

CHAPTER XI.

THE SCOTS IN ITALY.

Story of the Scotti—James Crichton—Scots in Venice—Curious Charter—Graham of Buchlyvie—The Wauchopes and Lord Drumlanrig in Sardinia, etc.

DIFFERENCE of religion in latter times doubtless prevented the Scottish Soldier of Fortune from seeking service in Italy as elsewhere ; yet in the States thereof a few rose to eminence. The statement made by Sir Robert Douglas in his *Peerage*, on the authority of Fordoun and others, that about the year 800 the King of Scotland sent his brother William, with a William Douglas, to aid the Lombards—that the former was known as William the Scot, and the latter founded the Scoti-Douglassi in Italy ; and, further, the statements to the same effect by Godscroft in his folio *History of the Douglasses* that they became the head of the Guelphs in Placentia, and so forth, seem utterly fabulous ; and yet the story is strangely endorsed by one or two writers, from whom we give quotations for what they are worth.

Of these Scots are also said to be descended Francesco Scotto or Scotti, an Italian engraver, born at Florence about 1760 ; Girolamo Scotto or Seotti, also a celebrated engraver, born in 1780 ; Stephano Scotto, a Milanese painter, who flourished at the end of the fifteenth and begin-

ning of the sixteenth centuries. (See Bryant's *Dict. of Painters, etc.*)

Citing a work called *Mémoire de Piacenza*, the author of *Italy and the Italian Island* (3 vols., 1841) tells us that "Piacenza presents nothing that interests us so much as the memoirs of that family of Scotti, who from the position of wealthy citizens rose in the latter half of the thirteenth century to be its absolute lords by a cautious progress which one is almost tempted to consider nationally characteristic. For although we may be allowed to smile at the invented genealogy which claimed for them a descent from an Earl Douglas, brother of the Scottish King Achaius, and companion in arms of Charlemagne, yet the common opinion here is that their founders in Italy were really adventurers belonging to the border clan of Scott."

Another writer, A. F. Drane, writing in 1880, says:—"In Genoa, St. Catherine of Sienna and her party were entertained for a month by a noble lady named Orietta Scotta, one of Scottish origin settled in Italy, *temp.* of Charlemagne, when two brothers, Arnico and Gabriel, sons of William Scott, came to Genoa in 1120, and were given command of the Genoese troops. From Baldwin, son of Arnico, descended Barnabo, the husband of the Saint's hostess. The Scotti afterwards assumed the name and arms of the Centurioni." (*Life of St. Catherine.*)

The story of these Italian Scotti is referred to by Godscroft elsewhere, when he states that in 1619 two of them, named Peter and Corneilius, who had settled in Antwerp, sent in that year (when challenged by the burgomaster for putting the Douglas arms on their father's tomb) Alexander

Seaton to William, Earl of Angus, "acknowledging their descent from his house, and entreating his testimonial thereupon," with a great deal more to the same purpose, including a long letter in old Italian from Marc Antonio Scoto, Marquis d'Agazono, dated 1622, to the same earl, with his family tree.

Some 30 years before that period a Captain James Scott is recorded to have fought valiantly in the wars of Lombardy, particularly at the battle of Marignano, fought between the Swiss, the Duke of Milan, and Francis I, in 1515. (*Lives of the Queens of Scotland.*)

To come to more solid ground, we find John Wemyss, second son of Sir John XXI of Weymss and that ilk, went to the wars in Lombardy about 1547, and married a lady of rank and fortune in Brescia, and from him are descended the Counts Wemyss and other families of that surname in Italy (*Douglas Peerage*); and it was in 1583 that James Crichton, younger of Ellioc, so well known as "The Admirable Crichton," was basely murdered at Mantua.

Born in Cluny Castle, Perthshire, 1560-1, he was M.A. in his fourteenth year, and rapidly became the first swordsman, tilter, dancer, and, what was then more than all, the first scholar of his age, with a knowledge of twelve languages. His history is too well known to need rehearsal here. Suffice it that, dazzled by his achievements with sword and pen, the Duke of Mantua appointed him tutor to his son, Vincentio di Gonzago, a prince of turbulent and licentious character, for whose amusement he composed a comedy containing fifteen characters, all personated by himself. But one night during the carnival in 1283, while

rambling through the streets with his guitar, he was attacked by several masked and armed men.

One of these he disarmed with his characteristic facility; the rest he put to flight. On discovering that their captain, who begged for life, was the prince, his pupil, he knelt and presented him with his sword, which the villain instantly plunged into Crichton's body, inflamed, it is supposed, by rage and jealousy, slaying him upon the spot.

Kipps, an Englishman, was the first, of course, to call in question the many marvellous stories related of him; but his life by Tytler proved the truth of them all; and apart from that, a book printed at Venice in 1580, "for the Brothers Dom. and Gio. Batt Guerra," when Crichton was in his twentieth year (referred to in the *Scottish Journal of Antiquities*), further proves all that has been attributed to him, and adds that, "a soldier at all points, he served two years with distinction in the French wars; unrivalled in the dance and all feats of activity; most dexterous in the use of arms of every description, in horsemanship and tilting at the ring."

In Wishart's translation of Castruccio Bonamici's *Commentaries on the late War in Italy*, an unknown Scottish recluse, about 1640, is thus referred to by the writer, an officer of the regiment of Catalonian Horse. "That part of the Appenines lying between Modena and Lucca goes at present by the name of *Monte di San Pelegrino*, or the Foreigner's Mountain, a Scottish nobleman of the first rank having, according to tradition, lived there a solitary and austere life for many years."

Sir James Scott of Rossie gained, about 1640, a high

reputation in the service of the Venetian Republic, when fighting with the Capelliti against the Germans, and was highly esteemed by the Doge Nicola Contarini. In 1644 he was in the army of Montrose, and led the left wing at the battle of Tippermuir. By 1650 his chief patrimony of Rossie was the property of the laird of Inchtute. (*Rentall Book of Perthshire*, 1654.)

He must have been dead before 1653, as Sir Robert Montgomerie, Bart., of Skelmorlie, married in that year Anne his "second daughter and co-heiress by Antonia Willobie his spouse." (*Eglinton Memorials*.)

He is probably one of the same family, was in the sea service of the same Republic in 1645, and of whom we might have a better account than the brief one given in a MS. in the Advocates' Library. A certain James Scott, it appears, built a vessel in the north of Scotland, described as of "prodigious bigness," and sailed with her to the Straits. He was accompanied by his brother, thus mentioned:—"William Scott was made a colonel at Venice, and his martial achievements in defence of that state against the Turks may well admit him to be ranked amongst our worthies. He became vice-admiral of the Venetian fleet, and the bane and terror of the Mussulman navigators. Whether they had galleons, galleys, galliasses, or great warships, it was all one to him. He set upon them all alike, saying the more there were the more he would kill, and the stronger the encounter should be, the greater should be his honour and the richer his prize. He oftentimes so swept the Archipelago of the Mussulmans that the Ottoman Power and the very gates of Constantinople would

quake at the report of his victories; and he did so ferret them out of all the creeks in the Adriatic Gulf, that they hardly knew in what part of the Mediterranean they should best shelter themselves from the fury of his blows. He died in his bed of a fever in the Isle of Candia in 1652. He was truly the glory of his nation and country, and was honoured after his death by a statue of marble, which I saw near the Rialto of Venice in 1659."

Evelyn, in his diary about 1646, gives us an interesting account of a Scottish colonel, who had a high, if not the chief, command in Milan, who, hearing him and a friend speaking English near the cathedral, sent his servant to invite them to dinner next day.

Thither they went, and found the *cavaliero* residing in a noble palace, where he had other guests, "all soldiers, one a Scotsman," to meet them, and said that, discovering they were English, he invited them to his house that they might be free from suspicion by the Inquisition. They had a sumptuous repast and plenty of tempting wine, after which he took them into a hall hung with splendid arms, many of them trophies taken with his own hand from the enemy. He bestowed a pair of fine pistols on Captain Wray, and on the latter's friend, Evelyn, "a Turkish bridle, woven with silk, curiously embossed with other silk trappings, to which hung a halfe-moone finely wrought, which he had taken from a basshaw he had slain. With this glorious spoil I rode to Paris, and after brought it to England." But these English visitors seemed not even to have asked the name of their generous host, who was killed next day, being thrown against a wall by a very

spirited horse he was showing off for their amusement, in defiance of the advice of his groom and page.

“This sad disaster,” Evelyn adds, “made us consult about our departure as soon as we could, not knowing how soon we might be inquired after, or engaged, the Inquisition being so cruelly formidable and inevitable on the least suspicion. The next morning, therefore, discharging our lodgings, we agreed for a coach to carry us to the foot of the Alpes, not a little concerned for the death of the colonel who had so courteously entertained us.”

Elsewhere he refers to a now unknown Scottish artist named Wright, “esteemed a good painter,” and long resident in Rome, and from whose brush came some pieces, afterwards to decorate Whitehall, etc., and whose best portraits were those of Lacy, the comedian, as a cavalier or Presbyterian minister, “and a Scotch Highlander in his plaid.”

In 1681 a singularly grave and yet grotesque warrant at considerable length was granted by Charles II in favour of Don Rostaino Cantelmi, Duke of Populi and Prince of Pettorano, a Neapolitan town on a mountain near Sulmona, and his brother, also Duke di Populi, proving their descent from the kings and queens of Scotland “by a continued pedigree of about 330 years *before* the Incarnation of our blessed Lord to this time—given at our Court at Windsor Castle the 25th day of August, 1681, and of our reign the 33rd year. By his Majesty’s command—MORRAY.”

This is the signature of Alexander, sixth Earl of Moray, then Secretary of State for Scotland; but no trace can be found of any parliamentary ratification at Edinburgh of

this singular document deducing the prince's pedigree from Fergus I, but it is fully referred to by Litta in his *Genealogies of Illustrious Italian Families*, "and is," says a writer, "for its absurdity, quite unique."

In 1767 General Graham, younger of Buchlyvie, in Stirlingshire, died at Venice in command of the forces of the Republic. He was a kinsman of the Duke of Montrose, and brother of James Graham of Buchlyvie, one of the commissaries of Edinburgh. He had been formerly in the Dutch service, but in 1755 entered that of the Venetians. On the day after his death, Sir James Wright, our Resident, and all the British subjects in Venice attended his funeral. The senators sent "a complimentary decree to his family," and ordered a bust of him to be placed in the arsenal. (*Scots Mag.*, xxix.)

In that useless and destructive war in which George I involved Britain for the defence of his beloved Hanover, two of the Wauchopes of Niddry-Marshall figured by land and sea in the Sardinian service.

In the fight off Cape Passaro, in Sicily, in 1718, in the Spanish fleet which encountered that of Sir George Byng, the *St. Francis Arves* of 22 guns and 100 men was commanded by one of the family, who, in Lediard's list (*Naval Hist.*, 1735), is simply called "Andrew Wacup, a Scotchman"; but he fought his way through the British fleet, and his ship was one of the very few that escaped an action in which twelve Spanish ships were taken or burnt. (*Schomberg, etc.*)

In the following year there died of fever, in the camp of Randazzo, at the foot of Mount Etna in Sicily, Andrew,

son of Sir George Seton of Garleton, a sub-lieutenant in the regiment of Irlanda, late that of Wauchope of Niddry-Marshall. (*Salmon's Chron., etc.*)

The latter, with his brother John, were both generals in the Spanish army, which was then attempting to master the Austrian dominions in Italy, and he was governor of Cagliari, the principal town in Sardinia.

Among the Scotsmen in the army of Charles Emanuel III, King of Sardinia, were General Paterson, who held a high command at Turin, and Henry, Earl of Drumlanrig, eldest son of the Duke of Queensberry, who received £20,000 for his share in achieving the Union.

After serving two campaigns under the Earl of Stair, he entered the Sardinian army, with which he served in three campaigns under Charles Emanuel III, who was enlarging his territories by alliances with France, Spain, and Austria. The earl gave proofs of a high military genius, particularly at the siege of Coni, a fortified city in Piedmont, in consequence of which his Sardinian Majesty desired his ambassador at the British court to wait upon the Duke of Queensberry, and return him thanks for the services of his son in course of that protracted war.

He left the Sardinian army in 1747 for that of the States of Holland, for whom he raised a Scottish regiment; and seventeen years afterwards—in 1764—General Paterson quitted his command at Turin and came home to die in Edinburgh.

Here it may not be without interest to remark that, when Cardinal York died in 1807, the representation of the royal line of Stuart became vested in the King of Sardinia,

eldest son of Victor Amadeus III, grandson of Victor Amadeus, King of Sardinia, by Anne his wife, daughter of Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans, daughter of Charles I, King of Scotland and England, as the nearest heir of line to the British throne.

