

EARLY SCOTTISH HOSPITALS AND REGULATIONS
FOR ISOLATION

It has already been mentioned that the early hospitals were connected with religious foundations, and that those who carried out the treatment of the sick in them were at first clerics. It should be remembered that the nature of a mediæval hospital and the diseases treated there were different from those found in hospitals as they exist at the present day.

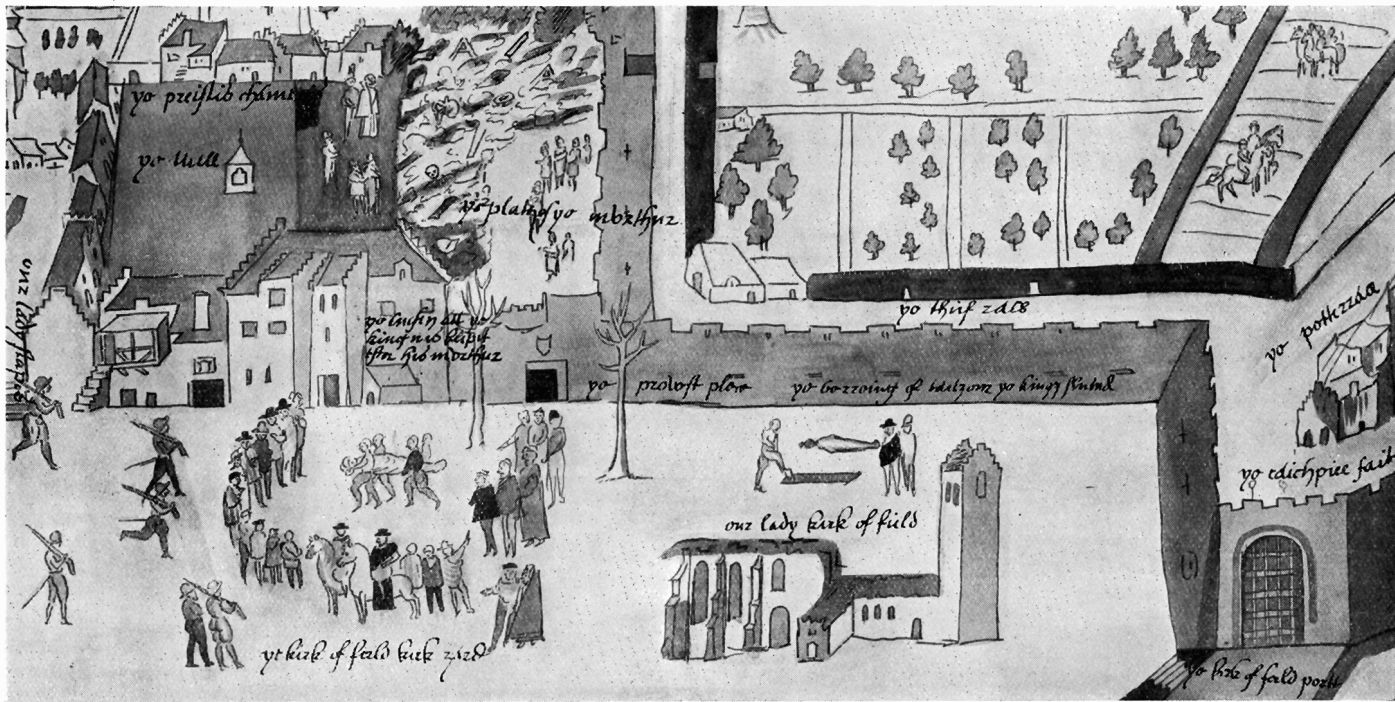
In the first place, hospitals were not generally intended for the treatment of acute disease. For one thing, means of transport was difficult, and a patient suffering from such a disease as acute pneumonia could not be transported to hospital on horseback unless it happened that he took ill at the very gate of a monastery.

In the second place, the early stages of chronic disease were not recognised. Thus, there was no means of diagnosing valvular disease of the heart, as such, before the end of the 18th century, and persons suffering from this condition would not be regarded as subjects for treatment until their condition was so advanced that the case might be classed as one of "dropsy." Similarly, diseases of the kidneys could hardly be recognised with exactness before Bright's treatise of 1827. If it be true that syphilis did not occur, in a severe form at least, before 1494, many diseases such as locomotor ataxia, general paralysis and several other nervous conditions, must have been non-existent in the Middle Ages. Speaking generally, therefore, only persons who had been so disabled as to be quite unfit for work and active life formed the class from which hospital patients were drawn in mediæval times.

Virchow has shown that after the edict of Pope Innocent III., early in the 13th century, directing the foundation of hospitals in all Sees, some 150 hospitals of the Holy Spirit were founded in Germany alone.¹ To this period belongs the founding or re-organisation of several great hospitals in London, and, at this time, numerous hospitals appear to have been founded in Scotland also.

At the time of the Reformation, the following hospitals were in existence in Scotland, having come down from a much earlier period. One of the oldest hospitals in this country was that of Soltray or Soutra, in Midlothian, sixteen miles south of Edinburgh, on the road leading to Kelso and England. This hospital more nearly fulfilled the conditions of a modern hospital than many others, because, being situated on an important route, it gave aid to travellers,

¹ Virchow: "Gesammelte Abhandlungen aus dem Gebiete der Oeffentlichen Medizin," Berlin, 1879, Vol. II. p. 24.



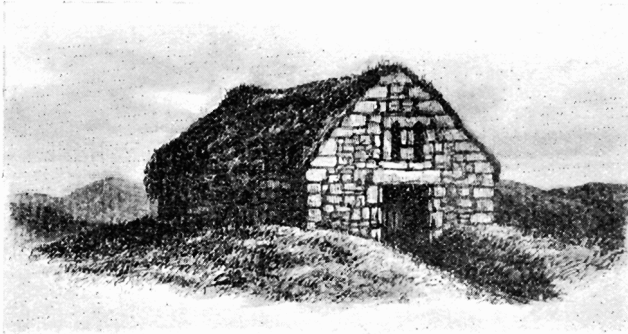
KIRK O' FIELD

Sketch made 10th February, 1567, for Queen Elizabeth, showing the surroundings of Darnley's murder. In the foreground is the ruined church of St. Mary de Campis: behind are buildings, including the Hospital of St. Mary, used by the Duke of Châtelherault, and, fifteen years later, taken over for the Town's College. The city-wall crosses the picture, with an angle opposite the Potterrow.

(Original in H.M. State Paper Office)

pilgrims and persons of the district who were urgently in need of medical assistance.

The hospital had been founded by Malcolm IV., in 1164, for the relief of pilgrims and poor and sickly people. In the neighbourhood was a well dedicated to the Holy Trinity, which was much frequented by sick and diseased persons because of its reputed curative properties. The hospital is mentioned several times during



SOUTRA AISLE

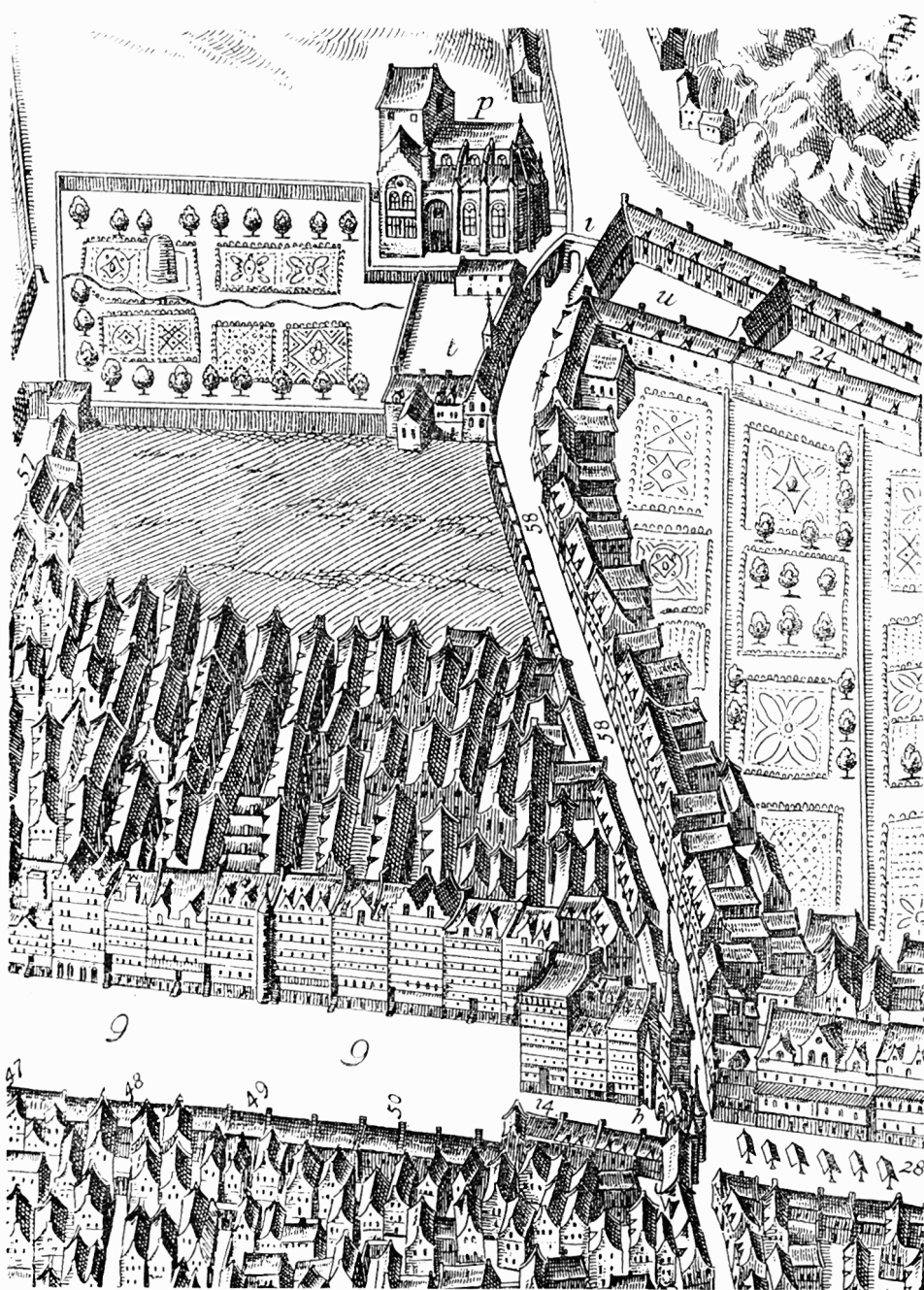
A present-day remnant of Soutra Hospital

the 13th century, but, apparently having become less necessary at a later date, the parish and church of Soutra were annexed to Trinity College, in Edinburgh, where a hospital was founded by Mary of Gueldres, following on a Bull of Pope Pius II. in 1460. Remnants of Soutra hospital, in a district which is now moorland, are still visible. On some lands belonging to this hospital at St. Leonards, near Edinburgh, Robert Ballantine, Abbot of Holyrood, founded a hospital for seven distressed people.

There were also in Edinburgh at the time of the Reformation a hospital in Bell's Wynd, known as the Maison Dieu, and another in St. Mary's Wynd, for which the Town Council, in 1575, authorised the taking of a collection in St. Giles's Church. There is a reference to this hospital in 1500, and it was re-roofed in 1508, but the deed of foundation appears to have been lost in 1583, when the Town Council authorised Baillie Michael Chisholm to search for it.¹

A hospital is also mentioned in connection with the Church of St. Mary de Campis, popularly known as the Kirk o' Field, which was one of the buildings burned by the English in 1544; so that in this year the religious community, not having means to rebuild it, sold the hospital to James, Earl of Arran, who built on it a lodging that afterwards was used as the College of Edinburgh. The University of Edinburgh now stands upon this site.

¹ "Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1573-1589," pp. 39 and 314; and Extracts 1403-1528, pp. 79 and 117.



TRINITY COLLEGE, CHURCH AND HOSPITAL, EDINBURGH

From Gordon of Rothemay's Plan of Edinburgh in 1647

9, High Street; 14, John Knox's house; 28, Canongate, with fleshers' stands; 47, Dickson's Close; 48, Blackfriars' Close; 49, Todrig's Close; 50, Gray's Close; 57, Halkerston's Wynd; 58, Leith Wynd; 24, the Correction House, formerly Hospital of Our Lady; p, Trinity Church; t, Trinity Hospital; i, Leith Wynd Port; u, Paul's Work; h, Netherbow Port. The garden, later used (from 1676) as the Botanic Garden, is seen adjoining Trinity Church and Hospital

A very important Edinburgh hospital was the Trinity Hospital, founded at the instigation of Queen Mary of Gueldres, in memory of her husband, James II. The funds of several religious houses, including those of the Hospital of Soutra, were appropriated for the purpose of founding Trinity Hospital and its collegiate church,¹ and numerous references to it occur in the Town Council minutes of the following century. On 21st June, 1578, a minute of the Town Council refers to the reorganisation in the hospital of Trinity College, where twelve furnished beds were now made ready for "pepill seiklie and vnabill to laubour for thair leving." These people were called "bedesmen," "bedrels," "betherells," or "beadles." They were given an allowance for food and clothing, and they had been obliged, prior to the Reformation, to carry out the duties, so far as they were able, of attendance on religious services twice daily, and of praying for the soul of the founder. In the minute of this date, nine persons were admitted. It is not specified what were their diseases, except in the case of Daud Forester, who was a blind man. Of the nine, Jhonne Thomesoun retained his place only for about six weeks, being ejected on 2nd August, 1578, because he was proved to be "ane drunkard." On 9th August, Bessy Jhonnstoun, a widow, was added to the company, being a "pure impotent bedrell." Many gifts to the hospital are recorded in the following years, and, in 1581 and 1584, the roof and windows were repaired.² The hospital continued its beneficent work for the sick and impotent up to the 19th century, and although the buildings disappeared to make way for the railway in 1845, its revenues are still employed by the Town Council in giving valued grants to aged and sick persons of the city.

Another hospital in Edinburgh, of almost equal age with Trinity Hospital, was established by Thomas Spence, Bishop of Aberdeen, in the year 1479. It was situated on the opposite side of Leith Wynd from Trinity Hospital, was designed for the reception and maintenance of twelve men, and was known as the Hospital of Our Lady. Subsequently it received revenues from other benefactors, including a chapel dedicated to St. Paul. The Town Council of Edinburgh became proprietors of this charity under a grant by Queen Mary, and in a minute of 15th June, 1582, they refer to it as the "hospitall of Sanct Pawles Work, callit our Lady Hospitall," and lay down an elaborate set of rules for the master of the hospital and the bedesmen. The latter were to be "na papistes, bot of the trew religioun." They were to be "not defylit with blame of ony notable vyce, bot of guid fame and conversatioun," and persons who would have exercised themselves in some honest trade if "seiknes, aige or impotencie" had not prevented them.³

This hospital, however, appears to have passed into desuetude, and in 1619 the buildings, having become ruinous, were reconstructed under the name

¹ "Charters Relating to the City of Edinburgh, 1143-1540," Scottish Burgh Records Society, Edinburgh, 1871, pp. 84-119.

² "Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1573-1589," pp. 77, 80, 81, 553, 208, 211 and 328.

³ "Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1573-1589," pp. 564-567.



HOSPITAL OF OUR LADY, EDINBURGH

The Hospital is on the left, with Trinity College Church in the background

(From a sketch by Sir Daniel Wilson, in the Library of the University of Edinburgh)

of Paul's Work, to receive boys and girls who should be taught a trade; and, finally, the Town Council converted it into a House of Correction. In 1650, this hospital was used for the soldiers of General Leslie's army wounded in the repulse of Oliver Cromwell, when he attacked Edinburgh.

A hospital existed in connection with the Convent of St. Catherine of Siena, inhabited by Dominican nuns, a short distance south of Edinburgh, in a district which has come to be called, by corruption, "Sciennes." The hospital, which was presumably originally a place for the reception of the neighbouring sick, appears to have reverted after the Reformation to the possession of the Town Council. After some trouble with a neighbouring proprietor, Henry Kincaid, who also claimed the buildings, the Magistrates took possession in 1575 and used it as an isolation hospital for persons suffering from the plague, which had been prevalent in Edinburgh.¹

Still another Edinburgh hospital which, however, was founded shortly before the Reformation, was the Hospital of the Magdalen Chapel in the Cowgate, founded by Michael Makquhen and Janet Rynd, his wife, in 1537, for seven bedesmen. This Hospital lasted for some 115 years. Its Chapel still stands.

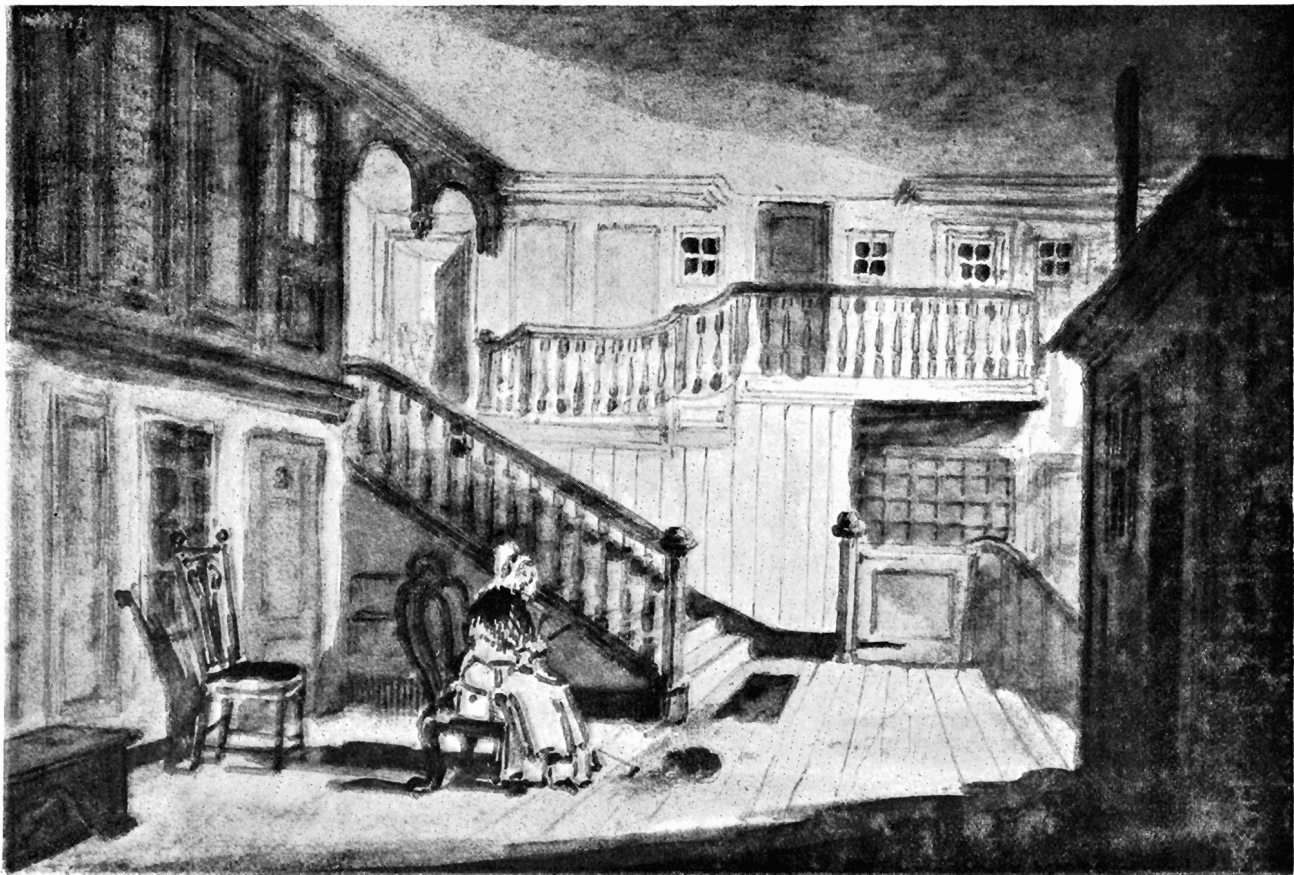


HOSPITAL OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN WITH ITS CHAPEL

(From a sketch of 1816)

Other hospitals in the south-east of Scotland, which were in existence in the 13th century—a fact established by their Superior having taken an oath of fealty to Edward I. in 1296—were Ballincrief, in the county of Edinburgh, dedicated to St. Cuthbert; St. Germain's, at Setoun, in the county of Haddington (the property of this hospital passed later to the support of Marischal College, Aberdeen); a hospital at Lauder, and another at Ligertwood in Berwickshire; and the Maison Dieu in the vanished town of Roxburgh. The hospital of St. Mary Magdalen, at Rutherford in Roxburghshire, founded by King Robert III. in 1396, had in its charter the curious provision that if it should be destroyed by an English invasion, it was to be rebuilt in the same place. The hospital of St. Mary Magdalen, in Linlithgow, belonged to the religious order of Lazarites, and is mentioned in the year 1426, when Robert de Lynton was nominated to the post

¹ "Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1573-1589," pp. 30, 37 and 38.



INTERIOR OF TRINITY HOSPITAL, EDINBURGH

As it appeared early in the 19th century, showing the mediæval arrangements
(From a sketch by Sir Daniel Wilson, preserved in the Library of the University of Edinburgh)

of master by Queen Jean, wife of James I. A hospital at Ednam, dedicated to St. Laurence, received a charter from King James I. in 1426.

Glasgow was early furnished with a hospital of St. Nicholas, founded by Master Michael Fleming, and endowed by Bishop Muirhead in the 15th century, after whom it was sometimes called the Bishop's Hospital.¹ In this hospital there existed the unusual provision of waiting maids to attend the sick.² In Aberdeen, a hospital was founded by Bishop Gavin Dunbar, in 1531, for the maintenance of twelve poor men. In the shire of Aberdeen, there were also hospitals at Kincardine-O'Neil, at Newburgh, where the hospital had been founded by Alexander, Earl of Buchan, in the reign of King Alexander III., and at Turriff, where another hospital had been founded by Alexander, Earl of Buchan, for twelve men.

At Stirling, a hospital of St. James stood at the end of the bridge (*see page 38*), having been granted to the Canons of Cambuskenneth serving God there, by King Robert III., in March, 1403. The Chapel attached to the Hospital, along with a Chapel to St. Roche, was destroyed at the Reformation, but a reference to the Hospital as still existing is found as late as 1709.³ In the town the Hospital of Spittals stood in St. Mary's Wynd, having been founded by Robert Spittal, tailor to King James IV. The Hospital of Suggeden was situated in Perthshire on the river Tay, in the year 1296, when its Superior swore fealty to King Edward I.

In the north of Scotland, the See of Moray had two hospitals, that of St. Nicolas, founded by Walterus de Moravia, near the bridge over the Spey, and the hospital at Rothfan, for seven leprous persons, founded in 1226. In Brechin, Forfarshire, a Maison Dieu was founded before 1477. At Lanark, a Hospital of St. Leonards had existed before 1393, and, two miles east of Peebles, at Chapel Yards,⁴ a hospital of St. Leonards received a charter from King James I., in the year 1427. There were also a hospital of the Holy Trinity at Houston, a hospital attached to the monastery of Holywood, which had been founded by Archibald the Grim, Earl of Douglas, in the reign of Robert II., and a hospital at Sanquhar, which is mentioned as a new erection in the year 1296.⁵ Chalmers mentions the names of several in other places.⁶



FOUNDATION STONE
of Hospital founded at Stirling in
1530 by Robert Spittal, tailor to
King James IV.

¹ M'Ure: "History of Glasgow, 1830," p. 22.

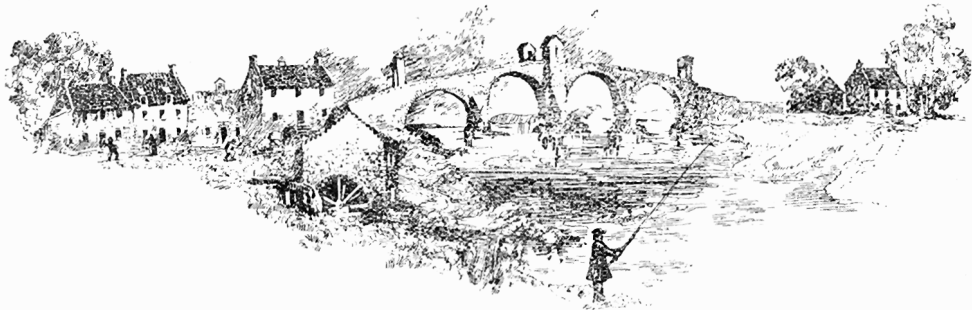
² "Chartulary of Paisley," p. 297; and Keith: *Op. cit.*, p. 475.

³ J. S. Fleming: "The Old Ludgings of Stirling," Stirling, 1897.

⁴ Chalmers: "Caledonia," Vol. II, p. 943.

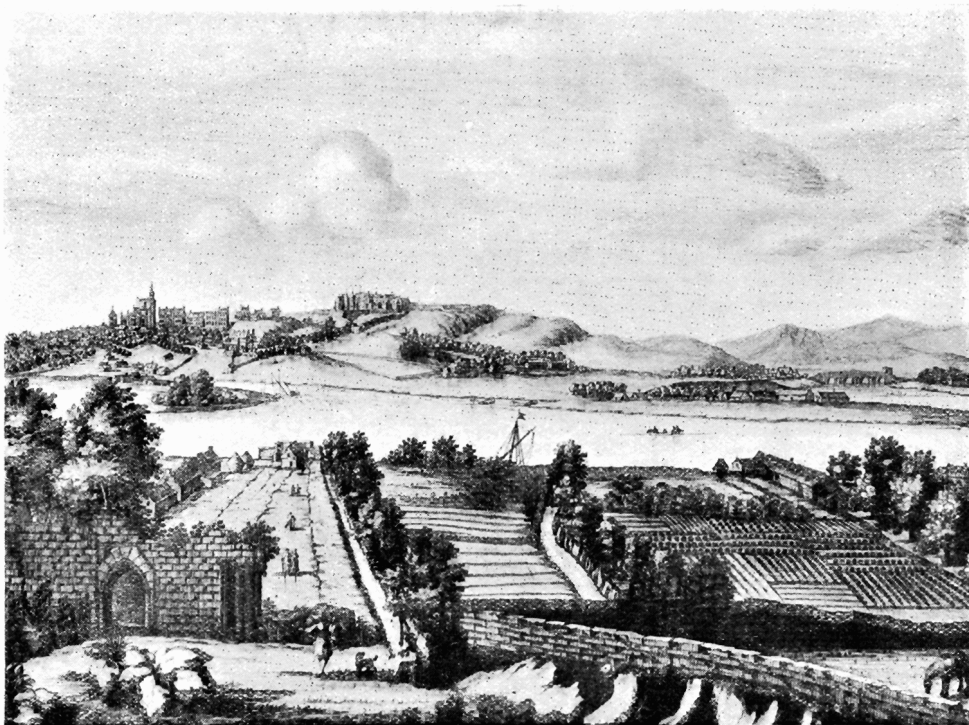
⁵ Right Rev. Robert Keith: "An Historical Catalogue of the Scottish Bishops down to the year 1688," Edinburgh, 1824, pp. 474-480.

⁶ Chalmers: "Caledonia," London, 1807.



THE OLD BRIDGE OF STIRLING IN 1700

Showing the HOSPITAL OF ST. JAMES at the end of the bridge behind the mill and ruins of one of the two Chapels which previously stood there



STIRLING, FROM CAMBUSKENNETH ABBEY, ABOUT 1680

Showing the considerable distance separating the Town from the Bridge, with its Hospital and Chapels
(From the engraving by Slezer)

Hospitals must have existed in connection with the settlements of the Knights Hospitallers. Of these the Preceptory at Torphichen has been mentioned, where the site of a hospitium is still pointed out. There was another Preceptory at Kirkstyle, in the Parish of Ruthwell, where several tombstones are to be seen in the churchyard bearing the insignia of this celebrated fraternity,¹ and still another at Balantrodach in Midlothian. In regard to houses belonging to the Hospitallers at Linlithgow and Glasgow, Beatson suggests that these were used as Hospitals for the sick.²

Before the Reformation, the 13th century hospitals were, in some places, falling into disuse, and in other places their funds were being misappropriated, so that the support of their inmates became impossible. This had become very noticeable by the year 1548, and at a Provincial Council, Holden by the Prelates and



NETHER HOSPITAL AT STIRLING

Illustrating the type of small hospital erected in the 17th and 18th centuries for sick paupers

Clergy of the realm of Scotland, at Edinburgh, in 1549, a resolution was passed anent the condition and repair of hospitals. Every ordinary was enjoined to make diligent inquiry throughout his diocese regarding the foundations of hospitals. If the charters and instruments could be found, he was to consider to what extent these places were dilapidated, who were their present possessors, and how the funds had been misappropriated. Masters of works of every monastery were enjoined to visit every year places attached to monasteries and churches for the repair of dilapidations.

Little attention appears to have been paid to this, and at another Provincial Council, held at Edinburgh, in January, 1552, the above visitation was ordered to be put into effect before the next Michaelmas, and a report made to Commissaries General so that suitable remedies could be provided.³

These orders, however, came too late, for the Reformation was at hand, and along with the possessions of other religious houses, the revenues of most of the hospitals were re-appropriated, usually for educational purposes, or simply for the benefit of neighbouring proprietors.

¹ Chalmers: "Caledonia," Vol. III, p. 154.

² Beatson: "The Knights Hospitallers in Scotland," Glasgow, 1903, p. 26.

³ "Statutes of the Scottish Church, 1225-1559," Patrick, Pub. of Scottish Hist. Soc., pp. 119 and 139

The manner in which a hospital gradually disappeared is well exemplified by the experience of St. Thomas's Hospital at Edinburgh which had been founded in 1541, in the reign of James V., by George Creighton, Bishop of Dunkeld. The building was in the Burgh of Canongate, close to the Water-gate, and the patronage of the hospital was vested by the founder in himself and his heirs. It was natural that the heirs should not be interested in hospital work, and, in 1617, an arrangement was reached between David Creighton, the patron at the time, and the bedesmen of the hospital, that Creighton should retain the endowments while the bedesmen and chaplains were allowed to sell the hospital buildings



COWANE'S HOSPITAL, STIRLING

to the Magistrates of the Canongate. The Magistrates established here a hospital for the poor of the burgh, and, in 1634, sold the patronage of the hospital to the Kirk Session for the same purpose. In the words of Arnot: "Its revenues were, by degrees, entirely embezzled." In 1747, the building was converted into coach-houses, and, becoming ruinous, was pulled down in the year 1778.¹

After the Reformation there was practically no new foundation of hospitals in Scotland until the voluntary hospital movement, which took place in the 18th century. In some places the Kirk Session of various parishes established temporary hospitals for the reception of sick paupers. The most notable exception was the establishment by John Cowane, a merchant in Stirling, who died in 1637, and left funds to endow a hospital, to be called "Cowane's Hospital," for twelve decayed members of the Stirling Guildry. This foundation was on the pre-Reformation plan of taking in sick and decayed persons for the remainder of their lives, but it proved quite unsuited to modern habits and ideas, and accordingly, about 1852, the hospital ceased to exist as such, the rooms for the patients were converted into a hall, and the endowments were used to provide grants for sick and decayed persons in their own

¹ Arnot: "History of Edinburgh," 1779, p. 249.

homes.¹ A similar arrangement was made in regard to the endowments of various hospitals in Scotland, such as the Trinity Hospital in Edinburgh, and Spittal's Hospital in Stirling. The word "hospital" in Scotland also came to be used in the 17th and 18th centuries to indicate educational foundations, such as schools for boys.

Very clear pictures of true leprosy are given in three mediæval treatises: one in the "Lilium Medicinæ," by Bernard Gordon, who is traditionally reputed to have been a Scotsman, and who taught at Montpellier between 1285 and 1307; one by Gilbert, the Englishman, whose "Compendium Medicinæ" was published in 1510; and a third by Guy de Chauliac, who wrote his treatise on surgery about 1363. Nevertheless, the diagnosis of leprosy was probably made somewhat recklessly, and no doubt in the Middle Ages persons with other skin diseases were sometimes segregated as lepers. Among the definitely admitted Scottish lepers, the most distinguished was King Robert the Bruce.²

The earliest leper house founded in England, so far as is known, was the Hospital of St. Peter and St. Leonard, at York, founded in 936 A.D. by King Athelstane, which provided for 206 bedesmen. Another was endowed at Canterbury by Lanfranc, the first Norman Archbishop of that See. Others were founded later at Westminster, Southwark, Highgate, and other places in London, and there were numerous other hospitals throughout England.³ Sir James Y. Simpson collected references to over 100 leper establishments in this country.⁴

The following law regarding lepers was enacted by the Scottish Parliament in the 12th century, and it shows incidentally that the burghs of Berwick, Roxburgh, Edinburgh and Stirling were then provided with leper hospitals outside the towns:—



SEAL OF LINLITHGOW LEPER HOUSE

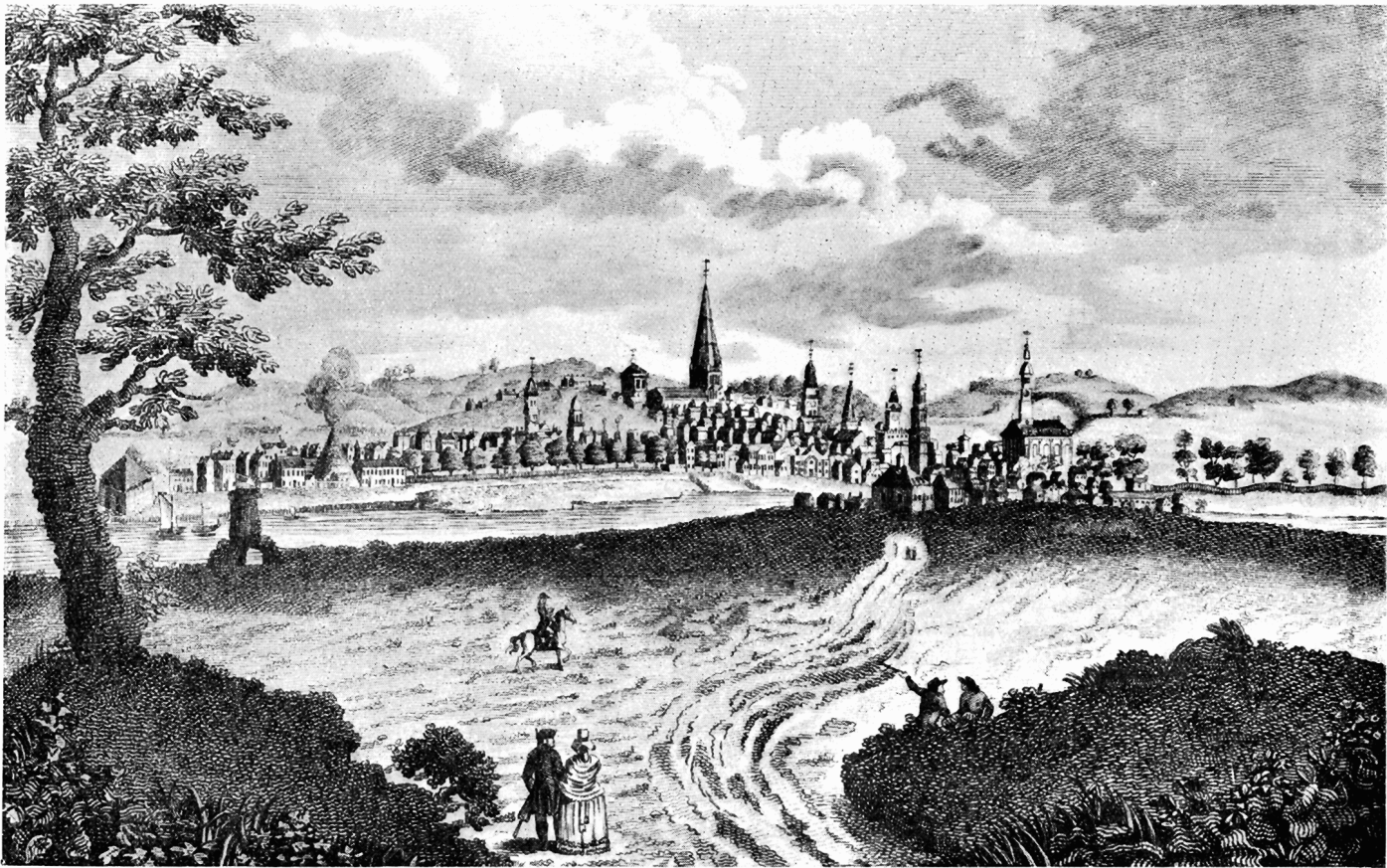
"Gif [*if*] ony that duellis in the kyngis burgh or was borne in it be fallyn in lepyr that is callit mysal gif that he hafe gudis of his awne thruch the quhilk [*which*] he may be sustenynt and cled he sal be put in the spytaile [*hospital*] of the burgh. And gif he has nocht of his awne the burges of that toune sal ger [*cause*] be gadderyt amangis thaim a collec to the valure of xx s. of the quhilk he may be sustenynt and cled. And it is to wyt [*to be known*] that mysal men sal nocht entre in the toune gangande [*going*] fra dur [*door*] to dur bot anerly [*only*] to pas the he [*high*] way thruch the toune and thai sal sit

¹ Shearer: "Stirling, Historical and Descriptive," Stirling, 1897, p. 65.

² "Chronicon de Lanercoost" (Bannatyne Club), p. 259; also Sir J. Y. Simpson: "Archæological Essays," Vol. II., pp. 113-115.

³ Charles Creighton, M.A., M.D.: "History of Epidemics in Britain," Cambridge, 1891, Vol. I., p. 86.

⁴ Simpson: Op. cit., p. 19.



GLASGOW

(Engraving by T. Grainger, circa 1760)

Although crude in execution and draughtsmanship and sadly lacking in perspective, this plate contains much of interest to the student of the past. It shows Glasgow as little more than a village glorified by a Cathedral and the campanilli of many churches. Interesting to students of the story of healing is the little group of quaint houses on the south bank of the River Clyde. The country road leading from those houses to the very foreground of the picture is now the busy but somewhat sordid Main Street of Gorbals. To medical men the interesting point is that these houses occupy the supposed site of the one-time famous Leper Hospital—known as St. Ninian's Hospital—erected about 1350 by the "Lady of Lochow" at the south bridge end of "The Auld Brig" of Glasgow—erected by Bishop Rae in 1350, and taken down finally in 1850.

at the toune end and thar ask almous at [*alms from*] furth passand men and ingangand. And mar attour na man sal tak on hand ony mysal man in his house to herbery na reste wythin the burgh on payn of a full forfalt [*forfeit*].¹

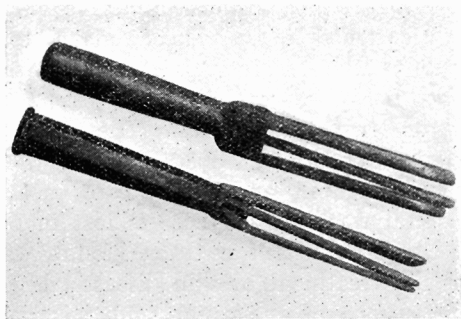
In the Forest Laws of Scotland, at an early date, when wild beasts were found dead or wounded, the flesh was to be sent to the house of the leper men if any such happened to be situated near by.² Another Act provided that flesh of pork or salmon, found to be corrupt in the markets and accordingly seized, was to be sent to the lepers.³

In the Parliament of James I., which met at Perth on 1st March, 1427, very definite enactments were made in regard to the lepers. Persons afflicted by this disease were not to enter any burgh except on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, between 10 and 2 o'clock; when a market fell on any of these days, they were to delay till the following day; lepers were to beg only at their own hospitals or at the town gate, and in other places outside burghs; bishops, officials and deans were enjoined to enquire, at the visitations to every parish church, whether there were any lepers in the parish, and to notify these to the bishop if they were clerks, or to the King if they were laymen.⁴

As regards Scotland, the richest foundation for lepers was at Kingcase, near Prestwick, in Ayrshire, which was endowed by King Robert Bruce with lands and contained a hospital of eight beds. Various leper houses were built by the rich Abbeys of Tweedside, such as the Hospital of Aldcambus, in Berwickshire, founded in the reign of William the Lion, and Aldnestun, in Lauderdale. A hospital at Rothfan, connected with the cathedral at Elgin, which was endowed in 1226, and existed before that time, had accommodation for seven lepers, a chaplain and a servant.

Most of the Scottish leper houses appear, however, to have been refuges in which the lepers supported themselves by begging in the neighbouring towns. Such a hospital was that at the Gorbals of Glasgow, founded about 1350. This had been established by Marjory Stuart, Lady Lochow.⁵

From the hospital on the south bank of the river, the lepers were permitted under certain stringent conditions, to enter the town for the purpose of asking



LEPER CLAPPERS

Intended to give warning of the approach of a Leper

¹ Laws of the four burghs (Berwick, Roxburgh, Edinburgh and Stirling), confirmed by King David I. "Acts of the Scottish Parliament (1124-1423)." Vol. I, p. 344, cap. 58.

² "Acts of the Scottish Parliament," Vol. I, p. 692.

³ Op. cit., Vol. I, p. 729.

⁴ Op. cit., Vol. II, p. 16, cap. 8.

⁵ M'Ure: "History of Glasgow," 1830, p. 52.

alms. To give warning of their approach, they were provided with clappers, and were obliged to wear a cloth over the mouth and face, because of an idea that the infection rested chiefly in the breath. The number of lepers was not great. A report had to be presented to the Town Council every Michaelmas as to the number admitted to the hospital during the year, and this usually amounted to about four or five. In the latter part of 1605, there were seven lepers in the hospital.¹

In Edinburgh, a Leper Hospital was founded by the Town Council. In 1584, they enquired into "the estait and ordour of the awld fundatioun of the lipper hous besyde Dyngwall,"² which was the name of the residence of the Provost of Trinity College, and stood on part of the ground now occupied by the London and North-Eastern Railway Station. Apparently this was not found in a satisfactory condition, for, in 1589, an Act was passed by the Magistrates to build a leper-house at Greenside, and, in 1591, five lepers of the city were consigned to this hospital.³ Two of the wives of the lepers voluntarily shut themselves up in the hospital along with their diseased husbands. Very severe regulations were made by the Magistrates to prevent those affected by leprosy from mixing with the citizens of Edinburgh. The lepers were commanded to remain within the walls of the hospital night and day, and to have the door shut after sunset, under pain of death. That this might not be deemed an empty threat, a gallows was erected on the gable of the hospital for the immediate execution of offenders.⁴

This leper hospital appears gradually to have fallen into disrepair. It is mentioned in a charter given to the city by Charles I. in 1636, but in 1652 the Magistrates ordered it to be demolished, and its material used for other purposes. The suburb of Liberton owes its name to a conversion of the term leper-town. The district is mentioned in old charters of the reign of David I., who died in 1153, as in the foundation charter of Holyrood, where its mill and chapel are mentioned, but the date at which a leper hospital was founded here is lost in obscurity. A well in the neighbourhood, at the Priest's Hill or Grace Mount, was specially celebrated in the Middle Ages for the treatment of skin diseases, because of the mineral oil which floated on the surface of the water, and this was in all probability used specially by the lepers of Liberton.

In 1528, the Town Council of Edinburgh published an edict dealing with lepers, as follows:—

22 JANUARY, 1528

"The quhilk day, the baillies and counsaile statutes and ordanis that [*blank*] Wilsoun, tailyeour, and all vtheris suspect of lipper within this towne devoyde thame of the samyn

¹ Cleland: "Statistical Facts," 1837, p. 22; also "Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Glasgow, 1573-1642," p. 238.

² "Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1573-1589," p. 352.

³ "Manuscript Records of the Town Council," Vol. IX., pp. 9, 12 and 123.

⁴ Arnot: *Op. cit.*, p. 258.

within xv dayes, and gif the said [*blank*] Wilsoun will allege that he hes nocht na sic seiknes that he caus the medicinaris to purge him be thair aythis in the meanetyme ; and als chairges all maner of lipper folkis that ar in lugeis and hospitaies about this towne that thair convers nocht amang clene folks nother in kirk merkat or vther wayes bot hold thame be thame selfis in quyet vnder the payne of banissing the towne." ¹

In Aberdeen, a Leper Hospital, which had existed before 1363, is mentioned and figured by Gordon as standing in the 17th century half-way between the Gallowgate Port and Old Aberdeen.

"Such as goe out at the Gallowgate Port toward Old Aberdeen, halff way almost, may see the place wher of old stood the lepers hospitall, called the Seick Hous, hard by the waye syd, to which ther was a chappell adjoyned, dedicated to St. Anna, quhome the papists account patronesse of the leapers. The citizens licencit one Mr. Alexander Gallaway, then person of Kinkell, for to build that chappell anno 1519." ²

In the beginning of the 18th century, the remains of the hospital and grounds were sold, though its burial ground is still left. The money was made over to the fund for the proposed lunatic asylum. ³

Leprosy appears to have prevailed in Scotland after its disappearance from England, and it gradually retreated northwards. The last native leper in Great Britain was an inhabitant of the Shetland Isles, and died at Edinburgh in 1798.

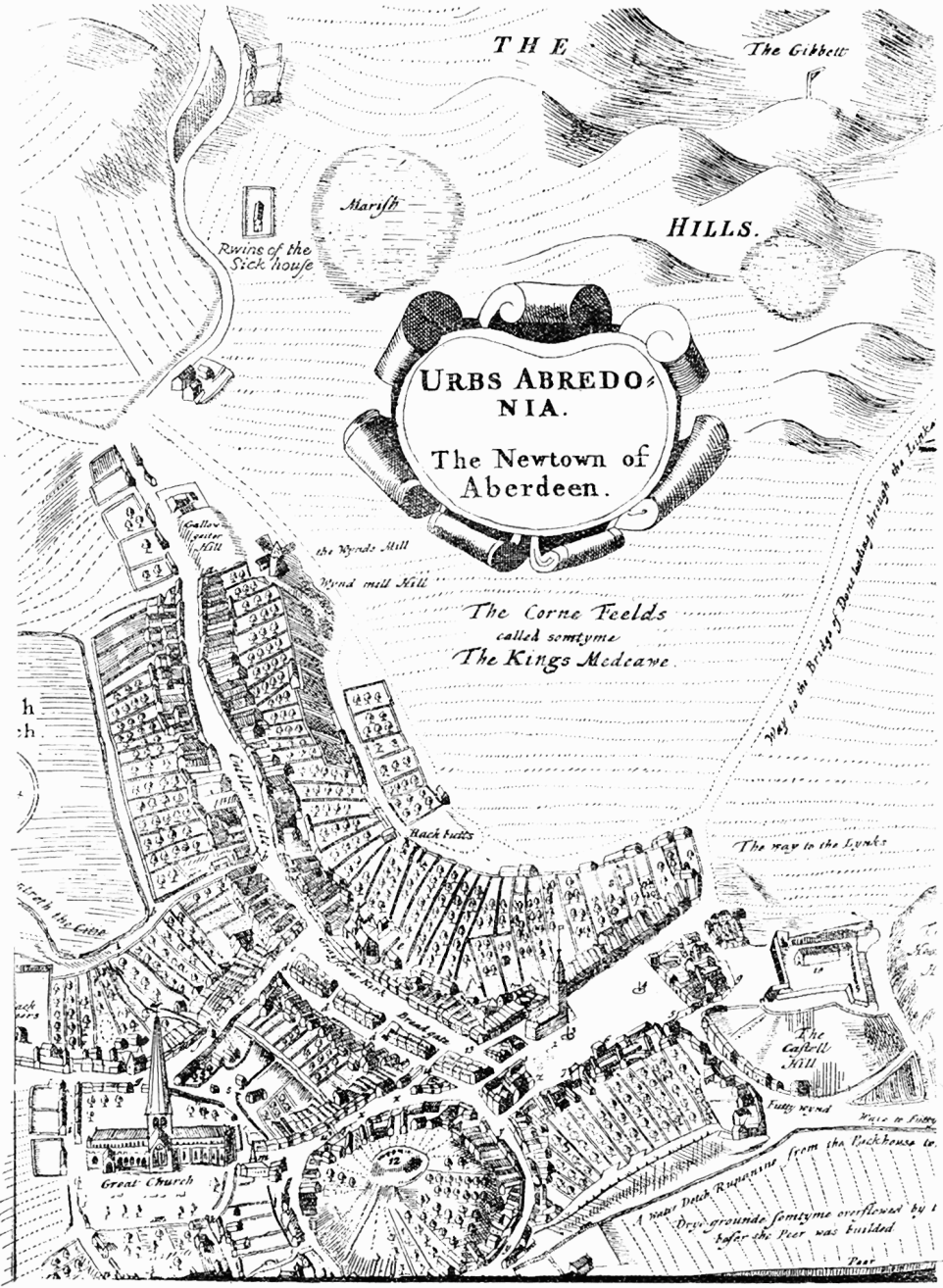
The disease known at the present day as syphilis is generally believed to have broken out for the first time in Europe, about the year 1494, among the people in Naples, and among the troops of Charles VIII. of France, who were besieging that city. The earliest notices of it appear between 1492, when Columbus discovered the New World, and 1494, when this outbreak occurred. It is generally believed that the followers of Columbus either imported this disease to Europe for the first time, or, what is more probable, that they introduced a variety of the disease due to a New World strain of the causal organism, which then spread in an almost epidemic form. The disease was known by a variety of names, such as gor, gore, grandgore, grantgore and glengore, as well as the French sickness and sickness of Naples. The word "grandgore" was used by Rabelais in 1532. The word "syphilis" was introduced in 1530 by Fracastoro, in the title of his Latin poem, in which the chief character bears this name.

By 1497 and 1498 there are numerous references to the incidence of the disease in different parts of Europe. Those which concern us here are especially regulations promulgated by the Town Councils of Aberdeen and Edinburgh, with the object of checking its spread. The regulation in regard to Aberdeen is dated 21st April, 1497, and is the earliest notice of this kind in Britain. It runs as follows:—

¹ "Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1403-1528," p. 232.

² Gordon of Rothemay: "Abredoniae Utriusque Descriptio," Spalding Club, 1842, p. 19.

³ Simpson: "Archaeological Essays," Vol. II., p. 13.



THE *The Gibbett*

Marsh

Remains of the Sick house

HILLS.

URBS ABREDONIA.

The Newtown of Aberdeen.

the Mynde Mill

Wind mill Hill

The Corne Feelds called somtyme The Kings Medcave.

Way to the Bridge of Dons leading through the Leper

The way to the Leper

The Castle Hill

Great Church

*A waste Dead Rumpstone from the Leper house to
Dress grounds somtyme overflowed by a
before the Pier was builded*

MAP OF ABERDEEN IN 1661

By Gordon of Rothemay

Showing the site of the Leper Hospital (*Remains of the Sick house*) on the road leading to Old Aberdeen

21 APRIL, 1497

"The said day, it was statut and ordanit be the alderman and consale for the eschevin [*avoidance*] of the infirmitey cumm out of Franche and strang partis, that all licht weman be chargit and ordanit to decist fra thar vicis and syne of venerie, and al thair buthis and houssis skalit [*emptied*], and thair to pas and wirk for thar sustentacioun, vnder the payne of ane key of het yrne one thar chekis, and banysene of the toune."¹

A few years later, in 1507, the Aberdeen Town Council passed several statutes connected with the public health, and one of these dealt with the segregation in their own houses of persons infected with the "strange seiknes of Nappillis," while another forbade folks infected with this sickness to appear at the common flesh-house or to hold converse with fleshers, bakers, brewers and "ladinaris," for the safety of the town.²

It is interesting to note that the Town Council of Aberdeen appear to have clearly discerned the method in which this disease was usually spread, at a time when Continental authorities were still in the dark as to its origin.

The Town Council of Edinburgh, apparently acting under instructions from King James IV., issued a stringent and celebrated regulation on 22nd September, 1497, through which segregation was to be still more effectively carried out by banishing all those sick of this disease, together with those who professed to cure it, to the Island of Inchkeith. Unfortunately, these restrictions, both in Aberdeen and Edinburgh, although well-designed, appear to have been ineffective. The regulation in Edinburgh was as follows:—

22 SEPTEMBER, 1497 (Ane grandgore Act)

"It is our Soueraine Lordis will, and the command of the lordis of his counsals send to the provest and baillies within this burgh, that this proclamatioun follow and be put till executioun for the eschewing [*avoidance*] of the greit appearand dainger of the infectioun of his liegis fra this contagiou seiknes callit the grandgor, and the greit vther skayth [*damage*] that may occur to his legeis and inhabitouris within this burgh, that is to say: We charge straitlie and commandis be the authoritie aboue writtin, that all maner of personis, being within the fredome of this burgh, quhilkis [*who*] ar infectit or hes bene infectit vncurit with this said contagious plage callit the grandgor, devoyd red [*leave clear*] and pas furth of this toun and compeir [*assemble*] vpoun the sandis of Leith at x houris befor none, and thair sall thair haue and fynd botis reddie in the havin ordanit to thame be the officieris of this burgh reddely furneist with victuallis to have thame to the Inche [*Inchkeith*], and thair to remane quhill God prouyde for thair health; and that all vther personis the quhilkis takis vpoun thame to hale the said contagious infirmite, and takis the cure thair of, that thay devoyd and pas with thame, sua that nane of thir personis quhilkis takis sic cure vpoun thame vse the samyn cure within this burgh in presens [*at present*] nor peirt [*appear*] ony maner of way; and quha sa beis fundin infectit and nocht passand to the Inche as said is be Monunday at the sone ganging to [*sunset*], and in lykwayis the saidis personis that takis the said cure of sanitie vpoun thame gif [*if*] thair will vse the samyn, thair and ilk [*each*] of thame salbe [*shall be*] brynt [*branded*] on the cheik with the marking irne that thair may be kennit in tyme to cum, and thairefter gif ony of thame remainis that thair salbe banist but [*without*] favouris."³

¹ "Extracts from the Council Register of the Burgh of Aberdeen," 1398-1570, p. 425.

² "Extracts from the Council Register of the Burgh of Aberdeen, 1398-1570," Spalding Club, 1844, p. 437.

³ "Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh," 1403-1528, pp. 71 and 72.

That these regulations were not merely formal, and that the profession to cure this disease was treated as a grave responsibility, is made clear by the following notice regarding Thomas Lyn, a burges of Edinburgh, under whose treatment Sir Lancelote Patonsoun had died :—

18 JANUARY, 1509

“ Respitt made to Thomas Lyn, burges of Edinburgh, for ye slauchtir of vmquhile [*deceased*] Schir Lancelote Patonsoun, Chapellain, quhilk happinnit be negligent cure and medicine yat ye said Thomas tuk one him to cure and hele ye said vmquhile Schir Lancelote of ye infirmite of ye grantgor, yat he was infekkit with. To endure for xix zeris. (Subscriptum per dominum Regem, apud Edinburghie).”¹

The disease seems to have made its first appearance all over Scotland, as appears from the following five notices in the Treasurer’s accounts, indicating that King James IV. had distributed alms to persons afflicted by the disease at Linlithgow, Stirling, Glasgow and Dalry :—

2 OCTOBER, 1497

“ Item to thaim that hed the grantgor at Linlithquho... .. viijd.”

21 FEBRUARY, 1498

“ Item, that samyn day at the tounne end of Strivelin to the seke folk in the grantgore ijs.”

22 FEBRUARY 1498

“ Item, the xxij day of Februar giffin to the seke folk in the grangore at the tounn end of Glasgo ijs.”

APRIL, 1498

“ . . . seke folk in grangor in Lithgw as the King com in the toune... .. ijs. viijd.”²

1 SEPTEMBER, 1497

“ Item, to a woman with ye grantgore thair (at St. John’s Kirk of Dalrye, when the King was on a Pilgrimage to ‘Quhithirne’) ijs. vjd.”³

It is very probable that these moneys were given to patients who had submitted themselves to different forms of treatment tried upon them by the King himself.

The disease was apparently looked upon with great detestation, for, in 1591, a year of great activity against witches, one of the charges against Ewfame Mackalzane was that she had bewitched Marie Sandelandis and dissuaded her from marrying Joseph Dowglas, of Punfrastoune, alleging that he had the glengore himself. For this, along with twenty-seven other charges, she was taken to the “ Castel-hill of Edinburghie and thair bund to ane staik and brunt in assis, quick, to the death.” This was the severest sentence ever pronounced by the Court, for, in ordinary cases of witchcraft, the culprit was previously strangled at the stake before being burned.⁴

¹ Robert Pitcairn : “ Criminal Trials in Scotland,” Vol. I, Part I, p. 110.

² Sir J. Y. Simpson, Bt. : “ Archaeological Essays,” Vol. II, Edinburgh, 1872, p. 310.

³ Robert Pitcairn : “ Criminal Trials in Scotland,” Vol. I, Part I, p. 117.

⁴ Robert Pitcairn : “ Criminal Trials in Scotland,” Vol. I, Part II, pp. 252 and 257.

Numerous references to the disease occur in the contemporary poems of Sir David Lyndsay and William Dunbar.

Although the disease was present in Glasgow in 1497, the Town Council do not seem to have become seriously alarmed about it until the year 1600, when, on 17th April, the Kirk Session consulted as to how the infection of the glengore within the city might be removed: "Some sent to the Council to deplore the infection that's in this city by the Glengore, and some to convene again in the Blackfriars Kirk anent it, and the whole chirurgeons and professors of medicine to be present. So much was given to a man for bigging a lodge without the Stable Green Port to the women that hath the glengore."¹ A minute of 3rd May, a fortnight later, continues: "The provest, bailleis and counsalle hes appoyntit Weddinsdye nixt, eftir the preiching, to convey thameselffis for taking tryall of the inhabitantis anent the greit suspicioune of sindry persones infectit with the glengoir, quhilk, gif it be nocht preventit, will endanger the haill towne, and hes ordanit the haill chyrurgianes to be warnit to that effect to compeir in the Grayefreir Kirk and qu'haever beis warnit (and comes nocht) to pay fyve li. of vnlaw."² The town's surgeon, Mr. Peter Lowe, had, four years earlier, written a book on the disease which he had called "The Spanish Sicknes." Possibly his large experience in treating "Spaniards and French, both men and women, of divers temperatures, who had often been treated both in Spain, Lowe Countries and Fraunce," and whom, he says, he had cured "by the help of God and my confection," may have had some effect, if not in staying the disease, in robbing it of some of its terrors.³

¹ "Glasgow Ancient and Modern," I, p. 131.

² "Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Glasgow, 1573-1642," p. 206.

³ "Memorials of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow." Maclehose, Glasgow, 1896, p. 15.