



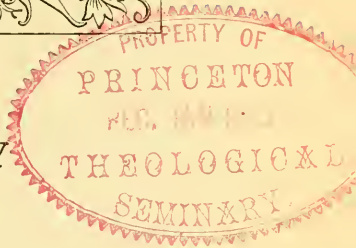
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HISTORY  
OF

ST GILES' CATHEDRAL CHURCH.

BY W. CHAMBERS, LL.D.

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ST GILES' CATHEDRAL CHURCH, in which certain noted Lectures on the History of the Scottish Church have recently been delivered, is the original parish church of Edinburgh. Its history can be satisfactorily traced to the early part of the twelfth century, when it superseded a church of much older date. Occupying a prominent central situation on the south side of High Street, its lofty and beautiful spire is seen from a great distance. In the course of time St Giles' has undergone various changes as regards extent and style of architecture. Externally, it seems a modern Gothic structure, with choir, nave, and transepts; but it is in reality old, of various eras, shrouded in an indifferent and comparatively recent casing. No ecclesiastical edifice in Scotland has passed through so many vicissitudes, or has been so cruelly maltreated, and yet has so tenaciously survived as an interesting memorial of the past. Identified with many stirring events in Scottish history, St Giles' may claim a national character, while it invites attention as a relic of art from the twelfth to the fifteenth century. The present narrative aspires to be only a

brief historical sketch of this venerable edifice, along with some account of the effort lately made towards its Restoration.

As early as 854, there was a church in Edinburgh included in the list of ecclesiastical establishments belonging to the Bishopric of Lindisfarne, or Holy Island; for at that time Lothian, in which Edinburgh is situated, formed a portion of the province of Northumbria. In 1020, Earl Eadulf ceded this part of his territory to Malcolm II., king of Scotland. Whether the church in Edinburgh was at first dedicated to St Giles, is uncertain. It might have been so, for St Giles lived in the sixth century. A word may be said regarding this personage.

St Giles, or Sanctus Egidius, as he is termed in Latin, was a renowned mediæval saint, of whom there are numerous legends. He is said to have been a native of Athens in Greece, and of royal lineage. From Greece he migrated to the south of France, and there in the neighbourhood of Nîmes, retired to a cave to spend his life in devotion as a hermit. The only companion of his solitude was a hind, on the milk of which

animal he partly subsisted. One day, this favourite was pursued by dogs and hunters, and fled to him for protection, which it readily received. Artists have usually painted St Giles in the garb of a monk, with a hind pierced by an arrow, either in his arms or at his feet. Lucas van Leyden, a Dutch painter (1494-1533), represents St Giles with an arrow piercing his hand while he is sheltering the hind; as shewn in the adjoining wood-cut. St Giles died in 541.



St Giles.

Numerous churches and other ecclesiastical establishments, also hospitals, were founded in his

honour. In England alone there were a hundred and forty-six churches dedicated to St Giles. His fame having reached Edinburgh, he was adopted as the patron saint of the church, and a hind figures as one of the supporters in the city arms. For further particulars concerning 'Sanct Geill and his Hynde' we may refer to the late Mrs Jameson's tasteful work, *Sacred and Legendary Art*, 2 vols. 1857.

A new church was erected by Alexander I. about 1120. It consisted of a choir and nave, with small side aisles and central tower, built in a massive style of the early Norman period. From all that can be learned, it covered less space than is occupied by the present edifice. It might be described as a substantial parish church, bordered by the parish burying-ground on the south, the site of which ground is now occupied by the present Parliament Square. To this St Giles' Church there are various references in old charters and other records. It is mentioned in an Act of the reign of Robert the Bruce. The circumstance of the Castle of Edinburgh having been selected as a residence by David I., is understood to have furthered the endowment and decoration of St Giles'. In 1359, David II., by a charter under the great seal, 'confirmed to the chaplain officiating at the altar of St Katherine's Chapel, in the parish church of St Giles, all the lands of Upper Merchiston, the gift of Roger Hog, burgess of Edinburgh.'

The church at this early period had for its chief clergyman an official bearing the title of Vicar of St Giles, who possessed an interest in a farm called St Giles' Grange, or more familiarly Sant Geillies Grange, situated about a mile southwards, and which has communicated the name of The Grange to a pleasant suburb in this quarter. 'Under the date of 1243,' says Dr Laing, 'we find the name of a Perpetual Vicar of the Church of St Giles, Edinburgh; this circumstance, along with the earlier reference to its Grange, suggests that the church must have been attached to some religious house, and like the

Priory of Coldingham, it might for a time have remained subordinate to Lindisfarne.<sup>1</sup>

St Giles' Church was destined to suffer an unexpected disaster, consequent on the unhappy wars between England and Scotland in the fourteenth century. Richard II., in retaliation for alleged wrongs, invaded Scotland with an English army in 1385. He laid waste the country, took possession of Edinburgh, and after an occupation of five days, committed the city to the flames. St Giles' Church perished in the conflagration. All that remained of the building were the entrance porch, a part of the choir and nave, with the heavier portions that formed the base of the spire.

Rallying after this grievous calamity, the town was rebuilt, and the civic authorities made a strenuous effort to reconstruct St Giles'. They entered into a contract for the building of 'five chapels' in St Giles', with pillars and vaulted roofs, covered with stone, and lighted with windows. The contract was dated 29th November 1387, in the reign of Robert II., and we may assume that the alteration was completed early in the fifteenth century. The part so executed was on the south-west of the nave. The style of art was lighter and more ornamental than that which had been destroyed. Afterwards, some side aisles were added through the munificence of pious individuals. These new parts are the fifteenth-century style of art, as will be afterwards more particularly described.

On entering the building by the doorway from the High Street, the visitor immediately ascends a flight of steps into the spacious lobby constructed out of the transept, and turning

<sup>1</sup> *The Charters of the Collegiate Church of St Giles, Edinburgh*, edited by the late Dr David Laing. Forming one of the Bannatyne Club books, presented by Sir George Clerk, Baronet, of Penicuik, and Alexander Maconochie Welwood of Meadowbank and Garvoek, Esq., the work is remarkable as a monument of Dr Laing's literary industry and antiquarian knowledge.

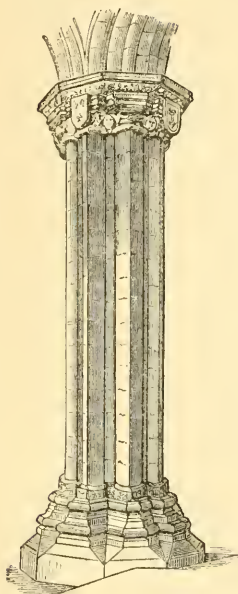
to the left, enters the choir on the east. Here, he will have a good opportunity of observing the diversity in the architecture. The pillars first reached are of a plain style, octagonal in shape, with capitals to correspond. They bear no heraldic devices. These were the original pillars of 1120, which survived the fire of 1385. In the course of the repairs recently completed, when the colouring and dirt of centuries had been removed, the marks of fire were seen on these sturdy Norman pillars, now seven hundred years old, and seemingly indestructible.

In the north wall, under the second window from the east, there is a plain arched recess, the lower part being level like a shelf. An opinion has been entertained that the recess had formed part of a monument to Napier of Merchiston, inventor of logarithms. This opinion is untenable. Napier died in 1617, whereas the recess has been in the wall since the fifteenth century. The recess is the relic of a mural tomb or shrine; the level part having most likely been appropriated to a recumbent figure. Originally, the label moulding on the outer edge of the arch had been fringed with finely-carved crockets representing bunches of oak leaves, but these decorations were cut away at some unknown period, to suit the plastering of the wall! The marks of the crockets have been traced. This arched recess has been copied in forming a similar one on the outer side of the wall in 1829, which contains a tablet evidently removed from a monument of the Napier family. The tablet is no doubt that which marked the burial-place of the family on the south side of the church.

Passing beyond the old pillars, and approaching the great east window, we find two arches, one on each side, resting on pillars of an ornate fifteenth-century style. These pillars have bases of foliated sculpture, fluted shafts, and elaborately ornamented capitals. Two similar pillars are half sunk in the eastern gable. The date of these four pillars with their lofty arches is determined by their heraldic devices, more particularly the devices on the first pillar on the north, usually called the



King's Pillar. This pillar bears four distinct shields, which have reference to James II., king of Scotland, and his queen, Mary of Gueldres, to whom he was married in 1449. These two had a son,



King's Pillar.

James, who was born in 1453. There is reason to believe that the shield facing the east, which we indicate as No. 1, was carved and set up in honour of that infant prince. It shews the Scottish lion, rampant, within a double tressure, with a label of three points, denoting an heir or prince. The shield No. 2, facing the north, impaled, and incomplete at the top, is that of the queen, Mary of Gueldres. The shield No. 3, facing the west, which has the lion, with a double tressure, also incomplete, is that of the king, James II. The shield No. 4, facing the south, has three fleurs-de-lis for France, with which country Scotland had intimate relations.



No. 1.



No. 2.

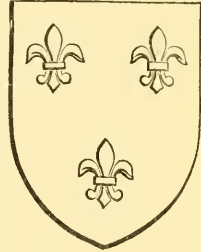


No. 3.



*St Giles' Cathedral Church.*

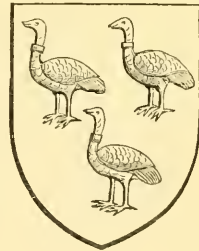
These royal shields, silent and unobtrusive, and which have happily weathered the civil and religious broils of four centuries, tell a tale of mingled joy and sorrow—the birth of an heir to the throne, the death of the king, shortly followed by the death of the heart-broken queen-mother. The happiness of James II. and his queen, Mary of Gueldres, was of short duration. James, who had been a kind patron of Edinburgh, was brought to it a lifeless corpse from Roxburgh, where he had been killed by the bursting of a cannon, 1460. Mary of Gueldres, his pious widow, a patroness of art, and foundress of the Trinity College Church, survived him only three years. Their son, the boy prince, who on the death of his father became James III., was murdered 1488. All things considered, we are



No. 4.

inclined to think that the date of the pillar must be set down as 1460, the imperfection in the upper part of the king and queen's shields almost pointing to the tragical event of that year. The work of reconstructing the choir went on, however, for a number of years afterwards.

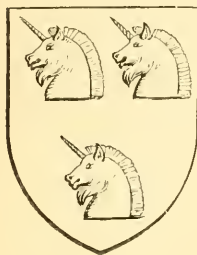
On the half-pillar on the north side of the great eastern window, there is a shield, No. 5, with three cranes gorged; such being the arms of Thomas Cranstoun, a burgess and chief magistrate of Edinburgh in 1439, and again in 1454, and who most likely had taken an active part in promoting the reconstruction of the church—the city improver of his day.



No. 5.

We now proceed to the pillar immediately opposite, on the south side of the choir. Here there are four shields, which we shall speak of separately. Shield No. 6, facing the east, bears

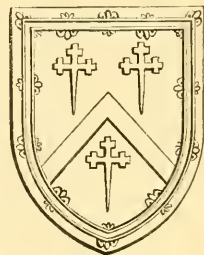
the heads of three unicorns. Such were the Preston arms, set up in honour of William Preston of Gorton, to whom we shall immediately refer as an esteemed benefactor of the church. Shield No. 7, facing the north, bears three otter heads, being the arms of the family of Otterburn. The person specially



No. 6.

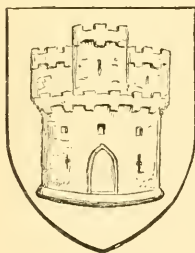


No. 7.



No. 8.

honoured was probably Nicholas de Otterburn, as he is styled in old writs, a learned official, much employed in public affairs, and who was Vicar of Edinburgh in 1455. He had a nephew,



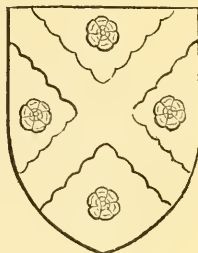
No. 9.

John de Otterburn, who founded commemorative services in St Giles'. Shield No. 8, facing the west, bears the arms of Kennedy, being a chevron between three crosses crossletted. This is a finely executed shield, with a double tressure, and refers to a person of distinction. We have no doubt it was placed in honour of Lord James Kennedy, a grandson of Robert III., and Bishop of St Andrews, who rendered valuable assistance to the

state on the sudden death of James II., and superintended the education of James III. He was designated by Mary of Gueldres, 'our dearest cousin,' and is remembered as one of the greatest men of his time—great from being a man of learning and peaceful counsels. No. 9, facing the south, is

a plain shield, with a castle, the central figure in the city arms.

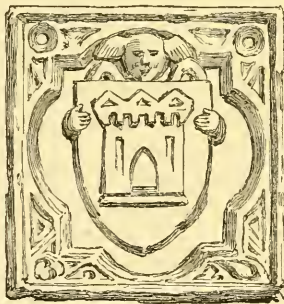
On the half-pillar next the great window on the south, is seen a shield, No. 10, bearing the arms of Napier of Merchiston, who was Lord Provost of Edinburgh in 1457. The shield, styled the Lennox shield, has a saltire, engrailed, cantoned with four rosettes, which the family of Napier assumed before the middle of the fifteenth century.



No. 10.

There are three other renderings of the city arms in the choir, but only one of them requires notice. It is a square carving in stone over the doorway to the small vestry, on the left on entering the church. As shewn

in the accompanying wood-cut, an angel is represented holding a shield, No. 11, on which a castle is emblazoned. This we consider to be a very old rendering, as early as the twelfth or thirteenth century. The ornamental bordering is of unusual elegance. The existence of the stone was unknown until the recent Restoration of the choir, when by the removal of a stair, the doorway with its characteristic mouldings was disclosed.



No. 11.

Besides the extension of the choir eastwards about 1460, the walls surmounting the older pillars were raised and improved. Part of the original groining which sprang from the capitals of the pillars still remains, partially chiselled away. The clerestory groining is remarkable for its rich variety of bosses. On one of the bosses is seen the monogram *i h s*. Around another

bosse is the following legend : *Ave. gra. pla. dus. tecu* ; such being an abbreviation of the words, *Ave Maria, gratia plena,*

*dominus tecum* (Hail Mary, full of mercy, the Lord be with thee). We present a wood-engraving of this remarkable bosse, which escaped erasure at the Reformation seemingly on account of its great height from the ground. It is to be viewed as an antiquarian curiosity. In the centre of some other bosses is an orifice from which had depended a chain or



cord sustaining a lamp. One of these lamps had hung immediately in front of the high-altar. It is learned that the high-altar of the early church of 1120 was not shifted on the reconstruction of the choir. It remained in its original place, and there was an altar of lesser importance placed behind it, under the great eastern window.

The part of the choir between the southern row of pillars and the south wall was originally known as the Lady Aisle. Of this aisle Dr Laing says : ' In the charter dated 11th January 1454-5, it is narrated that William Preston of Gourton, then deceased, and interred in the Lady Aisle, had with diligent labour and great expense, and aided by a high and mighty prince, the king of France, and many other Lords of France, succeeded in obtaining possession of the arm-bone of St Giles ; and this inestimable relique had been freely bequeathed by him " to oure mothir kirk of Sant Gell of Edynburgh withouten any condicion." The Provost, Bailies, and community of Edinburgh, deeply impressed with the importance of such an acquisition, voluntarily undertook to commence within one year, and to complete in the space of six or seven years, an aisle " furth fra our Lady Isle, where the said William lyes," to erect there his monument with a brass tablet, with his arms and an inscription, specifying his having brought that relique to Scot-

## *St Giles' Cathedral Church.*

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land ; his arms also to be put in hewn stone in three other parts of the aisle ; also an altar, and to endow a chaplain to sing for him from that time forth, and granting to his nearest relations the privilege of carrying the relique in all public processions.'

Such is the account given of William Preston of Gorton, whose arms, as above mentioned, consist of three heads of unicorns. The obligations in the charter were faithfully carried out. An aisle was constructed on the south, outside the Lady Aisle. For the purpose of bringing it into connection with the church, the wall, in which there were three windows, was removed ; and instead of the windows, three arches were formed, with pillars corresponding to the fifteenth-century arches and pillars in the choir. A window was placed in the east end of the Preston Aisle, and three windows along its south side. The west end of the aisle opened into the south transept. The Preston Aisle was fifty-nine feet in length by twenty-four feet in breadth, by which addition the choir was considerably enlarged, while the architectural effect, enhanced by a vista of pillars, was materially improved. In the charter, a monument to Preston with a brass tablet is spoken of. It has long since disappeared.

About the time of the erection of the Preston Aisle, the ecclesiastical organisation of St Giles' underwent an important change. In 1466, a charter of James III., who was still a boy of thirteen years of age, converted the parish church of St Giles' into a collegiate foundation, with a chapter to consist of a Provost, Curate, sixteen Prebendaries, a Minister of the Choir, four Choristers, a Sacristan, and a Beadle ; all of whom were exclusive of chaplains ministering at thirty-six altars throughout the establishment. Altogether, the number of ecclesiastics would not be less than a hundred, supported by particular endowments drawn from certain lands, oblations at the altars, and by donations of food and other articles. In the transition from the parochial to the collegiate organisation,

*St Giles' Cathedral Church.*

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William Forbes, Perpetual Vicar, was advanced to the Provostship of the new foundation. At his decease he was succeeded by Gawin Douglas, third son of Archibald, fifth Earl of Angus, and who with poetical tastes did good service to Scottish literature, which was still in its infancy. His longest poem was the 'Palace of Honour,' an apologue addressed to James IV. The most remarkable of his productions was a translation of Virgil's *Æneid* into Scottish verse, being the first version of a Latin classic into any British tongue. Gawin Douglas was promoted to be Bishop of Dunkeld, and died in 1522.

From his literary attainments, as well as from his social position while Provost of St Giles', and as being a son of the Earl of Angus who was Lord Provost of Edinburgh, we are to imagine Gawin Douglas as a favourite guest at Holyrood, where James IV. held court with his queen, Margaret, both of whom were encouragers of learning and the useful arts. The art of printing had been introduced by Caxton into England about 1477; but it was unknown in Scotland until it was introduced by Walter Chepman and Andrew Myllar, under the auspices of James IV. and his Queen, in 1507. The types, apparatus, and workmen appear to have been brought from France. Chepman was the moneyed man in the concern, and from all we can learn, he was a person of extraordinary energy. The first work attempted was a collection of ancient ballads, forming a thin quarto volume in black-letter, which appeared in 1508. A fac-simile was reprinted in 1827, under the indefatigable editorship of Dr Laing; but copies of it are exceedingly scarce. Myllar finally gave up the printing profession, which continued to be carried on with success by Chepman, in an establishment at the head of Blackfriars Wynd, High Street. Walter Chepman became a wealthy and respected citizen, and with other properties, acquired the estate of Ewerland, near Cramond.

The wealth, piety, and munificence of Walter Chepman, the Scottish Caxton, were manifested in various endowments con-



## *St Giles' Cathedral Church.*

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nected with St Giles'. On the 21st August 1513, he founded a chapel, or aisle, in honour of his royal patron and kind friend, James IV., the Queen Margaret, and their offspring. In less than a month, James perished at Flodden, 9th of September 1513. This unfortunate event did not stop the completion of the aisle. It projected southwards from the Preston Aisle, one of the windows of which was appropriated to form the entrance, and was immediately east of the south transept, of which exteriorly it seemed an enlargement. This handsome aisle became a family chapel and place of burial. Walter Chepman died in 1532, and here in the vault below he was buried.

The disturbances consequent on the change of religious sentiment in Scotland, began to break out in Edinburgh in 1556, and came to a head in 1558, when a procession of clergy on the anniversary of St Giles, 1st September, was riotously dispersed by the populace. An effigy of the saint was torn in pieces; and soon afterwards, in the national convulsion, the clerical community of this ancient church disappear, while their means of livelihood are confiscated. As concerns the depleting of the church, the civic authorities interfered. By the help of sailors from Leith, with ropes and ladders, the altars were taken down, and cleared out. All the gold, silver, and other valuables were carefully catalogued and secured, as may be seen from existing town records. After being stripped of its silver mountings, the arm-bone of St Giles, which about a hundred years previously had been thought so very precious, was, as is alleged, thrown into the adjacent burying-ground. It was a clean sweep. Excepting perhaps a pulpit or a reading-desk, and a few benches, nothing was left in the old edifice.

Under the settlement of affairs at the Reformation, 1560, the collegiate character of St Giles' Church disappeared, and it resumed its original condition of a parish church. John Knox was constituted pastor, with a suitable stipend from the city funds. In starting afresh after the recent clearing out, the



church must have presented an empty, desolate appearance. At that period there were no fixed pews. The seats were chairs or wooden stools, provided chiefly by worshippers for their own accommodation. The bulk of the people stood, and they would gladly stand for hours listening to their favourite preacher. John Knox often preached, it is said, to three thousand persons. The work he went through was immense. He preached twice on Sunday, and three times every other day of the week, besides attending to other clerical duties. His only assistant was a 'Reader.' The choir of the church with its extensions on the south we have referred to, formed the place of assemblage; but the voice of the preacher rang through the nave and far withdrawing aisles, which were left open, and formed a convenient lounge for the citizens. That is the picture we are to form of the interior of St Giles' Church immediately after the Reformation.

Knox occupied a conspicuous position when acting as chaplain at the funeral of the 'Good Regent,' James Stewart, Earl of Murray, who was assassinated at Linlithgow, 23d January 1569-70. The occasion is memorable in the history of St Giles'. 'Upon Tuesday, the 14th of February,' says M'Crie, 'the Regent's corpse was brought from the palace of Holyrood, and interred in the south aisle of the collegiate Church of St Giles'. Before the funeral, Knox preached a sermon on these words: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." Three thousand persons were dissolved in tears before him while he described the Regent's virtues and bewailed his loss. Buchanan paid his tribute to the memory of the deceased by writing the inscription placed on his monument with that impressive simplicity and brevity which are dictated by genuine grief.'

The death of Murray led to a keen contest as to who should be Regent. The choice fell on the Earl of Lennox, paternal grandfather of the young king, James VI. This gave offence to Sir William Kirkcaldy of Grange, who had hitherto belonged to the king's party, and as such was Governor of Edinburgh

Castle. He now changed sides, went over to the party of the exiled Mary Queen of Scots, and commenced a fierce civil war, in which he fortified Edinburgh, and on the 28th March 1571, placed a military force on the roof and steeple of St Giles' Church, to keep the citizens in awe. The craftsmen of the city, however, were not easily daunted. They broke into the church, and to bring matters to a crisis, proposed to pull down the pillars which sustained the roof. Alarmed for their safety, Kirkaldy's men, on the 4th June, began to make holes in the vaulted ceiling, from which they fired down with muskets on the crowd of assailants. Calderwood, the church historian, says they 'made the vaute like a riddle to shoot through;' which gives us an impressive idea of this warlike strife inside a church. Kirkaldy withdrew his forces in July 1572. Under the merciless Regency of Morton, he was hanged at the Cross of Edinburgh, 3d August 1573.

The roof of the church being duly repaired after the late hostile visitation, things went on in their usual quiet way. But St Giles' was destined to suffer infinitely more damage than anything that had been done to it by the operations of Kirkaldy of Grange—damage that has taken three centuries to remedy, and is not remedied yet. Previous to the death of Knox, the magistrates and council began to section the church of St Giles' into separate divisions. This proceeding was commenced within ten years after the Reformation. The first division we hear of was for the Tolbooth Church, situated at the south-west corner of the edifice. 'On Sunday, 21st September 1572,' says M'Crie, 'Knox began to preach in the Tolbooth Church, which had been fitted up for him.' On Sunday, 9th November following, he preached in the same place at the installation of Lawson, his colleague and successor. 'After the sermon,' adds M'Crie, 'he removed with the audience to the larger church,' that is, to the choir, which luckily escaped sectionising. This was John Knox's last sermon. On quitting the church leaning feebly on his

staff, he was attended down the street to his house by his audience, to take the last look of their pastor. He died on the 24th November, and was buried in the churchyard of St Giles'. The spot cannot now be identified. It is near to the equestrian statue of Charles II. in the Parliament Square.

In May 1590, James VI. and his young queen, Anne of Denmark, ceremoniously visited St Giles' Church, when there were thanksgivings for their marriage and safe arrival in Scotland. The choir, which was fitted up for the occasion, henceforth became a place of public worship for the king and queen, and from this time we begin to hear of a royal pew, or 'loft,' with seats for the officers of state, the judges, and the magistrates of the city. James sometimes went to St Giles' for the purpose of delivering public orations; he did so on Sunday, 3d April 1603, to bid farewell to the citizens on his departure to take possession of the throne of England.

We now arrive at the important events in the history of St Giles', consequent on the introduction of Episcopacy into Scotland by James VI., and his successor, Charles I., in the early part of the seventeenth century. Hitherto, Edinburgh and the adjacent district of country had ecclesiastically pertained to the diocese of St Andrews. Charles I. now resolved to form Edinburgh into a bishopric, by royal charter, and to constitute St Giles' the cathedral of the new diocese. The proceedings of Charles on this occasion are faithfully detailed by Maitland in his valuable *History of Edinburgh* (1 vol. folio 1754). The facts of the historian are drawn from city records, and are narrated as follows:

'King Charles I., by his Charter of the 29th September, *anno* 1633, having founded a Bishopric in Edinburgh, appointed for its Diocess all Parts besouth the Frith of Forth, belonging to the Arch-bishopric of St Andrews, in the County of Edinburgh, Constabulary of Haddington, and Shires of Linlithgow, Stirling, and Berwick, and Bailiwick of Lauderdale; with all the Rights, Powers and Privileges of a distinct Bishopric or

*St Giles' Cathedral Church.*

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Diocess, in as full and ample a Manner as any other Bishopric in Scotland; and appointed St Giles's Church in Edinburgh for its Cathedral; with all the Rights, Liberties and Immunities belonging to a Cathedral Church, and this new Erection to be denominated the Bishopric and Diocess of Edinburgh; to have and enjoy all the Honours, Dignities, Privileges, Authorities and Jurisdictions, with all the Liberties and Immunities enjoyed or possessed by any Diocesan or Bishop within Scotland, and to be a Suffragan to the Arch-bishop of St Andrews.

'And the Bishop to have Precedence of all other Scottish Suffragans in Parliament, Councils and publick Conventions, immediately after the Archbishop of Glasgow. And, for the good Government of this new Bishopric, by the Charter of Foundation, it was to consist of a Bishop, a Dean, and twelve Prebendaries, to whom and their Successors the King granted the Churches of St Giles, Grayfriars, Trinity College, and that of the South-east Parish in Edinburgh, with those of Holyroodhouse, Dalkeith, Dunbar, Haddington and Tranent in the County of East Lothian; Liberton in Mid-Lothian; Falkirk in Linlithgowshire; and that of the Town of Stirling in Stirlingshire, with their appurtenancies; with a Power to the Bishop to have a Seal like other Bishops, to transact his Affairs with; besides, another Seal for him and the Chapter, for transacting the Business of the Chapter, to be called the Seal of the Chapter of the Bishopric of Edinburgh: And to prepare St Giles's Church for the Reception of the new Establishment, the King sent a Letter to the Common Council of Edinburgh; of which the following is a Copy:

"CHARLES R.

"Trustie and weil belovit we greit you weil.

"Wheras of oure Princelie Motive and Zeale for the Advancement and Government of the Church of that oure Kingdome, we have, by the Advice of the chiefest of oure Clergie, thair of, erected at our Chairges, a Bishopric of new, to be callit the Bishopric of Edinburgh, whairby none of your

Priviledges or Liberties ar anie wayes to be infringed, but rather preservit and increased: And wheras to that Purpose, it is verie expedient, that Saint Geille's Church (designed by us to be the Cathedral Church of that Bishopric) be ordered, as is decent and fitt for a Church of that Eminencie, and according to the first Intentioun of the Erectors and Founders thair of; which was to be keiped conforme to the Largeness and Conspicuitie of the Foundatioun and Fabrick: and not to be indirectlie parcelled and disjoint by Wallis and Partitiounes, as now it is, without anie Warrant from anie of oure Royall Predecessoures.

“Oure Pleasure is, that with all Diligence, you caus raze to the Ground the East-wall of the said Church; and sick-lyke, that you caus raze to the Ground the Wester-wall therin, betwixt this and Lambas insewing; at or before which Tyme, we require you to caus finish the new Tolbuith, to the effect it may be for the Use of oure Church and uther Judicatories and Commissiones, as the Tyme and Occasioun shall require. We bid you fairweill, from oure Court at Whitehall, the 11th October 1633.”

‘In the year 1636, the Town Council, on the tenth Day of February, ordered one of the Bailiffs, and one of the Clerks of Edinburgh, to desire James Hanna, the Dean of St Giles's Church, to repair to Durham in the Northern Part of England, to take a Draught of the Choir of the Cathedral Church in that City, in order to fit up and beautify the Inside of the Choir of St Giles's Church after the same Manner.’

‘Surely,’ continues Maitland, ‘never was the Church Hierarchy by a Bishop of so short Duration, as this of Edinburgh; for it was erected in the year 1633; and subverted *anno* 1639, by the Abolishment of Episcopacy in Scotland, both by the Parliament and General Assembly.’

The change in the ecclesiastical organisation of the country might in time have been accepted and tolerated but for the indiscreet zeal of Charles I., who, by an imperious com-

mand, ordered the English Service-book to be read in every parish church. This brought matters to a crisis. The day on which the Book of Common Prayer was first attempted to be read in the Church of St Giles', was Sunday, the 23d of July 1637. The officiating clergyman was the dean, Mr James Hanna; and on his intimating that the collect for the day was that of the seventh Sunday after Trinity, a popular outbreak took place, and a strenuous female, uttering some violent reproaches, threw the stool on which she had been seated at the dean's head. The bishop from the pulpit endeavoured to calm the uproar which ensued, but in vain. The magistrates also made efforts to allay the disturbance, but failed to do so; and they were obliged to clear out the multitude by main force. The uproar of course arose from dislike to the Anglican liturgical service, which differed from the Book of Common Order hitherto in use in St Giles', as indeed throughout the country generally since the time of John Knox. There seems to have been a notion among the rioters that Popery was about to be introduced along with the Anglican service, and hence the intensity of the excitement. As regards the Collect for the day which had been intimated by Dean Hanna, there is nothing in it to give offence to any one.<sup>1</sup>

The scene of this extraordinary tumult was in the south transept, or the middle church, as some historians call it; the choir, at the time, being in course of preparation for the cathedral service. The spot on which Dean Hanna was assailed was, as nearly as can be defined, near the base of the stone arch on the left on entering the transept from the Preston Aisle. Consequent on the tumult and the circumstances that ensued, St Giles' ceased to have the status of a

<sup>1</sup> The collect is as follows: 'Lord of all power and might, who art the author and giver of all good things, graft in our hearts the love of Thy name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of Thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.'



cathedral; but this was resumed on the establishment of Episcopacy in 1662. It remained so until the Revolution of 1688, when Alexander Rose, the last of the race of prelates, was ejected. The building is still popularly designated St Giles' Cathedral, or St Giles' Cathedral Church. As is seen by our quotation from Maitland, Charles I. commanded the removal of the cross partition walls in St Giles', in order to adapt it as a cathedral—which was in effect a kind of restoration. On the resumption of Presbytery in 1639, the walls were speedily re-erected, and the building relapsed into the unsightly condition it has retained until our times.

Spottiswood, in his *History of the Church and State of Scotland* (1655), gives the following list of the bishops of Edinburgh until his time:

'The first Bishop of Edinburgh was William Forbes, Doctour of Divinity, one of the Preachers in Edinburgh (before, Principal of the Marischal Colledge of Aberdene), a very worthy Person. His Works shew him to have been a man of vast Learning and sound Judgment. He sate but a little while, and died at Edinburgh about the year 1634.

'Upon his death, David Lindsay, Bishop of Briechen, was translated to Edinburgh. The Fury of the rude Multitude fell heavy upon this Bishop, even to the manifest danger and hazard of his Life, upon the first reading of the Book of Common Prayer in Edinburgh, July 1637. He was thrust out, with the rest of the Bishops, by the Covenanters, 1638.

'George Wishart, Doctour of Divinity, was, upon the Restitution of the Hierarchy, *anno* 1662, promoted to the Bishopric of Edinburgh. This worthy man was, 1638, Preacher at Leith, and for his Loyalty had very hard measure from the Covenanters, being thrice plundered of all that he had, and thrice imprisoned. But being delivered from thence, he went beyond Sea with the Marquess of Montrose, 1646.<sup>1</sup> He died at

<sup>1</sup> Wishart was a man of considerable erudition. He wrote a memoir of Montrose in Latin, which has been translated into English.



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Edinburgh, *anno* 1670. Upon his death, Alexander Young, Archdeacon of Saint Andrews, was preferred to the Bishopric of Edinburgh.'

To proceed with our account of the Cathedral Church. It has been stated that the ancient entrance porch was among the parts spared at the conflagration of 1385. This porch was on the north side of the building, and was connected with the nave, so as to form a convenient entrance from the public thoroughfare. The arch, rounded in form, was of an ornate Norman style. The archivolt in several divisions exhibited figures of animals and grotesque heads, along with crenellated and chevron mouldings. By an act of barbarism, this ancient arch, a precious relic of the twelfth century, was taken down and utterly destroyed in the course of some repairs on the building in 1797 or 1798. Fortunately, before its removal, a representation of it was taken by an artist, of which an engraved copy appears as a frontispiece to Dr Laing's laborious work on St Giles'.

Besides the choir, which formed the parish church, there was at first only the Tolbooth Church, as a subordinate place of worship in St Giles'. It derived its name from including a portion of the Tolbooth, or Town-House of Edinburgh; the original meaning of the word Tolbooth being a place for receiving rents or duties imposed by the civic authority. Even before it became a church, this part of St Giles', along with a portion of the nave, had been used for meetings of Parliament. In the upper part of an adjoining building now removed were the Justiciary Court-room, and the Council Chamber for the city, connected with which was the Town Clerk's office. The Tolbooth Church, it must be understood, had no connection with the tall dark building in High Street, latterly known as the Tolbooth, or common prison, which was removed within our recollection.

In the palmiest of its pre-Reformation days, St Giles' had from these circumstances a certain dash of secularism. It was

in some sort a public Exchange. From the want of a place of resort for men of business, the church offered a means of meeting to persons who had to enter into or discharge contracts, to pay accounts, and so forth; for which miscellaneous purposes the high-altar of St Giles', or some other altar in the church, was a stipulated place of meeting. In such acts of desecration, one is in a small way reminded of the practices which were so objectionable in the Temple of Jerusalem.

After the clearance at the Reformation, St Giles' was still haunted for business transactions. The south transept became the favourite resort; and when the Earl of Murray's monumental tomb was set up, it answered as well as the old high-altar at which to make bargains or to discharge obligations. From a popular belief that Duke Humphry of Gloucester, youngest son of Henry IV., was buried in Old St Paul's, there arose the jocularly that persons who strolled about in St Paul's for want of a dinner, were said to dine with Duke Humphry. A similar pleasantry prevailed concerning the tomb of the Earl of Murray. Sempill, a Scottish poet, refers in verse to the spot as a convenient lounge for impecunious and hungry idlers. One of them with sad internal commotion pathetically says:

'I dined with saints and gentlemen,  
Ev'n sweet Saint Giles and the Earl of Murray.'

Long before the Reformation, St Giles' had been freely used as a place of interment. In most cases the interments were in graves below the floor, as was not unusual in old edifices of this kind, and is still in a limited way the case in Westminster Abbey. Persons of distinction were entombed in one or more vaults in the southern aisles. Here the Earl of Murray, as above related, was interred in 1569-70; his representative is the present Earl of Moray. The next individual of note laid in this quarter was John Stewart, fourth Earl of Athole, Lord High Chancellor of Scotland, who died in 1579. His title was conferred on John Murray, Earl

of Tullibardine, who married his grand-daughter. The representative of the family is now the Duke of Athole. A third distinguished person entombed near the spot was John Graham, third Earl of Montrose, High Treasurer, and afterwards Lord High Chancellor. On the accession of James VI. to the throne of England, he was appointed Viceroy in Scotland, presided at the parliament at Perth, 1606, and died in 1608.

The grandson of this last-mentioned personage was James Graham, fifth Earl, created Marquis of Montrose, who distinguished himself as a military commander in the cause of Royalty during the Civil War. Montrose's history is well known. Captured and brought into Edinburgh, he was condemned, and executed 21st May 1650. His body was dismembered. His limbs were sent to different parts of Scotland, his head was stuck on a pike on the Tolbooth or common prison, while his body was buried in the Boroughmuir under the gallows. Here, two days afterwards, some adventurous spirits in the cavalier interest contrived to take away the heart of Montrose, and convey it to Margaret, Lady Napier, wife of Alexander, first Baron Napier of Merchiston, and daughter of John, fourth Earl of Montrose. The heart of the great hero being duly embalmed, was inclosed in a gold casket for careful preservation. There is a portrait of Lady Napier with this interesting object by her side. It was the destiny of the casket to undergo a number of romantic adventures at home and abroad, which we have not space to relate. Ultimately, when in the custody of a person in France, it disappeared during the revolutionary troubles, and has not since been heard of.

After the Restoration, the scattered remains of Montrose were collected with tokens of respect, and deposited in the Abbey of Holyrood. Thence they were brought by a solemn funeral procession, at which the magistrates of Edinburgh assisted, and entombed in St Giles', 14th May 1661. The ordinary belief is that his tomb was in the vault underneath

the aisle of Walter Chepman. Mark Napier, in his Memoirs of Montrose, states that he was interred in the vault of his grandfather, the Viceroy of Scotland. Our own opinion coincides with the ordinary belief, that Montrose was buried in the vault beneath Chepman's Aisle, where possibly his grandfather had been previously interred. The descendant and representative of the great Marquis is the present Duke of Montrose. The burial of persons of note in St Giles' did not cease till past the middle of the eighteenth century.

In process of time, as Edinburgh grew in population, more parish churches were required. The proper course would have been to build new churches within the parishes to which they nominally pertained. Instead of this, a plan was adopted of utilising St Giles', by cutting it up into sections, and calling each section a parish church. Hence, the grouping of churches for different congregations in this unfortunate building. A number of offices for secular affairs got edged out, and the general condition of the building was more spiritualised, though in a manner not a little repugnant to the senses. At the middle of the eighteenth century, the list of churches in the edifice stood as follows. The Choir or High Church in the east. The Tolbooth Church in the south-west. The Old Church in the middle and part of the south side. The Little Kirk, or Haddo's Hole, in the north-west. Such name was familiarly given to it in consequence of an apartment above it having served as a prison to Sir John Gordon of Haddo in 1644, previous to his trial and execution. The allocation into these several places of worship left two portions of the building undisposed of. These were the Preston Aisle, which was used for meetings of various kinds; and the dark central space under the spire with the north transept. This last-mentioned portion was finally fitted up as the Police Office. We remember St Giles' in this condition in 1818.

If neither comfortable nor pleasing to the eye, the various churches grouped in St Giles', possessed in former times an

amusing difference of character. 'The High Church,' says the author of the *Traditions of Edinburgh*, 'had a sort of dignified aristocratic character, approaching somewhat to prelacy, and was frequented only by sound church-and-state men, who did not care so much for the sermon, as for the gratification of sitting in the same place with His Majesty's Lords of Council and Session, and the magistrates of Edinburgh, and who desired to be thought men of sufficient liberality and taste to appreciate the prelections of Blair. The Old Church, in the centre of the whole, was frequented by people who wished to have a sermon of good divinity, about three-quarters of an hour long, and who did not care for the darkness and dreariness of their temple. The Tolbooth Church was the peculiar resort of a set of rigid Calvinists from the Lawnmarket and head of the Bow, termed the Towbuith Whigs, who loved nothing but extempore evangelical sermons, and would have considered it sufficient to bring the house down about their ears, if the precentor had ceased, for one verse, the old hillside fashion of reciting the lines of the psalm before singing them. Dr Webster was long one of the clergymen of this church, and deservedly admired as a pulpit orator.'

As a type of the places of worship inconveniently crammed within the nave and aisles of St Giles' a hundred years ago, the Tolbooth Church became a subject for the satirical pencil of Kay, a notable Edinburgh caricaturist. His sketch is entitled 'A Sleepy Congregation.' The idea is conveyed of a church of limited dimensions, with a gallery, crowded in all its parts without an inch of free space, for even the passages were provided with benches, which were let down on hinges for sitters as soon as the clergyman entered the pulpit. Two of the heavy stone pillars that were never designed for a church of this kind, stood inconveniently among the seats. One of them was so directly in front of the preacher, as to cause some difficulty in managing the voice.

Mr W. Browne, who is a surviving member of the congre-

gation as it existed in the early years of the present century, has written *Notes and Recollections of the Tolbooth Church*, printed for private circulation, in which is given an amusing account of the state of affairs. We have space for only one particular. 'The walls were dingy in colour, and seemed to have dust resting on every available place. On one occasion, when either Mr Whitefield or Mr Simeon preached, he noticed a large cobweb which had been placed at a height above the reach of ordinary besoms, and remarked: "That is the very cobweb which I saw when I was last here"—so many years ago.'

What will strike every one with surprise is, that throughout the eighteenth and the early years of the present century there should have been such a general acquiescence in the odious internal condition of St Giles' Church. Arnot, the historian of Edinburgh, who wrote in 1779, and gives a list of the congregations which then confusedly nestled in the building, and must have suffered from the mass of decaying mortality beneath their feet, has not a word of remonstrance on the subject. There were accomplished men of letters in Edinburgh at a still later period who are now reckoned among national luminaries. Not one of them, as far as we know, imagined there was anything wrong in the unseemly state of St Giles'. They complacently saw before their eyes an edifice abounding in some of the finest specimens of fifteenth-century architecture degraded into a collection of wretchedly fetid caverns. Lord Cockburn, in his *Memorials*, makes some remarks on the total want of taste which prevailed at this period. Speaking of St Giles', he says: 'It might have been painted scarlet without any one objecting.' But the same dearth of taste as regards ecclesiastical structures and the comfort of congregations prevailed almost everywhere until very recent times.

Before it was despoiled, 1558-60, the vast interior of this grand old building, with its many pillars and groined roof, must have presented an appearance resembling that of a



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spacious English cathedral of the olden class. The policy of cutting up and apportioning this handsome structure, on which so much architectural taste had been lavished, is inexcusable. The transformation was effected in a manner altogether tasteless. No care was taken to preserve the finer parts of the architecture. Rows of fluted pillars sustaining lofty arches were merged in the rough walls which were erected lengthwise and crosswise to form the several compartments. The foliated bases and capitals of pillars were hacked without mercy to bring them within the required line. Characteristic heads carved among the foliage were knocked off with hammers, and are found buried in rubbish beneath the floor. The erection of galleries in all the churches caused further dilapidation, as cavities for beams to sustain these galleries were dug in the sides of several pillars.

Under the authority of successive acts of Parliament, the municipality of Edinburgh was extended, and churches for new parochial divisions were erected in various places at considerable cost to the civic corporation. Nevertheless, St Giles' remained in the condition now described until the first quarter of the nineteenth century. There were still four churches and a Police Office under one roof. In 1817, by the removal of small shops or 'krames,' which had long existed within the niches of the ancient building, the exterior had a very ragged appearance. Public sentiment was roused. Something must be done to renovate St Giles'. For several years the subject received the consideration of the Town Council, and a plan for remodelling the church, by Mr Burn, architect, was at length adopted. The cost was to be about £20,000, towards which sum government contributed £12,600. Dr Laing gives a ground-plan of St Giles', before it was touched by Mr Burn; but by a singular mistake of the artist in framing the scale of feet, the building is represented as being about two hundred and fifty feet long. Its true measurement was a hundred and ninety-six feet in length within the walls, by a hundred and



thirty feet wide at the transepts. The ground-plan we subsequently offer shews its present dimensions and character.

Burn commenced his operations in 1829, and the work was finished in 1833. On the south-west, two of the 'five chapels' or aisles, contracted for in 1387, were removed, in order to widen the entrance to the Parliament Square from the west, while other alterations were made in this part of the building. On the north side of the nave, two chapels were removed. One of these, which adjoined the transept, says Daniel Wilson, in his interesting *Memorials of Edinburgh*, 'was the only portion of the church in which any of the coloured glass remained, with which, doubtless, most of its windows were anciently filled. Its chief ornament consisted of an elephant, very well executed; underneath which were the crown and hammer, the armorial bearings of the Incorporation of Hammermen, inclosed within a wreath. From these insignia, we may infer that this was St Elois' Chapel, at the altar of which, according to the traditions of the burgh, the craftsmen of Edinburgh, who had followed Allan, Lord High Steward of Scotland, to the Holy Land, and aided in the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre from the Infidels, dedicated the famous *Blue Blanket*, or Banner of the Holy Ghost.'

Burn changed the entire exterior aspect of St Giles', the spire alone excepted. Picturesque roofs and pinnacles disappeared. The whole fabric was new cased in a bald style of art. As concerns the interior, the sectioning into parts was only modified. The choir remained as before. The southern section of the building was fitted up for meetings of the General Assembly; but this appropriation not being found satisfactory, the Old Church in a few years afterwards was here located. The best thing done was the expulsion of the Police Office. For it, was substituted a capacious lobby, common to the several congregations, who all entered by one outer door in the north transept. There was an alteration of names. The Tolbooth Church and Haddo's Hole statutorily

vanish. The nave is occupied by the New North Church, now designated West St Giles'. It is much to be deplored that, in the course of this remodelling, the fine old monument of the Earl of Murray, which had once been a place of resort, and was otherwise interesting, was destroyed. 'It might have been thought,' says Dr Laing, 'that such a monument would have escaped any sacrilegious hand; but to the disgrace of our civic authorities, it was allowed to be demolished, and the brass tablet, containing engraved figures of Justice and Faith, with an inscription written by Buchanan, was removed.' The brass tablet, however, was not lost. As after described, it is to be seen on the modern monument of the Earl of Murray.

So much for Mr Burn's improvements on St Giles'. By some, they are thought to have made matters worse rather than better. We are certainly left to lament that from whatever cause, he took away or mutilated much that can never be replaced.

As regards the spire of St Giles', it dates from the twelfth century, in which, as has been stated, the church was built. Of this antiquity, there is sufficient evidence in the massive substructure of octagonal pillars resembling those in the choir. Injured by the fire in 1385, the spire participated in the renovations that took place in the fifteenth century. It is known to have been repaired without detriment to its original character in 1648. And so it remains till the present day. As will be seen from our frontispiece, it is a handsome square structure, terminating in decorated arches and pinnacles, producing the appearance of an imperial crown, and rising to a height of one hundred and sixty-one feet. Billings, in his pictorial work on the Baronial and Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Scotland, observes that of all the Scottish instances of this species of structure, the spire of St Giles' 'is at once the richest and the finest.' As far as we are aware, there is nothing to compare to it in point of effect in modern ecclesiastical architecture.

The bells in St Giles' formed an important part of the ancient establishment, but nowhere do we find any accurate description of their number and character. There was, it seems, a bell called the St Mary Bell, which was sold with certain church furnishings in 1563. There still remained the 'great bell of St Giles,' as it was called, which dated from 1460. This bell is spoken of by historians and poets as being that which was rung on special occasions, such as summoning the inhabitants to assemble in military array for defence of the city after the battle of Flodden. In one of Dunbar's satirical poems, a dwarfish personage is introduced saying to the citizens of Edinburgh :

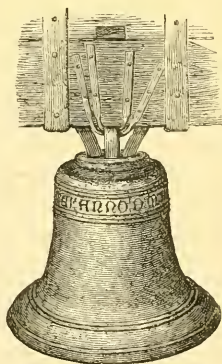
' I come among you hier to dwell :  
Fra sound of Sanct Gelis' bell  
Nevir think I to flie.'

Referring to this famous old bell, Dr Laing says it 'was cast in Flanders, and is described as having the arms of Guelderland upon different parts of it, together with figures of the Virgin and Child, and other devices, and had the following Latin inscription: "HONORABILES VIRI BURGENSES VILLAE DE EDINBURCH, IN SCOTIA, HANC CAMPANUM, FIERI FECERUNT ANNO DNI: M.CCCC.LVV. [1460]. JOHS ET WILHELMUS HOERHEN ME FECERUNT; IPSAMQUE CAMPANUM GYELIS VOCARI VOLUERUNT. DEFUNCTOS PLANGO: VIVOS VOCO: FULMINA FRANGO." *Translation*—"The honourable men, burgesses of the City of Edinburgh in Scotland, caused this bell to be made in the year of our Lord one thousand four hundred and sixty. Johannes and Wilhelm Hoerhen made me. And they determined that I should be called Giles's bell. I mourn the dead: I summon the living: I disperse the thunder."

The latter part of the inscription reminds us of ancient usages and beliefs. 'I mourn the dead:' This refers to the solemn sounds of the passing-bell on the occasion of a death. 'I summon the living:' This signifies the call to church, or to

arms. 'I disperse the thunder:' Here is a testimony to the old superstitious belief that thunder could be dispersed by making loud noises with bells. A similar inscription is found on many old church bells of large dimension. It would seem that the strange notion that bells are efficacious in dispelling storms is by no means extinct. In 1852, the Bishop of Malta ordered the church bells to be rung for an hour to allay a gale! The old great bell in St Giles' unfortunately suffered a fracture, and had to be recast, thereby obliterating the inscription. Its modern representative was founded by C. & G. Mears, London, in 1844. It measures four feet six inches and a half in diameter across the mouth, and three feet four inches in height. It is this bell on which the hours are struck, and which is rung for public worship. Near it are two lesser bells, or chimes, for striking the quarters, respectively dated 1700 and 1728.

Situated in a dark corner, which is inapproachable without the light of a lantern, we find an old bell, indeed the only genuine old bell in St Giles', one that has survived from pre-Reformation times. Although complete in its machinery for suspension and ringing, it can no longer ring, for by some accident it has lost its clapper, and there it hangs mute, unnoticed, covered with the dust of ages, a waif wrecked on the stream of time. Shapely in appearance, it measures seventeen and a half inches in diameter, and thirteen and a half inches high. According to tradition, it is the original Vesper Bell of St Giles'; though possibly, judging from the pious inscription it bears, it may have been the Ave or Pardon Bell tolled before and after divine service, to call the worshippers to a preparatory prayer



Vesper Bell.

to the Virgin before engaging in the solemnity, and an invocation for pardon at its close. The following is the inscription in black-letter capitals: 'O MATER DEI, MEMENTO MEI: ANNO D.M.IIIII.' *Translation*—'O Mother of God, Remember me, 1504.' This unfortunate bell, a curious archæological relic, might be rung as of old were it provided with a new clapper. Perhaps the present notice will lead to its resuscitation for some useful purpose.

Besides these bells, there are twenty-three small music-bells, and a set of eight chime-bells; making the entire number of thirty-five bells in St. Giles'. The music-bells are fitted on a frame in the open or upper part of the spire, and played by hand. These music-bells, which date from 1698, were until lately played daily by a lady of advanced age, and are by no means in a good condition. A thorough repair is requisite. The eight chime-bells were erected so lately as 1858. From the imperfect nature of the mechanism and the unsuitableness of the place where they are situated, they are not played.

#### FIRST RESTORATION—THE CHOIR.

When the present writer had the honour of being Lord Provost of Edinburgh, 1865-69, he had often occasion to attend public worship officially with the other magistrates and members of the Town Council. The place of assemblage was the choir, or High Church, in the front of a gallery on the north side, having the King's Pillar on the right, and the half-pillar with the Cranston arms on the left. In the corresponding gallery on the south were the seats for the judges of the Supreme Court of Scotland. Intermediately, in front of the great east window, was a huge dark pulpit, with a lofty sounding-board; such being the pulpit from which Hugh Blair delivered his admired sermons a hundred years ago. At the west end of the church was the gallery with the Royal pew. It was a homely structure, consisting of a light blue-painted canopy, supported by four wooden

posts, over a few tawdry arm-chairs. The technical name of this kind of structure is a baldachino. No one could look at it without being reminded of a four-post bed. Here George IV. was seated when he attended church on his visit to Edinburgh, 1822; and here for two Sundays every year sat the Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly. The whole seating of the church was of plain deal. A cram of old-fashioned pews from floor to ceiling. There was a distressing mustiness in the atmosphere, which ventilation failed to remedy, for the ground was saturated with human remains, which ought long since to have been removed as dangerous to the health of the congregation.

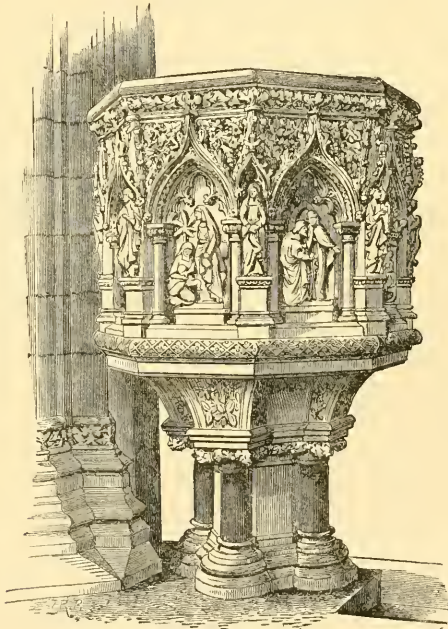
There and then, when seated in that elevated gallery close to the carved shields of the boy-prince James and his mother the inestimable Mary of Gueldres, we conceived the idea of attempting a restoration of the building, and producing a church in which the people of Edinburgh might feel some pride—a shrine fitting for the devotional exercises of Royalty. It would cost some trouble. But what good thing is ever done without trouble? There would be no harm in trying. Shortly afterwards, we called a meeting to take the matter into consideration, 1st November 1867. The scheme was generally approved; but difficulties interposed, and it was laid aside until 1871, when with recovered health and more leisure, it could be prosecuted with a better chance of success. At a public meeting, a Restoration Committee was appointed, with the present writer as Chairman. The object of the Committee was eventually to restore as far as practicable the whole interior of St Giles', but to effect this step by step as circumstances permitted, and to confine operations in the first place to the choir. The idea of thoroughly restoring an edifice so damaged by alterations was hopeless. But much might be done. The intervening walls could be taken down. The pillars might be mended. With patience, the outlay of money, and the concurrence of the civic and ecclesiastical



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authorities, the building could probably be brought back to something like what it had been in long-past times.

The efforts to gather subscriptions for the object in view were at first as successful as could be expected. Her Majesty the Queen headed the list with a subscription of £200. The



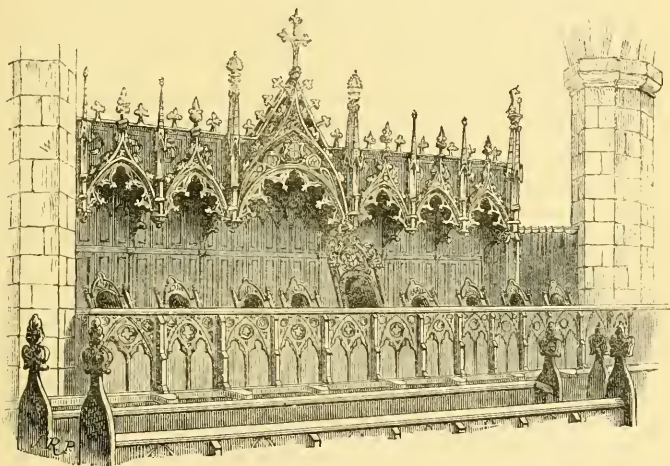
Pulpit.

Town Council of Edinburgh, the Royal College of Surgeons, the Societies of High Constables of Edinburgh and Holyrood, and the Society of Writers to the Signet, were among the public bodies who subscribed liberally. Nobility and gentry of all denominations contributed to facilitate an object which was felt to be national in its character. In June 1872, when the



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amount of subscriptions had reached £2000, the Committee, with consent of the authorities concerned, felt warranted in commencing the work. The galleries which disfigured the building were wholly removed, thereby developing the fine old pillars, which were mended with stone to resemble the original. The baldachino and the furniture of the Royal pew were taken away as crown property. All the pews and the pulpit were removed. When everything was gone, the floor was trenched



Royal Pew.

throughout to a depth of several feet. No vaults were discovered, but there was an immense quantity of human remains, which were taken away in hearses and decently buried in a churchyard. A number of large grave-stones were removed that had served as pavement, on which the professional devices of craftsmen were rudely carved. These slabs were put at the disposal of a corporate body representing the craftsmen of Edinburgh. As a final act, the walls and groined roof of the choir were cleaned, and rendered pleasing to the eye.

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Under direction of Mr W. Hay, architect, the process of renewal according to a style of art appropriate to the character of the building, was now commenced. The passages were laid with Minton tiles bearing antique Scottish devices. A pulpit of Caen stone exquisitely carved by Mr John Rhind, an Edinburgh sculptor, was placed against the pillar on the south side nearest the east window. All the seatings were of oak. The seats for the magistrates and for the judges bore appropriate carvings. The Royal pew at the west end, raised above the general level, was a highly ornamental structure, with suitable devices. The cost of the Government pews, including the Royal pew, and pews for the judges, alone cost the sum of £1586, towards which the Treasury made a grant of £500. Altogether the cost of restoring the choir, as now described, including the expense of heating by hot-water pipes, amounted to £4490. The subscriptions actually realised fell short of that sum to the extent of £650, which deficiency was made good by the Chairman and several members of Committee. Thus the transaction was closed. Throughout the whole affair, the Committee owed much to the valuable services of Mr Lindsay Mackersy, W.S., Honorary Secretary.

According to appointment, the choir, in its renovated form, was opened for public worship on Sunday, 9th March 1873. From the interest taken in the alterations, the church was crowded. At the morning and afternoon services, the judges, magistrates, and various public bodies attended in official costume, the spectacle being peculiarly effective. Latterly, under the incumbency of the Rev. Dr J. Cameron Lees, the church in its improved form has become one of the most attractive in Edinburgh.

### SECOND RESTORATION—SOUTHERN AISLES.

The choir in its restored state was still disfigured by three arches, with blocked-up windows, forming the partition of separation from the Preston Aisle on the south. To render

the restoration of the choir complete, it was obvious that there must be a second step in the alterations which should embrace the Preston Aisle and other aisles on the south. These southern aisles, as already mentioned, had been used as the Old Church, with windows overlooking the Parliament Square. By an Act of Parliament, 1870, the Old Church parish was dropped out of the statutory parochial divisions. The church was occupied for a time on a temporary footing, and at length disused. Such was the state of matters in 1878, and an opportunity was afforded of clearing out and restoring this portion of the building. Plans prepared by Mr W. Hay were submitted to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and the Magistrates and Council, and received their approval, but only under a guarantee given by the present writer that he would be responsible for the expense of the undertaking. In giving this guarantee, we resolved to relieve the Restoration Committee of any further trouble and responsibility, and to proceed entirely on our own judgment and at our own cost.

In February 1879, this second restoration was begun by removing the galleries and pews, taking down partitions and staircases, lifting the floor, and opening up the aisles. By the lifting of the floor, a hideous scene of decaying mortal remains was disclosed, as afterwards referred to. In the soil of the Preston Aisle, about a foot below the surface, was found a leaden coffin, bearing the inscription, 'Brigadier Richart Cunyngham, Died 26th Nov. 1697, Ætat 47.' The Brigadier had probably been a connection of the Dick-Cunynghams, baronets, of Prestonfield. The coffin was in an imperfect condition, and has been left undisturbed.

After a general clearance, the first operations were directed to the aisle founded by Chepman. This once elegant aisle was in a revolting condition. The arch between it and the Preston Aisle had been built up. It was divided into three floors. The lower floor was degraded into a coal-cellar; in the middle floor was placed a tall iron stove for heating by means

of flues ; and the upper floor formed an apartment, with a fire-place and other accessories. The floors were taken down, and the whole interior cleared out. It was expected that the remains of Montrose would be found in the coal-cellar ; but nothing of the kind was discovered.

When the thick wall that blocked up Chepman's Aisle was removed, the fluted jambs sustaining the arch were found to be much shattered. About twelve feet of the jambs on each side had been cut away. A chimney had been run right through the key-stone of the arch. The whole was repaired by inserting fresh hewn stone to resemble the original. The result has been a handsome arch in the style of the fifteenth century. The lath



Chepman's Arms.

and plaster which had been stuck on the walls of the aisle were wholly removed, and the original character of the stone-work was developed. A floor supported on brick arches over a vault completed the restoration.



Emblem of St John.

In the process of cleaning the groined roof of the aisle, which was begrimed with dirt and coatings of whitewash, a finely carved bosse was discovered, bearing the arms of Walter Chepman impaled with those of his first wife, who had belonged to the family of Kerkettill. The joint arms are on a shield held up by an angel. A corbel which terminated the groining of the roof on the west side bore a pious symbolic carving. It represents an eagle, the emblem of St John the Evangelist ; the eagle, in sacred and legendary art,

being the symbol of the highest inspiration, because St John soared upwards to the contemplation of the divine nature of the Saviour. Close to the eagle is a scroll legend in black-letter, *En principio*, being the two words with which the gospel of St John in the Latin Vulgate begins—*In principio erat Verbum*: 'In the beginning was the Word.' According to the charter of endowment, Chepman dedicated the altar in his chapel to St John, whom he had probably adopted as his patron saint. The disclosing of these old carvings adds to the archæological interest in St Giles'.

It has been thought that as something is due to Chepman for his service to literature, it would only be becoming to set up a tablet with a suitable inscription to his memory. A brass tablet accordingly is now placed in his aisle, bearing the following inscription: 'TO THE MEMORY OF WALTER CHEPMAN, DESIGNATED THE SCOTTISH CAXTON, WHO UNDER THE AUSPICES OF JAMES IV. AND HIS QUEEN MARGARET, INTRODUCED THE ART OF PRINTING INTO SCOTLAND 1507; FOUNDED THIS AISLE IN HONOUR OF THE KING AND QUEEN AND THEIR FAMILY 1513; AND DIED IN 1532; THIS TABLET IS GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED BY WILLIAM CHAMBERS, LL.D., 1879.'

As a final improvement, the floor of the Chepman Aisle was laid with encaustic tiles with suitable devices; while its entrance was closed by a fanciful grille in hammered iron after the antique, with a gate. This tasteful work of art was executed by Skidmore of Coventry.

The work on the Preston Aisle was the heaviest and lengthiest part of the second restoration, for the aisle, which abounds in artistic beauty, was in a sadly deteriorated condition. The finest carvings had been recklessly broken. The groined roof, on which immense labour had been expended by the artificers employed by the magistrates of Edinburgh, in the fifteenth century, was so thickly covered with whitewash as to have no appearance of stone-work. The first thing done was

to clear the groined roof of its odious coatings. Months were occupied on these repairs; the result being that the roof of the Preston Aisle, as now developed, perhaps excels in beauty of groining anything of the kind in Great Britain, or in the world. When the roof was finished, repairs were made on the pillars which stand in a row betwixt the aisle and the choir. These pillars had been seriously damaged by the insertion of beams and otherwise. In some instances, the bases and the ornamental capitals, with portions of the shafts, had to be replaced. The wall part of the aisle was also repaired in a manner as nearly as possible to resemble the original. A small arched recess or shrine, which possibly had some connection with the altar set up to commemorate Preston's munificence, was opened up in a creditable style of art. It is not improbable that the recess had been used as the shrine for the arm-bone of St Giles. Last of all, the floor was laid with encaustic tiles; and the aisle, fitted up with ornamental oak pews, now affords accommodation for eighty sitters in addition to those in the choir. The visitor is invited to look upon the Preston Aisle as a wonderfully fine specimen of fifteenth-century art. It is the gem of St Giles'.

In several parts of the Preston Aisle will be seen the arms of Preston, three unicorns' heads, formerly referred to. On one of the bosses on the groined ceiling is a shield bearing the arms of Sir Patrick Hepburn of Hales, a trusted statesman, who was created a peer with the title of Lord Hales, 1456. His grandson, Patrick, third Lord Hales, was created Earl of Bothwell by James IV. His great-grandson was the infamous Earl of Bothwell in the reign of Mary Queen of Scots. The arms on the shield consist of two chevrons, each shewing two lions plucking at a rose.

Before quitting the Preston Aisle, visitors will observe a baptismal font in Caen stone, executed by Mr Rhind, an Edinburgh sculptor, on the model of Thorwaldsen's famous work at Copenhagen. It represents an angel wreathed with



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flowers, kneeling on one knee, holding a large shell, intended to contain the water for baptism. The font, which has been



Baptismal Font.

presented to the church through the munificence of a friend of the Rev. Dr J. C. Lees, is at present placed in the Chepman Aisle.

In repairing the Preston Aisle, it was found necessary to build up the huge doorway in the eastern gable which had been introduced by Mr Burn; on which account, some alterations will require to be executed in this quarter on the exterior of the building. This will form one of the closing acts in the work of restoration.

Previous to the repairs being executed, the spacious stone arch which spans the west end of the Preston Aisle and divides it from the south transept, was, as a result of Mr Burn's proceedings, found to be fancifully clothed in stucco. This stucco coating, which was wholly out of place, was removed, and the simple beauty of the original stone arch has been

brought into view. Meanwhile, until the restorations are completed, the arch is closed by a wooden screen, the door in which admits to the south transept and aisles.

The work of restoring the south transept and adjoining aisles on the west, involved some excavations by which it was hoped a discovery would be made of certain burial vaults that were believed to be in this part of the building. A search for these vaults took place on the 10th April 1879. Only one vault was discovered. It was that in which the Regent Murray was entombed, 1569-70. It was situated close to the west wall of the transept. The vault measured about sixteen feet in length from north to south, and was little more than three feet in width. The search was to a certain extent disappointing. No coffin of any kind could be found containing the remains of the illustrious Regent. Three leaden coffins were discovered in a bad condition. The most perfect of these coffins, as seen by the arms and inscriptions, contained the remains of Alexander, fourth Earl of Galloway, born 1670, died 1690. The other two leaden coffins bore neither arms nor inscriptions, and seemed to pertain to persons of a slight figure. It was the opinion of a medical authority present that the remains in one of the coffins were those of a young man; and that the remains in the other were those of a female of middle age. Near these leaden coffins was found a leaden plate, bearing the engraved inscription, 'Francis Steuart, Esq., died at Rheims in France, 7th Octr. 1768, Aged 22.' The plate had probably been on a wooden coffin that lay in fragments, and in which the leaden coffin had been placed. The Francis Steuart referred to was a son of the Hon. Francis Steuart of Pittendriech, third son of Francis, sixth Earl of Moray.

The burial vault of the Regent, as we learn by a notice in the Edinburgh newspapers, under date January 23, 1830, had been disturbed by the alterations then going on, and this may account for the absence of any coffin recognisable as that pertaining to the Regent. To all appearance, a coffin of some

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kind had been emptied of its contents, which now lay as a confused heap of bones. A skull picked up from the heap was viewed with much respect. Massive, and with craniological indications of mental superiority, it was believed to be that of the Regent Murray. Such, at least, was our own belief, and that of one or two other persons present. The skull was carefully replaced in the heap of bones alongside the leaden coffins, and to prevent intrusion, the vault was immediately built up.

Attempts to find other burial vaults during the excavations of 1879 proved unsuccessful. On lifting the pavement of the crypt eastward from the Regent's tomb, within the compass of the south transept, there were seen two inclosures formed by dwarf walls that might at one time have been vaults. They were found to contain rubbish, with which a few bones of no significance were mingled. The inclosure farthest to the east was probably the vault in which the body of John, fourth Earl of Athole, was entombed, 1579.

Descending by a few steps to the vault underneath the Chepman Aisle, a rigorous search was now made for the remains of the Marquis of Montrose, which had undoubtedly been entombed here in 1661. No coffin nor any fragment of coffin could be discovered. Only some small pieces of bones were picked up from the soil. These we placed in a small box, and reverently deposited it on the spot where the remains of the Marquis had been ceremoniously interred. The floor of the vault was then laid with pavement, in which was inserted a marble tablet with the inscription, 'MONTROSE, 1661.'

The trenchings and the excavations that took place over the floor of the southern aisles need not be particularly described. The quantity of bones dug up was immense, the whole probably amounting to five tons in weight. After examination, the whole were placed in boxes, and removed to Greyfriars Churchyard for interment. It was unsatisfactory to be driven to the conclusion, that the vaults in which a number of distinguished personages were entombed, had been rifled of the leaden coffins

with their contents in the course of alterations on this part of the building, 1829 to 1833, at which time the ancient and historical tomb of the Earl of Murray was destroyed. The strange disappearance of the remains of illustrious dead from the spot in which by history and tradition they are said to have been placed, raises a painful reflection regarding the indifference to matters of this kind so lately as half a century ago. Only in 1879 did the disappearance of the remains become known.

In the general work of restoration a commencement was made by repairing the walls of that part of the transept which projects like a recess southwards. The walls were in an exceedingly bad condition, and to render them at all seemly, portions were renewed with hewn stone. The floor, raised two steps to give head-room in the crypt beneath, was laid with encaustic tiles. A spacious stone arch, the fellow of that adjoining the Preston Aisle, was stripped of its coating of stucco, and by sundry mendings brought back to its original condition.

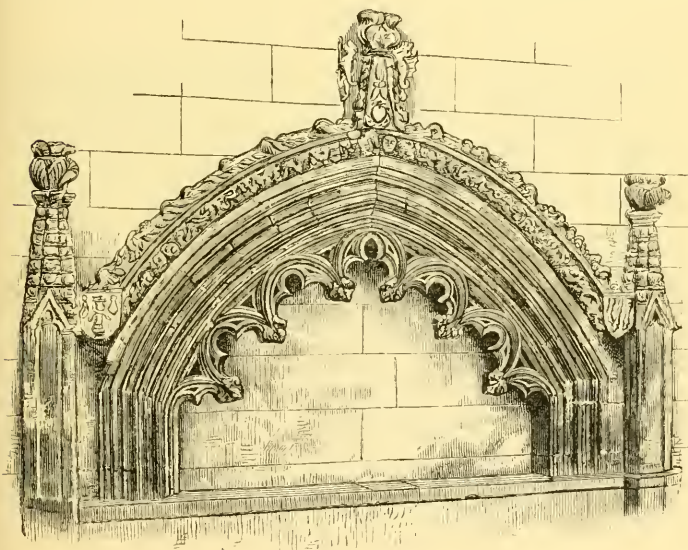
The south transept, as now cleared out and embellished, forms a recess of about twenty feet square. How it is to be ultimately appropriated we know not. The design we permitted ourselves to entertain was that it might perhaps be adopted as the place of ceremonial assemblage by the Knights of the ancient and noble Order of the Thistle, and where their banners may be suitably displayed; for since the Chapel Royal of Holyrood fell into ruin, they have possessed no place of installation, or where their banners could be shewn.

In the course of his operations, Mr Burn had made very considerable havoc with the southern aisles. As already mentioned, he had taken away two of these aisles with the view of improving the access to the Parliament Square, and he reduced a remaining aisle to half its dimensions. This reduced aisle he transformed into a staircase in connection with certain galleries of modern construction. The aisle in its original state contained an ancient tomb, so called in Dr Laing's

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plan of the building ; and to accommodate this relic of art, he removed it eastwards into the wall of the staircase. Obviously, anything like a restoration of this part of St Giles' was impossible. The site of the missing aisles was part of the public street. All that could be attempted was to bring this portion of the building into harmony with the Preston Aisle, the south transept, and other restored parts of the structure. The diminished aisle with its flight of stairs was cleared out. The wall that inclosed it was taken down, and the open space on its north side was arched with stone ;



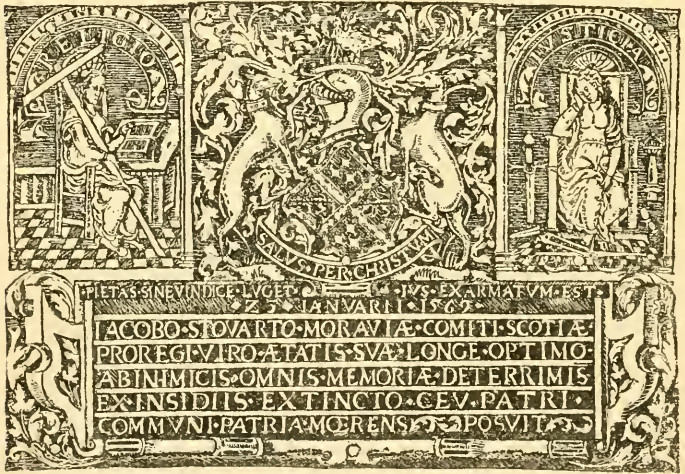
Mural Tomb or Shrine.

so that when completed, there was a distinct new aisle as a recess on the south, and which is now entitled the Moray Aisle.

This Moray Aisle, forming an acquisition to the church, has



been enriched in various ways. In the first place, the mural tomb already spoken of was removed from its mean and obscure position, and so elevated on the wall beneath the window as to be in front of the spectator. The tomb is in reality a shrine dedicated to the Passion of Christ, and the wonder is how it escaped the wrath of the iconoclasts in 1558. Like the similar but less ornamental relic of art in the choir, it consists of a Gothic arch over a level slab, on which possibly there had been a recumbent figure. The emblematic carvings are profuse and minute. They embody



Old Tablet, Earl of Moray's Tomb.

representations of the crown of thorns, the scourge, the nails, the sponge, and other symbols of the Passion. In the removal of the shrine, much care was taken to preserve the delicate carvings, and accordingly this beautiful work of art may be



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said to be very much what it was in the early part of the sixteenth century.

Allusion has been made to a modern monument of the Regent Murray. It stood on the west side of the south transept. Its site, on examination, having been found to be insecure, it was removed to the west side of the Moray Aisle, which was in all respects more appropriate. The monument is a wall structure of Caen stone, erected by the late John, twelfth Earl of Moray, 1864. Near the top is placed the old brass tablet, which, besides the arms of the Regent, with the motto, SALUS PER CHRISTUM (Salvation through Christ), bears on one side an emblematic figure of Faith or Piety, with the words, PIETAS SINE VINDICE LUGET (Piety mourns without defence); on the other side a figure of Justice, with the words, JUS EXARMATUM EST (Justice has been disarmed). Date beneath, '23 JANUARIII 1569,' followed by Buchanan's admired Latin inscription: 'JACOBO STOVARTO MORAVIÆ COMITI SCOTIÆ PROREGI VIRO ÆTATIS SUE LONGE OPTIMO AB INIMICIS OMNIS MEMORIÆ DETERRIMIS EX INSIDIIS EXTINCTO CEU PATRI COMMUNI PATRIA MÆRENS POSUIT.' Translation: 'To James Stewart, Earl of Moray, Regent of Scotland, a man by far the noblest of his time, barbarously slain by enemies, the vilest in history; his country mourning has raised this monument as to a common father.'

Adorned with this modern monument, the Moray Aisle has been further enriched by filling the window with stained glass, representing an important historical circumstance, the assassination of the Regent, and the impressive scene at his interment in St Giles', with John Knox preaching the funeral sermon. At the base of the window there is the inscription: 'In memory of the Regent Murray; presented by George Stuart, fourteenth Earl of Moray, 1881.'

Closed in by a hammered iron grille by Skidmore of Coventry, and laid with encaustic tiles, the Moray Aisle may be considered the vestibule to the crypt and vaults already mentioned. The

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crypt, gained by a flight of steps and doorway, is lighted by small Gothic windows to the south.

The work on the south aisles generally was completed by mending the walls with hewn stone, and by laying pavement in small squares. A new doorway, designed principally as an entrance to the Judges of the Court of Session, but to be used also as a door of exit, was constructed in the western gable. The jambs and lintel of the doorway are in the fifteenth-century style of Gothic art. The carvings over the door embrace a royal Scottish shield bearing a lion rampant, environed by the inscription: 'ROBERTUS SECUNDUS REX SCOTORUM, 1387,' such being the date of construction of the southern aisles by the community of Edinburgh.

One of the objects aimed at by the restoration of the building has been to give an opportunity for the erection of monuments to distinguished Scotchmen of past and future times. Wherefore, St Giles', in a sense, might be viewed as the Westminster Abbey of Scotland. In furtherance of this idea the wall of the south aisles underneath the two windows has been prepared and set aside for marble tablets commemorative of eminent Scottish poets, beginning with the royal poet James I., author of *Peebles to the Play*, Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, and others. When the nave is opened up, portions of the walls will be appropriated to monuments for distinguished historians, statesmen, divines, lawyers, soldiers, scientific discoverers, &c.

The restoration of the southern aisles was concluded, so far as practicable, early in 1880. From first to last the work of alteration had gone on very quietly, but not unnoticed. Great numbers of visitors flocked to the building to see what had been effected, and we are glad to say that, including observations by the press, the feelings expressed were those of general approval. No prejudice had been roused. There were no objections on the score of removing galleries prized by traditions and recollections. A building that had for the last

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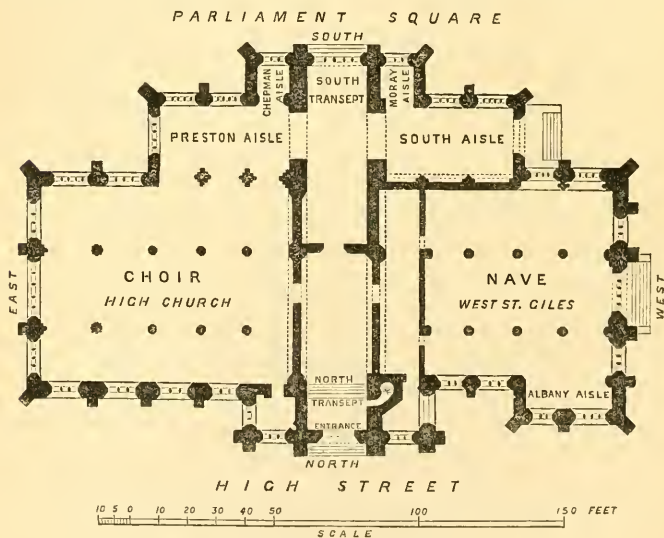
three hundred years been unsightly and repulsive, was now seen to possess claims to artistic beauty, and to have become an object of considerable attraction. Conducted purely on the grounds of restoring a grand, old, historical monument, our operations, happily, did not incur anything like the hostile criticism that might have ensued had they been promoted for denominational purposes.

Pleasing as the results may be, we have never disguised the fact that the operations did not come up to what is called a thorough restoration. Clearly, in the circumstances, such could not have been attempted. We had no authority to deal with the exterior of the building, nor to restore the ancient entrance porches. Mr Burn, as already shewn, had removed much that could not be brought back. Besides, in executing the restorations in the choir, the Committee in charge of the works were embarrassed by a short-coming of funds. At the same time, let it be understood that there has not on any occasion been a pedantic attempt to imitate what was old without sufficient grounds for doing so. The restoration of ancient structures must be accepted under reasonable qualifications. Modern science and art, if only for sanitary reasons, must be taken into account. Accordingly, in all that concerns ventilation, heating, and artificial lighting, the restored St Giles' will be found immensely in advance of its prototype of the fifteenth century. For example, in the matter of artificial lighting, we could not have left the congregation to depend on candles and oil-lamps according to the fashion of by-gone ages. Nor could we have neglected artificial lighting altogether, as has been the case with certain restored ecclesiastical buildings; for that would have been to render the church valueless for public worship in the evening, and on Sunday afternoons during the winter. A compromise in the sentiment of restoration was therefore indispensable. The whole church is lighted with gas by means of brass standards from the floor, with ornamentation after the antique, the effect being very satisfactory.

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### THIRD RESTORATIONS—THE NAVE.

When the restoration of the southern aisles was completed, there still remained to be put in decent order the whole of the nave, the Albany Aisle, with other aisles on the north side of the building, and the whole of the transepts except the portion on the south. Such will be the third step in the restoration of St Giles'. And to give an idea of its extent, we refer to the following wood-engraving, which represents a ground-plan of the building as it now exists.



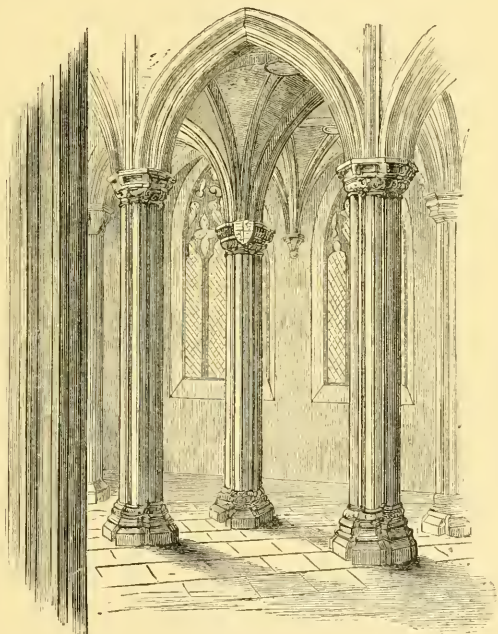
Ground-plan of St Giles'.

From this plan it appears that the whole edifice measures a hundred and ninety-six feet in length within the walls, by a hundred and twenty-five feet across at the transepts. The nave may be spoken of as about a hundred and twenty feet square in measurement. To effect a restoration of the nave and parts

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adjoining will involve some heavy work, with a number of delicate details connected with the arches and pillars. Certain stone and lime walls which block up arches will need to be removed in order to open up the entire structure from end to end and from side to side, and thus, if possible, to bring back the interior of St Giles' to that architectural state it possessed



Albany Aisle.

previous to the Reformation. The bulky partition walls here alluded to are principally those which had been removed by command of Charles I. on the institution of the bishopric of Edinburgh in 1633, but which were re-erected on the resumption of Presbytery in 1639.

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One of the contemplated improvements is the opening up of the western doorway of the nave (at present shut up), and constituting it the principal entrance to the entire cathedral church. Some characteristic architectural ornaments will be executed over this the great doorway, to express the date of the building, 1120, in the reign of Alexander I., king of Scots; for strange to say, if any such date was ever sculptured on the walls of St Giles', it has long since been obliterated.

Among the lesser but essential improvements will be the restoration of the stone arches and pillars in the nave and its aisles. The painted stucco ornaments which form the capitals of the pillars will be replaced by carved ornaments in stone. A special satisfaction will be experienced in restoring the Albany Aisle to its original artistic beauty. This interesting aisle, hitherto shrouded from observation, occupies the north-west corner of the nave, and causes a projection into High Street.

In the centre of this beautiful aisle stands a light and graceful pillar, which sustains a groined roof all around. The aisle takes its name from Robert, Duke of Albany, the second son of King Robert II., who, having been intrusted with the custody of his nephew, David, Duke of Rothésay, cruelly starved him to death in a dungeon in the castle of Falkland, 1402. Though escaping punishment for this atrocious act, Albany and his prime associate, Archibald, fourth Earl of Douglas, seem to have been haunted with a consciousness of guilt. According to the practice of the period, they are said to have built the Albany Aisle in St Giles' as a chapel expiatory of their crime. The capital of the pillar in the centre of the aisle bears two shields. One of these bears the Albany arms, in which the Scottish lion is quartered with the fess chequé of the Stewarts. The other shield has the heart and other armorial bearings of the Earl of Douglas. This remarkably fine pillar, surviving as a memento of a terrible tragedy in Scottish history, and of the remorse which it occasioned, has



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for ages been almost buried and lost amidst the gallery and seating of the church.

The steps taken towards proceeding with these concluding restorations may now be adverted to. The nave being occupied as a church by the congregation of West St Giles', nothing could be done in the way of alteration until another church was provided. This was a matter in which we could not possibly interfere; the solution of the difficulty lay with the public authorities, whom we addressed on the subject. Early in 1879, while still engaged in restoring the southern aisles, we made an offer to the Town Council and Magistrates, and to the Edinburgh Ecclesiastical Commissioners, to restore the whole of this ancient, historical building at our own expense, provided we were put in possession of the nave not later than Whitsunday 1880. The offer was entertained by the citizens, and steps were taken to secure its acceptance.

The first thing done was to procure an Act of Parliament to sanction the removal of the West St Giles' Congregation. By this Act, obtained in August 1879, and which received the approval and support of government, it was stipulated that upon payment of £10,500, the West St Giles' Congregation should be bound within a year to vacate the building and provide a new church for themselves. Thereafter a Committee, under the auspices of the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Council, was formed to collect subscriptions for the purpose of fulfilling the condition of the Act of Parliament.

As the proposed restoration was national and unsectarian in its object, the Committee was composed of gentlemen of different religious denominations, and through their instrumentality, as at Whitsunday 1880, contributions to the amount of about £5200 were received or promised. There being, however, still a large deficiency, we, on being applied to, were induced to extend the time for collection for one year—namely, till Whitsunday 1881—but only on condition that if the full sum

required should not be then collected, our offer was to be withdrawn, and was not to be renewed. Along with this offer a proviso was made which it is necessary to explain.

There being no official authorities in the form of a dean and chapter who could regulate various matters connected with St Giles' in its complete state, we made a stipulation to the following effect—That to facilitate arrangements for the erection of monuments to distinguished Scotchmen in St Giles', to regulate the introduction of coloured-glass windows, and for managing the interior of the building after the restoration, the Town Council would be expected to concur in appointing a committee of management, which we had formerly specified for these special purposes.

It would be needless to recount the various steps taken, some of them under difficulties, to gather subscriptions sufficient to complete the required sum of £10,500. It is enough to say, that the Magistrates and Council, assisted by Mr Robert Adam, City Chamberlain, made a decisive effort for the purpose in February 1881, and were materially aided by an auxiliary Committee composed of leading members of the Church of Scotland, headed by the Right Hon. Lord Justice-General. These united efforts were so successful that there can be no doubt the entire sum required will be obtained by the appointed date, Whitsunday 1881. As regards the stipulation above hinted at, it has been amply secured by the united consent of the Magistrates and Council, the Kirk Session of the High Church, and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. All that remains to be done is to pay the money; after which it will be a mere matter of adjustment when the West St Giles' Congregation will remove, and the work of restoring the nave be allowed to proceed. One thing is certain: when the keys of this part of the building are put into our hands, not an hour will be lost in commencing this important undertaking. And may God grant us life and health to carry it to a successful issue.

## *St Giles' Cathedral Church.*

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POSTSCRIPT.—As preparatory to the required restorations in the nave and transepts, Messrs Hay and Henderson, architects, have made a thorough survey of St Giles', embracing measurements of every part, with the view of making a set of plans, elevations, and sections of the whole fabric. By this means specifications will be drawn up of what is intended to be done, or what may be properly attempted. Such specifications will be submitted to the public authorities.

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### NOTE.

#### THE MEMORIAL WINDOWS IN ST GILES'.

St Giles' is known to have possessed at least some coloured-glass windows previous to the Reformation, but they had long since disappeared; and their re-introduction required a new and special effort. The windows throughout the Church are uniform in style and character. They may be described as a blending of the perpendicular and flamboyant styles of Gothic art, with cross bars or transoms dividing the windows into upper and lower lights. They are therefore well adapted for admitting illustrations of different subjects, or of a subject in several parts. On the occasion of restoring the choir, the introduction of stained glass received the attention of a special Committee. The design entertained was that all the windows in the choir should refer exclusively to events in the history of Our Lord. This plan has accordingly been carried out, by the gifts of private individuals. The subject of each window was prescribed. No heraldic or extraneous devices were allowed to be introduced. But the donors were permitted to place a memorial inscription of a single line at the foot of their respective windows. The result has been entirely satisfactory.

The following is a list of the Memorial Windows in the choir. They were executed by James Ballantine and Son, under the honorary supervision of R. Herdman, R.S.A.

*First Window.*—The Nativity, and Holy Family; the Presentation in the Temple; The Flight into Egypt; Disputation with the Doctors.—In memory of James Monteith, merchant, Calcutta, died 1872. Erected by his brother, Duncan Monteith, 1874.

## *St Giles' Cathedral Church.*

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*Second Window.*—The Baptism of Our Lord ; the Calling of the Apostles ; First Miracle at Cana ; Healing the Sick.—In memory of James Richardson, merchant, Edinburgh, died 1868. Erected by his widow and children, 1875.

*Third Window.*—Christ blessing little Children ; Stilling of the Tempest ; Healing of the Blind ; Raising of Lazarus.—In memory of Dean of Guild Lorimer, who perished when rendering help at a fire in 1865. Erected by his widow and family.

*Fourth Window.*—Christ's Entry into Jerusalem ; Christ purging the Temple ; Christ commending the poor Widow at the Treasury ; Christ preaching daily in the Temple.—In memory of Robert Stevenson, Engineer to the Northern Light-houses, died 1850. Erected by his sons, 1875.

*Fifth Window* (East gable).—The Last Supper ; Christ's Agony in the Garden ; Betrayal ; Bearing the Cross.—Gift of William Law, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, 1869 to 1872.

*Sixth Window* (Great East Window).—The Crucifixion, with numerous figures ; Ascension, with eleven apostles grouped.—Presented by the Right Hon. Sir James Falshaw, Baronet, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, 1872 to 1877.

*Seventh Window.*—Angels announcing the Resurrection to the Marys at the Sepulchre ; the Appearance of Our Lord to Mary Magdalene, to St Thomas and the Disciples.—In memory of Robert Smith, S.S.C., died 1875. Erected by his relatives and friends.

*Eighth Window*, being first in south wall.—Parable of Good Samaritan ; Parable of Prodigal Son.—In memory of James Webster, S.S.C., died 1879.

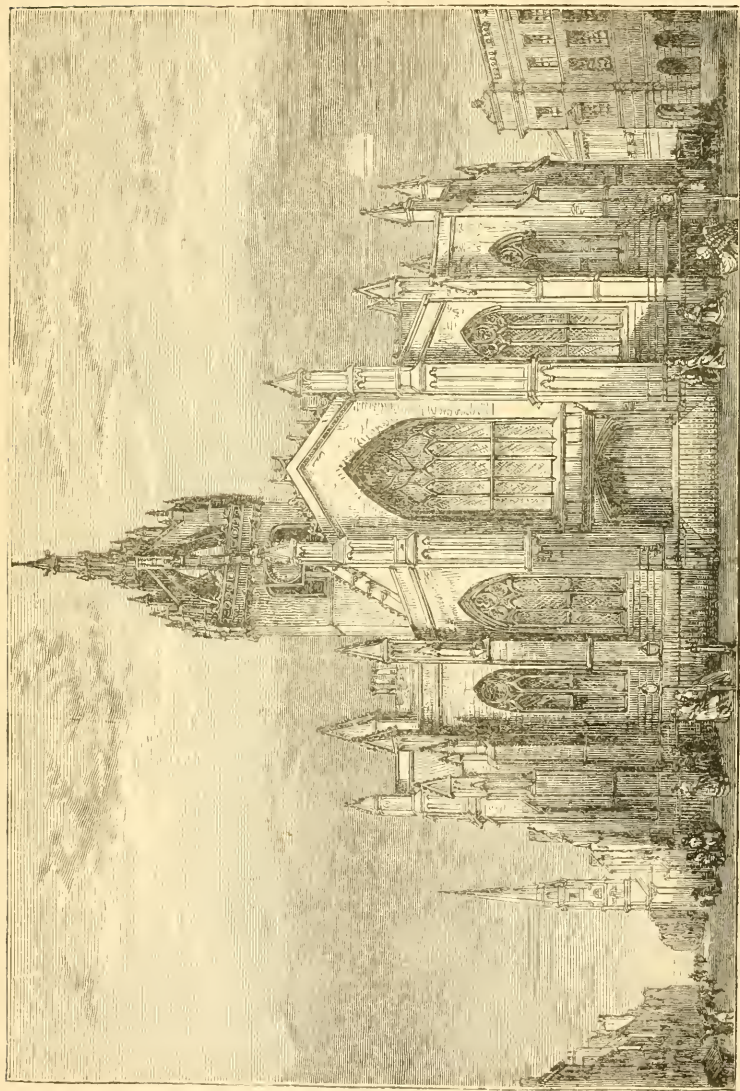
*Ninth Window.*—Parables of the Ten Virgins, and of the Talents.—In memory of Alexander Clapperton, merchant, Edinburgh, died 1849, and Anne Hume, his wife, died 1873. Erected by their sons, John and Alexander Clapperton, 1876.

### THE CLERESTORY WINDOWS IN CHOIR.

These windows are appropriated to the arms of the Craftsmen of Edinburgh. Those of the Wrights and Masons, Painters and Glaziers, Baxters, and the High Constables, are already put up.

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Window in the MORAY AISLE representing the assassination of the Earl of Murray, and the preaching of his funeral sermon by John Knox.—Presented by the present Earl of Moray. This admired window has also been executed by James Ballantine and Son.



ST GILES' CATHEDRAL CHURCH—FROM THE WEST.

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BY W. CHAMBERS, LL.D.



W. & R. CHAMBERS

EDINBURGH AND LONDON

1881