

NUMBER LIII.

PARISH OF HODDOM.

*(County of Dumfries.)**By the Rev. Mr JAMES YORSTOUN.**Situation, Extent, &c.*

THE parish of Hoddom lies in the county of Dumfries, and in that division of it called *Annandale*. It is situated about 16 miles south-east from the town of Dumfries, and belongs to the synod of Dumfries, and presbytery of Annan. The extent of the parish is, in length, about 5 miles, and, in breadth, about 2½. Its form is somewhat quadrangular. The present parish of Hoddom consists of three parishes united; Hoddom, Line, and Ecclesfechan. It is now almost a century and a half since these parishes were thrown into one. In each there is still a glebe belonging to the minister.

Rivers.—The rivers connected with the present parish are the Annan, the Milk, and the Mien. The river Annan runs along the west side of the parish, and is enlarged by the supplies it receives, in a course from the north, of about 26 miles. About 6 miles to the south, it empties itself into the Solway Frith. The fish in this river are salmon, trouts, &c. Though there be as yet no scarcity, yet, it is to be observed, that there never have been so many fish in the river since the
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land began to be manured with lime. This manure being washed from the land into the river by floods, is supposed to be very fatal to every species of fish. The Milk wathes only a small corner on the north-west of the parish, and then empties itself into the Annan. It runs from the east. The extent of its course is about 14 miles. It abounds with small fish, and is an excellent river for trouting. The Mien, which is so small as hardly to deserve the name of a river, runs also from the east. The extent of its course is about 6 miles. It runs across the parish, dividing the old parish of Hoddum from that of Lane, and then empties itself into the Annan. This rivulet is continually changing its channel, and damaging the land lying along its banks.

Surface and Soil.—The land of the parish consists partly of high, partly of low ground; and it may be added, that the low ground contains a considerable extent of holm. The soil may be classed under three kinds: 1st, The holm land, which lies by the banks of the Annan on the west, and by those of the Mien, towards the east of the parish. The land near the banks of these rivers is all, excepting a few small spots, a deep and a rich loam, collected by the rivers, and exceedingly fertile. The next is that in the body of the parish, where there is a plain of about two square miles. The soil in that plain is light and gravelly, but pretty free from stones; and, with proper culture, and a season not remarkably dry, produces rich crops both of corn and grass. The third is that towards the northern parts of the parish, where the ground rises, from the plain in the body of the parish, in a gradual and gentle ascent, finely exposed to the south and south west. The soil here inclines to clay; much of it lies upon a cold till; some of it upon a rock; but, when properly limed, is almost as productive as the low lands.

lands. A few farms to the east, on the march of Middlebie, and a few to the north, on the march of Tundergarth, have not the same exposure, but the soil is the same. On the west side of the old parish of Line, a considerable tract of land lies waste, the most of which could not admit of culture; but, excepting this and a few other places, all the land in the present parish of Hoddom is arable; and, indeed, the greatest part of it has actually been ploughed.

Inclufures and Produce.—About 22 years ago, not a fence or dyke of any kind was to be feen in the whole parish. Now, almost every farm is furrounded with a good fence, either of stone or hedge, mostly of the latter; and several farms are divided into parks or inclofures. The grain crops are principally oats and barley. In fome particular spots, wheat may be feen; but fo little of it, as not to deferve being particularly mentioned. The mode of culture commonly adopted is, firft, manuring the land with lime, when that is judged neceffary; then breaking the ground, and taking from it two crops of oats fucceffively; then manuring the land with dung, and taking from it one crop of barley; then taking from it other two crops of oats; and, after that, fuffering the land to reft for about four years. This is the method which is commonly followed; but there are individuals who purfue a different method, and lay out their fields both with judgment and tafte. The quantity of grain produced in the parish, greatly exceeds that which is confumed by the inhabitants. 1700 Carlifle bufhels of barley, 400 Carlifle bufhels of oats, together with 3500 ftone weight of oat-meal, are computed to have been, for thefe three years paff, carried out of the parish annually, at an average. Some of this barley is exported to Greenock, but the greateft part to Lancashire and Cumberland. It muft
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not, however, be understood that all the grain carried out of the parish, is over and above what is consumed by the inhabitants. Both meal and malt are brought into the parish from other places, and sold in small quantities to those who cannot afford to lay in a stock. But the quantity brought in, bears no proportion to that which is carried out of the parish. The vegetable produce, not included in grain, consists chiefly of potatoes, the chief sustenance of day-labourers, and the lower class of people. Few if any of these are exported. Almost every cottager keeps a hog or two, which he fattens; and, by the assistance of these animals, the inhabitants are enabled to consume almost the whole potatoe produce of the parish. A few fields are allotted for turnips. Of late years, a considerable quantity of ground has been laid out in sown grass. The quantity allotted for flax and hemp may not exceed 12 acres. There is one farm in the parish which it may be proper particularly to mention, on account of its having been lately converted into a dairy, a new thing in this part of the country. It is the farm of Relief; belongs to Mr Pulteney; and is let to a person from Cheshire, who had acquired the knowledge of dairy-work in that country. Cheese is there made of the same kind with that made in Cheshire, and is sold at $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. *per* pound. The butter, which is made from the thick of the whey, is sold at 6 d. *per* pound. This dairy consists of about 200 acres. 40 cows were kept upon it last season. The quantity of cheese made and sold amounted to the value of 140 l. Sterling, and of butter to the value of 11 l. Last season was unfavourable; and it is expected that a considerably greater quantity of cheese and butter will be made this season. The stock of milk-cows is also to be increased this season, by the additional number of ten.

Curiosities.

Curiosities.—Two places deserve to be mentioned, on account of their curiosity, and connection with antiquity. The one is the hill of Burnswark, famous for its particular form, (which, from its smoothness and regularity, has all the appearance of art), for the extensive view which it commands, and for the vestiges of Roman works, which may be distinctly traced on the sides, and on the top of the hill *. The other place is Hallguards, being the place on which the old castle of Hoddom stood, said to have been the seat of one of the families of the Bruces. This castle is said to have been demolished some centuries ago in compliance with the terms of a border treaty. It was rebuilt by Lord Kerkes, in the days of Queen Mary, but removed to a situation on the other side of the Annan, where it now stands. The history of this castle, and also of the Tower of Repentance, will probably be given in the account of the parish of Cumbertrees, to which they belong.

Church.—The living, including the stipend and the value of the three glebes formerly mentioned, amounts to 100 l. The manse is old, and in wretched repair. The offices are in good condition, having been very lately built. The right of presentation is vested in the Duke of Queensberry and Mr Sharpe of Hoddom, who have exercised it by turns.

School.—The schoolmaster's salary is only 6 l. 13 s. 6 d. besides quarter wages, which have usually amounted to upwards of 10 l. *per annum.*

Poor.

* For a more particular description, consult Gordon's Itinerary, in which is drawn a plan of the hill, and the works upon it.

Poor.—The poor's funds consist of a capital of 400 l. Sterling. This capital originated from two mortified sums; the one a sum of 1119 l. 19 s. 4 d. Scotch money, mortified to the poor of the parish in the year 1701, by Mr James Alexander, through whose means, chiefly, the three parishes were united; the other, a sum of 1000 merks, mortified by John Sharpe of Hoddum, in the year 1715. By the interest having, from different causes, been suffered to accumulate, these sums have swelled to a capital of 400 l. Sterling. Besides the above, the weekly collections produce about 12 l. Sterling *per annum*.

Miscellaneous Observations.—There are few parishes so well provided with roads as that of Hoddum. It is divided longitudinally almost into two halves, by the turnpike road leading from Gratenay to Moffat; and there are five cross roads, all of which are equal to turnpike. It may be proper to mention the convenience of its situation, in regard to one of the principal commodities for improvement, viz. lime. Lime of excellent quality is to be got in great abundance, within the distance of 2 miles. This, together with the good roads, has of late years greatly increased the value of the land, and wealth of the inhabitants. The commencement of improvements in this parish, and within the county of Dumfries in general, may be dated from the year 1777, when a particular act of Parliament was obtained, authorising a certain description of heritors, to assess the proprietors of land, and their tenants, in an annual sum, not exceeding 12 s. on each 100 merks valuation, for the special purpose of repairing and supporting the different highways in each parish within the county. Before that act was obtained, most of the roads were unmade, or had been repaired in a very superficial manner; and in that district of the county called Annandale

dale, almost the whole of the roads were impassable during the winter season. The power granted by the act 1777, has enabled the gentlemen of the county, who have exerted themselves with much laudable zeal, to repair, in the course of 14 years, almost every road of consequence in the respective parishes. The four great roads within the county, which lead to Edinburgh by Langholm, to Edinburgh and Glasgow by Moffat, to Portpatrick by Dumfriesshire, and to Ayrshire by Sanquhar, as also the road from Annan to Langholm, are now turnpike roads, and have all been effectually repaired since the year 1777. The tolls upon them produce about 1700 l. *per annum*; and no county, either in Scotland or in England, can boast of having better roads than the county of Dumfriesshire. From this cause alone, Dumfriesshire has become a great thoroughfare. The improvement of the soil has been great, rapid, and substantial. Lime, the only manure used for the improvement of waste lands, can now, by means of the good roads, be without any difficulty transported to a considerable distance at all seasons. The great, almost the only drawback, which this parish sustains, is the want of coals. Our distance from these is about 16 miles, which renders their carriage by land very expensive; and the unreasonable oppressive tax laid upon coals imported, renders their carriage by sea still more burdensome.

In the account of the parish of Hoddam, the village of Ecclesfechan must not be omitted. It consists of 105 houses and 500 inhabitants. In this village there are two well furnished inns, where passengers meet with good accommodation, and may be provided with post chaises and post horses. There are 2 inns of an inferior kind, 22 tippling houses, and 8 shops. It has been a post town since the year 1788. The mail coach, which runs between London and Glasgow, passes and repasses every 24 hours; and every day is a post day in

Ecclesfechan, for London, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. The revenue, arising from the postage levied upon letters and packets, at the post-office in Ecclesfechan, amounts to 120 l. *per annum*. But the chief things for which Ecclesfechan deserves to be mentioned, are its fairs and markets. In this village a market is held every month, besides two fairs in the year. These fairs and markets, besides convening the inhabitants of the country around, draw crowds of people from the Border, and even from the English side. On these occasions there is frequently a good shew, and a great sale of horses and black cattle. Hawkers and pedlars get a number of their goods disposed of, and a good deal of business is transacted in the way of settling accounts. On the markets preceding the terms of Whitsunday and Martinmas, many attend for the purpose of hiring servants for the ensuing half year. In former times, these meetings used never to part without some bloody encounter; but, through the progress of civilization, this *Border*, or rather *barbarous* spirit, has of late been gradually decreasing. and, in a short time, it is to be hoped, will cease to exist.

Besides these fairs and monthly markets, there has lately been established a weekly market for swine, which promises to be of great advantage. Formerly, the only market for swine, near this place, was at Longtown, a village on the English side of the Border. About 4 years ago, some dealers being of opinion, that a market in Ecclesfechan would be more convenient for many of the inhabitants of this part of the country, proposed to establish one in this village.—A market for swine was advertised to be held every Friday, from the beginning of January to the beginning of May. It was first held in January 1788, and has since continued according to the original establishment. During these 4 years, upwards of

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1000 carcases of swine, at 4 s. *per* stone, which will amount to 2 l. 8 s. each carcase, have been sold at an average each season. Most of this pork, with a great quantity not brought to the market, is made into bacon in this country. After being properly manufactured and dried, it is sold commonly at 6 s. *per* stone to different dealers, by whom it is exported to different places in England. A great quantity is exported each season to London, by a person who resides in Ecclesfechan. Of late years this parish, as well as those in the neighbourhood, have been comfortably situated in regard to fresh provisions. Formerly, there was rarely any fresh butcher meat to be got nearer than Dumfries; now, one may be very well supplied from Ecclesfechan twice in the week during summer, and once in the ten days or fortnight during winter. And, from Annan, one may be regularly supplied twice in the week during the whole of summer, and the greatest part of winter. This is a great convenience to the inhabitants of this place, who, not long ago, were subjected to the trouble of sending to Dumfries, which is 16 miles distant, at all times, when they stood in need of fresh provisions. It would not be doing justice to the place, to omit mentioning the objects which contribute to its beauty and pleasantness. A place is always pleasant where there is much wood, water, and dry ground. All these contribute to beautify Hoddam, and to render it the most delightful spot in Annandale. The three rivers have already been described. The fields, lying on the banks of these rivers, particularly the Annan, are charming, being mostly holm land, dry, and at the same time rich, and surrounded with beautiful banks of wood. On this side of the Annan, one large wood, consisting of birch, oak, and ash, ascends from the river about a quarter of a mile, and extends alongst its banks about two miles. Part of it goes beyond the bounds of this parish. A foot path, always dry and clean,

clean, makes a most delightful walk from one end of the wood to the other. One may walk for the space of two miles together, enjoying all the way the charms both of wood and water, in their utmost perfection. On the other side of the Annan, the hill of Woodcockair rises from the river, in a pretty steep ascent, for about a mile, and is covered with one of the finest woods in the south of Scotland. This is an object, to those on the opposite side, at once pleasant, from the beauty which it exhibits, and comfortable, from the shelter which it affords. Mention has already been made of the large plain in the body of the parish: The road from Dumfries to Carlisle by Ecclesfechan runs through it. On each side of the road, this plain is divided into inclosures, fenced with hedges, and interspersed with clumps of oak and ash. To the traveller coming from Dumfries, who has to pass through a wild, bleak, hilly tract of country, this vale, at first view, appears like a paradise.

Statistical Table of the Parish of Hoddam.

Population, 1755, -	1393	Persons under 50,	462
————— 1791, -	1198	————— under 70,	146
Decrease,	195	————— above 70,	27
Average of births, for 3		Houses inhabited,	247
years preceding 1791,	33	————— uninhabited,	0
————— of deaths,	14	New houses built within	
————— of marriages,	7	these 7 years, -	38
Males, - - - -	554	Old ditto pulled down,	0
Females, - - - -	644	Married persons, -	239
Persons under 10 years of		Widowers and widows,	61
age, - - - -	312	Members of the Esta-	
————— under 20,	251	blished Church,	1079
		Seceders,	

Seceders, - - -	119	Millers, - - -	2
Heritors residing *, -	29	Bakers, - - -	4
—— non-residing †, -	12	Apprentices, - - -	19
Clergyman, - - -	1	Male servants, - - -	60
Merchants, - - -	8	Female ditto, - - -	65
Writer, - - -	1	Carriers, - - -	7
Schoolmaster, - - -	1	Tanner, - - -	1
Farmers ‡, - - -	70	Cloggers §, - - -	3
Day-labourers, - - -	24	Clockmaker, - - -	1
Innkeepers, - - -	4	Poor, - - -	16
Smiths, - - -	5	Capital of their funds, L.	400
Masons, - - -	6	Annual income, - L.	32
Joiners, - - -	7	Carts, - - -	153
Weavers, - - -	15	Ploughs, - - -	79
Shoemakers, - - -	4	Rent, <i>anno</i> 1791, in Ster-	
Tailors, - - -	7	ling money, - L.	2668
Butchers, - - -	3		

Number.

* Of these there are 2, the rental of whose property is between 100*l.* and 300*l.* *per annum*; 4, whose property is between 30*l.* and 100*l.* a year; and 23, whose rental is under 30*l.* *per annum*.

† Though these do properly not belong to this table, as being none of the classes of inhabitants of the parish; yet, from the interest which they have in the parish, it was judged proper to mark them in this place of the table. Two of these gentlemen have property to the amount of 300*l.* or upwards; one rents between 200*l.* and 300*l.* *per annum*; 4, between 30*l.* and 100*l.*; and the other 5 below 30*l.* a year.

‡ By farmers, are to be understood those only who follow farming as their *chief* occupation. In this class, weavers, tailors, &c. though possessing farms, are not included, farming not being the chief occupation by which they live.

§ Persons whose business is to make clogs. These are a kind of shoes much worn by the lower class of inhabitants in the winter

	<i>Number.</i>	<i>Value each.</i>	<i>Total value.</i>
Horses,	259	L. 12 0 0	L. 3108 0 0
Cattle,	1037	3 0 0	3111 0 0
Sheep,	1078	0 10 6	565 19 0
Swine *,	235	2 0 0	470 0 0
Total value of stock,			L. 7254 19 0

winter season. The upper part consists of very strong leather; the under part, of soles of timber about an inch and a half thick. They are very cumbrous, but dry and warm, and reckoned very conducive to health. They are common in many parts of England, and cannot be too strongly recommended for the use of the poor in Scotland, who find shoes a very expensive article of dress, particularly in the remote parts of the country.

* Attention to the breeding of swine has, as yet, only prevailed near the western borders of Scotland. It is found so advantageous, that it ought to be extended as much as possible all over the kingdom. It requires skill; but, where the proper mode of managing swine is well known, from the quickness of the return, they prove the most profitable stock of any.

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