

PARISH OF KELTON.

PRESBYTERY OF KIRKCUDBRIGHT, SYNOD OF GALLOWAY.

THE REV. SAMUEL COWAN, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—KELTON derives its name from the British word *cell*, signifying a wood or grove, and the common Saxon affix, *tun*, a dwelling.

Extent and Boundaries.—In length, this parish extends about 6 miles; its medium breadth is nearly 3 miles; and its superficial contents may be stated at 16 square miles. It is bounded on the north, by Crossmichael; on the east, by Buittle; on the south, by Rerwick and Kirkcudbright; and on the west, by the river Dee, which separates it from Balmaghie and Tongland.

Topographical Appearances.—The general outline of the parish is that of a ridge between the channel of the Dee and the basin of the Carlinwark loch. Its surface, though very uneven, abounding with small hills of a conical figure, called *drums*, is almost all fit for the plough. Towards the south these hills gradually increase

in height, until they attain an altitude of 1200 feet. The highest points are Bengairn, the Skreel, and Dungyle. From Bengairn or the Skreel, when the state of the atmosphere is favourable, the view is remarkably beautiful and extensive. Throughout its whole extent, the vale of the Dee, rich in natural and artificial beauties, is visible. Running along the silvery line of the river, the eye naturally rests upon the lofty Cairnsmuir of Carsphairn, overlooking the Kells range of mountains, which separates the stewartry from Ayrshire. On the east and north-east are seen Criffel, Queensberry, and the mountains in the north of Dumfriesshire. Towards the west appear Cairnharra, and Cairnsmuir of Fleet, and on the south, the sea—(in the midst of which appears the Isle of Man)—lies immediately below. From St Bee's Head—like a giant guarding the entrance into the Solway Frith—stretches, in an easterly direction, the bold outline of the Cumberland mountains, with the line of cultivation, the rich fields, towns, and villages that adorn the coast of England, distinctly visible. Immediately on the east of Bengairn, and separated from it by a deep and narrow ravine, rises the wild and rugged Skreel, beneath which, on the north-east, is the green hill of Dungyle, whose summit was once crowned with a strong fort, in which the British sought shelter from the Roman invader.

Climate.—The climate is very variable, generally moist, yet mild, pleasant, and salubrious. The springs are cold, the summers rainy, the autumns mild, and the winters not severe.

The following is a correct register of the rain that has fallen in the parish of Kelton during each month within the time specified, as shown by the rain-gauge kept by Mr Joseph Train, in Castle Douglas. The rain-gauge was erected on the 1st March 1837, and the observations ceased in June 1841.

Month.	1837. Inches.	1838. Inches.	1839. Inches.	1840. Inches.	1841. Inches.
January,		.6	2.2	4.9	2.8
February,		2.4	3.6	3.5	3.1
March,	.7	4.1	4.9	.2	3.4
April,	1.3	1.9	2.2	.3	2.8
May,	1.6	3.7	2.	3.1	3.4
June,	2.3	4.2	2.1	2.8	4.6
July,	4.	3.3	5.3	5.6	
August,	2.3	3.7	2.4	2.6	
September,	1.9	2.1	3.8	7.3	
October,	3.2	3.6	4.7	3.4	
November,	3.7	5.	4.5	4.3	
December,	4.3	2.6	4.4	5.1	
Annual total,		37.2	47.1	43.1	

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Although it thus appears that a great deal of rain falls in the course of the year, yet the porous nature of the soil secures its speedy absorption. Frosts are seldom of long continuance, and snows are felt only in their beneficial influences. The strongest winds and the heaviest rains come in the direction of the sea, from the west and south-west; although in early spring, the east wind sometimes blows without intermission for many days, with the most piercing keenness. No diseases however, are peculiarly prevalent in the parish, the general softness of the climate being no less friendly to the human constitution than favourable to pasturage, and the operations of husbandry. An occasional case of small-pox, scarlatina, and typhus fever may occur, but these diseases never spread their ravages far, nor are they ever of long continuance. The blessing of health is enjoyed in an eminent degree; it is no uncommon thing to meet with inhabitants who, in a lifetime of fourscore years, have never been confined to bed by sickness for a single week, and there are at present living in the parish a man and a woman, both of whom have attained the extraordinary age of ninety-seven years.

Hydrography.—Springs and streams of the most excellent water abound in the parish. The river Dee, which has here attained to nearly its greatest volume, being only a few miles from the Tongland rapids, below which it is met by the tide, runs along the whole western boundary of the parish. Immediately above the bridge of Dee, and again at a small distance below it, the river separates, and by the confluence of its divided stream, forms two large and beautifully wooded islands. Several streamlets descend from the mountains and intersect the parish in different directions. The Slackburn and the Auchlane burn, from Bengairn, after running parallel for a few miles in a northerly direction, turn their courses westward, and fall into the Dee, the former above, and the latter below the ancient village of Rhonehouse. Three other burns descend from the Skreel, one of which flows in a northerly direction, past the village of Gelston, and falls into the Carlinwark Loch; the other two run in a south-easterly direction, one on each side of the hill of Gelston, and having at length united, fall into the Solway Frith near Orchardton. One of these—the Yerroch—runs through a beautiful and romantic pass, and, for several miles, forms the boundary between the parishes of Kelton and Buittle.

Loch.—Near the north corner of this parish there is a small

lake called the Carlinwark Loch. It covers a surface of about 100 acres. In the year 1765, this lake was partially drained by a canal of about a mile and a-half in length, cut from it to the river Dee. Six feet of water were thus withdrawn, and the loch was reduced from 180 acres to its present extent. This drainage was made for the purpose of procuring marl, an inexhaustible store of the very best sort of that useful manure—the shelly kind—being contained in the loch, and the mosses that were then exposed. The canal served the double purpose of draining the lake, and of conveying the marl in boats to the Dee, from which it was carried to all the inland parishes which lie upon that river and the Ken. Being thus reduced to the level of the Dee, the Carlinwark Loch is commonly a tributary to the river; but after a heavy fall of rain it acts as a reservoir, being raised many feet, and all the adjoining marshes being overflowed by the influx of the river.

The great road from London to Portpatrick runs along the north-western margin of this lake, whose beauty never fails to command the attention and admiration of the traveller. It is confessedly the most lovely sheet of water in the south of Scotland; nor are there many of the Highland lochs with which it would suffer by being brought into comparison. It is fringed with wood down to the water's edge, and studded with finely wooded islands, which afford harbour to all kinds of waterfowl. Overlooking the lake, the passenger has a remarkably fine view of the castle and woods of Gelston, with the magnificent background of Dungyle, the Skreel, and Bengairn. Even after it had enriched its proprietor, Mr Gordon of Greenlaw, and fertilized the whole surrounding country by the marl which it yielded, this beautiful loch was sold to the late Sir William Douglas for L.2000.

Geology and Mineralogy.—No coal, lime, or freestone is found in this parish. In the mountains there is abundance of ironstone of superior quality; but the absence of coal, difficulty of access, and distance from the sea coast, must ever prevent its being extensively used. The prevailing rock is of the transition formation—viz. slate and greywacke. The strata of greywacke exhibit many varieties; some, which are called in the country whinstone, are of a blue, or greyish-brown colour; of a hard and compact grain; generally break irregularly, but sometimes split into parallel slices, of which large coarse slates are made. The beds of this stone are of various thickness, from half an inch to many

feet, and generally lie in a direction from north-east to south-west, with a slight inclination from the perpendicular. There are interposed between them frequent strata of the soft, shivering, argillaceous stone, which easily yields to the weather, called slate band; and they are also sometimes interspersed with veins or dikes of porphyry. Of this there is a striking instance immediately in front of the manse, where a dike or vein of the hardest porphyry, about three feet in thickness, has been forced up through a bed of slate band. Granite is found in the mountains. There are also several mosses, of considerable extent, in the parish, which exhibit remains of the ancient forest that once covered nearly the whole of Galloway.

Soil.—The soil is various, but in general it consists of a thin light hazel mould, or a brown loam, mixed with sand, or the debris of slate band. In some places it is incumbent upon a stiff clay, and occasionally on gravel, but generally upon the rocks which prevail in the parish. It is very fertile, and yields a grateful return for any agricultural improvement.

Zoology.—Kelton Hill was formerly the great mart for the sale of horses in the south of Scotland. Many of these animals were, in consequence, bred in the parish. But the multiplication of fairs throughout the country, and the free importation of horses from Ireland, have divested this village of much of its ancient importance. A considerable number of horses, however, are still reared for the market, though the true Galloway, the once-celebrated native of the district, is now almost unknown. That small but beautiful, hardy, docile, and useful animal has given place to various larger, stronger, and more showy races.

Much attention is paid to the breed of cows. The native Galloway cow, perhaps the most finely proportioned of the species known in Scotland, is generally of a glossy black colour, without horns, of a round and compact body, and capable of being fed to the weight of 45 stones. This fine animal, however, has now to contend for superiority with the Cunningham or Ayrshire cow. Each species has its admirers and advocates ready to assign substantial reasons for the preference of their favourite. The produce of the native, though not so abundant as that of the stranger, is maintained to be superior in quality. Practically, the dispute is settled in this way;—those who can afford to indulge in luxuries retain the Galloway; while those to whom quantity is an object of importance, as the keepers of dairies,—a mode of husbandry

that is becoming common in this part of the country,—adopt the Ayrshire breed of cows.

The greatest share of the agriculturist's attention, however, is directed to the rearing of black-cattle, which may still be considered as the staple commodity of Galloway. In this respect, there seems to be a strong inclination to keep up the character which the county had acquired in the days of Symson, who remarks, that it was "more plentiful in bestial than cornes." Many more cattle are reared than bred in this parish. Some are brought from the Highlands of Scotland; others from Ireland, or the northern counties of England; and, after being grazed a year, are again sold to the dealers who supply the English markets. They are generally bought at the age of one or two years, at prices varying from L.5 to L.10, and are resold at prices ranging from L.9 to L.14. Some of the best lots bring as high as L.15. Whatever disputes may exist with regard to the comparative merits of the Galloway and Ayrshire cows, there is none with regard to their respective capabilities of being fed for the butcher,—the Galloway being readily and universally allowed to *take on fat* much faster, and to afford finer beef than its rival.

None of the farms in Kelton are held exclusively as sheep-walks. A considerable number of these useful animals, however, are kept in the parish. They are almost all of the cross breed between the Cheviot and Leicester. A few of the small black-faced sheep, the ancient breed of the country, are still to be seen wandering among the rocks of the Skreel. These produce finer mutton than the cross-breeds. All the farmers, and many of the common people, keep a few pigs, part of which are used in their own households, and part brought to market. On several of the farms, large flocks of geese are seen feeding, which, towards the end of the year, are sent to the Edinburgh, Glasgow, or Liverpool market.

Grouse, blackcocks, partridges, pheasants, and wood pigeons, hares and rabbits abound. The woodcock, cuckoo, landrail, swallow, and marten are annual visitants. The curlew, quail, and bittern are sometimes met with. The Carlinwark Loch is stocked with almost all the fresh-water fowls common in the country, as the swan, heron, wild duck, and various species of the jay-teal. Chinese geese breed in the islands; and the solitary cormorant may often be seen swimming among the waves, or sitting motionless for many hours together upon a pile of stones in the middle of

the lake. Various kinds of vermin are also to be met with, as the owl, several species of hawk, raven, polecat, fox, weasel, hedgehog, mole, and rat. The otter has also been seen and snared in the parish. One was lately taken in the Carlinwark Loch that measured 35 inches from the snout to the point of the tail.

The river Dee abounds with salmon and trout; and the Carlinwark Loch with the finest pike, perch, and eels. The *Unio*, or *Alasmodon Margaritiferus*, a kind of pearl mussel, is found in the Dee; and another, but rarer, species of the same genus, the *Anodon cygneus*, is met with in the Carlinwark Loch.

Botany.—Kelton offers a rich field for the botanist. Besides the more common plants, there may be mentioned as indigenous to the parish;—

Hippuris vulgaris	Cerastium semidecandrium	Geranium molle
Veronica serpyllifolia	Lythrum salicaria	————— dissectum
Gallium saxatile	Agrimonia Eupatorium	Genista tinctoria
————— cruciatum	Spiræa salicifolia	Anthyllis vulneraria
————— aparine	Potentilla reptans	Ervum hirsutum
Myosotis collina	Helianthemum vulgare	Hypericum humifusum
Anagallis tenella	Nymphæa alba	————— pulchrum
Parnassia palustris	Nuphar lutea	Hypochæris radicata
Drosera rotundifolia	Ranunculus lingua	Hieracium pilosella
Narthecium ossifragum	————— sceleratus	Gymnadenia conopsea
Alisma ranunculoides	Trollius Europæus	Epimedium
Epilobium hirsutum	Scutellaria galericulata	Myrica Gale
Saxifraga granulata	Lepidium campestre	Asplenium Trichomanes
Stellaria glauca	Nasturtium terrestre	Scolopendrium vulgare, &c.
Arenaria serpyllifolia	Sisymbrium officinale	
Cerastium viscosum	Erysimum Cheiranthoides	

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

The ancient history of this parish is enveloped in considerable obscurity. It formed part of the extensive territories of the powerful and warlike British tribe the Selgovæ, several of whose places of strength can still be traced. When Agricola invaded "that part of Britain which is opposite to Ireland," along with the rest of Galloway, Kelton was comprehended in the Roman province Valentia. The progress and power of that warlike people are still indicated by existing vestiges of their roads, causeways, and camps, placed among the hill-forts to keep the natives in check, as well as by Roman weapons, ornaments, and culinary utensils, found in this parish. After the Roman abdication, the Britons assumed their ancient independence, until the Northumbrian Saxons, in the seventh century, reduced this country under their power. Few of that people, however, who enjoyed a better country and climate on the eastern shore, and who had already conquered a greater extent of territory than their limited population could occupy,

settled permanently in Galloway; and they have left but few memorials, even in bestowing Saxon names upon places, of their ever having gained a footing here at all. Not so with the Irish emigrants, who, after many attacks on the Romanized Britons, before the end of the ninth century, succeeded in gaining possession of Galloway, and at length of the whole peninsula formed by the river Nith and the Solway Frith on the one hand, and the river and Frith of the Clyde on the other. In the topography of the stewartry, these colonists have left innumerable proofs of the number of their settlements. Many of the names of places alluded to, indeed, are common to the British and the Irish, as *Torrs*, from *tor*, a small hill; *Dungyle*, from the British *din* or the Irish *dun*, a fort; and *Bengairn*, from *ben*, a mountain, and *cairn*, a hillock of stones; yet the complete colonization of Galloway by the Irish is strikingly proved by the fact, that in this whole parish only two places retain names which are purely British, viz. *Slag-naw*, a compound of *slack*, the name of a burn, and *cnol*, commonly pronounced *knowe*, a hillock; and *Carlinwark*, from the British *caer-lin*, the fort-lake, and the tautological Scoto-Saxon *wark*, a castle or large structure of any kind. The name of *Kirk-cormic*, or rather *Kil-cormic*, as it was formerly written, one of the three parishes of which Kelton is composed, is purely Irish, *kil* signifying a church, and *Cormic* being the successor of Saint Patrick, and called in the Ulster Annals Saint Patrick's heir. For many ages, this people predominated in Galloway, speaking their own language, having their own officers, called *reguli* or kings, being governed by their own laws, and retaining their national manners and customs, even to the point of rebellion whenever they were attempted to be interfered with, as was the case in the times of Malcolm IV. and Alexander II. The manners of the Galwegians, as described by Symson in 1684, shew a great resemblance to the peculiarities of the Irish peasantry at the present day; but recent improvements, and increased facilities of intercourse, have changed the habits and customs of the people, and assimilated their modes of life to the Scottish national standard.

It would be foreign to the object of a work like the present to pursue the civil history of this parish, mixed up as it is with that of the district through all the desolating feuds of its native lords; the wars that originated in the disputed succession to the throne of Scotland, in which the Galwegians naturally took part with their countrymen the Comyns and Baliols, and consequently shared

in all their disasters; the oppressions of the Earls of Douglas; its deliverance by James II.; its distracted state, arising out of the jealousies and quarrels of its petty chiefs; the incursions of the English, until the union of the Scottish and English crowns gave repose to the harassed and almost depopulated country. Suffice it to say, that the parish of Kelton, from its central position, and especially from its proximity to the Castles of Buittle and Thrieve, the strongholds of the ambitious and turbulent families of the Baliols and Douglasses, was necessarily the theatre of many interesting and important transactions, altogether lost sight of by history, and concerning which even tradition is now almost silent.

In Blaeu's "Atlas Scotiæ," there is a description of the parish of Kelton, furnished by John Maclellan about the year 1650. It is particularly described in Symson's MS. Account of Galloway, 1684; and it is also noticed in Chalmers' Caledonia, Vol. iii. p. 314.

Land-owners.—The following is a correct list of the present proprietors, with their respective valuations:

The Heirs of the late William Maitland of Auchlane,	L.939	0	0
The Earl of Selkirk,	491	0	0
Archibald Maxwell of Kelton,	380	0	0
Sir Robert Abercromby, Bart. of Birkenbog, &c.	286	0	0
William Forbes of Callendar,	281	0	0
Sir J. M. Mackenzie, Bart. of Delvine,	230	0	0
Colonel Maxwell of Orchardton,	166	0	0
James Barbour of Dunmuir,	147	0	0
John Craig of Milnthird,	150	0	0
Mrs Hamilton of Torrs,	140	10	0
Colonel M'Dowall of Logan,	113	0	0
James Cowan of Daldawn,	105	0	0
Adam Gray of Kirkland,	55	0	0
Messrs Hankey, Bankers, London,	40	0	0
Matthew Craig of Upper Torrs,	39	10	0
John M'Kinnel of Over Arkland,	20	0	0
Hugh M'Whirter of Bellerig,	15	0	0
Total valuation,	L.3528	0	0

Of these land-owners, Mrs Maitland, Mr Barbour, Mr J. Craig, Mr M'Kinnel, and Mr M'Whirter reside in the parish. It contains no residence of any of the nobility.

Parochial Registers.—It is to be hoped that there are few parishes in Scotland, the registers of which have been so carelessly kept as those of Kelton. The session records extend no farther back than the year 1715. For the next eleven years from that date the proceedings of the session are regularly minuted, and the register of births is also complete. But from 1726 down to 1762, neither record nor register can be found. For the next twenty-two

years they have been regularly kept; but from 1794 down to 1839 no regular records appear to have been kept, and the register of births has been quite neglected. The transactions of the session are now regularly minuted; but so inveterate has become the habit of neglecting the register that not one parent in ten can be persuaded to record the births of his children.

Antiquities.—This parish exhibits traces of all the nations who have successively occupied Galloway. 1. On the farm of Torrs there is an imperfect circle of upright stones, the remains of a Druidical temple, in the neighbourhood of which there is a copious spring of excellent water. In such places, the pagan aborigines and their descendants, the Selgovæ, performed their superstitious worship and impious rites of divination. 2. Of the numerous remains of the hill forts of that ancient people which are found in this district, the most remarkable is situated upon the hill of Dungle, near the ruins of Gelston kirk. It is of the usual circular form, and surrounded with three ramparts of stones mixed with earth. At a little distance there is a smaller one, fortified in the same way. The former is 117, and the latter 68 paces in diameter. 3. On opening a sepulchral tumulus near Gelston, which is not far from the route of Agricola's army through Galloway, there was found a stone coffin, seven feet long, and three feet wide, which contained human bones of unusual length and thickness. These appear to have been the relics of some ancient warrior, as there was also discovered in the same coffin, a brass or copper helmet, with several implements of war, that were greatly corroded. There was also found in the neighbourhood "a nicely carved urn," full of reddish coloured ashes. The figure of the urn, however, is all that would lead us to refer this relic to the Romans, as cremation was not peculiar to that people, but practised also by the British; and it was the custom of both to inhume the urns of the dead, without any pious cairn to mark the place of their repose. 4. A few years ago, a Roman tripod, in a good state of preservation, was turned up by the plough in the farm of Mid Kelton: it is now in the possession of Mr Train, Castle Douglas. 5. A Mummer's head mask, made of fine copper, richly ornamented, and having two long horns turning backwards like those of a goat, was found in a morass in the farm of Torrs, about the year 1820. Masquerades were a favourite amusement of the nobility in the middle ages, and this mask had probably belonged to a Mummer of the neighbouring castle of Thrieve. It was pre-

sented to Sir Walter Scott by Mr Train, and is now a conspicuous object in the museum at Abbotsford. 6. Mr Train has also in his possession two interesting pieces of furniture; the one an antique bedstead or buistie of the black Earl of Douglas, who was assassinated by his sovereign in the castle of Stirling; the other, a beautiful cabinet of elaborately carved oak, formed out of the different pieces of an ornamented chimney-piece, the cutting of which was the amusement of twenty tedious years spent by Mr J. Gordon, a member of the Earlstoun family, in the dungeon of Blackness, where he was confined on account of his religion. 7. The Carlinwark loch has yielded up many antiquities. This beautiful sheet of water appears to have been an object of wonderful interest in ancient times. It once contained two large islands; one near the north end, and the other near the south end of it. But great pains have evidently been taken to adorn it with artificial islands, as there are two small ones that the writer of the Old Statistical Account says, "have evidently been formed by strong piles of wood driven into the moss or marl, on which were placed large frames of black oak." These were discovered in the year 1765, when the loch was drained for the purpose of procuring marl. They had been immersed "fully six feet under water,"—a fact which seems to prove that the original extent of the loch was not much greater than its present, these six feet of water being fully accounted for by two dams which were then also discovered. These must have been erected for the purpose of deepening the lake by shutting its two outlets towards the Dee. This idea seems to be confirmed by a tradition which has always prevailed in the parish; that there was a town which sunk, or was drowned, in the loch—probably a few houses partially submerged, and rendered uninhabitable by the confinement of the waters. Tradition says also, that there were two churches or chapels, one upon each of the large islands. On an islet near the north end of the loch, there was found a large iron mallet, or hammer, stained on one end with blood-rust. It is now in the possession of the Antiquarian Society of Edinburgh, and is supposed to have been an instrument used by the ancient Druids in killing their sacrifices. The dams referred to above had been strong works; the one was discovered at the present outlet of the loch to the Dee, and was built of stone, moss, and clay; the other was found near the town of Castle Douglas, at a point where, in very high floods, the loch and the river still meet. This work consisted of oak wood and earth. At this

place, which is now covered by the great military road, the Roman army constructed a causeway through the marsh, which gave to Castle Douglas, in its infant days, the name of "Causeway-end," which towards the close of last century, was changed for "Carlin-wark." About this place many horse shoes were found sunk deep in the mud, of a form altogether different from those now in use. One of them is in the possession of Mr Train. It consists of one solid piece of iron, not made to go round the edge of the hoof, but to cover the whole foot. On the inside, especially towards the heel, it is hollowed so as not to press upon the soft part of the foot. No perforations for the nails are discoverable—they appear to be filled with rust. It somewhat resembles the balls or lumps of ice formed by horses feet in winter. Four such amorphous pieces of iron must have formed no small encumbrance to a horse; for although a good deal worn in front, this shoe still weighs about six pounds. In several parts of the loch canoes were found, exactly similar to those discovered in Merton-mere, Lochar moss, and the Carron. They appear to have been hollowed out of one tree, by the action of fire, after the manner of the American Indians. These are obviously Celtic remains of a very early date. Several very large stag heads, and a capacious brass pan were also found in the loch; and near its south-west corner a Roman dagger 22 inches long, and plated with gold, was fished up in a bag of marl. It is in the possession of Mrs Colonel Gordon of Greenlaw. By the withdrawing of the water, one of the two large islands—that to the north—was made a peninsula, but it still retains the name of "the Isle." On the south, or Fir Isle, the remains of an iron forge may still be seen; and it is said that Edward I. when he penetrated into Galloway in the year 1300, made use of this island as a place for shoeing his cavalry horses. Around this isle there has been a stone rampart, and a road led from it to the land on the north-east, which was formed of stones secured by strong piles of oak. Close to the side of the island, this road had a deep opening, in which large beams of wood, the remains of a draw-bridge, are still visible under the water. The road is now a marsh, having been destroyed by the action of the water; and here we have an additional confirmation of what is stated above respecting the original depth and extent of the loch; for with the six feet of water that were drained off in 1765, added to what the loch at present contains, the construction of these works would have been impracticable.

On the west side of the loch, between it and the public road, there is still pointed out a small piece of rising ground, as the Gallows Sote, or pit into which the victims of the cruelty or revenge of the Earls of Douglas were cast after being hanged on the gallows knob, a large block of granite projecting from the front wall of Thrieve Castle, immediately over the main gateway. There is a difficulty, however, in accounting for this charnel being situated at the distance of more than a mile from the castle, while the carcasses could have been so much more readily disposed of in the neighbouring marshes, or in the river that flowed under the very walls. Some, therefore, regard this piece of ground as the *gallows sote*, on the top of which, it is said, stood a gibbet, upon which those unhappy persons who incurred the displeasure of the Douglasses were executed. Be this as it may, the fact is indisputable, that this piece of ground was used, if not as a place of execution, at least as a receptacle for the bodies of criminals; for the popular tradition to this effect was strikingly corroborated in the year 1800, when, in making the present highway, abundance of human bones were turned up in this spot. On this gallows, it is stated in the old Statistical Account, that Maclellan, tutor of Bombie, was executed by the command of Douglas, notwithstanding the King's letters demanding his release. This account, however, differs from that which is given by the best authors, as Pinkerton, Hume of Godscroft, Balfour, Buchanan, Hume, Scott, and Tytler, who all agree that Maclellan was beheaded in the court of Thrieve Castle,—a grim and frowning stronghold that stands on an island surrounded by the Dee, about a mile from the high road, from which it is visible. The same writer states, that “The remains of Raeberry (Maclellan) lie buried in the church of Kirkcormock, as appears from the inscription upon a gravestone there.” But Crawford, in his Peerage, says, that “Sir Patrick Maclellan was interred in the abbey church of Dundrennan, under a monument of freestone.” This account is the more probable, as Dundrennan was the family burying-place of the Maclellans, and not far from their castle of Raeberry. The inscription upon the stone in the church of Kirkcormock is in old Runic characters, now hardly legible. Enough, however, has been made out to show, that it was erected to perpetuate the memory of a young man of the same name, who died upwards of eighty years after the murder of the tutor of Bombie. It is, “*Honorabilis Patricius Maclellan qui obit anno M.DXXXIV. anno xviii ætatis.*”

Raeberry was beheaded in 1451. The stone in question is easily accounted for, when it is stated that the clan of the Maclellans became so numerous and respectable, that fourteen knights of the name are said to have existed in Galloway at one time, and that the ruins of a castle which belonged to a branch of the family are still to be seen within three miles of Kirkcormock. The family are considered to have been of Irish origin, and were probably instrumental in erecting this church. Their castle appears to have been a place of considerable importance. The ruins are extensive, and some of the vaults are yet entire, and are used as sheds for cattle. It was situated on the farm of Auchlane, to which it has transmitted its own name. It was surrounded with a wide and deep ditch, which was supplied with water from the burn that now flows past the north side of the ruins.

There are several beautiful moats in the parish.

Mons Meg.—Although this parish is forced to relinquish the honour of having furnished Raeberry with a grave, it seems to have a good claim to the honour of having contributed the means of demolishing the castle of his murderer. When the act of forfeiture against the Douglasses was passed by the Scottish Parliament in the year 1455, the Castle of Thrieve was the last stronghold that held out for that powerful and rebellious family. King James II. resolved to conduct the siege of this place in person. He therefore marched into Galloway at the head of a numerous army, and took up a position at "the Three Thorns of the Carlinwark,"* near the place where the town of Castle Douglas now stands. Among the multifarious assemblage who came from all parts of the country to witness the warlike operations, there was a blacksmith of the name of M'Kim, or M'Min, and his sons. Observing that the royal artillery produced little effect upon the thick and strong walls of Thrieve, old M'Kim remarked to one of the officers, that a larger cannon should be procured; and, after examining the way in which the guns had been manufactured, he offered, if furnished with the proper materials, to construct a more efficient piece of ordnance. The king gladly accepted his proposal; and the principal inhabitants of Kirkcudbright, to avenge the death of their superior, the tutor of Bombie; liberate the country from the tyranny of the Douglasses, and

* One of these thorns still remains—a knotty, gnarled, fluted, hoary, and interesting relic of antiquity, which it is desirable that some means were employed to preserve from the decay that has long since preyed upon the other two.

evinced their loyalty to their sovereign, having contributed each a *gaud*, or bar, of iron, brawny M'Kim and his sons were set to work, and soon produced the famous cannon, known by the name of *Mons Meg*. The manufacture of this extraordinary piece of ordnance was carried on at Buchan's Croft, in the immediate vicinity of the three Thorns of the Carlinwark, where the king had encamped. It is composed of a number of separate bars held firmly together by strong hoops of iron, in the form of a cask. Its calibre is $19\frac{1}{2}$ inches. With immense difficulty, this prodigious cannon, which weighs six tons and a-half, was dragged to a commanding position, since called *Knockcannon*, right in front of Thrieve Castle. The charge, it is said, consisted of a peck of powder, and a granite ball, the weight of a Carsphairn cow. It was discharged with such effect that the first shot produced the greatest consternation among the inmates of the castle, and the second went through the thick walls and carried away the right hand of the countess, the celebrated Fair Maid of Galloway,—as she sat at table within the banqueting-hall, and was about to raise the wine-cup to her lips,—a circumstance regarded by the people in the country as a direct manifestation of the vengeance of Heaven, because that hand had been given in wedlock to two brothers, and that whilst the lawful spouse of one of them was still alive. The garrison immediately surrendered; and the grateful monarch presented to M'Kim the forfeited lands of Mollance, as a reward for the service he had rendered his country by constructing so noble an engine of war. According to the custom of Galloway, where persons are generally called by the names of the lands they possess, M'Kim soon came to be known by the soubriquet Mollance. The cannon was named after him, with the addition of Meg, in compliment to his wife, whose voice, it is said, rivalled that of her namesake. Thus the original name of the gun was *Mollance Meg*, which, in course of time, was contracted into *Mons Meg*. Drummond of Hawthornden is the first author who uses this contraction, "*sicuti Mons Megga crachasset*,"—which has led people unacquainted with the history of Galloway erroneously to suppose that this famous cannon was forged at Mons in Flanders. But no proof whatever has yet been adduced to that effect, whereas there is very conclusive evidence of its having been constructed in Galloway. The ball which made the cannon hole in the wall of Thrieve Castle as well as those which are shewn in the Castle of Edinburgh, as pertaining to Mons

Meg, are of Galloway granite, to which there is none exactly similar in Scotland; and tradition says they were made on the summit of Bennan hill, while M'Kim and his sons were employed in constructing the cannon at the Buchan croft. Two of these balls only are said to have been discharged at the siege, and of both a satisfactory account can be given. The first,—that which shook the castle and spread dismay among the garrison, was, towards the end of last century, picked out of the wall and delivered to Mr Gordon of Greenlaw. And in the year 1841, when the tenant of the Isle of Thrieve was removing, for the purpose of turning-husbandry, a large accumulation of rubbish from the lower part of the castle, he came upon the draw-well, which was found to be lined with strong planks of black oak in a state of perfect preservation. Prosecuting the search which this discovery provoked, the labourers at length came to an immense round ball, which, on examination, was found to be a bullet in all respects the same as those belonging to Mons Meg, and still retaining evident marks of having been discharged from a cannon. It lay in the direct line from *Knock-cannon* to the breach in the wall; so that there is every reason to believe that this was the identical missile that shattered the stronghold and mutilated the lady of the tremendous Lord of Galloway. A massive gold ring, inscribed, "Margaret de Douglas," supposed to have been on the Fair Maid of Galloway's hand when it was blown away at the siege, was discovered by one of the workmen employed to clear out some rubbish, when Thrieve Castle was partially repaired, in the beginning of the present century, as a barrack for French prisoners. The ring was handed to Sir Alexander Gordon, sheriff of the county. Symson says, that "the common report also goes in that country, that in the isle of the Thrieve, the great iron gun in the Castle of Edinburgh, commonly called Mount Megg, was wrought and made,"—which statement, written nearly a hundred and sixty years ago, though obviously incorrect in assigning the Isle of Thrieve as Meg's birth-place, goes far to prove her a native of Galloway. Finally, the uninterrupted tradition which has prevailed on this subject in the country, received a strong confirmation, when the labourers who were engaged in making the great military road at Carlinwark, at the very spot where Mons Meg is said to have been manufactured, came to a large mound, which turned out to be a mass of ashes or cinders, such as are generally left from a forge.

The unexampled popularity of Mons Meg may perhaps justify the following brief outline of her subsequent history and travels. From the following entry in the Treasurer's books, she appears to have been carried by James IV., July 10, 1489, to the siege of Dumbarton,—“Item, to the gunners to drink-silver when they carit Mons, by the King's command, 18s.” Mons, however, from her enormous size and weight, proved exceedingly unmanageable; and after having been brought back from Dumbarton to Edinburgh, she enjoyed an interval of eight years' inglorious repose. When James, however, in 1497, sat down before Norham, the great gun was, with infinite labour and expense, conveyed to the siege, and some of the items regarding her transport are amusing. The construction of a new cradle or carriage for her seems to have been a work of great labour. Thus on July 24, 1497, we have “Item, to pyanaris to bere ye trees to be Mon's new cradill to her at St Leonards, quhare scho lay, iiish. vid. ;” and again, July 28, “Item, for xiii stane of irne to mak graith to Monsis new cradill, and geolokkis to ga with her, xxxsh. iiid.” “Item, to vii wrightis for twa dayis and a half ya maid Monsis cradill, xxiish. iiiiid.” “Item, for xyiii li of talloun (tallow) to Mons.” “Item, for viii elne of canvas to be Monsis claiths to cover her.” “Item, for mare talloun to Mons.” “Item, to Sir Thomas Galbraith for paynting Monsis claiths, xiiiish.” “Item, to the ministralis that playit before Mons doune the gait, xiiiish.”

The next occasion of Meg's making a noise in the world, was in 1548, at the nuptials of Queen Mary and the Dauphin of France, when the following entry occurs,—“certain pyanaris for their labouris in raising Monss out of her lair, and for finding and carrying her bullet after she was shot frae Waldie Muir back to the castle of Edinburgh, a distance of two miles, 10s.” On the 19th December 1650, when the Castle of Edinburgh capitulated to the parliamentary troops, in the list of ordnance delivered by the governor to Colonel Moncke is specially mentioned “The great iron murderer, called Muckle Megg.”

In 1682, in firing a salute in honour of James, Duke of York, Meg unfortunately sustained some damage, in having part of the iron hoop next the touch-hole blown away. The disaster is thus referred to by Robert Fergusson :

“Oh Willawins ! Mons Meg for you,
'Twas firing cracked thy muckle mou.”

To the great grief of the inhabitants of Edinburgh, this gigan-

tic piece of ordnance was, on the 19th April 1754, removed from Edinburgh Castle to Leith, on its way to the Tower of London. Her loss is thus again recorded by the same poet,—

“ Right seldom am I gi'en to bannin,
But by my soul she was a cannon,
Could hit a man had he been stannin
In shire of Fife;
Sax lang Scots miles ayont Clackmannin,
An' tack his life.”

When King George IV. visited Edinburgh Castle, on 22d August 1822, Sir Walter Scott pointed out to him the spot on the chief bastion of the old fortress, formerly occupied by Mons Meg, and earnestly requested that she might again be placed there, to which his Majesty readily assented. But through petty obstacles, stated by the official guardians of Meg, that object was not effected for nearly seven years afterwards.

“ On 9th March 1829, she was, however, brought in solemn procession, to re-occupy her ancient site on the Argyle battery, escorted by the 73d Regiment, a detachment of artillery-men, and two troops of dragoons, with thirty gentlemen, in full Highland costume, at the head of whom was Sir Walter Scott, accompanied by the greater part of the inhabitants of Edinburgh.*

Modern Buildings.—The principal modern buildings in this parish are, Gelston Castle, built by the late Sir William Douglas, Bart., now the residence of his niece, Mrs Maitland; the Carlinwark, built by the late Mr M'Culloch, and belonging at present to Mr David Hannay; and Daldawn, built by the late proprietor, Captain M'Dougall. The St John's Lodge of Free Masons have a large hall in Castle Douglas.

There are three mills in this parish for grinding corn, and one bone-mill.

III.—POPULATION.

Few parishes in Scotland exhibit so rapid an increase of population as Kelton. In the year 1755, it was only 811, and in 1791, it amounted to 1600.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
1801, -	926	979	1905
1811, -	1075	1188	2263
1821, -	1151	1265	2416
1831, -	1339	1538	2877
1841, -	1296	1577	2875

* The above account of Mons Meg is taken from Tytler's History of Scotland. Incidental Notices of Thrieve Castle and Mons Meg, furnished by Mr. Train for “the History of Galloway. J. Nicholson, Kirkcudbright, MDCCCXII.”

There are in the whole parish 636 families, being an average of about $4\frac{1}{2}$ to each family.

Of the present population, there reside in the town of Castle Douglas,	-	1848
village of Rhonchouse,	-	235
Gelston,	-	147
country part of the parish,	-	645
		<hr/>
	Total,	2875

The population consists generally of bankers, writers, medical men, shop-keepers, cabinet-makers, masons, joiners, blacksmiths, painters, upholsterers, inn-keepers, tailors, shoemakers, weavers, and labourers. As nearly as can be ascertained, the yearly average of marriages is 20; of births, 65; and of deaths, 35.

The number of resident proprietors of the yearly value of L.50 and upwards, is 4. The number of blind persons is 2; of insane, 1; and of fatuous, 1.

Language.—Very good English is spoken by the people in general. The peculiarities noticed by Symson, of their omitting the letter *h* after *t*, as in pronouncing *ting* for *thing*; of their converting *v* into *w*, as, *serwant* for *servant*, &c., no longer exist. The epithet *bask* is very generally applied to the dry withering easterly winds that sometimes prevail in spring. Although a few provincialisms, and a slight *patois* may occasionally be recognized, yet the language is decidedly improving, both in purity and correctness of pronunciation.

Character and Habits of the People.—The people are characterized by caution, shrewdness, and an inquisitive turn of mind. Though a good many lead an irreligious life, yet the inhabitants are generally distinguished for their industry, sobriety, and regard to the outward ordinances of religion. The peasantry are frugal, and cleanly in their habits; enjoy, in a reasonable degree, the comforts and advantages of society, and seem cheerful and contented with their condition and circumstances. Their ordinary food consists of oatmeal made into cakes and porridge, with milk for breakfast and supper, and a dinner of barley broth with beef or mutton and potatoes. They are simple in their tastes, civil to their superiors, and proverbial for their hospitality. Their favourite games are quoits and curling, in both of which they excel, standing at present in the proud position of conquerors in both games, of all the neighbouring parishes with which they are in the habit of playing an annual match. In winter, the Carlinwark Loch presents an ample field for the lovers of the latter national

and healthful amusement. These games, however, are not unattended with danger. In some places the lake is very deep, and the surface being constantly agitated in particular parts by currents of wind, and the hundreds of water-fowl that frequent its shores, there are generally some small spots left open after the rest is frozen over. These being covered by a single night's intense frost, as is sometimes the case, are apt to deceive the unwary. In this way a boy was drowned in the winter of 1839-40. Cards, backgammon, draughts, and chess are known, but not extensively practised in the parish. Poaching is not common, though one or two lawless young men have been several times incarcerated for violating the game laws. Smuggling is unknown.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

There are in the parish about 40 farmers, 43 cottars, and 45 farm-servants, living in their masters' houses. A considerable number of labourers, probably to the amount of 80, reside in Castle-Douglas, and the villages of Rhonehouse and Gelston, who, along with their families, and a part of the female population also, are generally employed in agriculture. Farm-servants receive as wages from L.10 to L.12 per annum; female servants, from L.5 to L.6; masons, 3s., and carpenters 2s. 6d. per day.

There are about 40 males employed in retail trade, and, including masters and workmen, 180 in handicraft. There are 3 bankers and 7 assistants, 10 writers, and 4 physicians and surgeons.

Agriculture.—This parish contains 2721 imperial acres annually under cultivation. About 1327 acres have never been subjected to the plough, and could not, by any profitable application of capital, be reclaimed. Cultivation, indeed, has nearly reached its limit. There are about 570 acres in plantation. The woods generally consist of the Scotch fir, larch, spruce, elm, ash, and oak. Most of the plantations are young, but take kindly to the soil, and grow rapidly. Great care is taken, by yearly thinning and pruning, to promote the growth of the trees.

This parish owes much to Sir William Douglas, for the pains he took to adorn with plantations the estate of Gelston; to the late proprietor, Mr Maitland, for improving upon the plans of his predecessor; to Colonel Maxwell, for his extensive plantations upon the farms of Potterland and Glen Yerroch, which entitle this part of the parish to the designation of *the Trosachs* of Galloway; and to James Barbour, Esq. of Dunmuir, for the tasteful manner in which he has beautified the estate of Keltonhill.

The valued rent of the parish is L.3598; its real rent is L.7972; but, as assessed for the poor, where house property is included, it is about L.11,000.

Rent of Land.—The average rent of arable land per acre is L. 1, 3s. The average rent of grazing is at the rate of L. 6 per cow; L. 2, 10s. per head for black-cattle; and L. 1 per ewe or full-grown sheep pastured for the year.

The lands are let on leases of fifteen and nineteen years duration. The farm-houses are all slated, comfortable, and commodious, generally containing, besides a kitchen and accommodation for servants, a dining-room, parlour, and two or more bed-rooms. The lands are all enclosed, either by substantial stone-dikes, or by thorn hedges, planted in a manner peculiar to Galloway. It is this:—A wall is built against a bank of earth, and when it has attained the height of the soil, a row of thorns is inserted, bent forwards, and covered with a little mould, when the building proceeds to the proper height. The thorns soon take root, creep up the face of the wall, and, by proper attention, combine with the dike to form a fence impervious to all kinds of cattle. Sometimes two rows of thorns are inserted, one at the base of the wall, and another at a small distance above. This hides altogether the deformity of the naked dike; and, whilst the thorns keep the stones in their proper places, the wall gives a stability to the hedge which bids defiance to the most violent storms. This mode of fencing is said to have been introduced by the late Lord Daer, with the view of turning the Galloway cattle, which are sure to trespass upon every field into which they are able to poke their heads,—and it fully answered the purpose. The hedges are carefully scutched, and give a great appearance of neatness to the country. It is little more than a century since lands begun to be enclosed in Galloway. In a letter to W. M. Herries, Esq. of Spottes, dated February 1811, and published in the Appendix to the Report of the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright Agricultural Society for the year 1810, the late John Maxwell, Esq. of Munshes, gives the following somewhat ludicrous account of the famous rising of the Levellers, occasioned by the proprietors enclosing their grounds. “That same year (1723, for this fine old old gentleman was born in 1720,) many of the proprietors inclosed their grounds to stock them with black-cattle, and by that means turned out a vast number of the tenants, at the term of Whitsunday 1723, whereby numbers of

them became destitute; and, in consequence, rose in a mob; when, with pitchforks, gavellocks, and spades, they levelled the park dikes of Barncailzie and Munches, which I saw with my own eyes. The mob passed by Dalbeaty and Buittle, and did the same on the estates of Netherlaw, Dunrod, &c. and the lands of the Laird of Murdoch, then proprietor of Kilwhanedy, who turned out sixteen families at that time. The proprietors rose, with their servants and dependants, to quell this mob; but were not of sufficient force to do it, and were obliged to send for two troops of dragoons from Edinburgh, who, upon their appearing, the mob dispersed." Before the arrival of the military, however, the Levellers had very effectually done their work, the only dike that was left standing in the Stewartry being one on the right hand side of the old road from Castle-Douglas to Kirkcudbright, upon the estate of Kelton. The proprietor used more effectual weapons to preserve his fence than the swords of the dragoons. Having awaited the arrival of the Levellers, he accosted them courteously, and invited them, before commencing their labours, to refresh themselves from a good cask of spirits, and another of ale, which he had prepared for them. They drank his ale, and spared his dike.

The present race of farmers are an intelligent and enterprising class of men. Their farms are skilfully managed, all the most approved modes of agriculture and improving stock being in general use; but a great obstacle to their improvements is the difficulty of procuring lime, which must be shipped from the opposite coast of England. Bone manure is much used in turnip husbandry; and draining, both with tiles and stones, is practised to a considerable extent, and with the greatest success.

A great impulse was given to agriculture by the discovery of the beds of marl in the Carlinwark Loch, about the year 1765. Crops of the greatest luxuriance were produced by the use of this calcareous manure, and it soon came to be eagerly sought after, and extensively applied. Ignorant, however, of its tendency to exhaust as well as stimulate the soil, the farmers injured their lands by cropping them for many seasons in succession; and this natural effect of an injudicious and excessive use of the marl was referred to the manure itself, and for many years it has ceased to be applied. The common rotation is now a white and a green crop alternately, till the fifth year, when the lands are laid down in grass.

Nothing can be more striking than the contrast between the present system of agriculture, and that described by Symson, who

tells us, that, "in several parts of the Stewartrie, they till with four horses, all abreast, and bound together to a small tree before, which a boy or sometimes a woman leads, going backward. In the meantime another stronger man hath a strong stick, about four feet long, with an iron hook at the lowest end thereof, with which, being put into another iron fastened to the end of the plough-beam, and leaning upon the upper end of the stick, and guiding it with his hands, he holds the plough-beame up or down, according as he finds the ground deep or shallow." From this miserable and expensive mode of tillage the usual return was four or five for one; and the grain was of the most execrable description, as we learn from the same source, for, he continues, "before they carry the corne to the mill, after it is dry'd in the kiln, they lay it upon the kiln-flour, in a circular bed, about a foot thick; then, being bare-foot, they go among it, rubbing it with their feet, (this they call lomeing of the corne,) and by this meanes the long beards, or awnds, are separated from the corne, and the corn made, as they term it, more *snod*, and easy to pass through the mill, when they are shell-ing of the corne there." And, after all their lomeing, he adds, "Although their measure be heaped, and the weakest and worst of their oates, which they reserve for their horses and seed, be winnowed and drawn out, yet three bolls of corne will not yield much more than one boll of good and sufficient meal, straked measure." But now the ploughman of Galloway, with his improved implements, and single team of strong and handsome horses, will stand a comparison, in point of appearance and dexterity, with any of his class in the country. The crops, too, are remarkably good; ten for one is not looked upon as an extraordinary return; and for every bushel of oats sent to the mill, the farmer expects at least a stone and a half of meal. It is pleasant to add, that their personal comfort has improved in the same ratio. No peasant would now be proud of what satisfied the proprietor a century ago, when, as Mr Maxwell, in the letter already referred to, tells us, "The tenants, in general, lived very meanly on kail, groats, milk, graddon ground in querns, turned by the hand, and the grain dried in a pot, together with a crock ewe now and then about Martinmas. They were clothed very plainly, and their habitations were most uncomfortable. Their general wear was of cloth, made of waulked plaiding, black and white wool, mixed very coarse, and the cloth rarely dyed. Their hose were made of white plaiding cloth, sewed together, with single-soled shoes, and a black or

blue bonnet, none having hats but the lairds,—who thought themselves very well dressed for going to church on Sunday with a black kelt-coat of their wife's making."

Produce.—The gross amount of raw produce annually raised in the parish, as nearly as can be ascertained, is as follows, viz.

1543 acres of corn, yielding 36 bushels per acre, at 2s. 6d. per bushel,	L.6943	10	0
268 acres of potatoes, yielding 18 bolts per acre, at 12s. per boll,	2894	8	0
327 acres of turnips, yielding 12 tons per acre, at 8s. per ton,	1569	12	0
588 acres of ryegrass hay, yielding 240 Imp. stones per acre, at 3d. per stone,	1749	0	0
444 acres of natural hay, yielding 200 Imp. stones per acre, at 2d. per stone,	740	0	0
430 cows, grazed at the rate of L.6 per head, per annum,	2580	0	0
969 bullocks, grazed at the rate of L.2, 10s. per head, per annum,	2422	10	0
1327 sheep, pastured at the rate of L.1 per head, per annum,	1327	0	0
650 pigs, each weighing 12 stones, at 5s. 6d. per stone,	2145	0	0
20 horses annually brought to the market, at the average price of L.20,	400	0	0
Total yearly value of raw produce raised,	L.22,771	0	0

This table, which has been prepared with very great care, furnishes as nearly as possible an exact account of the stock and crops for the year 1841,—and may be regarded as a fair average of the amount of raw produce annually raised in the parish of Kelton. There are 270 horses in the parish.

Agricultural Society.—There is a district society, comprehending Kelton and the five surrounding parishes, whose object is to promote the improvement of agriculture and stock of all kinds. Each member pays an annual subscription of half a guinea. Out of the funds thus realized handsome premiums are awarded to the best ploughmen, and to the owners of the best stock in the district. The ploughing-matches are held in each of the six parishes alternately; the show of stock takes place in Castle Douglas on the first Tuesday in October. The influence of this society, aided by the countenance and support of the Highland Society of Scotland, is very considerable in promoting the object of its institution.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Market-Town.—The market-town is Castle Douglas. This town, being situated near the centre of the county, is the great mart for the produce of the stewartry. A weekly market, at which an astonishing amount of business is transacted, is held every Monday for the sale of black cattle, sheep, pork, and all kinds of agricultural produce. The extraordinary rapidity with which Castle Douglas has sprung into commercial importance is sufficient to account for the great increase of the population of this parish during the last half century; whilst the circumstance of its

not having gone on in the same ratio, but having actually decreased since 1831, is accounted for by the failure of a cotton manufactory formerly carried on in Castle Douglas. This work was established by Sir William Douglas, as a means of increasing the town, of which he was the superior, and may almost be said to have been the founder. The introduction of the power-loom, however, rendered it impossible to carry on with advantage such a trade in places like Castle Douglas, where there is neither coal nor a sufficient power of water, and it has consequently been abandoned. The town has nevertheless thriven beyond the expectation of its patron. Men are yet living who remember the time when *Causeway-end* was only a small cluster of cottages, the population of which did not amount to more than twenty. Now, Castle Douglas is a handsome modern town, built upon a regular plan, containing a population of 1848. It is situate upon a gentle declivity, at the bottom of which is the Carlinwark Loch. The streets are wide and spacious, crossing one another at right angles. The town is thus divided into rectangles, the internal space in each division being laid out in gardens, one of which is attached to every feu. This town, the suddenness of whose rise rivals the rapid growth of towns in America, has already attained an importance that, in most cases, is the growth of ages. In an agricultural point of view, it far surpasses any other town in Galloway; and, with the exception of Dumfries, it is second to none in the south of Scotland. It possesses many natural advantages. It is situated in the centre of the county, and the great road from Dumfries to Kirkcudbright and Portpatrick passes through the heart of it. At the instance of Sir William Douglas, it was erected into a burgh of barony under its present title, by royal charter in 1792. Till then it had been called Carlinwark, and in remoter times, *Causeway-end*. By the charter of erection, the burgh was governed by a bailie and six councillors, who were chosen from among the resident burgesses, and continued in office three years. A new and extended charter was obtained in 1829, by which the burgesses were invested with the privilege of electing triennially, on the first Wednesday of September, a provost, two bailies, and seven councillors—the qualification being residence within the burgh, and a right by feu to a piece of ground within the same. The property of the burgh amounts to L.550; the debts to L.150. The average annual revenue is L.20; the expenditure L.15. Justice of peace small debt courts are held

on the first Monday of every month. The steward circuit courts, under the late Small Debt Act, are held on the second Wednesdays of January and April, and the first Wednesdays of July and October. There is a modern town-house, with a tower and clock, which were presented to the burgh by Sir W. Douglas. The shops are remarkably elegant and well furnished, so as to awaken the surprise of strangers, who are not aware of the fact that Castle Douglas is the great mart, not only of the parish of Kelton, but of the whole stewartry.

Banks.—Three of the most respectable banks in Scotland have branches in Castle Douglas; the British Linen Company, established in 1821; the National Bank, established in 1826; and the Bank of Scotland, established in 1840. All the three institutions do business to a considerable extent, and afford great encouragement to industry and commerce.

Post-Office.—The post-office of Castle Douglas is perhaps one of the most important in the south of Scotland, whether we consider the consequence of the town itself, or the extent of country, and number of villages around it, and subject to its delivery. There are no less than fourteen post-offices under Castle Douglas, viz. sub-office, New Galloway; penny post-offices, Auchencairn, Kirkpatrick, Dalry, Laurieston, Crocketford, Dalbeattie, Palnackie, Parton, Rhonehouse; receiving-houses, Gelston, Crossmichael, Haugh of Urr, and Glenlochar,—to all of which places there are daily runners. Castle Douglas, in regard to the number of its sub-offices, &c. is second to Glasgow alone throughout Scotland. The revenue, prior to the establishment of the penny postage, exceeded L.1100; but what it yields now cannot be exactly ascertained from the stamps being sold both at the post and stamp-offices.

Means of Communication.—1. The mail from Dumfries bringing dispatches from all England and Scotland, arrives at Castle Douglas daily at 10 o'clock P. M. Another mail from Portpatrick with the Irish letters, arrives at 3 o'clock A. M. 2. There are also two coaches every lawful day to and from Dumfries and Kirkcudbright, one of which brings a second mail from England and the whole of Scotland except Edinburgh and its neighbourhood, at one o'clock P. M. 3. Carriers go twice a week to Dumfries, once to Edinburgh, once to Glasgow, and thrice to Kirkcudbright and Gatehouse.

Roads.—The great military road from London to Portpatrick

passes through the north part of the parish for nearly four miles. The road from Castle Douglas to Palnackie, a sea-port on the mouth of the river Urr, from which coal, wood, slate, lime, bone manure, &c. are brought, passes along the east border of the parish for five miles. The old road from Dumfries to Kirkcudbright by Castle Douglas and Rhonehouse, and another by Dalbeattie, pass through Kelton, the former from north to south about five miles, the latter from north-east to south-west about three and a half miles. There are also two other roads which intersect the parish; one from Castle Douglas through Rhonehouse, and the very centre of the parish to Greenlane, on the line from Dumfries to Kirkcudbright by Dalbeattie, and another from Castle Douglas by Kelton Kirk to the village of Auchencairn in the parish of Rerwick. All these roads are kept in excellent repair, the metal of the parish, whether the hard primary schistus, or the porphyry, being admirably adapted for road making. The roads are Macadamized, and a little elevated in the centre; and the water-tables being kept clean, the rain speedily runs off, or is absorbed by the porous soil.

Bridges.—A very handsome bridge, consisting of three arches, was built across the river Dee in the year 1825. It is composed of granite, and unites the parishes of Kelton and Balmaghie. Below it about 200 yards, stands the old bridge consisting of four arches, from its venerable appearance, and still more from its narrow path-way, presenting a striking contrast to its modern neighbour.

Ecclesiastical State.—Kelton is composed of the three united parishes of Kelton, Gelston, and Kirkcormack. At each of the two last mentioned places, there exist the remains of a church, with its adjoining cemetery, which is still occasionally used by the families in the neighbourhood, and the descendants of those whose ashes are there deposited. There is also on the south-east boundary of the parish the vestige of an ancient chapel and church-yard, called Kirkmirren, now entirely neglected, and of which nothing is known but the locality and the name. In ancient times, it probably formed a distinct parish, though it is said to have been designed for a chapel of ease. The local situation of Gelston countenances the opinion of those who refer the name to *gill* or *gell*, a ravine through which runs a brook, and the common affix *tun*, but its ancient name appears to have been Galston, Gaulston, or, as in the grant of land to James Boyd by David II.

"Gaulistown," which lands John Gauliston had forfeited. Kirkcormack, anciently called Kilcormac, derived its name from the Irish saint, Cormac, to whom it was dedicated. This dedication was, no doubt, made during the ninth century, after the Irish emigrants began to find repose in Galloway. Symson says, that "Kirkcormack is only a chapel, and not, as it would seem, a complete parish, though ordinarily so called." He probably means Kirkmirren, for Kirkeormack appears from ancient records, to have had all the attributes of a complete parish. It is beautifully situated in a retired spot, on the bank of the river Dee, and seems to have been the burying-place of the Maclellans of Auchlane, a branch of the noble family of Kirkeudbright. In ancient times all these churches belonged to the monks of Icolmkill. When their establishment became ruined by the successive devastations of the northmen, Kelton, and, indeed, all the churches in Galloway, which belonged to these monks, were granted between the years 1172 and 1180, by William the Lion, to the monastery of Holyrood. This establishment also being dissolved by the Reformation, Charles I. in 1633, granted to the newly erected bishoprick of Edinburgh, along with many others which had belonged to the monastery of Holyrood, the churches of Kelton and Kirkcormack. On the abolition of Episcopacy in 1689, the patronages of these churches reverted to the Crown. Gelston belonged of old to the prior and canons of Whithern. After the Reformation, it was, by the general annexation act of 1587, vested in the King, who granted the whole property of Whithern priory, including the church of Gelston, to the Bishop of Galloway in 1606. When Episcopacy was finally abolished in 1689, the patronage of this church also reverted to the crown, which is still sole patron of the united parishes of Kelton, Gelston, and Kirkcormack. The precise date of the union of these parishes cannot now be ascertained. It probably took place soon after the Reformation; at least the churches of Gelston and Kirkcormack were both in ruins when Symson wrote his description of Galloway in 1684.

Castle Douglas, alternately with the county town, is the seat of the Presbytery of Kirkeudbright. The parish church is situated on the east side of Kelton hill, at nearly equal distances from Castle Douglas, Rhonehouse, and Gelston. Its distance from the extremities of the parish is about five miles. But although the situation of the church, considering the state of the parish when it was built, was well chosen; yet its distance of a mile and a

quarter from Castle Douglas, where so large a proportion as two-thirds of the whole population reside, is a source of great inconvenience. The present church was built in the year 1805-6, when it was removed from a low situation in the middle of the church-yard, to its present elevated, dry, and convenient site. It is a plain, substantial building, of a rectangular form, 68 feet long and 42 feet broad within the walls, and has a belfry on the west gable. Any small repairs that had become necessary were adhibited in the year 1840, and it is at present in very good order. It was originally seated for about 740. No distinct provision, however, was made for the accommodation of the feuars of Castle Douglas, Rhonehouse, and Gelston; and as the sittings which they were able to procure in the parts allocated to the heritors, and not occupied by themselves or their tenants, were found to be quite inadequate, in the year 1821, a gallery capable of accommodating 130 sitters was erected by subscription, in the east end of the church. The sittings were exposed to auction, and were taken with such avidity as led to the erection of a corresponding gallery in the west end of the church in the year 1822. The sittings in this gallery also were immediately taken, and at such prices as in a few years paid off the whole expenses incurred in these erections, with interest upon the money subscribed, when the shareholders agreed to devote the annual sum arising from this source to the promotion of the interests of education in the parish. It has been accordingly since divided among the three parochial teachers in the following proportions, one-half to the teacher in Castle Douglas, and one-fourth to each of the schoolmasters in Rhonehouse and Gelston. The church is thus capable of accommodating easily 1000 sitters. The two areas, however, having no fixed seats but moveable forms, are used only at the dispensation of the Lord's supper. They accommodate from 60 to 70 communicants. None of the sittings are absolutely free, except the forms in the area, which, being very uncomfortable, are seldom used. But several pews belong to the kirk-session, in which the sittings are let at very low prices, as 1s. and 1s. 6d. each. Any person who is unable to pay this small rent, is, on applying to the session, accommodated with a free sitting. About ten sittings are occupied in this way. It would obviously be very desirable that a new church should be built in Castle Douglas, and that burgh erected into a separate parish. This new parish would contain upwards of 1800, and leave in the old parish about 1000 souls.

The manse and offices were built in the year 1813-14. No extensive repairs have yet been required; but such as had become necessary were executed in the end of the year 1840. It is a substantial and comfortable house, containing the usual accommodation. The glebe consists of 17 imperial acres, exclusive of the garden and site of the manse and offices. The land is of good quality, and might be let for nearly L.2 per acre. The present stipend is 17 chalders, half meal and half barley, with L.10 for communion elements.

The Reformed Presbyterians have a meeting-house in Castle Douglas. The minister's stipend is L.90, and is raised from the seat rents and collections. The Relief body of Dissenters have also a meeting-house in the immediate neighbourhood of Castle Douglas, but within the parish of Crossmichael. The minister's stipend is nominally L.60, and is raised from the same sources. Neither of the clergymen has any manse.*

The parish church is generally well attended, although an unfavourable day, owing to the distance of the church from Castle Douglas, where the great bulk of the people reside, very seriously affects the attendance. All the seats in the area which are not required by the heritors and tenants are let, as are also the whole of the seats in the galleries.

The following is a correct abstract of the population and religious denominations, with the number of individuals belonging to each in the parish of Kelton, as taken from a survey in the year 1840:—Belonging to the Established Church, 2117; other denominations, 455; not connected with any denomination, *i. e.* not in communion, nor in the habit of attending any place of worship, 318;—total, 2890. Of the 455 Dissenters, there belong to the Reformed Presbyterians, 160; Relief, 112; United Associate Synod, 35; Roman Catholics, 148;—total, 455.

Neither the United Secession Dissenters, nor the Roman Catholics have any place of worship in the parish. The former attend Divine service at the Haugh of Urr, about four miles, and the latter at Dalbeattie, about five miles from Castle Douglas.

Of the 318 who are not in the habit of attending any place of worship, almost all *profess* to belong to the Established Church, and some of them *do* occasionally attend. The Dissenting places

* Since the above was written "the Free Church" has sprung into existence. From the recent date of its origin, the number of its adherents cannot be exactly ascertained. In this parish they are inconsiderable, but combining with those in Parton, Crossmichael, and Euittle, they have called a minister, and built a chapel in Castle Douglas.

of worship are but thinly attended, though some adherents of the Established Church attend in the Sabbath evenings, and also in the forenoons, when the weather is inclement.

Besides the ordinary collections for the poor, the average amount of church collections yearly for religious and charitable purposes is about L.12.

Education.—There are six schools at present in the parish, three of which are parochial,—one in Castle Douglas, one in Rhonehouse, which is the original parish school, and one in Gelston. The other three are unendowed, and on the teachers' own adventure. All the unendowed schools are conducted by females. Two of them may almost be reckoned infant schools. In the third, besides all the ordinary branches of education, sewing, drawing, music, and French are taught.

The parochial schoolmaster of Rhonehouse alone has a dwelling-house; but all the three school-houses are large, well-aired, and convenient.

The branches of education generally taught in the parish schools are, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, mathematics, Latin, Greek, French, and Italian. The fixed salary paid by the heritors is L.51, 6s., which is equally divided among the three schoolmasters. The teacher in Castle Douglas receives also about L.7, 10s. from a sum of money mortified by Sir William Douglas, and about L.15 as his share of the seat-rents in the church galleries. The other two teachers receive from the same sources about L.3 and L.7, 10s. each. The average amount of school-fees in Castle Douglas is L.120, and in each of the other schools about L.32 per annum.

The people are, in general, very much alive to the benefits of education. No part of the parish is so distant from one or other of the schools as to prevent attendance. The magistrates of Castle Douglas have the privilege of sending sixteen poor children to school, on the Douglas mortification; and the trustees and shareholders in the church galleries exercise the same privilege in regard to the other schools. Education is thus brought within reach of the poorest inhabitant; and there is hardly an individual, a native of the parish, of suitable age, who cannot read and write. The proportion of scholars to the whole population is a little less than one to five. Perhaps it might be of advantage to have a second school endowed in Castle Douglas to act as a nursery to the present one, which is rather overcrowded.

Literature.—There is an excellent subscription library in Castle

Douglas, consisting of nearly 1200 well selected and valuable volumes. Subscribers have alone the privilege of reading. The terms of admission are L.3, 3s., and an annual subscription of half-a-guinea. There are also a circulating library, and a juvenile library for the use of the children attending the Sabbath school.

Charitable and other Institutions.—There are two poor houses in the parish, the one erected and the other rented by the heritors and kirk-session. In these, about thirty poor persons, some of whom have families, are lodged, and receive the usual allowance of out-door paupers to spend as they please. A matron is appointed to take charge of the helpless, and orphan, or deserted children. She has free apartments assigned her, and receives, per month, for taking charge of an orphan child, from 5s. to 7s. 6d.; and for a paralytic or disabled person, from 10s. to 18s. per month, according to the nature of the case. This plan is attended with less expense, and a greater amount of comfort to the poor, than the system of paying for a separate lodging for each.

Savings Bank.—The Savings Bank of Castle Douglas was opened for public business on 24th December 1840, and on 20th November 1841, there were in 25 accounts, balances to the amount of

			L.196	0	0
On 20th November 1842,	104 Accounts,		668	11	10
„ 20th November 1843,	220 Accounts,		1638	0	8
and on 4th January 1844,	241 Accounts,		2022	17	10

As the institution is yet in its infancy, little can be said regarding its ultimate success. Hitherto that has been as great as could reasonably be expected; and from the subjoined statement of accounts and classification of depositors, it appears that a considerable number of individuals in those classes whose benefit it chiefly contemplates, take advantage of the institution.

Statement of Accounts as at 4th January 1844.			Classification of Depositors as at 4th January 1844.		
Accounts containing balances.			No. of Accts	Classification of	Amt. at Cr. of each Class.
61	under L.2	L.99 12 9	37	Male servants,	L.261 3 6
55	5	168 3 7	76	Female servants,	518 17 8
54	10	373 5 4	7	Mechanics,	88 2 5
37	20	455 14 7	7	Labourers,	39 2 8
18	30	442 12 6	51	Trustees for minors, &c.,	276 4 5
13	50	420 1 1	2	Charitable societies,	31 9 11
1	100	91 19 1	4	Shopmen,	48 15 2
2	Charitable Societies	31 8 11	57	Other descriptions,	759 3 1
<hr/>			<hr/>		
241 Accts. containing L.2022 17 10			241 Accts. containing L.2022 17 10		

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of persons receiving parochial aid is 55. The sums allowed to them vary from 9d. to 5s. per week, the average allowance being 1s. 8d. The annual amount of contributions for the relief of the poor is about L.330. This sum is raised by a legal assessment, amounting to L.300, and the half of the ordinary collections at the parish church, amounting to L.30, the other half being retained by the session to meet the current expenses, and relieve the occasional poor. There is also the interest of L.100, given by Miss Harriet Douglas, now Mrs Congar, of New York, one of the heirs of Sir William Douglas, which is expended in the purchase of coals, and distributed, in equal proportions, among the poor in Castle Douglas, Rhonehouse, and Gelston. The legal assessment was imposed in 1837-38. It began at the rate of 5d. per pound upon the real value of property in the parish. It steadily increased at the rate of 1d. per pound each year, until it reached 8d. per pound. The rate is imposed upon all tangible property above the value of L.3 per annum. The landlords pay the one-half, and the tenants the other half. The system is managed at an expense of L.25 yearly, including L.15 as the clerk's salary, the remainder being expended in paying the persons appointed to value the different properties, and in providing the necessary accommodation for the permanent committee of management, which meets once a-month.

Besides the regular poor, a good many persons require occasional aid. These are relieved by the kirk-session, out of the half of the ordinary collections, which the law allows them to retain. There is no disposition among the poor to refrain from seeking parochial relief, but, on the contrary, there is the most mortifying eagerness to get upon the roll. They look upon it as their natural and legal right, and receive, without gratitude, the pittance that is given without charity. This deplorable effect, the destruction of the proper feelings that ought to exist between the givers and receivers of charity, seems to be inseparable from the system, and is one of the strongest objections to its adoption. In some few cases, it is to be feared that the poor refrain from making the exertions to maintain themselves, of which they are capable; or, having an opportunity of earning a livelihood, as most of them have at certain seasons of the year, they still apply for the benefit of the public fund; and there is seldom any appa-

rent reluctance in children to allow their aged parents and relations to come upon the parish.

There is not much private charity now exercised in the parish, as it is thought inconsistent with a main object of so large an annual expenditure upon the poor, the suppression of vagrancy and public begging. Many families, however, are still favoured with a weekly visit from the poor persons whom they were in the habit of serving before the introduction of the poor rate; and the collections at the church have not been sensibly diminished.

Fairs.—There are seven fairs held in the parish in the course of the year, viz. at Castle Douglas, for the sale of horses, on the 11th February if it happen to be a Monday, if not, on the Monday following; at Castle Douglas, for horses and hiring, on the 23d March, or Monday after; at Castle Douglas, for the sale of hoggets, on the first Monday of April; at Keltonhill, for horses and hiring, on the 17th June, O. S.; at Castle Douglas, for lambs, on the Monday before the fair of Minniehive, which is held on the second Friday of August; at Castle Douglas, for horses and hiring, on the 23d September or Monday after; and at Castle Douglas for horses, on the Monday after the 18th November, O. S.

Formerly all these fairs were held at Kelton hill; but, with the exception of that in June, they have been transferred to Castle Douglas, the multiplication of places of entertainment, and, especially, the convenience of the banks, having rendered the change advisable, and even necessary.

Inns, Alehouses, &c.—There are twenty-three inns and alehouses in the parish, besides two grocers' shops, licensed to retail ardent spirits,—a number greatly exceeding the wants of the population. Several such houses have been closed within the last three years, and it is greatly to be desired that their number were still farther reduced. Of this, however, there appears a great probability, as the use of ardent spirits has been considerably diminished, since public attention began to be directed to the cause of temperance, and several of these houses are understood to be doing very little business, and very little harm. Upon the whole, they do less injury to the morals of the people than, at first sight, is apt to be supposed; for a considerable number of them are places of entertainment for farmers and dealers attending the fairs and markets, and are very little frequented except on these occasions.

Fuel.—Coal is the fuel commonly used in the parish. It is

KIRKCUDBRIGHT.

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brought from Cumberland to the ports of Palnackie and Tongland Bridge. At certain seasons, when their servants and horses are not necessarily engaged in agricultural operations, the farmers send for coal to Dalmellington, in Ayrshire, a distance of thirty-six miles from Castle Douglas. Here it costs less than the same weight of English coal; but it is also much less durable; and, taking into account the long land carriage, in reality no cheaper. The common cart-load of shipped coal, containing 8 bushels, or 12 cwt., costs about 9s., besides cartage, which is 2s. 6d. more. Peat is found in the parish, but it is not very extensively used as fuel.

Written January 1841.

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