



ENTRANCE GATEWAY, STIRLING CASTLE.



SCOTTISH

THE PALACE, STIRLING CASTLE.

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BY J. W. SMALL, F.S.A. (SCOT.)

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THE old entrance gateway to the Castle—not the one you enter under, over the moat from the esplanade, nor the one a little further up with the Crown and A. R. carved on its keystone—but the next one, flanked by two round towers, and admitting you to the lower courtyard, is contemporaneous with the building of the Parliament Hall, and we know that it was erected by our Scottish King, James the Third, and probably was built by the same architect as did the Hall—Cochrane, the unfortunate favourite of the King, who was hanged along with some others over Lauder Bridge by the rebel lords. The present gateway is not now complete. Originally, it had two flanking towers, one at each side of the present ones, and these towers had been much higher than those remaining are at present. In old prints we see these ancient towers to this height, crowned with corbelled parapets, and pyramidal or conical roofs. This is a very fine example of military architecture of this period. There are vaulted chambers underneath, probably used as dungeons or prisons. Some of these are full of rubbish, and there is only one to which access can be got, that under the west tower; but the entrance is so narrow and dark, with a ten-foot drop, that I would not advise tourists to attempt its examination. The guides will readily point out this black hole to any anxious visitor. There are two built-up openings at either side of the centre entrance. These are not windows, as the general public might take them for, but side entrances or doorways. Originally, to gain admission to the Castle from the esplanade, you had to cross a wooden bridge; not a drawbridge as at present entrance, as there are no arrangements in the masonwork of gateway for receiving the necessary apparatus to work one. This wooden bridge crossed a large ditch filled with water, and in case of a raid or attack upon the Castle, would be removed. You can see the marks of where the large iron gates had been, and the opening for the portcullis. Each of these three gateways had been provided with gate and portcullis, and the three gateways next the lower courtyard had had portcullises, but no gates. Should an enemy force the two outer iron gates, the inside ones could be lowered, and those inside would have a chance of keeping the enemy who had got inside at bay, or clearing them out,



as there is no stairway in these three entrances to the next storey. The ground floor rooms of the towers had been used as the guard-room, and their thick walls are pierced with loopholes for shooting through. How well Sir Walter Scott had noted the most of these things is shown by his reference to them in his "Lady of the Lake"—

"Ye towers ! within whose circuit dread  
A Douglas by his sovereign bled."

Also—

"At dawn the towers of Stirling rang  
With soldier step and weapon clang,  
While drums, with rolling note, foretell  
Relief to weary sentinel.  
Through narrow loop and casement barr'd,  
The sunbeams sought the Court of Guard."

The entrance to the first floor of the gateway towers had been from an outside stair in the lower courtyard, possibly on to the flanking battlemented wall to the west of the tower. The eight or nine courses of stonework on the top of towers and gateway are comparatively modern. The label moulding above the doorway, and the section of the mouldings round jambs, all indicate a building erected in the middle of the fifteenth century.

This old gateway could tell many a tale and reveal many a secret if stones could speak. Its own builder, James III., after his defeat and death at Sauchieburn, would be carried through its portals, in the midst of his mourning soldiery, and re-carried under them, to his burial at Cambuskenneth Abbey. His son, James IV., was born in the Castle, and lived here, and would have to enter by this same entrance.

At this gateway a dramatic scene took place in 1515 between Margaret Tudor and the Duke of Albany. An attempt to get possession of her children at Edinburgh was baffled by the Queen, but feeling she would be more secure at Stirling, she escaped to there. The Duke of Albany then appeared before the Castle with an army prepared to lay siege to it. Her worthless husband having practically deserted her, and having no wish to undergo the horrors and privations of a siege, she sent word to Albany that she was ready to give up her children. She presented herself at the gateway of the Castle along with them, one of them being the infant James V. Putting into his hands the massive keys of the fortress, she motioned to the child to give them to Albany, who kneeling took them, caressed the boy, and returned the children to the mother, on the condition that they were to remain at Stirling Castle.

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TO the west of the gateway is a corbelled and battlemented wall, connected with a square tower or donjon. This square tower is of an earlier date than the gateway. Its parapet is corbelled in a similar style to the enclosing walls, having corner turrets at top, with a saddle-backed roof, the crow steps of which are peculiar from their shape, being what one might call "gabled crow steps." This tower and wall, as well as the corbelled wall facing the north, I take to be of the time of James II.—1437-1460.

We now enter under the centre archway of gateway, and find ourselves in the lower courtyard of the ancient Castle of Stirling. The most prominent building that attracts our attention is the Palace of King James the Fifth. To the south you will notice the stairway leading up to what is called the Princes' Walk. This, do doubt, had led up to the battlements of the encircling walls, and also to the upper storeys of the gateway.

This Palace of James the Fifth is built in the form of a square, with an internal courtyard styled the Lions' Den, and incorporated into it on its south side is the square tower of James the Second's time, already referred to. It consists of three storeys in height, the ground flat being occupied by store rooms and other places of a like nature. The first floor is the principal one, and consisted of the dining rooms, reception rooms, withdrawing rooms, and other public and private apartments suitable to a royal residence; while the upper flat would contain the sleeping chambers of the royal household. The rooms in the first floor are large and airy, having windows of an exceptional size. The fireplaces are all of stone, and beautifully carved.

The whole of the seen fronts are divided into arcaded recesses and square piers, and has been carried out as a whole by one master mind, whether by James V. himself or his architect it is difficult to say, but I am of opinion His Majesty had a good deal to do with it. It is said that this style of work was common in France at the time that James V. visited it, and where he married his Queen, but I have no hesitation in saying the work was executed by Scottish hands.

The style of the Palace is what we call Renaissance. Just at the time when Gothic architecture was dying a natural death,

we see traces of the Gothic in cusped arches of the recesses, and in some of the mouldings, and the Renaissance is plainly visible in the Acanthus carved pillars supporting the carved figures, in the winged head carved in the cornice, and other details, and is probably one of the earliest examples which Scotland has of this period and style of architecture. Above each first-floor window is a carved tympanum bearing the royal initials, J. 5, on a tablet, supported by a conventionalized dolphin on each side.

The windows of the first floor are heavily barred with iron, and the visitor will notice the curious way they are intertwined, one-half going one way and the other half the other. It is said about these gratings in the windows, that they were supposed to have been executed for James the Sixth's protection, and a story is told of the blacksmith who did the work—a St. Ninians man—that he got no payment until after James the Sixth mounted the throne of England as James the First. The blacksmith went up to London with his account, and presented it to His Majesty, who authorised payment thereof. The account was made out in pounds Scots, and he got paid by the Treasury in London in pounds English, which gave him twelve times the amount he was entitled to. The douce old Scotsman said nothing, but took what he got and returned North, a wealthier man than he ever thought of.





## THE PALACE.

(CONTINUED).

THE visitor will notice the figure at the north-east corner of the Palace, just as you enter between it and the Parliament Hall, going to the upper courtyard.

This figure is set on the top of a beautifully-carved and moulded square pillar, and represents James the Fifth as the "Gudeman o' Ballangeich." He was so called from his hobby of dressing up as a gaberlunzie man, or beggar, and going through the country to see how matters were going on. Various stories are told of his escapades on these adventures, one of which is as follows:—"Once upon a time when he was feasting in Stirling, the King sent for some venison from the neighbouring hills. The deer was killed and put on horseback, to be transported to Stirling. Unluckily they had to pass the Castle gates of Arnpryor, belonging to a chief of the Buchanans, who had a considerable number of guests with him. They were rather short of victuals, and the chief, hearing that so much good food was passing his way, appropriated it to his own use. Notwithstanding the protests of the King's men, who told Buchanan who it belonged to, he replied, "If James was King in Scotland, *he* was King in Kippen," the district in which his Castle lay. King James, on being told of what had occurred almost at his very door, took instant horse for Buchanan's Castle, but was refused admittance by the fierce-looking Highlander who kept guard, on the ground that the laird was at dinner, and could not be disturbed. He was at length prevailed upon to carry in this message—"The Gudeman o' Ballangeich is come to feast with the King of Kippen,"—which gained him instant admission, and, on entering, the Buchanan at once fell on his knees and asked His Majesty's forgiveness for his daring deed. We need not add that this was royally given, and the King sat down and feasted on his own venison in the hall of Arnpryor Castle.

The statue, as said before, represents the King in his gaberlunzie costume. Over his head is the Royal Lion of Scotland holding a crown over the King's head, and a tablet with the royal initials, J. 5., similar to those over the windows.

It was from some of the rooms of this Palace that the "Stirling heads" were taken. These "Stirling heads" are a series of circular carved oaken work, with wreaths on the outside and heads inside, said to be of the King, Queen, and their contemporaries. They were originally used to decorate the ceiling of one of these public rooms. The ceiling, most probably, had been

divided into squares by oaken mouldings, and the circular heads were in each of the squares in the same manner as you see the ceilings in Queen Mary's apartments in Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh. These heads were taken down in 1777, and many of them were secured by the Governor of Stirling jail, and by him given away. Stirling Corporation secured some, and these can be seen now in the Smith Institute, Albert Place. In the same place you will also see some carved panels which had been used in wall panelling in this Palace. They are of quaint design, and entirely harmonise with the style of the stonework. Notice also a small door in the Douglas Room, which, without doubt, has also belonged to this Palace of James the Fifth. The initials of the Queen of James the Fifth are preserved in a dormer pediment which had occupied a place on this building, but which had at some subsequent period been taken down, and is now preserved in one of the corridors of the Palace. The initials are M. R., surmounted by a crown, and supported by acanthus foliage at each side. The top of the walls had been embattled with crow stepped gables, having as an apex stone a crown, on which is seated the Scottish Lion. The figures above the cornice represent military men, &c., of the period, such as cross-bowmen, swordsmen, and others. The figures in the recesses are said to represent various court functionaries, but to my mind they are a striving after the renaissance of the ancient models of the classic period.

In this Palace James V. would mourn the loss of his first wife, Queen Magdalene of France, and when he again married Mary of Lorraine, the rooms would wear a gayer appearance, and resound to the music of the fife and harp, as it is said she kept a gay court within Stirling's Palace. Her daughter, the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots, was kept here until, for greater security, she was sent to Inchmahome along with her four Maries, and afterwards conveyed to France. On her return in 1562, she again inhabited the Palace, and on the first night she ran a narrow escape of being burned to death by an accident. Here she fell in love with Darnley, and could not conceal her passion for him from those around her, and here she was married to him. Here James VI. was baptised and brought up under the Earl of Mar, the hereditary keeper of the Castle, until he took over the government of the kingdom, his education being under the famous George Buchanan, and not less learned Peter Young. Here also he would bring his young bride, Anne of Denmark; and here his eldest son, Prince Henry, was born and baptised. He resided here till he took his departure to the rich pastures of the South, and with His Majesty's departure this Palace as a royal residence may be said to end.