "best beloved" of the fishermen. The enterprise of the "Broch" curers was more pronounced than ever, and the high average price per cran paid by them to the fishermen, season after season, attracted the best crews from all parts of the coast to the port. Fraserburgh cure generally took first place in the Continental markets. Trade "boomed" remarkably about this time, and all the horrors of the financial debacle of the middle 'eighties were forgotten in the prosperity which seemed to lay siege to the general trade of the town, year after year. Great fleets of boats turned up at the harbour in the end of June each year, and the crews of these, with their families, spent their money freely in the town. The fishings, as a rule, were big, and the fishermen could afford to spend. Although turning over huge sums of money, the curers themselves did not secure the profits that the healthy trade of the town, taken as a whole, seemed to indicate. The "golden age," under the old engagement system before the insane competition was introduced, was gone, and the curers were quite satisfied with a very small percentage of profit on a very big overturn of money.

There was one exception, however, and that was the season of 1898. It gave not only the second biggest catch ever landed at Fraserburgh, but proved, by a long way, the most profitable season the fishcurers had had since the system

of selling by auction was introduced in 1887. Herrings were most abundant, and the fishing went on with the regularity of clockwork. The fish were of excellent quality all through. The fishcurers, not carried away by that spirit of unreasonable competition, which has so often made them play "Ducks and Drakes" with their capital, fixed the price of the fresh article at the beginning of the season, at a reasonable level. This wise policy they carried out during the season; and the demand on the Continent being good, remunerative prices were obtained for the cured article. The result was, as already stated, a very profitable season for the fishcurers. The fishermen also, did well. Prices were not high, but an enormous fishing made up for the lower price, and the fishermen considered 1898 probably their best season up to that date. This decade gave the heaviest single day's fishings on record, and the period will long be remembered by Fraserburgh people as the most stirring and progressive in the whole history of the town. Some periods may have been more profitable to the fishcurers, and catches more regular, but for single heavy day's fishings, the 'nineties easily take first place.

The first really record fishing, for a single day, at Fraserburgh was on Friday, 7th July, 1893, when 700 boats averaged 40 crans, or a total catch for the day of 28,000 crans. Shots of 90, 100, and 120 crans were not uncommon, and that was great things 20 years ago. When the fleet came to hand the tide was ebbing, and it was late in the afternoon before the boats got into the harbour. The quality of the fish was excellent for the early date, and prices in the forenoon were 13s. to 17s. 6d. per cran, and in the afternoon 6s. 6d. to 10s. The greatest day's catch ever landed at Fraserburgh or any other port up to that date was on Wednesday, 29th July, 1896, when 700 boats landed 30,000 crans, or an average of 43 crans per boat. Boats with heavy shots began to arrive in the morning at 7 o'clock, and craft continued coming all day long, some having shots as high as 130 crans. This was a red letter day in the annals of the history of the herring fishing at Fraserburgh, and will not soon be forgotten by those who helped to cure on one day, what would now be considered a splendid week's fishing. Prices in the morning ran from 8s. to 20s. 6d. per cran, but the bulk of the catch changed hands at from 8s. to 12s. per cran. This gigantic catch was cured in excellent condition, and all the yards cleared up by 6 o'clock next morning.

The next two outstanding single day's fishings at Fraserburgh were obtained in the wonderful season of 1898, which is still gratefully remembered by fishcurers and fishermen alike. On the 19th July (Tuesday) 700 boats averaged 29 crans, being a total catch of 20,000 crans. Again, on Tuesday, 2nd August, 700 boats averaged 30 crans, equal to landings for the day of 21,000 crans. Prices for the respective days ran from 11s. to 20s., and 7s. 6d. to 16s. 9d. per cran. Catches like these are inclined to make people envious. There are always ups and downs in the herring trade, and though recent years have not been propitious for Fraserburgh, "the good old days" may come again.

Although the 'nineties had a long run of success they, like other periods,

produced their failures. The seasons of 1897 and 1899—so near each other, too—gave the two poorest fishings landed since 1879, a period of practically 20 years. Sandwiched in between the two failures was the great season of 1898! The ten years ending 1899 gave the remarkable catch of 1,940,714 crans—an easy first up to that time—which is equal to an annual average catch of 194,071 crans for the ten years.

The details of the fishing for the 'nineties are as follows:—

Year.	No. of Boats.			Average.	Season's Catch—Crans.		
1890	670	...	281	...	188,678
1891	650	...	200	...	133,216
1892	690	...	326	...	225,283
1893	770	...	315	...	242,441
1894	800	...	334	...	267,252
1895	740	...	281	...	208,457
1896	710	...	285	...	202,314
1897	665	...	142	...	94,951
1898	700	...	403	...	282,122
1899	700	...	137	...	96,000

Mr. John Melville, who succeeded Mr. Couper as Fishery Officer at Fraserburgh in 1882, was transferred to Ardrishaig in 1894. Mr. Melville was a most capable officer, and professionally, was never excelled at his work. He was a keen sportsman, and at golf and curling he, in his day, had few equals in the district. His removal from Fraserburgh was the cause of much regret to large circle of friends. Mr. Melville died at Girvan a few years ago.

Since the advent of the twentieth century drastic changes have taken place in connection with the general conduct of the herring fishing industry. Old methods have been discarded, and what are called innovations and improvements, been introduced. These changes in the face of the march of improvement, may have been necessary, but, on the whole, so far as Fraserburgh is concerned, they have not as yet been in the financial interests of the fishermen and the fishcurers. For the last ten years the curing trade seems to have been "out of joint," and instead of the arduous labours of the curers, during the period mentioned, yielding an addition to their capital, they have rather spelt loss at Fraserburgh. This has been so much the case that the trade, as a whole, is almost giving up hope of a substantially profitable year, such as 1898, ever being experienced again. The trade may be what is called in a transition stage just now, so many have been the departures in recent times; but it will, no doubt, emerge from its trials purified and strengthened, and fit to meet the new and changed condition of things. "Experience is the best of schoolmasters, only the fees are heavy." So said a modern philosopher. The experience which the fishcurers have had lately, should teach them wisdom, and enable them to arrange their business plan of operations so that success will be

their reward. No doubt profitable seasons will come again, and probably, at times when the curers least expect them.

Since this century opened the fishings at Fraserburgh have been highly successful, and it is, therefore, all the more disappointing that the fishcurers should not have been able to reap a golden harvest out of the plenty. The greatest season ever recorded at Fraserburgh was in 1907, when the total catch touched 320,520 crans, truly remarkable figures. That year saw the first start, on a big scale, of the early herring fishing, due to the operations of steam drifters, whose owners pled that they could not allow so much capital to be laid up when there was a chance of earning something. To give an idea of the success of the early fishing in 1907, it has only to be mentioned that there were landed at Fraserburgh in May 6,893 crans, and in June 77,653 crans. These figures are enough to make the old fishermen who were engaged fishing here fifty years ago, turn in their graves. The season of 1908 yielded 252,090 crans, so that two seasons running gave the extraordinary aggregate of 572,610 crans. Figures such as these for two successive seasons were never approached before. For the ten years ending 1909 the aggregate catch at Fraserburgh was 2,016,890 crans, equal to an average of 201,689 crans per season. Truly, the riches of the sea are boundless.

The Baltasound herring fishing, which began to attract the increased attention of fishcurers and fishermen in the 'nineties, leapt into great prominence in the early years of this century. The fishings were phenomenally heavy, and the herrings of excellent quality, and this, combined with the important fact that the fishcurers had the fishermen engaged at very low prices for the season, accounted for the piles of gold which the Fraserburgh curers made at Baltasound. The fishermen were engaged for a given quantity of herrings per week. This was a cute and a very fine arrangement for the curer, because whenever the engagement quantity was exceeded, the fishcurer pretty much fixed the price per cran himself. There is no doubt the curer always erred on the safe side! Was not this retribution upon the fishermen for having used small meshed nets on the East Coast up to 1884, which practically ruined the trade?

The great increase of the Baltasound and North Isles fishing generally, and the handsome profits, referred to above, made year after year by the curers under the engagement system, began to tell upon the East Coast ports. The crisis was reached in the season of 1906, when only 350 boats fished from the port, the smallest season's fleet of boats that had fished from Fraserburgh since shortly after the start of the industry early last century. Both fishermen and fishcurers began to consider the mainland ports of secondary importance, and spoke of them as likely to develop into centres for barrel-making only. It is an interesting fact, and worth knowing, that the fleet of 350 boats in 1907 was practically made up of BF. and INS. craft, the FR. fleet having "lifted" bodily to Baltasound. The outlook at this time was indeed black for the "Broch" but a change in the conduct of the industry at Shetland was slowly

evolving, which was to give a fairer chance to the Aberdeenshire ports. Some steam drifters, whose crews would not accept the prices at which the sailboats were engaged, went to Baltasound unengaged, determined to break down what they called "a monopoly." They succeeded. For the same quality of herrings for which the engaged crews were getting 14s. and 16s. per cran, the free steam drifters were being paid almost double the price. The sail fishermen were not blind to the evolution that was taking place, and they too, in course of time, declined to engage on the old conditions. The fishcurers put forth every effort to strangle the introduction of the selling of herrings by auction at Baltasound, but the march of progress could not be stayed, and in due time the fish salesmen held the field and compelled the trade to conform to the new order of things. The business in Shetland, from the curers' standpoint, was greatly changed, and the thumping profits of former years generally gave place to a balance on the wrong side. Strange to say, also about this time the big shoals of herrings that were wont to visit Baltasound waters annually, gradually began to disappear. It was the exception to find a boat well fished, and the rule to find the bulk with miserable earnings for the season. The few herrings landed were, by competition, run up to such a "fancy" price that the curers returned home with less capital in their pockets than they took away. Thus both fishermen and fishcurers, who had for many years found Baltasound a genuine El Dorado, now had the bitter experience of having to declare that it was an unremunerative place at which to do business. This proved to be the saviour of Fraserburgh and Peterhead, as those engaged in the herring trade gradually withdrew from the early herring fishing in the North Isles of Shetland. From 1907 Baltasound began to decline as a fishing station, while the mainland ports improved; and now, whereas "Balta" is completely robbed of her former glory, the East Coast ports have attained to something like their former importance.

In the meantime Lerwick is the great opponent of the mainland stations, and it must be admitted that it has fished strongly and consistently for a good many years back, and by its splendid natural harbour accommodation, attracted to its waters the finest fleet of steam drifters that ever assembled in the north. The movements of the herring are as erratic as anything in this world, and it is well-known that herrings have frequented given ground in enormous shoals for a long period of years, and, without anything to account for it, have completely deserted the said grounds for quite a generation. The break in the fishing at Lerwick in 1912 and 1913, showed that that port is not infallible, and that it may have to do a period of penance soon, while the mainland stations once more assume the proud position held by Lerwick for a good many years back. The vagaries of the herring are so unaccountable, as already mentioned, that one need not be astonished at anything. These lines are written, not in any vindictive spirit, but as a humble warning to those who, not unlike the former upholders of Baltasound, declare that Lerwick will in time "swallow up" the whole herring trade of the mainland towns.

In referring to the drastic changes in the trade in modern times, there is nobody but will admit that the stoppage of engagements has had a seriously adverse effect upon the prosperity of Fraserburgh. When the fishermen were fixed to fish at Fraserburgh they brought their wives and families with them, and these resided in the town throughout the whole season. In rents alone, these fisher people each year left several thousand pounds with the working class, who let their rooms to the strangers and who depended upon this source of income for paying the landlord practically the year's rent. The fisher people also spent money freely throughout the season, and shopkeepers were benefited to an extent that could scarcely be believed by the younger generation. In fact, in the days of engaging, the fishing season was to local shopkeepers, what visitors are to the inhabitants of a fashionable seaside resort. Since steam drifters came upon the scene the migration of fisher families to Fraserburgh has completely ceased. Drifters cannot be depended upon to be in any port long, as they follow the herrings wherever they are most abundant; and in any case the crews can always run home for the week-end. The conditions of this side of the industry, due to non-engagements, have most completely changed, and it is a change that has left Fraserburgh very much the poorer.

Another innovation which has had a marked influence on the herring industry, is the introduction of steam drifters. The first few steamers that came upon the scene did well. Their success was due to the fact that they arrived in port much earlier as a rule, than sailboats, and received princely prices for their herrings all through the season. Although the expense of working the steamers was heavy, their huge earnings, for the reason above mentioned, left a handsome credit balance at the end of the season. Those happy days have greatly changed. The fleet of steam drifters now working on the coast is so enormous that the first arrivals each day bring in such a quantity of herrings that the price paid for these varies very little from the average price paid throughout the day. As a matter of fact, the price paid per cran to sailboats and steam drifters is practically one and the same. An average price per cran that will pay a sailboat means a dead loss to the steam drifter owners. It is for this reason that steam drifters have not always been a very paying investment during some recent years. Many fishermen who were in affluent circumstances before steam drifters came on the scene, are now with "their backs at the wa'." Of course, there are exceptions, and some steam drifter owners have done very well; but it is to be feared that, as these steamers gradually work into the hands of capitalists, the fine race of fishermen that presently inhabit the villages on this coast and along the shores of the Moray Firth, will slowly but surely disappear. Taking a share in a sailboat was a comparatively easy thing, but fishermen of exceptional wealth, able to raise the capital necessary to take a share in a steam drifter, are few and far between. Herring sailboats are not being built now, and as only a small proportion of the present race of fishermen can get employment on board steam drifters, the balance must look somewhere else for a livelihood. As a matter of fact, young fishermen are already beginning to

gravitate to Glasgow and Leith and other big shipping centres in the south, where they are finding employment in various capacities. The future of the villages is not, therefore, at all very hopeful.

There is another phase of the question. Since the advent of the great fleet of steam drifters a few years ago, the herring trade seems to have lost its equilibrium. Enormous quantities of herrings have been landed by Scotch, Dutch, and German steam drifters, and some authorities are inclined to think this over-fishing may be depleting the grounds. The prices paid for the fresh article may not have been enough for the steam drifters, but in recent years they have been beyond their true market value for the curer, curing in Fraserburgh at least, with the result that he has lost year after year. If the cured article can be sold at a low enough price, the consumptive demand on the Continent is practically without limit. An inflated value of the cured article always checks consumption, and unless the fishing—not only here, but in Holland, Germany, and Norway—is moderate, the payment by the curers of big prices for the raw article is courting certain disaster. The curers themselves know how often they have rushed in and bid upon each other, in quite a reckless manner, trusting that Providence would create a situation in some miraculous way that would enable them to escape from their folly without loss. Providence never interfered, with the result that those who trusted to “miracles” were most severely hit. The loss of capital sustained by fishcurers in recent years, must, to some extent at least, be recovered if the curing trade is to go on, or be worth engaging in. The trade, although a wonderful one in many respects, cannot work on losses for ever. The question is—“How is the capital to be recovered?” The answer must be—“Only the herrings in the bottom of the boat can repair the loss!” The law of average comes in here, and the price overpaid in the past must be balanced by a lower level of prices in the future, at least for a season or two. This means that the fishermen must be prepared for a couple of years of moderate prices. Some remarkable evolution in the trade may prevent the blow apprehended. It is sincerely to be hoped that an easier way out of the difficulty may be found, but in the meantime the solution of the problem seems to be that, if the herring curing trade is to be again put on a firm, healthy financial basis, the fresh herring must pay the debt.

Much has been heard recently of a regular close time annually for the East Coast and Shetland. Although such a step is to be most strongly deprecated, it must be admitted that for the last season or two the fishing was commenced too early, or else the conditions for a too early start were not propitious in these years. Huge quantities of immature and unseasonable fish were thrown upon the market, which had a distinct and unfavourable influence upon the legitimate business that followed at the proper date. At the same time, a hard and fast close time is out of the question. In one season it might be beneficial, while in another it might prove to be a huge mistake. The prosecution of the early herring fishing should be regulated by the law of supply and demand. In many seasons, especially in a year of a poor fishing, quite a

keen demand for early herrings, at good prices, has prevailed. If in any season it was profitable neither to the curer nor to the fisherman to catch early herrings, it would be a simple matter to cease fishing until the conditions were propitious for curing. If a close time could be made international, it would be different; but for the Scotch fishermen to make a close time for themselves, means handing over the early fishing to the tender mercies of the Dutchmen and the Germans, who would, no doubt, promptly despatch their boats to commence fishing in May and June. These nationalities are no mean opponents now, and if given a chance, not only would they take possession of the Scotch fishing grounds early, but they would take possession of the Russian and German markets at the opening of the season. A close time is a species of protection which the Scotch herring trade should keep clear of.

Another great factor which has been introduced to the trade, must be briefly referred to. That factor is the barrel factory. Since its appearance barrel-making has been revolutionized, and the cooper trade shaken to its foundations. Like the steam drifter to the villages, have been the barrel factories to Fraserburgh. They have lessened manual employment, and, therefore, greatly curtailed the spending power of an important section of the community. Many coopers have had to leave the place and seek employment as far afield as the Colonies. The unfortunate thing is that the lower price of the barrels has not helped the curer's profit one fraction. Had the reduced price of the barrels, due to the advantages of machinery, made a proportionate increase on the fishcurers' profits, the money would have been still kept in the town and the floating capital squared, but as things have been, thus far, the introduction of the barrel factory, generally speaking, has been a loss to the community. If there is any doubt on the question, let the number of coopers, along with their average weekly wage, employed in the town, say, fifteen years ago, be compared with the corresponding figures of the present day, and the result will overwhelmingly prove that the argument here set forth is perfectly correct. Of course, the profits made by the barrel factories would account for some portion of the vanished earnings of the coopers, but the figures of profit referred to, would not alter the general result very much. And, notwithstanding all this, the barrel factories, like the steam drifters, have come to stay.

Another growth of modern times is the "trade marker." To throw off the guarantee and security of the brand was a bold step, but the results have justified the decision of these pioneers in the trade. They had to make their cure superior to branded fish. They did so; but for many years after the new policy was inaugurated it is doubtful if the extra price received, greatly exceeded the additional expense caused by rigid selection, extra labour, and supervision, etc., in producing the "trade mark" article. In recent years "trade mark" cure has been much in demand, and very big prices have been paid for it. The fishcurers who have worked courageously on this plan for many years back on small profits, are now getting their reward. Their enterprise deserves this

financial recognition. While giving all credit to these stalwarts of self-dependence, a word must be said for the brand. It has been the foundation and maker of the Scotch herring trade. It was a seal and guarantee that the size of the barrel and contents thereof were what they were represented to be. This, therefore, constituted a barrel of herrings—a marketable article that could be safely bought and sold, no matter how far apart the seller and buyer lived. It also greatly facilitated business from a financial point of view, the documents in connection with a cargo of branded herrings being easily negotiable either at home or abroad, as compared with a shipment of unbranded cure. Thus was the herring curing industry established. Of course, “trade markers” may say that they have even a readier sale for their cure than have “branders” for theirs. That is admitted, because the present day “trade markers” are practically looked upon as capitalists in the trade, whose name and reputation have been long and favourably known all over the Continent. That is a big asset; but what of the poor, obscure, little curer? If he sent out his cure to the Continent with a fancy “trade mark” upon it, instead of the brand, would he receive 5s. per barrel more than was being paid for branded herrings of the same description? Nay, verily! He would probably receive 5s per barrel less! The Scottish brand has done yeoman service to the herring trade in the past, and it will do so in the future. The day may come when the brand can safely be dispensed with. That day is not yet. The “trade markers” will have a long field day before their system becomes universal.

Mr. James Gow, who followed Mr. Melville as Fishery Officer at Fraserburgh in 1894, did not occupy the position very long. During his tenure of office here, he discharged his duties with care, and wisely upheld the traditions of the office. As a man, he was of a quiet and somewhat retiring disposition, and never bulked largely in the public eye. He quite confined his attentions to his official duties. He retired on age limit in 1899, and was succeeded by Mr. William Mair, who proved a very able and strong officer. Nothing escaped his eye, and though he was thorough in the discharge of his duties, he was nevertheless held in the highest respect by the curing trade. His aim was to level up the quality of branded cure to that of “trade markers,” and though his methods at first sight seemed pretty stiff to the unsophisticated small curers, they in the end understood and greatly appreciated his policy. As a citizen, Mr. Mair was very popular. He was promoted to be Assistant Inspector, with residence at Edinburgh, in May, 1904, but sometime afterwards received an important appointment from the Canadian Government, as head of the Fishery Department in Newfoundland. He was succeeded in 1904 by Mr. George Cormack, the first Fraserburgh-born man to occupy the responsible position of resident Fishery Officer in his native town. Mr. Cormack has proved a worthy successor to Mr. Mair, and the good name of the office has been well upheld by him. He has discharged his onerous duties with discretion, and yet firmly, and his thirteen years of official work in Fraserburgh have added considerably to the value of the brand as a mark of good cure. The stringent policy of the

Fishery Board in recent years, in demanding a high level of cure, did, some years ago, bring Mr. Cormack into conflict with some curers, who, anxious to improve, not the shining, but the midnight hours, were not very particular as to the condition of their late purchases. In any little difference of this kind Mr. Cormack has always kept a high ideal of his duties before him, and in the end has proved, not the foe, but the friend of the curer. He is broad-minded enough to have every consideration for the interests of the trade, so long as these do not run counter to the avowed policy of the Fishery Board. He does not "ride on the top of his commission," as some weak-kneed officials are inclined to do; and when he is stringent in the discharge of his duty, there is a necessity for it. It is gratifying to be able to compliment a townsman on his work. It is to be hoped that he will be long spared to continue that work.

The fishing for the ten years ending 1909 was the biggest for any ten years on record, and that, too, notwithstanding a diminished fleet. The extraordinary catch of 1907, however, helped greatly to give this decade first place. It has also to be noted that the early start of the fishing, and the greatly increased catching power of steam drifters, quite equalized the drawbacks of a diminished fleet, so that, taking all the circumstances into account, herrings may be said to have been less plentiful on the Fraserburgh grounds in last decade than in the previous one. The year 1906 in the table given, showing only 350 boats on an average at the port during the season, is a reflection of the evil effects at the "Broch" of the sensational rise of Baltasound as a fishing station. Although the boats at Fraserburgh were few that year, the average catch was the second registered. It almost looked as if the hand of Fate had been uplifted in 1907 to save Fraserburgh from utter ruin, because from that year to this the fishing at Baltasound has proved a practical failure. Its day will, no doubt come again, but the conditions of the trade will be so changed, that Baltasound will never again become the Land of Ophir to the curers that it once was. For this reason, it cannot again be an outstanding menace to East Coast fishing ports.

The average catch in 1907, of 641 crans per boat for the season, puts all other comparisons, up to date, completely "out of court." Such an average would have been deemed incredible and impossible by those in the trade even a dozen years ago. Then, the belief was that the average of 1898 (403 crans) would never be exceeded. What has happened in the past may happen again, but it is probable that "much water will run down the burn" before the average of 1907 is "topped." The following are the figures of the catch from the year they were last given, until 1912:—

Year.	No. of Boats.		Average.		Season's Catch—Crans.	
1900	...	560	...	196	...	109,778
1901	...	640	...	249	...	159,829
1902	...	650	...	343	...	223,449
1903	...	620	...	302	...	187,780
1904	...	650	...	346	...	225,196

Year.			No. of Boats.		Average.		Season's Catch— Crans.
1905	...	...	420	...	390	...	163,781
1906	...	...	350	...	565	...	197,953
1907	...	...	500	...	641	...	320,520
1908	...	...	550	...	458	...	252,090
1909	...	...	500	...	353	...	176,514
1910	...	...	500	...	442	...	221,186
1911	...	...	450	...	428	...	192,637
1912	...	...	400	...	500	...	200,300

Between 1888 and 1912, the list of fishcurers doing business at Fraserburgh underwent many changes. Naturally, a period of fourteen years would see old names disappear and new ones fill the gap. The list for 1912 is as follows:—

Bisset, A. & J.	Kelsall Brothers.
Bisset & Company.	Low, James.
Blackhall, J. & A.	Low, William.
Bruce, A., & Company.	Maconochie Brothers, Limited.
Bruce, W. D.	Massie, C. & W.
Buchan & May.	Massie, W. R.
Burnett, J. & T.	McDonald, Charles.
Burnett, T. P.	McKenzie, John.
Burnett, William.	Miller, William, & Company.
Cardno, J., & Son.	Milne, A., & Son.
Cheyne, James.	Mitchell, Charles.
Crawford, J. & J.	Mitchell, J., & Sons.
Davidson, A. B.	Mitchell & Sim.
Davidson & Sons.	Noble, A. R.
Davidson, William, & Company.	Noble, William, & Company.
Dickson, John.	Noble, William.
Downie, William.	Paterson, Son, & Company.
Duthie, John.	Scottish-Russian Herring Company.
Duthie, William.	Stevenson, James, & Company.
Dunbar, I. & J.	Simpson, Henry.
Duncan, William, Jun.	Skinner, Duncan.
Ewen, J., & Son.	Spring, Alf., & Company, Limited.
Forbes & Company.	Stephen, George, & Company.
Gordon, Edward.	Thomson, J.M.
Gordon, Robert.	Thomson, Lewis.
Greaves & Bradbury.	Thomson & Son.
Hendry, Paul, & Sons.	Trail, W. R.
Inkson, Harry.	Watt, Alexander, & Company.
Inkson & Tozer.	Whyte, Thomas, & Son.
Jenkins, Thomas.	Wood, James.
Johnstone & Company.	

Having given a list of the fishcurers of the present day, it will be interesting to many to see a list of the buyers, or herring exporters, doing business in Fraserburgh, which, in a way, continues to be the metropolis of the herring industry of Scotland, in 1912. The "buyer" is now an important figure in the herring trade, because many of them are, or were, in the way of acting in the double capacity of banker and buyer. Although the custom of making large advances to the curers on herrings purchased long before they are shipped, is not so common as it once was, there is no doubt but that buyers still continue to give the struggling curer a "financial lift" when his exchequer is "full" of emptiness! At one time buyers or exporters were confined to people belonging to the district, or firms having places of business in Scotland only. Many of these, of course, acted on behalf of Continental houses. Great changes have taken place on the environment of the buyers since the days referred to. Many firms now come from Russia and German Baltic ports, do business with the fishcurers on the spot at Fraserburgh and other stations, and at the end of the season close their offices and return to their Continental homes till another season comes round. Generally these firms take the Yarmouth or Lowstoft season en route for Russia and Germany. Not a few of these peripatetic buyers are Russian Jews, who, though not greatly relished by the home exporter, have come to stay. Credit must be given to them for being straight business people, as a rule. They may drive a stiff bargain occasionally, but their dealings in Fraserburgh have been, on the whole, satisfactory. Besides this, they have opened a field of consumption for the smaller or cheaper brands, which was practically unknown before these industrious Israelites came upon the scene. In this one direction alone, have they been great benefactors to the herring trade of Scotland. The list of buyers, or, as they are often described, herring exporters, engaged in business in Fraserburgh in 1912 was as follows:—

Mr. James A. Thomson.
Messrs William Leslie & Company,
Limited.
Messrs. H. Dinesmann, Son, & Co.
Messrs. Gunther & Company.
Messrs. L. Stern & Sons.

Messrs. A. Smith & Schultze.
Mr. S. B. Birkhabn, of Libau.
Mr. William G. Simpson.
Messrs. Gunther & Rohde.
Mr. Martin Luther.

The first few names on the list have been established at Fraserburgh for many years back. It is always interesting to throw the memory backwards, and compare the present with the old condition of affairs. The comparison will appeal more to the old than to the young generation. To the former the list given below may appear pathetic, seeing that of the whole list only Mr. McConnachie is still alive. It will also, no doubt, awaken many happy memories of the past, and recall "booming business days," when those whose names are unknown to the present generation of curers were giants in the herring trade for

the space of twenty or thirty years ending Eighteen Hundred and Ninety. The following are the names of these stalwarts:—

Mr. Charles McBeath.	Messrs. William McConnachie & Co.
Mr. James Cardno.	Mr. Andrew Tarras.
Mr. George Henry Ebsworth, of Leith.	Mr. William Garden.
Messrs. Beda & Company, of Leith.	Mr. Robert Smith.
Messrs. J. & T. Park.	Messrs. George Wilson & Company, of Leith.
Mr. James Methuen, of Leith.	Captain Anderson, of Lossiemouth.
Messrs. Stephen & Donald.	Mr. Wemyss Park.
Messrs. Gillespie & Cathcart, of Leith.	Mr James McCombie, of Peterhead.
Mr. Alexander Watson.	Mr Joseph Wood, of Aberdeen.

In reviewing the past, there is no doubt the 'seventies, 'eighties— notwithstanding the financial crisis of 1884 and 1885—and 'nineties of last century were the thirty years when Fraserburgh made the greatest headway as a fishing port, and progress as a town. Since the opening of the twentieth century the herring trade of Fraserburgh has not been satisfactory. Instead of adding to, or even conserving their capital, fishcurers, as a rule, seem to have dropped money year after year. As has been already pointed out, this state of affairs is entirely due to the fishcurers themselves, who seem, in recent years, to have lost the art of buying herrings at their true market value. They have always paid inflated prices, and loss has been the result at the year's end. If the reason for this were asked of a fishcurer he would probably refer you to the language of Shakespeare ("Pericles") as follows:—

3rd Fish:—"Master, I marvel how the fishes live in the sea."

1st Fish:—"Why as men do a-land; the great ones eat up the little ones."

It is devoutly to be wished that a new era will set in. The fishcurer cannot live on his losses for ever! Although they may not obtain "a new heaven and a new earth" they may easily obtain a wiser and a better way of doing business. The ocean has been kind in its gifts to Fraserburgh in the past, approaching nearer a gold mine than anything else. Although this, the staple industry, has not "boomed" at Fraserburgh since the advent of the new century, times may change again soon, and the cornucopia of the North Sea distribute its blessings of fish in a more copious stream than it ever did before! Discontented murmurings and whinings at the success of other stations will not help Fraserburgh. The trade must have confidence in the future, and "play the man" with that energy and enterprise which has always characterized the "Broch" fishcurer in the past. If this spirit animates the community success will certainly come, which will infuse fresh life into the trade, and make the glorious decades of the past repeat themselves in the immediate future. The brilliant financial success of the curing trade at Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft during seasons of 1912 and 1913 shows how soon and how un-

expectedly a period of prosperity may overtake the long-suffering fishcurer at Fraserburgh. It is to be hoped that the chapter of prosperity—the new era desired—will run on for a long time to come.

Statistics are generally dry reading to “the man in the street” and it is possible that some of the tables of figures given in this chapter may prove “a weariness of the flesh” to the general reader. They are, however, necessary if the regular course of the fishing is to be followed from start to finish. The last figures to be given in the chapter should interest everybody, since they will show the gross value of the herrings cured at Fraserburgh from 1815 to 1912, a total of 97 seasons. A close examination of the annual reports and Harbour Office statistics pronounce the fact that the value of herrings cured at Fraserburgh during the time mentioned amounts to no less than £12,262,439! The figures are very remarkable, and show the amazing riches of the sea, the foundation wealth upon which Fraserburgh has prospered and progressed for almost one hundred years. Credit must not be given to one element only. Along with the bounties of nature must be bracketed the industry of the people. If Fraserburgh, situated in a naturally cold and somewhat desolate district, has been a progressive town, its advancement has been primarily due to the energy, enterprise, and business acumen of its inhabitants.

Before concluding this chapter it will not be out of place to make reference to some old customs and superstitions that were wont to prevail in the olden days among the fishermen residing in the Fraserburgh district.

The clannishness and aloofness of the fisher folk who abide, almost a race by themselves, among the many villages round the Scottish coast, have made them subjects of much curiosity to outsiders. Their strong individuality and quaint old-world ways, so often the subject of remark, are, however, being broken down somewhat—especially in these recent years when their calling has ceased to be profitable at home, and they have been obliged to become constant wanderers in the search for King Herring. The fishermen of the old days, who rarely left their native villages and seldom married outside their own kin, developed a type of character at once highly individual and strangely different from that of their fellow-countrymen among whom they lived, but of whom they were not. Added to their aloofness was their want of education—common at the time, however, to other classes—which helped to make the product the quainter. Among the best representatives of the type then, as now, were the inhabitants of the group of villages to the south and west of Fraserburgh, which has grown to be the centre of the Scottish herring industry. Some account of the old customs, curious beliefs and superstitions which once prevailed in the villages, but are now fast dying out, may not lack interest to-day.

Like their compeers of that day, the fishermen were very fond of a dram. Their predilection for “John Barleycorn” is evidenced by the fact that about the middle of last century no Fraserburgh fishcurer could engage a crew unless he agreed to provide daily a sufficiency of whisky for their wants. Perhaps the wretchedness of their surroundings had something to do with the craving

for whisky, for their houses were poor, clay-built cabins, with thatched roofs, and the environment was most insanitary. All that has now been changed. The fishermen are of a strongly emotional temperament, and the "revival" movement of forty or fifty years ago took nowhere stronger hold than in the Buchan fishing hamlet. The temperance movement which followed had also very great success amongst the fishermen, and between the two the people were lifted to a higher plane of life. Drinking is now almost unknown among them, and the improvement of their financial position has enabled them to greatly better their material surroundings. Education, too, has made marvellous strides among these fisher people, and it is a striking fact that their youth is far more highly developed mentally than the average of Scotland. As a result, many of their young men are finding their way into the ministry, the law, the Civil Service, and the other higher walks of life.

Marriages were with the fisher people, as with every other class, most important functions. Times have changed, but in "the long ago" the invitations to a Buchan fisher wedding included half the village, and it was a strict rule that all the invited guests should bring with them to the marriage feast some kind of eatables or drinkables. This took the form of tea, sugar, cream, bread, jam, oatcakes, and other delicacies. The guests were, however, relieved of the vexatious wedding gift tax, which is now so universally exacted. On the morning of the wedding the children were treated to milk porridge, while the men received an abundant supply of "ale brose" strongly charged with whisky. A button was, of course, placed in the "brose" bowl, and the lucky finder was to be first married. In the evening a fish supper was served to all the guests, but on account of the small size of the houses, the marriage party had to be divided into sections, and the wedding supper partaken of simultaneously in probably half a dozen houses. The feast, as it was called, was finished in one day, but drinking was carried on by the men for several days on end, often finishing up with a big fight, when sometimes blood flowed. At the time in question the marriage ceremony generally took place at the manse.

The wedding procession from the bride's house to the manse was a great event. The procession was headed by the bride and bridegroom walking arm-in-arm, and these were followed by the whole of the guests, each young man and girl, attired in their very best, following, also arm-in-arm. The procession was almost invariably led by musicians, sometimes fiddlers, these often being aided by a man playing the flute. Young men armed with fowling-pieces accompanied the marriage party, and every now and again fired into the air. Many of the older villagers stood at their doors, and, as the procession passed, joined in the fusillade with shot guns used for killing sea birds, and sometimes utilized quietly in despatching to its long home and the broth pot a rabbit in the bents of Cairnbulg or St. Combs. The march of progress has swept all these quaint customs away, and a fisher marriage of to-day in the village is as prosaic as it is in the city.

Funerals in the old days were as characteristic as marriages. Whisky played a prominent part in the ceremony. Mourners on arriving at the house where the dead lay were always liberally refreshed, and, as the churchyard was generally situated at a considerable distance from the village, the funeral party were always treated to a "dram" or two on the way. It was not in those days considered disrespectful to the memory of the deceased to smoke, and it was quite a common thing to see a whole funeral party "pulling away" at their pipes at the hardest.

Many other curious customs prevailed. When a new boat, for instance, was launched, it was considered lucky to put the boat into the water with a flowing tide. Immediately after the launch all those present partook of bread and cheese to the accompaniment of a liberal supply of whisky. At the same time a bottle of whisky was broken on the bow of the boat, and all good wishes expressed for the success of the craft. Like their brethren on land, the fishermen had great faith in the luck of a horse-shoe, and a boat was not considered complete without this ornament appearing in a prominent place on board, generally on the mast. The fishermen had a pious horror of any boat belonging to their village that had stranded and caused the loss of life. Although the boat might have been refloated and found quite sea-worthy, not a single fisherman residing in the village to which the craft belonged, would set foot in her again, being impressed with the idea that to do so was to court certain death. Strange to say, the ill-luck was not considered to attach to fishermen of an adjoining village, and these might secure the boat and sail her without any risk of evil. Ministers were considered very unlucky by Aberdeenshire fishermen, and, if a boat was met at sea having a parson on board, the crew of the passing boat made up their minds that some dire calamity would, sooner or later befall them. Pigs, hares, salmon, etc., were also abhorred as creatures of evil omen.

It was a firm belief among the villagers that, should a cock crow before midnight a death would soon occur in the family to which the ill-conditioned fowl belonged. There were a hundred and one omens in which the fisher people firmly believed. The falling of a picture, and especially a portrait, from a room wall foreboded death, and so did sounds heard in bed at night. This latter was called "the chackie mill" or "death watch," and was nothing more than the woodworm engaged in its operations of eating the woodwork of the old-fashioned "bun'-in-beds," which in most cases adorn the houses of the villagers to this day. If a sick person at the point of death sneezed it was taken for granted that he or she had every chance of recovering; while a more extraordinary notion still, and probably a legacy of the austere Covenanting days, was the belief that if any person showed excessive joy, it was an omen that the death was near at hand of the party himself or a near relation. To the very aged people of the villages a fragment of the old-world mysteries still cling, but the young generation have out-lived the prejudices of the past, and there are no fishermen on the British coast better educated or more

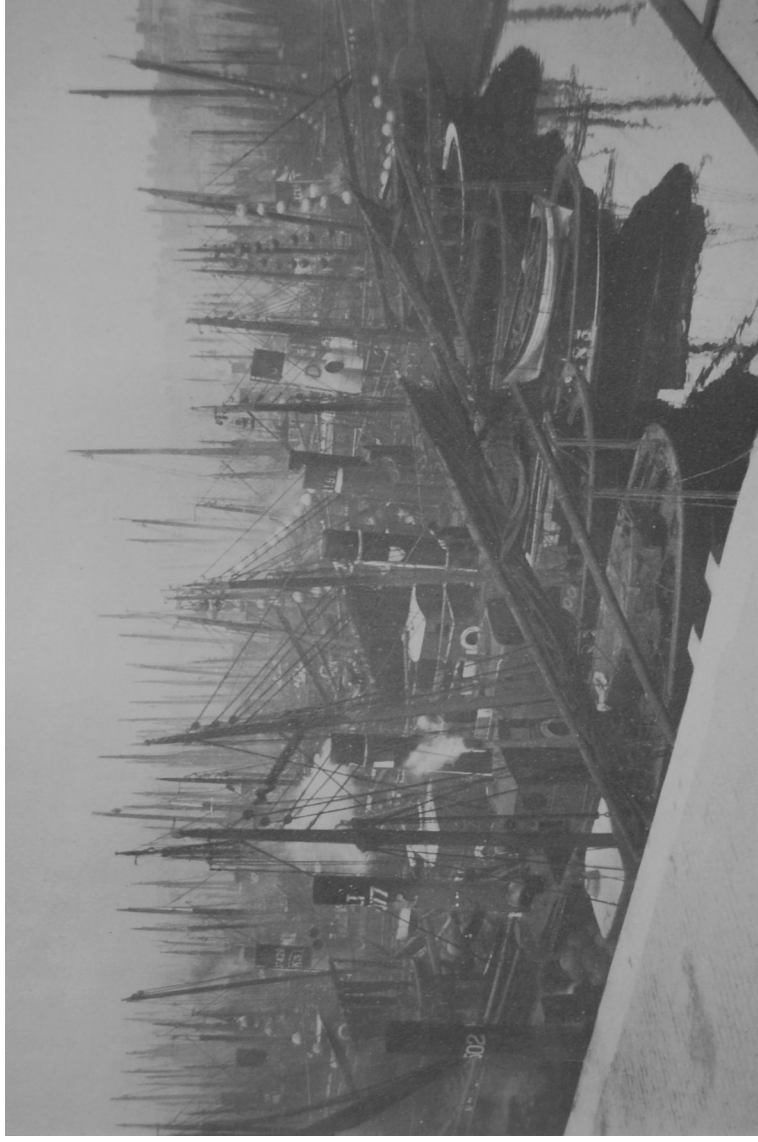


Photo by Norrie, Fraserburgh.

THE HERRING FLEET IN PORT, 1912.

enterprising in their calling than the villagers of the north-east corner of Aberdeenshire.

“Oh what an endless work has he in hand
Who’d count the sea’s abundant progeny,
Whose fruitful seed far passeth that on land,
And also theirs that roame in th’ azure sky—
So fertile be the floods in generation,
So vast their numbers, and so numberless their nation.”

Edmund Spenser.

CHAPTER VII.

FRASERBURGH HARBOURS.

Nothing in and around Fraserburgh has, for the last quarter of a century, kept up the march of improvement as the harbours have done. In the end of the eighteenth century, many towns along the East Coast of Scotland and skirting the shores of the Moray Firth could boast of better harbour accommodation than Fraserburgh. The latter's nearness to the great fishing banks of the North Sea was of primary importance; and when the herring fishing began to develop on the Aberdeenshire coast, while other ports less favoured by nature and the spoils of the deep stood still, Fraserburgh forged ahead. The enterprise of the people also contributed much to steady enlargement of the harbours. The great pioneer of harbour improvements and the best benefactor Fraserburgh has probably ever seen, owing to his far-seeing and energetic policy of improvement, was the late Sir Alexander Anderson. Before touching upon the gigantic scheme of harbour improvements inaugurated by him, it will be interesting to look backward and picture Fraserburgh as it was before there was a Balaclava Pier, a Middle Jetty, South Pier, or a South Breakwater. Records go back previous to the existence of a North Pier.

It is understood that the site of the first-made Fraserburgh Pier was in the corner of Balaclava, below the Baths. It was probably a deep water inlet among the rocks, made by nature and improved by the hands of man. At any-rate, until nearly the middle of the sixteenth century this natural creek did duty for a harbour, and to it the golden argosies (?) brought their valuable freights to Fraserburgh!

It will be remembered that the first attempt at regular harbour-making at Fraserburgh was made by the seventh Laird of Philorth, in 1546, who was said to have "constructed a convenient harbour." It must have been a very small work; but if it was equal to the needs of the time, that was all that was wanted. Exactly thirty years afterwards, viz., in 1576, Sir Alexander Fraser, the founder of Fraserburgh, started the building of a new harbour. His new harbour had, no doubt, been an enlargement of the old, but the work for the age, must have been carried out on ambitious lines, and must have met the development of the town's trade for a very lengthened period, because there is no word of any further harbour improvement works at Fraserburgh for the long period of 170 years. Mr. Alexander Garden of Troup, writing in 1683 (for Sir Robert Sibbald's Collections, MS., Advocates' Library), says:—

“HARBOURS.—Fraserburgh—An artificial harbour; is the best on this part of the Coast, being able to receive 10 feet at neap tide.” The community was pretty much a fishing one, and the harbour accommodation existing, met their demands. The harbour at this time was located somewhere between the North Pier-head and the Baths. It is possible that the beach there, with the piers run out by the founder of Fraserburgh, did duty for the harbour. The creek must have been much exposed to east and north-easterly winds, and one can understand disaster overtaking craft in the harbour, caught in gales coming from these directions. At the same time the place was wonderfully well protected from other points of the compass, and as some of the creeks had a considerable depth of water—there were no piers to cause silting in those days—the fishermen managed to carry on their calling with the small boats in use then with wonderful safety.

“A General Description of the East Coast of Scotland, from Edinburgh to Cullen” (by Francis Douglas, Paisley, 1782), says: “A little to the East of Kinnairdshead stands Fraserburgh, a seaport with a pretty good harbour and pier. The male part of the inhabitants are chiefly employed in fishing; the women in spinning flax. Near to this place stands Philorth Castle, the seat of Lord Saltoun, whose ancestor married the daughter of Archbishop Sharp, who was in the Coach with her father, when he was murdered on Magus Moor, near St. Andrews. A little to the west of Fraserburgh lies Broadsea, a fishing town, the property of Lord Saltoun.” The harbours along the coast in Mr. Douglas’ day must have been of a very primitive nature when he formed so favourable an opinion of Fraserburgh’s resources in this direction. The harbour of Fraserburgh at the date mentioned comprised the upper half of the North Pier, built in 1745. In a Blue Book, dated 1847, on “Reports on Harbours” (page 330), Baillie Lewis Chalmers’ memorandum on the subject says: “The old North Pier, built in 1745, was a dry stone pier, and nearly on the same site as the present North Pier, which was built by Mr. Stewart of Plymouth, between the years 1808 and 1811; and the materials of the old pier were used in the hearting of the present North Pier.” It was always understood that the upper half of the middle jetty was the first semi-modern pier built at Fraserburgh, but the above extract from the Blue Book disposes of this theory, as Mr. Douglas mentions “a pretty good harbour and pier,” the one pier being, no doubt the upper half of the North Pier, the building of which was completed in 1746.

When the original upper half of the Middle Jetty was built, nobody can tell and no records disclose the secret. It may surprise present-day people to know that up to 1818 all the traffic—that is, the loading and unloading of ships and boats—was carried on in the upper half of the North Harbour, where craft were greatly exposed to the blasts of north and north-easterly gales, which blew as furiously then as they do now. A small enclosing pier ran out from the Middle Jetty, close to the Round House, and a similar pier came out from the North Pier, exactly opposite, leaving a very narrow entrance for ships to get into the upper, or harbour proper at the time. These enclosing piers contributed greatly to the safety of shipping, but they could not have been quite satisfactory, for

engineers reporting on schemes of improvement, refer to the dangers to which Vessels are liable while lying in the harbour. The harbour, however, met the needs of the community till the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the natives saw the necessity for further harbour improvements. The population of the town then totalled 2,200, and the trade, though by no means large, had outgrown the accommodation available.

As trade developed, the loss of shipping in the exposed North Harbour became so great that Mr. John Rennie, the great London engineer of that time, was called in, and from his plans was built the present North Pier. Mr. Rennie was really the first engineer who reported on the possibilities of making a harbour at Fraserburgh, and as the document is very valuable, and has never before been published, it will be very interesting reading to Fraserburgh people and East Coast and Moray Firth fishermen, etc., especially as coming from one of the greatest engineering authorities of his day. The Superior of the Burgh, who had previously placed the free revenue of certain lands in the vicinity of the town in the hands of the then Town Council or Town Managers, chiefly for the upkeep and improvement of the harbour, again gave his warm support to the scheme propounded for the further enlargement of the harbour. It is of particular interest to the inhabitants of Fraserburgh to note that it was Mr. Rennie who first suggested the building of Balaclava Pier and breakwater. The nation did not build it in 1802, but the enterprising and courageous people of Fraserburgh did so, on their own account, within eighty years.

The report is dated July, 1802, and is as follows:—

“Fraserburgh is situated about 12 miles north of the latitude of Peterhead, and about 8 miles to the westward of its parallel of longitude. It lies in a bay which is formed by Kinnaird’s Head on the west, and Cairnbulg Head on the east; the distance between these heads in a straight line is about 2 miles, and the depth of the bay, within said line, is somewhat better than a mile; its exposure is nearly north-east.

“The shore, from the interior part of Cairnbulg Head, is within half a mile of the town, is flat and sandy, and there is generally good anchorageing ground throughout the whole of the bay.

“At the place above-mentioned, a ledge of rocks runs out for about 200 yards, called the Baring Rocks; the shore is then flat and sandy for about 320 yards more, and then the great ledge of rocks, called the Broch-Head (which are covered at high water) extends for about 300 yards into the bay; and these, with Kinnaird’s Head, form a small bay, at the bottom of which the town of Fraserburgh is situated. This small bay is further sheltered by a ledge of rocks, called the Inch, which is covered by about two-thirds flood, and near the south end of it is another rock, called the Beacon Rock, a perch is placed to direct vessels into the harbour.

“The shore of the last-mentioned bay is very rocky, and at the bottom of several places foul; but still it possesses the capability of being made a good harbour, as several of these places can be cleared at no very great expense, as

the stones would be required in building the piers; and there is clean ground and deep water where an entrance should be made.

"The present harbour is very small, and the water ebbs entirely out of it, but the form which has been given to the piers is as injudicious as can well be supposed. It is not of difficult access, but when vessels are in it, with north-easterly and easterly winds, the water is so agitated, that they are nearly in as great danger, as if they were in the open bay. On this account I see little, if any, advantage which would be gained by preserving any part of the present piers.

"A new harbour seems to be absolutely necessary; and the question which arises, is what extent this harbour should be? The town of Fraserburgh contains about 2,200 inhabitants, the trade small; so that for the trade of this place, a very small harbour would be sufficient. But when its situation at the mouth of the Moray Firth is considered, it becomes a place of considerable consequence, as a station, where vessels bound north about, might find shelter in storms, from the north-east and east. When I examined this place in November, 1800, several vessels were aground in the bay, and some of them were entirely lost. Had there been a good harbour at Fraserburgh every one of them might have found shelter in it, and the men's lives, ships, and cargoes saved.

"The Broch-Head, the rocks called the Inch, and another ledge which runs out from the south side of Kinnaird's Head, afford an opportunity of making a harbour capable to contain between 300 and 400 sail of ships; and the water is sufficiently deep to enable them to enter at all times of the tide. But such a harbour as this could only be undertaken at the national expense, as neither the trade of the place nor any tolls that could be exacted, for vessels taking shelter in it, could defray the interest of the money it would cost.

"My opinion, therefore, is, that such an extensive plan ought not to be undertaken at the expense of Lord Saltoun, nor those interested in the trade of the place.

"The harbour which appears to me most suitable, all circumstances considered, is one which would contain about one hundred and fifty sail of vessels and which is delineated on the plan that accompanies this report.

"The shape I have given to the enclosing piers, which form this harbour is such that vessels will be able to enter it with convenience, and when in, will be in perfect safety, as no agitation capable of injuring them can take place, either under the shelter of the south-eastern pier, or along the breast wall adjoining the town.

"The depth of water in spring tides, at the entrance, will be about 22 feet, and, of course, at low water, there will be about 8 feet. In neap tides there will only be from 17 to 18 feet at high water, and at low water, from 10 to 12 feet, which I apprehend will be sufficient for the purpose. Within the harbour, next the eastern pier, to within a short distance of the shore, is nearly the same water as at the north pier, but it will be no very expensive matter to make

the whole space of the harbour nearly of the same depth, and as the sett of the tides are nearly parallel to the shore, and their velocity in springs about 4 knots, 8 neaps, $2\frac{1}{2}$ per hour, but little sand will be carried with them, and, of course, there will be no great danger of its again filling up.

"The head of the pier is proposed to be built on the Beacon Rock, and on the same rock, to return for about 120 feet, and thence in a straight line, to the ledge of rocks adjoining the town, leaving a space of 120 feet wide between its inward end and the shore; by this construction, the waves which strike on the projection or jetty of the eastern pier will be thrown towards the northern pier, and then to the rocks on the south side of Kinnaird's Head, and those which enter its mouth, by the direction of the jetty head of the eastern pier will be made to pass through the opening between the north pier and the shore; and they will be prevented from recoiling into the harbour, by the projection represented at the letter A, on the plan. This projection will also prevent the waves, which are brought in by northerly and north-westerly winds, from passing the harbour. And, therefore, as I have before said, whatever winds blow, there will be little agitation in that part of the harbour which will be used for the loading and discharging of vessels, or for those that take shelter in it.

"A capstan should be placed on the jetty of the eastern pier, to assist in bringing vessels in when they enter it in a storm.

"The lighthouse on Kinnaird's Head is of great advantage to the town and harbour of Fraserburgh, as it becomes an excellent direction for ships who have occasion to enter the bay in the night; and if a small light was placed on the north pierhead, it would serve to guide them into the harbour; such a light would not be very expensive, and it would amply repay vessels who frequent the harbour, if a small additional duty was laid on them to defray the expenses of it.

"The difficulty of getting good materials for building the piers, considerably increases the amount of my estimate, which I have, as will appear by the estimate subjoined, stated at £17,726.

"The expense above stated, considering the present extent of trade of Fraserburgh, is no doubt greater than can possibly be defrayed by ships coming to the harbour. But when it is considered to be a matter of great and general importance, assistance may reasonably be looked for from all maritime towns trading northward, and from the neighbouring landowners, whose interest must be benefited from the improvement of the harbour of Fraserburgh."

Mr. Rennie became a very famous man as Smiles's "Lives of the Engineers: Smeaton and Rennie," proves. Rennie was the engineer of Waterloo Bridge, London, and other great works of national importance.

At this age, shipwreck and loss of life seem to have been of monthly, if not weekly occurrence on this coast during the winter months, and even in the autumn and spring. Mr. Rennie's scheme for enlarging and improving the harbour was estimated to cost £17,726. Old Baillie Chalmers, assisted by the



FRASERBURGH HARBOUR IN 1746. ONLY PIER THEN BUILT WAS UPPER HALF OF NORTH PIER AND NUCLEUS OF MIDDLE JETTY.

“heids o’ the toun,” set to work to raise the necessary funds with which to carry out the harbour enlargement that was to provide accommodation for “one hundred and fifty sail of vessels.”

Capital was not so plentiful in the district then as now, and the Imperial authorities of that day had their hands full with the work of providing cash to maintain the British Army, or in subsidising other European Powers to enable them to fight the French, so that a “Government grant” was not available then. Notwithstanding the best efforts of the community, only £2,000 could be raised, and the proposed works had to be curtailed; not only so, but had to be delayed for a time. The present North Pier was, however, commenced on 1st September, 1807, and by and by, as money came in, building operations were continued; after unusual exertion on the part of the leading men of the town, the building was triumphantly finished somewhere about 1809 or 1810. Of course, Mr Rennie’s big scheme costing £17,726 could not be carried out, and the Burgh records bear that the last of the accounts due in respect of the building of the North Pier were paid on the 11th August, 1814, and that the total cost of the structure was £11,332 17s. 3d. The work was superintended by a Mr. William Stewart, a man of parts, who went from Fraserburgh to fill an important appointment at Plymouth. That the completion of the work must have been considered of great moment to the town, is borne out by the fact that a sum of wellnigh £100 was spent on a dinner, ball, and other rejoicings observed in honour of the event. The then civic rulers were not lacking in enterprise or afraid of public censure, seeing that the harbour revenue, which was farmed out either to Mr. J. Dalrymple or Mr. Charles Simpson, for the year named, amounted to the insignificant sum of £65. It must, however, be remembered that there were no press representatives in the “Broch” in those days, and that everybody who was anybody had joined in the convivialities of the occasion, and was therefore muzzled.

The next important and inevitable work which attracted the attention of the community was the erection of what is now known as the South Pier. With the erection of this pier, and the rocks which lay around the inside of the Middle Jetty excavated, Fraserburgh would then be the possessor of one of the safest harbours on the coast. Mr. R. Stevenson, the Edinburgh engineer, was now employed by the Fraserburgh Harbour authority, and on his first visit he saw the needs of the place, and recommended the erection of the South Pier, which would for those days, enclose a large area of water that would be perfectly tranquil. It is interesting to notice here that the year 1818 is a very important one for Fraserburgh, for not only was the South Pier commenced in that year, but the first direct local harbour authority, having separate and special control of harbour affairs, as constituted by Act of Parliament, met for the first time on the 28th May, 1818. Those who had the honour of “being the first Fraserburgh Harbour Commissioners,” and who were present in the then Town Hall—which is now the property in Shore Street belonging to Mr. George Walker, sailmaker—at this historic

meeting were Baillie Lewis Chalmers, Mr. Charles Leslie, Mr. John Dalrymple, Mr. Charles Wemyss, Mr. John Wallace, Mr. William Stewart, Mr. Robert Matthew, and Mr. James Gray, with Mr. W. D. Kelman as clerk. So far as information can be gathered, not a single son, grandson, or great-grandson of any of the gentlemen named can be found in the town or parish of Fraserburgh. How eighty or a hundred years change the social and business circles of a community, and play havoc with the old landmarks, breaking traditions to pieces, and effacing names of families that it was thought posterity would never see die out! The places of honour in the community are now filled by "aliens," or the descendants of those who, in the beginning of last century, held the patent of an obscure origin and a humble position. Changes such as are here indicated, invariably follow the blasts of fortune of a hundred years.

With regard to the South Pier itself, there is a prevalent idea in Fraserburgh that it was finished in 1818, but incontestable evidence, extracted from official records, will be given in this chapter to show that the building was only commenced in the end of 1818. It is pleasant to recall the fact that when tenders for the building of the South Pier were asked, the newspapers to which the advertisement was sent were the *Aberdeen Journal and Chronicle*, the *Edinburgh Weekly Courant*, and the *Dundee Newspaper*. The fortunate offerer for the work was a Mr. William Minto, stated in the minute to be of Alford, whose tender for the whole work was £6,150. What the extras amounted to would be a difficult question to solve. Mr. Minto's cautioner, it is interesting to note, was John Forbes, Esq., of Boyndlie. Mr. Stevenson, the engineer, appointed as superintendent of the work a Mr. Selkirk.

The foundation stone of the South Pier was laid on the 30th September, 1818, and at a meeting of the Commissioners, held on the 8th September, it was resolved that the ceremony should be carried out with an éclat befitting the occasion. The minute, which is an interesting one, of the said meeting, reads: "There being several things necessary to be arranged before the day appointed for laying the foundation stone of the South Pier, the meeting was called for that purpose, and resolved as follows: That the Fraserburgh Lodge of Free Masons and Solomon's Lodge be invited to attend at the ceremony, and John Gordon, Esq., of Cairnbulg, the master of the former, to lay the foundation stone; the Rev. John Cumming to preach a sermon in the church, to commence at 12 o'clock noon, and afterwards to be present at the ceremony and give a prayer; that Cruickshank be ordered to have a dinner ready at four o'clock for the council, the master and office-bearers of the different lodges, and the other gentlemen who may be invited; that Mr. Hardy be ordered to get a plate made, and engraved upon it the inscription just now shown to the council; that there shall be a ball and supper given to the ladys, and cards wrote to them and the gentlemen contained in a list made out and approved of by the commissioners, the ball to commence at 6 o'clock, and the clerk was ordered to engage a bass fiddle and two seconds." There can be no doubt that the Commissioners must have had a high sense of the importance of their office,

judging from the exhaustive and minute way in which they engrossed in their minutes their instructions as to the ceremonial arrangements. It would be interesting to know what the inscription was that was put upon the plate referred to in the minute. No trace of the plate can be found in this district, and no doubt it has disappeared many, many years ago.

[Since the foregoing was written, the plate in question, strange to say, temporarily came to light. When the harbour workmen were engaged near the Fish Market, on 15th August, 1912, diverting the sewage pipe from the outlet that goes into the new Station Harbour, to that at the Baths, they came across the memorials of the laying of the foundation stone of the South Pier in September, 1818. A bottle containing a copy of the *Aberdeen Journal*, dated 23rd September, 1818, and several coins of the reign of George III., were found. But by far the most interesting find made was the identical plate which Mr. Hardy was instructed to have engraved. The plate, which had the appearance of being silver, was beautifully engraved with the following inscription: "The foundation stone of the South Pier of the Fraserburgh Harbour, designed by Robert Stephenson, Esq., Civil Engineer, Edinburgh, was laid on the 30th day of September, 1818, and of the reign of King George III., the 58 year, by John Gordon, Esq., of Cairnbulg, Right Worshipful Master of the Fraserburgh Lodge of Free Masons, the Right Hon. George, Lord Saltoun, being Superior and Provost; Lewis Chalmers, Bailie; Chas. Leslie, Treasurer; Sebastian Davidson, Procurator Fiscal; Charles Cumine, Dean of Guild; John Dalrymple, Chas. Wemyss, Jas. Gray, John Wallace, W. Stuart, Robt. Mathew, Councillors; W. D. Kelman, Town Clerk; Wm. Mintow, Banffshire, Contractor, at the sum of £6,150." The Plate was restored to its original resting-place].

The Mr. Hardy who received instructions about the plate inscription, was a well-known watchmaker, resident in Fraserburgh in the beginning of last century, whose name, engraved upon the dials of eight-day clocks, is still frequently come across both in the town and district. It is thus seen that while the memories of the great men, who were the municipal dignitaries and ruled the destinies of Fraserburgh a hundred years ago, are lost in oblivion, the name of the humble watchmaker, who received their orders and their cash, is still prominently before the public.

Fraserburgh has been for many years noted as a musical town, with a high ideal in the classical trend, but evidently the inhabitants' musical education must have been neglected a hundred years ago. From the wording of the minute it would appear that while the community could boast of fiddlers quite able to "rattle up" the "air," there were no "Broch" musical geniuses fit to tackle the bass, or even improvise seconds. And yet the argument now used will be repeated a hundred years hence, for is it not the case that musicians required for any big function at Fraserburgh always come from Aberdeen?

Although the minute nominates the Rev. John Cumming to attend at the

ceremony and give prayer, the fact is that Mr Cumming arranged that Bishop Jolly, of St. Peter's Episcopal Church, should officiate at the open-air ceremony, and the saintly Bishop did act in the capacity named and said the prayer. The Rev. Charles Pressley, in after years minister of St. Peter's for a long time, then a lad of 18 years, was present as a Freemason, and carried, or helped to carry the Masons' banner. The fraternal spirit exhibited on this occasion showed the good and brotherly feeling that existed in those days between the ministers of the Auld and Episcopal Churches.

The following interesting account of the laying of the foundation stone of the South Pier on 30th September, 1818, appeared in the *Aberdeen Journal* of date the 7th October, 1818: "On the 30th ult. the Foundation Stone of the South Pier of the Harbour of Fraserburgh, was laid with great solemnity, by John Gordon, Esq. of Cairnbulg, the Right Worshipful Master of the Fraserburgh Lodge of Free Masons, in presence of the Baillie and Town Council, a number of gentry, and the Office-bearers and Brethren of both the Lodges of Free Masons in that Burgh, as well as an innumerable crowd of spectators, between the hours of two and three o'clock in the afternoon. The Office-bearers and Members of the Lodges, met the Baillie and Town Council in the Town-hall, at 12 o'clock, and afterwards went to church, where they had an appropriate and eloquent sermon preached to them by the Rev. John Cumming, Minister of the Parish. On leaving the church the procession was arranged, and proceeded through the principal streets of the town, in proper order; and, having arrived at the spot where the stone was to be laid, the ceremony was performed, with heart-felt satisfaction to the inhabitants, and all who witnessed it. The ships in the harbour had their flags and colours displayed, which rendered the spectacle more grand and pleasing. After the ceremony was over, the Baillie and Town Council, with the Office-bearers and Members of the Lodges, several Deputy-Lieutenants and Magistrates of the County, and a great many other gentlemen, assembled in the Saltoun Inn and Mason Hall, where elegant entertainments were provided for them, and many loyal and appropriate toasts were given. The whole concluded with a ball and supper. The ball was kept up with the greatest spirit, harmony, and glee, till six o'clock in the morning.

"This work, now happily begun, so essential and long wished-for, will, when completed, contribute in an eminent degree, to the extension of the commerce of Fraserburgh, and general good of the country. The plan which has been adopted, was designed by Robert Stevenson, Esq., Civil Engineer, Edinburgh."

As soon as one improvement was completed, another immediately called for attention. The South Pier had no sooner been completed in 1821 or 1822 than the necessity for finishing the lower section of the Middle Jetty forced itself upon the attention of the Commissioners. The excavations in the inside of the pier had been going on steadily for years, but the condition of the wall at that side was such that no practical benefit as a loading or discharging berth

could be had of it. This could not be tolerated, seeing that the water was as smooth as a mill pond, compared with the nasty motion so often experienced at the North Harbour side of the jetty. The south wall of the jetty was originally pretty much a dyke of big stones thrown loosely on the top of one another. Accordingly, a new wall, a little in front of the old erection, faced with hewn or dressed stones, was built, and the space inside filled up with excavations from the harbour or debris carted from the town. The building of the lower section of the jetty, extending from the Round House to the point, was then commenced, and carried on with wonderful expedition. The hearting of the structure was accomplished much in the same way as was done the space between the old and new wall of the upper portion of the jetty. The Middle Jetty was finally completed in the early 'thirties of last century, and the work seems to have been very successfully carried out by the Commissioners' own employees, under the superintendence of a Mr. Wallace.

Considering the times, Fraserburgh was now possessed of a very good harbour, indeed. The goods traffic was now completely lifted, as it were, from the North Harbour to the new South Harbour, in which, as a safe tidal basin for ships to lie in all kinds of weather, was equalled by few and not excelled by any on the East Coast of Scotland. As a matter of fact, the harbour remains to this day the safest part of Fraserburgh's berthage accommodation, and for the greater part of the year the general trade of the port is entirely confined to the South Harbour. On the completion of the South Pier and the Middle Jetty, the latter about 1830, the state of the port was then such, that it was believed any further improvements would not be necessary for a very lengthened period.

From 1830 to 1840 very little was heard of further harbour extension, but the trade of the town began to develop gradually about the year last mentioned. The herring fishings during the whole of the 'forties were unusually successful, and many families engaged in the herring business, who, at the close of the 'thirties, on account of the poor fishings and bad times, had made up their minds to emigrate to America, stayed on, and helped to build up the prosperous town which Fraserburgh now is. At the same time, many people, disheartened by the struggle for existence, left Fraserburgh about this time, and found their way to America and Canada, and other British colonies.

The harbour revenue, which from 1820 to 1839 remained persistently about £1,000, suddenly rose in 1840 to £1,610, and for the following nine years ranged from the last-mentioned sum up to £2,000. The harbour revenue is the index of the prosperity of the trade of the town, or the reverse; and there can be no doubt that Fraserburgh prospered in a remarkable degree in the years named. Old Baillie Chalmers must have been a man of remarkable sagacity and business enterprise, and Fraserburgh owes much to him. He who, in the beginning of the century, pioneered the building of the North Pier, afterwards inspired the idea of and had built the South Pier, following that up by completing the Middle Jetty, was now, at

nearly the middle of the century, agitating for the erection of a new North Pier. Shortly after 1840 the proposed scheme was taken up by the Harbour Commissioners, and a plan of the Breakwater was prepared by Mr. Gibb, the Aberdeen engineer. The Government must have been very "flush" of money at this time, as the harbour minutes contain the copy of an official document practically inviting the Commissioners to apply for a loan. Baillie Chalmers, wise man that he was, immediately availed himself of the "golden" opportunity, and £20,000 were soon in the coffers of the Commissioners. Strange to say, as may be imagined from the above, the difficulty was not in getting funds, but a contractor to execute the work. The carrying out of big works and public improvements of all kinds over the whole country, had received such an impetus at this time that no contractor, for several years, could be found who would undertake the building of the new North Pier. Indeed, the Baillie was likely to get into trouble over the matter. Mr. Robert Stephen, advocate, presumably the agent of the North of Scotland Bank, on taking his seat as a Harbour Commissioner in 1847, immediately lodged a strong protest, and threatened pains and penalties against the Baillie for the way the business of the Board had been conducted, in so far as a large sum of money had been received from Government, and held unused, to the detriment of the public interest, and the serious loss of the Harbour Board. Baillie Chalmers was prepared with a satisfactory reply, and this storm blew over.

The Baillie had to contend with a party in the Harbour Board who strongly opposed the building of the Breakwater as being extravagant and ambitious beyond the needs of the town, and who maintained that, though built, the water within it would not likely be tranquil enough to give the accommodation and safety required. As to the last allegation, experience proved the objectors to be right. As to any general plan of improvement, the building of the Balaclava Pier was the most feasible at the time, and gave a basis on which all succeeding improvements have been worked. The other proposals were mere patchwork, which would have simply done for "a day and a dinner." Had it been possible to have made a harbour inland, by means of excavation, then the objectors would have had a good case; but, unfortunately, the formation of the coast, and the bluff headland in the neighbourhood of Kinnaird and all along the foreshores of the burgh, made, and still make, such a scheme a perfectly impossible one. Three of the strongest opponents to the Baillie's scheme were the first Mr. John Park, Mr. Charles McBeath, and Mr. Robert Stephen, already referred to, in whose names strong protests against the proposed work are engrossed in the harbour minute book. Notwithstanding all the adverse criticism and opposition, the Baillie, who was a man of determined will, proceeded to prepare for having the work carried out.

Before entering into the question of the erection of the new North Pier, it may be well to mention that up to 1847 the harbour works of Fraserburgh had cost the sum of £25,700—certainly not an extravagant figure for the wonderfully large area of accommodation available at the time mentioned.

After considerable difficulty, a contractor was at last met with in Mr. John Brebner, of Aberdeen, who undertook to build the new North Pier for the sum of £25,021. It is rather remarkable that old Baillie Chalmers, who carried on the negotiations until almost the very last, was laid aside before the contract was signed. His son, Mr Lewis Chalmers, jun., a man of great ability, who occupied an outstanding position in the town and district for many years, held chief office when the contract was signed, and sat as Chairman of the Harbour Board while the pier was being built, and long after its completion. As a matter of fact, however, at the meeting held on the 11th July, 1850, at which Mr. Brebner's tender was accepted, Mr Peter Cumine, father of Mr. J. P. Cumine, advocate, Aberdeen, presided. The members of the Harbour Board when the building of the new North Pier was contracted for, it is interesting to recall, were Baillie Lewis Chalmers, jun., and Messrs. James Lovie, George Officer, William Woodman, Alexander Malcolm, James Robertson, Peter Cumine, Alexander Henderson, Thomas Brebner, James Mitchell, John Park, Robert Stephen, Charles M'Beath, George Law, and Thomas Walker.

The contract was signed in July, 1850, and the work of the pier was commenced by Mr. Brebner shortly thereafter. The contractor appointed as his superintendent of the works was Mr. Chapman. The resident engineer was a Mr. Riddel. The work was commenced quietly, and none of the grand ceremony which marked the laying of the foundation stone of the South Pier, was observed when operations were commenced at the Baths. Had the Commissioners a presentiment of evil and refrained from courting ridicule afterwards? If so, they were wise in foregoing display, although Mr. Lewis Chalmers was one of the best at any ceremonial or demonstration. The pier was an unlucky one, but it was not the want of prayers or sermons, or even a banquet and ball, that made it so, but purely the exposed place where the erection was laid down and the weight of sea to which it was subjected. So far as the older piers are concerned, the sea broke heavily on the reef on which the new pier was being laid down, making their position tenable and the building of them comparatively easy as compared with the new work, the rocks on which it was being built having acted as a buffer to the old harbours.

In the course of 1851 some severe storms were experienced, and some parts of the new pier were very much shaken and partially broken down. The contractor struggled on, however, until the 9th and 10th January, 1852, when the portion of the new pier built had to face one of the severest storms ever experienced at Fraserburgh. After the subsidence of the gale the pier looked as if it had been subjected to the fire of a park of heavy siege guns. The whole of the upper section was more or less damaged, but the portion covering the old north channel was washed down completely, and all the materials thrown into the harbour. A gentleman still living, who witnessed the damage done to the pier, said the storm presented one of the grandest sights that could possibly be ever seen. The waves came rolling in like mountains and when they struck the pier the effect was tremendous. The

breach made in the structure was a very serious one, and Mr. Brebner, finding himself unequal to the task of finishing the job, threw up his contract. After protracted negotiations and threatened law suits, a settlement was events come to. Mr. Brebner was paid £12,400 for the work which he had done, and Mr. Gibb, the engineer, lost his brief from the Harbour Commissioners in consequence of the ill-starred luck of Mr. Brebner. The Commissioners again employed Mr. Stevenson, the Edinburgh C.E., upon whose report they proceeded to carry out the work with their own employees, Mr. Thomas Davidson being the superintendent. The completion of the pier was accomplished about 1856 or 1857. While it was in course of construction, the Crimean War was going on, and in commemoration of one of the striking episodes in the campaign, the name of New North Pier was changed to Balaclava Pier, by which name it has ever since been known. Before the work was completed, the Harbour Commissioners, after taking the job into their own hands, had an outlay of £12,100, making the total cost of the first Balaclava Pier £24,500, and making the gross outlay on the Harbour of Fraserburgh, for piers alone, up to 1857, £50,200.

It was considered that with the completion of the Balaclava Pier the accommodation available would meet the requirements of the trade of Fraserburgh for many a day, and so it proved. Strange to say, the fishings from 1857 to 1869 did not, by any means, keep up the average increase expected, and the result was that the trade of the town showed very little development. Indeed, it was practically at a standstill for a dozen years. With 1870 a decided change for the better set in. That year the herring fishing was prosecuted with unprecedented success, and though the fishcurers suffered in consequence of the Franco-Prussian War, the harbour and the whole community benefited immensely. The fishings continued with marked success for several years in succession, and while the general trade of the town prospered in proportion, the fleet of boats so increased that further harbour improvements became an imperative necessity, if the town was to maintain the premier position it had secured as the capital of the herring industry on the East Coast of Scotland. Besides this, the larger-sized ships and steamers that were now employed in the herring-carrying trade, demanded accommodation and security that the older school mariners did not aspire to, or think necessary.

The question of further harbour improvement was such a big one that none of the local leading public men cared to tackle it, even though the successful early 'seventies showed, without the slightest dubiety, that something would have to be done. Some of those at the very head of the town's affairs deprecated the expenditure of a large sum on the harbour, and declared if it were done it would involve the community in ruin and the town in bankruptcy. Others took a different view. In a great crisis in a nation's affairs there always a patriot provided for the emergency, who, by some mysterious arrangement of Providence, seems born with the peculiar qualifications necessary to combat the difficulties against which his country is labouring. So it is in communities, though, by comparison, in a very small and humble way.

The public men who favoured the forward movement looked about them for a leader, or rather, the leader looked around him for supporters. That leader was Sir Alexander Anderson, the hero of a hundred fights—far from the stricken field, of course, but, nevertheless, contests pregnant with great results to the communities that had the great good fortune to secure the benefit of his marvellous talents as a creator and initiator of gigantic works of public utility. Sir Alexander Anderson was appointed Commissioner to the late Lord Saltoun sometime about the year 1873, and as this appointment then carried with it the Chairmanship of the Harbour Board, the Commissioners had secured a chief armed with all the particular qualifications which the times and the circumstances of the case demanded. How fortunate for Fraserburgh! Though the late Lord Saltoun had paid thousands of pounds into the coffers of the Commissioners as free gifts, such payments would not have weighed in the scales against the great services rendered to the community by Sir Alexander Anderson. It was like an inspiration on Lord Saltoun's part to put Sir Alexander into the place of power, and the inhabitants of the town, even when the fact has almost become like a tradition, must ever remain grateful to his lordship.

Sir Alexander Anderson's work as Chairman of the Fraserburgh Harbour Board will have far-reaching effects for good on the town for generations yet to come. He was practically the maker of modern Fraserburgh, and all the great works of harbour improvements carried out at the port 'twixt 1875 and 1886 were the outcome of his fertile brain, restless activity, and unique knowledge of Parliamentary Committees' tastes, and Public Works Office idiosyncrasies. To those who did their duty and their work—if possible, with little enthusiasm—there could have been no kinder or more considerate friend than Sir Alexander Anderson. As the autumn of 1886 advanced, and the long life of the brave knight came to its evening, and the shadows of the impending night of total eclipse fell thicker and darker around him, it was pathetic to notice the solicitude with which he seemed to watch over and care for the town which had absorbed his whole attention in the closing years of his life. Fraserburgh can never forget her Grand Old Man. His brilliant and unequalled services to the town will be remembered "as long as grass grows and waters run." It is little short of scandalous that a man who did so much for Aberdeen and Fraserburgh as Sir Alexander Anderson, should have no statue erected to his memory in the Granite City. Fraserburgh would, no doubt, willingly join in forwarding such a movement, if inaugurated by the county town; but, after all, the monuments that best testify to Sir Alexander's greatness are the public works and institutions of Aberdeen and the harbours of Fraserburgh, created by his genius, if such a term may be applied to business achievements.

Having paid the above necessary and deserved references to one who tendered such signal services to the Harbour of Fraserburgh, the story of the improvements proper will again be proceeded with. Having, with his eagle eye,

watched the development of events since assuming the Chairmanship of the Board in 1873, Sir Alexander quickly grasped the situation, and suggested energetic and immediate action in the way of harbour improvements to meet the greatly increased and still growing trade of the town. He was cordially supported by the Board, and, accordingly, Mr James Abernethy, the eminent London civil engineer, a friend of Sir Alexander's, and a native of Aberdeen, be it noted, was called in, and visited the town. Mr. Abernethy had, it appears, had a hand, as an engineer, in the Fraserburgh harbours about a score of years before. Mr. Abernethy remained the trusted consulting engineer to the Harbour Commissioners up to the day of his death; and though Fraserburgh Harbour was a very small affair compared with some of Mr. Abernethy's huge professional jobs, he, from his long connection with it, took a keen and fatherly interest in its welfare, rather out of proportion to the fees he sometimes received.

Mr. Abernethy drew a complete plan of improvements upon which the later works executed have been based. The engineer decided that the most necessitous work was a breakwater, starting from the end of the old Balaclava Pier, and running in a south-easterly direction over a ridge of rocks, terminating with a cant, turning towards the land. The sea, in rough weather, broke heavily on the ridge of rocks referred to, and often played havoc with the fishing craft and shipping making for the harbour. The unprotected nature of the entrance, before the breakwater was put up, allowed the sea to roll heavily into the inner harbours, and also accounted for the shipwrecks that were wont to take place on the Bairney Rocks. The scheme also embraced the widening of the old Balaclava Pier, which was entirely inadequate for the requirements of the traffic, and also the erection of a high and substantial parapet as a wall of protection against the assaults of the sea, which, under the old regime, made a clean sweep over the pier in stormy weather, and at such times rendered traffic quite impossible. The estimated cost was £60,000 or thereby, and this sum Sir Alexander Anderson, after a good deal of negotiation, received on loan from the Public Works Loan Commissioners. The resident engineer appointed to carry out the work was Mr. J. H. Bostock, C.E., a gentleman of the highest professional qualifications, who executed the task, difficult and hazardous though it was, with conspicuous success and expedition. Mr. Bostock was a great favourite in Fraserburgh, and was highly esteemed and respected by a large circle of friends. Before his death in 1910, he had for a good many years previously been resident engineer-in-chief at Colombo, Ceylon, in connection with the erection of a great Government breakwater and dock, the latter, which is still in course of formation, being large enough to take in the big class of war vessels.

From the time that the building of the Balaclava Pier was started in 1850 until the year 1875, when the new extension, etc., of it was commenced, a great change on the personnel of the Harbour Board had taken place. The Harbour Commissioners associated with Lord Saltoun and Sir Alexander Anderson,

when the great scheme of harbour improvement was inaugurated by the latter, were: Messrs. Robert Anderson, solicitor; John Anderson, cabinetmaker; John Bisset, fishcurer; William Bruce, fishcurer; James Burnett, farmer; James Cruickshank, solicitor; James Cardno, grain merchant; John Dalrymple, retired shipmaster; John Dickson, fishcurer; Alexander Davidson, mason; James McAllan, builder; William Murison, feuar; John Mellis, surgeon; George Stephen, merchant; and Andrew Tarras, solicitor. Of the whole 17 gentlemen who were members of the Harbour Board in 1875, not one survives to-day.

Sir Alexander Anderson never did things by halves. He liked the effects of a little pageantry, and the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the Balaclava Breakwater was a very imposing one, indeed. The function took place on the 23rd October, 1875, and the town was *en fête* for the occasion. The day's programme commenced with a Trades procession, the like of which was never seen within the Burgh before, and has not been equalled since. All the various trades of the town were handsomely represented, the chiefs or kings, arrayed in striking attire, officiating on the occasion being: Vulcan (for the Hammermen), Mr. Thomas Armstrong; Bakers, Mr. John Meldrum; Tailors, Mr. Henry Noble; Wrights, Mr. John Henderson; Plasterers, Mr. Stephen; Coopers, Mr. Joseph Gordon; Carters, Mr. James Pirie; etc. Undoubtedly the most interesting feature of the procession was the boat manned by Broadsea fishermen and drawn by 100 of those sturdy villagers, on board of which Lord Saltoun and party were conveyed from the North Lodge to the Baths. In the boat, in addition to Lord Saltoun, were: The Master of Saltoun, the Earl of Aberdeen, Sir James Elphinstone, Captain Gordon, RN., Mr. Keppel, etc. It will be interesting to present-day Fraserburgh and Broadsea fishermen to know that the boat was specially built for the occasion to the order of the following Broadsea skippers, who also manned the craft, viz., Messrs. William Taylor, George Noble, Dugald Noble, James Noble, Joseph Noble, and William McLemon. The fishermen had somewhat intricate navigation at times, and there was a risk of the craft being totally lost once or twice, but by clever seamanship they overcame all dangers, and at last safely landed their passengers—much to the relief of the latter—at the head of Balaclava. The ceremony of laying the foundation stone was performed by Lord Saltoun. His lordship had a keen appreciation of the importance of the occasion, and acquitted himself with that becoming dignity which characterized all his actions, public and private through life. One of the features of the event was the grand prayer, couched in most inspiring and lofty language, delivered by Rev. Peter McLaren, parish minister. The impression made by this prayer remains fresh in the memory of those still surviving who heard it. Shortly after the laying of the foundation stone ceremony was completed, a public dinner on a big scale was given by the Harbour Commissioners in their hall, Frithside Street, lately known as Batchan's Hall.

All the principal inhabitants of the town and district, and many dignitaries

from a distance were present at this memorable dinner. At the function some very interesting speeches were delivered, but the all-important item on the programme was the presentation to Lord Saltoun of a magnificent portrait of himself, painted by Sir George Reid (then Mr George Reid), ex-president of the Royal Scottish Academy. The portrait, which now hangs in Philorth House, and formed the tenth of a complete series of portraits of the lairds of Philorth and Lords Saltoun, from and including Sir Alexander Fraser, the founder of the town, was subscribed for by the inhabitants of Fraserburgh and the tenantry on the Philorth estates. At the dinner, Mr. James Cardno was chairman, and Dr. Mellis, croupier, while the other gentlemen who made speeches were:—Lord Saltoun, the Earl of Aberdeen, the Master of Saltoun (now Lord Saltoun), Mr. Keppel the then Lord Saltoun's son-in-law; Captain Gordon, R.N.; Mr. Dingwall Fordyce, M.P. for East Aberdeenshire; Sir Alexander Anderson, Rev. P. McLaren, Mr. Bryson, the then master of the Merchant Maiden Company, Edinburgh; Captain Wemyss Park, Fraserburgh Artillery; and Mr Andrew Tarras, solicitor. A large proportion of the general company present, as well as the most of those whose names are given as having delivered speeches, have gone over to the great majority, and the place that knew them once, knows them no more. Among the general public present who are "still to the fore," are:—Mr. William McConnachie of Knowsie; Baillie Brebner, and Messrs. George Bruce, James Milne, John Cranna, George Walker, C. W. Gray, Captain Mackay, John Proctor, blockmaker; James Gordon, George Cantly, W. L. Hogg, William Ramsay, A. B. Chessor, etc.

Preliminary preparations were made at the end of 1875 for the systematic conduct of the work, and during the spring and summer months, for some seven years thereafter, the widening of Balaclava Pier and the extension of the breakwater were carried on with vigour by the Commissioners. The new work was built of concrete throughout, and, as giving some indication of the importance of the breakwater, apart from the widening of the old pier, it may be mentioned that the structure, measuring from the root of the old pier, extended 860 feet into the sea. The breakwater has a high and most substantial parapet, and is finished off at the seaward end with a lighthouse of imposing appearance standing, as it does, some 72 feet above high-water mark. The new breakwater shelters an area of nearly 18 acres hitherto exposed to the open sea, in a considerable portion of which, ships and boats can lie afloat at all states of the tide; and it also afforded berthage, and was taken advantage of by hundreds of boats for herring discharging purposes, before the inner harbours were deepened. The breakwater, which was commenced in 1875, was successfully finished at the close of 1882; but the cost, as usual in works of this kind, went up from £60,000 to almost £71,000, or £11,000 more than the estimate, due partly to a slight change of the plans. This breakwater was among the first extensive concrete works built in this country. For exposed sea works concrete was at this time only on trial, and practically at the experimental stage, and unfortunately the proposition of cement to stone and sand, which was supposed sufficient,

turned out totally inadequate. Some half score of years after its erection, decay in the concrete was observed, and the wasting went on at such an alarming rate that Government was applied to, and a loan of £9,000 was granted in 1896 to enable the Commissioners to effect the necessary repairs on the building. This sum was expended, but only a "patch" of the work was overtaken. Six or eight years afterwards the dangerous state of the structure was put before the Government, and mainly through the valuable services and unwearied efforts of Lord Saltoun and Mr. A. W. Maconochie, then M.P., free grants of £15,000 from the Treasury, and £5,000 from the Scotch Fishery Board were secured to enable the Harbour Board to put the breakwater into an efficient and permanent state of repair.

After this expenditure on the breakwater had been made, a great portion of the structure still remained in a very dilapidated and dangerous conditions, and the Commissioners had no alternative but to carry on the work of repairs themselves or else run the risk of seeing the building washed into the channel, a catastrophe that would have meant absolute ruin to the town. The Commissioners, therefore, continued the work of repairs, which is now almost completed, on their own account, and the expenditure from the time the grants of £20,000 were exhausted to the present time amounts to fully £12,000. Fortunately the Commissioners have received a Government grant of £25,000 to meet this and other expenditure on protective works carried out by the Board. It is thus seen that the total cost of the breakwater to date works out at £112,000. This sum looks big, but one must remember that if the proper proportion of cement had been used when the breakwater was being built, the prime cost must have been over £100,000, instead of £71,000.

Concurrent with the building of the breakwater were carried out certain improvements, which, though minor in a sense, were of great importance to the trade of the town. These were the widening of the upper section of the North Pier; the building of a quay wall, of great advantage, along the west side of Balaclava harbour, from the old Guard Jetty, at the foot of North Street, to the old Lifeboat House; and the erection of what is now popularly known as the Lifeboat Jetty. With these completed, Balaclava harbour was entirely changed in its aspects and utility. Discharging space was now available all along its margin, in addition to the new jetties, and to the increased traffic that was conducted in the newly improved harbour during the fishing season, was due the rapid development of the herring trade of the port. The amount expended on the improvements above referred to was £4,750, but the total cost of secondary kinds of new works executed between 1870 and 1882 amounted to £11,143.

Before taking up the question of further harbour improvements, it will be interesting and appropriate to refer here to a very important incident in the history of Fraserburgh Harbour. This was the passing of the Harbour Act of 1878, which quite revolutionized the old constitution of the board, and under which the Commissioners were popularly elected for the first time. This Act,

drawn up by Sir Alexander Anderson, gave very sweeping powers to the Commissioners with regard to the collection of rates. The bill was being discussed before a House of Lords Committee, when section 95 was read as follows:

"The Commissioners may by their own officers or servants, or such persons as they may choose to employ, and without judicial procedure or authority, take possession of any boat for which a rate or rates or penalty or penalties shall have been incurred under this Act, and which shall for the time being remain unpaid, and that wherever such boat may be found within the harbour, and may remove such boat to any part of the harbour and retain the same until the rate or rates and the penalty or penalties so incurred, and all expenses, etc., shall have been paid," etc., etc. On the clause being read over, the late Lord Redesdale, who was chairman of the Committee, exclaimed—"Dear me, Sir Alexander, these are extraordinary and sweeping powers to ask." "Yes," replied Sir Alexander, "north country fishermen are extraordinary people to deal with, and unless we have extraordinary and sweeping powers, all order and authority in the harbour is at an end." The clause was passed without another word.

The first election under the new Act—the voting was open—took place on Friday, the 3rd January, 1879, with Sir Alexander Anderson as returning officer. The day was a great one. In the two principal classes of voters—proprietors of lands and heritages and harbour ratepayers—there was great excitement over the election. On the votes being counted, it was found that the late Mr. William Bruce headed the list of proprietors, with Mr. A. Tarras, the late clerk, a good second. In the harbour ratepayer class, Mr. William McConnachie, now of Knowsie, was an easy first, with the late Provost Dickson second. When the results were announced there was great cheering and general excitement, and the Harbour Act, under which the first election took place, being the creation of Sir Alexander Anderson, the venerable knight gave evidence of much gratification at the whole-hearted interest taken in the proceedings by the community. It will be interesting to put on record for the benefit of future generations, the names of those who were the first popularly-elected Harbour Commissioners of Fraserburgh. They were as follows, and their names appear in the order in which the vote placed them:—Class of proprietors of lands and heritages Messrs. William Bruce, Andrew Tarras, John Park, George Low, and James Cardno; ratepayers' class—Messrs. William McConnachie, John Dickson, and John Bisset; shipowner class—Messrs. Alexander Stephen and George Walker; Town Council representative—Mr. Alexander Bruce; Police Commissioners—Messrs. John Mellis and Peter Noble. The above, along with Lord Saltoun and Sir Alexander Anderson, his factor, formed the board. The boisterous excitement which was manifested in connection with this, the first election, was never repeated. The interest in the annual return of members gradually dulled as the years span on, until the year 1912 when the advent of a fisherman candidate put fresh interest into the proceedings. It is admitted that the harbour is the *facile princeps* of the local boards. Of the 14 gentlemen who sat at the table at the first meeting of the new board in January,

1879, only 3 are left behind to “tell the tale.” These are Mr. William McConnachie, Mr. George Walker, and Mr. Peter Noble, fishcurer.

It is said about harbours that one improvement begets another. Of Fraserburgh this truly can be asserted, for no sooner had the breakwater and other minor improvements been completed, than the shallow water in the harbours began to be a serious difficulty. At one time steamers were tabooed as herring carriers by the Scotch curers, but gradually the prejudice was overcome, and by the year 1880 not only were steamers in common use, but a larger sized class of steamboats came into the trade than shallow water harbours could receive. The result was that these huge-sized craft made Aberdeen their port of loading, and, in conjunction with the railway company, fixed a rate of freight from the various Aberdeenshire and Banffshire ports, against which the small-sized vessels suitable for the harbours of the latter places could not compete. This was a serious thing for the revenue of the harbour. The dues on herrings were levied one-half on landing and the other half on export, but the situation became such an acute one that the board promoted and got through Parliament in 1884 an Order authorizing them to charge the whole dues per cran—on the herrings landed. This preserved their revenue intact. Long before this time, however, the coming crisis was apprehended. The absolute necessity for the deepening of the harbour was seen in the later seventies, and in 1879 Sir Alexander Anderson once more applied to the Loan Commissioners, and was successful in obtaining a loan of £40,000 for the deepening of the North and South harbours. The Commissioners resolved to contract for the work, and the job was let to Mr. King, a Glasgow contractor. He was most unfortunate in his operations, and after a fair trial he withdrew from the contract. The Board then took the work into their own hands, but it proved unusually formidable owing to the wretched condition of the North and South Piers, both being like sieves, and the immense quantity of solid rock, tough whinstone, too, that had to be removed over practically the entire area of the harbour. The whole of the South Pier and the lower section of the North were widened and faced with concrete, and this, besides making the piers tight, gave the immense advantage to traffic of quays double the width of what they formerly were. After the harbours were dry, and some time after operations had gone on, it was seen from the difficulties of the work that the loan received would not be sufficient to complete the deepening scheme.

Sir Alexander Anderson once more bombarded the Public Loan Commissioners for another advance of some £30,000 to enable the Harbour Board to complete the deepening. The Loan Commissioners would not yield the full extent, but they made a compromise and gave £20,000. The work was then pushed on with the greatest vigour but unfortunately, when the harbour had to be opened in June, 1883, not only was the money all done, but a small piece of the South Harbour bottom, in the shape of a triangle, lying exactly opposite the entrance, remained unexcavated. A more awkward unfinished part could not have been possible, as, being directly in the fairway to the South Harbour,

the class of large sized steamers for which the deepening operations were specially carried out, were completely debarred by this unexcavated bank from entering the harbour. The latter at this time may be likened to an excellently finished and furnished mansion which, having no exit or entrance, was practically useless. Besides this, the "bank" referred to was a standing menace to the Commissioners. Had a vessel or a fishing boat grounded on it, with a portion of her hull hanging over the deepened part, the results would have been serious, and, however big the claim, the Harbour Board would have had to "face the music." This grave responsibility the Commissioners had to bear from 1883 to June, 1886, being no fewer than four fishing seasons, but fortunately without a single mishap taking place. In the meantime Sir Alexander Anderson and the Commissioners had not been idle or remiss in their efforts to raise the funds necessary to remove the stumbling block from the South Harbour entrance. On the contrary, they were untiring in their efforts to give this finishing touch to the deepening scheme, without which the great expenditure would be in vain. The Public Works Loan Commissioners having positively declined to give any further advances on the security of the harbour revenue alone, the Harbour Board appealed to the old Town Council. A Head Court of Feuars was called, but the meeting refused to consent to the revenue of the town's lands being offered as the security for a loan. Next the Police Commissioners were approached on the subject, but also declined to hypothecate the rates, as collateral security to the Loan Commissioners in case the harbour revenue should at any time prove inadequate to meet the rent charges of the necessary loan. At this crisis, towards the close of 1886, the members of the Harbour Board were like men with "their backs at the wa'." Every avenue from which assistance was expected to come was unceremoniously closed, and big posters put up, bearing in huge letters "No road this way." Some men do not know the word "defeat," and the irresistible leader of the Board was one of them. Enterprise and progress were the watchwords of the Board at this period of its history.

An event happened at this juncture which emphasized the Board's forward policy. It likewise was a public-spirited act of which any community might well be proud, and which will ever redound to the credit of those public-spirited patriots who were the actors in the little financial drama. Finding a deaf ear turned to every appeal for assistance, Sir Alexander Anderson, Lord Saltoun acquiescing in and cordially supporting the movement, proposed that, as their efforts to obtain a loan had signally failed, and as it was absolutely necessary for the credit and the prosperity of the town that the funds needed to complete the deepening should be forthcoming at once, the Commissioners themselves should become personally liable to the bank for the sum required. With remarkable unanimity and public spirit the proposal was cordially agreed to, and the sum required—£7,500—was subscribed in a few minutes. Thus by the inspiration of one man were all difficulties and opposition removed as if by a wave of the magician's wand. The names of those who stepped into the breach on this occasion, when the cause looked well-nigh hopeless, may not be all destined

to be cut in marble, but they will at least appear in print. They are as follows:— Lord Saltoun, Alexander Bruce & Company, John Bisset, William McConnachie, John Dickson, James Ritchie, Alexander Stephen, George Walker, James Mitchell, and James Cardno. The result of Sir Alexander's financial masterstroke was that the work of completing the deepening of the South Harbour was commenced about the end of February, 1887. Some difficulties were at first experienced with the leakage at the middle jetty, but this was shortly overcome, and the work was thereafter carried on most successfully and most efficiently. The "bank" or block of stumbling at the inner harbour entrance was removed and the South Pier jetty built and everything complete by the middle of June, 1887. The jetty referred to, was a marked improvement, as its head, almost joining that running from the quayside, made the south-west corner of the South Harbour into an area of water as smooth, practically, as a wet dock. When finally completed, the work of deepening the North and South Harbours and relative works cost the Harbour Board a sum of about £70,000. It should have been mentioned that when the first part of the South Harbour was deepened, a great improvement was carried out in building up the quay wall now known as the quayside, and running out the railway jetty. Where the quayside now is, used to be the beach, with the patent slip on it, and placed almost opposite the Gasworks gate. The bowsprits of the ships being repaired on it, shot clear across Shore Street, and the youth of the town were wont to linger about the Gasworks entrance and admire the figureheads of those craft that could boast of anything with a striking appearance. The patent slip was swept away and its loss has been often felt since—in 1880 or 1881, when the first deepening operations were carried out. Those who have reached the half century and upwards can well remember when the sea washed the steps which led up to the east side of the present Harbour Office, and when carts loaded with herrings were wont to come out of the bed of the South Harbour by an ascending road which reached the level at the foot of Commerce Street, exactly opposite the old entrance gate of the goods station.

The first portion of the deepening operations was carried out by Mr. Bostock, C.E., and on the last two occasions by Mr. Alexander Buchan, a most capable, conscientious, and trustworthy superintendent, whose services gave the Harbour Commissioners the greatest satisfaction. Mr. Buchan has been in the employment of the Aberdeen Town Council in the Burgh Surveyor's Department, for a good many years back. The completion of the South Harbour deepening, in time for the fishing of 1887, was a great achievement. The opposition from Aberdeen in the way of herring exports was completely killed, because Fraserburgh was now in the position of receiving—and did receive—steamers quite as big as it was judicious or advisable to put herrings on board. Herring boats could come in and go out at all states of the tide, and, as no time was lost "waiting for water," the consequent facilities given to trade and the increase of traffic following thereon, marked another turning point in the history of the harbour. The old state of things gave place to a new condition of affairs.

The old-fashioned sailing schooners and small-sized steamers gave place to large-sized steam craft, which carried several thousand barrels instead of those whose limit was 1,500 barrels. As giving the best idea of the changes wrought on the trade at the harbour as the result of the deepening works, it may be mentioned that the average run of craft engaged in the herring carrying trade prior to 1887 measured from 80 to 130 tons register, whereas during and since the year mentioned the capacities of the carrying vessels have run from 250 to 500 tons.

Sir Alexander Anderson lived to give the finishing touches to the financial arrangements for the completion of the deepening of the North and South harbours, but unfortunately he did not live long enough to see the work itself completed and the first part of his great scheme of harbour improvements consolidated. His fine constitution showed signs of breaking up towards the closing days of 1886, and during the opening months of 1887 his strength ebbed visibly. This remarkable man, whose life of business activity has had probably no equal in the north, passed quietly away on the 11th April, 1887, aged 85 years. So far as Fraserburgh is concerned, his name will be held in grateful remembrance so long as the harbours exist. Strange to say, his portrait, subscribed for by grateful citizens and personal admirers in Fraserburgh, was unveiled in the Town Hall only eleven days before his death. The portrait is a striking copy, painted by Mr. John Sheriffs, of the fine portrait of Sir Alexander by Sir George Reid, which hangs, along with the other portraits of past Lord Provosts, in the Aberdeen Municipal Buildings. At the banquet which followed the unveiling ceremony in the Town Hall, hopes were expressed that Sir Alexander would soon be restored to health, and be present when the harbours were opened after the completion of deepening. Little did the meeting think that ere twelve days had come and gone the spirit of the brave knight would have bidden this world a last farewell. It is rather remarkable that the death of Lord Saltoun, who had always evinced the greatest interest in the welfare of the harbour, and never lost an opportunity of strengthening Sir Alexander's hands in connection with harbour improvement schemes, should have taken place at a date so near that of his trusty lieutenant. His lordship died very unexpectedly in London in February, 1886, to the intense sorrow of his tenantry and the inhabitants of Fraserburgh. Thus in little over twelve months Fraserburgh Harbour mourned the loss of two leading spirits and kind patrons. The great and crucial work had been accomplished, however, before the passing away of these two leaders, and Fraserburgh could well afford to wait for some time before the necessities of trade called for further improvements.

On the death of Sir Alexander Anderson, the present Lord Saltoun appointed Mr. G. A. Morris, from Sir Alexander's office, his factor and the Baron Baillie of the burgh. In virtue of the latter office, he, of course, became chairman of the Harbour Board. No great works were executed during his time, but as chairman he was fair and courteous to those around the table, well posted up in the affairs of the harbour and the duties of the chair, and withal

most anxious for the prosperity of the Trust. Unfortunately, the trying climate of Buchan did not suit Mr. Morris, and his health became such that he was obliged to resign his position of factor. He now resides in Dyce. Some time before leaving this district a change in the law necessitated Mr. Morris's secession from the chairmanship of the Harbour Board. By the passing of the Burgh Police Act, 1892, the Provost of the burgh became the chairman of the Harbour Board. The late Mr. John Park, who had been for the previous 25 years the Chief Magistrate of Fraserburgh, became the first Provost of the burgh, and in virtue of this office assumed the chairmanship of the Harbour Board in 1893.

The herring trade of the town developed so rapidly, and the fleet and size of boats increased at such a rate, that the demand for the deepening of Balaclava Harbour became a question of the utmost urgency, much sooner than was expected. The fishing boats had now a draught of water so enormously increased that Balaclava Harbour, such a splendid area, was, except at high water, practically useless for herring trade purposes. This could not be tolerated by a body whose enterprise had become proverbial, and the late Provost Dickson, who had for many years contended that Balaclava had not got justice in connection with the large expenditure of capital since 1880, moved, either in the end of 1892 or beginning of 1893, that application be made to the Public Works Loan Board for a loan of £60,000 to be devoted to the deepening of Balaclava Harbour and the building of certain jetties therein. The motion was unanimously agreed to, and application was at once made to the Loan Commissioners. Unfortunately, the latter would not grant more than £24,000 on the security of the harbour rates. Nothing daunted, the Commissioners approached the Town Council, and, after some representations had been made, the latter on this occasion agreed to be collateral security for a loan of £30,000, pledging the rates to that extent. The Commissioners resolved to have the work done by contract, and they were fortunate in securing as contractors the well-known firm of Messrs. Price and Wills, of London and Manchester. The resident engineer, appointed by Mr. Abernethy, was Mr. Gerald Fitzgibbon. That gentleman's services gave much satisfaction to the Commissioners, and his relations with them were of the most cordial nature from the day of his arrival till the day of his departure.

After the cofferdam was put in, considerable trouble was found in getting the part of Balaclava Pier tight at the spot where the old North Channel was and where the part of the first Balaclava Pier was washed down when the building operations were being carried on by Mr. Brebner in the 'fifties. At another time, part of the North Pier collapsed, but these initial difficulties were overcome, and the work, once fairly under weigh, made excellent progress. The agent for the contractor was the late Mr. F. V. Furniss, who had the entire control and direction of the operations, which, besides the arduous work of deepening, comprised the building of the new South Breakwater. Mr. Furniss proved himself one of the most capable of men that ever faced a difficult work. His energy was unbounded, and as an organizer and one who could keep work going on at

high pressure speed, he certainly never had his equal in the north. There is not the slightest doubt that the speed and success with which the deepening of Balaclava Harbour and the building of the South Breakwater were carried out, were due to the remarkable supervising qualities and business acumen possessed by Mr. Furniss.

It was seen, after the work had been three-fourths executed, that the loans received would not be sufficient to complete the contract. The Town Council was, therefore, again approached, and with commendable public spirit agreed to grant collateral security for a further loan of £12,000. The three loans received amounted to £66,000, but the deepening of Balaclava and the channel thereof, the erection of jetties, and the building of the South Breakwater cost £87,535, or fully £21,500 more than the loans received for the work. The deepening of Balaclava Harbour was finished in the spring of 1897, and the building of the South Breakwater was completed in the early part of the following year. The works comprised the formation of a dry dock at the head of Balaclava Harbour, in which 130 or 140 herring boats can winter. When the dry dock was formally opened in 1898, which signalled the completion of deepening operations, there was a public demonstration and a cake and wine banquet in the Town Hall. Provost Dickson, who had succeeded to the chairmanship of the Board in November, 1896, on the resignation of Provost Park, occupied the chair, and the toast-list, it will be interesting to future generations to know, was spoken to by the following gentlemen, in addition to the chairman.—Lieut. Oswald, R.N.; Major McConnachie, Baillie Mitchell, Messrs. G. Fitzgibbon, F. V. Furniss, John Bisset, D. L. Pressly, James Milne, G. A. Morris, John Bell, John Shearer, J. F. Cardno, Captain Stephen, Messrs. A. Cardno, Thomas Brebner, Andrew Tarras, and John Cranna. From first to last the deepening and relative works were a great success, and the advantages of a deepened Balaclava to the trade of the town cannot be overestimated. The amount of trade that can be carried on in Balaclava in the fishing season, quite overshadows the other harbours. Up to 1904 the “run” in Balaclava during stormy weather was such that shipping and fishing craft could scarcely be “held” in it. Ropes, chains, etc., were snapped like thread, and sometimes considerable damage was done to the craft themselves. This could not go on, and the Commissioners, in the year last named, had booms put in between the lifeboat jetty and the steamboat quay. The new work was a perfect success, and the inner portion of Balaclava, no matter how “the north wind blows,” is now as smooth as a mill pond.

On the lamented death of Provost Dickson, Mr. William McConnachie of Knowsie became Provost of Fraserburgh and chairman of the Harbour Board in July, 1898. So soon after the strenuous and exhaustive efforts of the Commissioners in deepening Balaclava, there was no opportunity given Provost McConnachie of inaugurating any gigantic scheme of improvement or new work. Nevertheless, as one who had sat so long at the feet of Sir Alexander Anderson, he was a most worthy disciple, and proved an admirable chairman. Indeed it is no exaggeration to say that he was one of the strongest and ablest

that ever guided the destinies of the Harbour Board. On the retirement of Mr. McConnachie in November, 1900, Mr Finlayson was appointed Provost and chairman of the Harbour Board.

He has proved a worthy successor to those who shaped the destinies of the Board before him. Under his guiding hand, great progress has marked the history of the Board. Of course, the revenue and resources of the Harbour Commissioners developed in a wonderful degree, and enabled Provost Finlayson and his colleagues to embark on a policy of enterprise, in the way of harbour improvements, that would not have been possible a decade or two earlier. From 1903 to 1910 there was expended on miscellaneous new works of inferior importance a sum of £4,341. The booms in Balaclava already referred to cost £1,508. The rocks immediately opposite the North Pier end, that is between the entrances to the South and Balaclava harbours, had proved a source of trouble, and sometimes serious loss to fishermen. The pier was extended seawards, and many of the dangerous rocks were covered by the new extension. The extended portion had "pockets" in it, which "trapped" the sea, and helped greatly to tranquilize the water in the North and South harbours in stormy weather. This extension cost £3,542. The "run" of seas into Balaclava channel had long troubled the Commissioners, and in 1905 or early in 1906, on the proposal of Mr. Edward Gordon, it was resolved to build a "spur" running from Balaclava Breakwater, across a portion of the entrance channel, directly opposite the South Breakwater. This work was carried out 'twixt 1906 and 1908, and cost £6,911. Some of the fisher population object to this particular work, but there is no doubt that it has had a very beneficial effect upon the state of Balaclava inner channel, and as a piece of superior workmanship, it is questionable if there is anything like it on the East Coast of Scotland. Certainly it is not excelled. Alive to the necessity of keeping Fraserburgh an up-to-date port, the Commissioners resolved to provide the harbour with a pontoon dock, so that steam drifters and sailboats could be cleaned, repainted, and repaired without having to leave the place at which they were fishing. The dock was also available for the smaller sized trading steamers and sail craft. The dock, which cost £8,095, was available for business in 1909. Since it was opened, it has been well patronized by local and Moray Firth craft.

Balaclava Breakwater repairs, which seem, like the brook, to "go on for ever," absorbed £41,000 between 1896 and 1910. The vast proportion of this sum was expended during the regime of Provost Finlayson. The evolution of the fishing industry, and the arrival upon the scene of the steam drifter drawing as much water as a fair sized trading vessel, demanded not only deeper water, but a bigger area of sheltered water and increased discharging berthage. The new craft must have deep enough water and other facilities to enable her to come and go at all states of the tide. A "jam" in the entrance, keeping steam and sail craft alike in the harbour overnight could not be tolerated by the former, and to obviate all difficulties the most gigantic scheme that the Harbour Commissioners of Fraserburgh ever aspired to, was launched. That was the

proposed making of the new Station Harbour, which meant the enclosing of the large area of water between the South Pier and the South Breakwater, and the deepening to 11 feet at low water of the large area so enclosed. Discharging and loading berthage will be available all round the new harbour, and in addition there will be a big pier running down the centre of the new harbour, starting at the reclaimed ground road, midway between the South Pier and the first curing station at the reclaimed ground. An application was made to the Public Works Loan Commissioners for a loan to carry out the work, and after considerable negotiations a sum of £95,000 was secured for the purpose. Work was commenced in 1908. Great difficulty was found in getting good foundations for the enclosing walls, and progress was very slow in consequence. Notwithstanding all those difficulties and enormous extra expense, it is to be hoped that the works will be brought to a satisfactory conclusion. Mr. Davies, resident engineer, was appointed to his position in Fraserburgh in 1898, and he has proved a most competent official. His admirable work all round the harbours is the best testimonial to his professional abilities.

The total sum expended on the making of the harbours and piers of Fraserburgh, from the date when the earliest reliable records are available (1744), to the 31st October, 1913, is £481,400. What was spent by the founder of Fraserburgh and other ancestors of Lord Saltoun is not known, but the following are the details, which should prove interesting, of the £481,000.

Spent on old piers and harbours, viz., Middle Jetty, North Pier and South Pier, etc., 'twixt 1745 and 1847	£25,700
Expenditure, chiefly on Balaclava Pier and Harbour, 'twixt 1847 and 1857	24,500
Amount expended on new quays and jetties, excavations, etc., 'twixt 1870 and 1880	11,145
Expended on Balaclava Breakwater 'twixt 1875 and 1883	71,000
Do. do. 'twixt 1896 and 1898	9,000
Do. do. 'twixt 1898 and 31st October, 1912	33,300
Expended on deepening of North and South harbours and relative works 'twixt 1879 and 1887	70,000
Expended on deepening of Balaclava Harbour and channels, and erection of South Breakwater	87,535
Expended on Reclaimed Ground, Sea Wall, Fish Market, New Road, etc., 'twixt 1881 and 1902	9,495
Miscellaneous New Works, 'twixt 1903 and 1910	4,341
Cost of Booms, Balaclava, 'twixt 1903 and 1905	1,508
Expended on Extension of North Pier, 'twixt 1905 and 1906	3,542
Expended on Spur at Balaclava, 'twixt 1906 and 1908	6,911
Expended on Pontoon Dock in 1908 and 1909	8,095
Expended on New Station Harbour from 1908 to 31 st October, 1913	115,328

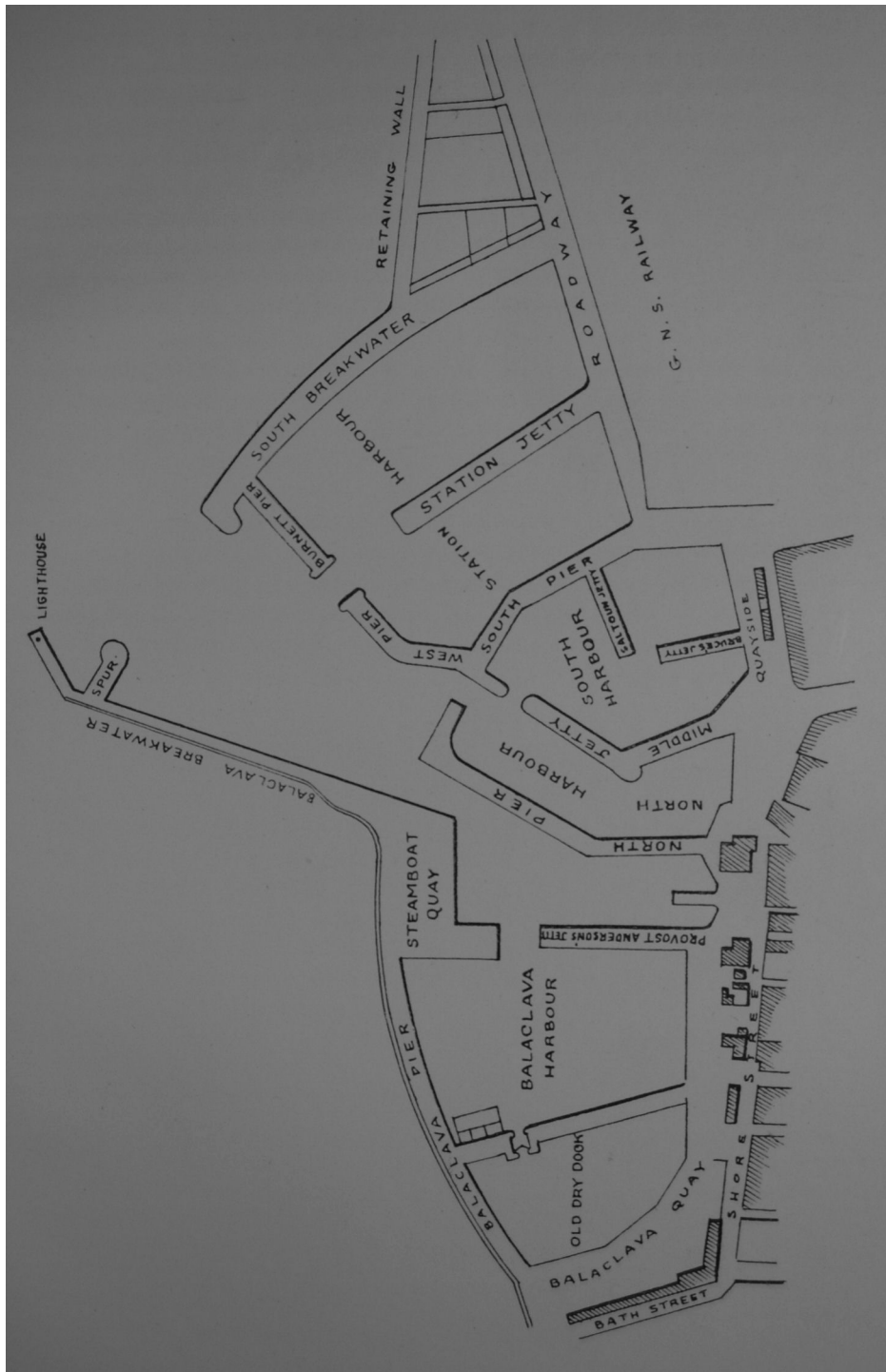
Having given a summary of the expenditure on Fraserburgh piers and harbours, a review of the progress of the harbour revenue may not be uninteresting. Before giving the dry figures, it may be mentioned that for the greater part of the first half of last century the harbour dues were farmed out, that is to say, a person would offer a certain definite amount to the Harbour Commissioners for the dues for a year. The said sum was paid to the Commissioners for their rights and interest in the dues, and this being disposed off the purchaser, or "farmer," would proceed to collect the dues for his own behoof. It is said that in these easy going days the parties that purchased the rights to the dues, made handsome profits on every occasion—indeed, it used to be a common "say" in the town, that some of those who rose to high social and business positions in Fraserburgh, owed their first "lift" to a few deals in the harbour dues. That there is some truth in this "old story" is borne out by the fact that in 1817 the year's harbour dues were "farmed" for a sum of £185, whereas next year, being collected by the Commissioners by an official of their own, they realized a sum of £464. They were again farmed out, but they never realized much less than £1,000. They were regularly "farmed" until 1839, when they realized £1,175. Next year, 1840, the Commissioners retained the dues in their own hands, when the collections amounted to £1,610. The harbour dues were never again farmed out. Among those who were "farmers" of the dues for several years in the beginning of last century were Mr. J. Dalrymple, presumably the uncle of the late Captain John Dalrymple. Others that followed were Mr. Charles Simpson, Simpson and Allardyce; Mr. Farquhar, Mr. Watt, Mr. John Park, Park and Wemyss; and Mr. Fyvie. With regard to the revenue itself, the following table shows its progress since the opening of last century:—

Year.	Revenue.	Year.	Revenue.
1800	£55	1860	£1,459
1810	111	1870	3,575
1820	1,035	1880	10,185
1830	1,055	1890	9,580
1840	1,611	1900	9,664
1850	1,560	1910	17,411
	1913	£17,021	

It may be mentioned that the best year ever enjoyed by the Harbour Commissioners was 1907, when the year's revenue totalled the very handsome figures of £21,156 2s. 6d.

Before giving the final touch to this chapter, it may be mentioned that the Harbour Commissioners directing the affairs of the Trust in 1912 were :—Lord Saltoun, Mr. A. G. Brown, his factor; Provost Finlayson, solicitor and banker; Baillie Alexander Gordon, fishcurer; Baillie William Mackie, manager; Baillie John Anderson, cabinetmaker; and Messrs. George Walker, sailmaker; John Reiach, bank agent; Gilbert Peterkin, fish salesman; Robert Bisset, fishcurer; Lewis Thomson, fishcurer; James Allan Thomson, herring exporter; John

Dunbar, fishcurer; Robert Ritchie, fisherman; Gilbert Summers, fisherman. It is to be hoped that the energy and enterprise of public men of the past will characterize the Fraserburgh men of the coming generations. There are already many indications of such a spirit, and when that is so, the community need not fear any discontinuance of the policy of endless harbour improvements, which is really the watchword of an enlightened Board. The harbours of Fraserburgh and their history are like a heritage with a great reputation, which cannot afford to be tarnished by the inactivity of those who come after the enterprising and in some cases great minds that, in spite of many difficulties, have left such a great gift to the community—present and future.



FRASERBURGH HARBOUR — 1913.

CHAPTER VIII.

SHIPBUILDING.

This branch of industry was at one time in a very flourishing condition in Fraserburgh. In fact, in the hey-day of its prosperity, it formed one of the most important trades in the town, finding employment for a large number of men at remunerative wages. About the middle of last century ship carpenters formed an important class in the community. Not only were they in demand at home, but there were great possibilities for them on board foreign-going ships, where most liberal wages were paid them. A foreign-going carpenter home on a holiday to see the old folks, sweetheart or wife, went about the harbour and the town with a swagger that a plain Jack Tar, however willing, would not dare imitate. The carpenter considered himself a skilled workman whose value was far above that of a common sailor, and he put on the necessary "side" so that the fact might be emphasized and advertised. At one time, ship carpenters were much run upon by the local lasses, and any one of these who carried off a carpenter for a husband was deemed to have made a handsome capture. When great sailing ships traded all over the world, each craft required one or two carpenters on board for the purpose of effecting the necessary repairs and renewals that were incidental to, and called for, on every voyage. Consider the great number of sailing ships voyaging all over the world in the olden days! Putting an average of two carpenters on board each ship, it can be roughly estimated what a huge army of ship carpenters must have been in existence in this country fifty odd years ago. What a change has taken place in this particular trade within the last thirty or forty years! It is enough to make, not the angels, but old seagoing carpenters, weep oceans of salt tears. The coming of the iron steamer has made the once proud and highly esteemed ship carpenter a negligible quantity. He has lost his glory and has, as a wood workman, practically disappeared from the busy haunts of men. It is all too sad, but alas! have not many other "old-fashioned" trades, or industries, suffered the same eclipse?

At one time the staff of carpenters employed by Mr. Webster, shipbuilder, Fraserburgh, averaged 50 men. On occasions, this number was considerably exceeded. These were the days when the merry sound of the mallet made sweet music all round the neighbourhood of the old shipbuilding yard, and when the servant maids, sent on a message, made an unnecessary circular tour

by Shore Street in the hope of getting one peep at, or loving recognition from their sweethearts engaged at shipbuilding.

Shipbuilding was commenced here in the end of the eighteenth century. The first reference made to the subject is in the Statistical Account of 1793. The note says: "Shipbuilding has been attempted here, and has succeeded well, especially since the peace of 1783." Unfortunately the reference gives no indication of what the builder's name was, a fact much to be regretted. There is no doubt but that shipbuilding was a busy trade here in the beginning of last century. The name of the shipbuilder then was Mr. John Dalrymple, a member of a family that came to Fraserburgh from the Firth of Forth. At this time Fraserburgh had a close business connection with the Firth, and several families and firms found their way to Fraserburgh, which was then beginning to attract notice as a busy herring catching centre. This Mr. Dalrymple was an uncle of the late Captain John Dalrymple, who was the creator of the Dalrymple Hall and Café Buildings. Besides being a shipbuilder, Mr. Dalrymple occupied and farmed Derbyhall, which was then some distance from the town, and was considered quite a country residence. Mr. Dalrymple's name also appears in the list of Fraserburgh fishcurers for 1816, so that he must have been a man of energy and enterprise who believed in having many arrows in his business quiver.

There is no material available to show the size and names of the vessels built by Mr. Dalrymple, except the last one or two. Mr. John Mackie of Wick, gives it as his opinion that the last vessel built by Mr. Dalrymple was the schooner "Wasp" of Montrose, which was launched about 1830. Some old men still living, who can carry their memories back to these days, declare that the last vessel built by the first recorded Fraserburgh shipbuilder, was a fairly large vessel called the "Union", which was purchased by Montrose owners. The vessel was launched somewhere towards the close of the 'thirties. She lay some 7 or 8 years on the stocks before a purchaser could be found for her, and the boys of the town played hide and seek among her timbers all these years. Her disposal and launch was a great disappointment to these youths, who were deprived of their happy hunting ground. A peculiarity about the craft was that she was built with her bow to the sea, and before the tide came in on the launching day a big hole was dug in the sands, so that the vessel might not be damaged by touching there when the water embraced her for the first time. It is worthy of note that the Union Inn, Shore Street, was named after this vessel, the last craft alleged to have been built by Mr. Dalrymple.

After completing the "Union", Mr. Dalrymple retired from business, and the industry was wholly at a standstill for a number of years. It was restarted again about the year 1840 by Mr. John Webster, sen., who carried on the trade successfully for a long period of years. The first vessel built by Mr. Webster was the schooner "Lady Saltoun", of which the owners were the Parks. Another of Mr. Webster's early productions was the "Buchan Maid", also built to the order of the Messrs. Park.

At this time there was beginning to be a good demand for sailing ships of a moderate size, and as Mr Webster's work was highly thought of, orders flowed in upon him in gratifying numbers. This enabled him to have a large staff of carpenters continually employed. The wages would not be considered much in these days, but at the date in question, the weekly wage of a ship carpenter was held to be rather handsome among common tradesmen. At no time was there kept an official list of ships built and launched at Fraserburgh, and it is difficult to get statistics gathered together of the ships built by Mr. Webster, sen., during the early years of his business career in the "Broch". The information is rather scrappy, and no guarantee is given that the names of vessels mentioned, follow in their regular order of launching. The facts were obtained by "word o' mou" from old residents, and are given as received.

Among the first few vessels launched by Mr. Webster was the "Pilot", a very small craft which was first commanded by Captain Darg, a once well-known "Broch" skipper, and thereafter by Captain Noble, a brother of the Captain Noble who married a Miss Clark of Fatson's Loch. About this time was built and launched a schooner named the "Robert", whose model did not redound to the credit of Mr. Webster, and whose tragic end brought sorrow to not a few homes in Fraserburgh. After being launched and sitting in the water, her sharp lines were criticized most adversely, and she was dubbed a "crank". The offensive epithet seemed to have been well deserved, for the craft was, early in her career, lost about the Naze of Norway, when all on board perished. One of the ill-fated crew was a brother of the late Mr. Geo. Davidson, fishcurer. No doubt, several more vessels had been built between 1840 and 1847 than those mentioned, but all trace of them has been lost. From 1847 to the date that the last launch took place in Fraserburgh, the statistics are furnished by Mr. William Noble, fishcurer, whose remarkable memory is a guarantee that the information is absolutely correct. In 1847, the vessels launched at Fraserburgh were the "Jane and Catherine" (74 tons), commanded by Captain John Stephen, father of Captain J. Stephen, late of the s.s. "Corennie"; also the "William Bartlett", a small schooner built for Banff owners. In 1848 there were built the brig "Fancy", for Aberdeen, and the "Stag" (100 tons), for Banff. The timber of which the "Fancy" was built, was said to have come wholly from the woods of Glentana, Deeside. In 1849 was built the fine brig "Orion" (180 odd tons register), to the order of Macduff owners, which was commanded by a Captain Valder.

About this time, a wave of depression came over the shipping trade, and the shipbuilding industry became very flat. Mr. Webster received no orders throughout the year 1850, and not only did the carpenters and their families have a very hard time of it, but the general trade of the town got into rather a backward state. The latter, however, was due more to the rather indifferent herring fishing of 1850, than to the depression in the shipping and shipbuilding trades. A start was made again in 1851 when there was launched, to the order

of Mr. Charles McBeath, banker and postmaster, etc., the barque "Eliza" (246 tons register). This craft was commanded by a Captain Stephen, and for size was the record vessel built at Fraserburgh up to that year. The "Eliza" was followed the same year by the small schooner "Susan". This vessel had a very short career, coming to grief on St Abbs Head on her second voyage. Fortunately all the crew were saved.

No vessels were built in the end of 1851, or throughout the whole of 1852. Mr. Webster had his carpenters occupied solely with the work of doubling the hulls of, and otherwise preparing, three large vessels for the Greenland seal and whale fishing, an industry that was new to Fraserburgh. Owing to the success of the whaling industry at Peterhead, Fraserburgh people had their attention taken up with that profitable business, to the detriment of shipbuilding. The diversion was only brief, as 1853 was a very busy year for the shipbuilding trade of Fraserburgh. That year was launched the full-rigged ship the "Aerolite" (317 tons), the largest vessel that ever was built at Fraserburgh. This fine vessel was built to the order of Messrs. Park & Wemyss, and was commanded by Captain Downie, a native of Rosehearty, and husband of the late Mrs. Downie, Saltoun Place. The production of such a large craft brought something like fame to Fraserburgh. It was never thought at all probable that a local shipbuilder would be so ambitious as to go in for a full-rigged ship, and the excitement that prevailed in the town, both at the launching and sailing of the "Aerolite", was something to be remembered. The event enhanced the prestige of Fraserburgh as a shipbuilding centre very much. The "Aerolite" sailed away to foreign parts and was never seen in Fraserburgh again.

The schooner "Lady Saltoun", the first vessel built by Mr. Webster, having been lost, a brig of 131 tons named the "Lady Saltoun", was launched in February, 1854, and was commanded by Captain Gillan. In June of the same year was launched the fine brig "Wallace", (198 tons). This vessel on her maiden voyage took emigrants direct to Canada. Those living now, and alas they are few, who witnessed the sailing of the "Wallace", recall with mingled feelings the excitement that prevailed, both on ship and shore, as the vessel cleared the pierheads. Cheers and tears were profusely mingled. Many of those on board the "Wallace" knew that they would never again see the dear old "Broch" and reviewing the happy associations of the past, which were to be severed for ever, no wonder the scene presented a pathetic side. This was the first and last emigrant ship that ever sailed from Fraserburgh.

The year 1855 saw two vessels launched at Fraserburgh, viz., on 4th January, the "Craigievar" (180 odd tons) for Aberdeen owners, and on 14th June, the "Florence Nightingale" for Fraserburgh owners. The latter craft was commanded by Captain James Milne, who is still alive, father of Mr. James Milne, solicitor. The vessel was launched while the Crimean war was in progress, and was named after the lady who immortalized herself by making a completely new departure in the way of nursing sick and wounded soldiers. When the "Florence Nightingale" was unfortunately lost on the Loadstone

Rock, Farne Islands, Captain Milne and his crew were, owing to the violence of the weather, obliged to remain in the lighthouse for a week. Captain Milne lived with Mr. George Darling, the father of the famous Grace Darling, and from his lips received the details of the thrilling rescue which is now one of the world's outstanding tales of bravery, familiar to the people of every civilized country under the sun. On 4th January, 1856, was launched the "Isabella", better known as the "Cloth Hall", a name given because the managing owner happened to be a worthy and well-known local draper. The "Isabella" was followed by the schooner "Stephens" (87 tons), which was launched in May and proved to be the last vessel which old Mr. Webster lived to complete. The "Stephens" sailed out and in to Fraserburgh for at least a quarter of a century.

When Mr. Webster, sen., died, a small schooner, which was afterwards named the "Admiral" and went to Portsoy, was "on the stocks". It was finished by Mr. John Webster, jun., and was launched before the close of 1856. In 1857 the smack "Jessie" (34 tons), and the schooner "Osprey" (91 tons), were built. From 1858 to 1861 the trade was again under a cloud of depression, and work in the Fraserburgh shipbuilding yard was very slack. During the period mentioned some six vessels, all more or less of small size, were built by Mr. Webster on chance, to keep "the wolf" from the local carpenters' doors. His spirit of charity was duly rewarded, for all the craft ultimately found purchasers at satisfactory prices. The list was as follows: "Eliza", a smaller schooner sold to Rosehearty; "Charm", also a small schooner purchased by Arbroath owners; "Buchan" (about 100 tons), went to Peterhead, was engaged in the London goods trade, and was lost with all her crew somewhere about the Bullars of Buchan; "Telegram" (45 tons), a smack, commanded by the well-known Captain Bogue, which engaged in the Leith goods trade until the railway was opened to Fraserburgh on 1st May, 1865. If not still afloat it is not so very long since the "Telegram" was in Fraserburgh harbour, windbound. In 1859 the "North Sea Queen" (52 tons) went to Lerwick, while the smack "Garabaldi", launched in 1861, was also purchased by Lerwick owners. The "Garabaldi" was the last of the small craft built on chance.

From 1861 up to the 'eighties a fleet of beautiful schooners was produced by Mr. Webster, some for outside ports, but the bulk for Fraserburgh. Throughout the 'sixties of last century the sailing ship industry was at its best, and ship-owning then was a most profitable business. Not only the owners, but also the skippers thrived. In the early 'sixties, the launch of a new vessel was an event of great importance in Fraserburgh.

Few occurrences of any moment distracted the Arcadian quiet of the community in those days. When a vessel was to be launched, intimation of the momentous business was duly made public, and the day was practically recognized as a holiday. Mr. Webster regularly announced the hour of each launch to the parish schoolmaster, first Mr. Woodman and then Mr. Murray, and on every occasion the school was closed, at the launch hour, so that the scholars might

be present at the launching ceremony. It was a great day for the schoolboys, and those were considered especially fortunate who managed to smuggle themselves on board the new craft, and enjoyed all the exciting sensations of the vessel rushing down the ways and dashing into the water. He was indeed a hero who achieved this distinction. Sometimes a boy, through sheer "cheek" and assurance, managed to enjoy the pleasures and excitement of a launch on board the ship, but as a rule this position was only reached through the favour of a friend "at court", that is, through the influence of the owner or the shipbuilder.

As the launch hour approached, mostly all business in the town was suspended, and hundreds, if not thousands of people found their way to the Middle Jetty and North Pier as the vantage ground where the launch could best be seen. Crowds also surrounded the vessel's bows, anxious to see the chosen lady discharge the graceful duty of baptising the new craft, by breaking a bottle of wine upon the stem. This done, ropes were cut, blocks knocked away, amidst the greatest possible excitement on the part of the carpenters, then the vessel would start slowly, and accelerating her speed, would rush into the sea with all the impetuosity of a lover, anxious to fly into the arms of his beloved. Adorned in all her new bunting, the newly launched craft sat gracefully on the face of the water, and looked really "a thing of beauty" and a charming member of Father Neptune's family. When the vessel was steadied up after her breathless race into the water, those on board raised hearty cheers to those in the yard, who replied in stentorian tones as if proud of the dainty craft they had created. Afterwards, the stability of the new craft was tested by everyone on board lining up and simultaneously rushing from bulwark to bulwark or from side to side of the vessel. This operation completed, there followed rather an exciting part of the ceremony, the relic of some old Spartan custom. Several small boats were engaged, as soon as possible after the vessel was launched, to collect all the floating material that the new craft had taken with her into the water. On board of these boats were all the young apprentices who had joined the staff since the previous launch took place. Every apprentice carpenter had to receive his formal baptism in the sea, and while the men were employed picking up the floating wood, the "fresh" apprentices, fully clothed, were one after the other thrown into the harbour by the journeymen. Some of the boys were good swimmers and boldly struck out for the beach, which they reached safely in due time. Others floundered and seemed as if trying to drown themselves. The greatest possible excitement often prevailed among the onlookers while this little comedy was being enacted, and if the mother or sisters of the lads were present, the comedy was often quickly turned into tragedy. These poor women sometimes thought their lads were being drowned, and the tension on their nerves became so great that they practically worked themselves into hysterics. All the time, however, the journeymen carpenters were keeping a sharp watch upon the lads who could not swim, and as soon as they gave any indication of losing strength, they were promptly pulled on board the boat.

It was a pretty drastic style of immersion but no accident ever resulted from it, and to have dropped the custom would have simply meant the robbing a launch of one of its most picturesque features.

A launch was a sort of double-barrelled function. In addition to the excitement of the launch through the day, there was the carpenters' supper and dance in the Harbour Commissioners', now Batchan's, Hall, in the evening. This was a very important affair in the eyes of the lasses of Fraserburgh, who, not eligible for joining the men at the supper table, were the bright and shining stars at the dance which followed. The supper was attended not only by the carpenters, but by the owner and a number of his friends, and in addition by a considerable contingent of gentlemen invited by the shipbuilder. In those days it was considered no small honour to be invited to "the launch supper". The eatables were always of a most substantial nature, such as would appeal to the keen and healthy appetite of working men. The menu generally was something like the following: Scotch broth, and boiled and roast beef, finishing up with plain rice puddings, generously mixed with currants and decorated on the top with a copious supply of ground cinnamon, which was the pre-eminent flavouring used for puddings in Fraserburgh fifty years ago.

The caterer for these suppers was invariably old Mrs. Ettershank of Ettershank's Inn, now the Royal Hotel, whose house of entertainment adjoined the hall. She was a kindly body, a great favourite in the town, whose personality is well remembered by many people now living in Fraserburgh. The quantity of eatables that disappeared at one of those suppers was an everlasting and eloquent testimonial to the glorious constitutions and perfect digestive organs of the carpenters. It is unnecessary to say that they enjoyed it. After the eating was finished, liquid refreshments made their appearance, and a sort of impromptu toast list was gone through. Mr. Webster occupied the chair, and called upon one of his friends, who had the knack of extempore speaking, to propose success to the newly launched vessel. To this the owner replied. Other toasts included "the town and trade of Fraserburgh", the health of Mr. Webster, the health of the owner, etc., etc. By the time the toast list was completed, the company was one of the happiest, the young carpenters looking forward to the dance with the lover's eager anticipation of meeting his sweetheart. The older people who had attended the supper did not generally remain for the dance. The latter was always left in possession of the young folk, who "tripped the light fantastic toe" until the early hours of the following morning. At the final break-up of the dance the young maidens, anxious to repeat the joys of the night, always urged their carpenter sweethearts to have another launch soon. These came in due season and the dance with them, but alas! the young maidens who attended the last launch dance given in Fraserburgh are now grey-haired mothers with a long stretch of life's journey behind them, and a very limited portion in front of them.

As already mentioned, the Fraserburgh shipbuilding trade was in a very

flourishing condition for the two decades that followed 1861. The following statistics show the output at Fraserburgh during the period mentioned. Probably the information will not be of much interest to the young generation but to the older people it will call forth lively memories of a happy past, and who knows but some of those who received their second baptism in the north harbour, in connection with the launch of some of the vessels named, will rejoice to think that the dread ceremony has been immortalized, and they along with it, by being recorded in print. The statistics are as follows: In March, 1861, was launched the "Ocean Maid" (99 tons), Captain James Milne; in July, 1862, the "Radiant" (107 tons), Captain Alexander Stephen; in February, 1863, the "Eaglet" (127 tons), Captain William Noble, whose widow died in the end of 1911; in July, 1863, the "Restless" (115 tons), Captain James Noble; in March, 1864, the "Dash" (107 tons); in August, 1864, the "Baltic" (115 tons), Captain John Buchan, long afterwards shipbroker, Quayside, who died in October, 1911; in April, 1865, the "Active" (125 tons), Captain Alexander Strachan, afterwards of cod-liver oil fame, who died about the close of 1911, in February, 1866, the "Philorth" (123 tons), Captain Wilson Summers; in June, 1866, the "Teaser" (77 tons), Captain Joseph Stephen; in March, 1867, the "Tom Henry" (133 tons), and about the same time the smack "Gudrun", both vessels being built for Kirkwall owners; in September, 1867, the "Pearl" (202 tons), Captain John Stephen, late of the "Melinka"; in September, 1868, the "Faithlie" (215 tons), Captain Alexander Stephen, formerly of the whaler "Alexander Harvey", and for many years a ship chandler in Shore Street, next door to the Ship Inn; in October, 1868, the smack "Quiver", Captain Robert Stephen, was built alongside "Faithlie", and launched the same year.

The vessels built at Fraserburgh for Fraserburgh owners during the 'seventies were as follows: September, 1870, "Lizzie" April, 1871, "Milky Way"; September, 1873, "Blue Bell". This "Blue Bell" went ashore on Cairnbulg Briggs on her maiden voyage and another "Blue Bell" was built some years afterwards. Other vessels launched were: Early in 1874, "Iona"; in September, 1874, "Kinnaird"; in May, 1875, "Dundarg"; in January, 1876, "Pandora"; in March, 1877, "Evelyn"; in February, 1878, "Maggie". In the late 'sixties and in the 'seventies of last century, there were built and launched at Fraserburgh for other ports the following vessels: "Barbara Moir", "St. Fergus", "James Methuen", and "Jessie Sinclair".

In the latter years of Mr. John Webster's life, the use of steamships became almost universal and the demand for sailing craft became an unknown quantity. The old shipbuilding yard, once one of the busiest hives of industry in the town, was reduced to a state and condition forlorn and neglected in the extreme. The cheering sound of the mallet and the whir of the saw were not heard for many years. No rush of men now, as in the days when the bell sounded the stoppage or the start of work. All was changed—for the worse. The marvellous invention of steam power, while epoch-making and benefiting the world at large as probably nothing before ever did, killed ship-

building at Fraserburgh and caused a loss to her industries, which had a very crippling effect for a time. Grass actually grew abundantly in the yard for years, and had the ground been suitable, the Harbour Commissioners would have let the place for a fishcuring station. For years after Mr. John Webster died not a single vessel was built in Fraserburgh, but at length Mr. James Webster, who had taken up the business, received an order from the Fraserburgh and Leith Trading Company, Ltd., and the trader "Active" was launched in 1886. In the following year (1887) was launched the yacht "Shiantelle", built to the order of Dr. Harvey Brown of Dunipace, and this was the benediction to shipbuilding in a proper sense at Fraserburgh. The Fraserburgh built vessels became famous all along the coast, not only because they were beautiful models, but because they were most highly finished and substantially built. They were considered the fastest sailers in the Baltic trade, and though real racers, they were fine sea ships and absolutely safe practically in all kinds of weather, so long as they had plenty of sea room. The day of the wooden sailer is done, and as a consequence shipbuilding in Fraserburgh made its final exit in 1887, fully a quarter of a century ago.

It should be mentioned that in recent years the local firm of Messrs. Scott and Yule, boatbuilders, have been kept very busy building fishing boats known as steam drifters, which in some measure, fills up the gap caused by the collapse of shipbuilding.

CHAPTER IX.

GREENLAND SEAL AND WHALE FISHING INDUSTRY.

Although this trade never assumed great proportions at Fraserburgh, as it did at Peterhead during the 'fifties of last century, still it was reckoned an important branch of the town's business, at a time when the herring fishing was in an inferior position, and not the dominating influence that it is to-day. To those people now living who can remember the 'fifties and early 'sixties of last century, the term "Greenland ships" has a charm about it which brings back happy recollections to those who stood on the piers bidding God-speed to the departing vessels, and again welcoming them back from the northern seas. There was a speculative touch about the trade that gave added interest to the mere onlookers, while to those who were directly and personally interested financially in the venture, it was like a wild "plunge" on the Stock Exchange. The return of "a full ship" (a ship loaded with whale or seal oil, and skins or whalebone—the last mentioned generally in small quantity) meant huge dividends, still a fairly successful voyage brought a decent return to the shareholders. On the other hand, if a ship returned from the Arctic regions "clean," or nearly so, the call made upon the owners was sometimes of an almost ruinous nature. It can thus be seen that though the trade was a somewhat exciting and uncertain one, it had attractions all its own to the "douce bodies" of Buchan, who, in those days, did not know what "a flutter" on the Stock Exchange meant.

No wonder that the industry was considered rather an important branch of the town's trade in the 'fifties, seeing that it gave employment not only to those on board the ships, but to a fairly large staff of workmen ashore, who handled the proceeds of the voyages in the boilyards, etc. The only weak point about the business was the objectionable smell that came across from the boilyards and overspread the town during south-easterly winds when oil-boiling operations were going on. But though there was a general grumble now and again, the smell to the lucky shareholders, with visions of big dividends before them, was like sweetest aroma wafted on breezes of Araby.

With such a big interest, and so much at stake in the industry, it was no wonder that the annual sailing of the whaling and sealing fleet was a big event for the inhabitants. Fitting out the fleet with provisions, etc., kept the grocers and merchants of the town busy for weeks on end. For a week or a fortnight before the ships sailed, the seamen also enjoyed a sort of carnival, and kept

things lively. As they were to be separated so long from their friends in a cold and inhospitable region, they were considered entitled to some little indulgence. Sailing for what may be called “the back of the north wind” was not fun, and jolly Jack Tar of those days generally took, if he did not get it accorded him, a little bit of special licence. The Greenlandman’s “foy” was a great institution, and generally took the form of a farewell supper and dance, and what may reasonably be called a good drink, a day or two before the ships sailed. The “foy” was invariably conducted with the best of good humour, and was attended by the seamen forming the crews of the different ships. As the night advanced and “John Barleycorn” began to work, the combative element occasionally asserted itself, and the adjournment outside of a couple now and again to have the dispute settled by muscular force was not an incident altogether unknown. Those were plain days, and a good square fight was no disparagement. A policeman was seldom or ever seen, and there was no Police Court and no such term as “breach of the peace” to degrade, as an old tar would declare, a good fight, or lower the status of the combatants.

The sailing of the Greenland Fleet in the spring was the great event of the year in Fraserburgh. On the day that the ships were clearing out of port, the town was practically *en fête* and everybody looked upon the occasion as a holiday. The scholars were allowed out of school to see the ships sail, as many a scholar had either a father, brother, or a relative of some degree on board one or other of the ships. The pier-heads were crowded with people, and much excitement prevailed among the onlookers as friend after friend took his departure. In the little public-houses abutting the harbour, which for a considerable part of the year experienced dull times, the proprietors and their goodwives were over head and ears in business, supplying the wants of the departing tars and their friends. Many farewell glasses were drunk, and toasts for the success of the ships given amid a tumult of noise and the chorus of some popular nautical ditty. On board the ships all was stir and bustle as they were being headed down towards the harbour mouth. The capstan went merrily round to the accompaniment of the sailors’ capstan songs, the words of which at Fraserburgh, as elsewhere, were not by any means classical or refined. One of the sailors, generally a picked man with a good voice and a retentive memory, sang the verses of the song alone, the whole crew joining in the chorus. Often the men improvised words for the chorus as they went along. While the song itself might have nothing objectionable about it, the words of the chorus were sometimes so lewd as not to bear recalling. That the spectators crowding the piers thought little about these ribald choruses seems strange at this date, but though some people, especially the older members of society, will not admit it, the world has made a big stride in refinement during the last 50 years.

When the vessels reached the pier-head it was a fine sight to see the crew getting the craft under canvas—especially when the sailors mounted the rattlings to “let go” the topsails. There was generally a competition here, and the seaman who first reached his post aloft was the hero of the crowd. As the

vessels left the harbour under full sail the sight was a very pretty one. Farewells were cried from ship to shore, and returned from shore to ship, but quickly the vessels glided away beyond speaking distance, and soon were well off, heading for the North. The crowd gradually dispersed, and the harbour after the last Greenlander had sailed was like Goldsmith's "Deserted Village."

While the sailing of the Greenland ships created much excitement, their arrival in the bay bringing the news of their luck, either good or bad, was even more rousing. The date of their arrival was usually approximately guessed, and a sharp look-out for their appearance was kept. All the sealers and whalers belonging to Fraserburgh, Peterhead, Aberdeen and Dundee, in coming from the northern seas always steered for Kinnaird Head, as the outstanding landmark, from whence they shaped their course homewards. Many a time there would be seen rising in the distant northern horizon, the masts and the yards of a square-rigged ship, until the whole hull was visible. It was a whaler certainly, but was it the "Melinka," or the "Alexander Harvey," or any of the other "Broch" ships? Approaching nearer, and hauling close to the wind, it was seen that the craft was none of those, but one of the Arctic voyagers heading for one or other of the more southern ports. The disappointment was short-lived. Craft made their appearance in wonderfully quick succession, and in a short time a vessel which looked remarkably like one of the local fleet, steered straight for the bay. It was recognized, and the word was passed round the town that a certain Greenland ship was in the offing. Immediately all was excitement, and crowds rushed to the Castle green to see the approaching vessel and hear what luck her voyage had brought her. The vessel came bravely on under all canvas, and flying every inch of bunting that could be laid hands on. It was a beautiful sight, and only the inhabitants of Fraserburgh in those quiet, uneventful days, can appreciate the excitement which thrilled the community when one of the Greenlanders arrived in the bay.

One pretty custom observed by the Greenland sailors must not be overlooked. That was the capture of the "Garland," just as the vessel was coming in between the pier heads. The sailors took an abundance of ribbon away with them, and during the long nights at Greenland they employed their time making a "Garland," or what might be better understood as a "victor's wreath." It was made of hoop and string, done up most lavishly with ribbon of all the colours of the rainbow. If it was not exactly "a study in colours" or "a thing of beauty," it had a great appearance, and was highly prized by the sailors on board and their friends ashore. To secure the "Garland," was a feat which the oldest was proud to recall. As has already been said the "Garland" was competed for, just as the vessel was entering the harbour. It was generally hung between the foremast and mainmast. All the young sailors were ranged at either side of the vessel, opposite the "rattlins," and at a given signal, as at a race, the word "go" was given, and the lot started in pursuit of the prize. The most nimble, with sure hands and feet, and of steady eye, never failed to secure the "Garland," but on many occasions the reckless feats done by some

of the men in their anxiety to secure the trophy, made the competition a very trying one to the more nervous of the spectators.

Having given a descriptive sketch of the industry, the following facts about the Fraserburgh ships may not prove uninteresting. The first sealer that belonged to Fraserburgh was the "Melinka" (297 tons), which was bought in Belfast in 1851. The local manager was Mr. George Wallace, agent of the Union Bank, Fraserburgh. The craft was overhauled, fitted out for the Greenland industry, and made her first voyage in 1852. Her skipper was Captain John Stephen, who previously commanded the London trader, "Sir William Wallace." In 1852 two other vessels intended for the Greenland trade, were added to the Fraserburgh list. These were the "Vulcan" (177 tons), which was built to carry iron, and was bought from the Carron Iron, etc., Company. This vessel was commanded by Captain Alexander, a native of Peterhead, who was formerly mate of the "Melinka." She was owned by the Fraserburgh Seal and Whale Fishing Company, of which Mr. Wallace was manager. The other vessel referred to, was the "Sovereign" (130 tons), which was commanded by Captain Burnett, and managed by Mr. James Cardno. The above named two vessels started work in 1853.

It is thus seen that while there was but one "Greenland ship" at Fraserburgh in 1852, there were three engaged in the industry in 1853. This continued to be the state of the list up to and including 1855. Two other vessels were added in the last-mentioned year. One of these was the "Enterprise," which was purchased from Peterhead. She was 349 tons register, and was the biggest sealing vessel ever owned at Fraserburgh, her manager being Mr. James Cardno. The craft seemed to have been built under an evil star, a fact which the Peterhead people were no doubt cognizant of, and which decided them to hand her and her "rotten luck" over to their simple-minded friends in the "Broch"! Season after season she returned with miserable catches, and notwithstanding the strenuous efforts of her captain and crew, the biggest catch she ever brought home was 23 tons oil. Bad luck dogged her steps to the end. On her fifth trip she was totally lost at Davis Straits. Fortunately her crew was saved. The other ship added in 1855 was the "Alexander Harvey," which was bought from Banff, and was commanded by Captain Alexander Stephen, whose fine bass voice in giving orders to his seamen in sailing and arriving, is remembered with a sort of awe by those still living who were boys when the worthy captain was thundering out his orders. Mr. Charles McBeath acted as manager of the "Alexander Harvey." In 1856, 1857 and 1858, Fraserburgh had 5 vessels engaged in the Arctic sealing and whaling industry. In 1859 a sixth vessel was added. During a heavy gale in October, 1858, a foreign vessel named the "Fortuna" was driven ashore on the sands. She was purchased by Mr. Oliphant, merchant, who, with his co-partners, had her floated and taken into Fraserburgh harbour. She was repaired and renamed the "Lord Saltoun," and under the command of Captain John Stephen ("Jottie") was sent to Greenland.

The year 1859, therefore, saw the largest number of Greenland ships

Fraserburgh ever owned. The maximum number stood for one year only. The industry fell on evil days, and the ships were steadily disposed of. With regard to the catches of some of the vessels the "Melinka," in her first year (1852) was the first ship home with a full cargo, which proved a "little fortune" to the shareholders. On her next voyage, in 1853, she had 100 tons of oil, but the following year she had only 30 tons. Next year (1855) she was home on 1st May full ship. She was the first east coast Greenland ship home that year, with the exception of the "Undaunted" of Peterhead, which passed Kinnaird Head just 24 hours earlier. The "Melinka" had to throw stores overboard in order to make room for cargo—quite a unique experience. It may be mentioned that the year 1855 was the best sealing year ever experienced among the vessels on the Buchan coast. Besides the "Melinka," the "Sovereign" also arrived home full ship.

No two-seasons followed alike, and 1856 proved a disastrous year. All the local fleet returned clean, with the exception of the "Alexander Harvey," which had a catch, though not large, sufficient to yield a dividend of from £1,100 to £1,200. As giving an idea of what the ship's profits were in a decent year, it may be mentioned that in 1857 the "Melinka" divided over £2,800. On the other hand, for the three years ending 1861, the "Melinka" sank a sum of £5,300. This vessel, however, did well for her owners, as also did the "Alexander Harvey." The bulk of the Greenland ships was sold in the early 'sixties of last century, but the "Melinka" and the "Alexander Harvey" prosecuted the industry with more or less—rather less than more—luck, up to the year 1868, when they were disposed of to Norwegian owners.

As the tobacco and spirits on board the Greenland ships were supplied out of Bond, duty free, watchmen were employed on board the different vessels, after their arrival, to prevent the sailors giving away, or smuggling ashore any of the contraband articles. A "stick" of sweet tobacco from on board a Greenland ship given to a youth of Fraserburgh, was a gift prized beyond rubies. Only those who have been the recipient of such a gift can adequately appreciate its value, and recall the feelings of delight and pride which animated the boy who was able to show a whole "stick" to his chum. Two of the watchmen employed by the Customs' officials to prevent smuggling, stand out in vivid relief. These were Sandie Greig, an old carpenter, and a relation of Grieg, the great Norwegian composer, and Jamie Thain, at one time a prosperous saddler in Fraserburgh. Other watchmen were employed, one for each ship of course, but these were the two outstanding men, who were the terror of the Fraserburgh boys of that day. If a score of boys were scared ashore once, they were scared ashore from the ship twenty times a-day. Good old James Thain was not such a hard taskmaster, but Sandie Greig was a "holy terror," who often suspended the boys, when caught, over the ship's side, and threatened to let them drop into the harbour if they dared to come on board again.

For the information of the younger generation, it has to be stated that the boilyards occupied a site a little distance to the south-east of where the

railway station now stands. The site is now embraced in the ground acquired by the railway company about 1897, and waggons now run over the spot where formerly the oil was boiled. After the collapse of the sealing industry, the boilyards were used as curing yards until the ground was taken over by the railway company. On the embankment east of the buildings, and immediately above the "Boatman's Shorie," the upturned whale boats of the Greenlanders lay for the greater part of the year. The place was a great rendezvous for the schoolboys of the town, who played "hide and seek" and other games among the boats. The upturned boats often proved a refuge to the school truant, who lay concealed there until the school was dismissed. All vestiges of the boats and the industry have disappeared. Those who played leading parts in the game, both managers and skippers, have long ago ceased from their labours. Even the minor characters, such as Sandie Greig and Jamie Thain, have passed out of memory, and an industry that once played an important part in the business life of Fraserburgh is dead beyond hope of revival.

CHAPTER X.

A LOST INDUSTRY.

THE SHIPPING TRADE.

What extraordinary changes have taken place in the once great shipping industry in the north of Scotland since the days when jolly tars were wont to sing, long, long years ago, the quaint old world-flavoured refrain:—

“The ship is moored
The wages paid;
Welcome the sailor
To his maid.”

One, whose recollection can go back over a period of half a century, to the times when the North Sea was practically teeming with sailing ships, and the little harbours all along the coast as busy as beehives with the comings and goings of the numerous, though small vessels belonging to the different ports, cannot but experience a feeling of the deepest regret when the animating picture of the past is contrasted with the changed aspect of the present. Well may the ancient mariner sigh for “the good old times,” which, to the aged of every country and clime, are always the best times. The surroundings of the seaman of the present day on the North Coast are so transformed as to be unrecognizable by an old salt. Now at rare intervals a steamer hurries into a port one day and hurries out the next. Haste like that was not known in the days of the old regime. When a sailing vessel was once in port she generally remained there for two or three weeks, and, as is well known, the sailors generally spent their money freely, much to the satisfaction, and not little to the benefit, of the tradespeople of the different towns in which the vessels lay. Thus the people in the smaller ports beheld with dismay the introduction of steam. The steamship indeed, “improved” many thriving little places out of existence practically. The steamer could go only to ports where good harbours were available, with the result that traffic was diverted to these centres, and the little creeks and places with small harbours between Wick and Fraserburgh, which once boasted of a thriving trade suitable to their wants, gradually languished and died. Such a history could be written about many little places in the upper reaches of the Moray Firth and farther northwards which have suffered from “the march of improvement.”



Photo by Trail, Fraserburgh.

THE LATE BOBBIE TEETIE.

THE BOGEY MAN OF THE BAIRNS OF THE "BROCH." HE WAS, IN HIS
DAY, THE RECOGNIZED COAL PORTER OF FRASERBURGH.

The disappearance of the coasting sailing vessels meant the loss to the country of a race of fine, smart, capable seamen, whose equal cannot be found today. Their physique was excellent, and as a rule they had a high opinion of their calling. Many of them were from inland towns and villages, even from the farm and the croft, attracted by the glamour and romance of a sailor's life. It is a curious fact that the love of the sea "runs in the blood;" and there was not a little seaport or fishing village in these northern waters a few years ago that could not produce its dozen families whose progenitors had "gone down to the sea in ships" for many generations. Many of the young sailors consequently sailed on board vessels of which their fathers, uncles, or brothers were skippers, and thus their young lives were safeguarded by wholesome supervision, which made them better men and abler to avoid the pitfalls and snares of life when they reached the age of manhood and had to "paddle their own canoe." It is said that "comparisons are odious," and without doubt there is a good deal of truth in the saying, if the old mariners' opinion is of any value. Old salts who trod the quarter-deck till their eyes grew dim and their sea legs refused service, and who now live on the reputation, the scenes and experiences of the past, do not look upon the men who man the steamers of the present day as seamen. To the old salt the steamboat hands are merely "donkey enginemmen," who have no pride in their craft or that wonderful love of the sea which was a remarkable trait in the character of the sailors of a bygone generation.

The steamer seamen do not run the risks to which the old sailormen were exposed. If the latter were not swallowed up by the sea during the early blasts of the many fierce hurricanes which they had to face in the open ocean, they were often buffeted between Scotland and Norway for weeks on end, sometimes courting death on the rocky shores of Shetland and Orkney, and at other times driven helplessly, as the Norse Vikings were of old, upon the dangerous waters of the Maelstrom. With a record such as this, no wonder the old-fashioned tar deservedly had a high opinion of his seamanship, and recalled with pride the many hairbreadth escapes through which he had passed. The modern steamer, independent of wind or tide, goes straight ahead, and while coasting, never needs to lose sight of land to catch a slant of wind, with the result that when the weather changes and dangers threaten, the vessel can pop into the first convenient port. Although one cannot altogether agree with the cavalier way in which the ancient mariner disposes of the modern steamboat sailors, there is no doubt the latter do not get the same training, nor run the same risks, as the old seamen who crossed the North Sea in puny little craft, little better than cockle shells. It often required smart seamanship to keep them afloat.

It will greatly surprise the present generation and make old men rub their eyes, with memories refreshed, when it is stated that the total tonnage of sailing vessels registered at Fraserburgh in 1856 reached the magnificent total of 7,035 tons. Business people of the present day will be inclined to question the accuracy of the figures, but incontestable evidence is at hand, and here is the list, which speaks for itself:—

Ship's Name.	Tons.	Ship's Name.	Tons.
Ariel	60	Day	19
Ann	75	Elizabeth	130
Alex. Harvey	292	Agnes	26
Andrews	60	Enterprise	349
Anna Mary	331	Fetteresso Castle	58
Ann and Hannah	39	Kate Robertson	146
Aerolite	317	Harmony	65
Arab	187	Holyrood	575
Avalanche	692	Isabella	81
Blossom	61	Indian Chief	410
Brutus	114	Jane and Catherine	74
Bayfield	49	Jane	70
Christian	110	Kinnaird	620
Lady Saltoun	131	Sovereign	130
Lochnagar	349	Vigilant	110
Louisa	34	Vulcan	177
Melinka	299	Wallace	198
Mary	58	Stephens	89
Northern Maid	86	Boyne Castle	21
Rival	226	Vigilant	20
Scotia	56	Margaret and Mary	25

As seafaring people are quite cosmopolitan in their nature, from mixing with and knowing each other all over the world, a few notes about some of the Fraserburgh ships and their masters may prove of interest to old tars from Duncansbay to St. Abbs Head; and who knows but some of the facts stated may re-awaken recollections of pleasant meetings of the past that took place in the Firth of Forth ports or in Frau Massey's hostelry, opposite the lower bridge in Stettin, or, for that matter, in yet more distant parts of the world. Sailors love to rehearse their experiences of the past, and the bringing forward of the old and at once familiar names that had been forgotten, will enable some of the hoary-headed tars to live their lives over again. The following are some particulars of the vessels in the above list of Fraserburgh shipping, with references to their skippers.

The "Ann" was a craft well known on the coast, and was commanded by Captain John Stephen, who was the father of two or three smart seamen. One of these was Captain John Stephen, long of the Greenland ship "Melinka," who died in the West Indies; and the other was the late Captain Alexander Stephen, of the London trader "Vigilant" and the Greenlander "Alexander Harvey," thereafter a shipchandler and for many years a Harbour Commissioner of Fraserburgh. The master of the "Andrews" was Mr. James McRae, a man who retired from the sea with a competency, started fishcuring, and through the adverse blasts of fortune in the stormy years of 1884 to 1886 in the curing trades, suffered almost total eclipse in the closing years of his life. The "Anna Mary"

traded to India and China chiefly. Her skipper was Captain David Stephen, whose son was for the greater part of his life the well-known parish minister of Renfrew. Captain Stephen died at his son's home in the manse of Renfrew. The "Aerolite" was built in Fraserburgh in 1853, and was commanded by Captain Downie, a native of Rosehearty, who died and was buried in China. His widow was a sister of one of Fraserburgh's leading townsmen—Mr. George Walker, Old Manse. The "Ann and Hannah" was a small craft commanded by a big man, the late William Stephen. William was a great snuffer, and none who can remember him but will associate the "mull" with him. He dearly loved to discuss religion, and would debate a point of theology for hours. He was a good old man. Many long years ago three of his daughters who were married to the following—Edward Galloway, fishcurer; John Gordon, fishcurer; and George Mavor, baker—migrated to America where a considerable measure of good fortune attended them.

The "Arab" was first commanded by Captain Dalgardno, a native of Buchan, whose services were afterwards transferred to the "Lochnagar." The "Arab" was the first barque that ever entered Fraserburgh Harbour, and the interesting event took place in 1839. Captain Dalgardno had a virtue that was somewhat uncommon among seafaring people in the middle of last century. He was a militant teetotaller, who took every opportunity of pointing out the evils of strong drink. When he retired from the sea, Captain Dalgardno settled down in Australia, where he died. The "Brutus," which was built on the Spey, was first commanded by Captain Noble, and thereafter by Captain Mackie, a native of Peterhead. Captain Noble was appointed Harbour Master at Fraserburgh, and, strange to say, his immediate successor was Captain Mackie. Captain Noble was for years master of the "Indian Chief." Two of his family still survive, both living in Aberdeen. One son—William—in a good position, died in Burmah. Another named Peter, who married a Colonel's daughter, was, along with his wife, drowned in the Indian Sea. He was going out to Singapore to start business as a shipping agent there, and in the course of the voyage the vessel, on board of which he and his wife were passengers, disappeared with all on board. The "Bayfield" was first commanded by a Welshman named Stevenson, grandfather of the late Mr. James Stevenson, fishcurer, Fraserburgh, and thereafter by Captain Duthie, a native of Rosehearty. When in the charge of the latter, the vessel, during a gale, foundered off Buchanness, and all on board were drowned. The "Elizabeth" belonged to old Baillie Chalmers, and generally traded to the Mediterranean. She was commanded by Mr. James Tarras, a veteran of much experience, who died some years ago. He was captured by a Danish warship in trying to run the blockade during the Danish-German War of 1864, and his ship, the "Glengrant," was towed as a prize into Copenhagen. The "Fetteresso Castle" was in charge of Captain James Stephen. This and other two craft were probably the only Fraserburgh vessels that ever attempted cod fishing at Faroe. The failure of the venture probably accounted for the lack of imitators. The master of the "Kate Robertson" was Captain Watt, a

native of either Pennan or Macduff, who married a Miss Birse, a relation of his owners, the Parks, a family so long and so honourably connected with Fraserburgh. The "Harmony's" skipper was Captain Ritchie, a native of Caithness, and a man of rather colossal proportions, He was afterwards Baillie of Rosehearty, and his family connections will be easily understood when it is stated that one of his sons was the late Mr. Donald Ritchie, fishcurer, Fraserburgh.

The "Isabella" was best known by the sobriquet of "The Cloth Hall," the double-barrelled name being due to the fact that the vessel belonged to Mr. Flett, draper, who had over his shop door in letters so large that he who ran might read the words "The Cloth Hall." The vessel was commanded by Captain Bruce, who married a daughter of old John Stephen. The "Isabella" was a cranky and most unfortunate craft. She sank on the west coast of Scotland— was raised, floated to port and repaired, and sold to a Welshman. She was not long in her new owner's hands, when she was lost, and every man on board found a watery grave. The master of the "Jane and Catherine" in the vessel's earlier years at Fraserburgh where she was built, was Captain John Stephen, whose son is Captain John Stephen, of the ss. "Girdleness" of Aberdeen, one of the shipmasters best known in herring trade circles both in the north of Scotland and in the Baltic ports. The "Jane and Catherine" was afterwards commanded by Captain William Gillan, whose widow was long the proprietrix and occupier of the Ship Inn, Shore Street. The "Lady Saltoun" was a brig well known on the coast, and in German and Mediterranean ports, commanded by Mr. James Gillan, a brother of the above named William Gillan. The "Louisa" was a small craft commanded by Captain Webster, husband of Mrs Webster, long the occupant and proprietrix of the Crown Inn, Fraserburgh, and whose daughter is Mrs. Robert Anderson, Charlotte Street. The son of the last mentioned, it will be remembered, received the distinguished conduct medal (at one time it was thought he would get the Victoria Cross) for his services as a volunteer gunner at the memorable defence of Ladybrand, South Africa, in 1900.

The "Louisa" was lost, with Captain Webster and all hands, in the hurricane of the 3rd October, 1860. This was a memorable gale, which is still referred to with bated breath by old people. In the same gale was lost the "Sarah" of Fraserburgh, belonging to Mr. William Noble, flesher, but in this case the crew was saved. A large German vessel named the "Pladda" was driven ashore at the west side at Rosehearty; and the Moray Firth schooner "Lady Abercrombie," bound for the Baltic with herrings, foundered off Kinnaird Head, and all on board were drowned. The coast was strewn with wrecks up and down, and the mention of the gale of the 3rd October, 1860, will reawaken in the minds of many an old sailor and fisherman, in every east coast seaport town, memories of narrow escapes and painful fatalities. The "Mary" was a small schooner commanded by Captain Charles Noble, father of the late Mr. Alexander Noble, teacher, for many years a well known figure in Fraserburgh and Newcastle-on-Tyne, who died in South Africa. The "Northern Maid" was in charge of William Noble, afterwards of the "Eaglet." This craft, which had

arrived in Fraserburgh, was blown out of the harbour during a gale, and landed on the rocks. She was purchased by Mr. Charles McBeath, taken off the rocks and repaired, and added to the "Broch" fleet. The master of the "Rival" was Mr. Cordiner, a native of Boddam. The vessel traded to the Southern Seas, and during a period of temporary depression she was sold, while lying in Australia. Captain Cordiner, somewhere about the end of the 'sixties or the early 'seventies, while acting as sailing master of the "Orion," being then quite an old man, died, and was buried in Sweden. The "Scotia" was owned and sailed by Mr. George Stephen, well known as "Rossie's Geordie." Mr. Stephen was a very well-known figure about the harbour and the Braeheads of Fraserburgh for many years. The "Scotia" was lost on the Horn Reef, on the German coast, while bound to Hamburg with a cargo of herrings. The "Wallace" was a brig commanded by Captain Sim, a native of Pitullie. She was built in Fraserburgh, and went, it is interesting to note, on her maiden voyage to Canada with passengers. She afterwards engaged in the Baltic and Mediterranean trades. The "Stephens," schooner, which remained long on the Fraserburgh list, was commanded by Captain Andrew Stephen, who afterwards became Harbourmaster of Fraserburgh.

Half a century ago and more, long before there was any railway communication to Fraserburgh, all the goods traffic—and the passenger traffic, too—was carried by sea. The "Olympic" and other monsters of the deep were not in existence in those days, and, besides, the people of Buchan and the north of Scotland generally were not over-ambitious as regards palatial cabins. They were easily pleased with accommodation, provided (and they say this is characteristic of North Country people) the fare was cheap. The fare was certainly low, but the accommodation was on the same level. The regular trader between Fraserburgh and Aberdeen in the 'fifties was the noble ship "Darg," of the fearful and wonderful burthen of 19 tons, which successfully carried on the business for many years, doing well for her owners and faithfully serving the public. To show the change in the times, it has only to be mentioned that a herring boat of 19 tons is, in these days, condemned as unfit to prosecute the fishing!

The Leith trader to Fraserburgh at this time was the "Margaret and Mary," better known as the "Scurry." This craft seems to have been a sort of a local "institution," the butt of all the wags—for a smile stole over the face of the old seaman who supplied much information about the ships and their skippers when her name was mentioned. It was soon followed, however, by a look of sadness when her dreadful fate recurred to him. The "Margaret and Mary" was certainly a little bigger than the "Dargie," but not very much, being only 25 tons register. One can fancy that the trade between Fraserburgh and Leith was not very large in those days when a craft of 25 tons was equal to the requirements of the town. The first master of the "Scurry" was a Noble, a name that predominated, and still predominates, all other names in the parish of Fraserburgh. He was followed by Captain Milne, father of Mr. James Milne,

solicitor, Fraserburgh. On Captain Milne's promotion another Noble assumed "command," who was in turn succeeded by Captain George Ritchie, a native of Rosehearty. While in the command of Mr. Ritchie the vessel sailed away from Fraserburgh and was never heard of again, having no doubt foundered during one of the severe gales recorded at the time, and with which such a crazy little craft could ill contend. It will interest Fraserburgh people to know that it was this Captain Ritchie's widow who married Harry Joyce, an Englishman, and who for a good many years afterwards occupied the Whitehall Hotel, at the top of the Middle Jetty. The family of Ritchies, who were talented above the average, seemed to be peculiarly unfortunate, at least the members who went to sea. Another brother, who had command of a large foreign-going ship, was lost, with all his crew, off Liverpool during a fearful hurricane. Still another brother was Mr. Ritchie, the once well-known provision curer of Peterhead.

The "Scurry" was followed by the "Agnes," which in turn was succeeded by the "Telegram," the smartest and best known of the old class of Leith traders. This craft was commanded by Captain Bogue, who, while in the Leith trade, and that was a long period, was one of the best known figures in shipping circles on the east coast 'twixt Fraserburgh and the Forth. He was a fearless seaman, and on many an occasion he kept the "Telegram's" head to the gale and "threshed" it out, while accompanying vessels turned tail and sought the shelter of the nearest port. For his time, he was also an unusually well-read and intelligent man. "Joe," as he was familiarly called, was a man of extraordinary physique, and weighed over 20 stones. It was wont to be a joke that when Captain Bogue went from the stern to the bow of the "Agnes," the vessel's draft of water was increased by an inch forward. The Carnegie family, late of Aberdeen, and now of London, several of whom have attained to high positions in the world, are grandchildren of Captain Bogue. Another grandson is Mr. A. B. Davidson, the well-known and popular fishcurer of Fraserburgh. The "Telegram" continued in the trade till some time after the opening of the railway in 1865, but when she was sold a few years afterwards, all regular and direct sea communication between Fraserburgh and Leith ceased for a considerable period. It was not till the "Active" was built and put on the passage some years ago that direct sea communication was resumed with Leith. The "Active," a sailing vessel, had to give way before steam.

In the old days, there were not only regular traders to Aberdeen and Leith, and occasionally Peterhead, but also vessels on the passage almost regularly between Fraserburgh and London. This will be "interesting information" to the present generation, whose ambition does not aspire to the greatness of a London line of steamers. Of course, the railway connection does away with all or any chance of a sea connection with London doing any good, and, moreover, the ships that ran on the passage in the 'forties and 'fifties were not so much general cargo vessels as cattle ships. About the time mentioned above, an extensive cattle trade was carried on between Fraserburgh and London. From its geographical situation, Fraserburgh was in these days the chief mainland

port for Orkney and Iceland in the trade. Vessels proceeded to these islands, loaded cargoes of cattle, which they brought across and landed at Fraserburgh. The animals were sometimes not in the best of condition when taken on board, and the voyage across, often unduly protracted owing to headwinds, did not improve their appearance. The beasts were therefore distributed all over the district, and allowed to graze on the fine rich grass for which Buchan is famous, until they were in prime condition for the London market. When they reached that stage, they were once more put on board the London traders and carried to the Thames. The most famous of these London traders were the "Sir William Wallace," "Vigilant," and "Mormon Maid," vessels well known in their day all along the east coast of Britain. The "Sir William Wallace" had almost as tragic an end as the hero after whom she was named. While on a voyage from South Shields to Fraserburgh, she encountered a terrific gale, and while attempting to get to sea, foundered on Shields Bar, when all on board perished.

The flight of time brings many changes, and the Iceland and Orkney cattle trade, once an important industry of Fraserburgh, is, owing to the advent of steam by sea and land, lost to the town and district for ever. When this particular branch of trade disappeared, the energy of the community found vent in other directions, and the volume of trade of the town did not suffer any set back. The railway, too, though it took away with one hand, gave back with the other. The all too short but stirring times of the sealing ships attracted the energy of the townsmen, and that trade was followed by the herring fishing the development of which has been the mainstay of Fraserburgh ever since.

The first introduction of steam to Fraserburgh was, it is understood, in 1858, when the tugboat "Heatherbell," of Aberdeen, arrived in the harbour. The occasion was the first annual holiday ever observed by the people of Fraserburgh, and the tugboat was put on the passage to run excursionists from Fraserburgh to the Granite City and back. The boat was crowded with passengers, but unfortunately the weather was rough, and almost the whole company suffered badly from *mal de mer*. The survivors of this historic trip, located in the Buchan district, are still inclined to shudder when their memories recall visions of men and women on deck and below, prostrate and helpless, in the last agonies of sea-sickness, but able between spasms to wish that they were "hame again or deid." In the year 1859 the Aberdeen, Grimsby, and Hull Steam Company put the screw steamer "Aberdeenshire" on the passage between Aberdeen and Fraserburgh for both goods and passengers. Mr. William Talbot was master, and Mr. James Nisbet, 47 Marischal Street, Aberdeen, manager; while the late Mr. James Cardno, father of Mr. James F. Cardno, Ardaros, was the Fraserburgh agent. For comparison with the present railway rates, it is worth giving the passenger fares charged to Aberdeen by the "Aberdeenshire" in the last year of the 'fifties. The charges were :—Cabin, single, 4s. 6d; return, 7s. ; steerage, single, 3s; return, 4s. 6d. This boat kept up the trade for a considerable time, and for several years carried big crowds of excursionists on the Fraserburgh annual holiday, an event inaugurated by the "Heatherbell."

The "Aberdeenshire" also, so long as she was on the passage, always took the first of the season's herrings to Hull, whence they were shipped to Continental ports.

With so many vessels owned in northern ports, there was a continual stream of vessels going south or coming north, and from a height overlooking the coast, one could almost always count quite a large number of craft "moving on the face of the waters" within the range of the eye. Harbours were of much more importance to windbound vessels in these old days than they are now. Standing as it does at the entrance of the Moray Firth, Fraserburgh has always been a port much frequented by windbound ships. In certain winds, vessels bound from Orkney, Wick, and all the ports of the Moray Firth cannot get beyond Cairnbulg Point; while craft coming from the south cannot, when the wind in a given direction, pass Kinnaird Head. Fraserburgh is thus a half-way house, which was much more patronized fifty years ago than it is to-day.

There were many times on which the harbour of Fraserburgh was rushed by a big fleet of sailing vessels, the crews of which were anxious to get into shelter before the thunders of Boreas overtook them; but one of the most notable occasions in this connection was in the beginning of 1850, when the port was so crowded with windbound craft that people were able to walk from one side of the harbour to the other, all the time crossing vessels. In the year 1861 there was a memorable list of windbound arrivals. A large fleet of vessels from the Firth and farther northwards passed Kinnaird Head in the early morning and forenoon bound south with a favourable breeze. The fleet had run south almost as far as Peterhead, when the wind went suddenly round to the south, and the barometer fell with startling suddenness. The wind began to rise, and the white-crested seas, forming quickly, plainly heralded to the mariners the coming storm. The change of wind put the vessels about, and at once a race for Fraserburgh Harbour commenced. The harbour could hold only a limited number of craft in safety in those days, and those that failed to get shelter in Fraserburgh had no option but to run for Cromarty. In violent weather, Banff or Portsoy was seldom looked at, and, having to run for Cromarty meant, to a sailing vessel, a considerable part of the passage lost, and a chance of still further delay and consequent increased expenses without any earning of freight. This was a serious matter for skipper and owner, and it was for this reason that Fraserburgh was such an important windbound port when sailing vessels were in the hey-day of their prosperity.

In this particular instance of the rush for Fraserburgh the ships came in pell-mell, sometimes two and three together, so that in a short time the harbour entrance had the appearance of a day in the fishing season at the present time when the fleet had arrived at low water, with this difference that, instead of boats, the fleet clustering round the harbour entrance was sailing ships. In many cases one vessel ran into the other, and the damage done to the craft was very serious, while the confusion and shouting at the pierheads among the excited crowd made the scene one to be remembered. The day was looked

upon as a very unfortunate one by all, except the local carpenters, who, having experienced a period of dullness, considered that the gale was a dispensation of Providence for their special benefit, as they trotted out the old proverb: "It's an ill win' that blows naebody gweed." On the afternoon of the day on which the weather changed, 25 sailing vessels ran Fraserburgh, and on the Sunday following, the harbour contained no fewer than 47 vessels. Surely a record!

From 1855 to 1880 was a prosperous time for sailing vessels and for the little ports along the northern coast whence they hailed. A very large proportion of the breadwinners in these towns was employed on shipboard. It followed almost as a consequence, that the winter months were generally the liveliest of the year among their population. As the autumn advanced, the craft began to make their appearance at their different ports of ownership, where the crews were paid off. The freights in the months of December, January, and February were not numerous enough, and were not considered remunerative enough, to warrant the owners in keeping their vessels at sea, and it was the universal rule to dismantle the ships and moor them in the safest part of the harbour during the "dead" season of the year. While the little harbours were pretty well filled with the numerous laid-up sailing craft, the towns were kept wonderfully lively by the jolly Jack Tars who had perforce to remain at home. In every port the sailors had their daily favourite meeting place, say "the plain-stanes" adjacent to the harbour, where they "spun" yarns of striking experiences or narrow escapes during the previous nine months.

After a short "spell" at home, time began to hang heavily on the hands of the young sailors, and all sorts of wild pranks were resorted to for the purpose of amusing themselves and those of their acquaintances who cared to join them. Generally cantankerous or miserly and close-fisted "auld bodies," both male and female, of the community were the victims of the sailors' jokes. Tying the handle of the door to a wooden bar across it, so that the inmate or inmates were prisoners for the time being, was a prank often indulged in. Another was the placing of a divot, or piece of turf, on the chimney can of a house, with the result that the obnoxious occupants were in time, like the bees, smoked out of their dwelling-place. At the time when such horse-play was indulged in, the houses of the poor people on whom the jokes would be played had never more than a ground floor, and were very modest even at that. To mount the roof of such a dwelling was child's play to a smart young sailor. Breaking a piece of glass smartly on the sill of a window, and making the occupants of the room believe that the glass of the window was broken, afforded much fun to the lads, as also did the trick of tying a piece of thin but strong cord from a lamp post to a nail in the wall of the house adjacent, so that the first pedestrian coming along the pavement either got his hat knocked off or his face sharply marked with the twine. These and a dozen other similar practical jokes afforded amusement to the young men during the long winter evenings. At the New Year and Auld Yule, sailors' fun ran riot, especially at Peterhead and Fraserburgh. In the

latter place, at least, it was no uncommon thing for a carter to find on Auld Yule morning, his carts and barrows, etc., lying at high-water mark in the North Harbour, some with their wheels off. Doors that would lift off their hinges were removed and carried from the owner's property to the farthest end of the town. But the most audacious trick of all, and one which only the boldest and most experienced hands would attempt, was the removing of a carter's horse from its own stable to that of another carter's place in the town, the latter's animal taking the place of the removed one in the other stable. This double joke, when successfully carried out, was considered a great feat, and though the parties upon whom the trick was played did not half like it, they did not care to spoil the enjoyment of the crowd by placing the jocular culprits in the hands of the police; in fact, such a thing as appealing to the police would, in those days, have been considered something like "hitting below the belt."

At the time—during the 'fifties, 'sixties, and 'seventies of last century—when sailing vessels were enjoying a great measure of financial prosperity, sailors, as already indicated, formed a most important part of the seafaring communities located in the north of Scotland. In many towns along the shores of the Moray Firth, the Sailors' Concert, generally given about the New Year, or on Auld Yule night, was a great event, and invariably attracted a crowded "house." The Sailors' Concert was never really established in Fraserburgh, but at the carpenter's supper, after a launch, or at the "Foy," previous to the sailing of the Greenland fleet, sailors' songs made up a large part of the programme. Only those who have been privileged to listen to the sailor artiste in the old days, can really appreciate and understand the remarkable change that has taken place upon "Jack Tar," from a musical point of view.

Some of the sailors sang a wonderful tremolo, while their grace notes were a study. Many might try to imitate them, but few would succeed. The words of these quaint old sailor songs are fast being forgotten, and probably some of them have already been entirely lost. At the present day it is a rarity to meet a sailor who can repeat one verse of an old chanty or capstan song. The songs were for the most part utter doggerel, with no claim to be considered poetry, but they were and are interesting as the medium by which the sailor lightened his toil when heaving the capstan, setting the sails, or engaged at some stiff pull of a rope or heavy lift. The sailors' chanty song had a literature of its own, and there were many different versions of the same song, according to the districts in which the seamen were located.

The chantyman, or nautical precentor, was a very important man on board a big vessel. Not only was it necessary that he should have a good and a "big" voice, but it was also essential that he should be able to fill in original verses as the song progressed, when the task at which the crew was engaged was an unduly protracted one. It can thus be seen that not only did a ship's chantyman require to be a vocalist, but a "poet" also. Of the poetry the after-quoted specimens will speak for themselves. A favourite, and one which always found a place on the programme of the Sailors' Concert, was :—

HOMEWARD BOUND.

We're outward bound from Liverpool town:
 Good-bye, fare ye well, good-bye, fare ye well.
 We're outward bound for Rio Grande:
 Hurrah, my boys, we're outward bound.

Perhaps we'll ne'er return again:
 Good-bye, fare ye well, good-bye, fare ye well.
 Perhaps we'll ne'er return again:
 Hurrah, my boys, we're outward bound.

We're homeward bound to Liverpool town:
 Good-bye, fare ye well, good-bye, fare ye well.
 We're homeward bound with sugar and rum:
 Hurrah, my boys, we're homeward bound.

Here's a health to our ship and her bully crew:
 Good-bye, fare ye well, good-bye, fare ye well.
 Here's a health to our ship and her bully crew:
 Hurrah, my boys, we're homeward bound.

Two other specimens are given, which, it is hoped, will interest readers, not so much on account of their graceful style or poetic imagery, but rather by the quaint language and simple thoughts on which the songs are built. It has to be pointed out that when the refrain or chorus was sung, the sailors gave an extra strong pull altogether. The refrain comes so often in the chanty songs that one is inclined to think that the sailors must have been willing to work hard in the olden days. The changed opinion of the seamen of the present time on this point is sometimes held responsible for the decline of popularity of the chanty song in these days. That, however, is a far-fetched argument. The true explanation is that steam has dispensed with all heavy manual labour on board ship, and the necessity for the sailor singing to lighten the burden of his toil has been removed. To this is due the practical extinction of the chanty song. The following effusion—"Ranzo"—was a great favourite with sailors, and was sung on board ship from Greenland to Cape Horn:—

RANZO, BOYS, RANZO.

Ranzo was a plough boy,
 Ranzo, boys, Ranzo;
 He shipped on board a whaler,
 Ranzo, boys, Ranzo.

He shipped as able seaman,
 Ranzo, boys, Ranzo;
 And he couldn't do his duty,
 Ranzo, boys, Ranzo.

We led him to a gangway,
 Ranzo, boys, Ranzo;
 We gave him eight and forty,
 Ranzo, boys, Ranzo.

The captain being a good man,
 Ranzo, boys, Ranzo;
 He took him to his cabin,
 Ranzo, boys, Ranzo.

He gave him wine and brandy,
 Ranzo, boys, Ranzo;
 He gave him his only daughter,
 Ranzo, boys, Ranzo.

Now he is Captain Ranzo,
 Ranzo, boys, Ranzo;
 I should like to sail with Ranzo,
 Ranzo, boys, Ranzo.

Another chanty which was in great favour with sailors all the world over was "Poor Old Santa Anna." This song has a Spanish flavour about it, and it is not altogether unlikely but that the ideas in it have been borrowed from the Spaniards, who in the hey-day of their prosperity were the leading sailors of the world. It is thought that "Ranzo, boys, Ranzo," is also of Spanish extraction—it may be the tatters of some old Spanish sea ballad, others believe that it is of Norse origin. Both have a peculiarly un-English ring about them, and it is strange, in view of this, that they should have enjoyed immense popularity on board British ships for many generations. Here follow the words of

POOR OLD SANTA ANNA.

Santa Anna gained the day.
 Hoorah! Santa Anna;
 Santa Anna gained the day
 All along the plains of Mexico.
 Hoorah! Santa Anna.

Mexico City will come rolling down.
 Hoorah! Santa Anna;
 Oh! didn't we make them Frenchmen run
 All along the plains of Mexico,
 Hoorah! Santa Anna.

Poor old Santa's dead and gone,
 Hoorah! Santa Anna;
 We'll dig his grave with a silver spade
 All along the plains of Mexico.
 Hoorah! Santa Anna.

A sort of refrain which was very popular with sailors, and was sung by them when heaving round the capstan, had the following words:—

HANG, BOYS, HANG.

Hang, boys, hang,
I will hang and haul him over;
Hang, boys, Hang.
From Calais on to Dover.
I would hang my father and mother,
I would hang my sister and brother;
Hang, boys, hang.

Chorus—
Hang, boys, hang.
From Calais on to Dover,
Hang, boys, Hang.

After the excitement of Auld Yule's festivities and frolics had died away, a period of dullness ensued. The monotony of life remained practically unbroken until the date for the sailing of the spring fleet was at hand. Then came a time of the greatest activity. The sailors were engaged to bend the sails, paint, and otherwise furbish up the ship, and assist at taking in ballast or help to load a spring cargo of grain. The stores had to be replenished, and grocers, bakers, butchers, and sailmakers reaped a golden harvest. The first sailing of the laid-up fleet was like the opening of the business year in the small ports in the north, and everybody's face beamed with satisfaction that the stagnant trade of the previous few months had given place to a brisk and profitable business. The time of the sailing of the ships in spring was an interesting period, and the ships taking their departure was a pretty sight. The piers were always well lined with spectators, and the departing sailors always got a hearty send-off from their friends. With the last ship away the excitement disappeared, and the people settled down to the usual workaday life experienced in every little seaport town.

As already shown, the list of shipping owned in Fraserburgh in 1856 was 7,035 tons. A large proportion of this tonnage was made up of foreign-going vessels, belonging to Messrs. Park and Wemyss, which, though registered at Fraserburgh, regularly sailed from London. These were registered at London in 1866, and struck off the Fraserburgh list. This fact to a great extent accounts for the diminished Fraserburgh register in 1876. In addition, the great attention paid to the development of the herring fishing at Fraserburgh, which had just become the capital of that industry in Scotland, if not the world, diverted the attention of the inhabitants from ship owning to the more lucrative business of fishcuring. Still, there was a fairly respectable fleet of sailing vessels owned in Fraserburgh in 1876, as the following list will show:—

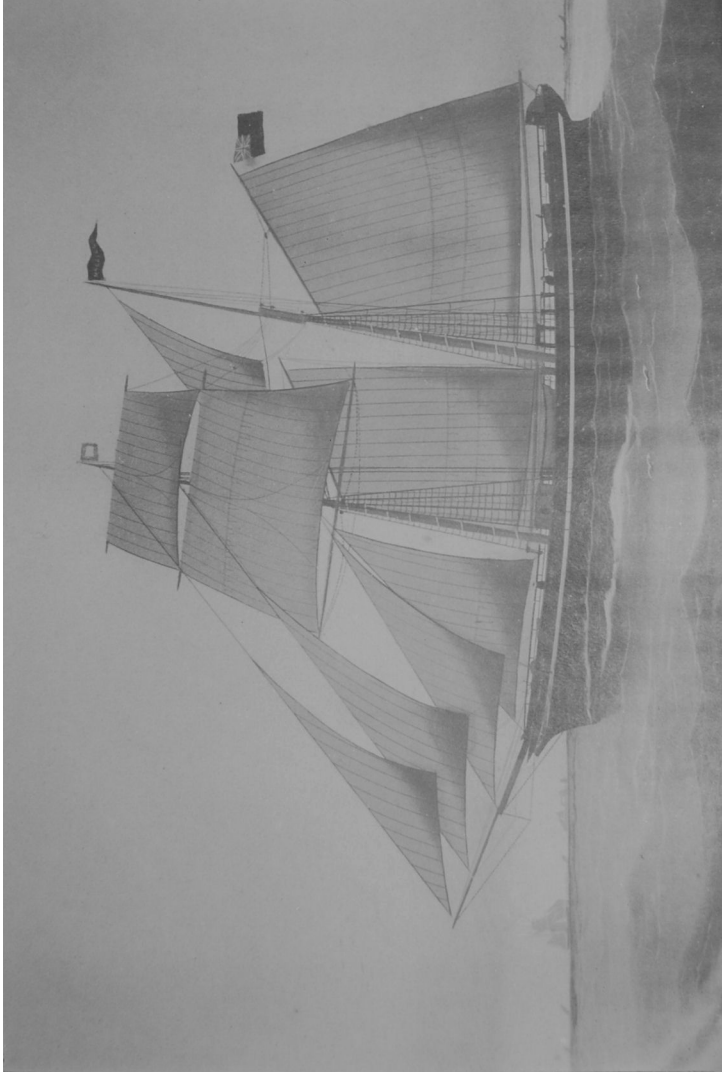
FRASERBURGH SHIPPING IN 1876.

Vessel's Name.	Tonnage.	Vessel's Name.	Tonnage.
George Noble	252	Milky Way	88
Active	118	Judith	90
Lizzie	76	Blue Bell	76
Jessie	34	Orion	81
Resolute	215	Plover	68
Christian	54	Catherine and Hendry	50
Philorth	115	Peace and Plenty	43
Paragon	94	Kinnaird	130
Radiant	99	Faithlie	216
Dundarg	133		

The above give a total of 2,039 tons, certainly a big decrease as compared with 1856, but nothing in comparison to the extraordinary collapse of ship owning which has taken place at Fraserburgh between 1876 and the present day. It was nothing less than “a clean sweep,” for the list of trading shipping owned at Fraserburgh in the year of grace 1914, is an unknown quantity.

It was the application of steam to the purposes of navigation which caused the final collapse of the sailing shipping trade. Shipowners fought long and strenuously against their powerful antagonist, but the battle was a losing one. Steam “came to stay,” and no opposition was powerful enough to rob it of victory. Its disastrous effects were twofold so far as the counties of Aberdeen, Banff, and Moray were concerned. Not only were sailing ships hunted from these northern seas and the seamen manning them driven by adverse fortune to seek employment at the four corners of the earth, but shipbuilding in the north (outside Aberdeen City) was completely obliterated.

The last chapter in the tragedy of “A Lost Industry”—the explanation of the collapse of the shipping trade in the north is not a difficult task to those who have been closely connected with it for the last 30 or 40 years. The great bulk of the schooners belonging to the small ports were engaged in the coasting trade for a considerable portion of the year, but the traffic upon which the owners and the shippers depended for bringing in the lion's share of the year's profit, was the carrying of herrings to the Elbe and the Baltic ports. The schooners monopolized this trade entirely, and it was very profitable. What would present-day shippers of herrings think of freights of 2s. 6d., 3s 6d., and sometimes 4s. per barrel to Stettin, Danzig, and Königsberg, and a proportionately high rate for wheat, etc., home! The 'fifties, 'sixties, and 'seventies of last century was truly the golden age for the shipping trade of the north of Scotland, for an investment in a schooner at that period meant a return of the whole capital in the course of a very few years. The months of July, August and September were the times when the vessels ran continually in the herring trade, bringing cargoes home when freights were tempting enough to induce a shipmaster to go as far out of his way as the English coast. Barring some-



A FRASERBURGH SCHOONER — ABOUT 1870.

thing good, the ship generally came straight back in ballast to a herring port. Shipmasters had a glorious time. There was no need "to pinch" in any direction in order to earn a fat dividend. The gratuities allowed, a point which the skipper looked sharply after, were on the most liberal scale; the disbursement sheet had broad shoulders, and it needed them, for the rate of expenses charged, and never questioned, was delightfully elastic.

"The main hatch" was the haven of refuge for many a perplexed skipper. When he had made up his accounts for a voyage and found that the balance against him was higher than he expected, he proceeded to debit the vessel with certain imaginary charges until the "correct" balance was brought out. No doubt the skipper had spent the outlays charged, but whether on behalf of the ship it would scarcely be fair to enquire too closely. A good story which was wont to be related with great gusto by a once well-known Moray Firth skipper, admirably illustrates the custom of the day. The skipper was settling with his ship chandler in Danzig when the latter said—

"Oh, captain, I vish to give you von present."

C.—"Thank you very much; that is exceedingly kind of you."

S.—"Well, captain, about vat sum vood you like?"

C.—"Beggars cannot be choosers. I will be very grateful for any sum or thing you care to give me."

S.—"Ach captain, but I moos put it into your account."

C. —"What, put it into the ship's account! If you did that it would not be you but my owner who would be giving me the present. No, no, if I want to cheat my owner I can do it without your assistance. No more accounts with you."

Yet it is understood that this was by no means an uncommon way of getting a present in the palmy days of the shipping trade.

Norwegian shipowners and fishcurers had steamers engaged in the herring-carrying trade between Norway, Germany and Russia, long before the Scotch merchants employed them. But when the methods of the trade changed, and curers, instead of consigning their herrings to German and Russian agents, sold them on this side to buyers here, steamers got their chances. The buyers here sold the herrings again to dealers on the Continent for delivery on a fixed date. Sailing vessels meeting with a contrary wind, could not be depended upon to arrive within the stipulated time, and complications often arose in consequence. This could not go on, and as a steamer could be timed to arrive at her port of destination on a given day, the opportunity of the latter had arrived. The Norwegians were the first to seize it. Towards the close of the 'seventies, some Norwegian steamers built of wood and of a very old-fashioned type, arrived in Fraserburgh and Peterhead, etc., and loaded herrings for Baltic ports. The appearance of steamers in the herring-carrying trade created strong jealousies, and something like indignation among shipowners and skippers. For a year or two an unfounded prejudice possessed the minds of many fishcurers, etc., that the heat from the engineroom of steamers would spoil the herrings

stored in the vessels' holds, and on that account some firms absolutely refused to put their barrels on board steamers. This helped the sailing vessels for a time.

But the relief was only temporary. Steamship cargoes were landed on other side in quite as good condition as those of sailing ships; and then steam could be depended upon to arrive on a certain fixed date. So the doom of the sailing vessel was sealed. The stern and unrelenting opposition of the steamer went on increasing, until at length it took entire possession of the herring trade. From being the favourite, the sailing vessel became the rejected, so much so that a charter could not be obtained at a rate that would do more than pay the crew's food bill. Without the income derived from the herring-carrying trade, sailing vessels could not "live." Some were lost, others were sold to distant ports or places with an advantage of being so peculiarly situated that only vessels of a certain draught of water could approach them. It would have been madness to have thought of replacing the old ships by new, and so the work of depletion went on. A few owners stuck to their ships in the hope that "a bare existence" could be eked out in the coasting trade. These struggled on bravely for years, but at last the opposition of the steamers there, too, became so great that the sailing vessel had to succumb and retire from the field hopelessly beaten. It is pity that, with the disappearance of the sailing ships, a fine race of seamen were lost to the country. Compared with the crews who man our steamers at the present day, it is only fair to say that the old sailormen in these northern ports were sea-dogs of an altogether superior type, and were really a credit to the merchant service of Great Britain.

Many a veteran sailor looked upon the result as a serious blow to the country, and a great injustice to his class, and naturally very bitter feelings were, for a time, harboured by the old tars against vessels propelled by steam. Many of them, when left without employment, declared that nothing faced them but "Davy Jones' locker," and their feelings were somewhat similar to those given expression to by poor Jack in Masefield's beautiful "Nicias Moriturus," as follows:—

An' Bill can have my seaboots, Nigger Jim can have my knife,
You can divvy up the dungarees an' bed;
An' the ship can have my blessin', an' the Lord can have my life,
An' "snails" and fish my body when I'm dead.

An' dreaming down below there in the tangled greens and blues,
Where the sunlight shudders golden round about,
I shall hear the ships complainin' and the cursin' of the crews,
An' be sorry when the watch is tumbled out.

I shall hear 'em hilly-hollyin' the weather crojick brace,
Hear the sheet-block jiggin' hornpipes all achafe,
Hear the tops' l halyard chanty—feel the salt spray sting my face—
I'll be seaward though my body's anchored safe.

I shall hear the south wind callin' soft and low across the deep,
An' the slattin' of the storm-sail on the stay;
Hear the ripplin' o' the catspaw at the makin' o' the neap,
An' the swirl an' splash o' porpoises at play.

An' Bill can have my seaboots, Nigger Jim can have my knife,
You can divvy up the dungarees an' bed;
An' the ship can have my blessin', an' the Lord can have my life,
For it's time to go aloft when Jack is dead.

Though steam is one of the greatest powers for good which the world has yet seen, many people still live to recall with pride and pleasure the beautiful sight of the big fleet of ships under full sail passing up and down the coast, and a decade or two must come and go before the people of the north cease lamenting "a lost industry."

CHAPTER XI.

STREET CHANGES AND IMPROVEMENTS: HISTORIC NOTES ON OLD BUILDINGS.

Within the last forty years a wonderful change has taken place in the appearance of Fraserburgh, due to the increase in its size, and to the number of handsome new streets that have come into existence within the time stated. Were a native, who had lived "in foreign parts" since about the close of the 'sixties, to pay a visit to the town now, he would look upon the scene with mixed feelings, and wonder where the "Broch" of his youth was. Few of the people and few of the landmarks with which he was familiar would he find remaining as cherished reminiscences of the past. The Links remain—though somewhat curtailed—and the Bellslea Park, with the old Parish School, still standing as in the days of yore; but, apart from these, the march of improvement has trampled down the old configuration of the town, and improved and enlarged the burgh boundaries and suburbs to an extent that would bewilder a long-absent native who might be in quest of the haunts of his youth. For practically half a century prior to the year 1870, the business of the town was not carried on with outstanding enterprise, and the result was that the town made little progress financially, and increased in size but slowly. In 1870 the first of the big herring fishings set in. The district was benefited, but the fishcurers had rather a severe ordeal to go through. It was the year of the Franco-Prussian War. The year of 1871 was the real beginning of Fraserburgh's success, and then began the great progress which has uninterruptedly gone on ever since. The increase of wealth in the community accounts for the first part of the heading with which chapter opens.

Beginning at the south side of the town, it does not require a very big stretch of memory to recall the old Parish School, with the figure of Moses, with flowing beard, and the Ten Commandments, carved in freestone, built into the wall over the doorway, as a daily guide and inspiration to the scholars going into and coming out of the school. Where the old school once raised its venerable head, and stood sentry over the Links, now stands the handsome South U. F. Church—a most appropriate successor to the old "Broch" seat of learning, where so many youths, reared by the Rev.

William Woodman, the teacher, became famous men of the world. Only the oldest inhabitants can remember the place as a flourishing classical institution, where Moses and Mr. Woodman divided the honours of moulding the character and storing the minds of the ambitious and aspiring youth of Fraserburgh. To those in middle life the building was known as the private residence of "Chirsty" Dalgardno, a good, big-hearted body, who was always kind to "the loons" who came to grief on the Links. She did not disdain to keep a pig or two, hens and ducks, etc., on the premises which were looked upon by former pupils as holy ground. Many of the tricky youths—alas! once youths—who have now reached old age will remember "Chirsty's deuks." Ducks are proverbial for keeping most irregular hours, and straying far from home, and, poor things, they did suffer for their bad habits at the hands of the boys who intercepted them down at the foot of the brae, or near the Beach, where now runs the train. Another old landmark, long since removed, that was quite near the erstwhile Links Parish School, was the Roperie.

With regard to the additional streets and the changes in the original ones, pages could be written. With regard to Saltoun Place, in the middle 'sixties, the outmost house on the west side was that at present occupied by Mr. Alexander Walker. At the time referred to, it was tenanted by Mr. Beatson, head of the Coastguard Division, of which Fraserburgh was the centre or capital. Mr. Beatson was a great favourite in Fraserburgh. The house referred to, which in those days adjoined the green fields, is now practically in the centre of the town. Saltoun Place South, beyond Victoria Street, is a new creation since the time mentioned. What is now a fine row of houses extending from the Congregational to the Parish Manse, was then a field of pasture grass. And this was a historic field, too. It abutted both on the Parish School in Saltoun Place, which was the successor of the old Links School, and on St. Peter's Episcopal Schools, and it was the common battle ground of the rival schools and scholars. Many a hard-fought fight has taken place in this field between the "Black Crows" (Parish School) and the "Spawned herrin's" (Episcopal Schools), especially in the winter time when the rivalry took the form of snowball contests. The "Black Crows," owing to their superior number, invariably secured the victory, and at times were so aggressive as to besiege the Episcopal School buildings, and confine not only the scholars as prisoners, but the teachers as well. Mr. George Murray, who succeeded Mr. Woodman as Parish School teacher about 1862, and who was idolized by the great mass of his pupils, was a keen sportsman, and in the conflicts between his scholars and the opposition school he took the liveliest interest. Any of his "loons" that got a black eye or a "bleedy nose" in these battles could count upon "the maister's" warmest sympathy, often accompanied by a penny. The grass fields referred to, where the youth of Fraserburgh were wont to take physical exercise after deep doses of mental work in school, are now really all stone and lime. Victoria Street, Saltoun Place Lane, and Grattan Street, with the buildings therein, take the place of

the green grass. King Edward Street was several fields away from Saltoun Place.

Still farther west, in the same neighbourhood, are Alexandra Terrace and Queen Street, two recent creations. The latter is quite near the pilots' outlook, a place once remote from all dwellings, and highly situated, where the pilots in the olden days could see and prepare for ships coming either down the Moray Firth, or rounding Cairnbulg Head, when bound from the south. The old road that ran from nearly opposite Derbyhall, over the hill in the direction of Watermill, is in danger of being totally extinguished. The pilots' outlook was on the highest lying field, immediately to the north of and adjoining this old road. The farm of Derbyhall, so long tenanted by the Milnes, was not so long ago considered quite in the country. Now the town is spreading its arms around the farm, and in another year or two the familiar and kindly old name of Derbyhall will give place to the high-sounding, if not altogether euphonious, designation of St. Modane Gate or Lerwick Crescent.

Before the railway came to Fraserburgh in 1865, the guard of the mail coach never sounded his horn until the vehicle reached a spot opposite to where the Bellslea Hotel now stands. This was then the entrance to the town, and to have sounded the warning horn earlier would have been for the coach guard to have wasted the sweet and silvery tones of his horn upon the desert air. To diverge a little. Who now living, able to carry their memories back fifty years, will ever forget the grand sight of the Aberdeen mail and passenger coach rolling into the town on a fine summer evening? Standing on Cross Street, one, in imagination, still sees the heads of the passengers rising into view a little beyond the manse. Then the four-in-hand in full glory appears in sight, and rattles bravely along what is now called Saltoun Place. James Jaffray was driver, and Creighton the guard. The latter, always dressed in splendid uniform, was a conspicuous figure. He sounded the horn, heralding the approach of the coach, with all the pomp and dignity of a Royal trumpeter, and caused the people living on the streets along which the coach ran, to rush in hot haste to their doors to see whom the vehicle had brought to the town. The arrival of the Aberdeen Coach was the most interesting, if not exciting, event of the day in the life of the people of Fraserburgh, prior to the advent of trains. Now the romance of the old coaching days is almost forgotten. At this time Victoria Street could only boast of the Episcopal Schools. Now it is coming dangerously near Fatson's Loch, another farm which at one time was considered quite safe for at least a hundred years from the terrors of the building fiend. This farm, like everything else, is being altered till no sentiment is left.

Ask any Fraserburgh man who was a youth 40 or 50 years ago, wherever he may be situated—from China to Peru—what Fatson's Loch was famous for, and he will at once say "slidin'" or skating and ship-sailing. As regularly as winter came round a couple of fields became submerged or, rather, water overflowed them, and when frost came, the youth and beauty of the

"Broch" crowded the ice until the place, especially in the evenings, had all the appearance of a carnival, "and eyes looked love to eyes which spake again," etc. Failing frost, the fine stretch of water made a grand pond in which to sail little ships and boats, and many a lad who could not resist the temptation of having an out-and-out day's ship-sailing truanted the school and met the master and paid the penalty next day "like a man." Mr. Clark, with extreme cunning, and with little respect for the feelings of "the youth and beauty" of the "Broch" of the present day, long ago systematically drained the fields, and the happy memories of the blissful days and evenings spent upon the ice at Fatson's Loch are denied the present generation of maid and swain, and are only vouchsafed to those of an older race whose hair, unfortunately, is quickly becoming intermingled with grey. Comparatively little change has taken place in Frithside Street within the last forty years. Strange to say, it at one time extended farther west than any other street in the town, but its possibilities of further extension came to an end with the formation of Charlotte Street.

In the olden days the town could boast a retail Fish Market. There is nothing in "black and white" on the subject, but old people who had heard their grand-parents discussing the matter, declare that it was situated in the property in Cross Street, at the Milestone, which was first so long occupied as a coal store by Messrs. J. & T. Park, and thereafter by the Fraserburgh Commercial Company, Limited. This would account for Cross Street having been, in the old days, named Fish Cross Street. The latter was the name painted on the street name-boards up to 1870.

The first hotel in Fraserburgh about the close of the seventeenth century was situated on the Braeheads, at the east end of Saltoun Square Lane, north corner, on the site of which a dwelling house was, some years ago, erected by the late Mr. John Bell, Auctioneer. The house was occupied by Baillie Ritchie, who was rather an important figure in Fraserburgh in his day.

Another house that was of some importance in its time was the building in High Street, now gone, which had a big arched gateway entrance and a considerable courtyard within the gateway. Like other old houses of importance, it had an imposing outside stone stairway leading to the upper flat. Natives old enough will remember the place as Miss Taylor's school, now Wordie's stables. The ancestral dwelling was said to have been at one time the town house of one of the lairds living in the district. The same history was attached to the old house at "the head of the town," so long occupied by the late Jean Hendry, and now the curing yard of the representatives of the late Mr. William Low. It had quite the same imposing appearance, with remnants of the outside stair and other relics of grandeur, which showed much the worse of the wear, before it was knocked down by the late Mr. George Low, fishcurer, in the early 'seventies of last century. This house was said to have been long occupied as a town house by succeeding generations of a family of gentle blood, and it was quite a common and accepted story in the town in the old days, that after the massacre at

Culloden, Lord Pitsligo hid in this house for some considerable time. How are the mighty fallen! This once imposing building, the house of the aristocracy, became the common lodging-house of tramps, itinerant dealers, and waifs of all kinds. In the rather spacious grounds attached to the house some queer scenes were witnessed, when the "jolly beggars" fell out and adjourned to the open-air to settle their quarrels. The youth of Fraserburgh in those days had often a first-class entertainment, not always bloodless, free of charge.

One of the most interesting houses in Fraserburgh, and one with a history, is "The World's End." Pratt, in a footnote in "Buchan," says: "There is a tradition that in remote times a Castle, called 'Kinbucket' stood on the site now occupied by the house known as 'The World's End,' but, as far as can be learned, there is no existing record of it, either printed or written." Probably Dr Pratt was right in saying that there was no evidence to prove that a castle called Kinbucket once stood on the site of "The World's End," but the worthy doctor was evidently unaware that "The World's End," or probably an older mansion, which occupied the same site, belonged to the Gordons of Glenbucket up to 1746, and was occupied by that family, in the olden days as a town's house, probably during the bathing season. There is ample documentary evidence to prove this, which makes "The World's End" property, with its historical connections, still more precious in the eyes of Fraserburgh people. The information to be given now is entirely new to them.

The laird of Glenbucket, and the owner of "The World's End," in the beginning of the eighteenth century, was John Gordon, a man of a fiery disposition, a born fighter, and a staunch supporter of any cause he espoused. In view of his close connection with Fraserburgh, a brief reference to Glenbucket as a man may not prove unacceptable to "Broch" readers. A notice of him in Billings' "The Baronial and Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Scotland" sums the man's character up in a few sentences. It is as follows: "The Laird of Glenbucket was a feudatory of the Earl of Mar, and his rude fortalice very near the centre of the Earl's domains. It would depend entirely on the turn taken by intrigues in London, about which the Laird of Glenbucket knew no more than he did of the politics of the Court of Cathay, whether he should be called out to fight for King George or King James. The latter was decided on, and the sturdy laird, having once taken his position, stuck to it. He was present, at the head of the Gordons, in the victorious part of the Jacobite army at the battle of Falkirk, and was all along conspicuous among the Highland leaders in that war. He kept his Jacobite feelings warm for thirty years, and heartily joined the standard of the Prince, unborn in his days of military leadership, who made the descent on Scotland in 1745. He was one of the few men of mark who escaped the vengeance of the successful party on both occasions, escaping to France in 1746. Not having been among those who had to feed the popular appetite for vengeance, and deliver a dying declaration on the scaffold, he has no place among the Jacobite biographies; but his name

was so formidable, that, according to tradition, George II. used to start from disturbed dreams, in efforts to pronounce the name of Glenbucket, accompanied by exclamations of terror."

The last part of the notice gives an awesome turn to the picture, and though King George's disturbed dreams need not be accepted as Gospel, it may be mentioned that the blood-curdling tale is one truly Scotch, which occurs time and again in connection with the wind-up of historical or traditional stories of the North Country. For his part in the rebellion all Glenbucket's property, including "The World's End," was forfeited to the Crown. "The Barons of His Majesty's Court of Exchequer in Scotland," exposed, as an attainted property, "The World's End" for sale by public roup at the Cross of Edinburgh, on the 2nd day of July, 1766. It was purchased by a Charles Gordon, Writer to the Signet, for the sum of £38 1s. 1½d. A copy of the disposition by the Barons of Exchequer, in favour of Charles Gordon, the purchaser, dated 15th August, 1766, is in the possession of Provost Finlayson, so that these facts are above suspicion "The World's End" property in those days comprised not only the ground conveyed by the late Captain Dalrymple to the railway company and now comprised within their boundaries, but the whole of the area, mostly built upon, lying to the south of Commerce Street and bounded by Dalrymple Street, Seaforth Street, and the road leading from Seaforth Street to the Railway Station. Of course, this road and Dalrymple Street formed part of the property at one time. And all this ground went for £38 1s. 1½d. in 1766! Such a transaction was a libel on the importance of Fraserburgh! In addition to "the house at the head of the town," it was the current belief in Fraserburgh fifty years ago that "The World's End" was also a hiding-place of Lord Pitsligo for some time after Culloden.

Before the harbour improvements of last century changed the face of the foreshores from the root of the South Pier southwards, the sea came up quite near to where Dalrymple Street now is; and old natives, in delighting to tell of the changes that had taken place on the town, were wont to relate how, after a violent easterly gale, they had seen great heaps of seaware left on the road quite near the front gate of "The World's End." The name of the house is rather unique, and why it should have been so designated has puzzled many. The explanation is probably this: The town at the time the house was built was all located about the Braeheads and the northern part of Shore Street, with branches running towards High Street and College Bounds. The new house, so far separated from the town proper, at a time when distances were viewed differently from what they are to-day, would have appeared practically inaccessible to the ordinary tradesman, hence the name—"World's End."

Drastic changes have taken place on the ground at the head of the North Pier, in front of the Oak Tree Inn, within the last forty years. The vacant area was then occupied by Mr. John Webster, shipbuilder, as a storage place for logs of wood used in his business. The place was a well-known rendezvous

for sailors home on leave, shore labourers and loafers, etc. Itinerant preachers, travelling quacks, packmen and other nondescript visitors found a refuge, in the fishing season, at this spot. Even John Milne, the Kilbadie minister, found "The Logs" a convenient place from which to preach and pray, and recite his own poetry in the early part of the evening, and a place of rest at night, when the effects of a big drink forbade him taking the risks of an extended walk. The logs formed convenient seats, where a sailor "spinning a yarn," or a stranger relating his adventures, was always certain of having "a large and appreciative audience." Boys played hide-and-seek among the timber, and, altogether, for many years "The Logs:" remained a well-known "public institution" in the town. They were put to still more practical uses. During the mild season the local inebriates, who had "no characters to lose," as they issued with very unsteady gait, from the different public-houses in the shore quarter, made straight for the logs, upon which, shortly afterwards, their recumbent figures would be seen, in considerable numbers, somewhat like the fragment of a defeated army, resting for the night after a heavy day's march. Those were the days when public-houses did not shut till 11 p.m., and when the powers that be, were not so exacting about closing time as they are now. A few quiet and "well-behaved chieles" often got a half hour's grace; and if a policeman did inopportunely turn up, he got "a donal" to himself to see the customers safely off the premises. It was a little "touch of nature" like this that lent poetry to the term "the good old times."

The space round the logs was often the battle ground for a stand-up fight between youths and even grown-up men, who could not verbally agree as to which was "the better man." The logs formed the reserve seats of the spectators, many of whom were so strongly partisan in backing up their friend that quarrels ensued, and couple after couple fought till the ground and many of the logs were stained with blood. Such battles royal were quite common in those days.

"The Logs" was not always the ground for mortal combat. Quieter scenes were enacted, and instead of Tragedy, Comedy held the field, the latter intensely more interesting and amusing than the former. The men who had imbibed "John Barleycorn," although they always adjourned to "The Logs" at night did not always fight with each other. They met in "spiritual" conclave, to extol each others virtues, as drunk men will stupidly persist in doing, discuss the lines of the vessel ready for launching, speak of the prospects of the herring fishing, or indulge in an improvised vocal and instrumental concert, to which the "drouthy cronies" were the sole contributors. Shades of Sims Reeves, and Signor Foli! what art, or, rather, "black-art." The quantity was right, but the quality, alas! was too dreadful, while the grace notes, invented for the occasion by some conceited and throaty tar, who, unfortunately, had safely crossed the line several times, and seen "foreign parts," would have killed any decent lover of music at 500 yards.

A most comical scene was once witnessed at one of these extempore

musical festivals. The company had drunk "not wisely but too well." They were, however, in excellent accord, one with the other, and their good nature and exuberance of feeling found vent in music, more or less. The company had sat late at their cups, and the time at "The Logs" passed rapidly away. It was past midnight, but the flow of music showed no signs of ceasing. The central figure in the company was "Bob" Saunders, ex-slater, who was really a very fine concertina player, and whose services were often requisitioned for fisher marriages, "meal and ales" in the country districts, and other such humble functions. "Bob," in his day, was an expert workman, but a dreadful fall which almost cost him his life, left him with a perfectly stiff, straight leg, and caused his walk to be somewhat ungraceful. As has been said, the concertina and vocal accompaniments were going merrily. The cronies were quite hilarious, when all at once an unearthly sound issued from somewhere below the logs. The music momentarily ceased, but some of the more fiery spirits insisted on its being started again. This was done, but another fearful sound followed, and some of the more sober men gradually disappeared. The grunting or growls came nearer, and were oftener repeated, and the "Dutch courage" having greatly evaporated, funk seized upon the crowd, and they took to their heels in all directions, in the full belief that some wild beast had escaped from a menagerie that had given an exhibition in the town the previous evening. Poor "Bob," not so agile as the others, was left alone in his glory; but, thinking "discretion the better part of valour," he, too, left his fort in possession of the enemy. One eye-witness of the whole scene said the most comical part of the flight was the picture of "Bob," lugging his concertina under his arm, and footing it, with his stiff leg strongly in evidence, up Kirk Brae for all he was worth, not daring to look either to the right or left, in case he should see the enemy. And what did the monster turn out to be? Two or three of "Chirsty" Dalgarno's pigs that had undertaken a midnight ramble all the way from the Links on their own account, in search of some toothsome morsel, which could often be picked up about the harbour. The incident was one which "Bob" did not enjoy hearing rehearsed. Needless to say, poor "Bob" left this sphere long ago, and the scene of the incident is now occupied by the Herring Sale Market and the adjoining yard.

To return to the street improvements. Some forty odd years ago there was nothing between School Street and the Windmill but fields of grass, potatoes, and sometimes oats. A field, which is the gardens of the houses somewhat north of Mr. Sheed's property in Charlotte Street, was a favourite cricket pitch of the Free Church School lads. Several gentlemen of the town possess a very interesting old photograph, reproduced by Mr. Norrie, showing the lads at cricket, and the old Windmill, as it originally was, in the background. This photograph gives an excellent idea of the neighbourhood before Charlotte Street and the houses thereon destroyed the pastoral aspect of the place. The Windmill, which in the 'sixties was considered a long march from the town, is now surrounded by several streets, not to mention houses. Albert

Street, which is not far from the Gallowhill Road fountain, will soon have many houses upon it. Those who remember that School Street was, not so very long ago, the most westerly street in Fraserburgh, and reflect that the whole space between it and the fountain is now filled up with houses, right away down to opposite the village of Broadsea, will be able to form an intelligent idea of the growth of the town within the last two or three decades. Out of the green fields at the due west side of the town have arisen Charlotte Street, Albert Street, Finlayson Street, and Dennyduff Road; an extension of Mid and Hanover Streets, and the north-west side of School Street are also comparatively recent creations. All the houses are of a good class, and these additions at the side of the town mentioned, are creditable to the proprietors. The Rev. P. M'Laren gave a considerable impetus to house-building in Charlotte Street in the 'seventies. He formed a Building Society, whose members consisted of steady, respectable, well-doing tradesmen. The late Lord Saltoun and Sir Alexander Anderson took an interest in the project, and a great many of the nice cottages to be seen in Charlotte Street were built through the instrumentality, and by the members, of this society. High Street, known in the olden days as Back Street, finished at the Toll Bar, which stood adjacent to the house standing at the corner of Denmark Street, belonging to Mr. James M. McAllan.

High Street is one of the oldest streets in Fraserburgh, and its importance may be guessed from the fact that Sir Alexander Fraser, the then proprietor of Philorth and founder of Fraserburgh in the sixteenth century, a man of conspicuous light and leading, not only locally but nationally, fixed upon High Street as the most suitable place for the erection of the Fraserburgh College. It is a great descent from a college to an hostelry, but evidently, judging from the results, the one is more congenial to the tastes of the people than the other. It has been said that the studious were killed with cold so far north, and this may be the reason why the inhabitants, after cogitating on the matter for over three hundred years, resolved, in their wisdom, to try a hotel, where the University once stood. Although practically the oldest street in the town, its appearance is quite modern, due to all the old erections being pulled down and handsome houses put in their places. As already mentioned, High Street at one time stopped at Denmark Street. Now, it extends away out to quite near Broadsea Farm—a revolution that would stagger a son of Fraserburgh who might happen to arrive on the scene after a long absence from the old place. Indeed, the older inhabitants still living in the town cannot debar from their minds the idea that Broadsea Farm is right into the country. Another notion of the town's growth, and the changes that have taken place in it, may be given when it is stated that it is not a violent stretch of memory to remember the time when the farms of Kirton, Middleburgh, Fatson's Loch, and Broadsea (which was separated from Fraserburgh) were sufficient to supply the whole milk requirements of the town. The village of Broadsea, which was separated from Fraserburgh by a field or

two, is now incorporated with the town, all the intervening space having been built upon. Broadsea has made great strides in recent years, due to the prosperity of the fishermen. Forty years ago, and even less, the fishermen lived in miserably small, thatched houses, with little comfort, and often with sickly families. Now, the new part of the village can show houses that will compare favourably with cottages in any town in the land, while the social surroundings of the men leave nothing to be desired. High Street has always been associated with Broadsea, as it is the direct thoroughfare leading into the town, and to the harbour from the village, and *vice versa*.

Many stories float about in the town, reminiscent of the old days, when the Broadsea fishermen were not so careful in some of their habits as they are now. One story will illustrate the humour of the fishermen; but before telling it, it may be well to say that it has been adapted to different places all over the country. "Jock" N——, who had imbibed rather freely, was heading up High Street, Broadseawards. He was, in nautical language, "making heavy weather," and at times for one step forward he made two backwards. A friend, meeting the much-tossed fisherman, saluted him in a kindly way with, "Weel, 'Jock,' ye're settin' hame?" "Fyles," was all the reply vouchsafed.

Taking the great area of ground lying north of High Street and College Bounds, and west of Castle Street, one sees a marvellous change since 1870. The whole was grass fields, or otherwise under cultivation. Now the complete area is built upon, much of it containing the magnificent curing yards which helped to make Fraserburgh famous as a herring centre. The new streets which intersect the area are Barrasgate, Denmark Street, Park Street, and Quarry Road. The Castle Parks have now completely disappeared, and in their places are the vast and splendidly-equipped curing yards belonging to Mr. William McConnachie of Knowsie, and Mr. Edward Gordon; and, on the other side of the road are the Kinnaird Head Preserving Works, belonging to Mr. A. W. Maconochie, ex-M.P. It seems only yesterday since the Artillery Volunteers, under the command of the late Captain Mellis, were drilling in the Park, where now stands the Kinnaird Works. As to the Kinnaird Head Lighthouse, which was wont, at the time mentioned, to stand isolated and alone, dwelling-houses are now built up to its very gates, and the old Castle Road—a famous courting rendezvous in its day, when nothing but green grass were the boundaries—has now graduated into the most respectable name of Castle Terrace.

Castle Street, another very old thoroughfare, has not changed much; but of all the streets of the town, North Street has changed the least. The cottage houses seem exactly as they were thirty or forty years ago, and, being all built identically alike, stick to one's memory strongly, especially if any incident out of the ordinary way occurred in the neighbourhood. A good story is identified with North Street and a Cairnbulg fisherman. This individual had a craze for using big words, although they did not exactly suit

the case. When the late Rev. James Hill was minister of the Mid Street Congregational Church he had occasion to visit one of his congregation who lived in North Street. The similarity of the houses was a difficulty with the minister, and, meeting the village fisherman, he explained his difficulty, and asked the good man's assistance. Readily agreeing to the minister's request, Andrew drew himself up, and, with the view of impressing the reverend gentleman with his erudition, said, "Weel, sir, I'm no a bit surprised at your difficulty, for the houses in this street are most unanimous."

The last, but not the least, street to be noticed is Shore Street. Contiguous to the harbour, Shore Street has been a leading thoroughfare since practically the start of the town. Of course, within the last half-century the changes that have taken place, on the street are such that, were a very ancient native to come back to this realm and take a stroll along "the shore" he would not know the old street, so changed are its environments. The old houses, whose front walls never exceeded eight or ten feet in height, and whose roofs were either thatched or tiled, have given place to fine, large, substantial houses, built on the most modern lines.

Another point deserving notice is the disappearance of the well-trimmed gardens that long ago ornamented the landscape in the neighbourhood of Balaclava Harbour. At one time—and not so very long ago—from the Oak Tree Inn to the old Killing-House, now merged in the Ice Factory property, every house had its little kitchen garden facing the sea. Only one patch of garden now remains to tell the tale, and that is attached to the property which belonged to the late Mr. Joseph Gordon, cooper.

It may be mentioned in passing, that School Street has undergone a complete change. School Street of the olden days was the portion of the street running from Commerce Street to Frithside Street and no farther. It was, in its day, probably the shortest street in the town. The extension northwards to Hanover and High Streets is a comparatively modern enlargement.

The changes that have taken place on two classic spots—the rocks about "Rum'lin' Goit" and the "Boatman's Shorie"—are past speaking about. In the neighbourhood of the former, the fine rocks which made a rugged but impressive picture, have been obliterated by deposits of town rubbish, which now form a hideous bank, almost meeting the sea. The Goit was long considered an awesome place, in consequence of its association with suicides, a libel which the Goit was not to blame for. Of the "Boatman's Shorie"—named so because the Coastguard kept their boat on the beach there up to the 'seventies—who that was a youth forty odd years ago, but has delightful recollections of it? It was situated immediately below the old Boilyards, and was the chosen bathing place of the boys of the Parish School. In the bathing season, and between school hours, the beach, or rather the sheltered waters, was always crowded with boys perfecting themselves in the art of swimming. Many a trick did one schoolboy play upon the other there. Not a few of the

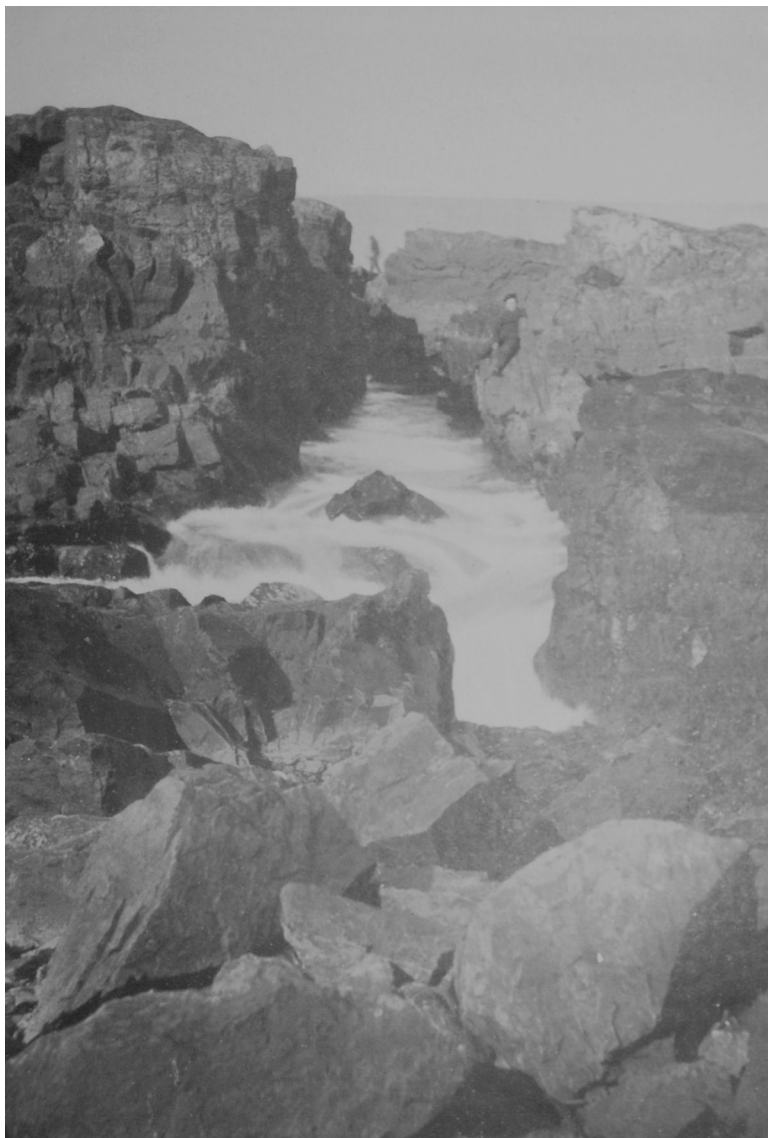


Photo by Norrie, Fraserburgh.

THE RUMBLING GOIT, NEAR KINNAIRD HEAD, A FAVOURITE PLACE
FOR ROCK FISHERS. THE BOYS OF FRASERBURGH BELIEVE THAT,
AT ITS ENTRANCE, THIS CHASM HAS NO BOTTOM.

actors have crossed "the bourne," while the majority have betaken themselves to all parts of the world. None of those living will ever forget the "Boatman's Shorie," which, alas! has been improved out of existence by the deposit on the foreshores of the excavations from the South and Balaclava Harbours.

Of public buildings, mention must be made of the Town House. Before it was put up in the 'fifties of last century, the site was occupied by the old Town Hall, beneath which was the Tolbooth, or town's prison. The entrance to the Hall, the gable of which faced Saltoun Square, was gained by an outside staircase. The erection was a very dilapidated and disreputable one, and the inhabitants were proud of their new Town House, a building which, architecturally, is still a credit to the town. Many will remember that the basement part of the building was intended for a public market, where vendors of vegetables, meat, etc., should have stalls. The market business was given a trial, but it proved a signal failure, and for a time the place was used as a store for different kinds of goods.

Reference has already been made to some of the old, and at one time important, houses in the town, but there are others which deserve to be mentioned. Their glory may have departed, but memories of their greatness still remain. For instance, the Brick Lodge, which is now a humble enough dwelling in Commerce Street, once stood in grounds of its own, and was tenanted by a Miss Fraser, a member of the Saltoun family. Its last "big" tenant was Mr. Paton, grain merchant. Of course, a considerable slice of the Brick Lodge was taken away when Commerce Street was extended in 1873. Another house that was once one of the outstanding dwellings in the town, is the building on the north side of High Street, not far from the entrance to Barrasgate, with several steps and iron hand-railings leading from the pavement up to the door. The house, which still retains an "air" of its former importance, was occupied by a Dr. Jamieson, a man of weight who took a leading part in the management of the town's affairs in the first half of last century. Dr. Jamieson was a connection of the great Edinburgh lawyer's of the same name. Another house which must have had great pretensions to grandeur in its day, but which disappeared in the 'sixties, when the Gas Works were extended, was what was known in its old age as the Clay Castle. It was situated in Shore Street, nearly opposite the steelyard office. Like other important "mansions," it had an imposing outside stone stairs, by which entrance was obtained to the upper flat. In its last days it was inhabited by a very poor class of tenants. The outstanding one was "Irish Peter," who always kept several goats. These were put out to the Links to graze on the cheap, and the men living now who were boys fifty years ago, will remember the pranks that used to be played upon "Peter" and his goats. The boys never allowed the latter to "feel lonely."

Of all the old buildings about Fraserburgh, none is so interesting as the Wine Tower. Although the oldest of them all, it still stands in its exposed situation, fresh and strong, as if able to defy the devouring hands of them time, and

the powerful assaults of a most trying climate. There is nothing romantic about the buildings in and around Fraserburgh, but there is no native who has spent his childhood or youthful days in the "Broch" but has a tender and affectionate regard for the old Wine Tower, around which cling many moving recollections of a happy past. To those at home, but more especially to natives scattered over the wide, wide world, its name vividly recalls to memory the Castle Braes, with the Bonnie gowans growing on them; the Bath Peel, where so many of the youth of Fraserburgh were taught to swim; the cave beneath the Tower, the dizzy path leading along the top of the precipitous rock, to walk along which, and safely negotiate the chasm at the south corner of the Tower, was a feat similar to gaining the Victoria Cross among the venturesome youth of Fraserburgh of the olden days. The Castle Braes were long the rendezvous of lad and lass of Fraserburgh, where, amid the grassy slopes or sheltering rocks, the love-sick swain swore unchanging love to the coy maiden, whose eyes performed the service of the tongue, and who sealed the unspoken answer with her lips. Standing near the old Tower on a fine summer day the prospect is most pleasant. One can see the Firth, a glassy smoothness dotted with the fishing fleet as far as the eye can reach, or catch a glance of a steamer dashing either east or west with all the desperate hurry of modern days. At the same place during winter how changed is the scene! A hurricane roars, and the sea is lashed into a seething mass. Breakers roll ashore in such gigantic proportions as to almost threaten the existence of the old Tower. The onlookers are deeply impressed with the marshalled forces of nature, and there is no murmur of love now. It is only temporary, however. The storm abates; spring and summer come round again, and Love once more holds high carnival. Time goes on, and actors make their entrances and their exits on the Castle Braes just as the seasons come round; and thus the world grows older.

The Braes, the Bath Peel, and the Cave—or "Selch's Hole"—remain, but improvements carried out by the Lighthouse Commissioners, and the extension of the town, have long ago put the dangerous path beyond the reach of the venturesome youths of Fraserburgh. One strong-nerved youth, who was attempting the path, many years ago, at lightning speed, as an extra feat, missed his footing, and, to the horror of his companions, fell down among the rocks below. Those with him thought he was killed, but he lay only stunned, and escaped with a few bruises. He was always rather eccentric, and on coming to himself his first exclamation was: "Eh, my! I richt nearly fell doon and was killed!" This same lad, who spent so many of his youthful days about the Wine Tower, afterwards faithfully served his Queen and country in different parts of the world. He rose to an excellent position, and was just on the eve of retiring on a handsome pension when he was struck down with fever, and died in the West Indies many years ago.

As already mentioned, immediately below the Wine Tower is a cave of fair dimensions. Tradition has it, that the cave at one time extended as far

as the Windmill, and was the rendezvous of a gang of smugglers, who drove a thriving trade with the thirsty natives of the town and district, before money was so plentiful, or the facilities for having a drink were so easy as they are now. If the cave ever extended to "the windmill," it must have been a windmill much nearer Kinnaird than the mill now occupied by Messrs. Park and Company, Limited, who would, no doubt, repudiate all connection with smuggling. That the cave might have been the temporary den of a gang of smugglers, when Fraserburgh was located farther south as Faithlie, was quite within the bounds of possibility, as the formation of the rocks and the features of the land adjacent were favourable to small boats being able to approach and leave the place unobserved. The cave has, it is alleged, been greatly filled up with shingle and stones in the course of the last hundred years, in consequence of which no one can now form any idea of the facilities offered by the place for smuggling in olden times. Another story which many old people—alas! now all gone over to the great majority—would insist upon as Gospel, was that the cave had a secret communication with the Tower, and that terrible crimes were sometimes perpetrated in connection with this secret passage. It was further said that long ago, during the fierce feuds of the clans, when the inmates of the Tower were sorely pressed, they had always a safe exit by the secret passage and boat, a movement which, at the conclusion of many a conflict, left their enemies in great bewilderment and dismay.

To the present generation it will be a surprise to learn that on an elevated rock not more than fifty yards south of the Wine Tower there stood for many generations a pigeon cot, which was wont to supply sport and pigeon pie to the inmates of the Castle. An old print of Fraserburgh shows the erection, and, of course, the position of this unusually situated pigeon cot. The waves washed round and round it, and on specially stormy nights the poor pigeons must have had an uncomfortable time, or else have fancied themselves seagulls or some member of the aquatic tribe. They, however, stuck long to their ancient home, and only left it when the plundering youth of Fraserburgh made the place, which had been previously too cold, too hot for them. Such an interesting remnant of the olden days, and so peculiarly placed, too, had no respect from our modern Vandals, and when the piers of Balaclava were being built in the 'fifties, the rock on which the cot stood was gradually blasted away, and then the cot was pulled down and the stones comprising it utilized for pier-building purposes.

The Tower has been the silent spectator of other scenes. In the hollow below, and to the south of the building, runs a vein of quartz. Some thirty odd years ago an ancient native, who had in his early days been gold-mining in California, declared that the quartz was the true gold-carrying species. The news spread like wildfire through the town, and for days the Beach was covered with old and young hammering away at the stone as if for dear life. The long-looked-for nuggets were never found, and, as a good deal of damage was being done to hammers, fingers, etc. the Fraserburgh diggings "burst up"

without yielding as much gold as would have been seen, even with the aid of a microscope. The old digger had many opprobrious epithets hurled at him, but he coolly told the people that it was much easier and cheaper to receive the disappointment at home than to go to California or Australia and experience the same fortune. Thus has the Tower not only played a part in the chivalrous days of the past, but it has also seen "the rush for the spoil" of modern days.

With regard to the Wine Tower itself, the building is a remarkable one, not only on account of an absolute silence as to its origin and history, but also in connection with its situation, peculiarity of access, and the style and materials of which it is built. Could the records of the life spent in and around these venerable walls for hundreds of years back be unfolded, what an interesting page would be added to local history! Unfortunately, not a single vestige of writing has ever been found bearing upon this ancient pile, except the old love-legend, which will be referred to later on. When it was built and what it was built for remains a mystery; but that it had been the centre of many stirring scenes in the old times there can be no doubt.

It may be interesting to many to learn that the Wine Tower is the exact counterpart of the College Tower, or *vice versa*. Quadrangular in shape, the Wine Tower is fully 25 feet by 21 feet at the base. Its height at the land side is 25 feet, but owing to the sloping nature of the rocks it is very much higher at the sea side. It seems to have had a couple of small windows on each of the four sides, but these were all raised a considerable distance from the ground, evidently to ensure the position of those within being safe from the attacks or molestation of those without. The habitable portion of the Tower could only have been the upper storeys; and it is rather remarkable that the entrance to the third storey was by an outside upper door, which was made available by a movable ladder, to be pulled up or let down at will. Thus the inmates could be isolated at a moment's notice. For many years it was thought that there was no ground floor, but while an accumulation of rubbish was being cleared away about 1860 or 1861, a door was discovered on the south wall leading to the ground floor. The third storey was connected with the lower apartments in the inside by a small aperture only, so that, as there were no stairs, it was the easiest matter in the world for those in the top of the Tower to shut off all connection, not only with people outside, but with persons who may have obtained access to the rooms below. It is rather peculiar that the Tower is not built of local material. Part is slate and part is freestone, and must have been brought from some considerable distance up the Moray Firth. The walls of the building are as strong and substantial-looking to-day as they were 200 years ago. The roof is of earth and turf, and is quite flat. The situation of the Tower is rather unique. It is built upon a rock overhanging the sea, and during fierce northerly and easterly gales is often swept with heavy seas. During stormy weather the seas rush with enormous force into the bight below the Tower, and the walls of the building may at times be seen quite white with the flying foam rising from the waves



After Aquatint by W. Daniell. Photo by J. H. Low.

KINNAIRD HEAD IN 1822.

below. The south-east corner of the Tower almost overlaps the edge of the precipitous rocks, and from one of the windows in the upper storey one could drop directly into the sea.

The origin of the name "Wine Tower" has puzzled antiquarians very much, and none of them has as yet been able to satisfactorily elucidate the mystery. Some of the older authorities suggested that the name had sprung from "The Wynd," which was a winding path leading from the Castle to the Tower, when the former was occupied by the Fraser family. As a matter of fact, while workmen, some years ago, were carrying out improvements on the dwelling-houses of the keepers at Kinnaird, they came upon part of an underground passage which evidently had at one time connected the Castle with the Tower. Others suggested that it was the family wine cellar, but the nature of the apartments inside rather tend to discount this theory. Another suggestion has recently been advanced by a most intelligent observer of passing events, who has interested himself in literature for over half a century. His proposition is that the Tower received its prefix "Wine" from the fact that the gentlemen of the Castle were wont to retire to the Tower, and there, free from the intrusion of ladies, domestics, and undesirable visitors, enjoy their wine in peace. With the steps pulled up, they were entirely free to follow out their own devices. The teetotal movement was an unknown quantity 200 years ago.

Like almost all old castles or similar buildings in the North, the Wine Tower has a pretty legend attached to it. In the early part of the seventeenth century, as the legend goes, the then head of the Fraser family, whose residence was Kinnaird Castle, had a beautiful young daughter, whose presence was the light and charm of the place. A handsome, well-made menial about the Castle had caught the eye and touched the heart of the charming girl. Not slow to catch the infection, the young man seized the first favourable opportunity of throwing himself at his lady's feet and making a passionate confession of his ardent and devoted love. The prayer was accepted, and the love affairs of the two, though clandestinely carried on, continued for a time to yield them joys undreamt of and happiness incomparably sweet. From their love dream they were suddenly awakened. The lady's father had a husband looked out for her, who proved to be one of the district proprietors. He was an aristocrat born, but was greedy and mean. He was blessed with plenty of money, but, alas! he was old and grey-haired. When her father proposed the union with his own selection he was surprised at the vehemence and scorn with which his lovely daughter repudiated the arrangement. He returned to the charge time after time, but with the same result.

Meantime the lovers had contrived to meet almost nightly in some quiet spot. The father's suspicions were aroused; a close watch was kept, and fateful night! the happy couple were discovered in each other's arms. The two were separated, but still the maid was obdurate, and would not for one moment entertain her father's proposal, although pressed and threatened to do so. Resorting to excessive measures, the father had the young man confined

in a dungeon about the Castle, where he lingered for a time and then died. The girl had also been punished by being placed, practically as a prisoner, in the Wine Tower. The father, thinking that his daughter would consent to the union upon which he had set his heart if the dead body of her lover were brought before her, had the foolishness and hardness of heart to have this proposal carried out. Instead of doing good, the sight of her dead and emaciated lover unhinged the girl's mind and put her into a frenzy of despair. Reproaches full of anger, and mixed with pathos for her dead lover, she poured upon her guilty father's head. Defying her father, and gladly courting death, she seized her dead lover in her arms, and sprang with him into the seething mass of water below.

The legend was well known among the "ancient mariners" who traded on the coast, and the local fishermen of a generation or two back. Whenever the small trading craft or the fishing boats were coasting along, the crews generally kept a close watch on the cave mouth below the Wine Tower, and, if the weather was not all the mistier or the waves the higher, a light at night was sure to be seen keeping rhythmic time with the movements of the sea. A notice of the old Wine Tower may well close with the poetic version of the legend, written by some old-fashioned lover of the romantic many years ago:—

LEGEND OF THE WINE TOWER.

Love wore a chaplet passing fair,
 Within Kinnaird's proud Tower,
 There joyous youth and beauty rare
 Lay captive to his power.

But woe is me!—alack the day!
 Pride spurned the simple wreath;
 And scattered all those blooms away,
 He doomed sweet love to death.

No bridal wreath, O maiden fair!
 Thy brow shall e'er adorn;
 A father's stern behest is there,
 Of pride and avarice born,

What boots to him thy vows, thy tears?
 What boots thy plighted troth?
 One rich in pelf and hoar in years
 Is deemed of seemlier worth

Than he who with but love to guide,
 Keeps tryst in yonder bower,
 Where ruffians hired by ruffian pride
 His stalwart limbs secure.

Where rolls the ocean's surging tide,
The Wine Tower beetling stands,
Right o'er a cavern deep and wide—
No work of mortal hands.

Dark as the dark expanse of hell,
That cavern's dreary space;
Whence never captive came to tell
The secrets of the place.

There, bound in cruel fetters, lies
The lover fond and true,
No more to glad the maiden's eyes,
No more to bless her view!

No pitying hand relieves his want,
No loving eyes his woe;
A hapless prey to hunger gaunt,
He dies in torments slow!

Thus slept the youth in death's embrace,
Darkly the tyrant smiled;
The corpse then dragged from that dread place,
And bore it to his child.

"Ah, say," he cried, "what greets thy view;
Canst trace these whilom charms?
Henceforth a fitter mate shall woo
And win thee to his arms.

Didst think that these, my brave, broad lands,
His love would well repay?
No, minion, no!—far other hands
Shall bear the prize away."

These direful words the maid arrest,
A marble hue she bore;
Then sinking on that clay-cold breast?
"We part," she cried, "no more!

"No more shall man his will oppose,
Nor man the wrong abet;
Our virgin love in fealty rose,
In fealty it shall set."

Then clasping close that shrouded form,
Which erst her love inspired,
Fearless she breasted cliff and storm,
By love and frenzy fired.

"Farewell, O ruthless, sire," she cried,
"Farewell, earth's all of good,
Our bridal waits below the tide,"
Then plunged beneath the flood!

Referring to the upper storey of the Wine Tower, "Castles of Aberdeenshire" has the following: "The upper room or storey has an arched window in each wall, freestone carved pendants of coats of arms ornamenting each arch. Three pendants, also of freestone, but of a more elaborate and pretentious character, are placed in the centre of the roof. One represents an eagle holding a key in his beak, the wings meeting behind, and in his talons a shield bearing the Arms of Fraser and Abernethy quartered, the bird being encircled by a scroll with the words—'The glory of the honourable is to feir God.' Another represents two unicorns with horns crossed in front, so as to form, with two swords, a diamond-shaped space, enclosing the bust of a man. The third pendant has two eagles, the crown of thorns, the pierced hands and feet, and the scourge." "The Book of Buchan," speaking of the pendants, says: "According to Pratt's 'Buchan' (revised edition, 1901) the three central pendants are representations of the arms of Scotland, the house of Philorth, and a religious device respectively. The other pendants contain various armorial bearings, including the arms of the Forbes, one of the quarterings of which shield is charged with the three-rosettes pearl of the Frasers."

Some of the pendants are beautiful works of art, while the whole are interesting in the highest degree. Only a limited number of the inhabitants of Fraserburgh know of their existence, and it is safe to say that not more than a score of the natives ever looked at them. If properly approached, the Lighthouse-keeper is charmed to conduct any visitor over the Tower. A theory has been advanced, and it is not an unreasonable one, that the pendants were not put into the tower when it was built, but were altogether a later creation. Such elaborate carvings could scarcely have been intended for a plain building of such small dimensions as the Wine Tower. It is thought that the pendants had originally had a place in the Fraserburgh College, and when that building was neglected and began to decay, the carvings had been removed to the Tower by some member of the Saltoun family, so that they might be preserved from the devouring hands of the vandals, which were unusually active for a long time after the Reformation. The Tower was used as a powder magazine and ammunition store during the threatened French invasion by Napoleon, in 1803, and again in 1860, when the local company of Volunteers was formed. It is now used as a store for Lighthouse purposes.

CHAPTER XII.

NATIVES OF MARK.

No town, however small, but has produced sons who have been a credit to their native place. Fraserburgh has sent out into the world no son, who, by his art, philosophy, or invention, has startled the world, yet she can claim as her true-born offspring many, who, by talent and laudible ambition, have risen to positions of distinction, that reflected much credit upon themselves and the town that gave them birth. No local newspaper existed in the olden days to record the lives or careers of successful citizens, and, no doubt, many worthy natives who lived in the early part of last century, and even in earlier times, and whose success in life deserved public notice, have passed away without receiving that recognition which their merits and success in life called for. This "missing link" with the past is much to be deplored; but Fraserburgh does not stand alone in this respect. There are very few towns in the North—and, for that matter, in the South either—that have produced old chroniclers, diligent and patriotic enough, to take the trouble to "put upon paper" the past history of the place in which they lived. Had this been done, it would have been a comparatively easy task to have taken up the story at the point where the old writer had left off. Such an old historian Fraserburgh has not been blessed with, and, therefore, much interesting old history affecting Fraserburgh, including facts regarding men of mark living 100 to 150 years ago, has been lost for ever. A talented native the late Mr. John Mackie, editor of the *Northern Ensign*—rescued from oblivion many interesting facts regarding Fraserburgh. His lectures on the "Broch," delivered in the Harbour Commissioners' Hall, now Batchan's Buildings, on 1st April, 1875, and 20th April, 1876, are the only real Fraserburgh literature extant. These lectures, so full of feeling and patriotism, and so charmingly set forth, have become classic in the eyes of every "Brocher" who has any taste for local lore. But for this literary and worthy native, much of the history of eminent natives of the past would have been a complete blank. His purview does not embrace a considerable portion of ancient history, but it goes sufficiently far back to bring vividly before the present generation, the names of many "Broch"-born men, who rose to high positions in the world, whose personality and very existence would have been obliterated from the page of history but for the delightful reminiscences with which Mr. Mackie so greatly enhanced the value of his lectures. Speaking of capable men that were Fraserburgh born,

or had a direct connection with the town, Mr. Mackie says: "I do not think Fraserburgh has any cause to hide its head on account of the youth it has sent forth. We must remember the drawbacks of a thinly peopled locality, geographically cut off from the great main line of commercial and social access; and taking these into account, I think the 'Broch' can claim credit for having contributed, in proportion to means and population, its fair share of men of eminence and usefulness.

"Naturally, as is the case with every maritime community, a large proportion of its sons go to sea, and there many of them occupy positions of great responsibility, and do credit to the town that is proud to own them. Her Nobles, her Stephens, her Burnetts, her Duthies, and her Buchans are to be found in almost every port, while many are to be met with prosecuting honourable mercantile and professional careers over the world. One of the most eminent philanthropists of the past century, a Mr. Henderson, was a native of the 'Broch,' of whom it is recorded that in deeds of devotedness and self-denial, especially in his efforts to promote the condition of the navy, he was without a rival during the century. The late Professor of Humanity in St. Andrews University was born in the little house near the old well at the top of Manse Street; the great Edinburgh educational family of Donaldsons are natives of the 'Broch.' Bishop Walker, of Edinburgh, formerly Pantonian Professor of Divinity, who succeeded Bishop Sandford at Edinburgh, was born here. A late editor of the *Westminster Review* made barrels in the cooperage between the Parish Church and the North Quay. The author of 'The Life of the Prince Consort' used to play at 'scuddie' over the Links, and was for some time at the Parish School, living with his grandfather, old 'Dory Martin,' factor for Cairnbulg, and father of Mr. James Martin, S.S.C., Edinburgh, who was also educated here. One of the best Hebrew scholars in Scotland, destined, I hope, to fill a professor's chair, is a native of the 'Broch.' A leading member of the London Exchange received his banking education here. The leading man on the Island of St. Kitts was my fellow-clerk in Baillie Chalmers's office. The Hendersons, of Manchester, whom I am glad to see keeping up their remembrance of their native town, were born in Frithside Street. One of the rising ministers of the Established Church was born in the corner house between Broad Street and Back Street. The Hardies and Rankens, of Canada, men of considerable influence, were all natives of this town. An able Chancery barrister of London, son of Mr. Begg, was born here. A leading Liverpool merchant acquired his business education within a few yards of this building. [Mr. Mackie spoke in the Harbour Commissioners' Hall.] The Established, Free, United Presbyterian, and Congregational Churches number among their ministers not a few earnest and devoted men, sons of the 'Broch.' Among the influential shipowners of London, Dundee, and Aberdeen are many natives. A respectable China merchant, who appears at times in the London newspapers under the initials of 'O. C.' (which he says means 'Old Cathay') was an apprentice draper in Broad Street. Many have heard of the Rev. J. H. Wilson, of London, the discoverer of 'Ragged Churches,'

whose tongue and pen continue devoted to the best of all causes, who was long well known in the 'Broch'; and I have no doubt that the town since my day has contributed not a few to the ranks of useful men."

It is unfortunate that Mr. Mackie did not give the names and fuller details regarding the careers of many of those to whom he refers. The youth who played "scuddie" over the Links proved to be Sir Theodore Martin, the well-known parliamentary agent and eminent literateur, who married Helen Faucit the great actress, and who died only a year or two ago, aged over 90. Sir Theodore Martin wrote the life of "The Prince Consort." The "respectable China merchant" who regularly wrote letters, signed "O. C." to the London newspapers, refers to Mr. Macdonald, who erected a mural white marble tablet in the Parish Church to the memory of his father, mother, and brothers. "One of the rising ministers of the Established Church," was an allusion to the late Rev. Mr. Stephen, minister of Renfrew. The late Professor of Humanity in St. Andrews University mentioned, was Professor William Pyper, who though actually born in the parish of Rathen, was brought up in a house which stood near where Manse Street crosses Hanover Street. He was a clever youth, and grew up to be a scholar of outstanding merit. He was appointed Professor of Humanity in St. Andrews University in 1844 and occupied the chair until his death, which took place in the beginning of the year 1861. He founded a bursary in the United College, of the value of about £10 per annum. The following notice of Professor Pyper appears in the "Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Men of Fife" by M. F. Conolly, Cupar-Fife, 1866, p. 371:—

Pyper, William, LL.D., late Professor of Humanity in the University of St. Andrews, was born in the parish of Rathen, Aberdeenshire, in 1797, and became a student in Marischal College, Aberdeen. He was parochial schoolmaster of Laurencekirk from 1815 to 1817; was then translated to Maybole, and in 1820 to the Grammar School of Glasgow. In 1822 he succeeded Mr. James Gray in the High School of Edinburgh, which position he worthily occupied until 1844. On the 22nd of October that year, he was appointed to the chair of Humanity in the above University in succession to Dr. Gillespie, which he occupied for more than sixteen years, having died on the 7th January, 1861. In the strictest sense of the words, Dr. Pyper was the architect of his own fortune; he rose by merit alone. A strong sense of duty was perhaps his strongest characteristic; and to this, as in many other persons of a like stamp, we must in justice attribute a certain sternness and even severity with which he is stated to have discharged his functions as a schoolmaster. The punctuality, alacrity, and assiduity which distinguished him in his former capacity he carried with him to his higher post at St. Andrews. His prompt and powerful elocution found here a more congenial field for its exercise. He had a high idea of philological study as one of the most effective instruments of mental discipline, and this idea he strove to reduce

to practice in his instructions. The tinge of severity traceable in his earlier career is stated to have been greatly softened during his academic life. While insisting on thorough preparation and a well grounded knowledge of the Latin tongue, he is stated to have cultivated with his students most friendly relations, and he certainly had at heart their moral as well as intellectual advancement. He was himself a thorough classical scholar of the older stamp, and the extent and selectness of his library showed that he was devoted through life to the studies which he professed. It does not detract from his reputation as a teacher to say that he did not attain to that mastery of the wide range of philological attainment which falls to the lot of but a few. As a man of business he was clear, temperate, and sagacious; and the University Library was for some time indebted for its orderly management in no small measure to his gratuitous services. By his colleagues he was prized as an able and friendly coadjutor; but for some years an insidious disease had deprived the College of his services, and his friends in a great measure of his society. His decline was rapid, and the close sudden and tranquil. He left a lasting proof of his interest in this College by the bequest of £500 to found a bursary, which came into operation, Session 1862.

Mr. Mackie briefly refers to the Hendersons of Manchester, the great cotton merchants, who were natives of Fraserburgh. They were born in a house facing Broad Street and Frithside Street, on the site of which now stands the property of the representatives of the late Mr. Robert Burnett, chemist. In fact, the property stood exactly opposite the part of the Bank of Scotland buildings which face Frithside Street. The old house, which many natives now living will remember, stood back from the street, and the main entrance was from Broad Street, immediately opposite the entrance door of the Royal Hotel. The space between the low enclosing wall and the house, boasted of several decent trees, which not only gave an air of importance to the Hendersons' residence, but greatly improved the amenity of Broad Street. The Manchester Hendersons' forefathers were farmers in the Cairnbulg or Inverallochy district. Two of the sons proved to be men of marked ability and of great force of character, who achieved conspicuous success in the realms of business. One of the brothers, Charles Paton Henderson, after receiving a business training at home, went out to fill an appointment in India. There he was very successful making business friends and connections which proved of considerable value to him in his future career. After being a few years in India, he returned to the old country and established himself in business as a rag, or cotton merchant, in Manchester. He confined his business operations to India and China, but these proved very successful, and the name of the firm became what might be called "a household word" all over the East. The strict integrity practised, and the honourable dealings of the firm, were the secrets of its success. When Mr. C. P. Henderson died some time ago, his estate was valued at half a million of pounds.

Another brother—Mr. William Henderson—went to Mauritius, and started business on his own account there. He was even more successful than his brother. He remained a good many years on the island, and his business developed until it was one of the biggest in Mauritius. When he died, about the 'seventies or 'eighties of last century, he left a fortune of £700,000. Such sons as these bring credit to their native place. The two retained a lively interest in Fraserburgh to the end, and so long as their mother lived in the quaint old house in Frithside Street, they were regular visitors to the "Broch." It is understood that some descendants of the Henderson family live in the south of England.

The first person in Britain that agitated and publicly wrote against the slave trade in the West Indies, and other centres, was a native of Fraserburgh, who for a good many years was an outstanding figure both at home and abroad. The individual in question was James Ramsay, who was born in Fraserburgh on 25th July, 1733. He became known in after years as an eminent philanthropist, especially devoting his time and means to the amelioration of slaves. After receiving his early education, he was apprenticed to Dr. Findlay, a medical practitioner in Fraserburgh, who was an outstanding and leading figure in the town in his day. Ramsay entered King's College, Aberdeen, in 1750, where he secured one of the principal bursaries. After studying for five years in Aberdeen he proceeded to London, where for two years he took a course of surgery and pharmacy under Dr. Macaulay. He was now fully equipped for a medical career, and he chose the Navy. After serving as a surgeon for several years on board the warship "Arundel," he one day unfortunately fell on the deck and broke his thigh-bone. The accident confined him to hospital for ten months, and when he was discharged therefrom, he found himself so lame as to be utterly unfit to continue doing duty as a surgeon. He turned his attention to the Church, and resolved to become a minister of the Church of England. Mr. Ramsay had many influential friends and through their strong recommendations, the Bishop of London presented him to two rectories in St. Christophers, West Indies, valued at £700 per annum. Besides discharging his clerical duties, he took in hand several plantations in the capacity of medical adviser. He became a man of great influence in the West Indies, and seemingly had taken a strong stand in favour of the slaves; those included many white people, who had been deported from this country for crimes, but which would hardly be called crimes in these days. He had time, however, to come to this country, and pay a visit to the "Broch" in 1777. In 1778 he was appointed chaplain to Admiral Barrington, and with him returned to the West Indies. After remaining in St. Christopher's, now better known as St. Kitt's, for three years, he resigned his appointments, and, with his wife and family, returned to this country towards the close of 1781. Through the interest of his friend, Admiral Sir Charles Middleton, Mr. Ramsay was presented to the livings of Teston and Nettlestead in Kent, where he laboured successfully for 7 or 8 years. He was the author of a number of pamphlets, one of which brought him a lot of trouble and worry. He was a

man of strong opinions, and an "Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of African Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies," published in 1785, seemed to have aroused the ire of British plantation owners. At any rate, it "involved him in a controversy on the slave trade that embittered his latter years." Mr. Ramsay died in London on 20th July, 1789, at the comparatively early age of 56 years. Events that have happened since he died, prove that his contention for better treatment to the slaves were correct. This distinguished native of Fraserburgh had views far ahead of the times in which he lived. It is hard that he should have been "worried to death" for his enlightenment. Mr. Ramsay was considered worthy of a place in that well-known book, "The Scottish Nation"—no small tribute to the value placed upon his life and work. The particulars here given are taken from the biographical sketch of Mr. Ramsay's career, which appears in the said publication.

Although not really a native of Fraserburgh, the district of Fraserburgh can claim to be the birthplace of the great-grandfather of the late Dr. Edvard Grieg, one of the greatest of modern composers. Grieg's great-grandfather, who was born at Mosstown of Cairnbulg, in 1739, and went to Bergen, Norway, in 1770, must have been educated at the parish school of Fraserburgh, and may therefore be reasonably claimed as a son. Indeed, the Greigs (the letters e and i had to be transposed to suit Norwegian pronunciation) who lived so long in High Street, claimed to be of the same family of Greigs as the composer. The Greig who went from Fraserburgh to Norway, towards the end of the eighteenth century, entered at Bergen the office of Mr. Wallace, the British Consul there. This Mr. Wallace was a native of Banff, and a friend of the Greig family. The first Norwegian Greig must have been a very capable man, for he became British Consul in Bergen on Mr. Wallace's resignation or death. He retained all his sympathies and affections for his native land, and remained characteristically Scotch up to the last. It is recorded that twice a year he crossed the North Sea in a fishing smack, in order that he might be able to attend the Communion in the Kirk of Scotland. In the recent (1911) Glasgow Exhibition, Norwegian Section, the following articles belonging to the original Norwegian Greig, were to be seen:—His old Scottish gold watch and chain, his ivory snuff box, and his knife and fork (mother of pearl handles). These it was said, he always had with him on his trips to Scotland. The son (who spelt his name Grieg) and grandson of the old man each in turn became British Consul in Bergen. They were plain business men, who did their duty, passed away without the outside world knowing of their existence.

It was when Edvard Grieg grew up that the name and the family became famous. His glorious compositions at once marked him out as a man of genius, and his fame became world wide. In every concert room in Europe and America, in Australia and South America, not excluding the big cities the coasts of India and China, Grieg's work gave unalloyed pleasure to thousands and thousands. He, through music, interpreted nature in calm and storm and humanity in love and passion, with a power

and intenseness that proclaimed him a great musician, worthy of the homage of the world. It is therefore natural, or at least excusable, that Fraserburgh should claim Edvard Grieg as a son, though several generations down the list from the first Norwegian Greig. It is understood that he inherited his musical gifts, not from his father, but from his mother; that, to Scotsmen, is a secondary consideration, seeing that he bears the name of Grieg. The composer always had a keen interest in the place of birth of his great-grand-father, and but for his wretched qualities as a sailor, would have made repeated visits to this country. He did not possess the sea going qualities of the Norse Vikings, nor had he the staying powers of old Greig, who crossed the North Sea twice a year to take Communion. *Mal de mer* seemed to overwhelm him, and its terrors appeared, in his later days at least, to have chained him to the Continent. The Rev. W. A. Gray, a Morayshire minister, in an article which appeared in the *Woman at Home* a few years ago, relates some interesting particulars of a chance meeting he had with the composer at a Laerdal hotel. In speaking of Grieg, Mr. Gray says:—

“Scarcely had I taken my place in the hotel porch after supper for a smoke in the cool night air, when Grieg stood beside me alone, and lit his cigar. His figure was even shorter and slighter than I first imagined it to be. Everyone speaks to everyone in a Norwegian hotel. I accosted him, introducing myself briefly and any doubt I had as to the character of my reception was at once set at rest. Off went the hat, with a courteous Scandinavian sweep; the clear blue eyes glanced keenly into my face; the attitude was one of frank and friendly attention. The talk (Grieg speaks fluent English, only now and again interjecting a Norsk word) turned first upon Scotland. The musician asked in what part of Scotland Mr. Gray lived, and he answered, “Not very far from the home of your forefathers.” “Then,” said Herr Grieg, “you live near Fraserburgh. Alexander Greig, my great-grandfather, who afterwards changed his name into Grieg, emigrated from Fraserburgh last century. See,” he said, displaying the seal at the end of his watch chain, with the figure of a ship among stormy waves, and the motto, “*Ad spes infracta*,” “here is our crest; it is the same as that of the Scottish Greigs. Yes,” he continued, “I have various ties to Scotland I have Scottish friends; my godmother was Scottish—Mrs. Stirling; she lived near the town of the same name. I know something of your Scottish writers, too, especially Carlyle. I am fond of reading Carlyle; in what part of Scotland was he born? And I admire Edinburgh—Princes Street, the gardens, the old town, the castle— ah, they are beautiful, beautiful!” “Edinburgh people are very kind. They have asked me repeatedly to visit them and to play, and I would do so willingly if it were not for the sea. I am the very worst of sailors. Once, some years ago, I crossed from Bergen to Aberdeen. I shall never forget that night of horrors, never!” We turn to the subject of Scottish music. “I admire it greatly,” said Herr Grieg, “and I find a similarity between your Scottish melodies and our Norwegian ones, especially when the sentiment is—what do you call it !—*alvorlig*, grave, serious.”

The author endeavoured to obtain some further details of the life of the original Norwegian Greig, through Mr. J. A. Balfour, F.R.Hist.S., F.S.A. (Scot.), convener of the Norse-Scottish Committee of the Exhibition, who most courteously interested himself in the matter. The information received added little to what was previously known about the old Scottish-Norwegian. The present head of the family in Norway, Mr. Alexander B. Grieg, sent the pedigree of Dr. Edvard Grieg to Mr. Balfour, and in the course of his accompanying letters dated September, 1911, said: "I also possess a very interesting old book dealing with Scottish History, 'The Life and Heroic Actions of the renowned Sir William Wallace, General and Governor of Scotland,' by William Hamilton, to which is annexed, 'The Life of that Valiant Hero Robert Bruce, King of Scotland,' by John Hervey. This book belonged to our ancestor's father, John Greig, whose ex-libris is printed on the fly-leaf and reads—'This book belongs to John Greig in Mosstown of Cairnbulg 1759.' From this I infer that the father of our ancestor in the later days of his life, resided and probably died in Mosstown of Cairnbulg, possibly as a worthy farmer. It would be most interesting to know what the parish books, etc., probably about 1770, might have to say about him." The Kirk Session books of Rathen parish were closely examined for a period before and after the year mentioned, but they make no reference to, or speak of a John Greig in Mosstown of Cairnbulg. The pedigree of Dr. Edvard Grieg, the composer, which is interesting to Fraserburgh people, is as follows:—

John Greig, born about 1690, died 17th November, 1774—married Anna Milne, 14th November, 1727.

His son: Alexander Greig, born in Cairnbulg, Fraserburgh, 1739. Came to Bergen, Norway, about 1770, and entered the office of Alexander Wallace, British Consul there, and a friend of the Greig family. Alexander Greig become later British Consul General in Bergen, and ancestor of the Norwegian branch of the Greig family.

Married: 1 Margaret Elizabeth Heitmann.
2 Modesta Heitmann.

His son: John Grieg, born 1772, British Consul General in Bergen, married Maren Regine Haslund in 1798. He died in 1844.

His son: Alexander Grieg, born 1806, died 1875, British Consul in Bergen. Married Gesine Juditte Hagerup.

His son: Dr. Edvard Grieg, born 1843, died 1907.

A native of Fraserburgh, or of the immediate neighbourhood, was Colonel John Joyner who, by his own right hand, rose from the humblest rank to a position of honour, which might well be envied by those of gentle birth. He won his position in life as the result of gallant deeds and smart handling of men entrusted to his charge on the battlefield. There is always a glamour of romance attached to the life of a soldier, who has faced the enemy in more than

one campaign, and this was the feeling with which the youth of Fraserburgh received Colonel Joyner each time he arrived home on furlough. The fact that he had risen from the ranks to the position of Colonel, added to the glory of an interesting and eventful life. The high ideal which Colonel Joyner placed before himself, and his strenuous and manful efforts to reach that ideal, typified the determined Aberdeenshire character and showed that an ambitious youth, bent on rising to a high position in life, will not be held back by the poor and unkindly environments of his early days. Colonel Joyner was born of poor parents, and when quite a boy, with an education of the most meagre kind, he was hired out as herd to a farmer in the district. Afterwards he "graduated" into the position of a farm servant. While serving in this capacity, the soldiering fever seized him, and in 1840, he enlisted as a private in the 93rd (Sutherland) Highlanders.

After serving six years in Canada and eight years at home, he embarked with his regiment for the Crimea, arriving there in September 1854. During the succeeding two years he shared in all the hardships and difficulties of that memorable campaign. He took part in the battles of Alma, Balaclava (forming one of the "Thin Red Line"), Kertch and Yenikale, and Sebastopol. More than once his name was favourably mentioned in despatches, and he was rewarded by his country with a commission as quartermaster. In addition, he received the Crimean medal and three clasps for Alma, Balaclava, and Sebastopol; the Turkish medal and the French war medal for valour and discipline. In June, 1857, he left with his regiment for China, but the Indian Mutiny having in the meantime broken out, the force was landed at Calcutta. Active operations were at once commenced to quell the mutineers, and he shared in the following ordeals :—Relief of women and children, Lucknow; defeat of Gwalior Force at Cawnpore, battles of Serai Ghat, Kaleh Nuddee; Lucknow Siege; Allygunge, Bareilly, Pusgaon, Russelpore, etc. He subsequently received the Indian Mutiny medal and two clasps. In March, 1870, he returned to Aberdeen, and for the next ten years acted as paymaster. He attained to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and retired in October, 1880, after completing upwards of 40 years of meritorious service. He died 2nd February, 1899, and was buried in Allenvale Cemetery, Aberdeen. Colonel Joyner always retained a tender regard for Fraserburgh, and though he did not settle in it permanently after his retiral he paid visits to it regularly. He was wont to wander all through the town alone, and it was no uncommon thing to see him standing, gazing lovingly and long, at some old house which was an abode of the great when he was a boy, poor and unknown. A beautiful trait in Colonel Joyner's character, was his big-hearted kindness to his poor relations, every one of whom he helped freely out of his abundance.

Fraserburgh has not produced many eminent scholars, and it is therefore meet that those who have come to the front should not be forgotten. Fraserburgh has never shone as a centre of learning, and when investigations are made the subject, it is remarkable how very few Fraserburgh born men are found,

who have risen to positions of eminence in the world of letters. One of the exceptions is the Rev. Professor Archibald Duff, D.D., L.L.D., son of the Rev. Archibald Duff, D.D., minister of the Manse Street Evangelical Union Church, who was born in Fraserburgh in 1845. His father having obtained a charge in Liverpool, young Duff was removed from Fraserburgh when only a few years old. His parents went to Canada in 1856, and it was there he received his primary education. He early showed marvellous powers of learning, and greatly distinguished himself throughout his whole educational course. As a Hebrew scholar he was most distinguished, and as such had probably no equal in the Congregational body in England. He was educated at the McGill University, Montreal, and on finishing his course in 1864, took First Class Honours and gold medal in Mathematics. He was further educated at Andover Theological Seminary, Mass., U.S.A., and in Germany, at Halle and Göttingen. He took his B.A. in 1864, his M.A. in 1867, and was L.L.D. of McGill University in 1880, being afterwards made B.D. of Andover Theological Seminary, and D.D. of Queen's University, Kingston, Canada. He has been Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament Theology in the United College (Congregational), Bradford, since 1876. Since that year he has taken much interest, and been an active and popular figure, in the public life of Bradford. He has written voluminously, among his publications being: "The use of the Old Testament in the Study of the Origin of Doctrine," 1879; "The History of Atonement among the Hebrews," 1880; "Old Testament Theology," Vol. I. (eighth century, B.C.), 1891; Vol. II. (Deuteronomic Reformation), 1900; "Hebrew Grammar," 1901; "Theology and Ethics of the Hebrews," 1902; "First and Second Esdras in 'Temple' Apocrypha," 1903; "Abraham and the Patriarchal Age," 1903; and "Modern Old Testament Theology," 1908. It will be admitted that a Fraserburgh born man with a record like this, deserves all honour at the hands of a local biographer. Professor Duff has not had much direct communication with Fraserburgh in his maturer years, but often though far removed from it, he has, naturally, and like a dutiful son, all along taken a kindly interest in the place that gave him birth.

Another Fraserburgh born scholar of first rank, who unfortunately died all too young, was the late Dr. John Clark, Professor of Mathematics in the Polytechnic College (of Engineering), Gizeh, Cairo. Dr. Clark was born in Castle Street, and was a son of Mr. James Clark, carting contractor, and a grandson of Mrs. Clark, Fatson's Loch. Dr. Clark was one of, if not the greatest scholar that Fraserburgh ever produced. Mathematics was his forte, and this special branch of learning he found no equal in his scholastic career, from the time he entered the parish school, until he closed his University course in Scotland. In Mathematics he reigned supreme, but he had all the artistic instincts of a genius, and inclined to the Bohemian life, he was an "artistic" Bohemian, who had a true appreciation of, and revelled in refined art. He lived in an atmosphere that was pregnant with all that was best in science, music, painting, and even social life. He would have shone

conspicuously as a journalist. His powers of description were remarkable, and his composition perfect. His beautifully flowing sentences were an example of what English ought to be, and any articles that came from his pen attracted widespread attention. He had remarkable talents as a versifier. In his younger days he wrote plays, etc., and achieved a feat which only few young men have attempted. For several years, while at Aberdeen University, his regular letter to his mother was, without exception, always written in verse. Mr. Macgill, rector of the old Academy, Mid Street, thought John Clark was "a loon a' pairts," and encouraged him to go on with his studies.

At the age of 15, he took a competitive scholarship and entered Aberdeen University. His career there was like a triumphal march, and with professors and fellow students alike he was recognized as the "show" student of Marischal College, and one that would bring credit to his "Alma Mater." The expectations formed of him were fully realized, for at the age of 19, he graduated as first, among the First Class Honours men. Shortly afterwards he carried off the Ferguson Scholarship for Mathematics, which is the "blue ribbon" prize for Mathematics in Scotland. To win it means fame, and generally fortune, to a young man. Dr. Clark next competed for the Fullarton Mathematical prize at Aberdeen University, a contest which never fails to bring together all the brilliant young talent of the north. Dr. Clark, as was expected, was an easy first. He thereafter proceeded to Cambridge University where, at the end of his course, he finished by coming out one of the wranglers. He remained at Cambridge, as a coach, for several years, and in the course of time was appointed Mathematical Lecturer in Aberdeen University. He remained in this position for four years, and it is no exaggeration to say that he was one of the most successful Mathematical Lecturers that ever worked within the walls of Marischal College. He had a unique power of illustrating and illuminating his subjects, which crowds of his students gratefully remember to this day. Dr. Clark's true place was the professorial chair in the University, a position which he applied for later, but was unsuccessful in securing. During his stay in Aberdeen at this time, he studied for and took the degree of Doctor of Science at Aberdeen University, being, it is understood, the first graduate to achieve such distinction at Aberdeen.

About the year 1898, he received a valuable appointment as Professor of Mathematics in the Polytechnic College, Cairo. Before proceeding to Cairo, he was publicly entertained by the professors and students of the University and friends, and in the course of the evening was presented with a handsome gold lever watch suitably inscribed. Dr. Clark was strikingly eulogized for his splendid work at the University. At the presentation meeting, Professor Niven said that Dr. Clark held the highest marks of any student since he (Professor Niven) had come to the University. The previous records were held by Professor Niven himself, and Professor Chrystal. His reply was admitted on all hands to be one of the ablest and most original that had ever been heard at such a function in the north. The year of Dr. Clark's graduation at Cambridge

was also in a measure a record year, for any one of the first eight wranglers in his year could have been senior wrangler in the following year.

As a mathematician and a scientist, Dr. Clark's outstanding achievement was a remarkable discovery in a new subject called nomography, which relates to engineering, astronomy, and all subjects involving complicated calculations. He published a book in French on the subject, and for this brilliant work he was feted by the Scientific Society of France, both in Paris and Cherbourg. The book is of great value to those in the engineering profession having minute calculations to work out. Dr Clark had been fully ten years in Cairo, and his great talent and work there, as at Aberdeen, will ever keep his memory fresh among succeeding lecturers and students in the Polytechnic College. He was a delightful public speaker, when he was tempted to enter the realms of rhetoric. Sentence followed sentence with a smoothness that was charming. He could be very serious and emotional should circumstances demand it, but humour was his strong point, and the artistic way which he applied it, was a fine art all his own. As a raconteur he was inimitable, and his presence in any company meant that "neither the day nor the night would be dull." As a conversationalist he was truly brilliant. He spoke French, German, Italian and Arabic, and was more or less acquainted with all the southern portion of Europe, from Constantinople to Paris, having travelled extensively in these parts. To his many other qualities has to be added that of musician. He had a wide and intelligent knowledge of the music of all countries, especially of the classical, and his powers in this direction were often used in the old days, in official newspaper criticism of public concerts, both vocal and instrumental. As a violin soloist, there were few amateurs in the north that could equal him. He appeared several times in the Cairo Opera House as violin soloist at high class concerts—no small testimonial to his abilities. In his young days he was a keen football player, and an oarsman, but his favourite exercise was swimming. He took great pleasure in this healthy and valuable pastime, and was the founder of the first Swimming Club established in Fraserburgh. Dr. Clark died, unmarried, in Cairo, on 8th January, 1910, aged 45 years. His remains were interred in the English cemetery there, so that he sleeps his last, long sleep, almost within the shadows of the Pyramids, where he so long laboured, lovingly and successfully, among the young Egyptians.

As showing the respect and esteem in which Dr. Clark was held, his friends in Cairo subscribed for a monument, which was placed over his grave in Cairo Cemetery, on the 8th January, 1913, the second anniversary of his death; it bore the following inscription: "Here lieth the mortal remains of John Clark, M.A., D.Sc, a native of Fraserburgh, Scotland, Professor of Mathematics at the Khedival Engineering School at Gizeh. Born 9th April, 1864; died 8th January, 1910. This stone was erected by his friends as a tribute of respect and affection to the memory of a man of ardent intellect and social worth." A sum of money was also sent home from Cairo to the Fraserburgh School Board, the interest of which is to defray the cost of a medal, to be styled the "Clark Medal," to be given annually to the best Mathematical student in the Academy.

A native who, despite obscurity of birth, has risen to a great position in the insurance world, is Mr. Robertson Macaulay, president of the Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada. His career in life shows what laudable ambition, perseverance, energy, and Scotch "siccarness" can do, even amid great opposition and competition. He was not the child of fortune, born with a silver spoon in his mouth, but the offspring of poor, but respectable parents, who had been for generations connected with the sea. Mr. Macaulay was born in the year 1833, at which time the great bulk of the people of Fraserburgh were depending upon the sea for a livelihood. To say that Mr. Macaulay's mother was a Noble, and that he first saw the light in Shore Street, is ample evidence to connect his origin with those that did business on the mighty deep. Mr. Macaulay was born some eighty years ago at No. 50 Shore Street, the only dwelling house, north of the Oak Tree Inn, now remaining in Shore Street. The house has become rather historic and interesting, not so much from the fact that Mr. Macaulay was born in it, but because it is the last house in Shore Street that still has a garden attached to it.

Mr. Macaulay's father was a native of Lewis Island, who found his way to Fraserburgh, as skipper of the smack "Gleaner." In the course of his trips to Fraserburgh, he became acquainted with several families residing about the harbour. One of these was the family of Mr. John Noble ("Noblie"), fisherman, 50 Shore Street, as already mentioned. The blandishments of John's daughter, Margaret Noble, were more than Captain Macaulay could resist. He woo'd and won her hand, and made Fraserburgh his home. He regularly visited the "Broch," but, unfortunately, died away from home, leaving a widow and six children in Fraserburgh. Young Robertson Macaulay stayed in Fraserburgh till he was 10 years of age, when he removed to Stornoway and lived with his father's sister. He served his apprenticeship in the office of Mr. Donald Munro, solicitor, Stornoway, but it is understood he finished his business training Aberdeen.

Fired with the ambition of making a name and fame for himself in the colonies, he left the Old Country in 1854 for Canada, when a young man of 22 years. The year following he brought out to the land of his adoption his mother, his sister and brothers. His youthful ideals, as to becoming a big man in the commercial world, have been amply realized. Single-handed he has "fought a good fight," and has conquered. He has reached a position of great trust and power, and is held in the highest respect and esteem, not only by the great army of officials in the office which he controls, but by everybody in the insurance world, wherever the words "Life Assurance" are known or heard. Arriving in Canada while the Crimean War was going on, Mr. Macaulay obtained employment first in the Canada Life Company, at Hamilton, Ontario, and thereafter in the Mutual Life of Canada. After being some time with the latter company, the value of his services began to leak out, and that a strong man had appeared in the Canadian insurance world, was apparent to all those who knew anything about the business. To secure the services and talents of this tireless and powerful worker, meant success to the office that

“captured” him. Several offices made overtures to him. After serious consideration, he made up his mind to throw in his lot with the Sun Life of Canada. Fortunate Sun Life! He was appointed secretary of the company in 1874. From that day to this the business of the company has gone up by leaps and bounds.

When Mr. Macaulay went into the Head Office, the staff consisted of but one clerk and the Managing Director. Now the number is about 150. When he took over the direction of the Sun Life it was pretty much a parochial sort of affair. Now its ramifications extend, practically, to every corner of the civilized earth. It has branch offices at most centres of industrial and monetary importance, and their working machinery, for securing business, is not excelled by any other company in the world. “From China to Peru” it is in active evidence, gathering grist to its ceaseless mill, everywhere. The Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada is now a magnificent property, which has been magnificently managed by one who may be termed the father of life assurance in Canada. The Sun is now the premier life company in the Dominion, and the enormous figures with which it deals every year, in increasing proportions, is a monument which bears eloquent testimony to the genius of Mr. Macaulay as an expert in the realms of insurance. In the evening of his days, much relieved from the heat and turmoil of business life, he must contemplate with great satisfaction the splendid financial position of a company which he has practically created, and which in importance, is second to none in a country that in wealth and prosperity is likely at some future time, to become “one of the wonders of the world.” After most successfully filling the position of secretary for some time, he was promoted to be manager, then managing director and thereafter president and managing director. Finding the weight of years telling upon him, he in 1908 resigned the office of managing director, but retained his presidentship, which he still holds. The active management of the company is now in the hands of his son, Mr. T. B. Macaulay, as managing director. When Mr. Macaulay first obtained a guiding hand in the company in 1874, its business was as follows:—Income, £12,059; Assets, £25,992; and Life Assurance in force, £302,860. The figures for 1911 were as follows:—Income, £2,363,354; Assets, £8,777,758; and Life Assurance in force, £33,816,180. These figures speak eloquently of the marvellous progress made by the company during the time that Mr. Macaulay wisely and actively guided its destinies.

Mr. Macaulay still retains a very kindly interest in the place of his birth. He has visited it once or twice in recent years, the last time in 1910. Unfortunately, with one or two exceptions, all those whom he knew in his youth are lying beneath the green turf at Kirkton. It is sad to think that in Fraserburgh, the place of his birth, Mr. Macaulay now feels “like a stranger in a strange land.”

Of all the natives of Fraserburgh who have shed lustre on their place of birth, none have reached the proud height attained by Sir George Anderson, Treasurer of the Bank of Scotland. He has truly arrived at a position of

eminence and influence in the commercial and financial world, which only a man of brilliant parts could have reached. He has not only climbed the great height, but he has held it with results that proclaim him to be the outstanding head of the bankers in Scotland. It is a bold suggestion to make, but he is probably the greatest man that Fraserburgh has ever produced. He had no special advantages in his youth, and his wonderful career is the harvest of splendid abilities, wisely used. Wedded to great mental powers were integrity, determination, and decision of character, virtues that are absolutely essential to anyone aiming at success in business, whatever his business may be. He has reached a position of trust, honour and title, a combination which has never been equalled in broad Scotland before, and Fraserburgh may well be proud of her illustrious son. Not only has Sir George Anderson the distinction of being the first native of Fraserburgh to receive a title, but he is the first Scottish banker that has received the honour. All this enhances his value in a marked degree in the eyes of the community. Sir George's career has been a steady march, onwards and upwards, from the time he entered an office till the present day. The fact that he occupies so distinguished a place and draws a salary exceeding that of the Prime Minister, is the hall mark and seal that certify the great position to which the Fraserburgh knight has been called. Little did he think when, as a lad of twelve or thirteen, he entered the North of Scotland Bank in Saltoun Square, in 1857, he would finish as the titled head, and Nestor of the banking profession in Scotland. To be Chairman of the Scottish Bank Managers, and Convener of all their meetings, is truly securing the blue ribbon of the banking profession in Scotland, and means the wielding of immense power and influence. It was no lucky turn of the wheel of fortune that made these things come to pass, but simply the reward of ability and industry.

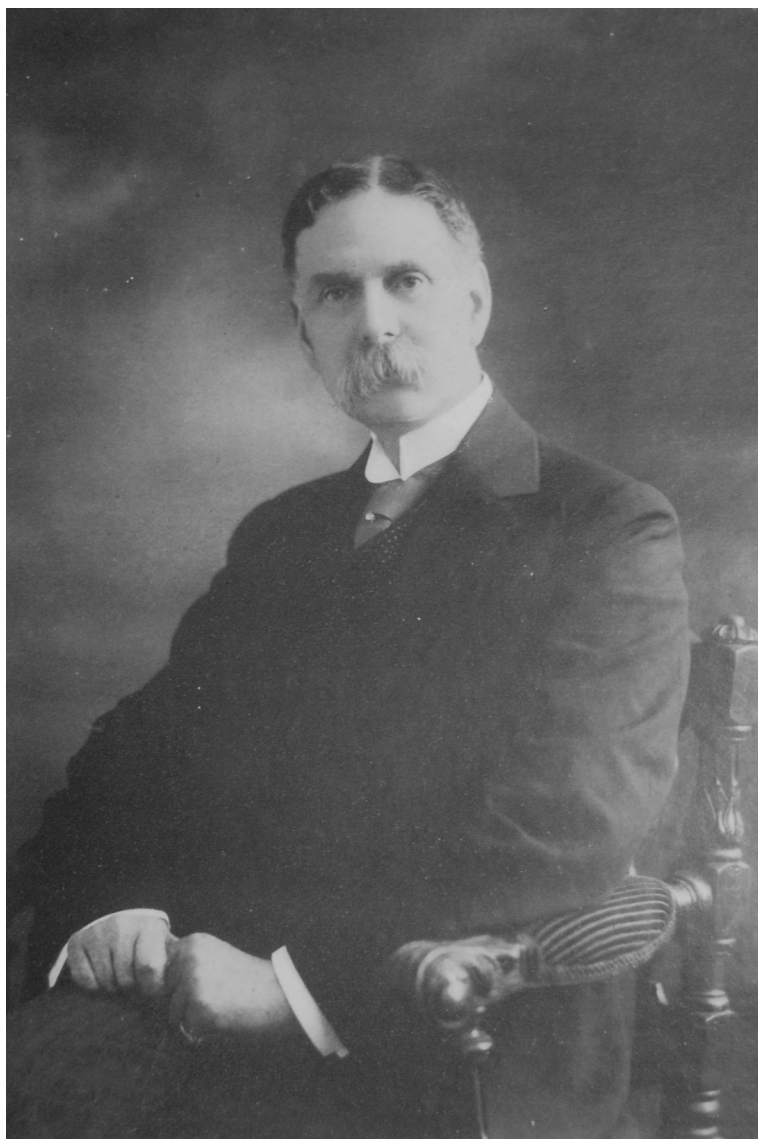
Sir George Anderson was born in Cross Street on the 26th March, 1845 and came of purely Fraserburgh stock, being able to trace his ancestors, both on his father's and his mother's side, as residents in Fraserburgh and neighbourhood for two or three hundred years back. He received his "schooling" at the Parish School under Mr. Woodman, and at the Free Church School, under Mr. Lindsay and Mr. Ewing. Before finishing his apprenticeship, he was made accountant at the Fraserburgh Branch at the age of fifteen, and was subsequently promoted to Banff in the same position, and from thence to Elgin. Shortly afterwards, he was appointed to Peterhead as accountant. His character as a smart and capable young official was well known at the head office, and in 1873 on the retirement of Mr. Robertson, he was promoted to be agent at the important branch at Huntly. This was "a feather in his cap," not only in the way of promotion, but as the road by which the management at the head office would come to know of the outstanding merits of one of their officials. His success during the six years he remained at Huntly was instant and continuous. It had now come to be pretty much a question of evolution and development of the bank's business, whenever Mr. Anderson appeared upon the scene.

When in the troublous days after the failure of the City of Glasgow Bank

the agency of the Bank became vacant at Dundee in 1879, Mr. Anderson, whose reputation as a practical banker had spread to the south, was promptly called upon to fill the vacancy. The change from the rural quiet of Huntly to the busy, enterprising port on the Tay, was rather a drastic one. It gave Mr. Anderson a much wider and more important field of operations to work upon. As was expected, he found himself fully equal to the new position. He grappled with the difficulties and burdens which the new appointment placed upon his shoulders, and steadily brought order out of troublesome entanglements. The returns of the branch made big strides upward every year, which more than ever confirmed those at headquarters of Mr. Anderson's profound knowledge of all business principles and details, and of his skill as a successful banker.

It will be remembered that in consequence of a too liberal supply of money to fishcurers, the North of Scotland Bank, as the result of the herring fishing seasons of 1884 to 1887, had to face a financial crisis of a most serious and trying nature. Those at the headquarters of the Bank were evidently feeling somewhat overpowered with the weight of their responsibilities, and Mr. Anderson was called to Aberdeen as assistant manager in 1888, when Mr. Lumsden retired from the joint managership. Early in 1889 Mr. Fiddes died, and Mr. Anderson was appointed sole manager. The fact that Mr. Anderson, an outsider so to speak, who had never had any experience in the head office, so promptly received the appointment of sole manager was the greatest possible compliment that could have been paid him. He had a gigantic task, of the greatest difficulty and involving enormous sums of money, before him when he took up duty in 1888. He set to work, as a general arrays his army for battle, and in due time he had the tangled web of the Bank's finance, at one period in a highly dangerous condition, once more extricated from its complications and the position established on a firm basis. It was a trying time, but Mr. Anderson by the brilliant way in which he met and overcame the gravest difficulties, showed that he was a financial expert of phenomenal powers, "head and shoulders" above any of his compeers. It will be remembered when the crisis was at its height, the shares of the Bank went down, comparatively speaking, to almost vanishing point. Mr Anderson had not been long in supreme command of the Bank when public confidence was thoroughly restored, and the shares mounted steadily upwards. Some Fraserburgh shareholders, who had implicit confidence in the ability of their townsman to restore the fallen fortunes of the Bank, invested every spare pound in the shares when they were at low figures. To such investors, the shares have proved truly a golden harvest. It may be said, without any fear of contradiction, that Mr. Anderson's handling of the affairs of the North of Scotland Bank, at the most dangerous crisis in its history, was one of the ablest financial pieces of work, on a large scale ever accomplished in Scotland.

The complete success of his clever re-organization of the Bank's affairs, greatly enhanced his reputation among the bankers, not only of Scotland, but of



SIR GEORGE ANDERSON.

England as well, and it was no surprise when Mr. Wenley retired from the Treasurership of the Bank of Scotland in 1898 that the directors of that venerable institution, in looking for a successor, at once cast their eyes in the direction of Mr. Anderson. It was somewhat extraordinary that an official outside the Bank of Scotland should have been asked to fill the vacant Treasurership, but it was understood that some thorny questions would have to be tackled, and that a very strong man was required for the work. The old Bank was known from its published reports to be lagging behind in the race. It had announced heavy losses, its dividends and reserves had been reduced, and its rivals in the banking world were creeping up, and even getting ahead of the old institution, notwithstanding its seniority and its prestige. In these circumstances the very highest possible honour was paid Mr. Anderson when, without any solicitation or move on his part, he was approached and asked to accept the office of Treasurer, the premier banking position in Scotland. His selection has been amply justified, for he has been as signal a success as Treasurer of the Bank of Scotland, as he was as manager of the North of Scotland Bank. Since he took command at the Mound in Edinburgh, the Bank has gone on from success to success, as to which none know better than the directors and the shareholders. The increase of the funds and the dividends, is the best testimonial that could be given as to the successful guidance of the Bank's affairs by Sir George Anderson. He is a veritable modern Midas. Everything he touches seems to turn to gold, and the shareholders of the Bank, grateful as they should be, must bless the day that the brilliant Aberdeenshire man assumed control of affairs. During the fifteen years he has held office in Edinburgh, the assets of the Bank have been increased about 50 per cent., and now exceed the huge sum of £27,000,000; the dividends have been raised from 12 to 20 per cent., and the Reserve Funds have been doubled. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to find a parallel to the fact that during his career as a general manager, he has issued twenty-five Annual Reports every one of which has shown an improvement on the one going before.

When it became known in Fraserburgh in July, 1905, that the late King Edward had conferred a knighthood upon Mr. Anderson, the greatest enthusiasm prevailed. That a real born native had had a title bestowed upon him, was a red letter day in the history of the town. It was the first time, as has been already said, that such a signal honour had been conferred upon a native of Fraserburgh. It was also an honour conferred upon the bankers of Scotland, of which Sir George was the conspicuous head. It was held in Fraserburgh that the new knight had well earned the honour as the outstanding representative of the bankers in Scotland. His fellow townsmen justly felt proud of him, and the Provost and Magistrates of the Burgh entertained him to a congratulatory banquet in the Town Hall on 7th August, 1905. The utmost enthusiasm prevailed, and speeches were delivered by Provost Finlayson, Lord Saltoun, Sir George Anderson, Baillie Brebner, Baillie Gordon, and Councillor Low. A further great honour was conferred upon Sir George Anderson, when

he was selected to act as Deputy-Usher of the White Rod of Scotland, at the coronation of King Edward VII., in London in 1902, and at Holyrood in 1903. Sir George, whose fine, courtly figure suited the part to perfection, discharged the duties of the office with admirable grace and dignity. He held the same position at the coronation of King George at Westminster in 1911.

To his other qualifications may be added that of a linguist. He has an extensive acquaintance with the literature of several European countries, and has travelled a good deal abroad. Like a true patriot, Sir George has a tender regard for Fraserburgh, and all its old associations. His brilliant success in life has not caused him to forget or slight his native place, for he pays regular visits to it. He has been, and still continues to be, a kind benefactor to the "Broch." The clock which he put into the steeple of the South U.F. Church is one of the most practical and useful improvements which has been effected in Fraserburgh for many years back. Mention must also be made of the magnificent stained glass window which he caused to be placed in the parish church, in memory of his father and mother. It is a work of art of great beauty, which will ever redound to his credit. It is sincerely to be hoped that Sir George Anderson, if he does not aspire to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, will be long spared to adorn the position which he so admirably fills at present.

Sir George was married in 1870 to his cousin, Mary, whose father, Alexander Anderson, was a native of Fraserburgh. He left it for London in early manhood, and spent his life as a corn merchant in the Great City, retaining till the end a great affection for his native town. Lady Anderson has proved a worthy helpmeet to her husband during a long and happy married life.

Another man, born and bred in Fraserburgh, whose name deserves a place in the local temple of fame, is the late Mr. James Park, shipowner, London, and brother of the late Provost John Park. Mr. Park was born in Fraserburgh in 1828 and died in London in 1893, thus attaining the age of 65 years. After finishing his education at the parish school under Mr. Woodman, he proceeded to Aberdeen University, where he took his M.A. degree. Early in the 'fifties, when quite a young man, he went to London, to take over the management of his father's extensive shipping connections there, and also to overlook, in his own interests, a Ceylon shipping trade. Mr. Park's business developed rapidly, and in time he became one of the leading authorities in London on all questions affecting shipping. So much were his knowledge and opinions on maritime matters valued, that he was elected one of the Committee at Lloyd's, a position which he filled with great credit to himself and with profit to Lloyd's. As proof of the confidence reposed in him, he was for twenty-nine years a member of the General Shipowners' Society, of which body he was twice Chairman, namely in the years 1873 and 1880. He was one of the pioneers of the Chamber of Shipping, and in order to give the organization a good send-off, he acted as Hon. Secretary during the first year of its existence. His business so developed, that he became an outstanding figure in shipping circles in London; and at one time he acted as a kind of

universal and unpaid arbiter, on questions in dispute between shipowners and merchants. In his latter days, he became a director in the well-known Shaw, Saville and Albion shipping company, one of the large shipping concerns of this country. He was held in the highest respect and esteem by all the great shipowners and business people of London. He was a man of sterling worth and integrity, and was beloved by his close personal friends. He was a most genial and interesting man, and his opinions at times were somewhat quaint and original. His success in business was very marked for a long time, and he rose to a position of great affluence.

It is sad and pathetic to think that financial eclipse should have overtaken, practically every member of this fine family, whose name at one time was a passport to every branch of successful business. Mr. James Park was no exception. His operations towards the end of his active career, proved highly unprofitable. His speculations were most unfortunate, and in the course of a few years his wealth took speedy wings to itself and disappeared. At anyrate, when he died, his estate was of an unexpectedly small amount. Such are the cruel blasts of fortune! Mr. Park remained a bachelor to the end. It has been already mentioned that he sometimes had quaint ideas. This feature of his character remained to the end. By his will he directed that, after death, his remains should be cremated at Woking; that the burnt ashes be placed in a bottle, and that the said bottle be handed to the master of the first of the sailing ships belonging to Mr. Park, that left London. The further instructions in the will were, that when the vessel arrived off St. Catherine's Point, in the Isle of Wight, she was to be steered due north (magnetic) so that her bows might be turned to the place of his birth. When the vessel was in this position the master was to break the bottle and cast its contents to the four winds of heaven. This strange request was faithfully carried out. To write such a request in the cool blood of good health, bespoke a strong character.

This chapter would not be complete without a notice, however brief, of the late Mr. John Mackie, for many years Editor of the *Northern Ensign*, Wick. Mr. Mackie, who was born in Fraserburgh in 1821, was a son of the late Mr. Robert Mackie, who for many years kept a small grocer's shop in Shore Street, immediately opposite the steelyard office. Mr. Mackie was educated at the parish school on the Links under Mr. Woodman, and when a lad, entered the office of the late Baillie Chalmers, for whom, notwithstanding his financial misfortunes, he retained great admiration up to the very last. Although engaged in clerical work, he had strong literary leanings. He read deeply, and could wield a most powerful and facile pen, even as a youth in Fraserburgh. For some years before leaving Fraserburgh, he, though quite a young man was one of the pioneers who introduced a new phase of social, religious, and temperance work in the town. His speaking powers were also excellent, and his services were in great request at all public meetings. He had a keen sense of the humorous, and had a most sanguine and enthusiastic temperament, all qualities which went to the making of a striking personality. He had an

overwhelming love for his native place, and his long residence beyond her borders did not in the least blunt the deep respect he felt for the town that gave him birth. Mr. Mackie's veneration for the "Broch" remained fresh and strong to the last.

Although he had no special newspaper training, his literary work began to attract widespread attention, on account of its superior quality. As a controversialist, both on the platform and in the press, he was recognized as a very dangerous opponent. These qualities shining out so brilliantly, accounted for the unexpected change on his environments. After being nine years in the office of Baillie Chalmers, he was in 1843, when 22 years of age, asked to undertake the duties of Editor of the *John O'Groat Journal*, Wick. He accepted the position, and for seven years carried on the newspaper with a great measure of success. In consequence of some misunderstanding arising out of a public meeting called to petition Parliament to stop Post Office work on Sunday, Mr. Mackie resigned the Editorship of the *John O'Groat Journal* and in June, 1850, launched the *Northern Ensign*, which he edited up to the time of his death. It was a bold venture, but in his able hands it soon became recognized as one of the best newspapers in the North of Scotland. In 1853, finding the duties of Proprietor and Editor too heavy a burden, he disposed of the *Ensign* to Mr. Rae, but retained the Editorship.

Mr. Mackie's knowledge of affairs was generally admitted, and he was called before numerous Committees of the House of Commons to give evidence on such varied subjects as the Poor Law, harbour accommodation, roads, etc. His pet subject however, was the herring trade of Scotland, with which his acquaintance was as extensive as it was correct. When writing on this subject, his articles could not be approached by any other writer in Scotland. In politics, his pen and speech were great assets for the Liberal Party, especially when he supported the candidature of Mr. Laing in 1852. In all the social, municipal and educational affairs of Wick he took a great and practical interest. The people of Wick did not fail to appreciate the great services Mr. Mackay had rendered their town. Speaking of him at the time of his death, the *Northern Ensign* of 10th January, 1878, says:—

"So far back as March 1850, he was presented, at a public entertainment in the Temperance Hall, with the freedom of the Burgh, and on the 6th November, 1857, he was entertained at a soiree in the same place, when 700 persons were present, and presented with an address ... The last paragraph in the address was as follows:—'Presented to Mr. John Mackie, Editor of the *Northern Ensign*, Wick, along with a silver purse and 100 guineas, by a large number of his friends for his zeal and activity in advocating the interests of the Community.' Again on the 25th December, 1865, a testimonial was given to Mr. Mackie in appreciation of his conduct as a public journalist advocating the claims and necessities of Wick for harbour extension. The testimonial originated with a number of the leading gentlemen of the district, the Committee embracing representatives of both town and county, Mr. Henderson

of Bilbster acting as Chairman. The presentation was made in the Town Hall by Provost Louttit who referred to Mr. Mackie's active interest in harbour accommodation for Wick, his services to the widow and the fatherless, and the spirited manner he had advocated the necessity of a railway to Caithness. The testimonial consisted of a silver salver, tea service, and a purse containing 220 sovereigns."

Mr. Mackie continued his activities till within about four weeks of his death. Throughout his whole life he always directed a kindly eye towards Fraserburgh. He was a most patriotic son, and one of which any town might well be proud. Mr. Mackie died in Wick on Saturday, 5th January, 1878, at the age of 57 years, just three months after he published his lectures on the "Broch."

Another native who rose to a position of great financial trust and importance, was the late Mr. William S. D. Blackhall, one of the sons of the late Mr. Adam Blackhall, clothier, Cross Street. Mr. W. S. D. Blackhall served his apprenticeship in the Union Bank branch at Fraserburgh, under Mr. George Wallace, where he showed himself a very sharp and capable clerk. On completing his apprenticeship in 1864, he was offered an appointment in the counting house of the well-known firm of Mr. C. P. Henderson, the great cotton or rag export merchant of Manchester. This he accepted, and so highly were his services appreciated by his principal, that after one year's service, viz., 1865, he was sent out to Calcutta to manage the firm's branch there. This was a position of great trust, since the firm's enormous business was practically confined to the East. After amassing great fortunes, the two partners of the firm of Mr. C. P. Henderson retired from business, and the establishments both at home and abroad closed. Mr. Blackhall's reputation as a most capable financier was well-known in the big centres of business in India, and his services were promptly secured by the Agra Bank, to act as their manager at Bombay. His promotion in the service of the Bank was rapid, and showed that he had lived up to his reputation. From Bombay he was promoted to be manager at Calcutta.

After occupying that position with great success for some years, he was taken home and appointed assistant general manager of the Bank in London. This position he had filled for only a moderate length of time when the manager resigned, and Mr. Blackhall was made sole general manager. After serving the Bank for years faithfully and well as its head in London, ill-health began to trouble Mr. Blackhall. This, combined with the weight of the responsibility of office, told heavily on a constitution that had been so long exposed to the severities of an Indian climate. He therefore placed his resignation in the hands of the directors of the Bank, who, in consideration of his splendid services, and in order to get the benefit of his opinion and advice, placed him on the board of directors. This position he occupied for several years, during which his advice and assistance were of considerable value to his colleagues on the board. The policy of the Bank in same directions, before Mr. Blackhall's advent to office, had not been very wise. The after-

math of the great banking crisis in Australia was keenly felt by several Oriental banks, among others by the Agra Bank. The two effects combined told severely upon the institution, and after serious consideration the directors resolved to suspend operations and wind up the affairs of the Bank. This was successfully done, and enabled the directors to pay depositors and shareholders in full.

Mr. Blackhall's health had been declining for some years, and unfortunately he did not long enjoy his well earned retirement. He died in London on 20th September, 1907, aged about 62 years. The directions he gave as to the disposal of his remains, followed very closely the lines adopted by his fellow townsman, Mr. James Park, shipowner, London. He (Mr. Blackhall) left definite instructions that his body should be cremated, the ashes placed in a small urn and deposited below the seat of the pew, which he was wont to occupy in Christ Church, Lancaster Gate. The instructions were faithfully carried out, and his ashes rest in the Church, where in life he regularly communed with his God.

Another native of Fraserburgh, whose career has been brilliant in the extreme, is Mr. Magnus Mowat. Had he remained a banker, there is no knowing to what great position he might have attained, but that profession he forsook to enter upon a mercantile career. His rapid advance to a position of great trust and responsibility was proof of his strong mental capacity. Not only was he gifted with a fine business head, but he had also, and it is a combination not often met with, rare literary tastes and talents. Had he chosen a literary life, he would probably have shone as a journalist or an author. He however, with all his fine imagination and poetic gifts, elected to devote his life's work to business pursuits. The result has proved that his resolution was a wise one. Like his contemporary, Sir George Anderson, Mr. Mowat's talents enabled him to overcome every difficulty and obstacle to progress, and his march upwards was so remarkable, that at an early age he occupied a position in the business world of great eminence and responsibility. Like Sir George Anderson he also reached a position of honour which gave him a "handle" to his name. On being elected a member of the Legislative Council of India (Bombay Presidency), he earned the title "Honourable," being placed as a prefix to his name.

That a man with practically a parish school education only, should have, by the power of his brain and that alone, risen to the proud position of being one of those who assisted to govern, so to speak, the great Indian Empire, marks Mr. Mowat out as "a man among ten thousand," who, by his brilliant achievements in the public and official life of Bombay, increased the prestige of his native place and added weight and worth to the name of Scotsmen generally. In his youthful years he had most ambitious views regarding his future career, and when he reached manhood, he placed a high ideal before himself. He consistently lived up to this ideal, an inspiration which may be likened to a loadstar that guided him through the many difficulties of life, and

left him in a position of honour that commanded the respect, if not admiration, of leading business people, both at home and abroad. The community of Fraserburgh feel highly honoured in claiming the parentage of such a brilliant son. A most interesting, admirable, and complete account of the Hon. Magnus Mowat's career, appeared in *Leading Men of London*, page 184, in 1895. The article is as follows:—

THE HONOURABLE MAGNUS MOWAT.

“Mr. Magnus Mowat was born at Fraserburgh, Scotland, in May, 1841. He left the parish school, where his education was conducted under the care of the Rev. W. Woodman, at the age of fifteen, and entered the service of the Bank of Scotland at Fraserburgh for a short time. He next studied law at Edinburgh till about twenty-one, and afterwards proceeded to London in the service of Messrs. Finlay, Campbell & Company. He was sent out to India in 1866 to the corresponding firm, Messrs. Ritchie, Steuart & Company, of Bombay, and became a partner in that house in 1876. His abilities and energy were bound to bring him to the front, and in 1877 we find him a Justice of the Peace, and Deputy Chairman of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, Chairman in 1878, to which position he was reselected in 1879. In 1878 he became also a director of the Bank of Bombay, of which he was afterwards President. Before his return to the old country he received a flattering resolution of thanks from his colleagues on the Board for the care and judgment with which he had assisted the Bank at a critical period. In 1879 he was President of the Bombay Committee in connection with the Melbourne International Exhibition, the success of which was partly due to his exertions. Sir Richard Temple, then Governor of the Presidency, conferred upon him the honour of membership of the Legislative Council, and he filled this position until 1880. Among the important official positions which he held at Bombay was that of trusteeship of the Port, and he was appointed by the Chamber of Commerce, along with Messrs. Bythell and Kittredge, as a sub-committee to value the foreshore properties, which were ultimately purchased at the prices recommended by them. He had been very active in endeavouring to promote legislation dealing with the Port Trust, and succeeded in getting his recommendation embodied in the new Port Trust Bill, that the five trustees should be elected by the Chamber of Commerce; and, as already mentioned, he was elected one of the first. This proved that the Chamber appreciated his efforts to obtain popular representation in dealing with this important question which affects so largely the prosperity of the trading community of Bombay.

“It is a pretty generally accepted fact that busy men have the most leisure, but until one actually sees a record of some of the manifestations of the diligence and energy of a busy man like Mr. Mowat, it is difficult to realize all that can be accomplished by a single individual.”

“In 1875 an essay was published by him dealing with the question of gold as a basis of currency. It attested some notice in the press and elsewhere,

and his views and prognostications have been fully borne out by subsequent events. He also found time to assist in the preparation of a paper for the Indian Famine Commission with reference to the question of public works. His views were set forth with great ability and were quoted by the late Mr. John Bright in his great speech on India at Willis's Rooms. He has presided and spoken at innumerable meetings on subjects connected with the prosperity of Bombay. Previously to leaving for England he presided at the last St. Andrew's dinner, in November, 1879, one of the most successful banquets of the kind ever held in the city.

"Mr. Mowat returned to England in 1880, temporarily divesting himself the positions which he was holding in India up to that time, and took charge of the Liverpool house of his firm, and was elected a member of the Council the Chamber of Commerce of that city, and Deputy Chairman of the East India and China Trade Section. To whatever business he had put his hands whether public or private, he devoted all his energy and care, and few men actively engaged in business have found time for so much labour for public objects as he. Moreover, it had all been done with the greatest disinterestedness and public spirit.

"In 1882 he again went to the East for eighteen months, and during that short stay was the Chairman of the Bombay Committee of the International Exhibition held at Calcutta. His labours in this connection were rewarded by a medal and a resolution of thanks for his services.

"He returned to London in 1884, and has found time to take up various commercial questions connected with the metropolis, especially those affecting the East, as well as to attend to the business of the house with which he is connected. He married in 1873, Jane, the daughter of the late James Stodart, Esq., J.P., of Muirfield, Grange, Banffshire, and has a family of three sons. He resides at Pitmain Lodge, Granville Park, Blackheath, enjoying a robust health, which is quite at variance with commonly accepted ideas about Anglo-Indians.

"Mr. Mowat is a director of several joint stock companies in the city of London, and perhaps may some day yield to the solicitations of his friends to enter political life. It is certain that his wide experience and proved administrative capabilities would make him a valuable representative." A very appreciative notice of the Hon. Magnus Mowat appeared in Vol. II. of "The British Empire in the First Year of the Twentieth Century." That notice mentioned the fact that Mr. Mowat was "a member of the London Chamber of Commerce, a member of the Society of Arts, and other learned societies."

As already indicated, Mr. Mowat had a lively imagination and a most artistic temperament, which found an outlet in the realms of poetry. Like the true poet he had no difficulty in framing his pictures of imagination in the language of poetry. His faculty of versification was remarkable, and at the early age of 19 years, he published a book of poems (Maclachlan and Stewart, Edinburgh 1862). The chief poem, which is of considerable length in the volume, is entitled "Ruthven's Revenge." It is a striking effort for so youthful

a mind. In style and metre, it closely follows on the lines of Scott's "Lady of the Lake," and is interesting from start to finish. Some passages are very pretty and laid on a thoroughly poetical foundation, while others are couched in vigorous, lofty and masterful language, that brings "Ruthven's Revenge" within the realms of the epic. In the interesting little volume are three other poems by Mr. Mowat entitled "The Pirate," "Strathaven Castle" and "Massacre of Eigg," all of which do credit to his poetic talents. These interesting poetic effusions of a "Brocher" would appeal to the people of Fraserburgh, and might well be reproduced in a local newspaper in weekly instalments for their benefit. It is understood that Mr. Mowat also "tried his hand" at fiction. A man who has acquitted himself in the world, as has done Mr. Mowat, is a credit to any community. He was called upon to play an important part in the affairs of a great nation, and was not "found wanting." So brilliantly did he act his part in the drama of life that his work, both public and private, will everlastingly redound to his credit, and shed lustre upon his native place. Mr. Mowat has been blessed in his family of three sons. The eldest, Mr. Magnus Mowat, has had a distinguished career as a civil engineer. The second, Rev. William Alexander Mowat, M.A., B.D., was a brilliant graduate of Edinburgh University, and in 1904, at the early age of 27, was appointed minister of the parish of Balmaghie, Castle Douglas. His third son, Dr. Harold Mowat, A.D., Ch.B., took his doctor's degree at Edinburgh at the limiting age of 24, and has since been house surgeon at the Royal Surrey Hospital at Guildford, and in practice at Kensington and Catford, where he has a great reputation as a clever medical man.

A man whose success in business in America has been phenomenal, may be classed as a native of these parts. The distinguished business man in question is Mr. Hugh Chalmers, of Detroit, Ohio, U.S.A. Though not actually born in this country, his father and mother were natives of Rathen, and he saw the light of day shortly after their arrival on the American continent, whence his parents had emigrated. He spent some of his earlier days in Fraserburgh and district. His brother (Mr. Thomas Chalmers, cashier to Messrs. Alexander Bruce & Co.) and numerous other relatives live in Fraserburgh, and altogether his career may reasonably come within the purview of this chapter. His education was largely obtained at evening schools, in the States, and the fact that with few educational advantages he has risen to a splendid position in business, is the best testimonial to his overwhelming energy and ability. Born 40 years ago, Mr. Chalmers is now head, and largely proprietor of, the Chalmers Detroit Motor Company, a concern with a capital of £600,000. Mr. Chalmers' progress in business has been remarkable. He entered the office of the National Cash Register Company as a boy. At 14 years of age he was stenographer and book-keeper. At 18 he was an office manager; at 21 sales agent; at 26 asset manager of agencies; at 27 manager of agencies; and at 30 general manager and vice-president. To be general manager at the early age of 30 years of a company with a capital of £2,000,000 and employing 5,000 people, reads like

a fairy tale. Hugh Chalmers was evidently born to be a leader of men. The company prospered amazingly under his able direction, and the profits steadily moved upwards.

He remained with the Cash Register Company till 1908, when he severed his connection with it, in order to found a company which would be more his own property, and which he would be free to direct and control as he thought best. Strong men cannot tolerate being "coached." Mr. Chalmers' business value may be appreciated when it is stated that the annual salary that was being paid him by the Cash Register Company when he left it in 1908 was seventy-two thousand dollars, equal to £14,400 per annum (see *Human Life*, Boston, December 1908). This is probably the biggest salary ever earned by a native of Buchan, a record which gives Mr. Chalmers an outstanding and unique position among the honoured natives of the district, who by their personal and unaided efforts, have brought fame and honour to themselves and the place from whence they sprang. In October, 1908, Mr. Chalmers purchased an interest in a motor company in Detroit, which is now known as the Chalmers Detroit Motor Company. On joining this concern, Mr. Chalmers immediately became president, which gave him full control of its management. His direction of the affairs of the company has been, as might have been expected from his previous record, a huge success. When Mr. Chalmers joined the youthful motor company, its capital was £60,000. After a lapse of about three years, Mr. Chalmers was able to do a startling thing. About two years ago he declared a stock dividend of 1,000 per cent., bringing the capital up from £60,000 to £600,000, without costing the shareholders a penny. In addition he paid the shareholders a cash dividend of 30 per cent. This is great work and clearly indicates that Mr. Chalmers is something of a business genius. That the Chalmers Detroit Motor Company will reach gigantic proportions, there is no reason to doubt. At least, what Mr. Chalmers has already done may be taken as an earnest of what the future will yield. All honour is due to a native of the district, who, single-handed, has reached the great position to which Mr. Chalmers has attained.

From a monetary point of view, bankers, merchants and professors pale into insignificance beside him. The employees at his works in Detroit are approaching the dimensions of a small army. Many a native of the town or district, or those having a Fraserburgh connection, are indebted to Mr. Chalmers for a friendly lift. For a well doing, steady man belonging to Fraserburgh, Mr. Chalmers always finds an opening in his works. He is a most strenuous business man, who is at work from early morning till late at night. His business methods are characteristically American, viz., a continual rush so that every minute may be profitably filled. Mr. Chalmers is only 40 years of age, as previously stated, and already is a wealthy man. What he will be worth at 60 or 65, it would be foolish for one to guess. The possession of money is the hallmark of success in these days. If Mr. Chalmers is put down as a very successful man, he has reached this desirable goal by the help of merits of his own, and by these alone.

CHAPTER XIII.

GENERAL HISTORY.

CONCLUSION.

This chapter, which forms the closing chapter of the book, will be of a somewhat mixed and miscellaneous nature, comprising as it does, odd scraps of information bearing upon Fraserburgh and district, drawn from all sources and all times, and from varied authorities. Although not very systematic in its "make up," that is no reason why the chapter should not prove of interest to those who claim Fraserburgh as their birthplace. To every true patriot, the most insignificant item of old history regarding one's place of birth is always prized.

Merchants' Guild.—With the exception of the Parish Kirk Session and the old Barony Town Council records, the oldest document existing in the town is the local Merchants' Guild cash book, the first entry in which is dated 1671. This precious volume is now in the possession of Mr. James F. Cardno, Ardaros. Unfortunately there are no minutes in it, to enlighten the people of the present day of the doings of the merchants of Fraserburgh in the seventeenth century. A peep into the quaint ways of business at a time when the different trades were closed against outsiders, or non-burgesses, would have been most interesting. The entries in the book deal solely with cash payments and receipts. The "Merchants' box" (funds probably?) is often mentioned in connection with payments made to it. The writing at the beginning of the book greatly resembles German characters, and is most difficult to read, few of the Scotch words used, being found in a Scotch dictionary. The free-and-easy way of spelling the people of Aberdeenshire had, and the peculiar formation of the words, as compared with lowland Scotch, no doubt accounts for the difficulties of translation. The names given in the book appear to have been those of the most important merchants in Fraserburgh at a time when the Episcopalians and Presbyterians were fighting for possession of the parish churches and manses. A list of the leading business people in the town 240 years ago should prove interesting, as it enables one to compare the names

with those in the town at the present day. The spelling of the names has been modernized. The list is as follows:—

John Bisset.	John Drummond.
Robert Willock.	Thomas Mitchell.
George Greig.	William Whyte.
John Middleton.	William Ogston.
Thomas Forrest.	Alexander Grassie.
Alexander Ramsay.	George Smith.
James Willock.	John Davidson.
John Craik.	Andrew Leith.
Walter Panton.	George Watson.
Alexander Craik.	Alexander Wilson.
James Park.	Allan Beddie.
James Findlay.	Alexander Farquhar.
John Wright.	John Ritchie.
Alexander Scott.	John Birnie.
Andrew Cooper.	John Kelman.
James Will.	John Robertson.
David Greig.	Robert Rollo.
James Chirnside.	John Davidson.
James Waterstone.	William Hay.
James Ramsay.	Patrick Fraser.
Alexander Forbes.	Andrew Noble.

With the exception of Forrest, Panton, Chirnside, Waterstone, Drummond, and Grassie, all the names of 1672 are to be found in Fraserburgh to-day.

Old "Aberdeen Journal" Extracts.—"A miscellaneous assortment" of Fraserburgh news items—real flotsam and jetsam—culled from the files of old *Aberdeen Journals* should not be uninteresting to the average reader of this book. The extracts are taken, as has already been mentioned with regard to some other matter in the book, not so much on account of their literary value, or as events of great public importance, but rather as simple facts, calculated in some degree to illuminate the common life of the people of old, and local movements of a bygone age which, until now, have been as a "total eclipse" to the present generation.

As is well known all traffic to and from Fraserburgh in the days before railways was by sea. The produce of the sea and of the land in the district also, found their way to market by sea route, and all the goods and commodities coming to Fraserburgh were conveyed by the same channel. Thus in a sense, general trade at the harbour is not so important as it was before the days of railways. The following advertisement, dated 5th May, 1753, shows the importance of the liner that ran between Fraserburgh and other ports and

London in those early days, "That the 'Pretty Peggy' of Fraserburgh, Alexander Stewart, master, sails from Fraserburgh for London in 8 days after that date. Any who have goods or passengers for London may send them to Fraserburgh where they will be properly cared for. The said ship lies at Hoare's Wharff, London, and will take in Goods for Peterhead, Banff, Portsoy, Spey or Findhorn and gives bills of Lading, deliverable at these places, to any who incline to ship goods aboard of her." It is thus seen that Fraserburgh, even as far back as 1753, was a place of importance in the trading world, seeing that its enterprising shipowners catered for the needs of the ports of Aberdeenshire, Banffshire and Morayshire. No doubt the noble "Pretty Peggy" had been prepared to carry goods from all the ports named, back to London.

The Fraserburgh district seems to have been visited on 14th December, 1753, with an extraordinary storm of wind and rain, which did great havoc in the quarter. Fortunately, no loss of life is reported, which is a most unusual thing in connection with such an occurrence. The details of smaller damages are not reported, but it is said that "the large two arched bridge of Philorth is broken down by the storm, as is the bridge at Miln of Philorth, and what is most extraordinary, notwithstanding the situation of Fraserburgh the water sprang up in such quantities in the ground floors of the houses, that the inhabitants were obliged for some time to confine themselves to the upper apartments." There is no chance of ascertaining whether the bridge of Philorth mentioned refers to the present bridge of Philorth (Cairnbulg road) or the bridge which now spans the water of Philorth, near Mains of Philorth. At about the date this storm occurred, mostly all the houses in Fraserburgh had their ground floors dug a foot or two down below the level of the streets. This gave increased height within the house without the expense of raising the walls, but rendered it liable to be flooded on all occasions of heavy rainstorms. Such a house still survives at No. 49 Cross Street.

It is interesting to note that up to 10th October, 1755, only two mails came to and left Fraserburgh per week. Trade must have been increasing, for on and after that date, arrivals and despatches were increased to three a week. The public notice on the subject is as follows: "The Fraserburgh post, which only came and went twice a week, was increased to three journeys a week from 10th October, 1755. Route was via Old Deer and Strichen. Reached Aberdeen—Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday morning leaving on return to Fraserburgh same day at noon." In olden times the road to the north, via Strichen, seems to have been a favourite one, for it is often mentioned in ancient records. Johnson and Boswell, when on their tour to the Hebrides, after leaving Slains Castle, took the road via Old Deer and Strichen *en route* for Inverness and the West Coast. It is a pity that Dr. Johnson and Mr. Boswell didn't visit the then Lord Saltoun. Had Johnson taken a turn through Fraserburgh, the inhabitants would have had the distinction (?) of having had something nasty written about the town and themselves!

After the battle of Culloden, soldiers were continually on the move in the north of Scotland, evidently in case of further trouble from the adherents of the Stuarts. From 1750 to 1760, mention is continually being made of companies of soldiers going to or coming from Fraserburgh, Peterhead, or Banff. The regiments are:—Lord Manners' regiment; Earl of Sutherland' regiment; Argyleshire regiment, (Col. Campbell); Col. Parlow's regiment. Of course, the headquarters of the regiments were always at Aberdeen, but there were generally 100 men with a couple of lieutenants stationed at Fraserburgh.

Violent Storms were always noted with great care in the old *Aberdeen Journals*. On 25th March, 1756, a terrific storm of wind and snow swept over the Buchan district. The fishing fleet was caught in it, and at Fraserburgh two boats with their entire crews of ten men were lost. Two Pitullie boats, also with crews comprising ten men, were engulfed in the sea during the same gale, and never heard of. The snowstorm must have been exceptionally severe for the month of March. Quite a large number of people all over Aberdeenshire that had gone out to the pasturing grounds to look for their sheep, perished in the storm. Among these unfortunates was one George Fraser, in Tyrie, who lost his life in trying to save his sheep.

During the last quarter of the eighteenth century, Fraserburgh shipping and vessels, moving in the neighbourhood of Kinnaird Head, were greatly annoyed by French privateers. It was a point that vessels always neared, going north or south. It thus brought a large number of vessels together on a circumscribed area, and offered to these French marauders a fine field for operations. The people of Fraserburgh must often have had exciting times, as they repeatedly saw French privateers pursuing vessels almost into the harbour entrance. It was remarkable how these French privateers could infest the North Sea and carry on their nefarious business of capturing British vessels with practical immunity, and the British fleet so numerous and so powerful at the time. Of course, the British Navy had a big game to play in fighting both the fleets of France and Holland at this period. That would probably account for the upper part of the North Sea being denuded of British war vessels during the latter part of the eighteenth century. A few extracts on the subject of privateering at this period may not be uninteresting, seeing that it so closely affected the trade of Fraserburgh. The following is a report dated 22nd July, 1757: "The 'Elizabeth' of and for Fraserburgh, Alexander Club master, was taken by a French privateer about 15 leagues from the coast of Norway. Ransomed for 115 guineas. The Frenchmen behaved very politely to Master Club and conveyed him within 9 leagues of the Buchan-naes." After receiving a sum of 115 guineas, the Frenchman could afford to behave very politely. The privateer had not escorted the "Brochers" across the North Sea as an act of courtesy, but in the hope that the "Elizabeth" would act as a decoy to other unsuspecting British craft.

The authorities at Fraserburgh seemed to have kept a sharp look out for privateers, as the Provost of Aberdeen reported on 14th March, 1758, that he

had "received an express from Fraserburgh, advising that the day before, there were seen, off that place, two large three-masted ships, which, by their manner of working, leave no room to doubt their being French privateers. In consequence of the above notice, an express on horseback was immediately despatched to Captain Craig, commander of his Majesty's ship, the 'Solebay,' presently in Leith Roads." It would appear that the complaints of the present day fishermen that gunboats appointed to protect their interests are invariably in port, for the delectation of the crews, instead of at sea pursuing poachers in the Moray Firth, is just a repetition of what took place in "the good old days." Instead of being in Leith Roads, the "Solebay" should have been hunting the privateers all over the North Sea.* The boldness with which the Frenchmen carried on operations, is revealed in the following paragraph dated Monday, 14th September, 1778: "On Friday forenoon two frigates and a large cutter appeared off Kinnaird Head, when the cutter fired a gun at the 'Mary' of Fraserburgh, Alexander Lunan, master, which sailed the day before, on which she ran for the harbour and got in. But when the cutter was within half a mile of the sloop, they all 3 put about to the offing and to S.E. They had no English colours." It would have created some excitement in the town, if a little drama of this kind had been played here say six months ago.

A week or two after the attempt at capture made at Fraserburgh, the same privateers were successful in securing the "Resolution" of Hull, 600 tons burden, from Onega to Hull, as also the "Love and Unity" of Peterhead. Both vessels were set on fire and destroyed by the Frenchmen. The crew of the "Resolution" were taken prisoners to France, and the master of the vessel wrote, on 17th October, 1778, from Dinan intimating the fact to the owners. As year followed year, the French privateers kept up the work of harrying Scotch shipping. Along with a number of other vessels, a Fraserburgh craft came to grief towards the end of 1780. The extract dated 31st July, 1780,

* It is interesting to know that the individual who had charge of the French privateering operations on the Aberdeenshire coast, and in the North Sea generally, from 1757 to 1759, was Francois Thurot, of Nuits, France, one of the most famous privateering captains that ever lived. The extraordinary boldness and confidence with which he followed vessels almost into Fraserburgh harbour, time after time, showed the man's reckless courage. Thurot was the individual who took the "Elizabeth" of Fraserburgh, the "Resolution" of Hull, and other craft. When the warship "Solebay," which was accompanied by the "Dauphin," another British war vessel, came north in pursuit of Thurot, the latter quietly slipped south and, unexpectedly appearing off the Tyne, "took fifteen ships off Shields and Stockton and sent them to Norway." This was in 1758. His depredations along the Scotch coast and among the Shetland Islands were so bold and so successful, that mention of the name of French privateer struck terror among the quiet north-country people. *Chambers's Encyclopædia* says that Thurot "frightened terribly the townspeople of Banff (5th October, 1757)." Thurot became quite a hero in the eyes of the French people, and "Louis XV. sent for him to Versailles where he became a fashion." After betaking himself to sea again Thurot contemplated taking Belfast, but his three ships were overtaken, off the Isle of Man, by three British war vessels in the end of February 1760, and after a brisk fight were defeated. Thurot was mortally wounded. His death must have been a relief to the people of the East Coast of Scotland.

which follows, shows how serious was the damage done and the loss to owners at this time in consequence of the operations of these privateers: "On Monday last came a letter to the customs here, with advice that the 'Duc d'Estifac,' privateer of Dunkirk, Captain Nicholas Cardorun, had taken on Saturday about 5 leagues off the Buchanness, the 'Saltoun' of Fraserburgh, Cruden from Dantzick, and ransomed her for 450 guineas. On Saturday, an express came from Fraserburgh giving an account that on Friday, the 28th, the privateer took 3 vessels off Cairnbulg, and two others ran on shore to escape her. The privateer mounts 22 guns, 100 men, frigate built, a woman's head upon her prow, white bottom and black sides."

A sum of 450 guineas in 1780 meant a very handsome ransom, and the "Saltoun" and her cargo must have represented an unusually large sum of money. Fraserburgh shipowners, even at this far back date, seem to have been men of enterprise and substance. The "Duc d'Estifac" seems, as a privateer, to have been very successful in her work. The capture of four vessels and forcing two others ashore, all practically at the same time, was a feather in the cap of the Frenchman. If all the captures did not pay like that of the "Saltoun," the other work of the privateer was a dead loss to this country, and that was the object France had in view, in sending privateers into the North Sea at this time. The minute description given of the "Duc d'Estifac," was with the view of assisting British cruisers to detect and capture the craft. The times continued to be stirring. On 7th August, 1780, the same privateer chased two vessels into Fraserburgh harbour, amid great excitement. The audacity of these French marauders is shown in the next extract: "On Saturday last, the brig 'Peggy' of Fraserburgh, John Cumming, master, bound for Norway, was chased by a French privateer; the crew ran the vessel ashore near the House of Philorth, but the privateer's boats followed and burnt her." The "Peggy" must have been very hard pressed when she was so near the harbour and failed to enter it. Running ashore near the House of Philorth, meant running on to the sands at the mouth of the Water of Philorth. It was a pity that the Frenchmen should have been allowed to burn the vessel, under the very nose of "Broch" people. What had become of the Earl of Sutherland's company, or Lord Manners' regiment then stationed at Fraserburgh? By beating off the Frenchmen and saving the vessel, they might have earned immortal fame for themselves.

British privateers seemed to have taken to making reprisals, and with some success, although the opportunities offered them of "scoring" in the North Sea were few as compared with the rich field offered the Frenchmen. An extract dated 17th September, 1781, says: "On Friday a letter was put ashore at Fraserburgh from on board the 'Lively Privateer,' advising of her having taken three more American vessels, richly laden. "These American vessels had no chance of getting through the English Channel uncaptured, and they therefore chose a northern passage to Europe via the Shetland Isles. From numerous notices in the old newspapers, the Americans at this time generally carried their vessels to Norway, where they landed their cargoes, and afterwards transhipped

them to the different northern European countries. The Yankee vessels taking the passage round by the north of Scotland, accounts for the English privateers being in touch with Fraserburgh.

Throughout the 'nineties of the eighteenth century, reports from Fraserburgh, bearing upon the depredations of French privateers, appear regularly in the old *Aberdeen Journal* of that period. This proves what has often been asserted, that Fraserburgh occupies one of the best geographical positions on the north-east coast of Scotland. Pursued ships made for it, and British cruisers and privateers found it the most convenient place to which to come, for the purpose of making reports. It would begin to be tedious to give details of all the privateering incidents at, and reports emanating from Fraserburgh, for the last ten years of the eighteenth century. Enough has been given to show the unrest, excitement, and real danger to which north country people, going down to the sea in ships were exposed while the French war was going on. The following extract from the old *Journal* is dated 6th May, 1799, and as it is one of the last on the subject of privateering in the *Journal* of that century, and forms a most interesting official communication from the chief magistrate of Fraserburgh, it is worthy of the final word on privateering, on which so much has been written. The extract runs: —

“On the 24h of April, four French privateers sailed from Bergen, and five more were lying in that harbour. Of their depredations on this unprotected coast, we are sorry to record the following unpleasant accounts:—

“The Magistrates of Aberdeen,

“Fraserburgh, April 30, 1799.

“My Lord;

“Captain John Craigie, of the N. Lowlands fencible regiment, has just now come ashore at this place, from on board the ‘Elizabeth of Leith,’ Dick master, bound for Zetland. Captain Craigie mentions, that about half past three o’clock this afternoon, being then a little to the northward of Buchanness, and about three miles from the land, they saw a large brig, whom they were informed by a boat from Peterhead, was an American vessel waiting provisions; she was at this time standing out to sea, and in a little after they observed a lugger standing in for the land, who, upon observing the American standing out in her direction, put about to sea. The master of the ‘Elizabeth’ from the first suspected the lugger to be a privateer, and having spoke with the Aberdeen and Shetland Packet, who was in company, both vessels thought it proper to haul in and run down with the land; in a little after the lugger again made her appearance, standing directly in for the shore, with a view, as Captain Craigie supposed, of getting between them and the land; and finding that the lugger was coming in very fast, they hauled close in ashore, for the purpose of running the vessel aground, if they had not been able to get into Fraserburgh harbour, which they luckily effected; and on the lugger finding she could not cut off the ‘Elizabeth’ and Aberdeen Packet, she then made after a sloop at a considerable

distance astern of them, who was also observed to haul close for the land, and Captain Craigie, and the people on board, thinks that she ran ashore to the northward of Rattray Head. The lugger is now seen off this place, and there is no doubt of her being a privateer.

"I have the honour to be, etc.,
(Signed) WM. KELMAN, Baillie."

The "Elizabeth" and the Aberdeen and Shetland packet were too many for the Frenchman, and managed to get safely into Fraserburgh after a rather hot race. Speak of the excitement of horse racing! That was not in it with the excitement at Fraserburgh when a local, or other Scotch vessel, raced for the harbour, closely pursued by a French privateer. Such races, unfortunately, were not uncommon during the closing period of the eighteenth century. Baillie Kelman was quite correct in surmising that the vessel which pursued the traders was a privateer. The sloop which she made for after the traders escaped, was reported next day to have been run ashore near Rattray Head, to escape the clutches of the Frenchman. The authorities of Fraserburgh were determined that a repetition of plundering and burning by the Frenchmen should not be permitted, and, as the newspaper extract says, "A party of Fraserburgh volunteers, under the command of an officer, marched to the place where the vessel lay, in order (if the privateer should have sent to plunder her) to prevent the mischief." It is a pity the Fraserburgh volunteers did not get a chance of exchanging shots with the Frenchmen. It would have made their reputation for ever, and been a martial deed which would have greatly enhanced the reputation of the warlike sons of Fraserburgh. The march of the "Broch" volunteers to Rattray Head, eager to fight the Frenchmen, forms a picturesque and fitting close to the notes on privateering.

Serious crime appears to have been not uncommon in Fraserburgh and district in the olden times. In August, 1756, a Christian Clark, from Burnside of Philorth, was tried before the sheriff of Aberdeenshire for, among other offenses, "keeping a, disorderly house, entertaining men as well in the night-time, as in the day-time, and sailors upon Sundays, and of being habit and repute a — and a loose woman, and of keeping a brothel." She was found guilty, and was banished the county for life, with a warning that if, at the end of a month from the passing of her sentence, she was found in Aberdeenshire, she would be publicly whipped at the market cross by the common hangman, and again banished (Black Calendar). The foregoing case is given to show how drastic were the punishments meted out to the poor criminal in the olden times. How easily would such a poor sinner be let off in these days, and it is certainly better the one way than the other. The punishments in the olden days for petty offences were so severe as to remain for ever a dark blot upon the page of civil life at the time. The two following murder cases are taken from the columns of the *Aberdeen Journal*: "March 7, 1768. Joseph Sangster, Mason in the parish of Fraserburgh was committed to prison by warrant of a

Justice of Peace, accused of robbing and murdering Isobel Dun at Berryhill of Memsie, on the night of the 26th of the last month." The other is: "December 15th, 1795. On Tuesday last was committed to prison, James Sandy, labourer in Fraserburgh, accused of the murder of Christian Stephen, wife of Robert Buchan, Mariner there." It is extraordinary that a local or district man should have gone the length of murdering a woman for robbery alone. Yet, at this time, murders were quite common all over Scotland in connection with robberies. Mrs. Buchan, above referred to, had likely been killed by Sandy during a brawl. What was the ultimate fate of the two alleged murderers is unknown, as no reference is again made to the two culprits in the columns of the old *Aberdeen Journals*.

An extraordinary drinking bout is reported of two sailors at Fraserburgh on 2nd January, 1769, which caused the death of one. The paragraph says: "We hear from Fraserburgh that on Wednesday, one Donald, a sailor, and his companion fell to drinking gin for a wager. After they had drank 22 gills, Donald fell back and expired. The other tumbled down stairs, and the violence of the fall having made him throw up," [vomit] "he recovered." The two sailors had not been enjoying the New Year wisely, but too well. The feature of the paragraph is the extraordinary way Donald's companion's life was saved. It is an immensely comical salvation.

It must be very interesting to Fraserburgh people to read an advertisement offering Kinnaird Head to let. The present and past generation have always associated Kinnaird Head with a lighthouse and nothing else, and to "Brochers," the castle under another garb will appear strange and unreal. Here is the advertisement dated 4th March, 1771: "Mansion-house of Kinnaird's-head, to be let in tack for such a number of years as may be agreed upon. The mansion-house and offices of Kinnaird's-head, with the park adjacent thereto, the garden in Fraserburgh called Lodging-Yard, and a Leet of Peats. The house is large, and in good repair, fit for accommodating a large family, and also very proper for a merchant or manufacturer, being contiguous to Fraserburgh Harbour, and more ground will be let therewith, if desired." It is to be feared there were not many applicants for the castle, as wealthy fishcurers had not come to live in Fraserburgh in 1775.

A most comical duel is reported as having taken place in Fraserburgh on 13th June, 1791. The names of the combatants are suppressed, but it is quite evident that the one was a shoemaker and the other a tailor, and, reading between the lines, it can easily be seen that the two worthies had fallen into the hands of a company of practical jokers. As a duel was never heard of before in Fraserburgh, the bloodless one of the 13th June, 1791, is reported here, not on account of the desperate nature of the fight, but as a specimen of Fraserburgh humour 120 years ago. The report of the duel reads: "T. M. *Taylor*, and J. B. *Cobler*, happening to differ in politics, over a chopin of ale, a challenge was given by Crispin and accepted by Mr. *Fashioner*. Two wags offered their services as seconds, and the meeting took place, with pistols and

swords, at six o'clock this afternoon. The pistols were loaded *only with powder*, unknown to the parties; the Cobler fired first—the Taylor fell—one of the seconds immediately smeared a little red paint (prepared on purpose) over the face of the dead Taylor; the Cobler no ways dismayed, coolly said, 'D—I care, lat him lye there, as well him as me.' This *bloody* affront was ended by several people appearing, who were apprized of the combat. The *dead* Taylor was carried home, and the Cobler secured by mock constables, to the great entertainment of a number of spectators, who at a distance beheld this Tragi-comical Duel." This great meeting, fortunately, had not the tragic ending which marked the finish of the drinking duel, described previously.

The people of Fraserburgh must have been most loyal subjects, and must have known how to appropriately celebrate the King's birthday in the stirring days of the French and Dutch wars. War invariably raises the patriotic feelings of the people to fever pitch, and it was this feeling no doubt that accounted for the excitement that marked the rejoicings at Fraserburgh in connection with King George III.'s birthday on 4th June, 1794. The report of the demonstration is as follows: "This being the anniversary of his Majesty's Birthday, the same was observed in this place with every demonstration of joy, by ringing of bells, bonfires, etc. Porter and Punch were distributed amongst the populace at the Cross, where the principal inhabitants in the place, and some gentlemen from the country drank his Majesty's health, with many other suitable toasts for the day, while the military in the place fired several vollies of small arms." The "populace" must have been indulgently treated 118 years ago, as compared with what it is in these degenerate days. What a treat free drinks at the Cross would be to "the man in the street" in this year of grace! To a certain class it would be quite a millennium. After all, the liberality of the town's dignitaries in those far back days was not so great as at first sight it appears to be, seeing that a gallon of whisky could practically be bought for a sum of money which would now purchase a bottle of whisky only.

The following newspaper extract is most interesting, seeing that it gives information regarding the first ploughing match that took place in the north-east corner of Buchan. Sir William Forbes was an enlightened, public spirited man, who thought and acted considerably in advance of the age in which he lived. Regular ploughing, as it is known to-day, was in its infancy in Buchan when Sir William Forbes lived, and to encourage the local farmers, he imported as tutors to the district farm servants, several expert Lothian ploughmen. The account of the primary ploughing match in the local district is as follows: "26th April, 1796. We hear from Fraserburgh, that on Wednesday last, there was a ploughing match of Sir William Forbes' tenants on Mains of Pittuly, in presence of several gentlemen, and a large concourse of country people, being the first of the kind in that part of the country. Ten ploughs of two horses ploughed each two ridges. The judges found a ploughman of Sir William's entitled to the prize, but in regard of his being taught by Sir William's Lothian ploughman, ordered him money—and the prize to a servant of Alexander Yule

in Mains of Pittuly. The judges were so much pleased with the other ploughmen's performances as to order suitable gratuities to each". One can fancy in imagination the crowd, and the excitement manifested by it, at the first ploughing match that had ever been seen. The old farm servant who had been content to merely scrape the surface of the ground, must have got his eyes opened when he saw the fine work done by the modern plough and the modern ploughman. Agricultural work in the north was undergoing revolution at this time, and Sir William Forbes was one of the pioneers who did noble work in this district. It reflected much on his honesty of purpose that he declined to let his own ploughman, who had the advantage of a special training, receive the special first prize.

The Fraserburgh people appear to have celebrated with great gusto the famous victory of Admiral Duncan over the Dutch at Camperdown on 11th October, 1797. The times were certainly exciting, for exactly twelve months afterwards came intelligence of the remarkable defeat of the French at the mouth of the Nile by Nelson. Two such victories were enough to send the people mad with joy. Britain was in a critical position at this time, fighting France, Spain and Holland combined, and her very existence was at stake, but the brilliant victories at Camperdown and the Nile, released her from what may be called "a state of bondage," and these two great achievements formed the beginning of a list of naval and military triumphs, which terminated with Trafalgar and Waterloo. The report which appears in the *Journal* of 21st October, 1797, is dated Fraserburgh, 18th October, and is as follows. "Yesterday, in consequence of the glorious victory, obtained by our gallant countryman Admiral Duncan over the Dutch fleet, on the 11th inst., the bells were set a ringing; at noon, a company of the Argyleshire Fencibles, and Fraserburgh Volunteers, fired a *feu de joye* at the Cross, accompanied by three cheers. A dinner was ordered in Green's Inn (situated in Mid Street and now the property of Mr. James Gordon), where the officers of the Fencibles, and Volunteers attended, honoured by the company of the neighbouring Deputy Lieutenant, and principal gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood. The health of the gallant Commander, his brave officers and seamen, and other loyal toasts, were then drunk. In the evening, a general and splendid illumination took place; and the whole concluded with that joy and harmony, which so signal an event merited."

The reference to Nelson's great battle is in the following terms: "Fraserburgh, 15th October, 1798. In consequence of the late very important victory obtained by the British fleet, under the command of the gallant Admiral Nelson, off the mouth of the Nile, over the French commanded by Admiral Bruyes, the Fraserburgh Volunteers, commanded by Captain William Troup, on the Monday after receiving the intelligence, fired a *feu de joye* at 12 o'clock noon in the principal street. The bells were set aringing, bonfires erected, and at four o'clock in the afternoon, the Volunteer officers, accompanied by several respected gentlemen of the town, dined at the Inn, where the healths of the brave Admiral, his officers and men, were drank, with many other loyal and patriotic toasts. In

the evening, the Burgh was adorned with a general and splendid illumination. Voluntary Subscriptions to Government for the town of Fraserburgh:— From the town's fund, £30; from individuals within the town, £34 17s. 6d.; from the parish, £9 6s. 4d.; a week's pay from the Volunteers, £9 2s. Total £83 5s. 10d. There is no resident heritor in the parish. "Well might the people drink the healths of the Admirals, and indulge in some shouting. Teetotalism was an unknown quantity in those days, and no doubt the people had let themselves "go," out of sheer gratefulness for the decrees passed by the God of Battles. The folks were practical in their appreciation, and subscribed the handsome sum of £83 5s. 10d. for the purse of the government. It would appear that at this time the government of the day received direct subscriptions from the people towards the nation's exchequer.

The war with France and Holland was brought to a close, temporarily at least, in the end of 1801, and peace was formally ratified at Amiens in the spring of 1802. The community had rejoiced greatly at the previous recent victories, but they were as ready to rejoice when the declaration of peace was made. The war was a terrible strain upon the resources of the country, and naturally the nation feared not only the coming burden of taxation, but also the risk of defeat in a big campaign against the redoubtable Napoleon. This is how the intimation of peace was received in Fraserburgh: "17th October, 1801. The *Gazette* announcing the preliminaries of Peace being ratified, every demonstration of joy was shown here by all ranks. At 12 o'clock the party of the 4th Irish Dragoons quartered here, and the Fraserburgh Volunteers, under the command of Captain Fraser, assembled at the Cross and fired a *feu de joye* with great correctness. The bells were then set ringing, and bonfires erected, and a splendid and general illumination took place in the evening. The Town Council and several of the inhabitants dined together at Green's, where many apposite Toasts were drank." Bonfires, toast drinking and illuminations must have been of frequent occurrence in Fraserburgh about this time. Anything and everything seemed to have been an excuse for "demonstrating." Happy people! the responsibilities of life sat lightly on their shoulders. Three months or so afterwards there was another demonstration at the Cross and toast drinking at Green's, the favourite hostelry in Fraserburgh at this time, the occasion being the King's birthday. On the following birthday of the King (June, 1803), Mr. Fraser of Memsie, the commandant of the Fraserburgh Volunteers, entertained his officers and men at the Cross, "and in libations of Rum Punch, served from tubs into tumblers, they all with fervent loyalty drank his Majesty's good health" etc. The phraseology of the paragraph is as peculiar as the quality of the drink used and the way it was served. The Volunteers must have been a thirsty lot when they had to be served in tubfuls.

The report of the great battle and victory at Trafalgar, did not cause the profuse rejoicings that former victories did, owing no doubt to the terrible blow the nation had received in the death of Nelson. People could not, in the circumstances, rejoice and forget the dead hero, who had been the saviour of his country.

The reference to Trafalgar is given at the end of a paragraph on the subject of the inspection of the Fraserburgh Volunteer Artillery and the Fraserburgh Infantry battalion. The newspaper paragraph in question, which is dated 20th November, 1805, reads: "On Friday last, the Fraserburgh Volunteer Artillery, under command of Captain Kelman, and the Fraserburgh Infantry battalion commanded by Maj. Fraser, were inspected by Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart, who expressed himself extremely well pleased with the state of the arms, and equipment of both corps. Immediately after the inspection the corps were reviewed by Brigadier-General Gordon Cuming and went through their manœuvres and firings much to the General's satisfaction. Before leaving the ground, the artillery and infantry fired a *feu de joye*, in celebration of the late important victory gained by the ever to be lamented Nelson, over the combined French and Spanish fleets."

The people of Fraserburgh once aimed at making Fraserburgh a first class watering place, but unfortunately their laudable ambition was not realized. The town had no doubt attracted visitors for a time. If fine, warm summers had followed each other in regular succession, no doubt the place would have boomed, but it is to be feared that a couple of raw, cold summers coming after each other had taken the "heart" out of the visitors, and compelled them to give the place "a long farewell." The Baths, the remains of which are still to the fore, were got up in rather a superior style, and given a better climate, would no doubt have been a big asset to the town. The Baths were opened in 1807, but were not completely finished till 1808. An advertisement which appeared in the *Aberdeen Journal* of 29th June, 1808, gives an excellent and elaborate description of the Baths, and details other watering facilities offered at Fraserburgh, including the drinking of mineral waters at the old well, whose site was where now stands the Dalrymple Buildings. The advertisement is as follows:

FRASERBURGH BATHS.

"The proprietors have now the pleasure to announce to the public that the Fraserburgh Baths are completely ready for the reception of company; and many more of the inhabitants have since last year fitted up their houses in a neat manner for lodgings, which they are resolved to let on reasonable terms.

"The bathing machine is also nearly ready for the accommodation of those who prefer bathing on the open beach; and it may be remarked with truth that few watering places have the advantage of a sand beach so much calculated for that purpose or for amusement, either in riding or walking. Its extent is at least three miles.

"No pains or expense have been saved to render these baths comfortable and elegant; and although some watering places are complained of for extravagance, the proprietors here have nothing more in view than promoting the prosperity of Fraserburgh, and rendering the advantage of sea bathing within the reach of most individuals.

"There are at present in use two cold baths, cut out of the solid rock,

filled every tide from the sea; four warm baths, and a shower bath, with dressing rooms and pump room.

"The mineral water at Fraserburgh has all the qualities of the chalybeate springs, and is found to be lighter than most springs of that quality in this country.

. . .

"The rates of bathing are as follows:— Cold bath for the season, 10s. 6d.; if less than a season, for each time 6d.; warm bath, for the first time used, 2s.; second times 1s.; third time, 6d.; shower bath, 1s.; bathing machine, 1s. ; mineral water for the season, 5s. Lodging per floor half a guinea to a guinea and a half a week."

A correspondent of the *Journal*, if not the Editor himself, who had visited Fraserburgh the previous year, gives a short, interesting description of the town, and a most readable account of the new Baths, in the *Aberdeen Journal* of 26th August, 1807. The communication is well worth reproducing here. It is as follows:—

"After revisiting, with much satisfaction the fine town of Peterhead, still improving in extent, population and trade, we came by a pleasant ride, through a rich, and in general highly cultivated district to this place" [Fraserburgh] "where we expected little to arrest our attention. In this we were very agreeably disappointed. The town is not only very neat and clean, but considerably enlarged and the foundation laid for more extensive improvements.

"There is the neatest and completest set of Baths erected and in a delightful situation for air and walking, which I have ever seen in any part of the kingdom; and that do much credit to the architect as well as to the spirit of the promoters, and particularly the Magistrate of the place, a very intelligent active, and public spirited character. They were no doubt formed on the model of those at Peterhead, and as is usual have improved on the original. Scarcely can anything be imagined neater than the Warm and Cold Baths and the dressing places for either. The mineral Water too is light and not unpleasant to the taste, and the medical gentlemen assert very efficacious.

"The air is extremely pure and temperate from the sheltered situation of the place; nor are any offensive operations carried on in its neighbourhood. The accommodation for strangers must, for some time, be much inferior to those of Peterhead, where they are indeed very ample, but great exertions are making in that respect, and will naturally increase with the demand; and there seems nothing wanting but the appearance and patronage of a few fashionable persons or families, to give the Baths their merited celebrity. The Marquis of Huntly, and his friends, were expected, and the brilliant Duchess, with her suite expected also, would effectually establish them.

"We are glad to hear, that a number of constant Bathers have already taken up their residence for the season; and their number is daily increasing. We expect to be able to furnish an ample list soon."

It is seen that the town was much more fashionable at the beginning of the nineteenth century, than it is at the beginning of the twentieth century.

To have even one Duchess and one Marquis living in the town as visitors in these days would have been a splendid advertisement, and would have made the people proud of the old "Broch." It is, however, to be feared that the olfactory organs of the nobility are now too finely developed to stand the aroma that arises, in the bathing season, from the curing yards and the gut factory. So long as the summer zephyrs waft the pungent fumes athwart the town and beach, distinguished visitors will remain outside the danger zone. It may appear paradoxical to say so, but it is a fact that the stronger the perfumes from the curing yards and the gut factory, the better and healthier is the general trade of the town. Told plainly, a big smell means a big herring fishing, and the community would prefer the latter to a big influx of visitors. It is disappointing to think that the Baths, which were opened with such a flourish of trumpets, had such a chequered career, and ultimately ended in total failure. They have been in turn a blacksmith's shop, a curer's store, and an epidemic hospital. Now the walls are on their last legs, and an old landmark will soon be no more. The reproduction of further extracts from the old *Aberdeen Journals* will be deferred until the old Statistical Account of Scotland (1793) has been dealt with.

Old (1793) Statistical Account, etc.—This publication contains a great amount of interesting information bearing upon the town and parish of Fraserburgh as they were at that time. Although a few enthusiastic students of local history may be well posted up in the details of the Statistical Account, to the great majority of readers of this book the information in the "Account" will be, in a great measure, new. It is for that reason that copious extracts have been taken from it.

From a statement in the "Account," it appears that the population of the parish of Fraserburgh in 1755 was 1,682 persons, whereas in 1791-92 it had risen to 2,200 persons, or an increase of 518 souls in 37 years. The herring fishing as an industry had not been begun in 1792, and the increase in the population was consequently very meagre and slow. Of the 2,200 of a population in 1791-92, some 1,000 resided in the town, 200 in the village of Broadsea, and the rest in the country part of the parish. Between 1784 and 1791-92, on an average the baptisms were 37, marriages 14, and deaths 19.

Speaking of the shore round and near Fraserburgh, it is said: "On this coast, considerable quantities of sea-weed, cut off the rocks, are manufactured into kelp. The sea has receded from the land in some places, and encroached on it in others. Westward of Kinnaird's Head, is a stony beach, evidently thrown up by the sea, 30 ells from, and 3 ells above, the present high water mark. Many of the benty hillocks, which skirt the bay, stand upon moss or clay; and in 1760, a tree with roots and branches, and a stem 20 feet long, was found entire, under the sand within the high flood mark. By a strong south east wind, the sands on this shore, if dry, are drifted; and if not intercepted by the bents, would overspread the adjacent fields. Bent ought, therefore, carefully to be preserved; especially a very fine sort, which has lately appeared in this bay, resembling the

river bulrush in length of joint, thickness of reed and largeness of leaf and top." It need only be remarked, in reference to the foregoing, that people will be surprised to learn that the bents stand upon moss or clay, and that trees had grown on the sands, where the southern half of the bents now are. This is not at all improbable, when it is remembered that in the vicinity of the Corbiehill, and from thence southwards to the water of Philorth, the subsoil is composed of strong clay. Indeed old men living in Fraserburgh a generation or two ago, remembered when a brick and tile work was carried on at the Rosehill, the little hill which lies almost opposite the Corbiehill, on the Cairnbulg turnpike road. That was ample evidence of the clay nature of the land in the neighbourhood.

Further extracts say: "Cod, ling, skate, turbot, whittings, haddocks, mackerel, lobsters, and many other kinds of fish, all of the best quality, and often in great quantities, are caught here in their seasons. A great part of the cod and lobsters is bought up for the London market. The Dutch are in the practice of fishing in summer on this coast, and in 1786, came so near as to preclude the inhabitants from their usual Stations. This practice has been long followed by them, and there is a tradition that, in the beginning of the last century" (seventeenth) "their busses frequented the loch of Strathbeg, about half way between Fraserburgh and Peterhead. Strathbeg at present, has no navigable communication with the sea, there being a bar of sand and bent, nearly a mile in breadth, between them; and an English gentleman is now attempting to drain that loch. A rivulet, called the water of Philorth, separating the parishes of Fraserburgh and Rathen, abounds with trout, especially that species called the phinnick, of a fine flavour. A salmon fishing has also been attempted at its mouth, and along the bay, but has for some time been given up."

Herrings are not mentioned as having been caught and cured, which is rather strange, seeing that in another part of the "Account," mention is made of the herring shoals which pass close to the coast every year. The Dutchmen, who are mentioned as coming to Scotch waters in summer, stole a march upon the Aberdeenshire fishermen. The Dutch knew the value of the herring fishing long before the Scotch did, and the former came to the Aberdeenshire coast at this time to fish for herrings and for nothing else. The Fraserburgh fishermen and the community generally, were just becoming alive to the importance of a herring industry at the close of the eighteenth century. Shortly afterwards, as is shown in another chapter, the business was started on definite lines, and from the day herring fishing became a regular industry in the town, prosperity and progress was the watchword. Salmon fishing in the sea, on the coast of the parish of Fraserburgh, proved a failure up to 1793. Despite repeated attempts to bring success, the said fishing has proved a failure from 1793 to 1912.

After speaking of the climate of the parish and the longevity of the people—mention is made of 20 persons then living, above 80 years of age and some above 90 years—the "Account" says: "This parish appears to have abounded with wood. Large roots of trees, mostly oak, remain still in the mosses.

. . .

The only hill in the vicinity of Fraserburgh is Mormond, covered with moss and heath, elevated 810 feet above the level of the sea; and the more conspicuous, as the country on every side for many miles is low and champaign. Here, as at the Wrekin of Shropshire, 'all friends around' is no unusual toast. In different places are fine mineral springs. An excellent one, of a chalybeate nature, resembling the waters of Peterhead, but reckoned by judges more fit for weak constitutions, was discovered a few years ago, on the south-east corner of the town. A well of freestone has been built, and a neat house erected over it, for the accommodation of those that chuse to drink the water. A lime-stone quarry among the rocks at Broadsea, was formerly wrought, and not being exhausted, may be opened again. The vein of lime-stone runs south; and in the same direction there are quarries for many miles, at short distance from each other, all of an excellent quality, on the banks of the Water of Philorth."

The climate has greatly changed since oak or other trees grew so freely in the Fraserburgh district as the "Account" would indicate. Hardy trees may grow inland, but so far as the sea coast is concerned, trees will really not now grow in Buchan. If they grow at all, it is only in most stunted form. The toast "All friends around," may have been in common use in the parish 120 years ago, but it must have disappeared from the convivial gathering ages ago. Direct and searching enquiry of the oldest natives always elicited the reply, "Never heard of the toast." The mineral (chalybeate) well, referred to in the Account, is the one which was mentioned, 15 years afterwards, in the rather inflated advertisement which appears under the heading of "*Old Aberdeen Journal* Extracts" announcing the opening of the Fraserburgh Baths. Many natives now living will recall the mineral well house, standing where the Dalrymple Street entrance door to the Cafe now is, and remember having often drunk the waters, strongly charged with iron, thereof. It is something new to the natives of Fraserburgh to know that a lime quarry existed among the rocks at Broadsea. It was well known that an excellent lime quarry once existed somewhere about Aucheries, but none of the old Town Council records give any indication that lime quarries were worked within the parish of Fraserburgh.

It is interesting to note that the wages of farm workers in the Fraserburgh district in 1793 were as follows: "Men servants per year, besides victuals, £4 10s. to £6 sterling; of women from £2 to £2 10s. Of men, for shearing in harvest," [scythes had not even then come in use] "£1 to £1 10s. Of women, for ditto, from 15s. to £1. Of men shearing per day, 8d.; of women, ditto, 6d.; Day-labourers, without victuals, 9d." What would present day labourers think of a weekly wage of 4s. 6d., and having to keep themselves out of it? There would not be much left for football matches, etc. Speaking of the town of Fraserburgh the "Account" of 1793 says it "is nearly of a square figure, most of the streets crossing each other at right angles. The houses are neatly built, and covered with slates or tyles. Many new houses have been erected within these few years, and several of them finished in an elegant manner. There are about 100 tenements, each of which contains 22 falls; the original price of each lot was

£16 13s. 4d. stg., or £1,666 13s. 4d. in whole. The only manufacture is linen yarn. Dutch flax, to the value of from £1,500 to £2,000, is annually imported for that purpose. The greatest part of the yarn is exported to other places, and wrought up there, which is a strong proof of the cheapness of labour, a circumstance which affords the best grounds to hope that whatever new manufactures may be introduced here, will have a very fair chance of succeeding." The town has made big strides since its total buildings comprised 100 tenements. With the exception of one or two, the whole of the 100 tenements referred to, have disappeared, and new and improved buildings taken their places. Like the old tenements, the manufacture of linen yarn has long since disappeared from here. The big centres, with improved appliances, have swallowed up an industry which was once the mainstay of many small towns.

Speaking of affairs maritime, the "Account" says: "The harbour is small, but good. According to the tide, there are from 11 to 16 feet water within the harbour, and above 20 feet immediately without, at spring tides. Vessels of 200 tons burden enter at present. Contiguous to the harbour, is a tolerable road for shipping, in a bay nearly a league in length, and half a league broad, with good anchorage ground. Seven vessels, from 50 to 100 tons, employed both in the coasting trade, and in the foreign, belong to this place. Fraserburgh is well situated for trade. In the beginning of this century," [eighteenth] "its commerce was equal, if not superior to that of any other town on the Coast, between Aberdeen and Inverness. At present it requires only encouragement to render it again a port of some consequence." The fleet of trading vessels belonging to Fraserburgh in the end of the eighteenth century, was a very humble one, but shortly afterwards, the industry received a great impetus at Fraserburgh, and in the early part of the following century shipowning was a considerable and important part of the town's trade. The "encouragement" mentioned above, referred to increased harbour accommodation. Further harbour improvements were shortly afterwards carried out. These were followed up by additional new works, which seem endless, but which have made Fraserburgh "again a port of some consequence."

Referring to Broadsea, the "Account" says: "Almost adjoining to the west end of Fraserburgh, is the fishing village of Broadsea. Seven boats belong to it. These boats are let to a tacksman. The fishermen inhabit good houses covered with tiles; to build which, they receive an allowance from the proprietors. They are tenants at will, paying annually a small quit rent." Broadsea has undergone a great change since the above was penned, and all for the better. The tacksman disappeared, and the Broadsea fishermen became freemen in the early part of last century. The number of boats and the fishermen's wealth have enormously increased, and last, but not least, Broadsea is not now a village, but part of the burgh of Fraserburgh. There is nothing further of interest to extract from the old Statistical Account of 1793.

The *Encyclopædia Britannica* of 1797 speaking of Fraserburgh, says: "A small seaport town in the County of Aberdeen, situated in a cheap and populous

country, on the point of land called Kinnairds Head, which is the Southern extremity of the Murray Firth. It has a small, good harbour, made and kept up by the proprietor and the town, and well adapted for the building of small vessels. According to the tides there are 11 to 15 feet of water within the harbour and 20 immediately without at spring tides. Without is a tolerable road for shipping in a bay nearly a league in length and a half league in depth with good anchorage in a sandy bottom. Vessels of 200 tons burden enter the harbour. Fraserburgh contains about 1,000 inhabitants and is well situated for trade with the East Coast of Europe. The town has lately advanced considerably and requires only encouragement to render it a port of some consequence on the East Coast of Scotland. At present it carries on a small trade with the East Sea. Several manufactories are forming in its neighbourhood, and the port is well adapted for the building of small vessels." There is evidently some mistake in the article with regard to the population. Old local records give the number of inhabitants at the close of the eighteenth century at fully 2,000, but there may be some mixing up of the parish population with that of the town.

Roads in the District.—In the outlying districts of Scotland, turnpike, or even accommodation roads, had been few and far between until a comparatively modern date. The following is a reference to roads of Aberdeenshire: "The turnpike road from Aberdeen to Ellon was made prior to the close of the eighteenth century, but the extension from Ellon to Fraserburgh and Peterhead was not opened till 1799" (Report on Aberdeenshire Road Reform, dated 1863). There had therefore only been a rough track to Fraserburgh up to 1799, which accounts for the usual mode of conveyance resorted to being invariably horseback. The present Strichen turnpike road was opened in 1849. Previous to that date an old road of rather primitive nature was used, which ran through the district some little distance to the eastward of, but parallel to, the present Strichen turnpike road.

"Aberdeen Journal" Extracts.—Returning to the old *Aberdeen Journal* extracts, it is found that in the early years of the nineteenth century, the dazzling and sweeping victories of Napoleon were arresting the attention of, if not terrifying the greater number of the European powers. All over Britain, nothing was heard of but military preparations. From 1803 to 1814 the bulk of Fraserburgh news in the *Aberdeen Journal* is confined to reports on the drilling and inspections of the Fraserburgh Battalion of Volunteer Infantry, the Fraserburgh regiment of Local Militia, and the Fraserburgh Volunteer Artillery Company. The Fraserburgh Volunteer Infantry must have been very patriotic, as a paragraph in the *Aberdeen Journal* of 31st August, 1803, says that "the Fraserburgh Volunteers commanded by Captain Fraser, made a voluntary offer to extend their services to any part of Great Britain in case of invasion, which offer has been transmitted to Major General the Marquis of Huntly, to be laid

before the Commander in Chief." Fortunately such services were never required. Naturally, soldiering was popular at this time. In October, 1808, the Fraserburgh Volunteers, which had become 400 strong, were sworn in and enrolled in the Local Militia of the country, being afterwards known as "The 4th Regiment of Aberdeenshire Local Militia." At the periodical inspections the regiment was always highly complimented by the inspecting officer on its excellent drill and general efficiency.

Fraserburgh people seem to have "shone" early as catchers of fish. Strange to say, it was a Mr. James Ritchie of Fraserburgh, the name of the great herring curer of a later date, who brought fame to the "Broch." In the years 1808 and 1813, Mr. Ritchie was "found entitled to the highest Premium (£60) given by the Commissioners and Trustees for Fisheries and Manufacturers, etc., in Scotland, for the greatest quantity of Cod, Ling and Tusk Fish caught" [in the respective years] "agreeable to their Regulations."

The "Waterloo" Saltoun, after five years' service with the Duke of Wellington on the Continent, returned home to his paternal estates in Scotland in the summer of 1814. His tenantry and feuars were overjoyed to have their Chief in their midst, while he was proud to be among his clansmen, practically, for the first time. He first entertained his tenantry on his Highland estates, near Inverness, and afterwards "feasted" the feuars of Fraserburgh and the tenantry on the Philorth estates. Accounts of the rejoicings are given in the *Aberdeen Journals* of 9th and 23rd November, 1814. The paragraphs are reproduced here, not so much for the value of the facts contained in them, as to show the fervid and highly coloured style of the Celtic paragraphist, compared with the matter of fact form of the Fraserburgh writer. Here is the Highlandman's effusion: "Anxious for the welfare and happiness of the tenantry of his estates, Lord Saltoun, with a laudable zeal, has sought every opportunity of becoming acquainted with them individually. For this purpose, he invited the whole to dine with him at Dores, on Friday last. His Lordship, with that condescension and urbanity which always characterizes true greatness, did the honours of the hospitable board in a manner that would have done credit even to the romantic chieftain of Glenaquoich. Numerous Gaelic sentiments were given in the course of the evening, and were received with that peculiar delight and those exalted feelings which they are well calculated to awaken in the bosom of a Highlander, at the feast of the shell. For the amusement of those who could not drink deep of the uproarious joys of the festive board, the dance was opened and kept up with Highland vivacity till an early hour in the morning, when the guests departed, highly delighted with the endearing conduct of their Noble Landlord."

Now follows the "Broch" scribe's effort:—

"Fraserburgh, 17th November, 1814.

"On Friday se'ennight, Lord Saltoun gave a grand Ball and Supper in the Saltoun Inn, Fraserburgh, to his Tenants, the Feuars, and Inhabitants of Fraserburgh, and the neighbouring Ladies and Gentlemen.

"His Lordship, accompanied by the Right Hon. Lady Saltoun, his Mother,

the Hon. Misses Fraser, the Hon. William Fraser, David McDowall Grant, Esq., of Arndilly; William McDowall Grant, Esq., younger of Arndilly; Captain Leith, Colonel Robertson, Alexander Russel, Esq., of Aden; John Gordon, Esq., Cairnbulg; Thomas Gordon, Esq., of Cairness, and several other persons of distinction, arrived in the ball-room about half past 9 o'clock, when immediately the dancing commenced. About one o'clock the company sat down to supper, which afforded a short pause, and recruited the spirits for a renewal of the dance. after supper the dancing recommenced, and was kept up with the greatest glee till about six o'clock in the morning, when the company parted, much satisfied with their Noble Landlord's engaging affability and ease, by which he rendered them all happy. The number present amounted to about 400.

"We are sorry to hear, that his Lordship has left Philorth, on Wednesday last, for London; but it is hoped he will soon return." The people of Fraserburgh must have had some "go" about them in 1814, when they were able to dance "with the greatest glee till about six o'clock in the morning."

Lord Saltoun did not soon return. The unrest in France and the rumoured plottings of Napoleon, who was at the time in semi-confinement in Elba, raised the suspicion of the British Government, who put the naval and military authorities of this country on the alert to be ready for any contingency. No doubt Lord Saltoun had been called to London by the Duke of Wellington, in connection with the steps that were being taken to combat Napoleon should he once again take the field with a French army. At any rate, Lord Saltoun did not return to Philorth till after Waterloo. The part his Lordship played at Waterloo, and a sketch of his general military career, is already given in this book.

Municipal and Population.—The old Barony Town Council managed the affairs of the town and harbour, from 1601 until the year 1840. The Barony Council was elected annually by the Superior of the Burgh, Lord Saltoun, with the approval of the retiring members of Council. As a matter of fact the choice was generally made by the councillors themselves, and the suggested names forwarded to Lord Saltoun for confirmation. The old Barony Town Council was superseded, as regards municipal administration, by the Commissioners elected under the General Police Act of 1833. The provisions of that Act regulating public lighting were adopted in Fraserburgh in the year 1840, at which date the Fraserburgh Gas Light Company was formed, and the remaining provisions of the Police Act with reference to water supply, sewage and general policing, were adopted in the year 1850. In the year 1862 was passed the General Police and Improvement Act. By a resolution of the householders of Fraserburgh, at a meeting held in November, 1870, the Act of 1862 was adopted. This step greatly added to the importance of the ruling authority of the town, in so far as the Burgh could now boast of one senior and two junior Magistrates, who dispensed justice in the local Police Court. On the passing of the Burgh Police Act of 1892, the governing body of the town were styled Burgh Com-

missioners. It was under this Act that the Chief Magistrate obtained the title of Provost. No further change took place on the municipal authority, until the Town Council (Scotland) Act of 1900 was passed, when the title of Burgh Commissioners ceased, and was succeeded by the more dignified title of Town Council. In 1906, in consequence of the average population having reached the limit of 10,000, the Town Council became entitled to ask the Sheriff to increase their number to 15 and to raise the number of Magistrates from 3 to 5. The Sheriff granted the prayer of the petition, and from 1906 Fraserburgh has had, as the head of the municipal authority, a Provost and four Baillies.

When the Burgh Commissioners became the supreme municipal authority, under the Act of 1892, the old Barony Town Council ceased to exist, and a new body was elected by the Feuars to manage their property and the common good of the Burgh, under the name of Feuars Managers, elected triennially by the Feuars of Fraserburgh .

Since the passing of the Act of 1892, the following have been the Provosts of Fraserburgh:—

John Park, shipowner, 1893 to 1896.

John Dickson, fishcurer, 1896 to 1898.

William McConnachie, fishcurer and herring exporter, 1898 to 1900.

John Finlayson, solicitor and bank agent, 1900 to 1913, and still in office.

Provost Finlayson has proved one of the most energetic, resourceful, and progressive Provosts that ever occupied the Civic Chair, a position that he has held longer than any of his predecessors. During his term of office great schemes of improvement have been carried out, the realization of which owes much to his enlightened policy and personal effort. Among these are the erection of the Isolation Hospital at a cost of £6,000; the municipalization of the Gas Works at an outlay of nearly £30,000; the introduction of the Fedderate Water Supply at a cost of about £60,000; and the last and greatest work of all, which will ever remain a monument to his memory, the formation of the new Station Harbour at an expenditure of £150,000. Many new streets have been formed since the Provost took office, one of which is named Finlayson Street in his honour. Other municipal reforms have been carried out, and it is not too much to say that his "reign" has been marked by a forward policy of boldness, enterprise and success, which will keep the name of "Provost Finlayson" fresh in the memory of the inhabitants for generations to come.

By the Act of 1892, the Provost of the Burgh became Chairman of the Harbour Board.

In recognition of his long and valuable public services to the town, Provost Park's portrait was painted at the cost of the community. It now hangs in the Town Hall along with those of other prominent public men who had faithfully served the people of Fraserburgh in previous generations.

It is quite impossible to get a complete list of the old Baillies that served the people of Fraserburgh in the days of the ancient Barony Town Council, but, a roll has been compiled which, though by no means complete, is better than



Photo by Lafayette, Glasgow.

PROVOST FINLAYSON.

passing the subject over in silence. The information has been obtained from various sources, but mostly from that valuable storehouse of information, the parish church Session records. The names of the older Baillies crop up in the Session records in connection with questions of public importance dealt with by the Session. From 1750, the names are taken from the minutes of the Barony Town Council. The following is the list:—

1616	Baillies	Alexander Stewart and William Pendrich.
1670	Baillie	John Craibe.
1704	"	John Bisset.
1719	"	Hay.
1720	"	Ramsay.
1721	"	Ramsay.
1722	"	John Craik.
1723	"	Bisset and Lickly.
1733	"	Lindsay.
1738	"	Robertson.
1750-1781	"	Alexander Ritchie.
1781-1790	"	Alexander Dauney, Commissioner for Lord Saltoun.
1790-1793	"	Daniel.
1793-1811	"	Kelman.
1811-1848	"	Lewis Chalmers, Sen.
1848-1864	"	Lewis Chalmers, Jun.
1864-1866	"	Ross, an Aberdeen advocate.
1866-1871	"	Lachlan McKinnon, an Aberdeen advocate.
1871-1887	"	Sir Alexander Anderson.
1887-1892	"	G. A. Morris, factor for Lord Saltoun.

As already indicated, the passing of the Police Act of 1892 consigned to oblivion the old Barony Town Council, and the "baron" Baillies, a name innocently flavouring of feudal times, who had played an important part in the municipal life of the town for 280 years, disappeared from the stage for ever. The march of progress must not be hindered, but still those having a reverence for the past cannot but heave a sigh at the disappearance of an old landmark which had been closely identified with the progress of Fraserburgh during such a lengthened period.

The following table gives a view of the population of Fraserburgh since 1755:—

Year.	Population.	Year.	Population.
1755 . . .	1,682	1861 . . .	4,503
1791 . . .	2,200	1871 . . .	5,300
1811 . . .	2,271	1881 . . .	7,541
1831 . . .	2,954	1891 . . .	8,352
1851 . . .	4,447	1901 . . .	9,715
		1911 . . .	11,151

In 1913 the Fraserburgh Town Council was composed as follows:—Provost—John Finlayson. Baillies—John Anderson, cabinetmaker; Alexander S. Cow, clothier; Alexander Gordon, fishcurer, and William Mackie, works manager. Councillors—Messrs. Thomas P. Burnett, fishcurer; George Low, fishcurer; John H. Low, chemist; F. W. McLellan, cashier; John Reiach, banker; William Rennie, feuar; A. J. Russell, clothier; George Walker, jun., sailmaker; Charles Will, stevedore, and James Yeats, engineer. Town Clerk—Mr. Francis J. R. Anderson, solicitor.

At the same period the following were the Parish Councillors:—Chairman—Rev. M. P. Johnstone, parish minister, and Messrs. Alexander G. Brown, factor, Witchhill; William Benzie, draper; Charles B. Cranna, saddler; James Chalmers, feuar; A. B. Davidson, fishcurer; William Fraser, fishcurer; Alexander Gerrard, Mariner's Inn; John Hendry, brewer; James Mortimer, feuar; W. W. Pirie, baker; William Rennie, feuar; Andrew Will, farmer. Clerk—Mr. William Pressley.

Facts relating to Fraserburgh in the early part of Last Century.—The only bank in Fraserburgh up to 1835 was a branch of the Old Aberdeen Bank, now incorporated in the Union Bank, whose office was, as mentioned in Chapter I., in the upper floor of the Oak Tree Inn. In September, 1835, the Bank of Scotland opened a branch in Fraserburgh, and this was followed by a branch of the new North of Scotland Bank in 1836. Considering the extent of the trade of the town at this time, there is no doubt but that three banks were ample for the needs of the community. The Fraserburgh postmaster's salary in 1835 was £10 per annum, shortly afterwards raised to £20! Before the 1d. postage rate was established in 1840, the following were the charges for letters posted at Fraserburgh for the places named:—Aberdeen, 6½d.; Banff, 7½d.; Edinburgh, 1s. 0½d., and London, 1s. 3½d. It is no wonder that correspondence was meagre in those days. Business letters had to be sent, but practically only the well-to-do could afford to indulge in friendly or family correspondence.

Many will remember the visit to Fraserburgh, in the early 'eighties of last century, of the late Duke of Edinburgh, who came to the town to officially inspect the local coastguard, but comparatively few will know that William IV., while Duke of Clarence, landed at Fraserburgh and made an inspection of the town. While on a yachting cruise in northern waters in 1826, the Duke touched at Fraserburgh. The visit was a brief one, but while the yacht was berthed at the middle jetty, North Harbour side, the Duke amused himself by playing tricks upon the boys about the harbour.

As was the case at all centres of population over the country, great excitement prevailed in Fraserburgh in connection with the Reform Bill, which was passed in 1832. The great mass of the people were in favour of the Bill, and its treatment by the Tories exasperated the electors to an extraordinary degree. The fever spread to the youths of Fraserburgh, who had no compunction in breaking the windows of the houses of leading Tories in the town, and using

threats of personal punishment. The town seemed to have been seething with a spirit of agitation and determination that the electors' voice should be given effect to. A great public meeting was held in the Masons' Hall, the then most important hall in the town, at which excitement rose to fever heat. Strong resolutions were moved by speakers, whose speeches were of a threatening nature, and of course, the resolutions were carried with acclamation. The speakers vied with each other in denunciation of the House of Lords, whose action was most bitterly resented by the great mass of the people. When intimation was received that the Bill had passed, the people became almost delirious with excitement and delight. Rejoicings were carried out on a grand scale. Windows all over the town were illuminated, and mottoes, derisive of the Lords, were exhibited by many householders. Local Tories had to be very quiet, because it took some considerable time before the excitement, over the passing of the Reform Bill, died down in Buchan.

It is worth noting that the temperance movement made its first appearance in Fraserburgh in 1833. People of the present day imagine that a temperance party had always been in evidence in the community. Previous to the year named, such a thing was never heard or thought of, with the result that alcoholic drinks, were, more or less, partaken of by all the male members of the population. Dram, or rather ale drinking, was part of the daily life of the people in the olden days. The first lecturer who came to Fraserburgh in 1833 as the representative of the Temperance Society, was a Mr. Macdonald. The first meeting was held in a vestry, behind a Mr. Morgan's (tailor) shop, but the attendance was very disappointing, totalling only about a dozen persons. Mr. Macdonald was disappointed with the turnout, and sent a messenger out to the streets with instructions to invite all that he met to come to the meeting. A rather miscellaneous crowd responded. At the close of the meeting the lecturer called upon those present to come forward and sign the pledge. One of these evidently had quite recently been on most familiar terms with "John Barleycorn." Mr. Macdonald noticed this and inquired of the man if he understood what he was signing. The man was a humorist, as witness his reply: "Perfectly weel, sir; I canna drink after this; but I can sup as muckle as I like wi' a speen." Mr. Macdonald was followed in 1838 by Rev. Robert Gray Mason, who preached entire abstinence from all kinds of intoxicating drinks, wines included. Mr. Mason had great influence with the people, and his work was very successful in Fraserburgh and district. Some 10 or 20 years ago, old people in Fraserburgh referring to the temperance question, often mentioned Mr. Mason's name with great respect and evident affection. Mr. Mason took a great interest in soirées, and sometimes filled the whole programme himself, so versatile an entertainer was he. The first soirée held in Fraserburgh, was at Christmas, 1835, and came off in the Saltoun Inn Hall. The promoters were Rev. John Cumming, parish minister, and Baillie Chalmers. At a soirée held in the Borrowstoness Yard, Castle Street, a few years afterwards, at which Mr. Mason was the great hero, the refreshments served to the audience comprised tea and red herrings! Where there was such a crowd of people, a simple menu was of vast importance!

It is always interesting to compare the prices of foodstuffs at different periods. Here are the prices of some eatables in Fraserburgh in 1835:—Cran of herrings, 8s.; cod, 3d. each; haddocks, 3d. per dozen; best beef, 3d. to 4d. per lb., and eggs, 3d. to 4d. per dozen. Owing to the heavy duty then, tea and sugar were double the price of what they are now. The prices of haddocks, beef and eggs quoted above, are enough to make housewives of the present day weep.

It will interest natives to know that Fraserburgh in early days possessed a meal mill which did a considerable business. The situation of the mill was unique, viz., among the rocks on the seashore, which now forms the South Harbour. The mill would have stood somewhere in the neighbourhood of the site which is now occupied by the weighbridge, at the head of the middle jetty. The mill dam formed a considerable sheet of water immediately beside Gray's sawmill, while the mill lade was an open burn that ran through the town. A large portion of the produce of the mill was shipped to London, and the meal was carried direct from the mill to vessels lying at the middle jetty side of the North Harbour, the upper part of which was the only harbour available for traffic at Fraserburgh for many years.

Water Supply.—No doubt the inhabitants of Fraserburgh now living are of opinion that the town has always enjoyed a regular water supply, brought from a distance by pipes. That was not the case however. Indeed, for over 200 years after the town was erected into a free port and Burgh of Barony, the inhabitants' needs, as regards water, were satisfied from ordinary sunk wells located in different parts of the town. One important well of this kind, which was situated not far from the head of the middle jetty, was in existence for some considerable time into the nineteenth century. These wells were like the ordinary country wells, the water from which was drawn by buckets. Being generally left open and unprotected in those days, the wells must have been a source of trouble to parents, and a decided danger to children. That the latter was the case is proved by the following paragraph taken from the *Aberdeen Journal* of 27th August, 1770, "Wednesday afternoon, a child of about four years of age, unfortunately fell into a well in Fraserburgh, and was drowned." No doubt, many similar accidents had happened in the course of the 200 odd years during which open wells had attracted children. As the inhabitants increased, the supply of water from the old wells began to be inadequate to the needs of the people. Besides, as trade developed, the wells became less sanitary than formerly, and something had to be done. In the end of the eighteenth century, the old Town Council, the body that had charge of the municipal affairs of the town, took the water supply question up and appointed, what was really a committee, under the name of "The Managers of the Water Fund." The old Statistical Account (1793) says: "And they" [the feuars] "have it now under consideration with this fund," [rents of land] "to bring water in pipes, into the town, for the use of the inhabitants." It took the old Town Council,

or "The Managers of the Water Fund," eleven years to bring the proposed supply in pipes to Fraserburgh. It was in the year 1804 that the first regular water supply was brought into the town. The place from whence it came is named in the old records "Bogs," evidently somewhere in the neighbourhood of the farm of Pitblae. At least the name Pitblae is also mentioned in the records in connection with this first water supply. The small reservoir, no bigger than a henhouse, that lies a little to the east of the old Smiddyhill Toll Bar, was built as the source storage of this wonderful water supply. The pipes, which, by the bye, were wooden, ran from the smiddyhill reservoir, down the miniature valley and passed quite near the north side of Kirkton farm dam from whence they were directed to the reservoir in the West Link park. The tract from this last named reservoir to the town, ran through the Links. The total cost of the works was something like £750.

About the year 1845, the second water supply was introduced to Fraserburgh. The source was at George Yule's farm, now known as Smiddyhill. The route which the pipes took, was through the south side of Lochpots farm, through the fields lying at the south side of the Dennyduff road, and into the town near where is now the Central School. The tract was continued down past the Free Church School, from whence it was carried to a reservoir, which stood on the spot on which now is built the shop at the Junction of Manse Street and Hanover Street, belonging to Mr. A. B. Davidson, fishcurer. An extension of this supply took place a few years afterwards when a big dam was formed at Greenbank, and additional water introduced into it, which added materially to the town's supply. Mr. Sutherland, then fishery officer, and Mr. Reid of the Kinnaird Head Lighthouse, father of the octogenarian who now lives in King Edward Street, both tried their hands at engineering in connection with the Greenbank supply. For a quarter of a century the Bogs and Greenbank supplies had to meet the domestic needs of the community. For trade purposes the supply was practically "a sealed book," and in consequence, the most of the fishcurers had draw-wells sunk in their yards, the remains of many of which are still in evidence.

In 1850, when the General Police Act of 1833 was adopted in Fraserburgh, "the Managers of the Water Fund" handed over the net yearly proceeds of that fund to the Police Commissioners, who thenceforth undertook the management of the water supply.

In the year 1870 the third water supply was brought to Fraserburgh from the source of the Glashiemyre Burn, about 4 miles west of Fraserburgh, from which the average supply was 135,000 gallons per 24 hours. In 1875 the Tyrie Burn was annexed and helped for a time, but as the trade and population increased, the water supply became unequal to the demand. Under a Provisional Order, dated 1883, a further new supply was obtained by means of search pipes extended further along the Glashiemyre area, upon the lands of Ardlaw and Tyrie Mains, which yielded about 300,000 gallons per day, averaged over 12 months. The total cost of the water supplies brought in by the Police Com-

missioners from 1870 to 1896 was about £25,000. Notwithstanding the work of bringing in supply after supply, it was seen some years ago that the total quantity coming to the town was quite inadequate to the needs of the community. In trying to add to the supply during the fishing season, some water was tapped which was not altogether beyond suspicion in quality. Murmurs, whether true or false, it would be difficult to determine, of typhoid and other terrible diseases, spread abroad, and the Town Council, in order to relieve the stress of water famines once and for all, wisely resolved to go in for the Fedderate Scheme. It was described by some economists as an unnecessarily extravagant scheme. That is a fallacious argument. There is nothing so precious to a community as a supply of pure water, and, instead of adopting half measures, which are never satisfactory, the authorities of the town consulted the best interests of the ratepayers in going in for a scheme that will give a big supply of water to the community for many years to come. It will pay handsomely in the end. The Fedderate Scheme is expensive, but consider the splendid supply of water it affords! Instead of banning, the people will live to bless the Town Council for its enterprise and energy in getting possession of the Fedderate Burn before the Peterhead people laid hold of it. Much dissatisfaction was expressed with the quality of the Fedderate water when it was first introduced. It is gradually improving, and as soon as the effects of agricultural manures put into the ground, are eliminated, the water will no doubt become excellent. Fedderate yields a daily supply of a million gallons at a total cost of about £55,000.

Gas.—One of the greatest steps forward ever taken by the people of Fraserburgh, was the introduction of gas in the year 1840. Prior to that time, all the houses in the town were lit either by the old-fashioned candle, or the “eely-dolly,” the burning power of which was dogfish oil. Churches, public halls, and public houses were all illuminated by candles, the smell arising from the “eely-dolly” being intolerable in a building where there was a large assemblage of people. It was for this reason that the churches were always lit by candles. This process of lighting often afforded great fun to the boys who attended church in the winter evenings with their parents. Periodically the beadle had to go round the church and snuff the candles, and in doing so he often snuffed the flame of a candle entirely out. This was great fun for the youngsters, who paid far more attention to the beadle’s snuffing operations than to the minister’s sermon. The minister had sometimes to stop speaking and reprove the boys for their levity in this connection. There is still one person living in Fraserburgh (1912) who recalls with almost childish innocence, the delight that he, as a boy in the ’thirties of last century, felt, when the beadle had the misfortune to snuff completely out a few of the candles in the course of his round.

There was a considerable prejudice against gas among the common people. They took up the idea that it was a most dangerous illuminant, and that if it were introduced into the town, the inhabitants would run the risk of being

prematurely blown up to the skies. This strong opposition on the part of "the man on the street" retarded the introduction of gas for some time. The opposition was at last overcome, and on 6th May, 1840, the following Interim Committee was appointed by those favourable to the project, to carry out the work of lighting the town with gas, viz.:—Messrs. L. Chalmers, Alexander Ramsay, Robert Stephen, John Robertson, James Lovie, John Park, John Wemyss, David Milne, Thomas Walker, George Officer, James Smith, George Angus and James Park. These were all the men "of light and leading," or, to use a Buchan term, "the heids o' the toun" in their day. Of course, Baillie L. Chalmers was the man who really "forced the pace," and, as was the case with every big public question during his long reign, was the one who brought the question to the practical stage. A company was formed and provisional directors were appointed on 17th May, 1841; but it was not till 1st December, 1841, that the first regular board of directors was appointed. Their names, which differ little from the list given above, are as follows:—Messrs. L. Chalmers, James Smith, George Officer, David Milne, John Wemyss, Thomas Walker, Robert Stephen, James Park, John Park, James Lovie, Peter Paton and Alexander Bruce.

As the time approached for putting the gas into practical use, an undercurrent of excitement prevailed in the town lest some untoward accident should happen, and "Gas" was the sole topic of conversation for some time before it was turned on. Gas exhibitions are now of frequent occurrence. Fraserburgh may claim to be the pioneer in this respect. In order to satisfy the people of Fraserburgh as to the utility and great value of gas as an illuminant, it was arranged that the house of Baillie Chalmers, the best in town, should be the first to be lighted up by gas, and then shown to the people at large. Accordingly the suite of handsome rooms facing Frithside Street were fitted up with gas, and public intimation made that the rooms would on a certain evening be illuminated with gas, which the inhabitants were invited to witness from the street. The eventful evening came, and "the hail toun" crowded to the Baillie's residence to see gas-light for the first time. The rooms were brilliantly lit up, and as the blinds were not drawn, the blaze of light that flooded the rooms and shone out upon the street completely amazed the simple folks of the "Broch." The light had such an effect upon the oldest of the people, who at that time had still the remnants of the superstitious age hanging about them, that some of them were heard to mutter "that it wisna canny."

Although admitted on all hands that gas was a marvellous light, the fisher population still looked upon it with grave suspicion as being a highly explosive and dangerous illuminant. The following story proves this: A man named Fowler was the tenant of the grocer's shop at the corner of Commerce and Cross Streets (presently occupied by Mr. Henry Young), shortly after the introduction of gas. A boy in the shop carelessly threw a piece of burning paper into a small keg of powder, with the result that an explosion followed, and considerable damage was done to the premises. A Cairnbulg fishwife hearing of the accident said, "that's yer gran' gas, the seener we're oot o' the 'Broch' the better."

In its early "career" in Fraserburgh, gas was often wrongly blamed in connection with accidents, but it has outlived all ignorant calumniators, and proved itself to be one of the greatest blessings of the age, and an indispensable "companion" to those of both high and low estate. Times have considerably changed since gas was first introduced into Fraserburgh. Directors and shareholders' meetings were not called by printed notice, but by the town's crier, "by tuck of drum." Those who did not hear the "cry," or were from home when the crier perambulated the town, were left out in the cold, as it were. One of the instructions to the Gas Manager was that the lamp at the Fountain was to be left lit, until the arrival of the mail and passenger coach from Aberdeen. The arrival of the Aberdeen coach was the great event of the day in Fraserburgh before trains ran, and at the stopping place there was generally a crowd of people hanging about. Although the streets of the town were otherwise in darkness, a good light always awaited the coach in the winter season. It is interesting to know that when gas was first burned in Fraserburgh there were no meters in use. At least the charge was made, not by the number of feet consumed, but by the number of burners used, which were charged so much per hour each when burning. It is said that the Fraserburgh Gas Company had a hard struggle for existence in its early years. The above condition of charging is a good and sufficient explanation of the primary struggles of the Company! If the same conditions were obtaining in Fraserburgh now, the Town Council would be ruined in a couple of years, unless they could provide a check clerk for every room in the town.

The lighting of the streets of the town and of the harbour leading lights by gas, had been promptly taken up by the authorities, as mention is made in the Company's minute book of 1842 of the terms upon which gas was to be supplied to the Police and Harbour Commissioners for the purposes named. As already indicated, the Gas Company had rather a chequered career during the first thirty years of its existence. From the year 1870, when the big herring fishings set in, the Gas Company, like the town, prospered amazingly. During the last thirty-five years the profits were abnormal. The Town Council took over the concern in 1911 at a cost of nearly £30,000. Roughly speaking, shareholders who paid £500 for their shares, lifted £2,000 for the same shares when the Town Council's purchase was completed—not a bad investment, seeing that substantial dividends were paid to the shareholders yearly. Not many Bonanzas like this a-going in these times! The following is a list of those who have been managers of the Fraserburgh Gas Works since gas lighting was introduced. The first four gentlemen were what may be called honorary managers, while the last three were practical gas experts:—

Robert Stephen,	Agent,	North of Scotland Bank.
Mr. Lawson,	"	"
Alexander Watson,	"	"
Thomas Park,	Shipowner.	

James Matthews.
John Lang.
H. G. Ritchie.

The present Gas Manager (appointed near the close of 1912) is Matthew D. Campbell.

Freemasonry.—Freemasonry was early practised in Fraserburgh, but unfortunately in the olden days the institution had many difficulties to encounter, and had to close its doors on more than one occasion. In the course of its life in Fraserburgh however, it has done substantial, good and progressive work, and its members included many men who were a credit to the craft, and good, useful citizens. Solomon Lodge was originally instituted in 1765 as No. 125, but though it succeeded famously for a time, interest in its management and affairs generally, gradually lessened, and after some years of a struggling existence, the Lodge collapsed altogether towards the end of the eighteenth century. Had the Lodge gone on continuously from the date of its inception till now, all records would have been preserved, and there would have been no difficulty in finding material upon which to build a readable history of the Lodge. As it is, there are no records available of the early life of the Lodge, and therefore any notice written regarding it, must of necessity be of a “scrappy” character. No doubt, on both occasions when the Lodge stopped operations and there was no “official home” for the papers, the then secretaries had taken charge of them. Probably they had been carefully preserved for a year or two, but time had left them of little value or importance in the eyes of their custodians, and no doubt in the hands of some illiterate housewife they had disappeared at some “spring cleaning” time, when the lodge and its affairs had passed out of memory. After a period of “suspended animation,” the Lodge was resuscitated in one of the opening years of the nineteenth century. At this time, shipbuilding was developing, and the foundations of the great herring fishing industry were being laid. Indeed, the new century gave new life and vigour to the trade of Fraserburgh, and it was natural that such an important institution as the Freemasons’ Lodge should be among the things that came to life again. The Lodge was re-established as No. 287, the old number of 125 having unfortunately been lost on account of the Lodge having been dormant in 1801, when the revision of the Roll of Lodges, etc., was completed.

The above dates show that Freemasonry was an important factor in the town’s life long ago. Although there is no documentary evidence on the subject, there is no doubt but that the craft must have had its supporters and a regular organization in Fraserburgh, long before the establishment of the first Solomon Lodge in 1765. This is proved by the following inscription on a table gravestone in Fraserburgh Churchyard:—“Under this lies interred the corps of Andrew Brown, Free Mason in Fraserburgh who deceased May 17 [year uncut] aged 56 years. Also of Isabell Mitchell, his spouse, who deceased May 28, 1702, aged 61 years, etc.” It is unfortunate that the date of Mr.

Brown's death is not recorded. His wife died in 1702, and as it is quite evident that he predeceased her, he must have died in the end of the seventeenth century. It is therefore apparent that Freemasonry had its votaries and ardent members in Fraserburgh some 220 years ago.

In a historical sketch in the book of "Bye-Laws of the Fraserburgh Lodge of Freemasons, No. 1055," it is stated that the Solomon Lodge was re-opened on 2nd November, 1807. This does not square very well with the following paragraph which appeared in the *Aberdeen Journal* of 29th January, 1806: "The Solomon's Lodge of Fraserburgh held their annual meeting on 6th current, when, after gathering up their quarterly contributions and settling accounts of Society, which still continues in a flourishing state, they proceeded to the election of office-bearers for ensuing year. The following were appointed, viz.:—R. W. Alexander Turriff, Master; Alexander Morice, Depute Master; George Low, Senior Warden; George Walker, Junior Warden; John Burnett, Treasurer; William McKay, Secretary; Lewis Chalmers, Clerk; James Scott, Arthur Rankin and William Afield, Deacons." It is therefore seen that the lodge was in full swing before 1807, although it may not have been officially recognized by the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

The revived charter, as already indicated, was dated 2nd November, 1807. There must have been a distinct change in the personnel of the Lodge, at least so far as the office-bearers were concerned, within a couple of years. The office-bearers, who were the petitioners for the resuscitation of the Lodge, at 2nd November, 1807, were:—Right Worshipful Master, Dr. Charles Leslie; Depute Master, William Kelman; Senior Warden, Charles Cumine; Junior Warden, John Gordon; Treasurer and Clerk, Lewis Chalmers; Secretary, William Leslie. It is thus found that with the exception of Lewis Chalmers, all the office-bearers of 1807 are new, when compared with the list of 1806. Socially, the office-bearers of 1807 completely obliterated those of 1806 reported in the old *Aberdeen Journal*. No doubt, when approaching the Grand Lodge for a new charter, the members of Solomon had wished to impress those at headquarters with the importance of their Lodge as exemplified by the high social position of its office-bearers. The Grand Master Mason who signed, along with other Grand Lodge office-bearers, the revived charter, was George, Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV. With the exception of this charter and a beautiful and artistic copper plate, from which were transferred the members' diplomas, all documentary evidence affecting the history of the Lodge has completely disappeared, as has been already noted. It is understood that the Lodge's headquarters were in the old Town Hall, the site of which is now occupied by the Town House.

The revived Lodge had an active and useful existence for a period of thirty years, but in 1837 it was obliged to close its doors on account of the falling off in the membership. This was entirely due to trade depression. For fully 10 years prior to 1840, the herring trade was in a deplorable condition, and many firms of curers of high standing were ruined and disappeared. Many of these Curers were warm supporters of Solomon's, and with their downfall came the

downfall of the Lodge. After a lapse of twenty-six years, the Lodge was again reopened. A number of old members started the movement and they, along with a considerable admixture of young men and young Masons, had the Lodge formally resuscitated as No. 197 on the occasion of the Prince of Wales' (afterwards King Edward VII.) marriage in 1863. Freemasonry has gone on prospering and progressing in Fraserburgh ever since. From 1863 Mr. James McAllan, sen., builder, College Bounds, was, for many years, the leading spirit and Right Worshipful Master of the Lodge.

People pretty well advanced in years, will remember the annual walk of the Freemasons, when, headed by a brass band, and all in full regalia, the brethren marched in procession to College Bounds for the R.W.M., and thereafter perambulated the principal streets of the town. This was the great event on Auld Yule Day for many years, and, in the eyes of the boys of Fraserburgh at least, was a very impressive spectacle. In the evening the Masons' ball, which was considered a rather "swagger" affair in the 'sixties of last century, took place in the Harbour Commissioners' Hall, now the upper part of Batchan's Buildings, Frithside Street. Other two very enthusiastic Freemasons about this time were the late Mr. Alexander Simpson, jeweller, Broad Street, and Mr. Alexander Malcolm, jun., rope and sailmaker.

Freemasonry made such strides in Fraserburgh after the opening of this century, that for the five years prior to 1909 no fewer than two hundred new members joined the Solomon Lodge. About this time it was thought it would be in the interests of Masonry if another lodge were established in Fraserburgh. There was ample material available for the successful "running" of another lodge. Mr. John Hendry, brewer, one of the most enthusiastic and amply equipped Freemasons that ever was in Fraserburgh, was a moving spirit in the project. He, supported by several other enthusiasts, petitioned the Grand Lodge to resuscitate the Fraserburgh Lodge, No. 287, which was established in 1807 and became dormant in 1837. To the great regret of the promoters, the Grand Lodge intimated that as none of the original members of 287 was alive to claim his mother lodge, that number could not be granted. It was however, indicated that the old name "The Fraserburgh Lodge," with a new number, would be granted. The negotiations were brought to a successful issue, and the new Lodge is known as "The Fraserburgh Lodge of Freemasons, No. 1055." The new Lodge was opened in 1909 with the following as office-bearers:— R.W.M., John Noble Hendry, P.M., 197 ; William Donald, P.M., 197, D.M; Dr. Beddie, S.M.; James Yeats, S.W.; Alfred J. Russell, J.W.; W. S. F. Wilson, Secretary; James D. McIntosh, Treasurer; Thomas P. Burnett, Chaplain; James R. Miller, S.D.; George Murison, J. D.; William Rennie, I.G. Now the two Lodges are working in perfect harmony, and it is to be hoped that neither will ever have to shut its door for lack of support.

Free Gardeners' Society.—This Society was first established in Fraserburgh as far back as 1790, and was originally named the "Saltoun Lodge," or

"Gardeners' Friendly Society of Fraserburgh." The original minute book of the Society is in the possession of the present day members, but unfortunately the first four leaves of the book are amissing. The first date of a meeting given in the minute book is 22nd June, 1795, but the following paragraph taken from the old *Aberdeen Journal* of 11th July, 1791, and gives a picturesque account of the first annual meeting, etc. The paragraph is as follows :—

"Yesterday the 17th current, being Lord Saltoun's birthday, the Saltoun Lodge Society of Gardeners belonging to this place held their first annual meeting. After settling the necessary business of the Society, the brethren walked in an orderly procession through the principal streets with two fine suits of colours and a band of music selected for the occasion. They were all decorated with the finest flowers of the season, dressed up in greatest taste. After the procession they sat down to an elegant entertainment in the ball-room, prepared by Green; and were honoured by the company of several gentlemen of the neighbourhood, and by the clergy of the place. A number of loyal and patriotic toasts were given, particularly success to Saltoun Lodge—Lord Saltoun, and many returns of the day—Lady Saltoun and the Family—The King and all his friends—The Wooden Walls—The Army—The Land of Cakes—The Town of Fraserburgh —The master and office-bearers for having conducted the whole in such a regular and elegant manner.

"The evening concluded with a ball, which was conducted with regularity and decorum which did the greatest credit to the brethren in office, as well as to every individual.

"This Society has not been a twelvemonth in being and already consists of upwards of 120 members, in which are included most of the gentlemen and principal inhabitants of this place—and bids fair to be as flourishing a society as any in this country."

It is a pity that the loss of the opening pages of the minute book renders it impossible to give the names of the original office-bearers of the Society. The first time the list is given is on 1st August, 1795. It is as follows:—William Smith (re-elected), Master; John Milne, Depute Master; William Grieg (re-elected), Treasurer; James Gray (re-elected), Secretary; Sebastian Davidson and John Murdoch, Stewards; Joseph Bruce, Clerk; James Gray, Officer, with a committee of 22. The Society did not confine its operations or its membership to Fraserburgh, for on the committee were the following:—John Henderson. Watermill; William Dalrymple, Pittendrum; John Cumine, Rosehearty; John Pyper, Aucheries; Alexander Lawrance, Cairnbulg; John Smith, Invernorth, and Alexander Walker, Merryhillock, etc. Mr. William Smith, the Master, must have been an enthusiastic member, for he presented a set of colours to the Society. For this gift, and the great exertions he had made for the success of the Society since its inception, he received the profuse thanks of members in a minute dated 1st August, 1795. The Society must have done excellent work, and the benefits derived from membership in those far back days, must have

been considerable, for applications to be admitted to membership came from all parts of Buchan, even as far away as St. Fergus. People living in Aberdeen became members. The executive of the Society comprised many of the leading men of the town, who looked well after the interests of members.

At this time of day, the idea of a famine in the Buchan district would appear grotesque or absurd. It was not ever thus. The extraordinary weather and the failure of the crops in the year 1799, brought famine very near the doors of the poorer classes in Fraserburgh and district during the following winter. The Gardeners' Society promptly took up the question of securing supplies of oatmeal for its members, and for those more or less directly connected with them. Mr. Fraser of Kirkton, a cadet of the Philorth family and factor for Lord Saltoun, who was an active Gardener, seems to have taken a leading part in adopting measures to prevent starvation among the people. A minute of the Society dated both December, 1799, says: "The meeting in the first place express their gratitude and thanks to Mr. Fraser of Kirkton, for his goodness in suggesting to the members of this Society the propriety and necessity of adopting a plan for supplying themselves with meal on this alarming occasion." The practical value of the Society was shown at this critical juncture.

Among those who were members and active workers on behalf of the Society at the close of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century were:—Mr. William Fraser of Memsie, Baillie Kelman, Lewis Chalmers, the elder, afterwards Baron Baillie; Phineas Daniel, a lawyer; a Dr. Leslie, and Dalziel, the famous "Broch" watchmaker, etc. When the upper part of the North Pier was built, the Gardeners' Society generously contributed £100 towards the cost of the work. It also gave a subscription of ten guineas to the fund that met the cost of the first lifeboat that Fraserburgh ever possessed. These facts show the enterprising spirit which possessed the members. It will be interesting to many to know that it was the Gardeners' Society that built the Saltoun Hotel in 1801. The Gardeners' old minute book discloses the fact that Saltoun Square, up to the first quarter of last century was known as "The Green," a semi-public place, possessed at one time by every town of any size in Scotland. So far as Fraserburgh is concerned, "The Green" is a dead-letter to the present generation, but it is well to put on record the fact that Fraserburgh could once boast of this particular locality.

With regard to the building of the Saltoun Hotel, the tradesmen seem to have been as troublesome a hundred years ago as they are to-day. When the offers for the erection of the hotel were accepted, the cost amounted to £719 3s. 3d., but before the building was finished the Society had disbursed £1,200 14s. 7d., rather a heavy increase. There were only two offers for occupancy of the hotel after it was built. Mr. John Shirras, vintner, Old Deer, offered £52 12s. a year of rent for a lease of fourteen years. For a lease of three years, Mr. Daniel Green, the keeper of the famous hostelry in Fraserburgh at this period, offered £40 per year. The committee of the Society accepted the man who offered the big rent. They lived to rue it. He was financially

unfit to meet the calls in connection with such a hotel. He was continually "in deep water," and after being only a year or two in the hotel, during which he was a continual source of worry to the Society, he failed. No doubt the Society had lost sharply through him. When Shirras was on his last legs, the Society tried to get a new tenant for the "Saltoun." The advertisement dated September, 1804, offering the place for let is rather an interesting document. It reads: "Saltoun Inn, Fraserburgh. That new and elegant inn and offices in Fraserburgh presently possessed by John Shirras, are to be let by public roup within said inn upon Saturday the 12th November next for such a number of years as may be agreed on—entry at Martinmas or Whitsunday first. The inn contains two parlours, dining room, 6 bedrooms and kitchen, a large Hall and drawing room, garret room, . . . and fitted up with servants' beds. The offices consist of . . . and a commodious garden and stable yard, with a pump well in the place. The tenant may also be accommodated with an enclosed park situated within half a mile of the town. The present tenant has been in the practice of keeping a post-chaise and saddle horses which have met with good employment. From the rapid advance which Fraserburgh is making in building and settlers, the late improvements, and accommodation now obtained of a plentiful supply of excellent spring water brought in pipes at two miles distance—added to the town's lying in a fertile corner of the county where necessities of every sort can always be had and purchased at a moderate rate, renders this inn a good opening for a steady, respectable tenant—and such will meet with every encouragement from the proprietors." The advertisement resulted in a Mr. Thomas McLachlan renting the hotel, which he occupied until Whitsunday, 1814. At that date Mr. James Cruickshank, vintner, Fraserburgh, entered the hotel as tenant. This Mr. Cruickshank was the father of Mr. James Cruickshank, for many years a well-known writer in Fraserburgh, in whose office the late Mr. John Proctor, Town Clerk, was, until Mr. Cruickshank's death. The Cruickshanks occupied the hotel for quite half a century.

For rather a lengthened period the Society did valuable work, its operations covering a large section of the community. The members comprising the rank and file of the Society began to lose interest in its affairs about 1810, and its prosperity gradually declined. The last minute in the old book is dated 25th July, 1814, but there is reason to believe that it carried on its beneficent work for several years after 1814 before finally suspending operations and closing its doors. The lodge was resuscitated on 21st October, 1891. The Worthy Master was Mr. Charles A. Pressley, grocer, while the other office-bearers were Messrs. Alexander Smart, clothier; James Burnett, fishcurer; Alexander Noble, John Purdie, clothier; William Donald, Ironmonger; A. G. Gavin, porter; John McKay, clothier; George Whyte was Treasurer, and Alexander Ferguson, Secretary. The affairs of the Lodge have been wisely and carefully managed and the benefits which members have received, are a tribute to the value and usefulness of such societies as the Free Gardeners. Besides giving most generously to members, the Lodge has now on hand funds amounting to £1,500.

The present (1912) office-bearers are:—Worthy Master, Mr James R. Cooper, hairdresser ; and Messrs. George Taylor, A. Christie, William Flett, J. Barclay, A. Minto, A. Cruickshank, A. Ritchie, with George Gordon, Treasurer, and William Gordon, Secretary. The new National Insurance Act will make the Free Gardeners' Society of more importance and of more value to members than ever. It is now like other friendly societies of a similar nature, more or less connected with the State. There are at present other four friendly societies doing good work in Fraserburgh. These are, The Loyal Order of Ancient Shepherds, A.U., The Oddfellows' Society, The Foresters, and The Rechabites.

Volunteering.—Much was heard of volunteering in Fraserburgh in the beginning of last century, but when Napoleon Bonaparte was despatched to St. Helena, it was thought the days of volunteering were at an end. For forty-four years the people of this country had no disturbing dreams about invasion, and their sleep was one of peaceful security. Unfortunately, the long period of repose came to an unexpected end. In 1859, a leading European power once more threatened Great Britain, and into the threat was read the possibilities of invasion. Britain practically accepted the challenge. Seeing the danger to which the country was exposed, in consequence of the smallness of the standing army, civilians, with true feelings of patriotism, rushed to arms, as it were, all over the country. The great and unique movement, known as the volunteer movement, was inaugurated in 1859. Though quite a voluntary army, the citizen soldiers have been a real force and a great additional strength to the nation's resources. Fraserburgh readily responded to the call, and on 22nd July, 1859, a public meeting of the inhabitants was held in the Town House, Lord Saltoun presiding, at which it was resolved to form a Volunteer Artillery Company in Fraserburgh. The corps was known as "The Fraserburgh Volunteer Artillery Company," or "5th Aberdeenshire." The leading figures at the initiatory meeting, in addition to Lord Saltoun, were Baillie Chalmers, Mr. James A. Flett, Dr. Mellis and Mr. William Woodman, parochial schoolmaster.

At the second meeting held on 7th December, 1859, sixty persons were enrolled as effective members, and thirty-three as honorary members, or pecuniary contributors. Immediately afterwards there was quite a rush for places in the ranks, and the membership went far beyond the required number. The government fixed the establishment strength of the Company at 80, with 1 Captain, 1 First Lieutenant, 1 Second Lieutenant. The first officers chosen were: Captain, Lewis Chalmers; First Lieutenant, George Wallace, banker; Second Lieutenant, Dr. Mellis, and Surgeon, Dr. Grieve. When the Company was first formed in the end of 1859, the formal taking of the oath of allegiance to Queen Victoria was overlooked. The error was rectified on 10th and 14th August, 1860, when 83 officers and men took the oath before Mr. John Park, J.P., father of the late Provost Park. Of the 83 volunteers who took the oath and subscribed the roll on the dates referred to in the old Artillery memorandum book, only the following now survive:—Sir George Anderson, treasurer of the

Bank of Scotland; Mr. James Blackhall, bank agent; ex-Baillie Thomas Brebner; Mr. George Angus, of the North of Scotland and Town and County Bank, Aberdeen; Mr. Alexander Ritchie, shoemaker, High Street; Mr. Alexander B. Henderson, shoemaker; Mr George Walker, J.P., Old Manse, and Mr. George Macallan, World's End, and Mr. James Tindall, now of Aberdeen. The above shows what the ravages of fifty-three long years can do.

There were no government grants when volunteering was started in Fraserburgh in 1859, and each man had to pay for his own uniform, amounting to something like £2 14s. 6d. The uniform consisted of a blue tunic and blue pair of trousers, the latter having a narrow red stripe running down each leg, together with a grey cap called a shako, having a glazed peak. The first drill instructor was Sergeant Wells, a handsome man, standing some 6 feet 2 inches. The place where the volunteers first started drill, was in Strachan's School playground. The Fraserburgh Artillery Company was all along one of outstanding merit, and did excellent work throughout the whole of its career. For smartness at drill, it could hold its own with any Company in the north, the eulogiums passed on the officers and men by the Inspecting Officer at the annual inspections, being in the highest degree flattering. As to shooting with the big guns and carbines, first at the Aberdeen Wapinschaw and thereafter at Banff, Fraserburgh was always well to the front. Indeed, on more than one occasion, Fraserburgh pitted against the best Artillery volunteering strength of the north, took premier honours. The Artillery Company was a credit to Fraserburgh, and the inhabitants were proud of it.

The Company was disjoined from Aberdeenshire, and, along with Peterhead, was attached to Banffshire Brigade in 1884. There seemed something incongruous in Fraserburgh being styled the 7th First "Banffshire" Artillery, and the name really never appealed to the men, although, thanks to the energy of the commanding officer, the Company maintained its high reputation to the last moment of its existence. For physique, the Fraserburgh Artillery was always famous, and at the last inspection at camp in Forfarshire at which the Company was present, the General who inspected the camp, on seeing the "Broch" stalwarts on parade, broke into language of admiration more forcible than classical. On account of the absence of written or verbal facts, it is impossible to say much of interest regarding the Company prior to 1873. The author of this book joined the Company in October of that year, and after a service of 31 years, retired in 1905 with the rank of Honorary Captain. On severing his connection with the Company, the men presented him with his portrait, and in acknowledging, he made a reminiscent speech, of which the following is a part:—"If time will permit I would like to say a few words on the changes that have taken place on the Company since I first joined it. How the ceaseless wheel of time goes round! It seems to me like yesterday since the late John Bisset, George Robertson, John Blackhall, now a banker in England, James Milne, solicitor, and I took the oath of service before Captain Mellis in the

Armoury, in what was the Harbour Commissioners' Hall, and which room is now occupied by Messrs. John S. Batchan & Co. as their private office. That was over 30 years ago. The battery then was in the Castle Park, which is now the site of the Kinnaird Head Works. We then defended Fraserburgh against all comers, with 32 pounder smooth bore guns, the vibration of which was so great that the glass in the windows of the fishermen's houses at the Braeheads was often broken. Then followed real warfare, but of a wordy nature. Company drill took place in the Castle Park, and the discipline in those early days was such that the men were allowed a spell of company drill when the big gun work got too tiring. Those were the palmy days of volunteering, when there was no irksome discipline insisted on to spoil the pleasures of a parade. It was a story given to me as a fact when I first joined the volunteers that the laying of the guns was sometimes very eccentric. The target was, on one occasion, nearer the bay than usual, and the layer, practically a raw recruit, having been left unnoticed, the order to fire was given with the result that instead of striking the target, the projectile, to the horror of the officer in charge, carried away part of the old baths. This is said to have been the first time that the Fraserburgh Artillery had ever struck anything—except the sea.

"The first commanding officer under whom I served was the late Dr. Mellis, who long held command and was much liked by the men. Indoor games took place in what is now known as Batchan's Hall. To the middle-aged it brings back many happy memories of the past. In it, in addition to drills, were held all great public meetings, soirees, balls, concerts, etc. In 1873 Charlie West was instructor. He was 'a great warrior' and a good soul. Charlie was a very good cricketer, and at home at practice was a very hard hitter, but strange to say in every match he was 'a duck.' His nerves completely forsook him on such an occasion and his reputation became so notorious that he was known as 'the duck.' To chaff a tramp or a 'sweetie wife' on the road, Charlie had few equals.

"The adjutant at this time was Captain Kinnear, a very decent, convivial old fellow. He was quite of the old school and when the Company at any time made a mess of the drill, the swearing that the adjutant indulged in was terrible. The swearing in Flanders was nothing to it, but we became accustomed to it and looked upon it as a blessing. Drill at this time was not the thing of beauty or perfection it is now. An amusing instance of the rough and tumble way of doing drill come under my notice. An officer, who shall be nameless, was drilling the Company and wished to take it over the old Kethock Bridge. The Company was in line, and the officer saw his mistake. He lost his head altogether, and did not know for the life of him what order to give to get the men over the bridge. We had just marched to the brink of the Kethock, when the extraordinary order was shouted by the officer, 'fall out at this side of the bridge, and fall in at the other.' And we executed the order!

"Following Inspector West came—Sergeant Hurst in 1873, Sergeant Wilson, who was afterwards long at Banff, in 1874, and Sergeant Williamson in 1877.

Williamson though hot-tempered was a decent and likeable man, with a good deal of character. He was a very fair bass singer, and was an enthusiastic member of the old Fraserburgh Musical Association. We were then practicing Mozart's 'Twelfth Mass,' and it was very amusing when as we were on the march down or up the Links to hear Sergeant Williamson loudly singing to time of the march the bass of that grand chorus 'Gloria.' Sergeant Young came in 1879, and was followed in 1885 by the 'Great' Tripp. One of the most exciting events in the whole history of volunteering here, took place on the occasion of the Highlanders' riot in the fishing season of 1874, I think. The people at one time thought that the whole town would fall a prey to the rioters, and great was the fear and trembling among the inhabitants. There were no Gordon Highlanders here in those days, and the Artillery were called out, it was never known by whom, to quell the riot.

"In all my volunteering experiences, the most amusing is a little incident that tells against myself. It is too good to be suppressed. Shortly after I was appointed Quarter-master of the Brigade, I appeared on Parade in the glory of the big cocked and plumed hat. I endeavoured to look my best, and in coming down Broad Street, the people came from all directions to see who the distinguished-looking (?) general was. A crowd of youngsters attracted by the waving plumes, came rushing up the street to inspect the great man. When they came quite alongside, the leader looked up to me and with a countenance of utter disgust exclaimed, 'Ah (and a very strong adjective), it's only Cranna.' (Great laughter.) Many were the experiences of the Fraserburgh Artillery in the old days when the Wapinschaw at Aberdeen was the great event of the year. Numerous were the bloodless victories gained by Fraserburgh in these battles. The Company never had a single casualty, excepting, I believe, the loss of the big drum. It was not lost on the tented field or in the din and rattle of battle, but mysteriously became a prisoner in some hostelry in the vicinity of the Links at Aberdeen. The drummer, on arrival at Fraserburgh, suffering from the effects of his 'arduous labours' during the day, could not give a very clear account of his casualty, but strange to say, the good old drum was recognized by an old friend and forwarded to Fraserburgh within a couple of days, none the worse of its strange experiences.

"After Captain Mellis came Captain Park, followed by Captain Murray, and then Major Reiach. In the great shooting competition days in Aberdeen, Fraserburgh Artillery always occupied an honourable place on the prize list. The greatest victory ever secured however, was in 1887, the year of the Jubilee, when Fraserburgh took the trumpet for big gun shooting, and the medal for carbine shooting. To take these two first prizes on one day was a great feat."

It should be mentioned that the late Provost Park was a Lieutenant in the Company in 1866, but retired after serving for several years. The Fraserburgh Artillery Company was disbanded in 1908 on the establishment of the Territorial system. It was never in better condition than at the date of its decease, and from the commanding officer down to the youngest bugle boy, the disappearance of

the Artillery uniform from the drill hall and the Links was, at the time, looked upon by every volunteer connected with the battery, as the closing of an interesting chapter in his life.

In the early 'seventies of last century there was for some time a feeling in Fraserburgh that in addition to the Artillery, there should be a company of Rifles in the town. Enquiries showed that a considerable number of capable young men were available, and a movement was launched to give effect to current opinion on the subject, headed by Mr. Andrew Tarras, an old Artillery officer, Mr. William McConnachie, Mr. George Walker, and Mr. Alexander Melvin. The first meeting held on the subject took place in the Town Hall on 26th February, 1875. Great enthusiasm prevailed at the meeting, and over 100 names were enrolled on the spot. At another meeting held a fortnight later the names enrolled reached 145, and the officers chosen were:—Captain, Mr. Andrew Tarras; First Lieutenant, Mr. William McConnachie; Second Lieutenant, Mr. George Walker; Surgeon Lieutenant, Dr. Napier, and Acting Chaplain, Rev. James Hill, M.A. It was not all plain sailing, however, for the newly formed Company. Representations were made to the War Office that coast towns could best be served by Artillery volunteers, and that the establishment of rifle companies would practically mean the destruction of the Artillery Batteries. A long-and bitter controversy on the point ensued, the War Office inclining at first to support the claims of the Artillery. The contest was long drawn out, but owing to the persistency of Captain Blair, Adjutant, and the local officers, but above all to the services and sympathy of the late Lord Saltoun, father of the present Peer, who personally and warmly supported the claims of the Rifles at the War Office, the formation of the corps was at last officially sanctioned.

The Company was first named the 24th Aberdeenshire Rifle Volunteers, in succession to the St. Fergus Company, transferred to Peterhead. At the first inspection held in 1876, there were 162 efficients returned. The first formed Rifle Company was afterwards known as G Company. Great interest was manifested in Rifle volunteering in Fraserburgh, and the Company rose steadily to be one of the best in the battalion. Indeed, its dimensions became such that when the New Pitsligo Company collapsed, a new Company called H Company was raised in Fraserburgh in 1883, and came into actual life in 1884. Lieutenant McConnachie of G Company was promoted to be Captain of H Company, with Mr. John E. Park as First Lieutenant, and Mr. James F. Cardno as Second Lieutenant. At its first inspection the new Company returned 96 men as efficients, which was a good start for a second Company in a town the size of Fraserburgh. The Captain of H Company in succession to Mr. McConnachie was Dr. Adam L. Cruickshank, who in turn was succeeded by Mr. William Reid, schoolmaster, who still commands the Company. With regard to the commanding officers of G Company, when Mr. Tarras retired in 1884, Lieutenant Park of H Company was promoted to the Captaincy of G Company. When he retired in 1900 to go and fight the Boers during the last South African War, Mr. Charles W. Bruce was appointed Captain, and when the latter resigned, the vacancy was

filled by the appointment of Mr William Stephen, who had been a very enthusiastic Lieutenant in the Company for same years. Captain Stephen still retains command. Mr. William McConnachie has undoubtedly been the moving spirit and the inspirer of high ideals among Buchan volunteers for many years back. In view of his great services to the local Companies, and the Battalion generally, he was promoted to be Major in 1891, and a few years ago was given the command of the Battalion with the rank of Colonel.

When the Companies were first raised, and for some considerable time thereafter, the uniform of the local Gordon Highlanders was dark green. The kilt has always an attraction for the Scot, and in order to make the volunteer service more popular with young men, Major McConnachie, as he then was, made application at headquarters in 1901 for permission to discard the trews and don the kilt and sporan. His demand was at first rather coldly treated on account of expense, but the gallant Major, who never knew defeat, relentlessly bombarded those in authority with "his case," and in the end "the enemy capitulated." The first parade of the Gordons in scarlet tunic and kilt was a red letter day in Fraserburgh. The uniform was greatly admired by everyone, and there is no doubt but that the national dress materially contributed to the continued popularity of volunteering in Fraserburgh. Although G and H Companies never sent out any marksmen of world-wide fame, they have, for strength and efficiency, never been excelled by any Company in the Battalion. In fact, for many years they were the backbone of the 3rd V.B.G.H., and without them the Battalion would indeed have made a poor show on parade. It must be remembered that the men of G and H Companies were not paper soldiers. When the country was sorely distressed during the dark days of the South African War, a call was made for volunteers for the front. The members of G and H Company volunteered almost to a man. It was splendid. Not a few of the Fraserburgh Gordons faced the grim realities of war in South Africa, and their conduct was a great testimonial to the bravery and endurance of Buchan men.

The two local Companies of Gordon Highlanders maintained their numbers and efficiency up to the date in 1908, when the name of "Volunteer" gave place to that of "Territorial." This was a drastic change, which removed many of the old landmarks in the realm of volunteering. The final parade of G and H Companies took place on the Links on the evening of Tuesday, 31st March, 1908, when the men listened to a touching valedictory address given by Colonel McConnachie. A firing party discharged three volleys, the pipe band played the "Flowers of the Forest," and when the buglers sounded the "Last Post," the term "Volunteer" ceased to be. Fraserburgh Links have witnessed many queer scenes, but the night ceremonial in connection with the passing of the volunteers was one of the quaintest and emotion-moving "touches of nature" that ever appealed to the feelings of the people of Fraserburgh. Late the same night the records of the Battalion, with various newspapers, were interred with great ceremony on the top of Mormond Hill. It was a



Photo by Elliot & Fry, London.

LIEUT.-COLONEL M'CONNACHIE.

weird ceremony. The night was cold and rather wild. As the funeral party, comprising a number of volunteers from each Company, threaded its way up the hill, to the bagpipe strains of the "Flowers of the Forest," snow began to fall. Torches lit the way, and when the grave was reached, and the coffin, containing the records, etc., was lowered into its last resting-place, the scene appeared somewhat uncanny to the unsophisticated. The driving snow, and the dancing shadows caused by the moving torches, gave the picture a touch of the mysterious most appropriate to the occasion. The old 3rd V.B.G.H. became known as the Buchan and Formartine 5th Gordon Highlanders, Territorial Force. The Battalion has, under its new name, maintained its reputation. Although the physique of the men is not all that could be desired meanwhile, there is good time for improvement, and when once the conditions of drill are better understood, young men will take kindly to the work, and the Territorial Force will be a better fighting machine than ever.

Golf.—A regularly constituted Golf Club existed in Fraserburgh in the middle of last century, but its membership gradually fell off until the organization became defunct. Cricket became the popular game, but enthusiastic golfers like Mr. John Park, Mr. Thomas Park, Mr. John Murray, fishcurer; Mr. Andrew Fyvie, draper, and Mr. Penny, farmer, Tyronhill, continued to play the game until the 'sixties and 'seventies of last century. The Fraserburgh Golf Club was resuscitated in 1882, but for a period of a hundred years prior to that date, golf was regularly played on the Links of Fraserburgh by devotees residing in the town and district. As a matter of fact, Fraserburgh Links was the resort of golfers three hundred years ago, and it may be taken for granted that from that time to this, the game had been played with more or less regularity on the public commonity that once stretched from Bellslea Park to the Cairnbulg road. The parish Kirk Session records of the year 1613, contain the "interesting information" that a young lad named John Burnett, for "playing at the gouff" on Sunday instead of going to church, was ordered by the Session to be sent to the "maister's stool for correction." This is proof positive that Golf had been early practised in Fraserburgh, and that the game had been as fascinating to the people of 300 years ago as it is to those of to-day. If these old Puritanical conditions regarding Sunday observance were in force to-day, Sunday golfers would have a bad time of it. Fancy a row of these ladies and gentlemen suitably robed in sackcloth, sitting in the defaulters' pew of the parish church, expiating their crime by public confession thereof! Sunday golf is certainly not to be admired, but it is better than the intolerance and bigotry that were rampant in the seventeenth century.

Some of the ancestors of the present Lord Saltoun were, as he himself is, enthusiastic golfers, and they, in addition to many of the neighbouring landed gentry, regularly frequented Fraserburgh Links generations ago and engaged in matches. As some indication of the estimation in which the game was held, it may be mentioned that some fifty or sixty years ago New Year's Day was

entirely devoted to golf, and on that occasion a number of the natives of the adjacent fishing villages of Inverallochy and Cairnbulg—no mean players in their day—met a selected team of the inhabitants on the Links of Fraserburgh to do battle for a fixed sum of money. On completion of the match, victors and vanquished adjourned to the leading alehouse, where the sum at stake was duly consumed in liquor, and the match played over again, at times in the most uproarious fashion. The golfers of Rosehearty, proud of their skill, also tried their strength against Fraserburgh, but the local players, fortified with a perfect knowledge of the ground, never failed to beat their doughty opponents from the west.

It may be mentioned that in the olden days the golf holes consisted of permanent granite cups sunk into the Links at different points. Until comparatively recently a number of these permanent granite holes were scattered over the Links. They have now all disappeared, the hand of the vandal once more showing no respect for the interesting remains of the ancient Golf Club of Fraserburgh. The last “survival” of these old granite golf holes was situated quite near the railway line, about 200 yards north of the Kethock railway bridge. It disappeared about 20 years ago. It may be that grass has overgrown the old relic and hidden it from view. Fifty years ago and upwards, the great bulk of the local players used one “tool” only, *viz.*:—a common wooden driver. Of course, young local “swells” who had seen the game played in the south had their “spoons,” and “putters,” etc., but this equipment belonged to the very select few, “the man in the street” being content with his single wooden club, often made by himself. It will be “news” to the present generation of players to know that in the olden days, it was not at all obligatory on a golfer to play his ball exactly where it lay. If the “lie” was not a good one the player deliberately lifted his ball, placed it on a nice little rise, and then hit it. This was quite a common thing, and as a matter of fact the old Fraserburgh golfers generally “teed” their balls every stroke. These old unsophisticated golfers did not care to risk breaking their club by attempting to hit the ball when it lay on uneven ground, and besides this, the old feather balls then in use, would not stand the bad usage which rubber balls can endure.

The game was played on the Fraserburgh Links up to 1891, but at this period the congestion became so marked that golfers ran the risk of doing serious injury to people walking on the Links. Indeed, the situation became so acute, that the game had either to be given up, or the Club had to find “pastures new” upon which to exercise their skill. An enthusiastic member of the Club saw the possibilities of a new course on the Links of Philorth. Lord Saltoun was approached on the subject of the proposed new course, and without practically any hesitation or reservation, promptly agreed to place the ground at the disposal of the Golf Club. The Philorth Golf Club was opened, as already indicated, early in 1891. The annual rent is absolutely nominal, and of the smallest proportions. Only those who really love the game can adequately appreciate the privileges and pleasures of the Philorth course, which has been so readily and so generously placed at the disposal of the community by the Superior.

When the Club was revived in 1882, the office-bearers were.—Hon Captain, John Park; Captain, Alexander Bannerman, baker; Vice-Captain, Peter Noble, fishcurer; Secretary, William Grant, ironmonger; Treasurer, Robertson Buchan, clothier; Council, Messrs. George Cormack, Andrew Noble, Alexander Mitchell, and Charles W. Gray. This year (1912) the office-bearers are:—Hon. President, Lord Saltoun; Hon. Vice-President, Colonel McConnachie of Knowsie; Captain, W. W. Cruickshank, chemist; Vice-Captain, Dr. Charles W. Whyte; Treasurer, George Murison, jeweller; Secretary, James Burnett, shoemaker; Council, Messrs. J. McKay, J. A. Thomson, John Cranna, George Clark, W. S. F. Wilson, and Peter Noble.

Twenty years ago the Fraserburgh Golf Club was more than a match for any club in the north, apart from Balgownie, but in recent years the prestige of Fraserburgh has sadly suffered, Peterhead even ousting Fraserburgh from the place of honour. Time is the great worker of changes, and who knows but that twenty years hence, Fraserburgh will again easily lead as the golfing champions of the county of Aberdeen.

Extension of Railway to Fraserburgh.—What may be termed an epoch-making event in the history of Fraserburgh, was the extension of the Great North of Scotland Railway to the town in 1865. For years prior to that date, rival schemes were propounded by different promoters, and many exciting public meetings were held all over the district, mostly addressed by legal luminaries from Aberdeen. The great question was—"Shall the line run past Mormond on the east or west side of the hill?" After a strenuous fight, the parties who promoted the east side route received the great bulk of public support, and of course this enabled them to carry their scheme. The great advantage of the east side route was that though the line did not actually touch the villages of St. Combs, Inverallochy and Cairnbulg, it practically placed railway facilities within range of the villagers. This was a very important matter for the pioneers of railways in north-east Buchan. It may not be due to the advent of the railway, but it is a remarkable fact that since the line was extended to Fraserburgh in 1865, trade has steadily developed, and the town made substantial progress year after year. The only people who suffered were those who ran regular trading craft to Aberdeen, Leith and London. The harbour revenue felt the change to a small extent immediately after the line was opened, but the development of trade which soon followed the advent of the railway more than counterbalanced the loss of the somewhat limited goods traffic. The first train was run on the 22nd April, 1865. The town was *en fête* on the occasion, and great was the excitement among the inhabitants. Hundreds, if not thousands, of them had never seen a train before. People from Rosehearty, New Aberdour, and even from the Blackhills of Tyrie, crowded into Fraserburgh to see a locomotive and train for the first time. The Links were covered with spectators from end to end when the first train hove in sight. Cheers were raised at the Kethock and carried by the crowd, the infection catching on right up to the old schoolhouse

on the Links, where now the South U.F. Church stands. It was amusing to watch the old people, especially those from the country district, standing a considerable distance back from the line, in case the train should take it into its head to try some gymnastics on the Links. These old people had conceived the curious idea that railway accidents were of daily occurrence, and that to stand too close to the line was quite a "tempting of Providence."

The memorable Saturday afternoon (22nd April, 1865) that saw the formal opening of the railway to Fraserburgh, brought the Chairman and Directors of the Company, and other men of mark from Aberdeen, and a great many representative men from all parts of the country. A procession of gentlemen went through the town, and then to the battery in the Castle Park, where a *feu-de-joie* was fired, amid the cheering of the populace. The great event of the day was a public dinner given in the Harbour Commissioners' Hall, Frithside Street. Lord Saltoun, father of the present peer, occupied the chair, and was supported by Sir James Elphinstone, M.P., Chairman of the Great North Directors; Captain Dalrymple, Captain Ramsay, of Barra; Dr. Will, Aberdeen; Mr. Crombie, manufacturer, Aberdeen; Sir Alexander Bannerman, of Crimonmogate; Mr. Leslie, M.P.; Mr. Milne, of Kinaldie; Mr. Jopp, advocate, Aberdeen; Mr. Robert Milne, secretary, Great North of Scotland Railway Company, etc. Mr. Ross, Baron Baillie of Fraserburgh, and Mr. John Park, father of the late Provost Park, were croupiers. The chief speakers were Lord Saltoun, Sir James H. D. Elphinstone, Mr. John Park and Baillie Ross. The other speakers were Mr. Milne, of Kinaldie; Provost Alexander, Peterhead; Dr. Gavin, Strichen, Sir Alexander Anderson, Captain Tyler, C.E., Mr. James Cardno, Captain Ramsey, of Barra; Mr. Barclay, Aberdour House; Mr. Burnett, Mains of Philorth; Rev. Peter McLaren, Mr. Forsyth, of the *Aberdeen Journal*; Mr. Robertson, Ardlaw; Dr. Mellis and Captain Dalrymple. When the train left at half past eight in the evening for Aberdeen with the Directors as passengers, there was quite a demonstration, and a display of rockets brought the day's rejoicings to a close. It is a significant and impressive fact that of the two hundred gentlemen who sat down to dinner in the Commissioners' Hall on the 22nd April, 1865, only three now survive, viz., Mr. John Sleight, factor, Strichen; Mr. James Blackhall, Union Bank, Fraserburgh, and Mr. Ironside, schoolmaster, Rosehearty.

Monday, 24th April, was observed as a holiday in Fraserburgh, when cheap fares were issued to Aberdeen and intermediate stations. The bulk of the inhabitants had never been in a train in their lives, and the rush for tickets was extraordinary, so fascinating was the idea of travelling by rail. Some of the worthy "Brochers" who had gone into Aberdeen unacquainted with the ramifications of a city railway station, got into the wrong trains in the evening, and instead of arriving home, found themselves stranded at out-of-the-way places. So great was the crush at Strichen that the carriages could not take up all the passengers waiting there, and the engine with a carriage had to return to Strichen late at night and pick up those "Brochers" left behind. Such were the experi-

ences of the Fraserburgh people on first getting the benefits of cheap trains. All has been changed, and Fraserburgh is as much up-to-date as regards railway facilities as any town in the south. The mail coach, with its portly driver and red coated guard coming sweeping along Saltoun Place was a picturesque institution, but as regards utility and comfort, the coach was centuries behind the train. The extension of the railway to Fraserburgh was truly a great step forward.

Mention must also be made of the Fraserburgh and St. Combs Light Railway, which was opened on 1st July, 1903. This railway has been a great boon to the fishermen of Cairnbulg, Inverallochy and St Combs, and they must ever be grateful to Mr. A. W. Maconochie, late M.P. for East Aberdeenshire, who initiated the movement, and to Mr. James Murray, ex-M.P., through whose untiring efforts and valuable services at headquarters in London, the proposal was brought to a definite and successful issue. The railway has been the means of fisher families being lost to Fraserburgh during the herring season, with the consequent loss of rents and shopkeepers' overturn, but on the other hand, the railway brought compensating advantages to Fraserburgh in the way of general trade throughout the year. To the golfers of Fraserburgh this railway has been "a boon and a blessing." It has given Fraserburgh golfers a unique advantage in carrying them to and from the course, which very few clubs in this country possess. It is understood that the railway has proved a financial success, a fact which reflects credit on all concerned. It is to be hoped that the three villages will not, like some other fishing villages in the county, begin to languish and decay. If this should prove to be the case, the Light Railway will probably have to face trouble. The activity of the natives is a guarantee that a brave fight will be made; and judging by the number of new houses erected in Cairnbulg in recent years, it may be taken for granted that a long lease of prosperity is still in store for the villages. The Fraserburgh and St. Combs Light Railway is 5 miles long, and its formation cost about £15,000.

The Highlandmen's Great Riot in 1874.—The people inhabiting the coast towns of the north-east of Scotland, having a large mixture of the old Frieslander blood in their veins, have been long recognized as a most orderly and law-abiding race. In the olden days, they were not prone to quarrel with their neighbours, but when once attacked, they fought with a sullen determination, that seldom knew defeat. It therefore appears rather remarkable that a people with such a certificate of character, should have had in their midst the last great riot in the north of Scotland, which necessitated the presence of a military force to overawe and quieten the rioters. This untoward event took place in Fraserburgh, on the night of August 1, 1874, and was as serious as it was unexpected. Fortunately for the credit of the town and the people of Buchan, the culprits who started and "made" the riot, were fiery and lawless Celts from the Island of Lewis, and adjoining country, who had gathered in their thousands at the premier herring station of Scotland, for the purpose of assisting in the prosecution of the great

summer herring fishing, which annually takes place on the east coast of Scotland.

At the time the riot spoken of occurred, the conditions of the business were entirely different from those which now obtain. Fishermen at present sell their catches daily by auction, and settle up with their hired men in the end of the season, but in 1874, and for many years thereafter, they entered into engagements with the fishcurers for a complement of 200 crans at 20s. per cran, with certain perquisites. The engagements generally ran for eight weeks, from the twentieth of July. All herrings caught before that date were called "early fish," and were always paid for on a Saturday about the end of July. The hired men, that is the Highlanders, received a substantial sum of money at this time, and the day became recognized as "the Hielanmen's foy." Drinking on this particular day had year by year gone on increasing in a marked degree, and on the festive occasion the Highlanders, by their insolence and threatening rudeness, became more and more offensive to the natives. On account of their great numbers—probably 2,000 men—and masterful and domineering behaviour, both the police and the inhabitants were terrorized, and seeing this, the strangers, especially when in their "cups," looked upon themselves as invincible, and behaved accordingly. It was on a "foy" Saturday night, when the Highlandmen were inflamed with drink, that the historic riot took place.

The evening was a beautiful one, and as usual at a big fishing station on Saturday night, the principle streets of the town were crowded with people native and stranger—out to make purchases, meet friends, or see "the fun," as it was termed. At eight o'clock there was not a single jarring note to indicate the coming discord. Indeed, the crowd was a very happy one, and the Highlandmen were complimented on their improved manners and behaviour. Unfortunately the encomiums passed upon them were premature, and soon the scene was changed. As the hotels and public-houses began to empty, the streets soon became crowded with inebriated Highlanders, full of insolence and fight, who came swaggering along and intentionally jostling, in the rudest manner possible, everyone they met. If the hustled one remonstrated in Gaelic, it acted like a talisman, and no harm befel him or her, but if "plain English" was spoken, one had either to run for dear life, or be promptly knocked down. The plot thickened, and a climax of disorder was reached when one Highlander—Buchanan by name—infuriated with drink, and encouraged by his companions, took the law into his own hands, and attacked everybody and everything he came across. This was the spark from which the flame of riot sprang.

The police courageously attempted to arrest the delinquent, but they were set upon by a horde of the Highlanders in a state of frenzied and semi-savage excitement—in what was once called Back Street, but is now known as High Street—and so unmercifully beaten and maltreated that an arrest was out of the question. In fact, the policemen carried their lives in their hands in "facing such fearful odds." While the battle raged in Back Street, false information

reached the precincts of the harbour that Buchanan had been lodged in the lock-up, which was located in the Town House Buildings. The haughty Highlanders, as their power and numbers increased, became more and more aggressive and bold. They issued their familiar war cry, and immediately hundreds of madly infuriated Celts were rushing towards the Town House to rescue their friend. They resolved to take the place by storm, and fierce rushes were made for the entrances to the police office. The inspector (Mr. Richardson, who died at Huntly only a few years ago) and his constables stood bravely to their posts, and for a long time withstood the wild rushes of the enemy. Indeed, many a brawny Highlander carried the marks of the constables' batons received on this occasion to the grave with him. Thinking to satisfy the mob, and thus secure peace, the inspector opened the cell doors and showed the men that their Celtic friend was not incarcerated. This conciliatory demonstration was of no avail. The mob waxed wilder than ever, and threatened to burn the Town House and take possession of the town. The doors and windows of the building were smashed to pieces, and preparations were made for firing the place. The handful of police were impotent against such a crowd of madmen, and the whole place was in the greatest possible danger.

The reports of the Highlanders' doings circulated to the farthest ends of the town and their threat to take forcible possession of it, spread terror among the citizens, who in many cases barricaded themselves in their houses and waited with fear and trembling the attack of the caterans. It was well that the threatened assaults did not take place, otherwise bloodshed would have followed with probably fatal results. One or two of the more hot blooded of the natives, who had seen life in the colonies and Western America, armed themselves with their fowling pieces, and declared that they would shoot the first Highlandman who attempted to damage or enter their dwellings. Meantime the destruction of the Town House went on, and it was feared that neighbouring public buildings, such as the Parish Church, would share the same fate. Some of the young men of the town who were volunteers, ignorant of the law that prohibits the "civilian" soldiers from firing on a mob, roused from his slumbers their instructor, who as ignorant of the law on the point as themselves, readily agreed to give them their carbines, with a certain number of rounds of shot per man, with the view of quelling the riot. In answer to an urgent round robbin, volunteers quickly began to put in an appearance at the armoury. When some 25 of the men had arrived and got their carbines and shot, a peremptory order was received from the Chief Constable of Aberdeenshire, Major Ross, who fortunately happened to be in the town on the night of the riot, and who had heard of the local volunteers' movements, demanding that they should immediately disarm, under pains and penalties. This they unwillingly did, and it is fortunate that affairs took this turn, as the volunteers, had they got the order from the authorities, would certainly have fired upon the mob, so great was the excitement at the moment. Had this taken place, it is to be feared that it would have been the volunteers and not the Highlanders

who would have received penal servitude. The rioting continued till past midnight. The situation at one time looked very serious, and efforts were made to get the military from Aberdeen by special train to prevent the destruction contemplated by the crowd. The authorities were all out of the city, and as the legal formalities could not be complied with, no military aid was available that night.

Meantime the riotous Highlanders, flushed with and proud of a victory, which nobody cared to question, were meditating further conquests, when at 1.30 on Sunday morning a deluge of rain began to fall. It continued for some time, and had the effect of dispersing the mob temporarily, during which time the authorities took the opportunity of swearing in a small army of special constables to assist the local force of police in preventing a renewal of the riot. This had the desired effect, for the Highlanders, at least for the time being, did not attempt further organized riot, destruction of property, and intimidation of the citizens. As they had been heard to boast that they would renew the disturbance if any attempts at arrests were made, a detachment of the Gordon Highlanders was promptly despatched from Aberdeen to restore confidence among the inhabitants, and to assist in the arrest of some of the suspected men. It is interesting to recall the fact that the officer in command of the detachment of Gordons was Lieutenant Gordon, now Major Gordon, Chief Constable of Aberdeenshire. At the appearance of the kilted warriors in the town, the bravado of the Celts immediately disappeared, and the impression made upon them was such that not the slightest resistance to the representatives of law and order has ever since been shown in the town by the hot-headed Highlander.

The riot had also its humorous side. On Sunday, the ministers of the town took the advantage of condemning from the pulpit, the outrageous conduct of the Highlanders. One congratulated himself on the fact that none of them belonged to his congregation; another said that such conduct on the part of the hypocritical and much psalm-singing and praying Highlanders did not surprise him, while a well-known clerical figure in the town declared that if a number of men had paid less attention to preaching and praying on Saturday night and more to their duties as citizens, the riot would never have reached the dimensions it did. Another amusing phase of the riot was furnished by the police. Backed up by the soldiers, who lined the piers, the policemen, the day after the riot, proceeded on board the fishing boats in the harbour and carefully examined each Highlandman's head. The idea was to identify the ringleaders by the wounds on their heads which had been caused by the blows received from the constables' batons. The picture of a dozen policemen methodical "going over" the heads of hundreds of Highlandmen, was most suggestive and created the greatest possible mirth among the soldiers and crowds of civilians who watched the proceedings. The Fraserburgh Police Force were long afterwards known as "the phrenologists of the bobby brigade." Without the soldiers, no arrests would have been possible. As it was, several of the leading rioters

were, at longer or shorter intervals apprehended, and after trial, were sentenced to periods of imprisonment ranging from one to two years. Thus ended the last riot in the north of Scotland in connection with which the military were called out.

Fraserburgh a Port of Registry.—Long, long ago, Fraserburgh was under the port of Banff, and when a vessel had to be cleared for a foreign port, the captain and his agent had to post all the way to Banff to have the necessary clearance effected. With a steady increase of business, the difficulty of getting to Banff became a real grievance, and the authorities, in deference to the strong feeling existing in Fraserburgh on the subject, removed Fraserburgh from the jurisdiction of Banff to that at Peterhead. Shortly afterwards a Custom House was opened at Fraserburgh, which enabled the business people of the town to have all ships cleared out and in, within the limits of the burgh. This was a great step in the right direction, but much more had to be done before Fraserburgh had reached the status which her increasing trade demanded. For many long years after a Custom House was opened in Fraserburgh, the port remained a creek, under the jurisdiction of Peterhead. When Peterhead was a much more important town than Fraserburgh this condition of things was not thought much of, but when the trade of Fraserburgh began to equal, if not outstrip, that of Peterhead, the leading business men of Faithlie thought the time had arrived when a change might reasonably be demanded. It was felt to be rather humiliating that Fraserburgh boats should have PD.—the letters for Peterhead—upon their bows, and it was considered that Fraserburgh had earned the right to be constituted a separate port of registry.

Accordingly, in the early days of 1896, Mr. William McConnachie of Knowsie, and Mr. James F. Cardno, Ardaros, Fraserburgh, took the question up, and made strong representations to the Board of Trade and the Customs authorities in London as to Fraserburgh having in every respect earned the right to be made a separate and distinct port of registry. Of course, the heads of the departments in London, with all the traditions of red tapeism about them, saw many difficulties in the way of granting the prayer of the petitioners. No denial would be taken, and after not a little correspondence, “the powers that be” had to give in, and Fraserburgh was raised to the status of a port of registry. The change took place as at 1st April (rather a sarcasm), 1896, from which date the letters “PD.” for ever disappeared from the bows of the local boats, and the letters “FR.” took their place. The Fraserburgh fishery district extends from St. Combs on the South, to Rosehearty on the west. The change did not bring any additional business to Fraserburgh, but the matter of prestige made the change desirable, and the community are indebted to the two gentlemen named for having so unostentatiously added an additional commercial dignity to the town.

Snow and Thunderstorms.—One or the greatest snowstorms that ever visited the Fraserburgh district fell in the year 1838, and that year has since

been known as the year of the "muckle" snowstorm. The fall began about the New Year, and continued for a long time. For some days prior to the preliminary shower, the sky had a very peculiar, leaden appearance, which rather affected the nervous and superstitious part of the population, and old-fashioned folks in the country district. The latter especially had a strong belief that peculiar appearances in the sky indicated coming events, generally great disasters on the earth. The indications on this occasion resulted in nothing worse than the snowstorm referred to. The wind blew strongly from the east, and the wreaths accumulated to a size which old people, still living, declare was extraordinary. The town was completely snowed up for some time, and in the country districts, cottars' houses were completely buried in the snow. In many cases the inmates had to be dug out to save their lives. Food was a scarce commodity in those days among the poor people, and many of them were half famished when rescued from their snowclad prisons. Several people who were overtaken by the storm some distance away from a habitation, were overwhelmed with its severity, and perished miserably. To the young generation the snowstorm in question has no fears because they have no personal knowledge of it, but those still living who experienced its terrors, still speak with awe and bated breath of the "muckle" snowstorm of 1838.

Another great snowstorm occurred in February, 1897 when the railway lines were all blocked, and the town isolated from the outside world for a week. The late Provost John Park had died at Cults, and the date of his funeral had been fixed before snow had begun to fall. The condition of things was such that the remains of Mr. Park had to be brought from Aberdeen to Fraserburgh by sea, and the date of interment postponed.

One of the most remarkable snowstorms that ever occurred in the Fraserburgh district took place on 27th December, 1908. Snow began to fall towards midnight, and with it arose a fierce gale of wind. Throughout the night and early hours of the morning the scene in town and country was of the wildest description. No one could have lived in it, and it was well that the visit came at night, when even the poor tramp had taken shelter under some kind of roof. The snow, which was quite powdery, was lifted up and dashed in all directions, flying in clouds at headlong speed and bent on mischief, as if urged on by the harpy-footed furies referred to by Milton. Fortunately, no lives were lost, but when daylight came the inhabitants saw a sight which the oldest had never witnessed before. The wreaths of snow in some cases reached up to the eaves of the houses, and at many points streets were quite impassable. On the Strichen road the snow was level with the top of the Manse garden wall, while the accumulation on the same road, not far from King Edward Street, quite resembled the side of a Swiss hill in mid-winter. The town had a set unique appearance, and might easily have been taken for some Northern Canadian town in a characteristic mantle of white. There is every likelihood that many years will elapse before Fraserburgh is again seen under such conditions. The town was cut off from the outer world for about a week, except-



Photo by Norrie, Fraserburgh.

THE GREAT SNOWSTORM OF 1908. STRICHEN ROAD, FROM THE FOUNTAIN.

ing that on the last evening of the year, an Aberdeen tugboat with passengers, and carrying mails and newspapers broke the monotony of the life of the enforced Fraserburgh exiles. Bread gave out towards the end of the week, and there was wild talk of a famine—which never came to pass. The violence of the storm may be judged when it is mentioned that on the farm of Stonebriggs, near Rosehearty, 63 sheep were smothered to death.

If the years named supplied such remarkable snowstorms, the year 1873 furnished a thunder and lightning storm unequalled for violence and brilliancy in modern times. The storm occurred on the 23rd July, the first day on which fishermen delivered herrings to fishcurers under the season's agreement. The weather was sultry and close during the afternoon and early evening, and weather judges prognosticated thunder. The herring fishing was heavy, and when the first peal was heard between seven and eight p.m., the catch was little more than half discharged. The storm developed with singular regularity. Every half hour heard the thunder claps grow louder and louder, and the flashes of lightning more and more vivid. The night was like a hideous illumination accompanied by the artillery of the lower regions. There was a nervous tension on everybody, and even the very brute beasts became obsessed with a feeling that something terrible was about to happen. The blinding flashes, and the deafening rattle of the thunder claps, caused the horses on the piers first to become restive, and then to get entirely beyond the control of their drivers. Horses were bolting everywhere. The North Pier at this time was very narrow, and the runaway horses there became a positive danger to the people working on the piers. It is marvellous that fatalities did not occur. Between the dangers of the forked lightning and runaway horses, mad with fear, the excitement grew unbearable. About 11 p.m., the lightning was such that the very heavens seemed to be opening. The sight was a magnificent, but a most awesome one. Shortly after this hour the nerves of the people completely broke down. Fisher people thought the Day of Judgment had arrived, and besought comfort and information on the subject from those better educated than themselves. At last the tension reached bursting point. Carters, coopers, and fishermen threw everything at their heels and made for the shelter of home, where association and converse with friends brought back the confidence and manhood which had almost reached vanishing point on the piers. With lightning rapidity, the harbour, which had been a hive of activity all the evening, promptly assumed the oppressively quiet and deserted condition of a country churchyard at night. Thousands of crans of herrings, valued at thousands of pounds, were left in the boats by the fishermen, who had to empty the herrings into the bay next day. Rain began to fall in torrents about 2 o'clock on Wednesday morning, and from that time the thunder and lightning storm gradually subsided. Such was the greatest thunderstorm that had visited Fraserburgh since the opening of the nineteenth century. Strange to say, no fatalities happened in Fraserburgh, but in the country districts, especially in Banffshire, many people and animals were killed.

Music.—

“How soft the music of those village bells,
Falling at intervals upon the ear,
In cadence sweet.”

Music is one of the finest of the fine arts, and the pleasure it has given to the human race since the world began never can be estimated. In sorrow and in joy, on the battlefield and in the quiet of the cloister, it has alike been the balm, the inspiration, and the support. Its votaries have been as numerous, enthusiastic and sincere in Fraserburgh, relatively speaking, as in any town in Scotland. During the last 35 years, especially, the taste for classical music in the community has been fostered and developed in a very striking manner, and the pursuit of the refined in music is being continued with a fervour and zeal that cannot but bring a rich reward in the future. There is no doubt but the great awakening, and the musical dawn, so far as Fraserburgh is concerned, was concurrent with the establishment of the Fraserburgh Musical Association in November, 1869. The preliminary meeting was held in Strachan's School on 16th November, 1869, and of the large company present, only the following now remain alive in Fraserburgh: Messrs. Archibald Robb, cabinetmaker; George West, butcher, and A. B. Henderson, shoemaker; Among those who were present but who have, alas! gone over to the great majority were:—Baillie Mitchell, James Ross, clothier; George Hay, clothier; John Wilson, draper; Robert Gray, wood merchant; George Hay, clerk, who was Secretary; James Grant, watchmaker; Alexander Malcolm, rope and sailmaker; J. M. D. Smith, sculptor, and T. D. Will, shipbroker; etc. The first President was the Rev. Charles Pressley, and the first accompanist Miss Pressley, now Mrs. Hadden. The Association had a long and successful career, and there is no doubt it laid the foundation of the taste for classical music in the town. It sometimes gave a concert, partly made up of part-songs, but as an invariable rule, the members' attention was always devoted to the study of classical music. In the course of its existence performances were given of “Judas Maccabæus,” Romberg's “Lay of the Bell,” the “Creation,” the “Messiah,” Bennet's “May Queen,” etc. The first public appearance of the Association was on the 7th July, 1870, when a rendering was given of “Judas Maccabæus.” Such a class of music had never before been heard in Fraserburgh, and the community was charmed with the performance. The first conductor was Mr. William McGregor, clothier, who though a first-class theoretical musician, was not a born conductor. Taking charge of an oratorio was no easy task, and Mr. McGregor resigned after a couple of nights' trial at the work. He was succeeded by Mr. W. L. Hogg, who in turn was followed by Mr. Robertson Buchan, now of Elgin. After him came Herr Bucherer, the music master in the Academy, the last to wield the baton being Mr. Cooke, the bandmaster of the Gordon Highlanders. Of the Association's local soloists, the following were the bright and shining lights:—the late Mrs. John Park, the late Mrs. Cardno, Miss Tina Davidson (now Mrs. Torrence, Thurso), Mrs. Monteith, Mrs. Bostock, and Mrs.

Winterbotham, all of whom did good work in their day. Many now living will recall with intense pleasure the happy evenings spent at practice, first in the Commissioners' Hall, and thereafter in the upstairs room in the Academy.

Many amusing incidents that took place at practice could be rehearsed, but space will permit of only one or two being given. Mr. Smith, painter, had been selected to sing the solo "The Trumpet shall sound," from the "Messiah." The recitative is "Behold I tell you a mystery," and, somehow, Mr. Smith could not get the correct notes into his head. Well through the session, he went up to the front once more to rehearse his solo, but, as usual, collapsed. Old George Hay, who was playing the first violin near him, turned round and said, "Look here, Smith, you started three months ago to tell us a mystery, and we've not heard it yet. You should give it up." Mr. Smith reluctantly did give it up. On another occasion a very worthy member was practising "Arm, arm ye brave," in which the words "A noble cause" came in pretty frequently. The member in question was a furnishing tailor, and a wag from the south, who was a listener at the practice, remarked pretty loudly "Is Mr — shouting for a needle case" As the singer's phrasing was a little peculiar, and might lead to the words being thus interpreted, the humour of the suggestion was thoroughly enjoyed. Shortly after starting, the Association could boast of an orchestra of some 8 instruments. If tradition does not lie, some of the players were not expert musicians. One or two of the fiddlers and a couple of cornet players made a great flourish immediately before the baton came down at each start, but there is an excellent authority for saying that during the whole of the session not one sound came from the four instruments in question. It can only be said of this quartette that if they were not musicians, they possessed thy crowning virtue of patience.

One of the local stalwarts in music who was present at the preliminary meeting and who stuck to the Association till the end; was the late Mr. John Wilson, draper, Seaforth Street. With a great knowledge of the musical arts Mr. Wilson always led the van in quest of the best in music, and those who were associated with him in the old days, know how much music of the better class was helped on in Fraserburgh by his long, unwearied and unselfish efforts. After the collapse of the original Association there was a period of rest, until Mr. Dimmer, bandmaster, Gordon Highlanders, took the work up. Mr. Dimmer was a most capable musician, and much beloved by the members of the Society. It was under his directions that the "May Queen" was produced. Mr. W. L. Cockburn afterwards appeared upon the scene. He gave a fillip to music, and through his efforts the Association was resuscitated for a time, and some good work was done. It was more as a singer however, than as a conductor, that Mr. Cockburn shone in Fraserburgh. Indeed, it will be readily admitted that Mr. Cockburn possessed the best voice of any person that has ever been located here after Mr. Cockburn came Herr Muller, who as a professional musician and composer, stood prominently ahead of all his predecessors. He organized a male voice choir, which gave one of the finest and most finished performances ever

heard in Fraserburgh. His interpretation of music and the expression and phrasing which he insisted upon should be observed, gave the choir an altogether new idea of how music should be sung, with the result that they have never gone back from the path Herr Muller put them upon. Undoubtedly Herr Muller's departure was a great loss to Fraserburgh.

The musical life of the place again lay dead and dormant, until the Rev. G. Wauchope Stewart came to the town. Herr Muller is a clever musician, but Mr. Stewart, as a non-professional, was the finest musician that ever wielded a baton here. He was the prime mover in establishing the Fraserburgh Choral Society, and it is no exaggeration to say that by his elevated and refined musical tastes, and his high ideals, he gave an impetus to music in Fraserburgh which will bear fruit for many years to come. He also established the Fraserburgh Musical Club, the members of which devoted themselves to the study and performance of what was best in music. Mr. Stewart made a great success of the Choral Society, whose performances even commended themselves greatly to critics from important musical centres. Among the works which the Society has rendered are the following: Cowen's "Rose Maiden," Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise," Gade's "Erl-King's Daughter"; "Judas Maccabaeus" and "The Creation." Mr. Stewart's departure from Fraserburgh was an irreparable loss to the musical art of the town.

When Mr. Stewart was called away to Aberdeen, the Society moved Mr. A. Hill Low into the conductor's chair. Although previously a member of the chorus, Mr. Low proved a worthy successor to so able a predecessor as Mr. Stewart. He had all the strength of character, musical knowledge and persuasion that are essential to the making of a strong and successful conductor. Mr. Low took the best possible out of the members, and while he wielded the baton, the Society was in splendid condition and did excellent work. Mr. Jackson, of Aberdeen, followed Mr. Low, and for a season or two laboured hard and successfully.

The accompanist during the regimes of Mr. Dimmer, Mr. Low and Mr. Jackson, etc., was Miss Violet Bruce (now Mrs. Hughes), L.R.A.M., one of the most artistic and accomplished pianists that Fraserburgh has ever produced. She did yeoman service in the realms of classical music in the town for many years, and her name will be handed down from generation to generation by devotees of the art, as one whose influence can never wholly fade away. When Mr. Jackson's connection with Fraserburgh was severed, Mr. Warren T. Clemens, of Aberdeen, was, 9 years ago, appointed conductor. There is no doubt but that Mr. Clemens has proved the most outstanding conductor that ever directed musical affairs in Fraserburgh. Indeed, as a musician, and especially as a conductor, he has never had his compeer in the town. His musical qualifications and ideals, energy, and inspiring and infectious disposition, swept away every difficulty on every occasion. He brought the chorus to a state of perfection in the art of singing, as choral singing should be, that could scarcely have been deemed possible some years ago. His methods were inimitable. He aimed at

a high standard and reached it. His magnificent work will be a lasting monument to his name and memory in Fraserburgh. An equally competent successor need never be looked for—unless greatly increased prosperity overtakes the town. Under Mr. Clemens' direction, the Choral Society produced the following oratorios: "Messiah," "Samson," "Elijah," "St. Paul" and "Israel in Egypt," while the following operas have been given: "H.M.S. Pinafore," "Pirates of Penzance," "Mikado," and Gounod's "Faust."

Mr. Clemens has the credit of "discovering" the two finest singers that Fraserburgh has produced, viz., Miss Alice Stuart (soprano), and Miss Jessie Gray, now Mrs. McAllan (contralto). These two have essayed the solo parts in public in the highest class of music, and have triumphantly emerged from the ordeal. Mrs. McAllan has been twice called into Aberdeen to sing the contralto solos in Bach's Passion Music, and on each occasion scored a great success. Miss Stuart and Mrs. McAllan are products of the Choral Society, of which the whole community should be justly proud. Mention must be made of the great services rendered to the Choral Society and the town by Miss Jean Watt, L.R.A.M., who has acted as accompanist to the Society for the last 8 or 9 years. Her work has been most arduous, but like the accomplished musician and brilliant pianist that she is, her duties sat lightly on her shoulders. Miss Watt has been a wonderful power for good in the musical life of Fraserburgh, and her great gifts have been freely given to the community for the pure love of the art. If the love for classical music has been stimulated and strengthened in Fraserburgh in recent years, Miss Watt has done a large share of the work which has brought this happy state of affairs about. Since Mr. Clemens' resignation, Mr. Douglas Smart has, as conductor of the Society, done most valuable work. The operations of the Society are meantime suspended, but it is expected that next season they will be recommenced with a membership and vigour that will bring great success and credit to the pioneer musical organization of the town.

Trawling Company.—The Fraserburgh and North of Scotland Steam Trawling Company, Limited, like the Glenburchy Distillery Company, is one of the few Fraserburgh concerns that has been a failure and a disappointment. The Company was floated in 1898 with a capital of £50,000, and great hopes were entertained that the establishment of trawling at Fraserburgh would mean much prosperity and a great increase to the town's trade. It was a laudable and praiseworthy effort, and though the undertaking ultimately ended in practical failure, those who floated the Company did so with the greatest confidence that not only would the town, but the shareholders also, be greatly benefited by the operations of the Company. The first directors were:—Lord Saltoun, Lord Provost Mearns of Aberdeen, and the following Fraserburgh gentlemen—Provost Dickson, Baillie Mitchell, Mr. Alexander Bruce, fishcurer; Mr. Charles W Bruce, fishcurer; Mr. James F. Cardno, merchant; Mr. Edward Gordon, fishcurer; Mr. Herman Carl Gunther, herring exporter; Mr. P. R. Paterson, fishcurer and Mr. A. Anderson Whyte, fishcurer.

At the first blush of the Company things looked rosy, and hopes were high that the bright expectations formed, when the subject was first mooted, would be fully realized. Unfortunately, Aberdeen had got too early a start at trawling, and the business had become so consolidated there that the effort to establish it at Fraserburgh seemed like a forlorn hope. A gallant attempt was made to conquer all difficulties. The management was changed, works in connection with the Company were established, but still the Company's affairs went back. It was a most unfortunate thing for Fraserburgh. The Company's operations gave work to a large staff of people about the harbour in connection with discharging operations, while the gutting, cleaning, and packing of the fish gave employment to a big army of hard-working women at the different fish merchants' establishments scattered over the town. The scene at the harbour when a few trawlers well laden with fish came to hand together, was one of the greatest activity and bustle. Discharging operations were always witnessed by crowds of people, and the fish market had truly a business-like appearance. The fish market for the greater part of the year is, since the departure of the trawlers, a most deserted looking place. In the hope that the financial debacle would be arrested, the directors after a time decided to leave Fraserburgh, and make Aberdeen the headquarters of the boats. That was a mistake, because the financial affairs of the Company did not improve one whit by the removal to Aberdeen. By continuing to fish from Fraserburgh, the Company would not have been in any worse position than it was at Aberdeen, and if the capital was to be dissipated, better that the money had been circulated and employment given in Fraserburgh than in Aberdeen. There is no doubt that the big Aberdeen trawling magnates never looked with a kindly eye upon the attempt made by the Fraserburgh people to establish trawling at the "Broch." It was a question of "damning it with faint praise" in the open, and giving it a stab in the back in the dark, so to speak. The Company struggled on for years, but at length the shareholders resolved to sell the boats, wind up the Company, and try to save something out of the wreckage. This was done three years ago. Not very much was left for the shareholders, but what was paid was more than some of them expected. The Fraserburgh Trawling Company is already a memory of the past. It can only be said that it is a thousand pities that such a bold and forward undertaking should have ended in failure.

New Industries.—Although Fraserburgh has lost some of her old industries such as the seal and whale fishing, kelp making and the sailing ship trade, other industries have sprung up and filled the gap. Foremost among these is the Consolidated Pneumatic Tool Works, situated on the Aberdeen turnpike road, and almost on the banks of the Kethock. These works were the creation of that remarkable and successful business man, Mr. A. W. Maconochie, ex-M.P. for East Aberdeenshire, and were started at a time when Fraserburgh was in great need of such an addition to her labour-giving establishments. The number of men finding remunerative employment at the works gradually rose till almost 200 was touched, which figure has been more or less maintained ever since.

With the men receiving very substantial wages, the large amount of money circulated in the town weekly by the Tool Works employees can easily be understood. The Pneumatic Tool Works have proved a great asset to Fraserburgh, and for the sake of the good old town, it is to be hoped they will go on prospering.

Another, but older establishment, which has been one of the mainstays of the town for many a year is the Kinnaird Head Preserving Works, the property of the said Mr. A.W. Maconochie. The number of people that have been employed at the works, and the amount of money that has been paid to them at one time or another, could scarcely be grasped by the average native. The works have proved a veritable gold mine to the community. Those who be living in Fraserburgh at the time of the last South African War was going on, will remember the huge force of employees then engaged, and the great amount of the weekly pay bill. The works were a veritable beehive of industry, and that at a time when Fraserburgh was sorely in need of support, owing to the miserable herring fishing. During war time the works do up Army rations, but the main output is preserved herrings, kippers, and fresh fish of different kinds. These products find their way to all parts the world, even to the very heart of Africa, which is proof of the boundless energy and enterprise of the firm of Maconochie Brothers, Ltd. In consequence of this enterprise the name Fraserburgh is paraded all over the globe, and a patriotic native may at any time feel his blood tingling in his veins when he unexpectedly comes across its name at the most remote or inaudible spot anywhere "from China to Peru." These works have done incalculable good to Fraserburgh, and it is to be sincerely wished that the success which has attended them in the past, may continue to smile upon them in the future.

Another comparatively new and important work is the very large barrel factory and timber business of Messrs. Park & Company, Ltd. Of course, the old windmill was in its day no mean affair, but the development that has taken place in the business since it was floated as a limited company 12 or 15 years ago is remarkable. The quantity of barrels that is manufactured yearly at the mill would have supplied the whole needs of Fraserburgh not so very many years ago. And these barrels are of the very finest quality, second to none in Scotland. Needless to say the staff of coopers and other men employed by Park and Company, Ltd. is a very large one, and yearly increasing. As yet, there is no indication of a limit being reached, and the further enlargement of the firm's business pretty much means continued prosperity to Fraserburgh, and an expansion of her general trade.

Another firm which now gives employment to a number of men, is that of Messrs. Samuel Robb, Ltd., barrel manufacturers, Barrasgate. Though not worked on the same extensive lines as that of Messrs. Park & Company, Ltd, still the barrel making establishment of Messrs. Robb is distinctly a valuable addition to the comparatively recently founded industries of the town. The Manure Works at the West Shore, of the British Oil and Guano Company, Ltd.,

is another modern addition to the town's industries. The smell coming from the Works, during a north or north-westerly breeze at certain seasons of the year, is not like that wafted from "Ceylon's isle," but people living and depending upon the industries of a herring fishing town, need not be too finical about smells, otherwise they must shift their abode. The works give employment to a number of men, and circulate a large sum of money in the town in the course of twelve months. When this is the case, inconveniences can be put up with to a considerable extent. Under the able management of Mr. William McConnachie of Knowsie, the Company has been a huge financial success. Two engineering shops have sprung into existence in recent years, of which due mention must be made. One in Shore Street belongs to Messrs. Chalmers & Company, while the other in Saltoun Square Lane, is the business of Mr. James Yeats. Both employ a considerable number of men. The establishments are steadily growing in size, and the excellent quality of the work done is the best guarantee that both shops have a successful future before them. There are other thriving and extensive businesses in Fraserburgh that might be mentioned, several fishcurers for instance, as "a boon and a blessing" to the town, but to start in this direction would mean that a dozen or two direct references would have to be made. That is beyond the scope of the book.

Conclusion.— The great improvements that have in recent years been carried out at the south entrance to the town, must not be overlooked. The Bowling Green, the Tennis Court, and the surrounding grounds so neatly laid off, are a credit to the community. A native, absent 20 years from the town, driving his motor car into the burgh from Aberdeen, would, when he neared the Manse, rub his eyes and wonder what Elysium he had reached. The Cricket Field, with the handsome new Pavilion, erected on what was once the banks of the Kethock, is a marked improvement on the amenities of the town. Other public improvements are in contemplation, and, as the quest for the beautiful in regard to the artistic improvement of towns, is rapidly gaining ground in this country, there is every likelihood that the external adornment of Fraserburgh in the future will enhance its appearance a thousand fold.

The beautiful sands of Fraserburgh are year by year becoming more popular with visitors. "The silver strand" is often quoted, but a native of Fraserburgh can go one better, and truthfully describe the sands of his native place as "the golden strand." On a fine summer day, the golden hue which they present against the green waves of the sea washing over them, with the benty dunes as a background, make a picture worthy the brush of a great artist. The sands have not yet taken the distinguished place in public estimation they are entitled to, but "a thing of beauty," probably unequalled on the whole coast of Scotland, is bound in time to secure public favour. But every spot in and around Fraserburgh is dear to a native, especially if he or she has been separated from the place for a lengthened period, and had his or her rough edges rubbed off by contact with the great world beyond the borders and the oceans. Mr. John



Photo by Norrie, Fraserburgh.

FRASERBURGH AND SANDS, 1912.

Mackie in his lectures on the "Broch," most beautifully describes the feeling as follows: "To them" (speaking of unfeeling people) "there may be neither beauty nor form in any of the scenes of the locality. To them there is no poetry in the word 'Broch.' To them a daisy on the Links is as a yellow primrose on the river's brink to an unobservant passer by—

'A yellow primrose is—
And nothing more.'

But to one placed like the speaker, there is not a daisy on the broad surface from the mineral well" (near the South U.F. Church) "to the Kethock but has a beauty which no daisy elsewhere can boast of. The Head o' Reekie," (near the Town Council flagstaff) "the Bassalonian Brae, the old School House, with Moses and Aaron and the ten commandments in front, the Rumbling Goit, the Bath Peel, the Wine Tower, the Gallow Hill, even Broadsea Hole and Peter Taylor's Mermaids, are charmed spots, possessing a fascination which no language can describe, the bare mention of their names summoning from the profoundest depths of memory, faces, voices, scenes, recollections, which make every locality sacred, and constrain the exclamation of the patriotic Jew with regard to his pride and joy, 'If I forget thee, let my right hand forget its cunning.'"

APPENDIX.

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