

*C. Harbison, Joseph*

ILLUSTRATIONS  
OF THE  
TOPOGRAPHY AND ANTIQUITIES  
OF THE SHIRES OF  
ABERDEEN AND BANFF.

THE FIRST VOLUME

STANFORD LIBRARY

ABERDEEN:  
PRINTED FOR THE SPALDING CLUB

MDCCLXIX.

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# The Spalding Club.

DECEMBER, MDCCCLXIX.

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## THE EDITOR'S PREFACE.

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IN the year 1843, a volume of "Collections for a History of the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff," edited by Mr. Joseph Robertson, was printed by the Spalding Club, at the expense of the Earl of Aberdeen. Of that volume, the editor remarked in his preface—  
" However crude or unsatisfying the contents of the following  
" sheets may appear to those who are accustomed to the more  
" copious and elaborate ' County Histories ' of England, so much  
" has a useful and not unpleasing field of literature been neglected  
" in the northern part of the island, that, perhaps, the present is  
" the most extensive collection of materials which has yet issued  
" from the press to illustrate the antiquities and topography of any  
" Scottish Shire."

The " Collections " formed only a portion of the materials available for the illustration of the history of the two counties. The Report by the Council of the Club to the eighth annual general meeting of the members, held on the 22d of December, 1846, contains the following passage :—" A Volume of Illustrations of  
" the Topography and Antiquities of the Shires of Aberdeen and  
" Banff, edited by Joseph Robertson, Esquire, has been for some  
" time at press, and but for accidental circumstances which  
" hindered the printer from fulfilling his engagement, would have  
" been finished before this period. It will be issued early in the

“ year 1847. The materials placed at the editor's disposal, chiefly  
“ from the charter-rooms of ancient families within the two counties,  
“ have so far exceeded expectations, that it has been found neces-  
“ sary to divide the work into three volumes. The second of these,  
“ containing the beginning of the text, will appear first ; the third,  
“ giving the conclusion of the text, the appendix, and a copious  
“ index (as well to this work as to the Collections for a History of  
“ the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff), will appear next ; and the  
“ first volume, occupied with a lengthened preface, and its docu-  
“ mentary illustrations, will be delivered last of all.” The volume  
first referred to in the foregoing extract appeared in 1847 ; another  
volume, conducted through the press by Mr. Francis Shaw, under  
the editorial superintendence of Mr. Robertson, was published in  
1857 ; and an additional volume, edited by Mr. Robertson, was  
published in 1862. The three volumes, in conformity with the  
plan above indicated, are called in the title pages, the second, third,  
and fourth volumes of the Illustrations. The extent of the work  
had exceeded the editor's original anticipations, and he was never  
able to prepare the Preface, which, with its documentary illus-  
trations, was to have formed the first volume in name, and the  
last in the order of publication.

At the Annual Meeting of the Club in December, 1866, which  
took place soon after Mr. Robertson's lamented decease, the writer  
of these pages was requested to prepare a Preface to the Collections  
and Illustrations, containing a biographical notice of the Editor.

JOSEPH ROBERTSON, the only son of Joseph Robertson and  
Christian Leslie, was born in the Woolmanhill, Aberdeen, on the

17th day of May, 1810. The father, who was descended from a family which for generations had resided in the parish of Leochel, carried on a small mercantile business in Aberdeen, where he died in the year 1816. His son, and his only other child, a daughter, now the wife of Mr. M'Combie, of the *Free Press*, Aberdeen, were left dependent for support on the exertions of their mother, who through her industry and economy was enabled to bring them up respectably. Joseph was sent to the school of Udny, then enjoying a high reputation under the teaching of Dr. Bisset. From Udny he went to the Grammar School of Aberdeen, and from thence to Marischal College. At these various institutions, his reputation as a scholar appears not to have been much above the average, but his high spirit and affectionate disposition won for him the liking of his fellow-students and the respect of his masters. Dr. Bisset continues to speak of him with the utmost warmth of regard; and Robertson never referred to his early teacher without expressions of gratitude and esteem.

When about sixteen years of age, Robertson entered the office of Mr. James Simpson, Advocate in Aberdeen, with the view of following out the law as a profession. Mr. Simpson, one of the best provincial lawyers of his day, was also a man of good literary taste and acquirements, and his apprentice imitated him in the latter rather than in the former character: Robertson's most intimate associate at that time was Mr. John Hill Burton, then also a law student in Aberdeen, and the friendship thus begun continued during life. It was in the latter period of his apprenticeship that I became acquainted with him, meeting him frequently during our leisure hours, which in those days were pretty ample,

and joining with him in the debates of an association of young men of the legal profession known as the Society of Writers. At the meetings of this body he was a regular attender, and spoke on almost every subject with great fluency, and with a fulness and accuracy of information for which he was even then remarkable.

When the discussions on the Reform Bill began, Robertson gave up his other professional pursuits, and threw himself with enthusiasm into the contest; writing pamphlets, and taking a leading part in the local struggles. Like most of the educated young men in Aberdeen at that time, he was an ardent Tory, but his Toryism differed as much from that of the elderly citizens who professed what had then become an unpopular creed, as it did from the opinions of the rising Liberal party. It was chiefly derived from a careful study of the writings of Coleridge and Wordsworth, and an ardent admiration for the poems and romances of Scott. His political principles, though modified in some points, were never changed.

He continued to cultivate the literary studies to which he had now resolved to devote himself, and paid particular attention to Scottish history and antiquities. The first number of a monthly periodical, under the name of *The Aberdeen Magazine*, was published in January, 1831, by Mr. Lewis Smith, and the work was continued for two years. Robertson was not the projector of the work, nor, strictly speaking, its editor, but his contributions were more numerous and important than those of any other person. I have been favoured with the perusal of a copy of the *Magazine*, in which he had entered the names of all the contributors opposite their articles in the index. A whole generation has elapsed since

## PREFACE.

v

that time, and the names of the other writers can now excite little interest: His own contributions are the following, taken in the order of the index:—in the first volume, A Tale of the Broadgate; A Day among the Hills; Aberdeen Worthies; Demonology; Deeside; The Foreign Quarterly Review; Horace Smith and the National Library; Ivan Vejeghen; Logan on the Celts; Letters to Certain Persons; Lochlee; The Old Scottish Ballads; Parallel Passages; Stray Thoughts; Saint Andrews; The Gazetteers versus Aberdeen; The Last of the Fights: and in the second volume, Aberdeen Worthies; A Page Omitted in Historical Parallels; A Few Words from a Tory in Answer to a Classical Reformer; Deeside; Dr. Browne on the Highlands; Facetiæ Aberdonenses; Horæ Antiquariæ; Mysticism of Modern Poetry; Nugæ Nicotianæ; Remarks on Some Recent Writers on Scottish History; Singular Ghost Story.

Several of these articles show learning and ability beyond what are generally found in magazines of higher reputation, while in some—that on Demonology for instance—an extent of miscellaneous reading appears, which is astonishing in a writer not more than twenty-two years of age. His taste for Scottish historical antiquities, and the knowledge he had already acquired on that subject, are indicated by the papers on Logan and Browne, and the remarks on writers on Scottish History. Other articles show that the author's occupations were not entirely of a sedentary character. The papers on Deeside mark an intimate acquaintance with the topography and scenery of the Aberdeenshire Highlands, that could only have been acquired in those long pedestrian journies for which he was remarkable in his early days, and which

he retained a liking for to the very last. At this period also, he was a frequent contributor, chiefly in the shape of literary criticism, to the *Aberdeen Observer*, a newspaper of which his friend the late Mr. William Duncan was one of the editors.

In 1831, Mr. Lewis Smith published a "Guide to the Highlands of Deeside, by James Brown." The work is noticed in Robertson's article on Deeside in the *Aberdeen Magazine* of June, 1831, and a ludicrous comparison is made between its merits and those of a "Tour on the Banks of the Dee" by Alexander Laing, which thus concludes:—"Honesty compels us to recommend Mr. Brown's little book as the best; it is much more intelligible, more comprehensive, more amusing, and more useful. Mr. Laing's volumes are not by any means to be sneezed at, but neither are they at all comparable to Mr. Brown's. If the reader chooses, of course he may buy both; but if he be to purchase one only, let him pay his shilling for a copy of the 'Guide to the Deeside Highlands,' which we pronounce to be the model of a guide-book." This praise was well deserved, though Robertson, like a greater Scotsman on one occasion, was here reviewing his own work. The nominal author was at that time the driver of a car on Deeside, and afterwards was keeper of the Greyfriars' Churchyard, Edinburgh. I understand that subsequently to Robertson's decease he claimed the work as his own. The true state of matters is thus explained by Mr. Smith in his preface to the edition of 1868,—“ Since this edition of the Deeside Guide went to the press, the reputed author, James Brown, has passed away, and the publisher feels that now when he alone is left to tell the tale, it may be interesting to know who actually



“ were engaged in getting up the little work. Brown was the informant of the real author, the late Joseph Robertson, who, in his early days amused himself writing the Guide in the quaint manner of Brown—the greater part of it being written in the schoolmaster’s house at Ballater. . . . The Guide was also indebted to the late John Ferres, Advocate, for the ‘Letters from Panninich,’ first published in the *Aberdeen Censor*, and to the late William Duncan for the ‘Baron of Pitfoddels.’”

In the year 1833, Robertson went to Edinburgh, and found literary employment of various kinds, chiefly in connection with the publications of Oliver and Boyd. Their “Cabinet Library” was then in progress, and for that collection, it has generally been stated that he wrote a volume which appeared in 1836, entitled “An Historical Account of the Circumnavigation of the Globe, and of the Progress of Discovery in the Pacific Ocean, from the voyage of Magellan to the death of Cook.” This, however, is incorrect. He was not the author of the volume, but he bestowed considerable time and labour in preparing it for the press. The work was to have been completed by a second part, and in 1843 there was published, in the same collection, a volume containing “Voyages round the World, from the death of Captain Cook to the present time, &c.,” but Robertson was not in any way connected with it. The fifth volume of the Cabinet Library contained “The Lives and Voyages of Drake, Cavendish, and Dampier.” A third edition of that volume, which was published in 1837, was revised and annotated by Robertson.

In 1839, he wrote, or rather compiled, a little volume which was published at London in the following year, under the title

“*Deliciæ Literariæ*, a new volume of Table Talk.” In his address to the Reader, he says, “The novelty and interest of collections of this kind must, in a great measure, depend on the course and extent of the author’s reading; the present compiler has at least endeavoured to avoid the more common sources from which famous writers of *Ana* have gathered their materials. That he has often drawn from fountains of Scottish history and literature, will not, he trusts, be deemed a fault by those into whose hands his work is most likely to fall.”

Much more important is “*The Book of Bon-Accord, or a Guide to the City of Aberdeen*,” which was published at Aberdeen in 1839. This volume gives, in a condensed form, a portion of the collections which he had been making for years regarding the history and topography of his native city. No Scottish burgh has been described with equal wit, learning, and ability. There is only one drawback, but it is a serious one. The work is incomplete, a second and concluding volume, which was to have followed, never having appeared. Among the most interesting parts of the book, are the biographical notices of distinguished Aberdonians.

In 1839, and soon after the publication of the work last mentioned, he left Edinburgh and returned to Aberdeen, on his being appointed editor of *The Constitutional*, a weekly newspaper which had been established some years before, for the maintenance of Conservative principles. He discharged his editorial duties with the same faithfulness and ability which he showed in more congenial labours, but he looked out for the means of occupying his leisure hours in what was to become his peculiar vocation. Before the end of the year, he had, in conjunction with his friend

Mr. John Stuart, planned and carried out the formation of a society for promoting in the north-eastern counties of Scotland those objects which the Bannatyne and Maitland Clubs were accomplishing in the south. Such was the commencement of the Spalding Club.

The first work issued by the club was a "History of Scots Affairs from 1637 to 1641, by James Gordon, Parson of Rothiemay," which was printed in three volumes in 1841, under the joint editorship of Robertson and myself. In those early days of youthful hope it was a sufficient inducement to me to engage in the work, that my name was to be associated with his. The book itself is the impartial and accurate, though somewhat tedious narrative of four years of one of the most important periods in Scottish history. The notes are of great value as illustrating that period, and have been a storehouse of materials to subsequent writers. This I may say quite freely, as my own share in them was very small.

As already mentioned, Robertson, in 1843, edited for the Spalding Club the volume of Collections on the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff, and in 1847, 1857, and 1862, the three volumes of Illustrations. In 1859 he edited for the club "Passages from the Diary of General Patrick Gordon, of Auchleuchries." Gordon was one of the most distinguished of those Scottish soldiers of fortune whose names were long better known on the Continent than in the land of their birth. His military skill was of a very high order, and he regretted that it had not been employed in the service of the last king of the house of Stewart, to whom he was attached by the tie of a common religion. As his editor remarks,

“ We may well believe that the hand which crushed the Strelitzes “ would have been heavy on the Cameronians; it may be that “ the walls of Derry would have fallen before the conqueror of “ Asof; and the ready counsel and daring acts which twice saved “ the throne of Peter the Great, might have upheld the rule even “ of King James the Second.” Robertson did as much as could be done for the Diary, but the work was not so interesting as he probably anticipated when he undertook the task. Gordon did not use the pen so effectively as he had wielded the sword. In the fifth volume of the Miscellany of the Spalding Club, which was published in 1852, Robertson wrote a treatise full of the most curious historical and ecclesiastical learning “ On Scholastic Offices in the Scottish Church in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries.”

His time at Aberdeen was usefully occupied in the manner which has been mentioned, and was cheered by the society of several valued friends besides those already named. Among them few held a higher place in his esteem and affection than the late Mr. John Dunn, Advocate, and Mr. Ligertwood, now Sheriff-Clerk of Aberdeenshire. But he knew that he was fitted for better employment, and he was not sorry to avail himself of what seemed a step in that direction when he was requested to accept the editorship of another Conservative newspaper—the *Glasgow Constitutional*. He removed to Glasgow in 1843 to enter on his new appointment, and on the 17th of July in that year was married to Anne, daughter of Mr. John Lanham, formerly of the Wilts and Dorset Bank.

Robertson's labours at Glasgow were much the same as at Aberdeen, but they were better remunerated, and lightened by the

happiness of domestic society. His newspaper was carefully and successfully edited, and the Book Clubs gave constant occupation to his leisure hours. His life was a busy and cheerful one, and he particularly enjoyed those portions of the year, which he was able to spend at a pleasant residence in Argyleshire.

He had not been long settled in the western metropolis, before the Maitland Club availed itself of his services. In 1846, he edited a volume for that Society, containing the chartulary of the Collegiate Church of St. Mary and St. Anne in Glasgow, and the Charters of the Black Friars of Glasgow. The documents contained in the volume were printed with his usual scrupulous accuracy. The preface, a long and interesting one, shewed his thorough knowledge, not only of the mere technicalities of old charters, but of the ancient ecclesiastical history of Scotland. It was the first of his writings which indicated this knowledge, and on that account deserves special notice. It is divided into two parts, the first referring to the Collegiate Church, the second to the Black Friars. In the first part, the account of the Church of St. Mary and St. Anne throws the most distinct light on the general constitution and objects of Collegiate Churches for secular clergy. A careful study of it would prevent those absurd mistakes, which writers, otherwise well-informed, still occasionally make regarding such institutions, confounding them with the houses of the monastic orders. It was one of Robertson's peculiarities, that he seldom came across any curious historical incident or character, without stopping to tell his readers all that he knew, so far as it never had been told before. This was sometimes carried to excess, but few antiquaries will be disposed to visit the transgression with heavy

censure. An illustration is afforded by two notes in this part of the preface to his Glasgow volume, one explaining the history of St Kentigern, the other, that of the Saint's mother, St. Thenaw. A brief quotation from the latter may be given. After mentioning that the street, now so well known as the 'Tron-gate, was anciently called St. Thenaw's Gate, from a chapel dedicated to her, and situated near its western extremity, he adds, "St. Thenaw's chapel survived the year 1597, and some traces of it were to be found so recently as the beginning of the last century. Wodrow records that it was then called 'Saint Tennoch's;' a name which, in the mouths of a people more familiar with the prophets of the antediluvian world, than with the saints of the dark ages, was in no long time changed into that of 'Saint Enoch,' now given to a church and square, not far from the site of the edifice which marked the resting place of the royal matron who gave birth to the Apostle of Cumbria." The second part of the preface is still more valuable. It illustrates not only the history of the Black Friars of Glasgow, but that of the order generally throughout Scotland. This narrative is as unique as it is interesting. No similar account has yet been given of the Scottish monasteries of the Franciscan and Carmelite orders. I doubt whether any one is capable of doing for them what has here been done for the Dominicans.

Robertson edited the first part of the fourth volume of the Miscellany of the Maitland Club, which was published in 1847. It contains a number of documents illustrated with his usual erudition. His tendency to enlarge on the subject before him—to give what Fuller calls "the preface of a mile to bring in a furlong of matter," is indicated by one of the articles in this volume. It is a letter of

Archbishop Leighton's resigning the see of Glasgow, and is printed in three lines, while the editor's notice of it extends to four pages. He was also selected by the Maitland Club to edit the Records of the University of Glasgow. The general outline of the work was planned by him, and a portion of the first volume was printed under his superintendence. About the same time, he assisted in preparing a part of the first volume of the *Origines Parochiales Scotiæ*.

His character as a scholar and as an antiquary was now established, and he was requested by Mr. Lockhart to write an article for the *Quarterly Review* on the architectural antiquities of Scotland. He complied with the request, and the result was one of the best-known of his writings—the paper on Scottish Abbeys and Cathedrals, which appeared in the *Quarterly Review* for June 1849. On this article, as he himself then informed me, he bestowed much time and labour. No one, at all acquainted with the subject, can read it without seeing that this must have been the case, but the toil was well bestowed. It is one of the finest specimens of its class, and, unlike many papers on similar subjects, its style is as beautiful and appropriate as its matter is interesting and valuable. Commencing with a brief description of the earliest ecclesiastical buildings in Scotland, it proceeds to examine more minutely the structures which arose after the accession of David I. The author dwells with particular pleasure on the Cathedral of the city, where he was now residing. Its traditional connection with St. Ninian and St. Kentigern, its historical associations with Robert Bruce and James the Fourth, the unseemly disputes of the Scottish primates for precedence, the equally unseemly riots after the Reformation, the discussions of the famous Assembly of 1638,

all pass in review. The following are the concluding sentences :—“ Glasgow echoed the universal delight which hailed the Restoration. Yet amid that joyous tumult, a voice was heard from the depths of her cathedral crypt, prophesying woe and lamentations—“ Cargill, the rugged confessor of a relentless covenant, sparing not to denounce the faithless king even on the first oak-apple day of his reign. A few years pass, and in the choir above, the low sweet voice of Leighton is heard in those angelic strains of eloquence and devotion which haunted the memory of his hearers to their dying day. A few years more, and the Cathedral is beset by a surging crowd of Cameronians—fanatic wanderers from the hills, whose wrath will not tarry for the slow retribution of the law, but who are there, at their own hand, to purge the temple of God of ‘ the prelatical intruders,’ as ‘ dumb dogs,’ ‘ Erastians,’ ‘ schismatics,’ ‘ covenant-breakers,’ and ‘ soul murderers.’ Yet a few years more, and probably from the pulpits of the minster, as certainly from other pulpits in the town, the people are stirred up to armed tumult against that union with England which has made their little burgh a great and wealthy city, and covered their river with the trade of nations. And now, ‘ last scene of all,’ after centuries of neglect, the breaches of St. Kentigern’s venerable High Church have been repaired, and its decayed places raised up,—it is swept and garnished—those western portals so long closed, are thrown open. Who, in these days of sudden and marvellous mutations, shall say for what or for whom they wait ? ”

In the summer of 1849, having been appointed editor of the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, he was once more a resident in the



PREFACE.

xv

Scottish metropolis, and in the immediate neighbourhood of Mr. Cosmo Innes, Mr. Burton, and many other friends. We have the best evidence of the manner in which he discharged his new duties in an article in the *Courant* written soon after his decease. "He was chosen out of many candidates for the office of editor of this journal, which had been in commission since the death of Mr. David Buchanan in 1847. During this virtual interregnum, the *Courant* had begun to lose somewhat of its old prestige, but on the accession of Mr. Robertson its prosperity was immediately restored, and was year by year enhanced during his able management." The remuneration which he now received was very good, but the labour was also great, and in 1853 he exchanged his editorial appointment for the office of Searcher of Records for literary purposes, or, as it was afterwards more appropriately named, Curator of the Historical Department in the Register House at Edinburgh. His labours here were very inadequately remunerated, but in other respects the situation was most agreeable, and gave him precisely that sort of work which during many years he had longed for. Speaking of him in an interesting note in the fourth volume of his *History of Scotland*, Mr. Burton remarks, "Of the kind of work in which his strength lay, he had that early presentiment, so often the companion of true genius. Rummaging among old letters, I find signal evidence of this. He wrote to me on the 7th of August, 1833, saying, 'The *ultima Thule* of my desires would be a situation in the Register House.' Then, diverging into other plans and possibilities, he comes back in the end to the same point, 'My desires are toward the Register House, and about January I shall make a

“ ‘set upon it; and, if unsuccessful, then consider what is to be  
 “ ‘done next.’ He had to wait just twenty years for the fulfilment  
 “ of this dream.”

The arrangement of the records under his charge occupied for some years the greater part of his time, but his leisure, as before, was devoted to antiquities and literature, and to the calls which were almost daily made upon him for assistance to those engaged in similar pursuits. It was not from Scotland alone that he had such calls; some of the most distinguished scholars of England, Ireland, and France, were in frequent communication with him. He wrote various papers, chiefly for archæological journals, and contributed an interesting series of articles to Chambers's Encyclopædia. Through the kindness of Dr. Findlater, I am able to subjoin a complete list of the Encyclopædia articles. They are the following:—Archæology; Bajan or Bejan; Bajimont's Roll; Bannatyne Club; Bartizan; Beehive Houses; Bell, Book, and Candle; Bestiaires; Booths, Merchants; Boots or Bootikins; Branks; Brehon Laws; Brets, Law of; Bronze Period of History; Burghs Royal; Burgh of Barony and Regality; Bylaw; Cairns; Celt; Charters, Royal; Chartulary; Chasuble; Clog Almanac; Columba, St.; Columban, St.; Contractions; Courthand; Cranogues; Cromlech; Cruithne; Culdees; Cumyn, Family of; Currach; Cuthbert, St.; Cuthbert of Jarrow; Cuthbert of Canterbury; Cyclopean Architecture; Dalaradia; Dalriada; Date; David I.; Deir, Book of; Diplomatics; Dolmen; Domesday Book; Douglas, Family of; Drowning; Eadmer of Canterbury; Earth Houses; Ecclesiology; Elf Arrowheads; Fillan, St.; Flint Implements and Weapons; Fools, Feast of; Fordun, John of;

## PREFACE.

xvii

Gordon, Family of; Gordon, Patrick; Hamilton, Family of; Harlaw, Battle of; Harry, Blind; Holyrood; Homildon; Inchcolm; Inchkeith; Iona; John O'Groats; Jongs; Keith, Family of; Kelso; Leslie, Family of; Lindsay, Sir David; Macbeth; Maiden; Mary Stewart; Melrose; Mungo, St.; Oghams; Orientation; Ossian; Palaeography; Picts Houses. The contributions to the Encyclopædia would probably have been continued farther, but his energies, during the last years of his life, were chiefly bestowed on the planning and carrying-out an important scheme, to be immediately mentioned, in connection with the records under his charge.

In his busiest hours he always found time to give assistance wherever the calls of duty or friendship seemed to require it. He was a zealous member of the Episcopal Church, and during the disputes which took place in that Communion in 1858, and the two following years, his aid and advice were eagerly sought and warmly appreciated. It is enough to mention here, that his counsels were those of moderation and peace. When tranquillity was restored, and application was made to Parliament to abolish the last remnant of the restrictions which had been imposed upon Episcopalians in Scotland, on account of their attachment to the House of Stewart, the information and assistance which he gave materially contributed to the successful result in the passing of the Act of 1864. In April of that year, he received the degree of Doctor of Laws from the University of Edinburgh; the honour being conferred at the same time on Mr. David Laing and Mr. Burton.

The scheme above alluded to may now be explained. In June  
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1864, Sir William Gibson-Craig, Lord-Clerk Register of Scotland, requested the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the expediency of making the records under his charge generally available, by printing a series of Calendars and Chronicles similar to the English series printed under the direction of the Master of the Rolls. In order that the Chancellor might be fully informed on the subject, Sir William submitted to him a Memorandum drawn up by Robertson. The proposal was afterwards laid before the Lords of the Treasury, and after considerable delay, the exertions of the Clerk Register were finally successful. A Parliamentary grant was made towards the expense of the contemplated publications, and Robertson's salary was raised to a sum which made the emoluments of his office more commensurate with the duties devolved upon him.

The Calendars suggested by Robertson were the following:— A Calendar of State Papers of the reign of King James IV. 1488-1513; of the reign of King James V. 1513-1542; of the reign of Queen Mary 1542-1567; of the reign of King James VI. 1567-1625; of the reign of King Charles I. 1625-1649; of the reign of King Charles II. 1649-1685; of the reign of King James VII. 1685-1689; of the reign of King William II. and Queen Mary II. 1689-1702; and of the reign of Queen Anne 1702-1707; and a Calendar of the Register of the Great Seal of Scotland 1424-1707. There were also suggested Photozincographic Facsimiles of some of the most important Scottish Historical documents, and the publication of various Chronicles and Memorials. Among those who were to take part in the proposed series were the Duke of Argyle, Lord Lindsay, Sir William Stirling-Maxwell,

Sir James Simpson, Mr. Cosmo Innes, Mr. David Laing, Mr. William Skene, and Mr. Burton.

The earliest of the volumes which have since appeared, contains the Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, and other early Memorials of Scottish history, and the editor, Mr. Skene, refers in the preface to the advantages he had, throughout the greater part of the work, in Robertson's ready and valuable assistance. The next volume was the first part of Facsimiles of National Manuscripts of Scotland, edited by Mr. Innes. In an introductory note, the Lord-Clerk Register says :—" I intrusted the selection of the documents " to the late Dr. Joseph Robertson, Curator of the Historical Department of the Register House, and the greatest Record scholar " in Scotland ; and as that most learned and excellent man died " just as the last of these manuscripts had been photographed, I " desire to associate his name with a work in which he took so deep " an interest, that he was occupied upon it on his death-bed, and " almost to the last hour of his life."

While at Aberdeen and afterwards, he had worked for the Spalding Club, while at Glasgow for the Maitland Club ; at Edinburgh his services were equally available for the Bannatyne Club. In 1863 he edited for the last mentioned Society the Catalogues of the Jewels, Dresses, Furniture, Books, and Paintings of Mary Queen of Scots. These Inventories are printed from the originals, and are full of interest to the antiquary. Still more valuable to the historical enquirer is the Editor's Preface, extending over a hundred pages and upwards. This preface, enriched with the most copious notes, illustrates the history of almost every person and event of any importance connected with the reign of Mary.

Its accuracy is as remarkable as its learning ; and its impartiality, on a subject so exciting, and which recently has been treated with more than usual bitterness and exaggeration, is equally praiseworthy. The investigations, of which the result is given in some of the notes, must have cost the labour of days or weeks. It was one of his characteristics that he was never satisfied so long as any thing remained to be ascertained on the subject of his inquiries. And this was carried so far as to become a fault.

An example of the minute care which he bestowed on this preface, and an illustration of his general habits which came under my own notice, may be referred to. He wished to find out whether John Leslie, Abbot of Lindores and Bishop of Ross, had been consecrated to his Scottish see, or whether his consecration had taken place after he left Scotland. In June, 1862, Robertson wrote to me—"I raise these doubts because having had occasion to look into his history in connection with Queen Mary, I find the following facts :—

" 1. ' Joannes commendatarius de Lundoris ' sits in the Privy Council on the 11th of April, 1566."

" 2. ' Joannes episcopus Rossensis ' sits in the Privy Council on the 15th of April, 1566.

" 3. In a deed upon record, dated at Edinburgh on the 12th of March, 1566-7, that is 1567, Bishop Leslie designing himself ' Joannes electus ecclesie Rossensis,' in the body of the deed, designates himself ' Joannes episcopus Rossensis,' and is styled ' by the officer who records the deed, ' Bishop of Ross.'

" But if he was only elect of Ross on 12th March 1567, was it likely that he was consecrated in Scotland before the Queen's

“ abdication in June, 1567? And if not consecrated before June, 1567, was it likely that he was consecrated in Scotland at all? Performance of mass was regarded as criminal even from 1560, much more from the act of 20th December, 1567, ratifying the questionable act of 1560.

“ I should be sorry to think that it would give you as much trouble to solve these difficulties, as it cost me to discover who it was that was called ‘ l’evesque de l’enders ’ by the Queen. She writes a bad hand, and her ‘ l’enders ’ was read ‘ venders ’ and ‘ tenders ’ by myself and others, till a happy inspiration revealed the true reading of ‘ Lindores ’ to me.”

I was unable to give him any information on the point, and the result of his inquiries is stated in a note to the Preface, in which he says that “ Leslie would seem never to have been consecrated to the see of Ross.” Both of us had overlooked a familiar authority—Thomas Innes’s Critical Essay, vol. i. p. 291, where it is expressly mentioned that Leslie was consecrated at Rome, while in exile from Scotland.

The notes to his Preface throw light on several of the disputed points connected with Darnley’s murder. His intimate acquaintance, not only with the history of the period, but with minute points of genealogy, was here of good service, and enabled him to correct mistakes which had established themselves as portions of the ordinary narratives. One instance may be given. It is well known that Mary left Darnley’s chamber at Kirk of Field on the night of the murder to attend a masque at Holyrood, in honour of the nuptials of her French servant Bastian. Almost all writers on the subject, including Malcolm Laing on one side, and Miss Strickland

on the other, assume that Bastian was married to Margaret Carwood, a female bed-chamber woman of the Queen ; and “ some scandal and more romance have been built upon an assumption which a closer scrutiny would have shown to be groundless.” Robertson puts the matter right by giving the names of Bastian’s wife and Margaret Carwood’s husband, and the true date of the marriage of the latter. His intimate acquaintance with the history of the period enables him to discover personal or family predilections which have escaped the attention of others. Thus he connects Buchanan’s zeal in the cause of Darnley with the circumstance that the historian was born a liegeman of the House of Lennox, and he notices the still more curious fact that Knox had a sort of sympathy with Bothwell, in consequence of his ancestors having been vassals of the Hepburns. Some may not agree with the opinions expressed or indicated in the Preface ; no one probably will question the correctness of the facts.

In describing the treasures of the Queen’s Library, Robertson was expatiating on a subject with which he had long been familiar ; but it may seem marvellous how he contrived to find his way among the mazes of the *mundus muliebris* of the royal wardrobe and jewellery. The difficulty is so far explained by the fact, that in this part of his labours, in connection with the French Inventories, he availed himself of the assistance of his wife.

It had long been his wish to edit a collection of the Scottish Canons. In August 1845, when the Spottiswoode Society had begun its useful labours, he wrote to me from Glasgow :—“ I think that perhaps the most essentially useful work which the Spottiswoode could take in hand would be a collection of the ancient and



“ modern statutes and canons of the Scottish Church. This is a work which I should like to try my hand on ; but I am not in communication with any of the Spottiswoode Council.” What he had then contemplated, he now in the full maturity of his powers accomplished for the Bannatyne Club ; but it was God’s will that with it his work should cease. The book appeared in two volumes in the end of the year 1866, under the title—“ *Concilia Scotiæ—Ecclesiæ Scoticanæ Statuta, tam Provincialia quam Synodalia, quæ supersunt, 1225-1559.*”

It is almost impossible to speak too highly of this work. The labours of previous writers had to some extent prepared the way for it. Thomas Innes in his *Critical Essay* had given a brief account of the Scottish Councils. The ancient canons of the thirteenth century, and those of the important Provincial Councils held immediately before the Reformation, had been inserted in Wilkins’ *Concilia*, through the instrumentality of Innes and Rudiman. Lord Hailes had reprinted the thirteenth century canons with careful notes, and in his *Historical Memorials* had supplied a fuller and more correct account of the Councils than that contained in the *Critical Essay*. Mr. Cosmo Innes, in the various *Chartularies* edited by him, and particularly in the *Chartulary of Aberdeen*, had given additional materials and information. From these and other available sources, I had attempted in my *Ecclesiastical History of Scotland* to give a correct list of the Councils, and to explain the nature of the most important canons enacted by them. But Robertson’s volumes do more than any of his predecessors had even contemplated. The first contains his *Preface*, which is really a history of Scottish Councils, illustrated with

that curious learning and rare accuracy in which he had no equal among his contemporaries. In the second volume, the text of the Canons is printed from a laborious collation of all the existing manuscripts. No work of equal importance and merit has yet appeared in connection with our ecclesiastical history in the thirteenth and three following centuries. In the value of the materials, Father Augustine Theiner's "*Vetera Monumenta Hibernorum et Scotorum*" comes nearest; but the priest of the Oratory is as inferior in accuracy and erudition as he is in judgment and good taste.

The scholar will study the various canons and constitutions of the Scottish Church from the middle of the thirteenth century to the tenth of April, 1559, when the Bishops and Clergy agreed to meet again on Septuagesima Sunday, 1560, little anticipating what was to happen before that day came. The ordinary reader will peruse with more interest the introductory narrative of the first volume. Commencing with a sketch of the early Celtic Synods, and an account of the conferences held by St. Margaret with the Scottish clergy, it proceeds to give full details of the Councils held after the accession of David I. These Councils, in consequence of there being no Metropolitan in Northern Britain, were held under the direct authority of the Pope, acting through his Legates. From the date of the Bull of Honorius III. in 1225, the Clergy were authorised to meet in Provincial Council, without the presence of a Legate, and under the presidency of one of their own Bishops, who bore the title of Conservator. This system continued till the establishment of the archiepiscopal and metropolitan see of St. Andrews in the reign of James III. The persons who met in these

Synods were at first the bishops, abbots, and priors, afterwards the representatives of the chapters and mendicant orders, and finally those of the parochial clergy. The old Scottish Synod, with its elective President, its annual meeting, its limited number of sittings, and the practical control of the temporal power, bore some resemblance to the General Assembly of the Established Church in the present day.

The account which Robertson gives of the Councils immediately preceding the Reformation, shows in a more authentic and impartial form than is elsewhere to be found, the real causes of the ecclesiastical changes which then took place. The chief of these—the ignorance and wickedness of the ecclesiastics—is dwelt upon with great but not undeserved severity. Were any justification required of his remarks, it would be found in the language used by the most learned of his predecessors, the zealous Roman Catholic priest, Thomas Innes.

The Preface is not confined to its immediate subject—the history of Councils. Its author, as his manner was, expatiates in his text, and still more in his ample notes, on every point of interest referred to in the documents before him. Thus we have an account of the ceremonies practised at the inauguration of the Kings of the Scots; of the ancient Taxations of Scottish benefices; of the mission to Scotland of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, afterwards Pope Pius II.; of the institution of Parochial Registers; of the negotiations of Queen Mary at the Roman Court; and of the Culdees, specially those of St. Andrews. The accuracy of his statements, and the minuteness with which they are verified by a reference to authorities, can be appreciated at their true worth only

by those who have had occasion to examine them with something of his own spirit. A few mistakes in the text are corrected by himself, and there is probably not a single one of any consequence which is not so noticed. One unimportant error into which he was led by a wrong reading in Theiner—the reference to a Bishop of Oxford in the thirteenth century—has been pointed out by me in another place.

The date of the Preface to the *Concilia Scotiæ* is the 26th of June, 1866. To all outward appearance, he was then in possession of the health and vigour which he had long enjoyed. The active habits of his early youth had been to some extent interrupted by the sedentary occupations and hard work of his manhood, but he always delighted to resume them when a brief holiday enabled him to enjoy the pleasures of a country life. At various times he resided during the autumn at Dunoon, at North Berwick, and at Aberdour in Fifeshire, and all who had the happiness of spending a few days with him on such occasions, must have seen how thoroughly he enjoyed himself. To those who sympathised with his favourite pursuits, nothing was more delightful than to accompany him and the members of his family in a visit to some ruined Church or Castle, and to hear from his lips, as few but he could tell, its architectural peculiarities, and all that history or legend had preserved regarding it. He was uniformly cheerful, and his cheerfulness was the reward of constant work and time well spent. A text of the Book of Ecclesiasticus which he sometimes quoted might have been applied to himself:—"To labour and to be content with that a man hath is a sweet life." During the busy portion of his latter years, he preserved his health, which

otherwise might have given way, by occasional walks of considerable length. In the summer months he frequently attended divine service on Sundays at Dalkeith or the restored chapel of Roslyn, and his chosen companion in these journeys was Mr. Irvine of Drum.

In the autumn of 1866 he became aware of some disease in his throat. The ailment at first seemed to be trifling, but the difficulty which he experienced in swallowing his food gradually increased, and was accompanied with general debility. By the advice of his physician, he went to Callander, in Perthshire, with his family. He had been there for a short time, and was beginning to recruit his strength, when he was visited with a sad calamity. His eldest son was thrown down by a railway truck, and died twelve hours afterwards. The father's loss may best be told in his own words, brief and simple as usual with him, written to me on the day of the funeral :—" If God had been pleased to spare him to us, he " would have been a pretty fellow. He was a good affectionate boy, " was improving very rapidly, growing more thoughtful, and showing studious tastes for art and natural science. It is a heavy " heavy blow, but God's will be done."

After some time, Robertson was apparently so far recovered as to be again at work in his well-known apartment in the Register House. I saw him there for the last time in the middle of October, and found him resigned and even cheerful. But the disease, which proved to be malignant tumour in the stomach, again made itself felt in an aggravated form. The last letter I had from him was written on the 24th of November. It contained some historical inquiries, and the handwriting showed no appearance of decaying

strength. Of himself he merely mentioned that he had again been ill, and was mending but slowly.

Immediately after this he was confined to bed. All that medical skill could suggest was done, but it became evident that his end was approaching. He received the information with Christian calmness and courage, and gave directions to his friends as to the settlement of his worldly affairs, and to the associates in his labours as to the literary work in which he was engaged. The provision he had been able to make for his family was sufficiently scanty, and it could not have been otherwise, considering the narrowness of his income. Had it pleased God to prolong his life, the higher salary recently conferred upon him would have been amply sufficient for his needs. It was probably to this he alluded, when he said on his deathbed, "I have steered my bark for a fair harbour, and found myself wrecked at the entrance." During his last illness he was frequently visited by his friend the Bishop of Brechin. In accordance with the directions in the Book of Common Prayer, he expressed his belief in the Articles of the Creed and a true repentance for his past sins, and received the Holy Communion of the body and blood of his Saviour.

He died on the 13th of December, and was buried in the Dean Cemetery. His surviving family were his wife, two sons, and two daughters, the elder of whom was married to Mr Hodson, Surgeon, at Ingatestone, in Essex.

The slender means which he left rendered it necessary to sell his select and valuable Library. The books of a literary man generally throw light on his character, and this was peculiarly the case with Robertson. The printed catalogue not only lets us see what were

his favourite studies, but shows also that his books were not the mere ornaments of his dwelling, but the necessary implements of his vocation. The library contained upwards of two thousand volumes—no great number in the estimation of a wealthy collector—but they were the careful gatherings of a lifetime. The sale occupied four days, and the amount realised was about £800. It may be allowable and interesting in the Preface to an antiquarian Club Book, to mention the names and prices of some of the principal works connected with Scottish history and antiquities, and they may best be taken in their alphabetical order. The Chartulary of Aberbrothock was sold for £1 15s; the Breviary of Aberdeen for £3 3s; the Chartulary of St. Andrews for £2 6s; the Missal of Arbuthnott for £1 9s; the Book of Bon-Accord for £1 14s; Chalmers's Caledonia for £12; Dugdale's Monasticon Anglicanum for £16 16s; the Muniments of the University of Glasgow for £2 14s; Grub's Ecclesiastical History of Scotland for £1 15s; Jamieson's edition of the Bruce and Wallace for £5; Lanigan's Ecclesiastical History of Ireland for £1 16s; Lord Lindsay's Lives of the Lindsays for £2; Queen Mary's Inventories for £3 3s; the Chartulary of Paisley for £10 15s; Petrie's Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland for £1 12s; Pinkerton's Vitæ Antiquæ Sanctorum in Scotia for £6; Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland for £5 15s; Origines Parochiales Scotiæ for £3 12s; Concilia Scotiæ for £6; a set of the Spalding Club volumes for £27; a set of the Surtees Society volumes for £22 1s; Wyntown's Chronicle of Scotland for £3 7s 6d.

In the end of the year 1867, the Queen, on the recommendation of the Earl of Derby, granted a pension of £100 to Mrs Robertson

“ in consideration of the services of her husband to literature generally; and especially in the illustration of the ancient history of Scotland.”

Robertson's character in private and domestic life was amiable and exemplary. No one was more beloved by his friends, and although his opinions were at times strongly expressed, he probably had not a single enemy. His political principles, from first to last, were those of the Tory party, but they had nothing in them of bitterness or bigotry. The attentive readers of his works will discover that, like most persons connected with the northern province where he was born and educated, he had considerable sympathy with the cause of the White Rose. His religious convictions were deep and sincere—more so than perhaps they seemed to some of his associates. It was not his wont to make a display of them in any case, nor even to allude to them in ordinary conversation. In this he had a full share of that reserve which is—or at least was—a characteristic of the Church to which he belonged.

From his boyhood he had been a hard student, especially in relation to his favourite pursuits. In regard to the history of the various races which inhabited Scotland, he might almost have applied to himself what Gibbon said of his knowledge of the Eastern nations, that before he was sixteen he had exhausted all that could be learned in the English language. As he grew up, he acquired a competent knowledge of Latin and French. The extent of his reading on all subjects connected with Scottish history and antiquities was very great, as any one may see who glances over the notes in his Inventories or Concilia. In his latter days, the books which he perused were chiefly those bearing on his anti-



quarian studies, but it was otherwise in his youth and early manhood. The whole field of English literature was familiar to him ; and his acquaintance with the poets and early dramatists in particular was as extensive as his taste was refined and correct.

Few will dispute Robertson's pre-eminent rank among Scottish antiquaries. Of his predecessors, the foremost names are those of Thomas Innes, Lord Hailes, Pinkerton, and Chalmers. Equal to Pinkerton in acuteness, and to Chalmers in industry and research, he excelled them both in learning, impartiality, and good taste. He was as accurate as Hailes, without any share of his narrowness and occasional acerbity and conceit. Probably he would himself have been most pleased to take his place beside Innes. His great work completed what had been begun in the *Critical Essay*, and in many points of his personal and literary character he was not unlike the Roman ecclesiastic. Neither of them had any portion of the fretful and wrangling humour which has often marked the antiquary ; and both left their mark on Scottish history, not only by their own published works, but by the assistance which they gave so freely and ungrudgingly to others.

Mr. Burton, speaking of Robertson in a note in his *History of Scotland*, to which reference has already been made, observes :—  
“ Many years ago, from the peculiar knowledge he had stored up,  
“ I had set before him, as his special duty, the work which I have  
“ myself attempted in these volumes. The bent of his mind was,  
“ however, rather towards archæology than history ; and thus it  
“ may be said that he preferred the science to the art.” There can be no doubt that Robertson was the person of his time best qualified to write a history of Scotland: But even if he had undertaken

such a task, and if time sufficient to finish it had been given to him. it may be doubted whether he would ever have brought the work to a conclusion. He was too laboriously and too minutely accurate for a task of such extent. The time which he bestowed on the narrow field of the *Concilia Scotiæ* is sufficient proof of this. More than once I suggested as a subject for composition a portion of his country's annals, with which he was particularly conversant, and admitting in its treatment almost dramatic unity—the history of Scotland from the accession of Malcolm Canmore to the extinction of the male line of that prince by the death of Alexander III. He seemed to think well of the suggestion, but it is almost needless to say that no attempt was made to carry it out.

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It is idle to indulge in speculation as to what might have been done by Robertson. Something may now be said of what he did in the volumes to which these remarks are introductory. The observations which follow neither are, nor profess to be, a substitute for the Preface contemplated by Robertson. Had he been spared to complete his plan, we should have had a treatise on the history and antiquities of Aberdeenshire and Banffshire as thoroughly done, as his Preface to *Queen Mary's Inventories* or the *Concilia Scotiæ*. All that is here proposed is to indicate the extent and value of what he was permitted to accomplish, and to mention some of the more important events connected with the history of the two counties.

Rich as our district is in the materials of local history, and peculiar and interesting as that history is in itself, these materials are

to be found in a collective form only in Robertson's volumes. Had the industrious Chalmers been able to finish the task which he undertook in his *Caledonia*, Scotland would have possessed a work, which, notwithstanding certain obvious defects, would have been unequalled as a storehouse of antiquities and topography. A part of his work—the general description of North Britain—was completed in his first volume. His history of the particular counties began with those nearest to the English Border, and when the third of his goodly quartos, which brought him as far north as the Forth, was published in 1824, he expressed a hope that the whole work would be completed in two years. Chalmers died in 1825, and his collections for our north-eastern counties, in which from his birth and education among us he took a particular interest, have not been given to the public.

Quarter of a century after the death of Chalmers appeared the first volume of the "*Origines Parochiales Scotiæ—the Antiquities Ecclesiastical and Territorial of the Parishes of Scotland.*" It was hoped that this work would, so far as parochial history was concerned, give a complete account of the whole Scottish kingdom. The first volume and the first and second parts of the second volume have been published. Fourteen years have elapsed since the latest of these appeared, and it is understood that there is no prospect of the work being finished. What has been published contains the dioceses of Ross, Caithness, Argyle, the Isles, and a part of Glasgow; it throws no light on those of Aberdeen and Murray.

Two works remain to be noticed—the *Statistical Account of Scotland*, drawn up by Sir John Sinclair from the communications of

the parish ministers, and the New Statistical Account of Scotland by the ministers of the respective parishes. In the older compilation, the accounts of the parishes of Aberdeenshire and Banffshire, in conformity with the inconvenient arrangement of the work, are scattered through the various volumes; in the later, Aberdeenshire occupies the whole of the twelfth volume, and Banffshire a portion of the thirteenth. The general usefulness of the two Accounts is so great, that it is perhaps unreasonable to complain of their defects, especially in those points to which the writers did not think that their attention was specially called. But errors in compilations of this kind are apt to be repeated by others, and it is therefore proper that they should be pointed out. This has been done, with no unkindly spirit, in an able and amusing article in the *Quarterly Review* for March, 1848. As was to be expected, the most ludicrous mistakes are those connected with the ancient history of Scotland. A south-country minister speaks of St. Michael as "a Saint of great note in the Romish Breviary, who flourished in the tenth century;" and a minister of the far north found the burial place of the same saint in his own parish. A Highland minister did not know who the Mary was to whom his church was dedicated, but thought it most likely "she was a descendant of one of the Lairds of Chisholm." One writer makes Froissart a contemporary of Mary Stewart. In the Old Statistical Account of the parish of Fordun, the minister, speaking of John Fordun, author of the *Scoti-Chronicon*, says that he was "thought by some to have been a man of property in this parish, by others, with greater probability, to have been a monk who resided here." In the New Statistical Account, the following additional information is supplied

regarding the old Chronicler :—“ John of Fordun, the Historian, “ was either a native of the parish, or resided in it when he wrote “ his History of Scotland. He is called by Bede, ‘ Venerabilis “ vir, Dominus Joannes Fordun, Presbyter.’ ” It is not explained how Bede was able to refer to an author who lived six centuries after himself.

The lack of information in other quarters increases the value of Robertson's volumes. They have all substantially the same object, but the first, which contains the Collections, differs somewhat from the Illustrations. It consists of three parts. The first part is a description of the two counties written in Latin by the well-known Antiquary, Robert Gordon of Straloch, and reprinted from the second edition of Blaeu's *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*. The second part is an account of Aderdeenshire, written in the beginning of the eighteenth century by Sir Samuel Forbes of Foveran, and printed from a manuscript in the British Museum. The third part—occupying much the greater portion of the volume—is a View of the Diocese of Aberdeen, written about the year 1732, by Alexander Keith, a clergyman of the Episcopal Church, and printed from a manuscript in the Advocates' Library. This last work, it will be observed, is a view of the *Diocese*, not of the *County*. It therefore follows the ecclesiastical, not the civil boundaries, and while it omits Strathbogie which is in the diocese of Murray, it contains an account of some parishes in Kincardineshire which are situated within the diocese of Aberdeen.

The three works above mentioned form, strictly speaking, the text of the Collections. Straloch's Description is unaccompanied by any editorial notes. Sir Samuel Forbes's Account is illustrated

by notes, chiefly biographical, the largest of which is a careful and instructive notice of David Wedderburn, Master of the Grammar School of Aberdeen. The View of the Diocese of Aberdeen is much more profusely illustrated. Besides, the foot-notes, for the most part topographical and biographical, a variety of documents is appended to the description in the text. The text itself contains an account of the civil divisions of Aberdeenshire, of its Royal Burghs, of the See of Aberdeen and the Bishops, of the Monastic Houses, the University, and the Rural Deaneries forming the ecclesiastical divisions of the Diocese. The rest of the work contains an account of all the parishes in the Diocese, arranged in the order of the Presbyteries.

At the end of the text the writer gives a list of the books, printed and manuscript, used by him in his View. The authorities so quoted, show that the Episcopal clergyman had been a diligent student of works, which even at the present day are by no means frequently perused. The printed volumes are the Aberdeen Breviary, Boece's History, and his Lives of the Bishops of Aberdeen, the work known by the name of Camerarius on the Saints of Scotland, Dempster's Ecclesiastical History, Archbishop Spottiswood's History, Craufurd's Peerage, and Nisbet's Heraldry. Those in manuscript are a Register of Writs relating to the Church of Aberdeen, a Copy of Bagimont's Roll, a Valuation of Aberdeenshire in the reigns of Charles I. and Charles II., Bishop Gavin Dunbar's Epistolare, an Inventory of the Jewels of the Cathedral, some manuscripts of Thomas Orem, "a very inquisitive antiquary in Old Aberdeen," the Chartulary of Aberdeen, and the Missal of Arbuthnot. The writer's Jacobite opinions occasionally come

out, as, for instance, in his account of the parish of Kildrummie, where he speaks of "the estate of John, Duke of Mar, forfeited A.D. 1716, by the Duke of Brunswick." The editor's additions are inserted after the author's descriptions in the text, and consist chiefly of topographical accounts of the parishes from Sir Robert Sibbald's and Macfarlane's Collections in the Advocates' Library, of Charters preserved in the same Library and in the Charter-rooms of the County families, or already printed in the published Chartularies, and of extracts from the two Statistical Accounts.

The three volumes of Illustrations follow the plan adopted in the additions to the parochial portions of the Collections. They are not like the early volumes composed of several works illustrated by editorial appendices and notes. The appendices and notes are themselves the work. The division as before is parochial in the order of the Presbyteries, and the parishes mentioned are not, as in the other volume, those of the diocese of Aberdeen, but those of the counties of Aberdeen and Banff whether within or beyond the diocese. The Presbyteries of Turriff and Deer, and some particular parishes, are gone over twice; the others only once. The notices are of the same character, and derived from the same sources, as those in the Collections.

It would be vain to attempt giving any abstract of the various matters referred to in the pages of the four volumes. Those who consult them will generally find under the particular parish what they wish to ascertain. Their labours will be diminished by consulting the ample Tables of Contents prefixed by the Editor to each volume of the Illustrations. These are most accurate and minute, particularly in the last volume where the Table occupies more than

a hundred and twenty pages. The Index contained in the present volume will, it is hoped, supply whatever further is wanting for the purposes of reference. It was partially prepared by Mr Francis Shaw and my son, and was arranged by the latter under my superintendance.

Through all the volumes will be found interesting notices of the various ecclesiastical foundations of the diocese, whether regular or secular. In the second volume of the Illustrations, there is an account of the Cistercian Abbey of Deer, carefully prepared by Robertson, which deserves particular attention. It is just what such accounts should be in those cases where, as in the present instance, the authentic sources of information are of the scantiest description. After a brief notice of the foundation, a chronological list is given of the Abbots and of the chief events during their administration, commencing with Hugh, supposed to have been the first Abbot, and ending with Robert Keith, the last Abbot or Commendator.

But the great merit of these volumes consists in their ample collection of charters and other writs, illustrating from the most authentic sources the history of every parish in the two counties. The writer of the article in the *Quarterly Review*, already referred to, observes—"The real civil history of a parish is its local and territorial history, the history of its soil, from the first settling of the Saxon 'town' or 'hame,' the Danish 'burgh' or 'by,' the Norman 'vil;' the clearing of its forests; the tenures of its lands from the earliest gift of the manor to the lords who afterwards took their name from it, and the first donation of toft and croft in pure alms to the chaplain celebrating at its rustic altar. These are subjects peculiarly within the sphere of the parish



“ historian, and to most readers the most interesting part of his work. “ It is in these we find the Statistical Accounts most miserably “ defective, and it is in these that no editorship could have supplied “ the place of patient and intelligent local research.” After alluding to the labours of George Chalmers, and the publications of the Antiquarian Societies generally, the same writer adds, with special reference to the Collections, and the volume of the Illustrations first printed—“ The Spalding Club, in particular, has distinguished “ itself in this career. Its generous President, the Earl of Aberdeen, “ set the example, and the Club has now printed two large volumes “ of charters and ancient documents illustrative of the early history “ of Aberdeen and Banff Shires. These are the proper materials “ for the parish historian, and, so far as it extends, that collection, “ made with great research, and exhibiting the most extensive “ charter learning, really saves the whole labour of working out the “ authorities, from which he must compile his account.”

What is said here of the two volumes referred to applies equally to the other two. They are a vast store from which materials of every kind may be derived, not only for the purposes above specified, but for those of the historian, the antiquary, the genealogist, and all others whose labours or inquiries are in any way connected with the tenure and possession of land in the district. The early records of that district are more scanty than those of some of the Southern shires ; but the subsequent materials are ample, and its history is in various respects peculiarly interesting.

The territory now known as Aberdeenshire and Banffshire was in old times the seat of the Taixali and other Celtic tribes, and at the end of the sixth century formed part of the province of the Northern

Picts. Some writers have attempted to connect the district with the site of the famous battle in which the Caledonians under Galgacus fought with Agricola. The theory is as well founded as that of the Laird of Monkbaron on the same subject in *The Antiquary*, and the local history must commence five centuries later. Even then fable is mixed up with truth, and the two elements can hardly be separated. We are told how a Scot from Ireland, named Machar, a disciple of St. Columba, was sent from Iona with twelve companions to preach the Gospel in the land of the Picts. He was commanded by his master to go onward along the eastern coast till he should come to a river whose windings resembled the figure of a Bishop's crozier; there he was to stop and build a church. At the mouth of the Don he beheld the appointed sign, and there he erected a church on the spot where the cathedral of Aberdeen was afterwards built and dedicated in his name.

This narrative regarding St. Machar and the church of Aberdeen might be dismissed altogether as merely a beautiful legend, were it not that a similar story about the foundation of other northern churches has recently been shown to rest on something like historical authority. Ancient tradition had connected the name of St. Drostan, another disciple of St. Columba, with the churches of Deer and Aberdour in Buchan. The *Book of Deer* shows that this tradition was well founded. That venerable volume has now been printed for the Spalding Club, and the Secretary's Preface contains everything which can be ascertained on the point. Extracts were given from it in the fourth volume of the *Illustrations*. From these we learn how Columba and Drostan came from Iona to Aberdeen, and how Bede the Pict, who was the Maormor of Buchan,

gave them Aberdour and Deer. The monastery of Deer continued in possession of the clergy, the successors of those established by St. Columba and St. Drostan, till they were removed, like so many others, to make way for the new monastic orders introduced by King David the First.

Early records prove the existence also of other monasteries of the same primitive type, in the territory which afterwards became the diocese of Aberdeen, at Mortlach, Cloveth, Turriff, and Monymusk. The religious house at Monymusk was a Culdee establishment. There is no evidence that any of the others were so.

The secular, like the ecclesiastical history of the district, opens with a mixture of truth and fiction. The name of Gregory the Great, King of the Scots, is famous in the legends of the medieval chroniclers. According to Scottish writers, he was a mighty sovereign who governed his own kingdom prudently and successfully, and extended his conquests over Ireland and a large portion of England. The evidence of this is nearly as good as some of the proofs which English writers, even in our own day, have held to be conclusive as to the supremacy of the Kings of England over Northern Britain. No one in Scotland is now so credulous as to believe the Scottish legend. Modern criticism has brought down the great Gregory from his mythical elevation, and reduced his fine sounding classical name to that of Grig. He undoubtedly ruled by some singular title the united kingdom of the Scots and Picts in the end of the ninth century, and there is nothing improbable in the tradition which assigned to him a residence at Dunnideer in the Garioch.

There is no doubt whatever as to the connection with our district

of another usurper of far higher fame—the renowned Macbeth. The northern provinces were favourable to his claims, and he retreated thither after his first defeat by Malcolm Canmore. His last battle took place at Lumphanan in Mar, and the cairn there, known by his name, may be held on the combined authority of chronicle and tradition to mark the spot where he fell. The struggle did not close with his death. His step-son, Lulach, continued the contest, till he also was slain at Essie in Strathbogie.

The battles said to have been fought in Buchan between the Scots and the Danes rest on tradition alone, so far as the details are concerned, but there can be no doubt that conflicts took place, and that there is a considerable Norse element in the people of that district. The dedication of the church of Cruden to St. Olave points in the same direction. It was not only in their own land that the Scots encountered the Northmen. We know from the Irish annals that a son of the Maormor of Mar fought under Brian Boromhe at the great battle of Clontarf. A Scottish chronicler connects the foundation of the church of Mortlach with a victory of Malcolm II. over the Northmen. The real founder, however, was Malcolm Canmore. The chief residence of that sovereign was at Dunfermline; and the more intimate relations established with England induced him and the succeeding princes of his house to prefer the southern provinces of their kingdom. But in those days a King of the Scots required to visit every part of his realm, and Malcolm is said to have dwelt occasionally at Kindroghet in Mar, where the site of his castle is still pointed out. The tradition is sufficiently probable; and there, far up the Highland Dee, we may suppose that his Queen, St. Margaret, also resided, eight centuries

before the same neighbourhood became the favourite abode of the sovereign of Britain.

With the accession of David, son of Malcolm and Margaret, a new era began in Scotland, and our northern district shared in the changes which then took place. These changes, which were almost all for the better, were manifold in their character, affecting the laws, the religion, and the language of the people, and introducing a new race into the ancient territory of the Picts. What has been called the Anglo-Norman colonization of Scotland was the work of David and his descendants. The general history has yet to be written, but its local progress may be traced in the pages of the Chartularies. New usages were adopted from the South; the Scottish Church was assimilated to the ecclesiastical condition of the rest of Christendom; Burghs were founded; and the feudal institutions were gradually established in the Lowlands.

There is now no dispute as to these points, or as to the extensive immigration from England and the Continent; but it was formerly a common opinion, and it is still maintained by a few, that there was no real change in the great body of the population of the north-eastern counties. This can only be held on the theory that the Picts were a Teutonic not a Celtic race; but that theory is opposed to the evidence both of chronicle and charter, and to the information derived from the latest discoveries, such as the Book of Deer. The language of the whole Scottish nation north of the Forth, in the reign of Malcolm Canmore, was Gaelic. Before the death of Alexander III., a change had been effected. All along the eastern coast, from the Frith of Forth to the Murray Frith, a Teutonic tongue superseded the Gaelic; the ancient race and

language receded farther to the west; and finally the very name of the old Scots was transferred to the new people and language which had come in their place. When Archdeacon Barbour wrote his national poem of the Bruce, the language in which it was composed was spoken in all the low country of Aberdeenshire and Banffshire.

The see of Aberdeen was founded by David I., and the new system of diocesan and parochial administration soon superseded the irregular monastic usages of the Celtic Church. The diocese included the whole of the county of Aberdeen, except Strathbogie, and about one-half of the county of Banff. At an early period it was divided into Rural Deaneries, of which there were at first three—Mar, Buchan, and Garioch; and afterwards five—Mar, Buchan, Boyne, Garioch, and Aberdeen. A list of the parishes in these deaneries is given in the volume of Collections. A chapter of secular canons was established in the Cathedral during the episcopate of Bishop Edward; the dignitaries being those usual in Scottish secular chapters, a Dean, a Chancellor, a Precentor, a Treasurer, and a single Archdeacon.

There were only three monastic foundations in the diocese, exclusive of the houses of the Dominican, Franciscan, and Carmelite Friars. These were Deer, Monymusk, and Fyvie. Of Deer, Robertson gives the following account in the second volume of the Illustrations:—“ The Cistercian Abbey of Deer, dedicated like all “ the houses of the order in honour of the Blessed Virgin, was “ founded by William, the first Earl of Buchan, of the great race “ of the Cumyns, who died in the year 1233, and is said to have “ chosen his sepulture within its walls. \* \* \* According to

“ record or tradition preserved in the Abbey until the middle of the  
“ sixteenth century, the date of its foundation was the 29th of  
“ January, 1219.” The monks were brought from Kinloss in  
Murray.

The Culdee monastery of Monymusk was dedicated to St. Mary, and among its benefactors were the Earls of Mar and Buchan. Robertson, speaking of Gillechrist, Earl of Mar, in a note to the account of the parish of Kildrummie, in the fourth volume of the Illustrations, mentions that “ between the years 1199 and 1207, he  
“ seems to have built a Priory at Monymusk, an old seat of  
“ Culdees, and to have given to it the churches of St. Andrew of  
“ Alford, of St. Marnan of Leochel, of St. Wolok of Ruthven, and  
“ of Invernochty in Strathdon.” Some years afterwards, the Culdees of Monymusk were allowed, or encouraged to become Canons-Regular, and their house was thenceforth dependent on the Augustinian Priory of St. Andrews.

The Priory of Fyvie, which was dedicated to St. Mary and All Saints, was a cell of the great Benedictine Abbey of Arbroath. By a charter granted at Aberdeen, on the feast of St. Luke, 1285, Reginald de Cheyne, head of the Norman family of that name, gave his lands of Ardlogie and certain others to the church of St. Thomas the Martyr at Arbroath, and the monks of that monastery, residing in the religious house built at Ardlogie, near the Church of St. Peter of Fyvie. He was the founder of the Priory, although that honour has been assigned to William the Lion, the founder of the mother-house of Aberbrothock, and to the Earls of Buchan—the error having probably arisen from the circumstance that the King gave to the monks of Arbroath the church of Fyvie,

and that Fergus, Earl of Buchan, and Marjory, Countess of Buchan, were among the early benefactors of Arbroath.

Among the most beneficial of the acts of King David was the encouragement which he gave to the new communities, which soon became known as Royal Burghs. Mr. Cosmo Innes, in his preface to James Gordon's Description of both towns of Aberdeen, observes : —“ The most ancient of our burghs cannot date their privileges “ higher than the age of David, the father of his people, no less “ than of the Church, nor support their individual claims by char- “ ters earlier than the reign of his grand-son William. With the “ most ancient, as well as the most important, ranks the Burgh of “ Aberdeen. Long before Edinburgh had acquired the precedence “ of a capital, or even the first place among the Four Burghs of “ Southern Scotland, while Glasgow was yet an insignificant “ dependent on its Bishop, Aberdeen had taken its place as a great “ and independent Royal Burgh, and a port of extensive foreign “ trade.” Mr. Innes expresses his opinion that the Burgh derived its name from that which the seat of the Cathedral already held in consequenc of its situation at the mouth of the Don. The see, and the small town in which it was situated, had one of the ancient national saints for their patron ; the Burgh, like other mercantile communities, made choice of St. Nicholas ; and this circumstance alone would indicate the difference between the two places known afterwards as Old and New Aberdeen.

In the reign of David and his immediate successors, we discover the first great divisions of the district, not only in the names of the three earliest rural deaneries, but in those of the ancient earldoms of Mar, Buchan, and the Garioch. The date of the commencement



of the earldom of Mar has been much disputed. Robertson, in his notes on the parish of Kildrummie, observes :—" Lord Hailes has  
" been thought to countenance the belief that there was a Martach  
" Earl of Mar in the reign of King Malcolm Canmore. It might  
" otherwise have been needless to say that Earl Martach, and the  
" charter which has been cited to prove his existence, are equally  
" fabulous. Nor is there any good reason to suppose that the  
" second Earl of Mar of the peerage writers—the Earl Gartnach  
" who, about 1120, gives his consent to the foundation of the Abbey  
" of Scone by King Alexander I., was Earl of Mar. It seems  
" sufficiently certain that he was Maormor or Earl of Buchan.  
" \* \* \* The first Earl of Mar certainly known to record is  
" Rothri, Rotheri, or Ruadri. As ' Earl Rotheri,' he gives consent  
" to the foundation charter of Scone by King Alexander I. about  
" 1120, and is witness to the great charter of King David to the  
" monks of Dunfermline between 1124 and 1127. As ' Ruadri,  
" ' Maormor of Mar,' he appears as a witness to a grant by Gartnait,  
" Earl or Maormor of Buchan, to the clerics of Deer in 1132."

The above quotations throw light also on the earldom of Buchan. The ancient Celtic family, first known as Maormors, afterwards as Earls of Buchan, ended in an heiress, whose marriage with William Cumyn brought the earldom into the great Norman house of that name. The earldom of the Garioch was held along with the English earldom of Huntingdon by David, brother of Malcolm IV. and William the Lion—the hero of Scott's romance of *The Talisman*. These honours descended to his son, John the Scot, Earl of Huntingdon, Chester, and the Garioch.

We may now pass on to the troubled period which followed the

death of Alexander III. In the great contest which then took place, the citizens of Aberdeen supported the cause of Bruce, but the earldom of Buchan belonged to his enemies the Cumyns. In the early part of his reign, Bruce himself sought refuge in Aberdeenshire, and placed his wife and daughter for safety in the Castle of Kildrummie. After their removal, the Castle, which was held by his brother Sir Nigel, was besieged and taken by the English, and the young knight was cruelly executed by order of Edward I. The wrongs which he had sustained were sternly avenged by King Robert. The Cumyns were defeated at Inverury, and their earldom was ravaged with such severity that, as Barbour tells us, men spoke fifty years afterwards of the harrying of Buchan. As remarked in the Illustrations, "In the memorable revolution which placed the Earl of Carrick on the Scottish throne, the illustrious family of Cumyn was so utterly overthrown, that, says a Chronicle of the age, of a name which numbered at one time three earls and more than thirty belted knights, there remained no memorial in the land, save the orisons of the monks of Deer."

The victories of Bruce gave repose for some time to his kingdom, but the troubles were renewed in the reign of his son. Henry de Beaumont, an English nobleman, claimed the earldom of Buchan in right of his wife, a daughter of the last earl. His claim was rejected by the Scottish Regent, and he became, in consequence, one of the leaders of the disinherited barons who supported the cause of Edward Baliol. They were successful for a time, but when dissensions broke out amongst them, the adherents of David Bruce again acquired the ascendancy. Beaumont was besieged in the

strong Castle of Dundarg on the northern coast of his earldom, and was obliged to surrender. Kildrummie was held for the house of Bruce, and the garrison was encouraged by the presence of a sister of King Robert, the wife of the Scottish leader, Sir Andrew Murray of Bothwell. It was attacked by David of Strathbogie, Earl of Athol, then in the service of England, but Murray hastened to its relief, and surprised and slew the earl in the forest of Kilblene. The ladies of that day were famous for their valour. Athol's widow, a daughter of Henry de Beaumont, defended the island-castle of Lochindorb in Murray against the Scots. She sent to Edward III. imploring his aid, and the young King of England listened to her call, and marching northwards, raised the siege. On his return, he wasted the north-eastern provinces, and destroyed the town of Aberdeen.

The war of independence was finally successful. The freedom of Scotland was secured, but it was at the expense of the civilization and temporal prosperity of the kingdom. The learning of the ecclesiastics, the chivalry of the nobles, the comforts of the burghers and peasantry had well-nigh disappeared. The counties of Aberdeen and Banff were not so exposed to the ravages of the spoiler as the southern shires, but they suffered greatly in the struggle and a considerable portion of the land had changed its owners. The adherents of the house of Baliol and the friends of the Cumyus were driven out, and those who maintained the national cause assumed their place, foremost among whom were the families of Gordon, Hay, and Keith.

One of the worst consequences of the strife was the weakening of the royal authority, and even of the predominance of the Teutonic race, in the mountainous districts of the North and West. The

chiefs of the Highlands and Isles entered into alliance with England, and attempted repeatedly to establish their independence of the Scottish crown. The most formidable attempt of this kind was that of Donald, Lord of the Isles, whose claim to the earldom of Ross was rejected by the Duke of Albany, Regent of the kingdom during the imprisonment of King James. Scotland was now in a more miserable condition than it had been at any time since the accession of David I. The fruits of Bruce's victories and of his vigorous government had been lost during three turbulent reigns, and the country was suffering more than the usual evils which a sovereign's minority occasioned in feudal times. There never was a fairer opportunity for the Celtic race recovering its ancient territories. Happily for the cause of civilization, the Lord of the Isles found an opponent in one who was accustomed to Highland warfare, and who enjoyed the full confidence of the barons and burgesses of the Lowlands. This was Alexander Stewart, Earl of Mar, an illegitimate son of the Earl of Buchan, one of the sons of Robert II. His career had been a strange one, and illustrates the disordered age in which he lived.

In his youth, Alexander Stewart had commanded a body of Caterans, and his life had been wild and irregular. He was suspected of being implicated in one of the most daring outrages of that unhappy time. Sir Malcolm Drummond, brother of Annabel, wife of Robert III., and married to Isabella, who held in her own right the earldom of Mar, was seized by a band of ruffians, and thrown into a dungeon, where he died soon afterwards. Stewart was thought to have instigated the crime. Not long after the baron's death, he stormed the Castle of Kildrummie, where the

widowed countess was residing, and persuaded or compelled her to marry him. He was apprehensive, however, that the way in which he had wooed and won the lady might not be reputed as quite regular. He therefore appeared before the gates of Kildrummie, and in presence of the vassals of the earldom surrendered the Castle and all that it contained into the hands of the countess, who thereupon declared that, of her own free will, she chose him as her husband. Stewart became Earl of Mar and the Garioch, and one of the most powerful nobles of Scotland. His character changed with his condition, and he was now as firm an assertor of the law as he had formerly been remarkable for setting it at defiance. After the death of his countess, he went abroad for some time, and distinguished himself in the service of the Duke of Burgundy, wedding for his second wife a Flemish lady, in whose right he became Lord of Duffle in Brabant. Details of the earl's proceedings on the continent are given by Andrew Winton in his Chronicle, with a fulness which is explained by the fact, ascertained by Robertson, that the Prior of Lochleven was "sprung from a family long numbered among the retainers of the house of Mar."

The Earl of Mar was once more in Scotland when the Lord of the Isles, after ravaging Murray, was preparing to enter the Garioch, and threatening to burn the town of Aberdeen, and waste the whole country as far as the Tay. The gentry of Aberdeenshire, Angus, and Mearns, accompanied by the Provost of Aberdeen and a stout body of the burghers, were mustered under the earl, and met the Highland army at Harlaw. The battle, which was fought on St. James's even, 1411, was fiercely contested. Many of the barons and the Provost of Aberdeen were slain, but Donald was

obliged to retreat, and no regular army of the clans ever again descended into the Lowlands under a Highland leader. Few events were more important in themselves, or left a deeper impression on the inhabitants of the northern shires, than the battle of Harlaw. Like Flodden, its memory was preserved in "tradition, legend, tune, and song." Mr. Clyne, in a note to his Ballads from Scottish History, has given a most interesting account of the relations which existed between the Earl of Mar and Robert Davidson, the brave Provost of Aberdeen, who fell under his banner at Harlaw. Mar died on the 26th of July, 1435, having survived the battle almost exactly twenty-four years.

The vigorous rule of James I., after his return from England, and his noble personal qualities, effected a great improvement in the Scottish kingdom. The miserable civil dissensions were renewed during the minorities of his son and grand-son, but the condition of the people was gradually becoming better. During the reign of James IV. the Scottish government was respected throughout Europe. An inestimable benefit was conferred on the northern provinces of the kingdom by the munificent foundation of Bishop Elphinstone's College and University at Old Aberdeen. A century afterwards, the generosity of the bishop was imitated by the Earl Marischal in New Aberdeen; and the establishment of a College and University at Fraserburgh was proposed by Sir Alexander Fraser of Philorth, and authorised by royal charter, but was never carried out.

In the great ecclesiastical revolution of the sixteenth century, the position of the two north-eastern counties was a peculiar one. At its commencement the Reformation had many friends, but the

ancient Church was powerful through the influence of the University of Aberdeen and the support of the house of Gordon. The Roman Catholics might have made a more strenuous resistance if they had had a better ecclesiastical chief in the Bishop of the diocese. But the successor of Elphinstone at this time was William Gordon, himself too deeply stained with the immorality of the age, to be able to oppose effectually what was a revolt as much against the profligacy of the clergy as against the erroneous belief of the Church. The Reformed doctrines were established by law when the Confession of Faith was agreed to by the Convention of the Estates in 1560. But the change had not received the sanction of the sovereign, and the adherents of the fallen hierarchy did not abandon the hope of recovering their supremacy. In the South they were weaker than the Protestants, but in the North the two parties were more equally balanced.

The leader of the Romanists was George, Earl of Huntly, Chancellor of Scotland, the most powerful nobleman of the kingdom. His political conduct during the regency of Mary of Lorraine had been of a very ambiguous character, but there is no reason to question the sincerity and consistency of his religious belief. Much depended on the line of policy which the young Queen, then about to return to Scotland, might adopt. The party which governed at Edinburgh had sent her illegitimate brother, the Prior of St. Andrews, afterwards the famous Earl of Murray, as their envoy to Mary. Huntly and several of the northern nobles and prelates also despatched an ambassador of their own faith, John Leslie, Official of Aberdeen, afterwards Bishop of Ross. Leslie anticipated the Prior in obtaining an interview with the Queen, and on the part of his

constituents invited her to land at Aberdeen, where he assured her she would be received by an army of twenty thousand of her faithful subjects, prepared to conduct her to Edinburgh. It is impossible to say what the result would have been had Mary landed in the North instead of at Leith. She adopted what seemed the wiser as well as safer course, and declined Leslie's proposal.

The Prior of St. Andrews became Mary's most trusted minister, and he gained her confidence by the general ability of his government, and by the prudence with which he controlled the more intolerant of his own supporters. But it was evident to all that his position was insecure, so long as Huntly was predominant in the North. The two chiefs came into deadly conflict in the autumn of 1562. The immediate pretext was the conferring of the earldom of Murray on the Prior and the Queen's northern journey; but the causes which induced the Gordons to rise in open insurrection, and by which Mary was persuaded to consent to their destruction, continue to be involved in mystery. What actually took place is sufficiently ascertained, and some interesting details are to be found in Robertson's Preface to the Queen's Inventories. Mary resided at Aberdeen for a few days on her progress northwards, and for more than a month on her return. She was there while Murray led the royal army to Corrichie, where Huntly was defeated and slain. The spoils of the Earl's Castle of Strathbogie were brought to Edinburgh, and divided between the Queen and her brother.

The son of the earl who fell at Corrichie was restored by Mary to the honours and estates of his house, and the influence of the Gordons again became very great. They steadfastly supported the cause of the Queen, and maintained for some time a desperate



## PREFACE.

lv

struggle on behalf of their Church. Thirty years after the legal establishment of the Reformed opinions, the Roman Catholic cause appeared to be far from hopeless. The last efforts of its adherents were made when the national indignation had been excited by the murder of Mary at Fotheringay, and while Spain, undismayed by the loss of the Armada, was still contemplating the conquest of England. Among the nobility, the Church of Rome had many supporters, including the Earls of Huntly, Crawford, Angus, Errol, and Montrose, the Lords Seaton, Livingstone, Maxwell, Herries, Home, Sanquhar, Gray, Ogilvie, and Fleming; and in the northern counties its leaders were the Earls of Huntly and Errol, the latter a recent convert, zealous for his new faith.

In 1594, the northern lords broke out into rebellion against King James, and the Earl of Argyll advanced against them with an army arrayed under the royal banner. There was something singular in the circumstances of this struggle. Argyll's uncle, Earl Archibald, had commanded Mary's army at Langside, and he himself in his later years became a Roman Catholic. His army was chiefly composed of Highlanders, and he had neither horse nor artillery. His principal officers were Maclean and Macintosh, the descendents of those who had fought against Mar at Harlaw. He marched northwards into Badenoch, and thence retreated to Strathavon, where he encountered the army of Huntly and Errol in the neighbourhood of Glenlivet. The followers of the earls consisted of Lowland gentry on horseback, and they had a small train of ordnance. They did not hesitate to attack the Highland army, though six times their number, and after a desperate struggle Argyll was defeated.

The victors of Glenlivet did not derive any permanent advantage

from their success. The King in person led an army to Aberdeen, and thence advanced to Strathbogie, which its master was unable to defend. The stately Castle, the pride of the North, was destroyed, and Errol's Castle of Slains was also demolished. The two noblemen, after another attempt to rouse their followers, announced their intention of leaving Scotland. Huntly's uncle, James Gordon, a Jesuit priest, endeavoured to dissuade them from their resolution. They met in Elgin Cathedral, and there mass was celebrated for the last time. Gordon then mounted the pulpit, and exhorted his kinsmen and friends to dare all for their faith, but they had lost heart, and gave up the contest. Huntly embarked at Aberdeen, and Errol at Peterhead, and sailed for the Continent. They returned some years afterwards, but it was to make their submission to the King and the Protestant Church. The ceremony of their formal reception took place within the church of St. Nicholas at Aberdeen. The recantation made on this occasion was as insincere as such acts proceeding from the dread of worldly consequences generally are. Huntly and Errol were again excommunicated, and again restored after the accession of James to the English crown. The former seems to have been little troubled by his frequent changes of religion. Errol was more scrupulous. We are informed that, on the morning of his last submission, "the Archbishop of Glasgow being called, he confessed his dissimulation "with many tears, and beseeching them that were present to bear "witness of his remorse, was hardly brought to any settling all that "day. This nobleman was of a tender heart, and of all that I "have known the most conscientious in his profession; and therefore to his dying was used by the Church with greater lenity

“ than were others of that sect.” Such is the testimony of Spottiswood, himself Archbishop of Glasgow at the time.

While the chiefs of the Gordons and Hays were thus compelled to submit to the Protestant Establishment, arguments of another description had kept the family of Keith faithful to the new opinions. Robert Keith, second son of William, Earl Marischal, was Commendator of Deer at the Reformation, and obtained a grant of the Abbey lands, which were erected into a temporal barony. He was succeeded by his nephew George, fifth Earl Marischal, the founder of Marischal College. Popular feeling in the North was not favourable to the appropriation of the temporalities of the Church, but the earl was not disposed to pay much regard to it. On a tower built by him on the lands of Deer, and on his new College at Aberdeen, he inscribed words which were supposed to allude to the opinions expressed about him—“ Thay haif said: Quhat say “ thay: Let thame say.” The Countess Marischal entreated her lord to have nothing to do with such sacrilegious gains, but he disregarded her warnings and the vision which she related of the doom of his castle. The account of this vision was first printed in the Collections from the manuscript of Patrick Gordon’s Short Abridgement of Britain’s Distemper, and that manuscript was subsequently printed for the Spalding Club. The narrative was written between 1649 and 1660, more than half a century after the date of the alleged dream; but it was another half century and more after the vision was recorded that the fulfilment came, in the ruin of Dunottar, and the downfall of the family of Keith. The story is a singular one, but it admits of an easy explanation.

Aberdeenshire and Banffshire partook in the general prosperity

enjoyed by Scotland in the early part of the seventeenth century. Scotland and England were now united under one sovereign, and the law was strong enough to put down the feudal contests among the nobility. One of the signs of returning comfort was the erection of baronial mansions of a higher order than those previously built. Mr. Cosmo Innes, in his *Scotland in the Middle Ages*, after referring to the labours of the Chancellor Seaton at Fyvie, and of the Earl of Strathmore at Glamis, adds—"These two master builders were but the type of their age. Castle-building, or castle-adorning was in high fashion in the beginning of the seventeenth century; and strangely it fixed on Aberdeenshire as its favourite field, where castle mansions of Frasers, Gordons, Forbeses, Burnetts, and Urquharts still exist to teach our presumptuous age a lesson of humility. All these chateaus, and the less-adorning country houses of that period, mark a great improvement in the comfort and in the tastes of our gentry. We cannot figure houses like Castle Fraser to have been built and inhabited by any who were not gentlemen and ladies, in the best sense of the word."

This prosperous era continued during the early years of the reign of Charles I. It was interrupted only by the never-ceasing outbreaks along the Highland line, and by such occasional calamities in the Lowlands as the burning of the House of Frendraught. The Diocese of Aberdeen was happy under the wise government of Bishop Patrick Forbes, and the University was dignified by the virtues and erudition of its doctors, famous throughout Christendom. In a learned age, John Forbes was one of the most learned; and British scholars, writing in what was still the common language of

men of letters, spoke of Robert Baron as "Baronius noster," to distinguish him from the great Roman Cardinal.

This fair prospect was overcast by the breaking out of the civil convulsions, which the writer from whom our Club is named calls emphatically the Troubles. The first blood was shed at the skirmish known as the Trot of Turriff, and the leader of the Royalists on that occasion, Sir John Gordon of Haddo, was the first who died on the scaffold. Aberdeenshire became one of the chief scenes of strife. At the beginning of the war, Lord Aboyne was beaten by Montrose at the Bridge of Dee; and subsequently the Great Marquis, fighting for the King, defeated Lord Burleigh at Aberdeen, the Marquis of Argyll at Fyvie, and General Baillie at Alford. These combats represent but a small part of the misery of that unhappy time, when every district was divided in opinion, and almost every castle was besieged or plundered.

Some of the saddest events took place towards the conclusion of the war. Dr. John Forbes, after years of exile, died in obscurity at his own Castle of Corse. Montrose, when his last battle had been fought and lost, was carried a prisoner, on his way to death, through the county which had beheld his early triumphs. George, second Marquis of Huntly, the leader of the northern Royalists, a nobleman of stainless faith and purity, to whose character history has not yet done justice, was imprisoned and beheaded. His judicial murder took place a few months after that of the King. At his death, he declared that he counted it his greatest felicity to be allowed to follow his master.

The Cavaliers of the north-eastern counties, like the Puritans of the south-west, had to submit to the rule of Cromwell and his

lieutenants. Rigorous as was the government of these military despots, it was acquiesced in by many as a relief from the more galling oppressions of the ecclesiastical courts. An instance of this is to be found in the appeal made by Sir Alexander Irvine of Drum to Colonel Overton, against a sentence of the Presbytery of Aberdeen, ordaining him to subscribe the Covenant. The third volume of the Illustrations contains a curious deed of this period, relative to the lands of Pitmuckston in the parish of St. Machar. It is a charter of those lands which belonged to the office of Mair of Fee of the Sherifdom of Aberdeen, and is granted by " Oliver, Lord " Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ire- " land, and dominions thereto belonging," in favour of Paul Symmer of Mergie, for performance of the services used and wont; and for yearly payment to the Protector and his successors, " in place of " the Cathedral Church of St. Nicholas of Aberdeen, of the sum of " two merks usual money of Scotland, of old paid for the yearly " revenues and obsequies of umquhile Robert Blenshell, burgess of " Aberdeen." It is singular to find Oliver receiving a payment of this description. He was not responsible for the language used by his commissioners in Scotland, and for the conversion of a Collegiate Church into a Cathedral.

The Restoration was nowhere welcomed more joyously than in Aberdeenshire. While the Covenanters were enduring persecution similar to that which they had inflicted during the preceding reign, the north-eastern counties were in peace and tranquillity; and the diocese of Aberdeen was happy under the mild government of Bishop Scougal, while the University was adorned by the learning and piety of his son. The Revolution of 1688 did not seriously

disturb this quietness. King James's arbitrary policy, and his determination to suspend the laws, which almost the whole nation believed to be necessary for the safety of the Protestant Church, had alienated even his most faithful subjects. After the death of Viscount Dundee, though the Jacobite party was strong, there was little open resistance to King William's government, and the supporters of Episcopacy were conciliated by permission being given to those of their ministers who took the oaths prescribed by law, to retain possession of their benefices and of the parish churches.

During the next reign, many of the adherents of the exiled prince submitted to Queen Anne, but everything indicated that a struggle would take place at her decease. The opponents of the Hanoverian succession were strengthened by a portion of the numerous party which had resisted the union with England, and by those Episcopalians who had hitherto acknowledged the Revolution settlement. If the advisers of George I. had acted with more wisdom and moderation, the storm might have been averted, but when it was seen that the King acted rather as the head of a party than as the sovereign of a nation, the discontented Tories made common cause with the Jacobites. Disaffection was general both in England and Scotland, but in the latter country the opponents of the new government were more numerous and more courageous, and the very centre of the movement was in Aberdeenshire.

The chief Jacobite leaders were the Earl of Mar, a disappointed statesman, actuated mainly by selfish motives, and the Earl Marischal, a young nobleman attached on principle to the house of Stewart. For the last time Kildrummie Castle appears in history. There, like his predecessors of old, the Earl of Mar established his

residence in the autumn of 1715, while preparing for the insurrection. A great hunting match was held in the Braes of Mar in the month of August, which was attended by the principal Jacobite noblemen; among whom, besides the earl himself, were the Marquis of Huntly, eldest son of the Duke of Gordon, the Earl Marischal, and the Earl of Errol. On the sixth of September, the standard of the Stewarts was set up at Braemar, and the Chevalier was proclaimed King. James was soon afterwards proclaimed at Aberdeen by the Earl Marischal, and at Gordon Castle by the Marquis of Huntly. Almost the whole of Scotland from the Dornoch Firth to the Firth of Forth was in the hands of the insurgents; and had they been able to seize Edinburgh Castle and join their friends in the South, or had Mar possessed the military genius of Montrose or Dundee, England would have been invaded by a Scottish army, as strong in numbers and in the sympathy of a powerful party in that kingdom, as when the Covenanters passed the Tweed in the reign of Charles I. As it was, the Duke of Argyll at the head of an inferior force, was able to prevent the northern insurgents from crossing the Forth.

It was only after the Jacobites had been discouraged by the inactivity of their leaders, and by the results of the indecisive battle at Sheriffmuir, that the sovereign whom they had for some time anxiously expected was able to effect a landing in Scotland. He disembarked at Peterhead on the 23d of December, and proceeded by Aberdeen to Fetteresso, a seat of the Earl Marischal, where he was met by that nobleman, the Earl of Mar, and others of his adherents, and from which he went onwards to Perth. His arrival gave no real strength to his cause, and the insurgents finding their



attempt hopeless, retired in good order to the North. The Chevalier embarked for France at Montrose, and the leaders who were unable to obtain terms from the government, succeeded in effecting their escape to the Continent. The southern Jacobites who were taken at Preston were punished with great severity, but in Scotland the Duke of Argyll and other chief adherents of the House of Hanover obtained milder treatment for the defeated party. Most of the Jacobite nobles were, however, attainted, and in Aberdeenshire extensive changes of property took place, in consequence of the forfeiture of the Earl of Mar and the Earl Marischal. Kildrummie was soon deserted, and Inverugie and Dunottar sunk into ruin. Mar in exile continued his course of busy and selfish intrigue. Marischal pursued a nobler career as the counsellor and friend of Frederick the Great; while in his younger brother, Aberdeenshire gave to the Continent, a soldier still more renowned than General Patrick Gordon of Auchleuchries.

After thirty years of tranquillity, the kingdom was again disturbed by a Jacobite insurrection. Although none of the great nobles of the north-eastern counties took part in it, one peer of high character, Lord Pitsligo, and Lord Lewis Gordon, a brother of the Duke of Gordon, joined Prince Charles, and many of the gentry adopted the same side. Lord Pitsligo had been out in 1715, and had escaped to the Continent, but had afterwards been allowed to return. He was sixty-seven years of age when the next rising took place, and was held in universal esteem. John Home mentions that when " he declared his purpose of joining Charles, most of the " gentlemen in that part of the country who favoured the Pretender's cause, put themselves under his command, thinking they

“ could not follow a better or safer guide than Lord Pitsligo.” His friends met him at Aberdeen, and when they were ready to set out, he stepped forward, took off his hat, and looking up to Heaven said, “ Lord, Thou knowest that our cause is just. March gentlemen.” He escaped from the field of Culloden, and from the eager search afterwards made for him, and at last, unmolested by the government, died in peace.

Lord Lewis Gordon, whose name is associated with that of the Prince in a well-known ballad, held the office of Lord-Lieutenant for the Chevalier in the counties of Aberdeen and Banff, and commanded the insurgents in the skirmish fought at Inverury in December, 1745. Sir Walter Scott has pointed out the singular circumstance, that on this occasion the Jacobites were Lowlanders, with the exception of the Farquharsons of Monaltrie, while King George's troops were Highlanders of the Whig clans of M'Leod and Monro. Lord Lewis, in a letter to Moir of Stoneywood, written a few days after the battle, expressed his regret that he had few Highlanders with him, in consequence of his brother the duke having ordered them not to stir.

When the insurrection was suppressed, the Lowland districts were exempted from military violence, but the cruelty of the Duke of Cumberland's soldiers in the Highlands is well known. The captive insurgents were treated with great severity, and the lists of the persons attainted, or specially excepted from the subsequent act of indemnity, show how numerous the Jacobites were in the counties of Aberdeen and Banff. Among the names are those of Lord Pitsligo, Lord Lewis Gordon, Sir Alexander Bannerman of Elsick, Sir William Dunbar of Durn, Sir William Gordon

of Park, Gordon of Glenbucket, Farquharson of Monaltrie, Irvine of Drum, Byres of Tonley, Cumine of Kininmont, Cumine of Pitully, Farquharson of Balmoral, Fullerton of Dudwick, Gordon of Carnousie, Garioch of Margie, Gordon of Hallhead, Gordon of Avochie, Gordon of Cobairdie, Hay of Rannes, Menzies of Pitfoddels, Moir of Stoneywood, Moir of Lonmay, Ogilvie of Auchiries, Smith of Inveramsay, and Turner of Turnerhall.

The town of Aberdeen contained many Episcopalians and Jacobites—names which at that time were almost identical—but among the inhabitants were also many zealous Hanoverians. Letters and other documents have fortunately been preserved, which mark the state of feeling, and record several curious incidents of the time. Prince Charles did not pass through Aberdeenshire at all, either on his way southwards or on his return. The Duke of Cumberland resided at Aberdeen from the 27th of February to the 8th of April, 1746. He lived in the house of Mr. Alexander Thomson, Advocate, in the Guestrow, and General Hawley was quartered in an adjoining house, that of Mrs. Gordon of Hallhead. Mr. Thomson was a Whig, but Mrs. Gordon's husband was an open adherent of the Stewarts. In the Jacobite Memoirs, compiled by Bishop Robert Forbes, and edited by Mr. Robert Chambers, there is a singular account of the violent conduct of the duke, and of the rapacity of Hawley, the general accuracy of which there is no reason to question, though the details may have been coloured by the strong feelings of the ladies who tell the tale.

The Diary of the Reverend John Bisset, one of the ministers of Aberdeen, gives us the other side of the picture. He was a keen Hanoverian, and entertained a particular dislike to Popery, or what-

ever seemed to him to have any connection with it. Selections from his Diary are printed in the first volume of the Miscellany of the Club. An entry of date the 24th of October, 1745, may be given as a specimen:—"This day there was a beating up for recruits to Lord Lewis Gordon for the Pretender. Stoneywood is also at Aberdeen recruiting; they come little speed. I am ravished to hear that when the drum beats, not a few of the boys cry God save King George. I love an early seasoning against the spirit of Jacobitism. I have heard of a Whig lady in Aberdeen styled Talisker, who, with her two daughters has been at Edinburgh, who, being kissed by the young Pretender, are returned proclaiming his praise. Were Absalom living and among us, he was like to do great execution among the Whig ladies, though, if I remember right, his claim was very unnatural." Bisset bears honest testimony to the good behaviour of the division of the Jacobite army which passed through Aberdeen on its retreat to the North, and specially of those who were billeted on himself. Their common soldiers seem to have conducted themselves with more politeness than King George's officers.

The north-eastern counties do not again appear in connection with any important historical event. For some time after Culloden, the whole Scottish nation generally, not the unsuccessful party only, felt humiliated by the defeat, and disaffection to the reigning dynasty extensively prevailed. But the discontent gradually abated after the accession of George III. The new sovereign, unlike the first two princes of his house, strove to conciliate all his subjects, and was even accused by a violent party of being too favourable to Scotsmen. The American war tended still farther

to make men forget old feuds. During that struggle, while the descendents of the English Puritans and of the Covenanters in Ulster took the lead in opposing their sovereign, the expatriated Highlanders remained faithful to the crown. In the storm of the French Revolution, the change became still more complete. A few of the Jacobites adopted Jacobin opinions, but by far the greater number of the families which had adhered to the Stewarts now became the most loyal subjects of the House of Hanover.

Meanwhile, the improvement in matters of social and domestic economy was very great. From the beginning of the eighteenth century, increasing attention had been paid to agriculture; and commerce, though paralysed in some of its branches by the union with England, in others had rapidly advanced, mainly in consequence of that event. Sir Archibald Grant of Monymusk was one of the earliest agricultural improvers in the North. Two papers written by him, and printed in the second volume of the Miscellany of the Club, are very instructive on this point—"By the indulgence of a very worthy father," he says, "I was allowed, 1716, though then very young, to begin to inclose, and plant, and provide, and prepare nurseries. At that time there was not an acre upon the whole estate inclosed, nor any timber upon it, but a few elm, sycamore, and ash, about a small kitchen garden adjoining to the house, and some straggling trees at some of the farm yards, with a small copse wood not inclosed, and dwarfish, and browsed by sheep and cattle. All the farms ill disposed and mixed, different persons having alternate ridges, not one wheel carriage on the estate, nor indeed any one road that would allow it, and the rent about £600 sterling per annum, grain and services converted to

“ money. \* \* \* In my early days, soon after the union, husbandry and manufactures were in low esteem. Turnips in fields for cattle by Earl of Rothes, and very few others were wondered at; wheat was almost confined to East Lothian; inclosures few, and planting very little; no repair of roads, all bad, and very few wheel carriages; no coach, chariot, or chaise, and few carts benorth Tay. In 1720, I could not, in chariot, get my wife from Aberdeen to Monymusk. Colonel Middleton the first who used carts or waggons there; and he and I the first benorth Tay who had hay, except very little at Gordon Castle. Mr. Lockhart of Carnwath, author of Memoirs, the first that attempted raising or feeding cattle to size.”

Sixty years wrought a great change for the better. The general condition of Aberdeenshire and Banffshire, at the time of the American war, may be learned from the description given in the well-known work of Francis Douglas on the East Coast of Scotland. In almost every part of the two counties the signs of improvement were manifest. In the neighbourhood of the Burgh of Aberdeen, mention is made of the plantations and inclosures at Fraserfield, Grandholm, Dyce, and Fintray. Monymusk is described at greater length, and justice is done to the exertions of Sir Archibald Grant. An account is given of the establishment of the linen manufacture at Huntly by Hugh M'Veagh, of Mr. Cumine's farm at Auchry, then much spoken of, and of the various improvements effected by the Earls of Fife and Findlater in the vicinity of Banff and Cullen.

Douglas relates a conversation which he had with an old man near Banff, and from it a good notion may be obtained of what had been done there. The old man said, “If you had known this

PREFACE.

lxix

“ country fifty years ago, as I did, you would think these fields  
“ and houses which you pass unnoticed a fine sight. I remember  
“ the time, Sir, and so does my youngest bairn, when they were  
“ all uninclosed ; large bauks between every two and three ridges ;  
“ and when you might have travelled through them from one stone  
“ head to another without touching the ground ; when the farm-  
“ houses were ready to tumble, and neither held out wind nor rain ;  
“ and when we were well pleased if, over all the farm, we had four  
“ times the corn we sowed.” When asked who had the merit of  
introducing better methods of farming, he answered, “ Faith, Sir,  
“ we did not think ourselves much obliged to him at first ; it was  
“ our master ; and we had some suspicion that lairds and lords  
“ chiefly minded their own interest. We had been long accustomed  
“ to our own methods, and thought our fathers had been as wise  
“ as we ; it was not therefore an easy matter to persuade us that any  
“ others were better, or more proper for our soil. \* \* \* All these  
“ prejudices Lord Findlater got the better of ; not by the strong  
“ hand, and telling us by his overseers and factors that such and  
“ such things we must do, but by going himself from farm to farm,  
“ advising rather than directing us how to proceed.”

For a faithful picture of Aberdeenshire in the latter half of the  
eighteenth century, viewed under a different aspect from that just  
mentioned, reference may be made to Sir William Forbes's *Life of  
Dr. Beattie*. It is unnecessary to extend these remarks beyond  
that period. Few of the documents contained in the *Collections  
and Illustrations* come down as far as the present century.

GEORGE GRUB.

ABERDEEN, 30th November, 1869.