

## PARISH OF INCH.

PRESBYTERY OF STRANRAER, SYNOD OF GALLOWAY.

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### L.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—THE name of the parish is evidently Celtic. *Inis*, *Ynis* or *Inch* signifies island. In the Loch of Castle-Kennedy, opposite the present church, is an island supposed to have been the site of a religious house prior to the Reformation. This island was called the INCH, and hence the name of the parish.

*Extent and Boundaries.*—The parish is about ten miles long, and in some places nearly the same in breadth. It is bounded on the north by the parish of Ballantrae; on the east by the parishes of New Luce and Glenluce; on the south by the parishes of Stonykirk and Portpatrick; and on the west by the parishes of Leswalt and Stranraer, and the Bay of Lochryan.

*Topographical Appearances.* The north part of the parish consists of high lands partly arable, but chiefly covered with heath, rugged and not susceptible of culture. The highest elevation is 812 feet above the level of the sea. The south part of the parish is low; and, when viewed from the hills, has the appearance of a plain; but it is gently undulating in its surface. This part of the parish lies in an isthmus between the bays of Lochryan and Luce. The soil is in general light, resting on a bed of sand or gravel. There are some curious hollows here, called by the country people *pots*, perhaps formed by the retiring sea, which is supposed to have overflowed at one period the whole isthmus. One of these, situated on the farm of Aird, near the church, is of an oval form, and is about 1000 feet in circumference, and about 100 in depth.

*Coast.*—There is an extent of shore of about eight miles along Lochryan. The shore is flat, sandy or gravelly, except where it joins the parish of Ballantrae; it there acquires a rocky and precipitous character.

*Bays.*—Lochryan is situated at what may be considered the entrance of the Frith of Clyde, being about 60 miles south-west of Greenock, 40 miles south south-east of Campbelton, 52 south-east of the north channel opening into the western ocean, and 40 miles north-east of the entrance of Belfast Loch. At its entrance it is about three miles across from east to west, with from four to five fathoms water, which gradually deepens to seven or eight as you proceed up. The loch lies north and south, and is between eight and nine miles long from the entrance to the town of Stranraer, situated at the head of it. Its breadth varies from two to five miles.

*Meteorology.*—The accompanying table will give the monthly temperature during the year 1837, also the pressure of the atmosphere, as ascertained by the barometer, and the quantity of rain fallen, as ascertained by the rain-gauge, &c. The observations have been made and kept with great regularity and accuracy by Mr Burnet, gardener to the Earl of Stair at Castle-Kennedy.

An Abstract of the Heat, Rain, and Barometer for the year 1837.

	Ther.	Bar.		Rain.	Dry Days.	Rain.	Snow.	Frost.
		Highest.	Lowest.					
Jan.	37. 690	30.375	28.625	3.500	24	6		114
Feb.	41. 990	30.350	28.240	4.600	13	14	1	5
Mar.	38. 840	30.300	29.	740	26	2	3	20
Apr.	40. 860	30.350	28.700	3.250	20	8	2	17
May,	50. 510	29.850	29.150	1.400	18	12	1	—
June,	58. 180	30.110	29	1.800	24	6	—	2
July,	60. 400	30.125	28.610	3.500	16	15	—	—
Aug.	57. 480	30.175	29.	2.320	18	13	—	1
Sept.	53. 070	30.175	28.875	1.500	20	8	1	1
Oct.	50. 250	30.500	28.400	3.560	15	16	—	5
Nov.	43. 750	30.025	28.400	4.750	6	24	—	4
Dec.	44. 440	30.275	28.150	5.840	13	18	—	3
Medium	48. 410			36.760	214	143	9	72

In July and August two heavy showers of hail. Seventy-two nights on which frost fell.

*Prevailing Winds.*—The prevailing winds are south and west. In November and December 1833, we had gales of great and unusual violence. The plantations suffered severely. The storm was preceded by a great depression of the barometer. A dreadful storm took place on the morning of the 7th January 1839, unroofing houses, and levelling with the ground the largest trees.

*Prognostics.*—I have often observed the correctness of the prognostics of the weather described by Virgil. There is to be storm,

“ Cum medio celeres revolant ex æquore mergi  
 Clamoremque ferunt ad litora; cumque marinæ  
 In sicco ludunt fulicæ; notasque paludes  
 Deserit, atque altam supra volat ardea nubem.”

When there is to be rain,

“ e pastu decedens agmine magno  
Corvorum increpuit densis exercitus alis,”

and various sea birds may be seen,

“ Certatim largos humeris infundere rores.”

*Climate.*—The climate of the parish is variable. The inhabitants, however, enjoy much health, and live to a good old age. Rheumatic distempers prevail, occasioned, probably, by the changefulness of the climate.

The accompanying table will show the commencement of seed-time and harvest in the highland district of the parish, for a series of years. It is extracted from the journal of an intelligent farmer.

Commencement of Seed-time and Harvest in the Parish of Inch.

Year.	Commencement of Seed-time.	Commencement of Harvest.
1813,	March 25,	August 31
1814,	—	September 9
1815,	April 1,	— 1
1816,	March 27,	October 7, finished Nov. 9
1817,	—	September 29
1818,	— 31,	August 24
1819,	— 15,	— 27
1820,	— 13,	September 2
1821,	— 21,	August 28
1822,	— 15,	— 19
1823,	— 28,	September 19
1824,	— 22,	August 31
1825,	—	September 4
1826,	— 20,	July 31
1827,	— 28,	August 22
1828,	— 25,	— 19
1829,	— 11,	— 26
1830,	— 26,	— 22
1831,	— 22,	— 16
1832,	— 13,	— 25
1833,	— 19,	— 26
1834,	— 17,	— 19

*Hydrography*—There are several chalybeate springs in the parish, some also slightly sulphuretted. I am not aware that any of these have been analyzed.

There are no less than twelve fresh water lochs in the parish. The lochs of Castle-Kennedy and Soulseat are remarkable for their beauty, and are well worthy of a visit from the lover of lake scenery. The loch of Soulseat was called in former times the *Green Lake*, and an outlet is still called the *Green Ford*. At certain seasons the loch is overspread with a green seed-like substance, but whether of a vegetable or animal nature, I have not ascertained.

There are no rivers of any magnitude in the parish. The Luce, a stream which rises in Carrick, and flowing with much rapidity over a rocky bed, discharges itself into the Bay of Luce, is the boundary line between this parish and New Luce. The Piltanton,

a smaller and more sluggish stream, which discharges itself into the same bay, divides this parish from Stonykirk.

*Geology.*—There is not much interesting in the geology of the parish. The hills are chiefly composed of stratified transition rocks, as greywacke, &c. There is an excellent slate-quarry on the lands of Lochryan. Granite is never found except in detached blocks. Tradition speaks of lead mines having been wrought. Probably an attempt was made to find lead ore, but without any success. Attempts have been repeatedly made to discover coal, but they have all hitherto failed. There are extensive tracts of peat moss, which supply abundant fuel. There is great diversity of soil, gravelly, sandy, clayey, loamy, and mossy. Throughout the lower part of the parish, the soil is in general light and sandy.

*Zoology.*—The parish abounds in different sorts of game; partridge, grouse, snipe, woodcock, hares, &c. I have heard it alleged that the ptarmigan once existed in the district. The bittern is sometimes, but not very often, found. Curlews and plovers abound. Troops of wild geese may be seen pasturing by the brooks on the high lands, or, when severe weather is setting in, winging their way to the sea shore. A great variety of water-fowl frequent the lakes—ducks, coots, widgeon, teal, cormorant, &c. In winter, we are frequently visited by swans. Sea-mews visit us in spring, to bring forth their young by the sedgy shores of our lochs. There are two rookeries in the parish,—one at Castle-Kennedy, the seat of the Earl of Stair, and one at Lochryan House, the seat of Sir Alexander Wallace. There is also a heronry at Castle-Kennedy. Birds of prey, such as hawks, kites, owls, ravens, &c. are not so numerous as they once were. Of beasts of prey, we have the polecat and weasel. Foxes, wild-cats, badgers, and otters once abounded, but have now disappeared. Serpents, lizards, &c. are not uncommon.

The lochs abound in pike, perch, trout, roach, and eel. Pike have been caught twenty-four pounds in weight. There are salmon in the River Luce, and in the estuaries of Lochryan. There are cod, haddock, whiting, herring, flounder, &c. in Lochryan. Excellent oysters, too, abound in Lochryan. The fishery belongs to Sir Alexander Wallace of Lochryan, by a charter from the Crown.

On a calm summer evening, the banks of the Loch of Soulseat present an appearance not a little curious. What seem to be pillars of cloud, appear here and there, rising to a height of fifty feet or more. A stranger viewing them at a distance might sup-

pose them to consist of vapour or smoke ; but on a nearer approach, they are found to consist of living creatures, engaged in ceaseless action, performing the most graceful evolutions ; and, on listening, will be heard the rush of their little wings and the piping of their tiny voices. These flies have, I believe, their nativity in the water, from which they emerge to an ephemeral existence in the region of air. One species of them go through a very singular process—throwing off the skin. They fix themselves to a tree or bush, or any resting-place, and literally crawl out of their skin, and, having left behind them their *exuviae*, hie themselves off with freshened agility to their aerial dance. On remaining for a short time by the water edge, I have found myself covered with the filmy skins of these gay ephemerae.

*Botany.*—The parish is not remarkable for the production of any rare plants.

The plantations consist of beech, ash, elm, oak, plane, birch, alder, Scotch, larch, and spruce firs. The beech, ash, and plane thrive best. There are some large and beautiful ash trees at Castle-Kennedy. The larch only thrives in sheltered situations.

#### II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

*Ancient Accounts of the Parish.*—In 1684, Mr Andrew Symson, minister of Kirkinner, drew up what he calls “a large Description of Galloway.” In that work there is an account of each parish in Wigtonshire. In it will be found some notices regarding the geographical position, antiquities, and remarkable objects of the parish of Inch. Mr Symson’s “Description” remained in MS. in the Advocates’ Library, till 1823, when it was printed for the first time.

The parish of Inch comprehended at one time the modern parish of Portpatrick, and part of the parish of Stranraer. In 1628, Portpatrick, which had been popularly called the *black quarter* of Inch, was erected into a distinct parish. About the same time, or soon after, a part of Inch was detached to form, with a part of Leswalt, the new parish of Stranraer. To compensate for these disjunctions, the whole of the old parish of Soulseat was annexed to Inch. The manse and glebe remain at Soulseat ; the parish church is at Inch.

*Eminent Men.*—The celebrated Marshal Stair was connected with this parish by property and residence. His military talents and achievements, and the part he took in the political proceedings of his day, are matters of history. When out of place this distinguished nobleman resided much in the country, and delighted

in agricultural pursuits. To him the parish was indebted for the introduction of some improvements in husbandry. He was fond of draining bogs and lochs. Several of his works in this way are still to be seen.

General Sir Alexander J. Wallace, a distinguished military officer, resides in the parish. He has seen much service in India, Egypt, the Peninsula, &c. He obtained the commendation of his Sovereign for his gallant conduct in the actions of Busaco, Fuentes d'Onor, and Salamanca. Having executed a gallant charge with his regiment, the 88th, or Connaught Rangers, in the Battle of Busaco, Lord Wellington, who had been a near spectator, bestowed the warmest encomiums. Riding up, he took Lieut.-Col. Wallace by the hand, and said, "Wallace, I never saw a more gallant charge than that just now made by your regiment." When any difficult or dangerous service was to be executed, the post of honour was frequently assigned to Lieut.-Col. Wallace and the brave 88th.

Sir John Ross, the intrepid Arctic Navigator, is a native of the parish. He is the youngest son of the Rev. Andrew Ross, formerly minister of Inch. He was born at Souleseat 24th June 1777. He has a residence in the parish, North-West Castle. General Andrew Ross is another distinguished member of the same family. His promising career was closed by an early death.

*Land-owners.*—The land-owners of the parish are, the Earl of Stair; General Sir Alexander J. Wallace, Bart. of Lochryan; Colonel Vans Agnew of Sheuchan; Patrick Maitland, Esq.; Sir James Dalrymple Hay, Bart.; Colonel Blair; W. Craig, Esq.; Sir Adolphus Dalrymple, at present M. P. for Brighton. The only resident proprietor is General Sir Alexander J. Wallace.

*Antiquities.*—At Glenterra, in this parish, at a little distance from the road leading to New Luce, there are four large unpolished stones placed erect, and forming a circle. At the distance of some yards from the circle stands a single stone. They are called by the country people "the Standing Stones of Glentarra." This may be a small specimen of the Druidical Temple.

What are called "the Stepping-Stones of Glenterra" are not a little curious. About three feet deep, in a peat moss, there is a regular file of stepping-stones, extending about a quarter of a mile. These must have been placed to form a passage through a swamp previous to the growth of the peat moss.

Stone axes have been found in the parish. These were proba-

bly the rude military implements of the ancient *Novantes*—the primitive inhabitants of Galloway.

Sepulchral stone cairns abound in the parish. They are commonly called "the Auld Grey Cairns." Some of them are in a situation where the stones must have been brought from a considerable distance, there being no stones in the neighbourhood. They consist of a circular heap of stones, from 50 to 70 feet in diameter, and from 6 to 8 feet high in the centre. In the interior there is a cavity formed with large flat stones, 4, 5, or 6 feet in length, and 2 or 3 feet in breadth. In this cavity, is generally found an urn, with fragments of bone, burned wood, and ashes; but sometimes the fragments of bone, burned wood, and ashes, occur without an urn. At Cairnyaran, a moorland farm in this parish, there are nine of these cairns within the extent of a Scots mile.

These cairns occur in the high part of the parish. In the lower district, burrows or tumuli of earth occur, having the same sort of cavity, and generally containing an urn with fragments of bone, burned wood, and ashes. Whether the age, or the locality, or whether the rank of the individual interred, made the difference between the stone cairn and the earthen tumulus, I cannot say. Both are no doubt the monuments of the ancient *Novantes*.

At Innermessan, a farm in this parish, is a large circular mound called the *Moat*. Its circumference at the base is 336 feet, and from the foundation to the top is 78 feet. It appears to have been surrounded by a fosse. Such erections may have served various purposes. The name *Moat*, a Saxon word, would seem to indicate that it was a place of judicial assembly. The *Fosse* would lead us to believe that it had been used as a fortlet or place of defence. But whatever other purposes it may have served, I have no doubt that it was used as a place for burning the dead, or depositing the ashes of the dead. On the 24th November 1834, I caused a hole, three feet deep, to be dug in the centre of the plain on the top. After passing through a fine rich mould, we came to a stratum consisting of ashes, charred wood, and fragments of bone. In the days of the ancient *Novantes*, this was probably the public cemetery of the adjacent town *Rerigonium*. May not this mound have been used also for such religious observances as "the kindling of lights on hills," the *Beltan* or *Baltien*, which, according to Jamieson's *Scottish Dictionary*, signifies *Bel's Fire*.

This Innermessan was the site of the ancient *Rerigonium*, a

town of the Novantes. It was situated on the *Rerigonius sinus*, the modern Lochryan. In subsequent times there was the town and Castle of Innermessan. The castle belonged to Sir Andrew Agnew of Lochnaw. The town of Innermessan seems to have been the most considerable place in the Rhins of Galloway, as Symson, in his "Description of Galloway," says, "the greatest town thereabouts till Stranraer was built." Every vestige of the town and castle is now obliterated, unless it be a sewer, about three feet under ground, which may still be seen. Innermessan is properly *Inver Messan*, signifying the influx of the Messan.

Close by the present manse may be traced some of the foundations of the Abbey of Soulseat or Saulseat. It was founded by Fergus, Lord of Galloway, in the twelfth century, for Premonstratensian monks. It was called in Latin, *sedes Animarum* and *Monasterium viridis stagni*. This latter name it acquired from being situated on a peninsula formed by a fresh water loch, the waters of which at certain seasons have a green hue. Chalmers, in his *Caledonia*, says, "it was the mother of the more celebrated and opulent Priory of Whithorn, as well as the Abbey of Holywood, both of which were planted by monks of the same order. It appears to have been the original establishment of the Premonstratensian monks in Scotland; and the abbots of Soulseat were the superiors of that order in this kingdom." Not much is known of the history of this abbey. It is mentioned in an act of Parliament 1487, against purchasing livings at Rome, as one of the Scottish abbeys, "that were not of old at the Court of Rome," *i. e.* the Pope had no right to dispose of it, the King having the appointment. In 1532, David, Abbot of Soulseat, obtained a precept from the King, commanding obedience to him, in visiting and reforming all the houses in Scotland of the Premonstratensian order. In 1568, the Abbot of Soulseat, along with others, subscribed a bond, obliging themselves to defend the Queen. These are all the notices I have been able to collect regarding the history of this abbey. It was in ruins in 1684, when Symson wrote his *Description of Galloway*. Only a few of the remains are now visible. An extensive burying-ground seems to have surrounded the abbey. Human bones and pieces of coffins have been often dug up. Part of the burying-ground still remains, and is occasionally used as a place of interment. There are, however, no very ancient inscriptions. The oldest inscription is the following:—"Here lies ane honest man, Gilbert Mure, Marchand, burghess

of Wigtown, quha departed this lyf, 16 September 1616, spouse to Agnes Cunningham."

A deep fosse or trench, drawn from the two wings of the loch, seems to have shut in the peninsula of Soulseat. Symson makes mention of this trench, and traces of it may still be seen. Symson also speaks of a wonderful stone here. "At this mause," he says, "is a stone, pretty large, which I have seen, to the particles whereof broken off the country people attribute great virtue for curing the gravel; and tell a long story concerning the progress of that stone, and how it came there, concerning which, if you think fit, you may inquire at Mr James Hutchinson, minister of North Leith, who was a considerable space minister of this parish."

In that part of the parish of Inch which was detached to form the parish of Stranraer, stood St John's Chapel. A piece of land which belonged to the chapel was called St John's Croft. Adjoining was the Castle of the Chapel, which Symson calls "a good house, pertaining to Sir John Dalrymple, younger of Stair." This castle now forms the jail of Stranraer.

Castle-Kennedy is the most notable place in this parish. The castle has been a large and stately edifice. It was probably built in the reign of James VI. It was the seat of the Earls of Cassilis, who once possessed large estates in Wigtonshire. The great power of this family in this part of the country occasioned the following rhyme:

"Twixt Wigton and the town of Ayr,  
Portpatrick, and the Cruives of Cree,  
No man needs think for to bide there,  
Unless he court with Kennedie."

In the reign of Charles II., Castle-Kennedy, with the adjacent lands, passed to Sir John Dalrymple, younger of Stair, and to that family it has since belonged. The castle was accidentally burned in 1715, and has never since been habitable. The walls, which are still standing, are 70 feet high. The castle is beautifully situated between two fresh water lochs. The grounds and plantations were laid off by Marshal Stair, and are said to be a kind of military picture, in which that distinguished soldier "fought his battles o'er again."

On the island near the church, the Earl of Cassilis had a small house, where he was wont, as Symson says, "to retire himself betwixt sermons, having a boat for that purpose."

The remains of a castle may still be seen at Larg, a farm in this

parish, near the River Luce. It was the property and residence of the Lyns of Larg.

The Castle of Craig-caffie is still entire. It is not a large building, and has been converted into a farm-house. It has been surrounded by a fosse, but could never have been a place of much strength. It was the residence and property of the Nelsons of Craig-caffie, a family now extinct.

### III.—POPULATION.

The population by the return to Dr Webster was	1513
In the Old Statistical Account,	1450
By census 1821,	2386
By census 1831,—males, 1164—females, 1357,	2521

The population is still on the increase. By a census taken by myself, it now amounts to 2684. The increase chiefly arises from the town of Stanraer extending its suburbs within the bounds of this parish. About 600 reside in villages, the rest in the country.

The yearly average of births, as far as inserted in the parish register, is	52
The average of marriages for the same time,	19
No register of deaths has been kept in the parish.	
By the census taken by myself, there are of the	
Population under 15 years of age,	1076
betwixt 15 and 30,	616
30 and 50,	582
50 and 70,	312
upwards of 70,	98

Total, 2684

The number of unmarried men upwards of 50 years of age, is	35
women upwards of 45,	117
of families is	406
chiefly employed in agriculture,	362
in trade, manufactures, or handicraft,	83
Number of fatuous persons, 5; of blind, 3,	8

Number of illegitimate births during the last three years, 22.

*Amusements.*—In the winter season, curling and skating are very common amusements. During hard frost, some of our lochs present a very gay and animating appearance. The skater performs his evolutions,—the stone thunders along the ice amid the cheers of the spectators,—the graceful forms of the fair move up and down on the slippery promenade, giving additional interest to the scene. Curling levels all distinctions,—the laird and the labourer, the master and the servant, the clergyman and the clown, are all on an equality at this game. The late mild winters have rendered less frequent the enjoyment of these amusements.

*Character of the People.*—The tenantry of Inch enjoy, in a considerable degree, the comforts and advantages of society. They are, in general, well-informed, moral and religious. Some of them are well versed in historic lore. I recollect of one man,

long an elder in this parish, who for a minute acquaintance with all matters of history, surpassed any man I ever knew. A large portion of the working-classes are Irish. They are by no means cleanly in their habits and style of living. Their habitations are too frequently scenes of filth. The pig often shares the same domicile with his owner. The Scotch part of the labouring population are much more cleanly in their habits,—superior also in character and intelligence. The ordinary food of the peasantry consists chiefly of oatmeal porridge, and bread, milk, cheese, potatoes, pork, and herring. Tea and tobacco are in too general use. It would be better that what is expended on these luxuries would go to improve the comforts of the people in other respects. I have often wished that the labourer could enjoy the wholesome and invigorating beverage of home-brewed ale. Poaching prevails much in the parish, but the poachers generally come from other parishes. \*

#### IV.—INDUSTRY.

*Agriculture.*—The land cultivated, or occasionally in tillage, may amount to 12,600 acres; the land never cultivated, constantly waste or in pasture, 18,000 acres. About 800 acres of the highland district of the parish might be added to the cultivated land; the climate, however, would have to be ameliorated by belts of plantation. There is no land in the parish in a state of undivided common. About 655 acres are under wood, all planted and enclosed. There is some natural wood in the glens in the higher district, but not of much extent or value. The oldest plantations were made about a century ago by Marshal Stair, and consist chiefly of beech. At that time, and till lately, beech was considered the only tree that would suit the soil and climate of Wigtonshire. This is now found to be a mistake. Beech also is very unprofitable timber. Ash, oak, elm, plane, and larch are now generally planted.

*Rent of Land.*—The average rent of arable land in the parish is L. 1 per acre. The average rent of grazing is about L. 3, 15s. for each cow, and 3s. 6d. for each sheep per annum.

*Wages.*—The wages of a common labourer in summer, 1s. 2d.; in winter, 1s. The wages of a joiner in summer and winter, 2s.; of a mason, do. 2s. 6d.

*Sheep.*—The common breed of sheep in the parish is the *black-faced*. The sheep-walks not being very good, the stock are generally small, and the breed not much studied. The diseases

which prevail among sheep in this district are the *brazy*, a kind of flatulent distemper, which speedily proves fatal; the *sturdy*, or water in the head, and *grupping*, a kind of palsy. The latter is sometimes cured by putting the sheep into a clover or turnip-field. Sheep are *clipped* in the month of June, and *smearred* in November.

*Live-Stock.*—The breed of cattle long common in this district is the well known *Galloway breed*. They feed well, and are preferred in the English market to any other cattle of the same weight. Much attention has been paid by our farmers to the improvement of this kind of stock. Of late years, however, the purity of the breed has been much contaminated by the introduction of Irish cattle. In consequence of the low price of *Galloways* in the English market, many of our farmers have introduced the Ayrshire cow, and turned their attention to cheese-making.

Turnips were introduced into the parish more than a century ago by Marshal Stair, but their cultivation did not become general till lately. Turnip cultivation, and feeding off with sheep, are extremely suitable to our light soils, and are now generally adopted. There is a bone-mill in the parish, and bone manure is in great demand.

*Reclaiming Waste Land, &c.*—There are several considerable bogs or mosses in the lower district of the parish, which might be reclaimed and improved; but as the price of coal is high, (being all imported) these are required for a supply of fuel. George Guthrie, Esq. factor to the Earl of Stair, the most spirited agriculturist in the district, has reclaimed many acres of bog land; and splendid crops of corn are now raised on what was before “a possession for the bittern and pools of water.” The example of Mr Guthrie has given a stimulus to agricultural improvement in the parish.

*Leases.*—The general duration of leases is nineteen years.

*Farm-Buildings, &c.*—The farm-houses about fifty years ago were very miserable, but they are now very comfortable dwellings.

The general fence in the lowland part of the parish is the turf-dike sown with whins. The thorn hedge is not very common, and does not thrive well in all situations. In the highland district the common fence is the Galloway dike, built of dry stones. It is built 5 feet 2 inches high for sheep, and 4 feet 2 inches for cattle. The first can be built for 1s. 4d. per rood, and the latter for 1s.

The principal obstacle to improvement arises from the want of capital among the tenantry.

*Raw Produce.*—The average gross amount of raw produce raised in the parish may probably be as under :

Produce of grain of all kinds,	L. 15,200
of green crop, potatoes, turnip, &c.	6,500
of hay,	1,500
of crops cultivated for the arts, as flax,	40
of land in pasture,	7,000
Total,	L. 30,240

*Manufactures.*—Manufactures have never been introduced into the parish to any extent.

*Navigation.*—Lochryan affords great facilities for shipping. There is excellent shelter and excellent anchorage opposite the village of Cairnryan. Here, with proper ground tackle, a vessel may ride out the heaviest gale. Lochryan has long been a place of refuge for the shipping of the Clyde, and vessels navigating the Irish Channel. It has often been suggested as the best station for the mail-packets between Scotland and Ireland. A Government survey was lately made with reference to this object, and it is understood to have been the opinion of the distinguished naval officer employed in that service, that Lochryan is the fittest station.

#### V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

*Market-Town.*—The nearest market-town is Stranraer. It is three miles distant from the parish church.

*Villages.*—The principal village is Cairnryan. Its population is about 300. It is seven miles distant from the parish church. Another village contains about 200. A suburb of Stranraer has been lately built within the parish of Inch, containing nearly 100.

*Means of Communication.*—The great road from London to Portpatrick passes through the parish; also the road from Glasgow to Portpatrick. Three mail-coaches travel daily through the parish. The Stranraer and Glasgow steamer, and the Stranraer and Belfast steamer call regularly at Cairnryan, and receive and land passengers and goods. The parish thus enjoys facility of communication with all parts of the world.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The parish church is the only place of worship within the parish. It is eight or ten miles distant from some of the extremities of the parish. Many of the parishioners are situated at an inconvenient distance. It is proposed, however, to remedy this evil by the erection of a church at Cairnryan. The parish church was built in 1770. It is not in good repair, and is

too small. It only contains 400. Its situation is very beautiful. The woods and lakes of Castle-Kennedy are close adjoining. On a fine summer evening the scene is exquisitely sweet.

The manse was pulled down and rebuilt during the summer of 1838.

The glebe is about 18 acres in extent, and may be valued at about 15s. or 20s. per acre. I am adding four acres more by draining a loch.

The stipend is L. 258, 12s. 3d.

The number of persons professedly belonging to the Established Church is 1965. The number of persons belonging to other religious denominations is 689. The number not known to belong to any religious denomination is 30.

Divine service at the Established Church is well attended in proportion to the size of the church, but not in proportion to the population. The number of communicants is 400.

There is an association in the parish for the purpose of promoting the General Assembly's four schemes. From L. 12 to L. 20 may be raised annually.

*Education.*—There are generally four schools in the parish, sometimes a fifth during the winter months. One of these is parochial, the rest are on the teachers' own adventure. The branches taught in the parochial school are, Latin, Greek, English, writing, arithmetic, practical mathematics, geography. In the private schools, the branches taught are chiefly English, writing, and arithmetic. The parochial teacher has the minimum salary, house and garden. The school fees are 2s. 6d. or 3s. for reading; 5s. for the higher branches. The fees may amount to L. 20 per annum. The teacher receives about L. 6 as session-clerk. The number of persons between six and fifteen years of age who cannot read or write may be 16. The number upwards of fifteen years of age who cannot read or write 20. The people are in general alive to the benefits of education. There is one part of the parish three or four miles distant from any school, but the population there is very scanty.

*Poor and Parochial Funds.*—The average number of persons receiving parochial aid is 50. The average sum allotted to each per annum is L. 1, 12s. About L. 90 is annually disbursed by the session for the support of the poor, for coffins and funeral expenses for the poor, and for paying precentor, session-clerk, presbytery-clerk, synod-clerk, beadle, &c. The amount of contribu-

tions may be stated as follows: Church collections, L. 43; proclamations, L. 3, 2s. 6d.; mortcloth, L. 4, 16s.; fines, L. 5, 4s.; donations, L. 12, 15s.; interest of funds left for the poor, L. 20, 16s. 8d.; total, L. 89, 14s. 2d. There is a disposition among the Scottish poor to refrain from seeking parochial aid. There is no disposition of this kind among the Irish settlers.

*Fairs.*—There is a monthly cattle-market from April to October, held within the bounds of the parish. Though held in the parish of Inch, it is called the Stranraer cattle-market.

*Inns, &c.*—There are nine inns or public-houses within the parish. Three would be sufficient. The part of the parish where public-houses are most numerous is the lowest in point of morals.

*Fuel.*—The fuel in general use in the parish is peat. Peats can be cut and prepared for from 5d. to 7d. per cart-load. Whatever coal is used in the parish is imported from Ayrshire.

January 1839.

## PARISH OF STRANRAER.

PRESBYTERY OF STRANRAER, SYNOD OF GALLOWAY.

THE REV. DAVID WILSON, MINISTER.

### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name, Boundaries, &c.*—ACCORDING to Chalmers, in his account of this parish, the name is of difficult derivation. Of old the name appeared under different forms, Stranrever, Stranraver, and Stronraver. He says, "this name is obviously Celtic." *Stron* appears as the prefix of many appellations in the Scoto-Irish language of North Briton, and is from the Gaelic *Sron* or *Stron*, which signifies a nose or promontory, and is usually applied to projections from rising grounds. There is here such a projection, or nose, to which the *Stron* was probably applied. The annex *raer* may be the Gaelic *Reamhar*, which is pronounced *Reavar*, signifying thick, clumsy. So *Stronreaver* would signify the "thick nose or clumsy projection." The general opinion, however, and perhaps the best founded, is, that it derives its name from the strand or rivulet which divides the row, *raw*, of houses on its banks. Strandraw became in time to be named and spelt Stranraver, and afterwards Stranraer.