

The Scottish Historical Review

VOL. IX., No. 34

JANUARY 1912

The Old Schools and Universities in Scotland

IT would be an interesting problem to analyze the secret of the fascination which Scottish history has been found to exercise on the minds of all thoughtful students. Much must be allowed to the violent political changes, which more frequently than in the history of other countries from time to time altered the whole course of Scottish development. The War of Independence, the Reformation, the Union with England,—each of these marks a definite turning-point involving catastrophic changes such as are rarely to be met in the more orderly development of the southern kingdom, and such changes as these can never occur without producing men who, sharing the influence of two periods, must for all time present elements of mystery to the historian.

Nor is the fascination of the irreconcilable to be found merely in the characters of the men who have played an outstanding part in the history of our country. The student of Scottish history, in any of its aspects, is constantly being confronted by apparent contradictions of the most violent kind. That Scotland should be liberal in politics and intolerant in religion was the paradox which attracted the vigorous mind of Buckle: that Scotland should be liberal in politics and conservative in its instincts has in recent

¹ Essay awarded the One Hundred Guineas Prize offered by Dr. J. P. Steele of Florence in connection with the Celebration of the Five Hundredth Anniversary of the Foundation of St. Andrews University. The competition was open to all graduates of Scottish Universities, and the subject of the essay was described as Scotland's Debt of Gratitude to her Parish Schools, her Grammar Schools, and her Universities.

times repeatedly figured in the columns of the daily press as a paradox worthy of consideration. Yet there is an even more curious contradiction which has been noted by most careful observers. Scarcely any country in Europe presents so continuous a history of extreme poverty as Scotland. This is, perhaps, the most outstanding feature in Scottish economic history from earliest times, through a long troubled history when devastation was a necessary accompaniment of incessant warfare, until the end of the eighteenth century, when Fletcher of Saltoun estimated that a fifth of the population lived in a state of beggary. The records of the various burghs and of the Privy Council reveal to us a country in which starvation was not merely the occasional result of a bad harvest or the consequences of war, but the normal condition of affairs. For long periods hunger was the daily companion of the greater part of the population, and the country at large was terrorized by the troops of beggars who wandered about seeking to extort by fear what they could not obtain by compassion.

Yet this country, so signally deficient in the necessaries of life, was the country which has had the clearest conception of the value of education and the importance of learning. The remarkable Act of 1496, whatever view may be taken of the objects of its provisions, was at least in intention a compulsory education Act, and shows that in educational matters the Parliament of Scotland was centuries in advance of the legislators of other countries. The great scheme of education drawn up in the *Book of Discipline*, though never carried into effect, represented the common ideals of both the religious parties which divided the Scottish nation at the time of the Reformation. These ideals, involving the establishment of a school in every parish, were never lost sight of, and the Act of 1696, which secured this end, gave Scotland an educational system which made her peasantry the best informed in Europe. That these lofty ideals should have been entertained in material circumstances so sordid and so depressing is one of the most remarkable facts in Scottish history, and one of the most creditable to the Scottish people. 'I know not,' wrote Dr. Johnson, who was never too favourable a critic of matters relating to Scotland,—'I know not whether it be not peculiar to the Scots to have attained the liberal without the manual arts, to have excelled in ornamental knowledge and to have wanted not only the elegancies but the conveniencies of common life.'

It is in the common schools of a country that the ordinary

citizens are equipped for the battle of life: it is in the higher schools and colleges that the future leaders of a nation receive the training which qualifies them for their position of trust and responsibility. To comment on the important part played by the educational system in the formation of national character would, therefore, be to insist on the obvious. Yet what would otherwise be a platitude ceases to be so in the case of Scotland when considered in the light of the peculiarity noted by Dr. Johnson. Had Scotland until the middle of the eighteenth century been without learning and without any educational system worthy of the name, the fact would not have appeared remarkable. The historian could have pointed in extenuation to the insecurity caused by incessant warfare within and without the kingdom, and to the poverty which might reasonably have been expected to extinguish all love of knowledge and all lofty ideals of education. Yet, in point of fact, in this, one of the most important departments of national life, Scotland, instead of being backward, has been immeasurably in advance of other nations. In a country placed in circumstances so unfavourable, the development of an efficient educational system must have demanded on the part of the nation at large a much greater sacrifice than was necessary elsewhere. In the minds of Scotsmen education must have been more prominent, and learning must have been more appreciated for its own sake. Great, then, as has been the influence on other countries of their educational systems, it is only to be expected that in the case of Scotland, the influence of her schools and colleges has been even greater, and that our country to-day is under a deeper debt of gratitude to her scholastic institutions than other countries are.

It is not the object of this paper to trace in any detail the history of the schools and universities of Scotland or to give a connected account of the various Acts of Parliament or of the Privy Council establishing or extending the scope of her educational system. It may, however, be convenient at this stage to consider as briefly as possible the nature of the Scottish educational system as it existed from earliest times, before showing in what way the leading features of that system have left their mark on the Scottish nation.

Briefly speaking, the educational institutions of Scotland may be divided into three classes: the parish schools, the grammar schools, and the universities. Historically, the system in its main features can be traced to the period of the domination of

the Roman Catholic Church, to which in educational matters Scotland owes much. The origin of the parish schools is a matter of some obscurity, but it is clear that from a very early time the parish priests either acted as schoolmasters in their parishes, or else, in certain cases, supervised a younger ecclesiastic to whom these duties were assigned. Such parish schools, it is unnecessary to say, did not exist everywhere, yet it is certain that before the Reformation they existed in considerable numbers throughout the country.

The scheme of educational reform associated with the name of Knox, which is to be found in the *Book of Discipline*, did not then, in proposing the establishment of a school in each parish, break with the traditions of the past; it merely sought to render more perfect a system already in existence. Adverse circumstances, however, proved too strong for the Reformers, and the realization of this part of their dreams was left to a later generation. By the Act of the Privy Council of 1633, and more definitely by the Act of Parliament of 1696, it was finally enacted that a school should be established in each parish. This last-mentioned Act completed a long process of development, and although it was not possible in every parish to give effect to its provisions, yet in general, as a result of this measure, parish schools did exist throughout the country and brought within the reach of all the possibility of an elementary education.

The grammar schools are also in their origin the offspring of the Roman Catholic Church. It was customary in the various cathedrals and abbeys to have schools intended in the first place for the training of boys and young men for the offices of the Church. These were naturally situated in towns of considerable size and importance, and as they offered advantages in education superior to what could be obtained elsewhere, it was, perhaps, inevitable that the sons of townsmen should in time be admitted as outside pupils. Through the growth of this element, the municipal authority gradually acquired a certain measure of control over these schools, and in the earlier history of these institutions there are numerous cases of disputed authority between the ecclesiastical and the secular powers. In the upheaval attending the Reformation, these cathedral and abbey schools, as well as the collegiate schools, which also had originally depended on the great ecclesiastical houses, naturally passed under the control of the various town councils. These bodies, in their new capacity as patrons of learning, showed themselves in all

cases zealous on behalf of the schools which had passed under their charge, and in very many burghs where there was no school with the ecclesiastical origin indicated, the town council at a later date took steps to establish academies or seminaries.

To the influence of the Roman Catholic Church, or at least of Roman Catholic ecclesiastics, is also to be attributed the foundation of three of the four Scottish universities. The large numbers of Scottish students at Oxford, and the more celebrated continental universities, proved at an early date that the establishment of a university in Scotland was urgently required. The foundation of St. Andrews, the first of the three Catholic universities, was effected in 1411-12 by Bishop Wardlaw, and was intended to provide Scottish students with the advantages of a higher education in their own country. In 1450 the University of Glasgow was founded, through the efforts of Bishop Turnbull, on the model of the University of Bologna, and in 1494 Bishop Elphinstone succeeded in obtaining a bull for the establishment of a university in Aberdeen, expressly founded for the purpose of humanizing the highlands where 'rude men, ignorant of letters were still to be found.' The University of Edinburgh alone, established after the Reformation, has a different and more humble origin. Founded in 1583 by the town council, it was for many years merely 'the town's college,' and only acquired the rank of a university as the result of a vague process of expansion and development. With four universities, Scotland was amply furnished with the means of providing a higher education,—indeed, it may reasonably be held that a country with so small a population as Scotland could not well maintain so many. Yet no one who has considered the part played by the Scottish universities will regret that they have been so numerous. If, perhaps, from the point of view of the universities themselves, the fact is to be deplored, the relatively large number of universities in Scotland has, nevertheless, produced effects, to be noted later, which have indubitably been for the advantage of the nation.

What then does Scotland owe to these various parts in her educational system? The first and most obvious test of efficiency is to enquire how far the educational system of Scotland has achieved the end for which schools and colleges are ostensibly founded,—in other words, how far has it been successful in promoting learning, and in keeping alive in our country the true spirit of culture and of scholarship? It is impossible in a few

words to answer this question adequately, since in Scotland, as in all countries, the seats of learning have had their seasons of stagnation and their periods of prosperity. There have been times when the universities cannot be said to have played that part in the national life which should rightly have fallen to them; there have, on the other hand, been times when our universities have rightly occupied a position of distinction among the leading European universities. In considering the Scottish educational system purely from the point of view of the work done by it as an instrument for the dissemination of knowledge, it will be possible to proceed only by way of illustration, indicating almost at random the work which has at various times and in various ways been accomplished.

It is necessarily difficult to appreciate the work done by the parish schools, since our knowledge of what was actually taught in them is, until a comparatively recent stage in their development, very vague in its nature. Latin, taught from the textbooks of the grammarians, Donatus and Despauter, was the chief subject in the curriculum of the elementary schools, as a knowledge of that language was the key to all other knowledge in the Middle Ages. Yet, if we cannot know directly, it can at least be inferred that the parish schools, even from a very early date, accomplished a great educational work. These schools were the basis of the whole educational system, and the vast number of distinguished Scottish scholars, who from the time of Duns Scotus thronged the universities of Europe, is a clear proof that in Scotland there was sufficient opportunity of acquiring the beginnings of learning.

Our knowledge of the curricula of studies followed in the grammar schools is more complete, and it is evident that in many ways the range of subjects taught in our schools to-day is less extended than it was some hundreds of years ago. In the middle of the sixteenth century the boys attending the Grammar School at Aberdeen were forbidden to speak any language other than Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French and Gaelic, and the scholars had been sufficiently accomplished to receive James V. in 1540 with orations in Greek and Latin. About this time Greek was also taught in the Grammar School at Montrose by the famous French scholar, Pierre de Marsilliers, and Hebrew as well as Greek was taught in the school at Perth by John Row in the next century.

Moreover, it is clear that the scholars acquired no mere perfunctory knowledge of the classics in the burgh schools, but

that, in the Latin writers at least, they obtained a wide and liberal education. Amongst the classical writers studied at Glasgow Grammar School towards the end of the sixteenth century, we find the names of Cicero, Terence, Ovid, Vergil, Horace, Sallust and Caesar, and in addition the *Psalms* of Buchanan and the *Dialogues* of Erasmus were also read. In the High School at Edinburgh the curriculum in 1640 comprised Cicero, Terence, Ovid, Buchanan, Vergil, Sallust and Lucan, while at a later date, in 1710, the highest class studied Terence, Vergil, Lucan, Horace, Juvenal, Cicero, Livy, Florus, Sallust, Suetonius and the *Psalms* of Buchanan. The range of reading in Aberdeen Grammar School was equally wide, and it is clear that throughout the country, in all the schools of which these may be taken as types, a classical training was given which must have disseminated throughout Scotland a very extensive knowledge of the best Latin authors. To this very thorough foundation, and to the custom of speaking only in Latin, rigorously enforced in all schools and universities, is doubtless to be ascribed the eminence in Latin scholarship which so long distinguished the countrymen of George Buchanan.

It is, however, the universities of a country which are the chief instruments in the dissemination of knowledge, since the students of to-day are the teachers of others to-morrow: to the universities must also necessarily fall the leadership in all matters of philosophic thought or scientific enquiry. No attempt can be made here to estimate accurately the nature of the work accomplished by the Scottish universities in this respect, but some indication of the greatness of the work which they have achieved, viewed solely as educational institutions, may be obtained by a brief reference to some of the more brilliant periods in their history.

The system of teaching in force in all the Scottish universities until the eighteenth century was carried on by regents as opposed to professors, that is to say, the students of each year were entrusted to a regent who carried them through the entire course. Such a system necessarily made it impossible for the teachers to become specialists in any department of learning, but this objection was a minor one in an age when it was still possible for the scholar to take all knowledge to be his province. It had, however, counterbalancing advantages, inasmuch as it was possible for a man of genius to leave the imprint of his personality on his students to an extent scarcely possible under the professorial

system. It is, however, only fair to judge of any system by its best achievements, and to realize what the regenting system of teaching could, and in fact did, accomplish for Scotland, it is only necessary to consider the case of Glasgow soon after the Reformation. Scotland's second university had about the middle of the sixteenth century passed into a period of eclipse, from which it was rescued by the efforts of the Regent Morton. The teaching of Andrew Melville, the chief restorer of the western university, inaugurated a bright period in the history of Scottish learning, and deservedly conferred on his university a European reputation. His teaching represented a vast advance on the somewhat barren scholastic philosophy of the Middle Ages, and those students who were privileged to read with him, acquired in the course of their studies, an extensive knowledge of classical literature, regarded from the standpoint of the new learning, which was modifying the views of the educated classes of Europe.

Let his nephew, James Melville, give his account of the work that was being done in Glasgow University in the last quarter of the sixteenth century.—'Sa falling to wark with a few number of capable heirars, sic as might be instructars of uthers thereafter, he teatched them the Greik grammer, the Dialectic of Ramus, the Rhetoric of Taleus with the practise thereof in Greik and Latin authors, namlie, Homer, Hesiod, Phocilides, Theognides, Pythagoras, Isocrates, Pindarus, Virgill, Horace, Theocritus etc. From that he enterit to the Mathematiks and teatched the Elements of Euclid, the Arithmetic and Geometrie of Ramus, the Geographie of Dyonisius, the Tables of Hontèr, the Astrologie of Aratus. From that to the Morall Philosophie: he teatched the Ethiks of Aristotle, the Offices of Cicero, Aristotle de Virtutibus, Cicero's Paradoxes and Tusculanes Aristotle's Polytics, and certean of Platoes Dialogues. From that to the Naturall Philosophie; he teatched the buiks of the Physics, De Ortu, De Coelo, etc., also of Plato and Fernelius. With this he joynd the Historie with the twa lights thereof, Chronologie and Chirographie, out of Sleidan, Menarthes, and Melanchthon. And all this, by and attoure his awin ordinar profession, the holie tonges and Theologie. He teachit the Hebrew grammer, first schortlie, and syne more accuratlie; thereafter the Caldaic and Syriac dialects with the practise thereof in the Psalmes and Warks of Solomon, David, Ezra, and Epistles to the Galates. He past throw the hail Comoun Places of Theologie

verie exactlie and accuratlie ; also throw all the Auld and New Testament. And all this in the space of sax yeirs during the quhilk he teatchit everie day customablie twyse, Sabothe and uther day ; with an ordinar conference with sic as war present efter denner and supper.' . . . 'Finalie,' adds James Melville, 'I dare say there was na place in Europe comparable to Glasgow for guid letters during these yeirs for a plentifull and guid chepe mercat of all kynd of langages, artes, and sciences.'

This description has been quoted at some length, as the impression which it gives of the work done by the Scottish universities towards the end of the sixteenth century is more vivid than would be conveyed by any general discussion of the university system which then existed. The influence on the country of such a 'plentifull and guid chepe mercat' of knowledge need not be emphasized. The teaching of Melville in Glasgow, and later in St. Andrews, must have supplied a body of men, imbued with the spirit of the new learning, who later as ministers and teachers, perpetuated the influence of their master through the pulpits and parish schools of their country.

The work done by the universities in Scotland may also be conveniently illustrated by reference to the history of Aberdeen. The university in that town started its career under most promising auspices, having for its first principal the historian Boece, and counting among its first teachers the great grammarian, John Vaus. It is clear from various sources that it was at once frequented by large numbers of students, and that within forty years of its foundation it had already acquired a very considerable reputation. At the Reformation the university was 'purged' by the removal of those teachers who were not in sympathy with the dominant ecclesiastical party. The first principal of the reformed university was Alexander Arbuthnot, a man who is known to have been in intimate communication with Andrew Melville. As they discussed together the question of university reform in Glasgow and Aberdeen, it may reasonably be inferred that he introduced into Aberdeen that new spirit of learning which was then conferring on Glasgow so high a reputation.

Throughout the seventeenth century, Aberdeen University continued to play a very large part in the intellectual life of the country. Under the influence of Bishop Forbes, the university tended to become a seat of theological learning, and the body of erudite men known as the Aberdeen doctors,

while playing a great part in the ecclesiastical disputes in connection with the Solemn League and Covenant, also maintained the reputation of their town as a centre of literary and intellectual activity. Throughout the seventeenth century the influence of the many distinguished men who taught in the university, conferred on Aberdeen a pre-eminence in all the finer arts which attracted the favourable notice of such disinterested observers as Clarendon and Burnet.

A further illustration of the intellectual work accomplished by the universities in Scotland may be obtained by reference to the conditions obtaining in the eighteenth century. The beginning of the century witnessed a period of intellectual stagnation, which, however, was not peculiar to Scotland. Adam Smith's description of the barrenness of the teaching in the English universities at this period, is one of the best known passages of *The Wealth of Nations*, and need only be mentioned here as indicating that the decline of the Scottish universities in the first part of the eighteenth century was not due to any causes peculiarly affecting Scotland, but was the result of a wide-spread intellectual reaction which marked the age of common sense throughout Europe.

What, however, is noteworthy, is the fact that the great awakening came to the Scottish universities at a time when the universities of England were still suffering from intellectual torpor. One of the greatest periods of Scottish intellectual activity was inaugurated by the lectures on philosophy delivered in Glasgow by Francis Hutcheson, and the dawn of the new spirit was further marked by the appointment, in 1751, of Adam Smith, whose lectures on philosophy contained the outline not only of his *Theory of the Moral Sentiments* but also of *The Wealth of Nations*. A university which, in addition to such names as these, counted among its professors such men as Reid in philosophy, and Cullen and Black in science, not merely did much for Scotland but benefited the whole world by its contributions to the advancement of learning.

Nor was the prosperity of Glasgow at this time exceptional among the Scottish universities. The Gregorys who lectured in Edinburgh, and Maclaurin as professor, first in Aberdeen and later in Edinburgh, are among the most distinguished names in the history of mathematics. It is, perhaps, worthy of special mention that David Gregory lectured in Edinburgh on the Newtonian philosophy many years before it was accepted in

Cambridge, and that indeed it was by his efforts that the *Principia* was brought to the notice of English mathematicians. Nor, in mentioning the University of Edinburgh in the eighteenth century, is it possible to pass over in silence the great names of the Monros, who will forever be remembered in connection with the foundation and rapid expansion of the medical school, which has ever since been so prominent a feature in the academic life of Edinburgh. In rationalizing medical science and freeing it from a heritage of superstition, the Medical School of Edinburgh did much even in its earliest days to advance that department of learning which, more than any other, is immediately and directly beneficent to suffering humanity. The lead which Edinburgh obtained in this respect through the greatness of her eighteenth-century teachers has never been wholly lost, and to-day, of the medical men practising throughout the empire, an abnormally large proportion have received their training in one or other of the medical schools of Scotland.

I have made no attempt in the preceding paragraphs to give any connected account of the influence of the Scottish universities as seats of learning, nor have I endeavoured to form a dazzling enumeration of the many great men whose learning and literature have accumulated the prestige of the academic bodies with which they were connected. I have merely endeavoured to show by somewhat disjointed references to the history of the various universities at different stages of their development that they have not failed in the first and most obvious duty falling to a university. They have maintained a high standard of learning: they have contributed their share to the advancement of human knowledge. They have influenced the literary taste of the country; they have contributed to philosophic speculation; they have aided in scientific discovery. And, while assisting in the search for truth, they have not forgotten that it is the duty of a university to impart to each successive generation the accumulated learning, the culture and the ideals of the past. Notwithstanding some periods when learning has been neglected, and the lecture rooms of our colleges have been but poorly attended, the homely words of James Melville regarding a brilliant period in the history of one of the universities may with justice be applied to the life of the Scottish universities as a whole. They have been pre-eminently 'guid chepe mercats' of knowledge.

The chief end of education, however, is not merely the acquisition of knowledge. Montaigne was justified in commenting on

the ineptitude of a system of education which aimed, not at goodness and wisdom, but at knowledge only, which taught not virtue and prudence, but the derivation and the etymology of these words. Thus, in estimating the debt of gratitude which Scotland owes to her educational institutions, there are more important matters to be considered than the standard of learning maintained throughout the country. Much as Scotland owes in this respect to her schools and colleges, even greater is her indebtedness when the indirect effects of her educational system are considered in the political, social, and religious life of the country, and above all in the character of the people. In the remainder of this paper an attempt will be made to suggest the nature of some of these indirect effects of the Scottish educational system.

One of the most obvious peculiarities of the academic life of Scotland, as contrasted with that of England, is to be found in the nature of the universities which were organized on continental and not on English models. The point may not at first sight appear of importance in connection with the subject under discussion, but the consequences of this fact were not without considerable influence on the development of Scottish life. Even before the foundation of the first Scottish university, Scottish students frequented continental universities in large numbers, and the establishment of seats of higher learning in Scotland in no way diminished during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the steady stream of scholars studying and teaching in all the leading universities of Europe.

All the great Scottish scholars of the period passed a considerable part of their life thus wandering from university to university, in many cases even filling the post of principal. The intimate connection existing between the Scottish universities and the models on which they were founded fostered on the part of Scottish scholars this tendency to give the best years of their life to teaching in foreign schools. This is not the place to give an account of any of the leading men who took part in this curious intellectual emigration, but it is difficult to repress all mention of men like John Cameron, who in the early seventeenth century taught successively in Glasgow, Bergerac, Sedan, Paris, Bordeaux, Geneva, Heidelberg, Saumur and Montauban, or Thomas Dempster, who moved about the universities of France, England, Spain and Italy. What is, however, of importance in the present connection is to note some of the consequences which

may not unreasonably be attributed to the somewhat accidental fact that the Scottish universities, being founded on continental models, facilitated intellectual intercourse between Scotland and the chief seats of learning abroad.

In the first place,—a fact of importance in view of the abject abiding poverty of Scotland—a greater opportunity of playing an honourable part in the world's work was opened to our countrymen. Instead of being restricted to the narrow confines of their native land, they became citizens of the world admitted to the highest places in the academic institutions of Europe. In the second place, it enormously enhanced the reputation of Scotland in the minds of scholars and statesmen abroad. A country like Scotland, remote in situation, limited in area, and without resources, would not ordinarily have figured largely in the minds of continental nations. That Scotland occupied a position in their thoughts out of all proportion to her political importance was chiefly the work of this large body of wandering teachers, in whom patriotism was intensified by exile. And thirdly, the peculiarity we have noted in the Scottish universities brought Scotland under the full influence of the development of European thought, and gave to Scotsmen internationally a wider outlook than would otherwise have been possible.

The effects of this can be traced in many ways. In nearly all matters of thought Scotland has sided with the Continent rather than with England,—Scottish philosophy, for instance, has been uniformly akin to German rather than to English speculation. This influence also is to be traced in less abstract matters, in the habits of thought which distinguish the nation. The long vacation in the Scottish universities has hitherto had one excellent result in that it has enabled each year a considerable number of students to maintain the old custom of studying abroad, and the tradition has been productive of good not only in the attitude of foreign opinion towards Scotland, but in the character of the Scottish people themselves.

No one who has attended a foreign university can have failed to realize that in the minds of the educated classes abroad a very real line is drawn between Scotsmen and Englishmen. Whether the distinction is justified is at present immaterial, that it exists cannot be questioned. The Scotsman is held to be less assertive of his nationality, more considerate of the feelings of those among whom he is living,—in a word he is more diplomatic. Nor need we scruple to trace this instinctive diplomacy in part

to the fact that for centuries it has been the custom of educated Scotsmen to spend a considerable period of their life abroad in study at the most receptive stage of their career. In short, the close relation between the universities of Scotland and the Continent has contributed to create abroad a friendly sentiment towards our country, while at the same time it has given our countrymen a cosmopolitan character in apparent contradiction to the remoteness of Scotland from other states.

I have placed this point first among the indirect effects of the Scottish educational system not on account of its intrinsic importance, but because it has been more frequently overlooked than some other consequences which have become the subject of commonplace observation in commenting on the Scottish character. The leading characteristic of the Scottish people has undoubtedly at all times been a love of freedom and a certain reasonable sense of equality, based, however, on a sense of common manhood rather than on the empty sentimentalities of the French Revolution. This has always been a distinguishing mark of the Scottish people, and it has always been one of the dominant notes of Scottish literature.

It is not without significance that the highest expression of the nobility of freedom in the English language is to be found in the works of Barbour, and that the words which the English-speaking races have by universal consent accepted as the best expression of the brotherhood of man are taken from the poetry of Burns. To attribute this characteristic wholly to the educational system in force in Scotland would be a misinterpretation of history. The acute sense of liberty in the Scottish mind is doubtless to be traced in large measure to the political history of the country at the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century. Perhaps also, in a sense, the history of Scottish liberty is a verification of the theory of Machiavelli, that the strongest foundation of the freedom of the state is to be sought for in the poverty of the citizens. Yet this at least may be asserted that the Scottish educational system did much to develop and make permanent that sense of equality which has been the underlying moving force in Scottish freedom. No system could have been devised more calculated to foster a democratic spirit. In the schools and in the universities there was no room for distinction of classes: there was only one training alike for rich and poor.

The catholicity of the parish school is not a matter which

admits of easy proof, but in the case of the grammar schools there is abundant evidence that the children of the poor were educated with the children of the most important citizens in the district. Thus, on the one hand, there are numerous instances of the efforts made by the town councils to throw open to all the benefits of the grammar school by reducing the fees in the case of poor children, or in many cases totally exempting their parents from all payments. On the other hand, we have had preserved in connection with certain riots which took place in Edinburgh High School in 1587, and in Aberdeen Grammar School in 1610, lists of the chief offenders who had been guilty of holding the school against the master. In each case the list obviously contains the names of a very large number of boys, who were the sons either of distinguished citizens or of leading land proprietors in the neighbouring counties.

Such a system of education in the elementary schools inevitably tended to smooth down class distinctions. On the one hand, the upper classes could not assume an attitude of superiority towards those who, earlier in life, had been their schoolfellows: on the other, any tendency to servility in the poorer classes was checked by the fact that they had at the outset of their life ranked as the equals of their social superiors, if only under the rod of the same master. The method of speech of the Knoxes and the Melvilles of the Reformation has frequently been the subject of comment. Yet, if properly considered, their tone was neither insolent nor disrespectful; it was but the natural expression of the spokesmen of a nation who from their earliest childhood had been taught the equality of mankind, and who realized instinctively that all service ranks the same with God. This, so far as Scotland was concerned, was the sentiment on which was founded the opposition to the excessive claims of the Stuarts. The principle of equality at the root of our educational system was utterly subversive of any claim to subjection resting on divine right.

No people, it has been said with more uncharity than lack of truth, were ever less loyal to their kings than the Scots, and the reason is to be found, partly in the fact that the Scottish nation was deficient in that ignorance which Montesquieu noted as the presupposition of extreme obedience, but even more in the fact that this deep-rooted instinctive sense of their individual worth was fundamentally opposed to a rigorous obedience to any external authority. Thus that divine right on which the Stuarts

rested their kingship was but a common quality of the Scottish nation. They shared with James his divine kingship in the form of a divine right of manhood, which, as history shows, could be easily transformed into, and indeed at times necessarily became, a divine right of rebellion. Without the help of Scotland at critical periods during the opening years of the great war, England could hardly have maintained her struggle for liberty against the Stuarts, and thus England too owes much to that Scottish sense of equality which was encouraged by the system of education in the parish and grammar schools.

The catholicity of the parish and grammar schools in being the schools of the whole nation and not of a class has its counterpart in the catholicity of the universities. In all countries in the Middle Ages, the universities were open to, and were frequented by, students of the poorest classes. Yet the Scottish universities pre-eminently opened their doors to the very poor, and they have, further, this very honourable distinction of having maintained until to-day, as a practical working system, the mediaeval idea that a university is a place which may be frequented by the poorest. No one who has been a student in a Scottish university can have any difficulty in recalling numerous cases of students who were obliged to support themselves in various ways while following their classes, and who during the summer vacations returned to the plough or the fishing-boat.

The step from the secondary or grammar school to the university has never presented any serious obstacle in Scotland, and thus it has always been a more easy matter in our country than elsewhere for men of the lowest rank to rise to the highest position in the state. It is a commonplace, that an enormous majority of the men whose memory we cherish with most gratitude in the history of our country have risen from very obscure origins. To this also is to be attributed another fact which has frequently been inadequately explained. When we reflect on the very meagre population of Scotland in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, it is impossible at first to suppress astonishment at the number of men of the first eminence, whom our country produced in philosophy, literature and science during that period. The obvious and patriotic explanation is to attribute this to some occult intellectual superiority which our countrymen have enjoyed compared with the inhabitants of less favoured states. Yet no such question-begging explanation is necessary. In all countries, the great majority of the people live

in comparative poverty, and, so far as we know, potential genius is distributed almost equally throughout the various ranks of society. Whenever, then, there is anything of the nature of a poverty bar to the rise of natural ability, an enormous proportion of the possible genius of the country is necessarily deprived of all possible fruition. This enormous waste,—this tragedy of the ‘mute inglorious Milton’—is the problem with which education everywhere has to grapple, and where the bar of poverty has been so successfully removed as it has been in Scotland, it is only natural that the number of great men produced should be proportionately much larger than in other countries.

The efficiency of the Scottish universities as an instrument for the education of all classes was much increased by the somewhat accidental circumstance that owing to want of supervision they increased in number to four. The three pre-Reformation universities were founded by the efforts of bishops interested in the chief towns of their diocese. Edinburgh University was founded by the zeal of the town council, moved by the advantage which a college would be to their town. The later universities were thus founded without consideration of existing similar institutions in the country. There can be no doubt that from the academic point of view the number was greater than a country with the population of Scotland could afford to support. Had Scotland been contented with one university at St. Andrews, or at most with two in St. Andrews and Glasgow, the development of higher education in Scotland might have followed an entirely different course.

In this case the Scottish zeal for education somewhat overshot itself, and the result was undoubtedly detrimental to the universities themselves. Had the efforts devoted to the foundation of the later universities been directed to the better maintenance of those already existing, the universities of Scotland, living in greater opulence, might have developed some of the features characteristic of Oxford and Cambridge. Such a course might have avoided some of the drawbacks which in times of intellectual stagnation have marked our academic life. One of the least creditable features in the history of our universities is the jealousy which has at times marked their attitude to the grammar schools. Professors, struggling to live on a miserable pittance eked out by scanty fees, were naturally averse from any course which might reduce the number of their students. Thus at times they agitated against the teaching in schools of subjects which they regarded

as properly their own; thus also students, however ignorant or inefficient, were encouraged to attend the university regardless of their ability to profit by or understand the lectures.

Thus the excessive number of the universities had a tendency to depress the standard of teaching and to throw on to the professors work, essentially preparatory in its nature, which should properly have been undertaken by the grammar schools. That this tendency made itself felt during the less brilliant periods of the universities is indubitable. Scotland having four universities, and having room for at most two, it was inevitable that her universities should to a certain extent be reduced to doing the work of higher schools, and in so far as they did so they were necessarily prevented from devoting themselves to the higher aims of a university.

There is, however, another side to this question. If the universities lost through their excessive numbers, the nation as a whole gained. The poverty of the highest seats of learning was in this respect an advantage, as they were thereby better qualified to discharge their functions as the universities of a poor country. Nor was it wholly disadvantageous to the country at large that to a certain extent the causes which have been noted tended to depress the level of the teaching of certain subjects in the universities. The passage of students from the grammar schools, and indeed from the parish schools, to the universities was thereby greatly facilitated. Thus by their number the Scottish universities may have been debarred from playing that part in the social life of the country which has been so long a distinguishing feature of Oxford and Cambridge, but this has been more than compensated for by the fact that they were thereby compelled to discharge more humble duties, more in accordance with the needs of the country. The excessive number of our universities has been one of the chief causes which have made university education so accessible even to the poorest in Scotland.

As a result of such a university system Scotland has necessarily had this peculiarity, that a very large proportion of what are known as the educated classes have always been men who have risen from the ranks. In virtue of this they have possessed an instinctive sympathy with the people which has enabled them to exercise a greater influence than this class has had elsewhere. To this as much as to any other cause is to be ascribed the extraordinary influence—the tyranny, to use the word of one school

of historians—of the Scottish Church in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and, indeed, in large measure until to-day. The Scottish clergy have possessed so much power over the people largely in virtue of the fact that the vast majority of them belonged to the people, and they could, therefore, understand and influence their congregations as no body of clergy drawn from a higher social position could have done. To ascribe this influence of the Church to its Presbyterian form of government is not wholly sufficient. The ultimate problems of history, like the ultimate problems of science, are insoluble, and this explanation merely leads to the question of the causes which predisposed the Scottish mind in favour of Presbyterianism. The reaction of religion and politics may explain much, but there is always an unexplained residuum left, since it is impossible to analyze, experiment with, and account for the mind and the will of a nation.

Adam Smith, who never fails to be suggestive in his treatment of history, has much to say that is of interest in explanation of the influence of the Scottish clergy. Not to Presbyterianism as such, but to the mediocrity of benefice resulting therefrom, does he ascribe the power of the Church of Scotland. 'Nothing but exemplary morals,' he says, 'can give dignity to a man of small fortune. . . . In his own conduct therefore he is obliged to follow that system of morals which the common people respect the most. . . . The common people look upon him with that kindness with which we naturally regard one who approaches somewhat to our own condition but who, we think, ought to be in a higher. Their kindness naturally provokes his kindness. . . . He does not even despise the prejudices of people who are disposed to be so favourable to him, and never treats them with those contemptuous and arrogant airs which we so often meet with in the proud dignitaries of opulent and well endowed Churches.'

As a criticism of Presbyterianism Adam Smith's statement is admirable; yet as applied to Scotland it is inadequate. The Scottish clergy moulded their conduct on the system which the common people most respected, because they themselves were of the common people. They did not approach *somewhat* the common people; they belonged to them by instincts which education could not eradicate. They did not despise the prejudices of the common people, because at one time they had shared, and indeed never wholly lost these prejudices. The influence of the Church in Scotland from the sixteenth to the

eighteenth century, which is one of the most far-reaching facts in Scottish history, is thus to be ascribed not to the consequences arising from the moderate stipends of the clergy, but to the intense natural sympathy which the clergy had with the people in virtue of their own humble origin. This peculiarity, as has been shown, was the direct result of the educational system of our country.

To this dominance of the Scottish Church is also usually ascribed the religious elements which are so prominent in the Scottish character. Yet the various educational institutions of Scotland were themselves powerful factors working in this direction. In the first place, the religious origin of the various classes of schools, and of three out of the four universities is, in this connection, a fact of great importance. It gave from the first a religious bent to Scottish education which it has only lost within the memory of those still living. The schools were church schools, and the intimate connection which existed between them and the Church was one of the features in our educational system which survived the catastrophic changes of the Reformation. The influence of the Church was exercised by the visitations of the Presbytery, an idea which is to be found in outline in the *Book of Discipline*. Moreover, the religious end of education was kept very consciously in view by those who directed the educational policy of the country.

It is impossible to read the various Acts of Parliament dealing with education, the frequent references to education in the records of the Privy Council, or the numerous entries relating to schools in the minutes of the town councils, without being impressed by the fact that the promotion of true religion was held to be the chief end of all education. Hence it is not surprising that religious instruction figured largely in the schools. The importance of this department of knowledge was indeed carried so far as to make the Sabbath the most arduous day in school life. The day of rest brought no respite to the hard-worked master or his pupils. The school met as usual on that day, and although *Donatus* may have been put aside, the study of Buchanan's *Psalms* and Calvin's *Catechism* may have been as trying a task to the youthful mind. Where it was possible a part of the gallery of the church was reserved for the scholars, who at sermon time were conducted there by the master. But even this was part of the day's work. The eye of the master was upon them to detect the idle and the irreverent, and in the afternoon they were

examined upon the notes which they had taken during the service, and catechized upon the doctrine which they had heard preached. Indeed in some places the pupils, if they did not supplant the minister were at least promoted to assist him in the religious instruction of 'common ignorant people and servants.' For this purpose two students were delegated to repeat the Shorter Catechism in church between services, the one asking the question and the other giving the answer. This or a similar practice was not uncommon in various burgh schools throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Such a rigorous religious training as this has left a deep mark on the Scottish mind and character. The emphasis thrown on dogmatic theology in the instruction of even the youngest children—the Shorter Catechism being repeated publicly in some schools once every week—tended to produce a people with strong religious feelings of a somewhat narrow and dogmatic type. The Scots became, indeed, not so much a religious as a theological people, eager to argue on abstruse points of doctrine and to confute an opponent by Biblical quotation or reference to the Westminster divines. I do not mean to assert that the religious or theological bent of the Scottish people was the result of the religious education given in the schools. It would, indeed, be truer to regard this very severe religious training as the expression of the power exercised by the Church in Scotland, which has already been considered in an earlier part of this essay. But what is at least incontestable is that the work done by the schools confirmed from generation to generation the ascendancy of the Church by implanting in each race of scholars this theological and religious tendency on which the power of the Church so much depended.

To the schools, then, we may in large measure attribute the strength of the religious elements in the Scottish character. Closely connected with this is a certain tendency to abstract reasoning and abstruse argument. Scottish religion was nothing if not dogmatic: the Shorter Catechism became the chief cornerstone of religion. Doctrinal preaching was the principal feature in the Church service, and the discussion of the sermon was the foremost intellectual occupation of the people from week to week. 'We were indeed amazed,' wrote Burnet, 'to see a poor commonalty so capable to argue on points of government, and on the bounds to be set to the powers of princes in matters of religion. Upon all these topics they had texts of scripture at hand and were ready with their answers to any thing that was

said to them. This measure of knowledge was spread even among the meanest of them, their cottagers and their servants.'

This argumentative tendency is undoubtedly to be traced in large measure to the training received in the schools, where the scholars at an early age were furnished with the weapons of theological controversy. Moreover, the schools aimed deliberately at producing an argumentative type of mind. Disputes or debates between the scholars constituted a common form of intellectual exercise. Every scholar in the school, according to one of the regulations governing the Aberdeen Grammar School, was to have an antagonist 'who may be as equal as can be for stirring up emulation.' A type of mind peculiarly adapted for abstract and deductive reasoning was thus developed. That the great Scotsmen of the eighteenth century were all deductive in their methods while the Englishmen of the same period were inductive, is one of the peculiarities in Scottish history which Buckle ascribes to the dominance of the Church. This, however, is not the whole explanation: the tendency to deductive reasoning which figures so largely in the Scottish character was not merely a fortuitous development, but was an end deliberately aimed at by the dogmatic teaching of the elementary schools, and the training in controversial methods, which was so prominent a feature in the grammar schools and colleges.

There is another aspect of the character of the Scottish people which it is necessary to mention in connection with the educational system of our country,—I refer to that combination of industry, perseverance and economy on which the success of Scotsmen in so large measure depends. The training received in the Scottish schools was in every way a stern one, and chief among the lessons taught the Scottish student was the supremely important one of the necessity of labour and endurance. In the schools and colleges teaching began at a surprisingly early hour, in most cases at six o'clock, and the unfortunate parish schoolmaster was frequently required to teach for ten hours a day during a working day of twelve hours. When it is considered that in many rural districts the scholars had to come long distances in all kinds of weather, and that the intervals during the day were not sufficient to allow them to return home, it will be realized that the most elementary schools furnished a hard discipline for the battle of life. The influence of the universities also made itself felt in this direction. It has been said that the universities were accessible to all, yet for the poor, and they were the large majority, a university

education could only be gained by considerable effort and sacrifice. It was for most a life of privation and of hard work, only possible by the exercise of rigid economy.

This, indeed, is the peculiar feature of all Scottish education, that so great results were obtained at so little money cost. Throughout the whole of the eighteenth century, the parish schoolmasters received a salary apart from various perquisites of just over £11. The professors in the universities received salaries as ridiculously small. This mark of poverty and of hardship can be traced in everything relating to education in Scotland. Not improbably the extraordinary importance attached to education in Scotland from very early times was in part connected with the poverty of the country, since the schools and colleges opened a career to many to whom the trade of their fathers held out no prospect but starvation. Education, in fact, opened a door for the surplus population who were ever pressing on the very limited means of subsistence which the country offered. Yet in such a country the academic life was itself necessarily a life of hardship calculated to emphasize all the lessons of perseverance, industry and economy which his environment was impressing on every Scotsman in the struggle for life. In this respect, indeed, the schools and colleges merely taught in a more intensive form what all our countrymen were learning under what Rousseau called the 'education of things.' But in most countries these lessons have not been taught to the educated classes, and nowhere have they been taught so emphatically to the common people.

These qualities account in large measure for the success in all departments of life which has so pre-eminently distinguished Scotsmen, since the Union opened to them a larger sphere for their activities,—a success which has sometimes excited admiration, at other times malicious envy. The pages of the *North Britain*, with its keen satire and biting invective, show more clearly than any sober statement could have done the part which our countrymen were then playing in the affairs of the United Kingdom. Underneath all the favouritism and backstair influence of which Wilkes complains, it is probable that one of the chief reasons for the Scottish emigration to England is to be found in the fact that at the time of the Union the Scottish people had the advantages of a superior educational system which enabled them to reap the benefits of the opportunities which the Union offered. To refer to any instances in which the qualities mentioned have enabled Scotsmen to achieve success is unnecessary, as countless

instances in the biographies of our great countrymen will occur to every one.

It may, however, be of interest to consider two cases in which these qualities have been shown by the common people who have thereby achieved success where others have failed. The first is referred to by Dean Swift in connection with certain settlements in Down and Antrim. 'These people,' he writes, 'by their extreme parsimony, wonderful dexterity in dealing and firm adherence to one another, soon grow into wealth from the smallest beginnings, never are rooted out where they once fix and increase daily by new supplies. . . . I have done all in my power on some land of my own to preserve two or three English fellows in their neighbourhood tho' one of them,' adds the satirist, 'thought he had sufficiently made his Court by turning Presbyterian.' The other instance is a matter of recent history. No county in England suffered so severely as Essex from the agricultural depression following 1875. Farmers everywhere were ruined, and the land was rapidly going out of cultivation. I quote from a recent volume on the position of agriculture, the account of the restoration of the prosperity of Essex. 'Far away from Essex in the dairy districts of Ayrshire, and especially in the neighbourhood of Kilmarnock, lived a sturdy race of farmers, who also had troubles of their own to bear. They were unspoiled by prosperity; they were thrifty and hardworking, and they had great force of character; but there was this drawback to their position: there were too many occupants of the Ayrshire hive, and the time had come for a swarming off of some of them in another direction. . . . So a few adventurous spirits went as an advance-guard to look into the situation for themselves, and the reports they made to their friends at home were so favourable that more and still more followed. Before long there was a regular migration from Ayrshire to Essex until the county began to be almost overrun with Scotsmen.' It is unnecessary to give any account of the means by which the Scottish farmers prospered in Essex; it is sufficient to say that they restored prosperity to a county which in the words of Mr. Pratt, the author quoted, 'the Englishmen were deserting as though it were only a "Slough of Despond."'

These two instances may appear to have but slight connection with the subject of this essay, yet they are in fact very relevant. I have endeavoured to show that education in Scotland developed

qualities of industry and parsimony, which have contributed largely to the success of Scotsmen in the struggle of life. The success of great men depends, however, on so many accidents of birth, education, and opportunity that no enumeration of Scotsmen, whose success has depended on the qualities I have mentioned, would offer so convincing a demonstration of the true secrets of our countrymen's success, as is furnished by these examples in which our unlettered hinds have overcome difficulties where others have failed.

There are many other points to which reference might be made in illustration of the influence which the Scottish educational system has had on our country. I have only referred incidentally to the history of Scottish literature: to show, in detail, in what way it has been the product of our schools and colleges would be a task of much interest, but would unfortunately be beyond the limits of this paper. I have not mentioned the excellent system of Scottish jurisprudence which contrasted strangely with the unfavourable material conditions of our country. The comparative leniency of the penal code, the procedure regarding debtors, the equality of the sexes in matters of divorce—to take only three obvious and striking features of Scottish law—reveal a wide sense of humanity and justice in the legislation of Scotland at the time of the Union, which in two of the cases mentioned has not yet been reached in England. The respect for legal knowledge is a common feature throughout the history of Scottish thought, and it is noteworthy that the ostensible object of the first great Education Act of 1496 was that the sons of men of substance might have knowledge of the law. That the purpose of this Act was realized in Scottish history is clear from the testimony of Blackstone, who, in lamenting in his *Commentaries* the ignorance of jurisprudence on the part of his countrymen, remarks that, 'in the northern part of our island . . . it is difficult to meet with a person of liberal education who is destitute of a competent knowledge in that science which is to be the guardian of his natural rights and the rule of his civil conduct.' To one other interesting question in regard to the influence of the educational system on Scotland, it is only possible to allude. The wealth of plaintive melody and folk-song is one of the greatest and most cherished possessions of our people. The composers of most of our songs are unknown, but it is not unreasonable to connect this wealth of simple melody with the important position which the teaching of music formerly

had in our educational system, as exemplified in the 'sang-schools' which were founded in all burghs of any importance.

These, and other points, might be emphasized in illustration of the debt which Scotland owes to her scholastic institutions. Enough has, however, been said to indicate what the nature of that obligation has been. Briefly, the influence of the educational system on the Scottish nation may be traced in three directions. In the first place, Scotland has through her schools and universities become a country in which education has been maintained at a high standard, and in which the general level of intelligence and the widespread diffusion of knowledge have been remarkable in all ranks of society. Secondly, a certain type of mind, which may broadly be described as democratic, has been produced resting on a sense of equality and the intrinsic worth of manhood. And as the principle of authority in politics has a tendency to the formation of a rigid and exclusive nationalism, so the principle of democracy is akin to cosmopolitanism. This tendency has not been absent in the development of the Scottish mind, and it has been shown that in the Scottish intellect was developed a certain instinctive sympathy with the thought and aspirations of other European states, which, however, in no way undermined Scottish patriotism. Thirdly, the Scottish educational system has developed not merely a type of mind: it has aided in the formation of a type of character. It has helped to give Scotsmen their strong sense of religion; it has tended to make them economical, industrious, and persevering.

In all these ways, the schools and universities of Scotland contributed their share to the production in the Scottish people of those qualities by virtue of which Scotsmen have been enabled to play so large a part in the world's history. Nor is it desirable in considering this question to look at it merely from the point of view of Scotland. It is difficult to exaggerate the benefits which the United Kingdom has derived from being formed out of the Union of peoples with different national characters, different ideals and different modes of thought. The richness and variety of our national life has thereby been increased enormously. That Scotsmen have contributed their share to the strength and the intellect of the United Kingdom, and have borne their part in the government of the empire, is one of our greatest debts to our schools and colleges.

ALEXANDER GRAY.

On the Early Northumbrian Poem, 'A Vision of the Cross of Christ'¹

THE mystic splendour of this old poem seems to have inspired the scholars—and they are not few—whose attention it has hitherto attracted, with a kind of awe of approaching it in a realistic spirit. Kemble, who was the first to translate it, passed over a host of difficult passages with a eulogy on its *poetical beauty and fancy*.² Dietrich, who declares the poet *ad dictionem aenigmaticam propensus*, was induced by its general similarity to Cynewulf's *Elene* to ascribe it to that writer, and argued a close connection between it and the epilogue to the *Elene*. With that it got drawn into the eddy of the Cynewulf Romance, so that even Sweet pronounced it a *portion of the epilogue to the 'Elene'*.³ In view of the discourses uttered by the cross of wood, of the gold and gems that bedeck it, of the wet blood with which it is still besprinkled, it was certainly natural enough not always to expect complete lucidity and a well-defined poetic purpose throughout the poem.

In addition, the circumstance—in itself fortunate—that we know it in two distinct versions, has hitherto rather confused than advanced investigation of the poem. In the Vercelli Manuscript it appears complete, 156 lines in all, and is written in the late West Saxon dialect usually employed by scribes of its period (late tenth century). The other version is in the older spelling, but contains only four separate groups of lines from the body of the poem, carved in pure Northumbrian dialect on the Ruthwell Cross. Moreover, these lines are incomplete in themselves, partly in metrical confusion, and in one passage even the sense takes a somewhat different turn.⁴

¹ Translated, and revised, from the Transactions of the *Berliner Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 1905.—Bibliography in Brandl's *AgS. Literaturgeschichte*, 1908, p. 91f. Trans. by Dr. Charles Macpherson, M.A. (Edin.).

² *Archæologia*, xxx. p. 32.

³ *Oldest English Texts*, p. 125.

⁴ *Tô þām æþelinge* Verc. 58, *æþþilæ til ânun* Ruthw. Cr.

There was a third difficulty. At the end of the incision on the Ruthwell Cross Stephens¹ made out the words *Kadmon mæ fauæþo*, and from that time the belief found ground that the authorship of the poem must be attributed to Cædmon the hymn-writer, so familiar to us from the pages of Bede. So that for a quarter of a century it was an open choice between the two chief representatives of early Anglo-Saxon, between Cædmon in the second half of the seventh century and Cynewulf in the second half of the eighth. At length Vietor, as the result of a scrupulous and personal examination of the Ruthwell Cross, was able to explode the 'Cædmon' theory. On his rubbing of the stone all that remained of Stephens' *Kadmon* was the *d*.²

On the other hand, there is of late a tendency to relegate the stone to a much later period—to the ninth or even the tenth century. Archæologists conclude this from its ornamentation, and Prof. Cook has shown that the archaic inflexions, on which so much stress was laid in fixing the age of the Cross, also occur sporadically in Northumbrian manuscripts of the late tenth century.³ As a matter of fact, this particular dialect did retain for an astonishing length of time a whole series of sounds and inflexions which the others had long since abandoned. The patent objection, however, is: Could such a mass of archaisms have got compressed into such narrow compass? Only sixteen lines, some of them mutilated, are preserved on the Ruthwell Cross, and they show a consistent Early Northumbrian dialect. At the very least a particularly ancient stock of written forms must have lain at bottom.

In view of all these circumstances, our best course is: first, to examine closely the subject-matter and purpose of the poem; then, availing ourselves of linguistic criteria, to mark off, within as narrow limits as possible, place and period of its origin; and, finally, to keep our eyes open for some event in the ecclesiastical life of that place and period which may have evoked a rapturous, or, as it is better termed in this case, a poetico-admonitory mood in the poet.

In the first part (lines 1-26), the poet recounts in the first person how he beheld the Cross at midnight. On the one hand it was invested with radiance, adorned with gold and gems, gazed

¹ *Old North. Runic Monuments*, 1868, ii. 405 ff.

² *Die northumb. Runensteine*, 1895, p. 12.

³ *Publ. of the Mod. Lang. Assoc. of America*, xvii. pp. 367 ff.

upon by the angels and the saints and all the tribes of the earth ; on the other, it still bore the traces of the Redeemer’s agony—on the right side it was bloody, *beswyled mid swâtes gange*. One moment the poet saw it in jewelled array, the next stained with gore. Thus, it is not a symbolical cross of victory, such as appeared to Constantine, that he has in view, nor is it a mere fragment of the Cross, but the actual Cross of Jesus in its entirety, as it is worshipped separate from the Redeemer in heaven and on earth.

In the second part (transitional lines 26 f., thereafter lines 28-121), the Cross itself relates its destiny. As a tree it was felled in the forest, dragged to the hill-top, and there planted firmly in the earth. As if it were a thing of life, it began to quiver when it felt about it the Redeemer’s embrace. Like a champion, it longed to strike down His foes, yet must all the time stand fast and still. Only after the death of Jesus was it allowed to incline itself in sorrow to the men who took down the body. Then it was buried along with the crosses of the thieves in the earth, only to be later found by friends, who decked it in gold and silver. ‘Now the day has come,’ it goes on, ‘when men worship me far and wide throughout the world. Since the Son of God has suffered on me, I am imbued with virtue,¹ and have power to heal whoso standeth in awe of me. Me hath God honoured before all trees beside, even as Mary before all women. Declare this vision to the sons of men. None need fear at the Day of Judgment that bears this symbol in his breast. Through the Cross let every soul strive to attain the Kingdom of Heaven !’ Evidently the poet’s purpose is a summons to worship the True Cross of Jesus with confidence, universally and in public, which had hitherto not been done as it ought.

In the third and last part it is again the poet that speaks. He rejoices that he can now take refuge under the Cross² and do it homage—through his poem—‘more than all men else.’ He yields himself to the Cross as a vassal to his lord. Once he had powerful friends—they have passed away to the Shadowy Land before him. Now he hopes that the Cross of Jesus he has seen in the vision may lead him to them in Heaven. On that showing he makes himself out a priest, the scion of a noble house, who now desires to provide in his own person, with all the emphasis he may, the first example of the worship he preaches.

¹ *brymfæst*, l. 84.

² *þone sigebéam sécan*.

That a consistent and practical intention permeates the poem is unmistakable. The author writes it out of no purely subjective mood; his being forlorn and weary of life is only mentioned as an accessory circumstance, above which the vision itself uplifts him. Neither does he write with any regard to an earlier poem: no reference of such a nature is to be found. He obeys, simply and solely, a command of the Cross of Jesus to proclaim its presence and power to heal, to spread its worship abroad. The purpose is on the face of it a liturgical one.

To enable us to fix the date of its composition, the best criterion at our disposal is the presence or absence of the definite article before a weak adjective with substantive.¹ That this test is absolutely reliable, even in the case of small variations in the percentages, is not contended. We may put it to the proof, however, by applying it to the few Anglo-Saxon writings earlier than Alfred, the age of which we know from other sources. These would be: *Guthlac A*, composed by one who had spoken personally with men who knew that saint (*mort.* 714)—composed, therefore, about 750 A.D.; and the undoubted works of Cynewulf, who, as he had discarded the old spelling Cyniwulf, must be placed after the middle of the eighth century²; but, on the other hand, a considerable time before the middle of the ninth, when the Early Anglian civilisation fell a prey to the Danes. Following the example of Barnouw, I here give in parallel columns an enumeration of the cases in these four poems where the weak adjective with substantive is found without or with the definite article. In so doing, however, I take into account not the individual instances, but the phrases:

	Without article	Percentage	With article	Percentage
<i>Guthlac A</i> ,	- 6	12.5	42	87.5
Cynewulf's <i>Juliana</i> ,	3	10.0	27	90.0
„ <i>Christ (II.)</i> ,	3	9.7	28	90.3
„ <i>Elene</i> ,	9	12.0	66	88.0

That is, roughly speaking, about the proportion we should have to expect. Of course it would be too subtle to regard *Elene* as the oldest work of Cynewulf on the mere ground that it has a few articles less in proportion than the *Juliana* or the *Christ*. Further, the Anglo-Saxon metre was elastic enough

¹ Cf. Lichtenheld, *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum*, xvi. pp. 325 ff.; Groth, *Composition der Exodus*, 1883; Mürkens, *Bonner Beitr.* ii. pp. 105 ff.; and especially Barnouw, *Krit. Untersuchung nach dem Gebrauch des bestimmten Artikels*, 1902.

² Cf. Sievers, *Anglia*, xiii. p. 1 ff.

to render feasible the insertion of the article by later scribes ; a clear instance of such insertion may be seen in *Azarius* 42, 59, as compared with *Daniel* 326, 342. Thus we have always to reckon with the possibility of such alteration. But, when all is allowed for, between all these poems and our *Vision* there comes a sharp and definite line of cleavage, which is no uncertain index of their different dates of composition :

	Without article	Percentage	With article	Percentage
<i>The Vision,</i>	- 5	33.3	10	66.6

Oldest of all is the state of matters in *Exodus* and *Beowulf* :

	Without article	Percentage	With article	Percentage
<i>Exodus,</i>	- - 14	58.3	10	41.6
<i>Beowulf,</i>	- - 65	83.3	13	16.6

So that, as *Beowulf*, on account of the Christian elements it contains, cannot be dated earlier than the middle of the seventh century, one has good grounds for assigning the *Vision* to about the beginning of the eighth century.

So much for the *date* of composition. As for the *place*, nothing can be urged against Northumberland, to which the incision in pure Northumbrian on the Ruthwell Cross naturally directs us. In addition, there was the fixed home of Cædmon and of his school of religious poets, of which Bede relates in 731 : *alii post illum in gente Anglorum religiosa poemata facere temabant*.¹

Now we have to inquire, what events touching on the veneration of the Holy Cross took place in the Church of Northumberland about the date assigned ?

It was in Jerusalem, where the Sacred Cross was dug up in the reign of Constantine, at the dedication of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (14 September, 335), that the *adoratio crucis* by kiss and genuflexion first came into being. According to the legend, as it had by an act of healing distinguished itself from the crosses of the thieves, and as it had remained for centuries intact in the earth, it was reputed miraculous. Starting from the consideration that it had absorbed some of Christ's blood, it was argued that it partook both of the human and of the divine nature of the Son of God, and thus it came to be regarded as a kind of sacred personality. It was set with gold and jewels, and, as a special reminiscence of the Saviour's blood, a receptacle, containing balm of rare fragrance, was placed within it : *desuper ex auro cum gemmis,*

¹ *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 24.

intus cavam habens confectionem ex balsamo satis bene olente, as the *Ordo Romanus* has it. Bishop Paulinus of Nola¹ taught as accepted doctrine in his day that the Jerusalem Cross was *in materia insensata, vim vivam habens*.² In more general terms John Chrysostom³ waxes eloquent on its power to break the might of the Evil One and set open again the gates of Paradise, and on its predestined return in glory on the Day of Judgment.⁴

This liturgical worship of the Crucifix reached Constantinople at the beginning of the fifth century, simultaneously with a large fragment of the True Cross. There was observed every year a public ceremony, lasting three days, which the Emperor himself was wont to open by kissing the Cross. Here again provision was made for drops of sweet-smelling balsam, which should be exuded from the wood, and no matter how small a drop chanced to fall on a sick person, he was instantly healed. Such is the account given by the shipwrecked Arculfus to Adamnan, Abbot of Iona,⁵ who gave the narrative a place in his *De locis sanctis* (iii. 3), whence it was soon after transcribed by Bede for his book of the same name.⁶

In the Western Church the appearance of the *adoratio crucis* as a special feature of the divine worship dates from the end of the sixth century, our authorities being the *Sacramentarium* of Gelasianus, the *Sacramentarium* and the *Antiphonarius* of Gregory the Great, and the *Ordo Romanus*. The ceremony was here performed with the aid of symbolic crosses and on Good Friday, and has to this day maintained its place in the special ritual for that day. It is worth our while to consider the Ritual of Gregory in some detail, the more so on account of the exceptional reverence with which he was regarded throughout all England as the founder of the missionary movement among the Anglo-Saxons. After a few prefatory prayers and lessons, two priests of high rank set *corpus Christi, quod pridie remansit*, on the altar, where a cross is standing. Then the Pope paces reverently to the altar, *adorans crucem Domini*; whereupon the bishops and all the congregation follow suit. Hymns and psalms follow, more especially the one attributed to Venantius Fortunatus,⁷ *Pange, lingua, gloriosi proelium certaminis*, where the Cross is invoked as tree and person in one :

¹ *Mort.* 431.

² *Epist.* 31 *ad Sever.*

³ *Mort.* 407.

⁴ *Opp.* ed. Montfaucon, 1818 ff., especially iii. 826.

⁵ *Mort.* 704.

⁶ *De locis sanctis*, cap. 20; cf. *Itinera Hierosol.* ed. Tobler and Molinier, i. pp. 194 f., 232 f.

⁷ *Mort.* 600.

*Crux fidelis, inter omnes arbor una nobilis:
Nulla talem silva profert fronde, flore, germine;
Dulce lignum, dulce clavo, dulce pondus sustinens.*

*Flecte ramos, arbor alta, tensa laxa viscera,
Et vigor lentescat ille quem dedit natiuitas,
Ut superni membra regis mite tendas stipite.
Hallelujah. Gloria. Benedictio.*

Conceptions of this nature, which in the course of the sixth century became the common property of the educated clergy, also underlie our Anglo-Saxon poem and provide us with the best commentary thereon. The poem owes its mysticism not to Keltic, but to Graeco-oriental sources. In uniting the contradictory ideas of a cross, inanimate wood, adorned with jewels and smirched with blood, and of a living person, the poem contained nothing either new or extraordinary for the churchmen of that day. If the poet set such incompatible conceptions crudely side by side and then rioted in repetitions of them (as, for instance, that the ‘Tree of Victory’ tells its story out of its own mouth), he evidently tended to the fashionable manner of the Riddle, which was in full blossom throughout England during the seventh and the eighth centuries. Tatwine of Canterbury¹ and Bonifatius composed each a Latin enigma directly *De cruce Christi*—so admirably did the subject lend itself to ingenious play of wit.

In 701, however, a new event *did* occur, and it was known and noticed in Northumberland. In that year, for the first time, we hear that in the Roman Church as well as in Constantinople a fragment of the True Cross was exposed for public veneration instead of the symbolic crosses previously employed. This came to pass in Rome through the agency of the Pope himself, and caused great popular excitement. Sergius I., a Syrian by birth, had a vision, which directed him to an obscure corner of St. Peter’s, where an old silver capsule was lying, tarnished and forgotten. He approached the spot and, after due prayer, having removed the seal from the capsule, he found therein, protected by a cushion and four pieces of metal and studded with gems, an exceptionally large fragment of the True Cross (*ineffabilem portionem verae crucis*). Ever since, this relic was once a year, on the day of the elevation of the Cross in the church of San Giovanni Lateran, to be kissed and adored *pro salute humani generis* by the whole Christian people, as related in the *Liber pontificalis* for the year mentioned above.²

¹ *Mort.* 734.

² Ed. Duchesne, 1886, i. 374; Mommsen, 1898, i. 213.

Such interest did the news of this find excite in the North of England that Bede has reproduced the account of the *Liber pontificalis* almost literally and with but trifling omissions in his *Universal History De sex aetatibus saeculi*. There we read under the year 701: *Papa Sergius in sacrario B. Petri apostoli capsam argenteam quae in angulo obscurissimo diutissime jacuerat, et in ea crucem diversis ac preciosis lapidibus adornatam, Domine revelante, reperit. De qua tractis IV petalis quibus gemmae inclusae erant mirae magnitudinis portionem ligni salutiferi Dominicae crucis interius repositam inspexit; quae ex tempore illo annis omnibus in Basilica Salvatoris quae appellata Constantiniana die exaltationis ejus ab omni occulatur et adoratur populo*. In order to comprehend the interest of Bede, one has but to reflect on the significance of Sergius' most opportune discovery. It set the Latin Church, in all that regarded the possession of an exceptionally prized source of grace, on an equal footing with the Greek; it imparted to the worship of the Cross, which had up till then been in the main symbolic, a more concrete character; and, above all, it called into being the Festival of the Elevation of the Cross. As Ceolfrid, Abbot of Wearmouth, was in Rome in this same year 701,¹ we may suppose that he was not behindhand in spreading the sensational tidings on his return to his Northumberland home. Now, as from that time on, the worship of the Cross in Northumberland received no further impulse, I should like to see in the sensational discovery of 701 the probable incentive to the composition of the poem. The poet wished to take his share in explaining the new Festival, and aid in its propagation.

Of the subsequent destiny of the fragment discovered by Sergius we know nothing. There were many pious frauds. True, Maphaeus Vegius, who in the popedom of Eugene IV (1431/49) compiled a four-volume history *De rebus antiquis memorabilibus Basilicae S. Petri Romae*, adds to the narrative of the *Liber pontificalis*, which in everything else he follows very closely, a new and striking particular.² According to his version of the story, Sergius also found in the capsule a document testifying to the genuineness of the fragment discovered (*veri ligni S. Crucis—sicut additae ibi literae significabant*). But in that case, what would have been the significance of the vision that led Pope Sergius to the discovery? How should such a treasure have been forgotten? And why was such a piece of evidence not

¹ Cf. *Regesta pontificum* ed. Lipsius, 1885, p. 245.

² Cf. the Bollandist ed., Antwerp 1718, Lib. i. cap 4, No. 36.

mentioned in the first official report? Plainly enough, we owe the addition to a rationalistic turn of thought in the person of Vegius. The custom of exposing the Relic is mentioned in Vegius in the past tense (*ostendebatur*); that is to say, it had been even then discontinued. As the place where it was kept he regards the Vatican (*unde plane gloriosior videtur nunc Vaticanus pretioso hujus crucis*). However, when Stephen Borgia, Secretary of the Propaganda fidei, compiled with a scholar's care his quarto volume *De cruce vaticana ex dono Justini Augusti*, which he published at Rome in 1779, the precious relic had vanished. The fragment of a crucifix that Borgia in his perplexity wished to take for it was quite tiny and had a totally different setting.

To return to our poem. After studying the foreign elements of which it is made up, it is a real pleasure to note the rich blend of Germanic vassalage that tinges its lines throughout, and by means of which the poet evidently sought to bring home to his Northumbrian compatriots his otherwise exceedingly exotic subject. Not only is Christ's work of redemption depicted as a battle, with the ‘ young hero ’ sinking to earth in the weariness of death, but everything that the Cross suffers—its being felled in the forest and dragged to the hilltop, its being pierced with nails as with arrows,¹ its being spattered with blood and sunk into the earth—is made to appear the doing of adversaries. God is the gentle Leader of the Host, the Cross His faithful retainer that longs to vanquish His foes. The poet himself is to make the Cross his patron,² and we are told that it behoves every Christian to be a fearless warrior,³ so that his guerdon may be ‘ the Joy of Heroes⁴ in the heavenly abode.’ These are of course conceptions with which the later Christian Epic continued to operate long thereafter. But when at the end of the poem the Deathwail⁵ is raised for Christ, the young hero fallen in glory, and when his followers chant the lay in sorrow before they take leave of the body,⁶ we have a singularly archaic touch. Nowhere else save in *Beowulf* is the custom mentioned; *Cynewulf* and his contemporaries have long forgotten it. From this point of view we are the rather confirmed in the impression that to date the poem as of the beginning of the eighth century involves no undue straining of the facts.

ALOIS BRANDL.

¹ *Strælum*.

² *Mīn munabyrd is geriht tō þære rôde*, l. 130.

³ l. 113 f.

⁴ *Dræam*.

⁵ *Sorhléod*.

⁶ l. 67 ff.

Ragna-rök and Orkney

I.

THE title of this paper, 'Ragna-rök,' is used in its original sense—the Norse history of the gods and the world.¹

All that we know about Norse mythology is derived almost entirely from two literary sources variously called :

- (1) The Elder Edda, or Poetic Edda, or Sæmundar Edda, or The Edda, and
- (2) The Younger Edda, or Prose Edda, or Snorra Edda, or Edda.

The name 'Edda' originally belonged to (2), and when the MS. of (1) turned up it was straightway labelled 'Sæmundar Edda,' it having been previously surmised that Sæmund the wise had compiled some such work.² But (1) is now also called 'The Edda' *par excellence*, in contra-distinction to (2) which is styled 'Snorra Edda.' As, however, Vigfússon and others cite (2) as 'Edda,' it will be obvious that 'Edda' as a reference must give rise to misunderstanding. To avoid confusion, these two works and all early Norse mythological poetry and prose might be aptly described as (1) *Ragna-ljóð* or *-lays*, literally, gods' lays, or lays about the gods and the world, and (2) *Ragna-saga*, gods' story, or story about the gods and the world.

We know that Snorri wrote *Ragna-saga*, but nothing is known for certain of the authorship or place of composition of *Ragna-lays*, where they were current or by whom and where they were

¹ O.D., s.v. *Rök*, 3 (p. 507).

² C.P.B., I. xxxiv. ; S.S., I. clxxxiii-iv.

N.B.—Abbreviations of works cited : C.P.B., *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, Oxford, 2 vols. S.S., *Sturlunga Saga*, Oxford, 2 vols. O.S., *Orkneyinga Saga*, Rolls edition, text and translation; the translation is quoted by page. O-L.M., *Old-Lore Miscellany of Orkney*, etc., Viking Club. L., *Ragna Lays (Poetic Edda)*; S., *Ragna Saga (Prose Edda)*; T., *Thulor* in S.; O.D., Oxford *Icelandic-English Dictionary*; J., Dr. J. Jakobsen's *Etymologisk Ordbog over det Nørrøne sprog paa Shetland* (A-Liver); Jd., J. Jakobsen's *The Dialect and Place-Names of Shetland*; Jss., J. Jakobsen's *Shetlandsøernes Stednavne*; E., T. Edmondston's *Etymological Glossary of the Orkney and Shetland Dialect*; E.D.D., *English Dialect Dictionary*.

taken down in writing. From internal evidence, Vigfússon was of opinion that the lays could not have been composed in Iceland or Norway, and that probably their home was to be looked for in Orkney, the Western Islands, Ireland or the north of England.¹

The characteristics pointing to a western origin are briefly : (1) grammatical, *e.g.* 'h' in a few instances dropped before 'l' and 'r' in the oldest copy, probably made by an Icelander, which may be the remnant of the archetype, an Orkney one ;² (2) words foreign to Icelandic prose ; (3) words of Celtic origin and others with meanings different to those attached to them in Iceland ;³ and (4) descriptions of Norway, Denmark, and Germany as viewed from abroad.

This paper is intended as a commentary on both the Eddas, based on Orkney records, dialect, traditions, etc., and forms a contribution to the subject of 'The Home of the Edda.' For the sake of brevity, the old Norse earldom of Orkney, Shetland, Caithness, and Sutherland will be referred to simply as 'Orkney,' but the mass of the evidence is derived from Orkney and Shetland, especially the latter.

II.

The oldest MS. of the lays is Codex Regius (R) which came to light in 1642.⁴ It is dated by Vigfússon as *circa* 1230,⁵ and he was of opinion that it was copied by an Icelander from an Orkney archetype of *circa* 1150,⁶ which might have been taken down in writing by an Icelander in Iceland or Orkney to the dictation of an Orkneyinger.⁷ He was further of opinion (1) that the lays date from 950-1100 and that they could not possibly be earlier than the ninth century,⁸ (2) that they would be fresh in the memory of the people down till *circa* 1100,⁹ and (3) that they were fading from mind and becoming corrupted at the time they were taken down, *circa* 1150.¹⁰

Snorri Sturlason, the compiler of Ragna-saga, which he undoubtedly derived from Ragna-lays and other lays, flourished 1178-1240.¹¹ The oldest MSS. of his work are (1) Codex

¹ S.S., I. clxxxvi., cxcii.

² C.P.B., I. xlii. ; S.S., I. cxcii.

³ C.P.B., I. lviii., lxiii.

⁴ C.P.B., I. xxxiii.

⁵ C.P.B., I. lxxi. ; S.S., I. ccxii.

⁶ C.P.B., I. xlii., lxxii. ; S.S., I. ccx.

⁷ C.P.B., I. lxxiii. ; S.S., I. cxcii.

⁸ C.P.B., I. lvii. ; S.S., I. ccx.

⁹ C.P.B., I. lxxii.

¹⁰ C.P.B., I. lxxii., lxxiv. f.n. ; S.S., I. ccx.

¹¹ C.P.B., I. c.

Wormianus (W), *circa* 1320-30, which made its reappearance in 1609,¹ and (2) Codex Regius (r), *circa* 1290, which reappeared in 1640.²

There is another important MS., AM. 748 A., *circa* 1280, which contains the lays and the saga.³

III.

We should bear in mind that Orkney was the earliest viking colony, where old institutions and old forms of place-names took root, flourished, and survived. The odal system of land-holding became firmly established in Orkney, whereas, by the later time that Iceland was settled, that system had become antiquated and did not find a place in the polity of the latter country. In Orkney we also find such old forms of Norse place-names as *vin* and *anгр*,⁴ which are not to be found in Iceland. We should therefore expect the Norse religious beliefs to have similarly taken a firmer hold in Orkney and to have survived longer there than in Iceland. The influence of the pre-viking Christian inhabitants of Orkney, whom the colonists would have found there, and of the neighbouring Scottish Christians must also be taken into account as an important factor in a critical study of the lays.

The first nominal Norse convert to Christianity in Orkney was Earl Sigurd, who, in 995, chose baptism to death at the hands of King Olaf.⁵ The bishopric of Orkney was not founded until about 1047-1064.⁶

The important part played by Orkney and Shetland in the western influence on Norwegian civilization has evoked from Professor Alexander Bugge the opinion that these islands could be called the Cyprus and Crete of northern culture.⁷

It must also be remembered that the vikings of Orkney were far-travelled and made frequent expeditions to Russia, Spain, Jerusalem, Rome, and other foreign countries.⁸

All expectations of finding any remnants of the lays still current in Orkney is out of the question, seeing that the insular Norse dialect, called Norn, has given place to English since 1468, when the islands were pledged by Norway to Scotland in security for the dowry of the Princess Margaret, the queen of King James III.

¹ C.P.B., I. xlv. ; S.S., I. ccxii.

² C.P.B., I. xxxv., xlvi. ; S.S., I. ccxii.

³ C.P.B., I. xliii.

⁴ Jss. ; O.D.

⁵ O.S., 16, 337.

⁶ O.S., 59.

⁷ *Vesterlandenes Indflydelse paa Nordboernes*, by A. Bugge, p. 401.

⁸ O.S. *passim*.

The insular code of Norse laws, the *Lawbook*, disappeared *circa* 1600, since when, with the exception of some odal land-rights, Scottish law has taken its place.

The Norse dialect continued longer in Shetland, where we find legal documents in that tongue as late as 1627,¹ and a Norse ballad recited in 1834.² Orkney, from its proximity to Scotland, and being the seat of government (latterly held by a Scottish line of earls, the St. Clairs), naturally adopted the English language much earlier. The last known Norse document in Orkney is the complaint by its Commons *circa* 1426.³ The Norse dialect, however, survived in secluded places in Orkney until the eighteenth century, when it is related that one of the lays was recited there.⁴

Notwithstanding that all Norse ballads have perforce disappeared with the dialect, still we have a rich store of scientific data preserved in place-names and in thousands of surviving dialect words which are now being explored by Dr. Jakob Jakobsen, data much more reliable than folklore, which latter can be introduced from literary sources and widely spread with remarkable rapidity.

IV.

Indications of location in the lays are few. In one instance we have: 'We broidered on our broidery how Sigar and Siggeir fought south in Fife (Fivi.)'⁵ Here is a clear indication of Orkney, north of Fife. Even if *Fivi* is a later gloss on a possible original *Fión*, it nevertheless points to the locality where this lay was current at the time it was taken down in writing. Vigfússon looked upon the life depicted in this particular tapestry lay as not corresponding with what we know of Denmark in the ninth and tenth centuries.⁶

As regards the reference to tapestry, it recalls an incident in the life of Earl Rögnvald in Orkney. In 1148 two Icelandic skalds were his guests in Orkney. It fell out one day about Yule that men were looking at the hangings, then the earl said to one of the skalds: 'Make thou a song about the behaviour of

¹ *The Celtic and Scandinavian Antiquities of Scotland*, by Gilbert Goudie, p. 131.

² *MS. Journal of an Expedition to Shetland*, in 1834, by Dr. Edward Charlton, p. 130. Extracts are now being printed in O-L.M.

³ *Dipl. Norveg.*, ii. p. 514.

⁴ *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott*, 1837, vol. iii. p. 190.

⁵ C.P.B., I. 318.

⁶ C.P.B., I. lxii.

that man who is there on the hanging, and have thou thy song sung when I have ended my song; and mind and have none of those words in thy song that I have in my song.'¹ It is thus proved that tapestry was in use in Orkney in the twelfth century, scarcely a hundred years after the probable date of the composition of the above tapestry lay. Harp-playing, which also occurs in the lays,² is also in keeping with Orkney life, since we find this same Earl Rögnvald priding himself, *circa* 1116: 'Either stands at my behest, sweep of harp or burst of song.'³

In Ragna-saga the Everlasting Battle is localized in Hoy, in Orkney.⁴ Fenja and Menja of the Gróttá Söngr or Mill Song have been deposited in the Pentland Firth to grind salt to make the sea salt.⁵ The scene of 'The Fatal Sisters' is laid in Caithness *circa* 1014.⁶

V.

Let us now glance at Orkney poets and authors, and their Icelandic correspondents and collaborators.

It is historically true that Orkney was a literary and poetical centre from the first; that the lays were known there, that there was constant communication with Iceland, and that at the time the lays are supposed to have been taken down, an earl-poet and a bishop-poet were busy at literary work in collaboration with Icelandic poets resident in Orkney.

Torf-Einarr, Earl of Orkney, *circa* 880-900, brother of Hrolf, the founder of Normandy, was a distinguished poet whose name has been commemorated by Snorri in 'Torf-Einarr metre' (Torf-Einars-hátt), the name of one of the metres in Háttatal.⁷ Here we see that at the very foundation of the earldom its chief was a renowned writer of verse.

Arnór Jarlaskald, 1011-1080, called 'Earls' Poet' because he composed poems about the Orkney Earls Thorfinn and Rögnvald, in one of these poems made a quotation from Völuspá, one of the lays, showing that this lay was then known in Orkney.⁸ A knowledge of Völuspá, a lay which shows Christian influence,

¹ O.S., 158.² C.P.B., I. 1x.³ O.S., 97.⁴ *The Younger Edda*, translated by R. B. Anderson, p. 218; S.S., I. clxxxvi.⁵ S.S., I. clxxxvi.; C.P.B., I. 184; *Sagá Book* of the Viking Club, vi. 296; O-L.M., iii. 142.⁶ O-L.M., iii. 78.⁷ O-L.M., i. 70.⁸ C.P.B., I. lxxvii.; II. 197; I. 193; O.S., 60.

means a knowledge of the whole system of Norse mythology, as it gives a complete history of the gods, which can be best understood after a study of all the lays.

Bjarni Gullbráar-skald, an Icelander, was in Orkney and made verses there in 1046.¹ A nameless Orkney skald has one of his extempore verses recorded which he sang, in 1137, in answer to Earl Rögnvald.²

Earl and Saint Rögnvald, *circa* 1100-1158, founder of St. Magnus' Cathedral, was a prolific poet and a great traveller and warrior. He lived at the very time that the lays are supposed to have been taken down by an Icelander to the dictation of an Orkneyman; and what do we find? In 1139-43 he composed Hättalykill or Key to Metres along with Hall, an Icelandic skald, in which he shows a knowledge of the Helgi lays.³ Besides Orkney skalds, the following Icelandic poets were in Orkney in the court of Earl Rögnvald: Hall Thórarinsson, 1139-1148;⁴ Eric, *circa* 1139-1148;⁵ Armod, 1148-1153;⁶ Oddi the little Glumsson, 1148-1153;⁷ Thorbjörn Svarti, 1148-1153;⁸ and Bótolf Begla, 1154, a resident.⁹

Bishop Bjarni Kolbeinson, known as 'The Skald,' 1150-1223, an Orkneyman, was author of Jómsvíkingadrápa and probably of Málsháttakvæði and the Orkneyinga Saga.¹⁰ Dr. Jón Stefánsson has shown that he made his court one of the literary and political centres of the time. There was close friendship between him and the leading chieftains in Iceland, especially the Oddi family. Icelandic skalds were frequently his guests on their voyages to Norway. Munch has suggested that Bjarni and Sæmund no doubt lent each other some of their literary treasures, and Snorri would be conversant with these. Snorri quotes the Orkney Saga which he must have got directly or indirectly from Bjarni, perhaps through Sæmund. It is well known that Snorri in Hátatal imitated the Hättalykill of Earl Rögnvald. The bishop was also a contemporary of, and acquainted with, his King Sverrir.¹¹

King Sverrir of Norway, who was born in the Faroes and visited Orkney and the Western Islands, quoted the lays in Norway in 1183-84, regarding which Vigfússon says: 'We have his speeches from his own report, so that it is not necessary to

¹ O.S., 49.² O.S., 129.³ C.P.B., I. lxxvii.; O.S., 145.⁴ O.S., 144, 145.⁵ O.S., 141.⁶ O.S., 157, 163, 178.⁷ O.S., 158, 159, 165, 171, 178.⁸ O.S., 159, 178, 340.⁹ O.S., 198, 199.¹⁰ O-L.M., i. 43-47, 65-71; C.P.B., II. 363, 301.¹¹ O-L.M., i. 43 *et seq.*

believe that the snatches he cites were as familiar to his hearers as they were to him.¹

In Iceland the *first* skald was Egil Skallagrímsson, *circa* 900-982.

While Iceland was the land of saga, Orkney was the home of metre,² which found an imitator in the great Snorri himself.³

If the rulers of Orkney were poets, it goes without saying that verse-making—a characteristic of the vikings—would have been fashionable among their subjects, of which we have proof in their saga.⁴

VI.

It will here suffice to give a few of the *poetic words* which are common to the Eddas and to the Shetland dialect of to-day, in which they are used chiefly as lucky or tabu names at sea. The significant fact should be noted that some of these words only occur in the Eddas and in the Shetland dialect. Such words are indicated below by a prefixed asterisk.

EDDAS.	MEANING IN O.D. UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.	SHETLAND DIALECT.
Lögr (L., T.)	<i>the sea</i>	Ljoag, <i>the sea</i> (Jd., 24)
Marr ⁵ (L., S., T.)	<i>the sea</i>	Maar, <i>the sea</i> (Jd., 24)
Áll (T.)	<i>the sea</i>	} Hollost [Ál-Vöst], <i>the sea</i> (J.)
Vöst (T.)	<i>the sea</i>	
Dúfa ⁶ (T.)	<i>a wave</i>	Däi, <i>a wave</i> (J.) ⁷
Far (T.)	<i>a ship</i>	Far, <i>a ship</i> (J.)
Rakki (T.)	<i>ring of sail-yard</i>	Rakki, <i>ring of sail-yard</i> (E.; E.D.D.)
Byrði (T.)	<i>board, i.e. side of a ship</i>	Birdin, <i>bottom planks of a boat</i> (J.)
*Drjóni (T.)	<i>an ox</i>	} Dronjer, <i>a cow</i> (J.) } Droina, <i>a cow</i> (O-L.M., iii. 169)
*Grímr (T.)	<i>a he-goat</i>	
Fagra-hvel (L., T.)	<i>the sun</i>	Grømek, <i>a ram</i> (J.) Feger, Feg, Foger, <i>the sun</i> (J.)

¹ C.P.B., I. lxxvii. 31, 314; *Sverrissaga*, translated by J. Sephton, p. 212.

² C.P.B., I. cxci. ³ O-L.M., i. 45. ⁴ O.S., 129.

⁵ In modern usage this word only remains in compounds. O.D.

⁶ Also the name of one of the daughters of Rán. O.D.

⁷ See also O-L.M., iii. 39, where it is derived by Jakobsen from *dýja*, to shake, and by the writer from *dýfa*, to dip, which is allied to *dúfa*, a wave. Magnússon expresses his conviction that *dýja* originally does *not* mean 'to shake,' but is the same word as Engl. *dye*, which, again, is related to *dýfa*.

EDDAS.	MEANING IN O.D. UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.	SHETLAND DIALECT.
Glámr (T.)	<i>the moon</i>	Glom, Glomer, <i>the moon</i> (J.)
Hlýrn (T.)	? 'poetically a certain time of day, the exact meaning is uncertain'	Lin, <i>to grow dusk</i> (J.) ¹
Gríma (L., T.)	<i>night</i>	{ Grims, <i>end of twilight, beginning of dawn</i> (J.) Grimlins [? Grímu - hlýrn,] <i>ditto.</i> (Orkney dialect)
Róta ² (T.)	<i>sleet and storm</i>	Röd, <i>mist and wet</i> (O-L.M., iii. 41)
Gráði (T.)	<i>a breeze</i>	Gro, <i>a breeze</i> (J.; O-L.M., iii. 39)
Gol (T.)	<i>a breeze</i>	Gol, <i>a breeze</i> (J.)
*Glæðr (T.)	<i>fire</i>	Gludder, <i>fire</i> (O-L.M., iii. 39)
Grána (O.D.)	<i>grey mare</i>	Groga, <i>grey mare or cow</i> (J.)
Gráni ³ (O.D.)	<i>grey horse</i>	Grogri, <i>grey horse</i> (O-L.M., ii. 168)
Korpr (T.)	<i>a raven</i>	Korp, <i>to screech hoarsely as a raven</i> (J.)
Döðr-kvísá (T.)	<i>a kind of bird</i>	Dirri-du, <i>stormy petrel</i> (J.) ⁴
Snæfugl (T.)	<i>snow-bunting</i>	Snafool, <i>snow-bunting</i> (E.; O-L.M., ii. 170)
Hrot-gás (T.)	<i>barnacle goose</i>	Rood-foose (O-L.M., ii. 170; E.)
Sæðingr (T.)	<i>gull</i>	Saithe-fool, <i>gull</i> (O-L.M., ii. 170)
Hegri (L., T.)	<i>heron</i>	Hegri, <i>heron</i> (J.; O-L.M., ii. 170)
Korki ⁵ (T.)	<i>oats</i>	Korka, <i>oats</i> (J.)
Brennir (T.)	<i>fire</i>	Brennir, <i>fire</i> (J.)
Funi (L., T.)	<i>fire</i>	Finna, Finni, Fona, <i>fire</i> (J.)

Note.—The words quoted from O-L.M. are from contributions by Mrs. Jessie M. E. Saxby and the Rev. John Spence.

¹ Dr. Jakobsen derives *lin* from O.N. *linna*, to cease. Can *lin* be derived from *hlýrn*, and explain its meaning?

² Also the name of a goddess who sends storm and rain. O.D.

³ The mythological horse of Sigurð Fafnis-bana is probably to be pronounced thus, not Grani. O.D. Grani is given in T. in the list of names of horses. If T. is of Shetland origin, may not *Grogri* be the lineal representative of Grani.

⁴ Jakobsen derives *dirri* from *döðr* and *du* from *dúfa*, a dove. The name *döðr-kvísá*, which may be interpreted as *the foreboder of numbness or deadness*, would be an appropriate name for the stormy petrel. This hitherto unknown 'kind of bird' whose name alone appears in the *Thulor* of Snorra Edda—the *Thulor* which Vigfússon supposed to have been compiled in Orkney—may now possibly be identified by means of the Shetland dialect of to-day, in which this name *Dirri-du* alone appears to survive.

⁵ A Gaelic word, *coirce*, *corca*, oats. O.D.; J.

EDDAS.	MEANING IN O.D. UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.	SHETLAND DIALECT.
Salr ¹ (L.)	<i>a hall</i>	Salur, <i>ben-end or best room in an Orkney and Shetland cottage</i>
Tún (L.)	<i>farm premises</i> ²	Tún, <i>farm premises</i>
Tá ³ (L.)	<i>house stance</i> (C.P.B., I. lix.)	Tow-male, <i>house stance in Orkney</i>

VII.

As already pointed out the change of language from Norse to English has completely obliterated all Norse ballads and folk-music, and has undoubtedly brought to an end many traditions, customs and much folk-lore. However, the few remnants which have been rescued lead us to believe that very many ballads and traditions of the old mythology must have existed.

In 1774 Mr. Low took down the Hildina ballad, which was recited to him in Norse by an inhabitant of Foula,⁴ whose son continued to recite it in 1834.⁵ This ballad is undoubtedly founded on the lays.

Sir Walter Scott relates that 'The Fatal Sisters' (Darraðaljóð) was recited in Norse in North Ronaldsey in Orkney in the eighteenth century, the title of this lay was rendered in English by the reciters as 'The Enchantresses.'⁶

Dr. Karl Blind placed on record the discovery of Odinic songs (in English) in Shetland, translated relics of the Hávamál.⁷

An echo of the Gróttu Söngur is still to be found in Orkney, where Grotti Finnie (Fenja) and Lukie Minnie (Menja) still grind the salt mill in the Pentland Firth, supplying a remarkable corroboration of Snorri's prose introduction to the lay in which

¹ This word with its compounds is obsolete in old prose writers, and only used in poets. O.D. See also C.P.B., I. lviii. where it is stated that the word is not found in Icelandic prose.

² In Iceland it refers to enclosed infield. C.P.B., I. lix. ; O.D.

³ Tá, unknown in Iceland. C.P.B., I. lix. 329.

⁴ *A Tour through the Islands of Orkney and Shetland*, by George Low, p. 108. O-L.M., 211.

⁵ *MS. Journal of an Expedition to Shetland*, in 1834, by Dr. Edward Charleton, p. 130.

⁶ *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott*, 1837, vol. iii. p. 190.

⁷ *Nineteenth Century*, 1879, p. 1093. See also C.P.B., I. lxxiv.

he states that Fenja and Menja were ultimately doomed to grind salt for the sea on Grótti in a svelgr, the Swelchie of the Pentland Firth.¹ Moreover, the existing names of the parts of a Shetland quern have at last given us the clue to the hitherto inexplicable kenning, 'lið-meldr' in the Hamlet verses.² *Lið* is the name of a part of a Shetland mill, and as the name of a part can, in a kenning, be used for the whole, hence *lið-meldr* means *mill-meal*. Fenja and Menja say: 'Léttom steinom,' let us lighten the stones.³ If a Shetlander of to-day, engaged in grinding corn in a hand-mill, were asked to lighten the stones he would immediately do so by raising the 'lightening tree,' and thereby grind coarser meal. To grind out a host of warriors, as Fenja and Menja did, even out of a giant's mill, would require, even poetically speaking, some considerable 'lightening' of the stones. The name of Grótti, the mythological hand-mill, is still preserved in the name of the nave of the lower stone of an Orkney quern.⁴

Vigfússon ridiculed the possibility of Dr. Karl Blind's Odinic song in English being a direct translated descendant from Eddic times.⁵ But the genuineness of this waif gains credibility when considered in conjunction with the other data brought together in this paper. If Vigfússon had had these facts placed before him there can be little doubt that he would have been otherwise convinced, more especially as the body of this evidence goes to prove his contention that the lays were current and probably taken down in Orkney.⁶

VIII.

To sum up :

- (1) It has been suggested that the lays were current in Orkney in the eleventh century, and we find that they were quoted there in 1064 and known there in 1139.
- (2) It has been suggested that the lays were taken down in the twelfth century by an Icelander to the dictation of an Orkneyman in Iceland or Orkney, and we find that Earl Rögnvald, a prolific and distinguished poet, who had a

¹ *Saga Book*, Viking Club, vi. 296.

² C.P.B., II. 54-5.

³ O-L.M., iii. 147.

⁴ O-L.M., iii. 253.

⁵ C.P.B., I. lxxiv. Professor W. P. Ker, in *On the History of the Ballads, 1100-1500*, writes: 'It is possible for themes of the early centuries to come through all the changes of languages and poetical taste.'

⁶ S.S., I. cxcii. cxciii. etc.

knowledge of the lays, was busy at work in Orkney in collaboration with Icelandic skalds, 1139-58, and that the Orkney bishop Bjarni, 'The Skald,' was similarly engaged with Icelandic skalds and was also in correspondence with Oddi in Iceland, 1150-1223.

- (3) It has been suggested that Snorri's *Thulor*, or rhymed glossaries, were compiled in Orkney,¹ and we find that numbers of these poetic words are still in use in Shetland as tabu or sea-names, and that Snorri must have been conversant with the literary work of Bjarni, and did actually imitate the work of Earl Rögnvald.
- (4) There are in Orkney (*a*) a few traditions and ballads which have survived the change of language; (*b*) the report that 'The Fatal Sisters' was recited in Norse in the eighteenth century; (*c*) the survival of the names of the two valkyries, Fenja and Menja, and the perpetuation of the name Grótti—it being worthy of notice that we are enabled by the Orkney names of parts of a hand-mill to solve a hitherto inexplicable kenning and the meaning of a doubtful passage in Snorra Edda.
- (5) The scenes and *dramatis personæ* of the lays were quite familiar to the far-travelled vikings of Orkney.

While Iceland was the land of the *saga*, Orkney was the home of *metre*, which was imitated in Iceland. The fishermen of Shetland of to-day still use poetic words of the Eddas as lucky names at sea, and it is significant that some of these words only occur in the Eddas and in the Shetland dialect and nowhere else.

It is not contended that the lays were one and all composed and current in Orkney, but merely that some or all of them were current and collected there.

If Orkneyingers, in collaboration with Icelanders, in the twelfth century placed on record their mythological lays, it finds its sequel in the twentieth century when the Orkney-founded Society for Northern Research, the Viking Club, is now engaged with, among others, such a distinguished Icelandic scholar as Mr. Eiríkr Magnússon, in translating these lays into the tongue of their adoption.

ALFRED W. JOHNSTON.

¹ C.P.B., II. 422, *et seq.*

Chronicle of Lanercost¹

THE king made ample recognition to Sir Antony and the others who arrested the earl, to wit—Sir Antony de Lucy [received] the manor of Cockermonth, Sir Richard de Denton the village of Thursby close to Carlisle, Sir Hugh de Moriceby of part of the village of Culgaythe, being the part belonging to the aforesaid Earl Andrew, Sir Hugh de Lowther [. . .],² Richard de Salkeld the village of Great Corby.

Before Christmas came the bull of my lord Pope John XXII.—*Cum inter nonnullos*, wherein he pronounced it to be erroneous and heretical to affirm obstinately that our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles possessed no private A.D. 1323. property even in common, since this is expressly contrary to Scripture; and likewise that consequently it is heretical to affirm obstinately that the Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles had no legal right to those things which Holy Scripture testifies that they possessed, but only actual use of them, and that they had not the right to sell or give away those things, or of themselves acquiring other things, which aforesaid things Holy Scripture testifies to their having done, because such use of them would have been illegal. Friar Michael, Minister General, appealed against this finding of the Pope, wherefore the Pope had him arrested, as is explained below, in the year 1328.

In the same year, about the feast of the Ascension of the Lord³ Sir Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, and Sir Hugh Despenser the younger, with four other official personages, came to Newcastle-on-Tyne on the part of the King of England; and on the part of the King of Scotland came my lord Bishop of S. Andrews and Sir Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray, and four other duly authorised persons, to treat for peace between the kingdoms, or, at least, for a prolonged truce, and, by God's will,

¹ See *Scottish Historical Review*, vi. 13, 174, 281, 383; vii. 56, 160, 271, 377; viii. 22, 159, 276, 377; ix. 69.

² Blank in original.

³ 5th May.

they speedily agreed upon a truce for thirteen years fully reckoned. When this was made public about the feast of S. Barnabas the Apostle,¹ that truce was ratified and proclaimed in both kingdoms, on condition, however, that, because of the excommunication of the Scots, neither people should buy of or sell to the other, nor hold any intercourse with each other, nor even go from one kingdom to the other without special letters of conduct. For the granting of such letters and licenses three notable persons for England and three persons for Scotland were appointed on the marches of the aforesaid kingdoms, and patrols were set on the marches to watch lest anyone should cross the march in any other manner.

With the bull of Pope John, whereof mention was made in the preceding year, came four other bulls from the same; one revoking the decision conveyed in that Decretal—*Exiit quod*
 A.D. 1324. *seminat*, lest anyone should twist it into different and injurious meanings, and that none might disparage the rule or state of the Minorite Friars. Another, beginning *Cum ad conditorem canonum*, lays down that none can have simple usufruct without legal right of user, because use cannot be separated from possession in things consumed in the using. The third is lengthy, beginning *Quia quarumdam*, wherein it is laid down that the Pope can decree and do all the aforesaid things, and the arguments of those who declare he cannot are dealt with. There is a fourth, wherein it is ordered that the four preceding bulls be read in the schools in like manner as the other letters decretal.

The new King of France² invaded Gascony and other lands of the King of England beyond the sea, because the King of England would not go and pay him the due and accustomed homage for the lands which he held in that kingdom. So the King of England sent his brother-german, my lord Edmund, Earl of Kent, to Gascony with an army for the defence of his lands.

On the feast of All Saints in the same year died my lord Bishop Prebendary of Carlisle at the manor of Rose; in place of whom my lord William de Ermyng was elected by the canons on the morrow of Epiphany following;³ but the election did not take effect, because Master John de Rose, a south-countryman, was consecrated Bishop of Carlisle by the Pope in the Curia on the first Sunday in Lent.

The Pope excommunicated my lord Louis, the Duke of Bavaria's son, who had been elected Emperor; but Louis formally

¹ 11th June.

² Charles IV.

³ 7th January, 1324-5.

summoned [the Pope] to a council, undertaking to prove that he was a heretic—aye, an arch-heretic, that is a prince and doctor of heretics; and through the clergy whom he had with him he answered all the arguments which the Pope ^{A.D. 1325.} put forward on his part. Now the clergy and people of all Germany and Italy drew more each day to the Emperor's side, and unanimously approved of his election, and crowned him, first with the iron crown at Milan,¹ secondly with the silver crown at Aachen, and thirdly he was crowned afterwards with the golden crown in the city of Rome, having been very honourably received by the Romans. Many battles were fought between the Pope's army and the Emperor's, but the Pope's side was generally beaten.²

In the same year the King of England sent his consort the queen to her brother, the King of France, hoping that, by God's help, peace might be established between himself and the King of France through her, according to her promise. But the queen had a secret motive for desiring to cross over to France; for Hugh Despenser the younger, the King's agent in all matters of business, was exerting himself at the Pope's court to procure divorce between the King of England and the queen, and in furtherance of this business there went to the court a certain man of religion, acting irreligiously, by name Thomas de Dunheved, with an appointed colleague, and a certain secular priest named Master Robert de Baldock. These men had even instigated the king to resume possession of the lands and rents which he had formerly bestowed upon the queen, and they allowed her only twenty shillings a day for herself and her whole court, and they took away from her her officers and body servants, so that the wife of the said Sir Hugh was appointed, as it were, guardian to the queen, and carried her seal; nor could the queen write to anybody without her knowledge; whereat my lady the queen was equally indignant and distressed, and therefore wished to visit her brother in France to seek for a remedy.

When, therefore, she had arrived there she astutely contrived that Edward, her elder son and heir of England, should cross over to his uncle, the King of France, on the plea that if he came and did homage to his uncle for Gascony and the other lands of the king beyond the sea, the King [of France] would transfer to him

¹In 1327. From this it appears that this part of the chronicle was not written quite contemporaneously; but, as was the usual custom, compiled from information recorded in various monasteries.

²The Papal Court during these years was at Avignon.

all these lands from the King [of England]; and he [Prince Edward] was made Duke of Aquitaine. But when he wished to appoint his men and bailiffs in those lands to take seisin thereof, the King of England's men, who had been in possession hitherto of those lands and certain cities, would not allow it. Hence arose disagreement between the King of England's men and those of his son, the duke.

Meanwhile it was publicly rumoured in England that the Queen of England was coming to England with her son, the duke, and the army of France in ships, to avenge herself upon Sir Hugh Despenser, and upon his father, the Earl of Winchester, by whose advice the King of England had caused the Earl of Lancaster, the Queen's uncle, to be executed, and upon the said Master Robert de Baldock and upon sundry others, by whose most pernicious counsel the King of England, with his whole realm, was controlled in everything. For this reason the king ordered that all the harbours of England should be most carefully guarded.

But there were contradictory rumours in England about the queen, some declaring that she was the betrayer of the king and kingdom, others that she was acting for peace and the common welfare of the kingdom, and for the removal of evil counsellors from the king; but it is horrible to tell what was done by the aforesaid evil counsellors of the king.

Public proclamation was made in London that if [the queen] herself or her son (albeit he was heir of the realm) should enter England, they were to be arrested as enemies of the king and kingdom. A.D. 1326. Meanwhile it was said that a very large sum of money was sent to sundry nobles and leading men in France, to induce them to cause the Queen of England and her son to be arrested by craft and sent over to England. Some of them, bribed with the money, endeavoured to do this, but she was forewarned by the Count of Hainault or Hanonia and saved. Then there was a treaty made, under which her son, Duke of Aquitaine and heir of the realm of England, should marry the daughter of the aforesaid count, provided that with his army he assisted the queen and her son, the duke, to cross over to England in safety: which was duly accomplished.

In the same year, on Wednesday next before the feast of the Dedication of the Church of S. Michael the Archangel,¹ she landed at the port of Harwich, in the east of England, with her son, the duke, and Messire Jehan, brother of the Count of

¹ 24th September.

Hainault or Hanonia, and my lord Edmund, Earl of Kent, the King of England's brother, and Sir Roger de Mortimer, a baron of the King of England, who had fled from him previously to France to save his life, and sundry others who had been exiled from England on account of the Earl of Lancaster. They had with them a small enough force (for there were not more at the outside than fifteen hundred men all told), but the Earl Marshal, the King of England's brother, joined them immediately, and my lord Henry, Earl of Leicester, brother of the executed Earl of Lancaster; and soon after the other earls and barons and the commonalty of the southern parts adhered to them. They proceeded against the king because he would not dismiss from his side Sir Hugh Despenser and Master Robert de Baldock.

Meanwhile, however, the people of London, holding in detestation the king and his party, seized my lord the Bishop of Exeter, the king's treasurer, whose exactions upon their community in the past had been excessively harsh, and who was then in London, and, dreadful to say, they beheaded him with great ferocity. Thereafter, having assembled the commonalty of the city, they violently assaulted the Tower of London, wherein were at that time the wife of the aforesaid Sir Hugh, and many State prisoners, adherents of the aforesaid Earl of Lancaster. Some townsmen within, to whom custody of the Tower had been entrusted, hearing and understanding all the aforesaid events, and seeing their fellow citizens fiercely attacking the Tower, surrendered it to them, with everything therein, both persons and property. But they appointed as warden thereof the king's younger son, my lord John of Eltham, who was in the Tower, a boy about twelve years old, for the use of his mother and brother, handing it over to him with a strong armed garrison.

Shortly afterwards Sir Hugh Despenser the elder, Earl of Winchester, was captured, and drawn at Bristol in his coat of arms (so that those arms should never again be borne in England),¹ and afterwards hanged and then beheaded. After a short interval the Earl of Arundel² was captured likewise. He had married the daughter of Sir Hugh the younger, and had been, with Hugh, one of the king's counsellors. He was condemned to death in secret, as it were, and afterwards beheaded. Meanwhile all who were captives and prisoners in England on account of their

¹ Having been thereby irremediably dishonoured. Nevertheless, they are borne at this day by Earl Spencer. Winchester was about 90 years old when executed.

² Edmund Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel (1285-1326).

adherence to the oft-mentioned Earl of Lancaster were released, and the exiles were recalled, and their lands and heritages, whereof they had been disinherited, were restored to them in full; wherefore they joined the party of the queen and her son eagerly and gladly.

During all these proceedings my lord the Earl of Leicester, Sir Roger de Mortimer, and Messire Jehan of Hainault, were pursuing with their forces the king, Sir Hugh Despenser, and Master Robert de Baldock to the west, lest they should embark there and sail across to Ireland, there to collect an army and oppress England as they had done before. Also, the aforesaid lords feared that if the king could reach Ireland he might collect an army there and cross over into Scotland, and by the help of the Scots and Irish together he might attack England. For already, alarmed at the coming to England of the French and some English with the queen, the king had been so ill-advised as to write to the Scots, freely giving up to them the land and realm of Scotland, to be held independently of any King of England, and (which was still worse) bestowed upon them with Scotland great part of the northern lands of England lying next to them, on condition that they should assist him against the queen, her son, and their confederates. But, by God's ordaining, the project of Achitophel was confounded, the king's will and purpose were hindered, nor were he and his people able to cross to Ireland, although they tried with all their might to do so.

The baffled king's following being dispersed, he wandered houseless about Wales with Hugh Despenser and Robert de Baldock, and there they were captured before the feast of S. Andrew.¹ The king was sent to Kenilworth Castle, and was there kept in close captivity. Hugh was drawn, hanged, and beheaded at Hereford; his body was divided into four parts and sent to four cities of England, and his head was suspended in London. But Baldock, being a cleric, was put to his penance in Newgate in London, and died soon after in prison.

After Christmas, by common advice of all the nobles of England, a parliament was held in London, at the beginning whereof two bishops—Winchester and Hereford—were sent to the king at Kenilworth, begging him humbly and urgently on the part of my lady the queen, of her son, the Duke of Aquitaine, and of all the earls, barons, and commonalty of the whole country assembled in London, that he would be pleased to come to the

¹ 30th November.

parliament to perform and enact with his lieges for the crown of England what ought to be done and what justice demanded. When he received this request he utterly refused to comply therewith; nay, he cursed them contemptuously, declaring that he would not come among his enemies—or rather, his traitors. The aforesaid envoys returned, therefore, and on the vigil of the octave of Epiphany¹ they entered the great hall of Westminster, where the aforesaid parliament was being held, and publicly recited the reply of the two envoys before all the clergy and people.

On the morrow, to wit, the feast of S. Hilary, the Bishop of Hereford preached, and, taking for his text that passage in Ecclesiasticus—‘A foolish king shall ruin his people’—dwelt weightily upon the folly and unwisdom of the king, and upon his childish doings (if indeed they deserved to be spoken of as childish), and upon the multiple and manifold disasters that had befallen in England in his time. And all the people answered with one voice—‘We will no longer have this man to reign over us.’

Then on the next day following the Bishop of Winchester preached, and, taking for his text that passage in the fourth of Kings—‘My head pains me’—he explained with sorrow what a feeble head England had had for many years. The Archbishop of Canterbury preached on the third day, taking for his text—‘The voice of the people is the voice of God,’ and he ended by announcing to all his hearers that, by the unanimous consent of all the earls and barons, and of the archbishops and bishops, and of the whole clergy and people, King Edward was deposed from his pristine dignity, never more to reign nor to govern the people of England; and he added that all the above-mentioned, both laity and clergy, unanimously agreed that my lord Edward, his first-born son, should succeed his father in the kingdom.

When this had been done, all the chief men, with the assent of the whole community, sent formal envoys to his father at Kenilworth to renounce their homage, and to inform him that he was deposed from the royal dignity and that he should govern the people of England no more. The aforesaid envoys were two bishops, Winchester and Hereford; two earls, Lancaster and Warren; two barons, de Ros and de Courtney;² two abbots,

¹ 12th January 1326-7.

² William 3rd Baron de Ros, d. 1343, and Hugh de Courtenay afterwards 1st Earl of Devon, d. 1340. The present Baroness de Ros is 25th in descent from William, and the present Earl of Devon is directly descended from Sir Philip de Courtenay, grandson of Hugh, 1st Earl.

two priors, two justiciaries, two Preaching Friars, two Carmelite Friars. But at the instance of my lady the queen, Minorite Friars were not sent, so that they should not be bearers of such a dismal message, for he greatly loved the Minorites.¹ Then there were two knights from beyond Trent, and two from this side of Trent; two citizens of London and two from the Cinque Ports; so that altogether there were four-and-twenty persons appointed to bear that message.

Meanwhile public proclamation was made in the city of London that my lord Edward, son of the late king, was to be crowned at Westminster upon Sunday, being the vigil of the Purification of the Glorious Virgin,² and that he would there assume the diadem of the realm. Which took place with great pomp, such as befitted so great a king.

On the night of the king's coronation in London, the Scots, having already heard thereof, came in great force with ladders to Norham Castle, which is upon the March and had been very offensive to them. About sixteen of them boldly mounted the castle walls; but Robert de Maners, warden of the castle, had been warned of their coming by a certain Scot within the castle, and, rushing suddenly upon them, killed nine or ten and took five of them alive, but severely wounded. This mishap ought to have been a sign and portent of the ills that were to befall them in the time of the new king.

Howbeit, this did not cause them [the Scots] to desist in the least from their long-standing iniquity and evil habits; for, hearing that the King of England's son had been
A. D. 1327. crowned and confirmed in the kingdom, and that his father, who had yielded to them their country free, together with a large part of the English march, had been deposed and was detained in custody, they invaded England, before the feast of S. Margaret Virgin and Martyr,³ in three columns, whereof one was commanded by the oft-mentioned Earl of Moray, another by Sir James of Douglas, and the third by the Earl of Mar,⁴ who for many years previously had been educated at the King of England's court, but had returned to Scotland after the capture of the king, hoping to rescue him from captivity and restore him

¹ *Quia Minores multum amabat*; it is not clear whether it was the hapless king or the queen who loved the Minorites.

² 1st February 1326-7.

³ 20th July. ⁴ Donald, 8th Earl of Mar in the ancient line (1300?—1332).

to his kingdom, as formerly, by the help of the Scots and of certain adherents whom the deposed king still had in England. My lord Robert de Brus, who had become leprous, did not invade England on this occasion.

On hearing reports of these events, the new King of England assembled an army and advanced swiftly against the Scots in the northern parts about Castle Barnard and Stanhope Park; and as they kept to the woods and would not accept battle in the open, the young king, with extraordinary exertion, made a flank march with part of his forces in a single day to Haydon Bridge, in order to cut off their retreat to Scotland. But, as the Scots continued to hold their ground in Stanhope Park, the king marched back to their neighbourhood, and, had he attacked them at once with his army, he must have beaten them, as was commonly said by all men afterwards. Daily they lost both men and horses through lack of provender, although they had gathered some booty in the country round about; but the affair was put off for eight days in accord with the bad advice of certain chief officers of the army, the king lying all that time between the Scots and Scotland;¹ until one night the Scots, warned, it is said, by an Englishman in the king's army that the king had decided to attack them next morning, silently decamped from the park, and, marching round the king's army, held their way to Scotland; and thus it was made clear how action is endangered by delay.

One night, when they were still in the park, Sir James of Douglas, like a brave and enterprising knight, stealthily penetrated far into the king's camp with a small party, and nearly reached the king's tent; but, in returning he made known who he was, killed many who were taken by surprise, and escaped without a scratch.²

When the king heard that the Scots had decamped he shed tears of vexation, disbanded his army, and returned to the south; and Messire Jehan, the Count of Hainault's brother, went back with his following to his own country. But after the king's departure, the Scots assembled an army and harried almost the whole of Northumberland, except the castles, remaining there a long time. When the people of the other English marches saw this, they sent envoys to the Scots, and for a large sum of money

¹ *Inter eos et Scottos*, an obvious error for *Scotiam*.

² The above was known hereafter as the campaign of Weardale, remarkable, says Barbour, for two notable things never before seen, viz. (1) 'Crakis of weir,' i.e. artillery; (2) crests worn on the helmets of knights (*The Brus*, xiv., 168-175).

obtained from them a truce to last till the following feast of Pentecost.¹

About the same time a certain friar of the Order of Preachers, by name Thomas of Dunheved, who had gone more than two years before with the envoys of the king, now deposed, to the court of my lord the Pope to obtain a divorce between the king and the queen, albeit he had not obtained his object, now travelled through England, not only secretly but even openly, stirring up the people of the south and north to rise for the deposed and imprisoned king and restore the kingdom to him, promising them speedy aid. But he was unable to fulfil what he promised; wherefore that foolish friar was arrested at last, thrown into prison, and died there.

The deposed king died soon after, either by a natural death or by the violence of others, and was buried at Gloucester, among the monks, on the feast of S. Thomas the Apostle,² and not in London among the other kings, because he was deposed from reigning.

Meanwhile ambassadors were appointed between the kingdoms of England and Scotland to arrange a temporary truce or confirm the former truce for thirteen years, or to come to any treaty for a perpetual peace if that could be done.

About Christmastide the aforesaid Messire Jehan, brother of the Count of Hainault, returned to England, bringing with him Philippa, daughter of the said count, whom the King of England married with great pomp at York shortly after, to wit, on Sunday in the vigil of the Conversion of Paul the Apostle.³

In the same year died the King of France without heir born of his body, just as his brother had died before him. When the King of England heard of his uncle's death without an heir, and holding himself to be the nearest rightful heir to the throne of France, fearing also, nevertheless, that the French would not admit this, but would elect somebody else of the blood (which they did immediately, to wit, the son of Charles, uncle of their deceased king), acting on the pestilent advice of his mother and Sir Roger de Mortimer (they being the chief controllers of the king, who was barely fifteen years of age), he was forced to release the Scots by his public deed from all exaction, right, claim or demand of the overlordship of the kingdom of Scotland on his part, or that of his heirs and successors in perpetuity, and from any homage to be done to the Kings of England. He

¹ 22nd May, 1328. ² 21st December. Edward II. died on 21st September.

³ 4th January, 1327-8.

restored to them also that piece of the Cross of Christ which the Scots call the Black Rood, and likewise a certain instrument or deed of subjection and homage to be done to the Kings of England, to which were appended the seals of all the chief men of Scotland, which they delivered, as related above, to the king's grandsire, and which, owing to the multitude of seals hanging to it, is called 'Ragman' by the Scots. But the people of London would no wise allow to be taken away from them the Stone of Scone, whereon the Kings of Scotland used to be set at their coronation at Scone. All these objects the illustrious King Edward, son of Henry, had caused to be brought away from Scotland when he reduced the Scots to his rule.

Also, the aforesaid young king gave his younger sister, my lady Joan of the Tower, in marriage to David, son of Robert de Brus, King of Scotland, he being then a boy five years old. All this was arranged by the king's mother the Queen [dowager] of England, who at that time governed the whole realm. The nuptials were solemnly celebrated at Berwick on Sunday next before the feast of S. Mary Magdalene.¹

The King of England was not present at these nuptials, but the queen mother was there, with the king's brother and his elder sister and my lords the Bishops of Lincoln, Ely and Norwich, and the Earl of Warenne, Sir Roger de ^{A.D. 1328.} Mortimer and other English barons, and much people, besides those of Scotland, who assembled in great numbers at those nuptials. The reason, or rather the excuse, for making that remission or gratuitous concession to the Scots (to wit, that they should freely possess their kingdom and not hold it from any King of England as over-lord) was that unless the king had first made peace with the Scots, he could not have attacked the French who had disinherited him lest the Scots should invade England.

'To all Christ's faithful people who shall see these letters, Edward, by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Aquitaine, greeting and peace everlasting in the Lord. Whereas, we and some of our predecessors, Kings of England, have endeavoured to establish rights of rule or dominion or superiority over the realm of Scotland, whence dire conflicts of wars waged have afflicted for a long time the kingdoms of England and Scotland: we, having regard to the slaughter, disasters, crimes, destruction of churches and evils innumerable which, in the course of such wars, have repeatedly befallen the subjects of both realms, and to the wealth with which each realm, if united by the assurance of perpetual peace, might abound to their mutual advantage, thereby rendering them more secure against the hurtful efforts of those conspiring

¹ 17th July.

to rebel or to attack, whether from within or from without : We will and grant by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors whatsoever, with the common advice, assent and consent of the prelates, princes, earls and barons, and the commons of our realm in our parliament, that the kingdom of Scotland, within its own proper marches as they were held and maintained in the time of King Alexander of Scotland, last deceased, of good memory, shall belong¹ to our dearest ally and friend, the magnificent prince, Lord Robert, by God's grace illustrious King of Scotland, and to his heirs and successors, separate in all things from the kingdom of England, whole, free and undisturbed in perpetuity, without any kind of subjection, service, claim or demand. And by these presents we renounce and demit to the King of Scotland, his heirs and successors, whatsoever right we or our predecessors have put forward in any way in bygone times to the aforesaid kingdom of Scotland. And, for ourselves and our heirs and successors, we cancel wholly and utterly all obligations, conventions and compacts undertaken in whatsoever manner with our predecessors, at whatsoever times, by whatsoever kings or inhabitants, clergy or laity, of the same kingdom of Scotland concerning the subjection of the realm of Scotland and its inhabitants. And wheresoever any letters, charters, deeds or instruments may be discovered bearing upon obligations, conventions, and compacts of this nature, we will that they be deemed cancelled, invalid, of no effect and void, and of no value or moment. And for the full, peaceful and faithful observance of the foregoing, all and singular, for all time, we have given full power and special command by our other letters patent to our well-beloved and faithful Henry de Percy, our kinsman, and William de la Zouche of Ashby,² and to either of them to make oath upon our soul. In testimony whereof we have caused these letters patent to be executed.

'Given at York, on the first day of March, in the second year of our reign.'

The same King Edward of England granted other letters, wherein he declared that he expressly and wholly withdrew from every suit, action or prosecution arising out of processes or sentences laid by the Supreme Lord Pontiff and the Cardinal-legates, Sir Joceline the priest, and Luke the deacon, against the said Lord Robert, King of Scotland, and the inhabitants of his kingdom, and would henceforth be opposed to any renewal of the Pope's processes. In testimony whereof, *et coetera*. But it is to be observed that these notable acts were done in the sixteenth year of the king's age.

In the same year, the clergy and people of Rome, chiefly at the instigation of Louis of Bavaria (who had been elected Emperor), deposed Pope John XXII. (whose seat was then in Avignon in the kingdom of France) after the ancient manner, because they held all the cardinals who were with the Pope to be supporters of heretical wickedness, and because of divers manifest heresies which they publicly laid to his charge, and obliged themselves to prove solemnly, in writing, by time and place, whatever was charged against

¹ *Remaneat*.

² William, 1st Baron Zouche (1276-1352) ancestor of the 15th and present baron.

him. Then they elected a Pope (if that ought to be called an election where no cardinal was present), a certain friar of the Order of Minorites by name Peter of Corvara, who, after his election (such as it was) was called Nicholas the Fifth. And the said Lord Louis, with the whole clergy and people of Rome, decreed that thenceforward neither the said John, who was called Pope, nor his predecessor Clement, should come near the city of Rome, where was the seat of Peter, the chief of the Apostles; and further, that if any future Lord Pope should leave the city of Rome beyond two days' journey according to common computation, and not return within one month to the city or its neighbourhood, the clergy and people of Rome should be thereby entitled to elect another as Pope, and when this had been done he who should so absent himself should be straightway deposed.

In the same year Friar Michael, Minister-General of the Minorite Order, was arrested by Pope John at Avignon, and received his injunction that, upon his obedience and under pain of excommunication he should not depart from his [the Pope's] court unless by license received and not assumed. This notwithstanding, he did depart in the company of Friar Bona Gratia and Friar William of Ockham,¹ an Englishman, being supported by the aid and armed force of the Emperor and the Genoese who took him with his companions away by sea, wherefore the Pope directed letters of excommunication against them because of their flight; but [this was] after he had made proclamation under the hand of a notary public before he [Michael] should depart from the court, which proclamation, beginning *Innotescat universis Christi fidelibus*, he afterwards published throughout Italy and Germany, and it was set upon the door of S. Paul's church in London about the Feast of All Saints.

Note—that the deliverance of the Chapter General of the Minorite Friars assembled at Paris in the year of Our Lord MCCCXXVIIJ was as follows—'We declare that it is not heretical, but reasonable, catholic and faithful, to say and affirm that Christ and his apostles, following the way of perfection, had no property or private rights in special or in common.' But Pope John XXII. pronounced this deliverance to be heretical, and as the Minister-General defended it, he caused him to be arrested by the Court.

¹ *Doctor singularis et invincibilis*, born at Ockham in Surrey, c. 1275, d. 1349.

(To be continued.)