

PARISH OF OLD LUCE.

PRESBYTERY OF STRANRAER, SYNOD OF GALLOWAY.

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L.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—It appears that this parish was anciently denominated Leuce; but the northern district having been cut off and formed into a separate parish in 1646, was afterwards called *New Luce*; and the southern district *Old Luce*. In some old Latin documents, dated in the year 1560, it is called *Vallis Lucis*, (the valley of light,)—a name probably assigned it, because the whole original parish was intersected by a deep and wide valley, running from the northern to the southern extremity, and in the middle of which an abbey or monastery was situated,—*the light of the valley*.

Extent, Boundaries, &c.—The parish of Old Luce, lying in the centre of Wigtonshire, comprehends about 80 square miles, being 10 miles long, and 8 or 8½ broad, and resembling in figure an oblong square or parallelogram. It is bounded on the north, by New Luce; on the west, by Inch and Stonykirk; on the south, by the Bay of Luce; and on the east, by Kirkowan and Mochrum.

Topographical Appearances.—The general aspect of the parish is very irregular, the surface being for the most part hilly, and containing comparatively little level land, except in the vicinity of the Bay of Luce, and on the sides of the river, which runs through the valley already referred to. The elevation, however, of the highest hills does not exceed 1014 feet above the level of the sea. The climate, compared with that of other parishes in Galloway, is temperate.

Bay—Coast.—The Bay of Luce winds round the southern coast of Wigtonshire, from the Mull of Galloway to Burrow-head, in Whithorn, and comprehends at least 400 square miles. Some parts of its coast are sandy, some gravelly, and some clayey. Within two miles of Glenluce, it affords a harbour (Burn-foot) for small vessels importing lime, coals, &c.; but usually vessels of

more than 60 or 70 tons burden cannot approach that part of the coast.

Hydrography.—The parish contains several small lakes or lochs; but they are too unimportant in all respects to require particular notice. The springs, which usually issue from rocks and the sides of hills, are numerous, unintermittent, extremely cold and transparent, but have nothing remarkable in their chemical nature. The principal rivers are Luce and Pooltanton. The river of Luce rises on the borders of Ayrshire, passes southward through New Luce and this parish, and discharges itself into the Bay of Luce. The length of its course is about 21 miles: the breadth of its channel may average 30 feet; and, unless with high floods, it is easily crossed on foot. Pooltanton is a small river rising in Leswalt, and running through a part of Inch, Stonykirk, and the southern extremity of Old Luce, till it falls into the Bay of Luce, nearly at the same place as the former river.

Soil.—All kinds of soil exist in the parish, but that which prevails is of a gravelly or sandy nature. The land, in general, is light, dry, and stony; but on the sides of the river of Luce, and in the southern parts of the parish, some land of better quality is found. The depth of the soil varies from six to twelve inches; but where it consists of moss, clay, or loam, its depth may vary from one to three feet. Unless in clayey or loamy land, the second stratum or subsoil is usually found to consist of sand or gravel, which extends to a considerable depth.

Geology.—The larger rocks are of common greywacke, with veins of quartz; but small rocks of granite also abound in various parts of the parish, and extensive tracts of slate might probably be found. A greywacke quarry, of some importance, has been wrought for several years in the immediate neighbourhood of Glenluce, where stones of great utility for various purposes have been obtained. No limestone, sandstone, nor mines of any description, have been discovered. In deep strata of moss, large trunks of trees, chiefly of oak, and nuts in an entire state, are often found; but other fossil remains or petrifications are seldom observed.

Zoology.—No rarer species of animals, birds, or insects are found in the parish. Foxes were once numerous, but for some years past have almost entirely disappeared. Game of every description abounds.

In the rivers of Luce and Pooltanton, salmon and sea-trout were once very abundant, but during the last fifteen or twenty

years their number has considerably decreased. For the three last seasons, the river of Luce has been preserved for rod-fishing only, with a view to increase the number of salmon,—which will probably have that effect.

In Pooltanton, scarcely any salmon are now caught; but in the earlier part of the season, sea-trout, weighing from one to twelve pounds each, are taken with nets. The fishery of greatest importance is at the mouth or entrance of the river of Luce, where salmon and sea-trout are caught with set nets, which rise with the flowing of the tide, and enclose salmon, &c. when it recedes. The whole rental of the fishery on the coast and on these rivers may annually amount to L. 70 or L. 80. Shell-fish of various kinds, flounders, and cod fish, are also taken within the Bay of Luce.

Plantations.—A few plantations of no great extent, and consisting chiefly of oak, ash, pine, and the more common sorts of timber, lie on the southern part of the parish.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Some brief notices of this parish will be found in Chalmers's *Caledonia*, and Murray's *Literary History of Galloway*; but we are not aware of the existence of any important historical accounts of it, either ancient or modern.

Proprietors of Land.—The chief land-owners are, the Earl of Stair; Sir James Dalrymple Hay, Bart.; Robert Cathcart, Esq. of Genoch; John Adair, Esq. Balkail; James Johnstone, Esq. Gillespie; John Carrick Moore, Esq. of Corsewall; William Gifford, Esq.; and A. J. Hannay, M. D., Esq. Glasgow.

Parochial Register.—A session record has been kept in this parish since the year 1731, containing a registration of births, marriages, &c. from that time till the present.

Antiquities—Abbey.—The Abbey of Luce (the only antiquity of importance) stood on the side of the river, and in the middle of the valley which intersects the parish from north to south, about one mile and a quarter from Glenluce. It was founded in the year 1190, and was afterwards inhabited by monks of the Cistercian order. From the ruins, which cover a whole acre of ground, and from some of its walls, which are still standing, it appears to have been a very magnificent and extensive building. Nearly a century after other monasteries had been destroyed in Scotland, the Abbey of Luce remained almost in an entire state; for so late as 1646, it is mentioned in the Records of the Presbytery of Stranraer as having sustained little injury. The Chapter-House, as it

is called, still remains entire,—a small apartment on the eastern side of the square, the roof of which is supported by a strong pillar, diverging at the top into eight arches, and terminating in the surrounding walls. The centres of the arches are ornamented with various figures, curiously cut out in white freestone. Thomas Hay, the lineal ancestor of Sir James D. Hay, Bart. (principal resident heritor,) was appointed Commendator of this monastery by the Pope of Rome, in the year 1560. A field adjoining the old building, and now forming a part of the present incumbent's glebe, had anciently been a burying-ground, and there the Commendator's family (the Hays of Park) have still their burial-place.

Castles.—This parish contains also three ancient castles, (one of which only is entire,) viz. the Castle of Park, formerly the residence of the family just referred to; Castle Synniness; and Carsecreuch, once the family residence of the Earl of Stair.

Eminent Characters.—Several eminent persons have been officially connected with the Abbey of Glenluce, of whom the most important were the two sons of Alexander Gordon, Bishop of Galloway, titular Archbishop of Athens, who died in 1576. Lawrence Gordon, second son of the bishop, was Abbot of this place for several years previously to 1606, the date of his death. In 1602, James VI. had erected, in his favour, Glenluce into a temporal barony, which at his death was conferred, by royal charter, on his elder brother John Gordon, Dean of Salisbury. This latter individual was a person of great condition, and an author of no mean reputation. For a minute list of his numerous literary publications, which are generally of an ecclesiastical or theological nature, see Murray's *Lit. History of Galloway*, 2d edition, p. 42. He died in 1619, and was succeeded in the barony of Glenluce by his son-in-law, Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonston, the celebrated historian of the family of Gordon. Glenluce was afterwards annexed to the see of Galloway, the revenue of which had, from various causes, been much reduced; and towards the end of the seventeenth century, it was again erected into a barony, and became the property of the Noble family of Stair. It may not be uninteresting to state the origin of the connection of that celebrated family with this parish and with Wigtonshire. James Dalrymple of Stair, the Professor of Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, married in 1643, Margaret Ross of Balniel, by whom he became possessed of Carsecreuch, Balniel, and other lands in this parish.

This lady had an only sister, married to Sir Thomas Dunbar of Mochrum. James Dalrymple afterwards studied law, passed advocate at the Scottish Bar, was appointed one of the Lords of Session, and on the Revolution was elevated to the office of Lord President. He died in 1695, leaving behind him the highest character as a lawyer or a judge. His various publications are well known; but his "Institutions of the Law of Scotland," has always been regarded as by far the best work produced in this country in the department to which it belongs. He was raised to the peerage in 1690, and died in 1695. He rebuilt the house of Carsecreuch, which was his favourite country residence. His oldest son, who succeeded him, held some of the highest offices, and was a great promoter of the union between Scotland and England. His grandson was the great Marshal Stair. The family seat is now at Calhorn, in the neighbouring parish of Inch.

The Rev. Robert M'Ward, an eminent clergyman and theological and controversial writer during the reigns of Charles I. and Charles II., was a native of this parish. He studied at St Andrews; and afterwards acted as amanuensis and private secretary to the celebrated Samuel Rutherford, while the latter was in London as a member of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. M'Ward successively held several high offices. He was elected Professor of Humanity in St Salvator's College, St Andrews, in 1650; Professor of Philosophy in the University of Glasgow in 1653; and one of the ministers of that city in 1656. On the Restoration, he was tried for sedition and treasonable preaching, and was sentenced to banishment forth of the kingdom, six months being allowed him to remove. He retired to Rotterdam. He was for some time one of the ministers of the Scottish Church in that city; but, owing to the interference of the English government, was obliged not only to resign that living, but to leave that town. He afterwards, however, ventured to return to it. He died there in 1681. He was supported while in Holland, before and after holding the ministerial office in Rotterdam, by the conjunct liberality of his Dutch and Scottish friends. He was the editor of Rutherford's Letters, which were first published in Rotterdam in 1664. His other works were, "The Poor Man's Cup of Cold Water;" "The True Non-Conformist;" "Banders Disbanded;" "A Testimony against paying of Cess to the Persecutors;" "Earnest Contendings for the Faith," and other publications, all of which were long popular in this country. About seventy of his letters, addressed to friends in Scotland, chiefly against the

Indulgence, have been preserved by Wodrow, and contain much biographical and other curious information.—(Murray's *Galloway*, 2d edit. pp. 107—14.)

III.—POPULATION.

The whole population of Old Luce in 1801 amounted to 1221. Of these 576 were males, and 645 females. The parish contained 220 inhabited houses, which were occupied by 253 families—Employed in agriculture, 414 persons; in trade and handicraft, 88; others not so employed, 719. From the beginning of the year 1780 to 1800, inclusive, 331 males and 306 females were baptised, making an average of 15 males and 14 females annually. Died during the same period 169 males and 223 females, making an average of 8 males and 10 females annually. Marriages during the same period 181, making an average of 8 annually.

In the year 1811 the total population amounted to 1536: males, 758, females, 718. Inhabited houses, 296, occupied by 319 families. Employed in agriculture, 184 families; in trade, &c. 73; others not so employed, 62.

In the year 1821 the total population amounted to 1957: males, 981, females, 976. Inhabited houses, 346, occupied by 382 families. Employed in agriculture, 648 persons; in trade, &c. 243; others not so employed, 1066. From the commencement of 1811 to 1820, inclusive, 264 males and 231 females were baptised. Annual average of males, 26, of females, 23. Died 84 males and 92 females. Average yearly of males dying, 8, of females, 9. Marriages, 118. Annual average of marriages, 11.

In the year 1831, the population amounted to 2180: males 1037, females, 1143. Inhabited houses, 371, occupied by 430 families. Employed in agriculture, 264 families; in trade, &c. 117; others not so employed, 46.

The present population in the village of Glenluce amounts to 821. The average number of births for the last seven years, is annually, of males, 36, of females, 20. The average number of deaths during that time is, of males, 16, of females, 16 annually. The average number of marriages is 13.

The average number of children in each family is not ascertained.

Number of families in the parish in 1831,	430
chiefly employed in agriculture,	267
in trade, manufactures, or handicraft,	117

Number of illegitimate births in the parish during the last three years, 17.

Character of the People.—There is nothing which respects the personal qualities, prevailing customs, or habits of the inhabitants of this parish that deserves particular notice. The people generally are sober, honest, industrious, and attentive to religious duties, contented with their situation, and hospitable and friendly. Such, at least, is the prevailing character of the native inhabitants; but a continual influx of Irish immigrants, who obtain settlements in the parish, may in some degree prove unfavourable to the moral and religious character of the gross population.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—

Number of imperial acres in the parish, either cultivated or occasionally in tillage,	90,000
Number of acres which never have been cultivated, but remain constantly waste or in pasture,	10,000
Number of acres under wood, of which 120 are under natural wood,	850

Perhaps some thousands of acres, in the moorland districts, which have hitherto remained untilled, might be reclaimed and profitably cultivated, if the tenants possessed sufficient capital, or had any prospect of being remunerated for the expense incurred.

Live-Stock.—In the moorland and pastoral parts of the parish, the breeding of black Galloway cattle has long been extensively adopted, on account of their superior value. For these cattle a higher price has always been obtained than for others of equal age and size, their beef being considered of finer quality. A breed of white and grey-faced sheep, with fine short wool and horns, has been gradually exchanged, within the last twenty years, for a larger species (black-faced, horned, with long coarse wool,) brought from Ayrshire and the Highlands.

Value of Land.—The average value of good arable land is probably about L. 1, 10s. per acre; but its value varies in different parts, according to the depth and nature of the soil.

Acres under Crop.—There are annually about 400 acres of wheat under crop; 1350 of oats; 454 of ryegrass; 259 of meadow hay; 60 of peas and beans; 467 of potatoes; and 160 of turnips.

Dairies.—In the southward part of the parish, dairies have of late become very general, and upwards of 6000 stones of cheese are annually produced.

Rabbits.—On the sandy coast of the Bay of Luce rabbits exist in great numbers; and about 1500 dozen are killed yearly.

Wages.—Male servants, capable of performing all kinds of farm-work, receive each about L. 9 in cash, 3 bolls and 4 stones of

oatmeal, and 5 bolls of potatoes per year; besides being furnished with a house, garden, and fuel. Male servants unmarried, living in farm-houses, and doing the same work, receive each for the same term of service about L. 10; common labourers usually receive 1s. 2d. per day in summer, and 1s. in winter. Female servants in farm-houses receive each about L. 5 per year.

Improvements.—Twenty years ago, the whole arable land in the parish of Old Luce was comparatively in an uncultivated state. Scarcely any wheat, barley, beans, peas, or turnips were produced, even in the cultivated districts, and not more than one-fifth of the annual quantity of potatoes which is now raised. The high price of cattle and sheep, previous to that period, retarded the progress of cultivation, and turned the attention of the farmers chiefly to pasturage. Only a small proportion of the land actually devoted to tillage received any manure, and little attention was paid to the reclaiming of waste land, or improving the general soil. Since that time, however, a different system of husbandry has been introduced and extensively prosecuted, which has greatly increased the amount of raw produce, and changed the whole aspect of the southern parts of the parish. The continued low price of cattle for several years past has led, in all the more cultivated districts, to a change of stock, and an improved system of agriculture. The increase of dairies, and the scheme of management connected with them, have tended much to improve the general state of the land, inasmuch as a greater quantity of manure is thereby procured, and a greater proportion of the soil annually enriched. In particular, the system of *green-cropping*, upon a more extensive scale, recently introduced by an eminent practical farmer (Mr Gibson, factor to Sir James D. Hay,) and now generally adopted, has greatly increased both the natural value of the land, and the quantity of farm produce. This system, besides having increased the average extent of crop on all farms where it is pursued, has naturally turned the attention of the farmers to all practicable means of improving their lands; and by draining, levelling, removing stones, and applying proper manure, they have effected of late an extensive improvement. Some parts of the land which were formerly waste and useless, have, under this system of management, been rendered the most productive and valuable; and the general aspect of the parish presents in consequence a very meliorated appearance. It is presumed that the mode of husbandry

prosecuted in the parts of this parish best suited for tillage, is not inferior to that of any other parish in Scotland.

On these parts which are less suitable for tillage, and solely reserved for pasturage, about 100 scores of sheep, and a corresponding number of black Galloway cattle, are kept as stock.

The general duration of leases is nineteen years.

Farm-Buildings, &c.—The dwelling-houses and office-houses of the tenantry are in general good, commodious, and advantageously situated, and form a pleasing contrast with what they were but a few years ago. Enclosures also are generally sufficient, and in good state of repair.

Manufactures.—No extensive manufactures have yet been established in this parish. There are, however, two corn-mills, two carding-mills; one dye-mill, and one flax-mill; but in none of these establishments are many hands employed, nor is any great amount of work executed.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Markets.—A cattle-market is held near Glenluce, on the first Friday of every month from April to December.

Villages.—The only village in this parish is Glenluce, which lies on the side of a little glen or valley, about one mile and a half from the most inland point of the Bay of Luce, and on the public road leading from Newton-Stewart to Stranraer. A regular post-office has long been established in this village, and the mail-coach, running between Dumfries and Portpatrick, passes through it daily.

Means of Communication, &c.—There is but one turnpike road in the parish, which measures about ten miles. The only bridge of importance is that over the river of Luce, about one quarter of a mile west from the village, which at present is in course of being enlarged by an adjunct of 22 feet in breadth.

Ecclesiastical State.—The parish church is situated on the north-west side of the village, and in its immediate neighbourhood. Its distance from the remotest extremity of the parish is about seven miles; but it could not be more conveniently situated for the great body of the population. It was built in 1814, and is in good state of repair. It affords accommodation for 800 persons.

The manse stands beside the old Abbey. It was built about sixty-five years ago, and was thoroughly repaired in 1830. The glebe contains 16 acres, and averages in value L. 2, 10s. per acre. The stipend of the present incumbent is the *minimum*.

There is one Dissenting chapel in this parish connected with the United Secession Church. The stipend of the minister is L. 80, raised chiefly from seat-rents and sabbatical contributions. The number of actual members is about 80; the average attendance about 150.

Public worship in the Established Church is remarkably well attended. The average number of communicants amounts to upwards of 600. The number of families attending the Established Church is 321; of Roman Catholic families, 19; of Dissenting or Seceding families, 25, whereof 9 are Cameronians, who attend Divine service, some in Stranraer, and others in Newtonstewart.

Education.—There are five schools at present in this parish, four of which are supported chiefly by the fees. The parish school-master receives the minimum salary, with the legal accommodations. His fees may amount to L. 40 a year: and he has about L. 4 a year from other sources. The branches of education taught in the parish school, and the rates of these branches per quarter, are as follows: English reading and grammar, 3s.; Latin, 4s.; arithmetic, 4s.; practical mathematics, 4s.; geography and history, 4s.; writing and book-keeping, 4s. The more common branches of education only are taught in the other four schools; and the average attendance at each may be about 30.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—About 30 persons annually receive parochial aid; but the sum allotted per week varies according to the peculiar circumstances of the different persons receiving relief. The amount of contributions for the poor is about L. 80 annually. No assessment for the relief of such persons has at any time taken place in this parish. The late Earl of Stair mortified L. 270 in behalf of the poor in this parish. A strong aversion from seeking parochial aid exists among the *native* inhabitants of the parish.

Fairs.—One fair is held in the month of May, in the village of Glenluce, for the purpose of engaging servants to work during the seasons of hay-making and harvest; but for several years it has been attended by few, and all business of importance is transacted on Fridays at the neighbouring market-town of Stranraer.

Inns and Ale-houses.—There are 3 inns and 6 or 7 ale-houses in this parish; but nothing remarkable is observed as to their effects on the moral character of the people.

Fuel.—The fuel generally used in this parish is peat, obtained from extensive tracts of moss.

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