

the alderman's cousin, to bring the vintners to terms. With some trouble he obtained from them a promise to pay to the king 40s. per tun on all wine sold by them, on the understanding that they might charge their customers an additional penny per quart. Abell was nominated one of the farmers of the new duty; but many merchants refused to pay it, and Abell petitioned for means to coerce them. In 1639 Abell, whose name had become a byword in the city as a venal supporter of the government and as a placehunter, became the licensor of tavern-keepers, and in that office did not diminish his unpopularity. Barely a month elapsed after the first meeting of the Long Parliament before Abell was summoned to answer the committee of grievances for his part in the imposition of the arbitrary duty of 40s. per tun on wine. On 27 Nov. 1640 he was committed to the custody of the serjeant-at-arms by order of the Commons. Bail was refused, and on 26 May 1641 it was resolved to bring in a bill against Abell and Kilvert as 'projectors' of the 40s. duty, 'to the end to make them exemplary.' On 1 Sept. following Abell was released on bail in 20,000*l.*, and on 9 April 1642, having been declared a 'delinquent,' he offered to make his submission to the house; on payment of 2,000*l.* his request was granted, and pardon promised him. Ten years later Abell was again imprisoned, but in the interval he had resigned his office of alderman. On 12 March 1652 he was given into the custody of Sir John Lenthall on the petition of certain persons to whom he owed money, borrowed in behalf of the Vintners' Company several years previously. He was not, however, kept in close confinement, but allowed to reside with his son at Hatfield, Herts. On 5 May 1652 it was reported to the council of state that he had spoken 'dangerous words' against the existing government, and measures were devised to keep him under closer surveillance. On 25 Feb. 1653-4 he petitioned the judges sitting at Salters' Hall for the payment of 1,333*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* owing to him from persons concerned with him in farming the wine duty. On 7 June 1655 a passport to Holland was given to him, but nothing seems ascertainable of his subsequent career.

A number of pamphlets and broadsides condemning Abell's action in the matter of the wine duty appeared in 1640 and 1641. Soon after his first imprisonment by the Commons Thomas Heywood published (18 Dec. 1640) a tract dealing with 'a priest, a judge, and a patentee,' in which Abell was severely attacked as the patentee. In 1641 appeared 'An Exact Legendary, compendiously con-

taining the whole life of Alderman Abel, the maine Projector and Patentee for the raising of Wines.' He is here described as springing from the lowest class of society, and thriving through his extreme parsimony. His wealth is computed at from 'ten to twelve thousand pounds.' He is denounced as having 'broken' both 'merchants and retailers,' and the city is described as rejoicing in his removal from his shop in Aldermanbury to a 'stronger house.' Other tracts relating to Abell, all of which appeared in 1641, bear the titles: 'The Copie of a Letter sent from the Roaring Boyes in Elizium, to two errant Knights of the Grape in Limbo, Alderman Abel and Mr. Kilvert;' 'Time's Alteration;' and 'The Last Discourse betwixt Master Abel and Master Richard Kilvert.' An attempt to defend Abell from the charge of obtaining by undue influence the consent of the Vintners' Company to the wine duty was printed under the title of 'A True Discovery of the Projectors of the Wine Project,' and a reply to this defence appeared in 'A true Relation of the Proposing, Threatening, and Perswading of the Vintners to yeeld to the Imposition upon Wines.' An engraved portrait of the alderman by Hollar was issued in 1641. Above it is written 'Good wine needs not A-Bush nor A-Bell.' Abell is often referred to in hostile broadsides as 'Cain's brother,' and as 'Alderman Medium.'

[Gardiner's Hist. of England, viii. 286-7; Commons' Journal, vol. ii.; Calendars of State Papers, 1638-41, 1652-3, 1655; Remembrancia, 14 s.; Rushworth's Collections, iv. 277-8; Catalogue of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum—Political and Personal—vol. 1., where full accounts of the broadsides relating to Abell may be found.]  
S. L. L.

**ABERCORN, EARL OF.** [See HAMILTON.]

**ABERCROMBIE, JOHN** (1726-1806), a writer on horticulture, was the son of a market gardener at Prestonpans, near Edinburgh. Having received some education, he began at an early age to work under his father: and when about twenty-five, he found employment in the Royal Gardens at Kew, and Leicester House, and in the service of several noblemen and gentlemen. After a marriage which brought him a numerous family, he began business on his own account as a market gardener at Hackney. While he was thus occupied, his biographer Mean asserts that he was asked, about 1770, by Lockyer Davis, a well-known publisher, to write a work on practical gardening; he consented only on condition that his manuscript should be revised by Oliver Goldsmith; and it is said that the manuscript was sent back by

Goldsmith unaltered, with the remark that Abercrombie's own style was that best suited to the subject. The story can hardly be true in relation to the first edition of Abercrombie's earliest work, since that was not published by Lockyer Davis, who was the publisher of some of his subsequent productions. It appeared in 1767, and was entitled 'Every Man his own Gardener, being a new and more complete Gardener's Kalendar than any one hitherto published.' 'From a diffidence in the writer' (this is Abercrombie's own statement), the volume was represented in the title-page as written 'by Mr. Maw, gardener to the Duke of Leeds,' who had not seen a line of it before publication, and who is said to have received 20*l.* for this use of his name. 'Every Man his own Gardener' soon attained a popularity which it has never wholly lost, a new edition of it having appeared in 1879. It supplied a want scarcely met by the chief work of the kind in vogue at the time of its publication, the 'Gardener's Kalendar' of Philip Miller, and gave for the first time detailed instructions which his practical experience enabled him to furnish. 'Every Man his own Gardener' had gone through seven editions, said to be of 2,000 each, when, in 1779, Abercrombie published under his own name, now well known, 'The British Fruit Gardener and Art of Pruning.' Abercrombie was then in business at Tottenham as a market-gardener and nurseryman. He afterwards seems to have devoted himself to the production of books on horticulture and to the revision and republication of his earlier works. A systematic work on general horticulture, in which the calendar form was discarded, with the title of 'The Practical Gardener,' appeared after his death. In spite of his industry and the great success of some of his manuals, he had, during his last years, to depend for support on the bounty of a friend. He died at or about the age of 80, in the spring of 1806, and left behind him the reputation of an upright man and a cheerful companion. A competent authority among his later editors or annotators, Mr. George Glenny, has called Abercrombie 'the great teacher of gardening.' Next to 'Every Man his own Gardener,' the most popular of his works has been the 'Gardener's Pocket Journal and Daily Assistant,' which in 1857 had reached a thirty-fifth edition. Among his treatises on special departments of horticulture are 'The Complete Forcing Gardener' (1781); 'The Complete Wall Tree Pruner' (1783); 'The Propagation and Botanical Arrangement of Plants and Trees, useful and ornamental' (1784); and 'The Hot House Gardener on the general culture of the pine-

apple and method of pruning early grapes,' &c. (1789); of which last work a German translation appeared at Vienna in 1792.

[Mean's Memoir in second edition of the Practical Gardener (1817); Biographical Sketch prefixed to the 35th edition of the Gardener's Pocket Journal (1857); Preface to Philip Miller's Gardener's Kalendar; Catalogue of the British Museum Library.] F. E.

**ABERCROMBIE, JOHN, M.D. (1780-1814)**, physician, was the only son of the Rev. George Abercrombie, one of the parish ministers of Aberdeen. He was born on 10 Oct. 1780, in Aberdeen, where, at the grammar school and at Marischal College, he received his early education. In 1800 he went to Edinburgh to study medicine, and took his degree there in 1803. The mental aspects of medical science seem already to have attracted him, his inaugural address being 'De Fatuitate Alpina,' a subject to which he recurred in his work on the intellectual powers. He spent about a year in London in further study at St. George's Hospital, and soon after his return to Edinburgh in 1804 began to practise. From the outset of his career his fellow-citizens recognised in him a man of boundless energy and of generous public spirit. Becoming connected with the public dispensary, he gradually gained an intimate knowledge of the moral and physical condition of the poor, and found opportunities for the exercise of those habits of close and accurate observation which were already formed in himself, and which throughout his life he strove to teach to others. He did much to train the medical students of his time. It is recorded as part of his system that he divided the poorer quarters of Edinburgh into districts, and allotted them to different students, himself maintaining a supervision of the whole. Meanwhile he kept with scrupulous care a record of every case of scientific interest that came before him. The results of his observations appeared in a series of papers on pathological subjects, contributed chiefly to the 'Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal' from 1816 to 1824. From these papers were elaborated his two chief works on pathology, published in 1828, in which his aim was rather to group together well-tested facts than to theorise. On the death of Dr. James Gregory in 1821, Abercrombie, whose professional reputation stood very high, immediately became one of the chief consulting physicians in Scotland. He failed, however, in his application for Dr. Gregory's chair of the practice of medicine. In 1823 he was made a licentiate, and in 1824 a fellow, of the Col-

lege of Physicians, and he received the complimentary appointment of physician in ordinary to the king in Scotland. About this time he began the works with which his name has been chiefly associated. Like Dr. Gregory, the friend of Reid, he was led away from science to metaphysics, through a belief that his wide knowledge of nervous diseases enabled him to throw light on mental problems. In 1830 he published a work on the intellectual powers and the application of logical methods to science, followed three years afterwards by another and shorter work on the moral feelings. Both books acquired an instant popularity, which even now has scarcely died away. Immediately after their first publication they were brought out in America. Within ten years there appeared ten English editions of the 'Intellectual Powers,' and in 1860 it was still in such favour that it was introduced as a textbook in the Calcutta University. The causes of this popularity were, no doubt, partly the numerous cases set forth of peculiar mental phenomena, whose detailed record made a dry subject easy and entertaining reading, and partly the pious and practical tone in which the books were written, rendering them acceptable for educational purposes. They have now no philosophical value. Abercrombie's theory of the mind is such as might be expected from a thinker of little originality, who was acquainted with the works of Reid, Brown, and Stewart, and who studiously kept himself from bold speculation as from a thing savouring of impiety. The facts which formed his own contribution to the subject are very rudely classified, and are subjected to the most superficial analysis. Lord Cockburn no doubt referred to the 'Intellectual Powers' and the 'Moral Feelings,' when he said that Dr. Abercrombie's 'fame would perhaps have stood higher had he published fewer books.' During his later years he wrote little besides a few popular essays, which were collected after his death. In 1835 the degree of doctor of medicine was conferred upon him by Oxford. In the following year the students of Marischal College elected him their lord rector. Before the disruption he hesitated long as to the course which he should take, but he finally decided to quit the established church. He died very suddenly on 14 Nov. 1844, of a somewhat exceptional disease of the heart, a full account of which is given in the 'Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal,' lxxiii. 225. The report, drawn up by Dr. Adam Hunter, states that Abercrombie's brain weighed 63 oz., being only a little less than the weight of Cuvier's.

A list of his early papers is given in Raige-Delorme and Dechambre's 'Dict. Encycl. des sciences médicales.' His principal works were the following: 1. 'Pathological and Practical Researches on Diseases of the Brain and Spinal Cord,' Edinburgh, 1828; 2nd edition, enlarged, 1829. 2. 'Pathological and Practical Researches on Diseases of the Stomach, the Intestinal Canal, the Liver, and the other Viscera of the Abdomen,' Edinburgh, 1828. 3. 'Inquiries concerning the Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth,' Edinburgh, 1830. 4. 'The Philosophy of the Moral Feelings,' London, 1833. 5. A collected edition of 'Essays and Tracts,' chiefly on moral and religious subjects, Edinburgh, 1847.

In 'Hogg's Instructor,' iii. 145, will be found a portrait of Dr. Abercrombie, and in the 'Scottish Nation,' i. 3, a woodcut of the medallion on his monument in the West Churchyard, Edinburgh.

[Edin. Med. and Surg. Journal, lxxiii. 225; Witness, 23 Nov. 1844; Rev. J. Bruce's Funeral Sermon; Anderson's Scottish Nation, i. 3; Hogg's Instructor, iii. 145; Lobbs's Abercrombie as a Text-Book in the Calcutta University; Cockburn's Journal, ii. 203-4.] G. P. M.

**ABERCROMBY, ALEXANDER** (1745-1795), Scotch judge and essayist, the fourth and youngest son of George Abercromby, of Tullibody, in Clackmannanshire, was born on 15 Oct. 1745. Two of his brothers entered the army, one of them becoming the celebrated general Sir Ralph Abercromby. Alexander studied at the university of Edinburgh, where he seems to have been chiefly distinguished for his handsome person and engaging disposition. He was admitted a member of the Faculty of Advocates in 1766, and was soon afterwards appointed sheriff-depute of his native county. Personal residence, however, not being required, he continued the practice of his profession at the bar. In 1780 he resigned his sheriffship and was appointed one of the advocates-depute by Henry Dundas, then lord-advocate of Scotland, and acquired a good practice. He also helped Henry Mackenzie, the author of the 'Man of Feeling,' to start the 'Mirror,' published at Edinburgh in 1779, and contributed to the 'Lounger' in 1785 and 1786. Abercromby's papers show much correctness of style and tenderness of expression. In 1792 he took his seat on the bench of the Court of Session under the courtesy title of Lord Abercromby, and a few months afterwards was appointed one of the lords commissioners of justiciary. On 17 Nov. 1795, he died of pulmonary disease at Exmouth.

Lord Abercromby's known contributions to literature consist of ten papers in the 'Mirror' and nine in the 'Lounger.'

[Notice of Lord Abercromby by Henry Mackenzie in the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, vol. iv. part 1. app. L.] J. B. P.

**ABERCROMBY, ALEXANDER** (1784-1853), colonel, was the youngest son of Sir Ralph Abercromby, and was born in 1784. He entered the army at an early age, and served as a volunteer with the 92nd regiment in the expedition to the Helder in 1799. He soon obtained his commission, and saw service with his regiment in Egypt. He was appointed aide-de-camp to his father's old lieutenant and friend, Sir John Moore, during his command in Sicily in 1806, but was not with him in Spain. Like his brother, Sir John, he was rapidly promoted, and in 1808, when only twenty-four, became lieutenant-colonel of the 28th regiment. He accompanied his regiment when it was sent to Portugal to reinforce Lord Wellington after the battle of Talavera. He commanded it at the battle of Busaco, and in the lines of Torres Vedras, and as senior colonel had the good fortune to command his brigade at the battle of Albuera. His services there were very conspicuous, and his brigade has been immortalised by Napier. He was soon superseded, but commanded his regiment at the surprise of Arroyo de Molinos and the storming of the forts at Almaraz. In 1812 he was removed to the staff of the army, and was present as assistant-quarter-master-general at the battles of Vittoria, the Pyrenees, and Orthes. He served in the same capacity in 1815, and was present at Quatre-Bras, Waterloo, and the storming of Peronne. For his active services he was promoted to a colonelcy in the 2nd or Coldstream guards, and made a companion of the Bath, a knight of the order of Maria Theresa of Austria, of St. George of Russia. He was returned to parliament in 1817 for the county of Clackmannan in the place of his brother Sir John, but retired in the following year. He was for some time in command of the 2nd guards, but retired on half-pay when there seemed to be no chance of another war, and died at his country seat in Scotland in 1853. He had no small share of the military ability of his family, and was an admirable regimental and staff officer; but the long peace which followed the battle of Waterloo gave him no opportunity to show whether he had his father's ability to command an army.

[For his services see the Royal Military Calendar, vol. iv., and occasional allusions in the

Wellington Despatches; for the battle of Albuera see Napier's Peninsular War, book xii. chaps. 6 and 7, and the discussion which arose on these chapters in the United Service Magazine and published pamphlets.] H. M. S.

**ABERCROMBY, DAVID** (d. 1701-25), was a Scottish physician of the seventeenth century. Half a century after his death, his 'Nova Medicinæ Praxis' (1685) was reprinted at Paris (1740); and during his lifetime his 'Tuta ac efficax Luis Veneræ, sæpe absque Mercurio ac semper absque Salivatione mercuriali, curandæ Methodus' (1684, 8vo), was translated into French (Paris, 1690), as by 'celebre médecin d'Angleterre;' and into Dutch (Amsterdam, 1691) by no less than J. B. Lusart. It was also translated into German (Dresden, 1702, 8vo). His books also gave him a place of honour in Haller's 'Bibliotheca Medicinæ Pract.' (4 vols. 4to, iii. 619, 1779). His other professional works are: 'De Variatione et Varietate Pulsus Observationes' (London and Paris, 1685); and 'Ars explorandi Medicas Facultates Plantarum ex solo Sapore' (London, 1685-8, 12mo). His 'Opuscula' were collected in 1687.

But it is as a metaphysician rather than as a physician that he lives, and ought to live. His 'Discourse of Wit' (1686)—wrongly assigned by some writers to Patrick Abercromby—has somehow fallen out of sight, but none the less is it a more than ordinarily noticeable book. It antedates the (so-called) 'Scottish School of Philosophy' a century nearly; for in it Dr. Thomas Reid's philosophy of common sense—since glorified by Sir William Hamilton—is distinctly taught. (Of kin with it is the following: 'Academia Scientiarum, or the Academy of Sciences: being a Short and Easie Introduction to the Knowledge of the Liberal Arts and Sciences, with the names of those famous authors that have written on any particular Science. In English and Latine' (1687, 12mo). This is arranged alphabetically from Algebra to Rectiline Trigonometry, and is far ahead of its age. Equally weighty and characteristic is another treatise, 'A Moral Discourse of the Power of Interest; by David Abercromby, M.D. and Fellow of the Colledge of Physicians in Amsterdam' (London, 1690, 12mo). This is dedicated worthily to Boyle. 'Almighty interest'—perhaps the prototype of the American 'almighty dollar'—is here asserted to be 'the undoubted cause of all the Transactions of the Politick World.' The 'Discourse' is packed with capital stories and racy and sometimes severely sarcastic sayings.

Biographically, a little book of his, hitherto

entirely neglected, is the most interesting of all. Its title-page runs thus: 'Protestancy to be Embrac'd; or a New and Infallible Method to Reduce Romanists from Popery to Protestancy. A Treatise of great Use to all His Majestie's Subjects, and necessary to prevent Errors and Popery. By David Abercromby, [M.]D., Lately Converted, after he had Profess'd near nineteen years Jesuitism and Popery. London, printed for the author by Thomas Hodgkin, 1682,' 12mo. It was republished in 1686 as 'Protestancy proved Safer than Popery' (12mo).

There is a good deal of personal autobiographical matter in the introduction, by which we learn that he was born into a Roman catholic (Scottish) family, and educated as such, 'because that all his nearest relations were, and ever were, for the most part, zealous Romanists' (p. 13). 'I was bred up,' he says, 'in my greener years at Doway, and in a short time became so good a proficient in the mysteries of popery, that I enter'd the order of Jesuits in France at my first instance: I lived amongst them full eighteen years and more, and I may say, without vanity, in some repute of a scholar, being judg'd after a solemn examen capable to teach divinity and philosophy in the most renowned universities of Europe, which is the Jesuits way of graduating their own men in divinity. I taught in France grammar, in Lorrain mathematics and philosophy, and being graduate in physick, I practis'd it not unhappily; and intend to practice it hereafter, with certain hopes, God willing, of the same good success' (pp. 2-5).

Continuing on his spiritual and intellectual difficulties and doubts, he adds: 'Being thus perplex'd in mind, and, as Hercules *in vivo*, uncertain what way to make choice of, I came to Scotland, where, because of some repute I had got abroad of a scholar, I was put instantly to work by the Jesuits against M. Menzies, a professor of divinity in Aberdeen. I wrote then in a short time a treatise of some bulk against his way of defending the protestant religion, but neither to my own satisfaction, though several others, seeing things but under one light, seem'd to be persuaded by my arguments; nor to the satisfaction of most Romanists, who thought and said my doctrine in some material points was not unlike or the same with that of Protestants' (pp. 10-11). He remained in Scotland about two years, and 'after an accurate parallel of Protestancy and Popery, and a scrupulous scrutiny of the most material grounds they both stood on,' he renounced the latter, and 'came to London as

to a safe sanctuary' where he might 'serve God in all freedom and security' (p. 11). He protests: 'They [his Roman catholic friends and relatives] cannot say that any other motive but that of saving my soul in the securest way caus'd me to withdraw from them and side with Protestants. They know I was in a condition amongst them to want for nothing, being supplied with all necessaries sufficiently; but now I must rely on God's providence and my own industry' (p. 14). There is rare acuteness and force in his argumentation.

The last occurrence of his name is in the following work: 'Fur Academicus sive Academia Ornamentis Spoliata a Furibus, qui in Parnasso coram Apolline sistuntur, ubi Criminis sui accusantur et convincuntur Auctore Davide Abercrombio Scoto, M.D. Editio secunda, Amstelod. 1701' (12mo). This consists of scholastic and medical discussions. It would appear that he passed over to reside and practise as a physician in Holland (Amsterdam). The date of his death is unknown. He was living, says Haller, 'early in the eighteenth century.' It will be observed that in 'Fur Academicus' he is designated 'Scotus' (Scoto). He is believed to have belonged to the Abercrombys of Seatoun or Seatoun. Curiously enough, so recently as 1833, Mr. James Maidment, of Edinburgh, printed privately for the first time 'A Short Account of Scots Divines' by him.

[Abercromby's books, as cited; Catalogues of Scotch Writers (published in 1833 by Mr. James Maidment), p. 62.] A. B. G.

**ABERCROMBY, JAMES**, first **BARON DUNFERMLINE** (1776-1858), third son of General Sir Ralph Abercromby [see **ABERCROMBY, SIR RALPH**], was born 7 Nov. 1776. He was educated for the English bar, and was called at Lincoln's Inn in 1801, soon after which he obtained a commissionership of bankruptcy. Subsequently he became steward of the estates of the Duke of Devonshire. In 1807 he entered parliament as member for Midhurst, and in 1812 he was returned for Calne, which he continued to represent till 1830. Without special claims for promotion as a politician, he owed his success chiefly to his power of clear and judicious statement, and the prudent use he made of opportunities. His career was also influenced to a considerable extent by the prominent part which he took in the discussion of Scotch business. In 1824 and 1826 he brought forward a motion for a bill to amend the representation of the city of Edinburgh; but although on both occasions he received large support, the

power of election remained until 1832 in the hands of the self-elected council of thirty-three. On the accession of the whigs to power under Canning in 1827, Abercromby was appointed judge-advocate-general. In 1830 he became chief baron of the exchequer of Scotland, and when in 1832 the office was abolished, he received a pension of 2,000*l.* a year. A parliamentary career being again open to him, he was chosen along with Francis Jeffrey to represent Edinburgh in the first reformed parliament. As on various questions of privilege he had manifested a special knowledge of the forms of the house, he was put forward by his party as a candidate for the speakership, but the vote was in favour of Manners Sutton. In 1834 he entered the cabinet of Lord Grey as master of the mint, but the ministry became disunited on the Irish question. At the opening of the new parliament in 1835 the condition of the political atmosphere was in some respects so uncertain, that the choice of a speaker awakened exceptional interest as a touchstone of party strength; and amid much excitement Abercromby was chosen over Manners Sutton by 316 votes to 310. As speaker Abercromby acted with great impartiality, while he possessed sufficient decision to quell any serious tendency to disorder. His term of office was marked by the introduction of several important reforms in the management of private bills, tending to simplify the arrangements and minimise the opportunities for jobbery. In spite of failing health he retained office till May 1839. On retiring he received a pension of 4,000*l.* a year, and was created Baron Dunfermline of Dunfermline in the county of Fife. He died at Colinton House, Midlothian, 17 April 1868.

Lord Dunfermline, after his retirement, continued to interest himself in public affairs connected with Edinburgh, and was one of the originators of the United Industrial School for the support and training of destitute children, with a provision for voluntary religious instruction in accordance with the beliefs of the parents. He wrote a life of his father, Sir Ralph Abercromby, which was published posthumously in 1861.

[Gent. Mag. 3rd series, iv. 547-551; Annual Register, c. 403-5; Anderson, History of Edinburgh (1856); Journal of Lord Cockburn (1874); Memoirs of Lord Brougham, iii. 230-231; Greville Memoirs, ii. 333, iii. 95, 201, 204, 213; Encyclopædia Britannica, 9th edit. i. 37.]

T. F. H.

**ABERCROMBY, JOHN** (*d.* 1561?), a scotch monk of the order of St. Benedict,

was a staunch opponent of the doctrines of the Reformation, and on that account was condemned to death and executed about the year 1561. He was the author of 'Veritatis Defensio' and 'Hereseos Confusio.' It does not appear that either of these works was printed.

[Demjster, Hist. Eccl. Gentis Scotorum, i. 28; Tanner, Bibl. Britannico-Hibernica.] T. C.

**ABERCROMBY, SIR JOHN** (1772-1817), general, was the second son of the famous Sir Ralph Abercromby, and the elder of the two sons who followed their father's profession. He entered the army in 1786 at the age of fourteen, as ensign in the 75th regiment, of which his uncle Robert was colonel. He became lieutenant in the same regiment in 1787, and captain in 1792, and first saw service as aide-de-camp to his father in the campaigns in Flanders in 1793 and 1794. His father's military reputation and dependence on his services caused him to rise rapidly. In May 1794 he became major in the 94th, and in July, when only twenty-two, lieutenant-colonel in the 112th regiment. In 1796 he exchanged into the 53rd, and accompanied his father to the West Indies in 1796 and 1797, to Ireland in 1798, and in the expedition to the Helder in 1799 as military secretary. This was a post of more than usual importance on the staff of Sir Ralph, who was extremely short-sighted, and had in action to depend entirely for his knowledge of what was happening on his personal staff. In this capacity young Abercromby particularly distinguished himself, and on more than one occasion, notably at the attack on Morne Fortunée in St. Lucia, the father owed much of his success to his son's power of explaining the military situation. He was promoted colonel on 1 Jan. 1800, and thus removed by his rank from his father's personal staff, but was appointed a deputy-adjutant-general in the army under Sir Ralph in the Mediterranean, and attached to General Hutchinson's division. In Egypt he greatly distinguished himself, and was at least twice publicly thanked by General Hutchinson in general orders.

At the time of the rupture of the peace of Amiens in 1803, he unfortunately happened to be travelling in France, and with other travelling Englishmen was seized and imprisoned by Napoleon at Verdun. Nevertheless in his absence he was promoted major-general in 1805, and made colonel of his old regiment, the 53rd, in 1807. He was at last exchanged for General Brennier, who had been taken prisoner by Sir A. Wellesley at the battle of Vimeiro in 1808, was allowed to return to England, and was appointed

commander-in-chief at Bombay in 1809. In this capacity he led the division from Bombay, which was to co-operate in the expedition sent by Lord Minto from India to capture the Mauritius. This island, which formed the base of the French fleet and of innumerable French privateers, caused immense damage to the Indiamen sailing between England and India, and Lord Minto had determined to subdue it. On his way the Ceylon, on which General Abercromby and his staff had embarked, was taken by the French frigate *Venus*, but on 18 Sept. was fortunately recaptured by Captain Rowley in the *Boadicea*. On 22 Nov. he left the island of Rodriguez with the Madras and Bombay divisions, and was joined, when in sight of the Mauritius, by the division from Bengal. He took command of the whole force as senior general present, and on 29 Nov. disembarked at an open roadstead, and advanced with 6,300 Europeans, 2,000 sailors lent to him by Admiral Bertie, and 3,000 Sepoys, upon Port Louis, the capital of the island. On 30 Nov. he fought a smart action, which showed the French general that resistance was impossible, and on 2 Dec. Decaen surrendered the island. Abercromby returned to Bombay in 1811, and continued to command the forces there till 1812, when he was appointed commander-in-chief and temporary governor of Madras. This presidency had lately been disturbed by the well-known mutiny of the Madras officers, on account of which Sir George Barlow had been recalled: but the quiet manner and good nature of General Abercromby had as good an effect as similar qualities had had during his uncle Sir Robert's command at Calcutta. In May 1813 Mr. Hugh Elliot assumed the governorship, and in December of the same year General Abercromby's health was so much impaired by the climate that he had to go home. On his return he was well received; he had been promoted lieutenant-general in 1812, and was now in 1814, on the extension of the order of the Bath, made a K.C.B. In 1815 his brother George resigned the seat for Clackmannan to him, and in 1816 he was made a G.C.B.: but his health was too bad for him to take any prominent part in politics, and on 14 Feb. 1817, when on the continent for his health, he died at Marseilles, where he was buried with full military honours. Some French writers have asserted that he was in command of an escort which conducted Napoleon to St. Helena: but there does not seem to be any record of the presence of any troops or any general officer on board the Northumberland, except the ordinary complement of marines. Sir John seems to have

possessed the military abilities of his family but had but little chance of showing them, except as military secretary to his father, and in the easy conquest of the Mauritius.

[For General John Abercromby's services in early life see the memoir of his father; for his services in Egypt see Sir R. Wilson's Campaign in Egypt; and for the capture of the Mauritius see the despatches in the Annual Register and Gentleman's Magazine, the Asiatic Annual Register, and Lady Minto's Lord Minto in India.]  
H. M. S.

**ABERCROMBY, PATRICK** (1656-1716 ?), Scottish antiquary and historical writer, was the third son of Alexander Abercromby of Fetterneir in Aberdeenshire, a branch of the house of Birkenbog in Banffshire, and which again was a migration from Abercromby of Abercromby in Fifeshire. He was born at Forfar in 1656. Like David Abercromby he was born into a Roman catholic family, and accordingly would not attend the parish school, but was probably educated first privately and then abroad (as he himself seems to indicate in the preface to his *magnum opus*). This probably explains his Roman catholicism and adhesion to James II. He graduated at St. Andrew's University in 1685. It has been alleged that he passed to the university of Paris, and there pursued his studies. His phrase of having 'spent most of his early years abroad' points rather to this having preceded his entry at St. Andrew's. On the completion of his professional course he is found practising as a physician in Edinburgh, according to his biographers; his title-pages assure us that he was 'M.D.:' he probably therefore gave himself to his professional duties with all fidelity and success, although some confusion with David Abercromby has apparently led his biographers to emphasise disproportionately his career as a doctor. When his brother Francis, eldest son of the family, was created Lord Glassford (or Glasford) on his marriage with Anna, Baroness Sempill, in July 1685, Patrick was appointed physician to James II. But this post he naturally vacated at the revolution.

When, in the reign of Queen Anne, the project of the union between England and Scotland took shape and substance, he rushed into the fray. Two considerable pamphlets by him attest at once his capacity and zeal: 'Advantage of the Act of Security compared with those of the intended Union' (Edinburgh, 1707), and 'A Vindication of the Same against Mr. De Foe' (Edinburgh, 1707). The logic was with Defoe, but the sentiment—more powerful—was with Aber-

cromby. The disadvantages of union, or, as he held, absorption and extinction, were near at hand, and the advantages remote and contingent on a thousand circumstances and uncertainties. Hence to Lord Belhaven and Allan Ramsay and Abercromby union with mighty England had the look of selling the national birthright of independence and freedom won at Bannockburn.

A minor work of Abercromby was a translation of M. Beauugé's *L'Histoire de la Guerre d'Ecosse* (1556) as follows: 'The History of the Campagnes, 1548 and 1549; being an exact account of the martial expeditions performed in those days by the Scots and French on the one hand, and the English and their foreign auxiliaries on the other; done in French by Mons. Beauugé, a French gentleman; with an introductory preface by the Translator' (1707). The 'Preface' is well written. The original was reprinted for the Maitland Club by one of its members (Smythe of Methuen), who betrays slight knowledge of either the language or the book, or ability to judge of Abercromby's translation. More recently the Comte de Montalembert edited a reproduction (Bordeaux, 1862, 8vo).

But the work that has kept Abercromby's name alive is his *'Martial Atchievements of the Scots Nation; being an account of the lives, characters, and memorable actions of such Scotsmen as have signaliz'd themselves by the sword at home and abroad; and a survey of the military transactions wherein Scotland or Scotsmen have been remarkably concern'd, from the first Establishment of the Scots Monarchy to this present Time.'* This extraordinary work occupies two great folios, vol. i. 1711, vol. ii. 1716. The author modestly disclaimed the name of historian in vol. i., but in vol. ii. felt entitled to assume it. There is much of myth and 'padding,' but there is indubitably much more of genuine historical and biographical research. It could not have been otherwise; for besides his own untiring exertions he was ably, seconded by Sir Thomas Craig, Sir George Mackenzie, Alexander Nisbet, and Thomas Ruddiman—the last his printer (in vol. ii.). With every abatement the *'Martial Atchievements'* is a book of which Scotland, at least, may well be proud. Singularly enough, the date of his death is still uncertain. It has been assigned to 1715, 1716, 1720, and 1726. It has been alleged that he left a widow in great poverty. In 1716 he must have been living, for Crawford, in his *'Peerage'*, calls him 'my worthy friend.' Probably he died in or soon after 1716. A manuscript, entitled *'Memoirs of the Abercrombys,'* elaborately drawn up by him, seems to have perished.

[Works as cited; Anderson's *Scottish Nation*; A. Chalmers's *Biog. Dict.*; G. Chalmers's *Life of Ruddiman*, pp. 58-9; Crawford's *Peerage* (1716), p. 167; art. in *Encyc. Brit.* 9th ed. by the present writer.] A. B. G.

**ABERCROMBY, SIR RALPH** (1734-1801), the general who shares with Sir John Moore the credit of renewing the ancient discipline and military reputation of the British soldier, was born at Menstry, near Tullibody, in October 1734. His father was a descendant of the family of Abercromby of Birkenbog, and was the chief whig landed proprietor in the little Scotch county of Clackmannan. Mr. George Abercromby had married a Miss Dundas, and had thus increased his own political importance and prepared an important connection for his son. Young Ralph was educated at Rugby, and then studied law at the universities of Edinburgh and Leipzig. But he felt such a distaste for the legal profession, that his father gave way to him, and in 1756 procured him a cornetcy in the 3rd dragoon guards. In 1758 he accompanied his regiment to Germany, where it formed part of the English force under the command of Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, the victor of Minden, and he was soon appointed aide-de-camp to General Sir William Pitt. He now saw a good deal of active warfare, and had a good opportunity of studying the advantages and essentials of the strict discipline of the Prussian system. He was promoted lieutenant in 1760 and captain in 1762, and at the conclusion of peace went with his regiment to Ireland. Here he was stationed for several years, and had an opportunity of studying that country, which stood him in good stead at the most critical period of his military career. His life continued its even tenor of domestic and military occupation; and the prolonged life of his father, who lived till the advanced age of ninety-five, saved him from the necessity of retiring from the service and looking after the paternal estate. In 1767 he married Miss Menzies, with whom he lived very happily, and was promoted in due course major in 1770, and lieutenant-colonel in 1773.

But a change was at hand, and he was asked to contest the county of Clackmannan, which his grandfather and other members of his family had represented, in the whig interest. The election was, like all elections in Scotland at the time, contested with extreme bitterness. His opponent, Colonel Erskine, was supported by all the old Jacobite families, who felt a personal animosity against the whigs. The election terminated, as often happened at this time, in a duel between



the two candidates, fortunately without any mishap to either side, and Colonel Abercromby was returned by the influence of his relative, Sir Lawrence Dundas. The plunge into politics was not a fortunate one for Colonel Abercromby. He refused to vote for the interests and at the bidding of his powerful relative, and by his opposition to the American war forfeited all chance of professional advancement. This opposition was the more creditable to him, as he longed to see service at the head of his regiment. His brothers did not feel as he did, and, while James Abercromby fell at Brooklyn, Robert fought his way to high honour and the command of his regiment. At last, disgusted with political life, Ralph Abercromby gave up his seat in parliament and retired in favour of his brother Burnet, who had made a fortune in India, and then, retiring to Edinburgh, devoted himself to the education of his children.

The war with France destroyed the chance of his ending his life as a colonel on half-pay. He had no hesitation in applying for a command, and, having a great military reputation and much parliamentary influence, he was at once promoted major-general and ordered to proceed with a brigade to Flanders. It is not necessary to go into the details of the disastrous campaigns in Flanders under the Duke of York, but in every engagement General Abercromby distinguished himself. He first made his mark at Furnes, commanded the storming column at the siege of Valenciennes, and was publicly thanked by the Duke of York for his conduct at Roubaix. It was in the retreat, however, that he was most conspicuous. When the Duke of York returned to England, his successors, General Harcourt and General Walmoden, proved incompetent, and on General Abercromby, who commanded the rear column, fell the real burden of the retreat of the dispirited troops before the impetuous onset of the republican army. Under him Lieutenant-colonel Wellesley commanded the 33rd regiment, and learned his first lesson in the art of war. On his return to England in the beginning of 1795 he was made a knight of the Bath, and, almost to his own surprise, found himself considered his country's greatest general. He had learned from this disastrous retreat the terrible deterioration in the military discipline of the English army. His last campaigns had been those of Minden and the Seven Years' war, and he had no difficulty in understanding the causes of the failure of the English. The American war of itself would have been enough to sap the discipline of any army, but there were yet further causes. The American war, like all

civil wars, had made the soldiery more ferocious and less easy of control, and, like all wars abounding in defeats, had deprived them of confidence in victory; and at the beginning of the French war they had no strong feelings to animate them, and no *esprit de corps* to take the place of strong feelings. The army was like a neglected machine; its officers knew they owed their grades to political influence, and the ministers were not slow to use these grades for political purposes; while the soldiers were regarded as an unimportant factor in an army, and were secured and provided for as cheaply as possible. The result of such corruption and false economy appeared in Flanders. Sir Harry Calvert, a keen observer, who afterwards became adjutant-general, remarked that Abercromby's own brigade consisted of old men and weak boys, and reminded him of Falstaff's ragged ruffians.

In November 1795 Abercromby was ordered to start for the West Indies at the head of 15,000 men to reduce the French sugar islands. He was at first driven back by a storm, but reached Jamaica early in 1796. He at once set about his task. He first reduced the island of St. Lucia, with its great and hitherto impregnable fortress of Morne Fortunée, and left his ablest lieutenant, Moore, to govern his acquisition. He then took Demerara, relieved St. Vincent, and reorganised the defences both of that island and of Grenada. He also examined the condition of the health of soldiers in the West Indian climate, had the uniform altered for the hot climate, forbade parades in the heat of the sun, established mountain stations and sanatoria, and encouraged personal valour and self-reliance both in men and officers, by giving the former pecuniary rewards and small civil posts, and by placing the latter on the staff, even when not recommended by the authorities. He went home for the summer, but returned at the end of 1796 and took Trinidad, of which he made Colonel Picton governor. He failed, however, at Porto Rico, through the inadequacy of the force at his command, and then threw up his command from ill-health.

His fame was more assured than ever, and he was sent to Ireland in December 1797 to command the troops there. He had had a great experience of the state of Ireland when his regiment was stationed there, and, knowing what he did, refused to be hoodwinked by the officials at Dublin Castle, or to connive at their schemes. The situation was a perilous one. The English cabinet and Irish officials had fixed their attention on the intrigues of the leading patriots and club

rators, rather than on the populace who would take part in a rebellion. And this populace had been inflamed to revolution pitch more by the arbitrary and cruel proceedings of the troops in Ireland than by the declarations of demagogues or the bribes of the French directory. The late commander-in-chief Luttrell, Lord Carhampton, had been ferocious enough, but it was rather of the conduct of the troops than of their commanders that the Irish people complained. The garrison of Ireland consisted nearly entirely of English and Scotch militia and protestant Irish yeomanry. Without the discipline of soldiers, they committed most fearful excesses, and the officials wished to condone their offences because the militia were only serving in Ireland as volunteers, and could demand to be sent home. Abercromby was too thorough a soldier to meet their wishes, and on 26 Feb. 1798 issued his famous general order, that the militia were far more dangerous to their friends than their enemies. The castle soon wished to get rid of this obnoxious Scotchman who would abuse their yeomanry, on which they depended, and try to remove the militia, whose services they wanted, and who seemed to expect that the Irish peasants should not be wantonly ill-treated; the authorities soon made a pretty quarrel between him and Lord Camden, the lord lieutenant, on which Abercromby resigned his command. He soon found he was not in disgrace at home, for he was at once appointed commander of the forces in Scotland.

In 1799 he was summoned to London by Mr. Dundas to discuss a project for a descent on Holland. He was appointed to command the first division, and was informed of two distinct projects. The first was to co-operate with a fleet in capturing the remnant of the Dutch fleet which had been beaten at Camperdown, and the second to make a powerful diversion, with the help of the Russians, in favour of the Archduke Charles and Suwaroff, who were both marching to invade France. On 13 Aug. he set sail with his division of 10,000 men, effected a landing at the Helder after a smart action on 27 Aug., and on 30 Aug. heard that the Dutch fleet had surrendered to Admiral Mitchell, though nominally to the Stadtholder. Thus the first project was accomplished; the second could not be attempted without a larger force. On 10 Sept. he defeated an attack made on his position by General Daendels, and on 13 Sept. was superseded by the Duke of York. When the Russians had disembarked, the duke ordered an attack on Bergen, which took place on 19 Sept., but was foiled by the impetuosity of the Russians. On 2 Oct. a yet more

elaborate attack on Bergen failed. In this Abercromby had to lead the right column along the sand to Egmont-op-Zee. He was completely successful after an engagement in which he had two horses killed under him, but the operation failed through the failure of the other columns. These failures were followed on 20 Oct. by the disgraceful convention of Alkmar, by which the English restored their prisoners, on condition that they should be allowed to embark undisturbed. This failure disgusted Abercromby, but the ministry were so pleased with the capture of the fleet that they wished to make him a peer as Lord Egmont or Lord Bergen, but he refused indignantly to have his name associated with a disgraceful failure.

He now had a very few quiet months in his command in Scotland, where he was immensely popular, as was shown by his unopposed re-election for Clackmannan during his absence in the West Indies; but he had for ever renounced political life, and resigned in favour of his brother Robert. He was then appointed to succeed Sir Charles Stuart in the command of the troops in the Mediterranean. He reached Minorca in June 1800, but the battle of Marengo prevented his being able to land in Italy as the ministry had directed. He therefore waited for orders, and spent his time in trying to improve the physical condition and the *morale* of his army. Orders at last came for him to proceed to Gibraltar, absorb a force under Sir James Pulteney, and make a descent on Cadiz with the co-operation of Vice-admiral Lord Keith. He accordingly arrived at Cadiz on 3 Oct. with 20,000 men, but failed to make a landing. The causes of the failure have been the subject of bitter controversy, but it may be asserted that no blame is to be laid on either side. Keith, who must have known, declared the anchorage unsafe; Abercromby refused to land unless the fleet would stop with him a fortnight. He, however, made an attempt to land on 5 Oct., but, owing to the slowness of the men in getting into the boats, not more than 3,000 men could have been got to shore in a whole day, and it would have been too dangerous to leave them unsupported. Admiral and general agreed, therefore, to retire. The latter had not to wait long for further orders, for on 24 Oct. he was directed to proceed with all his troops to Egypt to expel or capture the French army left there by Napoleon. He reached Malta on 19 Nov., and was delighted with its power of defence, about which he wrote to the government, begging them to make Malta the head-quarters of the Mediterranean army instead of Minorca. On 13 Dec. he left Malta,

and cast anchor in the bay of Marmorice on 27 Dec. Here he waited six weeks, receiving some slight reinforcements, and discovering that the Turks were quite useless as allies. But while waiting he looked after his soldiers' health, and practised disembarkments until the whole force thoroughly understood how to promptly disembark, and every man knew his place in his boat. At last, giving up any hope of assistance from the Turks, he set sail from Marmorice Bay with 14,000 infantry, 1,000 cavalry, and 600 artillery. On 2 March he anchored in Aboukir Bay, and on 8 March effected a landing in force in a single day, thanks to former practice. The opposition of the French was vigorous enough to show Abercromby he had no mean enemy to encounter, and he decided to march slowly and cautiously to Alexandria. He had a couple of skirmishes on 13 and 18 March, and then heard that the French general Menou was coming out to attack him. On 21 March accordingly, the French made a violent attack, but without effect, owing to the splendid conduct of Moore and his division, who held the right, and more particularly of the 28th regiment. In the end Menou was beaten back with immense loss, including three generals killed, while the English loss was only 1,464 killed and wounded. Among the latter was Sir Ralph Abercromby, who, riding in front in his usual reckless manner, was wounded in the thigh by a musket-ball. He was carried to the Foudroyant, the flagship. 'What is it you have placed under my head?' asked the wounded general. 'Only a soldier's blanket,' answered the aide-de-camp, who afterwards became General Sir John Macdonald. 'Only a soldier's blanket? Make haste and return it to him at once.' When carried on board he seemed to rally, but the improvement did not last, and on 28 March he died on board the flagship. He was buried at Malta, where a simple monument was erected to his memory; a more enduring monument has remained in the peerage conferred upon his wife as Baroness Abercromby of Tullibody and Aboukir Bay; but the most enduring of all lies in his unstained honour as a soldier.

When Abercromby came to the front in the campaign in Flanders, England had not a single great or even tolerable general, unless we except Lord Cornwallis, and her army was in a terrible state of degeneration. When he died, after having served in every important campaign, he left many a worthy successor and an army second to none in everything but equipment. He formed a regular school of officers, of whom may be mentioned John Moore, John Hope and Robert Anstruther,

and James Kempt, his adjutant-general, quartermaster-general, and military secretary in Egypt, Hildebrand Oakes, Thomas Graham, Rowland Hill, Cradock, Doyle, Edward Paget, and his own sons, John and Alexander Abercromby—as goodly a collection of officers as ever were formed by any general. It is more difficult to breathe the spirit of military prowess and military discipline into an army than to win a battle; and this is what Abercromby did. No wonder, then, that Moore and Hope for instance, probably his superiors in military ability, did not grudge giving him the credit for such victories as Morne Fortunée and Alexandria, which they really won, for they looked on him as the regenerator of the English army. No biography of Sir Ralph would be complete which did not notice his extreme short-sightedness, almost blindness, which made him depend for sight at different times on Moore, Kempt, and his son John, nor yet without noticing the singular sweetness and purity of his domestic life, which made all who came across him, from the Duke of York, whom he eclipsed, to Lord Camden, with whom he quarrelled, acknowledge the charm of his society.

Sir Ralph left four sons: 1. George Ralph, M.P. for Edinburgh and Clackmannan, who succeeded his mother as Lord Abercromby, 1821; 2. Lieutenant-general Sir John Abercromby, G.C.B.; 3. James, M.P. for Edinburgh, speaker, and first Lord Dunfermline; 4. Alexander, colonel, C.B., M.P., &c.

[The best authority for his life is a short Memoir of his Father by James, Lord Dunfermline, published in 1861; but there are also short biographies in Gleig's *Eminent British Military Commanders*, vol. iii., and the *Royal Military Panorama*, vol. iii.; for the campaigns in Flanders see, besides the despatches, Sir H. Calvert's *Journal*; for the West Indian campaigns see the supplement to Bryan Edwards's *History of the West Indies*, and the *Naval Histories of Brenton and James*; for the expedition to Egypt consult Moore's *Life of Sir John Moore*, the various contemporary journals and magazines, and more particularly Sir Robert Wilson's *Expedition to Egypt*.] H. M. S.

**ABERCROMBY, ROBERT** (1534–1613), a Scotch Jesuit, who, after entering the order, spent twenty-three years in assisting catholics abroad, and nineteen years on the Scotch mission, where he suffered imprisonment. Father Drew, in his *Fasti S. J.*, states that Abercromby induced Anne of Denmark, queen of James I, to abjure Lutheranism, and to die in the profession of the catholic faith. A reward of 10,000 crowns was offered for his apprehension; but he

escaped, and died at Bransberg College, 27 April 1613.

[*Oliver's Collectanea S. J.* 16; *Foley's Records*, vii. 2.] T. C.

**ABERCROMBY, SIR ROBERT** (1740-1827), military commander, was born at Tullibody, his father's seat in Scotland, in 1740, and was a younger brother of the more famous Sir Ralph. His desire to enter the army was as great as his elder brother's; and while Ralph was serving in Germany, Robert served as a volunteer in North America with such gallantry, that, after the battle of Ticonderoga in 1758, he was appointed an ensign, and in 1759 a lieutenant in the 44th regiment. He was present at the battle of Niagara and the capture of Montreal, was promoted captain in 1761, and retired on half-pay at the peace in 1763. He spent some quiet years in Scotland, but on the breaking out of the war with the American colonies felt none of the political scruples of his brother Ralph, and at once offered his services to the government. They were gladly accepted, because of the numerous retirements of officers from political reasons, and in 1772 he was appointed major in the 62nd regiment, and in 1773 lieutenant-colonel of the 37th. He served with great distinction throughout the war, and was present at the battles of Brooklyn, where his brother James was killed, Brandywine and Germantown, at the occupation of Charleston, and the capitulation of Yorktown. His services were the more appreciated from his brother's well-known political opinions, and in 1781 he was promoted colonel, and made aide-de-camp to the king. In 1787 he was made colonel of the 75th regiment, and in 1788 accompanied it to India.

In India during the next nine years he won his chief military renown. In 1790 he was governor and commander-in-chief at Bombay, and was directed by Lord Cornwallis to cooperate with him in his attack on Mysore. He first occupied with his forces the Malabar coast, and not without some resistance from the independent chieftains who either feared or loved Tippoo Sultan, and in 1792 marched up from the west to meet Lord Cornwallis before Seringapatam. His march was completely successful, and Tippoo had to sign the tripartite treaty of Seringapatam. For his eminent services he was made a knight of the Bath, and appointed to succeed Lord Cornwallis as commander-in-chief of the forces in India. He left Bombay in November 1792, but did not become commander-in-chief till the departure of Cornwallis in October 1793. His term of office was chiefly remark-

able for the second Rohilla war and the mutiny of the officers of the company's service.

After the reduction of the wild but warlike tribes of the Rohillas by the orders of Warren Hastings after his disgraceful convention with the Vizier of Oudh, the district of Rampoor was given to Fyzoollah Khan, one of the Rohilla chieftains. On his death, in 1793, the Vizier of Oudh wished to resume this district for his master; but the governor-general supported the claim of Mahommed Ali to succeed his father, Fyzoollah Khan. In 1794, however, Mahommed Ali was murdered by a relative named Gholam Mahommed, and Abercromby was ordered by the governor-general, Sir John Shore, to punish the murderer. Abercromby advanced with a small force, and after a long and well-contested action at Battina defeated Gholam Mahommed. His own ability and the gallantry of his troops were at once acknowledged by Sir John Shore; but he was censured for admitting the murderer to terms.

The other important event of his command was the mutiny of the company's officers. This was chiefly caused by their being always regarded as inferior to the king's officers, though often in command of more serviceable regiments, which deprived them of any chance of obtaining the more lucrative appointments in the garrison or the field. Abercromby's mildness and good temper served him in good stead, and where a martinet would have given rise to a regular rebellion he managed to control the spirit of disaffection till the arrival of new regulations from England. He was now suffering so much from a disease of the eyes that he was obliged to return home in April 1797. The best character of himself and of the tenor of his command in India is contained in the following passage from a private letter of the governor-general, Sir John Shore: 'My respect for Sir Robert Abercromby has increased with my knowledge of his character. What he was at Bombay I know not; he has been here mild, conciliatory, and unassuming from the first, and it is only justice to him to declare that a more honourable, upright, and zealous man never served the company. I assure you with great truth that I have ever found him anxious to promote the public good, either by his own efforts or those of others. I certainly do not think his abilities equal to his situation, and there are few men who have abilities equal to it; but I believe that his have been under-estimated, and that his greatest fault is his good nature. He will retire with a very moderate fortune, for money was never his object: he thinks too little of it.'

He was promoted lieutenant-general in 1797, elected M.P. for the county of Clackmannan in the place of his brother Ralph in 1798, was made governor of Edinburgh Castle in 1801, and a general in 1802. His increasing blindness made it impossible for him ever again to take active service, and obliged him to resign his seat in parliament in 1802. He lived to the age of 87, and died at Airthrey, near Stirling, in November 1827, being at the time the oldest general in the British army. He does not seem to have possessed the abilities of his brother Sir Ralph, but always did well whatever he had to do. As an Indian general of that period Sir John Shore's testimony to his incorruptibility is the highest praise for a time when a command in India was regarded as an opportunity for making a fortune.

[For Robert Abercromby's services see the Royal Military Calendar, 1820, vol. i.; for the campaigns in Mysore see Cornwallis's Correspondence, published 1861; and for his command-in-chief in India the Life of John, Lord Teignmouth, by his son.] H. M. S.

✓ **ABERDEEN, EARLS OF.** [See GORDON.]

**ABERGAVENNY.** [See NEVILLE.]

**ABERNETHY, JOHN** (1680-1740), Irish dissenting clergyman, was born at Coleraine, co. Londonderry, Ulster, on 19 Oct. 1680. His father was then presbyterian minister there. His mother was a daughter of Walkinshaw of Walkinshaw, Renfrewshire, Scotland.

In his ninth year, on occasion of his father's being sent to London as representative of the Irish presbyterian church in affairs that concerned them, his mother removed to Londonderry, whilst he was sent to a relative in Ballymena (or Ballymenagh). This was in 1689. To escape the rebellion and turbulence and confusion of the times, the relative proceeded to Scotland, and carried Master John with him, having 'no opportunity of conveying him to his mother.' He was thus delivered from the horrors and perils of the famous siege of Derry, in which Mrs. Abernethy lost all her other children. His education was continued in Scotland for three years. He then returned to Coleraine; but in his thirteenth year he is again found in Scotland as a student at the university of Glasgow. He himself condemned the un-wisdom of this premature sending of him to the university. His career in Glasgow was a brilliant one. He must have been specially precocious in wit. He took his degree of M.A. with much *éclat*.

At this time his leanings were towards the

study of medicine or physic. He was persuaded by his parents and other friends to devote himself to divinity. Upon this decision he went to Edinburgh university. His distinction at Glasgow college and his social attainments preceded him. He was at once admitted into the innermost circle of the cultured society of Edinburgh. The unvarying tradition is that he excelled as a conversationalist, drawing forth the wonder of grave professors (e.g. of Professor Campbell) and the more perilous homage of fair ladies' bright eyes.

Patriotically and modestly putting aside opportunities presented in Scotland, at the close of his theological course he returned to Coleraine. He there prosecuted his studies privately. In a short time he was licensed by his presbytery to preach the gospel. But being still under twenty-one, he proceeded to Dublin that he might get the advantages of further classical and theological study. When he left for the capital, he was practically under 'call' to the (presbyterian) church at Antrim; but having preached in Wood Street, Dublin, that congregation eagerly sought to associate him as co-pastor with the Rev. Mr. Boyse, who was held in high esteem. There was then competition between the two congregations. According to use and wont the synod was left to decide. In the interval the competition was complicated by a third 'call' on the death of his venerable father, from his father's congregation of Coleraine. The synod determined in favour of Antrim, and he was there ordained on 8 Aug. 1703. His admiring biographer (Duchal) tells of such quantity and quality of work done in Antrim as few could have achieved. He toiled and witnessed as a primitive apostle might have done. By the mass of his intellect, united with unequalled alertness of perception and fluency of expression, he was marked out for a debater; and perhaps no ecclesiastical courts in Christendom afford finer opportunities for an able debater than the synods and general assemblies of the presbyterian churches. But he was more than a debater. His whole soul and heart were fired with zeal on behalf of his ignorant and superstitious fellow-countrymen; and it is clear on perusal of the 'Records' that he lifted the entire Irish presbyterian church to a higher level of duty than ever before.

When he had been nine years in Antrim, he was called to Londonderry, but rejoiced when the synod retained him in his original charge. In 1712 the darkest shadow of his life fell broad and black upon him—the death of his wife, whose maiden name