

BIGGAR



AND THE HOUSE OF FLEMING.

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AND

THE HOUSE OF FLEMING.

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BIGGAR
AND
The House of Fleming.



SOUTH DOOR, BIGGAR PARISH KIRK

EDINBURGH.
WILLIAM PATERSON,
MDCCCLXVII.



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BIGGAR

AND

THE HOUSE OF FLEMING.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE

BIGGAR DISTRICT, ARCHÆOLOGICAL, HISTORICAL,
AND BIOGRAPHICAL.

BY WILLIAM HUNTER, F.S.A.SCOT.

*"Nescio, qua Natale Solum dulcedine cunctos
Ducit, et immemores non sinit esse sui."*

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EDINBURGH: WILLIAM PATERSON.
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MDCCCLXVII.



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TO
ADAM SIM, ESQ.,
OF COULTER,

A GENTLEMAN DISTINGUISHED FOR HIS ZEALOUS AND UNWEARIED EXERTIONS
TO COLLECT THE ANTIQUITIES, DEVELOP THE HISTORY,
AND PROMOTE THE GENERAL IMPROVEMENT OF
THE UPPER WARD OF CLYDESDALE,

This Volume,

WITH THE UTMOST GRATITUDE AND RESPECT,
IS DEDICATED,
BY HIS OBLIGED AND HUMBLE SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

THE following work was for several years out of print. As it still continued to be greatly sought after, it was resolved to publish a new edition. Advantage has been taken of the new issue to subject it to a careful revision, and to add to it a considerable amount of new matter, comprising biographical sketches, amusing incidents, local illustrations, &c. A number of additional engravings have also been given. On these accounts, it is hoped that it will be found more acceptable to the inhabitants of the district, as well as to other persons, who take an interest in Scottish antiquities and topography.

PORTOBELLO, *Nov. 1st* 1867.

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BIGGAR AND THE HOUSE OF FLEMING.

CHAPTER I.

Prehistoric Remains in the Biggar District.



BIGGAR, a parish in the Upper Ward of Clydesdale, is bounded on the west by Libberton and the river Clyde, on the north by Dolphinton and Walston, on the east by Skirling, and on the south by Coulter and Kilbueho. In form the parish is nearly triangular, and is chiefly of a hilly and undulating character, with exception of a level tract on the south, which is watered by Biggar Burn, and which forms part of what may be denominated the Strath of Biggar. This strath or valley, which is 628 feet above the level of the sea, sends its waters, on the west, into the Clyde, and on the east, into the Tweed. The parish lies about 23 miles south-west from Edinburgh, and 32 miles south-east from Glasgow, and has ready communication by good roads, and now by railway, with all parts of the kingdom. The name of the parish in old documents is variously written, such as Bygare, Bygair, Bygris, Bigart, Bigre, Biger, Begar, and Bigar, and it is only of late years that its present orthography has been established. Its etymology, according to the learned George Chalmers, is to be traced to the Scoto-Irish words, "big," soft, and "thir," land. It is far from unlikely that the title "soft" was applicable to the lands of the parish at a remote period; for, even at the commencement of the present century, a large portion of the lowest parts of it consisted of marshes and peat-mosses. Others, again, think that "big" may refer to a coarse kind of barley called bigg or bear, and,

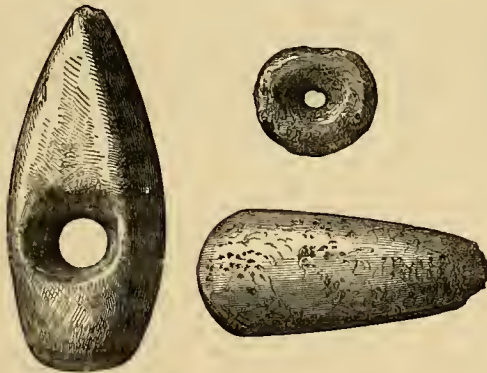
therefore, that the meaning of the word Biggar is the bigg or bear land. Another opinion is, that the root of the name is to be found in the Anglo-Saxon Big, Bige, "a turning or corner," and that the locality was so named from the remarkable bend which the river Clyde here makes from north-east to north-west. This is a subject, however, on which entire certainty will not be easily attained, and on which etymologists, in all probability, will continue to hold conflicting opinions.

The parish was, no doubt, peopled many ages previous to the existence of historical records, or the time at which the Roman invaders planted their eagles on our soil. The early inhabitants, like those of other parts of Scotland, would be very indifferently lodged, clothed, and fed. Their houses would be composed of turf, rough stones, and the branches of trees; their raiment would consist of the skins of wild or domesticated animals; and their food would be drawn from the spontaneous fruits of the soil, or the fish and venison which their skill and dexterity in fishing and hunting enabled them to procure. The parish, in these remote times, was evidently covered with forests of hazel, oak, alder, birch, &c., fragments of which have been dug up at considerable depths in its different peat mosses. With the wild beasts with which these were tenanted, as well as with marauding neighbours, the inhabitants would wage a constant warfare. Traces of the early inhabitants are to be found in the stone weapons and utensils that are, from time to time, dug up in the neighbourhood. They belong to what is called the Stone Period; that is, a period when the metals were still unknown, and the implements used by man were composed of stone and wood. It has often been remarked, that where geology leaves the world's history, archæology takes it up. The one deals with the different processes that have taken place to form the earth's crust, and render it fit for the habitation of man; the other takes up the industrial developments of man from the rude and simple fabrications of aboriginal times, to the complicated and scientific productions of our own day. As the excavator and the miner have contributed much to geological science by laying open the wonders of the earth's crust, so the ploughman and the drainer have enriched archæology by the stores of relics which they have brought to light. Few dis-

tricts have yielded a more plentiful crop of those remains of the past than the one around Biggar. A large portion of those dug up in recent times have fortunately found their way into the hands of Adam Sim, Esq. of Coulter. The collection of Lanarkshire antiquities in the possession of that gentleman is now exceedingly rich, and, we may say, perfectly unique. With his kind permission, a few of those, more immediately connected with Biggar and its neighbourhood, have been selected for brief description and pictorial representation.

The stone hammer is a primitive implement that is very commonly to be met with. It is often found in the older cists, or burying-places; and hence by the vulgar it has been called a purgatory hammer, from the supposition that it was placed in graves in order to be used by the dead when they came to the gates of purgatory. It is on this account that in some districts it has been regarded as an object of religious veneration. The one here represented was found at Aikbrae on Crosscryne, about three miles from Biggar. It measures $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length, and $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches across the cutting edge.

Flail-stone.



Hammer.

Celt.

The circular perforated stone here represented was found at Coulter, and is a specimen of what is very generally denominated a *flail-stone*. It has received this name from a supposition that it was a military weapon, which was made effective by suspending it by a cord or thong of leather from a short staff, and used in the same manner as the 'morning star' of the middle ages. As stones of this kind are often found in

the graves of the aboriginal inhabitants, it has been conjectured by some person that they were personal ornaments, and worn as beads. The ornamentation on some of them would also favour this conjecture; but the fact is, that the real use of them cannot now be known.

Another primitive stone weapon was an axe, or, as it is commonly called, a celt. It is a weapon that has been extensively dug up in almost every country in the world. It has been a matter of considerable speculation, to what use the celt was applied, and by what mode it was fixed to a handle. The likelihood is, that it was used both for warlike and domestic purposes, and that it was inserted in a wooden shaft or handle, and secured by thongs in such a way that it could be employed either in striking a foe, cutting down a tree, or constructing an article of domestic use. The one here represented was found at Biggar.

The practice of archery appears to be of a very remote antiquity in the Britannic Isles, and the number of flint arrow-heads, beautifully formed, that have been picked up on Bizzyberry, the Borrow Muir, and Biggar Shields, is a convincing proof that the Caledonian of Biggar 'put his reliance on his bow.' To shoot well with the bow, both in the battle-field and the more peaceful pursuit of the chase, would be regarded as a necessary accomplishment by the men of Biggar; and at such places as Bowflat, now called Bamphflat, and Batts, or Butts, now called Springfield, it is more than probable that gatherings for practice were wont to take place. The annexed

woodcut represents a fine specimen of a flint arrow-head found on the hill of Bizzyberry, that overlooks the town of Biggar.



The manner in which these arrow-heads were fabricated, and the places from which they were principally brought, are involved in obscurity. They appear to have been very extensively used, as they are found in many different parts of the world; and in fact to this day are used by the Esquimaux of the Arctic regions, by several tribes of American Indians, and the natives in the

islands of the Pacific Ocean. As some of these regions are

far remote from the spots where flint is a natural deposit, it is plain that, in the primitive times in which they were so largely and generally used, they must have formed an article of extensive traffic. The rude material must have been dug up, and most likely fashioned, in places, such as the south of England, where flint formations abound, and then conveyed to distant parts of the country, to be bartered for other commodities which the natives could supply.

The flint arrow-heads, as is well known, were long associated with the superstitions of this and other countries. They were termed elf or elfin bolts, and were supposed to be shot by the fairies, or other malignant spirits, and to produce the most fatal effects. Hence, in some parts of the country, whenever they were found, they were carefully buried, in case some of these evil beings might find them, and use them in the accomplishment of their destructive designs. They seem also to have been worn in some districts as an amulet or charm. They were in that case sewed in a part of the dress, and regarded as an effectual antidote against poison, the spells of witches, and the injurious tricks of elves and fairies. In the Biggar district, till a very recent period, many of the diseases of cattle were attributed to the elf-shot. Bauldy, in the "Gentle Shepherd," in enumerating the accusations which the country people brought against Mause, mentions that

"Brawny elf-shot never mair cam hame,"

was in the list of her dreaded spells.

One of the most remarkable statements regarding the fabrication of these elf-bolts, and the deadly effects which they produced, was made by Isobel Goudie, the famous witch of Aulderm, on her trial before a Commission in 1662. In her second confession she said, 'As for elf arrow-heidis, the Divel shapis thame with his avin hand, and syne deliveris thame to elf-boyis, wha whyttis and dyghtis thame with a sharp thing lyke a pakin neidle, bot quhan I was in Elfland, I saw thame whytting and dighting thame. . . . Thes that dightis thaim ar little ones, hollow and bossbaked. They speak gowstie lyk. Quhan the Divel giues thaim to ws, he sayes,

Shoot thes in my name,
And they sall not goe heall hame.

And quhan we shoot thes arrowes we say,—

I shoot you man in the Divel's name,
 He sall nott win heall hame;
 And this sal be alswa tru,
 Thair sall not be an bit of him on lieiw.

We hau no bow to shoot with, but spang them from the naillis of our thowmbes. Som tymes we misse, bot, if they twitch, be he beast, or man, or woman, it will kill tho' they had a jack upon thaim." This, of course, is the declaration of a poor creature made mad by prolonged insults and torture, and deserves no consideration, further than it shows the strange hallucinations into which persons charged with witchcraft could be driven, and the gross absurdities which men, even of the highest rank and intelligence, could be led to entertain and believe.

The annexed cut represents part of an ancient stone quern, or hand-mill for grinding corn, which was found at Coulter. The quern is an article of very great antiquity. The use of



it would, no doubt, be almost coeval with the existence of the human race. Some rude contrivance of the kind was evidently requisite ere the grain furnished by the bountiful Creator could, to any extent,

be converted into food. One of them would therefore be found in every household. The people were attached to their use, and, after the introduction of water-mills, were decidedly averse to give them up. The Government, who wished to encourage the water-mills, therefore, in 1284, during the reign of Alexander III., passed the following enactment:—‘That na man sall presume to grind quheit, maislhock, or rye, with hand mylnes, except he be compelled be storm, or be lack of mylnes, quhilk sould grind the samen. And in this case, gif a man grinds at hand mylnes, he sall gif the threitein measure as multer; and gif anie man contraveins this our prohibition, he sall tine his hand mylnes perpetuallie.’ This law failed to some extent to effect the end contemplated, and in some remote districts of Scotland the querns continued in use almost to our own times. At nearly all the old farm towns in

the Biggar district, these primitive and once useful utensils were lately to be found very generally built into the wall of some of the office-houses. Those of most recent date were hollowed out like a trough, and the corn, or rather the barley, was placed inside and bruised by a stone, or sometimes by a piece of wood called a knocker, and hence these utensils were usually denominated 'knocking stones.'

Another article that must be ascribed to a very remote antiquity is the ornamented stone ball. It is found in various parts of Scotland. Four or five very fine specimens are to be seen in the Museum of the Antiquaries of Scotland at Edinburgh. One of them, found at the Roman road near Carlisle, was presented to the Museum by the late James Brown, Esq., Edmonston, Biggar. They are all nearly alike in size, but they differ very much in their ornamentation. The one here represented (Fig. 1) was found at Biggar Shields. It has six regularly arranged circles in relief, with intervening spaces, which give it a fine symmetrical appearance. The use to which



these balls were put is not certainly known. It may be that they were used for warlike purposes, as balls of a similar kind have been so employed by some tribes of American Indians, who enclosed them in leather, and attached to them a thong a yard and a half in length. By some parties, on the contrary, it has been conjectured that they were used in the process of grinding corn, and hence they have been called 'corn-crushers.' They are frequently dug up in cists; and this may be taken as a proof that, in remote ages, they were held in respect. As might be expected, they have been identified with the superstitions of subsequent ages, and have been supposed to possess the same virtues, and to have the same claim to awe and veneration, as elf-bolts, stone-hammers, adder-stones, etc.

In course of time several of the metals were discovered, particularly copper and tin; as these, in some places, were found lying near the surface. By smelting these two metals together, a substance was produced of much greater hardness than either of them possessed, taken singly. This substance, which was called bronze, was, for a period, most extensively

used, and superseded stone as a material for the construction of warlike and domestic implements. The introduction of this metal marks an important stage in the history of human improvement; and it is interesting to note that articles, formerly composed of stone, were now produced in almost the same form in bronze. The ancient Caledonians who inhabited Biggar, so soon as a knowledge of the newly-discovered metals reached them, would no doubt throw aside their stone implements as comparatively of little value, and adopt those composed of the more durable and effective material. Several remarkably fine examples of bronze axe-heads or celts, spear-heads, and the weapons called paalstaves, have been found in the vicinity of Biggar. Fig. 1 is a curious bronze implement, the real use of which it is not very easy to divine. It may have been employed as a dagger, as in some specimens the blade contains two or three holes, for the evident purpose of riveting it to a handle. It measures $7\frac{3}{8}$ inches in length, and, at the smaller end, 2 inches in breadth; but it is evident that a portion of it has been broken off. It was found at Coulter.



In Fig. 2 we have a fine specimen of the bronze socket or pot-celt. Its sides are ornamented with the groovings or tridental marks common in this type, which have very frequently been met with in the north of England. It has a loop, intended

either to fasten it more firmly to the handle, or to suspend it from the girdle of the wearer. It is $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, and was found at Hangingshaw in the parish of Coulter. The bronze axe-head here engraved (Fig. 3) was found in a cairn, near the camp on the summit of Wintermuir Hill. It is $6\frac{1}{8}$ inches in length, and nearly 3 inches across the cutting edge.

The spear-head engraved (Fig. 4) was found in the neighbourhood, and has been selected as a good specimen of this early but beautiful weapon, and as in all likelihood the product of some of the ancient forges in the district. Another bronze implement here engraved (Fig. 5) is what is called a paalstave or paalstab. This weapon has, seemingly, been attached to a cleft handle, and might be used either as a spear or an axe. It was found at Aikbrae, on Crosscryne. Another very fine one in Mr Sim's possession was found at Kersewell, and several others have lately been discovered in this district. Paalstaves are met with in considerable variety, some of them being finely ornamented and engraved; but antiquaries are by no means agreed as to the purposes for which they were employed. It is very likely that they were used both as a warlike and a domestic implement, and perhaps, also, in the rites of some of the old religious systems that prevailed in the country.

The bronze ball (Fig. 2) represented in the woodcut, along with the one in stone, is the only specimen of the kind known to exist, being of the same type as those of stone formerly referred to. It is somewhat smaller, being only $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, and was found at Walston, three or four miles from Biggar. George Vere Irving, Esq. of Newton, in describing it in an *Archæological Journal*, says, 'It is beautifully incised with volutes, so as to produce six disc-shaped figures. It has been cast in two portions, each half being composed of a different metal, and of a different density. The workmanship of it would assign its production to a period subsequent to the occupation of this country by the Romans.'

CHAPTER II.

Supposed Traces of the Druids and Romans at Biggar.



THE religion of the ancient inhabitants of the Biggar district is supposed to have been Druidism. It has, no doubt, been stoutly asserted by several authors that the practice of this system of religion in Great Britain was confined to the southern parts of the island, and they demand a proof to the contrary. Now, it must be admitted that no direct proof of the kind can be given. No ancient author has made any statement on the subject; and the Druids themselves left no writings, as it was one of their tenets that no record of their opinions and transactions should be kept. Cæsar, indeed, states that the Druidical system was in operation in South Britain, a region which he had himself visited; but this does not prove that it did not prevail in other parts of the country, which he never saw. However this may be, it becomes us to notice several remains of antiquity in the parish of Biggar and its neighbourhood, which have been generally set down as Druidical.

On the Shields Hill, in the parish of Biggar, several upright stones are still standing, which have been considered to be part of a Druidical temple. Here the Druids, with their flowing robes, their white surplices, their long beards, and their rods of office, may have expounded their religious opinions, and offered up human victims in sacrifice. At the west end of the town of Biggar is the Moat, or Moathill, which in Saxon signifies the meeting-hill. It is of a circular form, and measures 100 feet in height on the west side, 477 feet in circumference at the base, and 225 feet at the top. The top of it is quite flat, and the sides are planted with trees. It com-

mands a fine view of Westraw, the High Street of Biggar, and the surrounding country. From it three other moats of a similar form, though of less dimensions, are in sight, viz., one at Robertson, a second at Wolfelyde, and a third at Bamphlet. The following wood-cut gives a fair representation of Biggar Moatknowe as it exists at present.



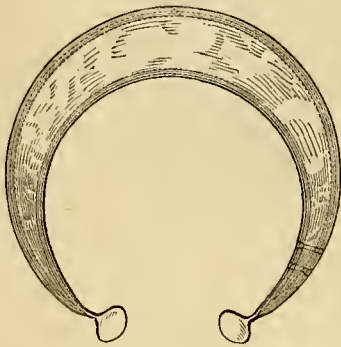
In the opinion of some persons, these knolls were places on which the Druids held their courts of justice, as they are known to have acted in a judicial as well as in a religious capacity, and to have transacted their business and performed their rites in the open air. Here, then, the priests of the Druidical superstition may have tried many trembling culprits, pronounced on them the terrible sentence of excommunication, or sent them to expiate their crimes on the blazing pile.* At a few miles distant, conspicuously in view, and forming a termination to the vista from the main street of the town of Biggar, is Tinto, the hill of fire, with its huge cairn, on which, on May eve, and on the 1st of November, yearly, the Druids are said to have lighted fires in honour of Beal or Belenus, the sun. Fires at the same time would blaze on the mountains of Lothian, Tweeddale, and others still more distant, till the

* It is hoped that care will be taken to preserve these ancient memorials from the destruction that has befallen some other objects of the olden time in the neighbourhood, so that a visitor to Biggar may be able to say that

“ he viewed the Moathill’s mound
Where Druid shades still fitted round.”

whole island was lighted up with a ruddy glow. Then the fires on every hearth would be extinguished, and the people would hasten to the nearest mountain-top to obtain a portion of the consecrated fire to rekindle the fires in their huts or weems. No fire was, however, given unless the customary dues were paid to the Cairneach, or officiating priest; and no person dared to supply the defaulter, under the pain of excommunication, which is said to have been worse than death itself.

Two very fine specimens of an ornament, supposed to be Druidical, were found, in 1858, on a piece of newly broken



up ground on the farm of Southside, in the parish of Kilbucho, about three miles from Biggar. They were at first thought to be merely pieces of tin, debris from the anvil of Moses Marshall, the tinker, and were taken to the farm-house, and thrown behind the kitchen fire. A relative of Mr. Core, the farmer, who had visited America, hap-

pened to have his attention attracted by their singular appearance, and, on examination, found that they were composed of the finest gold. They were taken to Biggar and weighed, and ultimately found their way into the hands of Adam Sim, Esq. That gentleman, on the 10th of June 1861, presented one of them to the Antiquarian Society of Scotland, and it is now to be seen in the Museum of that body at Edinburgh. The other still remains in his possession at Coultermains. Each of them weighs 1 oz. 8 dwt. 13 grs. They are in the form of a crescent or half-moon, measure at the broadest part $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches, terminate at each extremity with a button or small disc, and have a slight ornamentation, consisting of faint lines and small depressions. They are both exactly alike; and it is remarkable that two of them were found at the same spot,—a spot at which other remains of a remote antiquity, in the shape of paalstabs and bronze celts, have

been dug up. A representation of one of them is to be seen in the annexed woodcut.

The writers who consider that these ornaments were worn by the Druids, state that they were carried in the hand of the priest when he went to cut the sacred mistletoe on the sixth day of the moon, and that, as the Druids paid great attention to astronomy, this crescent-shaped ornament was intended to symbolize the moon at that stage of her course, and to indicate that the time of the festival had arrived. Such of them as had a button or disc at the extremities, are said also to have been worn on the head of the priest during sacrifices and other ceremonies, and were then placed behind the ears, and fastened with a string looped to the buttons. In this position they very much resemble the nimbus or rays of glory which are usually made, in pictorial representations, to surround the head of Christ and His apostles. Another ornament of the same shape is said to have been worn on the breast of the Druidical priest. This was called the *Iodhain Morain*, or breastplate of judgment; and, according to the fables of Ireland, was believed to possess the power of squeezing the neck on the utterance of a false judgment. Representations of these ornaments, and the manner in which they are said to have been worn, are to be seen in the 'Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis,' and in 'Meyricks and Smith's Costume of the Original Inhabitants of the British Islands.'

Though some authors have very strongly and positively asserted that these were the uses to which these ornaments were put, yet it must be admitted that their statements rest very much on conjecture. It is beyond question, however, that ornaments of the same kind were worn at a very remote era. They have been shown by Auberi, Montfaucon, and others, to have been represented on bas-reliefs and statues of great antiquity. Specimens of these ornaments have been occasionally dug up in the bogs of Ireland; but in Scotland they are more rarely to be met with, and hence the value of the two found at Southside.

The Upper Ward of Clydesdale, during the first century of the Christian era, was inhabited by a tribe to which the Romans gave the name of the *Damnii*. They are described by Dion Cassius, Herodian, and others, as sunk in deep bar-

barism ; and yet it is asserted that they fought in chariots, and made use of swords, lances, and bucklers, which, if correct, shows that they had by that time made very considerable progress in the useful arts. The whole history of the Roman invasion of the northern part of the island, abundantly shows that they were an athletic, warlike, and indomitable race. They never could be thoroughly subdued. It was, no doubt, in vain for them to contend, in a regular pitched battle, with the Roman invaders, who had attained the highest state of discipline, and had long been inured to war on the plains of Germany, Parthia, Gaul, and Palestine ; but they lost no opportunity of surprising isolated detachments, cutting off stragglers, intercepting supplies, and attacking encampments. The consequence was, that the Romans were never able to keep a continuous hold of the Upper Ward.

No record is extant that enables us to fix on the parish of Biggar as the place at which any important movement was made by the Romans ; but it is the concurrent opinion of all the writers, who have attempted to describe the operations of these invaders in Scotland, that the grounds in the neighbourhood of the town were a Roman station, and lay on an angle of the great Iter, or road, commonly called Watling Street, that proceeded from Carlisle, by Annandale and the Vale of Clyde, to the Wall of Antoninus. It is evident that these grounds, from their local position, and the character of the country around, were well fitted to be a military post, especially at the time when the Romans attempted to hold sway over Scotland. They lie on the outskirts of what are called the Southern Highlands, and are situated about midway between two important Roman camps, the one at Corbiehall near Carstairs, and the other at Lyne near Peebles, both being distant about a moderate day's march. The gentle slopes of Bizzyberry and the Knock have space sufficient to accommodate sixty or even a hundred thousand men, while their summits present advantageous positions for exploratory posts. Here is a deep ravine well fitted to form one side of a strong rampart, or vallum, and along the bottom of it meanders a stream of excellent water, so necessary to a large encampment. The antiquaries, Gordon, Roy, Chalmers, Stewart, etc., all concur in thinking that the Moat Knowe was used as part of

a Roman work. It may have been an outpost, while the camp itself extended along the grounds now composing the crofts of Westraw, or the minister's glebe and the burgh lands, on the north side of the town. Various Roman coins have been dug up here, the last of which was one of the Emperor Vespasian, and is now in the possession of a townsman, the Rev. Dr William Johnston, Limekilns. Bronze vessels, commonly called Roman camp-kettles, have been repeatedly found in the upper part of the Vale of Clyde, and in the district round Biggar, particularly at Carwood, Biggar Moss, Pietknowe, Coulter, and Libberton. In the collection of antiquities at Coultermains, about a dozen of these kettles are to be seen, all of them found in the neighbourhood, and all, though of various sizes, of the same form and type. These vessels are generally broken or fractured, as if they had been thrown aside as useless. Moses Marshall, the celebrated Upper Ward tinker, was wont to say that, in the early part of his wandering life, he frequently bought them as old metal, at a mere trifle, and sold them at high prices, on account of the superior quality of the bronze of which they were composed. It has been asserted by some antiquaries that the quality of the metal is inferior to that used by the Romans, and that is one of the reasons why they consider

that they are not of Roman manufacture. However this may be, they are unquestionably articles of very great antiquity, and may have been used by the native inhabitants at a period even anterior to the possession of our country by the Romans. The woodcut represents one of the kettles



found at Carwood Moss; and it is alleged that it was filled with gold and silver coins, but the finder, of course, would not allow this supposition to be entertained.

The Roman road that is supposed to have passed through the parish of Biggar has entirely disappeared. Gordon, in his 'Itinerarium Septentrionale,' published in 1727, states that

traces of it were at that time distinctly to be seen in Westraw Moss, west of the town. This road or causeway is referred to so late as 1765, in the Records of the Baron Bailie's Court of Biggar, when a complaint of Robert Wilson, 'tacksman of ye grass of Westraw Moss, above ye cassaw leading through ye said moss,' was lodged against certain feuars in Westraw for cutting 'Roughheads,' and pasturing their cattle on parts of the moss, to which, it was alleged, they had no right. This 'cassaw' gave the name of 'Causeyend' to a small hamlet built at its western extremity, and some of the houses of which still exist. This causeway was, however, in all likelihood, of comparatively modern formation. The workmen, while engaged some years ago in making excavations in this moss for the line of the Symington, Biggar, and Broughton Railway, came upon a causeway of stones, about three feet below the surface, which had evidently been formed at an early period, and which, in all probability, was part of the Watling Street of the Romans. It was minutely examined by several gentlemen in the neighbourhood, and, from the systematic and skilful arrangement of the stones, no doubt was left on their minds that they had been placed there for the purpose of forming a road. By this Iter, then, most of the Roman troops would pass and repass on their marches to subdue, or, as Claudian says, 'to bridle the fierce Scots.' The probability, therefore, is, that Agricola, Hadrian, Urbicus, Calphurnius Agricola, Marcellus, Severus, Theodosius, and other commanders of the successive invading armies, halted at Biggar, and marshalled their legions on the adjoining plains.

Along the great Roman Iter, on each side of the valley of the river Clyde, circular earthen works are to be seen on the summits of the more isolated hills, and are supposed to be the strongholds of the early inhabitants. No less than eight or nine of these primitive fortifications are to be found in the parish of Coulter, and traces of them are to be seen on several of the Biggar hills, particularly one distinctly marked on Bizzyberry, immediately above the town.*

* For a most learned and elaborate account of the ancient camps and Roman roads in the Upper Ward of Lanarkshire we refer to the recently published work entitled "The Upper Ward of Lanarkshire, described and delineated," by George Vere Irving, Esq., and Alexander Murray, Esq.

The Romans finally withdrew from Scotland during the fifth century. Their retirement led to the formation of what has been called the *Regnum Cumbrense*, or Kingdom of Strathclyd. It existed till the close of the tenth century, and of course included the Biggar district; but we are unable to identify this district with any of the notable transactions that occurred during that lengthened period, or to point out any relic connected with it that has been preserved.

To this chapter we append a representation of a bronze tripod which was found on the farm of Southside Kilbucho, two or three miles from Biggar, in July 1863, by Mr Thomas Core. It is worthy of remark that it was found very near the spot where the gold circlets, a number of silver coins of Edward II., and other articles of antiquity were dug up some years ago. When first discovered, the inside of it was of a bright yellow colour, as if it had come fresh from the foundry, and contained a roll of a strange substance that had much the appearance of an eel skin. The glittering appearance of the pot caused Mr Core to think that he had lighted on a prize sufficiently valuable to make his fortune, but on due investigation he ascertained that though it was unquestionably an article of great antiquity, the metal itself was not of much value. A short time ago he made a present of it to Mr Sim of Coulter. In the opinion of some antiquaries it is of British rather than Roman manufacture.

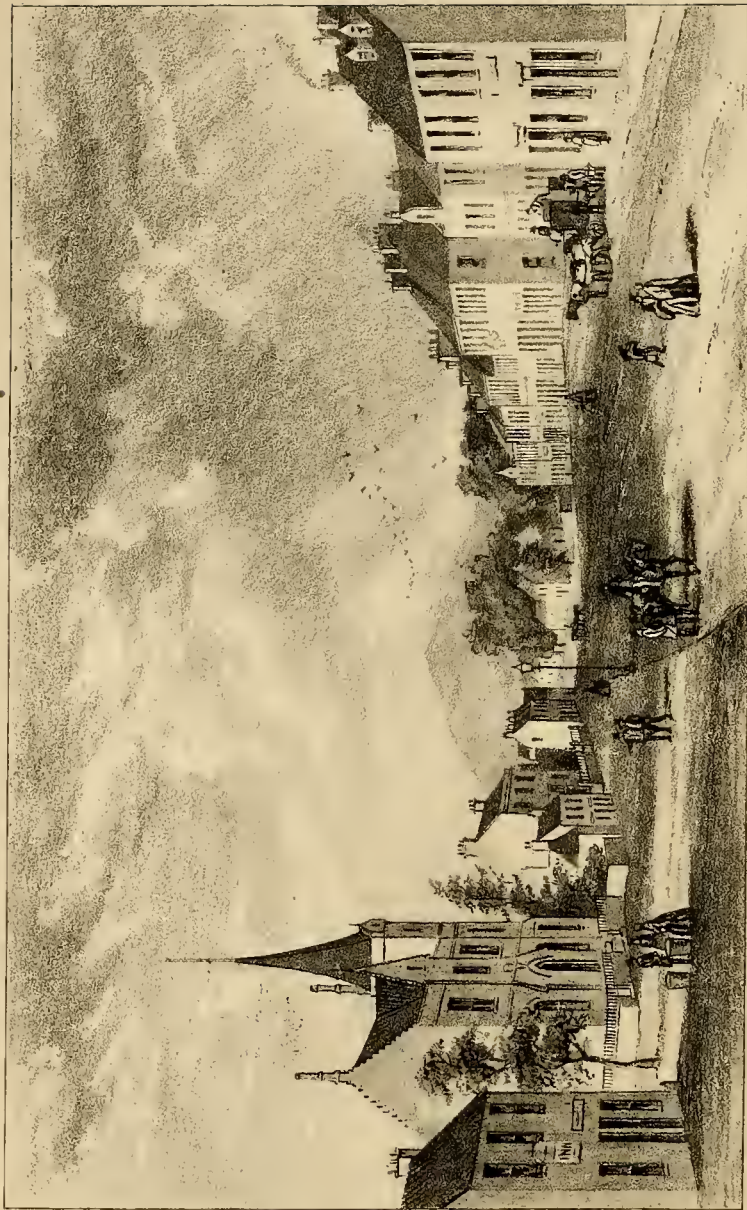


CHAPTER III.

The Town of Biggar.



BIGGAR, in all likelihood, was an ancient British village. It may possibly be the Gadanica of the Romans, a town which was situated near the Clyde in this locality, but the exact site of which has much perplexed our modern antiquaries. However this may be, it can certainly boast of considerable antiquity, as it is mentioned in some of the earliest Scottish records extant. We have no means of knowing what sort of town it was in primitive times, but in all probability it was a mere accumulation of mud and turf cabins, possessing the miserable accommodation of the wigwams of the Indian or the huts of our own Highland population. During the early part of last century, the houses were still of small dimensions, and for the most part covered with thatch. The appearance of the town at that time was remarkable on account of the number of maltkilns with which it was studded, several of the inhabitants being maltmen by profession, and the whole of them being evidently great drinkers of ale. Like most old towns, it was, down to a recent period, kept in a very dirty and unhealthy condition. Dunghills, peatstacks, noxious gutters, and fulzie of different sorts, were to be seen in all directions. This state of things has been now very much changed for the better. A number of good houses have been built, ornamental trees planted, gas-lamps to light the street put up, shops enlarged and embellished, old houses that incommoded the street pulled down, the common sewers covered, and nearly all unseemly accumulations removed; so that the High Street, as may be observed from the engraving, has now a very spacious and respectable appearance.



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An anecdote is told of a female minstrel of the peripatetic order, which shows that she had a due appreciation of the spaciousness of Biggar Street. About forty years ago Captain Gordon, heir of entail to the estate and title of Lord Kenmure, was a good deal about Biggar, and led rather an irregular sort of life. One day, when "half seas over," he sallied forth from his lodgings, and being lame, went "hirpling" down the street, whistling and singing by turns in a very high key. When opposite Mr John Wyld's shop, he "forgathered" with the strolling singer, who had a strong, high-pitched voice, and was making the street re-echo with one of her favourite ballads. He stood still, and made an attempt to silence her by a display of his vocal powers, but in this he failed, and, therefore, roughly ordered her to desist, and betake herself to her quarters. This she refused to do, but conceiving him to belong to her own profession, and being of a liberal turn of mind, she readily offered to take the opposite side of the street, saying, "Weel, weel, man; we needna differ, there's surely room eneuch in the braid street o' Biggar for us twa."

The town of Biggar at present consists of a main street, two back streets, and a suburb called the Westraw. The houses in general are small, consisting of one and two stories. They are built of whin-stone, from quarries in the neighbourhood, with corners, rybats, and lintels of freestone, brought from Deepsykehead, Libberton, and other places at a distance, as there is no sandstone in the immediate neighbourhood of the town. The covering of the houses are thatch and slates, roofing tiles being nearly unknown. In entering the town from the east, we have first a few isolated houses called the Townhead, and then the toll-bar,—'a merry place in days of yore,' when the toll-house was tenanted by Nicol Porteous. On the right or north side of the street is Boe's or Bow's Well, and a little below it the house occupied for some time by John, eleventh Lord Elphinstone, in consequence of Boghall Castle, the ancient seat of the family, having fallen into disrepair. This same house was also long occupied by that burgh worthy, Bailie Thomas Carmichael. He was appointed depute bailie by Robert Leckie, head bailie and factor, in the year 1744, and took a leading part in the management of the affairs of the town and barony till his death, in 1795, when he had

reached the patriarchal age of eighty-two years. On the other side of the street is a large house, once the residence of Dr Baillie, a distinguished Biggar physician of last century. During his time, and also that of his successor, Dr William Bowe, Biggar acquired some celebrity as a medical school. It was a common practice at that time, for young men who wished to acquire a knowledge of the medical art, to serve an apprenticeship to some eminent practitioner. The fame of these two Biggar worthies drew round them many young men, some of whom distinguished themselves in their profession in after years. We may specially refer to Dr Robert Jackson. Mr Jackson was born at Stonebyres, near Lanark, in 1750, and was a near relative of the late William Jackson of Coulter Mill, and his brother James Jackson, who for nearly half a century was well known in the streets of our towns and villages as a blind minstrel. Old James had a fine musical ear, and sung a number of popular Scotch songs, accompanying himself on the fiddle. We ourselves conversed with him a short time previous to his death; and it was gratifying to find that, amid all his vicissitudes and wanderings, and even when he had 'grown weary and old,' he still retained a lively recollection of the men and incidents of a former generation connected with the Biggar district.

Robert Jackson received his elementary education at a small school at Wandel, and afterwards at the Parish School of Crawford, then taught by a Mr Wilson, a teacher of some local celebrity. In 1766, he came to Biggar to study the medical art under the care of Dr Baillie. After remaining some time at Biggar, he proceeded, for the further prosecution of his medical studies, to the University of Edinburgh, then enjoying a high reputation, on account of the genius and learning of several of its professors, such as Munro, Cullen, and Black. After the completion of his college curriculum, he went abroad in pursuit of employment, and encountered such a variety of difficulties, disasters, and adventures, as to invest this period of his life with a most engrossing interest. He, however, surmounted them all, and gradually rose to eminence. He wrote some valuable treatises on contagious fevers in jails, ships, hospitals, etc.; and a number of medical reports on climate, sanitary arrangements, and hospital diseases. By his writings

and personal exertions, he effected great reforms in the treatment of soldiers, etc., and therefore was generally spoken of as 'the army physician.' He died at Thursby, near Carlisle, on the 6th of April 1827, in the seventy-seventh year of his age.

The street now widens to a very considerable extent, and is far more spacious than the streets usually found in old towns. The reason of this, no doubt, was to afford space for the large fairs annually held here. It has of late years been encroached on by the erection of dwelling houses, and though it is far from being so unseemly as it was in the days of the middens and peat-stacks, it might yet be improved by the removal of the wood and rubbish that have in several places been allowed to accumulate. On the south side of the street is the Langvout, so called from the houses, which once stood here, having arched roofs. The Langvout of old was occupied by a family of the name of Boe. The keystone of the jambs of one of those vaulted houses was finely ornamented with the Lockhart arms. When the house was demolished, this sculptured stone came into the possession of Adam Sim, Esq. of Coulter, and was presented by that gentleman to the late William Lockhart, Esq. of Milton Lockhart. In the hall of Milton Lockhart House it is still to be seen, placed on a bracket, and preserved with great care. Here a wretched hovel was employed, for a number of years, as the town prison; and here drunk beggars, the lunatic that fired Nannie Muir's house, the tinker who felled his companion at the Ba' Green, and other disturbers of the peace, were placed for a short time in durance vile. The Langvout gate was, in olden times, the principal passage to Biggar Moss.

A little farther down are Silver-knowes, long the property of a family of the name of Brown. Andrew Brown, and his spouse Margaret Tod, flourished here during the first half of the last century. They were succeeded by Richard Brown, weaver, whose spouse was Isabella, or, as she was generally called, Tibbie Forrest. This worthy couple had several children, of whom may be mentioned Andrew, John, an officer of excise, and Janet, who long lived in the inheritance at Silver-knowes, and died there within the last forty years.

Andrew, who was born in the year 1763, was the most dis-

tinguished. He early showed an aptitude for learning, and attended different schools, but was chiefly indebted for instruction, in some of the higher branches of education, to Mr Thorburn of Quothquan, afterwards Dr Thorburn of Shields. One of his teachers, struck with his aptitude and ability, said publicly, in the hearing of the other scholars, 'You are a clever boy; you will one day be a minister of Edinburgh;' a prediction which was afterwards verified. After going through the usual curriculum of literary, philosophical, and theological study at the University, he was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Presbytery of Biggar. He was then employed for a short time as a tutor in a family, one of the female members of which became his first wife. In 1787, he was ordained to the pastoral charge of the Scottish Church, Halifax, Nova Scotia; and continued in this situation till 1795, when he was presented to the living of Lochmaben, in Dumfriesshire. On the passage home from Halifax, he had the good fortune to be on board the same vessel with Prince William Henry, afterwards William IV., who was delighted with his fine taste and literary acquirements, and took much pleasure in his conversation. In 1799, the Town Council of Edinburgh appointed him to the charge of the New Greyfriars Church, and during the year following translated him to the Old Church, as colleague to Dr Grieve. On the death of Dr Blair, in 1801, he was appointed by the Crown Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in the University of Edinburgh, being chiefly indebted, it is said, for this appointment to the efforts of his old acquaintance Prince William. In 1813, he had the honour of filling the dignified office of Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. He died at Primrose Bank, near Edinburgh, on the 19th of February 1834, in the seventy-first year of his age, and was interred in the Greyfriars churchyard.

Dr Brown's style was elegant and ornate, though somewhat diffuse, and his manner of delivery insinuating rather than commanding. He manifested much gravity and earnestness in his prelections from the pulpit, and indulged in an ample range of illustration, clothed in beautiful language that rendered them very effective. He excelled especially in prayer. His devotional sentiments were delivered with a fervour and an aptness of expression that led captive the thoughts and feelings

of his fellow-worshippers. His lectures in the Rhetoric class were elegant and instructive, and from time to time were subjected to careful revision, in order to render them still more correct and complete. He spent a considerable portion of time in composing a history of America, and for the purpose of procuring information for this work, he paid several visits to London, and also to Paris. Persons to whom he read portions of it, spoke of it as highly elaborate and interesting, constructed on the model of the best historical specimens of the ancient classics, particularly in the curious conferences and harangues of the Indian chiefs. He delayed the publication of it in order to obtain fuller information, and thus to make it more complete; but he died before he had put it in such a state as he considered fit to lay before the public.

Several of Dr Brown's discourses, on special occasions, were from time to time published in a separate form. The following were bound up in a volume, which was presented by Dr Brown himself to his wife, and which is now in the library of Mr Sim, at Coultermains, viz.—I. 'A discourse delivered before the North British Society in Halifax, Nova Scotia, at their Anniversary Meeting on the 30th November 1790.' II. 'A Sermon on the Dangers and Duties of a seafaring life, preached before the Protestant Dissenting Congregation at Halifax, in November 1792, and published at the desire of the Marine Society in that place.' III. 'Perils of the Time, and the purposes for which they are appointed. A Sermon preached on the last Sabbath of the year 1794, and published at the request of the hearers.' And IV. 'Love of Country, explained and illustrated. A Sermon preached at Musselburgh, May 3d 1801, before the Corps of the Royal Mid-Lothian Volunteer Cavalry, and published by request.' These discourses, which some persons would regard as little better than moral essays, are characterised by strong good sense, clear and forcible expression, and a high tone of benevolent and patriotic sentiment. Dr Brown published another Sermon in 1810, and in 1820, 'A notice of the Life and Character of Alexander Christison, A.M., Professor of Humanity in the University of Edinburgh.'

It is worthy of notice, that when the grave of Dr Brown's forefathers in Biggar churchyard was opened for the interment either of his brother or his sister, a box was found in it, three

feet long, one foot broad, and upwards of one foot deep. On the outside of it was a plate, ornamented with elegant figures, and bearing the following inscription :—‘The remains of Jane, daughter of Sir T. A. S. of B., and wife of Sir T. A. S., Knt., who died abroad 14th of May 1799; together with those of her infant daughter and only child, who survived her but six weeks. Collected and brought home by the kind offices of a particular friend of her surviving husband, the Rev. A. B., and privately deposited at Biggar, N. B., 1805.’ The box, on being opened, was found to contain the bones and skulls of the lady and her infant, embedded in a quantity of fine yellow and red sand. No person at Biggar was aware that this box had been deposited in the churchyard; and many conjectures were hazarded, how it could have been placed there without being noticed, and who the parties were to whom the inscription referred. It was, no doubt, buried there by the directions of Dr Brown; but everything else connected with it still remains an entire mystery.

The part of the street to the eastward of Silver-knowes, was, on the 2d of July 1729, appointed by the baron bailie, John Wardlaw, as the place for the show and sale of stallions on fair and market days. This was done on a complaint of the constant disturbance and great danger to life caused by the exhibition of stoned horses in the midst of other horses. On the day previous to that on which the enactment was made, John Murray, in Coulter Park, had several of his ribs broken by the kick of a stoned horse, and several other persons narrowly escaped from being struck down. The bailie, therefore, ordained that stoned horses, in all time coming, should be shown at the place referred to, under the penalty of £10 Scots to the fiscal for each horse, and that intimation of this act should several times be publicly made at the Market Cross, that none might pretend ignorance.

In a small thatched cottage adjoining Silver-knowes, nearly a hundred years ago, lived an old crone called Euphane Aitken. In her early and more vigorous days she had been “At service out among the farmers roun’,” and, when the infirmities of age came on, she took up her abode at Biggar, and earned a scanty subsistence by spinning, knitting stockings, or doing any little work to her neighbours. Her name

is still preserved in the traditions of the town, from the following strange incident. An old man, named John Blake, who at the time referred to lived in Biggar, was in the habit of going to the neighbouring farmhouses to kill cows, sheep, swine, &c., but being advanced in years his journeys were short, and he always returned home the same day on which he set out. On one occasion, however, he did not return. His relatives and neighbours, naturally apprehensive that some calamity had befallen him, lost no time in instituting a search to ascertain the cause of his non-appearance. Parties of the inhabitants, scattering themselves over the country, examined the bogs and mosses, dragged the river Clyde, and explored the valleys and mountain passes, but no trace could be got of the old man, and after a time the search was abandoned. At length,

“Quhan mony a day had commit and fiedde,
Quhan grief grew caulm, and hope was dead,”

a clue was got to the mystery in a very extraordinary manner. One night, when Euphane Aitken was resting her weary limbs in bed, and lying, as she always maintained, wide awake, she was alarmed by a loud voice repeating three times, “Dead, dead, on Duncangillhead.”

So soon as daylight appeared, and the clank of Richie Brown’s loom was heard, she went and repeated to him the strange words which she had heard, and expressed her belief that it was a supernatural intimation of the spot at which the remains of John Blake would be found. Mr. Brown scouted the idea, and alleged that the story was nothing else than a foolish dream. Euphane pertinaciously maintained that it was no such thing, and that though not extremely “glcg” in hearing, she had heard the words quite distinctly. A report of the revelation soon spread through the town, and numbers of people went to the old woman’s dwelling to hear the words from her own lips. The story was generally discredited, and it tended to increase the unbelief that nobody could tell where Duncangillhead was. While it was still the theme of conversation, a man from Lamington happened to visit Biggar, and he at once declared that he knew the spot well, and that it was situated in a wild track between the parishes of Lamington and Craw-

ford, nine or ten miles from Biggar. Several persons, actuated more by curiosity than by a hope that Euphane's story would be confirmed, set out from Biggar, and on reaching the spot, to their utter astonishment, found the corpse of the old man, lying bleaching on the sward. It showed no marks of violence, and the prevailing opinion was that the old man, by some hallucination or other, had wandered from his proper route, and died from hunger and exhaustion. His remains in due time were removed from the spot, and interred in Biggar churchyard, while the words, "Dead, dead, on Duncangillhead," continue to this day to be repeated as a rhyme by the youths of Biggar.

A little to the west of Silver-knowes still stands the large house built by Dr William Bowe, and, for many years, occupied by him, and afterwards by his son, Dr James Bowe. William Bowe was born on the 16th of July 1723, at Quothquan Mill, and most likely was descended from the old family of Boc of Biggar. It tends to confirm this idea, that an old lady, a descendant of the Biggar Boes, bequeathed to him a Borrowland lying between John's Loan and the Borrowland partly belonging to the South United Presbyterian Church. Mr Bowe received the elementary part of his education at the School of Quothquan, then taught by Simon Pillans, who was afterwards schoolmaster at Kilbucho. On leaving school, he was sent to Biggar, and apprenticed to Dr William Baillie, to learn the art of surgery. On the expiry of his apprenticeship he proceeded to Edinburgh, and studied medicine at the University of that city several years. Having received his diploma and the degree of M.D., he obtained the appointment of surgeon on board an East Indiaman, in which he made several voyages to China and the East Indies, and had thus an opportunity both of seeing the world and improving himself in his profession. On one occasion, when ashore at a port, during the time that his vessel was employed in discharging her cargo and taking in a new one, he was called on to prescribe for a young Indian lady of high caste, who was labouring under a dangerous malady. He succeeded in effecting a cure, and the consequence was, that the lady fell in love with him, and proposed marriage. This the doctor thought prudent to decline, greatly to the chagrin and mortification of the lady.

Under the combined feelings of grief and resentment, she secretly resolved on revenge, and one day gave the doctor a drink of one of the most delicious liquids that he had ever tasted. This was a slow but deadly poison, and though he was able by the use of proper antidotes to counteract its effects so far as to prevent it from proving fatal, his health was so much injured that he was forced to resign his situation and return home. He then settled at Biggar, and began to practice as a surgeon. Meeting with a sufficient amount of encouragement in his profession, he was induced, on the 17th September 1756, to enter into marriage with Rachel Deans, daughter of James Deans, farmer, Chapelgill, in the parish of Glenholm. By this lady he had one son, James, and three daughters, Helen, Margaret, and Rachel. In the course of a few years his fame as a skilful practitioner extended beyond the bounds of the district in which he was located, and it was no uncommon thing for him to be called on to visit patients in Moffat, Leadhills, West Linton, and other places, fifteen and twenty miles distant. He purchased a property in Biggar, and erected on it the large and substantial house to which we have referred. Besides the land which he farmed in the neighbourhood of Biggar, he was led by a fondness for agricultural pursuits to take a lease of Coulter Cornhill for three nineteen years, but his large and constantly increasing practise prevented him from giving due attention to the cultivation of this farm; and the consequence was, that in course of the first nineteen years, he lost £500 by it, and this induced him to make application to the proprietor, John Dickson, advocate, Coulter, to take it off his hands, which he did by receiving payment of one hundred pounds.

His wife, who was of a delicate constitution, died on the 16th of January 1780, in the 50th year of her age. The doctor, in his old age, was afflicted with a disease for which an operation was performed seven times, twice by Dr Bell of Edinburgh, and five times by his own son, James. Refusing to submit to any further operation, he died after considerable suffering on the 3d of December 1790.

Dr Bowe, like many distinguished men in his profession, gave his services to the poorer classes gratis. He consequently stood high in their esteem, and, in order to evince their grati-

tude and respect, they were in the habit of turning out in harvest, and giving him a day's shearing. On these occasions it was the practice of Mrs Bowe to prepare a large haggis as one of the dishes for the shearers' dinner. One season the usual preparations had been made, and just a little before the dinner was carried out to the harvest-field, Mr Simon Pillans, schoolmaster, Kilbucho, having given his scholars the usual vacation, came into the doctor's house, and was requested to sit down and rest himself in the kitchen, where Mrs Bowe was busily employed in household duties. When the haggis was dished, and lay on the trencher "warm, reekin', rich," Simon's appetite, which was usually keen, and had been greatly sharpened by his walk from Kilbucho, was rendered almost unbearable by the "glorious sight," and he cast towards it sundry very longing and significant glances. "Mr Pillans," said Mrs Bowe, "as you must be hungry after your long walk, will ye sit forward and taste the haggis?" "I'll offer nae objection," said Simon, "as the air of Crosscryne has rather improved my poor appetite." The haggis being cut up, Simon fell to work, and as the quality was excellent, he never halted till the whole contents were disposed of, to the great disappointment and annoyance of Mrs Bowe, who was put to her wit's end to provide a substitute for the dish that had so thoroughly and unexpectedly disappeared. She was a person of some humour, however; and when Simon laid down his spoon, she asked if he would not take a bit of the tripe brandered. "There's naething I'm fonder o', Mrs Bowe," said Simon, "than brandered tripe." The tripe was accordingly brandered, and disappeared like the rest. When Dr Bowe came home, his better-half began a doleful complaint of the way in which the shearers had been deprived of their usual haggis, and of the inconvenience and disappointment to which she had thereby been subjected. "Say nothing more, my dear," said the doctor; Simon ere long will pay well for his feast." As anticipated, a person during the night arrived in great haste on horseback, requesting the doctor to come with all speed to Kilbucho Schoolhouse, as Mr Pillans had been seized with a sudden and violent illness. The doctor mounted his horse, and hurrying to the Schoolhouse, found Simon, as he expected, suffering from a severe attack of colic, prescribed

some simple remedy, and next day sent him a charge of a guinea.

Dr James Bowe, son of Dr William Bowe just mentioned, was born at Biggar in 1765, and was educated partly at the parish school, then taught by Mr Porteous, and partly by a private tutor, named Gardner. He studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh, and after taking the degree of M.D., settled at Biggar, and practised along with his father. A short time after he commenced practice, a message arrived to attend a case of child-birth, at a house in Holmswater. The woman had been in the same condition several times previously, but her children had all been still-born. The young doctor insisted on going, but his father objected, saying that a want of success at the outset of his professional career, however unavoidable it might be, would do him a serious injury. The son replied that in his opinion a failure could not do him much hurt, as it would be nothing worse than what had always happened before, but, on the contrary, should he succeed, the event would bring him into popularity at once. He went, delivered the woman of a living child, and was famed as an accoucheur ever afterwards. In August 1793, he married Margaret, a daughter of the Rev. Thomas Gray, minister of Broughton, by whom he had four sons, William, Thomas, Robert, and David, and one daughter Helen, who died in 1816 aged 20 years.

Dr Bowe, like his mother, was of a delicate constitution, and the long journeys in cold and stormy weather, often during the night, which, as a country surgeon, he had constantly to undertake, told with injurious effect on his health. One day, during frosty weather, while crossing Biggar Water on horseback, the ice gave way, and he was drenched in the stream. Before he reached home his clothes were stiff with the frost. He never fully recovered from the effects of this accident, and died on the 6th December 1802, aged 37 years.

Behind this part of the street, on the back road, is the manse of the Moat Park United Presbyterian Church. It was built shortly after the commencement of the present century, and was first occupied by the Rev. John Brown; to whom reference will afterwards be made. Here was born on the 22d of September 1810, Dr John Brown, author of *Horæ Subsecivæ*, &c.

The Doctor lived at Biggar till his twelfth year. Being educated privately, he did not mix much with the adventurous, and perhaps somewhat mischievous, youths, who at that time flourished in the little town; but he, nevertheless, retains a very lively recollection of the scenes and the men with whom he was familiar in his early years. In the end of his lay Sermons on "Health" to working people, when bidding adieu to his hearers or readers, he specially names a number of the inhabitants of Biggar and its neighbourhood, both male and female, with whom he was acquainted in his youth. We give an extract. "Good night, John Noble (Skirling) let me grip your horny hand, and count the queer knobs made by the perpetual mell. I used, when I was a Willie Winkie, and wee, to think that you were born with them. Never mind, you were born for them, and of old you handled the trowel well, and built to the plumb. Thomas Bertram (Biggar) your loom is at a discount, but many's the happy day I have watched you and your shuttle, and the interweaving treadles, and all the mysteries of setting the 'wab.' Andrew Wilson (Biggar) across the waste of forty years and more I snuff the fragrance of your shop; have you forgiven me yet for stealing your paint pot (awful joy) for ten minutes, to adorn my rabbit house, and for blunting your pet *furmer*. Wise you were always, and in the saw pit you spoke little and wore your crape." "And nimble Pillans (Biggar) the clothier of the race, and quick as your needle, strong as your corduroys, I bid you good night. May you and the cooper be like him of Fogo, each a better man than his father; and you Mungo, the mole catcher, and Tod Laurie, and Sir 'Robert the Cadger,' and all the other odd people, I shake your fists twice, for I like your line."

In 1822, the Doctor removed, along with his father, to Edinburgh, attended the High School and the University of that city, took his degree as an M.D., and for some years was connected with a medical institution in Minto House, Argyle Square. He entered at length into the marriage relation, and set up his staff as a physician in the same city.

Dr Brown, however, has achieved higher fame at a *litterateur* than as a physician. He had long been known as a person of mark and likelihood,—as a contributor to some of our most popular periodicals,—and as possessed of that warm devotion

to letters and study that had characterised his family for three previous generations ; but it was not till he published the first series of his ' *Horæ Subsecivæ*,' in 1859, that his reputation as a literary man was established. This work consists of a collection of literary, scientific, metaphysical, and professional papers, composed, as their general title imports, at spare hours, —hours snatched from the toils and fatigues of a laborious profession. These papers are written in a free, hearty, dashing style, with a disregard, we are sometimes apt to think, of the usual rules and conventionalities of literary composition ; but with an originality of conception, a vividness of portraiture, and a raciness of expression, that are most admirable and striking, and that are not surpassed by any writer of the present day. They stamp the author as a bold, independent thinker, as possessing a clear insight into the intricate workings of the human heart, and capable of ranging from a vein of singular quaintness and humour to a flow of most gentle but touching pathos. His tale of ' *Rab and his Friends*,' which has been widely circulated in a separate form, which has been translated into German by Mrs Montague, and sent forth with attractive pictorial embellishments, from the pencil of Sir George Harvey, Sir Noel Paton, and other distinguished artists, has fascinated many a heart, and drawn a tear from many an eye. It is to his connexion with Biggar that we owe this charming tale. He was solicited, through the medium of his uncle-in-law, the Rev. Dr David Smith of the North United Presbyterian Church, Biggar, to deliver a lecture before the members of the Athenæum of that town. He consented, but, like many persons in a similar predicament, he felt a difficulty in selecting a suitable topic for discussion. He at length fixed on the story of Ailie, a story that had made a profound impression on his own heart, and over which he had often thoughtfully pondered. He sat down to his desk one midsummer evening at midnight, and by four o'clock next morning he had committed it to paper. ' I read it to the Biggar folk,' he says, ' in the school-house, very frightened, and felt I was reading it ill, and their honest faces intimated as much in their affectionate and puzzled looks.' When it appeared in a printed form it took hold at once of the sympathies of the public, and contributed greatly to extend his literary popularity.

Dr Brown, after the reformation effected a few years ago in the management of the University of Edinburgh, had the honour of being appointed one of the Assessors of the University Court, by W. E. Gladstone, Esq., then Rector, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, and held this office for six years. This appointment was a proof of the distinguished literary position which he had achieved, and at the same time was a graceful tribute from the grandson of a Biggar man to a native of the good town.

A little further down the main street was the Tron-knowe, where the public weighing beam stood, and where all weighable ware, such as butter, cheese, lint, etc., were exposed for sale. From this spot the engraved view of the town was taken. A little below was the Cross-knowe, a small eminence twenty or thirty feet in height, crowned with the Cross, and forming a remarkable feature in the Main Street of the town. The Cross had a basis of solid masonry, about four feet in height; and from the centre of the platform above rose the shaft, which was without ornament of any kind. The Cross stone had a hole in its centre, and the date 1632; and the apex, which was square, had vertical dials on its four sides, and the initials 'J. E. W.,' John Earl of Wigton, with the date 1694. The oldest of these dates, viz., 1632, is not understood to be the period at which the Cross was at first erected. It can hardly be doubted that a Cross existed here at least from the time at which Biggar was created a burgh of barony, viz., in 1451. The dates, no doubt, referred to the time at which the Cross was rebuilt, or at which the stones on which they are inscribed were erected on the shaft, in place of others that had fallen into decay, or had been accidentally overturned and broken. At the Cross, state documents, acts of the Bailies' Court, and the different fairs, were proclaimed by tuck of drum; and here the juveniles met for amusement, and the townsmen to discuss the topics of the day. Here, on market and fair days, assembled a motley crowd of people from the country round, to transact business; while the sacred symbol above their heads reminded them of a leading point in their religious belief, and warned them to be candid and honest in their dealings, and to cultivate peace and good-will with their fellow-men. Here, in seasons of hard frost, the youths

of both sexes met to enjoy the exciting sport of sliding down the hurley-hacket, and then no little skill and daring were exhibited, and very animated and tumultuous scenes took place. Here, during the time of the great Continental war, blazed many a bonfire, composed of coals, brushwood, and tar barrels, to celebrate the successive victories of the British arms. The rollicking youths of the town were not content with burning the fires on the Knowe itself, but they hoisted the blazing faggots to the top of the pedestal of the Cross, and thus the shaft was split and shattered by the intense heat, and had ultimately to be taken down. The cross-stone and apex were, however, preserved, and in the autumn of 1860, were built into the south gable of the New Corn Exchange, with a stone containing the inscription, "Part of the old Cross of Biggar."

The pedestal, and the knowe on which it stood, were removed in 1823, to make room for a hotel, which at that time was projected on the Tontine system, but was never proceeded with. The removal of the Cross-knowe, so prominent a feature in the Main Street of the town, and so much identified with the recreations of the young and the loungings of the old, furnished a theme of great lamentation to the Biggar poets. James Affleck composed a dirge, in which he made the Knowe bewail its fate in very doleful terms, and preach a sermon on the changeable character of all sublunary things. Remembering with melancholy satisfaction the scenes which it had witnessed, it exclaims :—

'I've been the haunt on market days,
The haunt o' monie a fair,—
The lads and lasses, men and wives,—
To me wad a' repair ;

'And blythesome bairnies on my sides
Wi' pleasure they wad row,
While worn-out age wad station keep
On Biggar Auld Cross-knowe.'

It ended with this bit of serious moralizing :—

'I've served my time, and must away ;
Then why should earth repine ?
Vain mortals ! view your coming fate,
It may be seen in mine.

‘ Before old age shall press you sore,
 Still wiser may ye grow,
 Lay this to heart,—You must depart,
 Like Biggar Auld Cross-knowe.’

The most effective poem on the removal of the Cross-knowe was, however, composed by Mr Robert Rae, a native of Biggar, and son of Thomas Rae, a mason in that town. Mr Rae was born in 1805, and at an early age removed, with his father and the other members of his family, to the west of Scotland. While still a boy, he returned to Biggar, and lived some time with his uncle, Robert Pairman, merchant. In his fourteenth year he went to Glasgow, and filled various situations.

In 1829, while resident in that city, he published a small volume of Poems, which met with a ready sale, particularly in Biggar, as he was there well known, and several of his pieces had a reference to that locality, such as “To Scotland,” “To the Morning Star,” “The Flower of the Clyde,” “Hillrigs Jean,” and “Wallace’s Address to his Army after the Battle of Biggar.” At the time when this volume was published he was in his twenty-fourth year. Most of the poems which it contained, as he tells us in his preface, were composed some years earlier, and, therefore, were produced at a time when his mental powers were immature, and his taste not fully formed. Some of them consequently display considerable rawness and want of polish, but the greater portion of them are very creditable effusions. They have a terseness and vigour, a richness of imagery, and a variety of versification, that rank them greatly above many hundred publications of the same class that have issued from the Scottish press, and been evoked by the genius and success of the Ayrshire Ploughman. Mr Rae had evidently a fondness for contemplating martial glory and deeds of horror, and some of his pieces on these subjects are very spirited and impressive. We know little of his life, public or private. We cannot say whether

‘ Chill penury repressed his noble rage,
 And froze the genial current of his soul ;’

whether his thoughts were entirely engrossed with other and more remunerative pursuits ; or whether

‘Thoughtless follies laid him low
And stain’d his name;’

but we regret that one who, in his first work, afforded indication that he was capable of giving to the world something that posterity would not willingly let die, should, in after years, have produced little to extend his poetical reputation, or augment his pecuniary resources.

About 1852, Mr Rae went to London, and obtained a situation in an extensive mercantile house. It was from London that he addressed the verses on Biggar Auld Cross-knowe to his cousin, Dr Pairman of Biggar. Mr Rae died at Glasgow in the summer of 1861. As his poem on the auld Cross-knowe is a very favourable specimen of his poetic powers, as it contains many local allusions very happily expressed, and is pervaded by a fine genial spirit of affectionate attachment to scenes dear to every native of Biggar, we cannot forbear giving a considerable portion of it, more especially as it has never before been published. It is entitled—

‘A YAMMERIN’ AULD MAN’S LAMENT FOR BIGGAR AULD
CORSE-KNOWE.

- ‘O waes me for the auld Corse-knowe;
Twice forty years hae come and gane
Sin’ first I sprauchilt up its browe,
A wee bit thochtless, happy wean.
Noo a’ day lang I sit and grane,
And scart wi’ grief my lyart powe,
To think there’s neither yird nor stane
O what was ance the auld Corse-knowe.
- ‘We grue to read hoo Vandals bar’d
Their thirsty swurds owre auncient Rome;
And yet the heathen blackguards spar’d
Aneugh to mark its dreadfu’ doom.
But waur than Vandals hae been here
(Deil rax their thrapples in a tow),
Wha left nae wee bit object near
To tell whaur stood the auld Corse-knowe.
- ‘Hoo strange that scenes we lo’ed when young
Should sere auld age wi’ pleasure fill!
The wud wi’ hips and hazels hung,
The wee burn dancin’ down the hill,

The clatter o' the auld grey mill,
 That peers owre Biggar's grassy howe,
 Were dear to me ; but dearer still,
 My heart's delight,—the auld Corse-knowe.

' I've wander'd mony a far aff track,
 In mony a sweet wild spot I've been ;
 But aye my heart gaed yernin' back
 To bairntime's ever-hallow'd scene.
 Whaur Hartree Hills, wi' simmer green,
 Dear Bizzyberry's rugged browe,
 And Tintock, frae his azure screen,
 A' smiled upon the auld Corse-knowe.

' For O ! a thousand memories kin'
 Roun' that dear hillock ever clung ;
 And aye its sounds o' auld langsyne
 (Sweet sounds !) owre a' my wandrin's hung.
 The lowin' starns, that nightly flung
 Their glory owre the gloamin's browe,
 Aye seem'd tae me as if they sung,
 " There's nae spot like the auld Corse-knowe."

' In yon kirkyard, whaur, glimmerin' grey,
 Heidstanes rise thick 'mang hillocks green,
 Lies ae kin' chiel,* wha shar'd the wae
 That brings the draps to my auld een.
 His limner's han' and fancy keen
 Did mak the ready canvas glowe
 Wi' weel-kent groups, ilk face a freen',
 A' clusterin' roun' the auld Corse-knowe.

' For mony a hundred years it stood,
 And nicht hae seen sax thousand mair,
 Defyin' time, and storm, and flood,
 To lay its auld foundations bare.
 Oure fathers lo'ed to linger there,
 And see their wee anes roun' them rowe ;
 But a' are gane, and never mair
 Wi' joy shall ring the auld Corse-knowe.

' Hech ! Sirs ! the cronies o' my youth,—
 Affleck, that kept us in a roar ;
 The Fiddler, wi' his uuco drouth,
 Can't hae anither fortnicht's splore ;

* John Pairman, artist, the poet's nncle, who painted the sketch of the Cross-knowe from which the engraving in this volume is taken.

The Elder cocks his thooms no more,
 Nor Pinkles heckles at his tow !
 Man ! Biggar's no like days o' yore,
 It wants mair than the auld Corse-knowe.

' Yet aye I hear thro' memory's spell,
 At dead o' nicht come down the lum,
 The tinkle o' Saunt Mary's bell,
 Or tuck o' auld John Hilson's * drum ;
 Syne fancy leads me back to some
 Tremendous hurleyhacket rowe,
 When " Roarin' Dillie," lang since dumb,
 Gaed thund'rin' doon the auld Corse-knowe.

' That rulin' power, auld Bailie Cree,
 Aye cried the fairs wi' loud huzza ;
 An' faith ! nae blateness show'd, whan he
 To prick-the-garters gaed the law.
 Nae mace had he, but baton braw,
 The guid to fend, the bad to cowe ;
 Nae chair o' state in gilded ha',
 His rostrum was the auld Corse-knowe.'

' Oure farmers noo, ilk market day,
 Like donert nowte gang up and down,
 And Biggar Fair and Whupman Play
 Are but a vain and empty soun'.
 A bonfire still may licht the toun,
 But ah ! nae mair its sacred lowe
 Can burn the auld year out, or croun'
 The young ane, on the auld Corse-knowe.

' Noo stoiterin' doun life's lanesome brae,
 Nae langer aught can pleasure gie ;

* John Hilson was baron-officer, town drummer, gamekeeper, parish butcher, and tyler to the Biggar Lodge of Free Operatives. His drum, for half a century, was heard in Biggar street in the morning at six o'clock, and in the evening at eight, and on every New Year's Day it resounded within the walls of all the principal dwellings, when he came to demand a gratuity for his services. He was a keen fisher, and was often seen plying his rod in the waters of the Clyde. He died upwards of forty years ago, and his Elegy was written by the town poet, James Affleck. John Hilson's father also held the situation of baron-officer, and his name occurs several times in connection with the transactions of the Baron Bailie's Court previous to the middle of last century. John Hilson was succeeded in his offices by a person from Cumbernauld, called James Brownlee, whom James Affleck, in an eulogium on his merits as a constable and a sportsman, characterised as the "Velvetcen Hero," in allusion to the dress which he usually wore.

For a' I lo'ed hao passed away,
 Like ripples oore the changefu' sea.
 But sune I'll lay me doun tac dee,
 The yird will hap my weary powe,
 And nane sall ever mourn for me
 As I've dune for the auld Corse-knowe.

'But far abune yon murky lift,
 A ward o' sinless beauty lies,
 Whaur frien'ships, scattered here like drift,
 Shall bloom beneath unclouded skies,
 There 'mang the hills o' Paradise,
 Or where its gladsome rivers rowe,
 Rejoicing in immortal ties,
 I'll weep nae mair the auld Corse-knowe.'

The following very racy sketch of the Cross-knowe and the Hurley-hacket was inserted some years ago in an Edinburgh journal, and has very much the appearance of having come from the pen of the author of "Rab and his Friends."

"There was—'Ah for the change 'twixt now and then!'—an institution in Biggar as peculiar to it as is the Godiva procession to Coventry—the '*Hurley-hacket*!' It has ceased for ever, because its possibility is no more. Forty years ago, the *Corse Knowe*, or Cross Hill, was as essential a feature in Biggar as St Paul's in London, St Regulus' Tower in St Andrews, the Campanile in Venice, or our own Castle here. Biggar is no more Biggar as it was than the Apollo would be himself without his nose. This *knowe* was in the centre of the town, and middle of the street, and the Market Cross was on its top; and when there was a hard frost, it was the pleasure of the entire town, young and old, to go mad, and take to hurling themselves down the frozen slopes, 'keepin' the puddin' het,' in an astonishing way. As were the Saturnalia to old, and the Carnival to present Rome, so was this short insanity to the staid town—its consummation being the *Hurley-hacket*, a sort of express train, headed by one or two first-raters, "perfect deevils," who could descend the steep standing, like Hamlet in 'To be or not to be,' calm, and with their arms crossed, and their feet close heel-and-toe, shod with iron; one fellow was generally the leader, straight as an arrow, shooting the rapids, and yielding, like a consummate rider, to the perilous ups and downs; behind him came the lads and lasses,

scudding on their *hunkers*; then their elders on their *creepies*, turned upside down; and then the ruck. Away it swept, yelling and swaying to-and-fro, like a huge dragon, lithe and supple—‘swinging the horror’ of its multitudinous tail—down across the street, heedless of everything; running, it may be, right into Mr Pairman’s shop, or down on the other side into William Johnstone’s byre, and past the tail of his utmost *coo*. Then the confusion and scrimmage, and doubling of everybody up at the ending!—that was the glory, like emptying an express train into a ‘free toom.’ All this is gone, the Cross-knowe is levelled, the Hurley-hacket is unknown—no longer flames down the steep with half the town, and, it may be, the minister and the dominie secretly at its tail, with a fragment of a tar barrel flourishing and blazing at its head. It was worthy of the pen of him who sang of Anster Fair.”

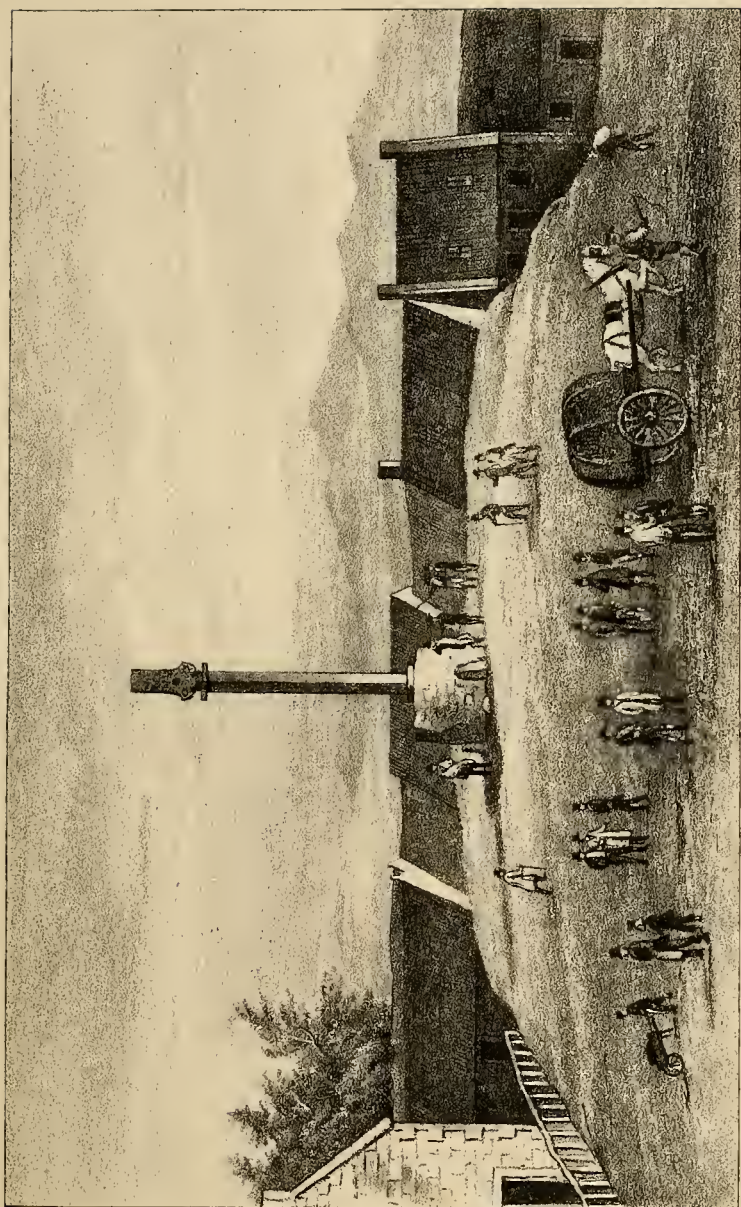
. One of the most interesting events in the history of Biggar is the visit of Captain Grose in 1789. On that occasion the “fine, fat, fodge wight” was accompanied by Captain Robert Riddel of Glenriddel, one of the heroes who flourish in Burns’ famous ballad of the “Whistle,” and by Grose’s servant, Mr Thomas Cocking, who was familiarly known by the name of “Tom,” and who, like his master, had “an unco slight o’ cauk and keel.” It is fortunate that an account of the visit, written by Capt. Riddel, is still extant, and is carefully preserved in one of the five volumes of the Captain’s manuscripts now in possession of that prince of antiquaries, Mr Sim. They set out in a chaise from Friars Carse on Friday the 15th of May 1789, and travelling by Drumlanrig, Sanquhar, Wanlochhead, Leadhills, Lanington, and Coulter, arrived at Biggar on the afternoon of Sabbath the 17th, and took up their abode at the Wigton Arms, then kept by Mr. Wilson. They had made sketches of various landscapes, gentlemen’s seats, old castles, &c., by the way; and Capt. Riddel being much pleased with the prospect from one of the windows of the Inn, induced “Tom” to make a drawing of it, which is preserved in the volumes referred to, and embraces the Cross, the Cross-knowe, the ruins of the Old Tolbooth, the row of thatched houses that ran downwards from the west side of the Knowe, and the distant landscape, including Hartree House and Hartree hills. On Monday morning the chaise was yoked, and

forth they went to Boghall Castle, where Capt. Riddel made what he calls "an eye draught of the ground plan of the Castle," also still preserved, and Capt. Grose took a sketch of the buildings, which he published in his work on the Antiquities of Scotland. "We returned to Biggar," says Captain Riddel, "and breakfasted, and then sent for the bellman, and went to the church, which is a building of great antiquity and singular curiosity." After examining the interior of the Church, inspecting the holy water jug, &c., they repaired to the manse, then occupied by the Rev. William Watson, and from one of the windows Capt. Grose made a drawing of the church, which was also published in his Antiquities of Scotland. The party left Biggar at 12 o'clock that same day, and proceeded by Noblehouse to Edinburgh, where Capt. Riddel was to attend the General Assembly, as representative elder from the Presbytery of Dumfries.

From time immemorial a bonfire was wont to blaze on the top of the Cross-knowe on the last night of the year. The custom was called burning the old year out, and most likely had its origin in remote superstitious times.* Down to the year 1836, the old year had always been burnt out on the 31st December, O.S. On the 31st day of December, N.S., of that year, the town drummer traversed the streets of Biggar and Westraw, and, by tuck of drum, made the following announcement: "Oho yes! Oho yes! Oho yes! This is to give notice that I have been desired to proclaim, that though London is big, yet Biggar is bigger, and that New Year's day will be held here to-morrow." The change accordingly took place, and has ever since been adhered to. It is a proof of the tenacious manner in which people cling to old customs, that though the Act for changing the style in Great Britain was passed in 1752, in the reign of George II., it was not adopted in Biggar, so far as the festival of the New Year was concerned, for eighty-three years afterwards.

A sketch of the Cross and the Cross-knowe, as they appeared when standing entire in 1807, was painted by Mr John Pairman, artist. His sketch, which was long in the possession of his brother Robert, merchant, Biggar, was pre-

* An attempt is now being made to set aside this time-honoured custom, on the ground that it is injurious if not dangerous to the neighbouring buildings.



BIGGAR AULD CORSE KNOWE.

FROM A SKETCH BY THE LATE M^R. JOHN FAIRMAN.

1807

Schreck & Son.

Litho. Edin.

sented by that gentleman to Mr Sim of Coulter. The engraving of it which adorns this volume will, no doubt, be duly appreciated by the inhabitants of Biggar; as to the old it will recall a spot associated with many youthful recollections, and to the young it will present a feature in the town which has for many years disappeared, but which must often, in their hearing, have been referred to and described. The figures with which the artist has peopled the Cross-knowe were intended to represent various worthies, who were wont to frequent it on market days at the time the sketch was made. Among these may be mentioned, Colonel Dickson of Hartree; James Gladstone of Wester Toftcombs; John Paterson, farmer, Easter Toftcombs; William Lindsay, meal-dealer, Perryflats; John Minto, carrier, Biggar; David Loch, horse-dealer, Biggar; Mr Dickson of Baddingsgal, commonly called "Old Barringsgal;" Robert Tait, Spittal Muir, commonly known by the title of "Sir Robert;" and James Stodart, Covington Hillhead.

Immediately at the back of the Cross-knowe, as shown in the engraving, stood the Market House, or the "Meal House," as it was generally called. What sort of building it was in former times, it is not easy to say; but latterly it was a house of one storey, and had a most melancholy look. It was opened every Thursday, the market-day, for the transaction of business, and occasionally on other days for the sale of various commodities. Internally it was most uninviting, and was greatly infested with rats and mice, which rendered it quite unsafe to deposit meal or grain within its walls. The rats and mice were old colonists. Some fifty years ago, Affleck, the town poet, penned a *jeu d'esprit*, which he termed an "Address of the Rats and Mice to two disputants (Nicol Porteous, toll-keeper, and William Brechan, baker), who had disagreed about a bargain of oatmeal, which was deposited by an order of the Sheriff in the Meal House, Biggar, until the plea then pending should be settled." This was a glorious arrangement for the rats and mice, as they were thus enabled to live for a time in the midst of abundance. This building had long been felt to be nearly useless; and it was in so dismal and dilapidated a condition as to be a discredit to the place. A number of the leading men in the town and neighbourhood, therefore, resolved to raise funds by shares, to erect a Corn

Exchange of a more elegant and commodious description. The site of the old Meal House, with some adjoining ground, and also the right to levy the market customs, were readily obtained, at a moderate price, from the late Colonel John Fleming, the proprietor. Plans were procured from David M'Gibbon, Esq., architect, Edinburgh; and the execution of the work was intrusted to Messrs Jaek and White, builders, Edinburgh. The foundation-stone was laid with masonic honours on the 24th of August 1860, by W. E. Hope Vere, Esq. of Craigie Hall and Blackwood, Provincial Grand Master Mason of the Upper Ward of Clydesdale, assisted by deputations of masonic brethren from twelve different lodges. The completion of the building was celebrated by a public dinner, which took place on Thursday, the 14th of November 1861, and was presided over by Sir Edward Colebrooke, Bart., M.P., while A. Baillie Cochrane, Esq., M.P., acted as erouper. At a meeting of the shareholders held a week afterwards—viz., on the 21st November—a code of regulations for conducting the business of the market, along with a table of admission rates, and market and storage dues, was agreed to, and the general business of the Exchange was opened in a formal manner.

The Exchange is a chaste and tasteful building, in the Elizabethan style of architecture, and forms a great ornament to the street, as will be observed from the engraving of the High Street given in this work. A tower springing from the north-west corner contains a clock, which is of no small use to the town. The basement storey is devoted to storage purposes; and above it is the large hall, lighted from the roof, sixty-two feet by thirty-five, for the disposal of grain and seeds; and in the higher part of the front of the building are a spacious committee-room and a consulting-room. Since its opening it has been largely patronised. On Market days it is well attended by the agriculturists in the surrounding district, and a very considerable amount of business is transacted, certainly with much more comfort and satisfaction than in former times. It has also been extensively used for balls, soirees, concerts, public meetings, dramatic entertainments, &c., and in these respects has conferred a great boon on the town, in furnishing facilities for amusement and instruction which it formerly did

not possess. In the same quarter is John's Loan, the entrance to which is observable in the engraving of the Crossknowe, the new Subscription School, and the Police Station, erected in 1860. A little farther down from the Corn Exchange are the spacious premises of the Royal Bank, conspicuous in the engraving of the High Street; and at some distance onwards are Malcolm's Well, and the South United Presbyterian Church and Manse.

Immediately adjoining the Church is the Laboratory of Dr Robert Pairman, one of the medical practitioners of Biggar. As Mr Pairman is the only one of the Biggar doctors who has distinguished himself as an author, we deem him entitled to a brief notice. He was born at Biggar on the 23d November 1818. His father was Mr Robert Pairman, who for half a century was a successful merchant in Biggar, who was distinguished for his integrity, his public usefulness, and his calm and Christian deportment, and who died on the 11th March 1867, in the eighty-fourth year of his age. The Doctor received the rudiments of his education at Biggar Parish School, then taught by the late Mr Richard Scott. At the age of twelve, he was sent to a classical seminary in Edinburgh, at which he studied for four years. He matriculated as a medical student in the University of Edinburgh in November 1834, and finished his curriculum, and obtained his diploma, in 1838. At the close of that session, he carried off several very distinguished prizes: first, one of two medals awarded by Professor Lizars to the two most distinguished students of his class for proficiency in surgery; second, the highest prize in the class of Dr George A. Borthwick, Lecturer on Clinical Medicine at the Royal Infirmary; and third, the first prize in the *Materia Medica* Class, of nearly two hundred students, conducted conjointly by Dr J. Argyle Robertson, and Dr W. Sellar, F.R.C.P., Lecturers at the Argyle Square School of Medicine.

On leaving the medical schools with these distinguished honours, he immediately settled in his native town, and commenced practice. Amid the toils and disquietudes of the life of a country surgeon, he has found leisure to compose several valuable little works. The first published in 1848, is entitled "Sceptical Doubts Examined." This work is in the form of a dialogue, and states, with great plainness and per-

spicuity, and with many happy illustrations, the deistical doubts which are apt to arise in the mind of a young and ardent inquirer ; and the telling and conclusive solution which can be given to these doubts by a person of learning, experience, and religious convictions. His next work was a popular "Exposition of Asiatic Cholera," which he delivered before the Biggar Athenæum, on the 20th March 1856. This treatise contains a clear elucidation of the manifestations and effects of this mysterious disease, the proofs which can be adduced in support of the theory that it has its origin in a damp and foul condition of the atmosphere, and the methods which ought to be adopted for its prevention. This work called forth very hearty commendations, both from medical men and the public press. A third work of Dr Pairman's is a series of four tracts on "Fever Poisons in our Streets and Homes," which were composed at the request of the Glasgow City Mission. They have been extensively distributed, not merely by the Society for which they were originally written, but by other kindred institutions. For instance, the Ladies' Sanitary Association of Aberdeen, in the year 1859, circulated 2000 copies. Several passages from these tracts, that appeared in a work by Miss Brewster, having attracted the attention of the Committee of Council on Education, J. S. Lawrie, Esq., one of the officials connected with that Committee, addressed a communication to the author in 1858, requesting permission to make extracts for educational purposes. To this request the Doctor readily acceded, his great object in composing them having been to lend his aid to the movement for the instruction and temporal elevation of the poorer classes of society. This application must have been a source of gratification to the worthy Doctor as well as to his friends, as it showed that his labours were recognized and appreciated in the very highest quarters. The tracts are written in the Doctor's usual clear, shrewd, earnest manner. They are divested of all perplexing technicalities, so that all classes can read and understand them with ease. They treat of themes of the highest importance to the health, happiness, and social amelioration of the community, and therefore deserve to be scattered broadcast among all ranks, the rich as well as the poor. A little below Dr Pairman's establishment is the large building of the Commercial Bank erected in 1833.

CHAPTER IV.

The Town of Biggar (*Continued.*)

RETURNING up the town, we have, on the other side of the street, nearly opposite Silver-knowes, the tenement, with one end to the street, once occupied by James Affleck, tailor and poet. James Affleck was born at Drummelzier on the 8th of September 1776. Owing to the poverty of his parents, he was kept but a short time at school, and went early to employment with the neighbouring farmers. He was then bound as an apprentice to Gilbert Tait, a tailor in his native village. He served with him three and a half years, and was chiefly employed, as was then the almost universal custom of country tailors, in sewing in the houses of his master's customers, having, as he said, 'not unfrequently to travel six or eight miles in a wintry morning, and work by candle-light for an hour or two before I received a morsel of breakfast, often wetted to the ankles in the morasses and rivulets which intersected our almost trackless way.' After the expiry of his apprenticeship, he resided a short time, first, at Netherton of Crawfordjohn, and then at the town of Ayr, and, last of all, set up his staff as a master tailor at Biggar, in the year 1793. In 1802 he published a volume of poetry, which sold readily, and brought him some pecuniary reward. He issued a second volume of poems in 1817, with a portrait from a painting by Mr John Pairman; and in 1818 he published a poem in two parts, entitled, "The Waes of Whisky." A posthumous volume of his poems, with a biographical sketch, was published in 1836 by his son John, who, at the same time, inserted some poetical productions of his own.

Affleck's merits as a poet do not rank high. The divine afflatus was wholly wanting. His poems are very indifferent

prose turned into rhyme. It would be difficult to select a single verse from his published works, and hold it up as a specimen of vigorous expression, original thought, or poetic inspiration. His poems, nevertheless, are interesting, as during a period of forty years his muse was ever busy with all sorts of local incidents, and, in fact, no event of any consequence transpired in the town or neighbourhood which did not evoke from him some poetic effusion. He was of an eminently social temperament. Shortly after his settlement at Biggar, he was initiated into the mysteries of freemasonry in the Lodge of Biggar Free Operatives, and took a great interest and pleasure in the meetings and festivities of the brethren, always contributing not a little to their harmony and conviviality by the singing or recitation of his own productions, and, as chaplain, invoking a blessing on refreshments with such felicity of expression, and such manifestations of devotional feeling, as never failed to call forth the admiration of all present. He excelled in conversation, and was full of anecdotes and shrewd observations on life and manners. He was a great favourite in all the houses in which he was in the habit of being employed in the way of his profession. He made the winter evenings seem short, with his stories, his recitations, and remarks, and was commonly to be seen with a group of anxious listeners, to whom the words of Goldsmith were applicable:—

‘ And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew.’

He was an excellent tradesman, and never allowed his conversational and poetical displays, nor the cultivation of the muse, to prevent him from producing a good day's work. It is to be lamented that in his latter days he became somewhat irregular in his habits. Intoxicating drink, which has mastered many a strong man, acquired, at times, too great ascendancy over him, and perhaps had some effect in laying him prematurely in the grave. He died on the 8th of September 1835, in the 59th year of his age, and was interred in the churchyard of Biggar.

A little farther down, and very near the spot at which the engraved view of the town begins, is an old house, once occupied by Richard Johnston and his spouse, Nannie Muir, and subsequently by Mr Matthew Robertson, grocer. This house,

or rather, perhaps, one which in former times stood on the same spot, was called the Tower or Fortalice. How it acquired this name, it is impossible now to say; but the probability is, that, as it stood in a commanding position, it was a fortified building for the defence of the town, or it may have been a stronghold of the Lords of the Manor at an earlier period than the castle of Boghall itself. The Tower House, and a half borrow land connected with it, belonged at one time to a Luke Tervat, in Toftcombs. On the 11th of July 1659, it was bequeathed by James Brown, merchant, Biggar, to the Rev. Alexander Livingstone, minister of Biggar, and Alexander Hay, in Stane, and others, then elders in the parish of Biggar, and their successors in office. The annual rent drawn from this property was, for a number of years, L.12 Scots, which was expended in aid of the funds for support of the poor. In 1774 it was sold by the kirk-session, and ultimately fell into the hands of Richard Johnston and his spouse, Agnes Muir. After this period the Tower House witnessed more strange scenes than any other house in Biggar. It was for many years used as a lodging-house by its landlady, and was, during that time, patronised by all the 'randy gangrel bodies' that frequented the Upper Ward. A score of teapots round Nannie's kitchen-fire on a morning was no uncommon spectacle. Drinking, dancing, and fighting at times, prevailed, though, in general, Nannie ruled her hostelry with a commanding hand. Had a Burns been admitted to its apartments during a winter's evening, he would have witnessed many a scene similar to those which he has so graphically described in his 'Jolly Beggars.'

Richard was a quiet inoffensive sort of man, and in his latter days much rather preferred to take service with a farmer in the capacity of a cow herd than to live among chapmen, tinklers, and beggars. Nannie on the contrary was strong, active, and outspoken, but withal very frugal and industrious. She was one of the best spinners with the distaff in the country side, and was perhaps the last person in Biggar that was to be seen twining out a thread from this primitive implement of domestic industry. When resident in the earlier part of her life at Coultermains she manufactured many a "braw" linen web. The customer weavers were fond of

working to her, not only because her yarn was of excellent quality, but because when they went home with the cloth they were always promptly paid, and regaled with a good supper of buttered sowens, then a common and favourite dish in the Upper Ward.

Behind the Tower House on the back road still stands a small thatched house in which, forty years ago, dwelt Mr Robert Davidson, who was one of the notables of Biggar, and who has been honoured with a notice by the accomplished and gifted authoress of "Our Village." About the commencement of the present century he was parochial schoolmaster at Skirling, and then had as one of his pupils Mr. James Howe the celebrated animal painter, and son of the Rev. William Howe minister of the parish. Mr Davidson was reckoned among the best penmen in the district, and one of his usual feats with the pen was a distinct transcription of the Lord's Prayer within the compass of a shilling. He took great delight in painting the names of people on the fly-leaves of their Bibles and other books, garnished with representations of flowers, beasts, &c. ; and used to boast that it was by exercises of this kind that he laid the foundation of the wonderful skill in animal painting to which young Howe afterwards attained, and which, to the great annoyance of his father, he was wont to exercise on all the books and papers on which he could lay his hands. A collection of his rough but curious sketches is now in the repositories of Mr Sim at Coultermains.

When Mr Davidson retired from his office of schoolmaster at Skirling he took up his abode at Biggar where he gave instructions to a few female scholars, who attended the sewing school of Miss Jeanie Johnston, his relative and housekeeper. His attention, however, was almost wholly devoted to fishing. Every day he was to be seen with his plaid across his shoulders, his basket on his back, his fishing rod in his hand, and a great profusion of lines, hooks, and flies twisted round his hat, jogging on to Skirling Burn, Biggar Water, or the Clyde. His mode of fishing was peculiar. He used no finesse in wiling a trout that had caught his bait out of its native element, but he pulled it up with a prodigious swing over his head, and landed it on *terra firma* at once. The consequence was that he very often lost his fish by its escaping from the hook

during the operation, or a portion of his tackle, when, instead of a trout it had got fixed on some obstruction lying in the stream. One of the most amusing "takes" he ever had, occurred one day at the Clyde. He was busy casting his line into the water somewhat in the same mode as a person thrashing corn with a flail, when a teal duck, which had been ensconced under a bank by the margin of the stream, was startled and flew off, but was caught by the hooks of the industrious dominie. The fowl fluttered and flapped, but he held on, and as his tackle, on that occasion, was good, he drew it to hand, unhooked it, and placed it in his basket. He fished no more that day, but returned to Biggar more uplifted than if he had captured the largest fish in the river.

On the same side of the street are the Elphinston Arms Inn, where the omnibus is stationed in the engraving; and the Wigton Arms Inn. Nearly adjoining stood an old tenement which projected into the street, and which forty years ago was partly occupied by the bookbinding establishment of the late William Borthwick, a worthy who, in order to avenge some fancied wrong, fired a gun at William Gall, a cobbler, as he stood at the mouth of the Canongate Close. William fell down as if he had been killed; but as the gun was merely charged with powder, he was more terrified than hurt. Borthwick immediately flung down the gun and fled; and was with difficulty overtaken and brought back to his weeping wife and family. This incident gave rise to a capital song, which found its way into print, and became for a season highly popular. This reference to gunpowder brings to recollection another incident which took place many years ago in an apartment of that same tenement, and which had very nearly removed it at an earlier period than it was. A neighbouring householder had been for sometime greatly annoyed by the disappearance of peats from his peat-stack. Being unable to detect the depredator, he bored a large hole in a peat, and having charged it with gunpowder, deposited the peat in a part of the stack where it was most likely to be carried off. The occupier of the apartment referred to unfortunately laid hands on the dangerous combustible, which she conveyed to her domicile, and placed on the fire. She then sat down to warm her feet before going to bed, when the peat blew up with a tremend-

ous explosion, and sent the depredator heels over head into the floor. A report immediately ran through the town that Bookie's establishment, like the Kirk o' Field of old, had been blown into the air with gunpowder.

In the small lane which, from some connexion perhaps with the Canons of Biggar Kirk, is called the Canongate Close, forty years ago dwelt one of the town fiddlers, Mr Thomas Davidson, a brother of Mr Robert Davidson already mentioned. He was not only a musician, but a tailor, weaver, optician, musical instrument maker, and philosopher. Two of his favourite tunes were the 'Button Hole' and the 'Hen's March,' which he played with comical grimaces and rare effect. In his old age, he tried to learn to perform on the flute, but he complained that he constantly lost the blast; and therefore he invented a curious apparatus for applying wind to the instrument with greater ease than by the usual mode of sounding it by blowing into the embouchure. He could thus sound the instrument, but the notes wanted the delicacy and precision produced by the ordinary mode of playing; so in the end he abandoned the task, as beyond the powers which he then possessed. The prospective glasses of his manufacture were primitive looking articles, but, as he alleged, of great power. On one occasion, when trying a new glass on the Cross-knowe, he exclaimed to a bystander, "Bless me! if the magnafeein' poor is nae sae prodigious that I actuallee observe a bumbee pickin' a thistle oot o' its fit on Tintock tap." Being aware of the property of putrid matter to produce animal life, he made repeated efforts to breed particular kinds of insects, but of course always failed to effect his purpose. He constructed an apparatus, the principal parts of which were two large fans, by which he expected to fly through the air. This not only proved a failure also, but like the Friar of Tungland he sustained some bodily injury when making an attempt at flight from the house top. In his philosophical disquisitions he sometimes manifested a leaning in favour of the doctrine of the metempsychosis or transmigration of souls. He would at times say, "It's a hard thought, but it may come to pass that some day or ither I'll be an auld cuddy chewing thistles at the back o' a dyke." Had he lived in the days of James IV., he could, with his uncommon

tunes, his curious instruments, and his ingenious speculations, have afforded that mirthful monarch rare entertainment during his repeated visits to Biggar.

Almost adjoining the Canongate Close are the premises belonging to the Freemason's Society, and next to them stood a house which, during a part of last century, was occupied as a change-house. It is memorable from an incident which took place in it on the afternoon of a fair day in 1788. Two individuals who happened to meet in it on that occasion, were J. M'Ghie, farmer, Mosside; and George Paterson, an old soldier, and at the time a labourer. Mr M'Ghie had been in the habit of employing Paterson on his farm, and it appears that, in the course of their transactions, some misunderstanding had arisen. The quarrel was resumed over their potatoes, and was carried to such a height that a scuffle ensued, and M'Ghie was laid prostrate on the floor. At this juncture M'Ghie's son James came in, and seeing his father maltreated by Paterson, seized a pair of tongs, and struck Paterson so severe a blow on the head, that he was instantly deprived of life. Young M'Ghie was shortly afterwards apprehended, committed to prison, and tried before the Circuit Court at Glasgow. The principal witness for the prosecution was Mr John Craig, a remarkably shrewd and intelligent man, and landlord of the inn in which the murder was committed, whose evidence gave great satisfaction to the Court. He emitted a full and clear account of the transaction, and in answer to a question put by one of the judges if the tongs in Court was the actual instrument employed in the murder, said that before delivering them up he had put a private mark on them, which he described. When examined the mark was found, and the Court complimented Mr Craig on his caution, foresight, and intelligence. Lord Elphinstone and others gave exculpatory evidence, and the consequence was, that M'Ghie was sentenced to receive what, even at the present day, would be regarded as a lenient punishment, viz., banishment for a few years furth of Scotland. He went to England, and after his return became tenant of the farm of Langlees, and finally emigrated to America.

A little farther down the street is the building which was once used as the North United Presbyterian Church and which was converted into dwelling houses in 1866. In front of it,

facing the street, stood the old Burgher Manse, taken down in 1865, and a new edifice erected on its site. The old house was occupied by the Rev. John Low during his ministry—a period of forty-three years. Here he reared a large family, and here he entertained many of the early clerical worthies of the Secession Church. Mr Low was a pious and devout man, but unfortunately he laboured under the infirmity of an irritable temper, which sometimes led him to commit acts, and place him in a position not altogether compatible with clerical decorum. One of the best remembered instances of this unhappy temperament was an assault which he made on Robert Forsyth, the Parish Church officer, and formerly one of his own members. The particulars are as follows. A young woman, at one time his servant, gave birth to an illegitimate child, and imputed the paternity of it to one of his sons, a student of Divinity. The young man utterly denied the charge, and of course refused to contribute anything to the support of the child. Both the young woman and her parents being in poor circumstances, were unable to bring it up, and, therefore, applied to the Session of the Established Church for parochial assistance. The Rev. William Watson and his elders, in consequence of this application, summoned young Low to appear before them, to show cause why his imputed child had been placed as a burden on the parish. With this summons he positively refused to comply, asserting that neither Mr Watson, nor any minister or Session of the Established Church had a right to call him before them, and compel him to support a child of whom he was not the father. The kirk Session, who were determined not to be baffled, once more despatched Forsyth with a fresh summons. When he got within the precincts of the manse, and announced his errand, the ire of Mr Low was kindled. He denounced the bellman as an apostate scoundrel, a disturber of domestic peace, and an impertinent intruder, and laying hold of him, inflicted sundry kicks on the hinder part of his person, and, aided by his son, thrust him into the street. Forsyth, indignant at being so roughly handled, caused Mr Low and his son to be summoned before the Justice of Peace Court to answer a charge of assault. On one of the Thursdays of March 1780, the court was opened, and the apartment, in which it was held, was instantly crammed

with persons eager to hear the details of the case, and to know what punishment would be inflicted on the minister and his son. The justices were, perhaps, satisfied that an assault had been made, but as it was evidently of a trivial character, they felt reluctant to visit it with any penalty, and to the great disappointment of a portion of the auditory, adjourned the case to next court day. In the interim the matter was hushed up and Mr Low was saved from any further annoyance in Court, but the incident was sometimes quoted to his prejudice so long as he lived.

Immediately adjoining the Burgher Manse was an old tenement which belonged at one time to a Dr Bertram, and a part of which he inhabited till his death, which took place fifty years ago. In a portion of it subsequently lived Mr Hamilton, a druggist and horse doctor, and afterwards well known as an auctioneer of old books in Edinburgh. He had the fortune, or rather misfortune, to be made the subject of a satirical effusion by the village bard, James Affleck. It is in the form of an Address from his auld grey mare, that complains bitterly of the bad treatment which she had received from the hands of her master. In another apartment of it for a number of years dwelt a singular personage called William Sim. He had previously occupied several houses in Biggar, but in January 1814 he took a lease of this apartment from Dr Bertram, and continued to live in it, while in Biggar, till his death. It was "plenished" with some old-fashioned furniture that in former years had graced his mother's cottage at Candy, and contained rather a large store of books, which he had collected from one quarter or another. As he kept house himself, his abode was always in a very dirty and disordered state. When we entered we were apt to say with Wordsworth,

"What a wreck

We had around us! Scattered was the floor
And, in like sort, chair, window-seat, and shelf,
With books, maps," &c.,

while coals, pots, stoups, bickers, &c., lay around in admirable confusion. He would allow no person who entered his dwelling to touch his books, as he alleged that they were all classed in the order in which he was studying them. When not en-

gaged in reading and devotion, he sallied forth from his sanctum and held converse with some of the inhabitants,—the smithies of William Black, John Steel, and William Carmichael being his favourite places of resort. In conversation he used very pompous language, and assumed an air of dignity and authority, as if he wished to convey an impression that he possessed a great amount of knowledge, and was eminently gifted with colloquial powers. When strolling about he took evident delight in pouncing on a clergyman, a surgeon, or other educated man, and drawing him into a discussion on abstruse and controverted topics. This generally caused much annoyance, and efforts were often made to shun him, which, if he observed, gave him great offence, and never failed to draw from him a volley of most censorious remarks. One day the Rev. John Brown came up the town riding on his pony, and was waylaid and hailed by Sim in his usual authoritative and stentorian manner. Mr Brown jogged on and paid no attention to his call. Sim, finding himself disregarded and baffled, pointed his finger at Mr Brown and bellowed out, “Behold, behold! there rides the proud pharisee!”

One day in winter, when the frost was severe, Sim went with some of the townspeople to Biggar Moss, the grand resort of the curlers of the parish, and while strutting over the ice and talking in his usual magniloquent style, he lost his feet, and fell heavily on the slippery surface. The bystanders were disposed to set up a guffaw at Sim’s mishap, but he checked them by casting up his eyes imploringly to heaven and exclaiming, “Angels to your charge, there is a soul departing here!”

Sim wrote several volumes of memoirs or “Commentaria,” as he sometimes styles them, which were found in his repositories after his death. They are a strange medley of devout sentiments, worldly considerations, professional sorrows, and self-accusations. As Sim was a notable character at Biggar for a number of years, we will, from these volumes, collect a few particulars regarding his career.

He was born in the parish of Skirling, and in his early years lived at Candy, where his mother occupied a small cottage. He was sent to the parish school of Skirling, but his progress in learning was much interrupted by having in sum-

mer to herd eows and engage in other agricultural labour. As he grew up he made considerable efforts to increase his scholastic acquirements, and by these means he obtained some acquaintance with English grammar and Latin. He was in the habit of consulting, we should rather say teasing, some of the neighbouring parochial dominies as to the best method of carrying on his studies, and on one occasion went off to Edinburgh to improve his knowledge of the Latin tongue. He alleges that the pedagogue whom he engaged was not so great a proficient in that language as he expected and desired, and he therefore remained under his tuition only one week, for which he paid five shillings. Divine providence, he says, favoured him so far as to bring him in contact with a fellow-student, who gave him valuable assistance. Writing in the year 1789, he says: "Last summer my heart was very much lifted up to excel as a Christian, as a man, as a scholar, and a gentleman. This was my ambition, and I studied unweariedly." He complains that he was sometimes withdrawn from pursuing these great aims by temptations, having to maintain an almost constant struggle with enemies, both temporal and spiritual.

Sim at length set himself forth as a public instructor. He obtained engagements as a teacher in a small school at Quothquan, and afterwards at Cowdenburn, Manor, and other places, these schools being mostly got up by persons who lived at a distance from the parish schools, or were dissatisfied with the way in which they were taught. The instruction of the young is a task often attended with mortification and disappointment, arising as well from the restless and refractory nature of children as from the unreasonable and thankless conduct of parents. Mr Sim's suspicious and irritable temperament made him peculiarly sensitive to such influences. He lived, if we may believe his assertions, in a state of constant anxiety and depression. The greater part of his "Memoirs" are occupied with what may be called scholastic griefs,—these indeed abound so much, that the volumes might justly be entitled, "The disquietudes of a Country Schoolmaster." We will give an instance or two in connection with Quothquan, promising that the troubles which he experienced in other places partook very much of the same character: "26th May 1788.

Yesterday I received a new grief. The woman with whom I lodged, and who had given me a bed for twelve months, said so soon as I entered her house, 'If you had been a few minutes longer in coming you would have got the back of the door.' This touched my soul in earnest. I replied, 'You would have done that but once; and the more so, as the people who chose me for a teacher are obliged to furnish me with a bed.' She then changed her spring, and said that she was in jest. She brought as usual her Bible and Psalm-book, but in a minute I refused to make exercise; and thus God has delivered me from a thing that hath been a sore bondage to me ever since I came here,—I mean joining with that woman in family worship. My soul, however, was sore distressed; and though I endeavoured to compose my spirits, I could not sleep." "An additional portion of my grief arises from the Sabbath conversation of my foes on their way to and from Biggar. These were chiefly J. G., his sons, and relatives. These people envied my qualifications and greatness as a Christian; they hated to see the divine lamp of a strong, conspicuous, and vigorous faith burning in my soul; they hated to see me making improvement in science and knowledge; and their great business has been to hinder these things relative to me so far as they could."

Writing on the 27th of August regarding the same foes, he says, that "they have too much gained their end, or rather Satan by them and his agents. They have withheld my diet from me for a number of weeks,—some have kept their children back from school, and others have not paid me my wages. Satan has hindered the prosperity of my school, as he was let loose on the children in the form of chincough. I bless God that he dashed back the foe. The children are now better, and not one of them has died; but the foe triumphed so far that he disabled them from attending school for a time."

"1st December—I have still several temptations and afflictions. My afflictions were occasioned by my scholars, and chiefly by a fellow belonging to a bad family, and possessed of a devilish and ungovernable temper. Advices and reproofs were lost on him. One afternoon, as he was going on in his mad fits, I gave his hand two strokes with my rod; and on this he got up and went home. This filled my mind

with grief, but he came back next morning. My diet was another trial. The people of Quothquan have not been so kindly disposed that way as they were last winter."

"Feb. 27, 1789.—This week I received my diet in D. Thorburn's. On Monday morning, when I arrived from Candy, his wife asked me if I had got breakfast. I said No. She then gave me some porridge, cold and champed together, the remains which others had left. I bless the Lord I can take my food, having been at the school of Christ, and borne His cross. Her behaviour to me then and at other times gave me very sensible pain. I remarked that Divine Providence permitted thieves to break into her house and take things away to a considerable amount.

"3d January 1790. To-day, on returning from my aged mother, I found myself very bad with a sore head, and therefore, so soon as night came on, I dismissed my scholars, and went to bed. The woman in whose house I lodged happened not to be in, and the fellow that used to lie with me was sitting by the fire ill of the smallpox. His father, a little later in the evening, came in to see him, and asked if the master was in bed. I heard the woman say to him in an offensive tone, 'Yes, he is in bed, and I wonder you allow him to lie there.' These words went like a spear to my heart; and though I was so bad that I could not lie a few minutes with my head one way, yet had I not thought it would make a speech in the place, I would have risen though I had lain in the open fields. The fellow at length came to bed. I made no movement, but he called me 'blockhead,' 'reeked whelp,' and such like names. I grew better, and rose early, but never since have I passed a night there." Numerous quotations of a similar kind might be given, but let the above suffice.

Another leading feature in Sim's autobiography is the repeated references made to the ladies with whom he was from time to time in love. One of those was the famed Miss Kello of Skirling Mill. He attempted to draw her into an epistolary correspondence, and was exceedingly mortified that she took no notice of his communications. He therefore very frequently talks of her and her relatives as his enemies. He was nevertheless very anxious to see her, and was much dis-

appointed when she did not appear at church on Sundays. Referring to Sabbath the 10th of August 1788, he says, "My heart was greatly distressed by reason that I did not see Miss Kello. I have found from experience that a seen enemy is less dangerous than a hidden one." On one occasion he plucked up courage, and repaired to Skirling Mill to pay his addresses in person, but the servants getting notice of his errand, assailed him with such a torrent of banter and ridicule, that he fled in rage and dismay from the house. He took leave of Miss Kello in the following strange epistle :—

"BIGGAR, *2d June 1789.*

"MISS KELLO,

You will return every letter of mine that you ever received. I am serious in this matter. I will not want a single line, nay a single word that I ever sent you. Lord be merciful to me a sinner. It was your duty, it was your province, to nourish, cherish, support, and befriend me, and with Christian firmness and greatness to make me your own. I appeal to heaven. I would have come to your house to receive my letters, but I did not wish to offend you and your relations."

"WILLIAM SIM."

Another young lady with whom he was in love was Miss Brown of Edmonston. So violent was his affection for her that he declares, unless there had been a union in his nature with God, he would have put an end to his life. "For her sake," he says, "I bore the wrath of God and the cruel pains of death and hell, but, by my union with the glorious bridegroom of the Church, I overcame, but it is a miracle I am living." Hearing on one occasion that she was seriously indisposed, he was filled with grief, and resolved to address a throne of grace in her behalf. "Accordingly," he says, "I took my Bible, and sung a few verses of a Psalm, and read a chapter, and, then, bowing the knees of my soul, I earnestly besought Almighty God, whose name I know, to spare Miss Brown."

About the year 1809, he fell in love with a Miss Davidson of Coats, and regarding her, he says, that she had his affections

above all women in the world. Some ten years later, he was desperately in love with a Jess Walker, a Peeblesshire damsel. He gives no evidence to show that he ever received any countenance from her, but he states that he cherished towards her a devoted and ardent affection, and was, at times, tortured with all the pangs of jealousy. When going to the communion table at West Linton on Sabbath, the 14th of June 1819, he says "a circumstance happened that made a painful impression on my spirits. I thought I saw Jess Walker standing beside a man as if they were married to each other." This turned out to be a mere suspicion, engendered, he says, by Satan to annoy him, and a week afterwards when he attended a Communion at Peebles, he actually found himself in the same pew with the object of his solicitude. "I had sat but a few minutes," he tells us, "when I perceived Jess Walker in the same seat. She looked with earnest attention apparently at me and I looked with expressive concern at her. I saw that she was evidently agitated." His regard to this damsel caused him very great disquiet. "For some days," he at one time confesses, "I have had a sore battling in my spirit regarding Jess Walker." At another time he says; "a concern relative to Jess Walker hunts and persecutes my spirit constantly," and he has many passages in his memoirs of a similar import. It is perhaps not too much to say that he scarcely ever exchanged a word with these females in his life.

He met one woman, however, who, according to his own story, actually made proposals of marriage to him. This occurred one Sabbath in the summer of 1819. He was on his way to attend a Sacramental Communion at Peebles, when he met "a sober young lass" of his acquaintance. They entered into conversation, and he learned that her parents, particularly her mother, were anxious that she should obtain Sim for her husband. She asserted that she had thrown herself in his way for the express purpose of making arrangements for the accomplishment of this object. Sim asserts that the sacredness of the day and his affection for Jess Walker, made him treat her proposal with coldness and reserve, but it is evident he felt somewhat flattered by it, as he says that the conduct of the maid "was kind, wise, and discreet." We have, nevertheless, a strong suspicion that the "sober young lass" was merely

quizzing our Biggar worthy, and that she greatly enjoyed the confusion, into which she threw him by her apparently frank proposals.

Many other curious passages are to be found in Sim's volumes, but it would extend this notice too much to make any further reference to them. He had a stroke of paralysis in 1820, which left a numbness in one of his sides, and rendered him partially lame. He had by industry and economy, saved, at one time, a hundred pounds,—a sum which was the great object of his ambition, and for which he had often earnestly prayed,—but after he retired from teaching, it was in course of time exhausted, and he was forced to depend for subsistence on parochial relief and the assistance of his charitable neighbours. He died about the year 1825, and his books and other effects were sold by public auction, which attracted a considerable assembly of the learned men of the district, many of them being anxious to secure a relic of this eccentric individual.

A little below the site on which Dr Bertram's house stood is the National Bank, erected in 1864, from a design by Mr Fraser, architect, Dumfries, and exhibiting a style of architecture somewhat in advance of what is commonly employed at Biggar. Adjoining is the Established Church manse, rebuilt in 1805, and to which an addition was made in 1827. A little farther on is the Parish School-house, erected in 1798, and containing somewhat larger accommodation than was usual at the time, as it was intended that the schoolmaster should keep boarders. Here also are the school green and the Kirkstyle with its noble array of beech and ash trees skirting the road on the west. In a small house near the old parish school, and distinctly seen almost at the extremity of the north side of the street, in the engraved view of the town, dwelt John Brown, usually denominated 'The Fiddler.' He was a good performer, especially of reel, strathspey, and contra-dance tunes; and his services were almost in constant requisition at fairs, penny weddings, and dancing schools. Like many other Biggar men of his time, he was shrewd, intelligent, and occasionally witty. Many of his good things are still remembered in Biggar. Let us merely give a specimen or two. On one occasion he was at a Broughton Fair, furnishing music, as usual, for penny

reels in a barn. He got considerable supplies of usquebae during the day; and at night, after his labours were over, he had a carouse with some boon companions in the Green Inn. He at length set out towards Biggar when the morning was somewhat advanced, and by the way feeling squeamish and sick, he sat down by the road-side, and was seized with an apprehension that his final end was near. After ruminating for some time, he suddenly started up and exclaimed, 'If I maun dec, I may as well dee gaun as sittin'.'

On another occasion, after indulging in a round of rather hard drinking, he fell into the horrors. He viewed his conduct with anything but complacency. He considered that a feeling of sorrow and regret was not a sufficient atonement for his delinquencies, but that he was fairly entitled to receive some personal chastisement. Labouring under this impression, he went forthwith to the late Mr James Paterson, commonly called 'Oggie,' from having lived with his father on the farm of Oggscastle, near Carnwath. Having found him, he said, 'Jeames, I maun hae the len' o' a gun fra ye this mornin'; I'm gaun to tak a bit daunder doon the length o' Bogha' Castle.' 'The len' o' a gun, John,' said James, 'that's stryngc. What on earth are you gaun to doo wi' a gun? Ye dinna mean to shute yersel'?' 'No exactly that, Jeames,' said John; 'but of coorse I mean to gae mysel' a deevil o' a fleg.'

A little farther down the street is a large house, adjoining the one last seen in the engraving, but is not itself visible, which was once the property of a family of the name of Vallanee, and now of the successors of the late James and William Paterson. This was one of the chief inns of Biggar during last century. It is remarkable as the house in which some of the officers of the Highland army, in the end of the year 1745, made their quarters during their stay in Biggar. These officers had been despatched in advance to levy supplies, or to make preparation for the reception and accommodation of troops, and accordingly they sent letters to the proprietors and farmers in the neighbourhood requiring them to furnish such horses, forage, and provisions, as might be necessary. The person whom they employed to deliver these letters was a man of weak intellect named James Ramage. On his return, the officers, after giving him a small gratuity, offered him a

glass of brandy, and requested him to drink the health of Prince Charles, the rightful heir to the British throne. 'Na na,' quoth James, with a due degree of Scottish caution, 'I'll drink neither Prince Charlie's health, nor King Geordie's, but I'll joost drink yer ain.'

The exact day of the arrival of what must have been a small detachment of the Highland army at Biggar has been preserved in the Session Records. The statement occurs in connexion with the birth and baptism of James Carmichael, son of Bailie Thomas Carmichael, and his spouse Violet Craig. It is recorded that he was 'born 22d December 1745, and baptized 24th thereof, being the day Biggar was alarmed with the coming of the Highland army thereto, after their retreat from Prince William, second son to George II., King of Great Britain, etc., with whom they would not engage.' Unfortunately, no account has been preserved of the number of the Highlanders that visited Biggar, the length of time which they remained, or the manner in which they conducted themselves. William Vallance, commonly called 'Laird Will,' with whom we ourselves, in our early years, have conversed, and whose father was tenant of part of Boghall Mains, was in the habit of saying that he was seven or eight years old at the time of the Rebellion, and when the cry arose that the Highlanders were on their way to Biggar, he and some other persons mounted his father's horses that were feeding in the Drone's Hole, in the Camb, and fled to the solitudes of the Tweeddale mountains, to preserve them from the fangs of the Highlandmen, who carried off or pressed into their service all the horses on which they could lay their hands.

From a sort of Itinerary or Journal of the march of the Highland army, kept by Captain James Stuart of Lord Ogilvie's regiment, we find that on Sabbath the 22d December, 1745, the division of the army to which Stuart was attached was at the town of Moffat, and on the 23d at Douglas. Prince Charles himself accompanied this division, and slept all night in Douglas Castle. On the 24th it marched down the Clyde to Hamilton. This is the only division of the Highland army, so far as we are aware, that came within a few miles of Biggar. The probability is that a detachment of it, instead of proceeding directly to Hamilton on the 24th, made a detour

by Biggar for the purpose of obtaining a more ample supply of provisions, and more commodious shelter for a night from the inclemency of the weather.

Still farther down is the Bridgend, the Wynd, and the Westraw.

Views of the town of Biggar have several times been sketched and engraved. A view of the upper part of the town, and the Church, with Bizzyberry in the background, was inserted in the 'Edinburgh Magazine' for May 1790. Another view of it, with an accompanying letterpress description, appeared in the 'Scots Magazine' for October 1815. This is taken from Hartree, and embraces Hartree House, Boghall Castle, the town of Biggar, and the adjacent heights to the north-west. No artist, so far as we are aware, in more recent times, has considered Biggar and its adjacent scenery picturesque and attractive enough to induce him to expend time and labour in transferring a representation of them to canvas. The people of Biggar, however, are thoroughly convinced that their town presents some picturesque features, and that the scenery around, if not striking, is pleasing and diversified. Mr Alexander Steele, in a poem entitled "A view of Biggar from a summit of Hartree hills," has given a vivid description of Biggar and the surrounding landscape, accompanied with such reflections as are very becoming on the part of a Biggar callant. At a meeting held at Biggar in 1848, under the auspices of the Edinburgh Biggar Club, the Rev. John Christison, minister of the parish, drew the following very playful contrast between Edinburgh and Biggar:—"Any one standing between the old and new towns of Edinburgh, and looking along the valley of the Nor' Loch, commanded a very splendid view; but Biggar had an old and new town as well as Edinburgh, and a beautiful valley lying between them, and as pretty a stream winding through it as the eye could light on, on a summer's day. (Cheers.) The whole, as many travellers had remarked, formed no bad representation in miniature of the famous links of Forth. The view of the Edinburgh spectator would no doubt comprehend a greater variety of grand and picturesque objects; but would it rival in sweetness the view of their own *burn braes*, on the one side, beautiful in their pastoral simplicity,—“when unadorned,

adorned the most"—(cheers)—and on the other, crowned with lofty trees, the growth of centuries, rising like towers, their leafy battlements scathed with ages of elemental war? (Great applause.) The Edinburgh view had many an architectural boast. Theirs had but one, but it was a gem—the Church—(cheers)—old, venerable, grey, calling up hosts of visions of the olden time, when it had its full establishment of provost, prebends, singing boys, singing girls, tributary kirks, such as Dunrod in far Galloway, &c., &c. Edinburgh had a splendid viaduct stretching from town to town; but it must yield in historical interest to their own *Cadger Brig*—(applause)—on which the foot of the immortal Wallace was planted in one of the most heroic stands he ever made. (Prolonged applause.) Edinburgh had its castle, itself a magnificent object, and rich in associations of the past. He confessed it was difficult to find a parallel here, and, away from home, he would scarcely have ventured on one. But in Biggar, which he knew to be strong in local attachment, he thought he might refer to that respectable eminence, *the Moat Knowe*—(laughter and applause) from which many a beacon had blazed in the days of yore, and which had witnessed many a valiant fight—as, for instance, that memorable one, the battle of Biggar, in which, if ancient chroniclers may be in aught believed, not less than 60,000 men were routed in one day. Let the people of Edinburgh, with all their scuffles about the castle, show anything like that.' (Enthusiastic cheers.)

After this very pleasing and characteristic eulogium on Biggar, we may give another testimony in its favour by the late Dr Aiton of Dolphinton, from a speech delivered at a public dinner at Biggar on the 23d December, 1862. "Having been so many long years resident within a few miles of it, he could honestly say he had a warm heart to it, its town and trade. His wish was, Let Biggar flourish, and aye become bigger and bigger still. (Great applause.) When he first saw Biggar, soon after the battle of Waterloo, it presented to his admiring eyes a splendid panorama of peat-stacks, and huts of every dimension, standing all reel-ral, as if they had fallen from the clouds. (Laughter.) But now it resembled, in its broad streets, and shops, and dwelling-houses, for cleanliness, elegance, and comfort, one of the first-class English towns of a

similar size—(cheers)—and far surpassing it in the beauty of its locality, and of the serene grandeur with which our beloved Tinto overlooks the cantel of the causeway—(immense applause)—and with which the cozy congregation of tall trees wave their long branches over the school and trotting burnie below. (Continued applause). Better and bigger still, its inhabitants were kind, and careful, and thriving, like breckens on the sunny side of the hill. They were a reading and religious, a clever, mercantile, pushing sort of folk, and aye noo and then trotting along the street with another small deposit for the bank. (Cheers.) And where will you meet a more enterprising or weel-to-do class of farmers, than in our Corn Exchange of a Thursday forenoon, all kindly speering for ane another, but with a keen intellectual eye to the sacks and samples in the meantime? and what for no! (Hear, hear.)'

The view from Biggar, though embracing the now fertile vale that stretches from Tinto to Broughton, is decidedly of an Alpine character. Hills appear on every hand. The Common, 1260 feet above the level of the sea, lies on the north-west, and was till recently covered with heather; but has now been subdivided by belts of plantations, and subjected to the inroads of the plough. Bizzyberry, 1150 feet above the level of the sea, is on the north, commanding a fine view from its summit—retaining not a few traces of ancient military operations, and having, on the north side, a rock called Wallace's Seat, and Wallace's Well, at which that hero is said to have quenched his thirst after the battle of Biggar. On the east and south are the Broughton, Kilbucho, and Hartree hills; the tops of some of them are encircled with deep trenches, most likely dug in times of invasion in order to afford security to the cattle of the district. Cardon and Coulter Fell are two of the most conspicuous mountains in this direction, the latter of which is said to be 2456 feet above the level of the sea, thus surpassing the height of Tinto, by several feet, though scarcely verifying the old rhyme—

'The height atween Tintock-tap and Coulter Fell
Is just three quarters of an ell.'

The most striking mountain near Biggar is certainly Tinto which rises majestically from the plain to the height of 2350

feet above the level of the sea. It is crowned with a huge cairn of stones, on which Druidical and beacon fires are said to have blazed in remote times, and on which huge piles of combustibles have illumined the country round in our own day, to mark seasons of rejoicing, such as the proclamation of peace in 1814, and the first visit of Queen Victoria to the 'land of the mountain and the flood,' in 1842. Regarding Tintock-tap there is the following rhyme :—

‘ On Tintock-tap there is a mist,
And in the mist there is a kist,
And in the kist there is a caup,
And in the caup there is a drap ;
Take up the caup, drink aff the drap,
And set the caup on Tintock-tap.’

Dr John Brown, the author of ‘ Rab ’ has chosen this rhyme as the text of one of his lay sermons, viz., ‘ Jeems the Door-keeper.’ He employs the ascent up the mountain to drink the far famed drap as a similitude of ‘ the toil, the joy, and the victory in the search after truth.’ He carries out the comparison in his usual racy and attractive manner, and with a force and an aptness of illustration that are well calculated to make a strong and salutary impression on the mind of the youthful and earnest enquirer after sound knowledge.

In 1803, the late Sir Alexander Boswell published a ballad in a different style, entitled ‘ The Spirit of Tintoc, or Johnnie Bell and the Kelpie,’ in which there is a special reference to the famed caup. Johnnie Bell, a drougthy tailor, entertained as his guest auld Robin Scott, as great a lover of strong drink as himself. Robin was invited to ‘ pree ’ the contents of a graybeard, and, finding the liquor good, drank the whole at a single draught, much to the mortification of the tailor, who thus exclaimed :—

‘ The graybeard’s toom, I maun hae drink ;
I’ve no a plack to buy a drap.
My heart is up, and away I’ll link,
There’s drink for nought on Tintock-tap.’

He instantly donned his blue bonnet, armed himself with a rowan-tree staff, and set out on his journey. During his pro-

gress he fell into a burn, and was seized by a water-kelpie, when a brownie whistled in his ear,—

‘ And muttering thrice the magic spell,
Thrice Cockatrice and Gallowlee,
When Kelpie shrieked, O Johnnie Bell!
My charm is broken, you are free!’

Gaining at length the summit of the hill, after much toilsome clambering, and having fortified himself with ‘a quid o’ the right Virginia,’ Stilla, “Queen of the Spirits of Fire,” appears to him, and bids him begone; but bold Johnnie Bell, not so easily daunted, defies the Queen and all the race of weird sisters, whom he overcomes by repeating the mystical words, ‘Gallowlee and Coekatrice.’ Thus compelled, and Stilla having

‘ — stamped on the grassless yeard,
A fire and cauldron quick arose;
The tailor rubb’d his head and beard,
And lick’d his lips, and cocked his nose.

‘ The fire low’d, and the cauldron hiss’d,
And the hell-steam rosc baith red and blue,
When the guardian-spirit of the kist
Swell’d to the wond’ring tailor’s view.

‘ The lid o’ the kist wi’ a clap flew up—
And fou to the brim out flew the cap;
The thirsty tailor at ae sup
Drank it a’, baith dreg and drap.

‘ The kist and cap, by cantrip spell,
Wi’ whirring birr, in flinders flew;
But what became o’ Johnnie Bell,
Gude kens! I ken nae mair than you!’

The following reference is made to Tintock-tap in the well-known song of ‘Tibbie Fowler’ :—

‘ Be a lassie e’er sae black,
Gin she hae the name o’ siller,
Set her up on Tintock-tap,
The wind wad blaw a man till hir.’

The view from the summit of Tinto is grand and extensive. It stretches quite across the Island from the German Ocean on the east, to the Irish sea on the west, and embraces the

ancient burgh of Lanark, the city of Glasgow, and many large towns and villages as well as not a few spots celebrated in Scottish history and song. Having often enjoyed it ourselves, we can fully endorse the account given of it by Dr Macknight, in an excellent paper read before the 'Wernerian Natural History Society' on the 11th April 1812. 'The expanse of country which it embraces appears unbounded on the west side, but towards the north it is terminated by the majestic Ben-lomond, and the lofty ranges of the Highlands, crowding irregularly into view in a manner extremely picturesque. In the opposite direction of south-east, the prominent features of the view are the bold, undulating mountain lines, the finely grouped masses, and the ultimate swells and deep hollows of the Tweeddale hills. Amongst the most remarkable is Culter Fell, distinguished as the rival of Tinto itself, in size and height. These magnificent objects, presenting themselves on the one hand, form an admirable and striking contrast to the delightful view, on the other hand, of the level country that stretches along the banks of the Clyde. This noble stream, which shows in its course so many charms of natural scenery, and whose fine sweeps through the mountain valley and lower districts of Lanarkshire are so great an embellishment of the whole prospect, may, in truth, be said to carry along with it beauty and fertility from its very source. It is equally pleasing and unexpected to find, at the height of 600 feet above the level of the sea, a tract of land so rich in soil, so well cultivated, and so extensively clothed with plantations, as the district spreading around the foot of the mountain, from Hyndford House to Symington and Culter, and up the river to a considerable distance. The effect of the landscape is completed by the number of villas, and other marks of population and comfort, which everywhere appear in the vicinity of the Clyde. There are few elevations in the United Kingdom, where a finer assemblage of the grand and the beautiful in nature may be contemplated, than from Tinto.'

The number of the inhabitants of the town and parish of Biggar in early times cannot now be ascertained. The probability is, that in remote ages the inhabitants of the landward part of the parish were much more numerous than what they are at present. On most of the farms there were several

cottars' houses, which have nearly all disappeared. Edmonston or Candy had evidently a considerable population; and many dwelling-places, such as Batyhall, Hillhead, Johnsholm, Little Boghall, Foreknows, Between the Hills, etc., mentioned in ancient records, do not now exist. The population of the parish appears to have slowly but steadily increased. In a muster roll of the able men in the parochin of Biggar in 1640, certified by the Rev. Thomas Campbell, minister of the parish, and still preserved in the archives of the Fleming family, the number was 146. Taking these men fit for war, as a fifth part of the population, the number of inhabitants at that time would be 730. The names which appear most frequently in the list, are Brown, Kello, Boc, Fleming, Telfer, Porteous, Paterson, Penman, Baillic, and Vallange.* The amount of the population in 1755 was 1098. In 1791 it had sunk down to 962; but after this period it continued for some time steadily, though slowly, to increase. In 1801 it was 1216; in 1811, 1376; in 1821, 1727; and in 1831, 1915. In 1841 it was 1865; in 1851, 2049; and in 1861, 1999.

The expense of erecting a house at Biggar, from the want of ready access to good and cheap building materials, has hitherto been considerable; and this has acted as a decided barrier to the increase of the town, as such a return in the shape of rent could not be obtained as to induce capitalists to expend their money in this direction. By the opening of a Branch Railway to Biggar, this disadvantage has, to some extent, been obviated; and therefore we may calculate that the town will, ere long, be largely increased.

* Appendix I.

CHAPTER IV.

Biggar Burn.



IGGAR BURN rises in the north of the parish, and flows first in a southerly and then in an easterly direction. After running a course of about nine miles, it falls into the Tweed nearly opposite Merlin's Grave, in the parish of Drummelzier. On its right bank, near its source, are the lands of Carwood, consisting of 947 Scots acres. At one period they formed a separate feu, and were for many years, as we learn from documents in the Wigton charter chest, held by a family of the name of Carwood. The male line becoming extinct, the estate went into the possession of two female relatives of the family, viz., Janet and Margaret Carwood or Carwod, as they spelt their names. Janet married John Fleming of Persilands, who, according to Richard Bannatyne, was a brother of Lord Fleming. Margaret, most likely on a recommendation of some member of the Fleming family, who were much about court, was appointed bed-chamber woman to Queen Mary, and became a great favourite with her majesty. She is mentioned as acting in this capacity in May 1564 and September 1565. In May or June 1566, the queen made a "Will," in which she bequeathed to Margaret Carwood, among other things, a miniature of herself set with diamonds, and a small silver box, supposed to be the casquet in which were afterwards found the famous letters and sonnets that were said to have passed between Bothwell and the queen. At that time she had charge of the jewels in the queen's cabinet, and, according to Buchanan and others, was privy to all the queen's secrets, and abetted her in the criminal intercourse which she carried on with Bothwell. French Paris, in the evidence which he

emitted regarding the murder of Darnley, stated that he was sent on the 8th of February 1567, the day before the murder, by Margaret Carwood, to Darnley's lodgings at the Kirk-of-Field, to bring a furred coverlet to the queen's bedchamber at Holyrood. Margaret was married at Holyrood on Tuesday, 11th February, that is two days after the blowing up of the Kirk-of-Field, to John Stewart of Tullypowreis in Athole. The queen provided the marriage-feast, gave the bride her marriage dress, which cost L.125 5s., and settled on her an annual pension of 300 merks from the lands of Kinclavin in Perthshire. The arrangements for this marriage seem to have been made previous to the murder of Darnley, the queen's husband, and some historians have confounded this marriage with that of Bastian Pagez, a valet of the queen's chamber, to Christily Hogg, which took place on the night of Sunday the 9th of February, and to attend which the queen hurriedly left the sick-chamber of her husband an hour or two before his murder. In November 1579, Margaret Carwood and her husband sold their half of Carwood for 500 merks to her sister Janet and her husband, John Fleming; and in March 1584 or 5 they gave a loan of L.1000 at 10 per cent. to Francis Hay, Master of Errol.

The estate of Carwood was at length greatly encumbered with debt, the principal creditor being Stirling of Glorat, who was infest in the lands. The debt having been cleared off by Lord Fleming, Stirling resigned the lands in his favour, and thus they came back to the main branch of the family. The tenant of Carwood, in 1671, was James Paterson, who was distinguished for his attachment to the cause of the Covenant, and who, on this account, was subjected to a considerable amount of persecution and suffering. His yearly rent was 250 merks in money, and 26 bolls 3 firlots of victual, two parts meal and one part bear. Carwood thus, in 1826, formed part of Admiral Fleming's Biggar estate, when the entail of it was set aside, and when almost the whole of it was sold two or three years afterwards. Carwood, at that time, was purchased by Mr Robert Gray, son of the Rev. Thomas Gray, Broughton, and for many years a well-known grocer in Argyle Square, Edinburgh. That gentleman immediately set to the work of improvement with most laudable vigour. In

a few years he reclaimed 400 acres of muirland, formed 50 enclosures of thorn, turf, and stone, and planted 200 acres with trees. In 1832, he erected an elegant mansion-house, and surrounded it with shrubberies and plantations. Carwood is now the property of W. G. Mitchell, Esq.

On the left side of Biggar Burn are the lands of Biggar Shields and "Ballwaistie," and a place called in former times "Betwixt the Hills." They comprise 1132 Scots acres. Biggar Shields is mentioned in an action brought before the Lords of Council on the 19th May 1491, by Sir Wm. Lindsay against James Carmichael, brother to the Earl of Angus, David Carmichael, and several other Carmichaels, for the spoliation, away-taking, and withholding from him of fifty young "scheip," out of the lands of "bigare schelis" and Muirhouse. The accused persons alleged that the sheep were taken by the Earl of Angus in virtue of the king's warrant, that they were merely in his company, and therefore were not responsible. A warrant was consequently issued to summon the Earl before their lordships next court day. This extensive possession belonged at one period to the Fleming family. They appear to have sold it, or granted a wadset over it, previous to 1677; for, in November of that year, John Cheisley of Kerswell, near Carnwath, was retoured heir of his father John, "in the lands and meadow of Scheills and Betwixt the Hills, a part of the lands called Balweistie, and lands of Heavieside, in the parish of Biggar." In a rent-roll of the Earl of Wigton's Biggar property, in 1671, it is stated that the heritor of Biggar Shields and Betwixt the Hills paid to his Lordship yearly "fifty pundis of teind duty, and eight bolls of teind meal. It was purchased in 1806 by Mr Joseph Stainton, manager of the Carron Company. At that time it was almost wholly a sheep-walk, and was let at a rent of L.150 per annum. In 1817 and the three following years, Mr Stainton carried on a series of very extensive improvements on this estate. "He reclaimed 600 acres, drained extensively, erected 18 miles of stone dykes, and planted 15 miles of thorn hedges, and 265 acres with forest trees." The yearly rental, we suppose, now exceeds L.1000. Mr Stainton died in 1825, and the present owner is Miss Stainton, his granddaughter, who attained her majority towards the close of the year 1866.

Farther down the stream are the lands of Persilands, and of what were anciently called the Over and the Nether Wells, which most likely, by the time of Queen Mary, were disjoined from the Biggar estate, and held as a separate possession. Some years afterwards, viz., in 1614, the proprietor of Persilands was William Fleming, no doubt a cadet of the family of the lord superior. In a document entitled "The Rentall of the meales, fermes, and other deuties payable to the Earl of Wigtoun furth of the Barony of Biggar in 1671," it is stated that John Muirhead was heritor of these lands, and paid five merks yearly as feu-duty. He was succeeded by his son James, who left the lands to George Muirhead, most likely his son, who died in 1751, and bequeathed them to his wife, Mary Dickson, a sister of the Rev. David Dickson, minister of Newlands. This lady afterwards married the Rev. John Noble of Libberton, and at her death left the estate of Persilands to her nephew, the Rev. David Dickson. Mr Dickson was the third son of the Rev. David Dickson, minister of Newlands,* an eccentric divine, who wrote some strange treatises in condemnation of his clerical brethren, which brought upon himself no small amount of trouble and reproach. He ultimately became proprietor of the estate of Kilbucho. His son David was born in April 1754, and received his elementary education at the parish school of West Linton. He was afterwards sent to the Grammar School of Peebles, then taught by Mr Oman, who enjoyed considerable reputation as a linguist. Having completed his literary and philosophical studies at the University of Glasgow, and attended the usual number of Sessions at the Divinity Hall, Edinburgh, he was licensed to preach the gospel by the Presbytery of Biggar in 1775. He then became assistant to his uncle-in-law, the Rev. Mr Noble of Libberton, and discharged the duties of this office so much to the satisfaction of the parishioners that on the death of Mr Noble in 1776, they petitioned the patron to present him to the vacant living. This petition having been successful, he continued his minis-

* This divine, who was a son of William Dickson of Kilbucho, was licensed by the Presbytery of Biggar in 1744, and ordained at Newlands 1756. He was deposed in 1767, and died on the 9th of April 1780, in the 71st year of his age. His eldest son was General William Dickson of Kilbucho, who commanded the 42d Highlanders in Egypt at the commencement of the present century.

trations at Libberton for seven years. During that period he was in the habit of assisting on Sacramental occasions at Bothkennar in the Presbytery of Stirling, and the people there entertaining a high opinion of his ministerial gifts, on a vacancy occurring in the parish, presented a petition in his favour to the patron Mr Graham of Airth, and its prayer having been granted he was inducted to that charge in July 1783.

His fame as a preacher spread throughout the church. His zealous advocacy and defence of evangelical principles and the rights of the Christian people tended greatly to enhance his acceptance with the mass of the community. His name was brought forward in connection with several vacancies in the churches of Edinburgh, but nothing decisive took place till 1795, when he was induced to accept a call from the managers and congregation of the newly erected church of New Street, Canongate. In 1799, he was presented by the Town Council of Edinburgh to the College Kirk, and, in 1801, was translated to the New North Church as successor in that charge to Principal Baird. In this charge he continued till his death which took place on the 3d of August 1820, in the 67th year of his age, and the 44th of his ministry. He left two sons, David and James, and three daughters. His publications were a volume of Sermons and several sermons in a separate form.

David, the eldest son of the divine just mentioned, was the next laird of Persilands. He was born at Libberton manse on the 23d February 1780, and received his elementary education at the parish school of Bothkennar. He entered the University of Edinburgh in the Session 1793-94, and there prosecuted his studies for eight years. On the 8th of December 1801, he was licensed to preach the gospel, and in January of the year following received an unanimous call to the chapel of Ease, now the High Church, Kilmarnock. In this situation he remained little more than a year, leaving it to accept one of the charges of the West Church, Edinburgh, to which he was presented by the Crown on a petition from a majority of the heritors. He commenced his labours in this place in May 1803, and for nearly forty years pursued a course of great pastoral activity and public usefulness. He was not merely a sound divine and an accomplished scholar, but he was

distinguished for the affability of his manners and the generosity of his disposition. He was readily accessible to all classes of the community, and with the whole members of his flock he was on terms of intimacy, and took a deep interest in their affairs. It was principally by his exertions that the Chapels of Ease, Newington, St. Bernards, and St. Davids, were established in the West Kirk parish, and, in some of these, or in the old Chapel of Ease, Buccleuch Street, he officiated almost every Sabbath for years. He was an active and liberal supporter of many of the literary and charitable institutions in the Scottish Capital.

When a vacancy occurred in the Chair of Hebrew and Oriental Languages in the University of Edinburgh, in 1812, Mr Dickson offered himself as a candidate, and a general opinion prevailed that he was well qualified to fill this situation, but the patrons by a majority of two only, elected Dr Alexander Murray, who at the time enjoyed considerable reputation as a philologist. The University of Edinburgh, in 1824, conferred on Mr Dickson the degree of Doctor of Divinity. Dr Dickson's labours as an author do not bulk largely. He edited an edition of Horsley on the Psalms, A Memoir of Miss Fanny Woodbury, Sermons by the Rev. W. F. Ireland, D.D., and Lectures and Sermons by the Rev. George B. Brand, and published several single sermons, one particularly on the death of his colleague Sir Henry Moncreiff, and another on the death of Dr Andrew Thomson. A volume of his Discourses, doctrinal and practical, was published in 1857, fifteen years after his death.

Dr Dickson in 1808, married Miss Jobson, daughter of James Jobson, Esq., Dundee, and by this lady he had four sons and four daughters. The Doctor's father and also himself retained the farm of Persilands in their own hands for a number of years, and a large portion of its produce, particularly butter, cheese, and fowls, went to supply their tables in Edinburgh. Their family during the autumn months occasionally resided at this pleasant and healthy spot, and of course Biggar and Persilands were often themes of conversation in the family circle at Edinburgh. Dr Dickson died on the 28th of July 1842, in the 63d year of his age and the 40th of his ministry. An elegant monument to his memory was erected at the west

end of the West Church, by a number of his parishioners. It represents the worthy divine in the act of blessing a widow and her orphan children, "an incident of almost daily occurrence in his life." The estate of Persilands was sold by the Doctor's representatives a few years after his death, and is now the property of W. G. Mitchell, Esq. of Carwood. The farm-house and offices were recently rebuilt, and a carved stone, containing several initials, the date 1658, and two Latin inscriptions, one of them 'Nisi Dominus frustra,' and very likely belonging to one of the old mansion-houses of Persilands, was placed for preservation in the end of a stable.

To the west of Persilands is a spot where formerly stood a small farm-steading called Hillriggs. Towards the end of last century it was occupied by a shepherd of the name of Kemp. This was the father of George Mickle Kemp, who acquired so great celebrity as the architect of the Scott Monument at Edinburgh. The architect was in the habit of stating that he was born here; and this statement has been confirmed by some of his relations who still reside in the village of Elsrickle. In his tenth year, after his father had gone to reside in another locality, he paid a visit to the famed chapel of Roslin; and being of an impressible and poetical temperament, he contemplated the pillars, arches, and emblematical devices of this edifice with wonder and admiration. He was bred to the trade of a joiner; and after the expiry of his apprenticeship, with a Mr Noble at Eddlestone, and working one year with a millwright at Galashiels, he set out on a tour for the purpose of improving himself in his profession, and gratifying his taste for architectural drawing. He wrought at his trade in many towns of Scotland, England, and France, and prolonged his stay especially in those which contained remarkable specimens of Gothic architecture. He was in the habit of studying all their details, and making a sketch of their chief peculiarities. He spent also a portion of his time in acquiring a knowledge of drawing and perspective, in which he made considerable progress.

Kemp at length returned home, entered into the marriage state, and commenced business on his own account as a joiner. Not meeting with the success which he expected, he threw aside the saw and hammer, and devoted himself to the work of

architectural drawing, from which he derived a very small and precarious income. He still practised his old habit of sketching the remains of ancient castles, abbeys, etc.; and, in fact, at this time Burns' account of Captain Grose was strictly applicable to him:—

‘ By some auld houlet-haunted biggin,
Or kirk deserted by its riggin,
It's ten to ane ye'll fin' him snug in
Some eldrich part.’

He was engaged in taking sketches of the Abbey of Kilwinning, when a professional friend, whom he chanced to meet, advised him to try his hand at a design for the monument of Sir Walter Scott at Edinburgh. Acting on this advice, he hastened home to his residence in Edinburgh, and in five days produced the design of a splendid Gothic cross, drawn in its principal details from Melrose Abbey. In due time he lodged the drawing of his plan, to which he attached the name of ‘John Morvo.’ The Committee appointed to forward the monument had offered prizes for the three best designs; and when they came to decide on the merits of those submitted for competition, they fixed on John Morvo's cross as one of the three to which a prize should be awarded. They were at a loss to know who John Morvo was, not being aware that the name was assumed, and that, in fact, it was the designation of a famous mason of former days, who, in an inscription on Melrose Abbey, is said to have

‘ Had in keyng al mason werk
Of Santandroys, ye Hie Kirk
Of Glasgow, Melros, and Paslay,
Of Niddisdail, and of Galway.’

On the morning of the day on which the prizes were to be decided, Mr Kemp had gone to Linlithgow to take drawings of some portions of its ruined palace; and on returning in the evening, he was delighted to find that some person had told his wife that a prize had been awarded to the design of John Morvo. When it became known that the beautiful and most appropriate Gothic cross was the production of so humble and unassuming a man as George Kemp, a strong prejudice was manifested in some quarters against it, and the Committee at

first refused to adopt it. They advertised a second time for new designs, and a few were obtained. Kemp stuck to his cross, and gave in an improved drawing of his original plan. The Committee still hesitated and objected. It was alleged to be a mere copy of some Gothic building, and to be of so inaccurate and unsubstantial a construction, that it even could not be erected. Mr Kemp himself satisfactorily showed that the first charge was entirely without foundation; and in regard to the second, Mr Burn, a professional architect of high reputation, who was consulted by the Committee, declared 'his admiration of Mr Kemp's design, its purity as a Gothic composition, and more particularly the constructive skill exhibited throughout, in the combination of the graceful features of that style of architecture, in such a manner as to satisfy any professional man of the correctness of its principle, and the perfect solidity which it would possess when built.' The Committee were, therefore, induced, in March 1838, to recommend the adoption of Mr Kemp's plan, as 'an imposing structure, 135 feet in height, of beautiful proportions, in strict conformity with the purity in taste and style of Melrose Abbey, from which it is in all its details derived.' It was afterwards resolved, in order to give a still more impressive effect to the structure, to enlarge it to the height of 200 feet above the surface of the ground.

The building of the monument was entrusted to Mr David Lind, and Mr Kemp himself was appointed superintendent of the works. Mr Kemp was now placed in circumstances of comparative comfort; he had acquired a celebrity which he had hardly dared at one time to contemplate, and he had the prospect of being largely employed, and raised to a state of affluence. Unfortunately, on the evening of the 6th of March 1844, when on his way home, he fell into the Union Canal, and was drowned. Mr Kemp was a remarkably modest and unassuming individual. He was averse to anything like forwardness and obtrusion. His merits were thus not readily observed, and often failed to secure him that attention to which he was entitled. He was of a social disposition. He loved to spend an hour with a friend to discuss the progress of art, or the topics of the day. He had cultivated his mind with some assiduity, and wrote tolerably good verses, some of which

appeared in newspapers and periodicals. His architectural genius was of a high order. His Scott Monument was a noble conception, and will perpetuate his name to distant ages. It holds, and is likely long to hold, a chief place amid the splendid structures that adorn the capital of our native land.

A little farther down is the farm of Foreknowes and Rawhead, which some years ago belonged to the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, a brother of Admiral Fleming, and well known as a Governor of Bombay, and afterwards of Madras, and as the author of an interesting work on the Kingdom of Cabul. He retired from the offices which he held in India in 1827, and died at Hookwood Park, Surrey, on the 20th November 1859. This property was purchased from Mr Elphinstone by the late Mr George Gillespie of Biggar Park, who sold it to the Senatus of the Free Church College, Edinburgh. This body purchased it with a sum of £4000 which Henry Miller, Esq., of London presented to the Free Church of Scotland for the purpose of founding four scholarships, each to be held for a period of two years by students who, during their currency shall attend the classes in the New College, Edinburgh. Each of these scholarships amounts at present to £40 per annum. The competition for them is open to all students, who have attended one year at College, whether they intend to study for the church or not, and the examination is in general literature, biblical knowledge, Greek and Latin classics, and elementary mathematics.

We next come to the Mill, which is also the property of the Free Church. It has ground the meal and malt of the parishioners for a long period, as it is mentioned in some very old documents connected with the parish. It is also referred to in one of Dr Pennicuick's Poems, published upwards of one hundred and fifty years ago, entitled 'The Tragedy of the Duke of Alva, alias Graybeard; being the complaint of the brandy bottle lost by a poor carrier, having fallen from the handle, and found again by a company of the Presbytery of Peebles, near Kinkaidylaw, as they returned from Glasgow immediately after they had taken the test.' The graybeard, addressing their reverences, said,

'O sons of Levi! messengers of grace!
Have some regard to my old reverend face,

My broken shoulder and my wrinkled brow
 Plead fast for pity, and supply from you.
 Help, godly sirs ; and, if it be your will,
 Convey me safely home to Biggar Mill,
 Where, wand'ring to the widow, I was lost.
 Alas ! I fear the Carrier pays the cost.'

In spite of those and other sympathetic appeals, the holy brethren resolved that they would regale themselves with the inspiring contents of the graybeard, let the consequences be what they might,

' Right blythe they were, and drank to ane another,
 And ay the word went round, Here's to you, brother.'

The poor widow of Biggar Mill was thus deprived of her jar of brandy, and in all likelihood the carrier had to pay the expense of the earouse.

During the early part of last century the multure for grinding six firlots of malt at the mill was five fulls of a measure kept in the mill called the "Mutehkin dish," neither heaped nor straiiked, but hand weaved, and the knaveship for each boll of malt was 16d. seots.

Biggar Burn, a little above the mill, enters a deep ravine called the Burn Braes, and, after passing the mill, was wont to flow in serpentine meanders, like the Links of Forth in miniature. On the right bank are the ruins of the wauk mill and dyeing establishment of Thomas Cosh, and his son-in-law Angus Campbell, and the picturesque suburb of Westraw, with its finely sloping gardens. The indwellers in Westraw were wont to reckon themselves a sort of separate community from the inhabitants of the town of Biggar. They had distinet societies and eoteries of their own. They had their own peatmoss, their own birlemen, and their own amusements. Between the boys of the two plaeces there was a standing feud of old date. This was constantly manifesting itself in pugilistie eneounters ; but at a certain season of the year it broke out in a general bieber or *melée* on the Burn Braes. The weapons employed were slings, stones, and stieks. The taet and heroism at times displayed in attacking and defending these braes, would have done no discredit to a regular army. The wounds inflieted were often severe, and sometimes left sears and injuries that the

sufferers carried with them to the grave. The baron bailie, Mathew Cree, and his henchmen, the chief constables of the town, sometimes made a sally on the belligerents; and it was a rare sight to see these worthy powers put to flight by repeated volleys of stones, or at other times forcing the youthful warriors to shift their ground, and take refuge behind the mill-planting, or to scatter themselves over Cuttimuir or Kennedy's Oxgate. A lad having lost an eye in one of these encounters, the better disposed portion of the inhabitants at length rose against them, and happily succeeded in putting a stop to them, it is to be hoped, for ever.

The lands behind the Westraw swell into a gentle upland, now crowned with trees, called the Knock. These lands belonged at one time to the Knights Templars. So late as the 20th of March 1620, we find that a precept of Sasine was granted to John Smith, of two oxgates of Templelands, with the annuals of teinds thereof, in the Westraw of Biggar. In former times, it was a common thing to hold and compute land by oxgates. In the old writs of Biggar, of which there is a large number in the Wigton charter chest, we notice references to the following oxgates:—Chamberlain's, Fleming's, Goldie's, Hillhead, Mosside, Smith's, Spittle, Staine, Stainehead, and Telfer's. The lands of Westraw, or 'Wasterraw,' as it is often called in the old writs, consisted of eight oxgates. These oxgates were, in 1671, possessed by Archibald Watson, Thomas, James, William, and Alexander Robb, and William Valange, who 'payd for ilk oxgang twentie pund; 'ane boll of meall, ane boll of beer, and ane boll and half of hill oats,' and for the whole twenty-four kain fowls. According to the ordinary souming and rooming the feuars and tenants in Westraw were prohibited from having on each oxgate more than one horse, two nolt with one follower, and fifteen sheep.

The upland of the Knock was the scene of a remarkable hoax played on the people of Biggar in the spring of 1819. At that time Mr Baillie of Mellerstein brought his splendid pack of fox hounds to the Upper Ward, and for some days, employed them in the chase. They attracted great attention. People of all ranks followed them, many on horseback and a multitude on foot. One day they started a fox in the plantations of Shieldhill, and after a splendid run of several miles

poor reynard was overtaken and slaughtered in Biggar Bogs. On the first day of April, when the excitement regarding the fox hunts was at its height, a weaver in Westraw conceived the bright idea of making April fools of the whole inhabitants of the town. Taking one or two other weavers into his confidence, he got hold of a red mantle—an article of dress then commonly worn by the ladies,—and going up to the top of the Knock, put it on, and pranced up and down on the edge of the plantation, as if he had been on horseback. His confederates at once raised the hue and cry, that the hunters were in the Knock plantation hard in pursuit of a fox. The report ran through the town like wild-fire. The schools, although at the time undergoing a Presbyterial visitation, were dismissed, the weavers flew off their looms, the souters threw aside their awls, the smiths flung down their hammers, the merchants forsook their counters, and old and young were seen scrambling up the Burnbraes and the Westraw crofts, striving who should get first at the scene of sport. One knowing son of the awl on arriving at the head of the Kirkstyle halted a minute to ascertain the direction of the wind, and finding it easterly, declared that reynard would make for the Persilands planting, and off he and some companions hied in that direction by the Mill and the Fore-knowes. When the straggling and panting multitude reached the plantation of the Knock, they could find neither huntsmen nor hounds, and after gazing eagerly about in all directions they were satisfied that they had been made the victims of an arrant hoax, and had, therefore, to return to their homes mortified and chop-fallen.

A little west from the Knock stands the farm-house of Langlees. After James M'Gie left it and went to America, the tenant of it for many years was Mr John Borthwick. His son, Mr William Murray Borthwick, who was a printer, carried on business for some time at Lanark, where he published editions of several standard works, and started a periodical called the Clydesdale Magazine, which reached the first volume. By the aid of funds contributed by Lord Douglas, Sir Henry Stewart, Sir James Stewart, W. E. Lockhart, Esq., Henry Monteith, Esq., and others, he commenced, in 1820, a rabid Tory newspaper at Hamilton called the 'Clydesdale Journal,' which contained a serious of scurrilous attacks on gentlemen of

the opposite side in politics. On the suppression of the infamous Edinburgh newspaper called 'The Beacon,' Borthwick and Robert Alexander, whom he had taken into partnership, removed their printing establishment to Glasgow, and changed the name of their journal to 'The Sentinel.' The first number, after the change, contained a libellous attack on James Stuart, Esq., of Duncarn, which caused that gentleman to raise an action against the publishers. A short time afterwards, Borthwick was imprisoned for debt, and this debt having been paid on condition that he would surrender the manuscripts of the libellous papers which had appeared in his newspaper, it was thus discovered that one of the writers of them was Sir Alexander Boswell of Auchinleck, the ingenious author of 'Jenny's Bawbee,' 'Jenny dang the Weaver,' &c. The consequence was that he received a challenge from Mr Stuart, and a duel was fought by the parties at Auchtertool in Fife, when Sir Alexander was mortally wounded, and died the day following. This event caused a great sensation throughout the whole empire. Borthwick was apprehended, and most illegally detained in prison, where he was very harshly treated. His case was taken up by Henry Cockburn, James Moncreiff, and other leading Whig lawyers, and he was liberated without being brought to trial. He brought the harsh and illegal treatment which he had received before the House of Commons by a petition which was presented by James Abercromby, but the Tory party being still all-powerful in the House, he failed to obtain redress. He ultimately emigrated to Australia.

Langlees and the Knock, which formed part of the Wigton estate, were purchased in 1830 by Sir John Archibald Murray, afterwards one of the senators of the College of Justice, under the title of Lord Murray. His Lordship died in 1859, and this property having been brought to a sale in 1862, was purchased by Andrew Mitchell, Esq., Glasgow, a brother of Mr Mitchell of Carwood.

To the west of Langlees is the farm of Lindsaylands which belonged to the Wigton family in 1547, the tenant of which at that time was Luke Wilson. At what time it went out of the hands of the Flemings, we have not ascertained; but they had evidently disposed of it previous to 1745, as it does not appear in the list of farms belonging to the Earl of Wigton

liable to pay cess, which at that period was inserted in the Court Books of the Burgh of Biggar. Shortly after this date we know that it was the property of James Scott, merchant, Edinburgh. Mr Scott was one of the early seceders from the Established Church, and attended the ministrations of the Rev. Mr Pattison, pastor of the congregation, Bristo Street, Edinburgh, afterwards under the care of Dr Peddie. His town mansion was Ramsay Lodge, now used as the Inn at the new Cattle Market, Lauriston. He died on the 8th of September 1783, in the 78th year of his age, and was interred in the Greyfriars Churchyard. By his wife, Elizabeth Lockhart, who survived till 1803, when she was in her 89th year, he had a numerous family. Five sons and two daughters died when they were young, and Christian died in 1791 in her 48th year. His only surviving son, James, became the next laird of Lindsaylands. He died unmarried in January 1803, at the age of 51 years, and left his whole estate heritable and personal to his three sisters, viz., Elizabeth, married to John Richmond, merchant, Edinburgh; Jane, married to Samuel Paterson, merchant, Edinburgh; and Eleanora, married to John S. Shirra, merchant, Dalkeith, and a son of the Rev. Robert Shirra, Kirkcaldy, well known for his eccentricities and for his alleged success in praying Paul Jones out of the Firth of Forth. In the division of Mr Scott's estate the farm of Lindsaylands fell to the share of Mrs Paterson. This lady had an only child, a daughter, who on the death of her parents became proprietrix of Lindsaylands. She married a Mr E. Brown, but having no children she bequeathed one portion of the Lindsaylands to her cousin the wife of the Rev. Robert Culbertson, Leith, and the other portion of it to her two nieces equally in life-rent, and to their children in fee; but in the event of their not having children, their portion was to go to the heirs of Mrs Culbertson. In 1850, the property was divided by a decree of the Court of Session into East and West Lindsaylands,—the east portion being assigned to the family of Mrs Culbertson, and the west to the two nieces of Mrs Brown, one of whom is married to James Elder, Esq., Edinburgh, and the other to Dr Carter, Jersey.

South from the Knock is Biggar Park, pleasantly situated amid plantations with a lawn in front. It has little pretensions

to architectural elegance, but still it is an agreeable and substantial mansion.

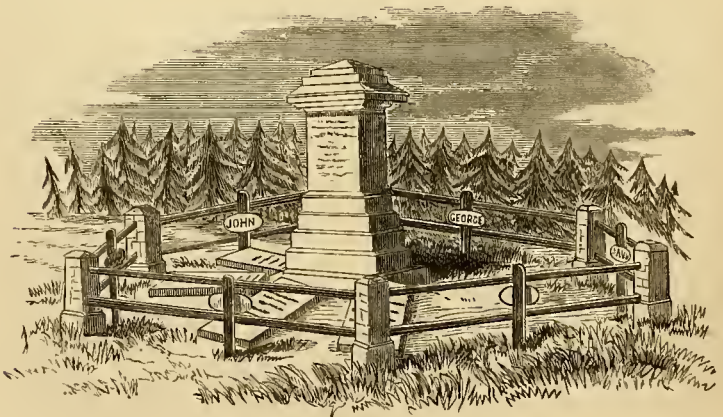


It was built at several times. The first portion of it was erected by James Bertram, who gave it the name of Bellfield. The house and the neighbouring grounds were purchased by John, twelfth Lord Elphinstone, who about the year 1798, considerably enlarged the house. Here his Lordship occasionally resided, and kept a pack of fox-hounds. For their accommodation he tore down a portion of the old castle of Boghall, and with the stones built a kennel. His Lordship died in 1813. A few months afterwards the guardians of his only son, John, who was then in the sixth year of his age, sold the house and grounds to Mr George Gillespie. Mr Gillespie, who was descended from the Gillespies of Wiston, early embarked in the fur trade, and spent a considerable part of his life in Columbia and among the Indians on the Rocky Mountains. Hewas a partner of Sir Alexander Mackenzie in The North-West Fur Company, he had a connexion with the Hudson's Bay Company, and also a share in the mercantile firm in Montreal which still exists under the name of Gillespie, Moffat, & Co. By these trade connexions he realized a very competent fortune. He thoroughly repaired the house of Bellfield,

and changed its name to Biggar Park. The joiners employed in executing the repairs, made a favourable impression on the hearts of the Biggar damsels, and, therefore, a local poet, who apprehensive that there was danger in countenancing the strangers, or envious, perhaps, of the flattering manner in which they were received, composed a song the chorus of which was,

‘Beware ye a’ o’ the Bellfield wrights,
For they will beguile you a’.’

His warning voice was, in some quarters, raised in vain, for one of the wrights, in true romantic fashion, carried off a daughter of the established clergyman. Mr Gillespie, who was held in high respect by the inhabitants of Biggar for his mild deportment, sound judgment, and unobtrusive benevolence, died in 1842, aged 70 years. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Alexander, who died in 1863, and the whole property, including Boghall Mains, was in 1865 sold for £19,000 to James Neilson, Esq., of Well Park Brewery, Glasgow. Mr Gillespie’s family having had for a number of years, by their residence at Biggar Park, a connexion with the parish, we give a woodcut of their burying place in Wiston Church Yard.



On the left bank of the Burn are the Kirkhill, the Kirk, the Kirk-yard, the Moat-knowe, and the Preaching Brae. The Preaching Brae is the spot at which open-air discourses were

delivered on sacramental and other extraordinary occasions. The tent was pitched near the edge of the burn, and the crowd rose rank above rank on the rising ground in front. Many of the leading divines of Scotland, especially those of former generations, preached here, and attracted immense multitudes from the country round. The clergy, at these assemblies, generally put forth their best abilities; many persons were wont to date from them their first serious concern for their eternal interests; the spectacle was reverential and picturesque, reminding one of the conventicles of old, to see a large throng of people worshipping their Creator under the blue canopy of heaven; and the heart was touched to hear "the sweet acclaim of praise" arise from thousands of pious lips, and swell on the fitful breeze. The practice of preaching at this spot has been discontinued for well nigh forty years, so that few of the present generation of Biggar inhabitants have seen a Burn Brae conventicle at all approximating in magnitude and rapt devotion to those of former times.

On these braes the inhabitants have long carried on the practice of washing and bleaching their clothes. Attempts have several times been made to deprive them of this privilege. A keen war has hence arisen between them and the tacksmen of the grounds; but the result has hitherto been, that the wives and maidens have remained in possession of the field. In 1863, the tenant of Rawhead, in order to straighten the course of the burn, caused a drain to be cut from the mill ford to a place near the foot of the Westraw Gardens, thus destroying its fine meandering sweep. This roused the indignation of the inhabitants. A meeting was held, and a resolution formed to undo the work already executed. A large number turned out, and, in a short time, the new cut was filled up with rubbish, and the stream was permitted to flow in its old channel. The Senatus of the Free Church College, by advice of their agents, at once instituted proceedings before the Sheriff Court at Lanark against a number of the persons who were present. The defenders' plea was "use and wont," and proof was led at great length, but the Sheriff decided that the defenders had no right to the said lands, and granted a warrant to the pursuers to re-open the new cutting at the expense of the defenders. The grounds adjacent to the Burn

were certainly in a very marshy condition, and if the object of the tenant was to dry them, he may have been entitled to some commendation. A story is told of a Biggar wight with a wooden leg, who was fairly impeded in his course by this marsh. He had during the day been indulging in rather heavy potations of strong drink, and towards evening descended on some errand or other to the mill. On his return home, the night being dark, he deviated from the road, and ere he was aware stuck his "tree-leg" up to the hilt in the bog. After a violent struggle he came to the conclusion that he had extricated the limb, and accordingly set out vigorously on the march, but it was still sunk in the marsh, and instead of making progress he only spun round as if he were moving on a pivot. Round and round he went till he was almost exhausted, and began to think that the distance to Biggar had somehow been vastly increased. At length a person passing along the road, hearing him panting and floundering in the marsh, went up to him and cried, "Hollo, friend! what are ye doing there?" "Am travellin' to Biggar," said he; "but the road is sae lang an' dreich, that I fear Mysie will be in her bed afore I get hame." The person finding how he was placed, relieved him from his confinement, and escorted him to the Kirk Style, where Mysie was found with a "bouet" searching the road sides for her lost mate.

A little farther down is a level spot called Angus's Green, on which the Biggar gymnastic sports were annually held in the middle of June. These sports at one time were popular, and largely patronised; but, like similar amusements in other parts of the country, they have been in a languishing condition for some years. The curious excavations here, in connection with the Moat-knowe, have, unfortunately, in the desire for improvement, been filled up and defaced.

Still farther down, some forty years ago, stood the hut of Janet Watson, commonly known by the name of "Daft Jenny." She was the daughter of John Watson and Isabella Vallance. In her early days she was employed in hawking small warcs about the country in a basket; but at length manifesting decided symptoms of insanity, she was placed in confinement, became dependent on the parochial funds, and lived here in her solitary apartment for many years. Her appear-

ance was most singular. She had a wild and excited expression of countenance. She was commonly dressed in a dark cotton gown, or in a blue flannel petticoat and jupe, or short-gown, and wore on her head a plair muteh or "toy," as it was here called, while on one shoulder hung a plaid; and in her left hand she invariably held an old tobacco pipe and a tattered Bible, which she frequently kissed or held to her breast. She was fastened by the leg with a strong iron chain, to prevent her from making her escape, and committing injury on the persons and property of the inhabitants. Her language was rambling and incoherent, and largely interlarded with snatches of songs, texts of Scripture, and the names of persons with whom she had been acquainted. At times it was uttered in a low and subdued tone, and all of a sudden it was poured forth with a vehemence and excitement that made all the neighbourhood re-echo. She was somewhat outrageous. She would heave the parritch cog, the frying-pan, and other utensils in which she received her food, over the top of the adjacent houses, and assail persons who came near her with stieks and stones. When she broke her chain, or contrived to slip it off her leg, she commonly ran to the Relief Manse, erected on the site of her father's cottage; and there broke the windows, or pulled up the bushes or plants in the garden. She was thus a great terror to the juvenile population; and when the cry arose, "Jenny's loose," every boy and girl made speedily to a place of protection.

Her father, surnamed the "Whistling Laird," was a singular sort of a man. In his early days he had spent some time in North America, and had there acquired a habit of making various articles of domestic use. In the side of a brae, near the place at which his daughter's hut stood, he erected a curious and primitive-looking building of stones, turf, and wood, and covered it with a roof composed partly of paper and pitch, and hence it was commonly known by the name of the "Castle o' Clouts." He made the whole of his own clothes, including his shoes and leathern cap; and he produced some rare pieces of joiner's work, in the shape of carts, wheelbarrows, &c. His first wife, Isabella Vallance, died early; and, during the war in Spain, he married a woman commonly called "Jock's Jenny," who had been previously

married to a labourer in Biggar, at one time well known in the town by the soubriquet of "Whistling Jock," from a bumming sort of whistle in which he indulged as he went from one place to another. During the exciting times of the Continental War, "Whistling Jock" was fired with the ambition of being a soldier; so he deserted his wife, and went to fight the battles of his country in the Spanish Peninsula. He very likely carried on little epistolary correspondence with his wife, even when he first went abroad, but at length it ceased altogether; and as his regiment had frequently been engaged with the enemy, Jenny suspected that he had lost his life in some of the sanguinary contests then so common in Spain. She wrote a letter inquiring after him to the War Office, and, by some mistake or other, he was reported to have been killed. When the Whistling Laird, therefore, made proposals of marriage to her, she considered she was at liberty to accept them, as she said, in her stuttering manner, "The War Office had told her that Dock was killed at Pain, far ayont Gasco." They therefore were joined in wedlock, and lived contentedly till the conclusion of the war, when "Dock" suddenly made his appearance in his tattered regimentals, and confronted the astounded pair. Jenny would rather have preferred to live with "Don," as she called her husband number two, as, in her estimation, "he was a good religious man;" but Whistling Jock maintained that, by priority of engagement, he had a preferable claim. With threats and pleadings, Jenny was prevailed on to go with Dock, and the Whistling Laird was left in solitary blessedness for the remainder of his life.

John Watson was a person of sagacity and intelligence. He allowed himself, however, on one occasion, to be made the victim of a rather laughable, though to him a very mortifying hoax. One day, in the year 1817, he received by post a large letter with a huge seal, purporting to be from the Lord Provost and Magistrates of Edinburgh, and inviting him to accept the office of hangman, then vacant by the death of John High. He was not only thoroughly convinced that the letter was genuine, but was vastly elated at the idea of receiving so great a mark of attention and honour from the municipal authorities of the Scottish metropolis. He said the post

which they had conferred on him might not in general estimation be very respectable, yet it was most necessary, and therefore laudable; because, if the laws were not duly carried out, society would soon be thrown into a state of anarchy. In spite of the remonstrances of his friends, he set out to Edinburgh, and presented himself at the Council Chambers. He boldly announced that he had come from Biggar to accept the office of hangman. The persons in the office informed him that it had already been filled up. This sad announcement at once laid all his bright hopes in the dust. He declared that he had been very unfairly treated, and produced the document putting the office in question at his acceptance. The communication was declared to be an arrant forgery, and John had no other alternative than to trudge back to Biggar, it may be a wiser, but certainly a most angry and disappointed man.

A little farther on are the Gas Works, erected in 1839, by a joint-stock company. Gas is supplied to the community at 7s. per 1000 cubic feet. The undertaking, while it has been a great advantage to the inhabitants, has also been a profitable speculation for the shareholders. We have next on the side of the Burn a range of premises used as a brewery by Mr James Steel, and afterwards by Mr James Bell. No brewing has been carried on here for several years. One of the malt lofts of the brewery was nearly fifty years ago fitted up as a Theatre, and here some of the best standard plays were acted by a strolling company under the management of a Mr Fraser, and excited great interest in the town and neighbourhood. Adjoining is the Wynd, dear to the recollection of Westraw callants, when it was tenanted by such worthies as John Davidson, tailor, Andrew Steel, and David Loch, carters, &c.

Few characters at one period were better known in the Upper Ward of Clydesdale, than David Loch. For many a year he exercised the calling of a pedler in that district, regularly going his rounds among the villages and farm-houses, supplying the females with shawls, prints, and cambrics; and the men with night-caps, braces, and corduroys. David was never a man of strong intellect, or expert business habits, but, in the good times in which he lived, and trafficking with a simple, unsophisticated people, he contrived to prosecute a considerable

trade, and to amass a little wealth. At the death of his first wife, he was regarded as a thriving man, and on the strength of his penny siller, he soon afterwards wooed and won the hand, if not the heart, of one of the most celebrated belles at that time in the country-side. This union, however, proved neither happy nor advantageous; but death, that stern and effectual dissolver of all earthly connexions, at length relieved David from the troubles which he had experienced from his unhappy spouse. In his next matrimonial engagement, David's heart was less set on the deceptive fascinations of beauty, and accordingly he selected for his helpmeet, Jeanie Dodds, a snod, frugal, middle-aged maiden, of a rank no higher than that of a servant. By-and-by he abandoned the chapman's profession, and became a carter and dealer in old horses. Jeanie Dodds, in course of time, slept with her fathers, and David took unto himself a fourth spouse of the name of Janet Aitken. He sometimes spoke of having one or two more wives, but Janet proved to be a piece of durable material, and saw David laid in the mools before her. By his second wife he had one daughter named Grizzel, who married a man called Thomas Brown. Brown was a man of great stature, reaching nearly seven feet in height, but he was of rather slender make, and not of very robust health. He enlisted as a soldier, but after serving a short time he either deserted, or was discharged, and then with his wife and children pursued the vocation of begging. Having come in contact with the proprietors of a travelling exhibition he entered into an engagement with them to be the giant of their establishment,—and in this capacity was transported from town to town, and shown to an admiring public. Close confinement in a caravan, however, agreed ill with his roving disposition, so he broke off from his exhibitors, declaring that the show business was worse than soldiering itself. For many years afterwards he roamed over the Upper Ward as a common vagrant. The last time we conversed with him was at Clydesbridge-end upwards of forty years ago, when he appeared to be lame in one of his legs, and was moving slowly along on crutches.

An incident in David Loch's career is entitled to notice, as it made a considerable noise over Scotland, and is the only in-

stance, so far as we are aware, of any individuals suffering the last sentence of the law for injury inflicted on a Biggar man.

A gentleman having occasion to proceed to the south, from Edinburgh, hired a horse to convey him the length of Biggar. David Loch, who was going to Edinburgh next day on some business, engaged to take the horse back to its owner. He accordingly left Biggar, mounted on the hired horse, between one and two o'clock in the afternoon of Wednesday, the 23rd of November 1814, and was soon jogging along at a slow trot, by Toftcombs and Candy Burn. In his pockets were four bank-notes and twenty shillings of silver, a tobacco spluchan, made of a piece of calf's skin, and a twopenny loaf, put there by the affectionate attention of his spouse, Jeanie Dodds, that he might have the wherewithal to appease any gnawing of hunger that might arise, and have no pretext to misspend his time and his means, by indulging in refreshments in the many tempting alc-houses by the way. At that time the country had been put into a state of great alarm by the perpetration^{of} a number of most daring highway robberies. In almost every quarter, men and women had been knocked down and maltreated, and their money, and in many cases their clothes, carried off. Participating in the general apprehension, David felt anxious to reach the metropolis at an early hour in the evening, and therefore steadily pursued his journey, and, although the day was piercingly cold, manfully resisted all the allurements of Bridgehouse, Ninemile Burn, Howgate, and Lothian Burn, favourite resting-places in those days for the wayfaring man. The days at that season of the year being short, the shades of night began to descend ere he had reached House of Muir, but, as the sky was unclouded, and the ground covered with snow, the night was by no means dark.

He had now passed the Buckstane and the Brigs o' Braid, and was descending the road towards Morningside, congratulating himself that he had escaped all danger, when, near a solitary thorn-bush, which long bore his name, he met two men, one of whom inquired at him if he knew what the clock was. David slackened the pace of his steed a little, and replied that 'he didna ken, but he believed it would be about sax.' 'Sure enough,' said the one who had not spoken, 'it is as near eleven.' David took them to be two drunk rustics, who had

been in Edinburgh at the market, and was about to proceed, when one of them rushed forward and seized the bridle, while the other dragged him off the horse, and tossed him into a ditch by the wayside. Instantly the two ruffians were above him with their knees, and in the struggle several of his ribs were broken. Age, and an attack of paralysis, had greatly weakened his bodily powers, and, consequently, he was able to offer very little resistance, but he roared out 'Murder, murder,' as loud as he was able. One of the villains then struck him several severe blows on the head with the butt end of a pistol, and threatened, if he would not be silent, to knock his brains out. He still, however, kept crying 'Oh dear;' and the noise which he made reached the ears of Mr Andrew Black, blacksmith, Braidsburn, who had been convoying one Samuel Payne towards Edinburgh, who had passed the robbers a few minutes before, on the road, nearer the city, and had remarked to his companion that they were gallows-looking scoundrels, whom he would not like to meet in a solitary place with a hundred pounds in his pocket. Andrew hastened with all speed to the spot, and the villains seeing him approach, ran off across the fields, carrying with them all the articles contained in David's pockets, formerly mentioned. Andrew pursued them for some distance, when one of the robbers wheeled round and discharged a pistol at him, which caused him to halt and turn back. He found David still lying in the ditch, all covered with blood, and the horse standing about thirty yards distant. Andrew, having procured some assistance, got David conveyed to Mr Scott's of Myreside, and afterwards to the Police Office, Edinburgh, where his wounds were dressed, and where he made a statement of the assault and robbery to the authorities.

Suspicious had for some time been entertained that two Irishmen, named Thomas Kelly and Henry O'Neil, were concerned with some of the numerous robberies which had been recently committed. Their houses in the West Port were searched, and several articles found, which had been taken from persons who had been robbed, and among the rest was David Loch's spleuchan. It was shown to David, who recognised it at once. Some of the legal gentlemen inquired how he was able to identify it as the article which he had lost. Davie replied, 'I ken the spleuchan weel enough frae the look

o't, as I hae putten mony an ounce o' tobacco in till't, and also frae having shu'd a slit in't the morning afore I cam' awa' frae Biggar.' The spleuchan being unrolled, David's rude needlework was discovered, and its identity thus established beyond a doubt. The Irishmen were accordingly forthwith lodged in the old Tolbooth, and, in a few days, were served with an indictment to stand their trial before the High Court of Justiciary, on the 16th of December, little more than three weeks after their robbery of David Loch.

The trial took place on the day appointed, and excited a very lively interest. The culprits having been placed at the bar, the indictment was read, which contained three separate charges,—1st, for having on the 22nd of November, attacked and robbed William Welch, parish schoolmaster of Stenton, East Lothian, near the farmhouse of Howmuir; 2nd, for having, on the same day, attacked and robbed James Leigo and Thomas Wilson, farm servants in the parish of Haddington, on the high road between Haddington and Dunbar; and 3rd, for having attacked and robbed David Loch, carter in Biggar, as already stated. Although the panels had, in their declarations, confessed their perpetration of the crimes laid to their charge, they now chose to plead not guilty, and so the case went to an assize. A number of witnesses bore testimony against the prisoners, and among others, Andrew Black, the smith at Braidsburn, who, on that occasion, was highly complimented by the Court for his humanity and attention. The evidence being closed, the Solicitor-General addressed the jury on the part of the Crown, and Messrs Gilles and Brodie on behalf of the prisoners. The charges against them having been clearly proved, the jury, without leaving the box, unanimously returned a verdict of guilty. The sentence of the Court was, that they be carried, on Wednesday the 25th of January, between the hours of one and four in the afternoon, from the Tolbooth, to the spot at which they had committed the robbery on David Loch, and that they be there hanged till dead.

The sentence was carried into effect on the day appointed, in presence of a large concourse of spectators, many of whom came from a great distance. Two large square stones, in which the beams of the scaffold were placed, still remain in the public road to mark the spot at which the execution took

place ; and, as they consist of sandstone, they have a dark, damp appearance, even in summer, and are thus conspicuous to the eye of the traveller. The thorn-tree, so long a terror after nightfall, was, a few years ago, cut down ; but the incident of the robbery and execution is still fresh in the memory of many old people throughout Scotland.

David Loch's name having by this incident become famous, some wag inserted a paragraph in one of the Edinburgh newspapers, stating that he had been out in the '45, and that for a notable act of valour performed by him on the field of Prestonpans, he had, from the hands of Prince Charles himself, received a pair of silver mounted pistols, which he had still in his possession. Strangers, who came to Biggar for some time afterwards, never failed to make inquiries after the Jacobite veteran, and were much disappointed to find that the whole statement was a complete hoax.

Spanning Biggar Burn at the bottom of the Wynd is the Cadger's Brig, supposed to be a Roman work. It is far from unlikely that the Romans threw a bridge across this stream, which often in winter is considerably swollen, and is then not easily fordable ; but the present erection is perhaps more modern. By whatever party it was built, it was, no doubt, largely taken advantage of by the numerous cadgers that at one time passed through Biggar to the great mart for their merchandise, the Scottish capital ; and hence, in all likelihood, its name. The popular tradition, however, is, that it first received its name from the circumstance of its having been used by Sir William Wallace, when he visited the English camp at Biggar in the guise of a cadger. It is very narrow, and being without parapet walls it was crossed with difficulty in dark nights. Instances of people falling from it into the stream were not uncommon, and perhaps it was in reference to these precipitations and immersions that the well-known aphorism had its origin, 'Ye're better here than in Biggar Burn.' Upwards of forty years ago a substitute was found for parapet walls in an iron railing, which was erected under the auspices of Mr James Bell, brewer. Robert Rae in an unpublished poem entitled, 'London's big but Biggar's biggar,' has the following stanza in reference to the Cadger's Brig. Addressing the Cockneys he says,—



John Dickson Del

Faolo Fmoio Sculp

CADGER'S BRIG,
BIGGAR.

1862.

‘Ye may boast o’ yer brigs ower the horrible Thames,
 The Hungerford, Vauxhall, an’ siccanlike names,
 But we hae a brig worth a score o’ them a’,
 The Auld Cadger’s Brig at the fit o’ the Raw,
 Yer Edward ance heard o’t whan sair to his loss
 His bowmen like vermin we drown’d in the moss,
 The cruel invader, the crafty intriguer,
 He thocht himsel’ big, but he fand us still biggar.’

A little below is a bridge in connection with the turnpike road to Dumfries, built in 1823, and embanked at each end with the earth that formed the Cross-knowe.

In the neighbourhood is Camb Cottage, erected, and for a number of years possessed, by Dr. Anthony Wilson, a very amiable man, and a cautious medical practitioner. In the same house, on the 30th of April 1864, died Dr. James Summers, who had practised in Biggar for upwards of a quarter of a century. He was held in much esteem for many admirable qualities, professional and otherwise. As we had not the pleasure of his acquaintancc, we quote an obituary notice of him which appeared in a public journal a few days after his death :—

‘ Possessed of great natural sagacity, promptitude, and decision, thoroughly educated at first, and keeping pace to the last with the medical literature of the day, it is not surprising that he should have practised in Biggar for the last twenty-six years with an ever-growing reputation. His patients had come to place in him unbounded confidence, confirmed by the well-known esteem in which he was held by some of the most eminent consulting physicians in this country. But it is not only as a professional man that Mr Summers will be long and deeply regretted. He was intelligent, sensible, shrewd, strictly conscientious, and singularly downright; and there was therefore nowhere to be found a more judicious adviser, a more staunch and faithful friend. Robust a little in manner, as in the general build of his character, he stood on little ceremony in dealing with foibles of the less amiable sort; but underneath there lurked a benevolence of disposition, a warmth of heart, a kindness and even gentleness, which those who knew him slightly might fail to sec—which those who knew him best saw clear as day. Though the favourite of all classes, he was

to one of them especially dear, for his memory will long live among the uplands he so often traversed as the benefactor of the poor.'

Below these bridges is the Ba' Green, supposed at one time to have been the public park of the town, where, among other pastimes, football was played. Football was long a favourite amusement in this as well as in other districts of Scotland. It was cried down by the edicts of James I., and other sovereigns, who wished to substitute archery in its place; but it still prevailed. It was a rough and savage pastime. Severe wounds were often inflicted from falls and kicks, and fights were not uncommon from alleged instances of unfair play. The sport in more recent times was also carried on in the Main or High Street of Biggar, particularly on public occasions, when a number of the country people were in town. It was then most irregular and tumultuous. Every one took what side he pleased. The fury and violence were terrible. A dozen or two of the combatants would be lying sprawling on the ground at one time, and an unhappy wight would be knocked through a window, or overturned in a filthy open sewer. The consequence was, that it was no uncommon occurrence for two or three pugilistic encounters to be going on at the same time. This rough and too often injurious pastime has been discontinued. Draughts, quoits, curling, and bowling, are now the favourite amusements. The Bowling-green, which was opened in 1847, lies contiguous to the Moat-knowe. It is neatly constructed, is kept in excellent order, and conduces much to the recreation and health of a portion of the inhabitants.

On the side opposite to the Ba' Green is the small holding of the Blawhill; and here, by the side of the stream, is Jenny's Well, to which the inhabitants established a right about forty years ago, when an attempt was made to shut up the road to it by the proprietor of the adjoining grounds. The barrier erected across the road was broken down, and the meeting of Westraw wives, with Mr James Bell, brewer, at their head, to defend their ancient right, was a fine display of indignant and independent Biggar feeling. The proprietor entered the case before the Sheriff at Lanark; but in the end had sense enough to withdraw it, and pay all expenses. So this remarkably cool and copious spring will remain in all time coming to supply re-

freshing draughts to the Biggar people, and to remind them that in this free country might cannot always triumph over right.

On the right are the lands of Boghall Mains, now finely subdivided and improved. The farm-steading, built about thirty years ago, is one of the most elegant and substantial in the county. It cost the proprietor L.1500, and the tenant L.300 in cartages. The tenant is Mr John Brown, who for a long series of years has been one of the most extensive dealers in horses in Scotland. He attends all the fairs far and near, and at stated times has a sale of horses on his own farm, which is known in the district by the name of Boghall Fair.

The farm of Boghall Mains was in former times possessed by several tenants, the principal of whom, in 1729, were James Vallange, who also held the Customs of Biggar, and William Lithgow, whose spouse was Elizabeth Mitchell. William Lithgow was succeeded by his son Richard, whose spouse was Jane Forrest, a daughter of Alex. Forrest and Grizzel Tweedie of Biggar Mill, and generally called, in the early part of the present century, "the Auld Gudewife o' Bogha'." She was exceedingly garrulous, and excelled as a genealogist, as she was able to trace the pedigree of all the settled inhabitants to the third and fourth generations. From the number of buildings standing at Boghall Mains till a comparatively recent period, it was evident that many of the baron's immediate retainers in feudal times must have resided here. In the Burgh Records, in the early part of last century, we notice the names of John Neilson, James M·Watt, and James Bogle, as inhabitants at Boghall Mains.

Between Boghall Mains and the town of Biggar at one time stood a hamlet called Little Boghall. One of the residents here, in the middle of last century, was John Tweedie. He had a son, also called John, who was fatuous, and was for many years a burden on the parochial funds. Daft Jock, as he was usually termed, was employed by Mr James Steel in his brewery, but after that gentleman emigrated to America, he never had any settled employment. After the death of his relatives he was boarded with different individuals, particularly with John Minto and his wife Kate in the School-green. He was quite harmless and docile. He was often to be seen with a group of boys around him, who made him

tumble, dance, sing, or carry them one after another on his back. When he grew tired with his successive loads he got rid of them by suddenly stooping down and giving a hitch, which had the effect of sending the urchin on his back right over his head. He was very taciturn, and when he did speak he repeated the same word three or four times. One of his common practices was to look alternately on the palm and back of his hand, and at every turn to thrust out his tongue. His songs, or rather recitations, for he had no musical ear, were strange rhapsodics, which he had been taught to repeat by Mr James Sinclair, painter, and which he was ready to deliver on all occasions. It was a comical thing to hear him recite, with great earnestness and iteration, "When I was up at the Hiefield," or "Pray that yer horn may be exalted." His dancing consisted in prancing to a considerable distance by a sideward motion called side-cutting. He died some thirty years ago, much to the relief of the parochial authorities, but to the regret of the juveniles, who missed the amusement which he was wont to afford.

Following the course of the Burn, we have on the left the Farm of Stain—the property of John L. Murray, Esq. The lands of Stain must at one time have been held by the Knight Templars, for we find that on the 4th of November 1632 George Lindsay of Covington was retoured heir of two oxgates of temple lands called "Stain," in the barony of Biggar, the value of which, according to the ancient extent, was 16s. 8d., and according to the new extent 3 merks. William Lindsay, of Covington, in 1663, conveyed to James Dickson, writer, Edinburgh, the right and superiority of "the lands of Stane, with houses, yeards, and pertinents thereof, with the croft of land and those portions and particals of land called the Seven Ruid Cutteing and Crukedale, and all the other pertinents thereof, with the meadow by and beside the lands of Chamberlands, and hail remanent meadows, either by and severally by themselves or otherwise, common in neighbourhood, pertaining to the said lands of Stane, with mosses, pasturages, priviledges, and other comodities belonging thereto." This conveyance was ratified by Parliament in 1663. This farm continued in the possession of the Dicksons of Hartree till about 1820, when it was disposed in fee simple by Colone.

Alexander Dickson to Mrs Douglas. This lady at her death bequeathed it to Dr David Maclagan, Edinburgh.

Still further down is Heavyside, the property of Mr John L. Murray, and the neighbouring farm of Spittal, the property of Mr. Robert Murray, both of which formed part of the Wigton estate when it was disposed of in 1830.

Biggar Burn, after receiving a small stream from Hartree, takes the name of Biggar Water. The first reference to Biggar Water in any of our public muniments, so far as we have observed, is in a document giving a detail of the perambulation of the Marches of Stobo, which is supposed to have taken place between 1202 and 1207. This document, after referring to various boundaries of that parish, goes on to say, "And so by the hill top between Glenubswirles to the Burn of Glenkeht (the Muirburn), and so downwards as that Burn falls into the Bigre." The other tributaries of Biggar Water are Skirling Burn, Kilbucho Burn, Broughton Burn, and Holmes Water. In a ditch or small burn running from the Westraw Moss, the strange phenomenon is sometimes seen of a portion of the waters of the Clyde flowing into Biggar Water. This, of course, only takes place when the Clyde is greatly flooded; but it shows how small an effort would be requisite to turn the waters of the Clyde into those of the Tweed. At the place where the level is most favourable for such a project, the Clyde has actually formed a channel of some length in this direction. The tradition regarding it is, that the wizard, Michael Scott, entered into a paction with the devil, by which he obtained liberty to take the Clyde across the Westraw Moss and the lands of Boghall as fast as a horse could trot, on condition, however, that he would not look behind him during the operation. He commenced the work; but the angry waters made such a terrific noise, that he could not resist the temptation to look back to see the cause of the uproar. The spell was thus broken, and the waters fled back to their old channel, but left a very decided trace of the devious course which they had been forced to take.

The Symington, Biggar, and Broughton Railway passes along the valley of Biggar Water. The first sod of this line was cut on the 30th of September 1858, by Mrs Baillie Cochrane of



Lamington, amid the applauding demonstrations of a great concourse of spectators, who had marched to the spot from Biggar with banners and bands of music. It was opened on the 5th of November 1860. The length of it is little more than eight miles; and the tract over which it passes, being extremely level, presented little engineering difficulty. It crosses the Clyde, near the Moat of Wolf-Clyde, by a viaduct, the piers and abutments of which are of stone, and the arches, seven in number, of malleable iron. Three of the arches are each $62\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide, and are what are called 'lattice' girders; and the other four are each 27 feet wide, and are called 'plate' girders. The whole weight of iron employed is 44 tons, and the cost was £4150. At this point is the first station, the second is at Boghall, near Biggar, and the terminus was at Broughton, but the line is now carried to Peebles. The North British Railway Company have made a line from that town to Galashiels, and thus the valleys of the Tweed and the Clyde have been connected throughout by Railway communication.

The tract through which Biggar Water flows, especially on its north bank, was till recently a dreary, unprofitable, and deleterious waste, relieved only here and there with a stunted birch tree. It was composed of peat-moss, and vast quantities of peat for fuel had been dug here. The surface was consequently studded with deep excavations, filled with water, and almost impassable. When a stray stot or stirk ventured to intrude into this boggy and treacherous track, the probability was, that it plunged into a deep hole, or stuck fast in the mud; and then great was the labour of men and boys to drag it from its dangerous position, and preserve it from destruction. This waste appears to have been in early times called the Nether Moss, and latterly it was known by the name of Biggar Bogs. In 1832, a poem appeared in a periodical called the 'Edinburgh Spectator,' which contained a sort of ironical eulogium on the Bogs of Biggar. One of the stanzas ran thus:—

‘O the Bogs of Biggar
Both clean and trig are,
With the frogs a chirping,
Uncommon sweet;

And some bulrushes,
And stunted bushes,
To meet your wishes,
So small and neat.'

The growing crops in the neighbourhood of the bogs, except in early years, were very liable to be damaged by frost, and were thus often rendered unfit for seed, and sometimes even for food. The feuars of Biggar, who rented nearly all the Bog parks, were occasionally subjected to heavy losses from this cause. The late Rev. William Watson, incumbent of the parish, had one of the Bog parks; but in consequence of the soil being drier, and lying at a greater distance from the swampy ground, his crops generally suffered less damage from the frosts than some of his neighbours, and thus excited their envy. One very frosty autumnal morning, Mr Watson met the late William Clerk, merchant, Biggar, and accosting him, said, 'William, this is a snell morning; I am afraid the oats in the Bog parks must have sustained damage.' 'Aye, Mr Watson,' was the reply, 'there's nae respect o' persons this morning.'

Various efforts were, from time to time, made to bring some portions of this tract under cultivation. The great difficulty to contend with was the want of a sufficient descent, to carry off the superfluous moisture with which the lands were saturated. The whole valley was nearly a dead level, and the channel of Biggar Water was only a few inches below the surface. Drains, cut to any depth, were worse than useless, as they only had the effect of bringing water in greater abundance on the adjoining grounds. To obviate these obstructions to drainage, the late Mr Murray of Heavyside cut a large ditch, and at the termination of it erected a water-wheel, with buckets, by which he lifted the water to a higher elevation, and then, running it off to a point lower down the stream, was thus enabled to dry a considerable portion of his bog lands. This wheel, which wrought very effectually, was the workmanship of the ingenious millwright of Biggar, Mr James Watt. The adjoining proprietors at length resolved to deepen Biggar Water to such an extent as to ensure a proper declivity, and prevent it from being filled up with mud and weeds, as had hitherto been the case. This important work was, accordingly,

carried out under the superintendence of Mr George Ferguson, and completed in 1858. Some hundred acres of land along the banks of the stream have, consequently, been drained and cultivated, and are now annually covered with most luxuriant crops, while the atmosphere around has been rendered vastly more salubrious and agreeable.

In this dreary flat stood a hamlet called John's Holm. John Gairns and Archibald Brown were two of the tenants of this place, a hundred and forty years ago. The buildings have now entirely disappeared, so that it is difficult to ascertain the exact spot on which they stood.

This level tract was, no doubt, at a very remote period, covered with the sea. The stones, to a great depth, appear to have travelled from a distance, and have the smooth rounded shape that is produced by the action of water. Mr Robert Chambers, in his curious and interesting work on 'Ancient Sea Margins,' states, that the central mountain range of southern Scotland, from which the Tweed and Clyde take their almost contiguous origin, bears marks of ancient sea levels at coincident heights on both sides. He enumerates various places at the height of 628 feet on the Ettrick, Gala, and Tweed, which present flat projections, supposed to be formed by the action of the sea, and then says, 'It is remarkable, however, that the broad passage or col between the Tweed and Clyde at Biggar, much of the basis of which is occupied by a moss, is given at 628 feet above the sea. When the sea stood at this height, the two estuaries of Clyde and Tweed joined in a shallow sound at Biggar, and the southern province of Scotland formed two islands, or rather group of islands.'

It is a matter of some regret that the Fleming family, so long connected with this parish, have, from time to time, disposed of nearly all the extensive lands that they once possessed here, and in the neighbourhood. With Glenholm, Kilbucho, and Thankerton they have long ceased to have any connection, and the whole of their inheritance in the parish of Biggar has now dwindled down to a few acres. This regret is qualified by the circumstance, that they had long allowed their lands in this parish to remain in a very neglected state. They held out no inducement to improvement. Being non-resident, and possessed of little superfluous wealth, they neither showed any

example of activity, nor expended the necessary capital to promote the due cultivation of the soil; and thus it continued, from year to year, in the same dismal and unprofitable state. When the entail was broken, fully forty years ago, and the portion of Biggar parish which they still held was sold, it fortunately fell into the hands of men who lost no time in commencing the work of improvement. New farm-steadings were built, drains were cut, dykes were erected, and trees and hedges were planted. Two thousand acres of land, by the enterprise and resources of the new proprietors, Lord Murray of Langlees, George Gillespie, Esq. of Biggar Park, Robert Gray, Esq. of Carwood, Thomas Murray, Esq. of Heavyside, and William Murray, Esq. of Spittal, very soon assumed a new appearance, and became vastly more productive and valuable.

The whole lands in the parish of Biggar comprise 5852 Scotch acres, or $11\frac{1}{2}$ square miles, and the valuation, inclusive of Railways, is £13,365, 19s. The soil consists principally of clay, sand, gravel, loam, and peat-moss. It rears good crops of oats, barley, pease, turnips, and potatoes, but is not adapted for beans and wheat. The dairy is here an object of great attention. Most of the farmers keep a stock of milk cows; and the butter and also the cheese, both full milk and skim milk, which they produce, are held in high repute in the marts of the eastern and western metropolis, and very often receive premiums at the shows of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland. In the north part of the parish, near the source of Biggar Burn, the soil is of a poor description, and appears to be too scantily supplied with the phosphates that are necessary for strengthening and fertilizing the soil. It is supposed that it is from this cause that the cattle are often attacked with a disease called the 'stiffness,' or 'cripple.' Those persons who wish to obtain information regarding this disease, which has hitherto been little investigated in this country, are referred to an article 'On Arthritic or Bone Disease,' by Mr William Thorburn, Henschilend, in the January number of the 'Veterinary Review' for 1861, and to various observations on the subject by Mr John Gamgee, both in that periodical and in his work on 'The Domestic Animals in Health and Disease.'

In 1809, a Disposition of the rental of Admiral Fleming's

portion of the Parish of Biggar, in a process of the valuation of teinds, was made by John Brown of Coultermains, Matthew Cree, Biggar, and William Bogle, Mosside. The amount of rental was only £944, 11s. 10½d.; but the document is chiefly interesting as showing that the Biggar estate of the Flemings was at the time divided into no less than fifty-five holdings; and that among the tenants, all of whose names are given, were the principal men of Biggar and Westraw.*

* Appendix No. 2.

CHAPTER VI.

Sunnyside and Candy.



LITTLE to the north-east of the Town of Biggar is the holding which till a recent period was called Sunnyside. Like many other places around Biggar, it had in former times several tenants, and here James Scott, one of the Biggar poets, was born about the year 1734. His father, who bore the same name, was by profession a mason. The name of Robert Scott, wright in Sunnyside, appears in the Session Records, under date 11th July 1734, in connection with negotiations for the construction of a new tent, 'for the benefit of the work of the Sacrament without doors;' and this most likely was the poet's uncle. The parents of Scott contrived to give him a good education. On arriving at manhood, he devoted himself to the medical profession. He entered the army as an assistant-surgeon in 1755, and was stationed with his regiment at Fort George, Fort William, and several other places. In 1762, the Spaniards and the French having sustained a number of severe reverses from the English, thought fit, as a means of retaliation, to invade Portugal, which then was under the special protection of Great Britain. A large body of troops was therefore despatched from this country to the aid of the Portuguese, and, among others, the regiment in which young Scott served. Little or no fighting took place, as peace was shortly afterwards proclaimed, and the British troops were ordered home. Scott wrote a poetical epistle regarding this war and the subsequent peace, in which he says,

' Grim war, amid his horrid train,
Now leaves the desolated plain ;

And now, by George's high command,
 Again we seek our native strand,
 Where, as I can no longer serve,
 I have his gracious leave to starve.'

In a note on the last of these couplets he says: 'This is almost literally the case. After seven years spent in his country's service, in a useful station for which no provision is made, the author was carried ashore at Portsmouth with a fever upon him, neither quite dead nor alive, where he had the pleasure of lying several hours on the beach, till, with much difficulty, somebody was found that had humanity enough to give him a lodging for three or four times its worth. There his pay was struck off, and he was left to the care of Providence, who reserved him for—God knows what.' It is understood that Mr Scott settled ultimately as a medical practitioner in a town in England, but found leisure to pay an occasional visit to his relatives and his old scenes at Biggar.

Mr Scott, from his early years, had been a writer of verses. His object, he says, was the amusement of an idle hour, the diversion of a friend, or the gratification of an original propensity. In 1765 a collected edition of his poems was published at London by G. Burnet, in the Strand.* In the preface he states that some of his poetical productions had been previously printed in periodical papers and miscellaneous collections, and that he had had the misfortune to be complimented by his country neighbours with the praise of genius. This, he considers, had made a very erroneous and injurious impression on his mind, for he says that 'since he had cultivated a more intimate acquaintance with the writings of the poets, he has a thousand times heartily wished the labours of his muse at the devil.' He declares that, were all his productions in his power, he would without reluctance commit them to the flames; but as this was beyond his reach, he hopes he has sent them forth in their collected form in a state more worthy the acceptance of the intelligent reader. With a true portion of Upper Ward independence, but with a roughness of language scarcely par-

* A copy was presented by the author to his nephew, Robert Scott, saddler, Biggar, and is still preserved by one of the members of Mr Scott's family.

donable in a sentimental poet, he adds, 'If, by ill luck, a critical reader should lay his hands on them, and find his delicacy shocked in the perusal, he is very welcome to throw the book in the fire, and damn the author for a blockhead.'

The author, to judge from his poetical effusions, was certainly not entitled to be characterised as a blockhead. Throughout his whole book he manifests much refined and correct sentiment, a warm appreciation of rural scenery, a high admiration of beauty and virtue, a devoted attachment to friendship and love, and a lively interest in the welfare and freedom of his fellow-men. At the time he wrote, the cultivation of poetry had sunk to a low ebb. The poetic race had become infected with a strained and sickly sentimentalism. They had forsaken the paths of nature, and took delight in little else than weaving a succession of tawdry garlands for the brows of some feigned goddess, under the name of Melinda, Narcissa, Delia, &c. Our author did not escape the mannerism and defects of his times; but he frequently rises above them, and sings with a true, if not a very exalted note. His descriptive powers were considerable. Take as a specimen an extract from a poem "On Solitude," written in a beautiful wild glen near Fort Augustus:—

" See the river winds along
The wild and tufted hills among;
Placid now it flows, and deep,
Now it thunders down the steep;
With violence dashed, it foams and roars,
And falling, shakes the lofty shores;
And rocks and billows rave around,
And woods and hills repeat the sound."

His appreciation of the varied aspects of the year is manifested in many of his productions. For instance, he thus refers to spring, and the feelings which it excites, in an *Elegy to Narcissa*:—

" In pride of youth exults the jovial year,
Again the groves put on their robes of green,
Again the pleasant woodland song we hear,
And Nature in her fairest form is seen.

" Along the banks of the wild warbling stream,
With many an herb adorned, and fragrant flower,

Cheer'd by the setting sun's inspiring beam,
Oft wandering, I enjoy the peaceful hour.

“The solemn scenes dispose the tranquil breast
To serious musing, and to thought refined ;
And contemplation comes, a heavenly guest,
And pours out all her blessings on the mind.”

His patriotism and loyalty found vent in a noble ode to the King on his birthday, 1756. We give one or two stanzas :—

“Industrious Commerce swells her train
With all the treasures which the main
And distant lands can boast ;
While glittering gems and golden ore,
The wealth of every foreign shore,
She pours on Albion's coast.

“Here gentle love, with roses crowned,
And peace, with olive garlands bound,
Their mingling charms unite ;
While art and science, hand in hand,
Conspire to bless the happy land
With honour and delight.

“Fair Liberty, high o'er the rest,
Exalted dwells in every breast,
By Britons still adored ;
For her the angry god of war,
Impatient, mounts his iron car,
And waves his flaming sword.

“See there her potent navy ride,
Exulting o'er the foaming tide,
The tyrant's constant dread.
Soon may her awful thunder roar
O'er faithless Gallia's hostile shore,
Ruin and terror spread.

Favoured of Heaven, assert the cause
Of Britain, liberty, and laws ;
And when with glory crowned,
Bid the fell rage of battle cease,
And, with the bands of love and peace,
Embrace the nations round.”

The Scottish language, his native vernacular, was then considered rude and vulgar. It had not yet been raised to classic dignity by the genius of Burns and Scott. Hence he sedulously avoids the use of it in any of his productions. Neither

his admiration of Scottish damsels, his musings by the ruins of Scotland's ancient royal halls, his wanderings among the Highland hills, nor his minute disquisitions on the equipments of a Scottish tea-table, could extort from him a word to indicate that he had spent his boyish days amid the hills and plains of Biggar, or was familiar with the streams of the Clyde and Tweed. His book was designed for English readers ; and he would, no doubt, consider that Scotch phraseology would be unintelligible, and allusions to the obscure localities of Biggar little attractive to the Southrons. But notwithstanding any little drawback of this kind, Scott is certainly one of Biggar's chief literary men.

At the commencement of the present century Sunnyside belonged to a Mr Rae, and the number of cothouses by that time had been reduced. The farm-house consisted of a but and a ben, covered with thatch, and having a dunghill and a garden in front. The tenant for some years was Mr William Johnston, the carrier to Glasgow, and then it was much resorted to by weavers' agents, merchants, &c., to transact business, or to deliver and receive letters, a large number of which was conveyed to and from Glasgow by the carrier, to avoid the heavy postage then exacted. The proprietorship of Sunnyside during the present century has been in the hands of a number of gentlemen. We may mention James and John Wyld, William Johnston, merchant, Nicol Sommerville, who built a good house on the site of the old farm steading, and Dr Black, who enlarged the house by the addition of several rooms. In 1855, it was purchased by W. S. Lorrain, Esq., merchant, Glasgow, who, three years afterwards, remodelled and enlarged the house after a design by Mr Thomas M'Guffey, architect, Glasgow, and changed the name to Loaningdale. It will be observed from the following woodcut that it is now a spacious and elegant building, somewhat in the Elizabethan style of architecture.



Mr Lorrain, in 1856, planted the adjoining grounds with trees, which he has cleaned and nursed with so much care that some of them have already attained a height of upwards of twenty feet, and promise ere long to form one of the finest plantations surrounding a gentleman's mansion in the Upper Ward.

The grounds in this neighbourhood go under the names of Guildie, the Colliehill, the Cuttings, the Scabbed Rigs, and the Borrow Muir. They belonged, and still nearly all belong, to the feuars of Biggar. Janet Brown, a daughter of John Brown, Biggar, was charged with having, in these fields, murdered her illegitimate child. She was tried for this crime on the 25th of June 1614, before the Justiciary Court at Edinburgh. The indictment charged her with concealment of pregnancy, as none of her neighbours were aware that she was with child, and as she had left her father's house and gone to the fields in the neighbourhood of the town, where she was delivered of a female child without the help of a midwife. She was further charged with having immediately strangled the child, and having taken its body to a dykeside, and there covered it with a number of turfs, and thus was guilty of murdering "the said bairn." In her confession, she denied the murder, and asserted that the child died shortly after it was born, and

“sae she earthed it in the grund of a turf stack.” The assize, by the mouth of William Fleming of Persilands, Chancellor, “fand and pronouncit the said Janet to be fylt, culpable, and convict of the murder of the said infant;” and her sentence was, that she “be tane to the Castlehill, and be hangit quhill she be deid, and her moveable goods to be escheat.” This is the only inhabitant of Biggar, so far as we are aware, that ever suffered the ignominious doom of capital punishment.

A case of a somewhat similar kind, but, so far as we can ascertain, without such sanguinary results, occurred in 1646. On the 15th of July, of that year, the bailies of Biggar reported to the Biggar Presbytery “that some folks of yr toun had fund a young bairne in Biggar Mosse, covered over, and being alyve, had broucht it furth; and also, that they had apprehended the mother, who had confessed the haynous and unnatural facte done be her to her chyld.” The advice of the Presbytery was, that the bailies should detain the woman in prison till their next meeting. The members offered to contribute along with the town to her maintenance, and they instructed the moderator to write to the King’s advocate to obtain his opinion regarding the nature of her crime, and his advice as to her disposal. The answer of the King’s advocate was, that she should be sent to the Justice-General at Edinburgh; and, therefore, the Presbytery called on the Bailies of Biggar to put her confession on record, and send her forward to Edinburgh, and ordered the Kirk-Sessions in the meantime to contribute to her support, according to the account to be given in by the town of Biggar. The fate of this person, as we have already indicated, is not now known.

A little to the east of Loaningdale is Cambus-Wallace, for many centuries known by the name of Whinbush. During a part of last century it was tenanted by Mr James Telfer, who was one of the first members of the Session of what is now called the Moat Park U.P. Church. At the centenary services connected with this church in October 1861, Dr Smith stated that Mr Telfer was a man of a warm temper, and was thus sometimes led at meetings of the Session to offer rather a keen opposition to his pastor, the Rev. John Low, who, as we have elsewhere stated, laboured under a similar infirmity. When their contendings waxed hot, Dr Meikle of Carnwath,

another member of Session, and a man of some humour, was wont to say, "Come, come, there must be a separation, —a low and a whinbush will never do together." In the early part of the present century Whinbush belonged to Mr Samuel Sommerville, who sold it to Captain Thomas Stirling Edmonstone. The Captain, in 1827, built a considerable addition to the old mansion, and changed the name to Cambus-Wallace. Some time after the Captain's death, which took place in 1831, Whinbush was sold to Mr Robert Gillespie, a nephew of Mr George Gillespie of Biggar Park, who had made a considerable fortune in Canada. Mrs Gillespie belonged to the Roman Catholic faith, and under her direction a part of the dwelling-house was converted into a chapel, in which worship, according to the Romish ritual, was occasionally performed to the family and such adherents of Popery as chose to attend. After Mr Gillespie's death, his heirs, in 1860, disposed of this estate to John Paul, Esq., a son of Mr Thomas Paul, banker, Lanark, and he continues in 1867 to be the proprietor.

We have next Wester Toftcombs, the tenants of which for two or three generations were a branch of the Gladstone family, and Mid Toftcombs, the proprietors of which for a considerable portion of last century were members of another branch of that family. It consists of four oxgangs, and was, in 1671, held in wadset by James Tod, who paid ten merks of feu-duty yearly. Still farther on we have Easter Toftcombs, which in 1668 was the property of the Earl of Wigton, and was let in tack to Mr John Menzies at the yearly rent of twenty bolls of victual—two parts meal and a third part bear, twenty kain fowls, and one half of the cess. These three farms are now the property of Thomas Gibson, Esq., and are called the estate of Toftcombs. We then come to Wintermuir, and a little farther on to Candy or Edmonston.

The estate of Edmonston was possessed for upwards of four centuries by the Douglasses, Earls of Morton, and Lords of Dalkeith. The Flemings of Biggar, however, held the superiority of it during that period.

In 1322, William, son and heir of the deceased Haldwine of Edmonston, resigned the whole lands of Edmonston, with their pertinents, in the barony of Biggar, to his superior, Gil-

bert Fleming of Biggar, in order that William, the son and heir of the deceased Sir James Douglas of Laudonia, might be infeft in the same. In 1382, Robert II. granted and confirmed to James Douglas, Lord of Dalkeith, and James, his son, the lands of Edmonston in the barony of Biggar. On the 15th of July 1476, James Earl of Morton resigned the lands of Edmonston and Wintermuir into the hands of Robert Lord Fleming, the superior of these lands; and on the 18th of the same month received a new charter of them from Lord Fleming, to be holden for the service of ward and relief, and one suit in the head court at Biggar. A precept of sasine of these lands was granted, on the 4th of January 1496, by John Lord Fleming to James Douglas, son and apparent heir of John Earl of Morton. On the 5th March 1541, the lands of Edmonston were again resigned into the hands of Malcolm Lord Fleming by James Earl of Morton, for the purpose, no doubt, of obtaining a new charter, and, in two years afterwards, the Earl granted them to his daughter Elizabeth, and to her husband, James Douglas, nephew of the Earl of Angus. The Earl of Morton dying without male issue, James Douglas, just mentioned, succeeded to his titles and estates. He received a new charter of these estates, and, of course, of "the lands and barony of Edmeston, with the maner, fortilace, mills, fishings, and orchards, parts, pendicles, advowson and endowment of churches and chapels and their pertinents lying within the barony of Biggar and sberiffdom of Lanark." This nobleman for some years played a very distinguished part in the public transactions of Scotland. He attached himself to the side of the Reformers, and took part with the Earl of Murray in his opposition to Queen Mary. He was bold, crafty, and avaricious, and attaining at length to be Regent of the kingdom, with a portion of the wealth which he then acquired, he commenced to build the stately castle of Drochil on the Lyne, but did not live to see it completed. He was beheaded at the Cross of Edinburgh on the 2d of June 1581, for alleged complicity in the murder of Darnley, by an instrument called "The Maiden," which he himself had been the means of introducing into Scotland.

Shortly after this event a process of multiplepointing was raised by the tenants of Edmonston to have it decided whether

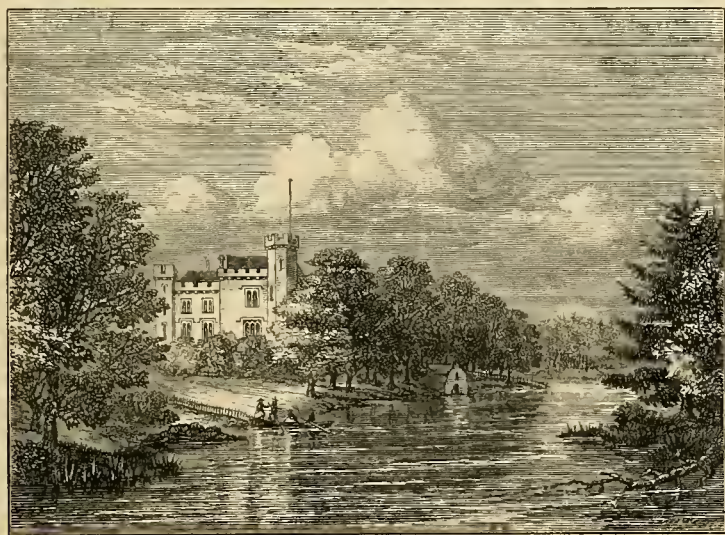
they should pay their "fermes" to the Earl of Morton and Lord Maxwell, or to John Lord Fleming. The Earl's plea rested on the fact, that a gift of these duties had been made to his family on the forfeiture of the late John Lord Fleming, and Lord Fleming on the other hand urged that they had been restored in virtue of the Act of pacification and restitution. A decision was given on the 24th January 1582, in favour of Lord Fleming. In 1606, William, Earl of Morton, was served heir to his grandfather in the lands of Edmonston, and, in 1649, Robert, Earl of Morton, was retoured heir of his father William in these lands. Shortly after this period they were sold to Christopher Baillie of Walston.

In the early part of last century the lands of Edmonston came, most likely by purchase, into the possession of a gentleman of the name of Laurence Brown, whose spouse was Janet Gibson. He died at the advanced age of 96 years, but we have not been able to ascertain the exact year of his death, or indeed any particulars of his history. His son James succeeded to the estate. He married Bethia Scott, a daughter of Captain Scott of Kipbyres, and by her he had a numerous family. He died in 1761, aged 72 years. His eldest son Laurence, who was born in 1722, was the next laird of Edmonston. He married Anne, a daughter of William Lawson of Netherurd, and died on the 13th September 1808. He had, for a short time, as a tutor in his family, James Græme, a native of Carnwath, who died in 1772, in the 22d year of his age. He studied at the University of Edinburgh, and wrote a number of respectable poems, which were inserted by his townsman, Dr Robert Anderson, in his edition of the British poets. One of Græme's poems was an elegy to the memory of James Fisher, Covington, a student of divinity, and a young man of distinguished abilities. In 1769, the Presbytery of Biggar, from some cause or other, refused to take Fisher on trials, and, after wandering about in a disconsolate state for some weeks, and talking of emigrating to America, he was found drowned in the Clyde between Lanark and Stonebyres.

The next proprietor of Edmonston was James, a son of Laurence just mentioned. He married his cousin Elizabeth, a daughter of Adam Glover, merchant, Jamaica, and by her he had a large family. He died in 1820, aged 65 years. Mr

Brown had a taste for antiquities, and had collected a number of relics connected with the district, which he very highly prized. He was succeeded in the estate by his son Laurence, who, in 1832, married his cousin Elizabeth, a daughter of the late John Brown, Broadchapel, Dumfriesshire. In 1687 the estate of Edmonston was sold to William Allan Woddrop, Esq., of Ellsrickle, for the sum of £39,750.

The estate of Edmonston, which now holds blanch of the Crown, consists of the farms of Wintermuir, Brownsbank, Townhead, Greencnd, Strathbogie, and Candybank, and also the Mill and Mill lands, the Mansion-house and offices, the Home parks, and the cottages and lands of Paul Yards,—the whole extending to 1440 imperial acres, of which 984 are arable, and the remainder consists of pasture, plantations, &c. In 1815, a very elegant mansion-house, in a castellated style of architecture, after a design by James Gillespie Graham, was erected in a secluded valley on this property.



The castle of Edmonston, with its lake and woods, as will be observed from the above representation, forms a lovely and picturesque scene, and at the period of its erection called forth a poetical eulogium from the pen of the Rev. James Proudfoot, Coulter. We give one or two of the stanzas:—

“ Sweet Edmonston, by nature blest,
 By art adorned as thou hast been,
 How fondly does the conscious sun
 Delight to linger o’er the scene.

Long may thy castle all unscathed,
 The touch of time and tempest brave,
 As proudly rising from the steep,
 It paints its image on the wave.

Proud are its battlements that rise
 Irregular and unconfined,
 Where grandeur, elegance, and strength,
 In happy union, are combined.”

On the estate of Edmonston there was at one time evidently a considerable village, which was generally called Candy. It had its own school, its own mill, its own alehouse, its own tailors, shoemakers, smiths, agricultural labourers, etc. One of its inhabitants, during last century, was Mr John Rob, tailor. He was a good specimen of the shrewd, intelligent, and pious men, who have long abounded in this district. He was a member of Mr Mair’s congregation at West Linton, and afterwards, of Mr Low’s at Biggar. When the controversy regarding the Burgess oath, which split the Seceders into two separate divisions, was still raging, he entered the lists against the famous Antiburgher leader, the Rev. Adam Gib of Edinburgh; and, in 1755, published a pamphlet, in which, in the opinion of some judges, he completely demolished the positions of his doughty and energetic opponent. It was entitled “The Rod Retorted, or the Corrector Corrected; containing some remarks upon a pamphlet entitled, ‘A Rod of Correction, etc., by Mr Adam Gib.’ By John Rob, Taylor, Candy.” Copies of this Brochure are now extremely rare. The only one that we have seen is in the library of Adam Sim, Esq., at Coultermains. We cannot forbear quoting one of its first paragraphs as a specimen of Mr Rob’s style, and the manner in which the controversy was conducted. “The first thing that I shall take notice of,” says Mr Rob, “is, that he (Adam Gib) charges me with impertenance and unbecoming behaviour, like an *enraged kailwife*, as he calls it. I know that my speech is for ordinary high, but I challenge him, or

any of the company, to condescend upon any one expression uttered by me unbecoming his character, although even from himself there was not wanting provocation; for I remember when I met him at Biggar, how he prefaced his discourse. When the man told him I was coming for light in the present case, he proudly answered, 'I have no manner of concern with such; let them take the length of the halter; perhaps they may worry in the band.' Now, let any impartial reader judge how cross this spirit is to the very letter of the law, Exodus xxiii. 4, 5."

John Rob had a son named Richard, who was a person of some humour, and an elder in the same church. Being of a social turn of mind, he sometimes rather exceeded in his potations at fairs and on market days, and thus subjected himself to the animadversions of the "unco guid," as well as the scoffing and reproaches of the profane. The other members of session, who were very circumspect in watching over the conduct of the flock under their charge, and sharp in inflicting ecclesiastical censures, were much offended and annoyed at Mr Rob's alleged irregularities, and at length intimated to him that it would be necessary at next meeting to deal with him in the usual form. Richard appeared at the meeting and owned his fault, but he entreated his reverend judges before pronouncing sentence to answer the question, "Is gluttony a sin?" This was at once admitted. "Then," said Richard, "whan I was at the Little Wall the ither day, I saw John Young, a member of the session noo present, supping kail oot o' a calf's luggy. It was evident to me that on that occasion he was guilty of an act of gluttony; sae, if ye rebuke me, ye ought to rebuke him also." The session were scarcely disposed to acquiesce in Mr Rob's analogy, or to comply with his suggestion, so they considered that it would be the best policy to go no farther at that time than subject him to an admonition.

Mr Rob, as a member of session, on one occasion, accompanied Mr Low in his round of visitation to the houses of the members of his congregation in Candy and its neighbourhood. They entered thirteen different dwellings, and in each of them were presented with spirituous liquors, of which the minister always partook. On parting in the evening, Mr Rob very gravely accosted Mr Low, and said, "I noo see wherein the sin

o' drinking consists." "What is that, Richard?" said Mr Low. "It maun consist, I think, in the paying," replied Mr Rob; "for I hae seen ye to-day tak a pairt o' thirteen drams, and a single word o' reproof or objection hasna faun frae your lips."

Mr Rob one day played a sad trick on old Robert Forsyth, the bellman and grave-digger of Biggar. It has ever since been a standing story in the district, and used some forty or fifty years ago, to be related with admirable drollery by the late James Sinclair, painter, Biggar. The minister of Biggar happening to have a litter of very fine pigs, promised to make a present of one to his friend the minister of Dolphinton. He therefore ordered Robert Forsyth to put one of them into a pock, and proceed with it to Dolphinton Manse. The obedient sexton did as he was ordered. While trudging on his way, and just as he approached Candy, where at that time a dram was sold, he met Mr Rob. "Weel, Robert," says the farmer, "as the day is warm, and as you are doubtless fatigued wi' your load, ye had better step into Jenny's and I'll gie ye a dram." To this proposal he readily assented. So the pock was thrown down by the side of the door, and in he went to quench his thirst and rest his limbs. While he was thus refreshing himself, the farmer went to the door, and succeeded, without being noticed, in making a young whelp occupy the place of the pig. At length our worthy resumed his journey to Dolphinton, and, on his arrival at the manse, announced his business with characteristic pomposity and importance. The minister and his domestics came out to view and examine the animal which had been so kindly sent by the reverend incumbent of Biggar; when, on being turned out of the sack, to the utter astonishment of all, it was not a sow, but a young dog. Old Robert "declared, whatever it might be noo, he was sure it was a pig whan he pat it into the pock." His reverence of Dolphinton was offended, and offered the unfortunate sexton neither refreshments nor reward, so he was under the necessity of again shouldering his load, and, much mortified and vexed, returning as heavy as he went. Mr R., who was still purposely loitering about Candy, at length espied Robert coming down the brae very gloomy and disconsolate. "What's the matter wi' ye noo?" said Mr R. "Will the minister no tak

the soo, that ye're trudging hame wi't on your back, as melancholy like as ye had seen the deil?" "Lord sauf us," quoth Robert, "it's nae langer a soo, it has turned into a doug; and as I'm a leevin' man, I declare, whan I shook it out o' the pock afore the manse, my very heart played dunt, and I really thought that the deil had entered intill't as he ance did into the herd o' swine." "But Robbie, my man," said Mr R., "this is a subject too kittle to be expounded here; ye maun gang ower to the house and get a plate o' kail, for I daresay the minister wadna hae the sense to offer you a bite o' dinner." While they were in the house, the pig and the whelp, unknown to the unsuspecting sexton again exchanged places. Having had a lengthened crack, and a taste besides o' the barley bree, they parted, and the sexton with his load made the best of his way to Biggar. He repaired at once to the manse, and told his reverence that by witchcraft or other diabolical means the sow had, during his journey to Dolphinton, become a whelp. "A whelp!" exclaimed the minister, "impossible; but let us see—turn him out;" and there now appeared before the dumfounded beadle the veritable animal, in shape, size, and kind, which had been entrusted to his care when he started from Biggar. "Why, Robert," said the minister, "that is surely the very animal which you put into your bag this morning." "Od," says Robert, "it may be onything it likes noo, but I'll minteen it was a whelp at Dolphinton." "Did you meet with anybody by the way?" inquired the minister, "or were you in any house?" "To tell the truth," said Robert, "I gaed in a few minutes at Candyburn to hae a refreshment wi' Ritchie Rob." "Ah, Robert, Robert," said the minister, "I see through the whole affair; you have allowed that witty gentleman to play a sad trick upon you, as well as to offer an affront to me. You must never, when employed on important business, be allured into an ale-house again, lest a worse mischief befall you."*

On the top of the hill above Candybank is a circular entrenchment, generally called a camp. No information regarding it

* A friend lately called our attention to a version of this story that appeared in a small periodical published at Lanark in 1832. In one or two slight particulars it differs from the narrative we have given, but in its main features it is very much the same.

exists, and the probability is, that it was constructed for the purpose of preserving the cattle and sheep during the times of invasion. It was in the course of removing a cairn of stones near this earthen work that the bronze implement, Fig. 3, page 7, was discovered.

Edmonston is the scene of "The Gaberlunzie, a Scottish Comedy, in three acts" by a gentleman, who has chosen to preserve his incognito, but who, it is understood, is a relative of Mr Brown the late proprietor of the estate. The *dramatis personæ* of this comedy are—The Gaberlunzie; Walter Scott, the Miller of Edmonston; Allan Armstrong, a Neeber Farmer; Friar John, a Monk of St Edmund's Convent; A Herd Callan; Margaret Scott, the Miller's Wife; Jean, their daughter; Effy, the servant lass, &c. The plot is very simple. Friar John cherishes an improper attachment to Jean, the miller's daughter, a circumstance which causes her a good deal of annoyance and alarm. She takes into her confidence Effy, the servant girl, who advises her to seek direction from the Gaberlunzie, as, she says, he can read like a clerk, and cure the diseases of cattle, and therefore, she infers must be able to give good advice. The Gaberlunzie is accordingly requested by the Herd Callan to speak with Effy, and is thus introduced to Jean, who discloses the annoyance to which she is subjected by the importunities of the monk, and confesses her attachment to Allan Armstrong. The Gaberlunzie propounds a scheme for the punishment of the monk, and in furtherance of it goes to the convent and advises him to keep a tryste with Jean, and to disguise himself by putting on his (the beggar's) old travelling cloak. The monk is easily led into the snare. He meets Jean under cloud of night, puts his arms around her neck, and is just in the act of kissing her, when Jean screams out that she sees bogles, and runs off. The bogles turn out to be Allan and the Herd Callan in disguise, who fall upon the Monk, and lounder him so severely that he is unable to walk or even to stand, and in this disabled state, is carried into the miller's house. As soon as he comes to himself he vows the direst vengeance on the persons who had attacked and maltreated him. At this juncture the Gaberlunzie enters the house, throws off his disguise, and shows himself to be no less a personage than James V., the gudeman of Ballengiech. He

at once silences the monk, and confers the farm of Strathbogie on Allan, the farmer, and the mill on Walter Scott, the miller. Jean and Allan ere long agree to unite their fortunes, and the drama winds up with the wedding of the happy pair.

This comedy is evidently constructed on the model of the "Gentle Shepherd." In poetical merit, delineation of pastoral life, and ingenuity of plot, it falls considerably short of Ramsay's drama, but it nevertheless contains several good songs and many pleasing allusions to rustic life and scenery. The heavy and lengthy character of the dialogue renders it unsuitable for representation on the stage, but it is a piece of agreeable reading, and lends an additional charm to the scenes around Edmonston, where—

"Upon a knowe of freshest green
A wee bit mill is halflins seen
Through the bright boughs of sheltering trees,
That rustle in the evening breeze."

On the little stream called Candy Burn which intersects the Edmonston estate, and, for some distance, forms the boundary between the shires of Lanark and Peebles, stands Skirling Mill, and a little farther down the Spittal, which evidently derived its name from the Hospital of St Leonards. Neither the exact site occupied by this charitable institution, nor any portion of its history is now known, though frequent references are made to it in old documents. The tenant of the Spittal farm, in 1671, was William Fleming, who paid of yearly rent 200 merks and 18 bolls of meal to the proprietor, the Earl of Wigton, and 2 bolls of meal to the minister of the parish, besides relieving the Earl of all public burdens. In 1745, it was tenanted by James Jamieson, and a number of years afterwards by Thomas Clerk.

In the Spittal Muir stood a turf tenement with some out-houses, a small garden, and a few dwarfish trees. It was a quiet and retired spot, impressing the passer-by with a sense of loneliness and a primeval state of existence. The buildings, the garden, and the trees have all disappeared, so that the spot which they occupied cannot now be easily recognised. Here, for many years, dwelt George Penman, and cultivated a few acres of the surrounding land. He had three sons, Richard,

Andrew, and John, who was fatuous and long a terror to the juveniles of the country round. Richard, the eldest, was born in the adjoining parish of Symington on the 29th December 1777. His parents removed to this little holding a short time after his birth, and here he was brought up. He received his education at the parish school, and, along with his parents, attended religious ordinances at the Relief Church, Biggar. Towards the close of last century some districts of Scotland were roused to a high pitch of religious excitement by the visits of Rowland Hill, Dr Bennet, Mr Burder, Mr Parsons, and others. Mr Penman, who had now reached the age of manhood, caught the enthusiasm. Religious topics and the merits of the preachers, whose prelections he heard from Sabbath to Sabbath, became the constant subjects of his conversation; and, indeed, so great was his zeal for attending religious ordinances, and his attachment to the founders of Congregationalism in Scotland, that he would, time after time, leave the Spittal Muir on the evening of Saturday, travel to Edinburgh—a distance of 26 miles,—and, after attending divine service on Sabbath, conducted by Hill, Haldane, Aikman, or Ewing, would set out on his return home in order to be ready to resume his usual toils on Monday morning. He resolved at length to devote himself to the work of the ministry in connection with the Independents, and, by the aid of funds contributed to assist young men in prosecuting their studies, he, in 1800, attended Mr Innes's first theological class at Dundee, and, in the year following, Mr Ewing's second class at Glasgow.

On the completion of his theological course, he was sent to a preaching station at Kirriemuir. He was here in the habit—as was then a common practice with the Independents—of preaching, when the weather would permit, in the open air. The earnest, energetic, and demonstrative labours of the new sect gave offence to many parties in the country, and called forth occasional outbursts of ridicule and annoyance. One Sabbath, when he was preaching to a considerable auditory out of doors, a young man present made repeated attempts to create a disturbance. Mr Penman stopped in the midst of his discourse and mildly requested him to discontinue his interruptions, but as this appeal failed to produce any effect, he then

abjured him to compose himself and listen to the discourse, as it might be the last offer of mercy and reconciliation from an offended God that would ever reach his ears. On Monday Mr Penman was astounded by receiving information that the young man had that morning been found dead in his bed. This incident produced a great sensation in that part of the country at the time, and was the means of preventing any further interruptions to his out-of-door ministrations. Mr Penman was removed from Kirriemuir to the town of Ayr, and was afterwards settled at Arbroath. He continued his ministrations for ten years at Arbroath, and left it in September 1814, to accept an invitation to be the pastor of the Independent Church, Frederick Street, Aberdeen. This was his last charge. He closed his earthly career on the 5th of February 1841, in the 64th year of his age, and 37th of his ministry. Mr Penman possessed a strong constitution, an ardent temperament, and vigorous mental powers. He manifested great devotion to his ministerial labours. He spoke with a boldness, earnestness, and eloquence that fixed the attention of the most careless, that often produced lasting spiritual impressions, and showed that his heart was thoroughly in his work. He was held in much esteem, not merely by his own denomination, but by all classes of the community with whom he was brought into contact.

Biggar being at a considerable distance from coals, the inhabitants till a recent period depended largely on the mosses in the neighbourhood for a supply of fuel. The principal mosses used for this purpose were Biggar moss on the east, the Westraw moss on the west, and Heavyside on the south-east. In summer the casting, footing, ricking, leading, and stacking of peats formed no inconsiderable portion of the labour of the feuars and their families. The peat season was one of great jollity. It was looked forward to with feelings akin to those excited by the prospect of sheep shearing, hay making, or harvest operations, as a time devoted no doubt to hard labour, but relieved and sweetened by a large amount of harmless amusement and healthful recreation. The extent of ground in the east moss allotted to each feuar or owner of a borrowland was fourteen ells in the foreroom and thirteen ells in the backroom, but the division in the Nether or Heavyside moss, as settled

in 1730, by the measurement of James Oswald, was different, some of the feuars having there as much as fifty ells, while others had only eight and a half. No small portion of the records of the Bailies' Court that have been preserved is occupied with decisions regarding the respective moss rooms of the feuars, such as the breaking of new ground without due warrant, the theft of peats, or the improper disposal of them to persons not resident in the barony. By damming up the rivulet called the Red Syke, a considerable portion of Biggar moss is, in winter, laid under water, and thus a large field of ice is obtained for the purposes of curling. Here the curlers of the parish have pursued their roaring and exhilarating sport for generations, here many well contested bonspiels have been played, and here, nearly fifty years ago, the Upperward curlers in a great match vanquished the curlers of Tweeddale.

The famed aeronaut Vincent Lunardi, in one of his aerial voyages, very nearly alighted in the Westraw Moss. On Wednesday 23d November 1785, he ascended from St. Andrew's Square, Glasgow, and the wind blowing from the north-west carried him up the track of the Clyde by Hamilton and Lanark. After passing the latter town he began to descend, when he threw out a portion of sand, but this produced no sensible effect. He entered the howe of Biggar a little after 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and at this time he was at a very low elevation. The people were astounded at the spectacle, and many of them, after gazing for a minute, rushed back to their houses in terror, imagining that the devil, or some destructive monster was going to descend on Westraw Moss or the bogs. Several persons under the impression that their 'fearfu' hinder end was come' made a full confession of special sins, and implored their heavenly Father to grant them forgiveness. One man, who had openly and solemnly denied the paternity of an illegitimate child, now made a full acknowledgment of his guilt, and earnestly prayed for mercy for the wrong which he had inflicted.* When Lunardi was almost above Mosside he threw out a bag of sand, and in a letter describing his voyage, which he sent to the 'Edinburgh Evening Courant,' he says that the throwing out of this sand caused the balloon to stand motion-

* The particulars of this strange confession were, some time ago, fully detailed in the columns of a local journal.

less for two minutes, and then to ascend at a good rate. After clearing the Hartree hills he was enveloped in a dense cloud, and as he could see neither earth nor sky, he dined, and enjoyed a short sleep. In less than an hour after passing Biggar he descended safely at Alemuir, in the county of Selkirk.

We close this chapter by giving a wood-cut representing the Glen of Birkwood in the parish of Lesmahagow, as a specimen of the fine scenery that abounds in the Upper Ward of Clydesdale.



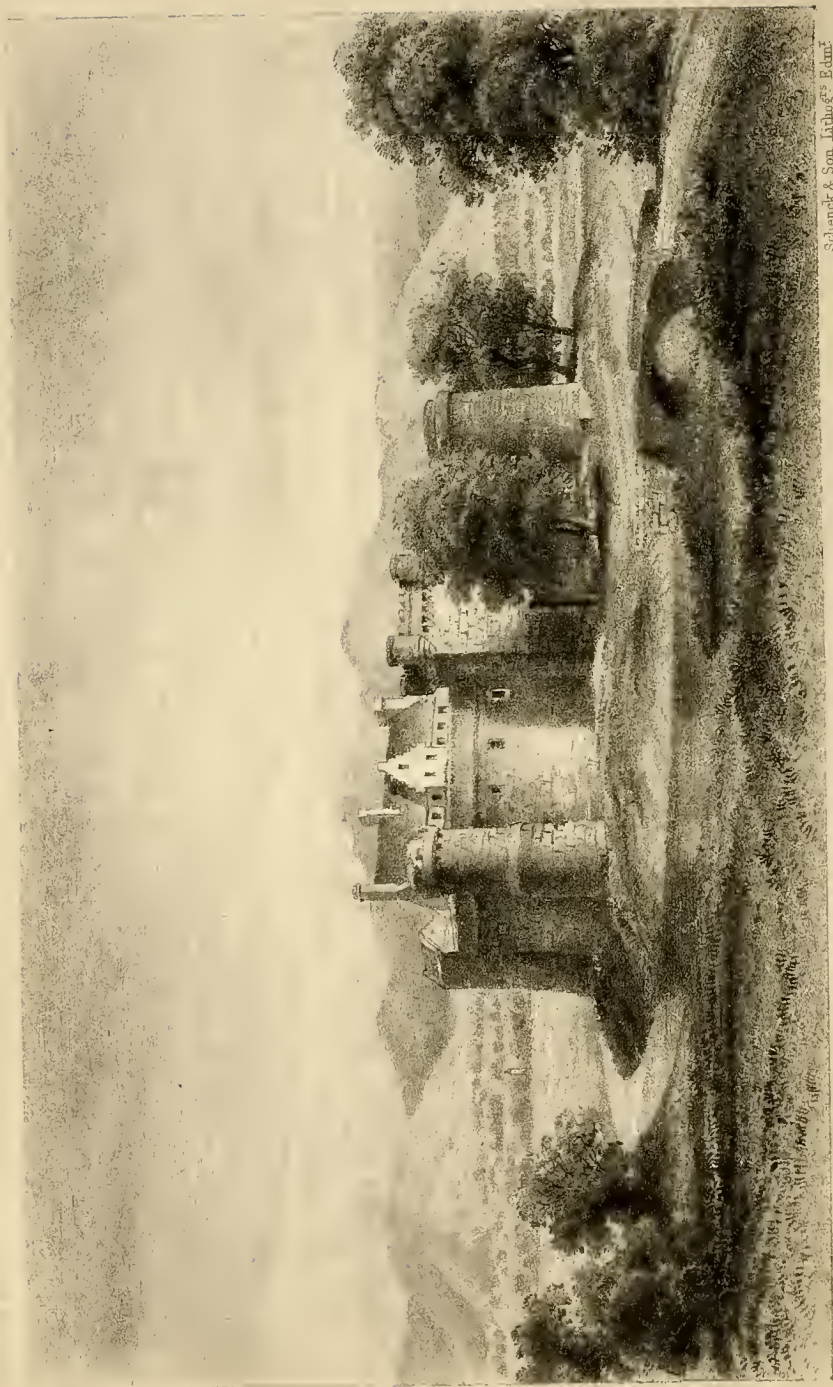
CHAPTER VII.

The Castle of Boghall.



THE House or Castle of Boghall was one of the largest and most imposing edifices in the south of Scotland. It stood, as its name imports, in the midst of a bog, which in former times was impassable, even on foot, and which contributed greatly to its security. The habitable part of it was on the south; and, as the bog stretched behind it for several hundred yards, it had been deemed unnecessary to surround the back of it with a separate wall for the purposes of defence. An area in front, extending about two hundred yards both in length and breadth, and capable of holding all the grain and cattle in the barony, was enclosed by a square wall, three feet thick and thirty feet high, on the top of which ran a bartizan, and at each corner was flanked by a circular tower, with embrasures and loop-holes for small arms and cannon. The court was entered on the north by a spacious gateway, with two posterns, and above the gateway was a tower for the warder. The whole was surrounded by a broad and deep fosse filled with water, and spanned by a stone bridge opposite the gate. The ground, between the walls and the fosse, was planted with fir and ash trees, and some very aged ones were standing within the last fifty years. The approach was by a very spacious road which left the highway near the Mains of Boghall, and which was open on the one side and skirted on the other by a stone wall, a high thorn hedge, and a row of trees.

The front of the habitable part of the Castle was two storeys in height, with attics, and presented a considerable degree of elegance, the lintels of the doors and the rybots of the windows being formed of carved freestone. In the centre of the stair-



From an etching by John Clark Esq^r of Edin.

BOGHALL CASTLE.

Schlander & Son Lithog^s Edin^r

case, which projected a little from the line of the building, the arms of the Flemings were carved in relief on a large square stone; and at the top of the wall was another stone, with the date 1670, which must have been placed there at the time some repairs were made on the Castle, during the period it was occupied as a residence by Anna Dowager Countess of Wigton. The lower part of the flanking tower on the south-east was used as a dungeon for the confinement of prisoners, and the upper part, it is understood, served the purposes of a girmel, in which the mails and duties of the vassals and tenants, payable in grain, malt, and meal, were stored. This building will be observed in the engraving to be a little detached from the habitable part of the Castle on the east side, or the left, facing the spectator. The girmel was under the charge of a keeper, whose duty it was to receive the victual, to distribute it among the baron's retainers, and to sell or barter such portions of it as were required by the cottars and craftsmen located in the barony. References are often made to the "garnar," or "girmel," in the family documents and the Records of the Baron Bailie's Court. For instance, in the transactions of Anthony Murray, factor to John, Earl of Wigton, for the half year ending Martinmas 1667, we notice that he paid six bolls and three firlots of meal to William Thripland, my lord's "garnar man" in Biggar, being half a boll for every chalder of thirteen chalders and nine bolls, which he did measure into the garnar, and measure out the same again, and did uphold the measure. James Carmichael, who was factor to William, Earl of Wigton, paid to the same William Thripland "ye soume of twentie pund Scots for his service in his Lordship's girmel, fra Martinmas 1675 to Martinmas 1676." The girmel at Boghall seems at that time to have undergone a repair, as there is an entry in the factor's books of £51, 8s. 8d., paid "for wrught work and seives to the girmall, and lyme to the house of Boghall, and leid to dress the windows."

In the Records of the Baron's Court, we find that Bailie Alexander Wardlaw, on the 29th of July 1720, "decerns the hail tennents, feuars, and others, lyable to the Earl of Wigtoun, to pay moultter and teind meall into the girmall, and any that hes gotten out meall upon trust, to pay to John Gledstanes, girmall man, one pund and fyve shillings Scots, for each boll,

betwixt and teusday nixt, under the pain of poynding." On the 28th of March 1747, Thomas Carmichael, keeper of the girnel of Biggar, made complaint before Bailie Robert Leekie, "That sundrie of the Tennants, after grinding of their farm meall, doe allow the same to ly in ye miln, or in their own houses, a considerable time, without delivering the same into the garnell, by which means the meill is lyable of being spoiled and damnified. Therefore, the Bailliff enacts and ordains, that, for the future, the hail fewars and tennants of the baroneys of Boaghall and Biggar shall, immediately after their meall is grund att the miln, at least, within forty-eight hours thereafter, deliver their farms into the garnell, and that under the penaltie of ten shillings Scots for each undelivered boll, to be paid by the failziers to the said Thomas Carmichael, as garnel keeper, and his successors in office."

An opinion has long prevailed at Biggar, and is referred to by Forsyth in his "Beauties of Scotland," that the habitable part of the Castle was originally of greater extent than it was in later times, and that it stood in the centre of the enclosed area. In trenching the ground to a considerable depth, some years ago, no distinct trace of former buildings was, however, discovered; but this is certainly not decisive evidence on the point, as the buildings may have all been thoroughly removed. The deep morass on the south serving as a sufficient defence, was evidently the cause why the mansion-house, at least in the end, came to be placed in that quarter, and left unprotected.

The Castle of Boghall was, no doubt, built at a remote period. The exact time, however, cannot now be ascertained. David Fleming, second son of Sir David Fleming of Biggar, who was killed at Longhermonston in the spring of 1405, settled on some lands in Renfrewshire, which he called Boghall, a name which he most likely assumed out of respect to his paternal habitation. In an old book in the possession of Mr James Watt, Biggar, there is the following entry:—"Note.—The Boghall Castle was built in the year of Christ 1492, by Malcolm Fleming of Cumbernauld." Little dependence can be placed on this assertion, as it is unknown who made it, and is unsupported by any collateral evidence. It is very far from unlikely, however, that it was rebuilt at that period. It had certainly very much the appearance of having been built about

the time of James IV. or James V. It had a degree of spaciousness and elegance that removed it considerably from the style of strongholds usually occupied by the Scottish barons, and led to the opinion that it had been constructed after the fashion of some of the large chateaux in France. Although not of extraordinary strength, it seemed able, if properly garrisoned, to withstand any attack, provided it was not made with heavy artillery. It must, for a long period, have been a principal residence of the Fleming family; but in the latter part of their history, they seem to have given a preference to the House of Cumbernauld, which, at one time was also a stronghold.

After the death of the last Earl of Wigton, and the transference of the Biggar estates to the Elphinstone family, in 1747, the Castle of Boghall was more and more deserted. No repair was made on the buildings, and the consequence of course was, that they began gradually to fall into ruin. Between 1773 and 1779, when the sketch of the castle was taken, by John Clerk of Eldin,* from which the accompanying view of it has been engraved, it was then almost entire. In 1789, when Captain Grose, whose name has been immortalized by Burns, took the sketch of the Castle, which he afterwards published in his work on the "Antiquities of Scotland," it had evidently undergone considerable dilapidation. The tower above the gateway had been partly demolished, and some of the stones had been removed from the top of the outer wall. In a view of it given in the "Scots Magazine" for October 1815, it appears by that time to have been entirely dismantled, and many parts of the walls laid in ruins. The writer of a letterpress description of the town of Biggar and its neighbourhood, in the same number of the Magazine, says, in reference to the Castle, "It is in a state of rapid decay, which, we are ashamed to understand, was accelerated some years ago by the appropriation of a part of its materials to the erection of a dog-kennel. It is still a ruin of considerable interest,

* John Clerk was the seventh son of Sir John Clerk of Pennicuik, and was born at Pennicuik House on the 10th of December 1728. He was first a merchant in Edinburgh, and afterwards Secretary to the Commissioners on the annexed estates. He purchased the estate of Eldin in the parish of Lasswade, where he died on the 10th of May 1812. His son was the celebrated John Clerk, Lord Eldin.

and we would entreat the proprietor to save it, and adorn the spot by surrounding it with planting." No attention was paid to this remonstrance; but, in 1821, Admiral Charles Elphinston Fleming, the proprietor, on some account or other, caused workmen to repair the walls of the projecting staircase, in the centre of the habitable part of the Castle, and to cover it with a roof of slate.

The entail of the Biggar estate having been broken in 1826, the farm of Boghall Mains, and the other lands still belonging to the heir of the Fleming family in the parish, were in two or three years afterwards brought to the hammer. Boghall Mains, on which the remains of the Castle stood, then fell into the hands of the late Mr George Gillespie, Biggar Park, and by some misunderstanding or mismanagement, the walls of the Castle, a short time afterwards, were nearly all carried away to fill drains and build dykes. The only parts left were the recently repaired staircase, and a portion of two of the flanking towers. These fragments, with a few trees, now stand—sad relics of a glory that has passed for ever away. How desolate and solitary is the scene around; how different from the days of feudal splendour! Now the ample court, the fosse, and the very site of the buildings, have been torn up by the plough, and are covered with the successive crops of the husbandman. Happily in our day a feeling of veneration for our ancient buildings has sprung up; the writings of Sir Walter Scott, and others, and the increased attention which has been paid to archæological studies, have deepened and extended this feeling, and caused it to find practical manifestation in preserving our ancient and dilapidated castles, abbeys, and cathedrals from further demolition, and sending thousands and tens of thousands from all quarters to gaze on their time-worn remains. The person who presumes to lay a violent hand upon them is liable to receive very severe censure. We therefore cordially concur in the following remarks, in a recent address on Archæology, by Professor Sir James Simpson of Edinburgh. "I solemnly protest," says he, "against the needless destruction and removal of our Scotch antiquarian remains. The hearts of all leal Scotsmen, overflowing as they do with a love of their native land, must ever deplore the unnecessary demolition of all such early relics and monuments, as can, in any degree, contribute to the recovery and

restoration of the past history of our country and of our ancestors. These ancient relics and monuments are truly, in one strong sense, national property; for historically they belong to Scotland, and to Scotsmen in general, more than they belong to the individual proprietors upon whose ground they accidentally happen to be placed." "Let us fondly hope and trust," he further adds, "that a proper spirit of patriotism, that every feeling of good, generous, and gentlemanly taste, will ensure and hallow the future consecration of all such Scottish antiquities as still remain—small fragments only though they be of the antiquarian treasures that once existed in the land." Many local poets have sung in doleful strains the demolition of Boghall Castle. We have a number of their productions lying beside us, and would gladly give some of them a place, did our space permit. The engraved view of it which we have been enabled to give, will, no doubt, make many other persons than poets deplore that it has been so thoroughly swept away.

The blame of the destruction of the Castle of Boghall is mainly to be attributed to the Elphinstone family. It was they who left it to entire neglect, who failed to expend a few pounds to keep it in a state of repair, who carried off a portion of its materials to build a dog-kennel, and who sold it, without making the least reserve as to its preservation. When these men, whose forefathers had built it, had lived within its walls, and made it memorable by their presence and transactions, not only felt no veneration for it, but actually hastened its destruction, we could scarcely expect that other parties, into whose hands it might fall, would view it with feelings of warmer attachment, or would expend their efforts and their means to preserve it from further demolition. Its removal, however, is to be regretted, as it was a noble feature in the landscape, and as the district has little to show in the shape of antiquities, and little to invest it with interest and attraction to strangers.

A few relics of the Castle have been preserved. The girdle-door is in the possession of Mr Allan Whitfield, agent, Biggar. An antique clock, which formed part of the furniture of the Castle, and which was presented by a member of the Boghall family, most likely by Lady Clementina Fleming herself, to Dr Baillie, who flourished as a physician at Biggar in the

early part of last century, is now in the Mansion of Mr Sim at Coultermains. A huge key, which was found near the ruins, supposed to be the key of the great outer gate, was, and perhaps still is, preserved in the Castle of Edmonston. Several cannon bullets, which appear to have been at one time part of the munitions of the Castle, or to have been shot against it during some of the assaults which it sustained, are in Mr Sim's Collection. A curious sword-blade, with a waved edge, but without the handle, is shown in the Museum of the Society of Scottish Antiquaries, as having been found at the Castle of Boghall. It was presented to the Society by William Loch, Esq. of Rachan, in 1829. In the letter which accompanied it, Mr Loch says that the sword was presented to him by an old man, who assured him that it was found in the ruins of Boghall. How far this man's testimony may be relied on, it is impossible now to say, but it seems to have been credited by Mr Loch. Swords with waved edges were used in mediæval times for the purpose of making a greater impression on defensive armour than could be done by those which had their edges straight. They acted, in fact, as a kind of saw, being drawn with great force across a helmet or a coat of mail. The Boghall sword, a woodcut of which is here given, is $32\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, and has the word *Mini* engraved four times on each side of the blade, and some slight ornaments which very likely were trade marks. About the year 1823, a gold marriage ring, with the motto "In the my choice I doe rejoice," was found at Boghall by Mr Thomas Mitchell then residing at Westraw. It was not of very large size, but was finely chased, and presented a good specimen of the workmanship of the sixteenth century, when these posy rings were common. Shortly after this period the late William Paterson, shoemaker, Biggar, found in the area of the Castle, a finely chased silver pencil-case, of an antique pattern, which is now in our own possession.



Boghall Castle, in a historical point of view, is not so remarkable as some other strongholds that could be named. We really know nothing of its early history. We cannot say what scenes of joy and sorrow, of peaceful entertainment or tumultuous outrage, it may have witnessed in remote times. We only begin to get some notices of it after it had been comparatively deserted by the Fleming family for Cumbernauld House. Still it is not altogether destitute of interest. We have good reason for believing that it was often tenanted by the Scottish kings, in their frequent progresses through this part of the kingdom. It was, along with the town and burgh of Biggar, and the acres lying thereabout, erected into a barony, called the Barony of Boghall, by a charter from James V. in 1538. Malcolm Lord Fleming, in his testament executed in 1547, assigned it as the jointure house of his wife, Joan Stewart, in case of her surviving him; and she was to receive the whole 'insight,' or furniture, except the artillery, which was to be the property of his son and heir. It was besieged and taken by the Regent Murray, and many years afterwards by Oliver Cromwell. It was, during the persecuting times, the jointure house of Anna Ker, Countess of Wigton, and was made memorable by the conventicles held, under her auspices, within its walls. The last garrison that it ever contained was placed in it by the Government, to overawe the adherents of the Covenant in Tweeddale and the Upper Ward.

A large number of documents in the charter chest of the Wigton family refer to Boghall. We select one or two specimens of the accounts of the domestic expenses of William, Earl of Wigton, during his residence at the Castle, from a large mass of papers of a similar kind. The first is a statement entitled—

'Ane Accompt furnished to the hous of Boghall for his Lop's use, beginning the 15th March 1675, to the 23^d thereof.

Imprimis, Six pound and a half of butter at 5/ the lb.	. . . . .	01 12 06
It. Ane hundron veil . . . . .	. . . . .	04 00 00
It. Ane sheep . . . . .	. . . . .	06 14 00
It. Six peices of salt beif & muttone . . . . .	. . . . .	01 10 00
It. for eells . . . . .	. . . . .	00 06 00
It. for trouts . . . . .	. . . . .	00 06 08
		<hr/>
Carry forward, . . . . .	. . . . .	£14 09 02

	Brought forward,	£14 09 02
It.	for candle 3 pound	00 15 00
It.	ten dosen and a half of eegs at 1/8 the dozen	00 14 02
It.	for seven loads of coalls	03 13 06
It.	for girding his LoP's brewing loomes	00 08 00
It.	for a choppine of brandie	01 00 00
It.	for clowes measst & peper	00 04 00
It.	for wild foulis	01 18'08
It.	for salt	00 01 04
It.	Given to my lord to give to the poor	00 06 00
It.	for a dosen of pypes	00 02 00
It.	for corks peals & barme	00 06 06
It.	for two capounes	00 18 00
It.	for ane oyr chopen of brandie	01 00 00
It.	mor fyve pynts of wyn out of Bigar	03 12 00
It.	mor ye 22 ^d of March 1675 tuo pieces of salt mutton and half a pund of buter	00 12 06
It.	mor tuo piece of mutton to yr Lordship's super and tuo dosen of eegs to yr brakfast	00 13 04
		<hr/>
		£30 14 2'

From other documents we observe that, during the same brief period, two pecks and two forpits of bear, at the cost of 2s. 2d., were consumed at Boghall; and that two bolls of malt, which cost L.2 Scots, were 'browen' in the same place.

'Accompt of my Lord's expences at Bigair fra 8th of Oct^r to 12th yr of 1675.

Item	givein to my Lord of Small mony ye 9 th Oct ^r	00 06 00
Item	payed at James Carmichell's on Saturday at night for four pynts of aill and 5 muchkines of seek	03 02 00
Item	mor for 3 pynts of aill to ye servants	00 09 00
Item	for ane chopin of seek and a duple gill, and a pynt of aill in ye morning	01 08 00
Item	half a dosen of pypes	00 01 00
Item	more at yr Lo's coming fra James Carmichell on Saturday at night ane duple gill	00 05 00
Item	your Lo lost or payed on Sunday a duple gill	00 05 00
Item	for yr LoP's footman qn you cam on Saterdag morning at Js. Carmichell	00 05 00
Item	On Monday morning yr wes a pynt of Seck, when yr Lo was wt my lord Carmichell and ye rest of ye gentillmen, and two duple gills and 3 pynts of aill—Inde	02 19 00
Item	given to ye bellman at yr Lo's derection	00 12 00
Item	to ye man yt went to Sunderland hall	01 04 00
Item	to ye man yt went for Whetsled and Glenkerk	00 04 00
Item	to ye woman yt brought ye gerse fra broughton	01 04 00
		<hr/>
	Carry forward,	£12 04 00

Brought forward,	£12 04 00
Item to ye lase ye maid ye beds, and swyped ye house	00 18 00
Item gven to Jon Chrictoune first 3 dolores q ⁿ yr Lo ^p went to broughton and when yr Lo ^p came away thertie pund and to yr Lo ^p 's self in small money fyve pund	41 14 00
Accompt of qt cam to ye hous of boghall ye said tym.	
Imp ^r for tuo pund of salt buter and tuo pund of fresh buter	01 00 00
Item for ane sixpeny loaf and 5 small bread	00 11 00
Item tuo dosen and a half of egcs and a pynt of milk	00 06 02
Item for a quarter of pund of raisines and a quarter of pund of plomdaimes	00 03 00
Item for half peck of ber and a for pairt of salt	00 07 04
Item for ane shep and a syd of mutton	03 13 04
Item for tuo pynts of Seck and a pynt of Braudy	06 00 00
Item for six galants and a half of aill	05 04 00
Item for a dosen of tubaco pypes	00 02 00
Item for tuo pund of candell	00 10 00
Item Given to Hew Anderson for making ready my Lord's met	01 00 00
Suma totalis	£73 12 10

A number of tacks, agreements, and deeds, still preserved, are dated "att Boghall." The following letter, preserved in the archives of the family, although containing no statement of any importance, may be interesting to some inhabitants of the Biggar district, from having been written by William Earl of Wigton within the walls of the Castle. It is addressed—'ffor Harie Drumond, Clarke to the Garisone of Dumbri-toune Castell,'—his lordship being governor of that fortress, and head sheriff of Dumbartonshire:—

"BOGHALL, Sept. 20th, 1680.

"HARIE

I received yours with the Money, and the Counsell's Letter and proclamatione, I am not fully resolved as yett whither I keep the Meitting of the Shyre at Dumbartone, or the Counsell, they being both to hold, one the first twesday of October; but if I come not, I shall send tymous advertisement to the Shirff deput. Any letters you have to send to me from Dumbartone, send them with a sojer to John Carmichall, and he will send them to me. And send me a trwe account how the Major is. So this being all at present from

your assured friend,

WIGTOUNE.

"Remember me to yr. wyfe. Be mindfull in getting my carriers from M'farland. Remember me to Catiweilie and all aqwantances."

On the death of William, Earl of Wigton, in 1681, the

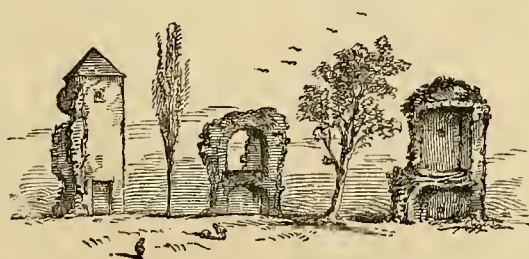
greater part of the old furniture of Boghall Castle was sold. An inventory of the sale has been preserved in the charter chest of the family ; and as every scrap of information regarding this old fortress is interesting, we give a copy of the document. It is entitled an 'Acompt of the plenishing of the house of Boghall sold Julii 13, 1681.'

"Impri ^s . the mustfatt and yuilie fatt sold to the Lady of Clohurne	10 00 0
Item more to hir ane stand, ane say, ane kerne, and two four gallon trees	03 04 0
Item more to hir ane stool and ane chamber pot	02 10 0
Item to John Carmichaell, in Carmichaell Myln, two stands, two punctiones, and two four gallon trees, and a washing tub	04 04 0
Item to Andrew Telfer two stands, three four gallon trees, two tuhies	03 10 0
Item to him two old coverings	03 06 8
Item to Mr Anthony Murray, ane say, a handy, and a seek ruidle	00 18 0
Item to Mr Robert Scot ane fether hed, and three huffet stollies, and two harrelles	12 06 0
Item, ane fether bed and holster, and two coads to the Ladie Clohurne	20 00 0
Item, two kapes to my Lord Carmichael	04 12 0
Item, for a wheel to Mr Anthonie Murray	01 00 0
Item to him ane barrell	00 08 0
Item to William Tait two very old coverings	01 10 0
Item to Mr Richerd Broune ane fether bed and bolster £12 and ane suit of old strip hangings, £12, inde	24 00 0
Item to bailzie Vallence for two suit of old reed Courtings	08 00 0
Item to hailzie Kello ane fedder bed	09 00 0
Item to the forsd John Carmichaell two calfe bolsters	01 00 0
Item Janet Threiplaud in the Mylne, ane old grein table cloath	00 14 0
Item to the Ladie Westshiell ane fether hed, ane holster, and two coads	20 00 0
Cheiris resting that John Carmichaell is to Compt for with my ladie	100 17 4
Item two milk bowes to the Lady Cultermaines	00 13 0
Item to Hardingtoune's Woman halfe ane dozen of chaires, at 2/ sterling, the peice, two candlestikes, six shillings sterling, ane holster and two coads £4. 6. 8 inde	15 02 8
Item to hir ane chamber stool and a chamber pot	02 15 0
Item to hir ane chimney	01 07 6
Item to hailzie Carmichaell's wife three pair of tonges, a pair-	
Carry forward,	£250 18 2

Brought forward,	£250 18 2
ing iron, ane pair of clips 20/ ane cheese fork and a chamber pot £1 14/ ane calfe bed £1 16/ ane milk tub 14/. inde	03 14 0
Item for ane large fedder bed and bolster to the ladie hard- ingtoun	20 00 0
Item to Alex ^r . Bailzie, bailzie of Lammingtoun, ane fedder bed and bolster	16 00 0
Item halfe ane dozen of bassons to hir	05 00 0
Item to bailzie Vallance halfe ane dozen of old reed chaires	03 06 0
Item to bailzie Broune fyve chaires	06 00 0
Item to bailzie Kello ane pot	04 13 4
Item ane wheel to him	01 00 0
Item to the ladie Lamingtoun two chamber stoles	02 00 0
Item to the ladie Cloburne ane stoll	01 00 0
Item to Richard Broune 3 chaires	03 02 2
Item to the ladie Lamingtoun the chimney, in the drawing rowme	12 10 0
Item to Mr Richard Broune for a chimney	01 07 6
Item to bailzie Vallance two beds	20 10 0
Item to James Aikman ane reed bed and a fether bed	24 00 0
Item to Robert Fforysyth ane chair	01 04 0
Item to Culterallers ane Caldron	66 13 4

The soume of the whol charge is £442 18 6"

The small portions of the House of Boghall that remain are now in the keeping of a gentleman, who, we hope, will take some pains to preserve them from further demolition, so that the pilgrim to Biggar may have the melancholy satisfaction of gazing on the fragments of a building, which, for centuries, accommodated and protected the Fleming family, which possessed considerable historical interest, which formed a striking feature in the landscape, and employed the pencils of Clerk of Eldin and the famous Captain Grose. We give a woodcut, representing these fragments, which, as we have said, may be regarded as a fitting emblem of a power and glory in this district that have passed almost entirely away.



CHAPTER VIII.

Biggar Churchyard.



THE Churchyard of Biggar is of small extent. It is by no means in keeping with the populousness of the parish, and the spaciousness of the church erected in its centre. An addition was made to it, some years ago, by taking in a part of the glebe connected with the Established Church; but it is still narrow and confined, and affords no space for the walks, shrubs, and flowers with which the tombs, in more modern cemeteries, are now generally adorned. The graves are too much crowded, and the tomb-stones, especially on the south, stand too closely together. Another effort is at present being made to extend it, and, if this is successful, greater scope will be afforded for the adornment of the grounds and the erection of suitable monuments. None of the tombstones are remarkable for their design, ornamentation, or antiquity. They almost entirely consist of the plain upright head-stone, or the horizontal slab, generally called a "thruchstane." The oldest stones, so far as the inscriptions on them can be deciphered, do not go further back than the seventeenth century. The greater portion of them have been erected during the last fifty years, and few of them are without some lettering executed by the late James Watson, mason, Westraw, who might justly have been styled the "Old Mortality" of the district, as he was often to be seen plying his mallet and chisel, not only in this churchyard, but in those of the country round.

Near the gateway is an obelisk, erected by the Lodge of Biggar Free Operatives, to the memory of Gavin Nicol, mason, an exceedingly bright and active member of the masonic fraternity, who died in 1819. Many persons yet alive will re-

collect the consequential strut and air which he assumed when taking part in the public masonic displays on St John's Day. In his latter years he was chiefly employed in conveying the mail-bags to and from Mountbog, mounted on an ass. During the Peninsular War, Gavin heralded to the inhabitants of Biggar the intelligence of all the famous victories achieved by the British arms. On these occasions his pocket-handkerchief was placed on the end of his staff in form of a flag, and his progress through the town was quite an ovation. No sooner did he appear at the town-head with his ass and his flag, and proclaim that some great battle had been fought and won, such as Salamanca, Vittoria, the Pyrenees, Waterloo, etc., than he was surrounded by an excited crowd; and the shop of Eben Young, tinsmith, was besieged, and his whole stock of tin-horns carried off. Then, amid the routing of horns and the cheering of the people, he was conducted to the dwelling of the post-master, Mr Alexander Multrie, where the bag was opened, and the details of the battle were read to the crowd amid loud huzzas.

At no great distance from this monument is the burying-place of the Gladstone family. As several members of it were leading men of the Biggar community during their day and generation, and as one branch of it has attained great wealth and distinction, a very brief genealogical sketch of it may be here given. The surname of Gladstones is frequently to be met with in the early records of Scotland. Families of this name had possessions in the counties of Lanark, Peebles, Roxburgh, and Dumfries, and therefore it is often difficult to determine to what branch individuals mentioned in old histories and documents really belonged. It appears now to be a settled point that the original stock of this clan or family was the Gladstones of that ilk, in the parish of Libberton, in the Upper Ward of Clydesdale. It is unfortunate that the title deeds of the estate of Gladstones, prior to the seventeenth century, have all been lost; and, on this account, it is impossible to say at what period the Gladstones family acquired it, or how long it remained in their possession. Adjoining the lands of Gladstones, and lying also in the parish of Libberton, is the estate of Arthurshiel, which, for a considerable period, was the inheritance of a branch of the Gladstones of that ilk. The early title deeds of this property have also been lost, but the proba-

bility is, that towards the close of the fifteenth century it was assigned as the portion of a younger son of the Gladstones of Gladstones. We know that the following members of this branch occupied Arthurshiel in succession, viz., William, who died previous to 1565; George, who died previous to 1623, as in an Assignation on the 13th of March of that year by Robert Chancellor of Shieldhill, he is referred to as "the vmquhile George Glaidstaines of Arthurshiel;" William, who witnessed a Tack dated 9th June 1641, between Robert Chancellor younger of Shieldhill and William Brown in Quothquan, of the lands of Langshot, and is supposed to have died previous to the year 1662; and John, who sold the estate to James Brown of Edmonston, and died about the year 1680.

William, the son of this last mentioned Laird, having lost his paternal inheritance, removed to Biggar, and commenced business as a maltman. At that period, and for more than a century afterwards, a large trade in malting was carried on at Biggar. Although the population did not exceed 1100 or 1200, it has been ascertained that no fewer than fourteen malting establishments were at one time in full and active operation in the town. William died about the year 1728, and was interred in Libberton churchyard, where the family had a burying ground as lairds of Arthurshiel. By his wife, Christian Brown, most likely a daughter of the Laird of Edmonston, he left three sons, John, James, and William, and a daughter, Grizzel, married to the dyer Thomas Cosh, whom the Earl of Wigton brought from Hamilton for the advantage of the inhabitants. One of her daughters married Angus Campbell, who succeeded Cosh in the dyeing and wauking establishment, situated by the side of the Burn near Westraw, and hence the flat ground in the neighbourhood is still called Angus's Green.

William, the youngest son, was a merchant in Biggar, and Laird of the property long occupied by Mr George Brown, near the manse of the Established Church. He married first Janet How, and second Marion Gardner, and had children by both. He appears not to have been very successful in business, as, in his old age, he filled the office of bellman and grave-digger. He died in 1784.

James, the second son, was like his father a maltman, and along with his eldest brother John, occupied the farm of

Wester Toftcombs. By his first wife Jean Telfer, he had two sons, William, an officer of Excise, who died in 1816, and Robert, who, at his father's death, became tenant of the farm just mentioned. Robert by his wife Helen Sibbald had two sons, James born 1778, and William born 1787. James succeeded to the occupation of the farm, and, for some time, acted as factor on the Biggar estate for Admiral Fleming. He died about forty years ago, and left a son Robert, born in 1821, who studied for the Church.

John, the eldest son, was born about the year 1693. He was also a maltman, and besides was a burges of the town, keeper of the baron's girdel, a leading member of the Freemason's Society, and an elder in the Established Church. His name, therefore, occurs very frequently in the documents connected with the town during the period in which he lived. By industry and frugality he acquired means sufficient to purchase the farm of Mid Toftcombs, which he retained in his own possession till the time of his death. He died on the 1st of June 1756, aged 63 years. By his wife Janet Aitken, he had five sons and six daughters. James the eldest son, was educated for the ministry* but not obtaining a living, he became Rector of the Grammar School of Leith. William the second son died at Coulter Muir in 1776 at the age of 52 years. John, the third son, accepted the patrimony of Mid Toftcombs which had been declined by his two elder brothers, and with a tocher of 7000 merks which he got with his wife Christian Taverner,† he was enabled to pay off the liabilities with which it was encumbered. He took an active part in the affairs of the town for many years. He

* After he was licensed as a probationer, he was very anxious that his brother John would hear him preach, and give him a candid opinion regarding his qualifications. One Sabbath he accordingly held forth in Biggar Kirk, but as he read his discourse—a practice then held in great dislike—he failed to command his brother's approbation. When he came down from the pulpit, he said, "Now, John, tell me what you think of my performance to-day." "Weel Jamie," said John, "to tell you the truth, I would as soon hear ane of my ain nowte routing in the loan as hear you in the poopit."

† Christian Traverner, when a young woman, resided at Biggar in the house long occupied by the late Mr James Hamilton, nailer. She was left a legacy by a relative, but did not obtain it till after a law-suit. No sooner was it settled in her favour than she received addresses from a number of suitors, but to one and all of them she answered, "Na, na, he that soucht me wi' my nicht mutch, is the lad that will get me noo that I can wear a day ane."

was an elder in the Established Church, and was the chief leader of the Secession from the parish church in 1780, at the settlement of Mr Pearson, and the establishment of the Relief congregation. He ultimately sold Mid Toftcombs, and became tenant of the farm of Eastfield, Symington. His sons, John, watchmaker, Biggar, who died in 1851, and Alexander, landlord of the Beehive Inn, Grassmarket, Edinburgh, who died a few years ago, both remarkably prudent and upright men, are well-remembered by many of the inhabitants of Biggar and a large circle of friends.

Thomas, the fourth son, left his native place, and settled as a corn merchant in the Coal Hill, Leith, where he prosecuted his business with success, and realized a considerable fortune. He married Helen, a daughter of Walter Neilson of Springfield, by whom he had a son, John, who commenced business in Leith; but, being unsuccessful, he proceeded to Liverpool, where he embarked in the West India trade, and, after a lengthened and prosperous career, acquired so great wealth that he was able to purchase the estate of Fasque, and to give each of his sons, during his lifetime, L.100,000. He was created a baronet on the 27th of June 1846. By his second wife, Ann, daughter of Andrew Robertson, Provost of Dingwall, he had four sons—Thomas, Robertson, John Neilson, and William Ewart. The last named is well known as an eminent scholar, orator, and statesman. He is the author of various works, and for a considerable time held with great distinction the high and very important office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, and was for six years previous to Nov. 1865, Rector of the University of Edinburgh. He is at present, 1867, the recognised leader of the liberal party in the House of Commons.

Here we note the resting-place of the Kelloes, a very old Biggar family. In the list of the parishioners of Biggar, in 1640, in the archives of the Wigton family, John Kello is given as one of them. About the same period, George Kello and his son received a disposition of two oxengates of land in Biggar, and, in 1681, John Kello was one of the bailies of Biggar. On the family tomb-stone we notice the name of Agnes Kello, a lady who acquired some celebrity in her time, and therefore deserves to be specially mentioned. She was the daughter of Andrew Kello, tenant in Skirling Mill, and portioner in Biggar,

who died in 1763, when she was a child. Her mother, whose name was Janet Watson, outlived her husband fifty-three years, and died in 1816, in the eighty-fifth year of her age.

Miss Kello was a lady of considerable personal attractions, great amiability of disposition, and of fortune somewhat beyond persons in her station of life. The charms of her person were set off to advantage by the neatness and elegance of her dress, particularly on Sundays, when she attended divine service in the Burgher meeting-house at Biggar. Some of the rigid members of the Session proposed that she should be called before them to be rebuked and admonished for what they were pleased to style her inordinate love of dress, and for the time she misspent every Sabbath morning at her toilet. Mr Low, her pastor, who knew her well, said that it would be gratifying to know that all the members of the congregation spent as much time as she did at their private devotions. No young woman entered the old town on whom all persons smiled so complacently, and none enjoyed a larger share of admiration and respect. It is a proof of the impression which she made, and the estimation in which she was held, that, though it is upwards of seventy years since she was laid in her grave, her name is a household word in Biggar to this day.

As might be expected, Miss Kello had many suitors for her hand. They were, in fact, as numerous as those who came to woo 'Tibbie Fowler of the Glen.' Farmers, lairds, students, and tradesmen were all ambitious to secure her favourable regard. One of her most persevering suitors was William Sim, then schoolmaster at Quothquan, a rare compound of bitter envy, spiritual pride, lofty aspirations, and learned pretensions, to whom we have already referred. A suitor of a far higher stamp made advances to her at one time, and was accepted. This was the famed Professor Lawson of Selkirk. The day for the nuptials was fixed, and the intended bride and her relatives had made all the necessary arrangements. The Professor had a most extraordinary memory for all kinds of sacred and human learning, but it appears that he had a most unaccountable obliviousness regarding some of the most important concerns of this world. At all events, he forgot the time that he had stipulated for the marriage. The banns were unproclaimed, and the lovely and amiable maid of Skirling Mill was

left to neglect. She was, however, possessed of firmness and spirit; and when the oblivious Professor returned to consciousness, she rejected his advances, and resolutely refused to reinstate him in the place which he had forfeited.

The admirer with whom she gained the greatest notoriety was Patrick Taylor of Birkenshaw, in the parish of Torphichen, near Bathgate. He first saw her at a Skirling Fair. Her personal graces, and the fact that she possessed a fortune of L.2000, made her very attractive in his eyes. He subsequently paid his addresses to her, and being a showy, specious fellow, succeeded in making some impression on her heart. By pursuing a course of reckless dissipation, he had reduced himself to bankruptcy, and this rendered him altogether unacceptable to Miss Kello's relations. After an intimacy of eighteen months, he gave her a document declaring her to be his just and lawful wife, and received one from her of a similar import in return. The following is a transcript of the document presented by her to Taylor:—

‘SKIRLING MILL, 16th Feb. 1779.

‘I hereby solemnly declare you, Patrick Taylor, in Birkenshaw, my just and lawful husband, and remain your affectionate wife,

‘AGNES KELLO.’

To PATRICK TAYLOR, Birkenshaw.

These documents were kept secret by both parties; but the copy in Miss Kello's hands having been discovered by her mother, she caused her to destroy it, and to write to Taylor, requesting him to give up his copy. This he refused to do, unless he received L.500. He continued, occasionally, after this period, to pay visits to Skirling Mill, and employed friends to intercede with Miss Kello's relatives in his behalf. He so far succeeded, that, in the spring of 1780, their banns were twice proclaimed: but some of the lady's friends, who were obstinately opposed to the union, prevented them from being proclaimed a third time. For two years afterwards their meetings were very unfrequent; and from 1782 to 1784 they ceased altogether.

Another candidate now appeared for the hand of Miss Kello. This was a gentleman of wealth and respectability from the neighbourhood of Whitburn. His suit was successful, and

preparations were made for the marriage. Taylor, getting notice of this arrangement, immediately took steps to prevent it from being carried into effect, by declaring that Miss Kello was already his wife. The case having been brought before the Commissary Court, was argued at great length; and the decision given on the 23d of March 1785 was, that, according to the law of Scotland, they were married parties. Every effort was made, first by a bill of advocation, and afterwards by a reclaiming petition, to reduce this sentence in the Court of Session, but without effect; and therefore the case was carried, by appeal, to the House of Lords. Their lordships, on the 16th of February 1787, reversed the decisions of the Scottish Courts, declaring "that the two letters insisted upon in this process by the parties respectively, and mutually exchanged, were not intended by either, or understood by the other, as a final agreement; nor was it intended or understood that they had thereby contracted the state of matrimony, or the relation of husband and wife from the date thereof. On the contrary, it was expressly agreed, that the same should be delivered up, if the purpose they were intended to serve should prove unattainable, and if such delivery should be demanded; which last-mentioned agreement is further proved by the whole and uniform subsequent conduct of both parties."

In going over the proceedings in this case, it is quite evident that Taylor's principal if not his sole design was to retrieve his ruined fortunes by a marriage with Miss Kello, while it must be admitted that on her part, she exhibited an undue confidence and simplicity amounting almost to foolishness. The interchange of the written lines, according to the law of Scotland, was certainly sufficient to constitute a marriage, because all that it requires is mere consent either in the presence of witnesses or by a written document. The whole fifteen judges on the Scottish bench at the time, therefore, held that they were married parties. But the House of Lords founded their decision on the light in which the parties themselves regarded the exchange of the documents as proved by their subsequent conduct. Taylor, though disposed enough to play the rogue, was evidently no lawyer. After receiving the document which we have quoted, he might have claimed Miss Kello as his wife, but he seems to have considered that it

went no further than an engagement to marry him at a subsequent period. He, therefore, continued his addresses, insisted on having a regular celebration of marriage, and on one occasion went the length of having a proclamation of banns. Their lordships on this account seized on Taylor's own understanding of the transaction, and assoilzied Miss Kello.

The harassing proceedings in this protracted law-suit, although so far successful, had an injurious effect on Miss Kello's health and spirits. She never regained her former sprightliness and gaiety. She retired, in a great measure, from general society; and, along with her mother, took up her abode in the town of Biggar, where she died in 1796, in the thirty-second year of her age, and was interred in Biggar Churchyard.

Not far from the wall of the church is the resting-place of John Crec, Procurator-fiscal of Biggar, who died on the 17th December 1796, in the eighty-ninth year of his age; and also of his son Matthew, nursery and scedsman, who held the office of Baron Baillie twenty-seven years, and died on the 7th of July 1832, when he had attained the advanced age of ninety years. He was one of the most mild and conciliatory magistrates that ever exercised authority in Biggar, or anywhere else. His common advice to disputants was, "Tak a gill and 'gree;" and he thus seems to have been an implicit believer in Burns' opinion, that "it's aye the cheapest lawyer's fee, to taste the barrel." He long officiated as an elder in the parish church. His only acting colleague in this office, for many years, was John Pairman, who was generally denominated The Elder. These two wortbies were great cronies, and had many a pleasant confabulation over a single glass of whisky punch; for they were remarkably circumspect in their conduct, and never exceeded in their potations. The Elder was in the habit of pronouncing any untoward circumstance, "A fair smook;" and this phrase became quite proverbial in Biggar. On one occasion, a person called on the Elder in regard to a case of scandal, and invited him to a public house to talk over the steps he would require to take, to be restored to his position in the Church. When the Elder was thawed a little with the toddy, the offender ventured to hint that there were two cases of scandal. "Faith, then, Davie lad," said the Elder, "we maun hae another half mutchkin." On another

occasion, he complained bitterly to the parish minister of the annoyance received from the paupers of the parish, and the heavy demands made for their support. The minister exhorted him to courage, and said, "But, John, think of the reward promised in another world." John's answer was, "Faith, a bird in the hand is worth twa in the buss."

In the tomb of his forefathers also sleeps Gavin Cree, son of Mathew Cree, just referred to. Gavin followed the same profession, viz., that of a nurseryman. In 1812 he was appointed paymaster to the French prisoners who were located at Biggar, and ever afterwards was extremely loquacious on the characters and proceedings of these unfortunate sons of Mars. He long took a deep interest in the prosperity of his native town. He was an active manager of some of its benefit societies. At the yearly display of the Whipmen's Society, in the middle of June, he was always in high spirits, arranged the races and sports that took place on the occasion, and catered largely for the gratification of the juvenile portion of the population. He held the rank of serjeant in the corps of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry Cavalry, and regularly, for many years, attended the musters on Lanark Muir. Mr Cree, however, gained his chief distinction by his laborious study and exertions to improve the methods of pruning forest trees. His attention was drawn at an early period to this subject, and one of the first trees on which he experimented was the most notable in Biggar. It was usually styled, the "Deil's Tree;" and every youth firmly believed that on very dark nights evil spirits were wont to hold their rendezvous under its shade; and therefore a great amount of courage was requisite to pass it after nightfall. Mr Cree procured a ladder and a saw, and, greatly to the amazement of young and old, cut off bough after bough, regardless either of fiend or fairy, and left it one of the most stunted and uncouth objects that could well be conceived. He continued his experiments wherever an opportunity could be obtained, and he wrote several papers illustrative of his system, for the "Quarterly Journal of Agriculture." The Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland having had their attention called to the subject, offered, in 1836, several prizes for essays on the best method of pruning forest trees. Mr Cree accordingly entered the arena as a competitor, and succeeded in

carrying off one of the Society's silver medals. The distinguishing peculiarity of Mr Cree's system—the shortening the branches, instead of cutting them off by the trunk—attracted the attention of several distinguished botanists, among whom may be mentioned Mr Loudon, and Professors Balfour and Low. Some of the systems propounded by others, particularly by Mr Bellington, one of the Keepers of the Royal Forest, were nearly similar to that of Mr Cree, but they failed to give so precisely the rule of practice; and therefore Professor Low, in his "Elements of Agriculture," states, that the country is highly indebted to Mr Cree for bringing his system to a point of improvement never before known. In May 1848, the London Society of Arts awarded Mr Cree a gold medal for the best essay "On the treatment of Forest Trees, where early pruning has been neglected; on the practice of Foreshortening, and how far advisable; and the physiological principles of its adoption." This honour afforded Mr Cree the highest gratification. On all public occasions the medal appeared on his breast; and he spoke with rapture of the distinction of receiving an invitation to attend a meeting in London, to receive the medal from the hands of Prince Albert,—an invitation, however, with which he had been unable to comply. His system having thus been brought favourably under the notice of his countrymen, he was to be often seen in a solitary plantation, with his ladder and his saw, disencumbering the trees of their superfluous branches. On one or two occasions he appeared in working order in the metropolis of Scotland, and, greatly to the horror of the uninitiated, committed sad havoc among the goodly trees in the Meadows, and the Gardens of Princes Street, and the Royal Terrace; but these trees have long since borne ample testimony to the advantageous results of his operations. Some years ago, Mr Cree published his "Essays on Pruning," in a collected form, which, we understand, met with a ready sale. He died, after a short illness, on the 17th of June 1860.

Here is the resting-place of John Pairman, artist, who deserves to be noticed, not less on account of his merits as a painter, than on account of his amiable character, his cultivated understanding, and public usefulness. He was the second son of Robert Pairman, farmer, Stain, in the parish of Biggar, and was born in 1788. He received his education at the schools

of his native place, and then went to Glasgow as an apprentice to a draper. At the expiry of his apprenticeship, he returned to Biggar; and there, in the shop now occupied by Mrs George Johnstone, commenced business on his own account. By this time he had begun to devote his thoughts and his leisure hours to drawing sketches from the objects around him. One of the first portraits that he attempted, was that of his brother Robert, merchant, Biggar. He wrought at this quite stealthily. One day he ventured to show it to his minister, the Rev. John Brown, who had accidentally called at his shop. He made no disclosure of the person whom he intended to represent, but Mr Brown at once said, "That is your brother." This gratified him exceedingly, as it showed that he could now sketch a countenance that could be recognised. After painting a number of portraits and local scenes, he abandoned his shop at Biggar, and repaired to Glasgow, where he took lodgings, and, though entirely self-taught, and without patronage of any sort, commenced business as a portrait painter. After spending some years in Glasgow, he left it, and proceeded to the Scottish capital, as likely to afford a better field for his exertions, and there he fixed his head-quarters till his death. During the summer months, he was in the habit of visiting some of the principal towns in Scotland, and there painting portraits of clergymen and other noted personages. The first full-length portrait that he painted, was one of the Rev. John Brown, Biggar; and though it is fifty years since it was executed, the colours are still fresh, and the picture is considered a good likeness by those who knew Mr Brown in his younger days. At a later period, he painted another portrait of Mr Brown, which was considered so striking a resemblance that an engraving was taken from it. Among the portraits of other celebrities, painted by Mr Pairman, was one of Professor Lawson of Selkirk, which was afterwards engraved. Mr Pairman, however, did not confine his attention to portraits; he also painted landscapes, groups, and fancy pictures, somewhat in the style of Wilkie. These were sent to the different exhibitions in Edinburgh, obtained very favourable notices, and sold readily. The last landscape that he painted, was a bridge over the Almond, a small stream not far from Edinburgh. It is in the possession of the widow of his brother Robert, along with

a number of other memorials, particularly a view of Tinto, taken from the High Street of Biggar.

Mr Pairman was a member of the session of the congregation, Broughton Place, Edinburgh, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Dr Brown. He took a deep interest in all matters connected with that congregation, and was at the head of every scheme of usefulness. He paid great attention to the wants of the poor, and had an evident delight in attending fellowship and district prayer-meetings. He was greatly esteemed for his mild, conciliatory manners, his ardent piety, his unwearied diligence in doing good, and his enlightened and instructive conversation. He died suddenly, at his house in Edinburgh, on the 14th December 1843, in the fifty-fifth year of his age.

We mark the tomb of Thomas Johnston, merchant, Biggar, and his spouse, Janet Brown. Beside them repose the remains of their eldest son, Robert, who was born at Biggar on the 6th of December 1784, and was baptized on the 12th of the same month by the Rev. John Low. He received his education at Biggar parish school, and there made some progress in the ordinary branches of learning—reading, writing, and arithmetic, including the rudiments of Latin. After leaving school, he learned the art of weaving; and on the expiry of his apprenticeship, wrought some time as a journeyman weaver in the city of Glasgow. Returning to his native town, he settled down as a merchant, and carried on business for a number of years. In 1808, he married Violet, daughter of the Rev. John Brown of Whitburn, and sister of the Rev. John Brown, then minister of the Secession congregation, Biggar.

Mr Johnston's vocation as a merchant not only brought him into contact with most of the worthies who, during his time, flourished in the Biggar district, but allowed him sufficient leisure to cultivate an acquaintance with literature, both ancient and modern. He was in daily converse with shrewd, practical farmers, learned and eccentric schoolmasters, grave and gifted divines, and intelligent and sagacious weavers, shoemakers, and other craftsmen. He would discuss a mathematical problem or an algebraical equation with Robert Whitelaw, the Symington weaver; canvass the merits of a favourite poet, or

the contradictions of human nature, with James Brown, the Symington poet, or James Affleck, the Biggar tailor; dive into the perplexing intricacies of politics, or the abstruse subtleties of theology, with John M'Ghie, the Biggar shoemaker, or Daniel Lithgow, the Biggar weaver; enjoy the devotional gravities and amusing pedantries of Adam Thomson, schoolmaster, Quothquan, or William Sim, the peripatetic dominie and philosopher, Biggar; and then, as his nephew, Dr Brown of Edinburgh, has told us, he would every Friday evening repair to the Burgher manse, and with his gifted brother-in-law, the Rev. John Brown, range over all topics, from the elegancies and niceties of classic lore, to the humours and pleasantries of village gossip. Besides, he was very often chosen a referee in disputed cases, especially among the weavers; and thus his mental acumen was sharpened by coming into collision with such acute intellects as Andrew Brown, John Baillie, Allan Whitfield, etc. He thus acquired a very intimate knowledge of the inhabitants of the Biggar district, and to the last retained a very lively remembrance of their habits, peculiarities, and proceedings.

Mr Johnston cultivated a close and extensive acquaintance with the English classic authors. He never could be brought to devote any attention to the works of many modern writers, particularly of fiction, of whose productions the present age has been very much enamoured. He seemed to regard them as altogether unworthy of notice. But the works of Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Swift, Hume, Addison, Burke, Johnson, he read over repeatedly, and knew all their sentiments and peculiarities of style intimately. He had a high appreciation of several of the Edinburgh Reviewers, particularly of Jeffrey, M'Intosh, Brougham, and Macaulay; and no literary productions ever afforded him greater delight than the poetry and novels of Sir Walter Scott. Down to the very close of his life, he every now and then perused one of Sir Walter's novels; and he seemed to enjoy its genial humour, its vivid portraitures of character, and its happy expositions of national feelings and peculiarities, with as much relish as ever. One of the most remarkable traits in Mr Johnston's character was the assiduous manner in which he devoted himself to acquire a knowledge of languages, both ancient and modern. He was, in his latter

years, when we knew him best, well versant in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, Spanish, Italian, and German. He had read repeatedly the works of the best Greek and Roman authors, and particularly those of Virgil, Horace, Livy, Cæsar, Suetonius, Xenophon, Theocritus, and above all, of Homer, as he made it a matter of conscience to read the Iliad and Odyssey from beginning to end every two or three years. He had perused the Greek New Testament so frequently, that he knew almost every passage in it by heart. He had read all the Hebrew of the Old Testament, but he did not cultivate so close an acquaintance with the Chaldee. With the works of Schiller, Tasso, and Cervantes, he was very familiar in the languages in which they were originally written; and he had a special pleasure in musing over the productions of Voltaire, Rousseau, Le Sage, Montesquieu, and other great French writers. He had, perhaps, a more minute acquaintance with the French language than any other, except his own; at least, it was the only foreign language in which he occasionally attempted to hold conversation.

Another department of learning to which Mr Johnston specially devoted himself, was geometry and algebra. Like most men of literary habits, he was rather of an indolent disposition, so far as manual labour was concerned; but in studying a classic author, or working out a mathematical demonstration, he would toil for days and weeks with the most unwearied application. He often gave himself a great deal of unnecessary labour. He disregarded all adventitious helps. He had no patience with glossaries and commentaries. An old text-book, and a common dictionary were the only tools with which he would work. In algebra he had great enjoyment in evolving a general formula for himself, though it should cost him weeks of close study; and many of his processes were original deductions to himself. They had long been previously known to regularly educated men; and he might have been acquainted with them too, had he been disposed to take a little trouble to ascertain what discoveries had been made by other inquirers.

Mr Johnston's contributions to literature were not numerous, considering that he devoted a great part of a long life to the pursuit of knowledge. We know that he contributed to "The Christian Repository," edited at Biggar by his brother-in-law,

the Rev. John Brown, a series of articles on the "History of the Secession Church," a paper on "A Corn of Wheat Falling into the Ground," and "A Review of Sir Harry Moncreiff's Life of Dr John Erskine." For a periodical called "The Christian Gleaner," he wrote "A Memoir of Betty Gibson," and, for the "Eclectic Review," a critique on Dr John Brown's "Exposition of First Peter." A sermon on the text, "There remaineth much land to be possessed," which was preached by the Rev. John Brown before the Secession Synod, and afterwards published, gave great offence to some of the friends of the Established Church, and called forth a number of very severe strictures. The Rev. Alexander Craik of Libberton, in particular, entered the lists, and published a sensorious pamphlet against the assertions made in the sermon. Mr Johnston followed with a pamphlet, entitled, "Letter by a Friend of the Church," which his nephew, Dr Brown, characterizes as "a capital bit of literary banter." The following pamphlets were also from Mr Johnston's pen:—"On the Abolition of Slavery;" "Calm Answers to certain Angry Questions proposed to Voluntary Churchmen;" and "A Digest of the Evidence on the Connection of Bible Societies with the Circulation of the Apocrypha." He furnished many articles to the "Scottish Herald," the "Scottish Press," and the "Kirkcaldy Observer." Two of the largest works with which he was connected were a translation of Calvin and Storr's work on Philippians, and a translation of the Messianic Psalms of Rosenmüller. To both of these works he furnished lengthened prefaces.

Mr Johnston was a person of very diffident and retiring habits. He had an extreme repugnance to put himself forward in any way before the public, or even before strangers with whom he accidentally came in contact. Every one who met him knew that he was a thoughtful, intelligent man; but it was only his intimate friends who were aware of the extent of his erudition, or the learned inquiries in which he was daily engaged. He had talents and acquirements fitting him to occupy a high position in life; but from an unconquerable aversion to push himself forward, and make his merits and his claims known, he passed through life in comparative obscurity. With one, or at most two intimate friends, he could descant whole evenings on themes of high import, delight them with

anecdotes of Biggar men, or dissect the merits of a favourite author ; but before a mixed company he was generally silent, or, if forced to speak, he generally made a very poor appearance. He, in fact, hated all public display, both on his own part and that of others.

Mr Johnston, in the latter part of his life, left Biggar with his family, resided for some years in Edinburgh, and then removed to Portobello. He died at this latter place, after a short illness, on Tuesday, the 17th April 1860, having reached the seventy-fifth year of his age. His wife, Violet Brown, was, in her way, a remarkable woman. Her intellectual powers were strong and discriminating, and her memory was wonderfully tenacious and accurate. It was always a pleasing treat to us to sit and hear her descant on the incidents of her early days, spent at Longridge and Biggar. She died at Portobello on the 22d of February 1861, and was interred also in the Churchyard of Biggar.

Mr and Mrs Johnston left behind them three sons and two daughters. The oldest son, Thomas, is settled in Glasgow as a medical practitioner. Like his father, he is fond of all sorts of books, and has a first-rate knowledge of his profession, and a great hatred of humbugs, especially of medical humbugs. He occasionally lectures on scientific subjects before some of the literary societies of Glasgow. Their second son, John, is minister of the United Presbyterian congregation, Duke Street, Glasgow. He was for some time editor of the "Scottish Press," and is the author of a work entitled, "The Life and Remains of the Rev. Robert Shirra of Kirkcaldy." He is a very popular preacher ; and, a short time ago, one of the American colleges conferred on him the degree of Doctor in Divinity. The youngest son, Robert, is a United Presbyterian minister at Arbroath. He was educated at the High School of Edinburgh, and carried off the chief prizes at all the classes which he attended, including that of the Rector's. He also received the gold medal for being the best scholar of the senior Humanity class at the University of Edinburgh. He took the degree of LL.B. at the University of London, and at one time was employed in superintending some of the Latin educational works published by the Messrs Chambers of Edinburgh.

Mr Thomas Johnston, merchant, Biggar, had several sons

besides Robert, to whom we have just referred. They all devoted themselves to the learned professions. James, a very amiable man, and a most respectable medical practitioner, was settled at Moffat, and afterwards at Limekilns. Ebenezer studied for the church, and was for a number of years connected with the Scottish Establishment. He acted for some time as chaplain of Simpson's Asylum at Plean, near Falkirk, and, after the Disruption, was settled minister of the Free Church at Bannockburn. He was a man of capital scholarship and great humour. He died on the 3d February 1864. William, who is minister of the United Presbyterian congregation at Limekilns, is a person whose ability, learning, and great moral worth, have not only given him a high place in the United Presbyterian Church, but throughout a wide section of the community. The University of Glasgow, at which he studied, conferred on him the degree of Doctor in Divinity.

In the north part of the Churchyard is a vault without grace or ornament, and, in fact, of so rude a construction as to be even an eyesore among the humble stones by which it is surrounded. Beneath it repose the ashes of Thomas Ord, the famous equestrian, and his first wife. Mr Ord's early history is obscure. It has been stated that he was the son of the Rev. Selby Ord, minister of Longformacus; that he was for some time a medical student; and that, being of a roving disposition, he threw aside the lancet and dissecting-knife, and enlisted into a cavalry regiment, in which he served till a friend of his father purchased his discharge. On the other hand, it has been asserted that he engaged himself, when a boy, to a distinguished equestrian of the name of M'Donald, with whom he served five years. In his sixteenth year, it is said, he started as an equestrian on his own account, and in this character made his *debut* at Kelso. However this may be, it is certain that, at an early part of his career as a master equestrian, he drew a company around him, and performed with *eclat* in many of the smaller towns of Scotland. Having great confidence in his own abilities, and encouraged by the success which had attended his previous efforts, he set up regular establishments in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee, Perth, Inverness, Dumfries, etc., and everywhere received substantial marks of public favour. He then made a descent into England, and performed

in a number of the large towns in the sister kingdom ; but here his good fortune forsook him. His heavy expenditure in attempting to cater for the amusement of the Southrons was not always covered by the receipts, and, in the end, he was forced to dispose of the greater part of his stud, to break up his troupe of artistes, and return to Scotland in comparative poverty. After this period he carried on his business in a more humble manner, keeping a small establishment, performing in the open air, and looking for remuneration to the disposal of lottery tickets. By prudence and economy, he amassed a sum of upwards of L.2000, which he invested in the Berwick Bank. This establishment, unfortunately, failed, and our equestrian again lost all his hard-won earnings. Nothing daunted, he still pursued his career, and ere long acquired such a sum as enabled him to purchase a small property at Biggar, which he afterwards regarded as his head-quarters. He had a higher appreciation of Biggar than any other town in Scotland, and here he erected his last circus, or amphitheatre, as it was called, in the spring of 1844. It was a substantial erection of wood, and had the singularity of standing on a part of his own grounds, and within a few yards of his own house. The interior contained the usual accommodation of boxes, pit, and gallery, and was fitted up with a considerable degree of elegance. The entertainments consisted both of equestrian and theatrical performances. On the 4th of April he presented a grand dramatic spectacle, written by a townsman, entitled, "The Battle of Biggar," with appropriate scenery, such as the English Camp on the Burgh Muir, the Cadger's Brig, the Cave of Threpland, etc. This undertaking, notwithstanding his vigorous efforts to present attractive amusements, failed, from the limited number of the population, to command an adequate measure of support. In the bill announcing his benefit for the evening of the 11th of April, he consequently thought fit to publish the following card :

" Mr Ord respectfully takes leave to state to the gentry and public in general of Biggar and its populous vicinity, that, in consequence of the very liberal encouragement he received on his former visits, he was determined to spare no expense in putting up an amphitheatre for their amusement, where equestrian exercises in the circle, and dramatic entertainments on

the stage, aided by appropriate scenery and wardrobe, might be alternately displayed, in the hope of a continuation of that patronage, which had hitherto crowned his efforts to please. In the attempt he has entirely failed, being a considerable *loser* from the opening of the establishment to the present time; and as the season is now at a close, he trusts he will not be deemed impertinent in respectfully and earnestly soliciting the countenance of his friends in particular, and the public at large, on this occasion, trusting the numerous amusements selected will merit the approbation of the visitors to his amphitheatre.

‘Tis not in mortals to command success:
I have done more, I've studied to deserve it.'”

His last appearance on horseback was at Thornhill, on the 29th September 1859. He proceeded with his company to Ayrshire, and intended to take part in the performances at Galston and other towns; but he became indisposed, and at his own request was conveyed to his home at Biggar. Here he grew gradually worse, and at last closed his earthly career on the 27th December following, aged upwards of eighty years, and his remains were interred in the vault to which we have referred. A proposal was made, at the time of his death, to raise a subscription to erect a monument to his memory; but it appears never to have been actively prosecuted, and may now be said to be abandoned. Mr Ord was temperate in his habits, charitable in his disposition, and opposed to anything like fraud or gambling. He was an equestrian of the first order. In the heyday of his strength and success, he challenged the renowned Andrew Ducrow to a trial of skill and agility for L.500; but the latter refused to peril his reputation by entering the lists against so fearless and renowned a competitor.

Several of the stones mark the resting-place of the baron bailies of Biggar, some of whom presided over the destinies of the little community for many years. We specially notice that of Bailie Alexander Wardlaw, to whose memory a marble slab was erected in the eastern wall of the church, with an epitaph from the pen of the famous Scottish poet, Allan Ramsay. The whole inscription on the tablet is as follows:—

“ Alexander Wardlaw, Chamberlain to the Right Honorable the Earl of Wigtoun, died 15th March, 1721, aged 67 years.

“ Here lyes a man whose upright heart
With virtue was profusely stor'd,
Who acted well the honest part
Between the tennants and their lords.

“ Betwixt the sands and flinty rock,
Thus steer'd he in the golden mein ;
While his blythe countenance bespoke
A mind unsulied and serene.

“ As to the *Bruce* the *Fleming* prov'd
Faithfule, so to the Fleming's heir
Wardlaw behav'd, and was belov'd,
For justice, candour, faith, and care.

“ His merit shall preserve his name
To latest ages free from rust,
Till the Archangel raise his frame,
To joyn his soul amongst the just.

‘ Hoc monumentum ponit Joannes Wardlaw Alexandri filius.’

It is rather a noticeable feature in the tomb-stones of Biggar Churchyard, that few of them contain poetical inscriptions. The only other inscription of this kind which we have noticed or heard of, is on a stone erected to the memory of Janet Jenkison. The whole inscription on the stone is as follows:—

“ Here lies the body of Janet Jenkison, daughter of James Jenkison, burgess, Biggar, and spouse of Hugh Somerval, wright in Dolphinton, who died the 20th day of February 1734, aged 33 years.

“ At this cold pillow lies her head,
And hopes to rise with Jacob's seed;
Prudent she was in virtue's walk,
And to do good in moderate talk.”

This is, no doubt, the composition of a local poet; but it does not impress us with very exalted notions of the manner in which poetry and grammar were cultivated in the district to which it refers.

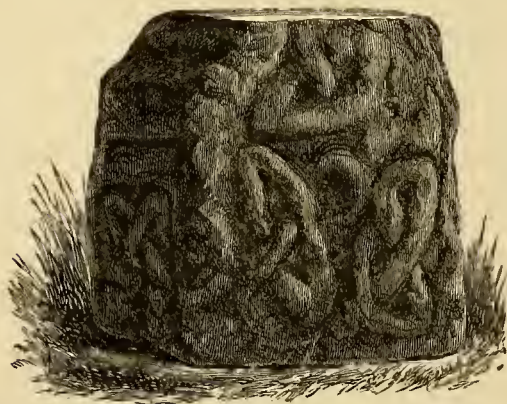
In this churchyard lie the ashes of many other men who, in their day, enjoyed considerable local celebrity; but it would swell this work to an undue size to descant on their history and characteristics.

The churchyard is the only regular place of burial in the parish. Persons who committed suicide were reckoned infamous, and, therefore, were interred on the hill called the Common, at a spot where the lands of different proprietors met. The last person that was interred on this hill was an old woman who dwelt in the upper part of the town, and who had committed self-destruction by hanging. Her corpse was thrust into a sack, placed in a cart, and conveyed with all dispatch to this sequestered spot, where it was thrown into a pit dug for the purpose. Fifty years ago the graves of these unfortunate individuals were easily distinguishable among the dark heather by their green appearance, and were a source of terror to all juveniles who strolled in that direction.

At page 10 of this work it is stated that the standing stones on the Shields hill were supposed to be part of a Druidical temple. It was a prevalent opinion till a recent period, that the standing monoliths of which large numbers are found in Scotland, were the remains of Druidical temples, but several leading archæologists are now disposed to regard them as monuments intended to mark the graves of exalted personages or distinguished warriors. This idea is so far confirmed by the fact that sepulchral remains are often found in their immediate neighbourhood. It is supposed, further, that it was a common practice to erect them on the spot where a battle had been fought, to point out the graves of the fallen warriors. The fact of a considerable number of flint arrow heads having been found on the Shields farm, tends so far to strengthen the supposition that a battle had taken place in the neighbourhood, but no remains of the dead so far as known have been dug up here, which, however, may have arisen from the circumstance that no sufficient excavations have been made. Stones of this kind are rough masses, without any figure or ornament. They are evidently of great antiquity, and are found in many countries throughout the globe.

Sculptured stones and crosses, of which a very considerable number have been found in Scotland, particularly in the eastern districts north of the Forth, and which have been very fully illustrated and described by the late Mr Chalmers of Auldbar, and J. Stuart, Esq., one of the Secretaries of the Society of Scottish Antiquaries, are supposed to have been

erected for the same purpose as the rough unhewn obelisks, viz., to mark the graves of kings, heroes, &c., or to point out spots rendered remarkable by the occurrence of notable events. From many of them being in the form of a cross, or having a cross carved on them, it is evident that they were erected after the introduction of Christianity. Not a few of them may be referred to the eighth or ninth century—that is to a period some years posterior to that at which the Pictish inhabitants of Scotland were converted to the Christian faith. Another object which it is supposed they were designed to serve, was to point out the boundary of a sanctuary—a thing common and useful in lawless and unsettled times, when the strong were apt to wrong and maltreat the weak. A certain class of these monuments is ornamented with rude representations of men, beasts, fishes, implements, &c., and the same figures occur so frequently on different stones, as to leave no doubt that they were symbols of a well-known significancy at the time of their execution, but their meaning is now entirely lost. The following is a representation of a small portion of a sculptured cross, which was found near Kirklawhill* in the parish of Skirling.



The portion of stone here represented was not found *in situ*, but the exact spot on which it originally stood is not now known. Several places in the neighbourhood have the name of stone, such as Parkgatestane and Corsestane, and even the term Kirk-

* In Blaeu's map of Tweeddale published in 1654 it is called Kirklandhill.

lawhill is calculated to suggest that it had some connection with religion, and may then have had a cross near it. The fragment represented has the carved tracery common on the sculptured crosses, and this is sufficient to confirm the idea that it formed part of one of them that stood in this locality. The interlacing on these crosses is exceedingly varied and intricate, and the only cross that we have noticed with interlacing somewhat similar to the fragment here referred to is one at Kirkcolm near Wigton. The Kirklawhill fragment is chiefly remarkable as the only portion of these ancient sculptured stones that has as yet been found in the Biggar district. For the preservation of it we are indebted to the indefatigable care of Mr Sim of Coulter.

CHAPTER IX.

Biggar Kirk.



URING the 350 years occupied by the Romans in attempting to conquer Scotland, a revolution took place in the religious opinions of the people. The Druidical system, although embracing such truths as that there is only one God, that the soul is immortal, that men will be punished or rewarded in a future state according to the actions which they have performed on earth, etc., yet, consisting as it principally did of frivolous and debasing rites, particularly that of offering human sacrifices, could not stand before the power and progress of divine knowledge. The individual or individuals who first introduced the light of Christianity into the British Isles, are not certainly known. The likelihood is, that during some of the rigorous persecutions carried on by the Roman emperors against the early Christians, which was the means of dispersing them over all parts of the known world, some of the converts found their way to Britain, and there promulgated the faith which they had embraced, and on account of which they had been called to suffer. The new faith, by whatever person it was introduced, appears to have made rapid progress in the minds of the people; and it is generally asserted that, in the year 203, Donald, King of the Scots, with his queen and many of his nobles, publicly embraced it, and were baptized. Then, from time to time, arose certain illustrious divines, whom our ecclesiastical historians have delighted to present in bright colours to the notice of their readers—such as St Ninian, St Columba, St Kentigern, etc. St Kentigern, or St Mungo, who flourished in the sixth century, after labouring with great zeal and success in Wales settled at last in the Vale of Clyde, founded a stately church

at Glasgow, and exercised a fatherly charge over the clergy in the adjacent districts. We may conclude that a fabric for the exercise of the Christian system had, by this time, been erected at Biggar, and that it was honoured with occasional visits from the Clydesdale saint. It is not, however, for fully 500 years after the time of St Mungo, that we have any authentic reference to the Church of Biggar. The earliest allusions to it, or rather to its clergymen, are to be found in the chartularies of the religious houses.

The Church was a rectory in the deanery of Lanark, and was dedicated to St Nicholas. Robert, the parson of Biggar, is mentioned as a witness of a grant by Walter Fitzallan to the monks of Paisley, between 1164 and 1177. In the Book of the Monastery of Kelso, Peter of Bigres, who most probably was Rector of the Church, is mentioned between the years 1174 and 1199, as a witness to a grant by Aneis de Bruce to the Monastery of Kelso. The name of Master Symon, the physician of Biggar, and also, as has been conjectured, the parson of the Church, occurs as a witness to a charter by Walter Bishop of Glasgow, conferring a grant to the Abbey of Holyrood, between the years 1207 and 1232. In the year last mentioned, his name is recorded as being present when the same bishop bestowed certain rights on the Abbey of Kelso, and three years afterwards, he appears as a witness to a decretal arbitral pronounced by Bishop William. In 1237, he is described as a canon of Glasgow in the record of a decision between the Abbeys of Melrose and Jedburgh, and in 1262, he is mentioned as attesting a grant by W. de Alwent to the Abbey of Melrose. About the year 1290, Philip de Keith, son of William de Keith, Knight Marischal, was Rector of Biggar. In the year 1329, Henry, Rector of Biggar, was chaplain to David II., and, in the Chamberlain Rolls, he is mentioned as having in that capacity, received 100 ells of canvas, 105 stones of wax, a cask of almonds or almond oil, and 104 lbs of rice, for which he was to account. He was during the same year appointed clerk to the livery of the house of the King, and on the 15th of March of the year following, he rendered at Biggar an account of his expenditure in this office. Walter, the next Rector of Biggar, whose name appears in old writs is mentioned as a witness to a

charter of some lands in Lennox granted by Malcolm Fleming, Earl of Wigton, between the years 1333 and 1364. He is referred to at different periods as acting in the capacity of Chamberlain to the Earl of Marr, of Clerk to the Wardrobe of the King, and of Master of the Hospital of Domus Dei of Dalgowitt. He afterwards held the office of Lord Chamberlain himself, and hence in the Records of Parliament that relate to the proceedings carried on in 1366, for payment of the ransom of the King, he is styled Lord Walter of Biggar, "our Chamberlain." During the time he held this high and dignified office, he was present at the coronation of Robert II. in 1371. It is a proof of the estimation in which he was held that he was selected as one of the representatives of the clergy in a committee appointed by Parliament, in 1369, to treat of general matters connected with the kingdom. In addition to the Rectory of Biggar, he appears also to have enjoyed the emoluments of the rectory of Errol. We learn from the Chamberlain Rolls that he was alive in 1375, but it appears that he died in a year or two afterwards. About the beginning of the sixteenth century, Adam Colquhoun of the family of Luss, was vicar of Stobo and parson of Biggar. He was learned not merely in theology, but in the civil and canon law, and, therefore, on the 25th October 1517, he was chosen rector of the University, and Vicar General of the See of Glasgow.

In Baiamund's or Bagimont's Roll, which, in the state in which it now exists, may be held to represent the value of ecclesiastical livings in the reign of James V., the rectory of Biggar is valued at L.66, 13s. 4d., in the *Taxatio Ecclesiæ Scotianæ*, commonly called "Ye Blak Buik," at L.58, and at the Reformation, Lord Fleming's steward reported that the parsonage and vicarage together had for many years yielded L.100 annually. By an indenture of assythment, and afterwards by a decret arbitral in the reign of James V., it received an additional endowment of L.10 yearly from Tweedie of Drumelzier, "to infest ane chaplaine perpetualie to say mass in ye kirk of biggair, at ye hye altar of ye sayme," for the soul of John Lord Fleming, whom Tweedie had murdered. From a charter granted by Tweedie in compliance with the terms of the decret arbitral, the first person that appears to have been

appointed chaplain, was Sir Andrew Brown, and his stipend is stated to be L.10 yearly, although in the decret arbitral itself, the sum is fixed at L.40. This sum was to be taken from all and hail the lands of Drummelzier, and to be held *in perpetua elymosyna*, and Lord Fleming and his heirs were to be patrons of the chaplaincy. 7

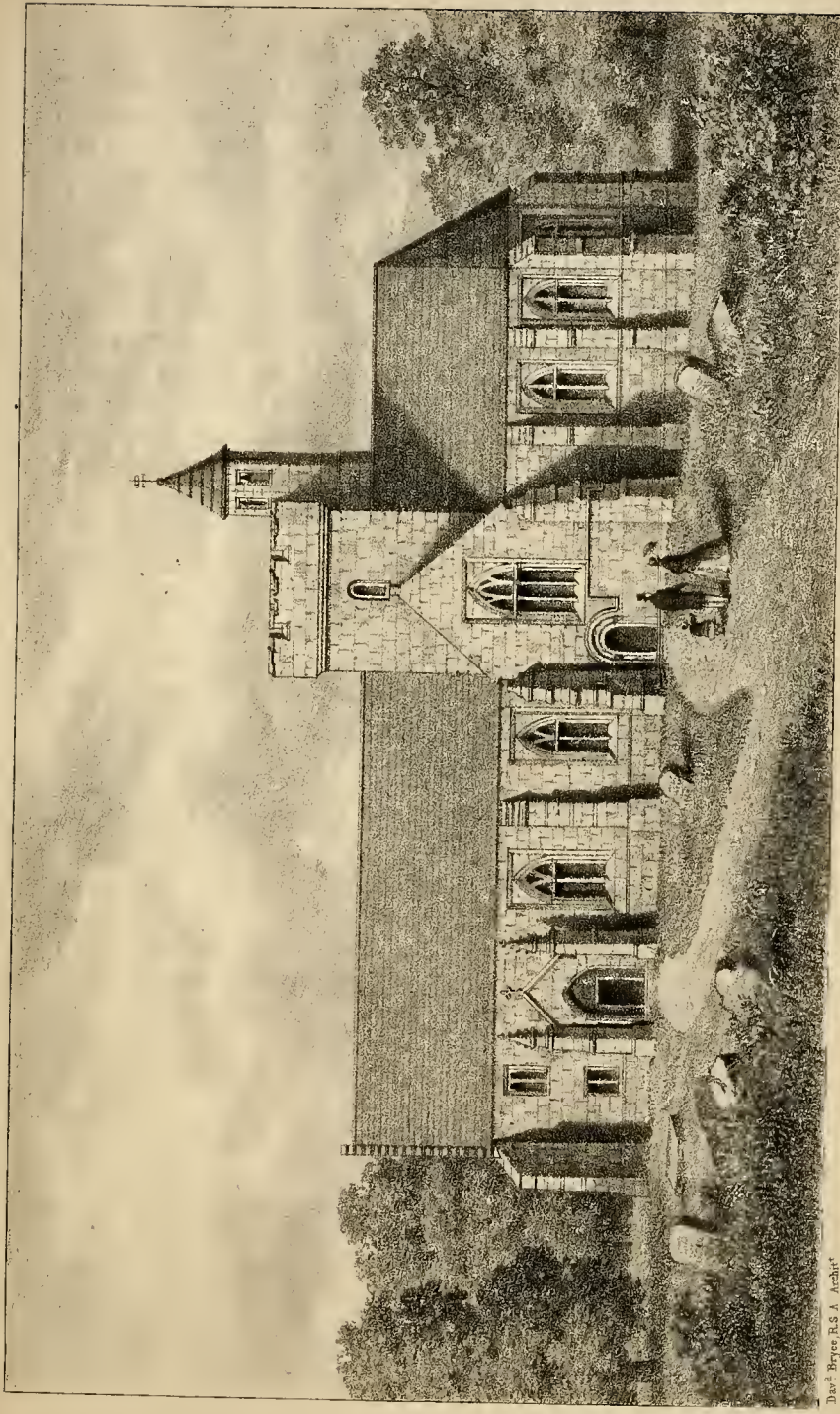
It is supposed that it was this endowment or mortification that first suggested to Malcolm Lord Fleming the propriety of founding a collegiate church at Biggar, and conferring on it a number of new endowments. He appears to have been a devoted Roman Catholic. He had identified himself with the party who, at the time, were striving, by every means in their power, to uphold the tottering fabric of the Romish Church, and he was, no doubt, anxious to give a notable manifestation of his zeal in the cause which they had so much at heart. The principles of the Reformation, first enunciated in Germany by Martin Luther in 1517, had now spread over all Europe, and were even making rapid progress in the comparatively obscure realm of Scotland, and alarming the fears of the devotees of the Romish superstition. Patrick Hamilton and George Wishart had proclaimed these principles with impressive effect, and had testified their sincerity by laying down their lives; and Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, and George Buchanan, had written and published most pungent satires on the pernicious doctrines and ungodly lives of the Romish priesthood. A corresponding desire was consequently manifested by the party, with whom Fleming was connected, to prop up the superstructure of Romanism, which had been so vigorously and successfully assailed.

The first intimation that we have of Lord Fleming's intention to build a collegiate church at Biggar, is contained in a writ still preserved in the archives of the Fleming family. It is from Gavin, Commendator of the Benedictine Monastery of Kelso, and bears date the 26th November 1540. It states that he had heard of Lord Fleming's design to found and endow a college church at Biggar; that the right of patronage of the Church of Thankerton had been obtained by the Abbots of Kelso from his lordship's predecessors; that in these evil times, by the increase of Lutheranism, all true Catholics were bound to contribute to so good a work; and that he was most

anxious that his lordship should not be diverted from his resolution, or suffer prejudice by the Abbots of Kelso continuing to hold the patronage of the Church of Thankerton. On these grounds, with consent of David Hamilton, then rector of the said church, he transferred to Lord Fleming, in name of the college to be founded and built, the right of patronage of that church, with its whole rents and emoluments, to be bestowed on one or more prebendaries of the foresaid college. The only reservation which he made, was that the Church of Thankerton should always be provided with a vicar pensioner, who should discharge the clerical duties of the charge, and have for his sustentation twenty merks Scots out of the first and readiest of the teinds of the parish, with a house, garden, and four acres of land. This writ was confirmed by the Archbishop of Glasgow, at Edinburgh, 1st May 1542.

The new church was founded in 1545, and erected on the site of the old building dedicated to St Nicholas. The parson of the old church at the time was Thomas Chappell, who, on the presentation of Malcolm Lord Fleming, was collated to his office by the Archbishop of Glasgow, on the 17th April 1542. It has been supposed by some persons, and among others by Grose, that the present edifice is much older than the date above mentioned. This, to some extent, at least, is certainly a mistake. From statements in the founder's testament, executed in 1547, and also in a charter of the Abbot and Chapter of Holyrood connected with this Church, and dated a few years afterwards, it is evident that the erection had been commenced and carried on, to some extent, by the founder, Malcolm Lord Fleming, but was evidently left unfinished at his death, in 1547. His son and successor, James Lord Fleming, belonged to the same religious and political party as his father, and was, no doubt, influenced by the same views and feelings in respect to the new collegiate Church. He is understood to have carried on the building, and to have left it in nearly the same state in which it exists at present.

The style of the architecture of the Church is Gothic, and the form of it is that of a cross. It was, no doubt, intended to be all composed of ashlar work. The choir, transepts, and tower have accordingly been built of dressed sandstone, brought evidently from a quarry in the parish of Libberton, near Carn-



Drawn by Bryce, R.S.A. Architect

Shanks & Son, Litho. Edin.

OLD BIGGAR KIRK,
WITH PROPOSED ALTERATIONS.

wath ; but the nave is constructed of rubble work, the stones employed being the rough whin which abounds in the neighbourhood. This may be a portion of the old Parish Church made to harmonize with the original plan, or it may be a part of the building executed in this manner by James Lord Fleming, with the view of lessening the expense. It is said that the original plan embraced a spire, which would have been a great ornament to the town, and a fine feature in the landscape ; but it was not built, and hence the unfinished state of the Church is very commonly cited in the locality as an illustration of the aphorism, "Many a thing is begun that is never ended," like Biggar Kirk. The walls of the tower from which the spire was to have sprung, have been formed into a parapet with embrasures and loopholes, as if it was intended to be a place of defence,—a use to which the towers and spires of churches in Scotland were, in former times, not unfrequently put. After all, however, it may be questioned if it was ever intended to carry the tower higher than it is at present. It is certainly the fact, that central towers in Gothic buildings very frequently terminate, not with a spire, but with a parapet containing loopholes and embrasures similar to those of Biggar Kirk. The aphorism, in all likelihood, had at first, a reference rather to the nave, which evidently was not completed according to the original plan.

The building on the outside is plain, presenting little more than the buttresses and mouldings peculiar to Gothic architecture. It had two principal entrances, one in the south transept, and the other in the western gable. The doorway in the west was extremely plain, and was built up many years ago, but the one on the south is composed of an arch finely moulded. The corbels from which the mouldings spring, are much defaced ; but enough of them remains to show that they have been ornamented with fine tracery work, and that the pattern of the one is different from the other. On the handle or latch of the strong wooden door, studded with nails, is the date 1697, referring most likely to the time at which the door was made, and placed in its present position. On the left side of this door are the remains of the ancient joughs, by which adult offenders were fastened to the wall, and forced to remain a space of time proportioned to their misdemeanors. On the

right, at a lower elevation, are staples, battled into the wall with lead, which were evidently intended to suspend a pair of jougs for the confinement and punishment of juvenile offenders. An excellent representation of this door and the chain of the jougs is to be seen in the vignette to this volume. West from the door now described is another entrance which at one period had a porch. By this door access was got to a very dismal place called the Session-house, in which not only the meetings of the Session, but of the Presbytery and the Justices of the Peace were held. The buttresses on each side of the gable of the south transept have been surmounted by carved pinnacles; but these have long since disappeared, as well as the apex or finial of the gable, which most likely was an emblem of the cross. The remains of the cross on the apex of the north transept can still be very distinctly observed. On one of the lowest corbie-steps, or, as they are here generally denominated, crow-steps, of the western gable, is a carved shield of the Fleming arms, with this peculiarity, that the cinquefoils, adopted from the arms of the Frasers, are in the first and fourth quarters, instead of the second and third, as they are usually found in the escutcheon of the Earls of Wigton.

The east end of the Church is circular, or aspidal as it is called—a form which generally prevails in the Collegiate Churches of Scotland, and which was evidently borrowed from the French Cathedrals and Churches. This form, it is understood, was adopted from the circular tomb-house or baptistry, which, in the early ages of Gothic Architecture on the Continent, stood detached from the upper part of the Cathedral, but which in course of time was incorporated with it, and thus formed a constituent part of the building. The windows of Biggar Kirk form a plain lanciform triplet enclosed in a pointed stone arch in contact with the top of the light, and thus possess one of the characteristics of the Pointed or Romanesque style of architecture. Specimens of this kind of window are to be seen in Glasgow Cathedral, Dunfermline Abbey, the Conventual Church of Queensferry, and the Church of St Bridget's Douglas. A recent writer on Scottish ecclesiastical architecture, in speaking of the windows of Biggar Kirk, says that the lights are transomed, and the windows set in a shallow recess with singularly bad effect. This observation

may be well founded, but the inhabitants of Biggar, perhaps from being long familiar with the kirk, are hard to believe that there is any thing disagreeable in the appearance of its windows.

A large number of the hewn stones used in the building have the mark of the masons by whom they were prepared. The practice of marking stones is known to have been observed by masons for several thousand years. The design of it was to distinguish the stones wrought by each workman, so that the merit or demerit of the workmanship could at once be attributed to the proper individual. It is not uncommon to find two marks on one stone,—the one being the mark of the hewer, and the other of the overseer, who, after inspecting the stone, and finding it correctly wrought, put upon it the official stamp of his approval. The apprentices had generally what is called a blind mark, that is, one with an even number of points or corners; while the journeymen or fellow-crafts had one with an odd number, which might range from three points to eleven. In the ancient lodges of Freemasons, a ceremony was observed at the time of conferring a mark on a newly entered brother; and when this was over, his name and mark were inserted in a book. We accordingly find that this was one of the regulations confirmed at a meeting of the masters of lodges, convened at Edinburgh, 28th December 1598, by William Schaw, “Maister of Wark” to his Majesty James VI., and General Warden of the Mason Craft in Scotland. All the old operative lodges, therefore, practised mark-masonry, and some of them—and among others, the Lodge of Biggar Free Operatives—retain an interesting roll of the marks which their members adopted and used. The individuals who built Biggar Kirk were evidently mark-masons, and hence the marks found on many of the stones of which a portion of it is constructed.

Two small buildings were at one time attached to the Church, the one on the north side of the choir or chancel, and the other on the south side of the nave. The one on the north side, the traces of which are still to be seen on the wall of the Church, was the chapter-house, which in such buildings was rarely to be found west of the transept. It was used for the meetings of the provost and prebendaries, and most likely also as a mortuary chapel. The building on the south was origin-

ally, in all likelihood, the vestry, in which the sacred utensils and vestments were kept; and perhaps it also served the purposes of an eleemosynary, or almonry, in which alms were distributed to the needy poor. It was in the end used as a porch, and had seats all round the walls. These buildings were removed about seventy years ago, along with two buttresses on the north side of the nave, and an arched gateway at the entrance to the churchyard.

The interior of the Church was fitted up with considerable elegance. It had four altars. The high altar and the altar of the crucifix stood in the choir or chancel, and the altars of the two aisles were placed one in the south transept and the other in the north transept, the two transepts being, in former times, very commonly called "The Cross Aisles." A screen divided the choir from the nave, and at the eastern extremity of the choir, which was finely lighted with three large windows, was the presbytery, into which no person was allowed to enter except the priests. A stone on the north side of the choir had a carved representation of a serpent,—an emblem which has a strange but emphatic significance both in the rites of Paganism and Christianity. In the nave were placed the pulpit, and the font for holding the holy water. The corbels from which the groinings and arches of the roof sprung, were highly ornamented with representations of doves, foliage, human heads, etc. These are now much mutilated; but the heads on each side of the eastern termination of the nave are nearly entire, and are most likely intended to represent the founder and his wife. In the north transept was the organ-loft, the door to which still exists in the staircase which admits to the tower. The ceiling, at least of the chancel, was originally of oak, richly carved and gilt, but was removed a number of years ago, and one of lath and plaster put in its place. In the tower is an apartment which appears never to have been completed. It is of square form, and has a small window on each side; but as these are filled with stone slabs, it is quite dark, and can only be examined by the aid of a candle. The walls are unplastered, and the floor and ceiling, if they ever existed, have disappeared. The oak joists, both above and below, are in a state of good preservation. A very singular looking shaft rests on a joist below, turns on a pivot, and

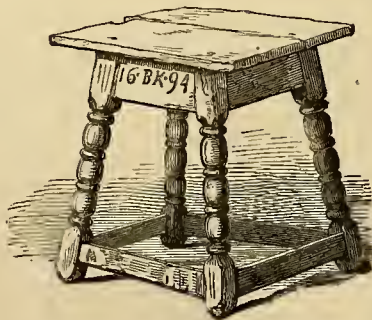
communicates with one of the joists above ; while a second shaft, with a hole in it near its lower termination, is suspended from one of the upper joists. It would perhaps not be easy to discover the purpose to which this curious apparatus was applied. The apartment has a spacious fire-place, which seems to indicate that it was intended to be occasionally occupied ; but no reliable account can now be got of the use which it was designed to serve. The tradition regarding it, that it was the place to which the Fleming family retired, or intended to retire, before and after attending religious service in the Church, to assume and lay aside what was called their "chapel graith." It is certain that the family had articles of this kind, as is shown by the following bequests. The founder of the Church, in his testament, says, "I leif to James, my eldest son and air," "the chapel graith of siluer ; that is to say, ane cross with the crucifix, twa siluer shandellers, twa siluer croadds, ane haly water fatt, with the haly water stick, ane siluer bell, ane chalice with the patine of siluer, with all the hail stand of vestments pertaining to the samen." James Lord Fleming, in the testament which he executed at Dieppe in 1588, bequeathed his "chapel graith" to his brother John. It consisted of the following items :—"Ane silvere chalice w^t ane pax, ane cryce of silvere, ane eucharest of silvere, ane haly watter fate, w^t ane styk of silvere, and ij crouats of silvere." From these extracts it is evident that the Flemings had not only a set of sacred vessels, but a peculiar suit of garments, which they used while attending or performing the rites of the Romish Church.

The circular staircase already referred to was entered from the inside by a door in the north-west angle of the chancel, and, besides admitting to the organ-loft and the square apartment in the tower, communicated also with the floor of the parapet or bartisan ; and as this is covered with lead, being open to the weather, it is usually called the Lead Loft. The door in the inside of the Church was some years ago built up, and one in place of it cut out of the staircase. On the north-west side of the interior of the staircase are the initials W.M., and on the south-east side the initials I.H., and the date 1542. With regard to the initials nothing can be said ; and the date is certainly puzzling, as it is three years prior to the time at

which the present Church was founded. The stone on which it is cut may have belonged to the old Parish Church, or some person, at a period subsequent to the erection of the present Church, may have cut it in a mere spirit of wantonness, or with a design to mislead. We put no confidence in it as calculated to establish the supposition of Grose and others, that the whole of the Church is older than the year 1545, the date of its foundation as a collegiate charge. The belfry was furnished with a bell of a remarkably clear tone, which was heard for many miles round, and was rung by a rope in the inside of the Church. This fine bell, which was supposed to be as old as the Church itself, was unfortunately cracked by a sexton, when tolling it at the funeral of one of the proprietors of the parish, nearly fifty years ago. The present bell is one of much inferior quality, and is rung from the outside of the Church.

The interior of Biggar Kirk, in former times, must have had an imposing effect. Its cruciform shape, its lofty and ornamented ceiling, and its richly emblazoned escutcheons, hanging in ample folds over the graves of the departed great, were calculated to excite emotions of solemnity and awe. Robert Forsyth, the bellman, used to state that Robert Burns, the poet, to whom he showed the church, reverentially took off his hat on entering, and evidently impressed with devotional feelings, remained uncovered all the time he examined the sacred edifice.

In the inside of the Church, a relic now very rarely to be



met with is still preserved. This is the repenting stool, called also the crepey and the cutty stool, on which the violators of

ecclesiastical discipline were wont, in the face of the congregation, to make expiation for their offences. It has the initials B. K., Biggar Kirk, and the date 1694. Allan Ramsay in his "Christ's Kirk on the Green," makes auld Maggy tender an advice in regard to the creepy to her neighbour Mause in the following serio-burlesque style:—

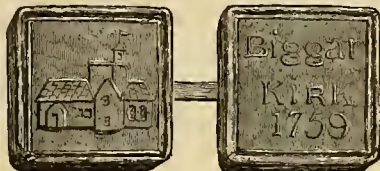
"It's a wise wife that kens her weird,
 What tho' ye mount the creepy,
 There a good lesson may be lear'd,
 An' what the war wad ye be
 To stan a day."

The punishment of the cutty stool is also referred to by Ferguson the poet as forming part of the gossip around the farmer's ingle:—

"And there how Marion for a bastart son
 Upo' the cutty stool was forced to ride,
 The waefu' scald o' our Mess John to bide."

The ecclesiastical punishment of the repenting stool like the jugs and the shirt of sackcloth, has, for many years, been discontinued, and modes of church discipline have gradually crept into practice that our forefathers would have denounced as lax and unscriptural.

Another relic preserved in the Kirk is a jug. It is apparently composed of pewter, and very much resembles a small claret-jug. It is usually denominated a holy water fatt or jug, as, according to tradition, it was used by the Roman Catholic priests in holding holy water. After the establishment of the rites of Presbyterianism, the jug was used in conveying to the Church the water used in baptism. As an old relic connected with the Kirk, we give the annexed engraving of it. We give a woodcut of another relic connected with the Kirk, viz., a church token, the die for which was cut in 1759, and which has on one of its sides a representation of the Kirk. The die after being long amissing, was very singularly discovered some time ago among a mass of old stores in the Cowgate



of Edinburgh, and is now in the possession of Mr Sim at Coulter Mains.

In the course of time the Kirk has undergone many alterations and repairs. We may refer to some repairs which were proposed to be made on it about the middle of last century.

On the 17th October 1750, James Brown the Laird of Edmonston appeared before the Presbytery of Biggar, and applied for a visitation of the Kirk Quire, and kirkyard dyke. Nothing appears to have been done, till 1758, when John Ireland, wright in Biggar, John Gardner, mason there, and George Veitch, mason in Sunnyside, were appointed by the Presbytery to lay before it a report of the repairs required on the Kirk and kirkyard dyke. Those tradesmen reported that the main body of the church and the north and south aisles required to be pinned and harled both within and without, and the wall heads levelled;—that the windows of the north and south aisles should be glazed to the window soles, and the iron in these and other windows taken out and sold; that the main body of the church not being fully lighted, required a new window above the seats belonging to George Bertram and James Gladstones, of the same size as those in the opposite wall; that the pulpit should be renewed and removed from its “stans,” and made to front the main body of the church; that a new seat should be erected for the minister’s family; that the porch at the west door being ruinous should be taken down, and the materials applied to the repair of the church; that the rotten floor of the steeple should be sufficiently joisted and floored,—a thing necessary for affording greater warmth to the church, and more ready access to the whole roof of the steeple and aisles; that the lead roof of the steeple should be renewed; that the bell-house being very frail, should be taken down and rebuilt; that the roof of the church and aisles should receive the slates that were wanting; and lastly, that the churchyard dyke should be repaired and furnished with a new gate. The whole of the expense for these repairs, it was estimated, would amount to £54 7s. 9d.* The repairs, according

* At that time a cart of sand was 2d., a boll of lime 1s. 1d., a cart of rough stones, 6d., 1000 slates, 20s., coping for the top of the tower, 6d. per foot, 30 deals for sarking the Kirk, 12 feet long, 40s., a window, 40s., and glazing it,

to the report, were very urgently required, and, therefore, it is to be presumed that the most of them were executed shortly after the date of the report.

About seventy years ago the organ gallery, the gilt oak ceiling of the chancel, and the emblazoned escutcheons were removed, and a coating of plaster and whitening having been put on the walls and ceiling, reduced the interior to a scene of dull uniformity. In this state, with the exception of the erection of a gallery in 1834, it has stood ever since. It has a cold, cheerless, and depressing aspect, such as most of the parish churches in Scotland had till a recent period. For nearly three centuries the taste of the Scottish people for ecclesiastical architecture was at a very low ebb. The elegant and venerable ecclesiastical relics that survived the Reformation, were held in little repute, and left, if the hand of violence did not sweep them entirely away, to crumble still farther into ruin. The more modern edifices were little better than large barns, damp, cold, and repulsive, requiring a strong sense of religious duty to induce attendance on Sabbath, and a robust constitution to withstand their injurious effects in winter. Pennant, the traveller, well observed that the Scottish people considered that a place of worship having any pretensions to neatness savoured of popery, and that to avoid the imputation of that extreme, they went into another, for, in many parts of Scotland, our Lord seemed still to be worshipped in a stable, and that often a wretched one. A different taste now prevails. Elegance and comfort are no longer thought incompatible with the solemnities of devotion, and the seriousness that ought to be manifested in religious worship.

Mr Christison, the present incumbent of the parish, had long felt that the state of the church was not in keeping with the improved taste of the times. Extensive alterations had become not only desirable, but absolutely necessary. The great obstacle, however, that stood in the way of their attainment was the want of funds. The heritors might voluntarily give a small sum from a sense of their obligation to keep the Church in good repair, but it would go only a short way in executing the alterations; and to compel them, by a legal action,

14s. 6d. The original copy of the specifications for the repairs is still preserved among the Wigton papers.

to give more would be unseemly, and might even fail in fully effecting the end intended. It was, therefore, resolved to raise the greater part of the money from other sources. A bazaar was projected, and having been successfully carried into effect in September 1865, realized upwards of £200. That zealous and indefatigable antiquary, Mr Sim of Coulter, was enlisted in the cause, and though he has no connexion with the parish, yet, out of respect to Biggar and its antiquities, he entered into the project with heart and hand. An appeal was made to all the gentlemen far and near interested in the district, and the consequence was, that in a short time, an additional sum of £800 or £900 was raised. Mr Bryce, Edinburgh, the celebrated architect, was employed to prepare drawings of the alterations, or the restoration, as it was called, and a lithographic view of the Church showing the outside improvements was published. The additions proposed outside were a porch with flanking buttresses, capitals, and finials at the south-west door,—a small spire in place of the belfry, and a vestry on the site of the old chapter house, on the north side of the chancel. The inside improvements were a new pulpit and pews, several additional windows, an organ gallery, a groined oak ceiling, &c., the whole being estimated to cost upwards of £2000.

An appeal was made to the heritors to give the remaining portion of the sum required for carrying out Mr Bryce's plans, but several of them objected to pay any more than what was merely necessary for the repair of the Church, and they employed an architect of their own to examine the building and to report what ought to be done to put it in habitable order. The repairs which this gentleman proposed were of a comparatively trivial character, and would have required little more than £400 to execute them. The heritors demurred to give even the whole of this sum, so upwards of a year was spent in fruitless cavilling and altercation. At length, two of the heritors, viz., Messrs Lorraine and Paul, laid a Petition before the Presbytery, craving that the Church should be examined by competent parties, who should report on oath as to its condition, and what it would be best to do in the circumstances. The Presbytery entertained the prayer of the Petition, and appointed Mr David Bryce, architect, Edinburgh, and Mr William Beattie, builder, there, to make the necessary examination and report. The report of these gentlemen was laid before

the Presbytery on the 4th of June 1867, and pointed out three courses which might be adopted, first to keep the Church essentially as it is at present, but to repair it thoroughly, second to build an entirely new church on a different site, and third, to take down the nave, and on its site erect the body of a good church, and use the transepts as the entrances. Such is the state of matters at the time at which we write, and therefore we are still in the dark as to the course which the heritors will finally adopt.

Having given a history and description of the building itself, we may now refer to the Charter of Foundation. It is still preserved in the archives of the Fleming family, and, with its ancient style of penmanship, and its large seals, has a most venerable appearance. It is written in Latin, and is of great length. As a full translation of it would occupy too much space, we will give the substance of its most important points.

It is addressed by Malcolm Lord Fleming to Cardinal Beaton of St Andrews. After enumerating all that reverend father's high-sounding titles, it goes on to say that his Lordship, influenced by examples of piety and devotion, and constantly desirous to increase the means of religious worship, and to press forward more warmly and earnestly in the practice of pious deeds, so far as justice and reason might warrant him, had been induced to found, endow, and effectually erect a College or Collegiate Church at Biggar, with the collegiate honour, dignity, and pre-eminence. The funds for this purpose were to be drawn from the parish churches, benefices, chaplainries, clerical revenues, and charities belonging to him by hereditary right, and from other property bestowed on him by the favour of Almighty God. He had erected and endowed this Church to the praise, glory, and honour of the most high and undivided Trinity; of the most blessed and immaculate Virgin Mary, under the title and invocation of her Assumption*; of the blessed St Nicholas, patron of the Parish Church of Biggar; of St Ninian the Confessor, and all the saints of the heavenly choir. The object of the founder was the safety of the soul

* The Assumption of the Virgin Mary is a Romish Festival celebrated on the 15th of August. It dates back to the seventh century, when an idea prevailed that Christ and His apostles had conveyed the soul and body of the Virgin to heaven.

of James V., late King of Scotland, of most worshipful memory; the safety of his own soul; of the soul of his wife, Joan Stewart, sister of the late renowned King; of the souls of his parents, benefactors, friends, and relatives, predecessors and successors; and of all the faithful dead, especially those from whom he had taken goods unjustly, or to whom he had occasioned loss or injury, and had not compensated by prayers or benefits. He had done all this with consent of the most reverend father in Christ, Gavin, by the grace of God Archbishop of Glasgow, and of the wise and venerable men, the deacons and canons of the Metropolitan Church of Glasgow, in chapter assembled. The foundation was to support a provost, eight canons or prebendaries, four singing boys, and six poor men. The firm conviction of the founder was, that in the solemnities of the mass the Son offered himself to the Father Omnipotent, a rich sacrifice for a sweet-smelling savour; and that to Him nothing more acceptable, gracious, and worthy could be presented. His sincere belief in the Catholic faith also convinced him that the mass had power to restore frail human nature, often falling into sin, to the Father's favour, to rescue the souls of the faithful from the pains of purgatory, and bring them to the full enjoyment of happiness and glory. He wished to have an assurance that he would not be found among the number of those of whom it was said in the beginning, "They are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them. O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" And he had pondered in his mind what is written in the Apocalypse, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

The founder's charity, piety, and desire for extending the means of religious worship, having been thus evoked, he had, out of his hereditary patronages and acquired property, endowed the Collegiate Church of Biggar, for the provost, canons, boys, and poor men, as already stated, and reserved only to himself, his wife, and his heirs, the disposition, presentation, and endowment of these officials, as often as the office of any of them became vacant. The collation of the provost was to belong to the Archbishop of Glasgow, and the admission or

installation of the prebendaries and boys was to be the duty of the provost, or, in his absence, the President of the College for the time being.

The provost was to be called the Provost of the Collegiate Church of the Most Blessed and Immaculate Virgin Mary of Biggar. He was to celebrate the Assumption of the Virgin, in the Church of Biggar, as the principal festival; and he was to have for his sustentation, all and whole the produce, rents, revenues, tithes, and emoluments of the rectory and vicarage of the parish of Thankerton, in the diocese of Glasgow, along with its tributes and offerings, and its manse and glebe. He was, however, to pay L.10 Scots to a curate, who was to undertake the cure of souls in the parish of Thankerton, and to bestow on him two acres of land, near the Church, for a manse and garden. The said curate was constantly to reside in the parish, and discharge all the duties of his office in person. The provost was also to bear all burdens, and meet all liabilities, ordinary and extraordinary, that, in times past, attached to the Church of Thankerton.

The first prebendary was to be called Canon of the Hospital of St Leonards, and was to be master and teacher of the School of Song. He was to instruct the boys of the College, and others, who might attend, in plain song, invocation, and disant. He was also to be well skilled in playing the organ for the performance of divine service. He was to receive for his support, throughout the year, the produce of the church lands of Spittal. The second prebendary, who was to be instructor of the Grammar School, was to be sufficiently acquainted with letters and grammar, and was to have, for his yearly sustentation, the lands of Auchynreoch. The third prebendary, who was to be sacristan of the College, was to have for his annual support the chapel founded on the lands of Garnegabir and Auchyndavy, and dedicated to the Virgin Mary, with its pertinents; and six merks of annual rent in Kirkintilloch, along with two acres of land, for a manse and garden, belonging to the chapel, and at that time in possession of Andrew Fleming of Kirkintilloch. The duty of this prebend was to ring the bells and to light the wax tapers and tallow candles on the high altar, the altars of the two aisles, and the altar of the crucifix. For the maintenance of the tapers and candles during winter, he was annually to receive L.5 Scots, drawn from

the produce and emoluments of the priest's office in the Church of Biggar. This prebend was also to prepare the vestments and ornaments of the four altars; he was to wash, clean, and repair, as often as necessary, the cups, vestments, and ornaments; and when this was done, he was to cover them up in their respective places on the altars. For this service, he was to receive the annual sum of L.5 Scots, levied from the priest's office of the Church of Biggar. The same prebend was to provide bread and wine for the celebration of mass in the College; and for the expense of these elements, he was annually to receive L.4 Scots out of the produce, rents, and revenues of the rectory and vicarage of Biggar. The fourth prebendary was to have charge of the poor men, while they were engaged in their devotions in the College, and also the administration and distribution of the victuals and other emoluments belonging to them; and was to render an account of the discharge of his duties, in this respect, to the patron, or, in his absence, to the provost and prebends. This canon was to receive for his sustentation L.10 Scots, from the yearly rent of the lands of Drummelzier, and L.7, 6s. 8d. Scots, every year, drawn from the produce, rents, and revenues of the rectory and vicarage of the Church of Biggar. Each of the other prebendaries was to have for his support the yearly sum of L.17, 6s. 8d. Scots, levied from the revenues of the vicarage and rectory of Biggar, but the special duties which they were to perform are not detailed, one of them was to be vicar stipendiary of the Church of Biggar, now erected into a College, and was constantly to take his place in the choir, to sing, and to exercise his divine office, unless when he was engaged with the special duties of his charge and the administration of the sacraments. The presentation of this vicar stipendiary was to belong to the founder and his heirs, but his collation was to devolve on the Archbishop of Glasgow for the time being.

The founder also ordained that there should be attached to the College, in all time to come, four boys with children's voices, who were to be sufficiently instructed and skilled in plain song, invocation, and discant, who were to have the crowns of their heads shaven, and to wear gowns of a crimson*

* The word "blodie," in the original, is rendered by Colvill and other English glossarists, "crimson," as derived from the Saxon "blod," blood; but Duncange considers that the proper meaning of it is blue.

colour, after the fashion of the singing boys in the Metropolitan Church of Glasgow. They were to have, divided amongst them, all and whole the produce of the priest's office of the Parish Church of Lenzie, in the diocese of Glasgow, except so much as might be necessary for the sustentation of a priest to discharge the duties of the cure of that parish. The presentation of these boys was to belong to the founder and his heirs, and their examination and admission to the provost and prebendaries. When they lost their boyish voices, by advancing age, or when they behaved in a disorderly and incorrigible manner, the provost and prebendaries were to have the power of dismissing them from their situations in the College. The produce and emoluments of the office from which they were to derive their living were, with the exception already stated, to be under the control of the boys, along with their parents and relatives, and were to be devoted exclusively to the payment of their aliment and other necessary expenses.

The founder ordained that the College should have six poor men, commonly called "beid men." The qualifications for their admission were to be poverty, frailty, and old age. They were to be natives of the baronies of Biggar or Lenzie, if a sufficient number could be got in these places, and they were to reside in the house of the Hospital, with its garden grounds, which the founder had set aside for their accommodation. They were to be presented, admitted, and installed by the founder, so long as he lived, and after his death, by his heirs and successors. They were to be annually furnished with a white linen gown, having a white cloth hood; and every day, in all time to come, they were to attend in the College at high mass and vespers; and when the founder departed this life, they were to sit at his grave and the grave of his parents, and pray devoutly to the Most High God for the welfare of his soul, the soul of his wife, and the souls of his progenitors and successors. For their aliment and support, they were to have distributed amongst them, on the first day of each month, two bolls of oatmeal, the whole amounting annually to twenty-seven bolls; so that each bedesman, during the year, was to obtain four bolls and two firlots of the said oatmeal. This sustenance was to be levied from the first-fruits and tithes of the rectory and vicarage of the Church of Biggar; and from

the same source twenty shillings annually was to be drawn by each bedesman, for repairing his white gown, his bed, and his house. The bedesmen were also to have full power, liberty, and access to cast, win, and lead peats and divots from two dargs of the Nether Moss, in order to supply their hearths with fuel.

The provost and prebends were to have suitable dwelling-houses and gardens near the Church. The provost was to have one acre of land for this purpose, and each canon half an acre; and they were, besides, to have the privilege of casting, winning, and leading all necessary fuel in the barony of Biggar, and especially within the bounds of the lands belonging to the Hospital of St Leonards. The patron, provost, and prebendaries were, yearly, on the eve of the Feast of Pentecost, to meet and select two of the prebendaries, whose duty should be to collect all the produce, tithes, revenues, offerings and emoluments of the rectory, vicarage, and church lands of Biggar, and distribute them in the order and proportion already stated. Whatever sum remained, after this was done, was annually to be disposed of in such a way as the patron, provost, and prebends might think expedient at the time, for the use and advantage of the College. Each of these prebends, for their services in this respect, was to receive annually the sum of 26s. 8d. Scots, derived from the revenues of the rectory and vicarage of the Church of Biggar.

The founder ordained that the following masses should be celebrated in the Collegiate Church, and that a register of them should be inscribed on a board, and suspended in the College. A mass in honour of the blessed Virgin Mary was to be said in the morning, between six and seven o'clock, before the commencement of matins, in summer as well as in winter. The priest celebrating it was not to be exempted from attending and singing at matins; and if he was not present at the end of "Gloria Patri," namely at the conclusion of the first Psalm, he was to lose that hour, and be subjected to a fine. High mass was to be celebrated daily, immediately after ten o'clock with singing the solemn Gregorian chant,* or discant, and playing

* This chant was introduced into the service of the Romish Church by Pope Gregory the Great, who flourished during the sixth century, and it continues still in use.

such tunes on the organ as the time might require. A third mass was to be said daily to any saint, according to the option of the celebrator, immediately after the consecration and elevation of the body of Christ in high mass, and not sooner; and no priest, present at chant and high mass, was to absent himself, under the penalty of losing the hour during which the mass was celebrated.

The following masses were to be celebrated on week-days, immediately after matins, viz. :—on Monday, and on the greater double feasts observed by the clergy and people, a mass *de requie*, for the founder's soul, his wife's soul, the souls of his parents, and all faithful dead; on Tuesday, a mass in honour of St Ann, the mother of the most blessed and immaculate Virgin Mary; on Wednesday, a mass in honour of St Nicholas and St Ninian,* bishops and confessors; on Thursday, a mass in honour of the body of Christ; on Friday, a mass for the five wounds of Christ; while every Sabbath a mass was to be performed for the Feast of the Compassion of the blessed Virgin Mary.† The officiating priest, clothed in his white gown and surplice, was, immediately after the celebration of high mass, to approach the grave of the founder, and sing the psalm, “*de profundis*,” with the usual collects and prayers, and the sprinkling of holy water. These extraordinary masses were also to be said daily in the two aisles, except the mass *de requie*, which was to be performed at the high altar.

A chapter was to be held on Sabbath every week in the Collegiate Church, and was to conduct all its business according to the rules and constitutions of the Metropolitan Church of Glasgow. Whoever absented himself from this meeting was to pay a fine of twopence. On all the four feasts immediately after the festivities for all the saints, for the purification of the blessed Virgin Mary, and for the Apostles Philip and James, and St Paul *ad vincula*, a mass was to be sung for the founder's soul, his wife's soul, and the souls of all those previously mentioned,—the vespers and matins of the dead being performed on the evening preceding these feasts, along with

* A relative of the founder was Prior of the Monastery of St Ninian, at Whithorn in Galloway.

† Compassion of the Virgin, or our Lady of Pity,—the Friday in Passion Week.

nine collects, and nine psalms, with their responses. Each prebend was, with the Gregorian chant, invocation, and discant, to celebrate matins, high mass, vespers, and complin, at the hours and seasons usually observed by prebendaries in other collegiate churches.*

All the prebends and their successors were bound to make a personal residence at the College, and on all feast, Sabbath, and week days, and continued commemorations, were to celebrate and sing, without note, matins, high mass, vespers, and complin at the great altar and in the choir of the Church; and clothed in their clerical habits—viz., clean linen surplices and red hoods trimmed with fur,—were, every night after complin, except on the greater double feasts, to rehearse the responses in honour of the Virgin Mary, to sing the psalm “de profundis,” and to read the usual collects and prayers for the souls of the founder and all faithful dead.

The prebendaries, at the ringing of the bell, which was to commence every morning throughout the year at six o'clock and end at seven, were to meet, clothed in their clerical vestments, and sing matins at seven. At ten o'clock they were to perform high mass; and at five, vespers and complin, except in Lent, when vespers was to be performed immediately after high mass, and complin at the usual hour. When met for these purposes, they were not to move up and down the Church, nor indulge in whispering and laughter, but to the close of the service were to remain in solemn silence, and to manifest all becoming gravity. They were exhorted, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to perform their duties fully, honestly, and attentively; and, avoiding all light and frivolous proceedings, were to commence, continue, and pause in the singing all at once. Those who violated this rule were to be severely punished; for, by singing improperly and carelessly, the due honour of God was not manifested, the intention of the founder was frustrated, the well-ordered conscience was hurt, and the edification of others was not promoted.

The prebend who absented himself from the usual services of the Church on week-days or simple feasts, was, for each hour, to pay twopence; on Lord's days and the great feasts,

* The number of canonical hours in the Romish Church are now fixed at seven, viz., matins and lauds, prime, tierce, sext, nones, vespers, and compline.

threepence ; and on the higher feasts, fourpence. The fines thus exacted were to be collected weekly, by the provost or a substitute, and were to be expended in the repair and purchase of books and ornaments for the Church. The provost or his substitute was also to have power of suspending offenders from the choir, and, while the suspension continued, of devoting the whole of their incomes to the uses already stated, or other objects of piety. On those who persisted in their disobedience, the general officer of the Church of Glasgow was, if a reasonable cause existed, to inflict suspension from the celebration of divine worship, and even still heavier penalties and higher ecclesiastical censures, from which they were not to be absolved till they had given the utmost satisfaction.

All the prebendaries were to be priests, or at least in deacon's orders, and were to be well skilled in literature, plain song, invocation, and discant; and, each day, were to take their places at the altars, and in a private manner celebrate mass for the souls of those by whom these altars were founded. They were to possess all the advantages common to the Romish Church, provided they made personal and continued residence at the College; but, in the event of any one of them absenting himself for five days without liberty, the provost, or, in his absence, the president and members of the Chapter, were, unless a necessary cause of absence was shown, to declare his office *de facto* vacant. At their admission, they were to take a solemn oath of obedience to the provost and the founder, so long as he lived, to observe the statutes and rules laid down in the constitution and ordinances of the College, and drawn up and ordained by the founder and others to whom he gave authority.

In the event of any prebendary being prevented by infirmity or indisposition from celebrating mass when it was his turn, another of the brethren was to occupy his place; but should he refuse to perform this service when required by the provost or president, he was to be fined twelve pence Scots. Should any prebend be of a quarrelsome disposition, and provoke his brethren to fight, or engage in altercations by which the worship of God was prevented, he was, on his offence being proved, to be removed without further process from his office. A prebendship becoming vacant in this or any other way, was

not to be filled up till after the lapse of thirty days, so that sufficient time might be afforded for obtaining a suitable and well-qualified successor, who, previous to his admission, was to undergo an examination by the provost and prebendaries.

The charter ends by calling upon Cardinal Beaton, with concurrence of the Lord Archbishop of Glasgow, to approve, ratify, and confirm, to add, correct, or otherwise amend, the statutes, rules, and constitution laid down for the College, its endowments, and officials. Malcolm Lord Fleming, in faith and testimony of all and every one of the articles stated in connection with his religious foundation, subscribed the charter with his own hand, and appended to it his armorial seal; and the Archbishop of Glasgow, and the Chapter of the Church of Glasgow, in token of their full concurrence and assent, attached to it their respective seals, on the 10th of January 1545, in presence of the following witnesses:—William, Bishop of Dunblane; Robert, Bishop of Orkney; John, Abbot of Paisley; Thomas, Commendator of Dryburgh; Malcolm, Prior of Whitehorn; William, Earl of Montrose; John Lord Erskine; Alexander Lord Livingstone; John Lindsay of Covington; William Fleming of Boghall; Thomas Kincaid of that Ilk; Andrew Brown of Hartree, and many others. This charter was confirmed by the Pope's Legate on the 14th of March 1545.

CHAPTER X.

Biggar Kirk—*Continued.*

MALCOLM Lord Fleming, in his Testament, executed in the spring of 1547, still further manifested his care for the erection of the Collegiate Church of Biggar. In that document he says, "I leif my vestments that were indued to the Kirk of Biggar and Colledge of the semin, and all other profits, whilk belangs to themselves as the erection of the Colledge bears, to the utility and profite of the samen, ay and while the Kirk, Colledge, Alemosinress, and mansion-house be biggit ; and putt ——— in their own places as the erection of the said Colledge bears, and ordines v^c merks of my own propir guddis to be tane to buy vestments, and bigging of the said Colledge, and mansions, chalices, or ony other necessar things that is needful for the said Colledge." He further orders, "All my clayths to be dealt betwixt my twa sonis gotten with my wife, and pairt of thaim to be given to the Colledge of Biggar, as my executors and oversman thinks expedient, and leif to the Grayfriars of Glasgow xx lib to pray for me, xx lib I leif to the ffour chaplains of the Lenzie and Biggar to pray for me, and to be divided as my executors find expedient."

It is not unlikely that the old Parish Church of St Nicholas at Biggar was used as the burial-place of the Fleming family. In Catholic times a strong desire prevailed to deposit the remains of the dead in consecrated ground, particularly in a place so sacred and hallowed as the area of a church. Kings, nobles, priests, and indeed all ranks, were anxious that their ashes should lie in a spot where the exercises of religion were daily performed, where the constant presence of holy men shed a solemnizing influence, where no rude hand dared to commit

violence, and where they would remain in calm and undisturbed repose till the time when the sound of the archangel's trumpet would animate them anew, and summon them into the presence of their Creator and Judge. It is certain, at least, that Malcolm Lord Fleming intended that his new church at Biggar should be the burying-place of his family. In his testament, after leaving his soul to Almighty God, the Virgin Mary, and all holy saints, he says, "Gif it happynis me to decess in weirs or ony uther deid, as God pless, giffen my body be gottin quharever I decess, to be erdit in my Colledge Kirk of Biggar." He also in the same document left orders that, immediately after the completion of the College, his father's "cymmeter" was to be carried from the Castle of Boghall to that sacred edifice, "whilk sall be born the xii day of October in the solemnest gate that can be devisit baith to the honour of God." In the chaneel of the new Church, at the spot where the high altar in former times stood, nearly all the members of the Fleming family have been interred from the days of the founder to the end of last century. The last person buried in it was Lady Clementina Fleming, who carried the Biggar estates into the family of Elphinstone, and who died in 1799. The banners and escutcheons of this noble family were wont to hang in ample fold over the graves of the deceased barons, but these have all disappeared for nearly a century. The only memorial of the dead interred below is a marble slab, inserted into the wall, to the memory of Jane Mereer, wife of the Honourable George Keith Elphinstone, who died in 1789. It is understood that a large number of other persons besides the Flemings were interred within the walls of the Church. It is certain that when excavations were made in the floor, some years ago, to introduce a heating apparatus, large quantities of the remains of mortality were dug up.

The practice of kirk burial was in popish times quite common throughout the whole country, and, therefore, the Presbyterian clergy, at the Reformation, set themselves with vigour to repress it, as it savoured, in their opinion, of Popery and superstition. In the General Assembly which met at Edinburgh in 1588, they passed an act against it; and in the General Assembly of 1643, they declared that all former acts and constitutions made against burial in kirks were again rati-

fied, and that all persons, of whatsoever rank, were inhibited and discharged to bury within the body of the kirk, where the people meet for the hearing of the word and the administration of the sacraments, or to hang pensiles or boards, to offer honours or arms, or to make any such like monuments, to the honour or remembrance of any deceased person, upon the walls or other places within the kirk. These acts set the landed proprietors and the Established clergy completely by the ears. The lairds, whose ancestors from time immemorial had interred their dead within the walls of the parish kirks, insisted on continuing the practice, maintaining that they had a right so to do, both by prescriptive usage and feudal superiority. The clergy took their stand on the acts of the General Assembly, and resisted with their usual warmth and obstinacy.

Some of the lairds in the neighbouring parishes had sad bickerings with the clergy in regard to this practice. They took forcible possession of the churches, and there interred their dead, in spite of all the acts and anathemas of their spiritual instructors, though, as might be expected, they had very generally in the end to submit to the fines and penances that were consequently imposed. We will give one or two instances from the records of the Presbyteries of Lanark and Biggar.

On the 22d of January 1624, John Chancellor of Shieldhill was summoned to appear before the Presbytery of Lanark at its next meeting, and answer to the charge of burying within the Kirk of Quothquan. On the 17th of June following, it is reported that the Laird "hes promised to gif satisfactioun to ye Session of Quodquan, and to find cawtion to abstain from kirk burial in all tyme coming." The Laird, however, after all, was resolved to take his own way; and when his wife died, in 1639, he interred her forcibly in the Kirk of Quothquan. The clergy, led on no doubt by his own pastor, George Bennet, pounced upon him again, and summoned him to appear before them at Lanark, on the 28th of March of that year. The record says, "Ye Laird of Shielhill compeiris and acknowledges his fault in burying his wife in ye Kirk of Quodquan, and is ordered to find cawtion to renounce his kirk buriell in tyme coming, under ye pain of xl lib, and is ordeined to be censured by ye Kirk Sessione of Quodquan, for breking up ye door of ye Kirk." John Muir, the Laird of Anniston, was ar-

raigned for committing a similar offence. The minutes of Presbytery record as follows: "Qlk day, compeirit ye Laird of Anaston, and confessit his fault, both in taking ye key of ye kirk doore of Symingtoun from ye minister thairof, and also burying his faither within ye samen, for qlk faults he obliiss himself under ye pain of xl lib to satisfy the Injunctiounes of Presbytery to abstain from kirk buriell in all tyme coming under the foresaid penaltie *toties quoties* be this act subscribed with his hand at Lanark 25th of Junii 1625." Twenty years after this date, viz., on the 25th of February 1646, the next Laird of "Anioston" was summoned before the Presbytery of Biggar, and accused of burying his father in the Kirk of Symington. He confessed the fault as charged, but pretended that he was not aware of the acts of the Church on the subject; that he was sorry for what had taken place, and promised forbearance in time to come. The Presbytery condemned him to make a public confession of his fault in the Kirk of Symington the next Lord's day, and to bind himself, under a penalty of a hundred pounds, not to offend in like manner again. On the 10th December 1629, the Rev. James Baillie, minister of Lamington, was enjoined by the Presbytery to take security from Thomas Baillie, the Laird of Lamington, that he would be present at next meeting of Presbytery, to receive his injunctions for his offence in breaking up the door of Lamington Kirk, and burying his child within the walls thereof; and if he refused, his pastor was to proceed against him by public admonition. The Laird, however, appeared before the Presbytery on the 31st of the month referred to, and "was ordeyned to mak his publick repentance in sack claith ane Sabbath day, and pay iiij lib in penalty." On the 15th September 1642, the Rev. John Currie of Coulter reported to the Presbytery of Lanark that John Bertram younger, one of his ruling elders, "did wyle" the key of the Kirk from his officer, under pretence of seeking something which he had lost, and then did quietly make a grave in the Kirk "just for-against" the pulpit, contrary to the Acts of the General Assembly, and would in no ways be stopped nor hindered by him to bury within the Kirk. He had, therefore, been summoned before the Presbytery, but he failed to appear on that occasion. He, however, attended a meeting of the Presbytery on the

29th of the same month, and confessing his offence was condemned to make public confession of it out of his own seat next Lord's day, and to bind himself under a penalty of £100 Scots, never again to bury in the Kirk.

In May 1668, John Earl of Wigton was interred in Biggar Kirk with all due solemnity, just at the time that the kirk-sessions were battling with all their vigour against the practice of kirk burial. Anthony Murray, factor at Biggar to his Lordship, enters in his books that he had "allowed to ye compter," that is, himself, "ye sowme of ane hunder and two punds eighteen shillings and tuo pennies Scots disbursed be him at Biggar at my Lord's funerall." He also mentions that he had given himself credit for the price of three bolls of meal, at four pounds and half a merk per boll, which were consumed in my Lord's house at the burial in May; and that six firlots of the meal was at that time given to the poor.

The Flemings, most likely from being patrons of the parish, were not disturbed in their kirk burial. No account has been left of the ceremonials observed at the funeral of any member of the family. These were, no doubt, very imposing, especially so long as the family continued its adherence to the popish faith. A statement of the funeral expenses of Lady Margaret Fleming, whose remains were interred in Biggar Kirk in December 1676, is still preserved. It details the expenses incurred before the body was brought to Biggar, and after it arrived at that town. As this statement may be interesting to some readers, we give a few of the items:—"To Georg Stark going through ye Monkland w^t letters to ye buriall, L.1, 4s.;" "for a dosen of great prinies to prin ye mortcloath and hors-cloath, 2s.;" "to ye footman Anderson to go to Carluik to advertis ye peopell to have provision for man and horse, 8s.;" "for breid and drink at ye dryburn qn ye corps halted, L.4, 6s." The cortege remained during the night at Carluke, and the bill of the inn in which the men and horses were chiefly accommodated has also been preserved. It is dated at "Carluik, Dec. 22^d 1675," and shows that the disbursements were for 8 gallons of ale, L.6, 8s.; for bread, L.2; for beef and mutton, L.3; for brandy, L.4, 10s.; for pipes and tobacco, 6s.; for coals and candles, 10s.; for eight pecks and three capful, most likely of corn, L.5, 5s.; for straw for seven horses,

L.1, 8s.; for breakfast to the coachman and footmen, L.1, 7s.; for additional breakfast, L.1, 4s. 6d. The amount of the whole expenses in the inn was L.25, 18s. 6d. Some other disbursements took place at Carluke, such as L.4, 10s. "for sex horse and sex men that was not in yt house," and 18s. "given to ye bellman." A halt was next made at Carnwath, and the bill for refreshments at that town was L.4, 12s. 8d.

Among the items of expense at "Bigair" were "4 pund of candell, L.1; 4 pund of buter, L.1; ane pund and a half plumdames, 5s.; ane quarter a pund of ginger, 3s. 4d.; half a peck of salt, 2s. 8d.; 4 hens, L.1, 10s.; two sheip, ane of ym L.5, and ane oyr L.6; 4 dosen of pypes, 10s.; fyve loads of coall, L.1, 7s.; 2 cariag horse to bring ye wyn and oyr necessaries out of Edinr., L.5; ane man for his hyr and quarter yt was byrd be Wm. bows to bring out ye links and torches, L.3, 16s.; James Rob for coming to Carluik w^t ye torches, L.1; ye man that brought ye mortcloath to Cumbernald, L.2; ye cotchman and his man at bigair for horse stall and diat, L.4; a pynt of wyne and two gills of brandy and glase to James Carmichael's weif, L.2; Hew Anderson and his daughter besyd ane firlot of meal, L.1, 6s.'

At the death of the founder of the College Church in 1547, the building, as we have already observed, was unfinished. His son and successor, James Lord Fleming, carried on the work; but, from some cause or other, he also failed to complete it, as well as the hospital for the bedesmen, and the manses for the priests. On the 5th of May 1555, he obtained a charter from the abbot and convent of Holyrood, conferring on the College of Biggar the patronage and emoluments of the Church of Dunrod, in the diocese of Whithorn, avowedly on the ground of the scanty provision made for the provost and prebendaries of the College. This charter has been preserved in the chartulary of the Monastery of Holyrood, and is of considerable length. As everything of this kind possesses not merely a local, but a general interest, we will give an abridged translation of its principal points. It is addressed by Robert Stewart, commendator of the Monastery of the Holycross, to the reverend father in Christ, Andrew, by the grace of God Bishop of Candida Casa, and Dean of the Chapel Royal at Stirling. It sets out by saying that all sincere endeavours to

promote the worship and honour of Almighty God, made by the faithful, ought to be extolled, approved of, and assisted by every person to the utmost extent of his power. The abbot and monks of Holyrood had, therefore, fully appreciated the singular affection, piety, and beneficence displayed towards God and the holy Catholic Church by the late noble and potent Malcolm Lord Fleming, who in these miserable and heretical (Lutheranis) times, and at his own expense, had erected a magnificent church at the town of Biggar, in honour of Almighty God and the Virgin Mary, and commonly called the College of "The Blessed Mary of Biggar," in which a provost and a certain number of other religious men had been appointed, established, and set apart to the service of God and the blessed Virgin. James Lord Fleming, son and heir of the late Malcolm Lord Fleming, had lately presented to the said abbot and monks a petition, which showed that his Lordship, moved by pious zeal and devotion, was striving to follow in the footsteps of his excellent father, and was endeavouring not merely to uphold the College, but to improve it with most watchful care. The petition also reminded them that they had in their hands the right of patronage of the Church of Dunrod;* and they felt that in these evil times it was incumbent on them, so far as their ability extended, to increase the means of religious worship, and render assistance to Lord Fleming, so that he might not be deterred from pursuing his excellent purpose and design, and feel too great inconvenience from the slender endowment and scanty revenue of the numerous religious men officiating in the College at Biggar. They had therefore resolved, in chapter assembled, after mature consideration, and with the consent of the venerated John Stevenson, prothonotary apostolic and precentor of the Metropolitan Church of Glasgow, first provost of the College of Biggar, and present vicar of the Parish Church of Dunrod, to give up all and whole the produce, rents, rights, and emoluments belonging to the vicarage of Dunrod, so far as their power extended, in order that they might be united, annexed, and incorporated with the provostship of the said College. They provided, however,

* Dunrod formed the south part of the parish of Kirkeudbright. It was granted, with its Church, to the Monastery of Holyrood so early as 1160. The remains of its Church are yet to be seen, and its cemetery is still in use.

that a vicar stipendiary should be appointed to discharge the duties of the Parish Church of Dunrod, and should receive for stipend twenty merks Scots annually, together with a house and garden, and an acre of arable land. They conclude by calling on the bishop of the diocese to approve and confirm the nomination of the paid vicar, and the annexation and incorporation of the produce and rents of the vicarage and other things, as already stated; to supply any omissions that they had made; and to accept the signatures of their agents acting in their name. To the charter is appended the seal of the monastery, and the subscription of the abbot and monks, and of John Stevenson, provost of the College of Biggar. Queen Mary as patron of the Abbey of Holyrood confirmed the annexation of the Parish Church of Dunrod with its fruits and rents to the College of Biggar on the 19th of May 1556.

John Stevenson, or Steinstoune, as he spelled his name, was the last Roman Catholic precentor* of the Metropolitan Church of Glasgow. He was the first provost of the Collegiate Church of St Mary's of Biggar, and held, besides, the office of a Lord of Session. He appears to have had a commission from the Pope to grant dispensations to parties marrying within the prohibited degrees. A dispensation which he granted on the 7th of February 1546-7, to Ninian Bruce or Baird and Margaret Livingston to marry when they were within the third or fourth degrees of consanguinity is still preserved in the Wigton charter chest.

An interesting relic of this ecclesiastic, long preserved by the late Principal Lee, is now in the possession of Adam Sim, Esq. This is a copy of the historical fragments of the Babylonian priest Berosus,† which belonged to him, and which has his autograph both on the title-page and on the last leaf. The following is the inscription on the title-page:—

“Spe expecto,
Steintoune et Amicorum,
1548.”

* The precentor or chanter in Collegiate churches regulated the music, and when present presided in the choir.

† Berosus is one of the authors that Oliver Goldsmith makes Dr Primrose, a leading character in the “Vicar of Wakefield,” refer to as having broached a strange medley of opinions regarding the creation of the world.

The inscription on the last leaf is as follows :—

“Spe expecto,

Sum ex libris magistri Johannis Steinstoune, Metropolitane Glasguensis præcentoris, de Collegiat, Eccles. Be Marie de Bigger præpositi—et Amicorum, 1548.”

From these inscriptions it is evident that John Steinstoune was no selfish hoarder of his literary stores, but considered that they belonged to his friends as well as to himself. This must have been a matter of no small importance in the times in which he lived, when books were few and high priced, and therefore not easily procured.

The glory of Biggar Kirk, as a collegiate establishment, was short-lived. The provost, canons, singing boys, and poor men, scarcely felt themselves warm and at ease in their new possessions, when they were roused and perturbed by the thunders of Knox and other leaders of the Scottish Reformation. The crusade against popish idolatry burst forth with destructive fury in 1559. The monasteries and other religious houses were attacked and demolished by the “rascal multitude,” and their revenues reverted to the Crown, or were seized by the rapacious and turbulent nobles. How far the principles of the Reformation had at that time made progress among the burghesses of Biggar, it is perhaps impossible now to say. The powerful influence exerted over them by Lord Fleming, in virtue of his feudal rights and prerogatives, would no doubt prevent them from laying violent hands on the new ecclesiastical edifice of Biggar Kirk, had they been so disposed. The monuments of idolatry connected with its walls were, at any rate, few. The heads of two or three saints, the emblems of a dove, or even of a serpent, were not calculated greatly to rouse the destructive propensities of the Reformers, who may have sprung up within the bounds of the burgh and barony. Some of the most offensive may have been defaced in the manner in which they are now to be seen. The altars would be overturned, the sacred furniture and utensils would be carried off, the priests would cease to perform their masses, the organ and the singing boys would become silent, and the poor bedesmen would no longer sit at the graves of the founder and his relatives, and pray for the safety of their souls.

A great difficulty was felt in supplying the places of the Romish priests. A sufficient number of regularly ordained Protestant clergymen was not to be found. It was, therefore, laid down, in the "First Book of Discipline," that "to the churches where no ministers can be had presentlie, must be appointed the most apt men, that distinctlie can read the common prayers and the Scriptures, to exercise both themselves and the Church till they grow to greater perfection, and in process of time he that is but a reader may attain to a further degree, and by the consent of the Church and discreet ministers, may be permitted to minister the sacraments," etc. The names of bishop and archbishop were distasteful to the Presbyterian Reformers, and therefore they appointed persons whom they called superintendents, who were employed in visiting the churches in a district assigned them, and preaching the word from parish to parish. Under this arrangement, William Millar was reader at Biggar in 1567, and William Hamilton in 1571, with a salary each of L.20. It is not unlikely that these two officials had been prebendaries in the collegiate establishment of Biggar, as it is known that this class was largely employed at the period as readers and exhorters. In 1574 a new ecclesiastical arrangement, carried into effect by the Earl of Morton, then Regent of the kingdom, provided that several parishes should be placed under the pastoral superintendence of one minister, while the readers were still to continue to discharge their duties in each parish.

During the existence of this plan, Ninian Hall, who was translated from Invergowrie in 1574, was appointed minister of Biggar, Lamington, Hartside, Coulter, Kilbucho, and Symington, with a salary of L.114, 13s. 4d. The readers in these parishes, and their salaries, were as follows, viz.: at Biggar, David Makkie, L.20; at Lamington and Hartside, John Lindsay, L.22, 4s. 5½d.; at Coulter, William Millar, L.16; at Kilbucho, Andrew Jardine, L.16; and at Symington, John Lindsay, L.16. Walter Haldane, the next minister of Biggar, had been presented in February 1574 by James VI., to the living of Carstairs. A complaint against him that he did not attend to the duties of his office was laid before the General Assembly in 1575, and the year following he was translated to Biggar. His stipend there was L.112 and the kirk land;

and the reader was John Pettilloch, with the former salary of L.20. Mr Haldane had also the oversight of the parishes of Coulter, Lamington, and Symington. He continued in this charge till 1586, when he was translated to Wiston. He appears in the end to have committed some misdemeanour; for in May 1588 he was deposed, as unworthy to fill his sacred office. The readers and exhorters were debarred from celebrating marriages or administering the sacraments, but it appears that in many instances they overstepped the bounds prescribed to them. We find, for instance, in the records of the Presbytery of Glasgow, that James Waugh, reader at Quothquan, was accused of celebrating irregular marriages; and was, besides, a drunkard, a fighter, a wanton, and inconstant. It was therefore declared by the General Assembly, in 1580, that "thair office is no ordinar office within ye Kirk of God;" and in the year following it was enacted that this office should be finally abolished, that the churches should be arranged into a number of presbyteries, and that none but a regularly ordained clergyman should be permitted to discharge the duties connected with public worship.

Although the ecclesiastical system of Scotland was changed at the Reformation, it yet seems that, for a considerable period afterwards, some of the clerical staff of Biggar College was kept up, at least in name, and received the emoluments of their respective offices. William Fleming, a son of John Fleming of Carwood, was presented to the office of provost, and the parsonage and vicarage of the Collegiate Church of Biggar, by John Lord Fleming, on the 1st of January 1573. This person, or perhaps another of the same name, as he is styled a servant of Lord Maitland of Thirlestane, obtained a tack of the teinds of the parsonage and vicarage, in 1590, from commissioners appointed by John Lord Fleming to sell or wadset such of his teinds and benefices as they should see fit, during his absence from this country. William Fleming, who obtained this tack, procured a decret from the Lords of Session, on the 26th November 1593, against the feuars, farmers, parishioners, tenants, tacksmen, rentallers, and others indebted in payment of the teinds, fruits, rents, and emoluments of the provostrie of the College of Biggar, and the parsonage and vicarage of Thankerton, united and annexed to the said provostrie, com-

manding them to make payment, under the penalty of having diligence executed against them, and being committed to ward in Dumbarton Castle. A gift of the provostship, with its fruits, rents, emoluments, and casualties, was conferred by John, Earl of Wigton, on Patrick Fleming of Ballach, on the 31st of March 1661. John, Earl of Wigton, patron of the College Kirk and prebendaries thereof, with consent of William Fleming, the provost, on the 14th of May 1616, granted a disposition in favour of James Duncan of the prebendship that was endowed with the teinds of Auchynreoch, and the two acres of land lying in the town and territory of Kirkintilloch. These persons are likely to have been laymen who obtained a right to levy the teinds and other ecclesiastical emoluments connected with the repressed offices referred to. They appear in most cases to have transferred these ecclesiastical revenues to some member of the Wigton family. For instance, among the Wigton papers we find a Disposition dated 18th March 1619, by William Fleming, provost of Biggar, granting the whole teinds, fruits, and rents of the provostrie to John Fleming, eldest son of John, Master of Wigton.

As we formerly stated, the parish of Thankerton was joined to the Collegiate Kirk of Biggar previous to the Reformation. It was this circumstance that led the Commissioners for the plantation of Churches, on the 5th of December 1617, to unite and annex the Church and Parish of Thankerton to the Church and Parish of Biggar, and to decern that the Earl of Wigton, patron of these churches, and tacksman of their teinds, should provide and maintain a passage-boat on the Clyde, for the accommodation of the parishioners of Thankerton, when they attended divine service at the Kirk of Biggar. The people of Thankerton by and by became averse to repair to the Kirk of Biggar, and they rebelled in the same way as the people of Libberton afterwards rebelled in regard to the Kirk of Quothquan. On the 13th of May 1630, the minister of Biggar lodged a complaint with the Presbytery of Lanark, that the parishioners of Thankerton refused to attend the Kirk of Biggar, on the ground that it was inconvenient to travel so far to the examinations, by which they were prepared for participation in the sacrament of the Supper. The parishioners were therefore summoned before the Presbytery, to show the grounds

of their refusal. On the 27th of the same month they appeared by commissioners before the Presbytery, and positively asserted that they would not attend divine service at Biggar; ‘quhairfore ye breether ordaine ye censures of ye kirk to proceed against thame for contumacie.’ On the 10th of June following, they again appeared, and informed the Presbytery that they had held an interview with the Earl of Wigton, and that he had promised with all possible diligence to meet with the Presbytery in order to concert some method, “how ye Kirk of Thankerton may be served.” The Presbytery therefore thought it advisable to proceed no further with the infliction of spiritual censures on the people of Thankerton. The dispute, however, was not so soon settled. We find that in the spring of 1635, the Archbishop of Glasgow wrote a letter to the Presbytery of Lanark, ordering George Ogstoun, minister of Covington, to signify to the parishioners of Thankerton that they should repair to the Kirk of Biggar, in accordance with the decision of the Commissioners for the Plantation of Churches. The Presbytery, however, brought the subject before the Synod; and the result in the end was, that Thankerton was joined to the parish of Covington.

After Walter Haldane, the next regular minister at Biggar was Alexander Spittal, A.M., who had studied and obtained his degree at St Andrews. He was settled at Biggar in 1586, and transferred to Libberton in 1590.

Thomas Campbell, A.M., who was translated from Coulter, became what was called parson and vicar of Biggar in 1599. On the 13th February 1607, he granted a tack of the teinds of Biggar, during his lifetime, to John, Earl of Wigton, for the payment of four chalders of oatmeal, between “Youl and Candlesmas,” and relieving his Lordship of the communion elements and all stents and taxation. He appears to have held the incumbency of Biggar for a long period. For several years he filled the office of Moderator of the Presbytery of Lanark, but having, from some cause or other, become unacceptable to the Archbishop of Glasgow, he was deprived of his honourable post by this prelate, who appointed John Lindsay of Carstairs, one of his creatures, to take his place. When the members of the Presbytery resolved to oppose the introduction of the service-book and book of canons, they deposed Lindsay from

the Moderator's chair, and delegated William Livingston and Alexander Somervail to wait on Mr Campbell to request him to return to his former post as Moderator. The Records of the Presbytery, so far as they have been published, do not show that he complied with the invitation.

Mr Campbell in 1632 gave 20 merks to assist in erecting the Library of the University of Glasgow. In 1644, when the Presbytery of Biggar was formed he was still minister of Biggar, but at that time he was old and incapable of discharging the duties of his office. The pulpit of Biggar was therefore for several years, supplied by members of the Presbytery. The period of Mr Campbell's death is not exactly known. Many applications were made to the Earl of Wigton to issue a presentation in favour of some acceptable minister, but nothing was done till October 1646, when a letter was laid before the Presbytery of Biggar from his Lordship, 'whairin he did nominat Mr Alexander Livingstone, now minister at Carmichael, for ye Kirk of Biggar;' and a 'supplicatione' from the parishioners was at the same time presented, calling on the Presbytery to take all necessary steps to forward so desirable a settlement. The Presbytery therefore lost no time in prosecuting the matter before the Presbytery of Lanark; and this Presbytery having obtained a decision favourable to the translation from the commission of the General Assembly, and being satisfied that Mr Livingstone was inclined to accept the presentation, agreed to transport the said Alexander Livingstone to the Kirk and Parish of Biggar. Mr Livingstone was most acceptable both to the Presbytery and the people of Biggar. He was an eloquent and effective preacher. On the 27th of January 1647, he preached a popular sermon, from Eph. iv. 11, 12, before the Presbytery, preparatory to his settlement, which gave the members so great satisfaction, that they put on record that they praised God for the gifts and graces which He had bestowed on their intended colleague. The following extract from the report of his induction, on the 3rd of February 1647, can hardly fail at the present day to be read with interest by the parishioners of Biggar:—'and haveing seriouslie exhorted ye whole people of that congregatiōne, especiallie ye present elderis of ye same, that in regaird they had been so long destitute of a pastor, and now that they had received one soe hopefull to doe

good among theme, and one whome they had so earnestlie socht for, that they wold testifie yr thankfulness to God for him, and that they wold reverence and obeye him as yr pastor in all things in the Lord. Thairafter the said ministeris, elderis, deacones, and parochiners respective, in signe of yr consent, did tak the said Mr Alexander Livingstone be ye hand, and gave to him most heartilie ye richt hand of fellowschip.' Mr Livingstone was one of the ministers of the province of Lothian, Teviotdale, and the Merse, that were appointed by Cromwell on the 17th October 1650 to visit the Universities, and authorize able and godly men to enjoy their livings. Having in 1661 joined the protesting party he was suspended and summoned before the Privy Council on the 23d of July of that year, when he was placed in confinement in Edinburgh, and then ordered to wait on the Archbishop of Glasgow and give him satisfaction regarding his conduct. As is well known he demitted his charge in 1662, rather than comply with the new ecclesiastical arrangements then established by law. Of his future history very little is known. A reference is afterwards made to him in the records of the Presbytery of Lanark. On the 18th of May 1665, nearly three years after he had left his living, Mr Robert Livingstone was appointed by that Presbytery to speak to him regarding the book of the Presbytery of Biggar in order that it might be delivered to the Lanark Presbytery. On the 15th of June following, Mr Livingstone reported that he had seen the ejected minister of Biggar, who had stated that the book in question was not in his possession, but that it was in the custody either of Alexander Bertram, some time Moderator, or of Mr Crichton the Clerk.

Biggar, during the persecuting period extending from 1662 to 1688 had two incumbents, the first being Richard Brown who was translated from Blantyre in 1665. His name appears repeatedly in the books of the Earl of Wigton, as having received his stipend, which appears to have been paid partly in money and partly in victual. For instance, it is recorded that there was allowed "Richard Brown, minister at Bigyar, the soume of fourscore pund qlk completes his silver stippand cropt 1674." The following order regarding the payment of his victual stipend, from William Earl of Wigton, to Bailie James Law of Biggar, is still preserved :—"James Law at sight heirof

pay to Mr Richarde Broune, our minister at Biggar, twelve bollis victuall, tow pairt meal and third pairt beir, failt not heirin, as ye will be answerable to us ; and this, with his receipt, shall be your sufficient warrand. Given under our hand at Biggar, Januar sixteen, jaj vi seventie-fyve (1675) years.

“WIGTOUNE”

Mr Brown's receipt is written on the same sheet ; and whatever may have been his merits in other respects, we can say at least that he was a good penman. References are also found in the family documents to his Kirk Session. In 1666, and for many years subsequently the Earls of Wigton paid £60 Scots as interest or, as it is called, annual rent on a sum of £1000 to the Kirk Session of Biggar. The curates in many cases had Kirk Sessions. This was done in compliance with an edict of the Privy Council in 1665, recommending the several ministers in Scotland to select such a number of grave, sober, and discreet persons, in each parish as they might think necessary for the proper exercise of discipline. Mr Brown was transferred to Dumfries in August 1685.

The next incumbent, during the persecution and the establishment of Episcopacy, was John Reid, who was translated from Walston to Biggar in the end of the year 1685. He continued at Biggar till 1688, when the inhabitants, like those in many of the covenanting districts, rose and expelled him by force. This summary process was called rabbling the curates, and consisted in carrying them to the Churchyard, the Market Cross, or other public place, and there taxing them with their misdemeanours, tearing the clerical robe, which they usually wore, from their persons, and trampling it under foot, and then conducting them to the boundaries of the parish, and dismissing them with a warning that it would be at their peril if they were ever found in the parish again.

William Jack, who had previously been settled at Clapham in England, was admitted to the charge of Biggar on the 28th of April 1692. He was translated to Kelso in December 1694. He was succeeded in 1696, by Robert Livingstone who was translated from Libberton. Mr Livingstone, died in 1733, in the 82d year of his age and the 44th of his ministry. Robert Jack, A.M., who had studied at St. Andrews, and had been licensed by the Presbytery of Tain, was appointed assistant

and successor to Mr Livingstone in 1732, and continued to officiate here till the 27th April 1749, when he was translated to Carnwath.

The curators of the heirs of John, Earl of Wigton, viz., William, Earl of Panmure, and William Fleming of Barrochan, in 1751, issued a presentation to the Kirk of Biggar in favour of Mr William Haig. The call to this gentleman was supported by Lady Clementina Fleming, and her husband, Mr Elphinstone, by Mr Chancellor of Shieldhill, Sussana Lockhart, widow of Mr Dickson of Hartree, by Robert Forsyth, Robert Hamilton, and his sister Margaret Cooper. But, on the other hand, it was opposed by Lady Persilands, Mr Brown of Edmonston,—James Telfer, Laurence Boe, James Bertram, John Gladstones, James Smith, and James Melrose, all resident heritors except James Melrose; by four of the elders, twenty-five feuars of the town of Biggar, and one hundred and twenty-five householders. The Presbytery, in these circumstances, decided that they could not proceed to the settlement of the presentee, and resolved to apply to the patrons to be relieved from any further trouble in the matter; but Gideon Lockhart, writer, Lanark, as agent for the presentee, protested and appealed to the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale. The case, accordingly came before the Synod, and afterwards before the General Assembly. The deliverance of the Assembly was, that ‘in present circumstances it is not expedient to appoint the settlement of the presentee, and to remit to the Presbytery of Biggar, to deal with all concerned, in order to bring about a comfortable settlement of the parish.’

As the parishioners, almost unanimously, still persevered in their opposition to the settlement, the Presbytery found that they could proceed no further in the case; and therefore another appeal was made to the higher ecclesiastical courts. The Commission of the General Assembly on the 27th May 1752, appointed a Committee to act in conjunction with the Presbytery of Biggar in dealing with all concerned, particularly with the parishioners, for the purpose of effecting a harmonious settlement of Mr Haig, and to report to the Commission in November. The Committee and the Presbytery, therefore, met at Biggar, and first called on the elders to state any objections that they had to Mr Haig. The elders said that

their objections to that gentleman were as follows :—“ I. that he could not be heard by a great part of the congregation, and that, though he began upon a high enough key, yet he was not able to hold out the whole length of the service, and II. that he was so unweildly and infirm that they had no prospect of his being able to perform the duties of his office, by going, as occasion might require, to visit the parishioners, particularly the sick.” The meeting after hearing the elders adjourned to the Church, to confer with the heritors and people there assembled, when one and all declared that they adhered to the objections made by the elders, and that in doing so they spoke not merely their own opinions, but those also of the whole body of the parishioners.

The Committee thereupon exhorted them to be cautious what they said, as every statement made would go to proof ; and reminded them that further opposition on their part would have the effect of keeping the Church longer vacant. The answer of the parishioners was, that they were determined to persevere in the course on which they had entered, as in their opinion the settlement of Mr Haig would be no better than a vacancy.

The Committee accordingly gave in a report to the commission, and after parties were heard, the Commission appointed another Committee to hold a meeting at Biggar along with the Biggar Presbytery on the second Thursday of March 1753, to take trial of the objections against Mr Haig, particularly with respect to his voice. They were to cause Mr Haig to preach before them in the Church of Biggar, and in the event of finding the objections to him not sufficiently supported, to make further efforts to induce the people to agree to his settlement. The Committee were to report to the Commission, which was to meet a few days after, but no meeting taking place, a petition was presented to the next General Assembly from the patron and such heritors as concurred in the presentation of Mr Haig, craving that the report of the Committee should be received. This was agreed to. After the report was read a long discussion took place regarding the procedure that should now be adopted, and it was at length carried that the settlement should not take place at present, and that further consideration of the call should be delayed till the meeting of the Commission

in November. The Presbytery of Biggar was at the same time instructed to make further efforts to reconcile the people to Mr Haig, to induce them to concur in his settlement, and to report the result of their labours to the Commission which was empowered to act in the case as might be thought necessary. On the 22d November, the case of Biggar was brought before the Commission, and after a lengthened discussion the motions "Settle" or "Delay" were put to the vote, when "Settle" was carried, and the Court ordered the Presbytery of Biggar to proceed at once to the trials and settlement of Mr Haig. Against this decision John Buchanan, Covington, William Tate, Kilbucho, and John M'Caul, Symington, ministers, for themselves and in name of the Presbytery, and James Smith, portioner in Biggar, for himself, and in name of the heritors, elders, and parishioners, opposers of Mr Haig's settlement, protested and craved liberty to complain to the next General Assembly.

The reasons of complaint unanimously agreed to by the Presbytery of Biggar, and laid before the General Assembly were eight in number, and, at great length, detailed that the sentence of the Commission was inconsistent with the rules of all courts where subordination existed; that it was contrary to the principles of justice, and subversive of the ends of all government; that it was opposed to the constitution of the Church of Scotland; that it went beyond the powers and instructions given to the Commission at last Assembly; that it introduced a new law and form of procedure into the church; that it had no warrant from civil or ecclesiastical law; and finally that it was the deliverance of a very small majority. On the 31st of May 1754, when the complaint was to have been discussed before the General Assembly, a member of court rose and stated that a prospect was now held out that the contentings in this case would soon be brought to a close, and that the subject of dispute would be disposed of to the satisfaction of all parties concerned. It was, thereupon agreed to let the complaint lie over till next meeting of Assembly, and, in the event of Mr Haig's presentation being withdrawn, the Presbytery of Biggar were empowered to proceed to the settlement of the vacancy according to the rules of the church. The consequence of this decided opposition was, that Mr Haig was induced to write a letter to the Presbytery from Edinburgh, on the 8th of June 1754, re-

signing any right which he might have acquired to the incumbency of Biggar.*

On the 27th of June, Bailie Carmichael appeared before the Presbytery, and laid on the table a presentation to the Kirk of Biggar in favour of Mr John Johnston, A.M., minister of the Gospel in the Castle of Edinburgh, who had been appointed to that charge in 1751. John Gladstones, one of the elders, at the same time presented a petition, signed by all the elders, the resident heritors, and a large number of the heads of families, craving that the Presbytery would proceed to the settlement of Mr Johnston with all convenient speed. Mr Johnston was consequently inducted to the charge of Biggar on the 26th September 1754. Mr Johnston died on the 15th of October 1778. The next incumbent of the parish of Biggar was Mr Robert Pearson, who, as will afterwards be related, was violently obtruded in 1780. Mr Pearson dying in 1787, Mr William Watson was admitted to the charge on the 23d October 1787. This divine died in 1822, in the 73d year of his age, and the 35th of his ministry, and was succeeded by the present incumbent, the Rev. John Christison, A.M. This divine is the son of Mr James Christison of Cumbernauld, and a nephew of Mr Alexander Christison, at one time Professor of Humanity in the University of Edinburgh. Mr Christison studied at that University and obtained his degree in 1819. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Chirnside, 24th April 1823, and having received a presentation to Biggar, he was ordained on the 18th of September following.

The Flemings, from an early period, were patrons of the Parish Church, and also of an hospital dedicated to St Leonard. No account of this latter institution can now be obtained, and the very spot on which it stood is not known. It is supposed that the lands belonging to it were those of Spittal on Candy Burn, and that it was from this circumstance that they acquired their name; Spittal being a corruption of the Latin word *hospitium*—a house of entertainment. We know that Malcolm Lord Fleming, who founded the College Kirk of Biggar, bestowed the church lands of Spittal on this establishment for the endow-

* Mr Haig, on the 13th of September 1754, was appointed to the chaplaincy of the Castle of Edinburgh, and held this office till his death which took place on the 19th October 1761.

ment of one of the prebendaries, who was to be called Canon of the Hospital of St. Leonards. The charter chest of the Wigton family contains many documents which refer to the patronage both of the Church and Hospital. There is, for instance, a precept of Sasine, granted by James II., for infefting Robert Lord Fleming in the lands of Biggar, and the patronage of the Church and Hospital, which bears date 31st May 1446. This was relative to a charter proceeding upon the personal resignation of David Lord Hay of Yester. A claim, it would seem, was made by Lord Hay to these patronages, and a lawsuit was the consequence. Commissioners appointed to settle the dispute held a meeting at Glasgow on the 31st of July 1469, and gave forth a decret, by which they declared that the patronage belonged to Robert Lord Fleming, as the true, loyal, and only lawful and undoubted patron of the Church of Biggar. Reference is also made to Lord Fleming's right of patronage to the Church and Hospital of Biggar in documents dated 1470 and 1472. The patronage of Biggar Kirk has remained with the Fleming family ever since, and at present (1867) is the property of the Hon. Cornwallis Fleming, son of the late Lady Hawarden, daughter of Admiral Fleming.

The stipend of the Parish Church of Biggar, which in 1821, was fixed at seventeen chalders, half oatmeal and half barley, was in 1860 augmented to nineteen. The sum derivable from this source is stated to be L.307, 3s 0³/₁₂d. per annum. An allowance of L.8, 6s. 8d. is also given for communion elements; and the glebe, extending to ten acres, is said to let at L.4, 4s. per acre. The free teind in the parish is still upwards of L.200.

CHAPTER XI.

The Presbytery of Biggar.



THE General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1581, found that throughout the country there were no fewer than 924 Kirks. Many of the buildings were in a ruinous condition, and some had very small congregations, or were mere pendicles of other churches. It was, therefore, proposed and agreed to that the charges should be reduced to 600, and divided into 50 Presbyteries, with 12 churches to each. Three Presbyteries, less or more as the ecclesiastical condition of a district might warrant, were to constitute a Synod, and under this arrangement, Presbyteries were to be formed at Peebles, Biggar, and Melrose, which were to compose a Synod, the seat of which was to be at Peebles. This division was, however, not carried into effect.

About the year 1640, an agitation was set on foot to constitute a Presbytery at Biggar, which should consist of eight parishes in the Upper Ward connected with the Presbytery of Lanark, and four in Tweeddale connected with the Presbytery of Peebles. At the General Assembly in 1641, John Lord Fleming, who was the representative elder from the Presbytery of Lanark, presented a petition in favour of this scheme, which was referred to the visitation of the bounds. The agitation was still kept up, and at the General Assembly which met at Edinburgh, in August 1643, the subject was amply discussed; and after due trial, and the hearing of all parties, it was resolved to erect the new Presbytery, and to grant to it full power of jurisdiction, the exercise of discipline, and all the liberties and privileges belonging to any other Presbytery. At the same time, it was agreed that the formal establishment, or,

as it was called, the entry and possession, of the new Presbytery, should be suspended during the pleasure of the General Assembly. Principal Baillie says that this was done "because of my Lord Fleming's small affection to the common cause." The meaning of this most likely is, that by this time his Lordship had deserted the cause of Presbytery, and gone over to the side of the King and Episcopacy. The ministers and elders of the parishes embraced in the new Presbytery presented a petition to the General Assembly which met at Edinburgh in June 1644, craving that the reverend court should without further delay constitute the Presbytery. This "supplicatioun being read in audience of the General Assembly, and thereafter the Commissioners from the Presbyteries of Lanark and Peebles personally present being heard at length, in what they could say or allege therein; And the said supplicatioun and desire thereof with the alledgiances and objections made against the samine being taken into consideration by the Assembly, and they therewith being fully and ripely advised, the Assembly, after removing of the parties, and after consideration of the premisses and voycing of the foresaid desire, Ordaines the entrie and possessione of the foresaid Presbyterie of Biggar, consisting of the particular kirks above mentioned, to begin now presently; And appoints and ordaines all the ministers and ruling elders of the foresaid kirks above specified, whereof the said Presbytery consists, to meet and convene with all conveniencie at the said Kirk of Biggar, which is the place and seat of the samine Presbytery; And the Assembly refers to the Commissioners, to be appointed by them for the public affairs of the Kirk, to determine to what Synod this the said new erected Presbyterie shall be subordinate, as also to prescribe the order and solemnities that shall be necessar for entering and possessing the ministers and elders in the said Presbyterie."

The Presbytery was accordingly constituted on the 26th of July 1644, when a sermon was preached on 1st Peter ii. and 9, by Alexander Somervail, Dolphinton, who had been the most strenuous advocate in favour of its establishment. The following are the names of the clergymen who, along with a ruling elder from each parish, formed the Presbytery, viz:—Thomas Campbell, Biggar; Robert Brown, Broughton; Alexander Somervail, Dolphinton; Kenneth Logie, Skirling; George Bennet,

Quothquan; Andro Gudlatt, Symington; John Currie, Coulter; Robert Elliot, Kilbucho; William Dickson, Glenholm; Thomas Lindsay, Walston; and George Ogstoun, Covington.* The Kirk of Wandel and Lamington was at the time vacant, and one of the earliest cases that came before the new Presbytery was a dispute regarding the settlement of this parish. The previous incumbent, Mr James Baillie, died in 1642; and a violent controversy arose between Douglas, Earl of Angus, proprietor of Wandel, and Sir William Baillie, proprietor of Lamington, as to which of them had the right to appoint a successor. As they could come to no agreement, both of them exercised the right of patronage. Baillie presented John Currie, and Douglas, Andrew M'Ghie. The case came before the Presbytery of Lanark, and afterwards before the higher ecclesiastical courts. A decision was given in favour of Douglas, and consequently of M'Ghie. The Presbytery of Lanark, having, accordingly, appointed M'Ghie to preach before the people of Lamington in March 1644, the Lady of Lamington, aided by several other women, took possession of the pulpit in a tumultuous manner, and prevented the presentee from obtaining an entrance, and, of course, a hearing,—her Ladyship stoutly declaring, “that no dog of the house of Douglas should ever bark there.”

This was too heinous an offence to be lightly passed over by the divines of the Lanark Presbytery. They lodged a complaint against the lady and her abettors with the Privy Council; and the consequence was, that a decree was issued, commanding the accused to enter their persons in ward in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh. This was accordingly done; and they remained in confinement till a fine imposed on them of 1000 merks was paid to the Lanark Presbytery. The members of this court were not yet satisfied. They wished her Ladyship to appear before them, and make a public expression of her deep contrition for an offence “so scandalous for the present, and so dangerous for the time to come.” Before this part of the case could be finally disposed of, the Presbytery of Biggar was formed, and the Lady of Lamington was now within its

* Dunsyre was not one of the parishes of which the Presbytery was at first composed, but it was disjoined from the Presbytery of Lanark on the 4th of June 5176, and added to Biggar.

jurisdiction. The Presbytery of Lanark desired that her Ladyship and the other delinquents should be sent by the Presbytery of Biggar to Lanark to make atonement before the court, the authority of which she had violated. After much altercation, the answer of the Biggar Presbytery was, "That they would do nothing of that kind till they should receive a pairt of the soume lately determined by the Council to the Presbytery of Lanark." The ground on which this claim was made, was that several members of the Biggar Presbytery had, while members of the Lanark Presbytery, expended money in prosecuting the case.

The Presbytery of Biggar itself resolved to deal with the Lamington Ladies; and, accordingly, they were cited to appear before it on the 25th December 1644. The minute of that date states, "This day compeired the Ladic Lammingtoun and being accused of ane scandell committed be her in ye Kirk of Lammingtoun by her resisting and stopping of Andro M'Ghie (expectant sent yr be ye Presbyterie of Lanark), who came yr upon ye Lord's day to preach, schoe did confesse the samyn resistance, bot withal did solemnlie protest that she had no ill intention, neither any thocht either to profane God's Sabbath or house, or to hinder preaching, bot onlie scho satt and stayed Mr Andro to enter ye pulpitt, and went into the samyn, onlie for fear of losing her husband's richt (he being absent for the tyme in England in the public service), or for fear of some ill or greater inconvenience which might have fallen furth. And notwithstanding whair of, yett was content to refer herself to ye Presbyterie to mak satisfacione as they pleased. Whair-upon the Presbyterie, after dewe advyse, did ordaine her, the next Lord's day, in her awin kirk, and in her ordinary saitt, to confess her fault, and in most humble manner to crave pardon, when schoe suld be called upon be the preacher efter his sermon. And being also desyred to delaitte these who were her helpers and attendants in the said resistance, schoe did declare ingenuously upon her conscience that none of all her folkes did stirre, or move out of yr places, except two, who went to the pulpitt doore with her, to witt, Catherine and Jennet Bailye. Whairenent the Presbytery having called in ye wholl summoned personcs, did absolve them except these two, whom they enjoined to mak yr public repentance, the same day and place,

and in manner foresaid. And to that effect did ordaine Mr Thomas Lyndsay to preach yr ye said day, and receive the confessiones and testificationes of the repentance of ye said offenders, and to report ye next day." The report given in at next meeting of Presbytery was, that the Lamington ladies had in every respect complied with the sentence of the Presbytery.

The difficulty in settling a minister in the parish of Lamington was complicated by the conduct of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, who nominated Mr William Young, "servant to ye Earle of Glencarne," to the vacant charge, and requested the Presbytery of Biggar to take him on his trials. This they agreed to do, and Mr Young appeared before them on the 27th of November 1644, and presented his credentials, particularly a certificate of his qualification in doctrine and conversation from the Presbytery of Glasgow, and had his trial discourses prescribed to him, which he was to deliver on the 25th of December following. The Earl of Angus, however, interfered; and in the end neither Mr Young nor Mr M'Gie obtained the living, but John Crawford, another nominee of the Earl of Angus, was settled in that parish on the 11th of August 1645. On that day, it is recorded that possession and collation were given to this gentleman, by the Presbytery handing him the key of the kirkdoor, going to the manse and putting out the fire of the former occupants, and "bigeing on a fyre for the said Mr John," and by delivering "eard and stane" in the manse yard, and glebe land, lying within the barony of Wandel. Mr Crawford himself concluded the proceedings by taking instruments in the hands of Thomas Moffat, notary, in presence of the following witnesses viz., James Elliot one of the teachers of the High School of Edinburgh, William Fowler wright and parishioner of Lamington, Alexander Fowler his son, and Thomas Threip-land his servant

One of the earliest acts of the Presbytery was a deliverance regarding the proper observance of the Lord's day. It appeared that in some parishes drovers were in the habit of driving their cattle on that day, and chapmen to carry their packs. It was found that these parties were not parishioners within the bounds of the Presbytery, and therefore the ministers through whose parishes they travelled were enjoined to ascertain the parishes whence they came, and to lodge a complaint with their respective pastors.

One of the most notable proceedings of the Presbytery was the visitation of the churches within its bounds. This was conducted in a most searching and inquisitorial manner. After the minister of the parish to which the visit was paid had preached a sermon, he was removed and the elders were called in one by one, and strictly interrogated if their pastor preached sound doctrine ; if he was painful in preaching twice on Sabbath and once on a week-day ; if he regularly visited his parishioners, and particularly the sick ; if he kept up family worship in his own household, and enjoined it on others, etc. The elders were then removed, and the pastor himself was called in, and questioned if he had any complaint to make regarding his elders, or the state of the kirk and parish. The work of the visitation of churches was for some years vigorously prosecuted after the formation of the Presbytery. The reports of these visitations are extremely curious, and throw light on the religious and ecclesiastical state of the Upper Ward parishes at the time. The work was however occasionally interfered with by stormy weather, by apprehensions of the plague, and the unsettled state of public affairs. For instance at a meeting of the Presbytery, on the 6th of August 1645, it was reported that the visitation of the Kirk of Covington had been hindered and deserted, because of a suspicion of the prevalence of the plague in the parish, and it was agreed on this account to discontinue the work for some time. The suspension was, however, of short duration, most likely from the suspicion turning out to be unfounded. On the 29th October of the same year, it was reported that the visitation of the Kirk of Quothquan had not taken place at the time appointed, because the whole people of the parish along with their minister and the other inhabitants of the shire, had been under the necessity of obeying a summons to appear at Glasgow.

The visitation of the Kirk of Quothquan however took place on the 10th of November, and as a specimen of the mode of proceeding on these occasions we may briefly refer to the report of it laid before the Presbytery. The minister of the parish, Mr Bennet, delivered a sermon on Luke iii. 17, and a prayer was offered up by Alexander Somervail the Moderator. Mr Bennet, having been removed, the elders were asked if their minister preached two sermons on the Lord's day, if his doctrine was edifying, if he visited the sick, if he took care of the poor,

if he exercised discipline, if he encouraged family worship, if he visited the several families under his charge, if his conversation was such as became a minister of Christ, if his carriage was irreproachable during the time the enemies (Montrose's army) abode in the country, and if there was a school in the parish? To all of these questions the elders gave an answer favourable to the minister—in particular they declared that during the time that the enemies were in the country he continually, both in his sermon and prayer, spoke against them and their wicked courses, and in no ways complied with them, and further that there was a school at Quothquan but none at Libberton. The minister having been brought in, he was requested and encouraged to lay before his brethren a frank statement of his grievances. He complained first that there was great enmity between the people of Libberton and Quothquan, and that he could not get the people of Libberton to attend Quothquan Kirk';—second that he had no help in the exercising of discipline;—and third, that although there was a large amount of unexhausted teinds in the parish he could not get a sufficient maintenance for a schoolmaster, and that the ignorance caused thereby rendered his ministry unprofitable. The root of the evil in his opinion lay in the union of the two kirks of Libberton and Quothquan. The parishioners present being asked to express their ideas on this subject, stated that it was their earnest desire that the two kirks should be disjoined, and that they were confident that a sufficient sum could be raised to support two ministers. The Presbytery concurred in the necessity as well as in the equity of taking this step, and a corresponding brother from the Presbytery of Lanark being present, reported that his Presbytery had already instituted a process to effect a disunion, and, therefore, the Biggar Presbytery resolved to co-operate with them to attain this end.

As a specimen of the troubles in which members of Presbytery as well as individual inhabitants of a parish were sometimes involved by the inquisitorial proceedings of the Presbytery at parochial visitations, we will briefly refer to what took place at one of the visitations of the parish of Broughton. The report of that visitation, which was presented to the Presbytery on the 14th of January 1646, stated that after sermon, when the elders were called in and interrogated regarding the conduct of their pastor, the Rev. Robert Brown, they bore the

highest testimony in his favour, declaring specially that his carriage during the time the army of Montrose remained in the country was such as showed his abhorrence of the cause in which these men were engaged, and that this was manifested by his prayers, sermons, and conversation, as could be attested both by ear and eye witnesses. The members of Presbytery were then called on to declare what they knew of Mr Brown's conduct, when all of them declared that they knew nothing of him but good. George Bennet, however, reported that lately, when travelling on the road towards Queensferry in company with David Semple and another man, they "foregathered" with one James Paterson, with whom they entered into conversation. Paterson stated that he came from Nether Caverhill, in the parish of Manor; that Sir David Murray of Stanhope would never have ridden forth to the enemy's camp, unless it had been by the advice of his minister, Mr Brown; and that it was Mr Brown's opinion that those who joined Montrose had the best of it. Mr Brown was accordingly called in, and these accusations having been laid before him, he denied them *in toto*, demanded a fair trial, and declared if he was found guilty that he would lay down his life; but, on the other hand, should he be proved innocent, he would call on the Presbytery to censure and punish his accusers.

The case accordingly came before the Presbytery for trial. Paterson, the informer, was the first witness called, and he, at the outset, admitted that he had been guilty of a falsehood in stating that he dwelt at Nether Caverhill, when he was, in reality, a parishioner of Glenholm. The only justification which he offered for making this statement was that some of his brothers dwelt at the place which he had named.* He confessed that he had expressed sorrow at the conduct of Sir David Murray in joining Montrose; but he maintained that he had said very little regarding Mr Brown. He admitted, however, that he had heard "a clashe that Sir David wuld not have gane that gaitt wer it not Mr Robert." He had never heard any statement, he said, that Mr Brown had declared

* In the Records of the Privy Council under date 6th July 1681, Alexander Paterson is said to be heritor of Caverhill.

that the persons who joined Montrose had the best of it ; and he positively denied that he had ever made any statement to that effect to Mr Bennet. Mr Bennet thereupon rose, and looking straight in Paterson's face, asserted that he did make such a statement, and produced a letter from Mr David Semple in confirmation of what he now said. Paterson nevertheless persisted in his denial, so the Presbytery agreed to waive that point, and proceeded to ask him "anent the first admission he had heard that Mr Robert was the wyte of Sir David going to the enemies' Leaguer and Campe." Paterson declared that he had heard that report in harvest, behind "the sheiraris," at the place of Littlehope,* from John Pringle, the laird's grieve. At a meeting of the Presbytery in February, John Pringle having been cited, appeared, and declared on oath that he never spoke a single word to James Paterson on the subject ; and that, in his opinion, Mr Brown was entirely innocent of the offence laid to his charge. James Paterson, the accuser, had also been cited, but failed to appear. His minister, William Dickson of Glenholm, stated that the whole parish considered "he was lowse in his toung, and wavering in his reports and promises, and verie inconstant in his words." Some months afterwards, Paterson was again forced to appear before the Presbytery, and as he was unable to adduce any authority for his assertions, he was denounced as a slanderer, and condemned to suffer due ecclesiastical punishment.

During these visitations, we find that John Currie of Coulter had complaints to make regarding the ruinous condition of his kirk and kirkyard dykes. William Dickson of Glenholm "regraitted" that his kirk was in bad condition, and that the kirkyard was likely to be carried away with the water. George Ogstoun of Covington was offended because Sir Francis Douglas had buried a child in his kirk. Andro Gudlatt of Symington was blamed that he preached doctrine noways edifying ; that he delivered only one discourse on Sabbath ; that his hearers were "sowle starved ;" that he did not introduce the "Direc-

* This was the ancient name of Broughton House, the seat of the Murrays of Stanhope. The last of the Murrays who possessed it, was the famed apostate Secretary Murray, who sold the Broughton estate in 1762 to James Dickson of Edrom. Broughton House was burnt down in 1773 by the carelessness of a servant and was never rebuilt.

torie" in proper time ; that he had baptized a child at Biggar without knowing whether it was dead or alive ; that he had failed to repair his manse, which is described as being "as base as a cottar's house ;" and that he was puffed up with self-pride. And Kenneth Logie of Skirling complained that he did not receive the amount of stipend to which he was entitled.

Another point on which the members of Presbytery were most exacting, was the visiting and catechizing of families. They drew up a set of regulations and questions, which were first to be expounded from the pulpit, and then used when the pastor went from house to house. The principal points into which he was to make inquiry were, if the family made prayers morning and evening ; if the Lord's day was properly observed, by prayer, reading the Scriptures, attending religious ordinances, and abstaining from frequenting common inns, from lascivious, worldly, and idle conversation, from seeing servants, or making any kind of merchandise ; if every household had a Bible and a psalm-book, and every member of it could read ; if any scandalous persons were in the family, and, if there were, to report them to the kirk session ; and, lastly, if all the social duties of husband and wife, parent and child, master and servant, were duly observed.

Another subject which engaged the attention of the Presbytery, in 1645, was the introduction of the "Directory for Public Worship." This was readily adopted by the Presbytery, and all the members began to introduce it in the month of August of that year, having first read and expounded it to the people of the several parishes from the pulpit. The only exception was Andro Gudlatt of Symington, who thus justified himself when called on by his brethren to explain his conduct : "He thocht it best," he said, "to delay and not to be over sudden, until he did see a farther settling, for he feared changes ; and if the King should prevail and bring in Bishops, they wold call us false knaves, and say we wold turn to any thing, and not spair to embrace ye masse." This reply gave the brethren great offence, and led, with other delinquencies, to the suspension of the "holy brother."*

* Previous to Mr Gudlatt's suspension he was very much badgered by his brethren on account of some of his proceedings. He felt greatly offended, and

The whole of Britain, at the time at which the Presbytery of Biggar was formed, was in a very disturbed state, in consequence of the war between Charles I. and a portion of his subjects, and in Scotland particularly by the campaigns of Montrose. The members of Presbytery were alternately swayed by hopes and fears. They held solemn days of thanksgiving for the victory of Fairfax in Northamptonshire, the capture of the town of Newcastle by the Scots army, and the defeat of Montrose at Philiphaugh by General Leslie. On the other hand, they had to fast and mourn for the triumphs of Montrose, and the invasion and victories of Cromwell. After the battle of Kilsyth, five of them fled from their manses and their flocks altogether, and the meetings of Presbytery were suspended for two months, which is termed "a long vacancie occasioned be the insolencie of ye barbarious enemie approaching to this parte of ye countrie." No sooner was Montrose defeated at Philiphaugh, and all apprehensions of immediate danger were removed, than the fugitives came out of their hiding-places, and returned to their charges. They now assumed a vast amount of courage; and in order to cover the disgrace of their retreat, they had the audacity to take to task those who kept their posts and boldly faced the danger. The minute on this subject is so interesting and amusing, that it must be quoted entire. The day on which this trial took place was the 15th October 1645. "This day ye Presbyterie took tryell of the breather's carriage, who had stayed at home, and not fled ye tyme of the enemie's abode in thir quarteris, after this manner,—first, ye said breather (being saxe in number, to wit, Robert Brown, William Dickson, Andro Gudlatt, George Ogstoun, George Bennet, and Thomas Lindsay) being desyred to answer certain queries, did give satisfactorie answers yrunto, as I. if they did sie James Graham in his Leaguer—the answer negative, II. if they had socht or received protection from the enemie—the answer negative; III. if they did preach or pray against the enemies of God's Kirk and these wicked men—the answer was affirmative, every one of them remembering his

refused to attend the Presbytery dinners. It was reported to the Presbytery that when some of the brethren requested him "to goe with ye rest to dinner, that he answered disdainfulie, saying, 'I will not goe, I am none of yours. I am for the King, for byschopes, for the Pope,' &c."

text of Scripture and sundry of the doctrines, whilk the Presbyterie did consider was to the purpose and a clear evidence of yr honestie and good affectione ; IIII. if they had bocht any plundered gear—yr answer was negative ; V. if they did blame thair breether for flieing—yr answer negative ; VI. if both in privat and publick they had dissuaded yr people from compliance with ye enemy—yr answer wes that they did so ; VII. if they had read or caused read James Graham's orders—the answer was negative : Next, because they willingly did offer themselves to any tryell : And lastly, in respect the voyce of the countrie was, that they carried themselves both honestly and courageously, therefore the Presbyterie were satisfied with them, and every one giving praise to God, did rejoice one with another."

We may quote the regulations which the neighbouring Presbytery of Lanark on the 17th April 1646, laid down for punishing the parties within their bounds, who had complied with the orders of the Marquis of Montrose:—I. That any one who had been a soldier in James Graham's army should pay a merk for each day's attendance to the poor. II. That those persons, who had "coft" plundered goods, or had plundered themselves, should make restitution in such proportion as the Presbytery or Kirk Session might consider in accordance with their means, and the benefit received from the plundered goods. III. That those persons, when they were received into the fellowship of the Church, should be separated into two divisions as they might be found more or less guilty. IV. and, lastly, that such persons as had seats in a conspicuous part of the church, should be censured and rebuked therefrom, and those who had no such seats, should be received from some public place provided for the purpose.

From repeated expressions in the records of the Presbytery, we might infer that the army of Montrose visited the Biggar district. The members talk of "yc approach of ye barbarous enemy to this part of ye countrie," and inquire what the carriage of each other was during "ye tyme of ye enemies' abode in ye countrie,"—if "they bocht any plundered gear" from the soldiers, and if they saw Montrose, or James Graham, as they invariably called him, in his leaguer. These statements, though not entirely explicit, would yet seem to indicate that

Montrose's army had come nearer the Upper Ward than the camp or leaguer established at Bothwell, which was about thirty miles distant. We can, however, find no account in any history that Montrose's army, or even a detachment of it, visited the Biggar district, either during the time the chief leaguer was maintained at Bothwell, or during the march to the south of Scotland previous to the battle of Philiphaugh.

Montrose in 1645 made an inroad into Argyleshire where he committed the most merciless havoc—slaying the inhabitants, burning their houses, and destroying or carrying away their effects. The members of the Biggar Presbytery ordered a contribution to be made for the ministers who had been spoiled by the enemy in that county, and the sum collected, amounting to “fyftie sax pundis ten schillingis,” was paid by the Rev. Robert Elliot of Kilbucho to Mr George Porterfield at Edinburgh.

It was one of the lamentable results of the unhappy contentions which at that time prevailed, that the Presbyterian clergy resolved to regard certain political opinions and actions as ecclesiastical offences. Malignancy, or an adherence to the cause of Royalty, was held by them to be one of the most grievous delinquencies, and they set themselves with uncommon zeal to ferret out every person in their respective parishes that, by word or deed, could in the least degree be regarded as leaning to the side of their Sovereign. The Presbytery was divided into sections, each consisting of two or three parishes, and in these a most thorough search was made for malignants. This brought the members of Presbytery into collision with the local gentry, most of whom were attached to Montrose and the cause of the King. The most notable offenders on whom they pounced were—Sir David Murray, Gideon Murray, John Weir, and John Lauder, of Broughton; Sir Francis Douglass of Covington; Christopher Baillie of Walston; John Baillie of St John's Kirk; Thomas Somerville and Alexander Rodger of Quothquan; John Brown of Coultermains; and William Lindsay of Birthwood, and his son Andrew. All of these persons were in the end forced to appear before the Presbytery, to acknowledge their offence, and to crave pardon.

We have already referred to the annoyances to which the Rev. Robert Brown of Broughton was subjected by the Presbytery in consequence of the false charges preferred against him,

that he had favoured the side of Montrose. As a further illustration of the conduct of the Presbytery in dealing with persons on account of their political opinions, we may refer to the cases of John Brown of Coultermains, and Sir William Maxwell Baillie of Lamington.

At a visitation of the Kirk of Coulter, on the 16th of July 1645, one of the questions asked at John Currie, the minister of the parish, was, "if there was any in his parish suspected of malignancie?" The answer was, that "John Brown, portioner of Cultermains, was suspected, because it was reported that his reasoning in discourse with company did tend that way. As also, when once upon a time, ye minister in his sermon was stirring up ye people to advance and hasten the levie, the said John Brown was perceived to smyle." Mr Brown denied that there was any truth in these allegations, and, being removed, the elders of the parish were called in; but though they admitted that "he was bruted and ill thought off," yet they could not charge him with any special act of malignancy. The case being referred to the minister and elders of the parish for further examination, John Currie, on the 19th November, reported that he and his session had been diligent in trying the disaffection of John Brown, but had not found out anything against him of a serious character. This did not satisfy the Presbytery, and therefore John Currie was ordered to cite the Laird of Coultermains to appear before the Presbytery at their next meeting. The Laird accordingly appeared before the Presbytery on the 24th December, and admitted that he smiled in the Kirk when the minister was insisting on constancy in the good cause; but he asserted that the smile was extorted from him by the light behaviour of a person that sat near him in the Kirk, and that he was very sorry that such a thing had taken place. He declared "that he thocht weill of ye work of Reformation," but denied that he received any protection from Montrose, or was at the Battle of Philiphaugh. He confessed, however, that he went in the cause of the King to Dumfries with the Marquis of Douglass. These admissions not proving satisfactory to the Presbytery, Robert Elliot of Kilbucho, George Bennet of Quothquan, and the indefatigable John Currie of Coulter, were appointed a committee to investigate still further into his conduct. . These worthies

reported at the next meeting that they were unable to elicit any further information, and therefore it was resolved to cite the Laird to appear once more before the holy conclave. The result of the whole was, that the Laird was forced to compear on the 21st of October 1646, when he humbled himself, confessed his malignancy, and craved pardon. He was thereupon referred back to the Kirk of Coulter to fulfil the rest of his censure. This, as laid down by the Presbytery in cases of persons charged with malignancy, was "to bring them before the Kirk session, and yrefter to ordeane them ye next Lord's day efter sermon, to stand before ye pulpitt, and mak open confessione of yr offence, and falling down upone yr knies, craive pardon for ye same."

Sir William Maxwell Baillie was the elder for Lamington parish at the formation of the Presbytery of Biggar. In 1648 he was a member of the Scottish Parliament, and agreed to support the cause of Charles I. after he was placed in confinement by Cromwell and his party. The engagement which a number of the other Scottish barons entered into on this occasion, as is well known, gave great offence to the Presbyterian clergy. They denounced it from their pulpits, and threatened to inflict spiritual censures on those who should obey the edict of the Parliament, and take up arms in defence of the King. Baillie of Lamington in consequence of his connexion with the "sinful engagement," as it was called, was, along with others, pounced on by the Presbytery of Biggar, and summoned to appear before them. He accordingly appeared on the 12th December 1649, and pled that by taking part in the engagement he did not consider that he had done anything wrong. The members of Presbytery were of a different opinion, and therefore they intimated to him, "if he wold not be readie to give satisfacione against ye next meiting, that they wold enter into farther proces against him." He came up before the Presbytery again on the 2d January 1650, and the reverend court laid down in detail the offences with which he was charged. They were as follows :—"His being a member of that parliament consenting to yr unjust proceedingis, and not dissenting with ye honest partie of that parliament,—his being att ye committee of estaitts flowing from that Parliament, and giveing his oath yr,—his keiping ye first rendezvous at Lanerk

moore wth his men verie willinglie,—his refusing to helpe ye westerne forces, and not suffering his men to helpe theme or joyne with theme,—his giveing furth his men to the enemie without constraint,—his goeing a great way for joineing with Lanerkers,—and his refuseing to cleare himself anent subscribing the unlawfull band.”

The Laird denied the greater number of these charges, but admitted that, in Parliament, he gave his consent to the engagement, that he took no part with the “honest partie,” and refused to render any help to the western forces. The Presbytery laboured hard to bring him to “a sense of his guyltines;” but not succeeding, they appointed a committee of “some breather and rewling elderis” to deal with him, and report at a future meeting. The clergy, in these days, when they entered on a case of this kind, pursued it with unwearied obstinacy; but in searching the records of Presbytery, we failed to discover any intimation that the Biggar divines succeeded in extorting any further confession from the Laird, or inflicting on him any sort of punishment. The kirk-scession of Lamington found him quite inexorable, and therefore deprived him of his office of elder, until he should give signs of penitence and make satisfaction.

It was a common practice in these times, for a certain class of offenders against ecclesiastical law and authority to appear before the Presbytery in sackcloth. For instance, on the 25th of June, 1645, William Marjoribanks, a parishioner of Kirkpatrick, and Margaret Ewart, a parishioner of Coulter, appeared before the Presbytery of Biggar in sackcloth, charged with the sin of adultery and were referred to “ye Kirk of Coulter to mak satisfacione.” On the 29th of October following, Thomas Porteous, Lamington, being a triplex fornicator, came before the Presbytery, clothed in sackcloth, and was sent back to the Kirk of Lamington, to satisfy by public repentance. Marion Boyd, with whom he had been guilty was summoned at the same time, but failing to come forward she was under the necessity of arraying herself in sackcloth and taking her stand before “ye holy breather,” at their next meeting, when she was also referred to the Kirk of Lamington, to make a public atonement for her sins. On the 29th of March 1647, the Rev. Robert Brown, of Broughton, having reported that Adam Storie, one of his

parishioners, had for a long time appeared at Church in sackcloth, for the sin of adultery, and had given signs of repentance, the Presbytery ordered that he should appear before them in sackcloth, at their next meeting, and that the last day of his standing before the congregation would then be appointed. He, accordingly, came before the Presbytery, in sackcloth, on the 12th of April, and was referred back to the Kirk of Broughton to make a public confession and repentance in the face of the whole people.

The commotions caused by the invasion of Cromwell appear to have led to a suspension of the meetings of the Presbytery. Those ministers who continued to live in their parishes do not seem to have constituted themselves into a Church Court, and at length, on the 1st of June 1655, the Presbyteries of Lanark and Biggar were conjoined by a decision of the Synod. They went on in conjunction till 1660, when the Presbytery of Biggar was re-constituted, and, for two years afterwards, a record of its proceedings was kept, and is still preserved. The whole members of Presbytery left their livings in 1662, and from that time to 1688 no evidence exists to show that the meetings of this reverend court were held.

For some time after the Revolution, the Presbyteries of Biggar and Peebles held their meetings conjointly. The members were few, and they had no fixed place of meeting. We find that they assembled at Biggar, Peebles, Kilbucho, Kirkurd, Linton, but most frequently at the hills of Dunsyre, a place previously occupied by the famous preacher, Mr William Veitch, who, after the Revolution, was settled for some time at Peebles. James Donaldson of Dolphinton, Patrick Anderson of Walston, and Anthony Murray of Coulter, are the only members of the Biggar Presbytery that appear to have survived the storms of twenty-eight years' persecution, and to have been restored to their pulpits after they had been vacated by the hated curates, or by the almost equally hated indulged presbyterian clergy. In a few years these aged divines were also removed, so that shortly after the close of the seventeenth century we find the Presbytery composed of entirely new incumbents.

It is interesting to note that the members of Presbytery, on the morning of the 5th of September 1650, hastened to Biggar,

without any previous concert, but every one of his own accord. They found the town in a sad state of uproar. This was occasioned by the arrival of news of the defeat of the Scots army at Dunbar. After calling on the name of the Lord, the Presbytery appointed next day to be observed as a day of solemn fasting and humiliation for the sins of the land, and the manifestations of divine displeasure which had afflicted the people. Nearly a hundred years afterwards, when the whole country was in commotion by the descent of Prince Charles and his highlanders on the Lowlands, the Presbytery appointed Tuesday, the 10th of September 1745, as a day of fasting, prayer, and humiliation for the abuse of the long-continued peace, and the gross immorality and wickedness of all ranks; "recommending it withall to the several ministers to warn their people of their present danger from a Jacobite party at home and a popish power abroad, to maintain their loyalty to our present Sovereign King George and his royal family, and to adhere to our present happy constitution, both in Church and State."

The records of the Presbytery are contained in fourteen volumes. In the early part they are very imperfect. The period from 1650 to 1660 is a blank, and so is also the period between 1662 and 1688. For a number of years after the Revolution, they are of a very abbreviated character; but from the commencement of last century they are of ample extent, and complete.

The Presbytery of Biggar has now existed for 223 years. The incumbents during that period have been one hundred and ninety-nine. In this number there have been not a few pious, upright, and devout men, who have zealously and successfully laboured for the temporal and spiritual welfare of their flocks, and been held in high and deserved esteem. Their names were long household words throughout the district; and the inhabitants were wont to recount with pride the chief incidents in their lives, and the great theological displays which they sometimes made on sacramental and other extraordinary occasions. In 1662, the members of this Presbytery made a noble stand against secular aggression and prelatie usurpation, and to a man, as we have already said, left their livings rather than deviate from what their convictions told them was the

path of duty. In 1843, after a ten years' unsuccessful conflict in vindication of the right of the people within the pale of the Church to have a voice in the choice of their pastors, only two members of Presbytery, viz., James Proudfoot, Coulter, and William Hanna, Skirling, abandoned their charges, and threw themselves for support on the liberality of their adherents.

The publications of the members of the Biggar Presbytery, so far as now known, do not bulk largely. They perhaps felt that the work of preaching, visiting, and catechising was sufficient to occupy their time and form the limit to their energies in the dissemination of religious truth. The press as a power for enlightening the community was not, in the times in which most of them lived, so generally recognized, and their incomes were too small to allow them to spend money in publishing their literary and theological speculations. Passing over the notices of their parishes, which they furnished to the Old and New Statistical Accounts of Scotland, we may refer to one or two other literary labours which they laid before the public. Thomas Mitchell of Lamington, an accomplished scholar, and, in 1772, a candidate for the Greek chair in the University of Edinburgh, published, in 1782, a sermon which he had preached at Lamington, and, in 1791, a Letter to the Rev. William M'Gill, D.D. Bryce Little of Covington, in 1804, published a sermon which he had preached before the Clydesdale Volunteers; and Alexander Craik of Libberton, in 1820, published a Letter to the Rev. John Brown, minister of the Associate Congregation, Biggar. William Meek of Dunsyre, who was a man of literary taste and considerable mental ability, gave to the world several publications, among which we may mention, A Sermon preached at Dunsyre in 1817; a Treatise on Philosophical and Theological Sects in 1829; and a Letter to Lord Brougham in 1831.

Hamilton Paul of Broughton was a man of social disposition, genuine humour, and literary proclivities. He is the only member of the Presbytery, except Mr James Proudfoot, who could advance any pretension to be styled a poet. His poetic labours, were indeed most abundant. Like the Biggar poet, James Affleck, his muse was often engaged with local incidents, and hence some of his productions obtained an amount of popularity that their intrinsic excellence scarcely warranted. It is true

that they were generally thrown off at a single sitting, but they display, in many cases, a looseness of composition and a want of easy and smooth versification that detract from their merits. His special publications are First and Second Epistles to the Female Students of Natural Philosophy in Anderson's Institution Glasgow, 1800;—Friendship exemplified, a sermon 1803;—Vaccination or Beauty preserved, a poem, 1805; the Poems and Songs of Burns, with Life &c., 1819; and a Fore-taste of Pleasant Things, 1820. This last publication is a small collection of poems dedicated to the Presbytery of Biggar. In the dedication he says, "as you have repeatedly asserted that I am capable of writing poetry and have often blamed me in the severest terms for keeping my candle under a bushel, I now submit to your examination a few specimens preparatory to a larger collection which I have in contemplation to offer to the public." Among other poems in this collection are the following viz. "To a young Lady on the eve of her being made happy." "The Herd of Broughton, Glenholm, and Kilbucho, being part of an answer to a poetical epistle from a friend complaining of the author's absence from his native Air." "Battle of Trafalgar," "The Lass of Carrick Shore," &c. The larger work contemplated by Mr Paul was never published, but, during a period of sixty years, a large number of his poetical productions found their way to the columns of newspapers and Magazines. One of his most amusing poems was styled "The Presbytery Garland" in which he took a survey of the matrimonial connexions formed by his colleagues, and humorously lamented his own solitary state of bachelorhood.

The member of Presbytery, who was the most voluminous writer, and attained the highest literary distinction, was Dr John Aiton of Dolphinton. The Doctor from an early period of his life devoted himself to literary pursuits. In 1824, he published a work entitled "Mr Owen's objections to Christianity, and new view of Society and Education refuted." This work falling under the notice of Archibald Lord Douglas gave him so much satisfaction that he presented the author with the living of Dolphinton. His next work, "The Life and Times of Alexander Henderson," published in 1836, attracted much notice, and caused the University of Glasgow

to confer on him the degree of D.D. Some of the Doctor's other publications are "Clerical Economics," 1842; Letter to Lord Palmerston on the political imprisonments and condition of Naples, 1851; "The Lands of Messiah, Mahomet, and the Pope," 1852; "The Drying up of the Euphrates, or the Downfall of Turkey prophetically considered," 1853; "The Cat o' Nine Tails applied to the Jewish Committee of the Church of Scotland," 1856; "St Paul and his Localities in their past and present condition," 1856; "Manual of Domestic Economy, 1857;" "The Tomahawk and Scalping knife applied to the Financial and other abuses of the Church of Scotland," 1860; &c.

CHAPTER XII.

The Covenanters of the Biggar District.



AMES VI. was at first, by profession at least, a zealous Presbyterian. After he was assailed by a mob while attending a meeting in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, and especially after he had the certain prospect of ascending the throne of England, he began to look coldly on Presbyterianism, as being, in his opinion, incompatible with the prerogatives of monarchy. He therefore laboured till he succeeded in introducing the office of bishop into the Church, and also several religious ceremonies, such as the confirmation of youths, the observance of holidays, private baptism, private communion, and kneeling at the Eucharist, which were commonly called the Five Articles of Perth, from having been adopted at a General Assembly held at that town. He was contemplating still further innovations, when he died, in 1625, leaving it as an injunction on his son and successor Charles, to prosecute with all vigour the scheme on which he had himself so foolishly entered. In this way he laid the foundation of an unhappy contest, that raged in Scotland for more than half a century, that caused an incalculable amount of disorder, cruelty, and bloodshed, and in the end was the means of driving the Stewart dynasty from the throne of these realms.

Charles I., true to the doctrines in which he had been educated, and madly bent on executing the scheme projected by his father, at length ordered that a liturgy and book of canons should be introduced into the service of the Scottish Kirk. The great body of the Presbyterian clergy met this order with the most strenuous opposition, as they regarded it as an unwarrantable innovation on the proper mode of conducting public worship, and as wholly invalid, inasmuch as it had not

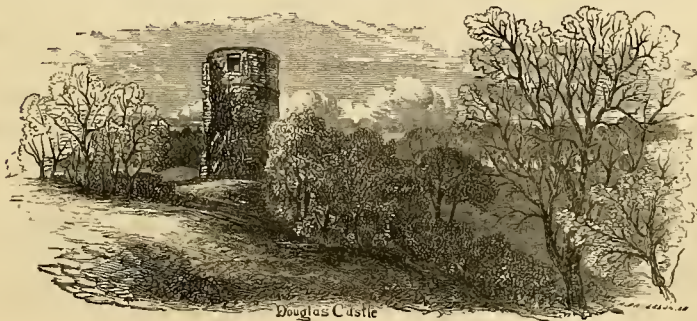
received the sanction of the General Assembly. The bishops, finding the order disregarded, caused the Privy Council to pass an Act to enforce its observance, under the pain of horning. The minister of Biggar, and most of the other ministers of the Presbytery of Lanark, refused to introduce the service-book and book of canons into their ministrations. The Bishop of Glasgow, in whose diocese they were, therefore, sent a messenger of arms to the Presbytery with a letter, commanding every member to buy the obnoxious books, and on his refusal to put him to the horn. The Presbytery were nothing daunted. They met, and resolved to petition the Privy Council against the introduction of the two books; and as their moderator, Mr John Lindsay of Carluke, who was a subservient tool of the Bishop of Glasgow, would not join in the petition, they requested him to resign his office. Lindsay, therefore, closed the diet, and, with two or three others, left the meeting. Those who remained, constituted themselves into a new meeting of Presbytery, and chose Alexander Somervail of Dolphinton as moderator *pro tempore*, when the petition was unanimously adopted. The Privy Council, instead of lending an ear to this petition, and others of a similar kind, passed an Act making it treason for any body of men to meet for the purpose of adopting such memorials.

This arbitrary step, and the commotions which took place in Edinburgh on the first introduction of the service-book in the Church of St Giles, on Sabbath, the 23d of July 1637, led to an organization of all ranks, and ultimately to the adoption of a Solemn League and Covenant. This document was signed on the 28th February 1638, in the Greyfriars Church, Edinburgh; and copies of it were immediately transmitted to every parish, to receive the names of those who stood well affected to the Presbyterian cause. Before the end of March it had been read in nearly all the churches of the Upper Ward, and signed, amid demonstrations of weeping and enthusiasm, by nearly the whole people. "I was present," says Alexander Livingstone, "at Lanark and several other parishes where on Sabbath, after the forenoon's sermon, the Covenant was read and sworn, and I may truly say, that in all my life-time, excepting at the Kirk of Shotts, I never saw such motions from the Spirit of God. All the people generally and most willingly

concurd. I have seen more than a thousand persons all at once lifting up their hands, and the tears falling down from their eyes, so that throughout the whole land, excepting the professed papists, and some few who adhered to the Prelates people entered into the Covenant of God." The only notable exceptions to this unanimity were the parishes of Douglas, Carmichael, and Carstairs, in which clerical or baronial influence prevailed in favour of the innovations.

The General Assembly that met at Glasgow in 1638, set the authority of the King's Commissioner at defiance. It declared the proceedings carried on and sanctioned by the six previous Assemblies to be null and void, and denounced and abolished the canons, the liturgy, the High Commission Court, the Articles of Perth, the forms of consecration, and the whole Episcopal system, root and branch. The gauntlet was thus thrown down to the King. He took it up, and both sides prepared for war. The Earl of Wigton, and his son John Lord Fleming, had signed the Covenant, and publicly declared that they would always maintain the doctrine and discipline now established by the General Assembly and the voice of the nation. Lord Fleming immediately took the field at the head of his father's retainers. His Lordship, and Lords Montgomery, Loudon, Boyd, Lindsay and others, seized the castle of Strathaven, and compelled all the gentlemen in Clydesdale suspected of favouring the royal cause to give security that they would not rise in arms. They then marched to Douglas Castle,* where they expected a hot reception from the Marquis of

* This Castle was destroyed by fire about the year 1755, and the only fragment of it now remaining is a ruined tower of which the following is a representation.



Douglas Castle

Douglas. They had no cannon, and entertained little hope of being able to make a successful assault on this strong Castle, but the Marquis did not remain to offer any resistance; so they readily obtained possession of the Castle, and left it garrisoned with a detachment of their troops.

Lord Fleming, in all likelihood, came to Biggar from Douglas, and completed his levies. He soon marched down the Tweed and joined the other Covenanters, who had now assembled in considerable numbers under the command of General Leslie, an old veteran, trained to war under the renowned Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden. The King had also raised a considerable army, and the blazing balefires soon gave token that he had crossed the border, and was penetrating into the country. He published a proclamation at Dunse, requiring the rebels to submit within ten days, fixing a price on the heads of the leaders, and confiscating their estates. He intended also to make this proclamation at Kelso, and a strong detachment was despatched thither under the command of the Earl of Holland. The Scots getting information of this intended movement, Lords Fleming, Munro, and Erskine, with their followers, to the number of a thousand horse and foot, met them before they could accomplish their purpose, and offered them battle. The English, however, did not relish the encounter, and fled, losing two hundred men in the pursuit. Principal Baillie says it was thought that Holland's commission was to cut off all opposition; but his soldiers that day were a great deal more nimble in their legs than their arms, except the cavaliers, whose right arms were no less weary in whipping than their heels in jading their horses.

The Scottish army afterwards encamped on Dunse Law, and presented a strange spectacle of military and religious enthusiasm,—the din of warlike evolutions intermingling with the voice of psalms, and the prayers and sermons of the preachers. "Every company," says Baillie, "had fleeing at the captain's tent door a brave new colour stamped with the Scottish arms, and the motto, 'For Christ's Crown and Covenant,' in gold, letters. Our soldiers were all lusty and full of courage, the most of them stout young ploughmen; great cheerfulness in the face of all. They were clothed in olive or grey plaiden, with bonnets having knots of blue ribands. The captains, who

were barons or country gentlemen, were distinguished by blue ribands worn scarf-wise across the body. None of our gentlemen were anything the worse of lying some weeks together in their cloaks and boots on the ground. Every one encouraged another. The sight of the nobles and their beloved pastors daily raised their hearts. The good sermons and prayers morning and evening, under the roof of heaven, to which the drums did call them instead of bells, also Leslie's skill, prudence and fortune, made them as resolute for battle as could be wished." The King, seeing the resolution and warlike spirit of the Scots, considered it hazardous to risk an engagement, and therefore an agreement was entered into, to settle the differences by negotiation. A conference was accordingly held at Berwick by commissioners on each side: but their proceedings were in the end rendered abortive by the obstinacy and duplicity of Charles, who would not recede from his design to establish Episcopacy in the northern part of his dominions. No alternative was left but a fresh appeal to arms.

The Scots had disbanded their army, but the tocsin of alarm was again sounded. The barons summoned forth their retainers, and the clergy beat the "drum ecclesiastic" with fury and effect. The Presbytery of Lanark on the 14th of May 1640, decided that each minister should give intimation to all the able bodied men* within the bounds of their respective charges to muster for the practice of military exercises so soon as Colonel John Lord Fleming should send officers for this purpose. Lord Fleming once more set up his standard at Biggar, and called on the retainers of his house, and others in the district well affected to the cause, to assemble around it. At a meeting of the Presbytery on the 25th of June following a communication was read from his Lordship, desiring every minister in the Presbytery to intimate from his pulpit, that the muster of men, according to the stipulated number, would take place at Biggar on Thursday first. The Presbytery at the same time chose Alexander Livingstone, minister of Carmichael, and afterwards of Biggar, to be chaplain to his Lordship's Upper Ward Regiment. He was to continue a month at this post,

*A list of "the abill men of the parochin of Biggar" at that period as already stated is still preserved, and a copy of it is given in the Appendix to this work.

and at the end of that time was to be relieved by George Bennet, minister of Quothquan, who was assured that, in the event of his not receiving payment from the general fund for support of the army, he would be paid by the Presbytery at the rate of 30s. per day.

The Scottish army, amounting in all to 23,000 infantry and 3000 cavalry, struck their tents in the month of August 1640, and marched into England. On arriving at the Tyne, they found that General Conway, the commander of the English army, had erected batteries on its banks near Newburn, to oppose their passage. The Scots were nothing discouraged. They opened so severe a fire from their artillery that the English were forced to abandon their guns; and a detachment of the Scots having crossed the river, encountered the English cavalry, and put them to flight. Conway's army was thus thrown into a state of rout and confusion, and the cavalry retreated to Durham, and the infantry to Newcastle. The Scottish troops were induced, by the solicitations and subsidies of the Puritan party in England, to prolong their stay till their grievances were redressed. After some negotiation with the Royalists, it was ultimately agreed that all oppressive courts should be abolished, that no money should be levied without consent of Parliament, and that Parliaments should be summoned every three years. The Scottish army, on the completion of those transactions, received L.300,000, in name of brotherly assistance, and returned to their native country.

At the very time at which Lord Fleming and his retainers from Biggar were in England upholding the cause of the National Covenant, and contending against the arbitrary designs of the King, a meeting of nineteen Scottish noblemen was held at the Earl of Wigton's house at Cumbernauld to support the royal cause. They subscribed a bond in which they declared that, from a sense of the duty which they owed to their religion, their king, and country, they were forced to join themselves in a covenant for the maintenance and protection of each other. Their country, they said, had suffered by the special and indirect practising of a few individuals, and, therefore, their object was to study all public ends which might lead to the safety of the religion, laws, and liberties of the poor kingdom of Scotland. This meeting was convened principally

by the efforts of James, Marquis of Montrose, who, at first, took part with the Covenanters, and was at Dunse Law and Newburn ; but, conceiving that his merits had been overlooked, and feeling special offence that Argyle was made his superior in the Senate, and Leslie in the field, he had obtained a secret interview with Charles when in England, and pledged himself to support his cause. The document, signed by the Earl of Wigton and the other nobleman,—“Montrose’s damnable Band,” as Baillie terms it,—was ordered by the Committee of Estates to be burnt by the hands of the common hangman, and Montrose was seized and thrown into prison.

The Earl of Wigton, having thus embraced the side of the Royalists, was honoured by receiving several letters from the King’s own hand. They are still preserved, and present a very creditable specimen of caligraphy. In one of them, dated Oxford, 21st April 1643, the King, after expressing his desire to preserve the affections of the people of his native kingdom, and to do everything to contribute to their happiness, goes on to say : “but knowing what industry is used (by scattering seditious pamphlets, and employing privat agents and instruments to give badd impressions of us and our proceedings, under a pretence of a danger to religion and government) to corrupt their fidelities and affections, and to engadge them in ane unjust quarrell against us their King, wee cannot, therefore, but remove those jealousies, and secure their feares from all possibilitie of any hazard to either of these from us. Wee have, therefore, thought fitt to require you to call together your friends, vassalls, tenants, and such others as have any dependencie upon you, and, in our name, to show them our willingness to give all the assurance they can desire, or wee possibly graunt (if more can be given than already is), of preserving inviolably all those graces and favours, which we have of late graunted to that our kingdome, and that wee doe faithfullie promise never to goe to the contrarie of any thing there established, either in ecclesiasticall or civil government, but that wee will inviolably keep the same according to the lawes of that our kingdome.”

The Earl himself does not seem, after all, to have taken a very active part in the support and advancement of the cause of Charles. It was otherwise with his son John, who had been

suspected of leaning towards the King when he was with the Scottish army in England, and who now fairly turned his back on his old friends the Covenanters. After his relative Montrose had gained the brilliant victories of Tibbermuir, Inverlochy, Aulderne, Alford, and Kilsyth, he threw off all disguise, and at the head of a body of his vassals, went to the camp at Bothwell and joined the army that had fought so gallantly and successfully in behalf of the King. He marched with Montrose to Philiphaugh, near Selkirk; the object of that general being, now that all opposition was beat down in Scotland, to make a diversion in favour of the Royalists on the soil of England. Montrose posted his infantry on an elevated piece of ground on the left bank of the Ettrick, while he himself and his cavalry occupied the adjacent town of Selkirk, and thus allowed the river to divide his forces into two portions. General Leslie, who had been despatched from England with a detachment of 5000 or 6000 men to oppose Montrose, taking advantage of a thick mist, on the morning of the 13th September 1645, fell on both flanks of his opponent's infantry at one time. The left flank was immediately thrown into confusion, and driven from the field; but the right, occupying a more advantageous position, with a wood in the rear, fought for some time with great obstinacy, but in the end had to yield to the furious onsets of the Covenanters. Montrose, with Lords Fleming, Napier, and Erskine, Sir John Dalziel, and other officers, so soon as the din of the battle was heard, rallied the cavalry, and hastened to the scene of action. They did everything that skill and bravery could suggest to retrieve the disasters of the day; but all their efforts were unavailing. They were forced to retire, and seek safety by speedy flight. They hastened up the Yarrow, struck along the bridle-road over Minchmuir, and came to Traquair House. Receiving little countenance there, although the Earl of Traquair was also a partisan of the King, they proceeded up the Tweed to Peebles, where they halted a short time during the night, and early next morning pursued their journey. They came to the Upper Ward and crossed the Clyde, and there they met with the Earls of Crawford and Airley, who had escaped by a different route. Montrose and a number of his friends fled to the Highlands, while Lord Fleming and others concealed themselves in the Lowlands.

The Convention of Estates were not disposed to pass over the delinquencies of those who had taken up arms against them, and subjected them to so much terror, inconvenience, and expense. They appointed a section of their number, called the Committee of Processes and Money, to institute actions against those persons who had taken part in what they termed the Rebellion of Montrose.

Lord Fleming remained concealed for some time, but the Committee of Processes permitted him, on the 9th of February 1646, "to repair home to his owne dwelling house on his giving James, Earl of Callender, as a cautioner, that he would appear before the Committee on the 8th of March following, at Linlithgow, or where they should happen to be sitting at the time, and that he would conduct himself with all due propriety, under a penalty of fiftie thousand punds." The Committee, on taking his case into consideration, decided that he should pay a fine of L.6400; but agreed to remit a portion of it, should the allegation of his Lordship, that he had expended large sums in the support of troop horses, foot soldiers, dragoons, and others in the public service, be satisfactorily established. In a document which his Lordship laid before the Committee, he stated that he had possession of no lands or teinds belonging to his father's estate, "except onely twentie chalders victuall payed to him of the estate and lands lyand about Biggar, within the shyre of Cliddisdail, quhilk is allowed upon him be his father for keiping his purse and buying his cloathes." He declared that he had no casual rent, no money owing him by "band" or otherwise, and no moveable goods or geir that could be escheated. He had borrowed, he said, L.20,000, which he had expended in the public service, viz., "be outreicking himself ane colonel at the first two expeditions, be buying of armes and uther necessre furnitour for his regiment, and be paying his officers and men," and supporting himself, as he had never received any of the public money at all. Besides, there were the charges, expenses, and pay of a garrison of forty soldiers, with a captain and lieutenant, who had occupied the Castle of Boghall of Biggar since the 14th of September last, and had been maintained solely out of his own portion, and the revenues of his father's estates; large sums were also due for the soldiers that had been quartered, and the

depredations that had been committed on his father's lands in and about Biggar and Cumbernauld; and further, all public orders had been obeyed, the monthly contribution paid, and "twenty horsemen of trouperis and dragounners with forty-aucht foot sojouris had been outreicked and put furth be my Lord's rent and estaite sufficientlie armed and mounted since the said fourteine day of September last bypast." The whole expense incurred in the equipment and maintenance of twenty dragoons and ninety-eight foot soldiers, including those lying in the Castle of Boghall, amounted to 8090 merks. The Committee, having duly weighed all the pleas advanced, decided that the account rendered by John Lord Fleming was sufficient to "exhaust the wholl fyne above-written imposed upon him for his delinquency, doe therfor discharge the said John Lord Fleming of the said fyne." His Lordship thus appears to have got rid of the heavy exaction imposed on him for the crime of taking part in the Rebellion of Montrose.

Charles II. had scarcely been restored to the throne, when he utterly repudiated the engagements into which he had entered in the days of his adversity, to uphold and maintain the Presbyterian form of church government, and the covenanted work of Reformation. He resolved to overturn the whole fabric of Presbyterianism, and to set up Prelacy in its stead, which the great majority of the Scottish people hated nearly as much as Popery itself. The Covenants were repealed; the opposition to Episcopal church government was denounced as sedition; the clergy who had been admitted to livings subsequent to the abolition of patronage were declared to have no title to them, and were required within four months to obtain presentation from the patrons and collation from the bishops, with assurance, if they did not comply, that they would be ejected by military force. The consequence of this edict was, that about the end of 1662, no fewer than three hundred and fifty clergymen threw up their livings rather than do violence to their conscientious convictions. The valedictory sermons which they delivered, the high esteem in which they were held, and the destitute circumstances to which they were reduced, made their flocks rally round them, and listen to their instructions with a keener relish than ever. Hence arose the practice of holding meetings for public worship in

the fields, which became so obnoxious to Government, that an Act was passed prohibiting the ejected ministers from approaching within twenty miles of their former parishes, and declaring it sedition for any person to contribute to their support. The people disregarded the edicts of the drunken and infuriated man who at that time swayed the destinies of Scotland, and doggedly refused to abandon their old pastors and wait on the ministrations of the ignorant and subservient curates who now occupied their pulpits. Hence fines, imprisonments, tortures, and death, were resorted to; and the people on several occasions were goaded on to repel aggression, and assert their liberties and their rights, with arms in their hands.

From a list published by Wodrow, it would seem that, in 1662, the whole of the ministers of the Presbyteries of Lanark and Biggar left their pulpits. This is rather surprising, as some of them are understood to have had a strong leaning towards Episcopacy, and, in fact, to have been the creatures of the bishops. It may be that even these parties were indignant at the violent and tyrannical conduct of Middleton and his drunken associates, and were thus induced to throw in their lot with their brethren. The list of the members of the Biggar Presbytery is as follows:—Alexander Livingstone, Biggar; Anthony Murray, Coulter; James Donaldson, Dolphinton; Patrick Anderson, Walston; Robert Brown, Quothquan; Archibald Porteous, Covington; Alexander Bertram, Kilbucho; John Rae, Symington; John Crawford, Lamington; William Dickson, Glenholm; John Greig, Skirling; and Robert Elliot, Broughton. These men chose rather to throw themselves on the wide world, and to subject themselves to all the hardships of an unsettled life, and all the contumely and persecution of an infuriated Government, than do violence to their convictions of duty, and succumb to the dictates of tyranny. It is a matter of regret, that very little of their subsequent history is known. John Rae, minister of Symington, as mentioned by Wodrow, was apprehended in 1670 for preaching and baptizing in his own house, and sent to Edinburgh, where he was confined in the Canongate Tolbooth. After an examination he was sent to Stirling, and then ordered to confine himself in the island of Cumbray, where, in 1672, he was offered the indulgence, but refused to accept of it. He then joined

the field preachers, and a warrant having been issued for his apprehension on the 16th of July 1674, he escaped the fangs of his persecutors at the time by fleeing to Holland. On his return he was included in a proclamation against fugitives, and having been apprehended he was, in September 1684, sent a prisoner to the Bass. Anthony Murray of Coulter was held in high esteem by the Nonconformists. Wodrow states that he was a relative of the Duchess of Lauderdale, and that in consequence of this connection, he was selected by a number of influential ministers to present an address to the Duke in favour of the Covenanters. It is a tradition, we are told, that after leaving his clerical charge, he continued to reside in the parish of Coulter, and employed himself in practising the healing art, facetiously remarking, that he would now make the doctor keep the minister. Wodrow has a farther reference to an Anthony Murray, which, if this was the pastor of Coulter, shows that however he may have been employed, he had still the boldness to engage in ministerial work. For obstinately persisting in preaching the Word, he was apprehended and thrown into prison. While he lay in prison, his brother, the laird of Glendoich, was taken dangerously ill, and the Privy Council, as a favour, granted him liberty to visit his dying relative on condition of entering into a bond to return to his confinement on a specified day, under the penalty of 500 merks. It is known, at all events, that the Rev. Anthony Murray returned to his parish in 1672. On the 3d of September of that year, the Privy Council, in order to remedy the evils which, in their opinion, flowed from the numerous conventicles held throughout the country, passed an Act of Indulgence, by which permission was granted to a number of outed ministers to return to their respective parishes, and there to preach and exercise other parts of the ministerial function. Among those who took advantage of this Act were Anthony Murray of Coulter and John Crawford of Lamington. Both of these ministers, like the greater number of Presbyterians at the period, were decidedly averse to the practice prevalent in the Romish and Episcopal churches, of keeping holidays. It was enacted by Parliament that the 29th of May, the birthday of Charles II. should be observed as a holiday, and devoted to rest and the public and private exercises of religion.

These two Upper Ward ministers, even though they had accepted the Indulgence, would not keep this holiday in the manner prescribed, and, therefore, were summoned before the Privy Council on the 8th of July 1673, and fined in the amount of one half of their stipend for that year. In a paper containing a list of the grievances of the prelatie clergy in the diocese of Glasgow, presented to the Synod on the 22d October 1674, Messrs Murray and Crawford are charged with not confining their ministerial services to their own parishes, but with travelling through the country baptizing, catechising, marrying, and administering the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to people belonging to parishes under the care of the curates. Mr Murray was removed to Carstairs in 1677, and returned to Coulter in 1687. In the year following he was translated to Paisley, but was restored to Coulter in 1689, and died there on the 22d of March 1692, in the 63d year of his age, and the thirty-eighth of his ministry. He left £18 for the education of poor children in the parish of Coulter. Mr Crawford, who had in 1672 received William Baillie, another indulged minister, as his colleague, died on the 7th of August 1674, in the 60th year of his age and 30th of his ministry.

Patrick Anderson, after he left Walston, continued his ministrations in the open fields, and neither the defeat at the Pentland Hills, nor the severe edicts promulgated against field conventicles, deterred him from his labours. By the second Act of Indulgence, in 1672, permission was given to him to discharge the duties of his ministerial offices in the parish of Kilbirnie in Ayrshire, and afterwards at a place called Longdreghorn, but he does not seem to have availed himself of this liberty. On the 7th of March 1673, the Privy Council ordered all the ministers who had left their livings and were resident in Edinburgh, to enter into a bond not to hold conventicles in their houses, or otherwise to leave the city, and confine themselves at a distance from it of five miles. Three members of the Presbytery of Biggar, viz., Patrick Anderson, James Donaldson, and Alexander Barton, did not comply with this edict, and, therefore, were cited to appear before the Privy Council on the 12th of the same month. They stated various reasons for their conduct, and the Council in consideration of the inclemency of the weather and the badness of the roads, allowed

them to remain in town till the 1st of June, at which time they were to remove to places of confinement under the pain of imprisonment. Mr Anderson does not seem to have been disposed to give implicit obedience to the Council, for we find that, on Sabbath the 5th of November 1676, he conducted divine service in a house in Edinburgh, inhabited by Mrs Guthrie, widow of John Guthrie, minister of Tarbolton. The magistrates of Edinburgh getting notice of this violation of the law, proceeded to the house with a detachment of the guard, and dispersed the meeting. Several ladies, who were present, were afterwards severely fined. On the 3d of April 1678, Mr Anderson was brought before the Privy Council charged with having for some time previous kept conventicles in his house in Potterrow, and held communication with Messrs Welsh, Johnston, Williamson, and other intercommuned persons. He denied the charge, but he was, nevertheless, condemned to be sent to the Bass, unless he found caution under the penalty of 2000 merks to remove five miles from Edinburgh, and to converse with no other persons than the members of his own family. According to some accounts, he was actually immured in the dungeons of the Bass, but he appears to have been liberated previous to the Revolution, and to have been settled at Dalkeith. The people of Walston were much attached to him, and, therefore, on the 27th of June 1689, petitioned the Presbyteries of Biggar and Peebles then conjoined for advice how they could get him back to be their pastor. He appears to have duly reciprocated the attached fidelity of his old flock, for about the end of the year referred to, he left Dalkeith in rather an informal manner, and recommenced his ministerial labours at Walston; and here he continued till his death on the 22d July 1690.

The work of imposing fines for nonconformity was early commenced in the Upper Ward. Middleton's Parliament, which met at Glasgow in 1662, fined the parish of Biggar L.1071. 5s., Quothquan L.181, 2s. 6d., Walston L.308, 8s., Dunsyre L.177, 12s., Carnwath L.6739, 19s. 8d., Lanark L.5000, etc. Heavy fines were imposed on many individual gentlemen in the same district. Among others may be mentioned, Christopher Baillie of Walston, L.9600; William Brown of Dolphinton, L.1200; Andrew Brown of the same parish, L.600;

William Bertram of Nisbet, L.480 ; James Baillie, St. John's Kirk, L.240 ; Thomas Gibson, Quothquan, L.360 ; John Kello, there, L.240 ; Mure of Annieston L.1200 ; Joseph Learmont of Dolphinton L.1200 ; and John Braid, Hillhead, Covington, L.600.

The Covenanters who rose in arms, in 1666, in the south-west of Scotland, after capturing Sir James Turner at Dumfries, proceeded to the Upper Ward. They halted a short time at Douglas, and then marched to Lanark, where they listened to sermons preached by some of the clergymen who accompanied them, and with great solemnity and uplifted hands renewed the Covenants.

From the strong leaning of the people of Biggar and its neighbourhood in favour of the principles of the Covenant, and the intense indignation which they felt at the tyrannical measures of the Government, it is likely that some of them took part in this insurrectionary, or, as it may rather be called, defensive movement. We know that Major Learmont, proprietor of Newholm, in the parish of Dolphinton, and the Rev. Wm. Veitch, tenant in the Westhills of Dunsyre, and son of the Rev. John Veitch, for forty-five years minister of Robertson, joined the Covenanters at a hill above Galston, and took a leading part in their proceedings. Major Learmont was appointed to the command of one of the divisions of cavalry, and escorted Sir James Turner out of the town of Lanark, to protect him from the assaults of the inhabitants. The Covenanting army marched from Lanark to Bathgate in the midst of extremely stormy weather, and ascertaining that they were to receive no assistance from the inhabitants of the Lothians and the city of Edinburgh, they resolved to make a detour by the end of the Pentland Hills, and march to Biggar. Mr Veitch was sent in disguise to Edinburgh, to hold an interview with their friends in the city ; but he was apprehended and detained as a prisoner. On his expressing his readiness to march against the Whigs, he was less strictly guarded, and effected his escape, and thus witnessed the conflict at Rullion Green, and arrived that same night at the herd's house in Dunsyre Common. Major Learmont fought bravely on the field of Rullion Green. He commanded the party that defeated the second charge of

the enemy. General Dalziel, seeing his men give way, hasted forward a detachment to their rescue, when Major Learmont was attacked by four horsemen, and his horse was shot under him. He started to the back of a fold dyke, shot the first trooper that approached, mounted his horse, and escaped.

It was near the close of day when Dalziel advanced his whole army to the last charge ; and as his numbers were 3000 against 900, the poor Covenanters had no alternative but to scatter themselves among the deep defiles of the Pentland Hills, where they were safe from the pursuit of the cavalry, and where they were soon hid by the darkness of the night. Large numbers on the day following hasted to their homes by Carnwath and Biggar.

The Rev. James Kirkton, who, from 1655 to 1657, was one of the ministers of Lanark,* in his "History of the Church of Scotland," has brought a severe charge against the inhabitants of these towns for their cruelty to the poor distressed fugitives. His information, he says, was obtained at the spot, and therefore was entitled, as he insinuates, to the most implicit credit. His statements, which are deeply tinged with the superstitious notions that prevailed at the period, can, however, at the most, only apply to a few individuals, and not to the mass of the inhabitants. He refers to the subject more than once, but we will quote only one of his passages. He enumerates various reasons why the people listened more readily to the ministrations of the outed clergymen than of the curates, and among others gives the following, viz. : "Another reason was the strange judgments seen upon those who were or had been persecutors. It is well known and observed what happened those who injured the poor Whigs who fled from Pentland. In the Upper Ward of Clydesdale, when some of them fled through Carnwath, one of the townsmen carried some of them into the moss and murdered them. It was told by the people of the village to myself within a little time thereafter, that frequently a fire was seen to arise from that place in the moss where the murder was committed, and thereafter creeping overland, it covered the murderer's house. Himself, as I was told, perished, and his children are beggars to this day. What curses befell

* Kirkton, who was afterwards minister at Mertoun, and then of the Tolbooth Church, Edinburgh, died in 1699, in the 71st year of his age.

the people of Biggar who were equally guilty of this fact, and how poor Laurence Boe died in high despair, accusing himself of the secret murder of two, was well known, and as well remembered by the neighbours." It would be most interesting to us at the present day to know what the curses were to which Kirkton refers. They were, he says, well known at the time he wrote his history; but whatever they were, they are now utterly forgotten.

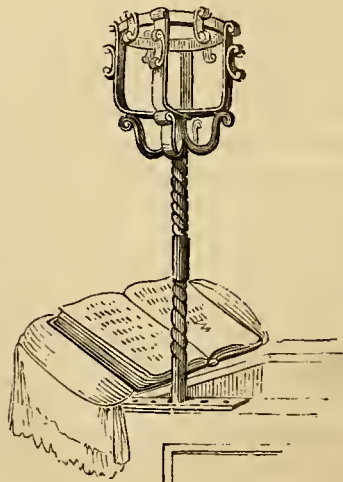
Mr William Veitch made a very narrow escape from being taken prisoner on the Friday after the battle of Pentland Hills. He left his house, Westhills, Dunsyre, to transact some business at the house of his landlord, the Laird of Weston, and the father-in-law of Major Learmont, and was surprised to find that a troop of Dalziel's dragoons had arrived there before him, and were in the act of surrounding the house. To have fled would have roused suspicion, and most likely led to an instantaneous pursuit. Being clothed in the dress of a peasant, his approach attracted no attention, so he came boldly forward to one of his neighbours, who was employed in holding three of the troopers' horses, and accosting him familiarly by name, inquired what he thought of the weather, and if there was likely to be a fall of snow. His neighbour with the same presence of mind addressed him by the name of Willie, and gave him two of the horses to hold. When the search was over, Mr Veitch, with his bonnet under his arm, held the stirrups to the dragoons, who rode off without entertaining the smallest idea who the person was that had given them assistance.

The curates who were thrust into the pulpits of the Upper Ward were, from all accounts, weak and despicable individuals; and some of them, particularly the curate of Carnwath, were known to lead profligate and licentious lives. The description given by Bishop Burnet of the curates generally, was, no doubt, applicable to those of the Upper Ward. "They were," he says, "the worst preachers ever I heard; they were ignorant to a reproach, and many of them openly vicious. They were a disgrace to their order and to the sacred function, and were indeed the dregs and refuse of the northern parts." Such preachers were not likely to recommend the cause of Prelacy, and induce the people to wait upon their ministrations. Some of the Upper Ward Churches appear to have been entirely

deserted. We may refer in this respect to the Church of Symington. The manse and church, in consequence of standing some time unoccupied, fell into a state almost of ruin. On the 21st of June 1676, Gavin Stevin and Hugh Telfer, masons and wrights, Biggar, at the instance of the curate, Robert Lawson, who, at that time, had most likely been newly appointed to the living, underwent a lengthened examination, on oath, before some clerical brethren, regarding the state of the manse and church. They declared that it would take 400 merks Scots to put the manse in habitable order, making it, as they said, "water tight and wind tight, with new theiking, glass windows, boards and cases, locks, sneckes, and slots, and casting the house without and within." In regard to the kirk, they reported that the west gable had slidden, and had a rift in it, and that if it were not helped it was likely to fall, and that very shortly; and that, as there was no glass in the windows, no pulpit, and no reader's desk, it would be necessary to supply them. The whole expenses for the repair of the kirk, it was estimated, would be £48 Scots. On the 5th of July following, Robert Lawson reported, at a meeting of his clerical colleagues, that after a search he had succeeded in finding the kirk box, the session book, the iron stancher, and the iron holder, in which the sand-glass stood;* and that the only thing now awanting was the key of the kirk box.†

* At that period, and for a century afterwards, a sand-glass was a common appendage to the pulpit. It appears to have been intended to indicate the length of time generally devoted to the performance of Divine Service. After the introduction of clocks into churches the sand-glasses began to disappear, and one of them is now seldom to be seen. We give a representation of the stands in which they were usually held, and which stood at the side, either of the pulpit or the precentor's desk.

† The only further fact that we know of Mr Lawson's history is that he was rabbled by the inhabitants of Symington at the Revolution.



The practice of attending field-meetings, or conventicles as they were called, was still obstinately maintained in the Upper Ward, as well as in many other districts of Scotland. The Parliament, in 1670, passed a severe enactment against these meetings. Every unauthorized person, who should preach, expound Scripture, or pray in any place, except in his own house and with his own family, was to be imprisoned till he found caution to the amount of 5000 merks, not to be guilty of a similar offence again, or otherwise agree to remove out of the kingdom altogether; but if he so officiated at a meeting in the fields, he was to suffer death and the confiscation of his goods. It was also enacted, that all persons who should attend such ministrations should be fined *toties quoties* in certain specified sums, according to their stations in life; and that these sums should be doubled if the ministrations were conducted in the open air. The fine of a landed proprietor was the fourth part of his annual rent; of a farmer or master tradesman, £25 Scots; of a cottar, £12 Scots; and of a servant, the fourth part of his yearly fee. Notwithstanding the severity of the Government, a number of conventicles were held in the neighbourhood of Biggar. The Rev. John Kid, who was taken prisoner at the battle of Bothwell Bridge, and executed at the Cross of Edinburgh on the 14th of August 1679, preached one day on the hill of Tinto, to a large assemblage of the inhabitants of this district. Patrick Walker, the packman of Bristo Port, Edinburgh, who wrote the lives of several Covenanting worthies, and who most likely was present on this occasion, tells us that Mr Kid, in the course of the service, gave out a part of the second psalm to be sung, and accompanied the reading of it with a commentary. When he came to the sixth verse, viz.,

“Yet, notwithstanding, I have Him
To be my King appointed;
And over Sion, my holy hill,
I have Him King anointed.”—

he exclaimed, with many tears, “Treason, treason, treason, against King Christ in Scotland. They would have him a King without a kingdom, and a King without subjects. There

is not a clean pulpit in all Scotland this day, curate nor indulged. Wherefore, come out from among them, and be separate, saith the Lord, and touch not these unclean things; and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Almighty."

Jacob Curate, who wrote the curious work entitled "Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence Displayed," published in 1740, says, that one of the Covenanting Divines in preaching one day by the side of Tinto, cried out with a loud voice, "What think you, sirs, would the curates do with Christ if they had him? They would e'en take him up to Tintoch tap, cut off his head, and hurl his head down the hill and laugh at it."

Tinto, situated in the midst of a populous district, and affording concealment and security in its deep declivities, was a favourite preaching place with several of the other heroes of the Covenant. Donald Cargill, who was in the habit of saying that he felt more liberty and delight in preaching and praying in the glens and wilds of the Upper Ward of Clydesdale than in any other place of Scotland, came to this district in the beginning of June 1681, after a tour through Ayrshire and Galloway, and intended on the Sabbath following to preach on Tinto. Mrs Baillie, the Lady of St John's Kirk, who professed a warm attachment to the Covenant and its champions, but who was looked on with suspicion by some of its more zealous and rigid partisans, as a person whose fidelity was likely to give way in the hour of trial, had begun to feel uneasiness at the frequent conventicles held in her neighbourhood. When she learned Cargill's design to preach on Tinto, she held a correspondence with some of the leading Covenanters in the country round; and it appears that they entered so far into her views as to permit her to issue an announcement, that the meeting on Sabbath would take place on a Common in the parish of Glenholm, at the back of Coulter Heights. Mr Cargill had taken up his abode in the house of John Liddell, at Heidmire, in the neighbourhood of St John's Kirk; but though communication could thus have been very readily held with him, he received no notice that the place of meeting had been changed. He rose early on the Sabbath morning, and going out to meditate in the fields, observed numbers of people travelling to the south. On learning from some of

them to what place they were going, he said, "This is the Lady's policy to get us at some distance from her house, but she will be discovered." He did not return to Mr Liddell's house to get breakfast; but being anxious that the great multitude from Biggar and the surrounding country, whom he understood were flocking to the place of rendezvous, should not be disappointed, he immediately set out on his journey. The day was very warm, and the road was long and difficult; the consequence was, that by the time he reached the sequestered spot where his friends were assembled, he was very much exhausted. Before he commenced his labours, a man went to a rivulet and brought him a drink of water in his steel bonnet, and supplied him with another draught in the same way between sermons; and these were all the refreshments which he tasted during the day. He discoursed on the 6th chapter of Isaiah in the forenoon, and in the afternoon delivered a sermon on the words in the 11th chapter of Romans, "Be not high-minded, but fear." We can easily conceive the thrilling effects that would be produced by religious discourses preached in a region so solitary and mountainous, and by the lips of a man so full of ardour and faith as Donald Cargill. Holmes' Common can never be surveyed without associating it with that great meeting.

A short time afterwards, Cargill preached his last sermon on Dunsyre Common, on the text, in the 20th verse of the 26th chapter of Isaiah, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers," etc. Walker, the packman, who was present, says, "He insisted what kind of chambers these were of protection and safety, and exhorted us all earnestly to dwell in the clefts of the rock, to hide ourselves in the wounds of Christ, and to wrap ourselves in the believing application of the promises flowing therefrom, and to take our refuge under the shadow of His wings, until these sad calamities pass over, and the dove come back with the olive leaf in her mouth."

After sermon, he did not leave the muir till it was dark, as he was afraid of falling into the hands of his enemies, who, he knew, were eager to apprehend him, and obtain the reward of 500 merks offered by the Government for his person. The Lady of St John's Kirk was present, and desired him to accept accommodation at her house; but he felt a great reluctance to comply, as he could not bring himself to regard her with

entire confidence, and was in the habit of saying, "Whatever end she might make, there would be foul wide steps in her life." Mr Walter Smith and Mr Boig, two lay gentlemen who had devoted themselves to the work of upholding the persecuted faith in Scotland, insisted that he would accept the invitation, and he so far yielded that he accompanied the lady to Covington; but refusing to go farther, he and Messrs Smith and Boig found accommodation in the house of Andrew Fisher, Covington Mill.

James Irvine of Bonshaw, a brutal individual, and a dealer in horses, having got a commission from the Privy Council to hunt down and apprehend all persons who attended field conventicles and were obnoxious to Government, and hearing that a great Covenanting meeting was to be held in the Upper Ward left Kilbride on Sabbath evening with a party of dragoons, and arrived about sunrise at St John's Kirk. He searched the house very closely; but finding none of the individuals of whom he was specially in quest, he proceeded to the Morris, or Muirhouse of Thankerton, the residence of a well-known Covenanter, Mr James Thomson. A fine opportunity was thus presented to the lady of St John's Kirk to apprise her friends at Covington Mill of their danger; but the good lady was too much paralysed with her own fears to cause anything of this kind to be done. Bonshaw, disappointed in not finding any of the leading Covenanters at Muirhouse, set off with his troop to the house of Andrew Fisher, and his spouse, Elizabeth Lindsay, at Covington Mill, and there he apprehended Messrs Cargill, Smith, and Boig. He was vastly elated with his success, and blessed the day that he had been born to find so rich a prize. He carried the prisoners to Lanark, and lodged them in the Tolbooth till he obtained refreshments; and then mounting them on the bare backs of horses, he tied Mr Cargill's feet below the horse's belly, with circumstances of great cruelty. In this posture he conveyed them hastily to Glasgow; and after halting a short time in that city, transferred them to the prison of Edinburgh. They were arraigned before the Court of Justiciary on the 26th of July 1681, found guilty of high treason on their own confessions, and condemned to be hanged next day at the Cross of Edinburgh, and their heads to be placed on the Nether Bow. This was accordingly done;

and thus their names were added to the roll of martyrs who have laid down their lives for opposition to tyranny and in defence of religious liberty. Irvine of Bonshaw, as is well known, a short time afterwards, was killed in a squabble with one of his drunken associates at the town of Lanark ; and it has ever since been considered by some persons as a special mark of divine vengeance, that he suffered punishment in the place where he had exercised his cruelties on Donald Cargill.

After this period Mrs Baillie, or, as she was usually termed, the Lady of St John's Kirk, fell into considerable odium with the more rigid of the Covenanters. It was rumoured that she had been accessory to the capture of her late friends at Covington Mill. The rumour, it appears, had even reached those men in their confinement in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, short as the time was which they were allowed to live. One of them, Walter Smith, in his dying testimony, as inserted in the "Cloud of Witnesses," however, exonerates her from that charge. In reference to this he says, "As to my apprehending, we were singularly delivered by Providence into the adversaries' hands, and, for what I could know, betrayed by no one, nor were any accessory to our taking more than we were ourselves. And particularly, let none blame the Lady of St John's Kirk." This lady, in the killing years that followed, actually, it is said, became a persecutor, and allowed no person to dwell on her lands unless they took the oath of abjuration, and attended the ministration of the curates. When Mr John Johnston in Grangehill of Pettinain, and Francis Leverance of Covington, two of her old Covenanting friends, waited on her to remind her of her solemn declarations in favour of the covenanted work of Reformation, and to remonstrate with her on her inconsistent and injurious conduct, she refused to hold conversation with them, and ordered the door to be shut in their faces. The dread of imprisonment and the forfeiture of the family estate had, no doubt, produced this change in her professions and deportment ; and this incident furnishes another illustration of the unhappy effects produced by persecution for religion's sake.

But two of the most remarkable religious meetings that took place in the Biggar district were held in the Castle of Boghall, under the personal auspices of the Dowager Countess

of Wigton, a daughter of Henry Lord Ker, and widow of John Fleming, Earl of Wigton. These meetings were largely attended by the inhabitants of Biggar and the country round, and addressed by various outed ministers, among whom may be mentioned James Greig, confined by an Act of the Privy Council to Carstairs; John Menzies, formerly minister at Car-laverock, but then living at Crawford; and Patrick Anderson, formerly of Walston, and confined at that time to Longdreghorn. So daring a contravention of the Act to which we have referred, of course attracted the attention of the tyrants who conducted public affairs in Scotland, and, therefore, the following persons were, at the instance of John Nisbet of Dirleton, his Majesty's advocate, summoned to appear before the Lords Commissioners and Lords of the Privy Council at Edinburgh, on the 25th of July 1672, viz., Anna, Countess of Wigton, James Crichton, John Kello, James Brown, John Dalziel, John Henderson, John and Laurence Tait, James Brown, wright, John Tod, mason, Alexander Gardiner, tailor, John Nisbet, and Alexander Smith, all residing in Biggar;—James Paterson, Carwood; James Crichton, Westraw; William Cleghorn, Edmonston; Alexander Story, there; William Thomson, Boghall; Malcolm Brown, Edmonston; James Cuthbertson, there; Peter Gillies, Skirling Waukmill; John Robertson, procurator, Lanark; John Watson, notar, Carnwath; Thomas Crichton, Wolflyde; James Glasgow, Whitcastle; John Tweedie, Edmonston; Robert Lohean, Skirling; William Forrest, there; John Newbigging, Carstairs; John Hutchison, Harelaw; John Lochie, Ravenstruther; Malcolm Gibson, Wester Pettinain; Ronald Spence, Thankerton; James Thomson, Muirhouse of Thankerton; and James Adam in Netherwarnhill. All of these persons, with one or two exceptions, obeyed the summons, and appeared in Edinburgh on the day appointed. The first person brought before the Privy Council was John Robertson of Lanark. He admitted that he had been at the conventicles held at Boghall; and being commanded to declare upon oath all that he knew regarding the persons who were present at these meetings, and the business that was transacted, he refused to do so, and therefore was ordered to be carried to prison, and there to remain until he should receive further sentence. The Privy Council very likely saw that it would be a difficult and

tedious matter to deal with so many offenders, and it was on this account, perhaps, that they appointed the Earls of Linlithgow, Murray, and Dumfries, a sub-commission, to examine the others, and to imprison such of them as would not become informers and give satisfactory answers, and to impose fines on those who were less resolute, and promised to attend no more conventicles in future. Fourteen of them, whose names deserve to be held in remembrance,—viz., James Crichton and John Dalziel, Biggar; James Paterson, Carwood; William Cleghorn, Malcolm Brown, and James Forrest, Edmonston; Peter Gillies, Skirling Waukmill; Thomas Crichton, Wolfclyde; James Glasgow, Whitcastle; James Lindsay, Netherwarnhill; James Thomson, Muirhouse; John Newbigging, Carstairs; John Hutchison, Harelaw; and Malcolm Gibson,—were then examined before the Committee, and as they resolutely refused to give the satisfaction required, they were condemned to suffer imprisonment. What the ultimate fate of these individuals was, and of the others who were arraigned on the same indictment, we have not been able to ascertain. Some of them were, no doubt, subjected to as heavy fines as they could bear, and others may have endured a long captivity on the Bass, or in the dungeons of Dunottar, or even may have been banished to the plantations of America. The Countess of Wigton was fined in the sum of 4000 merks, which she was ordered to pay to Sir William Sharp, his Majesty's Treasurer.

One of those persons, who attended the conventicles at Boghall, was Peter Gillies of the Waukmill of Skirling. His subsequent fate is well known to those who are conversant with the history of the Covenanting struggles. He had given refuge to some of the hard-hunted and oppressed preachers of the Covenant, sheltered them for a night under his roof, and supplied them with such viuctuals as his humble cottage afforded. This act of humanity had been reported to James Buchan, the curate of Skirling, and this professed servant of Christ was never at rest till he got Sir James Murray, the proprietor of Gillies's little tenement, to throw him and his family adrift on the world. After wandering about for some time, he settled at length in the parish of Muiravonside, in the county of Stirling. Gillies was none of those faithless and faint-hearted individuals that could

be daunted by persecution, and led to change their opinions and their practices to please the minions of power. He was still a staunch Presbyterian, and readily attended a conventicle, or befriended an outed minister, as often as an opportunity occurred. He thus incurred the resentment of Andrew Ure,* the curate of the parish in which he had settled; and in 1682 this worthy obtained a troop of dragoons to apprehend him, but at this time he happily escaped their fangs. He at length returned to his family, and continued to pursue his humble vocation till April 1685, when the curate caused another party of soldiers to apprehend him, and John Bryce, a weaver from West Calder. The soldiers treated him most brutally, and threatened to kill him before his wife, who a day or two previously had been delivered of a child. They searched his house, carried off everything that they could readily transport, and then hurried him away with them to the west of Scotland. On the 5th of May he was served with an indictment at Mauchline, charging him with having cast off the fear of God, and his allegiance and duty to the King; with having approved of the principles of rebellious traitors and blasphemers against God, and of the practice of taking up arms against the King and those commissioned by him; with adhering to the Covenant; and refusing to pray for his most gracious majesty the King. He was tried on these charges before Lieutenant-General Drummond and a jury of fifteen soldiers, found guilty, and condemned to be hanged next day at the Town-end of Mauchline. This sentence was accordingly carried into execution. No coffin was prepared for his remains; some of the soldiers and two countrymen dug a hole in the earth, and there deposited his body in the same state as it had been cut down from the gibbet. Thus died the once humble tenant of Skirling Waukmill, the friend of suffering humanity, the victim of relentless persecution, and the unflinching adherent of the covenanted work of Reformation.

Biggar and its neighbourhood furnished a contingent to the muster of Covenanters that took place, in June 1679, at Bothwell Bridge. The number of countrymen, who assembled on this occasion, was considerable, and they might have produced

* Ure, or Urie, was rabbled by his flock at the Revolution, and died at Edinburgh in 1707, in the 71st year of his age.

very important effects on the Government of Scotland, had they been commanded by proper officers, and not allowed themselves to be torn asunder by contentions regarding topics, the discussion of which, however important they might be, was completely out of place at such a juncture. On the 22d of June they were attacked by the royal troops under the command of the Duke of Monmouth, and completely routed. Many of the men of the Biggar district escaped. In the fugitive rolls of the period, we find the names of the following, among other persons, who either had been at the Battle of Bothwell Bridge, or had sheltered some of those who fled from that unhappy conflict, viz. : James Crichton ; Gideon Crawford, merchant ; John Gilkers, heritor ; Robert Aitken, merchant ; and Alexander Smith, weaver, all belonging to Biggar ;—John Fisher, Covington Mill ; Robert Brown, smith, Covington Hillhead ; James Thomson, Muirhouse, Thankerton ; James Weir, Lamington ; Andrew Gilroy, Walston ; and Hugh Sommerville, Quothquan.

The names of all the persons connected with the Biggar district, who were taken prisoners at Bothwell, cannot now be ascertained. The following have been preserved on account of the fate that ultimately befell them, viz. : John Rankin, Biggar ; and James Penman, James Thomson, and Thomas Wilson, Quothquan. The prisoners owed their lives to the clemency of the Duke of Monmouth. Some of the Royalists, and particularly Claverhouse, who was smarting from the defeat which he had, a short time before, sustained at Drumclog, urged that they should all be shot on the field ; but Monmouth, who had a leaning towards the Covenanters, and perhaps had received instructions to treat them with mercy, would not listen to such a barbarous proposal. Numbering in all about 1400 men, they were marched in a most deplorable state to Edinburgh, and confined like so many cattle in an enclosure called the Inner Greyfriars Churchyard. They were pent up in this place without any covering from the blasts and dews of heaven, and were forced to lie all night on the cold ground ; and any one that stirred or made a noise was liable to be fired at by the sentinels. Their allowance of food was four ounces of bread and a small quantity of water daily. Many persons in Edinburgh pitied their condition, and were

willing to contribute to their comfort ; but the food, clothing, and money which they sent, were, in many instances, not admitted, or appropriated by the sentinels to their own use.

After they had continued in this wretched state for some time, a proposal was made that they should sign a bond not again to take up arms against the King or his authority. Nearly a thousand signed this bond, and were set at liberty ; but the remaining four hundred obstinately refused to sign it, and no entreaty, nor even the report that they would all be put to death, could induce them to comply. Day after day they submitted to the most severe privations, and endured the most acute sufferings. As the rigours of winter drew on, the hearts of the authorities began a little to relent, and they were treated with more indulgence and humanity. A few huts were erected to shelter them from the inclemency of the weather, and a more ready access was given to their friends. The consequence was, that about a hundred of them effected their escape, either by climbing over the walls, or being disguised in women's clothes ; and a few more, at the earnest solicitation of some Presbyterian ministers, were induced to sign the bond. Their numbers were now reduced to 257 individuals. From the want of sufficient nutriment and exposure to the weather by day and night, their bodies were fearfully emaciated, and many of them were afflicted with acute diseases. It was understood that some of them were now rather disposed to submit to the requirements of Government ; but the Privy Council, irritated perhaps by their obstinacy, passed, on the whole of them, a sentence of banishment to Barbadoes. Early on the morning of the 15th November, after they had been confined in the churchyard nearly five months, they were marched to Leith, and put on board a vessel belonging to William Paterson, merchant, Edinburgh, where their sufferings, from want of water, food, and fresh air, and from being jammed together in a narrow hold, were worse than ever. They sailed from Leith Roads on the 27th November, and on the 10th of the following month, when passing the Orkney Islands, were overtaken by a storm, and the ship was ultimately dashed on the rocks. The captain had ordered the hatches to be locked and chained down ; and when the vessel struck he refused to open them, but provided for the safety of

himself and his men. The consequence was, that some time elapsed before the prisoners could get on deck. About forty of them, by means of boards, reached a place of safety, and the remainder found a watery grave amid the tempestuous surges of the Pentland Firth. Among those saved was James Penman, Quothquan; and among the drowned were James Rankin, Biggar, and Thomas Wilson and James Thomson, Quothquan. Biggar thus furnished at least one unflinching martyr in the cause of the Covenant, whose name is entitled to be held in remembrance in the annals of the town.

The late Dr Robert Simpson of Sanquhar, in his work entitled "Gleanings among the Mountains," relates an incident of the Covenanting times, which, he says, occurred at Biggar. It is to the effect that two brothers, of the names of Thomas and James Harkness, were apprehended in the wilds of Nithsdale by a party of dragoons, and conveyed to Edinburgh, where they were placed in confinement. By some means or other they contrived to escape, and, in returning to their native place, had occasion to pass Biggar. The good town, it seems, still possessed some of the persecutors spoken of by Kirkton, and, among others, the leader of the very party who had captured the two brothers. Resolving to give him a taste of the terrors which he was in the habit of causing to others, they obtained firearms, went to his house, and demanded to see him. His wife denied that he was at home, but a little boy betrayed the place of his concealment. He was instantly seized, dragged to the fields, and ordered to prepare for death. The brothers having blindfolded him with a napkin, caused him to kneel and offer up a prayer; and this being done, they presented their muskets and fired. Their intention, however, was not to kill him; so after the volley they plucked off the napkin from his eyes, and raised him in a state of almost entire insensibility to his feet. This event made a powerful impression on his mind. He began to reflect on his previous course of life, and was struck with its injustice, cruelty, and sinfulness. He ceased to be a persecutor, and entering on a new course of conduct, became an entirely altered man. How far this story may be founded on fact, we have no means of deciding.

Graham of Claverhouse, in course of his murderous raids

through the western shires of Scotland, paid occasional visits to the Upper Ward, and there exercised the cruelties for which, in all succeeding times, he has been so infamously distinguished. He was ranging up and down this district in 1685, when he met with James Brown of Coulter, fishing in the Clyde. He caused him to be searched; and a powder-horn having been found on his person, he denounced him as a knave and ordered him to be shot. He commanded six of his troopers to dismount and carry his sentence into execution; but the Laird of Coulterallers, who happened to be present, interceded in his behalf, and so his life was spared till next day. He was bound with cords and carried off to the south by the soldiers. He was ultimately confined in the Tolbooth of Selkirk, from which he contrived to escape, and thus eluded the fangs of that stern persecutor, who seldom felt much scruple in imbruing his hands in the blood of his fellow-men.


In order more thoroughly to overawe the people of Biggar and the country adjacent, a detachment of soldiers was stationed in the Castle of Boghall. These soldiers no doubt embraced every opportunity of exercising their cruel and tyrannical propensities on the poor and oppressed inhabitants, and carrying out the behests of a blind and infuriated Government. We find that the Committee on Public Affairs, on the 16th July 1684, wrote a letter to Sir William Murray of Stanhope, Sir Archibald Murray of Blackbarony, and John Veitch of Dawick, stating that they had been informed that conventicles had been held at Carnhill and Colston's Loup, in the county of Peebles, and complaining that these gentlemen had furnished no information regarding the persons who had been present, in violation of the terms of the proclamation of Council, in 1682. They were therefore ordered to make diligent search for, and to apprehend, both the preachers and hearers on these occasions; and to avail themselves in this work of the assistance of the garrison of Boghall.

The Covenanters in the Upper Ward, in spite of all the efforts of Government, kept up their meetings. By means of the Societies which were first formed in December 1681, they maintained a complete organization, and were, no doubt, regularly trained to the art of war, in order to be ready to take advantage of any favourable juncture that might arise, to

assert their claims. They carried on a continued correspondence with the Prince of Orange, mainly through Sir Robert Hamilton ; and when that Prince arrived in England, they lost no time in holding a great meeting, in the Church of Douglas, on the 29th April 1687, at which it was resolved in fourteen days to raise two battalions, each to consist of ten companies of sixty men each. The result of this step was the formation of a Regiment, which still exists, under the name of the 26th, or Cameronian Regiment, and which, on various occasions, has greatly distinguished itself by achievements on the battle-field.

CHAPTER XIII.

The North and South United Presbyterian Churches.

T was the remark of a shrewd individual, that Biggar has long been famed for the support which it gives to "divinity and diversion." It is certainly the case, that from the time of the Covenant downwards, the people of the Biggar district have been noted for the extent of their theological acquirements, their critical acumen in discussing abstruse points of faith, the strictness of their religious opinions and practice, and their strong dislike to the undue interference of the State with the Established Church. It was naturally to be expected, then, that the immediate descendants of the men who had contended and suffered in this district for the covenanted work of Reformation, would look with approving countenance on the stand made by the founders of the Secession Church against the errors of the times. They could not submit to see such defections as patronage restored, the Covenants despised, heretical opinions openly promulgated, vice and profligacy passing unrebuked, and a slavish subserviency to the ruling powers pervading the leaders of the Church, without feeling extreme sorrow and indignation, and applauding the men who stood boldly forward to expose and condemn them. This feeling was greatly deepened by the conduct of some of their own pastors, in reading from the pulpit a document regarding the apprehension of the persons concerned in the execution of Captain Porteous, on the 7th September 1736, in the Grassmarket of Edinburgh, and hence commonly called the Porteous Paper. This document was ordered by the Government to be read publicly by the Established clergy before their congregations, on the first Sabbath of each month, for a whole

year, under the penalty, in case of refusal, of being declared incapable, for the first offence, of sitting and voting in any Church Court, and for the second, of "taking, holding, or enjoying any ecclesiastical benefice in Scotland." This enactment was held by many of the clergy, and a large majority of the people, to be a daring and unwarrantable intermeddling by the civil magistrate with the rights and prerogatives of the church—in short, to be downright Erastianism. Many of the inhabitants of the Biggar district, at this period, therefore left the Established Church, and attached themselves to the Associate Presbytery, formed in 1733, and consisting at first of four ministers, viz., Ebenezer Erskine, Stirling; James Fisher, Perth; Alexander Moncrieff, Abernethy; and William Wilson, Kinclaven. It was augmented, in 1737, by the accession of the Rev. Thomas Mair of Orwell, and the Rev. Ralph Erskine of Dunfermline.

The Dissenters of Biggar and its neighbourhood, being far distant from the towns in which the fathers of the Secession were settled, could only listen to their ministrations by making long journeys and at rare intervals; and therefore they petitioned that some of their number would favour them with occasional visits, till such time as they were sufficiently organized, and could obtain the services of a settled pastor. In compliance with this petition, these worthy divines, in the midst of numerous engagements, found time to come at intervals to this district, and dispense the ordinances of religion to a congregation collected from many surrounding parishes. It was at length decided that an eligible place for the erection of a church was West Linton—a village eleven miles north-east from Biggar. Accordingly, Ralph Erskine and Thomas Mair, by order of the Presbytery, proceeded to West Linton, on Friday, the 24th of March 1738; and there, after sermon by Ralph Erskine, an election of elders took place, "by the lifting up of the hand." The elders thus chosen were then subjected to an examination; and on the Sabbath following were formally installed in their office. On that occasion both of the reverend gentlemen preached discourses to "a great and grave auditory," and they were afterwards gratified by learning that many persons present were much refreshed. In August 1738, Ralph Erskine, and James Fisher, then removed to Glasgow, were

sent on a missionary tour to the south of Scotland, and on the 30th of that month preached at West Linton, and baptized several children. In the autumn of 1739, Ralph Erskine, and the Rev. James Thomson of Burntisland, who had also joined the Secession, were engaged in another of these tours. On Wednesday, the 12th of September, Mr Thomson preached at West Linton, and dispensed the ordinance of baptism; and in the afternoon they rode to Symington, three miles to the west of Biggar, where the families, who had left the Established Church, had fixed the day following as a season of fasting and humiliation. Both the reverend gentlemen here preached impressive discourses to an audience whose descendants, in most cases, continue Dissenters to the present day. At length Mr James Mair was ordained the permanent pastor of the West Linton congregation, on the 29th of May 1740; and on this occasion the sermon was preached by the Rev. James Fisher, and was afterwards published.

For twelve or fifteen years the Seceders of Biggar and its neighbourhood waited on the ministrations of the Rev. James Mair, and Sabbath after Sabbath travelled to West Linton, though many of them resided twelve and fifteen miles distant. One of the most zealous Dissenters and constant attenders at West Linton, was Robert Forsyth, afterwards bellman and gravedigger, Biggar, and father of Robert Forsyth, the distinguished author and advocate. Robert went to Linton in all kinds of weather. Neither "summer's heat nor winter's snow" stopped his journey. One tempestuous Sabbath morning he rose early, as usual, and, in spite of the remonstrances of his mother, took the road. In passing up the town, he saw James Brown, joiner, another zealous Dissenter, and grandfather of the late Robert Johnston, merchant, Biggar, standing at his door and gazing on the sky, to discover any symptom of the speedy clearing of the weather. "Weel Jeemes," said Robert, "are ye no gaun east the day?" "As there's nae appearance of the wather rackin' up, I was thinkin' about stayin' at hame," said James. "Hoot, man," replied Robert, "Mr Mair wull think mair o' us if we gang on such a day as this, than if we gaed on twa or even three gude days." So saying, he took his way in the midst of the storm, by Candy, Sandyhill, Nick, Slipperfield Muir, and West Water to Linton.

A movement was at length set on foot to form a Secession congregation at Biggar. The members of Mr Mair's congregation at Biggar, Skirling, Walston, Libberton, and Glenholm, were joined in this movement by the persons in Symington, Covington, and Carnwath, who attended the ministrations of the Rev. David Horn at Daviesdykes, in the parish of Cambusnethan. The exact year in which the congregation was formed is not now known. It seems to have been a short time previous to the year 1754, as during that year a petition, craving a supply of sermon, was presented to the Edinburgh Secession Presbytery from the congregation of Biggar. The main cause which led to the formation of the Biggar congregation was, no doubt, the inconvenience of travelling so far to attend religious ordinances as West Linton and Cambusnethan; but minor causes seem also to have been at work, such as the erection of the Antiburgher meeting-house at Elsrickle, and the attempted violent settlement of Mr Haig in the Parish Church of Biggar. A Church having been built on a piece of ground immediately behind the north side of the High Street, the congregation proceeded, on the 16th of October 1760, to give a call to Mr Samuel Kinloch to be their pastor. This call Mr Kinloch thought fit to decline; and, therefore, the congregation, on the 7th of May 1761, gave a call to Mr John Low, who had studied divinity under Professor Fisher at Glasgow, and who had a short time previously been licensed to preach the Gospel. Mr Low accepted this call, and was ordained on the 30th of September, O.S. The members of the Edinburgh Presbytery present on that occasion were—the Rev. William Hutton of Dalkeith, the Rev. Archibald Hall of Torphichen, the Rev. James Mair of West Linton, the Rev. Mr Pattison of Edinburgh, and the Rev. Mr Kidston of Stow. The leading men in the congregation, and all of them holding the office of elder at the settlement of Mr Low, were—James Telfer, Whinbush; William Watson, Kirklawhill; James Brown, joiner, Biggar; James Steel, Elsrickle; James Sommerville, Carnwath; John Bertram, and Robert Wilson. Very little regarding these worthy men is now known: so quickly does the memory of even good and once prominent men fade away without the assistance of written records.

Mr Low was a faithful, laborious, and much respected minis-

ter. In the pulpit his appearance was commanding, his voice rich and powerful, and his delivery impressive. His discourses were pervaded by a strain of ardent piety. His theology was that of the severest Calvinism; and, of course, he was well versed in all the subtleties of that abstruse creed. It is worthy of notice, that at the time of his settlement he had a valuable collection of theological works. They consisted of 56 folio volumes, 44 quarto volumes, and 70 volumes of inferior sizes, all of a solid and standard character. The only relic of his library that we have seen, is the well-known controversial work on the origin and authority of episcopal church government, entitled "*Altare Damascenum*," etc., by the historian, David Calderwood. It has Mr Low's autograph on the margin, and is now in the library of Mr Sim, at Coultermains. Mr Low, shortly after his settlement at Biggar, entered into the marriage relation with a lady whose name was Janet Henderson. By this lady he had the following children:—Margaret, Helen, Robert, John, Janet, James, and Ebenezer. Mr Low continued to discharge his ministerial duties at Biggar for a period of forty-three years, and died on the 1st of November 1804.

The successor of Mr Low was the Rev. John Brown. He was the son of the Rev. John Brown, Whitburn, and Isabella Cranston, a native of Kelso, and was born on the 12th of July 1784. He studied general literature and philosophy at the University of Edinburgh, and theology at the Divinity Hall, Selkirk, under the direction of Dr Lawson. He was licensed to preach the Gospel, by the Presbytery of Stirling and Falkirk, on the 12th Feb. 1805, and after a short probation, received calls from Biggar and Stirling. The Synod, which at that time held the power of deciding in the case of competing calls, assigned him the charge of Biggar. He was ordained on the 6th Feb. 1806. The weather at the time was remarkably stormy; and the consequence was, that only three members of the Presbytery of Lanark attended on the occasion. Dr Harper of Leith, a son of the Rev. Alexander Harper of Lanark, at the jubilee services of Dr Brown, in Broughton Place Church, Edinburgh, on the 8th April 1856, said, "I have a boyish recollection of the event which you are met to commemorate, and of being almost, I cannot say altogether, a

spectator of Dr Brown's ordination. On the morning of that day I sat at the fireside wrapped up, and ready to be placed by my father in a nook of the conveyance in which he and a friend were going to the ordination at Biggar. There had been a heavy fall of snow through the night; and the friend I speak of used to remind me that there was a little face in the corner that had its own share of gloominess as well as the weather, when a messenger, who had been sent out to ascertain the state of the roads, reported that it was doubtful whether a horse and gig could pass. There was no help but to leave me behind." Mr Brown's own father preached the ordination sermon; and on the Sabbath following he was introduced by the Rev. James Ellis of Saltcoats. The congregation at Biggar, to which Mr Brown ministered, was characterized by great spiritual devotion and general intelligence. Some of the members were his equals, if not his superiors, in classical knowledge and literary attainments; while many of them were as deeply versant as himself in the abstruse tenets of Calvinistic theology, and in the history and principles of the religious body to which they belonged. He was thus stimulated, in the highest degree, to diligence in his preparations for the pulpit, and the diets of examination which he held in the houses of his members. He studied carefully everything that he delivered in public. He wrote out at full length, and mandated his discourses, prayers, and casual addresses. Besides the ministrations in his own pulpit, he was in the habit of preaching in barns and school-rooms in the adjoining villages, and not unfrequently in the open air. His son John, in his supplementary chapter to Dr Cairns' Life of his father, gives an anecdote illustrative of his achievements on his good grey mare in fulfilling an engagement of outdoor preaching. "He had," he says, "an engagement to preach somewhere beyond the Clyde on a Sabbath evening, and his excellent and attached friend and elder, Mr Kello, Lindsaylands, accompanied him on his big plough horse. It was to be in the open air on the river side. When they got to the Clyde, they found it in full flood, heavy and sudden rains at the head of the water having brought it down in a wild *spate*. On the opposite side were the gathered people and the tent. Before Mr Kello knew where he was, there was his minister on the mare swimming

across, and carried down in a long diagonal, the people looking on in terror. He landed, shook himself, and preached with his usual fervour."

He delivered a monthly lecture in his own church, the collection at which was expended in the education of poor children; and he was among the first who established a minister's library of costly and not readily accessible theological works—an institution of great importance to clergymen of limited means in country districts.* His little church was, every Sabbath, filled with an auditory that listened with profound attention and admiration to the clear, forcible, and impressive exposition of Scripture truth that proceeded from his lips. The old church was pulled down and a new one built; and a new manse was also erected in a more retired situation, on the south side of the town, finely overlooking the strath of Biggar and the Hartree Hills.

In August 1807, he married Miss Jane Nimmo, a daughter of Mr William Nimmo, surgeon, Glasgow. As her son, Dr John Brown, has justly said, she was modest, calm, thrifty, reasonable, tender, happy-hearted. She was his student-love, and is even now remembered in that pastoral region for "her sweet gentleness, and wife-like government." Their union was blessed with four children—two sons and two daughters. They enjoyed the greatest earthly felicity in each other's society; but cruel and envious fate snatched her from him in 1816. He mustered up courage to preach her funeral sermon, and descanted on her virtues and his own loss, amid the sobs and tears of an attached and sorrowing congregation. She was interred in Symington Churchyard, according to her own wishes; and her husband there erected a tablet to her memory.

From the high position to which Mr Brown attained in the Secession Church, he carried on, as might be expected, an intimate and constant intercourse with its leading divines. From many of them he received assistance on sacramental and other extraordinary occasions, and though he was naturally reserved and taciturn, yet they no doubt greatly enjoyed his society dur-

* The advantage of these libraries became so apparent that a movement was commenced in 1852 to establish one in connection with each manse in the United Presbyterian Church. It met with so much success that by the year 1863 no fewer than 180 had been established.

ing their brief sojourn at the Biggar Manse. His son John, in his Letter to Dr Cairns, after referring to some of his father's intimate acquaintance, says, "I am back at Biggar at the old sacramental times; I see and hear my grandfather, or Mr Horne of Braehead, Mr Leckie of Peebles, Mr Harper of Lanark, as inveterate in argument as he was warm in heart, Mr Comrie of Pennicuik, with his keen Voltaire-like face and much of that unhappy and unique man's wit, and sense, and perfection of expression, without his darker and baser qualities. I can hear their hearty talk, can see them coming and going between the meeting house and the *Tent* on the side of the burn, and then the Monday dinner, and the cheerful talk, and the many clerical stories and pleasantries, and the going home on their hardy little horses; Mr Comrie leaving his curl papers till the next solemnity, and leaving also some joke of his own, clear and compact as a diamond, and as cutting."

Down to the year 1815, Mr Brown confined himself, in a great measure, to the discharge of his pastoral duties at Biggar. It was the careful preparation of his discourses for the devout and intelligent people of the Biggar district that laid the foundation of that skill, that eminence in the exegetical and critical examination of Scripture, to which he afterwards attained. It was in Biggar, too, that he commenced that wonderful career of authorship, which is so marked a feature of his life. He was in the habit, at an early period of his ministry, of contributing occasional papers to the "Christian Instructor," then under the editorial care of the Rev. Andrew Thomson. In 1816, he started a periodical styled "The Christian Repository and Religious Register," which, besides his own articles, received contributions from Dr Lawson, Dr Peddie, Dr Marshall of Kirkintilloch, Dr Balmer, Berwick, Robert Johnston, Biggar, etc. Five volumes of this magazine had been published at the union of the Burghers and Anti-burghers in 1820, when it was merged into a conjoint periodical, called "The Christian Monitor." The "Repository" was ably conducted. Its papers were of a highly intellectual rather than a popular cast. To men of education and reflection they were most acceptable; and they can still be read with pleasure and profit. It is interesting to con them over, and think that every one of them was carefully revised in the

calm solitude of that retired manse, with its trim garden, standing behind the Silver-knowes of Biggar, and looking forth on the green mountains of Tweeddale.

Mr Brown's first separate publication at Biggar was "Strictures on Mr Yates's Vindication of Unitarianism." This was followed in succession by a volume of "Sacramental Discourses;" by a sermon preached before the Edinburgh Missionary Society, entitled, "The Danger of Opposing Christianity, and the Certainty of its final Triumph;" by "Remarks on the Plans and Publications of Robert Owen, Esq., New Lanark;" by "Three Discourses on the Character, Duty, and Danger of those who Forget God;" by a volume "On Religion, and the Means of its Attainment;" by "Notes of an Excursion into the Highlands of Scotland;" and "A Sermon on the State of Scotland in reference to the Means of Religious Instruction." The statements contained in this last-mentioned discourse, which was preached before the Associate Synod on the retirement of Mr Brown from the office of Moderator in April 1819, were strictly accurate, and all parties have long since admitted their truth; but at the time of its delivery and publication, a considerable party in the Established Church were unwilling to acknowledge that their ecclesiastical institution was chargeable with any defects, and were indignant at any one that attempted to point them out. Hence the Rev. Alexander Craik of Libberton, near Carnwath, and others, opened a heavy battery on Mr Brown for his strictures; but he bore the assault with wonderful equanimity, and lived to see very extraordinary efforts made within the pale of the Establishment itself, to remedy the very evils of which he had complained.

Mr Brown, in the latter part of his ministry at Biggar, was very much occupied with labours of a more public and extensive kind than the sphere of that town afforded. He preached the anniversary sermons of several public institutions, and he was sent out on various missionary tours. On one occasion he visited England, along with the Rev. A. O. Beattie, then Burgher minister at Kincardine, and the Rev. David Dickson and the Rev. Henry Grey, both of the Established Church, Edinburgh. They returned with a subsidy of L.3000. In 1820, on the death of Professor Lawson, Mr Brown was nominated as one of the candidates for the vacant Divinity Chair;

but the choice ultimately fell on Dr Dick, Glasgow. In 1817, he refused a call to the congregation of North Leith; but in 1822, receiving a call from the congregation of Rose Street, Edinburgh, the Synod decided that he should accept it; and he took farewell of his Biggar flock in a sermon which he preached from 1 Cor. xv. 1-4. On the occasion of his jubilee, in 1856, he thus referred to the congregation of Biggar:—
 “A more cordial pastoral relation, I believe, never existed. I respected them for their Christian intelligence and worth, and loved them for their unaffected kindness. They made abundant allowance for my youth, and showed that peculiar kind of affection which is cherished by the mature Christian for the young disciple; for a large proportion of the congregation, when I went to them, were beyond the midst of life, experienced in religion as well as stricken in years. I had great advantages for study; and, I hope, did not entirely neglect them. The acquisitions made in my first charge lay at the foundation of any measure of usefulness to which I may have attained in other situations. Biggar was much endeared to me as the scene of very sweet enjoyments and very deep sorrows. ‘The dews of youth’ lay heavy on these scenes, and their recollection refreshes the heart. It certainly was in my heart to live and die with my people there; but the Head of the Church ordained it otherwise. My connexion with that congregation was not dissolved with my own hand. We parted in sorrow, but in peace. Long before I became their minister, their former pastor, the Rev. John Low, a man of a warm temper but kind heart, said to his friend, my father, speaking of his own ministerial life, ‘We have had our brangles; but they are a sonsy, kindly folk.’ This is a true saying. I found them ‘a sonsy, kindly folk;’ but we never had any brangles.”

Mr Brown, after leaving Biggar, pursued a successful career of public usefulness. In 1839, he was translated to the congregation of Broughton Place; in 1830, received the degree of D.D. from Jefferson College, United States; and in 1834, was appointed Professor of Exegetical Theology to the religious body with which he was connected. In 1835, he entered into the relation of marriage with Miss Margaret Fisher Crum, only surviving daughter of Alexander Crum, Esq. of Thornliebank,

near Glasgow; and by this lady he had one son and two daughters. During the latter part of his life he published, in rapid succession, a number of those valuable expositions of Scripture which he had sketched at Biggar, and which he had perfected during his succeeding pastorates and his professorship in Edinburgh. His separate publications are numerous, amounting to upwards of fifty. They will long be held in esteem by those who value correct sentiment, clear and vigorous expression, and extraordinary critical acumen. He died at his house, Arthur Lodge, Newington, Edinburgh, on Wednesday, 17th October 1858, and was interred in the New Calton Burying-ground, beside his second wife, who had predeceased him several years.

Dr Brown's successor in the Associate Congregation, Biggar, was the Rev. David Smith, who was born in the year 1792, in the village of Rattray, near Blairgowrie, Perthshire. In 1807 he went to London, and remained there till 1815. He had now resolved to devote himself to the work of the holy ministry, and with this view he returned to Scotland, and attended two sessions at the University of Glasgow, and one—that of 1817-18—at the University of Edinburgh. In August 1817 he entered the Divinity Hall of the Associate Synod, then under the charge of Professor Lawson of Selkirk. The Professor died before Mr Smith had finished his theological course, and he completed it in September 1821, under Dr Dick, Glasgow. He was licensed to preach the Gospel in December of that year, and received a call from the congregation of Biggar in the spring of 1823. This he thought fit to accept, and was ordained on the 19th of August following. He married Janet Brown, a daughter of the Rev. John Brown of Whitburn; and by her he has had six children—three sons and three daughters. In 1850, the College of Dartmouth, United States, conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. He has received calls to other congregations, but his resolution appears to be to live and die with his attached flock at Biggar. At the meeting of the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church in May 1862, Dr Smith was unanimously elected Moderator of that body, and held this office for one year.

In the discharge of his duties as a pastor, Dr Smith has been

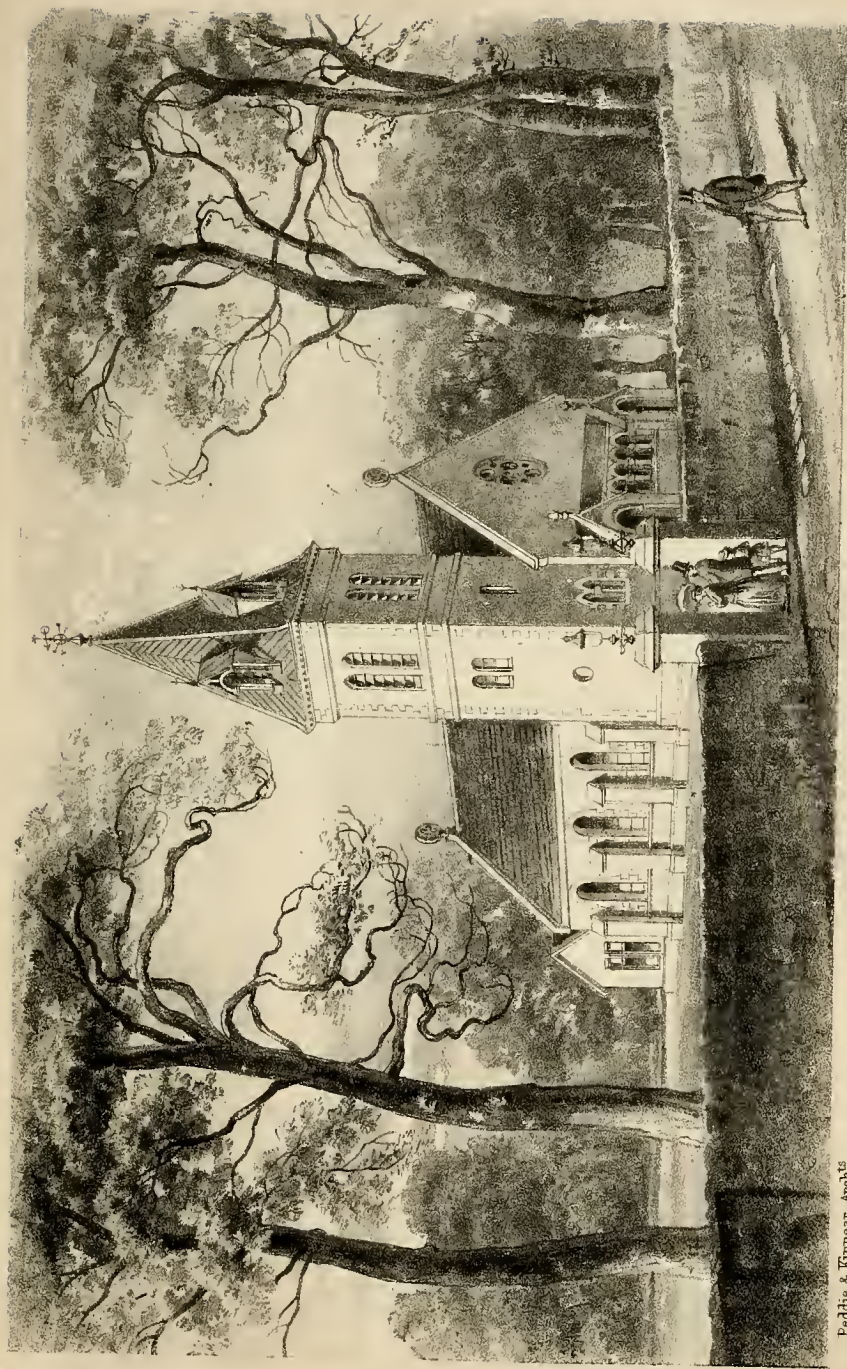
most faithful and laborious. He has taught the word of life from the pulpit with earnestness and power; he has been no stranger in the domiciles of his flock, praying in the family circle, or by the bedside of the sick and dying, and raising their thoughts to Him who has the issues of life and death in His hand, and who makes every event contribute to His glory; and he has taken no lukewarm interest in the condition and instruction of the young, but has laboured assiduously to furnish them with the knowledge that is profitable for the life that now is, and that which is to come. In the quiet seclusion and retirement of the Secession manse he has found time to compose and give to the world the following works:—"Devotional Psalter;" "Sacramental Manual;" "Chamber of Affliction;" "Token of Remembrance for Children;" "Golden Sayings;" "Memoirs of the Rev. John Brown, Whitburn;" "Memoirs of the Rev. William Fleming, West Calder;" "Memoirs of the Rev. Charles C. Leitch, India;" Tracts on Baptism and the Lord's Supper; and Sermons on "How Old art Thou?" and on "Prosperity and Peace, or the Church and the World of the Last Days." These various works not only testify to the diligence of Dr Smith, but to his zeal and ability in promoting the cause of his Divine Master, and in contributing to the gratification and improvement of his friends and the world at large. Old age has now laid its withering and enfeebling hand on this excellent man and laborious divine. He has of late been unable to undertake the full discharge of his ministerial duties, and the consequence is that a movement is on foot to obtain an assistant and successor.

On the 15th October 1861, a very interesting and gratifying meeting took place in Dr Smith's church. This was the celebration of the centenary of the settlement of its first pastor the Rev. Mr Low. On this occasion, the Rev. Dr Cairns of Berwick preached a sermon in the forenoon; and in the afternoon a soiree was held, at which Dr Smith presided, and gave a sketch of the rise, progress, and present state of the congregation under his charge. He was then presented by Mr John Archibald, president of the congregation, with a purse containing 135 sovereigns, as a testimony of respect for his long and faithful services. Addresses were afterwards delivered by a

number of gentlemen, among whom were the following natives of Biggar :—John Brown, M.D., Edinburgh ; Dr William Johnston, Limekilns ; Dr John Brown Johnston, Glasgow ; the Rev. William Scott, Balerno ; and the Rev. Robert Johnston, Arbroath.

Another interesting event connected with this congregation was the erection of a new Church. The old Church, which was built in 1806, was found to require extensive repairs and alterations to render it comfortable, convenient, and secure. It was very much hemmed in by surrounding buildings, and the entrance to it from the Main Street was through a narrow pend or close, and, on these accounts, it could not be satisfactorily improved without great expense. It was, therefore, resolved to build a new one on a different site. The attainment of a piece of ground in a suitable locality was found to be a matter of considerable difficulty. An eligible spot existed on the east side of the Corn Exchange, being in the centre of the town and readily accessible, but so much opposition was made by some parties to the occupation of this space with a church, that the idea of obtaining it for this purpose had to be abandoned. Application was at length made to the late Right Hon. Clementina Elphinstone Fleming, viscountess Hawarden, as heiress of entail of the lands and estate of Wigton, to grant a feu disposition of the Moat Park for the erection of a Church, a Manse, and a Schoolhouse. This application was successful. The ground thus obtained is very suitable for the purpose intended. It is ample in extent, central in position, free from all obstructions, commands a fine view to the north and south, and is skirted on the east by a row of the finest beech and elm trees to be found in the country.

The plans of the new edifice were prepared by Messrs Peddie and Kinnear, Architects, Edinburgh, and the foundation stone was laid on the 26th of June 1865. On that occasion the congregation, along with a number of ministers and friends from a distance, assembled in the old Church, when an eloquent discourse was delivered by Dr J. B. Johnston, Duke Street, Glasgow, on Luke xv. 2. The whole company was then formed in processional order, and headed by Dr Smith, the pastor of the congregation, walked to the site of the new building, when the cxviii. Psalm was sung, and an impressive



Peddie & Kinneear, Arch^{ts}

Schenck & Son, Lithog^{rs} Edin^g

MOAT PARK CHURCH, BIGGAR.
(REV DR SMITH'S)

prayer was offered up by the Rev. Doctor. Several documents and coins having been deposited in the cavity of the stone, the formalities usual on such occasions were gone through, and an able and appropriate address was delivered by W. G. Mitchell, Esq. of Carwood, a leading member of the congregation. After giving three cheers for the continued success of the undertaking, the proceedings terminated.

The Church was opened for divine service on Wednesday the 27th of June 1866. The attendance on that occasion was large, and comprised many of the local gentry, a number of clergymen of different denominations, &c. A talented and impressive discourse was delivered by Dr Cairns of Berwick on the 8th and 9th verses of the 55th chapter of Isaiah. The collection amounted to £211, which, with the sum previously collected, was sufficient to defray the whole expenses of the building, amounting to £1400. A dinner and a soiree afterwards took place, both of which were largely attended, and at which a number of most interesting addresses were delivered. One of the best and most characteristic was given by Dr John Brown Johnston, who, in the course of his remarks, introduced a poetical effusion in a very happy vein, in which he contrasted the past and present state of the town. A further sum of nearly £700 has since been expended in purchasing a bell, in erecting a vestry and session house, in lighting, heating, and varnishing the interior of the Church, and making sundry external improvements.

The whole proceedings connected with the erection of the new Church reflect the greatest credit on the members of this congregation, and entitle them to be held up as patterns of zeal and liberality in the important work of Christian instruction and evangelization. The Church, which they have erected, from the neat and tasteful style of the architecture, the commanding site which it occupies, and the light and airy appearance of the interior, is the theme of general admiration.

A gentleman, who was for nearly thirty years a member of this congregation, deserves to be noticed. This was the well-known James Meikle. Mr Meikle was born at Carnwath on the 19th of May 1730. From his earliest years, he was of a serious and devout turn of mind, and spent much of his time in secret prayer and reading the Scriptures. In his fifteenth

year he heard a sermon delivered by one of the Secession fathers, and this made so strong an impression on his mind, that he was led to make inquiries regarding the opinions and proceedings of the new sect. The result was, that he joined Mr Horn's church at Daviesdykes, and continued a staunch adherent of the Secession Church ever afterwards. The leading aim of his early years was to be a preacher of the Gospel; but the poverty of his family, and the death of his father in 1748, formed an insuperable barrier to the attainment of his wishes. Through the efforts of a gentleman, who took an interest in his advancement, he was, at one time, elated with the hope of enjoying a bursary at one of our universities; but he was doomed to disappointment as soon as it was known that he was a Seceder. He therefore devoted himself to the study of medicine; and soon afterward commenced practising in Carnwath as a surgeon and apothecary, with the view of earning a subsistence, and procuring means for the prosecution of his theological studies. His income from the profession on which he had now entered was small and precarious, and, therefore, he formed the resolution of going to sea, and serving as a surgeon's mate on board of a man-of-war. After various disappointments, he left Carnwath on the 10th of March 1758, and having passed an examination at Surgeons' Hall, London, was appointed second surgeon's mate to the "Portland," a 50-gun ship, lying at Portsmouth. Mr Meikle was now introduced to scenes which his soul utterly abhorred. The officers and crew, being men of immoral habits, were constantly guilty of profane swearing, excessive intoxication, gross debauchery, and Sabbath profanation. Amid all the wickedness by which he was surrounded, he nobly maintained his integrity, and found time to compose a great part of "The Traveller," "Solitude Sweetened," "The Secret Survey," etc., which were afterwards published, and which will long preserve his name among our Scottish worthies. He continued in the "Portland" four years. During that time he visited various parts of the world, and was present at two engagements, in which victories were gained over the French.

Mr Meikle returned to Carnwath on the 24th March 1762, and immediately joined the newly-formed congregation at Biggar. He attended regularly every Sabbath, and thus in

going and returning had to travel a distance of fourteen miles. He seems to have enjoyed great pleasure in meditating on divine things on his journeys to and from the church. In reference to this exercise, he on one occasion says, "It was a sweet day, and no disturbance but from a wandering heart;" and on another, "I had pleasure in meditation: the sermon was divine and edifying." On the 18th of August 1779, he married Agnes Smith, daughter of a farmer in the neighbourhood of Carnwath. She belonged to a small body of Anti-burghers, who, previous to 1760, had erected a chapel at Elsrickle, a village about midway between Biggar and Carnwath, but lying a little to the east of the direct road. He conducted his wife on Sabbath morning to this little Anti-burgher chapel, and, after worshipping at Biggar, returned by that village in the evening, and accompanied her home. It was in the same spirit of toleration and liberality that, on several occasions, he exerted himself to procure pecuniary contributions for the support of the Rev. J. Anderson,* the pastor of the little flock of which his wife was a member. Mr Meikle was ordained an elder of the Biggar congregation in July 1789, after he had been twenty-seven years a member, and held this office till his death, which took place on the 7th December 1799.

Shortly after the union of the two kingdoms, the State began to impose fetters on the Church of Scotland, with a view of checking its free republican spirit and constitution. These, in course of time, introduced a state of laxity, subserviency, and degradation, that made a departure from the doctrinal standards of the Church appear an offence less heinous than the violation of an ecclesiastical or legislative act, however unjust and unwarrantable it might be. This State interference, and the corruption it engendered, have lain at the foundation of all the secessions which have taken place in Scotland for more than a century past.

The body of Christians that at one time existed, called the

* The Rev. J. Anderson was interred in Walston Churchyard. His grandson, Mr John Anderson, merchant, Bo'ness, a few years ago erected a stone at his grave, on which he stated that his grandfather was thirty years minister of the Chapel at Elsrickle, that he was eminently useful not merely as a clergyman but as a surgeon, and that, in his benevolent labours, he was cordially assisted by his spouse, Agnes Bryson.

“Relief,” had their origin in the exercise of the law of patronage, which had been re-imposed on the Church in the reign of Queen Anne. Captain Philip Anstruther, in 1749, issued a presentation to the parish of Inverkeithing, in favour of the Rev. Andrew Richardson, minister of Broughton, in the Presbytery of Biggar. The parishioners of Inverkeithing, almost unanimously, opposed the settlement of Mr Richardson, and on this account the Presbytery of Dunfermline refused to take the usual steps to install him in that charge. This led to a course of rigorous and summary proceedings in the superior Church Courts, which ended in the deposition of the Rev. Thomas Gillespie, minister of Carnock, in 1752. Mr Gillespie, the Rev. Thomas Boston, Jedburgh, and the Rev. Thomas Colier, Colinsburgh, Fife, on the 22d October 1761, constituted themselves into a Presbytery of Relief.

The Relief congregation, Biggar, had its origin in the violent settlement of a minister in the Parish Church. The Rev. John Johnston having died on the 15th of October 1778, a presentation to the vacant charge was issued in favour of Mr Robert Pearson, probationer. At a meeting of the Biggar Presbytery, on the 25th of March 1779, the presentation was laid before the members by Bailie Carmichael, and sustained; and the presentee was instructed to preach, once before the Presbytery, and twice before the people. Mr Pearson obeyed; but his discourses gave so little satisfaction, that, without any formal meeting, or concerted resolution, the people came to a unanimous determination to abstain from any concurrence in his call. The Presbytery delayed taking any further steps till the 6th of July, to see if any one would move for the moderation of a call; but, as no person came forward, the Court fixed the 30th of July for that purpose. On this occasion the Moderator asked several times, if any parishioner present was disposed to subscribe the call. But no one would either put pen to paper, or give an oral assent; and, therefore, it was decided that the call should lie in the clerk's hands for some time, to obtain subscriptions, even in a private way. On the 19th of October not a single name had been appended; and, therefore, the Presbytery finding themselves in a dilemma, resolved to apply for advice to the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale. The Synod did not advise the Presbytery to proceed to a set-

tlement in the circumstances, but requested the Presbytery to deal with the people, in order to induce them to accept of the presentee. The people of Biggar were indignant at this recommendation, as they held that the Presbytery should have received instructions to deal with the presentee as well as with themselves, so that he might not persist in thrusting himself on a flock, who, to a man, were opposed to his settlement. Six months elapsed before any further steps were taken publicly; but, in the interim, great efforts were made to obtain concurrents to the call, either by fear or favour. At a meeting of the Presbytery, on the 9th of May 1780, Mr James Saunders, writer, Edinburgh, appeared as agent for the patroness and the presentee, and laid on the table the result of these efforts, in the shape of letters of adherence to Mr Pearson from four non-resident heritors—viz., the Hon. John Elphinstone, General James Lockhart of Lee, Geo. Brown of Heiston, and Charles Brown of Coulston,—one non-resident feuar, and four or five individuals, dependants on the patroness. The despicable amount of support thus obtained, and the resolute opposition of the people, staggered the members of Presbytery, and made them refuse to proceed further with the settlement. The agent of the presentee, therefore, protested, and intimated his intention to carry the case by appeal to the ensuing General Assembly. It accordingly came before the Supreme Court on Monday the 29th May. It was felt to possess a somewhat singular character, as, properly speaking, there was only one party—the presentee—with his four or five resident supporters; while the whole of the other adherents of the Church made no appearance, but stood doggedly aloof, and did not offer even any tangible objections. It, nevertheless, gave rise to a long and keen discussion, and at length the following motion was submitted, viz.: “To remit the case to the Presbytery, and enjoin them to moderate in a call to the presentee, *de novo*, betwixt that time and the 1st of October next, and to proceed towards the settlement according to the rules of the Church.” A counter motion was then proposed; “That the Assembly do sustain the concurrence to the presentee; appoint the Presbytery to proceed towards a settlement of the presentee, with all convenient speed, according to the rules of the Church; and empower the Commission,

in November, to judge in any question that may be regularly brought before them concerning the settlement of the parish, by complaint, reference, or appeal." These motions were put to the vote, when 77 members supported the first, and 85 the second, and judgment was given accordingly. Against this decision twenty-eight members entered a protest, and afterwards gave in a paper containing the reasons that induced them to take this step.*

On the 30th of June the Presbytery of Biggar met, when Bailie Carmichael appeared, and presented a mandate, craving that the Presbytery should proceed with the settlement of the presentee. Mr Pearson, accordingly, was subjected to trials for ordination; and these having been sustained at a meeting of the Presbytery in September, his ordination was fixed to take place on the 28th of November, the anniversary of the battle of the Pentland Hills.

The Rev. Thomas Gray of Broughton was appointed to serve the edict on the people, and the Rev. David Dickson of Libberton, to preach and preside on the occasion of the ordination. Against this step John Gladstone, one of the elders, tabled a protest, signed by himself, John Black, and John Wilson, elders; and by Richard Lithgow and William Aitken, parishioners. The protesters stated, that as the rights of society, both civil and sacred, to choose their rulers and representatives had always been held sacred and inviolable, they could not sit entirely silent, and see themselves deprived of all choice, voice, or hearing, by having a minister intruded upon them, in the most arbitrary manner, by the lordly exertion of Church power, and in opposition to all the Acts of the Church of Scotland since the Reformation. They then referred to the Acts of the Church against the intrusion of ministers, and declared that the proceedings in this case left the parishioners nothing but implicit obedience and subjection, and thus made them mere nullities; that they subverted the constitutional principles of the Church and good order; that they were the fruitful cause of debates, schisms, and divisions, and plainly tended to mar the success of the Gospel. On these grounds they, in their own name, and in the name of

* Appendix No. III.

all who should adhere to them, entered their protest against the steps proposed to be taken to settle Mr Pearson.

The people were now greatly incensed. Threats were freely used that the proceedings at the ordination would be prevented by violence. Several females had declared their intention of providing themselves with "lapfuls" of stones, and pelting the Presbytery so soon as they made their appearance in the Kirkstyle.* On the other hand, a rumour prevailed that a troop of dragoons would be brought from Edinburgh, to protect the members of Presbytery in the discharge of their duties. Everything betokened that the 28th of November would be a day of great commotion in the little town. The excitement was still further increased by the conduct of the Rev. Mr Dickson of Libberton. He caused a *pro re nata* meeting of the Presbytery to be held on the 25th of September; and there positively and solemnly declared that he would not preach and preside at Mr Pearson's ordination. He ended his statement by saying, that in the event of the Presbytery still insisting on his performance of the duty which they had assigned him, "I will be reduced to the painful necessity of immediately giving in a resignation of my charge and office as minister of Libberton, which appears to me the most respectful manner of preventing any further trouble to the Presbytery." The members of Presbytery were placed in a complete dilemma. None of them were prepared to incur the odium and brave the fury of the Biggar people, by taking an active part in the obnoxious settlement. It was in the end agreed, that a hint should be given to the presentee, that it would be necessary for him to bring some of his clerical friends from a distance to perform the chief part in his ordination. He accordingly arrived at Biggar on the evening of the 27th of November, along with the Rev. James Steele† of Cockpen, and

* The only person who showed an utter indifference to these proceedings was Jenny Minto of the Mossie. Jenny said that she cared naething for a' this fuss and protestin'; for her ain pairt, though my Lord Elphinstone pat ane o' his dougs in the poopit, she wad aye gang to the auld kirk.

† James Steele was ordained at Cockpen in 1768. He demitted that charge in 1787, to accept a benefice in Jamaica. He died on the 17th February 1790, in the 48th year of his age and 22d of his ministry.

the Rev. Thomas Whyte of Liberton, near Edinburgh.* At the same time, according to report, a detachment of dragoons took post a few miles from the town, in order to be ready next day in case of an attempt to prevent the settlement by violence.

Next day a meeting of Presbytery was constituted in a small apartment of one of the inns of the town. The place was immediately crowded to suffocation, and numbers were unable to gain admittance. The moderator called on the parishioners, if they had any objections to the presentee, to state them at once. John Gladstone, in name of the parishioners, stepped forward and presented a number of objections; but the Presbytery decided that they could not be sustained, as none of them inferred immorality of life, or heterodoxy of doctrine. A protest and appeal to the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale was next tabled; but the Presbytery, considering that these were now irrelevant, resolved to proceed to the settlement. The parishioners, in a body, therefore, left the apartment, and at the same time the Church of their forefathers. They formed themselves into a congregation, and obtained a supply of sermon from the Synod of Relief.

The proceedings in this case led to the publication of a poem of considerable length, but of little literary merit. Copies of it are now extremely rare. It details the proceedings under the similitude of a marriage;—the bride being the flock, the bridegroom the presentee, and the attendants or witnesses the Presbytery. The presentee or bridegroom, and the two strange priests that were to officiate at the nuptial ceremony, are described as starting on their journey from the east, and halting by the way at the alehouse of Harestanes, to fortify themselves with potations of strong drink to enable them to brave the dangers to which it was apprehended they would be exposed at Biggar; and to spend time, so that they might enter the town after nightfall, and thus elude the assaults of the old

* The Rev. Thomas Whyte, who belonged to the family of Whyte, Stockbriggs, Lesmahagow, was settled at Liberton in 1752, and died in 1789. One of the most noticable events of his life was his being in the playhouse at the representation of the "Douglas Tragedy" in 1756. For this alleged misdemeanour he was suspended for six weeks. It is said that he owed this moderate punishment to the plea that he kept himself as much concealed in the Theatre as he could to avoid giving offence.

women, who had threatened to salute them on their entrance with a shower of missiles. Addressing the landlord,

“ Make haste, they cry, bring us a gill,
Till Phœbus get behind the hill;
For we'll stay here till night is gone,
Because we love to walk unknown.”

The landlord, taking them to be gipsies of the better class, was rather alarmed at this intimation, and, therefore, was very well pleased,

“ When just as soon as it turned gray
They sought their horse and got away.”

The marriage then takes place, amid the protests, appeals, and lamentations of the bride. Her language is strong and furious. Addressing the officiating priests, she says,

“ Your works proclaim, and loudly tell,
That you're but sons of Belial,
To wreath so hard upon my neck
A yoke from hell made by Old Nick.”

In looking round and seeing the desolation which they had made in her tabernacle,

“ Where once so many lov'd to dwell,”

and

“ Which once did shine with Gospel grace,”

her bosom was filled with convulsive pangs, and she despairingly exclaimed,

“ O when shall wicked rulers cease
To hurt the Church and mar her peace!”

Her outraged spirit, in form of a ghost, then visits all the members of Presbytery in succession, commencing with “ Cauldrife John of Symington ; ” * and not neglecting Mr Pearson and his

* The members of Presbytery at the time, exclusive of Biggar and also of Dolphinton, which was vacant, were John M'Caul, Symington ; Bryce Little, Covington ; David Dickson, Libberton ; Bernard Haldan, Glenholm ; William Tate, Kilbucho ; John Bradfute, Dunsyre ; Thomas Mitchell, Lamington ; Thomas Gray, Broughton ; William Lockhart, Coulter ; William Howe, Skirling ; and John Thomson, Walston.

two friends, Whyte and Steele. She exposes with unsparing hand all their foibles, heresies, and shortcomings, and upbraids them for the part they had acted in robbing her of her rights and reducing her to a state of slavery. The ghost then returns to Biggar, bemoaning her sad fate, and praying that the reign of the "wild wolf" that had intruded into the Gospel-fold would be short.

One of Mr Pearson's clerical friends, who had assisted at the ordination, by and by comes back to Biggar to see what sort of congregation he had collected. He finds it composed of the "mongrel gentry," of "rustic John that mettle knave," of the "scandalous tribe," of "the poor and needy," and "the thoughtless and the ignorant;" in short, of those who had no fear of God, or who expected to reap some worldly advantage by their attendance. The devil himself at last appears on the stage, and expresses his entire satisfaction with the conduct of Mr Pearson. Addressing Pearson, he says,

" O Pearson ! thou'rt a champion bold,
 Thy use to me here can't be told,
 My kingdom here you do defend
 Against all such as heav'nward bend.
 You have now banished from the Kirk
 All such as did me hurt and wreck ;
 My flock all gather unto thee,
 Because their ills ye will not see ;
 And while ye keep this easy way,
 No rake from you I'm sure will stray."

The devil then gives him many advices. He was to hold no diets of examination, nor put troublesome questions about Bible truths, as these things disturbed the minds of those who loved to dwell at ease. In his sermons he was to say nothing of Christ or righteousness, and he was not to fright his hearers with statements of coming wrath. He was to choose as his intimate associates the licentious and untruthful, the careless and indifferent. If he did all these things he would continue to be very dear to his Satanic Majesty, and would receive from him no harm or molestation.

The most active individuals in opposing the settlement of Mr Pearson, and in forming the Relief Congregation at Biggar, were John Gladstone, Richard Tweedie, and Andrew Ritchie.

These persons and their associates lost no time in purchasing half a burgh land, lying on the south side of the town, and belonging by inheritance to Isabella Vallance, wife of John Watson, the "Whistling Laird," to whom we have already referred. The Burgh land, of which this formed a part, consisted, as usual, of ground land fronting the High Street, Croft land running to the south, and part of the Moss, the Borrow Muir, and Colliehill of Biggar; and, prior to 1712, was the property of Sir William Menzies of Gladstane. It was purchased from that gentleman by William Baillie, merchant, Biggar, who sold it to that distinguished burgh worthy, Bailie Luke Vallance. On the death of Luke, it went by inheritance to his brother Alexander, who left it to his two daughters—Isabella, married to John Watson as already stated, and Janet, married to Thomas Bryden, baker, Biggar. On the portion of this Burgh land which the founders of the Relief congregation thus acquired, they erected a church, and subsequently a manse and office-houses. The congregation having been regularly constituted by the Synod of Relief, the following are the members who attended the first meeting of Session, viz., John Gladstone, John Wilson, John Small, John Thomson, John Waugh, John Reid, Richard Tweedie, Andrew Ritchie, William Gilbert, and James Johnstone.

The first minister of this new congregation was the Rev. James Cross. He was ordained towards the close of the year 1780. His connection with the congregation was of short duration, as he accepted a call to Newcastle in 1782. Their next minister was the Rev. John Reston. He was ordained in 1783. He received a call to the Relief Church, Kilsyth, in November 1792; and the case having been brought before the Relief Presbytery of Edinburgh, he said that he saw no sufficient reason for leaving his present charge, but submitted the matter for decision to the Presbytery. The Presbytery, by a unanimous vote, decided that the call should not be sustained. Mr Reston, in the year following, demitted his charge, and went to Charleston, South Carolina. He was afterwards the pastor of a Relief congregation that met in Carrubber's Close, Edinburgh, and was ultimately translated to Bridgeton, Glasgow. Their third minister was the Rev. Robert Paterson, who had been for a number of years pastor of the Relief congrega-

tion at Largo, Fife. He came to Biggar in December 1794 ; but in consequence of a great storm of snow the Presbytery were unable to come up to induct him for eight weeks afterwards. Mr Paterson died on the 10th of August 1802, in the sixty-first year of his age and the thirty-second of his ministry, and was interred in Biggar Churchyard, where the congregation erected a monumental stone to his memory. The fourth pastor was the Rev. Hugh Macfarlane. On the 23d of March 1803, the Relief Presbytery of Edinburgh met at Biggar. The edict having been served, and no objections to the settlement of Mr Macfarlane offered, the Rev. Mr Ralston preached a sermon from 2 Cor. ii. 16 ; the eloquent Mr Struthers of College Street, Edinburgh, put the usual questions, and offered up the ordination prayer ; after which Mr Macfarlane was solemnly set apart, by the imposition of hands, to the office of the holy ministry and the pastoral charge of the congregation of Biggar. The Rev. Mr Thomson of James Place, Edinburgh, then gave the charge to the congregation ; and Mr Macfarlane's name was added to the roll of the Presbytery. On the 4th of March 1806, commissioners from the congregation at Biggar laid a libel against their pastor on the table of the Presbytery of Edinburgh. In consequence of some irregularity, it was not entertained till the 2d of July. The names attached to the libel were—John Paterson, farmer, Toftcombs ; John Waugh, tenant in Thankerton ; Andrew Ritchie, currier, Biggar ; and John Small, miller, Skirling Mill. A number of witnesses were examined in support of the libel, and Mr Macfarlane himself appeared in his own defence. The Presbytery found three counts in the libel proven : 1st, that the rev. gentleman had been guilty of disrespectful behaviour to the congregation of Biggar ; 2d, of the mean habit of drunkenness ; and 3d, of taking the name of God in vain. The decision of the Court was, that the Rev. Hugh Macfarlane should be solemnly rebuked, and his connexion with the congregation of Biggar dissolved. The congregation afterwards paid L.200 for behoof of Mr Macfarlane, which was entrusted to the Presbytery, to be advanced as they saw proper. On the 3d of March following the Presbytery agreed to restore Mr Macfarlane to the office of the sacred ministry ; but it soon became more plainly apparent that his reason was impaired, and that he was

incapable to discharge the duties of his office. He then became unsettled in his habits, and travelled over the country from place to place. In the course of his wanderings he came occasionally to Biggar, visited some of his old hearers, particularly the late George Cuthbertson, Westraw, and received such small gratuities of food, money, and clothes as he would accept.

The fifth pastor of this congregation was the Rev. Andrew Fife. He was ordained on the 23d of July 1807, and translated to Dumfries in May 1808, in opposition to a protest and appeal to the Synod on the part of the congregation of Biggar. The rev. gentleman, after ministering for nearly thirty years in Dumfries, attempted to carry his congregation and the place of worship over to the Established Church, but he met with only partial success; and the consequence was that the congregation was rent asunder, and nearly annihilated. The sixth pastor was the Rev. Daniel M'Naught, who had been previously settled at Riccarton, near Kilmarnock. He was inducted to the charge at Biggar on the 4th December 1808, and after labouring with considerable acceptance for upwards of ten years, died on the 5th of May 1819, and was interred in the area of the church, in front of the pulpit.

The seventh pastor of this congregation was the Rev. Hugh Gibson, who was ordained on the 16th of May 1820. He was a man of quiet and unobtrusive habits; but his manner and style of preaching were dry and unattractive, especially to strangers. On the 29th of December 1835, Mr Gibson petitioned the Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relation between him and the Biggar congregation, in consequence of his belief that he could no longer be useful. A congregational meeting was held a few days afterwards, which was presided over by the Rev. Francis Muir of Leith, when it was unanimously resolved to agree to a dissolution of the pastoral relation between the members of the church and Mr Gibson. The Presbytery gave effect to the petition and resolution on the 5th of January following; and Mr Gibson shortly afterwards left this country and proceeded to America. The eighth minister of this congregation was the Rev. James Caldwell. His ordination took place on the 27th January 1837. Mr Caldwell was a popular preacher, and was much esteemed by his flock; but, having received a call from the Relief congregation, Greenock, in 1846,

he resolved to accept of it, and leave his charge at Biggar. He had not been long settled at Greenock when the congregation charged him with some improprieties of conduct, and he found it necessary to give up his connexion with them. He was afterwards pastor of a church in England, and ultimately departed to the United States of America.

The ninth pastor was the Rev. James Dunlop, A.M., who was ordained on the 14th of April 1847. He distinguished himself by his efforts to awaken a spirit of vital godliness in the district. His labours to erect a Subscription School for the burgh, and thus to supply a want which was long felt, and which did much injury, cannot fail to evoke the grateful feelings of many generations of Biggar inhabitants. He demitted his Biggar charge in June 1866, having accepted a call to a newly formed U. P. Church at Motherwell.

The tenth pastor of this Church is the Rev. D. M. Connor, A.M., LL.B., who was ordained on the 26th of June 1867. He was born at Stane, in the parish of Shotts, and brought up at Calderbank, in the vicinity of Airdrie. He commenced his career as a student in the University of Glasgow, but after the first year, removed to Edinburgh, where he finished his curriculum, and graduated as Master of Arts in 1863. He was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Presbytery of Edinburgh on the 23d Jan. 1866, and was placed on the Roll of Probationers in the month of April following. On the 25th July 1866, after undergoing the usual examination, the degree of Bachelor of laws was conferred upon him by vote of the Senate of the University of London.

CHAPTER XIV.

Biggar Schools, &c.



THE instruction of the people of Biggar in the secular branches of education, in the times preceding the Reformation, when some even of the dignified clergy were scarcely able to read, was, no doubt, very limited and imperfect. It would perhaps be too much to assert that the means of education were then altogether wanting in Biggar. We know that Malcolm Lord Fleming, who founded the Collegiate Church of Biggar, ordained that one of its prebendaries should be teacher of the Grammar School. This School, in all probability, existed previous to that period, and was, no doubt, continued at the Reformation, as it was an enactment both of Parliament and the Church that a school should be planted in every parish. The readers, who were appointed to many of the parishes of Scotland on account of the paucity of properly qualified and regularly ordained pastors, in many instances, acted also as schoolmasters for some years after the introduction of the new ecclesiastical system. It is, no doubt, on this account that the parish schoolmasters, in many parishes, continued to act as readers down to a very recent period.

It is worthy of notice, that, at one time, a law existed in Biggar, that no seminary of learning should exist in the town and parish, except the Public or Parish School. In 1722, the various Acts on the subject were renewed by the Baron's Court, in the following terms, viz.: "The whilk day, the Bailic renews the former Acts of Court in favour of the Public School in Biggar, and discharges all private schools within the same to be kept, under the pain of five pundis Scots, *toties*

quoties.” These enactments evidently did not carry with them the sympathy of the whole inhabitants, as parties appeared, from time to time, who violated them, and received a portion of public support. We, therefore, find that on the 28th of March 1747, Mr James Philips, the parochial schoolmaster, laid a complaint before Mr Robert Leckie, the Bailie, that “diverse and sundrie private schools were kept in the town and neighbourhood, to the great hurt and prejudice of the said Mr Philips, the legal schoolmaster.” The Bailie, therefore, “inhibited and discharged all and sundry the private schoolmasters, within the said town and paroch, from holding and keeping schools, for the future, excepting in as far as in such parts of learning the said Mr James Philips was not capable to teach, and that under the penalty of L.12 Scots, for each transgression, *toties quoties.*”

These enactments appear to us at the present day to be somewhat arbitrary and injurious. They infringed the liberty of the subject; they prevented well qualified men from communicating useful knowledge, and thereby earning an honest subsistence, and benefiting society; while they deterred the inhabitants from countenancing and supporting useful and meritorious instructors, put a check on the diligence and attention which are generally evoked by wholesome opposition, and restricted the education of youth to a person, who might be objectionable from the want of talent, activity, impartiality, or good temper.

These local enactments were most likely based on an Act passed by the Scottish Parliament in 1567. The object of this Act was to provide “that the youth be brocht up and instructit in the feir of God and gude maneris;” and, therefore, it was statuted and ordained, “that all sculis to burgh and land, and all universities and collegis, be reformat, and that nane be permittit nor admittit to have charge and cure thereof, in tyme cuming, nor to instruct the youth privately or openlie, but sic as salbe tryit be the superintendents, or visitouris.” The patrons and clergy having thus got a control over the instructors of youth, exercised it rigorously in many places down to the middle of last century. The parish schoolmasters of Biggar being invested with an almost entire monopoly in the article of education, were evidently disposed not to allow the

laws in their favour to remain a dead letter. They caused edict after edict to be sent forth, backed with all the terrors of the Baron's Court, to dislodge or scare away any poor wight that might be disposed to communicate his store of information to the youths of the town. This state of things has passed away, and any person is now at liberty to open a school in the parish for imparting instruction in such branches of learning as he may be proficient, or the inhabitants may require. The consequence of this has been, that Biggar, for well nigh a century, has always had one or two adventure schools, taught by men who, if they did not possess great learning, were, at least, distinguished for industry, fidelity, and success.

Notwithstanding the desire of the parish schoolmasters of Biggar to enjoy a monopoly in the supply of instruction to the young, an additional school was for many years maintained, even under the auspices of the Kirk Session, at Edmonston. The schoolmaster there appears to have had a small salary, for in the Session records, under date 3d July 1730, we find the following entry:—"The Laird of Edmestone (James Brown) produced a discharge for the sum of L.5 Scots, being one half year salarie, from Martinmas 1729 to Whitsunday 1730, for a schoolmaster in Edmestone, due by contract between the Session of Biggar and the Laird of Edmestone."

Few of the early Biggar schoolmasters are remembered by the inhabitants. Schoolmasters are a quiet unambitious race, who pass through life doing a vast amount of good, but, in general, leave few tangible memorials behind them. We will, therefore, very briefly notice a few of those men who, in their day and generation, contributed not a little, during the last two centuries, to form the minds of the Biggar youths, and to uphold the character of the town and parish for intelligence and sagacity.

It is not till after the formation of the Presbytery of Biggar, in 1644, that we obtain any direct references to the schoolmasters of Biggar. In 1646, Mr Andrew Threpland was parish schoolmaster. He was, perhaps, an aspirant to the work of the ministry; for on the 14th of January of that year, he appeared before the Presbytery and delivered a discourse in Latin, and underwent an examination in Chronology, in the Hebrew and Greek languages, and in the interpretation of

difficult passages of Scripture. He acquitted himself so much to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, that a very favourable certificate was ordered to be given to him by the clerk. The next schoolmaster with whose name we are acquainted, was James Reid. We know that he held the offices both of schoolmaster and reader, and that he had resigned his situation, and retired on a small allowance, previous to the year 1675. He was succeeded by Thomas Carmichael. The Earl of Wigton's proportion of his salary was "ye soume of thretie-three pund six shillings and eight pennies." The next schoolmaster appears to have been John Watson. He is mentioned as presenting himself at a conjoined meeting of the Presbyteries of Biggar and Peebles, held at the Hills of Dunsyre, on the 27th of June 1689, and stating that he wanted a door to the kirk; but the Presbytery decided that they could not interfere in the matter. It is more than likely that he kept his school in a part of the Parish Kirk, and it was, no doubt, on this account that he was so anxious to procure a proper door for that edifice. The circumstance of the kirk standing without a door may be taken as a proof of the disrepair into which it had fallen during the times of persecution, and the incumbency of the curates. From the date 1697, on the latch of the present strong door, studded with large-headed nails, as shown in the vignette to the present volume, it would seem to have been put up a few years after the period referred to. Shortly after this period, Alexander Forsaith, or Forsyth, is mentioned in the records of Presbytery as the parish schoolmaster. In 1695, the Earl of Wigton presented Mr Thomas Fleming to the office. The Presbytery was rather surprised at this step, as Forsyth was still in the discharge of his duties, and consequently the office was not vacant. The members of Court, therefore, refused to take Mr Fleming on trials; but a short time afterwards Mr Forsyth was induced to resign, and Mr Fleming was immediately installed. Mr Thomas Simson, who had been schoolmaster at Dolphinton, became the next schoolmaster of Biggar. He was licensed as a probationer by the Presbytery of Biggar in 1701, and, in May of the following year, was ordained minister of Broughton, where he laboured till his death in 1732. The next schoolmaster appears to have been Mr George Grant. In 1720, Mr Alexander Wardlaw, one of the Bailies of Biggar, at

a meeting of the Head Court of the Barony, held on the 4th of February of that year, gave the following deliverance regarding the emoluments of the School, viz.:—"And considering that the dues of the said scoall is too small incuradgement for fitt and qualified persons in the said office; and it being agreed to by the heritors present att this Head Court, that the dues of the said scoall should be augmented to the said Mr George Grant and his successors in office; therefore, it is statut and ordained that the dues of the said scoall shall be quarterly in tyme coming, viz., for the teaching of each boy in the Latine tongue, twenty shillings Scots, per quarter; and for the teaching of each lad or lass in English, ten shillings Scots, per quarter; and for the teaching of each lad or lass in arithmatick, fyfteen shillings Scots, per quarter; and it is declared, that the yearly sellarie due to the scoallmaster is ane hundred pundis Scots, by and attour the dues of said scoall.—And this Act is ordained to stand in all tyme coming." The next schoolmaster of the Parish School of Biggar was Mr John Girdwood, a son of Mr Daniel Girdwood, schoolmaster, Carnwath. He was presented to the office by the Earl of Wigton in 1730. It was the practice of these times that the schoolmaster should be precentor in the Parish Church. Mr Girdwood, considering himself unqualified to lead the psalmody, refused to accept the appointment, unless he was allowed to find a substitute in his office as precentor. This liberty appears to have been granted.

Mr James Philips, to whom we have already referred as complaining in 1747, against the existence of private schools, was most likely the next parish schoolmaster. One of the parties, who appears to have roused his discontent, was Mr John Scott. This person was an exciseman, and greatly excelled as an arithmetician. He published a work on the subject of Arithmetic, but copies of it are now extremely rare. He opened a school in Biggar, and his fame as a man of figures attracted a large attendance. Many of the Biggar worthies, that flourished during the close of last century, were wont to ascribe their skill in arithmetic to the zeal and abilities of their instructor Mr Scott. He was the instructor of Mr James Smith, who was originally a weaver, but who afterwards was factor for Smollet's estate at Symington, and a distinguished land-measurer at Biggar for half a century.

For many years during the latter half of last century, Biggar rejoiced in the instructions of a parish dominie called Mr John Porteous. He was a man of eccentric habits and some talent. He had a turn for poetical composition, and published a poem, entitled, "The Christian Life;" but we cannot speak of its merits, as, after repeated inquiries, we have been unable to find a copy. He took an active part in the general agitation against Popery in the year 1779. At that time the whole of Scotland was put into a flame by a proposal to repeal the penal statutes against the Roman Catholics. Societies, or Committees of Correspondence, for defence of the Protestant interest, were formed in Edinburgh and other towns, and under their auspices resolutions and petitions were got up and published by many towns, parishes, public bodies, etc. The town and parish of Biggar, of course, sent forth a short declaration on the subject. It is dated Biggar, February 8th, 1779, and is signed by John Porteous, preses, and John Telfer, clerk. It may be noticed that John Dickson, Esq., advocate, Coulter, took a leading part in this movement. He drew up a pamphlet, entitled "A Short View of the Statutes at present in Force in Scotland against Popery; the Nature of the Bill proposed to be brought into Parliament for Repealing these Statutes; and some Remarks showing the Propriety and Necessity of Opposing such Repeal, with a few Hints on the Constitutional and Prudent Mode of Opposition." This pamphlet went through two editions, and was widely circulated.

Mr Porteous died 12th March 1792, aged 70 years, about two years after the death of his wife, whose name was Elizabeth Tweedie. Since the days of Porteous, the ferula of the Parish School has been successively wielded by Messrs Johnstone, Proudfoot, Scott, Gray, Wilkie, and Morrison; while the adventure schools have been conducted by Messrs Spence, Robertson, Slimon, Alton, Whiteford, Campbell, Ingram, Bogle, Brown, Scott, Blair, Ramage, and Crichton. It is worthy of notice, that on a vacancy taking place in the Parish School in the early part of the present century, Dr A. R. Carson, who afterwards held the office of Rector of the High School of Edinburgh, and became distinguished for his eminent scholarship, and his success as a public instructor, appeared as a candidate; but the Presbytery of Biggar considered that at

that time he did not possess sufficient qualifications to fit him to hold such a situation.

Biggar, besides male teachers, has long had a succession of laborious and painstaking female instructors, who have taught sewing and other branches of a female education. One of these, some forty years ago, was a Mrs Logan, a retired, prudent, gentle matron, with two children. She had a passage of romance in her history, in the desertion, restoration, and death of her husband. This passage being related to a fair authoress, was woven by her into an interesting story, which was inserted in two successive numbers of "Chambers's Journal" for November 1858, under the title of "The Second Widowhood." The writer has brought in a few fictitious incidents for the sake of effect; but many of her statements are in the main correct. Mrs Logan's settlement at Biggar—"a moorland village," the writer is pleased to call it—her opening a school, and the branches of education she taught, the return of her husband on a Sabbath forenoon, her hasty summons from the church, and the illness and death of her husband, are all stated very nearly as they occurred.

Education, of late years, has unquestionably made progress at Biggar. The branches of learning taught are more numerous, and the mode of tuition is more efficient. It is a rare thing for the child of any of the settled inhabitants to grow up without receiving, at least, the rudiments of education. From time to time, Biggar schools have sent forth not a few pupils who have, in after years, become clergymen, surgeons, lawyers, authors, editors, etc.; while many others, who have betaken themselves to industrial and commercial pursuits, have risen in their professions, and realized considerable fortunes. We will very briefly sketch the career of one or two of the scholars of Biggar School.

The late Robert Forsyth, advocate, and author of works on various subjects, was a native of Biggar, and a scholar at the Parish School. His father was Robert Forsyth, bellman and gravedigger, to whom we have already referred; and his mother's name was Marion Pairman. This worthy couple were united in marriage in 1764, and their only child, Robert, was born on the 18th January 1766. Their condition in life was very humble, and they had to struggle with all the disad-

vantages and sorrows of extreme poverty ; but they resolved to give their son, who early showed an aptitude for learning, a good education, in order to qualify him for the work of the ministry. He was sent early to the Parish School ; but being the son of a poor man, he was treated with marked neglect, and made small progress. He soon, however, became extremely fond of reading. He borrowed such books as his neighbours could supply, and read them in the winter nights to his parents, to Robert Rennie, shoemaker, and others, who commended him highly for his industry and ability, and thus encouraged him to renewed exertions. In this way he became acquainted with such works as "The History of the Devil," "Satan's Invisible World Discovered," the histories of Knox, Cruikshanks, and Josephus, Ross's "View of all Religions," the poems of Butler, Young, Milton, Ramsay, Pennicuik, and Sir David Lindsay. It is remembered at Biggar, that one evening he was busily engaged in reading aloud the poems of Sir David Lindsay, by the blaze of a piece of Auchenheath coal, after his mother had gone to bed, when that worthy matron said, "O Robie, man, steek the boords o' Davie Lindsay, and gies a blad o' the chapter buik (the Bible), or I'll no fa' asleep the nicht."

As he made slow progress in his classical studies at the Parish School of Biggar, he was sent in his twelfth or thirteenth year to the Burgh School of Lanark, then taught by Mr. Robert Thomson, a brother-in-law of the author of the "Seasons." Here he made more advancement in a few months than he had done for years previously. When attending this seminary, he returned to Biggar every Saturday, and remained till Monday. His aged grandmother was wont to "hirple" out the Lindsaylands road to meet him on his way home ; but young Forsyth sometimes spent a few hours in climbing trees at Carmichael, or looking for birds' nests at Thankerton ; and this sorely tried the patience of the old dame, as she sat by the wayside chafing at his delay, and longing for his return.

Forsyth then studied four years at the University of Glasgow, and manfully struggled with all the obstructions arising from the "*res angusta domi*." During one of these years, a severe and protracted storm of frost and snow occurred, and prevented all communication from place to place by means of carts. The Biggar carrier was consequently unable to pay his

usual visits to Glasgow for several weeks. Old Forsyth was thrown into great distress regarding the state in which he knew his son would be placed from want of his ordinary supply of provisions. He therefore procured a quantity of oatmeal, and carried it on his back, along the rough tracks on the top of the snow, all the way to Glasgow, a distance of thirty-five miles, and just arrived when young Forsyth had been reduced to his last meal.

Forsyth attended the Divinity Hall in the University of Edinburgh. On the day on which he preached his first discourse before the Professor of Divinity and his fellow-students, his father came in all the way from Biggar to hear him. As the weather was stormy and the roads bad, he had encased his legs in straw ropes, and wrapt the upper part of his person in a coarse grey plaid. In this rustic guise the Biggar bellman entered the gates of the College, and finding his way to the Divinity Hall, placed himself in a retired corner where he listened with the most profound attention, and was gratified to hear his son receive the approbation of the Professor. He returned to Biggar quite elated, and was loud in his prognostications that his son would one day be a burning and a shining light.

After the usual attendance at the Divinity Hall, Edinburgh, Forsyth was licensed to preach the Gospel when he had attained his twentieth year. He was an eloquent, energetic, and popular preacher. He officiated several times in the church of his native parish, and he did so on one occasion when a severe disease had made sad ravages among the population, and had carried off some of his friends and acquaintance. He therefore commenced the morning prayer with the words, "Our fathers, where are they? We stand where our fathers have stood, and we worship where our fathers have worshipped. We look around us, and behold but the green mounds that cover them." "He had scarcely uttered these expressions," we are told, "when all around were overwhelmed by a burst of grief."

He preached in a number of the pulpits of the Established Church in Edinburgh, and thus had an opportunity of bringing himself under the notice of men of power and influence; but year after year passed by, and no patron had discrimination and generosity enough to present him to a living. After long

and anxious cogitation, he resolved to change his profession, and to seek for admission into the Faculty of Advocates. At that time the men of the Parliament House were more exclusive than they are at present. They cared little for a new adherent to their ranks, unless he came recommended by his connexion with some aristocratic family. The idea of a *sticket* minister, and the son of a gravedigger, obtaining admission into their dignified order, was intolerable to the Dundases, the Forbeses, the Wedderburns, the Erskines, and others, who in those days ruled the roast in the Parliament House. One of their number, connected with the Biggar district, but never distinguished for obtaining any great amount of practice, was specially opposed to Forsyth, and one day had the audacity to say, "Who are you, sir, that would thrust yourself into the Faculty? Are ye not the poor bellman's son of Biggar?" "I am so," said Forsyth, coolly but sarcastically; "and I have a strong suspicion that had you been a bellman's son, you would have been your father's successor." Forsyth was not discouraged by the rebuffs and opposition which he had to encounter. He still persisted in his application. He renounced his profession of a preacher, and thus removed one of the objections which had been urged against him; and Lord President Islay Campbell interfered in his behalf, so that his opponents were forced to give way, and he was admitted to trials, and passed in 1792.

For a long time he had little practice. He attached himself to the party called the Friends of the People, who sympathized with the principles of the French Revolutionists; and this subjected him to a larger amount of obloquy and persecution, and operated still more in preventing him from obtaining employment at the bar. He was not idle. He studied mechanics, botany, chemistry, etc., and engaged largely in literary composition. At an early period he had composed and published a poem, entitled "Nature," and had made some progress with an epic poem in celebration of the achievements of Sir William Wallace; but he destroyed this production before it was completed. For the "Encyclopædia Britannica," he now wrote the articles, "Asia," "Botany," "Britain," and "Agriculture," the last of which was afterwards enlarged, and published in two volumes. In 1805, he published a volume of

considerable size, entitled "Principles of Moral Science." This volume is written in a clear, trenchant style, and contains many ingenious speculations and useful disquisitions; but it abounds with most untenable paradoxes and reckless assertions. Such doctrines as that there is no moral evil and no guilt in the eye of God, and that those persons only who have made a certain intellectual and moral progress will continue to exist in a future life, would, we suspect, have subjected him to the charge of heresy, had he remained a preacher in the Established Church. This work, however, had the effect of bringing him before the public as a powerful and original thinker, and contributing to extend his reputation and practice at the bar. He wrote a Life of Dr Samuel Johnson, which was published in connection with an edition of the Doctor's works in 1806; and that same year appeared his "Beauties of Scotland," in five volumes, illustrated with engravings. This work contains a large amount of interesting information regarding Scotland; but it has been superseded by several publications of the same kind, which have appeared since the period of its publication, particularly the "New Statistical Account of Scotland." In 1830, he published "Political Fragments;" in 1834, a pamphlet, entitled "Remarks on the Church of Scotland;" and, in 1838, he wrote "Observations on the Book of Genesis," which, along with some sermons and a lecture, were published in 1846, shortly after his death.

In person Mr Forsyth was tall and commanding, his complexion was dark, his features strongly marked, and his constitution hardy and vigorous. John Gibson Lockhart, in his "Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk," published in 1819, devotes several pages to Mr Forsyth, in which he describes his personal appearance, referring particularly to his square and massy forehead, his large and firm nose, his wide and rudely fashioned mouth, his ponderous cheeks, and his different coloured eyes, the one being black and the other grey; and he concludes by saying that "such a face as this was never meant to be the index of any common mind." He pays a tribute of admiration to his strong and commanding intellect, and his indomitable industry and perseverance. He considers that in intellectual power and legal acumen he was little inferior to Clerk, Jeffrey, Coekburn, Murray, and Monereiff, then the leading

men at the Scottish bar, but he alleges that a natural want of high eloquence had prevented him from attaining the same degree of popularity, and the same amount of practice as a pleader. "He is contented," he says, "to be ranged with the ordinary class of champions; but they who meet him feel that his vigour might well enable him to exchange thrusts with their superiors."

As a thinker Forsyth was original and profound, his knowledge of law was extensive, and his style was singularly forcible and terse. He was a powerful and even a successful pleader; but Mr Heiton in his "Castes of Edinburgh," says that an irresistible propensity to allow his mind to wander in search of points to display his humour operated to prevent his rising to great eminence in this respect, and that, on some occasions, he indulged in this species of intellectual playfulness to such an extent, that the judges thought it necessary to give him a hint that they had other business to attend to than to listen to quaint and amusing stories. His apparent indifference, and his tendency to let his mind riot in intellectual sport, did not, however, prevent him from carefully examining and mastering the details of every case brought under his notice. When Jeffrey was puzzled with some knotty point, he would say to Forsyth, "Put this into your mill and grind it for me," and it was ground and sifted in a manner that few intellects at the bar could have done. He ultimately abandoned, in a great measure, the more public part of his profession, and devoted himself to the practice of a Chamber Counsel, great weight being attached to his opinions whether oral or written. In his chambers during the day he usually wore a night-cap. Jeffrey one day at a consultation said to him, "Why, Forsyth, you look like a baker;" "And why not," replied Forsyth, "is it not here that I make my bread."

Mr Forsyth took great delight in the Parliament House. It was there that he could find a fitting field for the display of his intellectual abilities and his humorous propensity. For forty years he was the first advocate that day by day appeared on the floor. In the gloom of a winter morning, his "buidly" form would be seen pacing up and down the Hall or Outer House in solitary contemplation, and he was the last man to leave it in the evening. Mr Heiton states that a short time

previous to his death, when he had entirely renounced his legal practice, a friend observed him one evening, at a late hour, walking along Princes Street with an eager look and rather hurried step. Wondering what object he could have in view in being abroad at such an hour, this person had the curiosity to watch his movements, and found that he repaired to the Parliament Square, where he stood for some time and gazed wistfully on the buildings. He then slowly withdrew and proceeded to his home. This visit was no doubt paid to gratify a desire to look once more, and perhaps for the last time, on the place in which he had spent the better part of his life, and which had been the scene of his highest enjoyments and his proudest intellectual exertions and triumphs.

For some time previous to his death, he held the office of Keeper of the Record of Entails, to which he had been appointed by government. He died at his house, 11 Royal Circus, on the 30th of September 1845, and was interred in the Canongate Churchyard.

Mr Robert Forsyth was not the only son of a Biggar gravedigger who distinguished himself by his learning and abilities. In the early part of last century John Reekie, a distinguished scholar, was born at Biggar. His father, Patrick Reekie, was gravedigger and keeper of the mortcloth Biggar, and these offices he held in 1734, when we obtain a notice of him in the session records. Young Reekie received the rudimentary part of his education at the parish school of Biggar, and at an early age went to Glasgow, and devoted himself to the study of languages, in which he became a great proficient. He opened an academy in the Calton for instruction in the learned tongues, and here he wielded the ferula for a number of years. He was particularly famed for his acquaintance with the Greek language and literature, and was in the habit of saying that the University of Glasgow had ordained that he should teach Latin, but that God had inspired him to teach Greek. He was on intimate terms with Dr James Moor, professor of Greek in the University of Glasgow, Robert and Andrew Foulis, the eminent printers, and other learned and distinguished men, and assisted in bringing out the accurate and splendid editions of the Greek and Roman classics for which the press of Glasgow at that time acquired so great celebrity. After the death of

Dr Moor, the notes and collations made for an edition of Plato projected by the Foulises, came into the hands of Reekie, and were added to his copy of Fincinus Plato. Mr Reekie died at Glasgow, and was interred in a "lair" of the Cathedral Burying-ground which he had purchased near the Martyr's grave. He had amassed a large collection of books, which was sold, after his death, to a London firm for £800.

Another scholar at Biggar school was the Rev. William Porteous of Kilbucho. He was the son of Mr John Porteous, schoolmaster, Biggar, to whom reference has already been made. He was born in 1745, some years previous to the settlement of his father as schoolmaster of Biggar, and was instructed in the rudimentary parts of education by his father. He studied for the Established Church, and after receiving licence from the Presbytery of Biggar in 1775, was employed for some time as a tutor in the family of Mr Loch of Rachan. In 1785, when he had reached his fortieth year, he was presented to the living of Kilbucho* by Captain William Dickson of Hartree and Kilbucho.

The manse and church of Kilbucho were among the most secluded in Scotland. They stood in a narrow valley at the foot of the high mountain called Cardon, and were so much surrounded by that and other hills that they could not be seen at the distance of a few yards. An ill made and badly-kept road led to the kirk hamlet, where, besides the minister, dwelt one or two cottars employed in mechanical or agricultural pursuits, and lived as retired from the great world as if they had been inhabitants of a sequestered glen in our northern Highlands. In this valley in remote times stood a chapel or cell dedicated to the virgin St Begha, and hence in all likelihood the name of the parish. Here Gilbert the parson, and Cospatrick the hermit, mentioned in documents of the thirteenth century, most likely had their residence; and here a succession of pious and devout pastors for five centuries afterwards served their God, and led the devotions of their little flocks. At length in 1794, an edict went forth from the Court of Session that the parish of Kilbucho should be suppressed, and that one portion

* It is worthy of notice that a William Porteous was reader at Kilbucho in 1567, with a stipend of £14, 6s. 8d. and "the third of the pensionarie extendand to 6 merkis."

of it should be assigned to Coulter, and the remaining portion along with Broughton and Glenholm should form one parish so soon as two of the incumbents were removed from the scene of their earthly labours. Mr Porteous was thus the last minister that officiated in the Kirk of Kilbucho. He survived the other two incumbents, and consequently, in 1810, became the first pastor of the united parishes. He died on the 30th of May 1813, in the 68th year of his age, and the 27th of his ministry, and was interred in Broughton Churchyard.

Mr Porteous was an excellent scholar and a profound theologian. Being a diligent student, and gifted with a good memory, his mind was well stored with the details of history and the distinguishing doctrines of ancient and modern philosophy. Though scarcely known beyond the bounds of the district in which he lived, he was one of the most original and impressive preachers of his time. One who spoke from personal knowledge has said that in his discourses there were the great good sense, the grand ideas, the rich gospel statements, the luminous exhibition of divine truth, and the urgency and earnestness of spirit, that made them tell, in some cases, with overpowering effect. Professor Lawson of Selkirk, no mean judge, considered that he was one of the greatest men of his time in the Church of Scotland. His mode of delivery, though common perhaps a century and a half ago, would now be regarded as singular and even disagreeable. He pronounced the words in a slow drawling tone, with a strange rising and falling inflection of the voice, that made his discourses fall on the ear like a kind of monotonous chaunt, while his action consisted in first touching one side of the pulpit and then the other with his forefinger, bringing his arm with a curve over the bookboard between the two points. This movement was repeated the whole time of his discourse, and was only now and then varied by a higher elevation of the arm to wipe the perspiration from his brow with his coat sleeve.

During his incumbency at Kilbucho, the population of the parish did not exceed 360 souls. On stormy Sabbath days the number of hearers who found their way to the secluded valley in which the church stood were few, and, therefore, he was in the practice of preaching to them in the kitchen of the manse. He was thoroughly earnest and devout in his respect

to his Creator, and in his performance of religious exercises, but being a confirmed bachelor, being parsimonious in his disposition, and taking a deep interest in the management of domestic affairs, he was sometimes led, in the time of worship, to pause and refer to passing incidents in a manner truly ludicrous, and almost profane. When preaching in the kitchen he would stop all at once in the midst of his discourse and say to a hearer, "Nannie, as ye are nearest the fire, steer about the kail pat," or addressing his sister, who kept his house, would say, "As the wather is cauld, pit a few more peats on the fire," or, "As my discourse is drawing to a close, clap the potato pat on the swee."

When performing family worship in the kitchen, his inter-jaculatory commands and observations were still more frequent. He would even suspend his prayer and put a question regarding the feeding of the hens, the milking of the cows, or the preparing of the parritch; and having received an answer would resume the work of devotion. The same strange procedure was sometimes observed during his diets of visiting and examination. On one occasion, while engaged in devotional exercises in the house of a farmer, he abruptly put the following question to the astonished agriculturist, "By the by, John, doo ye ken hoo to ring a soo's nose?" On another occasion he held a diet of examination in the house of one of his parishioners, and among other neighbours that attended was Mr Thomas Core, the famed customer weaver of South-side, who had a short time before been entrusted with the weaving of a plaid for the minister. Mr Core did not arrive till the devotional part of the work had commenced, but no sooner did he show face than Mr Porteous stopped and said, "Come awa, Tammas, hae ye no got my plaid woven yet?—man! yer lang about it."

Mr Porteous's income was small. His emoluments consisted of £43, 7s. 4d., forty-eight bolls of victual, two parts of oat-meal, and one of bear, a glebe of a few acres, and a right to cast peats in one of the mosses of the barony. By great frugality he nevertheless contrived to save money, and, at his death, left a considerable sum to his relatives, and £100 to the parish for charitable purposes. While his ministerial duties were not neglected, he had a constant eye on the dairy, the

hen roost, and the crops. The glebe, in fact, was to a great extent cultivated with his own hands, as he took a principal part in the work of sowing, hoeing, mowing, reaping, &c. While engaged in the labour of the field he was generally in a sad state of dishabille, and, therefore, at such times was much annoyed at receiving visits from strangers. One day he was busily employed in binding and stooking, divested of hat, wig, coat, and vest, when one of his co-presbyters unexpectedly made a descent on his domains. No sooner was he descried than Mr Porteous ensconced himself in a stook, and remained there till the intruder withdrew.

One summer the heat was oppressive. The hay crop could no longer remain uncut, and, therefore, one morning Mr Porteous rose early and commenced the work of mowing, but was soon drenched with perspiration. He was not to be baffled. He stripped off one piece of dress after another till he had reduced himself to his shirt, and, in this primitive state, plied the scythe with vigour. Mr Davidson, who occupied the adjoining farm of Mitchelhill, on taking a turn across his fields, observed the minister busy at work in this strange fashion, and resolved to give him a surprise. On reaching home he requested one of his servant-maids to carry the newspaper, which the minister was in the habit of getting weekly, to the manse, and if she saw him by the way to deliver it to himself. The damsel obeyed orders, and as the minister was intently engaged with his work, he did not observe her approach. No sooner did she announce her errand than he turned round in wrath, and exclaimed, "Avaunt thee, thou intruding harlot, thou wicked Jezebel, approach me not." So saying he threw down the scythe and retreated to the place where his clothes were deposited. The maid, having laid down the newspaper on the field, withdrew; and it was observed that Mr Porteous ever afterwards pursued his agricultural toils in a more becoming guise.

Mr Porteous' parsimonious turn of mind led him to higgler a good deal with the cadgers, who found their way to the manse, regarding the price of butter, eggs, &c. He observed from the newspapers that butter usually sold in Edinburgh threepence and fourpence per pound higher than what he could command for it at Kilbucho, and, therefore, formed the re-

solution to embrace the first opportunity of his being in the Scottish capital to find a more advantageous customer for his dairy produce. Accordingly one year, when his turn came to represent his presbytery in the General Assembly, he caused half a pound of butter to be wrapped up in a goodly supply of cabbage blades, that he might take it to Edinburgh as a sample. Having reached the capital, he entered one of the most spacious grocer's shops in the High Street, and inquired if the shopman was disposed to take a regular supply of good country butter. The answer was that much would depend on the quality. "I can satisfy you on that point at once," said the minister, "I have a sample with me." So saying he drew the bundle from his coat-pocket, and unwound the cabbage blades, but to his mortification the butter had been reduced to a half liquid state by the heat of the weather, and could not be handled. "I observe," he said, "that the heat has disturbed the solidity of the article, but you may ascertain from the flavour that the quality is excellent. He then lifted the unctuous mass and attempted to apply it to the olfactory organs of the merchant, who started back and exclaimed, "Na, na, butter sic as that winna doo for ower Ediubraw customers." The divine, quite abashed, folded up his butter and kail blades in the best way he could and withdrew. From that time the cadgers found it a matter of less difficulty to drive a bargain at Kilbucho manse.

Mr Porteous sometimes, though rarely, invited a party of his friends to an entertainment at the manse. His invitations were generally accepted, for though his viands were homely and meagre enough, his conversation was racy and instructive, and the curiosity, particularly of the ladies, was gratified by a peep into the interior of his domicile, and a "swath" of the oddities of his housekeeping. On one occasion he invited several of his acquaintance at Biggar to dinner, among whom was Miss Rachel Bowe, who was in the habit of often referring to what then took place. They went early, she said, to enjoy a stroll among the mountains, and when they came in sight of the manse they were surprised to see the minister and his sister armed with cudgels driving a cow furiously up and down. After arriving at the manse and waiting a short time, the cause of the violent exercise with Hawky was made apparent.

The minister had confidently calculated that the cow would calve previous to the day fixed for the dinner, and would thus supply him with the principal dish, in the shape of roasted veal. But "the best laid schemes o' mice and men gang off' a glee," the day arrived and Hawky gave no signs of parturition. Not a single article had been provided of which a substitute could be made, and in this dilemma the cow had been turned out and subjected to a course of rough treatment, in order to bring about the desired result, but without effect. The guests, after being regaled with a piece of bread and cheese, had to return to Biggar with rather empty stomachs, but not without a good laugh at the parsimony and eccentricities of their reverend friend.

Mr Portcous was blessed, as we have already said, with a very retentive memory. An instance of this is still related in the district. The first Sunday after his return one year from the General Assembly, he delivered a sermon, in a style and train of thought, very different from that which he usually employed. On coming down from the pulpit he asked his elders what they thought of his sermon to-day. They replied that they sometimes liked him better. "I am surprised at that," said he, "last Sabbath I heard the same sermon preached before his Grace, the Lord High Commissioner, and I thought I never heard anything superior." It was understood that he had given the sermon almost word for word as he had heard it.

The formula which he used in the celebration of marriage, was, both in the matter and mode of delivery, one of the most singular ever heard in that part of the country. The homely, yet pointed injunctions laid on the bride, and the citation of the conduct of the women, good and bad, mentioned in Scripture for imitation and avoidance had, in particular, such a mixture of seriousness and comicality that few persons who heard them could maintain their gravity. The conclusion of the services was always abrupt, and was followed by the command, "Noo lads, tak the gait, and let us see wha amang ye wull win the brooze."

The Rev. Henry Scott Riddell, who has risen to distinction by his poetical productions, was also at one time a scholar at Biggar Parish school. He was born in 1798 at Sorbie, in the

Vale of Ewes, Dumfriesshire. His father, who followed the occupation of a shepherd, shortly afterwards removed to Langshawburn, a sequestered spot in the wilds of Eskdalemuir; and here the poet heard the songs in the Ettrick Shepherd's first publication so often read and sung, that he could repeat nearly all of them before he was able to read. His father had occasion to make several other changes in his herdings; and as they were all situated in solitary spots among the mountains of the south of Scotland, the education of the young poet was very desultory and imperfect. His first regular occupation of life was the tending of his father's cows at the farm of Capplefoot, on the Water of Milk. By and by he rose to the higher trust, and more congenial rural employment, of herding sheep. He acted one year, while yet a boy, as assistant-shepherd at Glen-cotho, on Holmswater; and thus, for the first time, became acquainted with the Biggar district. It was while resident at this place that he first made an attempt to write regular rhyme, by linking the names of the different localities of the farm together.

Mr Riddell's occupation as a shepherd was favourable to the development of his latent poetic powers. The scenes amid which he daily moved, if not rugged and sublime, were, with their green mountains, their sequestered valleys, and brawling rills, full of wild pastoral beauty, and well fitted to invigorate the frame, and inspire the soul with lofty imaginings. As he grew up to manhood, the care of his flocks, the perusal of books, and the recording of his poetic conceptions, occupied his attention by turns, as he wandered among the mountains, or loitered in the sunny nooks and green bracken dells of Ettrick Forest, whither he had now been removed.

Regarding this period of his life he says,

“ My early years were passed far on,
 The hills of Ettrick, wild and lone;
 Through summer's sheen, and winter's shade,
 Tending the flocks that o'er them stray'd;
 In bold enthusiastic glee,
 I sung rude strains of minstrelsy.”

Mr Riddell having, from the proceeds of his employment, saved a little money, and having at the death of his father

received his portion of his effects, he resolved to put in execution a scheme which he had for some time contemplated, viz. acquiring a more accurate and extended education, and devoting himself to the profession of the ministry. On throwing aside "the crook and plaid," his early imbibed predilections induced him to come to Biggar, where he continued to reside for some years. He placed himself under the tuition of the late Mr Richard Scott, parochial schoolmaster, who was a good classical scholar, and a man of genial disposition and varied information, but of somewhat indolent habits. He had, especially, a rooted aversion to the drudgery of teaching little children such elementary knowledge as is contained in spelling-books. Mr Riddell although arrived at the years of manhood, resolved to attend day by day in the school, amid all its din and distraction. He found the task which he had imposed on himself somewhat irksome; and in the bright days of summer, he says that he felt the solitary paths, woods, and wilds, not far distant from the town, eternally wooing his steps to retirement, and his mind to solitary contemplation. He composed a poem in Biggar School expressive of his feelings, from which the following are extracts,

"Discontented and uncheery,
 Of this noise and learning weary,
 Half my mind to madness driven,
 Woos the lore by nature given.
 'Mong fair fields and flowing fountains,
 Lonely glens, and lofty mountains,
 Charmed with nature's wildest grandeur,
 Lately wont was I to wander;
 Wheresoever fancy led me,
 Came no barrier to impede me;
 Still from early morn to even,
 In the light of earth and heaven,
 Musing on whatever graces,
 Livelier scenes or lonelier places,
 Till a nameless pleasure found me,
 Living like a dream around me;
 How, then, may I be contented,
 Thus confined and thus tormented?"
 "'Stead of that eternal humming,
 To the ear for ever coming—
 Humming of those thoughtless beings,
 In their restless pranks and pleaings,

And the sore-provoked Preceptor
 Roaring "Silence!" o'er each quarter.
 Silence comes, as o'er the valley,
 Where all rioted so gaily,
 When the sudden bursting thunder
 Overpowers with awe and wonder,
 Till again begins the fuss,
 'Maister, Jock's aye nippin' us!'

I could hear the fountain flowing
 Where the light hill-breeze was blowing,
 And the wild winged plover wailing
 Round the brow of heaven sailing,
 Bleating flocks and sky-larks singing—
 Echo still to echo ringing—
 Sounds still, still so wont to waken,
 That no note of them is taken,
 Yet which seem to lend assistance
 To the blessing of existence.

Who shall trow thee wise and witty,
 Lore of the Eternal City,
 Or derive delight and pleasure
 From the blood-stained deeds of Cæsar?
 Thus bewildering his senses
 'Mong these cases, moods, and tenses;
 Still the wrong-placed word arranging,
 Ever in their finals changing;
 Out and in, with hic and hockings,
 Like a loom for weaving stockings;
 Latin Lords and Grecian heroes—
 Oh, ye gods, in mercy spare us!
 How may mortals be contented,
 Thus confined, and thus tormented!"

A number of the young men of Biggar, inspired with a rage for theatricals, formed themselves at that time into a dramatic company and acted "the Douglas Tragedy," and the farce of "Barnaby Brettle." Some of them were good singers, and between the pieces gave several songs, one of which was Burns's song, "O let me in this ae Night," the two parts of which were sung by different performers, with the accession of proper stage scenery. Mr Riddell being known as a song-writer, was solicited by these amateur actors to compose for them an appropriate lyric, which they might sing on their humble stage in one of the malt lofts of the Brewery. He accordingly, to an air of their own selecting, produced a piece in the form of a

dramatic plot, which, as he himself says, being sung by alternate voices, was well received, and enhanced his fame as a composer of lyric poetry.

At this time also a Mr Watson, one of those gentlemen who are usefully employed in going from town to town teaching vocal music, came to Biggar, and opened an evening class for singing in the Parish School. He was rather a good singer,—at least he was an enthusiast in his profession. Besides psalmody he taught song-singing; but several of his songs were far from select, the music only rendering them passable. One of his songs was entitled the “Plough Boy,”—a very poor production, but with rather a good air. Mr Riddell, who used to attend Watson’s class, composed as a substitute the song of “The Crook and Plaid” to the same air; and it immediately became popular with the Biggar singers, and ere long found its way over all Scotland.

Mr Riddell, while residing at Biggar, composed a Border Romance, which he submitted to the examination of the Ettrick Shepherd, and whose remark on returning it was, that there were more rawness and more genius in it than any work he had seen. He also contributed several papers to the “Clydesdale Magazine,” a periodical published at Lanark by William Murray Borthwick, in 1818. One of his acquaintance while at Biggar, was the Rev. James Proudfoot, then parochial schoolmaster, Skirling, and now minister of the Free Church, Coulter. Mr Proudfoot had brought himself into notice when a student, by the publication of a poem, in which were some spirited references to the battle of Waterloo; and a congeniality of taste and sentiment naturally led to a bond of intimacy between him and Mr Riddell, and in company they made a tour to Yarrow, and held converse with that gifted son of song the Ettrick Shepherd. Another of his Biggar associates was James Brown, weaver, Symington, a good poet, and an amiable man, of whom notice will be taken in another part of this volume. Mr Riddell was also on terms of intimacy with the family of a farmer in the neighbourhood; and for one of its members, who had the charge of a hirsel of his father’s flocks, he composed the well-known song, “The Wild Glen so Green.” One of Mr Riddell’s school associates was Mr W. B. Clark, a native of Biggar, in after years parochial incumbent of Half Morton, and after the Dis-

ruption, for some time pastor of the Free Church, Maxwelltown, Dumfries, and now minister of Chalmers' Free Church, Quebec. Through this intimacy he became acquainted with Mr Clark's sister, Eliza, who, after a courtship of a goodly number of years, became his wife. The Rev. Hamilton Paul of Broughton in his poem entitled the "Presbytery Garland" makes the following reference to this union.

And what do ye think my friend Henry has *done*
 Tho' I thought him a monk and took her for a nun,
 Yet he's come and he's wed his Eliza ye see,
 Oh, a' bodies gaun to be married but me!

A Mr Harrower, son of Mary Black, Biggar, who had realized a considerable fortune in Demerara, came home at this time, and took up his residence at Biggar. He soon formed an intimacy with Mr Riddell, invited him frequently to his table, and put his horse at his disposal. After the poet left Biggar to attend the University of Edinburgh, Harrower several times paid him a visit, and on one occasion brought with him two English friends. The whole party made a pilgrimage to the scene of the battle of Pinkie, and the Englishmen bantered Harrower and Riddell a good deal concerning the defeat which the Scots there sustained. Riddell, since he could not make a better of it, resolved at least to have the last word in the strife; and before he slept, composed, in support of his country's cause, the popular song, "Ours is the Land of Gallant Hearts."

Mr Riddell, after attending the Universities of Edinburgh and St Andrews, was licensed to preach the Gospel. He was ultimately settled at Teviothead, as minister of a chapel erected by the Duke of Buccleuch; but, after labouring for a number of years in this situation, he was visited with severe affliction, which for a considerable period laid him aside from the discharge of his duties. On his recovery he did not resume his pastoral charge, to which another in the interim had been appointed. The dwelling house which was built for him by the Duke of Buccleuch, he still continues to occupy, and receives from his Grace an annuity, with other perquisites. Mr Riddell's publications are—"The Songs of the Ark," "A

Monody on the Death of Lord Byron ;” “The Christian Politician, or the Right Way of Thinking ;” and a volume of poems and songs. In 1855, he made a translation of the Gospel of St Matthew into the Scotch language, executed for Prince Lucien Bonaparte. More recently, he also for his Highness translated into the same language the Psalms of David and the Song of Solomon. As these translations were for the linguistic purposes of the Prince, only a limited number of copies of each was printed.

All the emanations of Mr Riddell’s muse manifest much poetical power ; they everywhere breathe an ardent attachment to liberty, to country, to rural scenes and domestic enjoyments. His larger pieces contain many choice sentiments and felicitous expressions, which we love to con over and over again ; but, on the whole, and for our own part, we feel disposed to give the preference to his songs. It is in his lyrics that the divine inspiration of genius shines most conspicuously forth. In these, the ardour of patriotism, the affections of the heart, the beauties of nature, and the endearments of home, are developed in such glowing and apt illustrations, that they will charm and delight so long as lyric poetry holds a place in the literature of our country. As might be expected from the genial sympathies of the bard, he has always cherished a warm attachment to the Biggar district and its inhabitants. A short time ago, in a communication to ourselves, he said, “my recollections concerning Biggar and its surrounding localities are vivid, manifold, and, I may add, pleasurable,— unless in so far as they are mingled with my regret in leaving them, and for the departure of those friends from them with whom I was wont to associate in the days of other years. Still, these things are like what Ossian says of departed joys, ‘They are sweet and mournful to the soul.’” In several poetical productions he has given expression to his affectionate attachment to the scenes and the people of this district, and from these we give a few extracts. In a poem entitled “The Folk o’ the Clyde,” he says :—

“O there is not a vale in the wide world in which
The hearts are so kind, and the scenery so rich,
Wi’ its woodlands so green, and its homes and its domes,
Where the wind wanders free, and the waterfall foams,
Where the wild wood is grand, if the moorland be grey,

And its bosom lies veiled in the beauty of day.
As bold as a bridegroom, and blythe as a bride,
And there is not a vale like the vale of the Clyde.

“The world frae Tintock gang ye and survey,
It’s no fault of his, if sight fails by the way,
But of all the scenes that may beam on the eye,
Ye’ll see these the loveliest close round him that lie;
For where is the beauty will ever excel
Its bowers in the bosom of Wild Coulter Fell,
Where David sings sweetest of a’ at eve-tide,
O’ *the wild glen sae green*, to the lads o’ the Clyde?”

“And there are the maidens sae modest, yet free,
And sweet as the breath o’ the new-blown haw tree,
As fair as the wild flower, and blythe as the day,
And untainted as dew in the morning of May;
Wi’ blinks in the e’e that will ne’er let alane,
Till they warm a’ the heart, tho’ the heart were like stane;
And if there ere now I had won not a bride,
I wad woo night and day at the lasses o’ Clyde.

“Ye lads o’ the hill, and the holm, and the shaw,
I’ll long for your welfare while breath I shall draw;
And when sleeps the bard that ye wont so to hail,
O bring ae sweet daisy frae Clyde’s lovely vale,
And plant the fair flower on the turf o’ his tomb,
For methinks it will sweeten the sleep of its gloom;
And may health, peace, and plenty, for ever betide
The warm generous hearts on the banks o’ the Clyde.”

In a song written for the Edinburgh Biggar Club, and sung at its anniversary meeting, 7th January 1848, he thus gave utterance to similar sentiments:—

“On Yarrow Braes and Ettrick Shaws beat leal, leal hearts and warm,
In men and dames, and lovely maids that cheer alike and charm;
But lealer hearts and fairer forms are no in Scotland wide,
Than those that trace and sweetly grace the bonnie banks o’ Clyde.

“The Tweed rows down his waters far alang yon mountain glen,
Where lonely rills and lofty hills are roun’ the hames o’ men;
But Tintock rears a prouder crest, and guards a fairer tide,
In casting his broad shadow o’er the valley o’ the Clyde.

“There glow the hearths as erst they glowed ere them we left behind,
Where love and worth combined to bless the kindest o’ the kind,

And bright intelligence lits up the fare the free provide,
When cantily they crack within the happy hames o' Clyde.

“ May peace and plenty dwell wi' them who still are dwellers there,
May lovc the sunny ringlets wreathe, and wit the hoary hair,
And sympathies that aye are young imingle life's ain tide,
While harps are strung and sangs are sung upon the banks o' Clyde.”

The only other extract which we will give is from a lengthened and very excellent poem, which he wrote for the same club also in 1848 :—

“ Climb to green Bizzberry's top,
And say, as round you cast your eye,
If lovelier scene on Nature's lap
E'er spread its breast to Nature's sky.
Lo! Coulter Fell and wild Cardon,
Themselves with heaven's own hues invest,
And Tintock lifts his summit lone
Far 'mid the stillness of the west.

“ Around lie stream, and glen, and grove,
And mansions fair, aud woodland wide,
Reflecting smiles of light and love,
To hail the mountain of the Clyde.
Even Tweed's lone hills, dark and sublime
As if awakening from a dream,
Look longingly across the clime
To greet the guardian of our stream.

“ But can the distant hill or dale
Forth in the soul sensations draw,
Such as awake when thought must hail
Our own blythe Biggar and Westraw?
O'er these the haunts of early days,
Emotion into rapture swells,
While fondest feeling warmly says,
There worth with love and beauty dwells.

“ From out these village homes and trees,
Afar the children's mingled hum,
Comes floating on the light hill-breeze,
As erst our own was wont to come.
And, lo! that venerable pile,
Gray with the garniture of years,
Gives forth its echo, hark! the while,
Awakening other hopes and fears.

There sleep the loved of soul and heart,
 The death departed of our line,
 Who scorned to play a servile part
 In aught, if secular or divine.

“ Their power could foreign pride o’erawe,
 And smile amid the triumphs won,
 When Scotia’s Lion raised his paw,
 And shook his grey beard in the sun.
 Their voice of freedom bore a sway,
 And energy, they say, that shook,
 When passing from the lip away,
 The dial on yon Castle nook.”

The house presently occupied by the parochial Schoolmaster of Biggar was erected as we have already said in 1798. It is a building of two storeys, which formerly contained a large apartment for a school-room and accommodation for the teacher, rather beyond what the statute then prescribed. In an advertisement for a Schoolmaster which appeared in an Edinburgh Newspaper, in January 1799, it is stated that the heritors had expended a considerable sum in erecting a school-house on a liberal scale, and that as the “flourishing town of Biggar was central, healthy, and supplied with good markets,” the Schoolmaster would have every advantage for the accommodation of Boarders. The school-room was by and by found to be rather small, and an addition was made to it some thirty-five years ago, but it did not altogether prove satisfactory. The Rev. John Christison, therefore, set vigorously to work to get a new and separate building erected; and in this he entirely succeeded. The school-house put up under his auspices, and mainly by his efforts, is one of the most elegant and commodious that can be found in the whole country. As the erection of this building is a notable event in the history of the town, and is most creditable to all parties concerned, we will quote part of a letter dated 10th February 1849, from Mr Christison to James Sommerville, Esq., S.S.C., Edinburgh, showing the steps which were taken to raise the necessary funds:—

“The heritors of this parish,” he says, “agreed to build a new school-house, at an expense of L.340, on the site of the old one; but as this site had no playground attached to it, and

was otherwise bad, I urged them to purchase a new one. They declined doing this, but agreed to allow the parishioners, at their own expense, to furnish a new site, and to improve the style and accommodation of the building if they chose. A subscription was immediately set on foot for these purposes, and went on with great spirit. In a short time we realized subscriptions in money to the amount of L.125. Besides this, everybody who had a horse assisted in driving materials; the value of the labour thus contributed was L.28. We had then a public sermon, at which a collection was made. We had a concert; and we were presented with the gratuitous services of the architects, Messrs Clark and Bell of Glasgow. We got by these means L.24. We had now raised L.177, and I had become liable to the contractors for L.50 more, trusting to the generous spirit which had already given so much, and which did not appear to me to be yet exhausted. I was not deceived. Our next device was a sale of ladies' work. Every needle in the parish, and not a few elsewhere, went cheerfully in the cause. A tempting show was set before the public, and at the close of the sale we found that it had yielded us L.59. We were still short, however, of what we required, for we had again gone ahead; and when we were considering what we should do next, the young people of the parish took the matter out of our hands, by getting up a ball, and sending us the proceeds, which amounted to L.21. We had now raised in all L.257, which, added to the L.340 expended by the heritors, amounted to nearly L.600. With this we have built one of the best parochial schools in Scotland. We were fortunate in getting a beautiful site, and a very elegant design from Messrs Clark and Bell; and we adopted all the recent improvements as to ventilation, and the proportion of area to each child. The main school-room is 53 feet long by an average breadth of 26 feet. We also built an additional class-room of 16 feet by 14, and a lobby, which may be occasionally used as a class room, 16 feet by 11."

The want of a suitable apartment in which to hold a subsidiary, or as it is now called, an adventure school, was long felt at Biggar. Those persons who attended the schools taught by Messrs Robertson, Slimon, Stephens, and Alton, will recollect the miserable apartments, dark, dirty, and confined, in which they were held. About forty years ago, a somewhat better

apartment was obtained in one of the office-houses connected with the Relief manse ; but the ceiling of it was low, and it had no playground except the public road. The erection of a larger and more appropriate building had, therefore, become absolutely necessary, to keep pace with the educational wants of the parish and the progress of the times. The new Parish School contains accommodation for 180 children ; but the number of children in the town and neighbourhood who ought to be at school was found to be 330, thus leaving 150 to be otherwise provided for. A scheme was, therefore, set on foot for the erection of a building, to be used as a school for the burgh. Liberal subscriptions were obtained from many of the most wealthy inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood, and an eligible site, of half an acre in extent, was obtained at the head of John's Loan, on one of the small fragments of ground that the descendants of the Flemings still possessed in the parish. A suitable plan having been obtained, the foundation-stone was laid with masonic honours, by Br. Alexander Baillie Cochrane, Esq. of Lamington, assisted by the Lodge of Biggar Free Operatives, on the 27th of October 1859. The part of the building devoted to the purposes of tuition, including an industrial department, was finished in the autumn of 1860, and was opened in October of that year. It is capable of containing 120 scholars, and has cost L.500. A house for the accommodation of the teacher has since been erected, adjacent to the school. The chief and indefatigable promoter of this undertaking was the Rev. James Dunlop, M.A., then pastor of the South United Presbyterian Church ; and it will stand, we hope, many generations, a monument to his honour and a benefit to the district. A few years ago a building for the accommodation of a Female Industrial School was erected outside the town on the road leading to the Burgh Muir. The expense of the building was defrayed by private subscriptions, by a government grant, and a donation from the Ferguson Bequest Fund. It has hitherto been supported somewhat in the same way, with the addition of nominal fees. Besides the ordinary branches of education, Sewing, Knitting, Singing, &c. are taught. It is attended by the daughters of the working classes, and under the care of Miss Mary Ramsay is at present largely patronized.

It has been a decided success, showing that a school of the kind was much wanted.

The cause of education in Biggar has been promoted to some extent, among the poorer classes, by the benefactions of two individuals, whose example is worthy of imitation. One of these was William Law, skinner, Biggar, who built and occupied a house near the Cadger's Brig, the lintel of the outer door still showing his initials and the date 1751. This individual, in 1767, mortified L.41 sterling for the education of poor children in the parish. The other person was William Nesbit, who had his dwelling in the School Green, and used to make a livelihood by hawking salt. At his death, in 1817 he mortified L.40 for the same laudable purpose.

Another benefactor of the poor of Biggar, in respect to education, was the late Alexander Mitchell, Esq., tanner and currier, Glasgow. Mr Mitchell, it has been stated, was a native of the neighbouring parish of Kilbucho, and when young removed to Biggar with his father, who lived for some years in the Kirkstyle, and was employed as a kilnman at Biggar Mill. When Mr Mitchell acquired sufficient strength to toil for his daily bread, he was engaged as a labourer in the nurseries of Bailie Cree. He left Biggar with half a crown in his pocket, with his feet bare, and his shoes slung over his shoulders, and proceeded to Glasgow, where he got employment in the establishment of a tanner and currier. He was of a saving turn of mind. When a mere boy he amassed a few shillings, which for security he concealed in the thatch of a neighbouring byre, but one night a strong gale of wind arose, and blowing the thatch off the byre, scattered abroad his much valued hoard beyond the hope of recovery. This incident taught him a lesson about the due preservation of money, which he did not forget. By steadiness, frugality, and attention to business, he rose to be the head of an extensive currying establishment in Glasgow, and one of the Directors of the City of Glasgow Bank. At his death in 1860, he left property to the amount of L.90,000, one half of which, by a Will dated 12th June 1858, he bequeathed to his widow to be disposed of as she might think proper, and the other to a number of relatives and charitable institutions, but not to be available till his widow's death. The part of his Will most interesting to the inhabitants of Biggar,

is contained in the following extract, "To the Kirk Session of the Established Church in the parish of Biggar, for behoof of the parochial school of that parish, the sum of one thousand pounds sterling, and to the Kirk Session of the United Presbyterian Church at Biggar, for behoof of the school connected with the said congregation, the like sum of one thousand pounds sterling, but which two sums of one thousand pounds each the said two kirk sessions shall be bound to invest in good heritable security, or in the debentures of any public company, and apply the interest or annual proceeds thereof, allenary, in or towards the support or maintenance of the said several schools, but the receipt or discharge of the said kirk sessions shall be a sufficient exoneration to my said trustees for the said two sums of one thousand pounds bequeathed to them respectively."

These bequests, when obtained, will confer a great boon on Biggar. If properly invested they will yield an annual sum of not less than one hundred pounds, which will be sufficient to educate gratuitously a considerable number of the children of the poorer portion of the inhabitants. As two United Presbyterian Churches exist in Biggar, a difference of opinion has arisen regarding the one indicated by the testator in his trust settlement. An opinion of Counsel has been taken on the subject by persons interested in the South Church, and his decision is, that the session of that church is entitled to receive the benefaction. This opinion is founded on the circumstances that the South Church is the only one that ever had a school in any way connected with it,—that Mr Mitchell during his lifetime, at the request of the Rev. James Dunlop, then pastor of the South Church, gave two donations towards the erection of a new school intended to supersede the congregational one, and that Mrs Mitchell, widow of the testator, had stated that the South Church is the one that her husband had in view at the time at which he made his Will.

A society, called the Edinburgh Biggar Club, which was instituted in 1846, has for one of its objects, the promotion of education in the parish of Biggar. On several occasions, it has given a number of books to the schools as prizes for the reward of merit,—a proceeding worthy of commendation, as it not only stimulated the scholars to industry, but distributed a number of useful works in various departments of literature

among the families of the town, and thus conduced to the knowledge and mental improvement of both young and old. The Edinburgh Upper Ward Club has for some years prosecuted the same object, by giving prizes and maps to the schools; and has also given a sum of money to the most proficient scholar in the Upper Ward, for the purpose of enabling him still further to prosecute his studies at one of our universities. Mr John Jamieson, a native of Abington, and for a number of years one of the partners of the firm of Gillespie, Moffat, and Co., Montreal, having realized a competent fortune, returned to his native district, and resided some time in the parish of Coulter. At his death, in 1848, he left the sum of L.600, to be invested for the purpose of founding a bursary in the University of Edinburgh. Candidates for this bursary must be the sons of schoolmasters, farmers, mechanics, etc., whose yearly income does not exceed L.100; and they must have been born and educated in the parish of Biggar, Coulter, Lamington, Crawford, Crawfordjohn, Wiston, or Robertson. They require to undergo an examination in Greek, Latin, and arithmetic, and the successful competitor holds the bursary for four years; the amount at present being L.21 per annum. The patrons are the Principal of the University and ten professors.

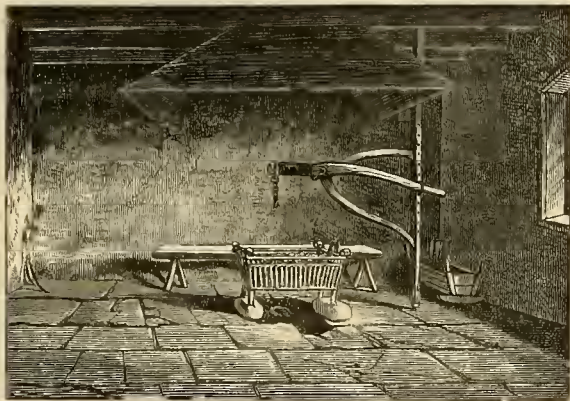
The character of the inhabitants, in former times, stood high for intelligence and sagacity. In general they were of a reading and reflecting turn, and most households had a store of theological literature of the old divines, particularly of the Puritan and Covenanting times. On such food they became expert polemics, rigid Calvinists, and decided non-intrusionists, no people offering a more sturdy and determined resistance to the settlement in the parish church of unacceptable ministers. In the midst of theological discussion and inquiry a little scepticism, as might be expected, was sometimes evoked, and the self-sacrifice of a young man labouring under mental hallucination, induced, as it is supposed, by infidel speculations, struck awe into the country round, and tended to check the open avowal of such opinions for many years.

Within the course of a century education, taken it in its widest sense, has made great progress, wealth has become more prevalent, many inventions and improvements in the useful

arts have taken place, and the means of intercourse between one part of the country and another have been vastly increased. The consequence has been that a great change has taken place in the manners, customs, and condition of the population in the Biggar district. A century ago the land was badly cultivated, manure was scanty, and drainage almost unknown. The implements of husbandry, composed principally of wood, were few, rudely constructed, and very ineffective. The clumsy ploughs were drawn partly by horses and partly by oxen, and the ploughman was assisted in his work by a young lad provided with a gaud or pikestaff, and hence called the gaudsman. The grain was cut with the toothed sickle, was wholly thrashed with flails, and winnowed on the sheeling knowe, or between two doors on the barn floor. The thrashing and "dichtin'" of the grain entailed a great amount of labour on the farmer and his assistants. It was a common practice to commence thrashing early in the morning, and continue at it till breakfast-time, after which, ploughing or other labour was engaged in. Heavy loads were conveyed from place to place on horses' backs or in sledges, and instead of saddles, pads filled with wool or straw called sods, with rope stirrups, were common.

The dwelling houses on farms, almost invariably, were one storey in height, were covered with thatch, and consisted of three apartments, the spence or parlour, the chaumer, and the kitchen. The kitchen very commonly had a cradle grate placed towards the centre of the floor, and the smoke escaped by a large box or aperture in the ceiling called the brace. Behind the fire-place was a long form or settle, which was occupied by the beggars, who almost nightly got quarters and were supplied with a supper of "parritch," and a bed in the barn. On one side of the fire was the "swee," a wooden apparatus for suspending pots or kettles above the fire, and lowering or elevating them according to the amount of heat that was required. Near the swee generally sat the gudeman in the winter nights, conversing with the wanderers seated behind the fire, overlooking the industrial occupations of the younger members of the family, or enjoying their amusements, the telling of stories, the reciting of ballads, the singing of songs, &c. The kitchen was furnished with a press or "awmory," in which bread, meal, and other articles of food

were kept ; and above it stood a rack or shelf with a large array of cogs, bickers, wooden trenchers, and pewter plates, flanked with a spoon creel on the one side, and a pint stoop or two on the other. As a specimen of the fire-place of a kitchen at the time of which we speak, we give a wood-cut of one at the Highfield, a farm-house in the parish of Coulter, belonging to Mr Sim.



The kitchen had very often a communication with the byre, stable, and barn, by a door in the gable, and thus the family could attend to the cows and horses without going out of doors. It was nothing uncommon for persons in cot-houses, and even in the town of Biggar, to live under the same roof with a cow and a horse, and to enter by the same door, the only division between the quadrupeds and the family being generally a close or box bed. The dung was piled by the side of the door, or at least in close proximity to the dwelling. Nothing could be more opposed to the sanitary arrangements now in vogue than this state of things, and yet the inmates were generally hale and healthy, and lived to a goodly old age.

The farmer himself took a share in all the hard labour of the farm, ploughing, sowing, hoeing, reaping, stacking, thrashing, &c., and in fact, set an example of industry which the other members were expected to follow. He sat at the same board with the other inmates of his household, and partook of the same fare, which generally consisted of parritch or brose

In some districts of the country, the instruments of spinstry were borne in procession before a newly married bride. In an old work we find the following reference to this custom:—
 “In olde tyme there was usually carried before the mayde, when she should be married, and come to dwell in hir husbandes house,—a distaffe, charged with flaxe and a spyndle hanging at it, to the intent that she might be myndefull to lyfe by hir labour.”

The distaff, on the top of which was placed the flax or wool, was held under the arm, and the spindle to which the thread was attached, hung by the side of the spinner, and was twisted rapidly round to give the proper twine to the thread. The spindle was a round tapering pin of several inches in length with a nick or notch at the small end to fasten the thread; and on the lower or thick end, as shown in the engraving, a circular stone called a whorle was placed, in order to give it greater weight and make it hang properly.

The whorles, which are commonly made of black stone, are found in abundance in the Biggar district. Like many of the early stone implements, they had a certain superstitious veneration attached to them when dug from the earth, and were ranked among the charms that had power over evil influences. Distaffs are now articles of great rarity. They were not merely composed of perishable material, but when they were no longer applied to their original purpose, they were specially liable to injury and destruction, from their shape, which readily suggested their conversion into another useful domestic utensil, viz., a parritch-stick. Distaffs and whorles were wont, in ancient times, to be highly ornamented, and many curious and valuable specimens are carefully preserved. In a respectable family in the neighbourhood of Biggar, a finely

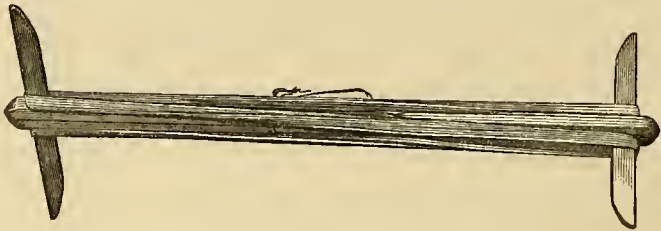


carved distaff is still kept, and regarded as a family relic. The distaff, spindle, and whorle here engraved, were the property of one of the oldest families in the village of Coulter, and the initials of one of the members of the family are cut on the top of the distaff.

The yarn, after being spun, was formed into hanks by means of a hand-reel, which is represented below with a portion of the yarn upon it. When the winding of the thread was in progress, something like the following words were used:

“Thou’s no ane, but thou’s ane a’ out;
Thou’s no twae, but thou’s twae a’ out.”

The thread was not full till it had passed in a certain manner round the reel, and so many rounds formed the hesp or hank.



The spinning wheel, which, from a representation in a manuscript of the early part of the fourteenth century, appears to have been in use before that period, was long in being introduced into the Biggar district. By and by it became quite common, and for many years, along with a reel, formed a portion of the “providin’” of almost every bride. Not only did every farmer grow a lint crop, but almost every cottar had a portion of ground allotted to him, on which to sow a “capfu’” of lint seed, the produce of which was manufactured into shirts, towels, sheets, table-cloths, &c. The sowing, weeding, pulling, steeping, and spinning of the lint furnished a considerable amount of employment to the farmer and cottar’s family, and as a matter of course the lint crop was regarded as a thing of no small value and importance.

A story is told of a stand which the cottars of Covington Hillhead made in defence of their lint rigs, about the year 1716, against the last Duke of Douglas, and which led to a very serious affray. The Duke was of an imperious and over-

bearing disposition, and could brook no disobedience to his orders, or interference with his proceedings. He had a strong passion for the chase, and in spring pursued this sport without regard to the damage which he committed, or the offence which he gave. John Watt, tenant of Covington Hillhead, a consequential man, too, in his way, suffered some injury to his fences and newly sown grounds from the inroads of his Grace, and, therefore, took the liberty of remonstrating with him rather sharply on the impropriety of his conduct. The Duke resented this as a most unwarrantable and impertinent interference with his prerogatives as a landed proprietor. He raged, stamped, and swore, and vowed revenge, but no opportunity presented itself of carrying his threats into execution, till about midsummer, when passing Hillhead, he remembered the affront received from Watt, and seizing a fishing net which was drying on a hedge, cut it in pieces. Not content with this act of destruction, he rode furiously up and down the lint rigs of the cottars, who at once turned out, and, as entreaties to desist had no effect, assailed him with a volley of stones. Up and down he pranced, and stone after stone rebounded from him and his horse, till he was fairly compelled to descend the bank on which Hillhead stands, and swim across the Clyde, which, at the time, was considerably swollen by previous rains.

The Duke returned to Douglas Castle frantic with rage, and immediately issued a summons to his retainers to meet him the following morning in battle array at the Castle. Next day the Duke at the head of a cavalcade of armed men, marched to Hillhead, determined to slay and destroy all that came in his way. The first person that they saw was a servant named John Whiteford, who was engaged in pulling thistles in a corn field at some distance from the farm house. The Duke instantly drew his blunderbuss and discharged it at John, and down he fell as if he had been shot dead. A trooper was despatched to ascertain if he had actually been killed, but finding him unskathed, recommended him to keep his position, as if he were a dead man, till the raid was over. A mare and a foal that were grazing in a park next engaged attention. The mare was at once shot down, and the neighings and frantic circuits of the foal round its dead mother were truly pitiful, but had no effect in softening the heart of the infuriated Duke.

The troop hastened forward to the farm steading, but the farmer and the cottars having got notice of the intended attack had fled, and carried with them such of their cattle and valuable effects as they could readily remove. A fine horse had, in the hurry, been left in the stable, and the persons who searched it being unwilling that so valuable an animal should be sacrificed, concealed the circumstance of its being there, and it was considered remarkable that, notwithstanding the noise made by the other horses, it neither gave a neigh nor a stamp to betray its preservers. The farm house having been entered, the churn was overturned, the tables and chairs destroyed, the grates torn out, the windows smashed to pieces, the plates, cogs, pots, and pans broken, and the interior converted into a scene of ruin and desolation. The Duke and his myrmidons retired when they could find nothing more to destroy.

When Watt returned to Hillhead and surveyed the havoc which had been made, he resolved to proceed next day to Edinburgh to seek redress at the proper legal tribunal. He was, however, saved the trouble, for the Duchess, on learning the havoc which had been committed, sent for him privately to the Castle, and requested him to name a sum sufficient to cover the damage which he had sustained. In telling the story afterwards, he was wont to declare that the day of the Duke's raid was the most profitable that he had ever experienced at Hillhead.

A century ago and later, penny weddings were common. A very general invitation was given to these weddings, and as a rule large numbers attended. The bridal party assembled at the house of the bridegroom, and preceded by a young man with a white rod called the saine or sign, and headed, if the party was on foot, by a piper or a fiddler, set out in order of procession to the house of the bride. So soon as the nuptial knot was tied some of the most athletic and courageous young men started off to ride or run the brooze*—a race that generally afforded great amusement and excited the most lively interest. The racer who first reached the house of the bridegroom was the winner, and being forthwith furnished with a

* A very humorous description of riding the brooze is given in Peter Forbes's song entitled, 'The Tranent Wedding.'

bottle of rum, brandy, or whisky, returned to meet the wedding party, to salute the bride, and offer refreshments to her and her attendants. When the marriage party emerged from the bride's house, the juveniles present clamorously demanded the "ba' siller," and thereupon the best man scattered amongst them several handfuls of copper money, and then a grand scene of scrambling and confusion took place. On the bride's approaching the threshold of her new abode, a piece of bread was broken over her head, emblematical of the plenty which it was hoped would always prevail in her dwelling. When the bride had entered the house, the tongs,* or some domestic implement, was put into her hands, indicating that she had now full right to commence the performance of household duties. The whole party then adjourned to a barn or large apartment, where a substantial repast was served up, each one bringing his own spoon, knife, and fork, and where the night was spent in dancing and merriment. Each gentleman paid a sum which, it was understood, would defray expenses, and perhaps leave a little surplus to the newly wedded pair if they were not in affluent circumstances; and hence the name of "Penny Weddings."

At a birth or "shouting" as it was called, all the matrons in the neighbourhood were summoned into the apartment and much talk, gossip, and hilarity prevailed. After the child had been dressed, the blythe meat was served, which, as its title imports, was a very hearty and joyous repast.

The practice of riding the stang according to Forsyth was at one time common in the town. It was inflicted by women on a husband, who had made himself obnoxious by the ill-treatment of his wife, and consisted in mounting the culprit

* Allan Ramsay, in his continuation of "Christ's Kirk on the Green," when enumerating the gifts presented to the bride, mentions that a pair of tongs was among the number.

" Her aunt a pair of tangs fush in,
 Right bauld she spak an' spruce,
 ' Gin your guidman shall mak' a din,
 An' gabble like a goose.
 Shorin', when fou, to skelp your skin,
 Thir tangs may be o' use;
 Lay them enlang his pow or shin—
 Wha wins syne may mak' roose
 Between you twa.'"

astride a pole, and carrying him through the town, amid the jeers, reproaches, and merriment of the onlookers. In the end he was generally plunged into a pool in the burn, and had to return to his wife in a very sorrowful plight. Whether these exhibitions and "dookins" effected much reformation, history has failed to record.

The practice of appearing before the congregation on Sabbath attired in sackcloth, standing in the joughs, or sitting on the cutty stool, for ecclesiastical offences, as we have already said, was common a century ago. The standing of fornicators and adulterers before the congregation for three successive Sabbaths, and receiving a serious rebuke and admonition was continued in the dissenting churches of Biggar until the last forty years. These practices were founded on the Scripture warrant that those who sinned were to be rebuked before all; but, in spite of Scripture and prevailing iniquity, they have one after another been abandoned, and a more gentle and private mode of discipline has been adopted.

The passing bell announcing the death of some inhabitant, was a century ago duly heard in the streets of Biggar. This practice was ancient, perhaps as ancient as the introduction of bells themselves, viz. in the seventh century. In the days of Roman Catholic ascendancy, it was also called the soul bell, as it was intended that the persons who heard it, should put up prayers for the soul of the deceased.

Funerals were expensively conducted. Large numbers were invited. The company assembled in a barn or large room, and after one or two lengthened prayers, several services of wine, rum, whisky, &c., with cakes, cheese, shortbread, and buns were given. When these were ended, a riddle filled with pipes and tobacco was carried round, and every one was invited to provide himself with the means of enjoying a smoke.

All these practices and many others have been abandoned. The tailor no longer goes to the houses of his customers to pursue his vocation; the cooper with his hoops and staves and the implements of his craft is never seen mounted on his Highland sheltie passing from one farm-house to another; the clank of the loom of the customer weaver is seldom heard; the little and the muckle wheels are not now implements of domestic thrift; and the malt kilns have disappeared from the

town, and the brewing utensils from every household. A century ago not a single piano existed in the parish, and now they count by dozens; English grammar, geography, drawing, and modern languages then formed no part of education, and now they are quite common, and considered indispensable. The school-boy no longer carries in the morning a peat to the school fire; cock-fighting no longer takes place in the parish school; the Candlemas offering is no longer laid before the poorly paid preceptor; and the schoolhouses are no longer dark, narrow hovels, but spacious, well lighted, and well aired buildings, and are, therefore, vastly more conducive to the comfort and health of the pupils.

Towards the close of last century, according to the statement of the Rev. William Watson, then incumbent of the parish, a labourer had 6d. per day in winter, 8d. in summer, and 10d. in harvest. The wages of this class of working men have been increased nearly fourfold, but, although their condition has certainly been improved, the advantage has not been wholly in their favour. At that period a pound of butcher meat cost 3d. or 4d., a hen, 1s., a chicken, 4d., and a pound of butter, 7d. The price of these commodities has risen in something like the same ratio as wages. Tea drinking, which the reverend gentleman says was on the increase in his days, and which he seems to point out as a sign of the degeneracy of the times, is now almost universal, and to all appearance neither the physical powers, nor the moral condition of the population, have thereby been deteriorated.

CHAPTER XV.

Biggar a Burgh of Barony.



ONE of the favours which James II. conferred on Robert, Lord Fleming, was the erection of Biggar into a free burgh of barony. The original charter is still preserved in the archives of the Fleming family. Like other early charters it is of no great length. It states expressly, that, for the love and favour which the King had for Robert, Lord Fleming of Biggar, he erected Biggar into a free burgh of barony, with all the usual privileges, and particularly a weekly market on Thursday. This charter was given under the great seal, at Edinburgh, on the 31st of March 1451. It was renewed by the Scottish parliament on the 25th November 1526, in the reign of James V., in the following terms:—"Our sourane Lord, with avis and consent of his thre estatis, ratifyis and apprevis ye charter of new infestment maid be our sourane Lord to Malcolme, Lord Fleming, making ye toun of Biggar and Kirktulloch burghis in baronyis, with ye mercat dais, in all punctis and artiklis, efter ye forme and tenor of ye said charter of infitment maid yare-upon." New ratifications of this charter were made by James VI., on the 6th of January 1588; by Charles I., on the 1st of February 1634; and by Charles II., on the 10th of May 1662.

The privileges of a burgh of barony were, in general, the holding of a weekly market and certain annual fairs; the exaction of a custom on all merchandise brought into the burgh for public sale; the trial of all disputes and offences which took place within the bounds of the barony, with the punishment of offenders by fine, imprisonment, and even in some instances

by death ; and, lastly, the recovery of the baron's mails, duties, profits, multures, and mill service.

It is a popular tradition, that the burgh of Biggar, at one time, possessed the power of self-government ; and that it was thus, in point of jurisdiction, similar to a royal burgh, or a burgh of regality. This power, it is said, was taken away by the influence or active interference of a lawyer in Edinburgh, who in his youth had been a vagrant, and who, on account of some depredation committed at Biggar, had been rather roughly handled by the authorities and the inhabitants. The following rhyme is understood to have a reference to this transaction, from which it would seem that the individual in question had been drummed out of the town :—

“ The laddie had tricks that cost him fu' dear,
For he was a runnagait loon ;
But their ain licks and their ain drumsticks
Hae fared as ill for the town.”

No written proof exists, so far as we know, to lend anything like confirmation to this tradition, though it is by no means unlikely that the Flemings, for services performed, conferred extra privileges on the burgh, and that some incident occurred which caused these privileges to be taken away. It is evident, however, that the Flemings treated the inhabitants of Biggar with considerable liberality. The whole land in the immediate neighbourhood of the town was conferred on the burgh, and was divided into twenty-four portions, called Burgh or Borrow lands ; and besides these, there were also two Cotlands. A burgh land was of sufficient extent to allow one or two houses to be erected on it, fronting the street, and to afford ample space for a garden and a croft. The possessors of these burgh lands, who, both in common parlance and in legal documents, were styled burgesses, had each of them a right to a piece of land, on the east of the town, called the Borrow Muir, on which they raised crops and pastured their cattle, and had, besides, a “ darg ” or “ room ” in one of the mosses in the neighbourhood of the town, from which they drew large supplies of peats and divots, or, as they are generally called roughheads. The burgh lands were not all of the same extent. They ranged from five to eight acres, and each of them was valued at L.12,

13s. 1d. Scots, so that the extent appears to have been regulated by the quality. Taking them at an average of six acres each, this shows that upwards of 140 acres of the best land of the parish were in the hands of the burgesses.

The lands of the Borrow Muir of Biggar, at one period, were divided by what are called run rigs or ridges. This division which consisted in one ridge belonging to one proprietor and the next to another proprietor, and so on alternately over the whole field or track of land, led to much discussion and altercation regarding the marches, as the balks and pit stones were apt to be disturbed or removed. To put an end to this unpleasant state of things an Act was passed, in the first Parliament of William III. authorising proprietors, who had run rig lands to apply to the Sheriffs, Stewarts, or Justices of the Peace of their respective shires, to appoint honest and knowing men to perambulate these lands, and make a division of them according to their quality and quantity, so that each proprietor might have the whole of his portion in one place continuously. The Burgesses of Biggar as proprietors of the Borrow Muir, in 1729, therefore, applied to William Bertram of Nisbet and George Muirhead of Whitcastle, Justices of Peace for the County of Lanark, to effect a new division of the whole Borrow lands, both Outfield and Infield, and Scabbit Muir. These gentlemen accordingly appointed Robert Telfer, James Gardener, William Ritchie, John Cuthbertson, and Andrew Brown, Indwellers in Biggar, to act in this matter along with James Oswald of Dryburgh and John Kay in Ingleston Bridge; and the division then made continues in force to the present day.

Few of the burgh lands remain entire. They have been much subdivided, and some portions of them have been sold to the conterminous proprietors, and persons not connected with the burgh. The feuars, however, still hold about forty acres of arable land, and also thirty-five acres of moss, to which they have a conjoined right, and which are lying in a very dismal and unprofitable state. They are quite unfit for pasture, and are of little use as a source to supply fuel, as coals, by means of the railway, can now be got at a moderate rate. It is therefore very desirable that efforts should be made to bring them into a state of cultivation.

When a burgh land was sold or bequeathed to a successor, a certain sum was paid for Lord Fleming's confirmation. On the 23d of January 1668, John Brown, senior, burghess, Biggar, paid "ane hunder and six pundis threteen shillings and four pennies Scots" for the confirmation of his rights to that burgh land sometime possessed by Mr John Kello. James Brown, who succeeded his father John, in 1678, paid L.40 for my Lord's confirmation of his right to a burgh land he being a singular successor. The sums paid for this warrant appear to have differed very much, and to have depended on the value of the land, and the person into whose possession the land was transferred, whether by succession or purchase.

The burgesses appear, like the other vassals of the Flemings in the parish, to have also had a certain right to the Common of Biggar, an extensive hilly traet lying to the north-west of the town. The different claims to this Common led to a series of litigations between the vassals or feuars and their superior, the Earl of Wigton, before the Court of Session, in the beginning of 1739, a short time before the Biggar estate was last entailed. Notices of these cases are to be found both in Kilkerran and Morrison's Decisions.* The likelihood is, that the Earl of Wigton, previous to effecting a new entail of his lands, purchased the rights of the feuars of Biggar to the Common, and thus all knowledge of these rights has, in a great measure, faded from the remembrance of the present generation of feuars.

The burgesses of Biggar, for their possessions, were bound to render the superior the usual service; that is, to attend his court, to follow him to the battle-field, to cast and win his peats, and to lead both his peats and corn, so far as they had horses, and received command to do so. Besides this, the feuars and burgesses of Biggar were bound by their original charters to pay to the lord superior six chalders of malt, with exception of two pecks and a half. This, at least, is stated to be the case in 1675, by an entry in one of the Earl of Wigton's books of that period. In the records of the Baron's Court we find that the Bailie was in the habit of ordering the inhabitants to pay the amount of their feus to the Earl of Wigton. For instance, on the 24th December 1723, John Smith, late tenant in Whinbush, was ordered to pay L.48

* Appendix No. iv.

Scots, Thomas Simson, tenant in Langvout, L.29 6s. 8d., and George Brown, wright, Biggar, L.22, as feu duties "furth of the lands of Langvout." After the Rebellion in 1745, an Act was passed for abolishing heritable jurisdictions; and thus the holding of land for military service was changed into what is called feu or blench tenures, that is, the payment of an annual sum of money, or some honorary acknowledgment of vassalage; and by this means the burgesses of Biggar were, like all other vassals, released from their obligation to take the field with their lords superior, and follow them through the gory ranks of war.

In a burgh of barony the chief magistrate was the baron himself; but as that dignitary often found it inconvenient to attend to all the duties of his office, he generally deputed his powers to a depute, called his Bailie. The Chief Bailie of the Flemings, at least in later times, was most commonly a lawyer, who had charge of all their estates; and being often non-resident at Biggar, he had power to appoint one or two substitutes, for whose proceedings he was responsible. Biggar had thus almost always two bailies and sometimes three. It had three in 1729. The Chief Bailie at that time was John Wardlaw. Luke Vallange, tailor and burghess, and a man of very considerable wealth, had, for a long time, held the office of substitute-bailie; but his advanced age and increasing infirmities rendering him unable to discharge efficiently the whole duties, Bailie Wardlaw gave him a colleague in the person of Alexander Baird; and these two worthy substitutes sat on the judicial bench in the Tolbooth together. The next official in the burgh was a procurator-fiscal, who seems to have been joint prosecutor with the bailie, and to have received the fines imposed in the Baron's Court. Besides these, there were a Clerk, to draw up indictments, record the transactions of court, etc.; a Dean of Guild, to take the oversight of the buildings; Inspectors of Markets, to examine the goods exposed for public sale, and ascertain if they were of good material and workmanship; Quartermasters to secure lodgings for travelling soldiers, and horses for the conveyance of their baggage; Referees or Birliemen, as they were called, to settle disputes, inspect the fences, and decide upon boundaries; and lastly, an Officer or Constable, to apprehend

offenders, issue summonses, and warn the vassals to pay their feu-duties, rents, kains, customs, and casualties. A Head Court was held once or twice a year, and an ordinary Court once a month, and, at times, once a week. The superior in the deed appointing the chief Bailie, reserved to himself the power of mitigating such punishments and modifying such fines as he might think exorbitant.

The Court of the Lands and Barony of Biggar was long held in the Tolbooth of the burgh. This was a strong vaulted building, which stood on a spot behind the present Corn Exchange. One part of it was used as a Court-house, and another as a prison. It was the scene of many a curious trial, and a place of resort to the burgesses to hear the sentences and the laws given forth by the Baron Bailie. It was, in a great measure, discontinued as a Court-house about the year 1737; most likely from having become ruinous. The Court, after this period, was generally held in an apartment of the Bailie's own house.

Had the records of the Court of the Lands and Barony of Biggar, during the three hundred years that it existed, been preserved, they would, to us at the present day, have been extremely interesting, and would have been worthy of being published by some of the literary clubs, which have done so much to extend a knowledge of rare books and ancient manuscripts connected with Scottish history. A reference to the Court Books is sometimes to be met with in the papers in the Charter chest of the Wigton family. For instance, in a document dated 1666, a statement is made that the amount of rent and duty then due the Earl of Wigton is inserted in the Court Books of the Burgh of Biggar. The only memorial of this Court known to exist, is a mutilated fragment of the last volume of its transactions, extending from 1719 to 1781; but the entries after the abolition of heritable jurisdictions, and the death of the last Earl of Wigton in 1747, are few and of little importance. The perusal of it, however, brings very vividly before the mind of the reader a considerable portion of the inhabitants of Biggar, and their doings in the earlier part of last century. We will give a few extracts from it, illustrative of the rights, liberties, and proceedings of the inhabitants at that period.

One of the first entries shows the great care that the Bailie manifested in preserving the horses of the parish from infectious diseases:—"Court of Lands and Barrony of Biggar, holden in the Tolbooth thereof upon the 12th day of November 1719, by Alexander Wardlaw, factor to the Earl of Wigton, and the suits called and the court fenced and affirmed; the whilk day the Bailie statutes and ordains, that no person nor persons keep colded nor scabbed horses, or otherwise insufficient, within the parroch, under the pain of ten pund Scots, by and attour of repairing their neighbours' skaith and damage. And where such horse or mare is found in the fields, that they be taken up and sighted, and if found insufficient, that the magistrate of the town caus dispatch them, and the owners thereof punished as said is."

The appointment of the birliemen was vested in the Head Bailie; and it appears, as we have already said, that the suburb of Westraw had a set of these functionaries of its own. At the Head Court held on the 19th of May 1720, the Bailie, Alexander Wardlaw, appointed "David Tweedie and Thomas Aitken, Westraw, to be birliemen there for ane year, and for that effect has taken their oaths *de fidei administratione*." The sort of cases in which the birliemen gave their decision, is shown by the proceedings which took place at the Court held by Luke Vallange on the 28th of June following, viz.: "The same day the Bailie fynes Andrew Aikman and James Thrypland, ilk ane of them, in the soume of fyve pund Scots, for cutting peats in their neighbour's peatt moss rumes, and that conform to ye birliemen's declaratione."

A heavy penalty was inflicted on those persons who would not accept the office of birlieman, or burleyman as it was sometimes called, when they were "nominated, constituted, and appointed" to it by the Bailie. On the 8th of October 1746, Robert Leckie, Head Bailie, appointed John Thomson and John Tweedie in Westraw, and James Forrest, miller, Biggar Mill, John Gladstanès and Andrew Vallange, feuars, and William Forrest, maltman, to be birliemen, and Andrew Vallange and James Forrest having refused to accept the office, were each fined in the sum of L.20 Scots, to be paid to the Procurator-Fiscal for the use of the Court.

The dealers in horses, or horse-coupers, as they were usually

called, are now characterized in the Biggar district for their orderly habits, and the honesty of their transactions. Within the memory of persons still living, the state of matters was different. Then, cheating in horse-dealing was proverbial; and the evenings of the fairs at Biggar and Skirling often presented scenes of swearing, fighting, and tumult among the generation of horse-coupers, truly appalling. Similar exhibitions, it appears, were common one hundred and forty years ago. The old record states, that Bailie Alexander Wardlaw, taking into consideration "the many compliments made to him anent drinking, fighting, cursing, swearing, and cheating, by reason of selling and exchanging of horscs under night, when mercat tyme is over, for remeid whereof, the Baron Bailie statuts and ordanis, that no person whatsoever buy, sell, or exchange any sort of horses after daylight is gone, under the pain and penalty of five pund Scots, *toties quoties*, for each transgression, and all bargains, after daylight is gone, are hereby declared null and of no effect. He renews all former Acts of Court anent forstallers of mercatts, and keeping up horses, and not presenting them to the mercat in tyme of day, and ordains this Act to be proclaimed at the Mercat Cross, on Thursday, in tyme of mercat."

Notwithstanding this enactment, the horse-merchants could not be altogether deterred from pursuing their evil courses. We have evidence of this from the following sentence pronounced by the Bailie a short time afterwards:—"The same day, the Baillie fines and americates Richard Steill, horse merchant, in Biggar, in ye sum of ten pound Scots, for contumacy in not compearing, being personally summoned, at ye fiscall's instance, and likewise fines him in ye sum of five pounds Scots, for his cursing, swearing, and breaking ye peace of ye fair." Richard appears to have been rather an outrageous knave, for on his appearing next court-day, the Bailie fined him in the additional sum of five pounds Scots, for cursing and swearing in the face of Court, and using other opprobrious language. Richard, by his irregular and boisterous conduct made himself amenable also to the Kirk Session. On the 20th of March 1735, the Scssion having been informed that he had been drinking to excess on the Sabbath evening previous, thereupon ordered their officer to summon

him before them. When he appeared he admitted that he drank two bottles of ale, and having received a serious admonition to abstain from drinking in future, and having promised amendment, he was dismissed.

The horse merchants of Biggar, it appears, were guilty of the practice of forestalling the market; that is, the sale of their horses before exposing them in the public market place. This practice was constituted a crime by an Act of the Scottish Parliament in 1592, and was punishable by the escheat of moveables. The horse merchants, however, were not the only dealers at Biggar who were chargeable with this crime. On the 12th April 1729, the Bailie, Luke Vallange, fined Gilbert Bannatyne, Thomas Forrest, James Watson, and William Bertram, and on the 2d of May following, Andrew M'Watt and Gilbert Reid, all meal-mongers in Biggar, "ilke ane of them in L.5 Scots, for not presenting their meal to the market, in market time of day." It is a proof of the traffic then carried on at Biggar, that it had at least six wholesale dealers in the article of meal.

The following are specimens of the punishment inflicted by the bailies for the crime of theft. At the Court held on the 20th October 1720, by Bailie Luke Vallange, Margaret Stevenson, a native of the parish of St Ninian's, was arraigned, at the instance of the Fiscal, for the crime of breaking into the house of John Wilson, shoemaker, Biggar, on the fast-day before the Sacrament, and theftuously carrying off all his clothes. The culprit confessed that "she took from him ane coat, ane gown, ane weast coat, ane pair of stockings, and twa shiffitis." The Bailie having considered the complaint, and the defender's judicial confession, ordains her to "stand in ye jugs for the space of ane hour, and to be banished out of ye toun by touck of Drum." On the 13th of April 1725, another case of theft came before the Bailie's Court. William Neilson, servant to John Dalziel, merchant, Biggar, and Isabel Couper, servant to William Paterson, baker there, were placed at the bar, charged with the crime of stealing, from the said John Dalziel, a sum of money and a large number of articles, among which were tobacco, gimlets, ring-dials, whiptaws, shears, knives and forks, watch-keys, files, bridle-bits, white soap, &c. and from the said William Paterson, ale caups, bottles, a brass

seal, spoons, lint, a two ounce weight, &c., all of which had been found in their chests. They pleaded guilty, and were sentenced to make full compensation to their masters for the articles which they had stolen, to pay a fine of L.50 Scots, to have all their moveables escheat to the fiscal, and to be banished from the barony of Biggar.

The customs of Biggar were farmed by one of the burgesses, and were generally exposed every year to public competition. The Bailie, at a Court held in the end of October, intimated that a meeting of the burgesses would take place in the afternoon, when the customs would be roup'd; and that none were to bid who could not produce a sufficient cautioner, under the penalty of L.50 Scots. This meeting, though primarily intended for business, appears to have also partaken of a festive character, as the customer, or person into whose hands the customs fell, was, at least on some occasions, bound to pay for "a chopin of brandy" to regale the company. At the hour appointed for the meeting, the officer set up the half-hour sandglass, and cried "three several Oyesses," and the highest bidder, when the last particle of sand had run down the glass, was declared the "customer" for the ensuing year. The customs of the two fairs of the town of Biggar were "set" in 1671 to Andrew Telfoord, my Lord's officer, for twenty-eight pounds Scots yearly. The sum yearly obtained from the customs of Biggar during the early part of last century, ranged from L.60 to L.70 Scots. In 1730, Bailie John Wardlaw drew up a revised tariff of customs for Biggar, and ordered it to be engrossed in the Court books, and observed in all time to come. It is interesting, as showing the rate of custom at the time, and the kind of commodities that were exposed for sale at the fairs and markets of Biggar. It is divided into two parts, the dead and the quick customs; and fixes a higher rate of custom for fairs than for the ordinary market days. On market days, it appears, there were exposed for sale, shoes, smith work, pewter dishes, spinning wheels, chests, ploughs, harrows, caups, sieves, riddles, candle, coal, butter, cheese, salt, tallow, lint, horse, nolt, sheep and dog skins, webs of cloth, and such merchandise as were hawked about in horse and foot packs. At fairs, a stand for a horse pack was 1s. 4d., and for a foot 8d.; a stone of lint was 2s.; and a stone of tallow, tobacco,

cheese, butter, and other weighable ware, was 1s. 4d. Each shoemaker, smith, cooper, wheelwright, and joiner, paid 8d.; while a horse-load of caups, sieves, and riddles was 8d., of pewter utensils, 1s., and of any other ware, 1s. 4d. A web of cloth was 8d.; and each load of meal was the full of the town-ladle, neither heaped nor stropped. On ordinary market days, the rate of custom was, in general, about one-half less than what it was on fair days. The quick customs, which were levied only at fairs, and upon both buyer and seller, were 2s. Scots for a horse, 1s. for a cow, 3s. 4d. for each score of old sheep, and 2s. for each score of lambs. The custom on cattle still belongs to the superior, and the custom on grain has been let on a long lease to the shareholders of the Corn Exchange at Biggar.

Shoes were a principal article exposed for sale at the markets of Biggar. All the people in the town and country supplied themselves with shoes from the market stalls, and it was almost a universal practice for masters to give their servants one or two pairs of shoes during the year as a part of their wages. It was of course important that the people should be supplied with a good article, and hence the authorities caused the market shoes to be carefully inspected. For instance, on the 13th November 1729, Bailies Luke Vallange, and Alexander Baird, appointed James Bannantyne and John Wilson visitors of the Shoe-markets of the town, to ascertain if any insufficient shoes were exposed for sale, and to report to the Bailies.

Some of the young women of Biggar, it would seem, in former times occasionally amused themselves with a reprehensible pastime, which in our own day is termed larking. An instance of this occurred in May 1728, as appears from the following entry:—"The same day the Baillie fines Marion Rob, in Easter Toftcombes, and Janet Rob, servant to William Liddel, Biggar, ilk ane of them in the sum of two pounds Scots to the fiscal, for their masquerading, and breaking and overturning of muck carts in Biggar, under cloud of night, when all the inhabitants were at rest."

In the days when Biggar flourished as a Burgh of Barony, more vigilance was apparently exercised in regard to the character of persons coming to occupy houses, and servants obtain-

ing situations in the parish. The attention of Bailie Alexander Baird having in 1730 been directed to this subject by the minister of the parish, he statuted and ordained that no proprietor should let cot-houses to any persons unless they were of good character and reputation, and produced testimonials from the place where they last resided to satisfy the minister and elders, under the penalty of £10 Scots *toties quoties*, and further that no servants should come into the town or parish, and no masters should receive them into their families, without satisfactory testimonials, under a penalty to both master and servant of £10 Scots *toties quoties*.

It is evident when the Flemings and their bailies reigned in Biggar, that the inhabitants had to submit to a considerable amount of interference with their liberties. Let us give one or two instances:—The Bailie not only ordered a number of burgesses, in 1723, to dispose of their horses, cows, and other bestial, within eight days, under a penalty of L.10 Scots, on the ground of their not having a sufficient quantity of provender for their support, but on the 14th of February of the year following, statuted and ordained, “that none within the toun of Biggar, nor Barrionie thereof, belonging to my Lord Wigtoun, sell any fodder until the toun and tenantie belonging to his Lordship be served therewith—they always paying such reasonable prices as others pay for the same, under the pain and penalty of twenty pounds Scots, *toties quoties*.” The Bailies make restrictive enactments not merely regarding horses and cows, but also regarding hens, trouts, pigeons, and dogs. Those inhabitants who, at the commencement of harvest, did not “cavy up” their hens were to pay a fine of 40s Scots for each transgression; those who fished with nets, or shot “doos” were to be subjected to the pains and forfeiture contained in the Act of Parliament, anent such deeds; and those who did not destroy their dogs when required by the Court were to be fined in the sum of 40s Scots. Hence we find that Robert Scott, wright, John Ballantyne, smith, and Robert Forrest in Heavyside, were “ilk ane of them” fined in the sum of £10 Scots for fishing in the new ditches and redmire dubs in the moss, and John Telfer, James Bogle, and John Penman were each fined in 40s Scots for not hanging their dogs conform to Act of Court.

Another prohibitory act of the bailies of Biggar, which seems to have been supported by a regulation of the Justices of the Peace of the county, but which has been unknown in practice for a long time past, and which in these days of combination to increase the wages and improve the condition of the agricultural labourer, would be regarded as intolerable, was the prevention of servants from hiring themselves out of the parish, so long as there was within its bounds any demand for their services. The following is an enactment of Bailie Alexander Wardlaw on this subject, on the 17th February 1721 :—" The whilk day the Ballie having considered the grievances of the parroch of Biggar anent their servants, not only feing without the said parroch, but in going to the neighbouring shyre for the love of extravagant fies, contrair to the act of the Justices of the Peace within this shyre, so that servants cannot be had in the parroch for laboring and manuring the ground, ffor remeid whereof the Ballie statutes and ordains, that no man nor woman servant lass nor lad flit nor remove from there master or mistress out of the said parroch in tyme coming, until the people of the said parroch be served, under the pain of ten pundis Scots to each transgression, *toties quoties*, and that by and attour the loss of what fies and bountiths shall be resting them by their masters or mistresses at the time of their going out of their service ; and every such servant suspect to contravene this Act, shall be obliged to find caution to obtemper the same under the pain of imprisonment, and ordains this Act to be intimat at the cross of Biggar the next mercat day."

The powers and prerogatives of Biggar as a Burgh after the abolition of heritable jurisdictions gradually fell into obedience. It had no Procurator Fiscal, no Birliemen, no Dean of Guild, no Inspector of markets, no Burgh Clerk, and, in the end, not even a Baron Bailie, or a Burgh Officer. A regular Bailie's Court has not been held for the greater part of a century, and a proclamation at the Market Cross, in all its state and ceremony, has not been witnessed by the present generation. The County of Lanark having some years ago adopted the Police Act, the preservation of the public peace in Biggar was then entrusted to a couple of Police Officers, who got a location in the neighbourhood of the place on which the Tolbooth of the Burgh in former days stood. These men, however efficient

they might be, appeared to be a poor substitute for the old baron bailies with their ample staff of assistants backed by all the power of the baron himself. Biggar, under their superintendence, might be compared to a state ruled by foreigners instead of its own native princes. Offenders and matters in dispute instead of being brought before its own Magistrates and disposed of by their decision were carried off to Lanark, and subjected to the fiat of a Sheriff-Substitute.

During forty years efforts were made from time to time to put the town in a proper state of order and cleanliness. These efforts were not unproductive of good effects, and by and by its appearance contrasted favourably with what it was in former days. Attempts were even made to erect lamps to light some portions of it in the dark nights of winter. These movements, highly laudable though they were, could not be fully sustained from the want of requisite authority and funds. At length the management of the public affairs of the town assumed a new phase. At a meeting of the inhabitants held on the 18th of September 1863, and presided over by Neil Dyce, Esq., one of the Sheriff-Substitutes of Lanarkshire, a motion was made and carried by a majority to adopt the clauses relating to lighting, cleaning, drainage, and the removal of nuisances, &c. in the Act of 1862 for regulating the Police of Towns, commonly called Provost Lindsay's Act. No poll having been demanded by the minority, the Sheriff declared that the clauses in the Act as proposed were the law in Biggar. At a meeting of the electors on the 19th of October the following gentlemen were appointed Commissioners of Police, viz. Messrs Thomas Paul, Banker,* David Thomson, Banker, J. Summers, Surgeon, William Ovens, Merchant, J. Bertram, Grain Merchant, and James Brown, Farmer. The commissioners met for the first time on the 27th of October, when Mr Thomas Paul was elected Senior Magistrate, Messrs William Ovens and David Thomson, Junior Magistrates, Mr John Ballantine, Clerk, Mr Allan Whitfield, Treasurer and Collector, Mr James Watt, Surveyor of drainage, Mr James Fairley, Lamplighter, and the resident Serjeant of the County Police, Inspector of cleaning.

* Mr Paul, who was held in great esteem for his unobtrusive habits, his sterling integrity, and public usefulness, died at Finlayston, Port-Glasgow, where he had gone for the benefit of his health, on the 24th of March 1867.

The town, under the care of the Commissioners, is now well lighted and cleaned. Drains, in several quarters, have been constructed, and the unseemly obstructions, which have long encumbered the streets, are in the course of removal. The strenuous opposition at first manifested against the adoption of the Act has been gradually disappearing, and all parties now demand that its requirements be thoroughly carried into effect. The rate of assessment for all purposes has not exceeded 9d per pound.

Biggar is unfavourably situated with regard to water. It has no doubt several wells, and the burn for washing and bleaching, but as these are distant from most of the houses, the inhabitants are subjected to much labour and loss of time in carrying the water which they require for domestic purposes. It would be a great boon could a copious supply be introduced into the houses. Entire cleanliness and salubrity cannot be easily maintained without a ready command of this most necessary element. Efforts should be made to ascertain if a proper supply could be got from the high grounds in the neighbourhood, and if so to form a company to bring it to the town. Another want much felt is Hotel accommodation commensurate with the increased requirements of the times. The deficiency in this respect excited attention nearly half a century ago, and arrangements were partly entered into to supply it, but unhappily some obstacle arose to prevent them from being carried into effect. The numerous gentlemen, who are now resident in the neighbourhood, and who pay frequent visits to the town, may be expected ere long to urge on a movement to put Biggar on an equal footing in respect of Hotel accommodation with other parts of the country.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Commerce and Trade of Biggar.



THE Biggar district, in former times, had a number of markets and fairs. Some of these, for many years, have been abandoned. The Scottish Parliament, on the 15th of June 1693, passed an Act in favour of Andrew Brown of Dolphinton, "for two free faires to be holden at the town of Dolphinton," the one upon the last Wednesday of May yearly, to be called New Whitsunday Fair, and the other upon the 8th of October, to be afterwards named ; and also a weekly market upon Tuesday, with the usual privileges, immunities, customs, casualties, and duties. The Dolphinton annual fairs and weekly market, if they were ever established, have long been discontinued.

"The Edinburgh True Almanack for the year of our Lord 1692," states that "there are two notable fairs at Lamington, within the shire of Lanark, where are to be had good schap horse, neat, sheep, and corns, meal, etc. The first on the 15th of June, with a horse-raee for a saddle at 40s. value, set out by the laird of Lamington ; the second, on the 22d of October yearly, with a weekly market every Thursday." The fairs and weekly market of Lamington have also, for a long period, been abandoned.

Broughton, five miles from Biggar, has from time immemorial had an annual fair. It is, or was, a hiring fair, and was famed for the numerous assemblages of the rural population, male and female, that frequented it from the mountainous region around, for the mirth and jocularity that prevailed, and the desperate combats in which the Tweeddale ploughmen and shepherds occasionally engaged when under the maddening influence of love and drink. This fair, of late years, has much declined,—in fact, it is now almost extinct.

Skirling, two miles distant, had three annual fairs;—the first in May, the second in June, and the third in September. The June fair of Skirling was long one of the largest markets in Scotland for horses and cattle. Dealers attended it from many parts of Scotland, and even of England. Daylight on the day of the fair had scarcely appeared, when drove after drove of cattle, and troop after troop of sale horses began to stream through the town of Biggar, while the main street “was clad frae side to side” with travellers on foot or horseback. The fair itself was a scene of great animation. Cattle dealers, horse coupers, ballad singers, pick-pockets, prick-the-garters, hawkers of curry combs, recruiting parties with fifes and drums, merchants with their stands, and ginger bread Neds with their baskets, were all pursuing their respective vocations with intense assiduity and clamour. A large painting, showing the appearance of the fair in the days of its prosperity, by the celebrated artist, James Howe, a native of Skirling, is now in the possession of Adam Sim, Esq. of Coulter, along with another picture of a similar size, by the same artist, representing a show of stallions on Skirling Green. These pictures, while they give abundant proof of Mr Howe’s great skill as an animal painter, at the same time show that he had a strong appreciation of the ludicrous and grotesque. They exhibit scenes of great fun and comicality,—scenes which he himself, no doubt, witnessed and enjoyed in his early days, while living under his father’s roof. The Biggar district has produced no painter of greater genius than Howe. No artist of his day could give a more life-like representation of the horse, the cow, the sheep, the dog, and other portions of the animal creation. His professional merits raised him to distinction; and they might have made him wealthy, respected, and happy, had they not been counterbalanced by great defects. His Panorama of Waterloo alone, by prudence and proper management, might have placed him in a state of affluence; but he allowed that and other golden opportunities to pass by without yielding him any solid advantage. What money he gained by indefatigable industry and the exercise of his rare talents in one day, he squandered away the next in reckless profusion and the debasement of his noble faculties; and in the

end he died in poverty and neglect,—affording another example of the calamitous fate that too frequently befalls the sons of genius.

When Skirling was erected into a free burgh of barony, in 1592, by James VI., “in consideratione of ye gude and thankfull service to hir Majesty, and unquhile our dearest mother, by the late Sir James Cockburne of Skirling,” it was provided that it should have a weekly market on Friday, and an annual fair on the 4th of September. The reason assigned for this was the distance of Skirling from the principal burgh of the shire, “quhairby they (the inhabitants) cannot goodly repair at the fairs and mercat days of the said burgh for doing of their lawful affairs, and traffic of goods, corns, and other merchandise.” It would appear from this, that, at the time, it was thought desirable that the traffic of a county should as much as possible be confined within itself,—an opinion very different from that which now prevails. To what extent the weekly market of Skirling was patronized by the farmers and traffickers of the district, we cannot now say ; but it appears, for a long time, to have fallen into disuse.

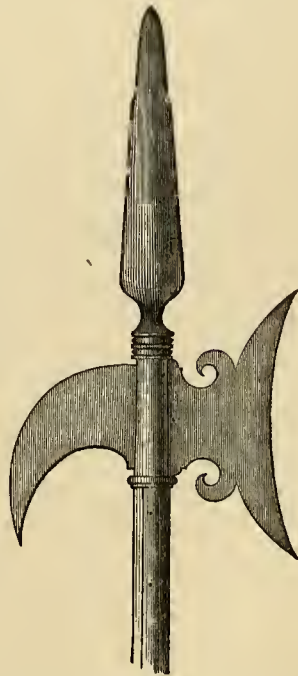
For some years the attendance at the Fairs of Skirling gradually fell off. The village was several miles distant from a railway station, and, after the general establishment of the Railway System, travelling on common roads with cattle was found to be comparatively inconvenient, expensive, and injurious. The only Inn that latterly existed in the village, suffered from the change of times, and by and by ceased to afford entertainment either for man or horse. The tired and hungry drover, and the drouthy horse couper, on this account, could not so readily obtain the means of satisfying their appetites, and dealers of all sorts found less facilities for the transaction of business. At a meeting of farmers, dealers, and gentlemen, held at Biggar, it was, therefore, resolved that the June and September Fairs should be transferred to Biggar. The concurrence of Sir W. G. Carmichael, Bart., the Superior of Skirling, having been obtained, these changes took place in 1864, and have been attended with good results, both the attendance and the amount of business transacted having been increased.

The fairs or large markets peculiar to Biggar are numerous, and two of them, at least, have been long established. In the

precept under the signet which passed the hands of Charles II. at Whitehall, on the 18th of August 1669 erecting anew the Earldom of Wigton in favour of William Lord Fleming it is stated among other things that two new fairs are added to the two old ones in the Burgh of Biggar. The first fair of the year is held on the last Thursday of January, old style, and is usually called Candlemas fair. The business principally transacted at it is the sale of horses and cattle, and the hiring of servants. The second takes place on the first Thursday of March, and used to be called Seed Thursday, because its principal transactions consisted in the disposal of corn, potatoes, etc., for seed. The third fair is held on the last Thursday of April. It was only instituted a few years ago, but has been attended with success. At this market servants are hired, stallions are shown, and horses, cattle, pigs, etc., are disposed of. The next fair takes place on the third Thursday of July, O. S. This fair, in the charter re-erecting Biggar into a burgh of barony, granted by James VI., in 1588, in favour of John, Lord Fleming, is called St Peter's, and is appointed to take place on the festival of that saint, on the 29th of June,—fairs in ancient times being very commonly held on the festival of some saint. It was wont to be called Midsummer fair, and was a great market for the sale of lambs, but it began at length to decline; and, about fifty years ago, it was agreed to hold it two weeks later in the year, in the expectation that this would operate as an inducement to the farmers in the adjacent pastoral districts to patronise it again with their flocks. When a place of business begins to fall off, it is no easy matter to restore it to its former state of prosperity. This was fully exemplified in the case of this fair. It is now almost wholly deserted as a stock market; but some business is still done in wool; and reapers for the harvest are engaged. It was, down to a recent period, a practice for a foot-race to be run on the evening preceding the fair, immediately after it had been proclaimed by the Baron Bailie at the Cross by tuck of drum. The reward given to the successful competitor was a pair of white gloves. As the expense of the gloves was paid by the Lord superior, it is likely that the race was instituted by some of the Flemings to encourage the practice of athletic sports. The last fair of the year is held on the last Thursday of October,

O. S. It is called the "Old Fair," and is a large market for the sale of horses, cattle, and the hiring of servants.

It is evident from the entries in the old record of the Bailie's Court, that sad scenes occasionally took place at the fairs of Biggar. On the first November 1723, the Bailie fined James Young, servant to James Anderson, Bridgend of Dolphinton, in the sum of five pounds Scots, and to remain in prison until it was paid, for committing "a blood and battery on Steven Giles in Biggar Fair." On the 9th February 1721, the Bailie fined James Aitken and William Fleming in the sum of L.10 Scots, for refusing to assist in quelling a tumult in the market of Biggar on the last Thursday of January. On the 2d July 1724, the Fiscal arraigned before the Bailie, James Millar, in Biggar, and his spouse, John Rob, servant to Alexander Forsyth, and David Murdoch, son to William Murdoch, officer of Excise, for a riot committed by them on the 1st of July, being Biggar Fair, upon Robert Reid of Broughton Mains. The Bailie continued this case till next court-day, but the decision is not recorded. On the 2d July 1728, John Rob, son of Thomas Rob in Westraw, was fined in the sum of five pounds Scots, and was to remain in prison until it was paid, for fighting and making a disturbance in the fair on the day previous. It was in consequence of such disturbances as these that the Baron's officer, and one or two assistants, armed with halberts, perambulated the ground during the continuance of the fair. Their duty was to prevent all tumults and riots, and to apprehend individuals disposed to be outrageous and unruly, lodge them in the Tolbooth, and arraign them before the Baron Bailie. The officer was empowered to call on any burgess for assistance, and the Bailies were rigorous in imposing fines on those persons who refused. For



instance on the 14th of August 1729, the bailies Luke Vallange and Alexander Baird fined Alexander Tweedie in the sum of L.10 Scots for refusing assistance to the officer. The halberts used at the fairs are still preserved, and a representation of the head of one of them is given in the preceding engraving.

We are far from thinking, however, that the fairs of Biggar were or still are more distinguished for disturbances and immoralities than the fairs in other districts. The rustics of Biggar, like those everywhere else, have a high flow of animal spirits, and when they get free from the thralldom in which they are held all the year round, they are apt to be a little hilarious and uproarious ; but this is nothing more than might be expected from persons rejoicing in the vigour of youth, and placed in similar circumstances. At the same time, no right thinking man will condemn the efforts recently made to withdraw them, on these occasions, from the consumption of intoxicating drinks. The unseemly exhibitions of swearing, rioting, and fighting, that at times take place, are, in almost every instance, the direct result of these beverages.

The hiring of servants in a public market is a degrading spectacle. It savours very much of the marts of slavery. Men and women there expose, if not their persons, at least their physical capabilities, to public sale, and are subjected to a scrutiny in some respects similar to that which the slave-merchant gives to the human chattels placed on the auction block. Moral character here goes but a short way, while physical strength is reckoned of higher value, and is in far greater request. It may appear difficult to find a substitute for these human exhibitions, —the rustics themselves may cling to them with the greatest tenacity, like the slave hugging his chains ; but the employers of labour, by subjecting themselves to a little temporary inconvenience, and by adopting a proper mode of registration in the towns and chief villages, might, in a short time, change the whole system of hiring, and obviate the great evils and defects with which the present method is chargeable. At the same time, let servants, like other classes, have their holidays. Incessant bondage and toil are by no means conducive to the physical and moral well-being of mankind. It is good to have seasons of cheerful reunion, when change of scene and innocent recreation give a zest to human existence, and scatter the clouds

that are too apt to settle down on the brows of the sons and daughters of toil. Biggar some years ago commenced a great movement for the amelioration of the condition of farm servants. Public meetings were held and addresses delivered by Dr Guthrie and others, at two Biggar Fairs, which had the effect for a time of drawing public attention very generally to the subject, but unfortunately the movement so auspiciously begun has not been sustained, and for the present may be said to have been abandoned.

Thursday, "dies Jovis," is the day expressly mentioned in the original charter constituting Biggar a burgh of barony, on which the weekly market of that town was to be held. We are, therefore, surprised to find, that when the General Assembly of the Scottish Kirk fixed on Saturday, the 26th of July 1645, to be observed as a solemn national fast, for the purpose of craving a blessing on the Parliament about to assemble at St Johnstone, and of giving thanks for the victory gained by Fairfax in Northamptonshire, the Presbytery of Biggar, in making arrangements for the fast, decided that, "because Saturday is ye ordinar day of Biggar mercatt, it was recommended to ye baillies of Biggar to discharge ye mercatt for that day." Nay, in the charter of 1661, reconstituting Biggar and Kirkintilloch burghs of barony, it is stated that their market days were changed from Sunday to Saturday.* The weekly market of Biggar, as well as its annual fairs, have, for a long period, been held on Thursday. On market days the farmers, and other portions of the rural community, visit Biggar. Grain, meal, potatoes, and other agricultural produce, are disposed of, the news of the district are discussed, the progress of rural labour on the different farms is reported, bank business is transacted, farming implements and household commodities are purchased, and the wants of the inner man are supplied by a due modicum of refreshments in the "Crown," the "Commercial," or the "Elphinstone Arms."

At the fairs and markets of Biggar, in the olden time, one of the most notable and gratifying spectacles was the ample array of the products of female industry that was then displayed.

* Previous to the Reformation it was a common practice throughout the country to hold markets on Sunday, as well as to engage in various sports and pastimes.

Every housewife in the rural districts was a spinner and a manufacturer. Her primary object was to clothe and adorn her own household; but not unfrequently, by diligence and economy, she was able to supply domestic wants, and also to have a considerable surplus to dispose of to others. Hence, the gudewife appeared at the marts of commerce with her lint and her wool, her hanks of yarn and her webs of cloth; and, by the sales then made, she increased the family finances, and received encouragement to enter on new schemes of domestic industry.

The amount of business done at the fairs and markets of Biggar is now very considerable. It is, indeed, far beyond what any person who takes a cursory look at the town would suppose. No better proof of this can be given than the fact, that Biggar supports the branches of three different banks; the "Commercial," the "Royal," and the "National," besides a Savings' Bank. Some forty years ago the directors of an Edinburgh Bank applied to the late Mr Robert Johnston, Biggar, to obtain an opinion from him, if Biggar could support a branch of their bank. Mr Johnston supposed that he knew the trade of the district well; but, after all, he was so little aware of its wealth, and the traffic it carried on, that he gave his decision against the establishment of any such institution. The Savings' Bank was established in 1832, and was attended with so much success, that the Directors of the Commercial Bank were satisfied that a branch of their establishment might also be opened with advantage. They immediately erected suitable premises, and the branch was opened in the end of 1832, under the management of the late Mr James Purdie. The present manager is John Paul, Esq. of Cambus-Wallace. A branch of the Western Bank of Scotland was opened on the 25th April 1840, and was conducted by Mr John Wyld till September 1848, by Messrs Wyld and Jackson till 1853, and by Mr David Thomson till the suspension of the Bank on the 9th November 1857. A branch of the Royal Bank was established in place of the Western, on the 28th November of that year, and has, to the present time, been conducted by Mr Thomson. A branch of the City of Glasgow Bank was opened in January 1857; and on the partial suspension of that Bank in November of that same year, the business was taken up by the

National Bank of Scotland on the 1st of December following. The branch of the National is under the management of Mr Adam Pairman.

The inhabitants of Biggar devote themselves to all the industrial pursuits common in little towns. Its weavers, masons, joiners, shoemakers, and tailors very much predominate, in point of numbers, over the other tradesmen. About thirty years ago, according to the Statistical Account of Scotland, there were no fewer than 210 weavers in the town and parish. The webs, which consisted of stripes, checks, ginghams, druggets, etc., were supplied by manufacturing houses in Glasgow, through the medium of agents. One of the weavers' agents at Biggar at that time, was Mr James Brown, who deserves to be specially noticed on account of his amiable manners, his Christian deportment, and poetic talents. He was born at Libberton, near Carnwath, on the 1st of July 1796. His father, who was miller of Libberton Mill, was considerably advanced in years at the time of his birth, and died when he was only six years of age. His mother was Grizzel Anderson, a person held in esteem for her kind and amiable disposition. As soon as Mr Brown had acquired sufficient strength, he was apprenticed to a weaver, and after serving the usual period, he removed to Symington, and there wrought for a number of years as a journeyman. He devoted his leisure hours to the cultivation of his mind, or the enjoyment of solitary rambles on the adjacent uplands of the Castlehill and Tinto. He established a club for mutual improvement, which met periodically at his house. He wrote a number of poems and songs of considerable merit, and although they attained some portion of local celebrity, he obstinately refused to commit any of them to print. In 1823, he obtained a situation in the wareroom of a manufacturer in Glasgow; but this employment not suiting his constitution, he was appointed agent of the firm at Biggar. Here he lived several years, until his health, never robust, entirely gave way. When he saw that the time of his departure was at hand, he desired to be taken to Symington, the scene of his early manhood, and there he died on the 12th September 1836. His manners were rather grave and austere, and his disposition retiring and reserved; but he possessed a kind and benevolent heart, and his belief in the truths of divine revelation was firm

and sincere. Two or three of his poetical productions were published for the first time, several years ago, in Rodger's "Scottish Minstrelsy."

The agents at Biggar also supplied webs to weavers at Symington, Thankerton, Covington, Quothquan, Newbigging, Elsrickle, etc.,—these places containing, perhaps, not less than 150 weavers. The number of webs received from Glasgow weekly, at least from 1824 to 1835, would average about eighty, and the amount of weekly payments would be about £200. The rate of remuneration was highest in 1812, and a few years subsequently. The weaving of an ell of stripe, 1000 reed, was then paid as high as 8½d.; but the rate at length began gradually to decline, so that the same fabric in 1840, was paid as low as 1¾d. per ell,—a rate at which it was scarcely possible to earn the scantiest subsistence. The supply of work, even at so low a rate, was very limited; and this induced some of the agents, and especially Mr Allan Whitfield, to exert themselves to introduce new fabrics. Their efforts met with partial success, and for some years a considerable amount of heavy work, consisting of cotton warp and woollen weft, was obtained. The application of steam-power to weaving, and the erection of large weaving establishments in the west of Scotland, appear, however, to have had a permanently injurious effect on hand-loom weaving in such places as Biggar and its adjacent villages. While we write, 1867, the weaving trade in Biggar is by no means in a very prosperous state. The number of weavers in the town at present does not exceed 60. The fabrics on which they are employed are coarse stripes, having linen warp and woollen weft. The rate of remuneration ranges from 2½d. to 3½d. per ell, according to the quality of the cloth and the number of shuttles employed. The average earnings amount to 10s. 6d. per week.

The other branches of industry in Biggar continue in a prosperous state. It is no small proof of the progressive character of the town, that it is now able to support two printing presses. From these presses issue trade circulars, announcements of sales, public meetings, etc., all conducive to the enterprise and prosperity of the district. The spirited proprietor of one of these presses, Mr David Lockhart, in 1860, laid before the public the first volume ever printed in Biggar. It is entitled, "Tales

and Legends of the Upper Ward of Lanarkshire." This volume contains no inconsiderable portion of Upper Ward history, interlarded, no doubt, with a large amount of fable. The style in which these "Tales" are couched, and the industry of the author in ferreting out old traditions and incidents connected with the locality, are worthy of commendation; but, upon the whole, the stories rather disappoint the hopes which they are calculated at first to raise. We hail them, nevertheless, with great cordiality, as the first intellectual fruits of the Biggar Press, to be followed, we trust, by many worthy and successful publications.

The inhabitants of Biggar are not known to have embarked to any great extent in the smuggling trade, so largely carried on about the end of last century. A portion of this traffic was, however, conveyed by Biggar and its neighbourhood. The smugglers carried their tea, brandy, tobacco, &c. on horses' backs, from the Solway Firth, by Moffat and Tweedshaws, and then along a bridle path among the mountains to Coulter. Here they generally halted at a smith's "hostelrie" to refresh themselves and fodder their horses. No fewer than forty or fifty horses have been seen at once behind the smithy, while a due number of attendants were regaling themselves within the Inn. The contrabandists and their steeds after being invigorated with rest and refreshment, proceeded by Thankerton and Pettinain towards the west, or by Hillriggs, Backwelltryst, and the Lang Whang, towards the east. When the smithy was pulled down a few years ago, a dagger was found under the thatch, which, it is likely, was placed there by one of the smugglers, and which is now in Mr Sim's Collection of antiquities, at Coultermains. The Coulter smith had a sign board above the door of his change house, with the inscription in large letters, "Vulcan and Bacchus are here united."

Biggar was long a depôt for lead from the mines at Leadhills. These mines were wrought for some time by James IV. and James V. The latter monarch, at length, granted permission to a company of Germans to work the whole mines of Scotland for forty-three years. In January 1562, John Achisone, Master of the Mint, and John Aslowne, burgess in Edinburgh, obtained a license from Queen Mary "to wirk and wyn in the Leid Mynis of Glengoner and Wenlek, sa mekill leid

ure as they may gudlie, and to transport and carie furt of this realme to Flanderis, or ony otheris pairtis beyond sey, 20,000 stane wecht of the said ure comptand sexskoirt toy hundreth trone wecht." These parties were to deliver to the Queen's Mint at Edinburgh, forty-five ounces of pure silver for every 1000 stanes of lead ore which they carried away. The lead which these persons dug, was conveyed on horses' backs to Biggar, and thence to Leith, where it was shipped for Flanders. There the silver incorporated with the lead was extracted, by a process with which the Scots were at that time unacquainted. About thirty years afterwards, Thomas Fowlis, goldsmith, Edinburgh, obtained a lease of these lead mines, and assumed as partner a skilful and enterprising English miner named Bewis Bulmer. In the records of the Privy Council, it is stated that the broken men of the Border were in the habit of assailing the servants of this mining company while employed in transporting the ore on the backs of horses, and depriving them of "their horses, armour, clothing, and hail carriage."

After the use of carts became common, and the process of smelting the lead ore was carried on at Leadhills and Wanlockhead, the practice was to cart the lead in bars from these places, and deposit it at Biggar, where each mining company had an agent, and then convey it in the same way from Biggar to Leith, principally by carters from Edinburgh and Leith, who took what they called a "rake o' leed," when business was slack at home, or when they had occasion to be at Biggar or its neighbourhood with other loading. About the beginning of the present century, the number of bars that were annually deposited at Biggar, on their way to Leith, ranged from 10,000 to 18,000. Each bar weighed about 120 lbs. Taking the medium number of bars to be 14,000, and each cart to carry 15 bars, upwards of 900 cart-loads of lead would thus each year, on an average, be conveyed to and from the depôt at Biggar.

The number of carts constantly coming and going in connection with this traffic, caused no small stir at Biggar, and brought a considerable amount of patronage to the houses of the stblers. The construction of the Caledonian Railway deprived Biggar of the advantages which it derived from this source, and re-

moved the piles of lead bars which for a long period formed a marked feature in the High Street of the little town.

Besides the transmission of lead, a considerable number of carriers from the south of Scotland passed every week through Biggar on their way to and from the metropolis. Biggar was one of their stages; and on certain nights of the week, ranges of well-laden carts, with a due portion of canine attendants, were to be seen on the street. Biggar, standing on the great highway from the south to Edinburgh, was visited by a constant succession of travellers on foot or horseback, in gig or chariot. Being the capital of a considerable district, extending from Tweedsmuir to Covington, and from Dolphinton to Crawford, its markets and marts of commerce were frequented by a considerable population, and thus its monotony was relieved, and its wealth increased. Biggar, neither in remote ages, with the exciting presence of its feudal barons, nor in more recent times, with its spirit, industry, and traffic, could therefore, with any fairness, be called a dull and lifeless community, or was so "entirely cut off from the great world, and thrown upon its own solitary reading and reflection," as some persons have ventured to suppose.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Societies of Biggar.



THE people of Biggar and its neighbourhood have several societies. They have not been inattentive to the advantages of associating themselves for the purpose of social intercourse, mental cultivation, mutual relief in case of sickness, or improvement in some useful object. Efforts of this kind are meritorious, as they encourage prudent and economical conduct, promote good fellowship, provide a security against destitution, when by some stroke of calamity, the usual sources of income are dried up, and enable the inhabitants to keep pace in intelligence and social condition with other districts of the country. Forty years ago, Biggar could boast of possessing four benefit societies, with a conjoined membership of 733 persons. These were the Masons', the Friendly, the Whipmen, and the Weavers' Societies.

The oldest society in Biggar is the Masons. Like many Masons' Societies in Scotland, it has lost its oldest records, and therefore its early history is shrouded in an obscurity never likely to be dispelled. When we first became acquainted with it, we find it in active working order; but we obtain no information regarding the way in which the members acquired their masonic knowledge, or the time at which they first associated themselves together. It is perhaps not going too far to say, that a Masons' Lodge of one kind or another has existed in Biggar from the commencement of the building of Biggar Kirk, in 1545. The men who erected that edifice were evidently, from the marks left on their work, Freemasons; and little doubt can exist that they practised their rites during the time that they carried it on. The Lodge then formed would be frequented by the operative masons in the district; and

these men would continue the organization long after the builders of the Kirk had taken their departure. This is so far confirmed by the fact, that the Freemasons of Biggar continued, to a recent period, to practise mark-masonry, and to use marks similar to those found on the stones of Biggar Kirk. A record of the Lodge marks for a number of years is still preserved, and possesses no small interest to the student of the principles of masonic science. The law of the Lodge in regard to marks, as expressed in a minute dated 27th December 1797, was, "that every brother, in all time coming, using any mark, for any purpose whatever in masonry, shall have the same registered by the Mark Masters, for which he shall pay the sum of one merk Scots, which shall go to the funds of the Lodge, and that any mark that is not so registered, cannot serve him for any purpose in masonry; and further, that no brother can, on any pretext whatever, use a mark employed by another brother after it is registered."

The first entry on the records of the Lodge of Biggar Free Operatives that has been preserved, is dated 12th January 1726, and states that William Ireland and George Young were then entered apprentices, and Alexander Crichton was past fellow-craft. A reference is made in one of the minutes to an Act, passed in 1725, against absentees from the meetings of the Lodge; and this is the earliest date that we can find regarding its operations. The Biggar Society of Freemasons was, strictly speaking, what is called an Operative Lodge; that is, a large portion of its members were operative masons. Like all the old operative Lodges with which we are acquainted, it practised at first only two degrees of St John's masonry—the entered apprentice and fellow-craft, the entrance fee for an apprentice being L4 Scots and for a fellow-craft, L2 Scots. It is not till the year 1765, that special notice is taken of the raising of entrants to the sublime degree of Master Mason. On the 21st of January of that year, a deputation from the Biggar Lodge consisting of John Gardner, John Barclay, Alexander Inglis, John Smith, and John Inglis, visited the Lodge of Linlithgow, and were raised to the Master's degree. The Lodge, at first, was presided over by a deacon, who was assisted by a warden, a box-master, a treasurer, a clerk, and several managers; but after the formation of the

Grand Lodge of Scotland, in 1736, the present order of officials, —viz., a master, two wardens, two deacons, two stewards, a treasurer, secretary, etc.,—was adopted. On St John's day 1726, the principal office-bearers chosen were—Robert Scott, deacon; Alexander Baillie, warden; and Andrew Aikman,* box-master; and the most active members, at that time, were Thomas Cosh, John Tod, Daniel Aitken, James Vallange, John Gladstones, George Bertram, and William Baillie.

At a meeting of the members of the lodge, on the 27th May 1727, it was resolved to petition the Lodge of Linlithgow to be incorporated with that Lodge—"to be made," as was stated "a part and pendicle of it, and to obtain the rights, powers, and privileges thereof." Accordingly, the Lodge of Linlithgow at a meeting held at Queensferry on the 11th of July following, was pleased to grant the prayer of the petition, and to present a charter on stamped paper to a deputation from the Biggar Lodge, that were in attendance. The expenses incurred in carrying through this transaction, amounted to L.58 17s. Scots, and the Biggar Lodge became bound to pay to the Linlithgow Lodge one pound Scots yearly. On the 27th of May 1734, the Biggar Lodge received a visit from the deacon and warden of the Linlithgow Lodge, and spent L.12 Scots in giving them a treat.

It was the practice of the Lodge at that time, as it still is, to have an annual procession on the anniversary of St John the Evangelist, viz., the 27th of December. On the 24th December 1736, the members resolved to have a new flag for their annual display. This was evidently done with the intention of giving additional effect to an extraordinary demon-

* Andrew Aikman was a surgeon at Biggar. He and James Thrypland were brought before the Baron Bailies Court on the 28th of June 1720, and fined in the sum of L5 Scots to the fiscal for having in the course of casting peats in Biggar Moss encroached on their neighbours' room. In 1723, he and his family appear to have been greatly annoyed by William Liddell, a horse-couper, one of these restless and outrageous individuals who give their neighbours and the powers that be a great amount of trouble. He therefore arraigned Liddell before the Bailie's Court; and Luke Vallange, the presiding magistrate, condemned him, under a penalty of "fyve hundred merks Scots," to keep the doctor, "and his wife, bairns, family, and others, harmless and skeathless, in their bodyes, lives, goods, and geir, and not to molest him nor his in any sort, directly or indirectly, in tyme coming." The doctor died on the 8th of April 1730, in the forty-fourth year of his age.

stration which was to take place on the ensuing St John's day, in consequence of the reorganization of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, on the 30th of November preceeding, in which the Biggar Lodge had taken part. Accordingly, they bought a piece of silk cloth from William Johnston, and "yellow wattens from Janet Wilson to munt the said flag,"—the price of the whole being L.4 2s. Scots. On St John's day following, they chose Alexander Crichton ensign, and Daniel Aitken adjutant, and marched through the town five men deep, all with blue bonnets, white aprons, white gloves, yellow cockades, and hand-rules. On these occasions, it was the custom of the brethren to ascend the Cross-knowe, and while encircling the ancient Cross, to drink the usual loyal toasts in whisky, brandy,* or ale. This was done with great acclaim on the 27th December 1745, during the time of the rebellion. The brethren on that day assembled in the house of John Gladstanes at 10 o'clock, and then, with drum beating and flag unfurled, marched to Wolf-Clyde, where the R. W. Master resided, and brought him into Biggar. Having got a good supply of inspiring liquor, including a pint of whisky from John Laidlaw, merchant, they ascended the Cross-knowe, and drank all the loyal toasts with loud acclamations. In the exuberance of their generous feelings, they invited to dinner the following townsmen, viz:—Andrew Vallange, John Gibson, Bailie Carmichael, William Forrest, Robert Craig, John Laidlaw, George Bertram, and "ye Drummer," and defrayed the whole expense out of the funds of the box. Whether any of the toasts referred to "Bonny Prince Charlie" the record saith not, but it is certain that the Biggar Masons were intensely loyal to the House of Hanover during the early part of the reign of George III. On the King's birthday—the 4th of June—the brethren were wont to assemble, and clothed in the paraphernalia of their order, to proceed to the Cross, and there drink his Majesty's health amid loud huzzas and volleys of musketry.

The order of procession on St John's day was fixed, in 1796, as follows.—

Music, preceded by three Halbertmen.

Tyler in uniform.

Stewards with white rods.

*The price of Brandy at that time was 1s 6d per bottle.

Brethren out of office, two and two.

Treasurer and Secretary, with the badges of their offices.

The Bible, with Square and Compass, borne on a crimson cushion, and supported by the two Deacons, with black rods.

The Chaplain.

The Wardens.

The Past Master.

The R. W. Master, supported by the Depute
and Substitute Masters.

It was the practice, for a number of years, to have a sermon preached on St John's day, in the Parish Church. In 1794, the sermon was preached by the Rev. William Strachan of Coulter ; in 1795, by the Rev. James Gardner of Tweedsmuir ; in 1796, by the Rev. Robert Anderson, preacher of the Gospel at Symington ; in 1797, by the Rev. John Ritchie of Dunsyre ; in 1798, by the Rev. Bryce Little of Covington ; and in 1799, by the Rev. Patrick Mollison of Walston.

In 1736, Biggar Lodge sent a representative to Edinburgh, when William St Clair of Roslin resigned his office as hereditary Grand Master, and the Grand Lodge of Scotland was constituted in its present form. The name of the representative is unfortunately obliterated in the old record, from exposure to damp, but it is supposed to have been Sir William Baillie of Lamington, who was a member of the Lodge Canongate, Kilwinning No 2. A misunderstanding, it appears, arose between Sir William and the Lodge, which he was indisposed to take any steps to clear up. When the Grand Lodge sent a communication to the Biggar Masons, in March 1737, requesting a delegation at the Quarterly Communication on the 13th of April, the brethren set Sir William aside, and elected, in his place, Brother Thomas Simson. They furnished this brother with a copy of their charter from the Lodge of Linlithgow, and the names of the members, that they might be recorded in the books of the Grand Lodge. The members were accordingly enrolled, to the number of fifty-three. The list appears to comprise all the principal men in the town at the time. We may give the following :—Robert Scott, wright in Sunnyside and Deacon of the Lodge ; Alexander Baillie, Warden of the Lodge ; Lawrence Boe of the Langvout, his name in the Grand Lodge books being spelled “ Beau ;” James

Vallange, farmer, Boghall ; Thomas and Charles Cosh, sons of Bailie Thomas Cosh, the "litster" who died 1st July 1718 ; John Gladstones, afterwards of Mid Toftcombs, great grandfather of Sir Thomas Gladstone of Fasque ; Alexander Baird, one of the bailies of Biggar and Chamberlain to the Earl of Wigton ; George Muirhead, proprietor of Persilands ; John Gardner, Dean of Guild of Biggar ; George Bertram, merchant, Biggar ; Andrew Brown of Silverknowes, grandfather of the late Professor Dr Andrew Brown of Edinburgh ; Daniel Aitken, burgess and feuar ; James Leishman, burgess and feuar ; and William Brown, merchant, for some time clerk to the Burgh Court, and afterwards Procurator Fiscal.

The brethren instructed Mr Simson, their representative, to ascertain if they were recognised as a regularly constituted Lodge, and, if this was the case, to pay the stipulated fee of half-a-crown for the enrolment of each of their entrants since November last. It may be conjectured that there was either some hesitation on the part of the Grand Lodge to admit the Biggar brethren on their own terms, or that these brethren themselves were slow in complying with some of the Grand Lodge regulations. At all events, the Lodge of Biggar very soon began to cool towards the governing body. In 1738, they came to the decision, that, as they had many widows and orphans to support, it would be better to keep their half-crowns at home than to send them to the Grand Lodge. The Lodge continued its connexion with the Lodge of Linlithgow, although that Lodge had set the example of resigning its independent powers, and giving its adherence to the the supreme ruling body established in Edinburgh ; and it was not till the year 1785 that the Biggar brethren resolved to obtain a charter from the Grand Lodge. This accordingly was granted them on the 6th of November 1786, and cost the sum of L.7, 19s. 2d. The Biggar Lodge was placed on the roll as number 222, which was afterwards changed to its present number, 167 ; but had it persevered in keeping up its connexion with the Grand Lodge it would have taken its place among the oldest lodges in the country, and consequently would have stood much lower on the roll. The charter, which it thus obtained, is preserved with great care ; it is always read at the annual meetings on St John's day,

and during processions is carried in an ornamental box by the Tyler.

After joining the Grand Lodge the number of entrants began rapidly to increase. Thirteen Biggar brethren were enrolled in the Grand Lodge books on the 3d February 1790, thirty-seven on the 6th February 1793, and thirty on the 21st November 1795, thus making eighty enrollments in less than six years. Among those enrolled in 1795, are the following well known inhabitants of a past generation, viz., John Minto, carrier; Adam Paterson, mason; William Hunter, merchant; Robert Lithgow, shoemaker; and John Robertson, mason. This last mentioned brother was entered in the Biggar Lodge on the 31st of July 1792, when he was an apprentice to John Robb, mason, Biggar. He held for a number of years the office of Baron Bailie, and died so recently as April 1864, aged 91 years.

The meetings of the Lodge were at first held in the inns and private houses of the town. Those most frequently mentioned are the houses of Thomas Cosh, dyer; John Cree, gardener; John Gladstones, maltman; Andrew Brown, Silver-knowes; and John Jardine and Thomas Wilson, vintners. A lodge was occasionally opened in the country for making masons. Among other places in the neighbourhood, may be mentioned Elsrickle, Boggsbank, Biggar Shields, and Cormiston; and on one occasion a dispensation was granted to make masons for the Biggar Lodge in England. In 1793, the members purchased a house in the centre of the town from Matthew Cree and Andrew Nicol for L.140, and converted one of its apartments into a lodge-room; but as it was far from being suitable or commodious, the brethren at different times held deliberations regarding the propriety of erecting a proper hall.* In 1796, Lord Elphinstone, superior of the barony, proposed to erect a new Meal-house and a Tolbooth; and, therefore, the brethren put themselves in communication with his Lordship to get liberty to put an additional storey on the top of this projected building, to be used for the purpose of a hall; but his Lordship's design was not carried into execution. In 1808, a committee, composed of three delegates from each of the Benefit Societies of

*The Lodge gave ten guineas to assist in purchasing St Cecilia's Hall in Niddry Street, Edinburgh, in order that it might be fitted up as a Hall for the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

Biggar, held several meetings to decide on the erection of a common hall. To this committee a report was given in, that a hall, 55 feet long and $28\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide, could be erected for L.450. This project also failed, and the consequence was, that the Masons erected a new hall for themselves, in 1814, adjoining their own tenement. It is plain but commodious, and on great festive days is ornamented by the Master's chair, made in 1794, and by a portrait of Robert Burns, painted for the Lodge by a townsman and brother mason, the late John Pairman. This portrait was presented to the Lodge in December 1821, along with a letter addressed to the Right Worshipful Master, in which Mr Pairman said that as an humble but sincere mark of respect to him and the brethren of Biggar Free Operatives, St John's Lodge, he begged to present for their acceptance a portrait of the late Robert Burns, the Ayrshire Poet. In fixing on him for their hall, he did not wish to hold him up as a faultless character, but he might be allowed to say that, with all his faults, Burns would merit a place in the affections of every brother. When living, he was ardently devoted to masonry: and since his death, his songs had, in an eminent degree, contributed to the innocent pleasures of masonry. As a small return for Mr Pairman's kindness, the Lodge elected him an honorary member, and presented him with a diploma. For a number of years the Lodge Hall was largely used for dancing schools, theatrical exhibitions, penny weddings, public meetings, sales by auction, &c. Some time ago the Lodge rebuilt the front premises occupied as the Commercial Inn, and lately expended several hundred pounds in repairing and enlarging other portions of their property; these operations have encroached largely on the stock of the Lodge, but the property, as it now stands, is a valuable possession, and must yield a considerable revenue to the funds.

At the meeting on St John's day 1796, some Knight-Templars who were present, insisted on taking precedence of the other brethren, who were only Blue Masons. This led to a keen discussion. The Lodge itself was not disposed to give any deliverance on the subject, but Brother George Inglis protested against the conduct and pretensions of the Templars, and appealed to the Grand Lodge. That body on the 1st of May 1797, gave the following decision:—"A petition and

complaint was read from sundry brethren of the Lodge Biggar Free Operatives, respecting certain brethren of the order of Knight-Templars, insisting that, in consequence of their possessing that degree in masonry, they are entitled to precedence above Master Masons of said Lodge. The Grand Lodge declare in the negative, and that the present office-bearers of every regular Lodge shall, according to their respective offices, as expressed in their charter, take precedence of every other member of said Lodge ; and that no other distinction shall be known in a Lodge of the brethren thereof, but that which rises from superior knowledge in masonry and exemplary behaviour."

A number of French prisoners stationed at Biggar on their parole of honour, towards the close of the war with France, were freemasons. In the beginning of 1813, they applied to the members of the Biggar Lodge for the use of their hall, the master's chair, the warden's tools, etc., in order that they might constitute a lodge of their own. This application was acceded to, and Brothers Elias Berger and Francis Renaudy became security for any damage that might be done. The French masons were here wont to practise their rites, which were somewhat different from those of Scottish brethren. One of their number, resident in Westraw, having died, was interred with masonic honours, and a funeral lodge was held out of respect to his memory. The Biggar Lodge had the honour of enrolling in its ranks one of these prisoners, a distinguished Polish nobleman and a freemason, named Francois Mayskie, and received from him a fee of one guinea.

The Lodge of Biggar has taken part in various public ceremonies of the craft. It was well represented at laying the foundation-stones of the Lodge Hall of Lockhart St John, Carnwath ; the National Monument at Edinburgh ; the Bridge over the Mouse at Cartland ; the County Buildings, Lanark ; the Freemasons' Hall, Edinburgh, etc. ; and it turned out in great force at the demonstration at laying the foundation-stone of the Corn Exchange, Biggar. One of the most notable displays that it ever made, although not strictly in keeping with masonic practice, was at a great procession at Biggar on the 20th of July 1832, to celebrate the triumph of Parliamentary Reform. The minutes of the Lodge referring to that display magniloquently states, that the members had made a public demonstration

of their grateful feelings for the eminent services of those meritorious persons who had nobly espoused the cause of liberty, and had been instrumental in bestowing upon them a portion of those rights which were their natural inheritance. They had seen the consummation of an Act, the era of which would be eternalized in the pages of history, and contemplated with pleasure by millions yet unborn.

It is well known that Cowans especially women are debarred from entering a Mason's Lodge, when in working order. Yet true it is and of verity, that on one occasion a woman dared to show her face in the Biggar Lodge of Free Operatives. This heroine was Jane Rae, spouse of James Affleck, the Biggar poet, and as we have already said, a keen free mason. Jane had long been annoyed at the late hours to which the meetings of the Masons were prolonged, and the temptations to tippling which by a peculiar regulation * they held out; and she had often threatened that some time or other she would "skail the byke," as she termed it. Accordingly one night when she had sat long by the fire side, nursing her wrath, she lost patience, and screwing up her courage to the sticking place, ascended the Lodge stair. John Hilson, the tyler, who was seated in a recess at the top, armed with a sword, had from long watchfulness and repeated applications to the toddy bottle, fallen into a somewhat somniferous state, and therefore, offered no obstruction to her progress. She opened the door, rushed in, and ordered her poetic Lord to leave the Hall at once, and was opening her battery on the whole fraternity when Dr William Cree, one of the wardens, raised her gown over her head, and pushed her violently down stairs, by which she sustained some severe bodily injuries. This effort at reformation failed to produce the effect intended, and Affleck continued to participate in the masonic symposiums, and to perplex his spouse, till the day of his death.

Members are admitted into the Biggar Lodge between the ages of sixteen and thirty-two years. On being entered apprentices, they pay L.1, 6s. 6d. and 10s. 6d. additional on being raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason. The quarterly

* This was the imposition of a fine on absentees, which was expended on toddy at the quarterly meetings. This regulation was connected with the management of the benefit society, and had no countenance from the general rules and principles of Masonry.

payment is 1s. 3d. Members, when sick, are entitled to 5s. weekly for the space of seventeen weeks ; and if they continue longer in a bad state of health, they receive 3s. 6d. weekly till the expiration of a year. After this period, they are allowed such a sum as the managers think proper. On the death of a member, the Lodge pays L.2 in name of funeral expenses. The annual income of the Society has been somewhat fluctuating. In 1837, it was as low as L.93, 1s. 4d., while in 1849 it was as high as L.172, 5s. 6d. ; and in 1860, it was L.132, 3s. 2d. The expenditure has varied in the same way. In 1836, it was L.70, 12s. 6d. ; and in 1855, it was L.159. The Society is at present in a prosperous condition, and the number of members on the roll is fully 200. The amount of good which this Society has done is, no doubt, very great. It has not only aided hundreds of poor men when in distress, and after their death caused their funeral rites to be observed with decent solemnities, but it has relieved the wants of many a poor wanderer. The entries in the books are numerous of small sums disbursed to travelling brethren, to assist them on their journey.

The Friendly Society, established in 1787, and the Weaver's Society, in 1806, were dissolved a number of years ago. They were both flourishing Societies in their time. They largely occupied the attention of a past generation of Biggar men, and no doubt were productive of a great amount of benefit in seasons of suffering and distress. The comparative dullness of trade, the diminished desire to make provision for evil days, and the want of fresh accessions to their ranks, told injuriously against them, and after lingering for some years in a state of gradual decay, they ceased at length to exist.

The Whipmen's Society, which was established in 1806, is still in operation. During the first year of its existence, it enrolled 190 members. At its first annual procession, which took place on the 17th of July 1807, no fewer than 164 members appeared on horses, gaily caparisoned with ribbons, flowers, etc. The privilege of carrying the colours or flag was roused, and brought the sum of four guineas. The members then proceeded to Coultermains, the seat of John Brown, Esq. and afterwards to Hartree House, the residence of Colonel

Alexander Dickson. The annual procession at first was fixed to take place on the day after Biggar Midsummer Fair in July, but it has been changed to the Tuesday after the Fair that was wont to be held at Skirling in June. The Whipmen's Society allows its sick members 5s. per week for twelve weeks, 3s. a-week for twenty-four weeks, and then one guinea quarterly so long as sickness continues.

Biggar has several Book Associations or Libraries, but none of them are of a very old date. The Biggar Library, founded in 1797, principally by the exertions of the Rev. Patrick Mollison of Walston, contained about 1000 volumes, and was supported almost exclusively by the higher classes of the town and neighbourhood. The number of members at length fell gradually off, and it continued in a languishing condition for several years. In 1863, it was joined with the Biggar Parish Library, which was founded, in 1800 by the working classes of the town and neighbourhood. At one time this library was under the charge of John M'Gbie, shoemaker, one of the most shrewd and intelligent men of his time in Biggar. He had read all the books in the library, and many of them several times over. As he was endowed with a most tenacious memory, he could give a summary of the contents of any one of them to which his attention might be directed, as well as a very correct estimate of its merits. His conversational powers were of a high order. It was a treat of no ordinary kind to sit beside him while engaged with his *elshin* and his *lingle*, and hear him discourse with fluency and critical acumen on poetry, philosophy, politics, religion, and general literature. He was a notable specimen of not a few men living in obscure corners of our country, and pursuing an humble vocation, who have, nevertheless, entered into the very depths of the great masters of literature, and have had a powerful influence in stimulating and moulding the minds of the generation around them.

The Parish Library, forty years ago, had fallen very much into a state of dormancy. The members had dwindled down to eleven in number, the income had become a trifle, and the addition of new books had, in a great measure, ceased. The merit of restoring it to more than its primitive vigour is due to Mr Allan Whitfield, who, at the time referred to, was elected president. That gentleman got a new catalogue and a new set of

regulations drawn up and printed, and commenced an active canvass for entrants. The consequence was, that in the course of a year or two, the members were increased to fifty; and the library has continued down to the present time in a flourishing and satisfactory state. The number of members of the United Library at present is upwards of ninety, and the volumes amount to fully 2500. The entry money is 4s., and the annual payment 2s.

The Evangelical Library was founded in 1807, and, as its title imports, is composed of books of a religious cast. It contains 900 volumes. The entry money and annual payment are 2s. each. This library is scarcely in so flourishing a state as could be desired. Biggar Kirk Library contains upwards of 2000 volumes, and is supported by collections at evening sermons, delivered under the auspices of the Established Church. The Biggar Relief Juvenile Library has a very useful collection of books, amounting to nearly 700 volumes; and is conducted by a committee of the congregation. The entry money is 6d., and the annual payment 1s. 1d. The existence of these libraries bears abundant testimony to the reading habits of the inhabitants, and the desire generally felt to spend their leisure hours in rational and profitable exercises.

A number of years ago a society was established at Biggar, called "The Scientific Association." Its object was to diffuse information on scientific subjects, by means of lectures, discussions, and books. After flourishing for some time, it fell into abeyance, and in 1854 was superseded by a similar institution, called the "Athenæum," which had a library, a reading room, and a course of lectures on miscellaneous subjects, during the winter months, and was supported by an annual subscription of 5s. from each member. Institutions of this kind are with difficulty upheld in our largest cities; and it does not reflect great discredit on Biggar, when, with a population scarcely so large as is to be found in many a single street of these cities, it has been unable to uphold its "Athenæum."

In the year 1808, a Farmers' Society was established at Biggar, the principal objects of which were the discussion of agricultural subjects, the establishment of an agricultural library, and the punishment of depredations on the property of the members. The library was, however, never formed. In

1820, it was resolved to change the name of the Society to that of "The Biggar Farmers' Club," and to extend its design, by having an annual show of live stock and seeds. This show, with the exception of seeds, has accordingly taken place on the last Thursday of August every year since, and has been largely patronized. The Club comprises the names of all the principal proprietors and farmers in the district; and it cannot be questioned that it has, in a great degree, contributed to evoke and keep alive a spirit of wholesome emulation in rearing stock, in cultivating the soil, and improving the products of the dairy. It has caused increased attention to be paid, among other matters, to the breed of horses, for which this district has long been famed. The powerful Clydesdale horse is now held in repute not only in Scotland, but in various other parts of the world. Several fine young stallions reared in the Biggar district, have of late years been exported to New Zealand and Australia, and have realized high prices; one in particular brought as large a sum as L.325. The farmers in the Biggar district, as might be expected, very often succeed, at the great shows held under the auspices of the Highland Society, in carrying off some of the chief prizes for the breed, not merely of horses, but of sheep and cows, as well as for the produce of the dairy.

Another association at Biggar is the Company of Rifle Volunteers. In 1859, when the volunteer movement commenced, Biggar was not behind in furnishing a quota of young men anxious to learn the art of war to be able to defend their country. Early in 1860, the necessary organization took place. The company was named the 62d Lanarkshire Volunteers, and the following officers were appointed, viz., Alexander Baillie Cochran, Esq. of Lamington, captain; Robert Paterson, Esq. of Birthwood, lieutenant; and William Handyside, Esq. of Cornhill, ensign. Some misunderstanding or other having arisen, the movement was checked at the very outset, and the martial ardour of the inhabitants repressed. The company was disbanded, and Biggar for some time took no part in the general movement to acquire the military art. At length, in 1861, William Ballantyne, Esq., manufacturer, Glasgow, a native of Biggar, and at the time resident in the town, came to the rescue. He did not attempt to raise a company all at once, but at the head of a Biggar detachment joined the 2d

Peeblesshire Rifle Company, under the command of James Tweedie, Esq. of Rachan. Mr Ballantyne was appointed lieutenant in Mr Tweedie's corps, and entered into the movement with great zeal. A desire ere long naturally sprang up, to have an independent Biggar Company. Biggar men, always noted for their ardour, and their zeal for the honour of their town, liked ill to see it eclipsed in the general military movement by towns and districts of less size and importance. In the spring of 1863, seventy men were enrolled as a separate company, and in June of that year the following officers were gazetted, viz., William Ballantyne, captain; David Lockhart, lieutenant; and Robert Boa, ensign. At the first inspection in November following, not a single member of the Company was absent. In 1864, the Company joined the Upper Ward Administrative Battalion, which now comprises the following corps, according to their order of precedency, the Lesmahagow, the Lanark, the Biggar, the Carluke, and the Douglas. Mr Ballantyne, in 1865, removed his residence to a different part of the country, and, therefore, resigned his post as captain, and Mr Boa also resigned his as ensign. The following gentlemen were appointed to fill the vacant offices, viz., John Paul, Esq. of Cambus Wallace, captain; and George Tweddle, Esq., Warrenhill, ensign. The Company has always continued in a very effective state, the members ranging in number from 75 to 85, and manifesting much attention and zeal in the discharge of their duties. Some of the gentlemen connected with the locality, as well as the officers of the corps, have presented considerable sums of money as prizes for the best marksmen, and these have led to a good deal of wholesome competition, and of course to increased precision and skill in the use of the rifle.

In the year 1862, a society for the encouragement of horticulture, called "The Biggar Horticultural Society," was established at Biggar. The first annual show of fruits, flowers, vegetables, &c., took place on the 14th of August of that year, and was largely patronised. The display of flowers and rare plants was varied and extensive, and afforded a high gratification to all classes. The Society has since gone on with unabated vigour and prosperity, and promises to have an important influence in extending the cultivation of flowers, &c., and improving the garden grounds of the town and surrounding

district. The fruits and flowers are shown in the large apartment of the Corn Exchange, and the vegetables in the hall of the Elphinstone Arms Inn. The sums given as prizes range from 1s. to 10s. 6d., and the total sum annually distributed amounts on an average to L.50. The competitors are divided into three classes, cottagers, amateurs, and professional gardeners. The show of the Society is one of the chief gala days of the season. The local gentry, the tradesmen, the farmers, and even the cottagers, are all to be seen critically examining the contents of the pots and tables, and talking learnedly of verbenas, phloxes, calceolarias, &c., and of the more homely, but not less useful products,—cabbages, turnips, and potatoes.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Witches of the Biggar District.



BELIEF in witchcraft and sorcery, it is well known, prevailed at one period throughout the whole of Europe. The minds of all men were, for a season, given up to gross delusion on this subject; a delusion, unfortunately, that did not remain visionary and passive, but manifested itself in acts of the most unrelenting cruelty. It is impossible at this day to read the details of the tortures and deaths that were inflicted on helpless old men and women, accused of these imaginary crimes, without experiencing a thrill of intense horror, and breathing a prayer of grateful acknowledgment that we live in times more rational, enlightened, and humane. The Romish Church, when it held undisputed sway over the nations, waged, with its papal bulls and inquisitorial proceedings, a terrible and unremitting warfare with the supposed possessors of these black arts. The Reformation, which had a great effect in eradicating errors, enlightening the mind, and banishing intellectual torpor, instead of dispelling the belief in witchcraft, rendered it more inveterate and intense, and fanned the rage against it to a state of fiercer activity than ever. The Scriptures were more diligently searched, and in many respects better understood; but all classes of men were still unable fully to discriminate between what was peculiar and temporary in a dispensation that had passed away, and what remained obligatory under the religious system that had taken its place. The Old Testament declared that witches, wizards, enchanters, familiar spirits, etc., not merely existed, but that the law of God was, that they should not be suffered to live. These rulers among the ancient Jews who had signalized themselves in attempting to effect the utter extermination of these unfor-

tunate beings, had received very special commendation, and therefore, it was argued, that men in authority, in all ages, should act a similar part. Fortified with such notions, the whole mass of the people became blind to the utter improbability that the Almighty, either directly or indirectly, would permit old, ignorant, crazed individuals to possess powers so extraordinary as to be able to raise storms, blast the produce of the field, inflict diseases and disasters on man and beast, metamorphose themselves into various animals, fly through the air from place to place, hold personal intercourse with the enemy of mankind, pry into the dark future, and foretell the designs of Providence and the fate of human beings.

The Scottish Parliament, in the reign of Queen Mary, enacted that "witchcraft, sorcerie, necromancie, the vsurers thereof, and all persons seikand any helpe, response, or consultatione fra any sic vsurers, or abusers, are punished to the death with all regour." The consequence of this was, that vast numbers of aged persons, especially women, were seized and arraigned for crimes, which we now know were purely imaginary; and, in order to extort a confession of guilt, were subjected to the most excruciating tortures. The Boots and the thumbkins* were often called into requisition in such cases; men called prickers were employed to thrust large pins into the flesh of the accused; a terrible instrument called the branks, or witches' bridle,* was placed on their heads, which fastened them to the wall of their cells, and prevented them from speaking; relays of men were appointed to guard them in prison and keep them from falling asleep; and a special and standing commission of the Privy Council was empowered to try the wretches accused of the supposed crime. Many of the persons seized, made mad by oppression, emitted before this tribunal the most extravagant, absurd, and incredible confessions; and, in most cases, were sent without delay to the gibbet or the stake. The effect of these severities was that the numbers of the accused, instead of being diminished, were increased to an immense extent. Witches, warlocks, and charmers abounded in every parish; prisons sufficiently large could not be got to contain them; and terror and frenzy reigned in every quarter. The most active instruments in the discovery, prosecution, and

* Good specimens of these instruments are to be seen in Mr Sim's collection.

destruction of witches, were the Reformed Clergy. These men pursued this object with an unrelenting determination, that while it bears ample testimony to their energy and zeal, at the same time reflects no great credit on them as men and Christians. They seem to have divested themselves of all feelings of humanity, and to have evinced an amount of error, delusion, and barbarity, utterly alien to the enlightened and benevolent principles which they had undertaken to enunciate to their fellow-sinners.

Warlocks and witches, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, of course, abounded in the Upper Ward of Clydesdale, as well as in the other districts of Scotland. Every parish had its quota, but it appears, from the records of the Presbytery of Lanark, that they were especially numerous in the parishes of Douglas, Crawford, and Crawfordjohn. The Presbytery of Lanark, for a number of years, had their hands so full of business connected with these persons, that it engrossed a large portion of their time.

In former times, great attention was paid to certain wells, and to the superstitious notions, entertained regarding them, we may first of all very briefly advert. They were held to possess a sovereign efficacy in curing diseases, and were dedicated to some angel or saint, who was supposed to preside over them, and to confer upon them their curative virtues. Bands of people walked in procession to them on the festivals of the holy beings to whom they were dedicated; and on these occasions they were decorated with flowers and boughs of trees, and libations of their water were poured out with great ceremony and solemnity. Pilgrims from distant parts of the kingdom were often to be seen seated by their side, imbibing their water, or washing the sores with which their persons were afflicted. The leaders of the Reformation resolved to suppress these superstitious practices; and, accordingly, a statute was enacted, in 1579, prohibiting all pilgrimages to wells. This law, however, had not the desired effect. It was to little purpose that the civil authorities threatened and prosecuted, or that the Reformed clergy thundered against the practice, and inflicted their spiritual censures. The people could not be deterred from the observance of their old custom, or led to believe that the wells, once so sacred and efficacious, had lost their virtues.

The Privy Council, in 1629, issued an edict, in which they lamented that pilgrimages to chapels and wells were still common in the kingdom to the great offence of God, the scandal of the Kirk, and disgrace to his Majesty's Government, and enacted that Commissioners should cause diligent search to be made "at all suche pairts and places where this idolatrous superstition is used, and to take and apprehend all suche persons, of whatsoever rank or qualitie, whom they sall deprehend, going in pilgrimage to chappellis and wellis, or whome they sall know themselffes to be guiltie of that cryme, and commit thame to waird," until measures should be adopted for their trial and punishment. Notwithstanding the severity of this enactment, it is evident from the records of the Presbytery of Lanark, and from other sources of information, that the practice was still, more or less, continued. For instance, in September 1641, Mali Lithgow, was reported to the Presbytery of Lanark, by John Hume, to be guilty of charming in the parish of Skirling; and William Somervail, minister of Dunsyre, was appointed to make diligent search for her, and send her to the Session of Skirling to be tried. On the 5th November following, Mali was brought before the Presbytery, and confessed that she went to the Well of Skirling,* and was ordered to appear before the Kirk Session of Skirling, and answer for her incantations.

As a specimen of the mode of charming in the Upper Ward we may refer to an account of it given by Bessie Smythe of Lesmahagow before the Presbytery of Lanark on the 10th of July 1623. When she appeared she confessed she charmed those persons who had "heart feavers, and that by knielling they socht their healthe for Godes saik, and that she appointit thame the wayburn leaf to be eattin nyne morningis. The words of the charm are 'for Godes saik, for Sanct Spirit, for St Dickit, for the nyne maidens that died into the buirtree, into the Ledywellbank, this charm to be buik and beil to me; God that sua be.'"

In 1640, the Presbytery of Peebles had several cases of witchcraft under consideration. On one occasion the members met at the Kirk of Glenholm for the purpose of trying witches, and among the persons brought before them were Gilbert Ro-

*The Well of Skirling was held in considerable repute in ancient times, and was dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

bisone, Isobel Cuthbertson, Lilius Bertram, and Mali M'Watt. One of the questions put to these poor creatures was "had they any acquaintance with one Graham, a warlock, who had been burnt at Peebles?" The main charge against them seems to have been that they told people to take their children when indisposed to a south running stream, and dip them in it, which would effect a cure. Gilbert Robisonc was believed to be a decided warlock, and frequent references are made to him in the Presbytery records. He is mentioned, in 1641, as being then in ward, suspected of witchcraft, and the ministers of Broughton, Glenholm, and Drummelzier, were appointed to find out what was laid to his charge, and to intimate from their pulpits that such an investigation was in progress.

The case of Mali M'Watt at that time engaged considerable attention. She underwent, as already stated, an examination in the Kirk of Glenholm in presence of David Murray of Stenhopc, the Laird of Hadden, and other members of the Presbytery of Peebles. These parties do not appear to have followed up this examination with any further prosecution of her case, most likely from the accused having her residence at Nesbit among the Coulter hills, within the bounds of the Presbytery of Lanark, and, therefore, beyond their jurisdiction. She was at length pounced on by John Currie, her parish minister, and summoned before the Presbytery of Lanark on the 14th of May 1640. She appeared, but as a copy of her confession in the Kirk of Glenholm was not forthcoming, she was dismissed till next meeting, after giving John M'Watt, in Cagill, and William M'Watt, in Baitlaws, as cautioners for her attendance, under the pain of L.100 Scots. She, accordingly, presented herself before the Presbytery on the twenty-eighth day of the same month, and showed a disposition to deny what it was understood she had confessed at Glenholm; but she admitted that she had charmed a stream of water with an axe, by crossing it in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and then giving three knocks on the threshold of the door; that having been sent for to John Black's cow, she had caused it to take the calf, and then prayed to God that it might give milk, which it did; and, lastly, having been sent for to see Alexander Ram's mare, she had also prayed to God for its recovery. We are now apt to think, if no further charge could be brought against

her than is contained in her confession, that it would have been amply sufficient, in so frivolous a case, to have dismissed her with an admonition to abstain from any absurd symbolism in future, when she attempted to charm the water, or cure the bestial in her neighbourhood; but the Presbytery thought otherwise, and therefore set themselves with the most restless activity to take the life of this poor woman. In the times to which we refer, it was a practice observed by the Presbyteries of the Scottish Kirk, to hold diets of visitation in each parish within their bounds. The Lanark Presbytery, therefore, at their meeting on the 11th June, instructed the visitors of the Kirk of Coulter to be careful and diligent to find out everything they possibly could against Mali M'Watt, and report the result of their investigations at next meeting. On the 16th of July, the Rev. John Currie of Coulter, and the Rev. George Bennet of Quothquan, gave in a "proecess" which they had drawn up, and which, after deliberation, it was agreed should be delivered to the Commissary of Lanark for his revision. At this diet of the Presbytery, James Brydon, a son of the accused, was present, and became bound, under a penalty of L.100 Scots, that his mother, till Whitsunday next, would at any time appear before the Presbytery when summoned. The Commissary of Lanark, it appears, had requested to be furnished with a copy of the proceedings instituted against Mali by the Presbytery of Peebles, and therefore John Currie was instructed to proceed to Peebles to procure one; but he either did not go, or was unsuccessful, for, on the 21st of January 1641, a committee consisting of the Rev. Richard Inglis of Wiston, the Rev. James Douglas of Douglas, and the Rev. George Bennet of Quothquan, was appointed to hold a meeting at Coulter with some members of the Presbytery of Peebles, but the result is not stated.

In the meantime, it was resolved to apply to the Committee of Estates for a Commission to try Mali for the crime of witchcraft. The Commissary of Lanark, however, told the Presbytery that, in his opinion, Mali had been guilty, at the most, of charming, and that such an offence did not infer the penalty of death. The Presbytery were evidently chagrined and annoyed by this decision; but it did not deter them from the prosecution of their bloodthirsty design. They instructed the

moderator, and the committee previously named, to revise the whole process against Mali, and, if possible, to get it signed by the members of the Presbytery of Peebles; and ordained the Rev. James Baillie of Lamington to summon Mali and her cautioner, James Brydon, to appear before them on the 1st of July. In these unhappy times, it often happened that old women accused of witchcraft were deserted by their relatives, and left to the tender mercies of their persecutors, without a friend to console and defend them. This happened on the present occasion. The old woman trudged away from Nesbit to Lanark, and presented herself, on the day appointed, before the Presbytery; but as no person, not even her son, was present, who would vouch for her future appearance, she was committed to the prison of Lanark. Her own minister, John Currie, was one of her most inveterate persecutors; but on this occasion he insisted that she should either be declared guilty of witchcraft, or that the charge against her should be abandoned. The Presbytery were not yet prepared to decide either the one way or the other; they still desiderated further proofs of her guilt; and therefore they appointed John Currie and George Bennet to attend the Presbytery of Peebles, "to labour," as they called it, for additional information, and to request that a committee of the Presbytery of Peebles should meet at Biggar on the 21st of the same month of July, to hold a conference with the following committee of their own body, viz.,—the Rev. Alexander Somervail of Dolphinton, the Rev. George Bennet of Quothquan, the Rev. John Currie of Coulter, the Rev. Andrew Gudlatt of Symington, and the Rev. John Veitch of Robertson; and to summon all parties interested to attend the said meeting. This meeting accordingly took place, and the result of its deliberations, as embodied in a report, was, that many of the charges against Mali M'Watt were found proven, and that there were just grounds for arraigning her before the civil tribunals of the country. The Presbytery thereupon once more took courage, and acting, as they said, on the Scripture warrant, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," they ordained John Currie to repair to Edinburgh to wait upon the Earl of Angus, Sir William Baillie of Lamington, Sir William Carmichael, and Sir John Dalziel, to induce them to lend their assistance to procure a Commission to apprehend Mali, who had

been set at liberty, and subject her to such punishment as the laws of God and the country authorized. John Currie, as instructed, went to Edinburgh; but he was met with the objection, that his application for a Commission was informal, so long as Mali continued at large, and practised her charms and cures. The Presbytery when they heard this, with one consent, requested the elder for Lamington, Sir William Baillie, or, in his absence, his bailie, Alexander Menzies of Culterallers, to apprehend poor Mali with all expedition, and to keep her in confinement at Coulter, or to send her to the county jail, to be under the vigilant eye of the bailies of Lanark.

The Privy Council had begun, by this time, to be wearied with the endless prosecutions raised by the clergy against old women; and, in the case of Mali M'Watt, they could not, at any rate see that the charge of witchcraft could be sustained. The clergy were determined, however, not to be baffled; and on the 24th of March 1642, the day on which Mali was lodged in Lanark Jail, they met and resolved to appoint a committee to revise her process, and to make a fresh effort to obtain a Commission for her trial. The committee, consisting of the Rev. William Somervail of Dunsyre, the Rev. Alexander Somervail of Dolphinton, the Rev. George Bennet, and the Rev. John Currie, met at Dolphinton, and, after revising the process, drew up a petition to the Lords of the Privy Council, which was signed by the clerk in name of the Presbytery, and conveyed to Edinburgh by the indefatigable John Currie. When John arrived in Edinburgh, he found that the Privy Council would hold no meeting sooner than the 1st of June; and thus he and the Presbytery were once more baulked in their design. The Presbytery, nevertheless, ordered John to repair to Edinburgh so soon as the Council met, and agreed to allow him two dollars to pay his expenses; but when the day arrived, John had become unwell, and could not leave his manse. The Presbytery, still unwearied in their efforts, resolved to take the advice of the Synod on their procedure in Mali's case, and also to consult the Commission of the General Assembly and the legal agent of the Church; but what advice they got, or what further steps they took, their records, so far as we have seen them, give no information. The likelihood is, that Mali M'Watt, after undergoing a most harassing and protracted persecution

from the Presbyteries of Peebles and Lanark, lived and died in her own quiet home in the Vale of Coulter.

For several years after the formation of the Presbytery of Biggar, the members of that reverend court appear to have taken no part in the prosecution of witches. Their persecuting zeal, however, broke out, all of a sudden, in 1649. At a meeting on the 28th of November of that year, it was reported that one Janet Bowis, a confessing witch, was imprisoned at Peebles; and therefore Robert Brown of Broughton, and John Crawford of Lamington, were instructed to wait on the Commissioners appointed to try cases of witchcraft, to ascertain if, in her depositions, she had accused any one connected with their congregations of being guilty of that crime, and to request liberty to bring Janet to Biggar, to be detained in confinement there, and to be confronted with such old women as she might declare to be witches. These two reverend gentlemen, accordingly, repaired to Peebles, and obtaining an interview with Janet, the confessing witch, they received from her the names of a number of persons in the parishes of Broughton, Lamington, and Walston, who, she alleged, had been guilty of the crime of witchcraft. The authorities at Peebles, however, refused to allow Janet to be taken out of their hands, and transferred to the Tolbooth of Biggar. The two delegates, therefore, repaired to the moderator of the Presbytery, and laid before him the result of their proceedings; and that dignitary lost no time in sending a communication on the subject to Sir John Christie. Through the influence of this gentleman, a Commission was granted by the Committee of Estates to sit at Biggar on the 19th of December, with power to try all witches within the bounds of the Presbytery; and an order was at the same time issued for transporting Janet Bowis, the confessing witch, to Biggar. The Commission met at Biggar on the day appointed. The whole members of Presbytery attended. It is a matter of regret that no report of what took place at that meeting can now be obtained. We only know that the divines of the Presbytery were greatly disappointed and dissatisfied with the result; and particularly with the conduct of the confessing witch, of whom they expected to make so much. She appears to have broken completely down under the searching examination to which she was subjected. The divines resolved

not to give her up. They appointed a meeting to take place on the 29th, and summoned her before them. The minute referring to what then took place is curious, and therefore we give it entire:—"The brethrine in yr attendance upone ye Commissioneres appoynted for tryall of suspected witches, within ye boundis of ye Presbyterie, haveing perceived that Jennett Bowis, ye confesseing witche (brocht to Biggar for yat end), that schoe might be confronted with suche persones as schoe had delated and affirmed to be guyltie with her of ye said cryme of witchcraft, had clearlie contradicted herself in these declarationes in verie many points, and that the most part of her dispositiones wer full of variationes, bothe in regard of persones, names, tymes, places, matter, and everie other circumstance; all whiche haveing maid them suspicious of her, that schoe had lyed upon some innocent persones, and concealed ye guyltiness of others, tending to the prejudice of ye work of tryall, and discoverie of that fearfull sinne, and to ye advantage of Satan, did therefore aggrie togeder to sett aparte this day for humiliacion and prayer. And being (at least ye most parte of yr number) convenit this day in ye Kirk of Biggar, and ye said Jennett Bowis being brocht before theme, efter manie exhortationes from ye word of the Lord, and pouring furth of prayers and supplicationes to God (by turns), entreating his Majestie to open her mouthe to confess her guyltiness in this point, and with manie wurd exhorteing her to yat effecte. At last ye said Jennett burst furthe in clamours and teares, and said that schoe had condemned her awin sillie saule in sweareing falselie, and, in signe yrof, schoe presentlie cleared about fortie eight persones, whose guyltiness before schoe had affirmed. Whairupone the brethrine of ye Presbyterie thocht fitting to referre, as be ther presents they doe referre, ye matter to ye consideratione of ye Commissioners for tryall, that they may bothe advyse what to doe, and also (if need be), to represent the samyn to ye Committee of Estaitts for directione, what sall be done anent ye said Jennet Bowis." No further statements regarding her appear in the records of Presbytery, and therefore her ultimate fate cannot now be ascertained.

At that period, so many persons were apprehended for the crime of witchcraft, that the ordinary prisons could not contain

them. An order was therefore issued, that each parish, in its turn, should furnish a quota of men to guard them and prevent their escape. The members of the Biggar Presbytery, in their great zeal against witchcraft, resolved that they would, along with their parishioners, take their turn in watching. On the 7th of May 1650, they even went the length of resolving to call in the services of a person called George Cathie, "a searcher for ye Devill's mark on witches," who dwelt at Tranent, and who had recently been pursuing his vocation within the bounds of the Presbytery of Peebles. They therefore requested the Presbytery of Haddington, in conjunction with a magistrate, to bind him down to answer before the Judge Ordinary when he should be called. Cathie a short time previous, viz., in November 1649, had also been employed by the Presbytery of Lanark to exercise his cruel art on eleven women sent by the Marquis of Douglas from the parish of Crawford Douglas, who had been "delated" as witches by Jonet Coutts, a confessing witch, and at that time a prisoner in the jail of Peebles. On the 6th of December of that year it was reported to the Presbytery that in the presence of two bailies of Lanark and certain other witnesses, "the said George did prick pinnes in everie one of them, and in diverse of them the pinne was put in without pain as the witnesses can testify."

At this period, the members of the Presbytery of Lanark were actively employed in the prosecution of witches. In 1650, they caused a very considerable number of old women to be apprehended in the parishes to the west of Biggar, and lodged in the Tolbooth of Lanark. We may briefly refer to one or two of these cases:—On the 10th of January of that year, Marion Hunter, one of the suspected persons incarcerated for witchcraft, compeared before the Presbytery, and declared, —1st, That the devil appeared like a little whelp between Haircleuch and Littleclyd, and evanished in a bush; 2d, Like a brown whelp at Haircleuch, and, a good while afterwards, like a man, between Haircleuch and Glispen, and nipped her in her shoulder, and requested her to be his servant; 3d, That she was in Gallowberriehill, and rode upon a "bunwede," and that of those who are at present in prison, the following were with her on this occasion, viz.—Lillias Moffat, Marion Watson, Helen Aitchison, Marion Moffat, and Mali Laidlaw;—the last,

she said, was of special service to her, for she "drew her when she was hindmost, and could not winne up."

In a month or two afterwards, Janet Birnie, from Crawford, was tried by a committee of the Presbytery, and the following points were found proved:—First, That she followed William Brown, slater, to Robert Williamson's house in Watermeetings, and there craved him for something that he was due her. A quarrel thereupon ensued between them; and in twenty-four hours thereafter he fell from a house and broke his neck. Second, "Ane outcast" having taken place between her family and the family of Bessie Aitchison, the said Janet prayed that the Aitchisons might soon have bloody beds and a light house; and after that, Bessie Aitchison's daughter took sickness, and cried, "There is a fire in the bed," and died; and Bessie Aitchison's "gudeman dwyned." And, Third, She was blamed for causing discord between Newton and his wife, and procuring the death of William Geddes. Marion Laidlaw from Crawford was also tried at the same time, and the charges against her were that a quarrel having ensued between her and Jean Blackwood regarding some hay, the said Jean's cow had become ill and died; that she had obtained her husband by unlawful means; and lastly, that she had a beard. The Presbytery, notwithstanding these grievous charges, agreed to set them at liberty, provided the bailies of Lanark would enter into recognisances, to the amount of 1000 merks, that they would appear before them when called on. It appears that Janet Coutts, the confessing witch, who had accused the eleven old women in the parish of Crawford of being witches, in the end emitted a declaration that her accusations were entirely false, and that Mr Veitch, minister of Robertson, was ordered by the Presbytery of Lanark to preach at Crawford, and, on Janet Coutts' testimony, to acquit the accused.

On the 21st March of the same year, 1650, the Presbytery received papers from Richard Inglis, which contained the confession of "ane warlock called Archibald Watt, alias Sole the Paitlet, freelie given by him in the Tolbooth of Douglas." The brethren read over the papers, and considered that it was clearly set forth that this warlock had made a paction with the devil; that he had held frequent meetings with his satanic majesty and several witches in different places; and that he

had been guilty of many horrid abominations. They were un-animously of opinion that it was their duty to obtain a Commission of the Lords of Council to try him; and therefore they appointed Mr Robert Lockhart to proceed to Edinburgh for this purpose, with all convenient speed. Mr Inghis requested that, as the warlock had once before escaped out of the prison of Douglas, he should be brought to the Tolbooth of Lanark; and further, that a committee of the Presbytery should be appointed to confer with him on his arrival. All this was agreed to; but the records of the Presbytery fail to show what was the fate of this unfortunate and infatuated individual.

Biggar during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries would no doubt have its quota of witches and charmers as well as the adjacent parishes, but we have found no reference to them in any documents that we have consulted. Tradition has, however, preserved the names of several women in the town and parish who, at a somewhat later period, were reputed witches, and one or two of whom underwent the operation of "scoring abune the breath," that is, having several incisions made with a knife, or other sharp instrument, across the forehead. This operation, like that of cutting off the locks of Samson, was understood to deprive them of their supernatural powers, so far, at least, as exercising them to the injury of the operator.* One of the most noted of these witches was Bessie Carmichael, who lived in the neighbourhood of Biggar, and was regarded with awe on account of her "grewsum" looks, her intercourse with the weird folk, and her extraordinary powers in curing diseases, etc. One day a man in her neighbourhood was going to the mill of Biggar, with one or two loads of grain on a horse's back—then the usual mode of conveyance—and Bessie requested him to take, either her "pock," which hung in the mill, to receive the gratuitous offerings of the farmers when they had a "melder" at the mill, or a quantity of grain which she had gleaned or received as a gift from some of the farmers. The man refused to do this; and Bessie told him, in the hearing of some persons, that he would soon rue it. In course of disloading the horse, at the mill, the animal

* A deed of this kind was perpetrated on an old woman in the parish of Ancrum so late as 1775.

became restive, and gave the man so violent a kick, that he was laid lifeless on the spot. The whole country round soon rang with this terrible instance of the witch's revenge, and a strong desire was expressed that she should be burnt. By the time this incident happened, the days of judicial burning for witchcraft had passed away; but it is said that some persons, in disguise, broke into her cot, and maltreated her in such a way, that they hoped she would no longer "keep the countryside in fear."

It is a tradition that a noted witch in the neighbouring parish of Broughton after being tried by the Commission of the Privy Council was burnt in a ravine near Kirklawhill. In the excellent History of Peeblesshire by William Chambers, Esq., it is stated that several old men and women in the county of Peebles were burnt for witchcraft, and that the different parishes were called on to pay a portion of the expense thereby incurred. For instance, in the records of the parish of Drummelzier, there is the following entry under date 28th July 1652, viz.: "Paid Mr Andrew Wilson, vicar of Peebles, L.3 Scots, as part payment of 100 merks due by the Presbytery for burning witches."

The parish of Broughton down to the commencement of the present century had always a few reputed witches. At this comparatively recent period, two old women dwelt in a hut near the parish school, who were held to possess supernatural powers. They were consulted regarding the diseases both of man and beast; and like Mause in the "Gentle Shepherd," got the "wyte" of all the disasters that fell out in the neighbourhood. Many stories of their wonderful powers were wont to be related, but let one suffice. One winter a cow at Kirkbank fell ill, and all efforts to restore her to her wonted state proved ineffectual. The old women, who were in the habit of coming to the farm house for a benefaction of milk or meal, were consulted, and they declared that no cure could be effected unless the cow swallowed one or two whole trouts. It was an intense frost at the time. The Tweed and its little tributaries were frozen up, so that it was in a manner impossible to obtain a trout. Next morning, to the utter astonishment of the farmer and his family, a whole trout and a half one were found in a hen's nest. The old women were at once sent for, and,

after much muttering and ceremony, they thrust the trouts over the cow's throat, and of course a cure immediately took place.

Coulter is another neighbouring parish which, to a recent period, always had a few witches and warlocks. The stories still prevalent of their super-human deeds, which most frequently were of a mischievous kind, are numerous. We give a sample. The cows of Mr John Dickson of Coulter commonly called "the Advocate," on one occasion towards the close of last century, refused to give their milk, and became almost "yell" as it is called. This was regarded as a clear case of witchcraft, and it consequently became necessary for the dairy-maid to resort to the usual method of undoing the spell. This consisted in extracting a small quantity of milk from the bewitched cows, and after securing all the doors and windows to place it on the fire in a pan about 12 o'clock at night, and then prick it with a fork or large pin till it had evaporated. This process not only undid the spell, but it inflicted great torment on the enchanter who had put it on. Mr Dickson's maid obtained the desired quantity of milk, and placed it on the fire, but she had scarcely commenced the work of pricking, when Mrs A., a noted witch, came to the house, rattled at the doors and windows, and imperiously demanded admittance. No regard being paid to her solicitations, the work of removing the spell was proceeded with, the witch was tortured and baffled, and the cows, restored to their usual condition, ever afterwards yielded their milk freely.

The cows of a farmer on the banks of the Clyde in this parish began one season to cast their calves. As this calamity could not be accounted for, by any natural cause, it was of course attributed to witchcraft. The source from which the evil influence proceeded was not very difficult to discover. In the parish dwelt a "wabster," who had what was called "ill e'en," and who, a little before the miscarriage of the cows, had been seen passing the place where they were grazing, and casting at them very suspicious looks. The undoing of this spell required the interment or sacrifice of a living calf. Accordingly, at the entrance to the byre, a hole was dug, and in it a living calf was buried; and by this means the spell was broken, and the cows were preserved from further misfortune. Such at least was the belief

of the farmer and his family, but the profane and rascal multitude, who, by this time, entertained different ideas regarding witchcraft, were sometimes disposed to reproach and annoy them for having performed such a deed.

The belief in witchcraft in the Biggar district is now almost wholly exploded. The dread of evil influences from this source no longer prevails; old women, however wrinkled their face or suspicious their looks, are now safe from torment and abuse; and disasters, if they cannot be always accounted for, are ascribed to different and more feasible causes.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Vagrants of the Biggar District.



THE Biggar district was, from a remote period, overrun by swarms of tinkers, gipsies, chapmen, beggars, etc. Some of these wanderers were well known, and kindly treated. They went regular rounds, obtained quarters at certain farm-houses, and claimed and received an "awmous," or small benefaction, in the shape of a coin, a bannock, or a handful of meal, at the doors of the charitable, and bestowed a benediction in return. The sturdy beggars, sorners, and bluegowns of a bygone age, carried in their capacious wallets what was called an awmous dish, which was round in shape and composed of wood, and, in fact, bore a close resemblance to a large quaich or drinking cup. On calling at a house, the gaberlunzie held out this dish to receive the alms of the gudewife, which, in that case, generally consisted of a handful or two of barley or oat-meal. By this method he was able to ascertain the exact amount of the dole bestowed, and to measure out in return a corresponding amount of blessing to the giver. The meal was then deposited in the appropriate meal-pock, and the awmous dish had its place of honour in one of the pocks in front. We can thus see the appropriateness of the comparison used by Burns, when he says, that one of the heroines of his "Jolly Beggars," in looking up to her admirer to receive a kiss,

"held up her greedy gab,
Just like an awmous dish."

The accompanying engraving represents an awmous dish, carried, we believe, by one of the sturdy beggars that at one time frequented the Upper Ward of Clydesdale.



These vagrants, in the long winter nights, when seated at the back of the ample hearth, entertained the family circle with the news of the district, or with stories of their experience and adventures in their early years. The pedlars, male and female, carried a tempting collection of wares from house to house, and conveniently supplied persons far remote from shops, with articles of ornament or utility. The tinkers mended pots and kettles, sold trenchers, horn spoons, heather besoms, rush mats, pottery ware, etc. The men were expert hunters and fishers, and some of them excelled as musicians, while the females practised the art of fortune-telling. Their encampments, by the side of plantations, or in secluded corners of the country, with their blazing fires, and their array of asses, horses, and dogs, had a romantic effect, and impressed the mind with a primitive state of existence, "ere the base laws of servitude began." They paid scrupulous respect to the property of those who treated them kindly and afforded them shelter; but plundered, without mercy, all those who drove them from their doors, or refused them the corner of a field on which to pitch their encampment. Besides these wanderers, there were a number of idiots, who roamed the country at large, afforded amusement by their antics, witticisms, or mimicry, or were regarded with terror for their sudden resentment and their savage malignity. A great annoyance was experienced from the cripples who were conveyed from door to door in hand-barrows. They expected not only to receive an awmous, but to be carried from the place where they had been set down, to the nearest house. When persons of sufficient strength could not be found, the cripple had often to sit for hours by the wayside; and when the nearest house was distant, the task imposed on the carriers was most oppressive. Nothing but the idea that it was an incumbent duty on all classes of the community to contribute directly to the relief of the necessitous

poor, could have made them submit to such an amount of drudgery and inconvenience.

The gipsies, those strange people who are found in many different countries, who have preserved themselves as a distinct community, and have many peculiarities in dress, appearance, and language, were first heard of in Scotland in 1506, when James IV. wrote a letter regarding them to the King of Denmark. In 1540, an enactment was made in favour of John Faw, Lord and Count of Little Egypt, a leader of these wanderers, authorising him to rule his followers according to the laws of the country from which, as he asserted, they had come. They were at first regarded as refugees of a noble race, and to possess a semi-religious character, but, in a short time, they were discovered to be mere knaves and impostors. The Privy Council, in 1572, denounced them as vagabonds, idle and counterfeit people, who falsely termed themselves Egyptians, and supported themselves by plundering, and other unlawful means, to the damage of the commonweal. They were, therefore, ordered to betake themselves to fixed habitations, and honest employment, and, failing to do so, they were "to be scourgit throughout the toun and paroch, and sae to be imprisonit and scourgit fra paroch to paroch, while they be utterly renderit furth of this realm."

The laws against the sturdy vagabonds that prowled idly about the country were consolidated into one comprehensive statute, in 1579, during the reign of Queen Mary, and provided that vagrants, on being apprehended, "sall be put into the King's waird or irons, so lang as they have ony gudes of thair awin to live on. And fra they have not quhairupon to live of thair awin, that thair eares be nayled to the trone or to an uther tree, and thair eares cutted off, and banished the countrie; and gif, thereafter, they be found againe, that they be hangit." These laws, and others of a similar kind, afterwards enacted, appear to have become, in a great measure, a dead letter; and if we can fully credit the statements of Fletcher of Salton and others the country about the close of the seventeenth century was overrun by thousands of vagrants, of whom the settled inhabitants knew little, except being kept in terror by their brawls, depredations, and exactions.

The authorities of Biggar made various attempts to keep

the town free from the riots and annoyances of the unsettled and lawless hordes that frequented the Upper Ward. The enactments against them were renewed on the 22d April 1727 in the following terms:—"The same day, the Bailie renews all former Acts of Court made anent resetting of sturdy beggars, by giving and selling to them meat and drink, whereby they abuse the hail inhabitants of the town; and therefore prejudice to all former Acts, statutes and ordains, that no person or persons within the town of Biggar resett such sturdy beggars, sorners, gypsies, or give unto them drink for yr money, under the pain of ten pundis Scots, *toties quoties*." On the 15th October 1728, Bailie Luke Vallange fined John Rob, indweller in Biggar, in the sum of ten pounds Scots, for entertaining thieves and beggars, the "fangs" (plunder) being found in his house.

The Baron Bailie, on the 28th March 1747, gave the following decision:—"The same day, complaint having been made upon Samuel Bell, inkeeper in Biggar, and Agnes Noble, his spouse, that for some time past they have been in use of houting and allowing vagrants, tinklers, sorners, and sturdy beggars to lodge in their house. The Bailiff passes them for all bygone transgressions of that nature, but appoints them to find caution, that from this time to the term of Whitsunday next, at which time they are to leave this place and reside at Linton, that they shall not harbour any such vagrants or sturdy beggars, under the penalty of twelve pundis Scots for each transgression, *toties quoties*, by and attour repairing what damage neighbours shall sustain by and through their harbouring them, as said is."

The gipsy hordes that roamed about the Upper Ward in former times, consisted of distinct families or clans. The principal of these were—the Jardines, Browns, Baillies, Faas, Shaws, Ruthvens, Keiths, and Wilsons. Two of these parties, the Faas and Shaws, had a terrible fight at Romano, in Tweeddale, about ten or twelve miles from Biggar, on the 1st of October 1677. They had been at a Haddington fair, and were on their way to Harestanes, to meet two other gangs, the Baillies and the Browns; but they quarrelled about a division of the spoil taken at the fair, and a fight ensued. The Faas consisted of four brothers and a brother's son; and the Shaws, of the father and

three sons, with several women on both sides. The combat was keen and bloody, and victory at last inclined to the side of the Shaws. Sandie Faa and his wife were killed dead upon the spot, and Geordie Faa was dangerously wounded. Old Robin Shaw and his three sons were, sometime afterwards, apprehended; and having been convicted of the murder at Romano, they were hanged in the Grassmarket in February 1678. Dr Pennecuik, to whom the estate of Romano belonged, erected, in 1683, a dovecot on the spot on which this fight, or "polymachy," as he calls it, took place, with the inscription,

"The field of Gipsej blood, which here you see,
A shelter for the harmless dove shall be."

The late Robert Johnston, merchant, Biggar, was wont to relate the following story concerning the gipsies and his maternal great-grandfather, James Brown, who was tenant in Skirling Mill nearly a century and a half ago. On one occasion, a strong band of tinklers quarrelled with the country people assembled at a Skirling fair. The business of the market was stopped, and many persons left it in consequence of the violent behaviour of these ruffians, when James Brown and his brother-in-law, Richard Burns, armed themselves with trusty Andrea Ferraras, and at the head of a courageous body of countrymen attacked the tinklers, and drove them quite out of the village. One of them, however, determined on revenge, and, running off in the direction of Skirling Mill, was over-heard threatening, with the bitterest imprecations, that the whole of the buildings would be immediately in flames. Several persons, on hearing this threat, followed him with all speed, to prevent him from executing his design; but what was their surprise, on reaching the court in front of the house, to find the fellow stretched on his back, and a man above him holding his throat with a grasp which, in a short time, must have put an end to his existence. This man's name was John M'Ivor. He was a native of the "north countrie," and had been out in "the fyfteen." Leaving his native mountains, he came to the low country, and employed himself as a hawker, and that morning had come to the mill after the male portion of the family had gone to the fair. Being fatigued with a long morning's journey, he had

sat down to rest himself in the barn before proceeding to the fair, and had fallen asleep, when he was awoke by the screams of the terrified females, and, rushing out, knocked the intended incendiary down, and held him fastened to the ground till competent assistance arrived. Many years afterwards, the gudeman of the mill had occasion to make a journey some distance from home. In a solitary part of the road he saw an encampment of tinkers, which he could not avoid passing. Revenge was a peculiar characteristic of these vagabonds. The gudeman, at the sight of them, in a place far remote from any assistance, felt a sudden tremor creep over him; but he resolved to show no signs of fear, and therefore faced them boldly. While engaged in conversation with them, one of them brought forth a sword and said, "Gudeman, what think ye o' that swurd? Is it as lang and sharp as the ane you used at Skirling Fair?" To these questions the gudeman made a jocular reply. No violence, however, was offered him, and he was allowed to wend his way home in safety. The sword used by Mr Brown, on the occasion of clearing the fair, is still preserved by Mr Johnston's family.

An incident of the same class was often related by the late David Wilson, wheelwright, Biggar. One day a female gipsy entered the herd's house of Coulter Waterhead, lying in a wild and sequestered track among the mountains of our Southern Highlands. The shepherd was attending his flocks on the hills, and the only person at home was the shepherd's wife. The gipsy, in the rude forward manner characteristic of her order, came unasked into the kitchen, and seating herself by the fire, lighted her cutty pipe, and then took a narrow survey of the apartment. Fixing her eyes on a gun that hung from a joist, she said, "Gudewife that seems a guid gun, I'se warrant the gudeman taks a shot wi't now and then whan he's oot on the hills." "He seldom does ony sic thing," replied the shepherd's wife, "and, in truth the gun's little worth, as it's rusty, and wants the lock." "Gudewife," said the gipsy, "I wonner yer nae feared to leeve in this lane sheilin', what wad ye do wer ye attacked by rubbers?" "We nicht mak nae great resistance," replied the gudewife, "but really we hae little dreed o' sican a thing, as there's little in the hoose to tempt people o' that sort." "Noo, gudewife," said the gipsy, "can ye

deny that ye hae still in the kist neuk the pickle notes that the goodman got on Thursday last for his lambs at Biggar Midsummer Fair." The shepherd's wife gave an evasive reply. The gipsy then pressed her to buy some of her wares, but as none were wanted she took her leave.

When the shepherd returned from the hills his wife related the conversation which she had held with the gipsy. The suspicions of the shepherd were roused. He lost no time in cleaning and repairing the gun, and charging it with a heavy shot, and in securing the doors and windows in such a manner that no one could obtain entrance except by violence. The shepherd's suspicions turned out to be too well founded. About midnight a loud knocking was heard, and a furious demand made for admittance. No attention having been paid to the demand, an attempt was made violently to effect an entrance by the door and windows, but this having failed, some of the assailants sprung on the roof and commenced to remove the thatch. The shepherd now in a voice of thunder ordered them to keep outside otherwise he would fire on them. "O," said one of them, "we care naething for yer gun; it wants the lock." No sooner did a fellow present himself at an opening to descend than the shepherd took a deliberate aim and fired, the shot telling with deadly effect. This hot and unexpected reception struck dismay into the hearts of the assailants. They immediately retreated, carrying with them their wounded comrade, but vowing to return, and inflict the direst vengeance. The shepherd stood on guard till day-light, when he and his family descended to Birthwood, and gave information of the attack. As they could no longer occupy their sheiling without the risk of a renewed attack, their furniture was that same day brought down to Birthwood, where they took up their abode. The shepherds, in going their rounds on the morning following, found that the sheiling had been revisited by the gipsies, and reduced to a heap of smoking ruins.

We may also refer to a murder committed by some Tinklers near the village of Newbigging, three or four miles from Biggar, which made a great sensation in the district, and was closely associated with a man well known in Biggar at the commencement of the present century. An old man named Adam

Thomson, with his wife and daughter, occupied a solitary hut at the place referred to, and employed himself in gathering rags and manufacturing heather besoms, straw mats, and similar articles, and is thus supposed to have given offence to the Tinklers, by supplying articles which they were in the habit of producing and selling at the farm houses. About 11 o'clock on the night of Monday, the 17th of June 1771, when the inmates had retired to rest, a loud knocking was made at the door and windows by several persons, who peremptorily demanded that Thomson should rise and show them the way across the muir to Peebles. He accordingly got up, and, on reaching the door, was struck a heavy blow on the head, and knocked down. The ruffians then tied his hands behind his back, and maltreated him in a brutal manner. Mrs Thomson, alarmed by the noise of the scuffle, sprung out of bed, and went to the door, when she was instantly struck also, and laid prostrate on the ground. The daughter, hearing the violence that had been inflicted on her parents, made her escape by a back window, and proceeding, with all speed, to the nearest house, gave the alarm. In a short time, several persons, who had been hastily collected, hurried to the cottage, and found that Thomson and his wife had been seriously wounded; that the house had been rifled, the chests broken open, and a quantity of linen, a silver watch, several bank-notes and a red plaid carried off. A surgeon with all haste was brought from Cranwath. The old man was found to have received some deadly strokes on the head, and at six o'clock next morning breathed his last. Mrs Thomson was less dangerously injured, and in course of time recovered.

Great efforts, by offering rewards and otherwise, were made to discover the perpetrators of this foul outrage. Several persons were apprehended on suspicion, and all manner of reports was put in circulation; but no satisfactory discovery was made, and most persons began to consider that further search was hopeless.

Adam Thomson, a son of the deceased, a man of strange notions and eccentric habits, and then schoolmaster of the Parish of Walston, after pondering for a long time over the mysterious death of his father, resolved to make personal efforts to discover the murderers. From time to time, so often as his

vocation would permit, he left his native locality, and travelled over the greater part of Scotland and England, making minute inquiries after suspicious characters, visiting jails, and mixing with thieves, tinkers, and vagabonds of all sorts. Again and again he returned home, baffled and disappointed. One evening, as he lay in bed ruminating on the painful subject which had taken so firm a hold of his mind, he felt a strong and irresistible impulse once more to renew his search. He rose early next morning and wended his way to Jedburgh, where, as was his wont he repaired to the Tolbooth. Here he made the usual inquiries at the prisoners, if any of them knew the perpetrators of his father's murder; and it is understood that he obtained such information as enabled him to take effectual steps to apprehend them and bring them to justice. It was thus ascertained that the murder was committed by two men, John Brown and James Wilson, and two women, Martha Wilson and Janet Greig. At what place James Wilson was apprehended, we have not ascertained; but John Brown was captured in a house near the Fort of Inversnaid, by a party of soldiers from the garrison, on Sabbath, the 3d of January 1773.* He was conducted first to Stirling, and then to Edinburgh.

Simson in his "History of the Gipsies," says that a singular incident took place during the journey from Stirling. The prisoner was conveyed in a cart bound with ropes, and guarded by two strong constables. After they had passed Linlithgow, they saw a woman lying by the road side, apparently in very great agony, who implored them either to bring a midwife to her, or convey her to one, as she had been unexpectedly overtaken with the pains of labour. They, therefore, put her into the cart beside the prisoner, but on reaching a dell full of trees and bushes, near Kirkliston, they were astounded to see the prisoner spring out of the cart, and disappear among the thickets. Pursuit was immediately given, but the culprit in all likelihood would have escaped, had not a gentleman, who was shooting in an adjoining field, observed the course which he took, and was thus able to point out a bush in which he had sought concealment.

* A reward of L.50 had been offered for his apprehension, and in his "Last Speech," he states that the soldiers were made acquainted with the place where he lodged, by John M'Queen, ground officer to the Duke of Montrose, in the hope of obtaining the reward.

As his pursuers were armed he had no alternative but to surrender. When they returned to the cart, the female, who in all probability was the prisoner's wife, or at least one of the gipsies, had of course disappeared.

As no person had seen Wilson and Brown commit the murder, it would have been difficult to obtain a conviction against them; but the two women who had taken part with them in the robbery and murder, and who had also been discovered, basely agreed to turn king's evidence. The trial of the two men was fixed to take place on the 28th of June; but it was postponed till the 12th of August, on the plea that at least one of the panels could bring evidence to prove an *alibi*. The individual who at length came forward and made this attempt, was a person of their own kidney, called William Robertson; but his statements were so inconsistent and contradictory, that the Court committed him to prison. The jury unanimously found the prisoners guilty; and the sentence pronounced upon them was, that they should be executed in the Grassmarket, Edinburgh, on Wednesday, the 15th September, and their bodies given to Dr Munro for dissection.

Previous to their execution, they emitted their "last speech, confession, and dying words," all of which were attested by Richard Loch, inner-turnkey of the Tolbooth, and printed and published by H. Galbreith, Edinburgh. James Wilson declared that he would make no public confession of particular crimes, and that he would confess to God alone. His last speech, therefore, throws no light on the murder, or the manner in which he and his associates in crime were detected. John Brown, in his declaration, was more explicit. He said, "I do acknowledge that I was at the house of Adam Thomson, in Carnwath Muir, on Monday, the 17th of June 1771, along with Martha Wilson and Janet Greig; but as they did not tell the truth, the whole truth, I will give a simple declaration of it to the world. I declare that I never knew that house before; neither had I any intention to call at it that night, until I was led to it by Martha Wilson and Janet Greig; neither did I knock at the door, as they declared; it was the man that was with me that went to the door. I acknowledge that when Adam Thomson came out, I was standing by; but I did not give him the first stroke, neither did I give him the last; but the women,

Martha Wilson and Janet Greig, struck both the woman and the man most desperately with sticks. As to the story they told as to my beating him with a potato-dibble, it is entirely false; yet I do acknowledge that I gave him several strokes. I acknowledge also that I gave the woman the first stroke, although it was declared before the judges that it was the other man, for which I sorely repent, as I acknowledge myself art and part in the murder. As to robbing the house, I touched nothing in it; but when I went in to desire the women to come out, I saw one of them at a chest, and another at the amry." He made a number of other statements, but none of them bearing particularly on the murder and robbery.

The execution of Brown and Wilson took place on the day appointed; and Adam Thomson, it is said, appeared with them on the scaffold, and offered up a solemn prayer, an exercise of which he was very fond, and in which, it is allowed, he greatly excelled. On his return home, he erected a stone at the grave of his father in Carnwath Churchyard, with an inscription in Latin. It was long an object of attraction, and was visited by many persons from a distance, who had heard the story of the murder, the extraordinary efforts made by young Thomson to discover the perpetrators of it, and the singular epitaph which he had composed. A relative of Thomson, some years ago, removed the stone to the neighbouring churchyard of Libberton; and there barbarously caused the inscription to be defaced or erased, and another one, regarding his own immediate relations, to be put in its place. So far as can be remembered the inscription ran as follows:—

"Hic jacet Adamus Thomson, qui xv. ante Cal. Julii 1771, cruentis manibus, Joannis Brown, Jacobi Wilson, et duarum feminarum, apud Nigram Legem prope Novam Ædificationem, crudelissime trucidatus erat. Illi, Adamo Thomson defuncti filio et ludimagistro de Walston, detecti erant. Ob quod crimen nefandum, Brown et Wilson, capitis damnati, et xvii. Cal. Oct. 1773, suspensi erant.

"Hoc monumentum extractum fuit Adamo Thomson, rectore Academiæ de Walston."*

* Translation.—"Here lies Adam Thomson, who was most cruelly murdered at Blacklaw near Newbigging, on the 17th of June 1771, by the bloody hands of John Brown, James Wilson, and two females. They were found out by Adam

The late Rev. William Meek of Dunsyre was wont to quote the above inscription, as a curious sample of latinity, putting special emphasis on the rendering of Blacklaw near Newbigging, by "Nigram Legem prope Novam *Ædificationem*," and pointing out the fine conceit of Thomson, in styling himself "Iudimagister" and "rector" of the Academy of Walston. Mr Thomson some time afterwards left the "Academy" of Walston, and became teacher of the School of Quothquan. He was a frequent visitor to Biggar, and his appearance and oddities were familiar to all the inhabitants.

The gipsy gang that had the most intimate connection with the Biggar district were the Baillies. They were an old gipsy family. Towla Bailyow and Geleyr Bailyow are mentioned in the league or treaty into which James V. entered, in 1540, with John Faw, Lord and Earl of Little Egypt, their names being in the list of Faw's followers, who, he alleged, had rebelled against his authority, and plundered his goods. On the 13th of December 1698, John Baillie, and six other Baillies, with one of their wives, were arraigned for being Egyptians, and for sundry misdeeds, and being all convicted except the woman, were ordered to be hanged. William Baillie, towards the close of the seventeenth, and the early part of the eighteenth centuries, was the leader of this gipsy clan. In order to increase his importance he pretended to be the son of one of the Baillies of Lamington, by a gipsy girl. He travelled very often about the Upper Ward, and was sure to be present at all the fairs in this and other districts in the south of Scotland. He rode from place to place mounted on a blood horse, dressed in clothes of the finest scarlet or green, and followed by a greyhound as if he had been a man of high rank. He was, nevertheless, a bold marauder and pickpocket, and derived support for himself and his numerous dependents almost wholly from plunder. He was a most expert swordsman, and feared no antagonist when armed with his favourite weapon. He married a woman called Rachel Johnston, by whom he had at

Thomson a son of the deceased, and Schoolmaster of Walston. On account of this infamous crime, Brown and Wilson were sentenced to death, and hanged on the 15th of September 1773.

"This monument was erected by Adam Thomson, Rector of the Academy of Walston."

least two sons, Matthew and John. He appears in no very creditable light in the records of the Presbytery of Biggar. On the 9th of June 1695, Margaret Shankland, being summoned, compeared before that reverend court, and judicially confessed the crime of adultery with William Baillie, the gipsy, and being seriously exhorted by the Moderator (the Rev. John Buchanan of Covington) to mourn over her sins, she was referred back to the Kirk Session of Lamington to make satisfaction according to the Acts of the General Assembly of the Church.

One or two anecdotes of this gipsy leader, gleaned from different sources, may be given.

At a large fair at Dumfries, a farmer from the Parish of Hutton, in Annandale, had his pocket picked of a considerable sum in gold, with which he intended to purchase cattle. On discovering his loss, he procured a purse like the one he had lost, which he filled with small stones, and, going into a crowded part of the fair, kept a watchful eye on his pocket, and, in a short time, caught a fellow in the very act of picking it. The farmer, who was a stout athletic man, did not make any noise, as he thought he would try the following plan to recover his money. He took a hold of the fellow as if he had been placed in a vice, and then whispered to him to come out of the crowd, as he wished to speak with him. Having retired a short distance, he told him that he had lost his money, and that if he found it for him, he would let him go, if not, he would at once hand him over to the authorities. The pickpocket desired him to come along with him, and he would see what could be done. They set out, and entered a house in a retired lane, where they found William Baillie sitting at a table. The farmer told the story of his loss, and promised, if the money was restored, to say not a word of what had occurred. Baillie immediately went to a place of concealment and brought forth the very purse which the farmer had lost, with its contents untouched, and handed it to him, who, of course, was overjoyed at the recovery of his property, and kept his promise to make no disclosure of the robbery to the legal authorities.

At the old fair of Biggar, held in November, the clan of the Baillies had been singularly unsuccessful; and the sun had

sunk behind the lofty mountain of Tintock, and the gloamin' was throwing its dusky shades over the noisy assemblage which was still congregated around the Cross-knowe, and yet scarcely an article of any value had been captured. It was the practice of these marauders to fix upon some house or place, at which one of their number was stationed, to receive the booty from the hands of those by whom it had been purloined. On this occasion, a room for this purpose had been taken in an old house in the lower part of the town; and here several of the gang assembled, and lamented their want of success, cursed the vigilance of the town officer and his assistants, and projected schemes for future attempts. Will, during these discussions, happening to observe a rustic pass with a large plaiden web on his shoulder, exclaimed, "I'll wad ony o' ye a pint o' usquebae, that ere ten minutes that wab will be in my possession." The bet was taken; and Will, having provided himself with a darning-needle and thread, followed hastily after the man, who was proceeding up the town. The darkness and noise which prevailed, enabled Will, unperceived, to stitch a corner of the web, that hung at some distance from the man's back, to the lappel of his own coat. He then tripped the man, and seizing the web, placed it on his own shoulder. The man, on regaining his feet, grasped at the web, and demanded it as his. "Na, na," quoth Will, "this is no your wab. Some o' the tinklers maun hae run aff wi' the ane that ye had; and really, gudeman, ye ought to mak your gear mair sicker when there are sae mony o' thae thievish fellows in the fair. See, man, how I hae secured mine (showing him the web stitched to his coat) and had ye followed the same plan, ye might hae defied a' the robbers in the fair to tak yours awa without your kennin." On saying this, Will walked coolly off, leaving the poor man overwhelmed with grief and amazement at the loss of his web.

At a Skirling Fair, Baillie was in a tent in company with several farmers of his acquaintance, when a canny countryman was observed to make a purchase at a "stand," and then cautiously put his purse into his watch pocket in the band of his breeches. One of the farmers observed that it would be a difficult matter to rob that man of his purse without being detected. Baillie immediately offered to bet two bottles of wine

that he would take the purse out of the man's pocket in the open market without his knowledge. The bet was taken, and Baillie proceeded to execute his difficult and hazardous task. Going up to the unsuspecting countryman, he requested him to slacken his stock, which, as was then the fashion, buckled behind. The man very readily agreed to oblige a gentleman of so respectable an appearance, and Baillie stooping down to allow the stock to be adjusted, placed his head against the countryman's stomach, and then stretched one hand down, under the pretence of easing one of his feet from the pressure of the boot, while with the other he extracted the purse. When Baillie returned to the company he produced the purse, but as some of the farmers had doubts whether it belonged to the man in question, Baillie sent for him to the tent, and asked him if he had lost his purse. The man himself would not believe that he had until he examined his watch pocket, and found it empty. Baillie then showed him the purse, which he at once recognized as the one that he had lost.

The predatory and outrageous habits of William Baillie appear to have frequently brought him into trouble. Several notices of him are to be found in Hume and M'Laurin's works on the criminal law of Scotland. On the 26th of June 1699, he was tried before the Privy Council for being an Egyptian, and using a forged pass, and was condemned to be hanged, but his sentence was commuted into transportation by his entering into a bond, under the penalty of 500 merks, to leave the kingdom, and to suffer death in the event of his return. He seems to have paid little regard to these stipulations for he was again apprehended, and tried with a number of others on the 10th and 11th August 1714. He was condemned to death for the crimes of sorning, being habit and repute an Egyptian, and carrying a pistol and a shabbe, but by some friendly interposition his sentence was again changed to that of banishment from the country. He evidently treated the sentence with contempt, for in August 1715, he was once more in the hands of the authorities, and, on being brought to trial, was found guilty not only of having broken his engagement by remaining in Scotland, but of having pursued his old courses of sorning and violence. Instead of being sent to the gallows, as many of his associates had been, he was once more pardoned on con-

dition of leaving the country. It is generally supposed that the interposition of Baillie of Lamington, or some other influential baron, in his favour, was the cause why he was treated with a leniency and indulgence very uncommon in those times.

It is stated in the Clydesdale Magazine that William Baillie was killed in a fray with some other Tinkers at Biggarshields,—that favourite howf of the wandering train in days of yore,—but according to another and perhaps more reliable account, he was killed in a scuffle at the house of Thomas Riddle in Newarthill on the 12th of November 1724. He had been drinking at this place with two other gipsies, James Kairns and David Pinkerton ; when a quarrel ensued. After a good deal of altercation they went out of doors, when Kairns and Pinkerton mounted their horses, drew their swords, and attacked Baillie, who received several wounds on the head and breast, of which he shortly afterwards died.

William Baillie was succeeded in the leadership of the gang by his son Matthew, a youth of twelve or thirteen years of age. He and his mother are said to have pursued the murderers of his father with unwearied ferocity, and to have been at last instrumental in bringing Pinkerton to trial on the 22d of August 1726. He travelled over the country, and practised the same arts as his predecessors. At fairs and other public places he made a considerable display with his broad tailed coat, his wrist frills, and silver shoe buckles. He was strong and athletic, and exercised something like sovereign power among the gipsy hordes in the south of Scotland. We may refer to one or two incidents in his career.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries each gipsy leader had a district of country assigned him within which he professed to be able, by issuing passes, to protect his special friends from being assaulted by any member of the gipsy fraternity. The chief of the Baillies was allowed to possess a more extended jurisdiction, and to issue passes which were of avail in all parts of Scotland. The following anecdote is told of the effect of one of Matthew Baillie's passes.

Robert M'Vitie, a south country farmer, who, during a part of the year was employed as a carrier from Dumfriesshire to Edinburgh, halted on one occasion at Broughton ; and on coming out of the stable, met a man who asked if he knew him.

Robert after looking at him said, "I think you are Mr Baillie." He said he was, and requested Robert to lend him two guineas, which he promised would be faithfully repaid. Robert being well aware of Baillie's character, and the danger there was in offending him, at once, with the greatest apparent frankness, replied that he would give him two guineas or more if he required them. Baillie said that the sum which he had named would be sufficient. Having received it Baillie asked if, when travelling late, he was ever molested by any person. He replied that he had never been so, but that he had sometimes been rather afraid. Baillie then gave him a brass token about the size of half a crown, with several marks on it, and desired him to carry it in his pocket, and show it to any person that might offer to harm him. Some time afterwards, when Robert was travelling with his packs, at a late hour, between Elvanfoot and Moffat, two suspicious looking characters overtook him, and after keeping company with him for a short distance, one of them asked him if he was not afraid to travel so late at night. Robert replied that he was not greatly afraid, but should any danger arise he expected protection from a token which he had received from a friend. They desired to see it, and having examined it by the light of the moon, they looked at one another, and whispered a few words, and then returned it, saying that having such a protection he would receive no harm from them. On saying this they left him, and betook themselves to the muirs. About two years after this occurrence, M'Vitie was one morning loading his packs at the door of a public house at Gretna Green, when he felt some person touch him on the shoulder, and looking round saw it was Mr Baillie, who slipped something into his hand, and withdrew without speaking a word. On opening the packet he found it contained three guineas, which, he understood, was payment for the money which he had lent, and one guinea as interest.

Mathew married a woman called Mary Yorkston or Youston, having carried her off from her mother by force at the village of Drummelzier. This was regarded by the gipsies as a better mode of wooing, and more in keeping with their daring and predatory character, than the tame sentimental practice commonly observed. Mary became one of the most famous

vagrants that ever travelled the Upper Ward. She exercised a complete ascendancy over the members of her tribe, and in fact, spread awe and terror wherever she came. She was bold, imperious, and exacting, and stuck at no means to obtain her ends. Few persons cared to offend her, because if they did they were sure in the end to suffer some loss or injury. It was a common saying in reference to any thing that was done to prevent further injury, "It's like Mary Youston's awmous, gien mair for her ill than for her guid." She was a dexterous thief and pick-pocket, so that it was a common observation regarding her, "whip her up Biggar street on a market day, wi' a man at ilka oxter, and she'll steal a purse ere they get her to the head o't." She bore the title of "my lady," and "the duchess," among her followers, and in virtue of her character and position presided at all their great festive meetings, such as their marriages, their divorces, and their dredgies, all of which they celebrated from time to time with barbarous and disgusting ceremonies.

In height Mary was nearly six feet, her eyes were dark and penetrating, her face was much marked with the small-pox, and her appearance was fierce and commanding. Mr David Stoddart, Bankhead, near Queensferry, who was in the habit of frequently seeing her in his younger years, has given the following description of her dress. "She wore a large black beaver hat tied down over her ears, with a handkerchief, knotted below her chin in the gipsy fashion. Her upper garment was a dark blue short cloak, somewhat after the Spanish fashion, made of substantial woollen cloth. The greater part of her other apparel was made of dark blue camlet cloth, with petticoats so short that they scarcely reached to the calves of her well set legs. Her stockings were of dark blue worsted, flowered and ornamented at the ankles with scarlet thread, and in her shoes she displayed large massy silver buckles. Her outer petticoat was folded up round her haunches for a lap, with a large pocket dangling at each side, and below her cloak she carried between her shoulders a small flat pack or pad which contained her most valuable articles. About her person she generally kept a large clasp knife with a long broad blade resembling a dagger or carving knife, and carried in her hand

a long pole or pikestaff that reached about a foot above her head."

It was a common report that she had killed a herd boy who molested her, and having flayed him with her large clasp knife, had hung his skin on a hedge as a terror to all persons that were disposed to disturb her peace or rebel against her authority. Mothers, in order to awe their children into silence or obedience, were, therefore, in the habit of saying, "There's Mary Youston."

An anecdote or two of this heroine may be given. At a fair in the Upper Ward a farmer lost his purse containing a considerable sum of money. He suspected that some of the gipsies had picked his pocket, and seeking out Mary, informed her of his loss. "Gudeman," said Mary, "as ye're a friend o' mine I'll try an' find it for ye," and then hurried him off to the house in which her husband had his office for the day. On telling him the object of her visit he instantly spread before the astonished farmer from twenty to thirty purses, and desired him to select his own if it was among the number. The farmer at once recognising his purse laid hold of it, and was going to put it into his pocket, when Matthew said, "Hold, let us count the cash first." He accordingly, with the greatest coolness and deliberation, counted over the money, which was found correct to a farthing. "There's yer purse to ye, gudeman," said Matthew, "ye see what it is to hae to doo wi' honcst folk."

The gipsies in disposing of their warcs generally insisted, in addition to money, to have what they called a bountith, that is, some article of provisions. They were most importunate and unreasonable in their demands for this, and if it was not readily supplied they did not hesitate to appropriate any article on which they could conveniently lay hands. On one occasion, the gudewife of Glencotha went out of the kitchen, to get a bountith to give Mary, when the virago slipped a large piece of tallow, that was lying on a stool, into her lap. The gudewife on her return missing the tallow charged Mary with the theft of it, and ordered her to deliver it up without delay. Mary, with the most stolid gravity, exclaimed, "God bless ye, gudewife, I wad steal frae mony a ane afore I wad steal frae you." The gudewife was not to be driven from her object by any pretence, and, therefore, laid hold of her to search her person, when a

scuffle ensued, in the midst of which the tallow fell out of her lap on the floor. At this conclusive exposure Mary burst into a fit of laughter, and exclaimed, "The Lord hae a care o' me, gudewife, ye maun surcly hae little to spare, whan ye winna let a pair body take a bit tauch to mak a cannel o'."

One harvest morning during her peregrinations, she called, with a number of followers in her train, at a farm house a few miles from Biggar. The family were all employed, at some distance from the house, in cutting down the grain, except the gudewife, who had just dished the parritch for the morning's meal. Mary declared, that as she and her attendants were excessively hungry, they must have a portion of the parritch. It was in vain that the gudewife remonstrated, and declared that the quantity prepared was just sufficient for the shearers. A pock on one of the cuddies was opened, a number of ram-horn spoons were procured, and the contents of the bickers disappeared in a twinkling. Mary, in her rounds afterwards, never failed to call at the farm-house, to solicit an awmous, or the sale of some of her wares. The gudewife invariably told her to go about her business, as she wished to have nothing further to do with her. Mary's constant rejoinder was, "Lord sauf us ! gudewife, wull ye never forget the drap parritch ?"

One day Mary arrived at the village of Thankerton, with several juveniles, who were usually transported from place to place in the panniers of the cuddies. She commenced hawking her commodities amongst the inhabitants, when some of the children of the village came into the house where she was, and cried, "Mary, your weans are stealing the eggs out of the hen's nest." Mary quite exultingly exclaimed, "The Lord be praised ! I am glad to hear that the bairns are beginning to show some signs o' thrift."

Mary and her followers were one night encamped in a sequestered spot in Clydesdale, called Raggingill, when Mr Lindsay of Coulter Park had occasion to pass the place. He was alarmed by several of the men abruptly laying hold of his horse's bridle, and giving unequivocal evidence of their intention to treat him roughly and carry off the contents of his pockets. Mary coming forward to superintend the operation, was surprised to find that the horseman was her particular friend, the gudeman of Coulter Park. "Haud up your hans,

ye villans," she instantly exclaimed, "It's the gudeman o' Cooter Park, let him gang, God bless him, honest man, mony a nicht's quarters, and mony a bite and soup he has gien to me an' mine." Mr Lindsay thanked Mary for her friendly interposition, and rode on his way. He owed his deliverance to the circumstance of having always given the use of an out-house to Mary and her gang, when they came to his neighbourhood.

A great tumult occasioned by the Baillies, took place at a Biggar Fair about the year 1760. Something happening to occur to rouse their ire, they flourished their cudgels, and gave vent to terrific threats and imprecations, so that the order and business of the fair were greatly disturbed. The procurator fiscal, Mr John Cree, finding that all peaceable means to appease them were in vain, armed himself with a heavy hoe, or what in vulgar parlance is called a "claut," and rushing in amongst the gipsies laid several of them sprawling at his feet. Mary Youston, who was engaged in the fray, drew her great clasp knife from her pocket, and made a furious attack on the fiscal, but this stout and courageous functionary evaded or warded off her blows, and retaliated with such force and effect, that she was compelled to take to her heels. Mr Cree having been reinforced by a strong body of country people, the gipsies were driven out of the town. The Baillies foamed with rage at this rough handling, and particularly at the ignominious repulse of their heroine old Mary, and therefore, in the course of an hour or two afterwards, four of her sons, viz., Matthew, James, William, and John, rode furiously into the town, armed with swords, having their coats stripped off, and their shirt sleeves rolled up to their shoulders, and vowed the direst vengeance on the fiscal, and all who had assisted him in the fray. Not being able to find the fiscal, they rode through the midst of the crowd, brandishing their weapons, and offering to fight any one that dared to oppose them. The fair was a second time thrown into a state of commotion. Screams and shouts were heard on every hand, a number of the more resolute of the country people were preparing to resist the gipsies, and everything betokened a scene of turmoil and bloodshed, when a person ran to the Manse and implored the Rev. John Johnston to make an effort to prevent the conflict and restore peace. This much respected clergyman repaired at once to the market place, and confronted the infuriated gipsies.

His presence overawed them, and, by his earnest entreaties, they were induced to leave the fair, but they vowed that they would return at another time, and obtain revenge. In consequence of this threat, a guard was constantly kept on Mr Cree's house for six months afterwards.

The favourite howfs of the gipsies in the Upper Ward, were Biggarshields, Lochlyock, Warrenhill, and St John's Kirk. Another great resort was Kilbucho Mill, and near it was a small piece of ground, which, being surrounded with trees, and seldom disturbed with the plough, furnished excellent grazing for the cuddies during the wandering season. Large numbers of the gipsies were, therefore, often to be seen at the Mill. One Saturday night in summer, Mary Youston arrived with a single cuddy, having a child or two swung in the panniers, and readily obtained from Mr Steel, the farmer, the usual privilege of quartering in the kiln. Next morning when the family arose, no fewer than forty cuddies were counted on the green, while a corresponding number of men, women, and children, were stowed in the kiln and other outhouses.

Mary Youston, in the Upper portions of Clydesdale and Tweeddale, was altogether as remarkable a personage as the famous Jean Gordon was in Teviotdale and the Merse, and had she been known to the author of *Waverley*, might, with equal propriety, have sat for the portraiture of his celebrated character Meg Merrilees. She died at an advanced age in an old kiln at Harelaw, and was interred in the Churchyard of Carstairs.

Matthew, the son of Mary Youston and the next chief of the Baillies, for some time rented a house in Biggar, which was his head quarters. He was twice married, and had a family by both wives. By his first wife he had Jock, Jamie, Mary, and another daughter, who was married to one of the Morrisons. By his second wife, whom he brought from the north, and whose name was Margaret Campbell, he had Matthew, Leczy, and Rachael. He at length purchased a house in Westraw, from George Bertram, Merchant, Biggar, which is still standing; and which above the back entrance has his initials, M. B., and the date 1752, along with the letters M. E., C. I., and a mason's mark. The title deeds bear that the property was disposed to "Mathew Baillie indweller in Biggar, and Margaret Campbell his spouse, in conjunct fee and life rent, and to John Baillie,

eldest son of the said Matthew Baillie, by his first marriage, in fee as to one half, and to Rachel and Elizabeth Baillie, daughters of the said Mathew Baillie and Margaret Campbell, as to the other half." Matthew's name appears several times in the Records of the Baron Bailie's Court, during the year 1765, in connexion with the right which, in virtue of his feu, he had acquired to a room in Westraw Moss. His daughters were reckoned the most handsome women of their time in Biggar. In 1766, Leezy and Rachel disposed their half of the Westraw property to their half brother Jock, who thus became sole proprietor. Jock, in May 1788, disposed of the property to Mr George Cuthbertson, Westraw, and it now belongs to Adam Wyld, Esq., Biggar.

The most noted of the descendants of the Baillies was Peter, or as he was most commonly called Pate Baillie, who was, for many years settled about Loanhead and Bonnyrigg in Mid Lothian, and who excelled as a player on the fiddle. He certainly was gifted with musical abilities of a very high order. Had these received due cultivation, and had he not possessed the wayward and obstinate disposition and the unsettled habits of the gipsy, he might have taken a high place as a musical performer. He devoted his attention almost exclusively to Scotch music; and certainly the variations which he improvised, when playing some of our best tunes, were highly original and striking. His intemperance and his rude and offensive manners prevented him from receiving that patronage from the higher classes of society which he would, no doubt, have otherwise obtained; but he was often employed by the country people at penny weddings, kirns, and other merry "splores," when he was largely plied with intoxicating drink, and it was alleged that he played as well when he was drunk as when he was sober. He died some twenty years ago, and was interred, we believe, in the Church-yard of Lasswade.

Among the vagrants that frequented the Upper Ward during last century were the Mitchells, father and son, and, as they were often at Biggar, deserve some notice. The father, James Mitchell, was born at Rig, in the parish of Greenlaw in Berwickshire. His father, John Mitchell, who was for some time miller at Fogo Mill, gave James a good education at the parish school of Eccles, and, on withdrawing him from school,

engaged him as a servant, first to a farmer, and afterwards to the Rev. Mr Dawson, minister of Langton. Being, however, a wayward, ill-conditioned young man, he found the restraints of service unsupportable, and, therefore, enlisting as a soldier, went to the wars in the Netherlands, and fought in several battles under the Duke of Marlborough. He was at length taken prisoner by the French, and detained till the peace of Utrecht, when he was liberated after he had been fully a year in confinement. Instead of returning home, he went on board the Yarmouth man-of-war, but having in the discharge of some service received a wound in the hand, he was discharged, after he had served in the army and navy sixteen years. On returning to his native district he was disowned by his relations, and no one would employ him. He was thus compelled by sheer want to leave Berwickshire, and strolling up and down, at length came to the Upper Ward of Clydesdale—the great resort of vagrants of all sorts—and there he fell in with a female mendicant, a widow, called Mrs Dyer. Mitchell and Mrs Dyer, after a brief courtship, agreed to unite their fortunes, and pick up a livelihood by begging. When this couple were quartered in a stable at Newhouse, in the parish of Whitburn, on the 3d of September 1723, their only son, whom they named Thomas, first saw the light. Like most of their class, they had a strong desire to have their infant baptized, but neither the minister of Whitburn nor West Calder, to whom they applied, would administer the rite.

Mitchell and his wife were disposed to lead an honest sort of life, but they happened to meet with a notorious thief and villain, called John Stewart, whose leading maxim was, “Lang liel, lang puir,” and who advised Mitchell to help himself to any article that came in his way, as the easiest and readiest mode of procuring a subsistence. Stewart presented Mitchell with a coat that he had stolen, and plied him with strong drink till he was in a state of intoxication. Influenced by the bad advice and example thus given, drinking, swearing, and stealing became matters of common occurrence with the Mitchells, and of course brought them at times into considerable trouble. Mitchell died in 1740, and his spouse in 1746.

Young Mitchell wandered up and down with his parents, and so soon as he was able, practised the art of begging.

When he had reached his seventh year, his father bought him a Shorter Catechism, or "Single Caritches," at that time the initiatory English book most commonly used in Scotland, and instructed him daily in the art of reading. He made some progress, and by and by took delight in perusing the historical portions of the Old Testament. He acquired also the art of writing, and early showed an aptitude for drawing. His parents having no settled residence, but wandering from place to place, and associating with lawless vagabonds of all sorts, the example set before him was of the very worst description. He consequently learned at an early period to curse and swear, to steal, to disregard the Sabbath, &c. "In those days," he states in a manuscript autobiography addressed to the Rev. Thomas Boston of Jedburgh, and now in possession of Mr Sim, "I knew no more of God or Christ, heaven or hell, than the beasts. I thought nothing so good as meat and drink,—no heaven like this world, no news better than the report of a wedding, where I would get plenty of fine bread and flesh; no prize more highly relished than a bird's nest with feathered young; in short, the wild woodlands and the bonny braes of Etrick, Yarrow, and Tweed, were the best heavens that I knew any thing of." Having received several checks in his wild career, he began at length to entertain serious thoughts regarding the Creator and a future state, and this led him again to the perusal of the Bible and the Shorter Catechism. The first time he was present at family worship was in the house of David Tweedie, tenant of Biggarshields, and the second time was at Nesbit in the parish of Coulter. One Sabbath day his father borrowed a volume of Ralph Erskine's Sermons from a farmer at whose house they were quartered, and read one of them in his hearing on the text, "I will raise up to thee a plant of renown," which made a considerable impression on his mind. Under the influence of these awakened religious feelings, he went into the precentor's house at Walston Kirk, and, with a penny which his father had given him, wished to purchase a Mother's "Caritches," but he was told that the price was three halfpence. He was quite disconcerted at this announcement, and left the precentor's house with the tear in his eye. The precentor's wife, touched with compassion at his great disappointment, interceded in his behalf, so he was called back, and

supplied with the book for a penny. He was wont to say that this was the first good act that he had ever performed.

In May 1732, when he was in his ninth year, he went with his parents to Etrick to attend the funeral of the Rev. Thomas Boston, minister of that parish. His parents, however bad they might be, were filled with grief, and gave vent to bitter lamentations at the loss of this good man and eminent divine. Young Mitchell, wholly unimpressed with the lamentations and funeral solemnities, occupied his thoughts in devising plans how to get at a starling's nest in the roof of the church. He began to pile up stones by the side of the wall, but before he could get his object accomplished, he was pounced on by the beadle, and expelled from the churchyard.

In 1738, his father was apprehended for stealing some harn shirts at Galashiels, and being tried before the Laird of Gala, was sent to Selkirk prison, where he lay in irons for several months. On regaining his liberty, he and his family commenced the old trade of begging, and having got their wallets well filled with meal they came to Biggar and sold it, and then went to Biggarshields, where they got their usual quarters in a barn. Next day being Sabbath, old Mitchell borrowed a Bible from Mr Tweedie, and read to his son some of the passages in which he had formerly taken pleasure, after which young Mitchell attended divine service in Biggar Kirk. The minister of Biggar at that time was Mr Robert Jack, and his discourse was on the passage in the 10th chapter of St Luke, regarding the man who fell among thieves. This was the sixth time he had been present at public worship, but it was the first, he says, that he ever felt any interest in what was delivered. The words then spoken remained long in his remembrance, but they failed at the time to effect any reformation of his life.

Young Mitchell was now a pretty strong lad, and to obviate the surprise of people that he was not set to work, he feigned himself to be sometimes sick, and at other times "daft." These impostures not being always successful, he was at length hired to a farmer to herd cows, but his wandering propensity was now so strong that he would not settle at this employment, so his parents engaged him to "Wull Rivan," or Ruthven, and his son, two travelling gipsies, or tinklers, to learn the art

of spoon-making, &c. The Rivans, he says, were honest men, but the saddest wretches for swearing, lying, and drinking, that he ever knew. He detested their habits at first, but learned by degrees to swear, play at cards, &c., as well as any of them. His conscience at length began to reprove him for his conduct; and the cry of "Tinklers, tinklers," which the children set up at every town and hamlet to which they came, was exceedingly disagreeable to him; so meeting with his parents at the village of Skirling, it was agreed that he should leave the Rivans, though he had made no greater progress in their art than the rising of a spoon.

His next engagement was with Matthew Baillie, the famous Upper Ward Gipsy. One day his father stole a coat, and escaped detection. Matthew Baillie, happening to be quartered near the place where the theft was committed, was consequently blamed for it, and this caused him to make efforts to discover the actual thief; and ere long, he found reason to believe that it was old Mitchell. He sought him up and down till he found him, and being a powerful athletic man, was preparing to inflict on him very severe chastisement, when Matthew's wife and his brother interposed, and restrained his rage. A short time afterwards, the Mitchells met Matthew at Malslie, in the parish of Temple, and to their great surprise, he came forward and shook them kindly by the hand, and invited them to stay with him all night. Matthew said that he had heard that their son Thomas could both read and write, and, therefore, proposed to engage him as tutor to his sons. The Mitchells, standing greatly in awe of Matthew, durst refuse him nothing, and so a bargain was struck that young Mitchell should remain in Matthew's service for three months, and in requital for his labours as a pedagogue, should be taught the important tinkler arts of buckle and spoon making.

Matthew treated young Mitchell with some degree of kindness; and John Baillie, Matthew's brother, a cheerful athletic fellow, and an adept at leaping, wrestling, and putting the stone, paid him considerable attention, and invited him to take part in his sports to keep up his spirits. One night the gang of the Baillies arrived at Harperrig, on the north side of the Pentland Hills, when Matthew, still farther to initiate Mitchell in the art and mystery of his profession, ordered him to go

to the hills, and bring in a sheep, and then skin it, and make it ready for the caldron and the spit. Matthew's word was law. Off Mitchell went, and brought home a sheep; but having no acquaintance with the butchering trade, he made a poor figure in skinning and cutting up the animal, and this made an ill-favoured randy of the name of Brown, who acted as a servant-maid to Matthew's establishment, report that he was good for nothing. Mitchell, during the term of his engagement, was at the stealing of a number of sheep, being sometimes accompanied on such marauding expeditions by Matthew himself.

At the end of three months the Mitchells and Baillies met, according to agreement, at the Hillend of Robertson, but Matthew refused to set young Mitchell at liberty, and asserted that he would keep him in his service so long as he pleased. This was a great disappointment to the Mitchells, but Matthew's wishes could not be resisted, and off again young Mitchell trudged with the Baillies. That same night orders were issued that Mitchell, assisted by the female Brown, should enter a fold belonging to the Laird of Bagbie, and carry off a sheep. They set out, but Mitchell, being tired of this sort of life, ran off, and found his parents quartered in a kiln at Fall-side, four or five miles distant. Brown at once returned to the Baillies and informed Matthew of the escape of Mitchell. Dark as it was, Matthew set off in pursuit, and scarcely had Mitchell lain down in the kiln to rest his weary limbs, when the voice of Matthew was heard thundering at the door. He threatened to sacrifice the whole of the Mitchells to his fury, but some people in the neighbourhood being roused by the noise which he made, prevented him from carrying his threats into execution. Young Mitchell was forced to return to his task as tutor to the Baillies, but as he was now thoroughly tired of them, he embraced the earliest opportunity to escape again, and joined his parents at the town of Douglas. He contrived after this time to elude the fangs of Matthew, and served the Baillies no more.

Mitchell, after his father's death, travelled over the country with his mother, and earned a few pence by making pewter buttons, drawing pictures, and writing names on books. He committed at that time a great number of thefts, but a stop was put to his plundering career in April 1744, when he was

captured by a pressgang at a Moffat Fair, and sent to join the second battalion of the Royals at Waterford in Ireland. He behaved well in the army. During the rebellion of 1745, he came to Scotland, took part in the capture of some rebel soldiers at Linlithgow, and was engaged at the battle of Falkirk, in which he lost his knapsack. The Quarter master of his Regiment, named Masterton, having wrongfully withheld 30s of his pay, disgusted him with the army, and so he deserted and fled to Douglas. He soon again commenced his old course of wandering, sold pewter buttons at a half-penny a pair, and painted names on books at a penny. In course of his peregrinations, he became acquainted with a gipsy called Armstrong and a companion of his named Tagart. Mitchell and Tagart entered into partnership, and committed a great number of depredations. They contrived to elude detection, but Mitchell tiring of this wicked and hazardous mode of life, left Tagart, and came to Stonehill in Carmichael parish, where he got quarters, and joined in family worship. At this period he was greatly addicted to lying, but he received a rebuke at Harleyholm that made him desist from this vice for some time. He was asserting here that Mr Mitchell of Hartree Mill was his uncle, when the Mistress of the house looked him broad in the face, and sharply told him that Mr Mitchell "was not a drop's blood to him." This flat denial made him tremble, and unable to utter a single word in his own defence, so he shouldered his budget and departed.

He was present at the execution of three women at Hamilton, with one of whom called Ross he was acquainted, but the sad spectacle made no salutary impression on his mind. He says, "I was so far from taking warning by what I had seen that next day I stole a pound of roll tobacco, and a few days after I went into a stable and stole a pair of shoes and two harn sarks, and this may show the horrid pitch of wickedness at which I had now arrived." Among other vices to which he was addicted at this period was that of intoxication. After one of his drunken debauches he came to Biggar, and having got quarters as usual at Biggarshields, Mr Tweedie, the farmer reproved him for wandering up and down the country like an idle vagabond, and advised him to go to service. He again attended public worship in Biggar Kirk, and heard Mr Jack

preach on Luke ix. 25, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." He says that Mr Jack had such an earnest mode of delivery that he felt greatly attached to him and his doctrine. Profiting by the admonitions which he had received at Biggar, he went to Ayrshire and got employment for some months in teaching children to read and write, first at Stonbriggs, and afterwards, at Birnochhead in the parish of Ochiltree. Becoming greatly disquieted regarding his past life and his future condition, he left Ayrshire, and returned once more to the barn of Biggarshields in the spring of 1747, and remained there for four days. One of them being a Sabbath, he went to Biggar Kirk, and heard Mr Jack lecture on several verses in the 22d chapter of Revelation. The solemn reflections then delivered so strongly impressed his heart that the tears started in his eyes, and in travelling back to Biggarshields, he thought the very hills and fields were altered, and looked more pleasant than before. When night came on, the scene was changed, and he had to engage in a terrible conflict with the great Spiritual Adversary of mankind and other evil spirits most hideous and annoying. No sooner did he lie down in his bed than Satan, he says, "fell upon me tooth and nail." When he was battling with the foul fiend, he continues, "my good friend D. Tweedie came to me, for I had told him before that I was greatly under temptation. He asked if I was asleep. I said No. I was glad when I heard his voice, for I loved him much. He bad me resist Satan, and pray to God against him, and to take comfort, for he had good hopes of me. But no sooner was he gone than my infernal assailants came on me again, and I could get no rest." The contest was fierce and prolonged. He quoted passages from the lecture which he had heard in Biggar Kirk, he clenched his old Bible, and brandished it at his foes, but all without avail. He was completely vanquished, and fled from the scene of action. Taking up a new position in the stack-yard, he prayed powerfully for help till day-light appeared, and then the fiends of course took to their heels.

In the month of July following he enlisted at Dalkeith into the 21st Regiment or Royal Scots Fusiliers, and was sent to Germany and Holland. At the peace of 1749, he came with his regiment to London, and afterwards was stationed at various

towns in England, particularly at Dover, which he says was the best town for religious services that he ever was in with the exception of Biggar. In May 1751, he embarked at Portsmouth for Gibraltar, and remained in that fortress eight years. During that time he led an exemplary life, read religious books, and attended religious meetings. On being invalided he received a high recommendation from his officers, and was placed on the foundation of Chelsea Hospital. At his request he was allowed to join a veteran battalion stationed at Carlisle, and shortly afterwards paid a visit to his old haunts in Scotland, refunded, in several instances, the value of effects that he had stolen, and was baptized at St Ninians by the Rev Mr Gibson, minister of that parish, to whom he had become known by the correspondence which he had carried on with D. Tweedie of Biggarshields.* When the Garrison Company with which he was connected was disbanded, he took up his abode in Dumfriesshire, and led a very pious and exemplary life. He was in the habit of paying visits to Edinburgh, and carrying on a correspondence with some friends in that city, who took an interest in his welfare, and, from time to time, sent him small sums of money to enable him, when enfeebled with age, to obtain a few comforts beyond what his pension would allow. He died in 1801.

Such is a very brief outline of the history of a man who became a sincere convert to Christianity, but who at one time was, as he himself says, "a horrid thief, nay, the son of a thief, a born beggar, the son of a beggar, a drunkard, a liar, a backslider, a vagabond, unclean, unbaptised, a bastard, unholy, and under the power of the devil."

One or two other noted wanderers that frequented the Biggar district during the present century, may be very briefly noticed. John Thomson, commonly called "Langleathers," was a person of great strength, and carried a budget of old iron implements and other articles on his back that few persons could lift. He was decidedly fatuous; and the report was, that he had received such a shock on witnessing the destruction of the city of Lisbon by an earthquake in 1755, that he never again entirely recovered his reason. He

* From a letter to Mr Tweedie, a brief narrative of his career with suitable reflections was drawn up and published, in 1816, as one of the tracts of the Edinburgh Religious Tract Society.

used, in his contemplative moods, often to mutter to himself, "I saw a city sunk." He was inoffensive, except when roused by the annoyances and tricks of mischievous boys. He then became exceedingly noisy and outrageous; and being a dexterous "hencher" of stones, it required great nimbleness on the part of his youthful tormentors to avoid his aim. When he happened to be at Biggar on Sabbath, the boys and he were sure to come into collision, and then a great deal of noise and disturbance was the consequence. He had rather a fondness for these encounters, and was not easily prevailed on to give them up. When any person remonstrated with him, and said that he ought to pay more respect to the Sabbath, "Weel, weel, then," said Jock, "I'll aff to Crawfordjohn; there's nae Sabbath there."

Daft Francie Anderson was another well-known wanderer. He was remarkably quiet and inoffensive. His thoughts ran almost constantly on the subject of religion, and he considered that he had a special vocation in the exercise of prayer. When he entered a house, with the inmates of which he was on familiar terms, he generally proposed, let the season or the hour be what it might, to engage in devotional exercises. At certain times, that was by no means convenient; and the consequence was, that the poor fool was often left praying alone. He attended religious worship at the nearest church every Sabbath day; and at every tent-preaching for twenty miles round he was sure to be present, especially on sacramental occasions. His grimaces, mutterings, and ludicrously devout appearance, often provoked laughter in the church, and disturbed the equanimity of the preacher. A clergyman, on proceeding to his church one Sabbath morning, observed Francie stationed by the wall of the church, waiting till the ringing in of the last bell. He had been often annoyed by the fool's extravagant conduct in the church; so he went up to him and said, "Now, Francie, you must promise to sit quietly on your seat; you must make no faces, and speak not a single word." "I'll doo your biddin'," said Francie. The minister then directed his steps to the church door, when Francie hastened after him, and cried out, among the assembled loungers outside the church, "Minister, I want to speak wi' ye." "What is it?" said his reverence. "Wull a body no be allooed to host?" inquired

Francie, with a tone of such solemn gravity and earnest simplicity that the bystanders could not refrain from a shout of laughter. One Sabbath afternoon, the inhabitants of a parish adjacent to Biggar, in returning from church, met Francie, who had been hearing one of his favourite preachers elsewhere. "Francie," said one of them, "ye war ill away frae owre kirk the day. The minister, I'm shure, wad hae pleased ye, for the Gospel cam spewin' oot o' his mouth just like a flood." "It maun hae been an unco effort," said Francie, "for its nae easy wark spewin' wi' a toom stomach." Francie very often engaged in the work of public exhortation himself. When he worshipped in a parish church, his practice was to slip out immediately on the conclusion of the service, and, mounting a thruchstane in the churchyard, to hold forth with great vehemence and volubility to all who would stop and hear him. On one occasion, being very much dissatisfied with the services of the Rev. Thomas Gray of Broughton, he commenced to preach in the churchyard with such vehement shouts and vociferation, that two horses, who were grazing in a neighbouring field, were alarmed, and, pulling up their tethers, ran off at full speed, and did not halt till they had reached the top of an adjoining eminence, called Jockie's Brae. This poor wanderer came to an untimely end. He was travelling one very dark night in the parish of Eddleston, and, having lost his way, stumbled into a sheet of water called the West Loch, and was drowned.

One of the most remarkable mendicants that ever travelled the Upper Ward, or drank a glass of usquebae at a Biggar ale-house, was James Abernethy. Of his history very little is now known. He was born in Edinburgh March 1722, and was bred a corkcutter. In his eighteenth year he was inspired with a warlike spirit, and, being not less than six feet four inches in height, he enlisted into the King's Life Guards. The two incidents of his military career to which he most frequently referred, were his presence at the disastrous battle of Fontenoy, fought in 1743, and his being one of the detachment of picked men who, in the year 1761, formed the escort to the Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strehitz, when she arrived from the Continent to marry George III. He received his discharge about the year 1764, and returned to his native place, where he obtained employment at Craigleith Quarry. He here met

with an accident which rendered him lame for life ; and after this he betook himself to the profession of begging, which he continued to prosecute for the long period of fifty years. His appearance was striking ; his stature, as already stated, was considerably above the usual size ; his aspect was fierce and commanding, and manifested no symptom of the usual humility and condescension of a mendicant ; and a curious old hat, with the brim cocked up, which he invariably wore, gave him a semi-military air. Several wallets, including his meal-pocks, hung round him and were partially concealed by a plaid ; and the staff, or "kent," by which he supported himself in the course of his peregrinations, was fully two yards in length, and of corresponding strength. No person in the Biggar district carried so formidable a kent, with exception perhaps of James Forrest, who dwelt at Langlees, and was famed for his love of "parritch," and his strong antipathy to potatoes, which he constantly denounced as "vile roots, unfit to be men's meat." The following engraving, which is taken from a print published during the mendicant's life by a bookseller in Paisley, gives a



tolerably fair representation of his usual appearance when he was greatly advanced in years, and shortly before he abandoned for ever the scene of his wanderings. The print was taken from a sketch made by a young man, son of Mr Robert Hamilton, factor to the Earl of Hyndford, at Maulsdlie Castle. James entertained a strong aversion to the idea of having his likeness taken, and resisted all efforts to induce him to sit for this purpose. This object, in the end, was gained by stratagem. In the course of his rounds, he came to the locality where Mr Hamilton resided, and, on calling at one of his favourite houses, was invited into the kitchen, and some bread and cheese and a stoup of whisky set before him. Young Hamilton was concealed in a closet, which commanded a view of the place where the mendicant sat, and thus was enabled to take a correct sketch of his countenance and general appearance.

Abernethy was a contemporary of Andrew Gemmells, and in many respects was a counterpart of that remarkable mendicant, who has been immortalized by Sir Walter Scott under the name of Edie Ochiltree. He went regular rounds, and called only at certain houses for an alms. He considered that he had a prescriptive right to be served at these houses, and would seldom take a refusal. On one occasion, he called at one of his farm-houses near Biggar, and demanded his usual dole. The gudewife being busily engaged in churning, told him that she had not time to attend to his wants just now, but promised to give him a double gratuity the next time he came round. Abernethy was by no means disposed to give credit, and therefore setting out, and making a complete circuit of the farm premises, returned and demanded his promised supply. The gudewife was hardly disposed to admit that he had gone his usual round; but amused at the artifice resorted to, and seeing there was no use in attempting to stave off the claims of the mendicant a second time, she, with the best grace she could, gave him a double "gowpen" of oatmeal. After he commenced his wanderings, he would seldom engage in any manual labour, but regarded begging as his sole vocation. One day he arrived at a farm-house in Peeblesshire, where the cattle were scant of fodder, and a young lad was the only person left to thrash in the barn. The farmer thought he would tempt Abernethy to give him assistance by

offering him a shilling for a day's thrashing. The mendicant rejected the offer with disdain. "Why, man," said he to the farmer, "if ye'll serve me for a day, and carry my meal-pocks, I'll gie ye half-a-crown for your pains; and I'm shure ye'll no find it half sae sair wark as your thrashin'." Abernethy had great fondness for a glass of good spirits, and sometimes partook of considerable quantities without any apparent injury. One day he entered a grocer's shop in Biggar, and said to the shopkeeper, "Tammas, draw me a gill of whisky oot o' yer best barrel; there's a good king's coin to pay for't; and let me hae a bit parliament cake to taste it wi'." The grocer filled the stoup and set it down on the counter; and then turning round to obtain a parliament, Abernethy with singular dexterity lifted the measure, drank off its contents, and placed it on the counter, wholly unobserved. Abernethy appearing in no hurry to taste the liquor, the grocer inquired the cause. "I'm waitin 'till ye fill the stoup." "Fill the stoup! the stoup is filled already. If it is no fou, I'll gie ye a gill for naething." "Done," said Abernethy, and turning the stoup upside down, showed that it was entirely empty. The bewildered grocer drew another gill, and set it down. Abernethy, though a beggar, was a man of honour. He explained how the first gill had disappeared, drank the second, and paid for both. On another occasion he called at a spirit-dealer's shop at Carnwath, and asked for a gill. The shopman drew the liquor, and asked where was his bottle. "I'll shune let ye see that," said James; and lifting the stoup, emptied its contents at a single "waucht," and demanded another fill. The astonished publican hesitated to comply. "I maun hae't," said the sturdy vagrant; "I've got ane for the tae side, I maun hae anither to balance it." It was drawn, and immediately swallowed as before. "Noo," said the drouthy gaberlunzie, "if I had a third for the centre, I wad be a' richt."

Abernethy, like his contemporary Andrew Gemmells, often used great familiarity with persons in the higher stations of life, and sometimes even retorted on them with bitter effect. One day, on his way to Carmichael House, he took a near-hand cut through the grounds, and accidentally met with the Earl of Hyndford himself. The Earl, displeased at the trespass, accosted James somewhat angrily, and said, "Get off, ye

coward ; what are ye wanting here ?” The mendicant, not at all abashed, replied, “I’m nae greater a cooard than your Lordship.” The Earl, amused at this reply, asked for an explanation. “That can shune be gein,” said James. “Your Lordship fled frae Dunkirk, and I fled frae Fontenoy. Ye rade, and I ran ; wha is the greatest cooard ?” The Earl, pleased with the repartee, gave James a sixpence and sent him to the house for refreshments ; and ever after James received sixpence and plenty of food, as often as he visited Carmichael House. Like most members of the wandering train, he had to maintain a constant warfare with the canine race. On approaching a farm-house, he was usually assailed by all the collies and mastiffs about the place. The mendicant never flinched, but, shouldering his kent, boldly advanced to the attack. If any unwary cur ventured within range, he received such a “lounder” as sent him at once howling to his den. On one occasion, he was passing along the Main Street of Carnwath, and there met a mastiff that was dissatisfied with his appearance, and seemed disposed to offer him battle. James accepted the challenge, and, ascending the steps of the Cross, provoked the dog to come to close quarters. The bruilziement soon attracted a number of spectators, and, among others, the owner of the dog, the Rev. Mr Mark, who dwelt near, and who was well acquainted with the vagrant. “James,” cried he, “you will surely not hurt my dog.” “Your doug !” said James, “I’m sorry that he’s yours ; for if he had been ony ither body’s, I wad shune hae laid his yaffin’ for ever.”

Abernethy travelled the country till he had reached his one hundred and third year. By the increasing infirmities of age, he was now unable to walk to any distance, and was generally conveyed from place to place in a cart. He relished this mode of travelling very ill, as he could not get time to sun himself about the dykes, and particularly to visit his favourite ale-houses. Notwithstanding his tippling propensities, he contrived somehow to save a little money ; and, in 1825, he relinquished his peripatetic habits, and took up his abode in an institution in Edinburgh, where he stipulated that he should, at least, receive two glasses of whisky daily, and a due modicum of tobacco. It is understood that he did not long survive the close of his wanderings. His favourite toast is said to have been the following :—

“Here’s health to the sick,
Honour to the brave,
Success to the lover,
And freedom to the slave.”

Another noted wanderer, who long frequented the Biggar district, was a person generally known by the name of Beni Minori. Living very much in the open air he had a fresh, weather beaten appearance; he wore rings in his ears; he had a cast of features that seemed to indicate that he was of foreign extraction; and he spoke with a great degree of importance and pomposity. He carried a raree-show on his back from town to town, and when he came to Biggar his favourite stance was the Crossknowe, where to a group of admiring juveniles he displayed the pictorial wonders of his box, such as mighty battles and sieges, the splendours of Vauxhall, and the magnificence of Fountainbleau, with a due amount of description, at the ransom of a half-penny per head. On his visits to Biggar, he quartered two or three nights in the Chapmen’s room of Nannie Muir’s hostelry. Beni Minori was born in London in 1737, and his real name was Robert Brown. At an early age he was sent to reside with his grandfather at Carlisle, and at this town he spent his juvenile years. He remembered the march of the rebel army into Carlisle in 1745, the surrender of the rebel garrison left in the castle, and the exhibition of the heads of the rebel chiefs, who were executed at that town. Having served some time as a post boy he ran off to sea in 1759, and was captured by the French, who kept him a prisoner till the close of the war in 1762. He afterwards went to the West Indies, and in 1782, witnessed the naval victory gained by Admiral Rodney over the Count de Grasse off Dominica. After this he returned to England, and having met with an Italian showman, who shortly afterwards died, he purchased his show box, and assumed his name. He then commenced his wanderings through the counties in the north of England and the South of Scotland, which he carried on for thirty or forty years. At length, when enfeebled with age; he found his way into the Edinburgh Charity Workhouse, where his condition was somewhat ameliorated by the kindly contributions of a few old acquaintance. He died in the year 1840, when, like James Abernethy, he had attained the great age of 103 years.

John Robertson was one of the most expert and clever knaves that ever prowled about the Upper Ward. He had received a good education, was well acquainted with Scripture, and excelled as an expert penman. His knowledge of men and manners was extensive and accurate; his conversational powers were of a superior order; and his apprehension was remarkably quick and acute. He usually feigned himself to be deaf and dumb, and then professed to tell fortunes. With his chalk-writing, he made astounding disclosures to the rustics ranged round the fire on a winter evening. To persons with whom he was intimate, he was wont to give the following explanation of his mode of fortune-telling:—"Such is the propensity of human nature to pry into futurity, that I am very successful as a spaeman; and as I take no money, I am less apt to be committed as a vagrant. I can hide my tongue in such a manner that it cannot be observed; and though I am dumb, I am not deaf; I hear in one house what is going on in another, and can easily make a tolerable history. I first kneel down on the floor, then draw a magic circle with my chalk; next, I write the initials J. S., which will serve for John Smith, James Sommerville, Joseph Sym, Jacob Simpson, and a thousand more. On seeing the initials, a girl perhaps whispers, 'I'll wager that's our Johnnie that's at the sea.' Having found a clue, I draw a ship, and write Mediterranean, or whatever can be elicited from the tattle of the maidens. If, on inspecting the initials, they look grave, or give a hint about death, I draw a coffin; but if the initials do not suit any absent friend of the parties, I make them a sentence, 'I say,' and follow it up with a new set of letters till I can fabricate a story."

It was understood that Robertson had studied at the University of Glasgow, at the time at which it was attended by Campbell the poet, and the late Rev. Hamilton Paul of Broughton. He had afterwards fallen into dissipated and irregular habits, and had served both as a soldier and a sailor. In the end he betook himself to a wandering life, principally in the counties of Lanark, Ayr, Dumfries, and Renfrew; and he calculated that it took him nearly two years to complete his rounds. He contrived to pick up a sufficient amount of food in the houses which he visited to supply his daily wants; and

he usually spent the money which was bestowed on him for his fortune-telling, and out of compassion for his pretended deficiencies of hearing and speech, on strong drink, to which, of course, he was much addicted. He had, naturally, a strong constitution ; so he was never at a loss for a bed. When he could not obtain the corner of a barn or a byre, he thought nothing of ensconcing himself at the back of a dyke, where he slept as soundly, and with as little apparent harm, as if he had been accommodated in the most elegant and comfortable quarters.

One of the last of the noted Upper Ward tinkers, was Moses Marshall. He did not belong to the gipsy race, but was born at Newton-of-Ayr, where his forefathers had resided for several centuries. He was bred a currier, and, when a young man, 'listed into the Royal Artillery. After serving with this corps for eighteen years, he deserted in the West Indies. He was afterwards pressed on board a man-of-war ; but embraced the earliest opportunity of deserting from this service, which he hated even worse than the Artillery. He then commenced a wandering sort of life, which he continued till within a week or two of his death. He wrought as a tinsmith, and dealt in hardware goods ; but as he was addicted to occasional rounds of hard drinking, he often exhausted his whole stock in trade ; and it was a matter of some mystery how he contrived to get it replaced. In person, he was tall and powerful ; and at one period was excessively pugnacious, when under the influence of strong drink. He was engaged in constant broils, and thus became a terror wherever he went ; while punishments of various kinds, inflicted on him for his outrages, seemed to be employed in vain. He was often met in personal combat, and would have been more frequently defeated than he was, had his principle on these occasions not been that "a's fair in time o' war." One day he encountered a strong fellow at Bathgate, and would have received a sound pommelling, had he not, as a last resort, caught the man's nose with his teeth, and by a terrible wrench deprived him of this facial appendage, and made him roar out for mercy. On another occasion, he "took up" the toll-house at Tarbrax, when a shepherd in the neighbourhood, hearing the noise, came in and attempted to subdue the infuriated Moses. A determined encounter took place ;

but ere long the herd was glad to relinquish the fray with the loss of a finger. During his latter years, Moses became more pacific in his disposition, or at least in his practice. His declining strength, no doubt, made him less able to use those weapons with which he had achieved victory on many a hard-fought field.

Moses had a great dislike to live in the lodging-houses that are usually to be found in the towns and villages of the district. He earnestly petitioned the proprietors of land within the bounds of his wanderings to allow him a small corner on which to pitch his encampment; and this request was generally granted. He could, in fact, use a considerable degree of familiarity with the local gentry. A proprietor in the parish of Coulter one day came upon Moses' encampment, and found him busily engaged in preparing dinner. Among other viands round the fire was an excellent leg of mutton, which he appeared to watch with great care. "Moses," said the laird, "you seem to keep a very vigilant eye on the mutton." "Muckle need," said Moses, "were I no to do that, it wad very soon disappear." He seemed to be apprehensive that some of his followers would lay hands on it before the feast began. "Mr ——," said Moses, addressing the laird, "as I hae often dined at your expense, I shall be very happy if ye'll tak a bit chack wi' me the day, as you're here at ony rate." The laird thanked Moses, but declined the invitation, on the ground that he was previously engaged.

On one occasion Moses disappeared from his haunts in the districts in which he usually travelled, and a general impression prevailed that he had paid the debt of nature in some mysterious manner. The Rev. Hamilton Paul of Broughton, who was famed for his facetiousness, occasionally, in the indulgence of this propensity, selected texts which, however distinctly they might indicate the object which he had in view, were rather calculated to excite the surprise and risibility of his audience. When, for instance, he left the town of Ayr, in which he had resided for some time, to accept the pastorate of Broughton, he preached a farewell discourse to the ladies, on the text in the Acts of the Apostles, "All wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him." One season some young ladies in his neighbourhood went for the benefit of their health

to enjoy sea-bathing at Joppa, near Portobello, when Mr Paul, on the Sabbath after their departure, preached a sermon on the text, "Send men to Joppa." On the occasion of Moses' disappearance, he preached a strange discourse on the passage in the 32d chapter of Exodus, "As for this Moses, we wot not what has become of him." In course of time Moses made his appearance "hale and feir" as usual. After a short illness, Moses died at Coulter, on the 15th of May 1860, in the eighty-sixth year of his age.

CHAPTER XX.

The Battle of Biggar.



THE Battle of Biggar is a theme well known to all readers of Blind Harry's renowned poem, "Ye Actis and Deidis of ye illuster and vailzeand Campioun, Shyr William Wallace, Knycht off Elrisc," and of the metrical abridgment of it by Hamilton of Gilbertfield. Much discussion has taken place regarding the actual occurrence of this battle; but whatever opinion may be entertained regarding the veracity of the Minstrel, it nevertheless becomes us, in a work of this kind, to give a detail of the incidents of the conflict as he has recorded them.

In 1297, Sir William Wallace, to revenge the murder of his wife, attacked the garrison of Lanark under cloud of night, and by fire and sword put almost every one of the English who composed it to death. This notable exploit soon resounded over the country, and brought together a large number of men who were desirous of striking a blow for the freedom of their country. Wallace was unanimously chosen their leader. The English garrisons who had been left to keep the country in subjection, were of course much alarmed by these warlike demonstrations, and Aymer de Vallance, then dwelling at Bothwell, despatched a courier with intelligence of them to Edward. The king having set his heart on the entire subjugation of Scotland, and having been at infinite pains to effect this object by artful schemes of diplomacy, as well as by several military inroads, was excessively grieved and enraged at this intelligence, and instantly resolved to march again into Scotland, to chastise the insolence and audacity of the Scots, and put them under more rigorous bondage than ever. The queen vainly endeavoured to persuade him against this expedition,

representing the outrage and injustice he was attempting to perpetrate on Scotland, by depriving it of its ancient sovereign power, and reducing its people to slavery. Deaf to all remonstrances, the king despatched his heralds over the country to summon his vassals to meet him in warlike array, and to follow him to Scotland. One of Edward's pursuivants, by birth a Scotsman, and well known in Scotland afterwards by the name of Jop, on learning the intentions of the English king, left the court and hastened to Scotland to give information of them to Wallace, whom he found in Ayrshire. Wallace lost no time in setting up his standard at Lanark, and sending notice to his friends, especially in Ayrshire and Clydesdale, to join him without delay. Adam Wallace, the young laird of Richardtown, Sir Robert Boyd, the ancestor of the Earls of Kilmarnock and Errol, Sir John Graham, Sir John Tinto of Crymperamp, Sir Thomas Sommerville of Linton and Carnwath, Sir Walter Newbigging of Newbigging, near Biggar, Nichol Auchinleck, and other men of note, hastened with their followers to obey the summons. On mustering their united forces, they were found to amount to 3000 horsemen, well equipped, and a considerable number of foot; but these were in a great measure destitute of arms. The Scots, learning that Edward was approaching with a powerful and well-appointed army, and being aware that they could not cope with him in the open field, betook themselves to a strong position on the hill of Tinto, about four miles from the town of Biggar.

The English army marched up the Tweed from Berwick, and after winding among the hills of Peeblesshire, descended on the plains of the Upper Ward of Lanarkshire, by the ancient pass of Crosscryne. The Scots, from their elevated encampment, beheld this "awful ost," as the Minstrel calls it, dcfile over the mountain's brow. It amounted to 60,000 warriors, clad in complete armour, led on by the most warlike and politic monarch of the age, and supplied with everything that could contribute to their comfort, or inspire them with confidence and courage. Still the little patriotic band on the side of Tinto manifested no symptoms of fear, nor thought for a moment of dispersing themselves and providing for their safety. The English pitched their camp near Biggar, on a piece of ground rising gently from the valley traversed by Biggar

Water, and having a deep and inaccessible morass on the south and east. Here

“Yai planytyt yar feild with tents and pailzonis,
 Quhar claryouns blew full mony mychty sonis:
 Plenyst yat place with gud wittail and wyne,
 In carts brocht yair purwiance dewine.”

From this place Edward despatched two heralds to Wallace, commanding him to submit to his authority, and promising if he would do so to take him into his service and favour, and to confer upon him the most ample rewards; but in case of disobedience, he threatened to hang him the first time he would fall into his hands. Wallace, after consulting his friends, wrote back to the king that he rejected his offers with disdain; and that, so far from being intimidated by his threats, he was determined to contend against him until he was driven from the kingdom; that the Scots would sacrifice him without mercy should he ever become their prisoner; and that they would be prepared to offer him battle at no distant period.

A young knight, the king's nephew, either out of curiosity, or for the purpose of ascertaining the numbers and reconnoitering the position of the Scots, had accompanied the heralds in disguise; but Jop, recognising this youth, having often seen him before while living at the English court, gave intimation of his rank and condition to Wallace. In these chivalrous times, it was considered highly dishonourable for a true knight to act as a spy, or for any one to assume the character of a herald who did not belong to that order; and the person who did so was held to have forfeited all claim to be treated with mercy. The Scots, smarting under the wrongs inflicted on them by the English, indignant at the haughty and imperious message sent by the king, and especially enraged at the duplicity of the young warrior and his companions, instantly resolved to punish them in a most severe and summary manner. The knight was conducted to an eminence above the camp, and had his head struck from his body; the tongue of one of the heralds was cut out, and the eyes of the other extracted with a pair of pincers. The two heralds, in this dreadful plight, were ordered to return to the English camp with the head of the knight, and to inform the king that he might

regard what the Scots had done as a proof that his threats and his powerful army had not been able to strike them with terror, or bring them to submission. When Edward learned what had taken place, he was for some time struck dumb with sorrow and indignation ; and at length, when his feelings were somewhat tranquillized, he vowed not to leave Scotland till he had taken the most ample vengeance on Wallace and the Scots for the outrage which they had perpetrated.

Wallace now resolved to take a very daring step. He was quite well aware that his small army was no match for Edward's in a fair field, and that his only chance of success lay in some well concerted and vigorously-executed stratagem. To carry out such an object, he was convinced that it would be of great advantage were he to visit the English camp in disguise, and thus ascertain its means of defence, and the positions occupied by the king and his generals. He communicated his design only to Sir John Tinto, and enjoined him to observe the strictest secrecy. He accordingly disguised himself, and left the camp unnoticed. On his way between Coulter and Biggar, he met a poor man driving a horse laden with pitchers of earthenware. Wallace entered into conversation with him, and finding him to be an itinerant merchant, instantly entertained the idea that he might gain admission into the interior of the English camp by pretending to be a hawker. He accordingly purchased the man's horse and his stock in trade ; and still thinking his disguise not sufficiently complete, proposed an exchange of garments—a proposal which greatly increased the man's astonishment, but to which he readily assented. Equipped in the hawker's habiliments, consisting of a threadbare hood, a grey doublet, and hose daubed, or, as Harry says, "claggit" with clay, closing one of his eyes as if it had been deprived of vision, and driving the mare, he set forward, to the great amusement of the old hawker, towards the town of Biggar. In this guise, tradition says that he passed along the old narrow bridge which crosses Biggar Burn ; and that from this circumstance, as we have already stated, it first got the name of the "Cadger's Brig," which it still retains.

About twilight he entered the English camp, and while seemingly intent on the sale of his commodities, he was, at

the same time, carefully observing the arrangement of the encampment,

“Quhar lords lay and had yair luyng maid,
Ze kings palzone quharon ye libards baid,
Spyand full fast quhar awaill suld be,
And couth weyll luk and wynk with ye ta e.”

The soldiers, no doubt struck with his singular appearance, soon began to treat him with considerable freedom. Some of them broke his pots, while others indulged in jokes upon his blind eye. It is a tradition, that one man declared that if the hawker had not been blind of an eye and lame of a leg, he was certain that he was Wallace himself. This declaration was afterwards put into rhyme, and is still well known at Biggar. It is as follows:—

“Had ye not been cripple o’ a leg, and blind o’ an e’e,
Ye are as like William Wallace as ever I did see.”

Wallace finding his situation becoming perilous, made haste to retire without exciting further suspicion.

He returned to his own camp just in time to save the life of his friend, Sir John Tinto. A great discontent had arisen among the Scots when it was known that Wallace had secretly left the camp, as it was conjectured that he had, after all, deserted his friends, and might betray them to the enemy. As he had been last seen in communication with Sir John Tinto, that knight was called on to disclose what he knew regarding the movements of their leader; but as he positively refused to do this, he was put under restraint, and a cry was raised that he should forfeit his life for his obstinacy. When the excitement was at the very height, and Tinto was expecting nothing else than that he would fall a victim to the general indignation, Wallace made his appearance, ordered him to be set at liberty, and commended him highly for his unflinching fidelity to his obligation. The chiefs gathered round Wallace to hear an account of his adventures, the recital of which afforded them much amusement; but it called forth a strong expression of dissatisfaction from Sir John Graham, who maintained that such conduct was unchieftainlike, and altogether

unbecoming the commander of an army. Wallace, in reply, said that before Scotland was free, it would be necessary for them all to subject themselves to far greater hazards, and to perform still more daring exploits.

The Scottish army retired to rest, but with instructions that every man should be on foot before daybreak, and ready for the march. When the trumpet, at the appointed time, blew a rallying blast, they all sprang up, ready armed, and eager for the fray. They were immediately drawn up in three divisions. The first was led by Wallace himself, and under him were Sir Robert Boyd and Nicol Auchinleck; the second by Sir John Graham, and under him were Adam Wallace, younger of Riccarton, and Sir Thomas Somerville of Carnwath; and the third by Sir Walter of Newbigging, and under him were Sir John Tinto, and David, son of Sir Walter. The foot, being badly armed, were drawn up in the rear, and received orders not to engage rashly, but reserve themselves till a fitting opportunity, or till they were properly supplied with arms. Wallace then summoned the chieftains around him, and strictly enjoined them to prevent their followers from being allured from the combat by the pillage which the English camp might present. He reminded them, that those who betook themselves to plunder before the victory was gained, generally lost both their life and their booty. He expressed the utmost confidence that they would, on this occasion, strike a blow worthy of freemen, and exert themselves with all their might to inflict punishment on a false tyrant who had come to wreath fresh chains on the necks of their countrymen. All of them readily consented to attend to his orders.

They had scarcely commenced their march, when, through the faint gloom of the summer's morning, they beheld a body of armed men approaching from the south, which naturally filled them with alarm. These, however, turned out to be a party of three hundred hardy and stalwart borderers, under the command of Thomas Halliday and his two sons, Wallace and Rutherford; and with them also came Jardine of Applegirth, and Rodger Kirkpatrick, Lord of Torthorald; the whole being on their way to join the Scottish patriots who had taken up arms in defence of their country. This welcome accession of strength was hailed with great satisfaction, and still further raised the spirits of the Scots.

The combined force now proceeded with the greatest celerity towards Biggar. The English, to prevent surprise during the night, had posted pickets at some distance from their camp; but as dawn began to appear, these had been withdrawn. The English, being aware of the comparatively small number of the Scots, entertained no suspicion that an attack would be made upon them by day. When the first division of the Scottish horsemen, led on by Wallace himself, therefore, rushed upon them, they were taken somewhat by surprise. The knowledge which Wallace had acquired by his visit to the English camp, was of the greatest use, as he knew the ground, the disposition of the tents, and the best mode of conducting the assault. He therefore rushed with his division into the very heart of the camp, with the view of reaching the tent of the king; but he found this was impossible, as the English soldiers in great numbers rallied round it, particularly the Earl of Kent, with a detachment of 5000 men. The Scots, finding themselves encumbered with their horses, dismounted, and carried on the affray on foot. As they were all stalwart men, expert in war, and animated with a deadly resentment to the English, they fought with the most desperate valour, and made a prodigious havoc among their terrified, disordered, and half-armed antagonists.

Graham and Newbigging, with their divisions, followed by the foot, who had now obtained an abundant supply of weapons, also pressed hastily forward, overturning the tents in their way, and slaughtering every opponent they could reach. The battle still raged round the king's person with great obstinacy; and the Scots, having joined their forces, began to drive the English back towards the valley, covered with deep marshes on the south, and in the confusion the royal tent was overturned. The Earl of Kent, proud of displaying his martial skill and prowess in the presence of his sovereign, rallied his troops once and again, and, with a ponderous battle-axe, committed great havoc among the Scots. Wallace, finding the course of victory arrested by the powerful arm of this intrepid and indomitable warrior, sought him out amid the throng, and engaged him in single combat. When these two distinguished champions had fairly encountered, the surrounding warriors, on both sides, almost suspended the work of death, to watch the issue of a conflict so tremendous and heart-stirring. Both fought

with great fury, but with admirable courage and dexterity, till, at length, Wallace, with an irresistible stroke, smote him lifeless to the ground. At this sight the English were discouraged, and mounting the king on horseback, forced him, much against his inclination, to quit the field. In this encounter 4000 of the English were cut down, and the remainder, in terror and confusion, fled from Biggar, taking the direction of Coulter by the Causeway, which crossed the moss on the west. The Scots pursued them to Coulter Hope, about four miles distant. Here the English rallied in great force, and Wallace, knowing that he was no match for them in the open field, withdrew his followers to Biggar, after they had slain 7000 men in the pursuit, as no quarter was given. Here, finding provisions and valuable commodities in abundance, and being exceedingly hungry and fatigued, they sat down to a sumptuous repast; and after regaling themselves with bumpers of wine, proceeded to take some repose. Their rest, however, was of short duration, as Wallace was afraid that the English, apprized of the smallness of their numbers, would return, for the purpose of recovering their camp, and therefore deemed it prudent to draw off his forces to a place of strength and security, called Davis Shaw, and to convey the booty obtained in the camp to Rop's Bog.

The English were now drawn up in Coulter Hope, on a place called John's Green, and were lamenting the disaster that had befallen them, and the loss of their comrades and commanders, among the latter of whom were the king's son, his two uncles, and the Earl of Kent, when two cooks, who had concealed themselves in the camp, and skulked off after they saw the Scots indulging in repose, came and informed them that the Scots were lying in the camp, overcome with sleep and intoxication, and might easily be overpowered. The king was unwilling to credit this story, as he considered it unlikely that Wallace would be so remiss and unguarded in such circumstances. He therefore declared it to be his determination to retreat, as there was little hope of recovering their provisions at Biggar, and no adequate supplies could be obtained amid the mountains by which they were surrounded. The Duke of Lancaster urged, that the circumstances in which they were placed rendered it imperative that an effort should be made to regain the camp; and though the king himself would not

return, he requested to be furnished with a strong detachment, with which he hoped to recover the supplies, of which they would soon stand so much in need. The king was prevailed on to allow him to take 10,000 men, and promised to wait on him till next day, expecting to be able to supply the wants of his troops with such bestial as he might find among the hills. The Governor of Calais and the Lord of Westmoreland resolved to accompany the Duke, and each of them obtained the command of 1000 men; Sir Aymer de Vallance also joined them with a considerable reinforcement. These united parties marched back to Biggar, but found the camp plundered and deserted, and strewed with dead bodies that had been stripped bare. For some time they were at a loss to conceive what place the Scots had retired to, but some scouts soon brought intelligence that they were posted at Davis Shaw, which is supposed to have been situated on the sloping sides of the hill of Bizzyberry, little more than a mile from Biggar. They accordingly marched in that direction, but were descried by the Scottish videttes, who gave the alarm. Leaving their horses in the Shaw, the Scots passed on foot into Rop's Bog, as a place of greater security from the attacks of the English division, which consisted principally of cavalry. The English seeing them pass into the bog, and being deceived by its fair and solid appearance, rode towards them with great impetuosity. The consequence was, that the front line of horse was soon embogued in the morass, and overborne by those that pressed on behind. In this state of confusion the soldiers were assailed by the Scots, and, being unable to extricate themselves, were slaughtered almost to a man. The Scots, emboldened by this success, crossed the bog and fell upon the English, who were bewildered and intimidated by the fate of their comrades, and the boldness and success of their opponents. The conflict, however, was sharp and long-continued, and great valour was displayed on both sides. The mode of fighting at that time generally rendered a battle a series of single combats. Some notable encounters of this kind took place during the engagement. The Governor of Calais, clad in complete armour, and expert in all warlike exercises, assailed Sir John Graham, who, with his trusty blade, warded off his attacks, and, at length, struck him such a blow as pierced his harness, and laid him

lifeless on the spot. Wallace, espying Aymer de Vallance, one of Edward's most active and resolute captains, and noted for his cruel oppression of the Scots, was anxious to engage with him; but the Earl of Westmoreland, coming between them, received a stroke from Wallace on his steel basinet, which instantly deprived him of life. Robert Boyd encountered the the Governor of Berwick, and, after an obstinate combat, also succeeded in slaying him by a "straik awkwart ye crag," which cutting

"Through all hys weid in sondyr straik ye bane."

The English, now panic-struck, left the field to the victorious Scots, and fled back to John's Green.

Such was the Battle of Biggar; and if Harry is at all to be credited, it was productive of most important consequences. Edward considered it prudent to return to England, without gaining the object of his expedition. Many persons of distinction came and ranked themselves under the banner of Wallace, and in a short time afterwards, that undaunted and inflexible patriot was chosen Warden of Scotland, at an assembly of his countrymen held at Carluke Church, then called Forest Kirk.

The spot on which the English are supposed to have had their encampment, and on which the Battle of Biggar was fought, lies to the east of the town, and comprehends what are now called the Back Well Park, the Stanthead, Guildie's Oxgait, and the Borrow Muir. A little farther to the east is the extensive morass, then called "Rop's Bog," and now Biggar Moss, a right to it having, at a later period, been conferred on the town. A small stream, which runs out of this bog, is said to have been dyed with blood on the day of the battle, and, therefore, got the name of the "Red Syke," by which it is still known. A little to the north is the hill of Bizzyberry, on which the wood called Davis Shaw is said to have been situated, on which evident traces of military works are still to be seen, and which has some parts of it associated with the name of Wallace to this day.

The story of the Battle of Biggar, as is well known, has been regarded by historians as a mere fable, and has brought down on the head of the poor Minstrel a perfect torrent of con-

tempt and abuse. The main cause of this is, that no historian or state document of the period mentions the expedition of Edward I. which ended in the Battle of Biggar. It is stated, too, by some historians, and among others by Holinshed, that Edward was in France in 1297, the year in which Harry says the Battle of Biggar was fought. Now all these circumstances do not put the Battle beyond the bounds of probability. Documents of that period, whether written by statesmen or historians, were neither very detailed nor accurate, and were often, in the course of a few years, destroyed or lost. Supposing Blind Harry's narrative to be correct, it is far from unlikely that the king was at pains, so far as he possibly could, to obliterate every trace of an expedition so disappointing to his hopes, and so damaging to his military reputation. It is not a decisive statement to say that Edward was that same year in France, because he may have gone to that country shortly after the battle was fought; and even supposing that he was the whole of the year there, the details given by Harry may be perfectly correct, although he may have made a mistake as to the exact date. Several reasons might be assigned in favour of attaching credit to the Minstrel's story. The causes which are said to have led to the battle, viz., the sanguinary proceedings at Lanark, do not rest on the testimony of Harry alone. They are recorded by Fordun in his "Scotichronicon," and by Wyn-toun in his "Chronykill of Scotland;" and are generally regarded as facts beyond all cavil or dispute. The slaughter of Hesirig, Thorn, and the English garrison at Lanark, and the gathering together of the Scots, under Wallace and other competent leaders, were certainly events sufficient to rouse Edward to make a fresh inroad into Scotland. The complete subjugation of this country was regarded by that monarch as a matter of the last importance. For the attainment of this object he had plotted and contended for years; he had held important national assemblies; he had overrun the greater part of Scotland; he had vanquished its armies; he had destroyed or carried off the memorials of its national independence; he had filled its strongholds with his troops; and he had forced its king and its barons to submit to the most bitter mortifications, and to bend before him as their lord superior. Though detachments of English troops were stationed in different parts of Scotland, it does not

appear that there was at that time any concentrated force that could effectually cope with the patriots who had banded themselves together. In these circumstances, nothing was more likely than that Edward should again march into Scotland at the head of a large army.

It serves somewhat to confirm the statement that a battle was fought at Biggar at the time referred to, that fragments of ancient armour, according to report, have been repeatedly dug up in the neighbourhood of the town; and that coins of the reign of Edward I., have been found in the adjoining fields. One of these, found on Gum's Meadow, by Adam Wyld, Esq., Biggar, is still in the possession of that gentleman; and another, found some forty years ago by Mr Peter Williamson on the Borrow Muir, is now in the possession of William Ballantyne, Esq., manufacturer, Glasgow. A few years ago, an immense number of these coins were dug up at a spot on the south side of Crosscryne, about three miles from Biggar, which tradition points out as lying on the exact line of the march of the English army. That zealous antiquary, Mr Sim of Coulter, visited the spot, and found the coins scattered about in such abundance, that he was led to entertain the opinion that a portion of Edward's military chest had been there deposited, either from the circumstance of a waggon breaking down, or for the purpose of concealment. As might be expected, Mr Sim has in his repositories a number of these coins, which he delights to show to his friends, as forming, it may be, a slight corroboration of the old Minstrel's narrative of the Battle of Biggar.

The details given by Blind Harry are by no means improbable. The visit of Wallace to the English camp cannot be a matter of great surprise, when we know that the Duke of Wellington, one of the most cautious of generals, was in the habit, both in Spain and France, of going alone, and in disguise, almost close to the pickets of the enemy, to ascertain, with his own eyes, the nature of the ground, and the best modes of carrying out his movements. The disparity of numbers is, no doubt, very great; but the battle is not described as a regular engagement in the fields, but as, in the first place, an unexpected assault on the enemy's camp, and in the second, a stand against an attack of cavalry in a bog, in both of which a small body of

powerful and intrepid men might successfully oppose and overcome five or six times their own number. The removal of the booty by the Scots to a place of security, the return of the English to Biggar, and the position taken up by the Scots on a piece of ground defended by a morass, are all circumstances most likely to occur; while the nature of the ground, and the relative position of the places mentioned, lend additional confirmation to the Minstrel's tale.

It is not to be denied that there is much confusion of dates, and even of statements in Blind Harry's book. In the end he dispenses with dates altogether. His narrative, however, agrees in many points with that given by old historians, particularly by Fordun and Wyntown; and recent researches have tended rather to establish than to invalidate the events which he describes. If he tells the truth in very many respects, it is rather surprising that he should be guilty of an entire fabrication in regard to the Battle of Biggar. Harry lived at a time when, no doubt, much authentic information, both written and oral, existed regarding the career of Wallace. He refers to various works as his authorities, which unfortunately do not now exist, such as "The First Line of the First Stewarts," "Con's Cronykle," and, above all, a Life of Wallace, written in Latin by his chaplain, Robert Blair, and Thomas Gray, parson of Libberton, in the neighbourhood of Biggar, and confirmed for truth by Sinclair, Bishop of Dunkeld, who had himself been a witness of many of the exploits of Wallace. These works may have borne out the Minstrel's narrative in very many particulars. As it is evident that he was an enthusiast in the cause of his hero, he would spare no pains in collecting the stories then current regarding his achievements. He mentions several parties who had supplied him with facts, particularly Wallace of Craigie, and the Laird of Liddle. His own declaration regarding his book bears such an appearance of simplicity and candour, that it would almost satisfy an inveterate sceptic of his entire sincerity in the narrative which he has given.

" All worthy men yat redys yis rurall dyt,
 Blaym nocht ye buk set I be unperfyt,
 I suld haive thank, sen I nocht trawaill spard,
 For my labour na man hecht me reward.

Na charge I had off king or oyr lord,
Gret harm I thocht hys gud deid suld be smored.
I haiff said her ner as ye process gais,
And fenziel nocht for freindschip nor for fais."

We have no intention to stand up and implicitly maintain that a battle, with all the incidents detailed by Blind Harry, actually took place at Biggar; but, at the same time, we have little doubt that in these unsettled times some engagement or another was fought at this place, on which the narrative of the Minstrel was, in a great measure, founded.

CHAPTER XXI.

Warlike Movements and Royal Progresses at Biggar.



THE encampment of Edward II. of England at Biggar, in 1310, is an important event in the history of the town. By this time Wallace had been betrayed into the hands of the English, and had been most unjustly and ignominiously put to death as a traitor; and his savage executioner, Edward I., who had caused so much injury to Scotland, had also paid the debt of nature, without obtaining the great object of his ambition, the entire subjugation of the Scots. His son, Edward II., now reigned in his stead; and though possessed of far less energy and discrimination than his father, he still pursued the same unjust and aggressive policy in respect to the northern kingdom. He had, however, to contend with Robert Bruce, a most politic, indefatigable, and valiant champion of his country's rights and liberties. Bruce, at first, had met with reverses and discouragements sufficient to crush any ordinary man; but, at the period to which we refer, he had rallied his scattered friends, and was overpowering in detail the generals whom Edward had sent to overawe and subjugate the country. The English king, on learning the reverses of his troops, and the successful career of Bruce, resolved to levy a formidable army, and once more make an inroad into Scotland, hoping that his imposing array of military force would put an end to all further efforts on the part of Bruce to oppose his designs. He summoned his vassals from all parts of his dominions, and, in a short time, arrived at Berwick with a mighty body of armed men, his principal generals being the Earls of Gloucester and Warrene,

Lord Henry Percy, and Lord James Clifford. Leaving Berwick, the king marched by Werk, Roxburgh, St Boswells, Selkirk, and Traquair, to Biggar, at which town he arrived on the 29th of September of the year above mentioned. Here he remained till the 3d of October, and then went back to Roxburgh. He returned to Biggar on the 5th, and remained till the 10th, when he went to Carmil (probably Carmichael), Lanark, Linlithgow, and Renfrew, and came back to Biggar on the 18th. He finally left it on the 21st, having been at Biggar altogether ten or eleven days. From Biggar he issued a number of writs on matters of state addressed to parties in England. On the first of October, for instance, he confirmed a deed granting the office of Governor of Nottingham Castle to Peter de Gaveston with all its pertinents and possessions. On the same day he issued another document appointing this gentleman to the office of Justiciar of the Forest lying adjacent to the river Trent. On the 6th he issued a writ to his bailiffs and faithful subjects in Cheshire, informing them that he had taken under his special protection and defence Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, with all his vassals, lands, revenues, and possessions in Cheshire, and had appointed him to be guardian of the kingdom and to have the same authority as himself during the time that he was absent prosecuting the war in Scotland. On the same day he dispatched a mandate to his well beloved and faithful subject John de Crumbewell, Constable of the Tower of London, commanding him to liberate under a proper guard some Knight Templars confined in the fortress under his charge, as often as the superior clergy and inquisitors, who had brought an accusation against them, should demand them, in order that they might undergo an examination before the Sheriffs, &c. On the 18th he sent orders to the Sheriffs of the different counties of England regarding the mode in which they were to make a levy of corn and other provisions for the sustentation of his army in Scotland.

From the long continued wars in which Scotland had been engaged, tillage had been greatly neglected, and the country, at the time, was suffering from the direful effects of famine. Any corn and forage that existed had been carefully removed to places not easily accessible to the English. This was a leading feature in the policy of Bruce, to which he gave pro-

minent expression in what is called his Testament, originally written in Latin verse, and afterwards translated into Scotch by Hearn. In speaking of the manner of dealing with invaders, he says,

“In strait placis gar keip all stoire,
 And birnen the planen land thaim befoire,
 Thanan sall thai pass away in haist,
 Quhen that thai find nothing bot waist.”

Had the sound advice given in this testament been attended to by the Scots in after times, it would have saved them from many a sad disaster; and, at this day, we would not have had to lament such woeful defeats as those of Flodden, Pinkey, and Dunbar. The English monarch was no doubt desirous to bring the Scots to an engagement, but Bruce saw that he was more likely to defeat a large army by allowing it to march up and down a barren and desolated country, than by encountering it in the open field. He therefore kept hovering on the flanks of the English, intercepting their supplies, and cutting off such stragglers and foraging parties as fell in his way. On one occasion he pounced on a detachment of 300 men, and before a reinforcement could be sent to their aid, cut them to pieces.

The English army, after striking their tents at Biggar, marched down the Clyde to Renfrew; but finding in the west the same uniform scenes of poverty and desolation, they soon reversed their march and came to Linlithgow, where they remained twelve days, and then returned to Berwick, at which town they arrived on the 10th of November. The whole expedition was a complete failure, being nothing better than a piece of empty ostentation and bravado. It awed and subdued nobody. Edward, in writing an account of it to the Pope, however, claims the credit of completely overawing the Scots. He says,—“When we lately marched into Scotland to suppress the rebellion of Robert Bruce and his accomplices, traitors alike against us and your Holiness, they lurked in hiding-places like foxes, not daring to oppose us in the field.” He had a very different tale to tell a few years afterwards, when he met Bruce on the famous field of Bannockburn.

Biggar was the place appointed as the rendezvous of the Scot-

tish warriors, who, in February 1302-3, were summoned to repel an invasion of the English. Here assembled an army of 8,000 or 10,000 men from Dumfriesshire, Ayrshire, and Clydesdale, —districts famed throughout the whole of our history for containing the boldest and most unflinching champions of freedom, civil and religious. The principal commanders were Sir John Comyn, Lord of Lenzie and Badenoch, and one of the guardians of the kingdom, and the brave Sir Simon Fraser of Oliver Castle, in Peeblesshire. Walsingham and some other English historians state that Wallace held the chief command; but as this circumstance is not confirmed by Fordun or any Scottish writer, it is probable that the great hero of national independence was not present, but, at the time, was living in retirement, or had gone to France, disgusted with the selfishness and treachery of the greater part of the Scottish nobility. We can readily imagine the lively interest with which the inhabitants of Biggar would regard the array of brave and patriotic men, who had assembled on their plains, not for the purpose of a mere holiday review, but of using their good broadswords, and imperilling their lives to repel the swarm of invaders that Edward of England had again sent to ravage their country. The English, amounting to 20,000 men, under the command of Sir John Segrave, marched about Lent from Berwick to Edinburgh, and then commenced to move in three divisions to the south. The Scots at Biggar appear to have got notice of their movements, and being nearly all horsemen, they hastened by a night march to meet them, and stop their progress. While it was yet dark, they fell on the first division near Roslin, commanded by Segrave, and ere it had time to draw up in battle order, routed it with great slaughter. In like manner they attacked and defeated in succession the other two divisions, and thus the whole of the English army were either killed or scattered in hopeless confusion over the plains of Lothian, while the Scots were rewarded by the rich booty left in their hands.*

At a convention held at Stirling, on the 15th May 1565,

* It has been conjectured by some writers, that it was on a confused tradition of these engagements, that Blind Harry founded his narrative of the Battle of Biggar.

Queen Mary expressed her intention to enter into the marriage relation with her cousin, Lord Darnley. Lord John Fleming and the barons present gave their sanction to this union, and it was accordingly solemnized on the 20th of July following. Unfortunately, the step gave great dissatisfaction to some of her principal nobility. Professing a warm attachment to Protestantism, they viewed Darnley with special dislike on account of his adherence to the Romish faith. The Duke of Chatelherault, the Earls of Murray, Glencairn, Rothes, and Argyle, Lords Boyd and Ochiltree, and others, usually styled the Lords of the Congregation, drew together their followers, and broke out against her in open rebellion. Whatever may have been the faults and failings of Mary Stewart, she was certainly not destitute of courage and activity. She lost no time in summoning her faithful subjects around her, and, at the head of 5000 men, marched against the rebel lords, then assembled in the west of Scotland. The Queen expected to encounter them at Hamilton; but they eluded her, and proceeded to Edinburgh. Finding that they were to receive little support in the capital, they left it in a few days, and retreated, first to Lanark, and then to Hamilton. Considering their position insecure in the west, they proceeded to Dumfries, so that, in case of necessity, they might readily retire across the border, and take refuge in the dominions of Queen Elizabeth, who secretly favoured their rebellious designs. Queen Mary and her friends, on the rebel lords first leaving Hamilton, went to Stirling, and then to St Andrews, from which she issued a proclamation calling on the rebels to lay down their arms, and appear before her in six days, to answer such charges as might be brought against them; but as none of them appeared, they were denounced as rebels, and put to the horn. Her authority being thus set at defiance, she sent forth a summons to her faithful subjects to assemble at Biggar* on the 8th of October,

* In the British Museum a summons is preserved, dated Edinburgh, 1st Oct. 1565, with the signatures of "MARIE R." and "HENRY R." addressed to some noblemen, to attend a general assembly of the Scottish Army at Lamington. As all the old historians concur in stating that the rendezvous of the Scottish Army on that occasion was at Biggar, it is likely that the intention of their majesties was, that the noblemen addressed, should join the army at Lamington, on its march from Biggar to the south.

“all boden in feir of weir,” with twenty days’ provision, “under pane of tinsell of lyff, landis, and guddis.” The author of the “Diurnal of Remarkable Occurents,” in referring to the 8th of October 1565, says:—“Upon the samen day our souranis with thair army depairtit of Edinburgh towart Biggar.” The equipment of the Queen was decidedly warlike. She rode a stately charger, and had a pair of pistols stuck in holsters at her saddle-bows; and it is said that her scarlet and embroidered riding dress covered a suit of defensive armour, and that under her hood and veil she wore a steel casque. Darnley was also gaily mounted, and wore a splendid suit of gilt armour. These royal and illustrious personages were received at Biggar by an enthusiastic host of 18,000 men, all ready to march against the foes of their sovereign, and to fight to the death in defence of her rights and authority. Mary, no doubt, honoured her cousin, Lord Fleming, by taking up her abode in the Castle of Boghall during her brief stay at Biggar. Its old walls would then resound with the enthusiastic shouts that welcomed Scotland’s fair Queen and her husband to repose within its towers and battlements.

Biggar never saw a more gallant array of Scottish chivalry than was, on this occasion, displayed on its adjacent acclivities. Here had assembled a large portion of the nobles, barons, and knights of Scotland, with their retainers, from almost every part of the kingdom. The names of the chief leaders of this army, and the posts which they were to occupy in the different battalions, as given by some of our old historians, are as follows:—The vanguard was led by the right noble and mighty Lord Matthew, Earl of Lennox, Lieutenant in the western parts of the realm, who was supported by the Earls of Cassillis and Eglinton, Lords Semple, Ross, Cathcart, and Sanquhar, the Sheriff of Ayr, the Laird of Garlies, Sir James Hamilton, and other lieges of the Queen, within the Earl of Lennox’s jurisdiction. The rearguard was led by George, Earl of Huntly, John, Earl of Athole, and David, Earl of Crawford; and these noblemen were accompanied by Lords Ruthven, Glamis, Forbes, Drummond, and Innermeith, and the Commendator of Deer, who took the place of his father, the Earl Marischall. The main body was under the command of Lord Darnley, the husband of the Queen, who was supported by the Earls of Morton,

Bothwell, and Mar ; Lords Fleming, Ogilvie, Livingston, Sommerville, Borthwick, Yester, Lindsay, and Hume, and "the hail remnant of ye realme."* The Queen was the life and soul of this warlike assemblage. She directed its movements, and inflamed its martial ardour. Her youth and beauty won every heart ; and her courage in taking the field in person, to imperil her liberty or her life in defence of her rights, no doubt lent strength to every warrior's arm, and made him resolve to conquer or die in her behalf.

The Queen led forth her loyal and devoted warriors from Biggar on the 10th of October, and proceeded by Coulter, Lamington, and Crawford towards Dumfries. The rebel lords fled at her approach, and, crossing the border, took refuge in England. Mary, two days after she left Biggar, entered Dumfries ; but finding none in arms to oppose her, she disbanded her army, and with all the *eclat* of a bloodless victory, returned to her capital by way of Moffat, Tweedsmuir, and Peebles.

After the battle of Langside, so disastrous to the claims and power of Mary Stewart, the Regent Murray proceeded to inflict vengeance on the adherents of the unfortunate Queen. His policy was rather to plunder their estates and overturn their strongholds, than to shed their blood on the scaffold. He is consequently described in a history of the time as running in a rage "throwe the cuntrie like a wilde boare, depopulatinge the landis of the Queenis faithful subiects, robbing them of ther goodis, and pullinge down ther holds and houses, persuinge them with fire and sworde whithersoever he came, and confiscatinge all ther mowables for his owen particular use."

One of his first expeditions of this sort was up the Vale of Clyde, and to the southern parts of Scotland. He "put out proclamations commanding all men to ryse with fifteen days provisions," and appointed the rendezvous to be at Biggar. He set out from Glasgow in the beginning of June with 2000 men in his train, and three pieces of artillery ; one of the noblemen who accompanied him being James Douglas, Earl of Morton, and Laird of Edmonston. On his way he took and

* The Council of war, at which the above arrangement was agreed to, made the reservation "that the present ordouring and disposing of the Battellis foresaidis, be nawayis prejudiciall to the Erle of Angus, his titile and interest quhatsumever." The Earl of Angus had a hereditary right to lead the van of the royal army, but it appears that he was not present at Biggar on this occasion.

destroyed the Castles of Hamilton and Draffen, belonging to those zealous partizans of the Queen, the Hamiltons. Herries, in his "Historical Memoirs of the Reign of Mary Queen of Scots," states that the Regent, on his arrival at Biggar, "found four thousand hors and one thousand foote with fyrlocks." With this force he plundered and devastated the domains of the supporters of the Queen in the Biggar district, with absolute freedom and impunity.

Lord Fleming was particularly obnoxious to the Regent, both because he was a zealous and indefatigable partisan of the Queen, and especially because he obstinately continued to hold the strong and important fortress of Dumbarton in her interests. He was, of course, absent from Biggar at this time; so the full weight of the Regent's vengeance fell on his tenants and vassals. We know from a journal of the Regent's proceedings in Clydesdale, preserved in her Majesty's State Paper Office, that he laid siege to the Castle of Boghall, and took it, after overcoming some resistance, and most likely demolishing a portion of the buildings. He then led a detachment of his men to Skirling, the domain of Sir J. Cockburn, who, at the time, was a fugitive in England. The Regent, meeting with no opposition, found little difficulty in obtaining possession of the castle of that barony. This stronghold was situated in a morass, which now forms part of the glebe of the parish minister, and was of considerable size and strength. It was principally defended by the morass; but this being somewhat accessible on the south-west, the building in that quarter was protected by strong turrets. The ordinary access was by a causeway and stone bridge. The Regent, being determined to leave behind him a sensible token of his displeasure, caused a large quantity of gunpowder to be deposited in one of the lower apartments, and this being fired, the edifice was immediately reduced to a heap of smoking ruins. It was never rebuilt. The remains of it continued standing till the present century, when they were unfortunately removed by the Rev. Mr M'Alpine, a late incumbent of the parish, during some improvements which he made on the glebe. The ground has now been so much changed by drainage and cultivation, that it is very difficult to discover the spot on which the Castle stood.

Detachments of the Regent's troops were also sent out to

ravage the lands of the other adherents of the Queen in the neighbourhood of Biggar. The tenants of Baillie of Lamington, Baillie of St John's Kirk, and Chancellor of Shieldhill, were assailed and plundered without mercy. The fortalice of the Chancellors, which at this period stood at the village of Quothquan, was of course attacked and laid in ruins. It was not rebuilt; and when times became more settled under the rule of James VI., the laird erected a habitation on the spot on which the House of Shieldhill still stands. The Regent thus left the Biggar district a scene of suffering and desolation; and the expedition, on this account, received the name of the Raid of Biggar. In the records of Justiciary, we find that on the 4th January 1570-1, James Spens, in Glenduke, William Russell, in Glaslie, and John Dick, elder, in Easter Cartmoir, were "delatit for remaning fra the Raids of Langsyde, Biger," etc. The Court deserted the charge against them at that time; but the Judge ordered them to find caution to appear and underlie the law on the 15th of February next. No record has been left to show whether they were ultimately punished or acquitted.

After the execution of Charles I., the Scots proclaimed his son Charles successor to the throne. The Scots, by the support thus tendered to the King, were brought into collision with the Republicans of England. Oliver Cromwell was recalled from Ireland, and despatched to Scotland with a force of 16,000 men, in order to compel the Scots to renounce their adherence to the King, and to submit implicitly to the Commonwealth. The Scots mustered a considerable army to oppose the English general, and would have forced him to leave the country, had not the improper interference of the Presbyterian clergy caused them, in spite of the remonstrances of their commander, General Leslie, to hazard an engagement at Dunbar, on the 3d of September 1650. As might be expected, they were thoroughly defeated.

Cromwell lost no time in improving the advantages which he had gained by the victory at Dunbar. He bombarded and took the Castles of Roslin, Tantallon, Hume, Borthwick, Neidpath and others; and their shattered remains still bear witness to the effects of his destructive assaults. In the end of November he despatched a force of 4000 men, chiefly horsemen, to

the Upper Ward, who took possession of the town of Lanark, and committed a series of ravages on the country round. It is supposed that it was this force, or a part of it, that laid siege to the Castle of Boghall. The camp which the soldiers of the Commonwealth are said to have occupied, is situated a few hundred yards to the south-west of the Castle, and though much obliterated by the progress of agricultural improvement, can still be very distinctly traced. It completely commanded the habitable part of the Castle; and as it was no doubt furnished with a battering train, a few shots would serve to show that the walls could not long withstand the effects of a cannonade by heavy ordnance, and that the garrison had no alternative but to surrender. At all events, it seems to be certain that the Royalist troops were expelled, and that the Castle was held for some time by the soldiers of the Commonwealth.

The Scots, although encountering many disasters, still prosecuted the war against Cromwell. They rallied round the standard of Charles at Stirling, and manifested a most resolute determination not to yield to the invader. Cromwell at length set out to prosecute hostilities in Perthshire; and the way to England being thus left open, Charles formed the desperate resolution of marching into England, where he hoped he would be joined by a large number of adherents. He therefore set out on his march, and in a day or two arrived at Biggar. David Leslie, his major-general, summoned the Castle of Boghall to surrender; but the governor, according to Whitlocke,* returned a resolute refusal, declaring that he held the Castle for the Commonwealth of England. As the Royalists were anxious to cross the border with all possible haste, they did not halt sufficient time at Biggar to attempt a reduction of the Castle by force. Cromwell followed hard in the track of the royal army, and therefore the likelihood is that he also visited Biggar in person, and took up his quarters for a night in the Castle of Boghall.

No sooner did it become generally known, in 1715, that the Earl of Mar had set up the standard of rebellion in the north, than a meeting of Jacobites was held at Edinburgh. At this

* Whitlocke wrote a *Journal*, or *Memoirs*, as he calls them, of the transactions which took place from day to day, from the beginning of the reign of Charles I., to the restoration of Charles II.

meeting it was resolved that troops should be raised to join the squadrons expected to be levied in the south of Scotland, and that the rendezvous should be at Biggar. This muster accordingly took place; but the number of troops that assembled at Biggar on this occasion cannot now be ascertained. We know that a troop of horse came from Carnwath, commanded by Philip Lockhart, a brother of the distinguished Sir George Lockhart. This gentleman, who was a captain in the royal army, and, at the time, was on half pay, possessed good natural abilities, which had been cultivated by a liberal education, and was now influenced, by the persuasions of his brother and the movements of the Earl of Mar, to draw his sword in behalf of the Chevalier St. George. His brother, in speaking of the Carnwath troop that joined the Jacobite muster at Biggar, says, "In respect of the goodness of the men, horses, and arms, and being commanded by three brave experienced officers, besides several private men that had served in the army, and whom I prevailed with and engaged at no small charge to enter the service, was reckoned the best troop in the little army."

The men assembled at Biggar were all cavalry; and, after a short halt, marched to the south to join the Earls of Kenmure, Nithsdale, Winton, and Derwentwater, Lord Widrington, Thomas Forster, and others, who had levied a number of horsemen in the south of Scotland and the north of England for the service of the Pretender. As they felt unable to make any decided movement from the want of infantry, the Earl of Mar despatched a body of 1400 Highlanders, under the command of M'Intosh of Borlum, commonly called Brigadier M'Intosh, to their assistance. These several forces formed a junction at the town of Kelso, and, after some debate, resolved to march into England.

In this resolution the Highlanders obstinately refused to acquiesce. They had an extreme aversion to enter the sister kingdom. They drew up in battle order on the Muir of Hawick, and, cocking their muskets, declared that they would not go into England to be kidnapped and sold as slaves; and that, if they were doomed to destruction, they would prefer to die in their own country. The greater part of them were ultimately prevailed on to cross the border; but 400 of them broke off from their companions, and attempted to regain their

native mountains. The people of the country through which they passed, hovered about them, captured the stragglers, and prevented them from plundering. Ten of them were taken prisoners by Robert Jardine, at a place called Briery Hill, and marched to Dumfries. The rest proceeded in a body by Moffat to Erickstane; and here they divided themselves into two parties, one of them taking the route by Crawford and Douglas, and the other striking through the hills towards Lamington. Two countrymen, who had been watching their movements, knowing the passes of the hills, hastened on before them, and arrived at Lamington about midnight. Baillie of Lamington, who was favourable to the House of Hanover, lost no time in despatching messengers in every direction to summon the well-affected to hasten with all speed to Clydesbridge, above Lamington, to assist in capturing the poor Highlanders. Accordingly, next morning, the 2d of November, a large multitude from the country round assembled at the place of rendezvous, headed by the Lairds of Lamington, Nesbit, Glespin, and Mosscastle, Mr Mitchell, factor to the Laird of Hartree, Mr Campbell of Moat, and, what is not a little surprising, considering that the Earl of Wigton was, at the time, in prison for his Jacobite attachments, Luke Vallange, one of the bailies of Biggar. They were all well armed and accoutred, and having been divided into several companies, they penetrated the hills, and, after a little search, found the poor wanderers, in number about 200, quite worn out with hunger and fatigue. Meeting with little or no resistance, they took them all prisoners, and marched them off to Lamington Kirk, where they were detained all night, and next day were conducted to Lanark, and afterwards to Glasgow. Rae, who recounts this incident, has failed to tell us what was the ultimate fate of these wretched men.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Biggar received many visits from royalty. One of the reasons which conduced very much to this, was the celebrity of the shrine of St. Ninian at Whithorn. St. Ninian, who was the son of a British prince, about the year 370 paid a visit to Rome; and the Pope, finding him well instructed in the mysteries of the Christian faith, and zealous for their promulgation, ordained him as a missionary to the heathen tribes of Britain. On his

return, he built a church at Whithorn, which he dedicated to his uncle, St Martin of Tours, and which, being built of stone, was generally known by the title of "Candida Casa," that is, the White House. St. Ninian was interred within its walls, and it continued to be the Cathedral Church of the district for several centuries. Fergus, Lord of Galloway, in the reign of David I., erected near this church, which by that time had fallen into ruins, a priory for monks of the Premonstratensian Order; and gathering together such relics of St. Ninian as had been preserved, deposited them in this sacred edifice. From that time down to the Reformation, the memory of St. Ninian, and the sanctity and efficacy of his supposed relics, were held in the highest estimation. All ranks from the King to the beggar, made pilgrimages to Whithorn, and paid their devotions at its shrine.

In the summer of 1473, Margaret, the Queen of James III., made a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Ninian, attended by six ladies of her bedchamber, who were attired in new dresses for the journey. They no doubt passed through Biggar, and lodged in the Castle of Boghall, as Biggar lay on the direct road to Whithorn from the Royal Palaces of Edinburgh, Linlithgow, Stirling, and Falkland. The monarch who made the most frequent pilgrimages to this shrine was James IV. Although James was one of the most gallant and courageous men that ever lived, he was deeply tinctured with the superstitious notions of the times. He had strong compunctions regarding the part which he had taken in the movement that led to his father's death; and, in token of his penitence, wore an iron belt, to which he added a link yearly; and the priests of the Chapel Royal, both at matins and vespers, made daily lamentation in his presence for his having been "counsalled to cum againes his father in battell." Once, and sometimes twice, every year, the King repaired to St. Ninian's shrine to pour out his sorrows, and pray for strength and consolation. On these occasions he was attended by a considerable retinue, and particularly, as he was fond of music, by a number of minstrels. It was, besides, always the practice of the local musicians to turn out and entertain the King with their minstrelsy, on passing through their villages and towns. In the accounts of the Treasurer of the Royal Household, we find, that James,

during these pilgrimages, disbursed considerable sums to pipers, fiddlers, and luters, and also to tale-tellers, priests, and poor men. For instance, in 1502, on passing through Wigton, he gave 14s. to the pipers of that town for playing during his progress. On the 24th of February 1503, there is the following entry in the Treasurer's books, viz. :—"Item, That samyn nycht, in Biggar, to ane piper and ane fithelar, be the King's command, xiijs." On the 10th of February 1505-6, Margaret Tudor, his Queen, bore a son and heir to the Scottish throne, and her life having been placed in extreme peril, her royal spouse set off as usual on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Ninian, to pray for her recovery. He walked the whole way on foot, and was accompanied by four Italian minstrels, who, being unable to bear the same amount of fatigue as the robust and spirited monarch, completely broke down, and had to be borne forward on horseback. It would be a rare sight for the people of Biggar to see the King, with his staff in his hand, marching on foot, while his foreign minstrels were mounted on horses, like so many noblemen. When James arrived at the shrine, he prayed most powerfully ; and it was noted that the Queen began to recover at the exact time at which he was engaged in this pious work. So soon as the Queen was able to go abroad, a pilgrimage on a grand scale to the shrine of a saint so propitious and influential was resolved on. This took place in July 1507. The Queen, being still weak, was borne on a litter ; the wardrobe and baggage of the King were carried by three horses ; and the paraphernalia of the Queen required no fewer than seventeen. Another horse was laden with "the King's chapel geir," and the "chapel graith" of the Queen was borne along in two coffers. They were attended by a large retinue, and occupied nearly a month in the journey to and from the shrine.

James V. also made several pilgrimages to Whithorn, particularly in the year 1532 and 1533. According to the statement of the author of the "Memoire of the Sommervilles," James also paid frequent visits to the Upper Ward, with the view of visiting Catherine Carmichael, a daughter of the Captain of Crawford, of whom he became enamoured by seeing her in Cowthally Castle, at the marriage of the eldest daughter of Hugh, Lord Sommerville, to the Laird of Cockpool in Annandale. As his sister Joan, or Janet, was married

to Malcolm, Lord Fleming, it is natural to suppose that he was no unfrequent guest at the Castle of Boghall. The Bannatyne Club, in 1836, published a work, entitled "Excerpta e libris Domicilli Domini Jacobi Quinti, regis Scotorum," that is extracts from the Household Book of James V. King of Scotland extending from 1528 to 1533, and consisting of a statement of his household expenses at various places which he visited, written in a sort of Frenchified Latin. It is extremely curious and interesting, as it not only shows the various kinds of viands with which the royal table was supplied, and the prices at which they were purchased, but also the different journeys which he undertook, and the places at which he occasionally resided. Although Biggar is not mentioned in this book, yet it is easy to infer that, in passing from Peebles to the Upper Ward, he would take the Castle of Boghall in his way, and receive entertainment from Lord and Lady Fleming. At Peebles and Lanark he had everything to provide, and hence we have in the book referred to, long lists of articles furnished at these towns for breakfast, dinner, and supper, consisting of bread, ale, mutton, salmon, soles, turbot, skate, pike, trouts, chickens, capons, rabbits, woodcocks, redshanks, plovers, butter, cheese, onions, pears, apples, mustard, not forgetting occasionally the favourite Scotch dish of *capita arietum et pedes ovium*, that is, sheep's heads and trotters; but at the Castle of Boghall, as well as at the Castle of Cowthally, he would get the best of these viands without any expense, and hence the Master of the Household would be under no necessity of making any entry in his books of the dishes with which he was there entertained.

Biggar appears to have been honoured by several visits from James VI. From a despatch, preserved in her Majesty's State Paper Office, from George Nicholson to Mr Bowes, we know that this monarch, in the month of January 1595, was living at Biggar, and no doubt in the Castle of Boghall. His object, we are told, was to enjoy the sport of hawking. The Biggar district was, no doubt, at that period plentifully stocked with various kinds of wild fowl. We know that the marshy grounds, and the banks of the Clyde and the Tweed, abounded with herons, which afforded excellent sport to the falconer, and, in all likelihood, greatly attracted the attention of the royal hunts-

man. The most famous heronry in the neighbourhood in olden times, was in an old orchard at Dawick, where the herons, by carrying trouts and eels to their nests, furnished the strange spectacle of fish, flesh, and fruit, on the same tree. The sojourn of James and his court in the Castle would create some stir and excitement in the little town. Messengers of State would be constantly coming and going; the servants of the household would be frequenting the shops, and purveying for the royal table; and the inhabitants would be on the alert to witness the movements of the King, and give him a joyous welcome as often as he appeared. We can fancy the sapient monarch, mounted on a stately charger, surrounded by some of his nobility, and followed by a goodly train of falconers and other retainers, issuing from the spacious gate of the Castle, proceeding along the broad avenue that led to the highway, and then, amid the defiles of the Tweeddale mountains, or on the gentle ridges of the Common, the Lindsaylands, or the Shields, participating in the exhilarating pastime of the chase as then pursued. It will be long, we fear, before another monarch courses a maukin or brings down a muircock in the same district.

CHAPTER XXII.

Historical Sketches of the Fleming Family.



IN the twelfth century, the Flemings were perhaps the most active and enterprising people in Europe. Finding their own territories in Flanders too limited for their ambitious aspirations, they emigrated in considerable numbers to England, during the reigns of William Rufus and Henry I.; and, some years afterwards, took an active part in the civil war waged by Stephen to obtain the English throne. Henry II. having, in the end, vanquished his opponent Stephen, the Flemings were consequently banished the kingdom; and numbers of them taking refuge in Scotland, entered into the service of David I., then on the Scottish throne. Many other Flemings are understood to have come, about the same time, directly from their native regions to Scotland. These strangers, settling in towns and rural situations, contributed greatly, by their skill in agriculture and other industrial arts, to the improvement of the country.

One of these Flemish leaders, it is said, obtained a grant of the lands of Biggar from David I., and settled there with his followers; and thus became the founder of a family that for several centuries reigned as lords superior in that parish. We propose to give a brief account of the most notable incidents in the history of this family, and particularly of the battles and warlike expeditions in which the successive members of it took part. These are entitled to special notice in a work on Biggar. The Flemings of Biggar, in addition to their anxiety to support and advance any cause to which they might be attached, were bound by the feudal law, not merely to appear in the field themselves, at the call of their sovereign, but to bring with them a certain number of their retainers. These retainers, or

vassals, in consideration of occupying their farms and feus, were also bound to give their superior suit and service, both in his court and in the field, as often as these should be required. It is, then, a matter almost of certainty, that in all the battles in which the Flemings fought, they were attended by a portion of the inhabitants of Biggar. In fact, some of the charters by which the Scottish kings conferred honours or rewards on the Flemings, make express reference to the services of their retainers on the battle-field. For instance, in the commission of Chancellorship to James, Lord Fleming, granted under the Great Seal on the 12th of November 1553, during the minority of Queen Mary, it is stated that this honourable office was conferred on Lord Fleming, specially in consideration of "the good, faithful, and gratuitous service to our late most noble father, of happy memory, whose soul may God benefit, and to us, by our late well-beloved cousin, Malcolm, Lord Fleming, our Great Chancellor, who, under our banner, with diverse of his relatives, servants, and friends, was slain in the camp of Pinkey Cleugh." In the warlike proceedings in which the Flemings took part, the men of Biggar, no doubt, then fought by their side, and sometimes lost their liberties or their lives in contending with them to revenge a wrong, to repel invasion, or maintain the independence of their country.

The first proprietor of Biggar, of whom we know anything, was Baldwin, who at first was styled Baldwin Flamingus, but who afterwards, as was the usual custom of the period, took also from his lands the title of Biggar. He was appointed by Malcolm IV., the grandson and successor of David I., to the office of Sheriff of Lanarkshire—the shire of Lanark, at that period, including also the territory now forming the county of Renfrew. Towards the close of the reign of Malcolm, he appears as a witness of a grant by Vice of Wiston of the church of that parish to the Abbey of Kelso. He, along with his stepson John, who settled at Duncaton, and gave his name to Crawfordjohn, between 1147 and 1160, witnessed a charter of Arnald, Abbot of Kelso, granting the lands of Douglas Water to Theobald, also a Fleming, and said by some writers, though perhaps without sufficient authority, to be the founder of the distinguished House of Douglas. He was also a witness of a charter of Walter, son of Allan, the Steward of Scotland to the

monks of Paisley, between 1165 and 1174. In the Register of the Monastery of Paisley a charter still exists, setting forth that Baldwin, Sheriff of Lanark, gave and granted to God, and the Church of St Mirin, of Paisley, and the monks serving God there, the Church of Innerkyp, with all the lands lying near the river where the church is founded, with the entire parish and its pertinents, to be held in free and perpetual gift.

Baldwin was succeeded by his son Valdeve, who, most likely, was also appointed to the office of Sheriff of Lanarkshire, as this office seems to have continued in the Biggar family for several generations. The most remarkable incident in his life, that has been preserved, is his capture by the English, at the siege of Alnwick Castle, in 1174. It may be stated, that the kings of Scotland had, previous to this period, held considerable possessions in the north of England, and had been deprived of them by the superior power of the English. William I., surnamed the Lion, made a demand for the restoration of these provinces, but Henry, the English king, refused to comply. William, therefore, proclaimed war against him, and with a numerous but undisciplined host, consisting of Scots, Flemings, and Gallowaymen, invaded England. He laid siege to Alnwick Castle; but on the 13th of July, with a lamentable want of prudence and caution, separated himself from the main body of his army, and, attended by Valdeve of Biggar and about sixty horsemen, rode to some distance. The day was dark and misty, and, before they were aware, a body of four hundred English horsemen had approached within a few hundred yards of them. The King disdained to flee, but cried out, "Let it now appear who among you are good knights," and instantly charged against the foe. The King and his followers fought desperately, but, in the end, were overpowered by superiority of numbers; and the king, Valdeve of Biggar, and others, were taken prisoners. They were conducted to the town of Northampton, where William, and most likely his fellow-captives of note, were presented before King Henry, with their legs tied under their horses' bellies, as if they had been the most ignominious felons.

It is not known at what time Valdeve regained his liberty, but his name is found attached as a witness to two royal charters, granted between 1180 and 1203, to the Abbey of Melrose.

Robert of Biggar, a son of Valdeve, granted to Hugh of Pettcnain the lands of Kilpeter in Strathgrif, and was a witness to a charter conferring certain lands in Galloway on the Abbey of Melrose by William de Colvill, and also to a deed granted, in 1225, by Duncan, Lord of Carrick. From a charter granted by Richard Bard, and confirmed by Alexander II., in 1240, conveying some lands to the cell of St Machute at Lesmahagow, Robert of Biggar appears to have held the superiority of certain lands in Strathavon. Hugh of Biggar, a son of Robert, as patron of the Church of Strathavon, granted, on the 14th of February 1228, to St Machute's of Lesmahagow, and the monks serving God there, in pure and perpetual alms, all the tythe land of Richard le Bard lying on the south side of the river Avon, viz., the great Kyp, the lesser Kyp, Glengenel, Polnebo, Louchere, and all the lands on that side, that are, or can be cultivated. The names appended to this charter are interesting, as showing some of the principal men then holding possessions in the neighbourhood of Biggar. They were, William Fleamang, probably the uncle of the donor, Malcolm Locard, most likely of Symington, Robert of Robertstun, Radulph of Cormaceston, and Richard, parson of Coulter.

Nicholas of Biggar, Knight, is mentioned in a deed, dated at Lesmahagow, in 1269, confirming some lands in that parish as belonging to the Abbey of Kelso; and he appears to have been present a short time afterwards, as sheriff of the county of Lanark, at a meeting held at Carstairs, when the Bishop of Glasgow decided a dispute between Simon Lockhart, and the Abbey just mentioned, regarding the Church of Symington. He died previous to 1292, when the marriage of his wife Mary, and the ward and marriage of his daughters Marjory and Ada, were granted by Edward I. of England to Robert, Bishop of Glasgow. It has been asserted by some writers, that the Lairds of Biggar, to whom we have already referred, were a different family from the Flemings who afterwards were proprietors and superiors of this barony. A Fleming, they say, married one of the daughters of Sir Nicholas de Biggar just referred to, and receiving with her the lands of Biggar, became the progenitor of the family of Fleming, who possessed the Biggar estate for some centuries. This assertion, although it has not been fully substantiated, is far from being improbable.

However it may be, a reference may be made to several Flemings, who, if they were not connected with Biggar themselves, appear at all events to have been progenitors of the Biggar family of that name. William Flandrensis, along with Hugo Cancellarius, who died in 1199, witnessed a deed of William I. to the monks of Kelso, and also a charter of the same monarch confirming the teinds of Linlithgow to the nuns of Manuel. He was also a witness of a donation of Richard le Bard to the monastery of Kelso, which was confirmed by Alexander II. in 1228. Sir Malcolm Fleming, most likely a son of William, witnessed the donation of the Church of Largs to the monastery of Paisley, by Walter, the High Steward, who died in 1246. In a charter of Malcolm, Earl of Lennox, of which he was a witness, he is styled, "Vice Comes de Dunbarton," which shows that during the reign of Alexander III. he had been appointed to the office of Sheriff of that county, a county with which the Flemings retain a connexion to this day.

Robert Fleming, who probably was the son of Sir Malcolm, attended the assembly of bishops, earls, abbots, priors, and barons, which took place at Brigham, 12th March 1289-90, to consider the proposal made by Edward I. of England, to marry his son Edward to the Maid of Norway, heiress to the Scottish throne, and thus to unite both kingdoms under one sovereign. Along with the others present, he agreed to this proposal, and appended his name to a letter addressed to the English monarch, in which it is stated that they were overjoyed to hear the good news that the "Apostle" had granted a dispensation for the marriage of Margaret, their dear lady and Queen, to Prince Edward; and requested to be furnished with early intelligence regarding the steps taken to forward this important measure, with assurance of their full and ready concurrence, provided certain reasonable conditions were agreed to, which would be specified by commissioners, who were to attend in London at the meeting of the Parliament in Easter. This scheme, after all, was defeated by the early death of the Maid of Norway, in September 1290. Robert Fleming, previous to the year 1305, appears to have thrown off his allegiance to Edward of England, and to have joined the patriots who fought for their country's freedom. According to Holinshed, he was in the Castle of Lochmaben when Robert Bruce, escaping from the murderous

fangs of the English king, arrived, in the February of that year, at this stronghold of his forefathers. At that time, the Justiciars, Roger de Kirkpatrick and Walter Burgheton, held their courts at Dumfries; and Bruce, as a freeholder in Annandale, was, no doubt, summoned to give suit and service for his lands, by appearing in the retinue of these dignitaries. He, at all events, set out to that town, attended by his brother Edward, and Robert Fleming.

In the Church of the Greyfriars at Dumfries, Bruce met Sir John Comyn, who had been Governor of Scotland, and who, as a sister's son of Baliol, was also one of the claimants to the Scottish throne, and taxed him with attempting to prevail on Edward I. to put him to death. A warm altercation ensued, and in the heat of the moment Bruce so far forgot himself, and the sacred place in which he stood, as to draw his poniard, and smite Comyn to the ground. Struck with horror at committing so atrocious a deed, he instantly rushed to the door, and there met Fleming, Sir Rodger Kirkpatrick, and other friends. Seeing him pale and trembling, they asked the cause. "I doubt," said Bruce "I have slain Comyn." "Doubt!" said Kirkpatrick; "then I'll mak sicker;" and along with the others hurried into the Church. They were resolutely opposed by Robert Comyn, who defended the body of his brother; but soon despatching him, they plunged their weapons into the breast of the dying baron, and severed his head from his body. On their return, Bruce inquired if Comyn was dead. According to tradition, Fleming held up the bloody head and exclaimed, "Let the deed shaw;"* and it is said that henceforth this expression was adopted as the motto on the crest of the Flemings of Biggar. Robert Fleming continued to be a strenuous supporter of Robert Bruce, and, no doubt, so long as he lived, fought in his battles and shared in his varied fortunes.

Robert Fleming died previous to 1314, and thus was not destined to take a part in the glorious and decisive battle of Bannockburn. He left two sons, Malcolm and Patrick. Patrick is usually styled Lord of Biggar, and he may have received

* A picture representing this scene was wont to hang on the walls of one of the apartments in Cumbernauld House, but most likely, along with the other pictures of the house, was some years ago removed to London and sold.

the barony of Biggar for his patrimony. He married one of the daughters and heiresses of Sir Simon Fraser of Oliver Castle; and thus the Flemings obtained considerable possessions in Tweeddale, and also a right to add the arms of the Frasers—viz., second and third azure, and three cinquefoils argent—to their escutcheons. It was, no doubt, in consequence of obtaining these possessions that he was appointed to the office of Sheriff of Peeblesshire. We see no reason to credit the statement made by Crawford, and repeated by many subsequent writers, that Patrick Fleming received the barony of Biggar as part of his wife's heritage. We can, in fact, find no proof whatever that her father, Sir Simon Fraser, or any one of her relatives, was ever proprietor of the lands of Biggar. The documents in the charter chest of the Fleming family throw no light on this subject. The oldest family documents still extant, in which the Flemings of Biggar are mentioned, is dated 1357. This is a charter granted by Malcolm, Earl of Wigton, to his kinsman, Malcolm Fleming, Laird of Biggar, of all his lands of Auchmoir, etc., with their pertinents, wadset to him by Sir Thomas Morham, Knight, for 200 merks. There is, indeed, an old paper in the chest referred to, entitled, "Catalogue of the knights, lords, and earls of the house of flemyng, as they ar recorded in their Charters," and evidently written during the seventeenth century, in which it is stated that a Sir Malcolm Fleming of Biggar lived in the reign of David I. This statement was made, perhaps, on the authority of some document or charter then extant, though it cannot now be found.

Malcolm, the elder son, appears to have given a warm support to the cause of Robert Bruce. He was, no doubt, present with his retainers at the battle of Bannockburn. Robert Bruce, in consideration of his eminent services, conferred upon him the charters of several lands. We give a translation of one of them as a specimen. "Robert, King of Scotland. Be it known that we have given, and by this our present charter confirmed, to Malcolm Fleming, our well-beloved and faithful soldier, for his homage and service, the whole barony of Kirkintilloch, with its pertinents, which formerly belonged to John Comyn, Knight, holding and to be held by the said Malcolm and his heirs from us and our heirs, by all its proper boundaries

and divisions, and with all its liberties, commodities, easements, and just pertinents, as freely, quietly, fully, and honourably as the said John held or possessed, for some time, the said barony and its pertinents; the said Malcolm and his heirs rendering to us and our heirs the service of a knight in our army, and suit in the court of the Sheriffdom of Dumbarton.”* He also received from Bruce charters of the lands of Auchyn-donan and their pertinents in the Lennox, which had been resigned by Malcolm de Drummond, and of the lands of Poltown in the county of Wigton. Bruce also appointed him to the offices of Sheriff of Dumbarton, and Governor of the castle of that name; and Walter, the High Steward, on the feast of St Dunstan, 19th May 1321, rewarded him with an annuity out of the revenues of the Abbey and Convent of Holyrood, drawn from the barony of Cars.

Sir Walter Scott, as is well known, makes Malcolm Fleming one of the characters in his last published novel, “Castle Dangerous.” He is described in that work as fighting at the capture of Douglas Castle, the Castle Dangerous of the novel, and there vanquishing in single combat Sir Amyer de Vallence, on Palm Sunday, 19th March 1306-7. He has, of course, a sweetheart, whose name was Margaret de Hautlieu. Her father was a Norman baron, who, in quest of adventures, came to the Scottish court, and in the war for independence took the side of Baliol. His daughter Margaret, in course of the story, says, “Among these soldiers of the soil, Malcolm Fleming of Biggar was one of the most distinguished by his noble birth, his high acquirements, and his fame in chivalry. I saw him, and fell in love with the handsomest youth in Scotland.” Her father had designed to wed her to a youth, bred at the English court, and, therefore, was utterly opposed to her union with Malcolm Fleming, a keen partisan of the opposite faction of Bruce. Fleming, who was inspired by a similar passion, resolved not to be thwarted by any ordinary obstacle, and therefore, along with Sir William Wallace, concerted a plan to carry her off by force. They assailed the house in which she lived, and a combat ensuing, Wallace attempted in the midst of the confusion to carry her down a ladder; but this being

* In the Wigton charter chest there is a charter of the lands of Lenzie and Cumbernauld, granted to William Comyn by Alexander II. previous to 1216.

overturned, they were both precipitated to the ground, and the form of the fair Margaret was seriously injured and disfigured. On recovering from her wounds and bruises, she became a nun at Douglas, and during the contentions of the period, was carried off by a band of marauders to the borders. She was, however, rescued; and the novel closes with this sentence:—"In a short time it was made generally known throughout Scotland, that Sir Malcolm Fleming and the lady Margaret de Hautlieu were to be united at the court of the good King Robert, and the husband invested with the honours of Biggar and Cumbernauld, an earldom so long known in the family of Fleming."

Previous to completing the novel of "Castle Dangerous," Sir Walter paid a visit to the scene in which it is laid. Having been subjected to several attacks of apoplexy, his health was at the time in a precarious condition; and a few weeks previously, he had been assailed with a strong burst of popular indignation at Jedburgh, in making an attempt to oppose the movement in favour of Parliamentary Reform; and this reception had deeply wounded his spirit, and still hung heavily on his mind. Accompanied by Mr John Gibson Lockhart, his son-in-law, he left Abbotsford on the morning of the 18th July 1831, and, travelling through many scenes hallowed by his magic pen, he arrived at Biggar in the afternoon, where he was detained for some time, in consequence of the horses belonging to the chief inn being engaged elsewhere. A report spread rapidly through the town that the great minstrel of Scotland had arrived; and instantly the weavers left their looms, the smiths their forges, the shoemakers their seats, and the merchants their shops, and hastened forth to obtain a sight of a man whose works had afforded so much delight to all ranks, and conferred so great fame and honour on his country. In general, Scott was annoyed when he was made the object of vulgar gaze and attention; but, on this occasion, Lockhart says that he appeared gratified by the respectful notice of the people of Biggar, and he accounts for it by saying, "Jedburgh, no doubt, hung on his mind, and he might be pleased to find that political differences did not interfere everywhere with his reception among his countrymen."

It is to be regretted that the temper of our great novelist,

in the enfeebled state in which he was at the time, was ruffled by an incident which occurred a few minutes after he left the town of Biggar. It is thus related by Lockhart.—“About a mile from Biggar we overtook a parcel of carters, one of whom was maltreating his horse ; and Sir Walter called to him from the carriage window with great indignation. The man looked and spoke insolently ; and, as we drove on, he used some strong expressions about what he would have done had this happened within the bounds of his sheriffship. As he continued moved in an uncommon degree, I said, jokingly, that I wondered his porridge diet had left his blood so warm, and quoted Prior’s

‘ Was ever Tartar fierce or cruel
Upon a mess of water-gruel ?’

He smiled graciously, and extemporized this variation on the next couplet,

‘ Yet who shall stand the Sheriff’s force
If Selkirk carter beats his horse ?’

Malcolm Fleming was succeeded by his son Malcolm, who remained stedfast in his attachment to David, the youthful son of Bruce, whom that monarch left to inherit his perilous and unstable throne. Fleming, therefore, threw in his lot with the Earl of Mar, the Douglasses, Sir Andrew Murray, and others, who, after the battle of Dupplin in 1332, refused to concur in the usurpation of the Scottish throne by Edward Baliol. Having succeeded his father as Governor of Dumbarton Castle, he was able to afford a refuge in that fortress to David during the disastrous state of his affairs that ensued from the loss of that battle. The party with whom Fleming acted, having attacked Baliol and his adherents at Annan, drove them across the border. Edward III. of England, who favoured Baliol in consequence of having received from him an acknowledgment as his lord superior, proclaimed war against the friends of Bruce, and having levied a large army, laid siege to Berwick. This town was gallantly defended by the Earl of March and Sir Alexander Seton. A stipulation was entered into with Edward, that the Scots would deliver Berwick into his hands unless they were able, before the 19th day of July 1333, to

throw 200 men into the town, or defeat the English in a pitched battle. The adherents of David Bruce immediately raised an army, and marched to the relief of the beleaguered town. The Governor representing that the inhabitants were reduced to the last extremity, the Scots resolved to hazard a battle, and, crossing the Tweed, attacked the English, who were drawn up in four battalions on an eminence called Halidonhill. The Scots, who were also arrayed in four battalions, Fleming and his retainers occupying a post in the second, made charge after charge, but were ultimately driven back, and scattered in irretrievable confusion. Fourteen thousand warriors, including a number of the nobility, were laid lifeless on the field. Fleming was fortunate enough to escape, and fled to his strong Castle of Dumbarton. Edward overran the country, appointed sheriffs, garrisoned castles, and managed all matters as if Scotland had been thoroughly and irretrievably subdued, and had become an integral part of England. Fleming, therefore, began to suspect that Dumbarton Castle might not be strong enough to protect the King and Queen ; and on this account he privately conveyed them to France, where they remained for eight years. They returned to Scotland on the 4th of May 1341, when their interests in Scotland had begun to be again in the ascendant.

David, whatever may have been his defects in other respects, was fully alive to the great and notable services which had been rendered to him by Malcolm Fleming. At the town of Ayr, on the 9th of November, about six months after his return from France, he conferred on him a charter, by which he was raised to the dignity of Earl of Wigton, and obtained very important rights and privileges. The following may be given as the substance of this charter, from the original Latin :—David, by the grace of God, King of Scotland. Be it known to all good men on the face of the earth, lay or clerical, that we have given, granted, and, by this our charter, confirmed to Malcolm Fleming, our well-beloved and faithful Knight, for his homages and laudable service paid and to be paid to us, all our lands of Faryes and the Rynnes, and the whole of our burgh of Wigton, with all their pertinents, and all our lands of the whole Sheriffship of Wigton, by their proper boundaries, and divisions, viz., along the Water of Cree to the sea, and along the

sea coast to Molereunysuage, and from that point to the bounds of Carrick, and from these bounds to the head of the Water of Cree. All these lands are to be held by Malcolm and the heirs-male, lawfully begotten, or to be begotten, of his body, from us and our heirs, in feu and heritage, by the bounds and divisions described, in free Earldom, with homages and services of the said lands, with feus and forfeitures, with courts and escheats, with pit and gallows, with sok and sak, thol and theam, with infangthief, with multures, mills, and their sequels, with fowlings, fishings, and huntings, with all other liberties, commodities, easements, and just pertinents, that may belong to the free Earldom at present, or at any future time, named as well as not named; together with the advowson of churches, and the right of patronage of the monasteries and abbeys existing in the Earldom, reserving only to us and our heirs the patronage of the episcopal seat of Whithorn, and continuing to the burgesses of Wigton the same liberties which they justly possessed in the times of our predecessors. And because the place of Wigton is held to be the principal manor of the whole Sheriffdom, we ordain and perpetually confirm that Malcolm and his heirs take hence the title of Earl and Earls of Wigton; and because the said Malcolm has always conducted himself faithfully and laudably towards us, in times both of prosperity and adversity, we add, as a perpetual memorial of such service, to the grant of the said Earldom, that he and his heirs hold it in free regality, and have power to judge, in its courts, in the four pleas of the Crown *—the said Malcolm and his heirs rendering to us and our heirs the service of five knights in our army.

The alliance which for centuries existed between France and Scotland, was often the cause of great disasters to the Scots. It repeatedly involved them in war with England, during which their country was invaded and their armies defeated. David II. had been hospitably entertained in France during the eight years that he resided in it; and Philip, the French king, had aided his adherents in Scotland with contributions of arms and money. When war broke out between France and England in 1346, the French naturally desired that David would make a diversion in their favour by invading England. The Scottish

* These pleas were robbery, rape, murder, and arson.

king, therefore, summoned his subjects to repair to his standard at Perth ; and thither accordingly went Malcolm Fleming, now Earl of Wigton, his cousin, Sir Malcolm Fleming of Biggar, and their relatives and retainers, to devote their energies and their lives to the service of their sovereign. The Scots, under the command of the King himself, marched to the borders ; and rashly supposing that, as Edward III. was in person carrying on the war in France, the English would be incapable of making any defence, they crossed the border, and ravaged the country as far as Durham. The English, however soon assembled an army of 30,000 men, and advanced to meet the Scots, who were encamped at Bear Park in the neighbourhood of that town. An obstinate engagement took place between the two armies, when the Scots were defeated, and lost 15,000 men. Among the prisoners were the king, the Earls of Wigton, Fife, Monteith, and Sutherland, Douglas, Knight of Liddesdale, and about fifty other barons and knights, including Sir Malcolm Fleming of Biggar. They were conducted under a strong escort to London, paraded along the streets with great ostentation, and then lodged in the Tower. The Earl of Wigton, and his cousin, Sir Malcolm Fleming of Biggar, were captured by a person named Robert Bertram, and it appears that they were afterwards committed to his charge. This individual either set them at liberty without authority, or allowed them to escape ; and for this conduct, was denounced an enemy to his king, and punished with imprisonment in the Tower, and the confiscation of his lands and goods.

The English, taking advantage of the defenceless and disordered state of Scotland, after the Battle of Durham, overran the Merse, Ettrick, Annandale, and Galloway. Considering that these districts had all been thoroughly and irretrievably subdued, they fixed on a new boundary between the two kingdoms, which was to extend from Cockburnspath to Soultra, and from Carlops to Crosscryne. As Wyntoun in his "Cronykill" says,

" At Karlinlippis and at Corscryne,
Thare thai made the marches syne."

The Earl of Wigton was present at the Parliament held at

Edinburgh, 26th September 1357, and gave his consent to the appointment of a commission to conclude a treaty for the ransom of David II. This negotiation was completed at Berwick in October following; and the Scots agreed to pay 100,000 merks, and to give a number of persons connected with the chief families, as hostages for the faithful performance of their part of the treaty. The Earl of Wigton appended his seal to the documents in this case, and gave his grandson Thomas as one of the hostages, his son John having died about the year 1351. The Earl, who seems to have had very extensive possessions, conveyed the lands of Kilmaronnock in Dumbartonshire, and the island of Inchcailloch in Lochlomond, to his son-in-law, John Danielson; the lands of Kyllsynith in Dumbartonshire, to Robert de la Val; the lands of Hallys and Letberald, to Robert Dunbarton, Clerk of Register; and he gave a donation to the Monastery of Newbattle, in the beginning of 1346, to say prayers for the safety of his soul. He himself obtained a charter of the five-merk land of Carmole and Knockiebirvan. He died about the year 1362, and was succeeded by his grandson Thomas.

Thomas, the second Earl of Wigton, was a hostage for David II., when he was permitted to visit his dominions, 4th September 1351; and, as we have already stated, he was one of the hostages for the fulfilment of the treaty that set David at liberty, 3d July 1354. David conferred on him a new charter of the Earldom of Wigton, dated at Perth, 25th January 1365, but he withheld the right of regality, out of deference, it is supposed, to the wishes of Archibald Douglas, Lord of Galloway, who was grievously dissatisfied that another person should exercise such a jurisdiction in a territory with which he was connected. The right of regality was of great importance as by it the possessor was made absolute in his own domains. He held his own courts; was supreme judge in all cases, civil or criminal; had the power of death or imprisonment in his own dungeon; and could reclaim any of his vassals from the court even of the High Justiciar himself. A quarrel at length arose between the Earl and the native population of Wigtonshire, most likely originated and fomented by the same Archibald Douglas; and this rendered his position so disagreeable, that he was induced to dispose of his lands, privileges, and

title in Wigtonshire to that nobleman. A copy of the deed conveying these lands dated 8th February 1371, still exists. * This sale was confirmed by Robert II. on the 7th of October 1372. The sum which Thomas Fleming obtained for the Earldom, with all its important rights and possessions, was L.500. One of the most noticeable things connected with this transaction, is that a sale was made, not merely of the lands and their privileges, but also of the title. In a royal charter granted by Robert II. in 1375, Fleming is styled Thomas Fleming of Fulwood, † formerly Earl of Wigton. The family of Douglas, however, did not assume the title till a considerable time after the sale took place.

Thomas Fleming, having no children, appears to have alienated most of his estates during his life. In 1371 he granted an annuity of twelve merks to William Boyd; on the 20th June 1372, he gave in pledge the barony of Lenzie for the sum of L.80; and he gifted the town of Kirkintilloch to Sir Gilbert Kennedy, which was confirmed 13th May 1373.

The successor of Thomas Fleming was Sir Malcolm Fleming of Biggar, a son of Sir Patrick, who married the daughter of Sir Simon Fraser. As formerly stated, he was taken prisoner at the Battle of Durham; and afterwards received from David II. charters of the barony of Dalliell, and of the lands of Rinns of Wigton, and Sthboger in the barony of Lenzie. His cousin, Malcolm, Earl of Wigton, gave him a grant of the lands of Achmoir and Seymoir in 1357, as already stated; and his predecessor Thomas, previous to his death, conferred on him the barony of Lenzie, and this gift was confirmed by Robert II. on the 20th of September 1382. In 1360, he was paid L.4 13s. 4d. for a horse bought from him for the use of the King, and in 1362, a further sum of L.13 6s. 8d. was paid to him by royal warrant. David II. in 1362, granted a new charter to him and to his wife Christian, and to the longest liver of them and their heirs, of all the lands in the barony of Lenzie, which he had received from the King a few years previously, on the forfeiture of the former proprietor, John Kennedy. He was appointed Sheriff of Dumbarton in 1364, and had an assignment of the pledge made of the barony of Lenzie by Thomas Fleming to William Boyd for L.80. He had a

* Appendix No. V.

† The lands of Fulwood lie on the banks of the Greif in Renfrewshire.

charter from Robert II. of a tenement in Cramond, resigned by Marjory Fleming, 16th January 1380.

Sir Malcolm left two sons, David and Patrick. Patrick, in April 1369, exchanged his lands of Dalnoter and Gartscandane, in the Earldom of Lennox, for the lands of Bord, Tweoures, Croy, etc., in the barony of "Leygneh," belonging to Sir Robert Erskine, and became the progenitor of the Flemings of Bord.

David Fleming of Biggar played a distinguished part in the public transactions of his time. In 1362, he received from David II. a charter of certain annual rents; and on the 20th May 1365, he obtained a safe conduct to pass into England with twenty horses and their grooms in order that he might visit the shrines of certain saints. He appears to have been of a religious turn of mind, and to have been disposed to bestow liberal benefactions on religious establishments. He made a grant or mortification, confirmed by Robert II. in 1379, of the lands of Drumtablay, with a portion of its mill, lying in the barony of Lenzie, to Almighty God, the blessed Virgin, and to the chapel of the blessed Virgin in Kirkintilloch, for the salvation of his own soul and the soul of his parents, his wife, and others. In 1388, he accompanied Douglas in the expedition to England which terminated in the Battle of Otterburn, so much celebrated in our annals, as one of the most chivalrous encounters that ever took place between the inhabitants of the two kingdoms. Froissart, who obtained his information from persons on both sides who had taken part in the battle, states in his Chronicles, that of all the battles that he had mentioned, Otterburn was the bravest and the best contested; for every knight and squire acquitted himself nobly, doing well his duty, and fighting hand to hand without either stay or faint-heartedness.

Sir David Fleming, or, as the monks of Holyrood used to call him, "Davie Fleming of Biggar," came out of the encounter at Otterburn with no small reputation for bravery and martial prowess. It was most likely as a reward for his gallant services that he obtained from Robert II. grants of various lands and sums of money. On the 14th March 1399, ✓ he received from that monarch a charter of annual rents of the value of L.50 sterling, due to the Crown by the abbot and

monks of Holyrood from the lands of Cars in Stirlingshire; and charters of the lands of Auchlan, in the barony of Kinnedward,—of Barbethe, Caslis, Golnethe, and Glentall, in the parish of Straiton in Ayrshire,—of Cambusbarron and Blaregis in Stirlingshire,—of the chapels of Kirkintilloch, the lands of Drumtablay, in Dumbartonshire,—the lands of Wodland and Meiklgall, in the barony of Monycabow, and the lands of Cavers and the Sheriffship of Roxburgh.

With the consent of his son and heir Malcolm, he, in his turn, gave the lands of Mureton to the Monastery of Cambuskenneth, in order that the monks of that establishment might constantly pray for the welfare of the souls of Malcolm, his father, of Christian, his mother, of himself, and his wife Isabella. On the 25th of November 1399, he granted a charter to the abbot and monks of Holyrood, which was drawn up at Stirling, and confirmed by Robert III. A copy of it still exists in the chartulary of the Monastery of Holyrood, and, strange enough, is written in the contracted vernacular Scotch of the period, and not, as was usual, in Latin. "It contenis and bearis witness that ye said Davi Lord of Bigare and Lenzie has giffen in pure and perpetuale almous to ye said religious men, twenty marks of annuale rent to pay a channon singand perpetually at ye altare of St Nicholas, in ye said Abbay, quhare ye said Davi has ordanit his sepulture. Item the said Davi has giffen five marks of annuale rent in pure and perpetual almous for the repair of St Nicholas' altare, both within and without, with glass windows and his arms on them. Finally, he has giffen ten pound of annuale rent for the offering up of continual prayer for his own soul and the souls of his relatives." It further provides, that David Fleming or his heirs might redeem these annual offerings by paying down to the abbot and monks, on the high altar of Holyrood, the sum of one hundred pounds. Sir David occasionally acted as deputy for the Lord Chamberlain, the Duke of Albany; and, in 1403, was appointed one of the Lords to whom the Duke as Chamberlain was to render his accounts. He was one of the chief parties that concluded a truce with England at the town of Pontefract in 1404, and received L.150 to defray the expenses of his journey.

Robert III., though possessed of a mild and generous dis-

position, was a weak and indolent monarch. The Duke of Rothesay, his eldest son, gave him great uneasiness by his riotous and irregular behaviour; and, with the view of reclaiming him to more settled habits, it was proposed to unite him in marriage with a daughter of one of the nobles. The Duke of Albany, the king's brother, who took the chief management of public affairs, in carrying out this arrangement, made it a condition, that the daughter of that nobleman would be preferred who would pay down the largest sum of money. The Earl of March at first proposed to give the largest sum, and his daughter and the Prince were betrothed. The Earl of Douglas afterwards offered a still larger sum; and Albany, with great injustice, broke faith with the Earl of March, and united the Prince to Margery Douglas.

The Earl of March, filled with indignation at the dishonourable treatment which he had received in this matrimonial transaction, fled to England, and at the head of an English force committed great havoc on the Scottish border. The Earl of Douglas, to revenge this inroad, levied an army, and marched into England; but he was routed at Homildon by an English force under the command of the Percies, and taken prisoner. A short time afterwards, the Percies, in conjunction with other discontented nobles, broke out in rebellion, and in the war which they waged against their sovereign Henry IV., received the assistance of Douglas, whom they had set at liberty. At the Battle of Shrewsbury, the insurgents were routed and Douglas was taken prisoner; while the Earl of Northumberland and Lord Bardolph, escaping from the field, took refuge in Scotland. Henry IV., addressing himself to the Duke of Albany, proposed to set at liberty Murdoch, the Duke's son, the Earl of Douglas, and other Scottish prisoners in England, on condition that the English refugees were immediately put to death. Albany entered into this base project; but Sir David Fleming of Biggar, having discovered it before it was ripe for execution, apprised his friend, the Duke of Northumberland, of the fate intended for him, and advised him to seek safety in flight. By this means the English exiles escaped the bloody fangs of the Duke of Albany, greatly to the mortification of the Douglasses, who resolved to embrace the earliest opportunity of taking vengeance on Fleming.

Robert III., being well aware of the ambitious and unscrupulous character of his brother, the Duke of Albany, was careful to have his second son, James, Earl of Carrick, brought up in a place of security. He was, therefore, educated in the Castle of St Andrews, under the superintendence of Henry Wardlaw, then Bishop of that See. The murder of his oldest son in the Castle of Falkland, and the unsettled state of the country, made the King apprehensive that there was no place in Scotland beyond the reach of violence, and therefore he resolved to send his son James to France to complete his education. A vessel was prepared for the voyage, and stationed at the Bass; and a strong body of armed men, under the command of Sir David Fleming and the Earl of Orkney, were ordered to escort the Prince from St Andrews to Edinburgh, and then to North Berwick. These barons performed the duty assigned them with great promptness and fidelity, and the Prince, with the Earl of Orkney and a small suit, was safely put aboard the vessel. They were, however, not destined to reach the shores of France; for, on passing Flamborough Head, they were captured by an armed English vessel, carried to London, and thrown into the Tower, in direct violation of a truce, which, at the time, existed between the two kingdoms.

The Duke of Albany and the Douglasses being full of indignation against Sir David Fleming, both on account of the escape of the English refugees and the departure of the young Prince, collected a number of their retainers, and placed them under the command of Sir James Douglas of Abercorn, second son of the Earl of Douglas, and Alexander Seton. These individuals fell upon Fleming and his party at Longhermandston, on their way from North Berwick; and, after an obstinate encounter, Fleming and a number of his followers were slain. The body of Fleming was conveyed to the Abbey of Holyrood, and there, according to his own arrangement, was interred under the altar of St Nicholas, the patron saint of the old Parish Kirk of Biggar. Wyntoun thus speaks of his prowess as a warrior, and the esteem in which he was held by the King:—

“ Schire Davy Flemyng of Cumbirnald
 Lord,—a knycht stout and bald,
 Trowit and luvit wel wyth ye King,
 Our Prynce resavit in his keiping.”

Of his death and burial the same poet says:—

“Fra this, Schire Davy thare wes slayne,
 Der Lords all passit hame agane,
 And ye cors wes on ye morne
 Through Edinbruch wyth honoure borne
 Til Halyrudhouse, yare he lyes,
 His spirite intil paradys.”

Sir David Fleming was twice married. His first wife was Jean, daughter of Sir David Barclay of Brechin; and by her he had a daughter, Marion, who became the wife of Sir William Maule of Panmure. By his second wife, Isabel, heiress of the Baron of Monycabow, he had two sons, Malcolm and David. David was the founder of a respectable branch of the Fleming family, who settled at a place in Renfrewshire which was called Boghall.* The elder son, Malcolm, succeeded to the family estates of Biggar and Cumbernauld. He married Elizabeth, daughter of the Duke of Albany, niece of Robert III., and thus was closely connected with the royal family of Scotland. He was knighted by that monarch, and received from his father-in-law a charter of the lands of Torwood, most likely as the dowry of his wife. He, of course, inherited the lands in the parish of Drummelzier, acquired by the Flemings from their marriage with the family of Sir Simon Fraser. The father of Sir Simon, who died in 1291, had bestowed a portion of the lands of Kingledoors on the monks of Melrose. These lands, in ancient times, were divided into Craw Kingledoors and Chapel Kingledoors; Chapel Kingledoors being so called from a chapel which stood on it, dedicated to St Cuthbert. A dispute arose between the monks of Melrose and the Lairds of Biggar, regarding the party on whom devolved the burden of repairing and upholding the chapel, and had the right of appointing a priest to officiate at its altar. Malcolm Fleming, of whom we are now treating, put an end to these long and keenly controverted points, by renouncing, in 1417, “all right and claim in the chapel and its priest had, or to be had, from

* The lands of Boghall, on the death of their proprietor, John Fleming, in 1581, came into the hands of John, Lord Fleming, who disposed them to his second son, James, in 1593. In course of time they went out of the hands of the Flemings, and became the property of the Earls of Dundonald.

the beginning of the world to the end of time." On the 10th of August 1405, he received charters from Robert III. of the barony of Cavers in the Sheriffdom of Roxburgh, and on the 24th of the same month, of the pennylands of Barbiech in the Earldom of Carrick. On the 2d of April 1406, the same monarch granted to him and his heirs a charter of the Castle of Cumbernauld with the five merk lands in which it is situated and their pertinents, the lands of Bodsberg, the lands of Dillater of Auchinstarre with the ground of the old Castle of Kirkintilloch, the Forest of Cumbernauld, the Mill of Bodsberg, and an annual rent of six merks to be drawn from the town of Kirkintilloch.

The Earl of Carrick, whom we mentioned as having been conveyed by Sir David Fleming to the Bass, and as having been captured and imprisoned by the English, became, on the death of his father, in 1406, James I. ; but for eighteen years was detained a prisoner in England. He was allowed to visit his dominions in May 1421, and Malcolm Fleming was one of the hostages for his return to captivity. A war breaking out between France and England, in 1419, many of the most bold and adventurous Scots embarked for France, and took part in the contest against the English in that country. The English carried the Scottish king to France, in order that he might exert his authority to prevent his subjects from taking any further part in the war ; but they refused to obey his orders so long as he was not a free agent ; and this circumstance made the English more readily disposed to listen to proposals to set him at liberty. A treaty was at length concluded at London on the 4th December 1423, by which it was stipulated that the Scots should pay L.40,000, as a compensation for the expense which the English had incurred in the maintenance and education of James, and also give a number of the principal barons as hostages for the due fulfilment of the terms of this treaty. The names of the hostages, and the yearly income of each, are given in "Rymer's Foedera." "Malcolmus, Dominus de Bygare," was one of the hostages ; and his yearly income is set down at 600 merks.

James I. was no sooner established on his throne than he began to administer justice with a severity that, in a short time, cost him his life. Among other persons whom he brought

to trial, was Murdoch, Duke of Albany, his cousin, who had succeeded his father as Regent of the kingdom during the confinement of the King in England; and both he and his two sons were condemned for abusing the King's authority, and beheaded at Stirling, in May 1425. Sir Malcolm Fleming of Biggar, being the brother-in-law of Murdoch, was apprehended at the same time; but, as most likely no satisfactory plea could be advanced against him, he was soon set at liberty.

In those days of feud and faction, very strange and unexpected alliances were often formed. It would naturally be supposed that Malcolm Fleming, having lost his father by the craft and malignity of the Duke of Albany and the family of Douglas, would hold them in deadly enmity; but, instead of this, he married the daughter of the one, and became the intimate friend and counsellor of the other. At that time no noblemen were more powerful, or comported themselves with a more haughty and imperious bearing, than the Earls of Douglas, of whom it was nothing uncommon to hear, that they were marching through the country with a band of several thousand armed men in their train. In fact, their power and authority became dangerous to the Stewart dynasty, more especially as, by marriage with the royal family, they had acquired some hopes of succeeding to the throne. Archibald, the fifth Earl of Douglas, died on the 26th of June 1439, and left two sons, William and David. William, who, at his father's death, was only seventeen years of age, was a youth of good abilities, gallant demeanour, and generous disposition; and, had his lot been cast in more peaceful and settled times, might have been one of the most distinguished members of his illustrious House. Malcolm Fleming of Biggar was his near neighbour, and his age and experience might point him out as a most proper friend and adviser. At all events, the recent feud between the two Houses was forgotten, and a great intimacy springing up between them, Douglas sent him and Allan Lauder of the Bass, to France, to carry his oath of allegiance to the French king, and to receive investiture in the Dukedom of Touraine, which had been bestowed on the grandfather of Douglas, for his gallant services to the French nation. Charles VII., then King of France, gave Fleming and Lauder a very kind reception, and, as we are told by Lindsay of Pits-

cottie, "grantit glaidlie to thair requisit and message, and gave to him (Douglas) and his procuratouris the hail landis and rentis in France, quhilk his guidschir had a befoir."

At the period of which we are now speaking, Scotland was in a very miserable condition. James I. had been cruelly murdered at Perth, and his son and successor was only a few years old. No single person possessed sufficient power and authority to exercise, with effect, the administration of public affairs, to cause the laws to be respected and obeyed, to overawe the factious, turbulent, and blood-thirsty barons, and promote the peaceful arts of industry and commerce. The two noblemen who claimed and exercised the largest share of power were Alexander Livingstone of Callander, who held the office of Governor; and William Crichton of Crichton, who was Chancellor of the kingdom. These barons carried on a constant rivalry with one another, each of them being resolutely bent on obtaining the superiority, and equally industrious in issuing edicts, calling on the people to give himself alone exclusive obedience. The minds of the population were thus distracted; the adherents of one party perpetrated every species of enormity on the other; the lands remained uncultivated; and famine, with all its dire concomitants, was the result. The young Earl of Douglas, amid these unhappy dissensions and calamities, is alleged to have conducted himself in a very imperious and lawless manner, riding up and down at the head of several hundred armed troopers, and burning, slaughtering, and pillaging wherever he went. The Governor and Chancellor having, at length, effected a reconciliation, came to a resolution to crush, by dissimulation and violence, the exorbitant power of Douglas. A letter was written to him, representing that the affairs of State could not be conducted without his aid, and requesting him to repair without delay to Edinburgh. It is stated that other inducements were given to draw him into the snare, such as holding out a prospect of advancing him, or his uncle, Malise, Earl of Strathern, to the supreme power, in preference to the son of James I.; but the fact is, that all the reasons that they adduced are not certainly known. Whatever they were, they were sufficient to puff up the vain young man with very confident and exalted notions, and make him deaf to all the entreaties and remonstrances of his friends to keep aloof

from the society of Crichton and Livingston, whose hasty reconciliation made them apprehensive of impending danger. Accompanied by his brother David, his friend Sir Malcolm Fleming of Biggar, and a small escort, he set out towards Edinburgh, and by the way was met by Crichton, the Chancellor, who conducted him and his attendants to the Castle of Crichton, and there splendidly entertained them for several days. They at length left Crichton's festive halls, and proceeded to the Castle of Edinburgh, where they were seemingly welcomed with the greatest cordiality. Both Leslie and Pitscottie state that they were here entertained at a sumptuous dinner, and that, in the course of it, a bull's head was placed on the table, which was a sign of condemnation to death. This incident, it is said, gave rise to a ballad, the first verse of which, being all of it that has been preserved, is as follows :—

“Edinburgh Castle, Town, and Tower,
 God grant ye sink for sin ;
 And that even for the black dinnour
 Earl Douglas gat therein.”

Tytler, in opposition to the statements of the old historians, rejects the story of the bull's head as a mere fiction ; but his opinion rests on nothing better than supposition. It is certain, at least, that Douglas and his principal attendants were immediately accused of treason and placed under restraint. The Earl and his brother were subjected to the forms of a mock trial, and condemned to be taken to the Castlehill and beheaded. This sentence was accordingly carried into execution, in presence of the young monarch, on the eve of the Festival of St Katherine, viz., the 24th November 1440.

It has been generally asserted, that the trial and execution of Sir Malcolm Fleming took place at the same time with the Douglasses. This is a mistake. It has been ascertained that he was not tried and executed till the fourth day after his friends had been deprived of life. After a form of trial, as illegal as it was insulting, he was brought to the Castlehill, the usual place of execution at the time, and there his head was struck from his body by the axe of the headsman ; thus ignominiously losing his life for no other crime that history has left on record than that he was a friend to the youthful

Douglas, and obnoxious to men inflamed with mad ambition, and ready to make a cruel and unwarrantable use of the power that had fallen into their hands.

Malcolm, by his wife Elizabeth Stewart, who in old writs is termed Lady Biggar, had two sons, Malcolm and Robert. Malcolm was one of the hostages for James I., and appears to have been released from this duty on the 20th January 1432. He predeceased his father, and therefore his brother Robert succeeded to the estates. One of Robert's first acts was to make several public protests against the sentence of death and forfeiture which had been pronounced against his father. Copies of several of these instruments are still preserved. We may refer to one of them, written partly in Latin and partly in the vernacular Scotch of the time, which was made at the Cross of Linlithgow. It commences by invoking the name of the Deity, and wishes all men to know by this public instrument that on the 7th day of January, in the year of our Lord 1440, and the 14th year of the Pontificate of the most holy Father in Christ, Lord Eugenius, by Divine Providence Pope, and in presence of the witnesses whose names are subscribed—Walter Buchanan and Thomas Muirhead, Esquires, and procurators of Robert Fleming, son and heir of the late Malcolm Fleming, Lord of Biggar, having power and sufficient instructions, as is shown by legal documents, went to the Market Cross of the burgh of Linlithgow, and there, before William Houston, Sheriff-depute, and in name of the said Robert, falsified a certain sentence pronounced, or violently carried out, upon Malcolm Fleming, father of the said Robert, on the Castle Hill of Edinburgh; all this being done according to due mode and form, and for the reasons written below, the tenor of which follows in the vulgar:—

“ We, Waltyr of Buchqwanane, and Thomas of Murhede, speciale procuratoris and actourneis, conjunctly and severally, to Robert Flemyng, son and ayr to Malcolm Flemyng, sumtyme Lord of Biggar, sayis to thee John of Blayr, Dempstar, that the Doyme gyffin out of thy mouth to Malcolm Flemyng in a said Courte haldyn befor our soverane Lord ye King, on the Castle-hill of Edynburch, on Mononday the acht and twenty day of the moneth of November, the yere of our Lord M^{mo} CCCC^{mo} and fourty zeris, sayande, ‘ that he had forfat land, lyff, and

guds aschete to the King, and that yow gave for doyme,' that doyme forsaid giffyn out of thy mouth is evyl, fals, and rotten in itself; and here, We the fors^d Walter and Thomas, procuratoris to the said Robert, for hym, and in his name, fals it, adnull it, and again cancel it, in thy hand William of Howston, deput to the Sherray of Lithgow, and tharto a borch in thy hand; and for this cause, the Courte was unlachful, the doyme unlachful, unorderly gyffin, and agane our statut; for had he been a common thef takyn redhand, and haldyn twa Sonys, he sulde haff had his law dayis, he askande them, as he did befor our Soverane Lord the King, and be this resoune the doyme is evyll giffyn, and weil agane said; and here we, the forsaid Walter and Thomas, procuratoris to the forsaid Robert, protests for ma resounys to be giffyn up be the said Robert, or be his procuratoris, quhar he acht, in lawful tyme."

The said sentence, as thus set forth, being false and void, the procurators of Robert Fleming took a pledge to pursue the adnulification and falsification of the said sentence, in the hands of Robert Nicholson, serjeant of our Lord the King, who received the same pledge. The procurators afterwards offered a falsification and adnulification of the sentence, under the seal of Robert Fleming to William Houston, Sheriff-depute, who refused to receive it, alleging that the reception of such a document pertained to the Justiciar and not to the Sheriff; and thereupon the agents publicly protested against this refusal being the cause of any prejudice to the said Robert in time to come. Upon each and all of these points the procurators took public instruments in the hands of a notary public, at the Cross of Linlithgow, at ten o'clock of the day already stated, and before a number of competent witnesses.


In consequence of the refusal of the Sheriff of Linlithgow, to receive the instrument referred to, the procurators of Robert Fleming, on the 13th of February 1441, took an instrument against the sentence of death pronounced on Sir Malcolm Fleming, in the hands of Robert Shaw, notary, in presence of the Earl of Douglas, Justice general to the south of the Forth. On the 16th of August 1443, Sir Alexander Livingston, as is shown by a document still preserved, in presence of Robert Fleming and four bishops, solemnly purged himself, upon oath, of having given any counsel, assistance, or consent to the

slaughter of Sir Malcolm Fleming. It would thus seem that the death of Sir Malcolm is to be ascribed solely to the vindictive feelings or ambitious aspirations of Crichton the Chancellor.

When James II. arrived at the age of maturity he became convinced that great injustice had been done in putting Sir Malcolm Fleming to death, and forfeiting his estates. He therefore caused precepts to be addressed to the sheriffs of the different counties in which Fleming's estates were situated, ordering them to infest Robert Fleming of Biggar as the heir and successor of his father, who had been proved, by the testimony of several persons, to have died at the faith and peace of his sovereign. He also, on the 6th of June 1451, bestowed on him a charter of the twenty-four merk lands of Petkenny, Culevenny, and Balrody, and their pertinents, lying in the barony of Kinghorn, to be held of the king by rendering the usual services. On the following day, viz., the 7th of June, he conferred on him a charter of all and whole the lands of Auchtermony and their pertinents, lying in the Earldom of Lennox, to be held of the king by rendering a silver penny Scots if sought. James also raised Fleming to the peerage by the title of Lord Fleming of Cumbernauld in 1458-9,—but the favour received by him from the King, which possesses the greatest interest to the people of Biggar, was the erection of Biggar into a free burgh of barony, as we have elsewhere stated.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Historical Sketches of the Fleming Family— *Continued.*

T was a very common thing for the nobility in former days to enter into a bond or league with each other for mutual defence, or the attainment of some object. The main plea in justification of this step was the defective administration of the laws. The executive department of government was often powerless; and the consequence was, that the strong oppressed the weak, and rapine, slaughter, and confusion prevailed. In this state of things it was the policy of the nobles to bind as many powerful men to their interest as possible, so that they might be better able to revenge a wrong, to protect themselves from assault, and make a formidable appearance on the battle field. On the 10th of February 1465, Robert Lord Fleming entered into a remarkable bond, or "Indenture," as it was called, with Gilbert Lord Kennedy, and Sir Alexander Boyd of Duchal. The object of it is thus stated: "Ye said lordis ar bundyn and oblisit yaimselfis, yair kin, friendis and men, to stand in afald kendness, supple, and defence, ilk an til odir in all yair causis and querrells, leiful and honest, movit and to be movit, for all ye dais of yair liffis, in contrery and aganis al maner of personnes yat leiff or dee may." Reservation was made with respect to the "bands" which these barons had previously made with other parties; and from this it appears that Lord Fleming had bands with Lord Livingstone and Lord Hamilton. The document goes on to bind Lord Fleming not to give his consent or assent to any proposal to take the King from Lord Kennedy and Sir Alexander Boyd, or the persons whom they might appoint his keepers in their absence; and to use all his power

of good counsel to prevail on the King to be kind to them, "yair bairnis, and friendis yaiat belong te yaim for ye tim." If he did this, he was to have such reward as follows: "Gif yair happynis a large thyng to fall, sic as vard, releiff, marriage, or offis, yat is meit for hym, the said Lord Flemyng sall haff it for a resonable compocicion befor undir." It appears that two individuals, "Thom of Summerwel" and Wat of "Twedy," were special friends of Lord Fleming; and therefore Lord Kennedy and Sir Alexander were bound to have them in special maintenance, supply, and defence in all their actions, causes, and quarrels, lawful and honest, for Lord Fleming's sake, and for services done, or to be done. The document ends with this solemn sanction: "All and sundry thingis aboven writtyn sal be lelily keipit bot fraud and gil, after ye partis giffyn till udiris yair bodily aithis, the hali euangelist tuychit, and set to thair sealis." One of the results of this engagement was that the principal parties who had entered into it, seized the King as he sat in his Exchequer Court at Linlithgow, and forcibly conveyed him to Edinburgh. Lord Fleming did not publicly appear as an actor in this treasonable proceeding, but there can be little doubt that he gave it his concurrence and approval. The gentlemen concerned, by this means got the King entirely into their power.

Lord Fleming was one of the ambassadors sent to France in 1484 to receive from Charles the Eighth a ratification of the ancient league between that country and Scotland, and an assurance that the Scottish King would obtain prompt assistance in the event of any act of aggression on the part of England.

In the records of "The Acts and Proceedings of the Lord Auditors of Causes and Complaints, from 1466 to 1494," Robert Lord Fleming frequently appears as a party in the lawsuits then carried on. We will briefly refer to one or two of the cases with which he was more especially connected. On the 30th July 1473, an action was raised by Henry Livingstone of Middlebinning against Robert Lord Fleming and John and Thomas Anderson, for their spoliation and withholding of ten oxen and cows and two bulls from the lands of Weltown and Castlecary, belonging to the said Henry, and the improper holding of his lands. The Lords decreed that Lord Fleming had done wrong in taking the said animals, and ordained him

to restore them, and, in all time coming, to desist from annoying the said Henry "in the brokin and joyasing" of his lands, as well as to pay him 20s. for his costs and expenses, his three witnesses 15s. for their costs, and, if necessary, to distrain his effects for payment. On the 16th May 1474, Lord Crichton raised an action against Lord Fleming for the payment of L.150, which had been awarded by a decret of arbitration. The Lords decided against Lord Fleming, and ordered his lands and goods to be distrained. On the 14th October 1479, Lord Fleming appeared in an action against Lord Crichton, for wrongously withholding from him a basin and ewer of silver gilt, valued at L.80, which he had laid in "wad" to the said Lord Crichton for L.20. The Lords continued the case to the 17th of January following, to afford Lord Fleming time to bring forward proof of the value of the basin and ewer, and to Lord Crichton to return them, or give the balance of their value; but the final result is not recorded. On the 12th June 1478, the Lords decreed and delivered that Robert Lord Fleming should content and pay to Patrick Baron, burgess of Edinburgh, the sum of 26 merks, owed by him and his son Robert Fleming, for certain merchandise which he had received, as was proved by Baron's account books, and that letters should be written to distrain his lands and goods for payment. Lord Fleming alleged that his son owed 20 merks of this account; and therefore the Lords continued the case till the 3d of July, to give him time to summon witnesses to prove what he had stated. William Fleming of Bord obtained a decret against him in 1489 for the marriage portion of a granddaughter amounting to 300 merks, and L.16 for certain silks and other goods, as was proved by his hand in the said William's book of accounts. He was guilty besides of many outrages; and in the end was considered incapable of managing his affairs, so that an action was raised to have him declared furious, profuse, and insane. This action was successful, but it was afterwards set aside on a strange ground of informality, viz., that the Sheriff, who had charge of the investigation regarding his conduct and mental state, was under age.

Robert Fleming died in 1491. He was twice married, first to Janet, daughter of Lord Douglas, and second to Margaret, daughter of John Lindsay of Covington. By his first wife he

had two sons, Malcolm and Robert, and two daughters, Elizabeth and Beatrix ; but by his second wife he had no children.

Malcolm, the eldest son, was one of the Commissioners appointed to negotiate a marriage between James, Prince of Scotland, to Cecilia, daughter of Edward IV., on the 18th of October 1474. He died before his father, and by his wife Euphemia, daughter of Lord Crichton, had two sons, David and John. David, as the heir-apparent of his grandfather, had a charter of the family estates of Biggar, Thankerton, Cumbernauld, etc., about the year 1480. He died early. His brother John, in 1482, some years previous to his accession to the estates, appeared with the retainers of the family at the Boroughmuir of Edinburgh, on the summons of James III. to assist in opposing Edward IV. of England, who had raised a force for the purpose of invading Scotland. The Scottish army marched to Lauder ; but the barons, dissatisfied with the King, on account of his partiality to tradesmen and persons of low degree, seized one Cochrane, his master-mason, whom he had raised to the peerage by the title of the Earl of Mar, and who had conducted himself in a very supercilious and offensive manner, hanged him over the bridge of Lauder, disbanded the army, and conveyed the King prisoner to Edinburgh Castle. When the King was restored to liberty by his brother, the Duke of Albany, and the Duke of Glo'ster, he attempted to take revenge on his rebellious nobles, and, among others, committed John Fleming to prison : but he was soon after released.

Fleming again joined the discontented party—Angus, Hume, Bothwell, and others—who seized the young Prince, afterwards James IV. and proclaimed him King, declaring that his father, on several grounds, had forfeited his right to the crown. Both parties mustered their vassals, and an engagement took place on the 18th June 1488 at Sauchieburn, in which the King's forces were routed. The King fled from the field, and on descending a declivity at Beaton's Mill, near Stirling, he was thrown from his horse, and, being encased in armour, was much hurt. He was conveyed to a bed in the miller's house, and was there murdered, and his body carried off by a person whose name remains unknown to this day. The rebel lords were unable to obtain any intelligence of the King, and there-

fore it was supposed that he had gone on board one of the ships of war that had been sailing up and down the Firth of Forth, under the command of Sir Andrew Wood. They, therefore, requested a conference with Sir Andrew; but he refused to meet with them, unless two noblemen were placed on board as security for his own safety. The noblemen selected for this purpose were Lords Fleming and Seton; and, so soon as they were on board, Sir Andrew landed, and had a lengthened conversation with the Lords, during which he spoke very freely of their rebellious conduct, but, of course, could give no information regarding the King. Pitscottie says, "The lordis sieing nothing in Captane Wood bot disphyghtfull answeiris and proud speakingis, war not content thairwith; yitt they durst not put hand on him to doe him any skaith, becaus of the lordis that war pledges for him: ffor if the had done him any skaith, they wold incontinent have hanged the lordis that war pledges for him, quhilk as it was, escaped narrowlie, becaus of the long stay of the said captane. The Lords haisted away the captane to his schipes, and inquiryed no moe tydings of him. This being done, the lordis pledges war delyvered and tane on land againe, who war richt flied, and schew the Prince and the lordis, if they had holdin Captane Wood any longer, they had been both hanged."

In examining the papers in the Wigton Charter Chest, it is interesting to note the numerous "bands of Manrent," with their solemn sanctions, and large seals, into which the Flemings entered with their friends, as they refer to a state of things which has long past away. We may here briefly refer to one or two of them. John Kincaird of Craiglockhart, on the 8th of March 1506, bound himself by one of these solemn deeds, to be of the household and retinue of John, Lord Fleming, to warn him of all "skaith," to conceal his counsel, and to be ready with his men, tenants, and servants, to ride or "gang" with him in order to render him faithful service both in peace and war, in all his lawful actions, causes, and quarrels. We may notice only another band between William Veitch of Dawick, and Malcolm, Lord Fleming, of date the 22d November 1531, as it shows the kind of "consideration" that was sometimes given by the greater barons to men of inferior standing to induce them to enter into these engagements.—

Veitch bound and "oblissed" himself with his kin, friends, and servants, during the whole term of his natural life, to render to his Lordship all the services usually specified in these documents, and in return was to receive, "ye sowme of auchtein bollis of mele to be uptaine zeirlic be me and my factor of the myln of Glenquhom, or of ye fermes of ye barrony of Biggar, quhilk I think best."

A war having been proclaimed between France and England, James IV. of Scotland, about the year 1511, was urged by the King of France to invade England. He refused to do so, on the ground that a bond of alliance existed between the English King and himself; but he promised to send a reinforcement to the assistance of the French. He accordingly fitted out a fleet of considerable size, appointed Lord Hamilton Admiral, and Lord Fleming Vice-Admiral, and placed under their command a body of 10,000 men. The ship in which Fleming sailed was called the "Margaret," and the Admiral's ship was the "Micheall," which was built by James, and was the largest vessel in Scotland, being 248 feet long, and 46 feet over all. She carried 1400 men, and cost upwards of £40,000. This armament set sail; but instead of directing its course to France, it approached the coast of Ireland, burnt the town of Carrickfergus and some of the neighbouring villages, and then returned to Scotland. The Admiral and his men landed at the town of Ayr, where they "played thamselves, and reposed be the space of fourtie dayes." The King, when he heard of their conduct, was in a terrible rage, and sent Sir Andrew Wood and several heralds to order Lord Hamilton to give up his command; but his Lordship disregarded the King's authority, and having put his men on board, again set sail. The expedition was a complete failure, and apparently was one of the causes which induced James to muster a land army and march into England, where he lost his life on the disastrous field of Flodden.

At the death of James IV., in 1513, his son James was only two years of age, and therefore his Queen Margaret, was appointed Regent of the kingdom. During the year following, Lord Fleming, and James Ogilvie, Rector of Kinkell, and afterwards Abbot of Dryburgh, were sent on an embassy to France, and acquitted themselves with so much fidelity and success, that Fleming, on his return, was chosen a member of the

Queen's Privy Council. He was shortly afterwards entrusted with another embassy to France, and brought back a considerable quantity of arms and ammunition, and 10,000 francs to assist the Scots in defending themselves against the English. The Queen, in consequence of entering into a marriage with the Earl of Angus, was called on to resign her office of Regent; and was so incensed at the idea of being deprived of power, that she requested assistance from her brother, Henry VIII. of England, to enable her to retain possession of her office. It appears that Lord Fleming had by this time deserted her party, and incurred her resentment; for in the letter in which she requested this assistance, she says, "It is told me that the Lord adversaries are prepared to siege me in the Castle of Stirling. I would, therefore, that Lord Chamberlain Fleming be held waking in the meantime with the Borderers. I trow I shall defend me well enough from the others till the coming of the English army." The passion of the Queen having been thoroughly roused, she appears to have stickled at nothing by which she might blacken the character of Lord Fleming, and fire the indignation of her brother against him. In one of her letters, she accuses him of having been guilty of a most atrocious crime. "For evil will," says she, "that he had to his wife Euphemia Drummond, caused poison three sisters, one of them his wife; and that is known as truth throughout all Scotland. And if he be good to put about the King, my son, God knoweth." The sudden death of Lord Drummond's three daughters, Margaret, Euphemia, and Sybilla, by poison, is a historical fact; but, so far as we know, not a shadow of proof remains to implicate Lord Fleming in a tragedy so foul and unnatural. During his subsequent career, no one ever publicly charged him with being either an accessory or a principal party in the perpetration of this crime, which would not very likely have been the case had it been supposed that he was guilty. James Stewart, then Duke of Rothesay, and afterwards James IV., was passionately attached to Margaret, one of the daughters who was poisoned. Many historians assert that he had actually married her privately, and that as the union was within the prohibited degrees, he was only waiting for a dispensation from the Pope to have it legally solemnized. Three parties in the state were violently opposed to this marriage—first, the

clergy, because it was within the degrees prohibited by the Church ; second, a portion of the nobles, because they wished the Prince to ally himself in marriage with the royal family of England ; and third, the Kennedys, because the Prince had carried on a love intrigue with Lord Kennedy's daughter Jane, whom it was expected he would marry. It was, no doubt, by some of these parties that the deed was committed, and not by Fleming, who apparently had no motive in murdering not only his own wife, but the wife or mistress of the young Prince, and her sister. Had James IV. really believed him to be the murderer, he would, considering his passionate attachment to Margaret Drummond, and his grief at her untimely death, very quickly have brought him to the ignominious doom that he would, in that case, have so justly deserved.

The Queen was succeeded in the regency by the Duke of Albany, grandson of James II., who had previously lived in France. One of the first steps of the new Regent was to get possession of the person of the young monarch, James V., and his brother, the Earl of Ross, who were detained in the Castle of Stirling by their mother, the late regent. Albany raised an army of 7000 men and invested the Castle. The garrison ere long was induced to surrender, and Queen Margaret seeking an interview with the Regent, caused the young King to place the keys of the Castle in his hands. The Regent then committed the King to the guardianship of the Earl Marischall and Lords Fleming and Borthwick, in whose fidelity he placed entire confidence. The Parliament at the same time enacted that the services of Lord Fleming in this capacity should not be required more than three months in the year, viz., from Candlemas to Beltane. Lord Fleming, by his zeal and abilities, commended himself so much to the favour and countenance of the new Regent, that he appointed him to the office of Lord Chamberlain in 1516, on the execution of Lord Chamberlain Home, for the cowardly and unpatriotic part which he had played at the Battle of Flodden. The office of Lord Chamberlain, or Treasurer, which remained in the family of Fleming for several generations, was one of great trust and dignity. It required the person who held it to be constantly resident at court, to have charge of the household of the sovereign, and to disburse all sums that were necessary for the maintenance

of the royal establishment. The accounts of the Treasurers of Scotland have been preserved from a remote period, and are extremely interesting, as well as useful, in showing the movements of the court, and the manners and customs of the times. Lord Fleming, so far as we know, first signed himself "Camerarius Scotiæ," in a letter of date 7th October 1517, which was sent by the Regent and Parliament to Henry VIII. of England, regarding a suspension of hostilities between the two kingdoms.

The Duke of Albany soon found his position as Regent beset with so many difficulties and troubles, that he longed to return to the calm privacy which he had formerly enjoyed in France. He therefore departed to that country, holding out as the cause, that he wished to enter into a personal negotiation with the French King regarding the assistance which he would render in the event of the English invading Scotland; but he remained so long absent, that Lord Chamberlain Fleming was despatched to France to urge his return. A copy of the instructions which he received on this occasion is preserved in the charter chest of the family; and from this document it is made to appear that the Regent was detained in France by the influence of the French King, and that the Council of Scotland threatened, if he was not very soon sent back, they would enter into an alliance with England, break off all connexion with France, and declare the office of Regent vacant. As a specimen of this document, we quote the "Item" in which the threat is held out of an alliance with England:—"That the Counseil of Scotland is aduisit that gyf thai have na sickyr tydingis of my lord gouvernour be Monsyeur de Flemyng, or the said Vitsunday, thai wil tak pece witht Ingland as is offerit thame, straytar than the auld and alluterly agains France; quharfor thai have ellis send for ane sauf conduct to Ingland for thair ambassadouris to tret the sammyn." Lord Fleming was, however, successful in gaining the object of this mission; and he returned to Scotland in the retinue of the Regent in November 1521.

The Regent Albany, at the instigation of the King of France, involved Scotland in a war with England; but he conducted it in a way that reflected little credit on his energy and skill, and entailed many calamities on the country over which he

ruled. Born and brought up in France, he never had any warm attachment to Scotland, and seemed always well pleased to escape from its plots, its turmoil, and miseries. Having induced the Parliament to entrust the keeping of the King's person to Lords Fleming, Cassillis, Borthwick, and Erskine, he left Scotland in May 1524, and never again set foot on its soil. After his departure, the country was placed, if possible, in a still more disordered state than ever. The young King, who was only thirteen years of age, was incompetent to take on his shoulders the cares of government; and he had no person around him of sufficient power and energy to grasp the reins of administration, and keep the country in proper awe and subjection. His mother had obtained a legal separation from her second husband, the Earl of Angus, and had entered into a new matrimonial connection with Henry Stewart, a younger son of Lord Evandale, and had thus lost all political influence. Her late husband, the Earl of Angus, now rose into power; but was opposed by a faction, who wished to place the King, young as he was, at the helm of public affairs. In the unsettled state of the country many disorders arose, and many barbarities were perpetrated. One of the most remarkable of these was the murder of Lord Fleming, on the 1st of November 1524, by the Tweedies of Drummelzier and a band of accomplices.

The Tweedies, who long occupied a considerable portion of the wild and mountainous region in the upper part of Tweeddale, were a numerous clan, distinguished for their arrogance, turbulence, and ferocity. Outrages committed by them are found repeatedly recorded in the annals of the criminal courts of Scotland. For instance, at a Justice Aire held at Peebles by Lord Drummond, on the 15th Nov. 1498, John Tweedie of Drummelzier, and five others, came in the King's will, and were each fined five merks, for art and part in an act of oppression committed on Oswald Porteous, and his wife Janet Fleming, in ejecting them from their holding in Upper Kingle doors. In the reign of James IV., Gilbert Tweedie, John Beres, and Andrew Chancellor, were arraigned for the slaughter of Edward Hunter of Polmood; and on the 4th Feb. 1502, John Tweedie of Drummelzier, Walter Tweedic of Hawmyre, and William Tweedie, became sureties for the appearance of

the said Gilbert Tweedie at the next Justice Aire at Peebles, under the penalty of 100 merks. On the 26th January 1565-6, "Adam Twedie of Drawey was dilatit of (the crime of) cutting Robert Raimagis luggis, and demembring him thair of." The panel did not deny his guilt, but pleaded the King and Queen's remission, 30th Nov. 1565, and was accordingly absolved. Patrick Veitch, son of William Veitch of Dawick (now New Posso), was in 1590 slaughtered by or through James Tweedie of Drummelzier, Adam Tweedie of Dreva, William Tweedie of the Wrae, John Crichton of Quarter, Andrew Crichton in Cardon, and Thomas Porteous of Glenkirk: These persons were in prison in Edinburgh for the fact in July of that year; but the case was deferred to the *aire* of Peebles.

The principal residence of the chief of the clan Tweedie was situated on the banks of the Tweed at Drummelzier. It was a building of great size and strength, but its situation was ill chosen either for assault or defence. To compensate for this disadvantage, they erected a fort on a neighbouring eminence, which was called the Thane's Castle, but more commonly, by the country people, Tennis Castle. It is a tradition that it was a custom of the Tweedies to demand an act of homage from every person that passed these strongholds, and to inflict severe punishment in case of refusal. This imperious conduct brought them at times into collision with the Scottish kings, who made them feel the full weight of the royal displeasure. An instance of this is still related by the peasantry of Tweeddale and Clydesdale, and is more or less detailed in several publications. It is to the following effect:—One of the Jameses, having heard of the overbearing and tyrannical conduct of the Tweedies, resolved to visit Drummelzier *incognito*, and witness, in person, the treatment which they bestowed on strangers. He went, as was a very common practice with our Scottish monarchs, to hunt the fallow deer in the wilds of Tweedsmuir and Ettrick Forest, attended by a considerable retinue. Having made some of his courtiers privy to his design, and enjoined them to keep themselves concealed among the hills, but to remain within hail, he disguised himself, and as a solitary traveller descended the Vale of Tweed. At a place not far distant from the Castle of Kittlehall, the ancient seat of

the Geddeses of Rachan, he came up to an old man, a cobbler to trade, tending a cow, and entertaining himself with a spring on the bagpipes. This man, whose name was Bertram, and who occupied a small hut in the neighbourhood, readily entered into conversation with the traveller, and at last invited him to his humble dwelling to partake of refreshments. The King at once complied, and having been regaled by the homely fare set before him, resumed the conversation, and made minute inquiries regarding the conduct of the neighbouring barons. Time flew rapidly by, and evening coming on, the King being greatly delighted with the kindness and intelligence of the cobbler and his wife, readily consented to take the shelter of their cot during the night. Next morning, to the great astonishment and even consternation of his host, he disclosed his rank and condition, and his design of passing the Castle of Drummelzier, and requested Bertram to act as his guide. The King and Bertram immediately set out, and on coming to the Castle of Sir James Tweedie, not only offered no act of homage, but took pains to manifest their contempt, and then pursued their journey. The indignation of the Tweedies was roused. Sixteen of them mounted their steeds, and following the refractory couple with all speed, had almost overtaken them at a spot called Glenwhappen, when the King blew a loud blast on his bugle, and immediately a party of horsemen appeared in sight. So great was the insolence and audacity of the Tweedies, that they nevertheless threatened to inflict corporal chastisement on the fugitives for the affront which they had offered them. The King instantly stripped off his disguise, and ordered the Tweedies to be seized and disarmed. Sir James, finding himself caught in a snare from which he could not escape, fell on his knees and begged the King's pardon. The King with some reluctance granted his request, on condition that in future he and his retainers would refrain from all aggressions on travellers. Bertram was highly honoured, and rewarded with a grant of sixteen acres of land adjoining his dwelling, with the right to pasture a mare and a foal, and a sow, and nine pigs, on a piece of ground at the foot of Holmes Water. The descendants of Bertram long held this possession, which was called Dukepool, and acknowledged no superior, and paid no tax or assessment. In course of time it was much

curtailed by the disposal of portions of it to the neighbouring proprietors, and such of it as remained, fell some time ago into the female line, and is now the property of James Tweedie, Esq. of Quarter.*

Between the Tweedies and Lord Fleming a feud had arisen. The cause is not very accurately known, but it seems to have been regarding the disposal or marriage of Catherine Frizzel, heiress of Fruid in Tweedsmuir. Catherine was a descendent of the old family of Frizzel or Fraser, who held large possessions in the Upper part of Tweeddale, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. By the marriage of Patrick Fleming of Biggar with one of the heiresses of Sir Simon Frizzel, the Flemings, along with the Hays of Yester, whose ancestor married another of the heiresses, acquired some control or superiority over the lands of Fruid. We have so far a proof of this in 1445, when Lord Fleming's bailie and Hay of Yester, granted a sasine of the lands of Fruid to William Fraser. John Lord Fleming, it appears, also held at that time the ward and marriage of the Fruid estate, and was anxious that Catherine the heiress would marry one of his sons, whose name was Malcolm,—not his legitimate son and heir of that name, but another, most likely illegitimate. On the other hand, the Tweedies were determined that she should wed no other than James Tweedie, eldest son and heir of John Tweedie of Drummelzier. From casual expressions in some of the old documents on the subject, it would seem that she had actually been married to Malcolm Fleming as she styles him her husband. This, no doubt, fired the indignation of the Tweedies. Having got notice that Lord Fleming was to enjoy the sport of hawking over his lands in Kilbucho, Glenholm, and Drummelzier, they and their confederates assembled to the number evidently of not fewer than forty or fifty men, and waylaid his lordship and his small retinue among the hills. When the parties met, a hot altercation ensued, and in the course of it young Tweedie of Drummelzier drew his sword and slew Lord Fleming on the spot.

The party in attendance on Lord Fleming was small, consisting merely of his son and a few domestics. After the

* Many curious and interesting particulars regarding the Tweedies will be found in Mr Chambers's valuable History of Peeblesshire.

slaughter of his Lordship, the Tweedies plundered his servants and carried off young Fleming, and kept him in confinement in the Place of Drummelzier. While this young nobleman was in their custody, they extorted a promise from him that he would confer on them the ward and marriage of Fruid—that is, a sum equivalent to two or three years' rent that the heir of a vassal was bound to pay to the superior on his marriage and accession to the estates; and it is likely, also, that he consented that Catherine Frizzel should give up her engagement to his brother, and should marry young Tweedie. In order to obtain his liberty, and as a pledge that he would fulfil the agreement which he had made, he put into the custody of the Tweedies Malcolm Fleming his brother, Robert Stewart of Minto, and William Fleming of Boghall; and these persons were for some time kept in confinement in the Place of Drummelzier.

Malcolm Lord Fleming, on regaining his liberty, wished to resile from this engagement; but being afraid of the vindictive character of the Tweedies, he signed an instrument to show that he sent Catherine Frizzel, with the writs and evidents of her lands, to the Place of Drummelzier, solely for the purpose of obtaining the liberation of his friends, and from a dread of the disastrous consequences that might otherwise ensue. Several other legal instruments, still preserved, also show that Catherine had been compelled to go to Drummelzier Place against her inclination, and that her object was to set her husband, Malcolm Fleming, and the other gentlemen held in custody, at liberty, and further, to testify that whatever she might say or do on that occasion, could not be legally used to the prejudice of her, her estates, or marriage. These documents are dated the 17th and 25th of November 1526.

The civil authorities lost no great time in making an effort to bring the Tweedies and their accomplices to justice. In the course of fourteen days after the murder was committed, it appears that a number of them had been seized or bound down "to thole an assize;" for at that time a respite for one year was granted to James Tweedie, son and apparent heir of John Tweedie of Drummelzier, and other persons, for the cruel slaughter of "ye vmquile John Lord Fleming, and treasonable taking and presonyng of Malcolme, Maister of Fleming, his sone

and are, ye king's fre man, in priuate presone; and for reif of certain gudis fra yame and yare seruandis ye samyn tyme."

From an indenture made at Edinburgh 23d November 1524, and still preserved, it appears that by some influence or other, it was "appoyntit, aggreit, and finalie concordit," between Malcolm Lord Fleming and James, son and heir apparent of John Tweedie of Drummelzier, that a reconciliation should take place and all previous wrongs forgiven. This document intimates that James Tweedie and his accomplices went "to ye mercat croce of Peblis in their lynning claithes, viz., sark alane, and yair thai haif offerit yr naykit suords to ye said Malcolm, his kyn and friendis," that they bound themselves to be his servants "all ye dayis of yr livis," and gave him a band of manrent thereupon. Lord Fleming on the part of himself and his friends, received James Tweedie and his accomplices "in faithful troth and afald kindness," and forgave them the rancour which they had shown, and the injury which they had inflicted; and in token of his sincerity, extended to them the right hand of fellowship at the Market Cross of Peebles, at the time the foresaid sword was delivered, and agreed to support and defend them in all their actions honest and lawful, "bot fraud or gyle." Tweedie and his accomplices engaged "to gang, or gar gang," the three head pilgrimages of Scotland, viz., St Ninian's in Galloway, St Duthac in Ross, and St Andrews in Fife, and at all of these places to make offerings and cause masses to be said for the welfare of Lord Fleming's soul; and they were to infest a chaplain to say mass at the high altar of Biggar Kirk for the same purpose. It was finally agreed that the son and heir of Tweedie should be married to one of Lord Fleming's sisters, that an honest and competent livelihood should, at the sight of friends, be bestowed on the young couple by Tweedie, and that Tweedie was to receive from Lord Fleming the ward and marriage of the heir of Fruid. It appears from several documents still extant, that the terms of this agreement were not strictly adhered to, and that the vengeance of the law still pursued the Tweedies and their accomplices.

On the 6th of June of the following year, a respite was granted for nineteen years to James Tweedy, Drummelzier, John Veitch of Kingside, James Tweedy of Kirkhall, David

Newton of Mitchelhill, William Porteous of Glenkirk, and twelve others, for the crime of murdering Lord Fleming. On the 18th of August 1525, a petition, in connexion with this foul transaction, was presented to the Lords of Council by George Geddes of Kittlehall, near Rachan. As it is curious, we will give it in the original words:—"My Lordis of Counsal and Auditoris of Chekker, vnto zour l huimlie menis and shewis I, zour seruitor, George Geddes of Cuthillhall: That quhare Williame Tuedy, ane scolar, was delatit of airt and pairt of ye slauchter of vmquhile John Lord Fleming, and is innocent yairof, considering ye tyme of ye committing of ye samin, he wes at ye scule in Edinburghe: And becaus I duell amang his friendis, yai sollist and listit (enticed) me to be souerte for him, for his entre to ye law; And becaus he durst nocht compier, he being innocent, for feir of his parti, I am vnlawit for his nonentre befor ye Justice; howbeit as I traist, I suld nocht have bene ressaut souerte, nor suld have been vnlawit, considering I wes and is of lessage within xv yeiris, and may nocht nor suld nocht be souerte, of ye law. Heirfor I besek your l, to have consideratioune herof, and gif command to ye Justise Clerk to draw me out of Adiornal, sua yat I be nocht poided for ye said vnlaw. According to justice and zour ansuer I beseik." The Lords ordained that, as the complainant at the time of his signing the document was in his minority, he should be relieved from his engagement, and his name erased from the books of adjournal.

Among other parties who assisted the Tweedies in the slaughter of Lord Fleming was Walter Hunter of Polmood. Hunter, on this account, was induced on the 26th of November 1525 to grant to young Lord Fleming a bond of manrent "for ye falt and offence comittit be him to ye said lord for art and part of ye slauchter of umquhile Lord John flemyng his fader, for assythment and amends;" and Lord Fleming on the other hand obliged himself to maintain and defend the said Walter in the peaceable "brouking and joyising" of his lands.

On the 22d of October 1528, the Tweedies were declared to be fugitives from the law, and were put to the horn, and their goods forfeited and conferred as a gift, under the Privy Seal, on Malcolm Lord Fleming. In the spring of 1529, the

case was still unsettled; but it appears that at that time some impetus was given to the tardy wheels of justice, for we find that John Tweedie of Drummelzier, John Tweedie dwelling with him, Thomas Tweedie of Oliver Castle, James Tweedie of Kilbucho, and James Tweedie of Wrae, were compelled to find security to appear at the Justice Aire of Peebles, and underly the law for art and part in the cruel slaughter of John Lord Fleming; and as these parties had been previously put to the horn, John Hay of Yester was taken as security for their appearance, by warrant of the Privy Council, and with consent of Malcolm Lord Fleming. James Tweedie, younger of Drummelzier, John Veitch of Kingside, David Newton of Mitchelhill, and eight others, were also summoned to appear at the same time, and offered Sir Walter Scott of Branxholm as their cautioner, to answer at the same time and place for the above crime. On the 18th September of the year mentioned, Champnay, messenger-at-arms, was despatched with the king's writings, to summon a "condign" assize, to convene at Peebles the 13th day of October, betwixt the Laird of Drummelzier and Lord Fleming of Biggar.

This assize did not give a deliverance on the merits of the slaughter and disputes, but referred the whole case for arbitration to the Lords of Council. Their Lordships, on the 4th of March 1530, pronounced a decret-arbitral, by which it was decerned that John Tweedie of Drummelzier should found a chaplainerie in the Church of Biggar, and endow it with a yearly stipend of L.40* out of his lands and heritages, to pray for the soul of the umquhile John Lord Fleming, and the Lords Fleming to have the patronage. It was further ordained that James Tweedie, heir-apparent of Drummelzier, and the other persons guilty of the slaughter of Lord Fleming should go out of the kingdoms of Scotland and England within three months, and should remain for three years, or during his Majesty's pleasure; and that the parties in the dispute should, in presence of the King and Council, take each other by the hand, and bind themselves for the orderly behaviour of their respective kin and followers. In regard to the marriage of Catherine Frizzel to James Tweedie, a thing which was claimed by Malcolm, Lord Fleming's brother, it was decided

* The sum ultimately agreed on seems to have been L.10 yearly.

that the Tweedies should cause Lady Fruid infest heritably and irredeemably the said Malcolm and his assignees in the L.4 10s. land of old extent of Mossfennan, in the 30s. land of old extent of Smallhopes and the mill thereof and in the 40s. land called Urisland, etc. All this was to be done without prejudice to the concord made between Lord Fleming and the Lairds of Glenkirk and Polmood; and the penalty of failure was to be 10,000 merks. This decret was confirmed by James V. on the 22d of March 1531.

Malcolm, the eldest son of John Lord Fleming, who was murdered by the Tweedies, was born in 1494. He was educated, as became his rank, in all the learning of the time; and on arriving at manhood, was distinguished for his abilities, acquirements, and upright character. His merits were highly appreciated by James V., who conferred on him many favours. On the death of his father in 1524, he was appointed to the vacant office of Lord Chamberlain, and received charters of the lands of Drummelzier, Halmyre, Cardrona, Rachan, Glencotho, Covington, Kilbucho, Over Kingledoors, Over Menzion, Oliver Castle, Auchtermony, Kerse, Lenzie, Cumbernauld, Boghall, Thankerton, Biggar, and many others. On the 26th Feb. 1524-5, he obtained a dispensation from Pope Clement VII. to marry Johanna or Janet Stewart, a natural daughter of James IV., as she was related to him within the third degree, and on this account they had to perform certain penances which were detailed in the Pope's letter. His wife's tocher was paid by her half brother James V. and amounted to L.400.

On the 24th July 1526, Lord Fleming accompanied James V. in an expedition to the border, to settle disturbances, and punish thieves. After this had been effected the royal party set out on their march homewards, and had reached the bridge of Melrose on the 29th, when the Laird of Buccleuch presented himself at the head of a thousand horsemen. The King, it appears, had come to be of opinion that he was kept too much in bondage by the persons by whom he was daily surrounded, and had sent a secret message to Buccleuch to raise his clan, and come to his rescue. The Earl of Angus, who commanded the King's troops, demanded to know what Buccleuch's design was in coming with so great a force. Buccleuch replied that he had come to do the King honour and service, and to show

him his retainers and friends. Angus at once ordered him to depart on the pain of treason, and on his refusal, a combat ensued; but Buccleuch in the end was routed, and eighty of his men slain.

The Scots, about this period, warmly resented the interference of Henry VIII. in their national affairs; and the consequence was, that a war ensued between the two kingdoms. The inhabitants of the Biggar district have ever been distinguished for their loyalty to their sovereign, and for their contentings in behalf of their native country; and therefore one is surprised to find that about seventy of them were arraigned for treasonable intercourse, during the war, "with Alexander Forrester, Jonkin Storie, and others their accomplices, Englishmen and traitors, dwelling upon levine and reset of them within the realm." The names of the principal parties arraigned were, Malcolm Lord Fleming, James Murray of Fawlohill, Gilbert Brown of Threpland, Andrew Brown of Hartree, Richard Brown of Coultermains, Patrick Porteous of Hawkshaw, Walter Hunter of Polmood, James Kincaid, the Laird of Crymperamp, John Murray of Lewinshope, William Murray of Sundhope, William Boyd of Bathenheugh, William Carwood of that Ilk, and William Murray of Rommano. On the 16th of August 1526, a respite was granted them for nineteen years; and it does not appear that they were ever subjected to any further legal proceedings, from which we are apt to believe that the accusations brought against them were unfounded.

On the 12th of August 1525, Lord Fleming obtained a charter of the demense lands of Easter Drummelzier, the Castle of "Tynnes," and the lands of "Hopcalgeoch," in Peeblesshire. Two years afterwards he received the superiority of the lands of Logan, Mossfennan, Quarter, and Chapelgill. On the 1st of December 1531, James V. by an instrument under the great seal dated at Perth, granted to him and his heirs, the Sheriffship of Tweeddale and Peebles.

Lord Fleming advanced a sum of money to the Earl of Morton, on condition that he would give his Lordship certain of his lands in security, but the Earl failing to fulfil his agreement, James V. wrote a letter from Edinburgh, on the 11th of October 1532, to his half sister, the countess of Morton, condemning the conduct of her husband, and also censuring

the countess herself, because she had prevented her daughter from giving over her fee of the lands in question. The King, therefore, insisted that the countess would for his sake adopt a different course, "because the said Malcolmis bairnis that suld have the said landis ar sa teynder of blude bath to us and you, and siclike becaus your husband is selland and pulland fast away till utheris." He concluded by asserting that, if her husband would not keep his promise to Lord Fleming, he would find means to compel him to do so by the law.

Lord Fleming, on the 9th of April 1538, resigned his lands into the hands of James V. and that monarch granted him a new charter by which his Lordship's whole possessions were formed into five baronies, 1st the lands of Auchtermony, the annual rents of Kers, the lands of Lenzie, and the forest of Cumbernauld were to form the barony of Cumbernauld, and Cumbernauld House was to be the messuage for taking sasines; 2d., The lands and barony of Lenzie with the town and burgh of Kirkintilloch, were to form the barony of Lenzie, and Kirkintilloch was to be the place for taking sasines; 3d., Boghall, the town and burgh of Biggar, and the acres lying adjacent, were to form a new barony to be called the barony of Boghall, and the manor place of Boghall was to be the messuage for sasines; 4th., The lands of Thankerton and Biggar were to form the barony of Thankerton, and the town of Thankerton was to be the messuage for sasines; 5th., The lands of Overmenzion, the superiority of one half of Glenrusie, and other lands in that quarter, were to form the barony of Mossfennan.

Lord Fleming, in 1535, accompanied James V. on his matrimonial expedition to France. Ambassadors had, a short time before, concluded a marriage treaty between James and Marie de Bourbon, daughter of the Duke of Vendosme. Notwithstanding this engagement he fell in love with Magdalene, daughter of the French King, a lady of great beauty, but of weakly constitution, and was married to her in the Church of Notre Dame, Paris, on New Year's day 1537. In the spring the King returned with his Queen and attendants to Scotland; but the fair and youthful Magdalene sickened and died, forty days after she set foot on the shore of her adopted country.

The misunderstanding between James and his uncle Henry

VIII. still continued. James refused to wed Henry's daughter, Mary, and formed a matrimonial union with Mary of Guise. Henry was anxious that a conference should take place between James and himself at York, to discuss various matters of importance to both kingdoms, and James promised to meet his uncle, but, influenced by the remonstrances of the Romish priests, who were apprehensive that James would be drawn from his allegiance to the Church of Rome by the entreaties and reasonings of his uncle, who had become a zealous champion in support of the principles of the Reformation, he failed to keep his appointment. A war consequently broke out between the two kingdoms. The success, at first, was on the side of Scotland. An English invading force under the command of the Duke of Norfolk, harassed by detachments of the Scots, suffering from the want of provisions, and opposed by a formidable army, in a short time beat a retreat across the border. Now was the time, as James thought, to retaliate with effect on the English; but, to his extreme surprise and mortification, his principal barons refused to advance a step further than Fala, and he had no alternative but to disband his army.

The conduct of these barons threw the King still more thoroughly into the arms of the Romish priests and their bigoted adherents, who, elated with the confidence reposed in them, strove to gratify the wishes of the King by contributions of men and money. In a short time James saw himself at the head of 10,000 men, whom he dispatched, in November 1542, with all haste to the border, but they had scarcely disengaged themselves from the dangerous sands and bogs of the Solway, when they were filled with surprise and indignation by a proclamation, that Oliver Sinclair, the King's gentleman-in-waiting, had been appointed to the chief command. They instantly raised a shout that they would not follow such a leader; and a scene of complete insubordination and disorder consequently ensued. The English wardens, Dacre and Musgrove, with 400 horsemen, happened at this juncture to advance for the purpose of reconnoitring, and, observing the confusion of the Scots, instantly assailed them with levelled lances, and drove them in irretrievable rout from the field. A

number of them were slain, and many of them taken prisoners, among the latter of whom were the Earl of Cassillis and Glencairn, and Lords Fleming, Sommerville, Maxwell, Gray, and Oliphant. These barons were marched to London, and, on the 19th of December, lodged in the Tower. On the second day after their arrival, they were clothed in gowns of black damask, furred with black rabbit-skins, and coats of black velvet, decorated with the red cross of St Andrew; and in this guise were publicly paraded through the streets of London to Westminster Hall, where Audeley, the Lord Chancellor, reprimanded them for invading the territory of England, and waging war with its sovereign and people. He, however, stated, "that his Majesty meant to return good for evil, and to give a signal instance of the benignity of his most princely nature by releasing them from personal restraint; and that, taking only their word of honour for remaining in England prisoners at large, he would allot them their lodgings with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Duke of Norfolk, and other persons of high consideration."

James V., fourteen days after the rout of Solway, died of a broken heart in his palace of Falkland, in the thirty-first year of his age. When his uncle, Henry VIII., heard of his death in circumstances so melancholy and deplorable, he treated the Scottish prisoners with more kindness and forbearance, hoping to make them instrumental in promoting the political designs which this sad event now led him to entertain in regard to Scotland. He invited them to a grand entertainment on the 26th December, and after bestowing on them the most flattering marks of respect, he propounded to them his new scheme of uniting the two kingdoms by a marriage between his only son Edward and the infant Queen of Scots, who was born a few days before her father's death. This design, had its accomplishment been sought by fair and honourable means, had much to commend it, as it held out the prospect of conducting to the peace and prosperity of both nations; but Henry clogged it with conditions that were highly reprehensible. He insisted on receiving the custody of the young Queen, in order that she might be brought up and educated in England, on being declared lord superior of Scotland, and on placing English troops in the principal fortresses of that country. Seven

of the prisoners, viz., the Earls of Cassilis and Glencairn, and Lords Fleming, Sommerville, Gray, Maxwell, and Oliphant, signed a bond to use their exertions to carry this design into effect, and were released, on giving hostages that they would return to captivity by a prescribed time, or, failing in this point, to pay the sum of money at which they were valued. Lord Fleming gave as his hostage his eldest son James, and his own ransom was fixed at 1000 merks. The Scottish barons began their journey homewards on the 1st January 1543, and by the way visited Enfield, where the young heir-apparent of the English throne resided, and were greatly pleased with his intelligence, his fine features, and graceful deportment.

Lord Fleming, for some time after his return to Scotland, continued faithful to his engagement to the English monarch. In the Parliament which met at Edinburgh on the 12th March 1543, he defended the proposal of a marriage between Mary of Scotland and Prince Edward of England, as likely to put an end to the feuds and wars that so often prevailed between the two kingdoms. He was consequently, in opposition to the wishes of Cardinal Beaton and his party, appointed, along with Lords Erskine, Livingstone, and Ruthven, a guardian of the young Queen, who, at that time, was kept in Stirling Castle. Sir Ralph Sadler, the English ambassador, in his state papers, bears testimony to the strict manner in which these barons discharged their duties. They would neither allow the Cardinal to lodge in the Castle, nor above one or two of his accomplices to enter the gates at the same time. In a conversation which Sir Ralph had with Lord Fleming in April of this year, his Lordship attributed the opposition to the matrimonial project of Henry VIII. principally to the Regent, the Earl of Arran, and the Douglasses; his Lordship stating that the Regent had told him that he would rather take the young Queen and carry her with him into the isles, and dwell there, than consent to marry her into England. His Lordship, as a proof of his own zeal for the English interest, declared that his reply was, that if the Regent should take this step, the English King, for L.10, might get one of the "Irish cettericks" (banditti) there to bring him the Regent's head. Sir Ralph says that Lord Fleming and the Douglasses were at that time at variance re-

garding a sheriffship ; and he assigns this as the main cause why he spoke so strongly against them, and especially against Arran the Regent. At the same interview Lord Fleming declared that he would proceed to England before the day appointed for his return, and would lay his opinion regarding public matters before Henry in person, as "he was fully determined to serve his Majesty to the uttermost of his power, according to his promise."

By the month of August following, a complete change had been produced in Lord Fleming's mind regarding the English alliance ; and hence Sadler, writing on the 10th of that month, says that, by the assistance of one of the spies in his employment, he had discovered that Fleming and other noblemen had secretly signed a bond against the matrimonial connexion with England, which had been drawn up by Cardinal Beaton at Linlithgow. He further says, that it had come to his ears that Lord Fleming had declared that he would never go back to England, whatever became of his son ; and that he had resolved to pay the sum fixed for his ransom, and thus shake himself free from all obligation to the English king. This, in reality, was the course pursued by his Lordship. He broke off all connexion with the English party, paid the 1000 merks for his ransom, and became one of the most zealous and devoted partizans of the Queen Dowager, Cardinal Beaton, and their confederates, all bigoted adherents to the Romish faith and the interests of France. The step which he thus took was so far justified by the decision of the Scottish Parliament, which, on the 11th December 1543, by a solemn act, declared that all negotiations regarding the proposed matrimonial union were at an end. The consequence of this decision was, that war broke out between the two kingdoms with renewed vigour. Henry, greatly incensed at the conduct of the Scots, resolved to chastise them with the utmost severity, and therefore sent invading armies into Scotland that committed every species of havoc, burning towns, villages, and religious houses, and slaughtering and plundering the people. In some of the battles which were at that time fought Lord Fleming took part. He obeyed, for instance, the proclamation which was issued for the lieges of the Queen to assemble at Dunbar on the 29th November 1544, and march to the border. Seven thousand

men having mustered, they received several pieces of artillery and other weapons, taken out of the Castle of Dunbar, and then proceeded to Coldingham, which at the time was in possession of the English. They opened their batteries on the town; but their operations were feebly and unsuccessfully conducted. The English made a sortie, broke their ranks, and chased them for miles back into the country.

Malcolm Lord Fleming, to manifest his zeal in the cause of Popery, resolved to erect and endow a Collegiate Church at Biggar. He commenced this work in 1545, and carried it on with vigour so long as he lived. The cares and solicitude consequent upon this erection did not withdraw his attention from the business of the State. He attended a convention of peers, spiritual and temporal, which met at Stirling on the 10th of June 1545. Great efforts were made at this meeting to reconcile and unite the parties who opposed each other, and obstructed the establishment of peace, order, and security within the realm. Lord Fleming, although attached to the French party and the abettors of Popery, was strongly disposed to enter into healing measures; and therefore he approved of the proposal to select twenty peers, four of whom were to remain, alternately for a month, with the Governor, the Earl of Arran, as his secret council. The first four appointed to discharge the duties of this office were, Lord Fleming; Patrick, Bishop of Orkney; Patrick, Earl of Bothwell; and Gilbert, Earl of Cassilis.

In retaliation of the wrongs inflicted by the English on Scotland, an army was sent into England on the 10th of August 1545, to burn, plunder, and slay in return. Malcolm Lord Fleming, with his retainers, formed a portion of the rear division of this army. It burnt and destroyed a number of villages, and returned laden with booty, without meeting with any decided opposition, or incurring any great loss.

Henry VIII. died in 1547, and as his son Edward was only in the ninth year of his age, the Duke of Somerset was appointed Regent of the kingdom. The Regent, unfortunately, resolved to prosecute the same policy in regard to Scotland as his deceased master, and therefore levied an army of 18,000 men, and marched into Scotland, determined still further to punish the Scots, and to carry off the young Scottish Queen.

The Scots, on their side, mustered a host almost double in point of numbers ; but, as was usual, it laboured under the disadvantage of having no commander adequate to guide and control the various sections of which it was composed. Malcolm Lord Fleming mustered his vassals, and marched to the Scottish camp near Musselburgh. Several of his near relatives had also taken the field with their followers, particularly his two sons-in-law, the Master of Livingstone and the Master of Montrose, both of them destined to meet with the same disastrous fate as himself. The position of the Scots, on the left bank of the Esk, was well chosen ; and on Somerset reconnoitering it, he saw that he could not attack it with advantage, and therefore gave orders to withdraw his troops to some distance. This movement made the Scots imagine that the English were retreating to their ships lying in the bay. In opposition to the opinion and remonstrances of the most experienced leaders, the Scots crossed the Esk, and thus gave their opponents the advantage of the rising ground on which they were drawn up. The Scots in some skirmishing that took place repelled their opponents, but in executing a manœuvre to effect a change of position, the Highlanders, who had left their ranks for the sake of plunder, supposed that their friends had commenced a retreat, and immediately betook themselves to their heels. A panic was, consequently, infused into the whole Scottish army, and in an instant the country round was covered with fugitives. The English cavalry having rallied, hastened after their foes, and cut them down without mercy. No fewer than 14,000 men were slain in the pursuit, and among others Lord Fleming, and many of his retainers from Biggar and Cumbernauld. This battle was fought on the 10th of September 1547.

Lord Fleming, at his death, was in the fifty-third year of his age, and his body was, no doubt, conveyed to Biggar, and, according to his own directions, interred in the church which he had founded and partly built. He left two sons and five daughters by his wife Janet Stewart, and also several illegitimate children. On the 15th of February of the same year on which he was slain, he executed a Testament, in which he left his family under the charge of several executors, and appointed his wife, so long as she remained unmarried, to be the

principal "intromittar" with all his goods, moveable and immoveable, with the advice of these executors. The inventory of his effects is of great length, and remarkably interesting, particularly as showing the sources from which he drew his income, and the amount and value of the grain, stock, and other produce which were paid to him in the shape of rent. We will quote such parts of it as are applicable to Biggar and its neighbourhood. "The maills of the hale barony of Biggar, of the Whitsunday's term of xlvij zere, 106 merks, 4s. 4d., the said term's male of Kilboche, L.47, 5s., the said term's male of the Quarter, 50s., the said term's male of Broughtoun, L.3, the said term's male of Burnatland 10 merks, the said term's male of Smalhoppis, L.10, and the said term's male of Thanartoun, L.9, 19s. 6d." The sum-total of maills for that term, including those of Lenzie, Kers, Dreppis, Auchtermony, Lour, &c., amounted to L.399, 18s. 4d. The above seems to have been the money part of his rents, but from those places mentioned and others, he drew besides a large revenue in name of multure meal, farm meal, and teind meal, and also in hens, capons, oxen, bulls, kye, stirks, horses, sheep,* &c. The tenants on several parts of his lands had, it would seem, fallen somewhat into arrears, and therefore we find such statements as follow: "Item rests in Thankertoun of malt of the Martinmas term the xlvj zeir, and Whitsunday term in the xlvij zeir the said xv. day of Februar, iij score xij bolls ij firlofts bolls malt, price of the boll xxx shill.,—sum l^e iij lib, ij sh, ix d. Item rests of male in Thankertoun of the xlvj zeir crop iijj chalders vj bolls,—price of the boll xx shill. iij^{xxx} lib. Item rests within the barony of Biggar of malt and bear the said xv day of Februar of the Martinmas term in the xlvi zeir, and Whitsunday term in the xlvij zeir, xi chalders, x bolls, i ff, iij p, malt and bear, price of the boll xxx shillings,—sum. xij score xix lib, ii shill, ix d. Item rests of the former male on Biggar barony of the xlvj zeir crop, vij chalders, xv bolls, i ff. ii p,—price of the boll foresaid, sum vj score vij lib, vij shil, vi d. Item rests in Biggar barony iijj score capons, price of the peice ij shil,—sum viij lib. Item in Louk Wilson's hands in the Lyndsyslands v chalders ats, at the price of the

* From this "Testament" we learn that at the time at which it was executed the price of a hen was 1s. Scots, a capon 2s., a sheep 6s. 8d., and an ox 40s.

boll x shil,—sum xi lib. Item in Jek Kempis hand, xi kye price of the peice iiij merks, sum is xliiij merks. Item in his hand a bull, price xl shil. Item in his hand iij stirks, price of the peice xx shil,—sum iij lib. Item in Jean Paterson elder's hand xi score vij yois, xiiij kubbis, iij score v yeld yois, iij tuppis, xi score vij hoges, and v score iiij gymmers, sum of sheep in Jean Paterson elder's hand xxxij score viij sheep, price of peice overheid viij shils, sum xij score xix lib, iiij shil. In Jean Paterson younger's hand of schip xxxij score twa schip, price of the peice overheid viij shil,—sum xij score xvj lib, xvj shil. Item in the Boghall, that draws in plough and paddok, xiiij oxin—price of the peice iiij lib, sum liij lib. Item hele sawin in the Boghall this instant zeir v chalders xiiij bolls ats, estimat to the third grain, price of the boll x shil—sum vj score xj lib.” Among various other tenants may be noticed the miller of Killacke (Call-late), whose rent was twenty bolls of meal and twelve bolls of sale bear, amounting in all to L.38 ; and the miller of Glenholm, whose rent was sixteen bolls meal and two bolls of sale bear, amounting in all to L.19. Among his debtors was the Queen, who owed him L.500, which was to be paid before the next term of Martinmas. The whole sum of the inventory amounted to L.5006, 18s. 4d. Scots.

Among the legacies which he left, were 400 merks to his servants, and L.20 to “the poir householders within Lenzie and Biggar, that pays me nocht, that are fallen folks, to pray for me,” and “I leif sax chalder of male to be delt annually to my tennents of Lenzie, Harbartshyre, Biggar, and Thankerton.” To his eldest son James he left the “insight,” that is, the furniture within the Place of Cumbernauld ; along with the silver “wark, an bason, an cover, twa gilt cups with covers, vi — of silver, vj silver spoons, an dozen of silver trinchers, twa saltfats of silver, the chapell graith of silver,” &c. ; and to his second son John L.1000 ; and to his daughters, Agnes and Mary, 1000 merks each. To his wife, in addition to the house of Boghall, with the “insight within the same,” except the artillery, which was to be the property of James, his son and heir, he bequeathed all the oxen and kye, corn and bear, on the Mains of Boghall.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Historical Sketches of the Fleming Family— *Continued.*



MARY, one of the daughters of Lord Fleming who founded Biggar Kirk, and lost his life at Pinkie, was, when a child, selected to be a playmate of Mary, the young Scottish Queen, and to be trained up with her in all the branches of learning common at the period. She thus formed one of the Queen's four Marys; the others being, Mary, daughter of Lord Livingstone; Mary, daughter of Lord Seton; and Mary, daughter of Beton, Laird of Creich. The unsettled state of the country rendering it necessary that the Queen should live in places of security, she successively occupied several castles, and spent some time on the lone but pleasant isle of Inchmahon in the lake of Monteith. After the Battle of Pinkie she was placed in the strong castle of Dumbarton, but the Scottish people being still averse to the marriage of the Queen with Edward of England, and becoming apprehensive that no place in their country might afford her adequate protection, resolved to send her to France. Lady Fleming, the widow of Lord Malcolm, and the Queen's aunt, was appointed to accompany her in the capacity of governess. The Queen, attended by Lady Fleming and her four Marys, and by Lords Erskine and Livingstone, and Lord James, her natural brother, accordingly set sail for France in a French galley, commanded by Monsieur de Villegaignon, in the month of July 1548, when the Queen was in the sixth year of her age. When they had almost reached their destination a violent storm arose, which lasted several days, and caused the youthful voyagers to suffer severely from sea-sickness. Lady Fleming repeatedly implored the captain to allow the Queen and her

companions to land, and repose themselves a short time on shore ; but his instructions being peremptory against any such step, he resisted all her solicitations, and at length, in a fit of ill humour, told her that she must either go to the place appointed for disembarkation, or be engulfed in the stormy ocean. They landed at Brest on the 13th of August, and proceeded to the French court at St. Germain, where they were joyfully and honourably welcomed.

Lady Fleming was much respected and caressed at the French court. The attentions paid to her gave a handle to the English ambassador to make an attempt to injure her reputation, by alleging, in a letter which he sent to the English court, that an improper intimacy existed between her and the French king. The story appears to have been a mere fabrication, got up for the purpose of gratifying certain parties in England. It is certain, however, that Henry II., King of France, held Lady Fleming in very high estimation. As a proof of this, we may quote a letter which he wrote regarding her to the Queen Dowager of Scotland :—

“Madame my Good Sister,

“I believe that you think enough of the care, pains, and great vigilance, that my cousin, the Lady Fleming, constantly takes about the person of our little daughter, the Queen of Scotland. The really good, virtuous, and honourable manner in which she performs her duties therein, makes it only reasonable that you and I should have her, and the children of her family, in perpetual remembrance on this account. She has been lamenting to me that one of her sons is a prisoner in England, and I desire to lend a helping hand, as far as possible, to obtain his deliverance ; yet, situated as I am, it is not quite easy to accomplish that wish. It appears to me, Madame my good sister, that you ought to write and request, as you have the means of doing so, to have him exchanged for some English prisoner. In doing this, you will perform a good work for a person who merits it. Praying God, Madam,” etc.

Lady Fleming continued to superintend the education of the young Queen for several years, when she was at length superseded by Madame Parois, a bigoted devotee of the Romish

Church, whom Cardinal Lorraine, the Queen's uncle, is said to have selected as a person well qualified to instil into the mind of the Queen those extreme Popish opinions which, in Germany, in England, and in Scotland, were now actively and successfully assailed, and which the ultra-Romish party, therefore, felt all the more anxious to defend and maintain. The services of Lady Fleming being no longer required about the person of the Queen, she returned to her own country in 1555, and most likely took up her residence at Boghall Castle, as assigned to her by her husband. Her daughter Mary, however, remained with the Queen as one of her maids of honour, and no doubt was present at all those amusements and festivities in which it is said the Queen so largely participated, during her abode in France. She would be one of her bridesmaids on the occasion of her marriage to the Dauphin, and she would be called on to condole with her when that young monarch was laid in a premature grave. She accompanied her back to Scotland, and heard her take that affectionate farewell of France which has been so pathetically described by many historians, and which has furnished a theme of inspiration to not a few gifted sons of song. She was afterwards a witness of some of those scenes in the life of her royal mistress which have invested her history with a romantic interest beyond that of any monarch that ever lived—such as her warlike displays, her progresses through her dominions, her interviews with Knox, her marriage to Darnley, the murder of Rizzio, the birth of a son in Edinburgh Castle, the loss of her husband by violence, etc. Mary Fleming was one of the ladies seated in an outer chamber of the Palace of Holyrood, gorgeously apparelled, in 1563, whom Knox addressed after one of his stormy interviews with the Queen. "O fair ladies," said John, "how plesing were this lyfe of yours, if it sould evir abyde, and then in the end that we mycht pass to heiven with all this gay gear. Bot fie upon that knave Death, that will come quhidder we will or not, and quhen he hes laid on his areist the foull wormes will be busie with this flesch, be it nevir so fair and so tender. And the silly saull sall be so feabill, that it can nyther cary with it gold, garnisching, targating, pearll, nor precious stones."

In a court which Knox was fond of describing as utterly dissolute, and at which, as he maintained, fiddling, flinging,

and dallying with dames formed the constant pastimes, it is not to be expected that the Queen's Marys would escape his reproach. Accordingly, in his "History of the Reformation in Scotland," after referring to several wicked practices which, he alleged, prevailed at Holyrood, he states that "Schame hastit marriage betwix Johne Sempil, called the Danser, and Marie Levingstoun, surnamed the Lustie;" and he then strikes a blow at the whole of the Marys and the dancers. "What bruit," says he, "the Maries and the rest of the dawners of the court had the ballads of the age did witness, which we for modesties sake omitt." We are disposed to take this sweeping denunciation with considerable limitation. Knox was incensed against Queen Mary because she gave her subjects toleration with regard to their religious opinions, and because she would not renounce the faith in which she had been brought up, and become an active promoter of the principles of the Reformation. He was evidently at bottom a hilarious sort of man; but in the discharge of his duties as a minister of the gospel he considered himself warranted to express a strong dislike of all harmless amusements, and to attempt the imposition of the most grave and depressing austerities, particularly on the young Queen and her courtiers. Freedom to practise Popish rites, and the sound of music and dancing, were regarded by him as utter abominations, and hence, throughout his "History," he hurls against them his severest denunciations.

One of the amusements at that time practised at the Scottish court was the cutting of a cake in which a bean had been concealed, and the distributing of it among the company present. The person who found the bean was denominated the Queen or King of the Bean, according as it might fall into the hands of a lady or gentleman. The amusement of cutting the cake took place on the 5th of January, being the eve of Epiphany, and no doubt had its origin in connexion with the ceremonies observed at the celebration of this Romish festival. On the day following a banquet was served up in honour of the person to whose lot the bean had fallen; and, at this entertainment, the holder of the bean was called on to act the part of a sovereign. On the 5th of January 1563, the bean fell into the hands of Mary Fleming; and Thomas Randolph, in a letter addressed a few days afterwards to Lord Robert Dudley,

in the style of euphuism then in vogue, thus describes the success, the appearance, and effect of the mock Queen:—"The ladies and gentlewomen," says he, "are all in health and merrie, which your Lordship should have seen, if you had been here upon Tuesday, at the great solemnity and royall estate of the Queen of the Boene. Fortune was so favourable to faire Fleyming, that, if shee could have seen to have judged of her vertue and beauty, as blindly shee went to work and chose her at adventure, she wold sooner have made her a Queen for ever, than for one only day to exalt her so high and the nixt to leave her in the state shee found her. Ther lacked only for so noble a hart a worthie realme to endue that which—That day yt was to be seen, by her princely pomp, how fite a match she wold be, wer she to contend ether with Venus in beauty, Minerva in witt, or Juno in worldly wealth, having the two former by nature, and of the third so much as is contained in this realme at her command and free disposition. The treasure of Solomon, I trowe, was not to be compared unto that which that day hanged upon her back. Happy was yt unto this realme that her raigne endured no longer. Two such sights in one state, in soe good accord, I beleeve was never seen, as to behold two worthie Queens possess, without envie, one kingdom both upon a day. I leave the rest unto your Lordship to be judged of. My pen staggereth, my hand faileth farther to wryt. Ther praises surmount whatsomever may be thought of them. The Queen of the Bean was that day in a gowne of cloth of silver; her head, her neck, her shoulders, the rest of her whole body, so besett with stones, that more in our whole jewell house wer not to be found." The celebrated George Buchanan, on this occasion, composed a Latin Epigram in praise of the beauty and noble bearing of her who had so gracefully acted the part of the Queen of the Bean.*

In February 1563, a French gentleman named Chartellet, highly skilled in music, having received some favourable notices from Queen Mary, fell in love with her, and made one or two improper attempts at unseasonable hours to approach her person. On this account she thought it unsafe to sleep alone, and

* A good translation of this Epigram, from the pen of Mr Alexander Gibb, teacher of the Free Church School, Carnwath, lately appeared in a journal published at Dalkeith.

honoured Mary Fleming by selecting her for her bedfellow. Sir William Maitland of Lethington, an able and accomplished man, and secretary to the Queen, in the autumn of 1564, began to pay his addresses to Mary Fleming, who at that time was in her twenty-second year. She appears at first to have received him with indifference; but the secretary pursued his object with an ardour and assiduity that led to success. Various references to their courtship are to be found in the epistolary communications of the courtiers at the period. Kirkcaldy of Grange, in writing to Randolph in September of the year above mentioned, says that the secretary "is a suitor to Mary Fleming, who is as meet for him as I am to be a page." A few months later the English envoy in Scotland, in a communication to Sir Henry Sidney, who had himself been an admirer of Mary Fleming, says, "She hath found another whom she doth love better. Lethington now serveth her alone, and is like for her sake to run beside himself. Both day and night he attendeth, he watcheth, he wooeth, his folly never more apparent than in loving her where he may be assured that, how much soever he make of her, she will always love another better." The Queen being very much engaged with her musical studies under the direction of David Rizzio, Lethington had ample time and opportunity to press his suit, and his amorous proceedings called forth the animadversions of some of the loungers about the court, who stated their belief that wise as he was he would in the end show himself to be a very fool. The murder of Rizzio separated the lovers for six months, but Lethington having been restored to favour, renewed his addresses with redoubled ardour, and all arrangements having been made, they were married at Stirling on the 6th of January 1566.

Mary Fleming remained a faithful adherent to the Queen in spite of all her misfortunes, and all the calumnies that were heaped upon her; and when the Queen was confined in Lochleven she sent her a ring with an inscription from Æsop's Fable regarding the Lion and the Mouse, intending to indicate that by some apparently insignificant means she would yet be delivered from the bondage in which she was held. Mary Fleming's husband, Lethington, died in prison in June 1573, having been placed in confinement for assisting to hold the

Castle of Edinburgh against the Regent Morton. By interceding with Burleigh, she succeeded in getting possession of his remains, and thus rescuing them from the manifestations of infamy and disgrace which, in virtue of an old law against treason, they would undoubtedly have received.

James Lord Fleming, who succeeded his father, who fell at Pinkie, was a nobleman of distinguished abilities, and took a prominent part in the public transactions of the period in which he lived. In September 1550, along with the Earls of Huntly, Sutherland, Marischal, Cassilis, and other noblemen, he accompanied Mary of Lorraine, the Queen Dowager, in a visit which she paid to her native country of France. They sailed from Leith, and landed at Dieppe, in Normandy, in the middle of October. They then proceeded to Rouen, where the French court was, and after spending some time there in mirth and jollity, paid a visit to Paris, and participated in the gaiety and festivities that then characterized the French capital. The ostensible object of the Queen Dowager was to see her daughter, then receiving her education in France; but her principal design in reality was to prevail on the French king to exert his influence to secure for her the office of Regent of Scotland. The King promised that he would do so, provided the Earl of Arran, at the time Regent, would voluntarily resign his office. The Queen Dowager at length left France, and landing at Portsmouth, on the 2d of November 1551, repaired to London, and had an interview with King Edward VI. at Whitehall. After her return to Scotland, she set herself industriously to obtain the great object of her ambition, the Regency of the kingdom. Her efforts being crowned with success, she was, in 1554, exalted to the office of chief ruler of the ancient realm of Scotland, and thus, as Knox says, had "a crown put upoun hir Heid, als seimlie a sicht, gif men had eyes, as to put a Saidill upoun the Back of ane unrewlie Cow." As Lord Fleming stood high in the estimation of the Queen Dowager, he was, by letters patent under the Great seal, appointed to the office of Lord Chamberlain of the kingdom, which had formerly been held by his father. He was also, on the death of Patrick, Earl of Bothwell, chosen Guardian and Lieutenant of the East and Middle Marches on the Border, with the power of justiciary within

the limits of his jurisdiction. In 1552, Robert, Commendator of Holyrood, conferred on him the lands of Plewlands and Saughton, and mill lands and multures in Midlothian, on account of several sums of money which he had advanced for the repair of that monastery, when it had been laid in ruins by the English.

Lord Fleming was one of the Commissioners appointed by the Scottish Parliament, on the 18th December 1557, to be present at the marriage of Queen Mary with the Dauphin of France. On the 3d of February 1557, just before he set out to France, he infeft his brother John in all his lands, reserving only a life interest, and receiving a letter of reversion to himself and his heirs. By this act his Lordship seems to indicate that he considered the expedition would be attended with danger. His chief colleagues in this embassy were, Beaton, Archbishop of Glasgow; Reid, Bishop of Orkney; James Stewart, Prior of St Andrews, afterwards Earl of Murray; the Earls of Cassilis and Rothes; Lord Seton; the Provosts of Edinburgh and Montrose; and Mr Erskine of Dun. To defray their expenses, a tax of L.15,000 Scots was imposed on the burghs and the estates of the clergy and nobles. They set sail on the 8th February, and encountered extremely stormy weather; the consequence of which was, that one of the vessels that carried the rich apparel, in which they intended to make an imposing appearance at the French court, was lost off St Abb's Head, and another foundered in the roadstead off Boulogne, and all on board perished, except the Earl of Rothes and the Bishop of Orkney, who were picked up by a French fishing-boat, while the other ships were separated from each other, and arrived at different French harbours. The Commissioners, before leaving Scotland, had been carefully instructed to give no sanction to the marriage unless they obtained the most ample guarantees that the independence of the country would be maintained, and its laws and liberty secured. Before their arrival, Henry, King of France, had obtained the signature of Queen Mary to a document, conferring on him and his heirs the crown of Scotland, and her right to that of England in case of her decease without lineal succession; and to another, transferring to him the revenues of her kingdom in payment of one million of gold

crowns, or any greater sum that might be expended on her board and education in France or in defence of her kingdom. The Commissioners readily agreed that the arms of France and Scotland should be borne by the Queen and her husband, on separate shields, surmounted by the French crown; that their eldest son should be sovereign of both realms; and that, in the event of their having only daughters, the eldest, who would be prevented by the Salic law from being sovereign of France, should, on her mother's death, succeed to the throne of Scotland; but, on being summoned before the French Council after the celebration of the marriage, and required to swear fealty to the Dauphin, and confer on him the emblems of royalty, they peremptorily refused, and asserted that they would not go a step beyond the instructions which they had received from their own Parliament. The French king, finding that they were inflexibly bent on adhering to their resolution, detained them several weeks amid the gaieties and festivities of the French capital; and on dismissing them, expressed a hope that they would at least support a proposal, which he intended to lay before the Estates of Scotland, to confer the crown-matrimonial of Scotland on the Dauphin. Their young Queen also preferred the same request; and after promising to give the subject a careful consideration, they took leave of the French court, and in a short time arrived at Dieppe. At this town the Bishop of Orkney died suddenly; and in a day or two afterwards, the Earls of Rothes and Cassillis, and several other members of the embassy, were also laid in the grave. Lord Fleming, alarmed at the sudden mortality among his colleagues, drew up his Last Will and Testament, which is still preserved in the archives of the family. To his brother John he left his "chapel graith," his silver plate, the furniture of Cumbernauld House, &c; and, among all his bequests, it is interesting to note the following: "Item to ye poore men of ye Westraw of Byggar one chalder of meill." He also enjoined on his brother to "set forthward ye proffet of ye Kirk of Byggar to beild ye priest's chalmers and ye provest's house, and desyn of ye kirk, and also ye said Iohne to set up my fadyr's toun." Having executed this deed, and dreading infection, he hastened back to Paris; but, after all, he was seized with the same distemper, and died on

the 18th December 1558, in the 24th year of his age. As no infectious disorder prevailed at the time, the general impression in Scotland was, that he and his colleagues died from the effects of poison, which had been administered to them in consequence of their refusal to comply with the ambitious designs of the French court.

Lord Fleming was married at an early age to Barbara, a daughter of the Duke of Chatelherault. On the 14th December 1553, he conferred on her a charter of part of the barony of Lenzie; and on the 21st December of the year following, he executed another charter in her favour, constituting her liferenter of the lands of Kildowan and Auchtermony. He left by this lady an only child—a daughter. Father Baillie, who wrote a work on the events of that period, says that John Knox, the Reformer, after the death of his first wife, in 1561, paid his addresses to Lady Fleming. Baillie's words are,—“ Having laid aside al feir of the panis of hel, and regarding na thing the honestie of the warld, as ane bund sklave of the Devil, being kendellit with ane unquenshible lust and ambition, he durst be sua bauld to enterpryse the sute of marriage with the maist honorabil ladie, my lady Fleming, my Lord Duke's eldest dochter, to the end, that his seid being of the blude royal, and gydit be thair father's spirit, might have aspyrit to the crown. And becaus he receivit ane refusal, it is notoriouslie knawn how deidhie he hated the hail hous of the Hamiltons.” What truth there may be in this statement it would not be very easy now to discover; but it is certain that Knox was anxious to ally himself in marriage with a family of the nobility. He accordingly made suit to Margaret Stewart, a daughter of Lord Ochiltree, who was also connected with the royal family, and being accepted, he was married to that lady in March 1564.

John Fleming, the second son of Lord Malcolm, succeeded, on his brother's death, to the title and estates. On the 16th of January 1558, he received a renunciation and discharge of reversion under the Great Seal of the lands of Kilbucho and their patronages from Francis and Mary, who in the document conferring this grant styled themselves King and Queen of England and Ireland. These favours were expressly given on account of the eminent services of his father Malcolm and his

brother James. Queen Mary, under the Privy Seal, on the 28th December 1562, conferred a gift on him of 20 chalders of oatmeal yearly, to be paid out of the Queen's thirds of benefices, because he had bestowed his whole time in her service. The Queen further not only gave him a gift of the non-entry of Boghall Castle, but of the non-entries of his lands, baronies, and patronages of churches and benefices lying within the sheriffdom of Lanark, and of the annual rent of Kers. On the 17th May 1564, he married Elizabeth, only daughter and heiress of Robert, Master of Ross, who was killed at Pinkie. The marriage, instead of being celebrated at the Castle of Biggar or Cumbernauld, took place in presence of Queen Mary and her court at Holyrood. From an account of the festivities which took place on this occasion, it would seem that they were celebrated in the Royal Park, at the lower end of the valley, between Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crags, a place at that time covered with water. Here the Queen, with her nobles, and foreign ambassadors, forgot for a time the cares and troubles of her unruly kingdom, and gave herself up to mirth and jollity. As Robert Chambers says, "The incident is so pleasantly picturesque, and associates Mary so agreeably with one of her subjects, that it is gratifying to reflect on Lord Fleming proving a steady friend throughout her subsequent troubles."

On the 25th of July 1565, he received a gift from Queen Mary under the Great Seal, of the office of Master Usher to her bed-chamber, with the fees thereof, and with power to appoint deputies. On the 1st of August following, the Queen and Parliament conferred on him the office of Lord Chamberlain, an office that had been held by three of his immediate predecessors. In 1567, he received a grant of a third of the profits and rents of the Priory of Whithorn, for his devotion to the Queen's interests, and particularly as a compensation, in part, for services which he had rendered to her majesty, and for the losses which he had sustained by depredations committed by marauders from the borders. About the same time he was appointed Governor of Dumbarton Castle, and "Justiciar" within the sheriffdom of Peebles and the Upper Ward of Clydesdale.

Lord Fleming was one of the nobles who were in the Palace of

Holyrood on the night of the 9th of March 1566, when a body of armed men, headed by Darnley, Morton, Ruthven, and others, rushed into the Palace, and in the Queen's presence assassinated David Rizzio, her foreign secretary and favourite musician. This outrage naturally caused a great uproar in the Palace. The attendants on the Queen were taken quite by surprise, and finding themselves utterly incompetent to contend against the assailing force, they escaped by the back windows, and some of them did not stop till they reached the Castle of Crichton. The persons connected with the Biggar district who were implicated in this foul conspiracy, were William Tweedie of Drummelzier, Adam Tweedie of Dreva, John Brown of Coultermains, and Richard Muirhead of Crawford. These persons, along with the other conspirators, were summoned on the 19th March following to compare personally before the King and Queen, and the Lords of the Secret Council, to answer such things as would be laid to their charge. Their names, however, do not appear in the list of those who were put to the horn for their participation in this outrage. It is not unlikely that they submitted themselves to the Council, and were sentenced to some slight punishment.

On the 19th of April 1567, Lord Fleming, along with other noblemen, subscribed a bond, acquitting the Earl of Bothwell of the murder of Lord Darnley, recommending him as a fit and proper person to be elevated to the honour of being the Queen's husband, and pledging himself to stand up in defence of this unseemly and unnatural connexion. The subscription of this bond was extorted by Bothwell from Lord Fleming and the other nobles, whom he had invited to an entertainment, and whom, it is said, he overawed, by surrounding them with a strong body of his retainers. Armed with this document, Bothwell seized the Queen at Cramond, and carried her off to the strong Castle of Dunbar. In a few days afterwards they appeared publicly in the streets of Edinburgh; and Bothwell having obtained a divorce from his wife, was married to the Queen, on the 15th of May, by the Bishop of Orkney. Lord Fleming was present at this ill-starred solemnity, at which, as the author of the "Diurnal of Remarkable Occurrents," says, "there was neither pleasure nor pastime as was wont."

It has long been a subject of disputation, whether Mary was

accessory to the murder of her husband Darnley ; but scarcely any doubt was ever entertained, that the chief actor in this foul transaction was Bothwell. He was, no doubt, acquitted of the charge by an " assise ;" but this was effected by surrounding the court with armed men, and preventing any person from giving evidence against him, by a dread of personal violence. The Queen, therefore, by marrying Bothwell, lost the sympathy and respect of a great portion of her subjects. A report was spread, that Bothwell, having now obtained an entire control over the Queen, entertained the design of seizing the person of her only son James, a child of two years of age, and most likely of putting him to death also. Many of the nobles, therefore, flew to arms, to protect the young Prince, to thwart the treacherous schemes of Bothwell, and rescue the Queen from the fangs of her blood-stained paramour. Mary summoned her subjects to rally to her standard, and having assembled a considerable force, left Dunbar and advanced towards Edinburgh. The confederated lords with an equal number of retainers marched from the capital to Musselburgh, and learned, on reaching that town, that the Queen's army had taken possession of the neighbouring height of Carberry. They therefore made a detour by Wallyford, and ascended the hill until they came nearly in contact with the Queen's troops. The Queen, with her usual boldness and impetuosity, insisted on bringing the matters in dispute at once to the arbitration of the sword ; but her friends by no means possessed the same ardour for the combat as herself. They counselled delay until the expected reinforcements from Clydesdale, under the command of the Hamiltons, should arrive. The Queen then proposed that she should go and meet them, promising that she would immediately return ; but this design was opposed. It is likely that these reinforcements were at the very time on their way to join the Queen. The opposing forces came face to face on Carberry Hill on the 15th of June ; and on the day preceding, the following letter was sent by Lord John Hamilton to Lord Fleming, at his Castle of Boghall :—

" MY LORD,—After maist hartie commendatioun ze sall understand that I resavit ane writtin fra the quenis Maistie, daitit at Dunbar, the xij of this instant Junij, that hir grace

is reddy to cum fordwart this morning toward Haldingtoun, and therefore desiris me and my friendis to be in rediness, quhen it sall please hir to charge us to merche fordwart. Heirfoir I haif thocht goid to send this berar, knowing that zour lordship sould be togidder this nicht, in to Beggar, to knaw zour dyet, and thinkis goid, safand better counsell, that we joyne us togidder or we cum to hir Maistie, baith for zour surete and ouris. And we intend quhen we marche, to pass be Pentland Hills or neir therbie, and gif se please to appoint ony place be that way, we being chargit to cum fordwart, we wald be glad to meit zou ther, as ye sall appoint; and the rest referris to zour advertisement with the berar; and sa committis zour lordship to the protectione of God, this Saterdag at vij houris afoirnoune the xiiij of junij 1567.

Zour Lordship's loving friend at power,

JOHNE HAMILTON."

From a statement made in an Act of Parliament * of date 1584, it would seem that Fleming and his Biggar retainers actually reached Carberry, but the whole of the Clydesdale forces did not arrive in time; and the Queen was thus induced to dismiss Bothwell, and surrender herself to the confederated lords. She was conducted, with every mark of indignity and disrespect, to Edinburgh, and next day, in violation of the conditions on which she had surrendered, was placed in confinement in Lochleven Castle. Lords Fleming and Hamilton, after the Queen's surrender, withdrew their forces to Hamilton to watch the progress of events.

After the surrender of the Queen at Carberry, the Earl of Bothwell fled to the north of Scotland. It would seem from a letter of Sir Nicholas Throkmorton to Queen Elizabeth, dated 18th July 1567, that he had been joined there by Lords Fleming and Seton. The likelihood is, that they had been despatched from Hamilton to hold a conference with him, and learn his designs. It is evident from the following extract from

* This Act ratified the restoration to John Lord Fleming of the "possessioun, richt, and titill to all landis, heretigis, takis, stedingis, rowmis, possessiounis, teyndis, and others quhatsumever, quhilk pertinit to ye umquhile Johnne, sumtyme Lord Fleming, his father at ye field of Carbarrie hill as gif he had never been foirfallit of befoir.

the letter, that their stay with him was short, and that, to their credit, they left him to his fate :—" Bodwell doethe still remaine in the northe partyes, bot the Lordis Seaton and Flemynge, which have ben there, have utterlye abandoned hym, and doe repayre hetherwardes."

Morton, Ruthven, Grange, and the other barons leagued against the Queen, soon found that all their ostentatious zeal for the Protestant faith would not be sufficient to support their popularity. Their treacherous and cruel treatment of the Queen was beginning to rouse the indignation of the people, and the charge of rebellion both at home and abroad was constantly rung in their ears. They considered that, in order to extenuate their conduct, it would be necessary to make the Queen still more accessory to her own humiliation. They therefore despatched Lord Lindsay, a man of stern and rough manners, to Lochleven, to induce the Queen, by persuasion, or if necessary by force, to abdicate the throne, to invest her infant son James with the sovereign power, and appoint her brother, the Earl of Murray, Regent of the kingdom during the young King's minority. The Queen was forced, from a dread of personal violence, to adhibit her name to the degrading documents, which stript her of her crown. Steps were immediately taken to have the young Prince crowned. Sir James Melville was despatched to Hamilton, where Lords Hamilton, Fleming, Boyd, and other friends of the Queen were still assembled, to invite them to be present at the coronation, which was to take place on the 29th of July.

The confederated Lords at Hamilton not having received satisfactory assurance of protection, and not approving of the business to be transacted, did not attend the coronation of the infant Prince at Stirling. In the Castle of Dumbarton, held for the Queen by Lord Fleming, they entered into a bond for the purpose of restoring the Queen to liberty. The document to which they appended their names commences by stating that they had no freedom of access to her Majesty for transacting their lawful business ; and therefore they bind themselves to use all diligence, and to adopt all reasonable means to set her at liberty, upon such conditions as may be consistent with her honour, the advantage of her kingdom, and the security of her subjects. In the event of the refusal of the noblemen who had her in custody to open her prison-doors,

they declared that they would employ themselves, their kin and friends, their servants and partakers, and their bodies and lives, to put her Highness at liberty, as well as to procure the punishment of the murderer of the King her husband, and the safe preservation of the Prince her son. They also issued a proclamation from the same place, calling upon all good subjects to be ready on nine hours' warning to take arms for the delivery of the Queen.

Queen Mary, by the aid of William Douglas, a boy of fifteen or sixteen years of age, was at length enabled, on Sunday the 2d May 1568, to escape from Lochleven. She was received, on landing from the boat that brought her ashore, by Lord Seton and a party of his retainers, and conveyed to Niddrie Castle, and next day to Hamilton. Intelligence of her escape soon spread far and wide, and brought large accessions to her ranks, so that in the course of a day or two her troops amounted to 6000 men. A bond was drawn up and signed by nine earls, nine bishops, eighteen lords, twelve abbots and priors, and about a hundred other barons, pledging themselves to protect the Queen and restore her to her rights. Lord Fleming, of course, was among the number of those who signed this bond. Mary's desire was to go with Lord Fleming to the strong Castle of Dumbarton, where she could remain in safety till she saw whether the nation in general would declare in favour of her restoration, or whether it would be necessary for her to abandon her kingdom, and retire once more to France. The Hamiltons being anxious to gain an ascendancy in the management of public affairs, thought that the presence of the Queen was necessary to the accomplishment of their designs, and therefore detained her several days in the Castle of Draffen. The Earl of Murray had assembled a force of 4000 men at Glasgow, and a request was sent to him by the lords at Hamilton to agree to reponé the Queen to her former status at the head of the government; but as he refused to do this, it was resolved to conduct the Queen in a sort of warlike procession to the Castle of Dumbarton, on the 13th of May, under the direction of the Duke of Argyle, who had been appointed Commander-in-chief of the Queen's forces. The Earl of Murray no sooner learned that the Queen's army was on its march towards Dumbarton, than he crossed the Clyde, and took pos-

session of the little village of Langside, where an obstinate engagement took place and the Queen's army was totally defeated.

Lord Fleming himself took no part in the battle. Along with Lords Herries and Livingstone and a small guard, he stood by the Queen's side at a thorn-tree, not far distant from Cathcart Castle, and watched the progress of the fight with breathless anxiety and suspense. When that small party saw that their hopes were blasted and their designs frustrated by the victory of the Regent, they lost no time in placing the Queen on horseback, and conveying her by a circuitous route through Ayrshire, Nithsdale, and Galloway, to the Abbey of Dundrennan. Mary, in a letter written to her uncle, the Cardinal Lorraine, during this journey, which lasted two days, states, "I have suffered injuries, calumnies, hunger, cold and heat; flying without knowing whither, fourscore and twelve miles, without once pausing to alight; and then lay on the hard ground, having only sour milk to drink, and oatmeal to eat, without bread, passing three nights with the owls." In the Abbey of Dundrennan she sat in council with her friends for the last time; and here she intimated to them her intention to proceed to England, and throw herself on the protection of Queen Elizabeth. They implored her to abandon this design, and put no faith in the specious promises and pretences of the English Queen. Finding her deaf to their remonstrances, they prevailed on her to sign an instrument exonerating them from all approval of, or complicity in, the step on which she had resolved. A boat was then procured, and the Queen, accompanied by Lords Fleming, Boyd, Livingstone, and others, amounting in all to sixteen persons, crossed the Solway Firth, and landed at Workington, a small town on the coast of Cumberland. She there surrendered herself to the English Deputy Warden, named Lowther, who assigned her a residence in the Castle of Carlisle, till such time as he should receive instructions from Elizabeth regarding her further disposal. Lords Fleming and Herries hastened up to the English court, with the view of entering into arrangements for the Queen's proper accommodation; but their mission was unsuccessful, and Mary was shortly afterwards removed to Bolton Castle in Yorkshire, where she was placed in the strictest confinement. Here, however, she

found means to carry on a correspondence with her friends in Scotland, and, among others, with Lord Fleming. In a letter dated "Off Bowtoun, the 27th of September 1568," and addressed to the Archbishop of St Andrews, she says, "We haif written in ciphere to my Lord Flemyng, quha will mak zou participant thereof." We cannot find, however, that any of her letters to Lord Flemyng have been preserved.

Lord John Fleming, after returning from London, was despatched by Queen Mary to the French court, to explain the late events in her history, to vindicate her character, and ask for advice and assistance. On the 24th of August 1568, most likely before his return from France, he and his relative, John Fleming of Boghall, were summoned to present themselves before Pàrliament and answer for their late conduct in supporting the Queen. Having failed to appear, their estates were liable to be forfeited; but at the request of the Regent, who in this case is said to have acted on the advice of Queen Elizabeth, it was agreed that the sentence of forfeiture should for a short time be suspended, in order that they might have a fair opportunity to acknowledge their faults, and be reconciled to Queen Mary's successor, her son James.

The Regent Murray, in order to justify his conduct in taking up arms against the Queen, publicly charged her with being accessory to the death of her husband Darnley. On this account, Queen Elizabeth refused to hold an interview with her until she could exonerate herself from this charge. Elizabeth's object was to obtain a plea to be constituted judge in a cause so important as a dispute between the Queen of Scotland and her subjects. She had no right to put the Scottish Queen on her trial for this or any other offence; but Mary, confident in her innocence, and acting under due protest, accepted the tribunal. Commissioners from both sides were thereupon appointed to meet at York in October 1568, and thither Mary sent Lords Fleming and Herries, the Bishop of Ross, and other able friends in her defence. It was on this occasion that the Earl of Murray, in order to give a tangible proof of Queen Mary's guilt, produced the famous letters and sonnets which, it was alleged, had passed between the Queen and Bothwell, and had been taken from a servant of that nobleman's called Dalgleish. The investigation was carried on for five months;

and Elizabeth, in the end, dismissed the Commissioners, declaring that the criminal charge against Queen Mary had not been proved.

Lord Fleming, after this period, took up his abode in Dumbarton Castle, of which he still continued to be Governor. The Master of Graham was several times sent to the Castle for the purpose of persuading him to surrender it to the Regent; but he obstinately persisted in rejecting all overtures on the subject. The Regent, therefore, invested it with a considerable force, and as any attempt to carry it by assault was considered hopeless, the siege was turned into a blockade; and on the 18th of November 1569, "sentence of foirfaltour wes pronouncit aganis Lord John Fleming, and John Fleming of Boghall, for the keiping and halding the Castel of Dumbartane aganis the Kingis majestie." This sentence was confirmed by the Scottish Parliament in 1571; and the Act then passed, among other things, states, "And thairfoir decernis and ordanis all and sundrie ye landis, guidis, movable and vnmovable, als weil landis as offices, and vther thingis quhatsomever per-tening to thame and euerye ane of thame, to be confiscatt to our sourane lord, and to remane in propertie w^t his heynes for ewir. And thair persones to underlye ye panes of tressone extreme and just punishment distinatt of ye lawes of yis Realme. Quhilk dome wes pronouncit be ye mowth of Andro Lindsay, dempstar of ye said Parliament." The estate of Biggar, and the other estates of Lord Fleming, by this sentence were transferred to the Crown, and were held by it for eight years.

The garrison of Dumbarton began ere long to be straitened for want of provisions; but early on the morning of the 15th December, the Laird of Borg, taking advantage of the darkness that prevailed, and the want of vigilance on the part of the blockading force, succeeded in conveying into the Castle several "ky" and "laides of meill," greatly to the satisfaction of the Governor and his men, but vastly to the displeasure of the Regent, who sharply rebuked his captains and men of war that they "tholit the said furnischings to pas to ye Castel." The Regent made various efforts to induce Lord Fleming to surrender the Castle during the month of January 1569-70; but intelligence having reached his Lordship that Thomas Fleming, a brother of the Laird of Boghall, had arrived in Lochryan from

France, with two large ships laden with provisions and military stores for the use of the garrison, he refused to hold any further parley on the subject. The Regent, baffled in obtaining the object of his desire, left Dumbarton, and, in a few days afterwards, was shot at Linlithgow by Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh. The besiegers, so soon as they received intelligence of the Regent's death, broke up the blockade and retired to Stirling. In a few days afterwards, Thomas Fleming arrived at Dumbarton with his ships, and transferred the whole stores to the fortress without molestation. The Earl of Argyle, several of the Hamiltons, and other adherents of the Queen, repaired to the Castle, and held a conference with Lord Fleming on the posture of public affairs, consequent on the death of the Regent.

Queen Elizabeth, at the instigation of the King's faction, sent an army at this juncture into Scotland, under the command of Sir William Dury, which, during the spring of 1570, committed great havoc in Clydesdale on the estates of the adherents of the Queen. The devastation at Hamilton was such as had hardly ever been paralleled in Scotland before, and the ruthless soldiery "herrit all the Monkland—my Lord Fleming's boundis, my Lord Livingstone's boundis, together with al their puir tennantis and friendis, in sic maner that nae heart can think thereon bot the same must be dolorous." Sir William, after perpetrating these enormities, had the audacity to repair to Dumbarton in the month of May, and request a parley with the Governor respecting the Archbishop of St Andrews, who had taken refuge in the fortress. Lord Fleming, justly enraged at the outrages which Sir William had committed, saluted him with a bullet discharged from one of the great guns on the ramparts. This was considered a grievous outrage by the King's party, and gave rise to a lengthy ballad, entitled "The Tressoun of Dumbartane," which was printed in black letter, at Edinburgh, by Robert Lekpreuk in 1570. It says :—

"The General raid with mony Demyllance
Doun to Dumbartane, doand na man ill,
Quhair furious Fleming schot his Ordinance,
Willing to wraik him, wanted na gude will.

"Mair I lament the great ingratitude
Of creuel catives, kankerit and unkinde :

Quhat gart you schute to slay yon man of gude?
 Lunatyke monsters mad and by your mind;
 Degenerat Stewartis of ane Hieland strynde,
 As mix me balm and poysone put into it.
 Rycht as the tre is nureist be the rynde,
 Gardanus counsell causit the to do it."

It concludes with the following railing animadversions on Lord Fleming's conduct.

"Now fairweill Fleming, bot foul are thy deedis,
 The general this schedul at schort to the sends,
 Thou sall heir ma novells as farder proceedis,
 Bot not to thy sythment as sum men intends,
 The action is not honcest thou defends;
 Gif thou be angrie with ocht that I reheirs,
 The narrest gait thou can gang to seek amends
 Is mend thy maners, and I sall mend the veirs."

After the death of the Earl of Murray, the Earl of Lennox was chosen Regent. This nobleman manifested great anxiety to obtain possession of the Castle of Dumbarton, as a rumour prevailed that Lord Fleming intended to deliver it to the French. He craved assistance from England, in order that he might besiege it in due form; and Queen Elizabeth sent an armament by sea, for the ostensible purpose of furthering the designs of the Regent, but the real policy of that monarch was to crush neither of the two factions into which Scotland was divided, but allow them to weaken each other by continued quarrels and outrages. It does not therefore appear that the English force ever invested the Castle. Indeed, Elizabeth became of opinion that the Queen's party had been rather too much weakened already; and therefore her lieutenant, the Earl of Sussex, caused the Regent to give an assurance that he would, at least for a time, abstain from inflicting any further outrages on his opponents. The Regent, nevertheless, in violation of this compact, despatched a strong detachment of men to Biggar, and, according to the testimony of Richard Bannatyne, the Secretary of John Knox, who wrote a Journal of the Transactions of Scotland from 1570 to 1573, they committed great enormities; and as the estates of Lord Fleming

had been forfeited, they compelled the tenants in the Barony of Biggar, as well as in Thankerton and Glenholm, to pay large contributions under the name of the mails and rents of their lands. From Biggar they went to Cumbernauld, and perpetrated similar outrages, besides destroying the deer in the Forest of that barony, "and the quhit ky and bullis of the said forrest, to the gryt distructione of polecie and hinder of the commanweill."

CHAPTER XXV.

Historical Sketches of the Fleming Family— *Continued.*



THE Castle of Dumbarton, situated on a lofty and precipitous rock, and nearly surrounded by the Firth of Clyde, was in early times deemed impregnable. The use of battering artillery, at the time of which we are now speaking, 1571, was as yet but little known, and a blockade seemed unavailing, after the abundant supplies which the garrison had recently obtained from France. Captain Thomas Crawford of Jordanhill, a keen partisan of the Regent Lennox, was therefore entrusted with the apparently desperate enterprise of taking the Castle by escalade, during the darkness of night. He called to his aid the Laird of Drumwhassal, a skilful and intrepid soldier, and several other men of known courage, particularly a person of the name of Robertson, who at one time had been a member of the garrison, and was intimately acquainted with the fortifications and acclivities of the rock. The party assembled at Glasgow on the 2d of April 1571, and provided themselves with "ledderis, coardis, craves," and other necessary implements, and despatched a few of their number to stop all travellers to the west, so that no intelligence of the intended enterprise might be conveyed to the Governor, Lord Fleming. Having appointed the Hill of Dumbuck, within a mile of Dumbarton, as the general rendezvous, they set out by different routes about an hour before sunset, and it was past midnight before they reached the foot of the rock. "The geat with the gilteane horn," as Richard Bannatyne styles Lord Fleming, and the other inmates of the Castle, with exception of a warder or two, had retired to rest, undisturbed by a single apprehension of an

attack, and confident in the protection afforded by the crags and walls by which they were surrounded. A thick mist had by this time enveloped the top of the rock, and tended still more to conceal the operations of the party below. The "crawes" were then thrown against the rock, and the soldiers began to ascend the ladders, when the whole gave way, and came to the ground with great noise and violence. Had the sentinels on the walls not been asleep, or utterly inattentive to their duty, the party must have been discovered, and their enterprise defeated. The besiegers eagerly listened for a time; but all being still, they made another attempt, and with greater success. Some of the soldiers landed on a shelving part of the rock, where an ash-tree sprung from the crevices, and, by attaching ropes to it, they were able to render very effective aid to their companions below. They had now reached the middle of the ascent; but the most difficult part still remained, and the ruddy streaks of dawn began to appear in the east. They fixed the ladders once more; but an incident now occurred, which seemed likely to defeat the whole design. One of the soldiers, while climbing a ladder, overcome most likely by terror, was seized with a fit, and clung to the steps with such tenacity, that he could not be disengaged; but the self-possession and fertile mind of Crawford soon removed the obstruction by causing the man to be tied to the ladder, and turning it upside down. In a short time the whole assailants were at the foot of the walls, which were old and ruinous, and offered no great obstruction. They were now descried by the warders, who gave the alarm, and the inmates at once sprung out of bed, and rushed forth in bewilderment, without taking time to supply themselves either with clothes or arms. The assailants, having torn down a part of the wall, entered at the same time, and beating a drum, and shouting "A Darnley, a Darnley!" fell upon the disordered and amazed garrison. Three or four of the soldiers were killed on the spot. Lord Fleming and several of his retainers hurried down a passage in the rock, and finding a boat, escaped to Argyleshire; while Lady Fleming, John Fleming of Boghall, John Hamilton, the Archbishop of St Andrews, Verac, the French ambassador, John Hall, an Englishman, and the rest were made prisoners. Next day, at ten o'clock, the Regent Lennox arrived at the Castle,

and showed Lady Fleming very great kindness and attention. He gave her liberty to depart, and take with her all her clothes, jewels and silver plate. In the Castle were found a large quantity of warlike stores, twenty tuns of wine, twelve chalders of meal, ten bolls of wheat, eight bolls of malt, eight hogsheads of biscuit, and four puncheons of bacon. Lord Fleming found means to escape to France, the Archbishop of St Andrews was beheaded and quartered at Stirling, and John Fleming of Boghall was sent to the Castle of Blackness.

Lord Fleming returned from France on the 28th of May 1572, and brought with him a considerable sum of money, of which the adherents of the Queen stood very much in need. He landed in Galloway, and was met by Lord Herries, the Laird of Lochinvar, and others, who most likely escorted him to Biggar. On the 26th day of June, he arrived in Edinburgh at the head of a detachment of thirty horsemen, and took up his residence in the Castle, then held for the Queen by the stout warrior Sir William Kirkaldy of Grange. A few days afterwards, a party of twelve or fifteen French soldiers, who had been taken in a ship of war, and forced to serve in the King's army against their will, came up from Leith. Their design very likely was to desert the King's service, and to take refuge in the Castle. When they arrived at the Tolbooth, they were either opposed by another party, or were overjoyed to see Lord Fleming, whom they seem to have known, and who is said to have been the cause of their leaving their quarters in Leith. At all events, they fired a volley, and one of the balls rebounding from the causeway, struck his Lordship and wounded him in a most serious manner. The author of the "Diurnal of Remarkable Occurrents" says that the gun by which his Lordship was wounded, was only charged with powder and paper, and that the firing of it caused "the skalpis of the stanis" to fly up and hurt his Lordship in the legs; but this statement is very improbable, as the mere concussion of the shot was not very likely to split the stones on the street, and make them fly up with such force as to inflict a deadly wound. His Lordship was carried back to the Castle, where he remained till the beginning of September. "The sext of September," to use the words of Richard Bannatyne, "the Lord Flemyng, wha wes hurt be the Frenchmen which befor

staw out of Leyth, and that by his speciale doingis and meanis, departit this lyfe in Biggar, where he was careit in ane litter furth of the Castell of Edinburgh ; which litter not being able to go furth at the Castell yeat, vntill the portcullious were raisit, and liftit vp hier, which beand rasit vp, fele down to the ground agane, and pairt of a spelch therof fleing of, hurt Harie Balfour in the heid, wha efter he had lyne a 10 or 11 dayis, deid the xi of September. And so thair twa have gottin thare rewarde. God gif it be his pleasour that that throw his judgments may be a warning to the rest to bring tham to repentance ; but *consuetudo mali est indelibilis.*"

Lord Fleming, by his wife Elizabeth, daughter and sole heiress of Robert, Master of Ross, left a son, John, and three daughters, Mary, Elizabeth, and Margaret. Lady Fleming only survived her husband two or three years. At her death she left a Will, still preserved, in which she appointed her son John, her brother-in-law, John, Earl of Athole, and Thomas Scott of Abbotshall, her executors. It was in virtue of this arrangement that John Fleming, styled "Captain of Biggar," on the 25th and 26th October 1578, delivered an inventory of the "siluer wark and garments, and vyer thingis" that pertained to the deceased lady, to John, Earl of Athole. As this inventory is remarkably curious, and as the articles were most likely kept in Boghall Castle, a copy of it in the original orthography will be found in the Appendix.*

John Fleming, at his father's death, was only four years of age. In an account of the state of the Scottish nobility, published in 1583, it is stated that he was, at that time, a youth in the 15th year of his age, that his income was small, and that he was involved in debt and trouble, in consequence of the efforts which his father had made in upholding the cause of Queen Mary, and particularly in defending and maintaining the Castle of Dumbarton. A great part of this embarrassment was, no doubt, attributable to the forfeiture of the family estates, by virtue of which their revenues were engrossed either by the Crown, or by some of the partisans of the opposite faction. The Regent Lennox was graciously pleased to allow Lady Fleming, after the capture of Dumbarton Castle, to occupy a portion of her husband's lands ; but this

* Appendix No. VI.

would likely be barely sufficient for the maintenance of herself and her infant family. An Act was passed by the Scottish Parliament in 1579, "Restorand, rehabilitand, and makand the said John (Fleming), lauchful to enter be brevis to the landis and heretaige sumtyme pertaining to his said vmquhile father, as gif he had deit at our soveran Lordis fayth and peace." The following reservation made in this Act, was no doubt attributable to the Earl of Morton, then Regent, and the most powerful man in the kingdom:—viz., that, "ye heritable dispositioun of ze landis of Edmestoun to James Earle of Morton, Lord of Dalkeith, &c., nor the soume consignit be him for the redemptioun of the landis and barony of Kilbocho and disponit to him by reason of escheat, &c., be not comprhendit under this Act of present pacificatioun and restitution." Immediately on the execution of the Regent Morton in 1581, the Parliament decided that the clause regarding the lands of Edmonston should be reversed. "Sua that ye said Johne, now Lord Fleming, may bruik and jois the saidis landis of Edmiston, conforme to his predicessouris infestmentis." Archibald, Earl of Angus, as Morton's heir, laid claim to the lands and barony of Kilbucho, that belonged to Lord Fleming. Angus' claim was brought before Parliament in 1587, and it was decided that the matter in dispute should be settled by arbitration. The parties agreeing to this mode of adjustment, Lord John Fleming chose the Earl of Montrose and Sir John Maitland of Thirlestane on his side, and the Earl of Angus chose the Earl of Mar and the Master of Glammis on his. The decision seems to have been in favour of the Earl of Angus; for his descendants in 1641 disposed of the estate to John Dickson of Hartree, servitor to Alexander Gibson, younger of Durie.

In 1587, Lord Fleming was appointed to the office of chief gatekeeper and guardian of the house and bed-chamber of the King. On the 8th of May of that year, he was denounced a rebel for not appearing "to underly the law for bearing and shooting with hagbuttis and pistolettis and wounding sundry of his Hienes' subjects." On the 26th he, however, came forward and found security to the amount of L.10,000 that he "sall pass and enter his person in ward within the bounds of the sheriffdome of Stirling within three days, and remain and

keep ward therein, and not transcend the bounds thereof, ay and until he be freed by the King's majesty with advise of counsale."

At this same period, great feuds, as usual, prevailed among the nobility of Scotland, and kept the country in a state of constant turmoil and disorder. James VI., who was a rare compound of silliness and ability, of folly and sagacity, on the 14th of May 1587, assembled all the nobles at Holyrood, and exhorting them to give up their animosities, and to lead peaceable lives, caused them to join hands, and to walk two by two to the Cross of Edinburgh, where a grand collation of bread, wine, and sweetmeats had been provided. Amid salvoes of artillery and the jubilant demonstrations of the inhabitants, he drank their healths, and wished that they might long enjoy happiness and peace. On the 13th of July following, an incident occurred at the opening of Parliament, which showed that the efforts of the King to establish concord had been of little avail. We give this incident in the words of the venerable historian, David Moysie:—"The Parliament," says he, "beguid the xij day of the monethe of Julij, quhair his Majestie accompanied with his nobilitie red to the tolbuthe of Edinburgh. Bot befor his vnlooping thaire arose ane heiche contentioun betuix the erles of Crafurde and Bothuell, the lordis Fleming, Settoun, Home, and Innermeithe, anent thaire woites. The Counsell sat thairvpone, and fand that the erle of Crafurde sould have the prioritie of woite, and that the lord Flemyng sould have the woite afoir the rest of the lordis. Qubairvpone the Lord Home challendgit the Lord Flemyng with the singular combat, quho wer not suffered to fecht, albeit they were baith weill willing."

In 1589, Lord Fleming became surety for John Tweedie, a brother of James Tweedie, Laird of Drummelzier, that Michael Nasmyth of Posso, Thomas Nasmyth his son, and John Nasmyth his brother, with their wives, children, and servants, should not be harmed by Tweedie under a penalty of 5000 merks. It was stipulated that John Tweedie, on being relieved from ward in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, should keep ward within the burgh of Peebles until he satisfied Thomas Nasmyth for the skaith sustained by him from the downcasting of his house at Stirckfield.

In the month of May 1590, the King brought home his bride, Ann of Denmark, to Leith, and lodged her in the house of Thomas Lindsay. Here the King took all the Danish nobles who had accompanied the Queen, one after another, by the hand, and gave them a gracious welcome to Scotland. Shortly afterwards the King and Queen repaired to Church, to give thanks for their safe voyage; and there they were met by Lords Fleming and Hamilton, who escorted them into the place of worship, and sat beside them while Patrick Galloway preached a sermon. In six days afterwards, the Queen was conducted in state to the Palace of Holyrood, amid great manifestations of joy.

Lord Fleming was a great favourite of James VI., and received from him many tokens of his respect. After James ascended the English throne, Lord Fleming was one of the Scottish noblemen who were permitted to visit the court in London. He was appointed one of the members of the Scottish Council that sat in the English capital; and it was in virtue of this office that he was admitted to the presence chamber in 1607, when the King gave audience to the eight clergymen whom he had summoned from Scotland to confer with him on the state of the Scottish Church, at that time greatly disturbed by his controlling the freedom of the General Assembly, and appointing bishops as rulers in the Church. The prelates, who formed part of the delegation, of course readily came into the King's measures; but the inferior clergy, represented by the venerable Andrew Melville and his nephew James, would not renounce their opinions, or give up their opposition, and the consequence was, that in violation of everything like honour and justice, they were condemned to perpetual exile.

The King, to mark his appreciation of Lord Fleming's services and attachment to the throne, created him Earl of Wigton, Lord Fleming of Biggar and Cumbernauld, by letters patent, dated at Whitehall 19th March 1606. This dignity was "to last and continue" to him, and his heirs male of lawful and lineal descent, in all time to come. Lord Fleming, in presence of a number of Scottish barons, assembled at Perth on the 1st of July following, delivered the warrant for this honour, under the sign-manual, to the Earl of Montrose, his

Majesty's Commissioner, and received investiture in due and ancient form. In the first place, his banner was displayed, and he himself was brought forward attired in his appropriate robes, and supported by two noblemen; and then, after the ceremony of "belting," or girding his person with a sword, had been performed, the heralds, with a flare of trumpets, proclaimed his new style and titles.

The Roman Catholics in the north of Scotland, under the direction of the Earls of Huntly, Angus, and Errol, had, in the early part of 1608, shown considerable dissatisfaction, and a disposition to disturb the peace of the realm. A General Assembly was therefore convened at Linlithgow in the month of July of that year, by the King's command, at which several strong resolutions were passed against them, and a committee appointed to lay a petition before his Majesty, praying for the enforcement of the laws against Popery. The Earl of Wigton was chosen a member of this committee; and the King, in reply to the petition drawn up and presented by the Earl and his colleagues, said that he "would give order for a Convention of Estates, which should ratifie the conclusions of the Assembly, assuring them that the Church, keeping that course, should never lack his patrociny and protection." On the 24th of November, James wrote the following letter to the Earl in reference to these ecclesiastical proceedings:—

"James R.

Right trusty and well-beloved Cosen, wee greeete you well. The reporte made to us by the Commissioners of the late generall assembly of the procedingis therin, and of the greate zeale and affection kythed to all sortes of people there, for the advancement of God's glory, and the suppressing of the common enemy, and also of the happie unity and concorde amongst the clergy, did give us no small joy and contentment, that in this last age of the worlde, wherein error and superstition abroade had taken so greate rooting, nevertheless, within these our dominions, God hath been pleased to reserue a handfull to him selfe, who have never bowed the knee to Baal. And as wee acknowledge our self (in dewty to our God) bound to be a nursing father to his churche, a protectour to all true professours, and a prosequutour of all the enemies of the truth, so they may be eyther reclaimed, or then brought to

that case as they may be no more feared (since all those who are affected to this Romish superstition may justly be suspected as dangerous subjectes in the estate), so for the better countenauncing of the procedingis of the general assembly, we have appoynted a convention of the estates of that our kingdome to mete at Edinburgh, the xxvj of Januarie nexte, to the entent that such thinges as may farder the advauncement of the gossell, and suppressing of the enemy, may be then treated of, advised, and concluded, wherein there shall be no want eyther of our good wille, power, or authority; desiring you hereby to be present thereat, and to utter your loving care and affection to the wele of that Church. And because wee have appoynted a preceding meeting of some selected oute of every estate, to be at the same place the xxiiij of Januarie before, and having made choice of you for one of that number, wee desire you also both to keepe the tyme appoynted, and to kyth still as yee have done heretofore affectioned, to the advauncement of the religion presentle profest, wherein ye shall do us acceptable service; and so bid you farewell. From our Courte at Newmarket, the 24th November 1608.

Several other letters, addressed by James VI. to the Earl of Wigton, have been preserved by the family. They, among other things, declared, that the King had special confidence in the Earl's "affection to the advancement of religion and good estate of the cuntrie," and therefore call on him to attend certain meetings of Parliament and of the General Assembly, which had been summoned by the King, to adopt measures, among other things, for "hinderance of the encreas of Poperie." The King was not content with the meetings and deliberations of the Scottish nobility regarding religious matters; but, as is shown by a document addressed to John Lord Fleming, he issued an edict in 1619, calling upon the whole members of his Privy Council in Scotland to repair to Edinburgh, "and upon pashe day to convene at the heich Kirk of Edinburgh, and thair to ressave the communioun, efter the manner prescryvit by the ordoure and actis of the last generall assemblee, assuring thame that sal refuse to do the same, that they salbe deposit from their placeis in counsall, as unworthie of the trust

quhilk his Maiestie hes reposit in thame, by advanceing thame to sa heich a rowme."

It appears that the Earl of Wigton, when frequenting the court at Whitehall, not only presented petitions to his Majesty from others, but that, like Richie Moniplies, he sometimes embraced an opportunity of slipping into the royal hand "a siffication" of his own. We have an instance of this in 1613. The Fleming family, at one time, were patrons of the Church of Stobo,* which had four pendicles or chapels, viz., Dawick, Drummelzier,† Broughton, and Glenholm. The probability is that they had a right to appoint the vicars to these chapels in Roman Catholic times, and that they continued to exercise the patronage after the Reformation, as in the parishes mentioned, they at one time held extensive possessions. We find that in 1599, John Lord Fleming presented Alexander Fleming to the church of Glenholm, but in the course of a few years afterwards, the right of the Flemings to the patronage of this church, had been alienated or disturbed, and the Earl of Wigton, of whom we now speak, had again received a right to the patronage from his present Majesty, and had also given to the titular a large sum to secure his consent. The right of the Earl was, however, disputed by one John Gib, who attempted to establish his claim by an appeal to the legal tribunals of the country. The Earl presented a petition to the King regarding this matter, when he was at court; and he now addressed the following letter to his Majesty on the same subject:—

"Most Gracious and Dread Sourane,

At my laite being at your Heighnes Courte, the petitioun preferred by me for the Kirk of Glenquhome was graciously acceptit by your Maistie, the samen Kirk being formerly giftit by your Heighness to me, whiche nocht the less in purchessing the Titular's consent to the samen did stand me at no less rate than ten thousand poundis Scottis, as I did particularly signifie to your Maiestie, who then out of your Heighnes most gracious and bountifull disposition, pleased to promeis that efter a course sould be tane for securing wnto me

* Pennecuik's Description of Tweeddale.

† Drummelzier, in former times, included the present parish of Tweedsmuir, which was called Upper Drummelzier.

the Patronage of that Kirk, acqyred by me at so deir a pryce, or then sufficient satisfioun and recompence sould be gewen me for the samen. And now seing John Gib hathe of lait trowblit me with pursuite in the law, and heathe recovred decreit aganes me, I will most humblye intreat your Maistie to be pleased, according to your Heighnes promeis, that said Kirk, without farder trowble, be in my peaceble enjoying thair-of, or dew recompance and satisfioun be gewen to me for the samin. Thus humble crawling pardon for my bauldnes, and praying Almychtie God to ences your Maistie's happynes with long and happie regne ower' ws and blissitnes elswheir, I taik my lief, and, as I am most bound, sall euir remane your Maistie's most humble serwand and subject.

WIGTOUN.

Cummbernald, the 6th Oct. 1613."

We are not aware how this dispute was settled, but we suspect that it was unfavourable to the Earl, as it does not appear that either he or his successors afterwards exercised the patronage, and no mention is made in subsequent "retours" that it belonged to the family. The Flemings appear to have held the patronage of Stobo, Drummelzier, and Broughton, down to the time at which the male line became extinct. In 1734, John Earl of Wigton presented William Wallace to the church of Drummelzier, and in 1735, he presented to the church of Broughton, Mr Andrew Richardson, who gained so much notoriety on account of his violent settlement at Inverkeithing in 1751.

Lord Fleming married Lady Lillias Graham, a daughter of John Earl of Montrose. Her Ladyship was distinguished for her piety and devotion, and her zealous efforts to promote the principles of the Reformation. Livingstone, in his "Characteristics," says of her, "When I was a child, I have often seen her at my father's, at the preachings and communions. While dressing she read the Bible, and every day at that time, shed more tears (said one) than ever I did in my life." The distinguished John Welch, son-in-law of John Knox, in 1605, addressed a lengthened epistle to her from the Castle of Blackness, in which he was imprisoned for attempting to hold meetings of the General Assembly, in opposition to the edicts of

James VI. In this document, which has been printed, he expresses the consolations which he experienced in the midst of his sufferings; refers to the calamities which he anticipated would fall on his native country; vindicates the views which he held with regard to Church government, views which had led to his condemnation and imprisonment as a traitor; and declares his readiness "to be offered up as a sacrifice" for the precious truths which he had maintained. The gist of his opinions on ecclesiastical polity, he says, was contained in the two propositions—that Christ is the Head of the Church; and that the Church is free in her government from all other jurisdiction except Christ's, yea, as free as any kingdom under heaven, not only to convocate, hold, and keep her meetings, conventions, and assemblies, but also to judge in all her affairs among her members and subjects. Lady Fleming, no doubt, held the views of Welch in regard to Church government; while her husband, although remaining an adherent of the Kirk of Scotland, appears to have countenanced the opinions and repressive measures of the King, who maintained that no assembly of the Kirk could be held without his authority and under his special control, and, in fact, did not hesitate to avow that the deliberations of the Kirk were inconsistent with kingly power and prerogative, and, therefore, should be suppressed. The following entry in the Records of the Presbytery of Glasgow, under date 13th July 1596, shows that the Earl was somewhat remiss in his attendance on religious ordinances, at least in his Parish Church:—"The Presbyterie understanding that the absence of my Lord Fleming fra the Kirk of Lenzie upon the Sondag, his Lordship being then at Cumernald, within the bounds of Presbyterie, is the motive and great occasioun of moving his tenants, being parochiners of Lenzie, to byd away fra the Kirk to heir Godis word prechit on Sondag, thairfore the Presbyterie ordenis Mr Niniane Drewe, parson now present, ordinar minister of Lenzie, to summond the said Lord Fleming, how sone his Lordship cummis in Cumernald, to compeir before ye said Presbyterie to answer for his absence fra the said Kirk, and to sik uther thingis as the said Presbyterie sall happin to have to laye to his charge."

The Earl died in April 1619, leaving three sons and five daughters, and was succeeded by his eldest son John, who

warmly embraced his mother's ecclesiastical opinions, and was as zealous in the cause of Presbyterianism as his forefathers had been in the maintenance of Popery. He married Margaret, daughter of Alexander Livingstone, first Earl of Linlithgow, a lady of amiable disposition and great piety, who entered cordially into the religious views and schemes of her husband. They not only attended the ministrations of the settled Protestant clergy, but for some time maintained a chaplain in their own family. The person who acted in this capacity was John Livingstone, a son of the Rev. William Livingstone, a distant relative of the Countess of Wigton, who was first settled at Monyabrock, and afterwards at Lanark. His father wished him to marry and settle on some lands which he had purchased in his former parish of Monyabrock, but young Livingstone determined to devote himself to the work of the ministry. Having gone through the necessary curriculum he began to preach in January 1625, and for some time was employed in occasional ministrations in the pulpits of the neighbouring parishes, and in that of Biggar, no doubt, among the rest.


In the autumn of 1626, he went, by desire of Lord Torphichen, to Mid-Calder, and officiated as the assistant of the aged incumbent of that charge. At the death of this clergyman, which took place soon afterwards, considerable exertions were made to get Mr Livingstone appointed his successor; but this object was defeated by the bishops, to whom he was obnoxious. He resolved to go back to his father's house at Lanark, but before doing so, paid a visit to his uncle, William Livingstone, at Falkirk; and here he received a letter from the Countess of Wigton requesting him to come and see her mother, Eleanor, Countess of Linlithgow, then on her death-bed. He complied with this request, and the Earl and Countess of Wigton proposed, that as their house of Cumbernauld was somewhat distant from the Parish Church, he should reside with them, and in winter preach in the hall to their household and such of their tenants as chose to attend. He remained in this situation two years and a half. The Fleming family treated Livingstone with great respect. In 1635, when he was married by his father in the West Kirk of Edinburgh to a daughter of Bartholomew Fleming, a merchant of that city, the Earl and his son, John Lord Fleming, honoured the nuptial ceremony with their presence.

At the Wappenshaw held on the Borrow Muir of Peebles on the 15th day of June 1627, we find that James Chisholm in Glenholm appeared for the Earl of Wigton, "weil horsit himself, accompanied with seven horsemen, with lances and swords, dwelling on the said noble Earl his lands lying in the parish of Glenholm."

In the month of July 1629, an event took place which reminds us strongly of times still more remote, when the grandees very frequently decided their quarrels by brute force. A difference regarding the service to some land having arisen between the Earl of Wigton and the Earl of Cassillis, it was discussed for some time with increasing obstinacy and fury on both sides, and at last was submitted for decision to the Lords of Council and Session. The presence of the two noblemen, was, of course, required in Edinburgh; and as they either considered themselves in danger of bodily harm, or wished to overawe the Judges by a display of force, they summoned all their retainers to accompany them to the capital. The appearance of two large and hostile bodies on the streets of Edinburgh, naturally caused great disorder and alarm. The Privy Council met in haste, and appointed a committee to wait on the belligerents, and remonstrate with them on the impropriety of their conduct, and to prevent them, if possible, from proceeding to actual blows and violence. The Council at the same time decided, that so long as the two noblemen remained in town, they would not be allowed to appear on the streets with more than twelve followers each, or come to the bar with more than six, that they should comport themselves in a peaceful manner, and dismiss from their attendance all persons who had no necessary cause to be present. The Council also issued injunctions to all the other noblemen who were in town, and were friends of the two litigants, that they should "forbear the backing of them at this time, on the pain of censure as troubleshooters of his Majesty's peace."

CHAPTER XXVI.

Historical Sketches of the Fleming Family— *Continued.*

 IN the chapter on the Covenanters in this volume, we have referred to various movements on the part of John, second Earl of Wigton, and his son John Lord Fleming. They attached themselves at first to the cause of the Covenant, but influenced by the solicitations of their relative Montrose, and by the blandishments of Charles II., they turned their backs on that movement, and lent their support to the measures of the King. After the Battle of Philiphaugh, they do not seem, however, to have taken a very active part in the public transactions of the time. The overthrow and the execution of Montrose, and the losses and injuries which they themselves sustained, most likely disposed them to withdraw from public life, and to spend the remainder of their days in retirement and peace. The Earl died at Cumbernauld on the 7th of May 1650, and was succeeded in his titles and estates by his son John. This Earl married Jane Drummond, a daughter of the Earl of Perth, by whom he had five sons and three daughters, and died in February 1665.

The Earl's second daughter, named Lillias, fell in love with one of her father's servants called Richard Storry, and having eloped from her father's house, succeeded in forming with him a matrimonial union. She, with consent of her husband, in October 1673, resigned her portion, consisting of the five merk land of Smythson and others, lying in the barony of Lenzie, to her brother, Lieutenant Colonel Fleming, and received from him a legal acknowledgment that the same would be redeemable in the manner there described. The family afterwards obtained for Storry a situation in the Custom-house. The

marriage of this pair made a great noise at the time, and gave rise to a ballad, which has been preserved in some publications, and of which the following is the principal portion :—

“ The Erle o’ Wigtoun had three daughters,
 O braw wallie they were bonnie ;
 The youngest o’ them, and the bonniest too,
 Has fa’en in love wi’ Richie Storrie.

“ Here’s a letter for ye, Madame,
 Here’s a letter for ye, Madame,
 The Erle o’ Home wad fain presume,
 To be a suitor to ye, Madame.

“ I’ll hae nane o’ your letter, Richie,
 I’ll hae nane o’ your letter, Richie ;
 For I hae made a vow, and I’ll keep it true,
 That I’ll hae nane but you, Richie.

“ O do not say so, Madame,
 O do not say so, Madame,
 For I hae neither land nor rent,
 For to maintain you wi’, Madame.

“ Ribands ye maun wear, Madame,
 Ribands ye maun wear, Madame ;
 Wi’ bands about your bonnie neck
 O’ the goud that shines sae clear, Madame.

“ I’ll lie ayont a dyke, Richie,
 I’ll lie ayont a dyke, Richie ;
 And I’ll be aye at your command,
 And biding when ye like, Richie.

“ Fair Powmoodie is a’ my ain,
 And goud and pearlins too, Richie ;
 Gin ye’ll consent to be my ain,
 I’ll gie them a’ to you, Richie.

“ O he’s gane on the braid braid road,
 And she’s gane through the broom so bonnie,
 Her sillar robes down to her heels,
 And she’s awa wi’ Richie Storrie.

“ The lady gaed up the Parliament Stairs,
 Wi’ pendles in her lug sae bonnie ;
 Mony a lord lifted his hat,
 But little wist they she was Richie’s lady.

“Up then spak the Erle of Home’s lady,—
 Wasna ye richt sorrie, Lillie,
 To leave the lands o’ bonnie Cumbernald,
 And follow Richie Storrie, Lillie?”

“O what need I be sorrie, Madame,
 O what need I be sorrie, Madame?
 For I’ve got them that I like best,
 And war ordaned for me, Madame.”

The subject of this ballad formed the groundwork of a tale which appeared in the first and second numbers of “Chambers’ Edinburgh Journal” in 1832.

John Fleming, the eldest son of the last Earl, succeeded to the title and estates. Of his history very little is known. He married Anna, daughter of Henry Lord Ker, by whom he had a daughter, Jane, who became the wife of George Maule, Lord Panmure. He had only inherited the estates a period of three years, when he died, in 1668, and leaving no male issue, was succeeded by his brother William, who had entered the army the year previous, his commission as an ensign in General Thomas Dalziel’s own company of foot being dated 26th July 1667. The following is a translation of the terms in which William, on the 5th of August 1668, was retoured heir of the Biggar estate to Chancery:—“William, Earl of Wigtoun, Lord Fleming of Cumbernald, heir-male of John, Earl of Wigtoun, his brother-german, in the lands of Spittal, Easter Toft-Combes, Middle and Wester Toft-Combes, lands of Whinbush, Telfer’s Oxengate,* and Gildie Oxengate,—the lands of Heavyside,—the lands of Stane and Chamberlane Oxengate, Mossyde Oxengate and Staneheid, four oxgates of land at Hillhead,—the town and burgh of Biggar, comprehending twenty-four burgh lands and two cotlands, with mill of Biggar,—lands of Westraw of Biggar, comprehending thirty oxgates,—two oxgates of lands of Westraw of Biggar,—the three pound lands of the lordship of Boghall,—a part of the barony of Biggar,—the demesne lands of Lindsielands,† the lands of Over and Nether Voltis,

* An oxgate, oxgang, or bovate in Scotland, according to some writers, was 10 acres; Skene makes it 13 acres. In England, according to Spelman and Ducange, it contained 18 acres.

† Since the notice of Lindsaylands in a former part of this work passed through the press, East Lindsaylands has been sold to J. M. Little, Esq., London, for £7000.

part of the barony of Biggar, two oxgates of the temple lands in the Westerraw of Biggar within the said barony and said burgh of Biggar, ancient extent L.36, new extent L.144,

acris of land of the said burgh of Biggar lying round in the lands and barony of Biggar, the six merk lands of ancient extent of Glentoers within the barony of Monkland, with the patronages of the Churches of Stobo, Drummelzier, Dawick, and Broughton ancient extent L.4, new extent L.8 ; the burghs of barony of Kirkintilloch and Biggar, all erected into the Earldom of Wigtoun."

The Earl resigned his lands and honours to Charles II., and obtained a signature under the hand of the King, on the 18th of August 1669, authorizing a charter or regrant to pass the Great Seal of the dignities of Earl of Wigton, Lord Fleming and Cumbernauld, and also of his estates, in favour of himself and the heirs-male of his body, containing remainders also to Charles Fleming, his brother-german ; Sir William Fleming, Chamberlain of the Household to the King, and son of John, second Earl of Wigton ; to Lieutenant-Colonel Fleming, son of Malcolm Fleming, and grandson of John, first Earl ; and to Jane Fleming, only daughter of John, fourth Earl, and afterwards wife of George, Earl of Panmure ; to the heirs-male of their bodies *seriatim*, each and all of them, with an ultimate substitution, without division, to the eldest heir-female of the body of the dispee. It is a very singular circumstance that this regrant was never completed ; that, in the course of a few years, it became unknown to the family, and remained in oblivion until it was accidentally discovered some time after the middle of last century. By the above resignation of the Earldom, which was gratuitous and not onerous, and by the failure to carry into effect the new warrant obtained, the Earl may be legally held to have denuded himself of the honours conferred on the Fleming family by James VI., and perhaps also of his estates.

He married in 1760, Henrietta, a daughter of Charles Seton, Earl of Dunfermline, and by her had two sons, John and Charles, and a daughter Mary. The Earl was appointed by Charles II. Sheriff of Dumbartonshire, and Governor of Dumbarton Castle, and also a member of the Privy Council. His name, however, does not appear in connexion with any of the

arbitrary and discreditable transactions with which the Privy Council during his time was so very largely engaged. He appears to have lived a good deal in retirement, for his name seldom occurs in any public document. From the numerous papers connected with the management of his estates still preserved, it is evident that he was a careful and methodical man of business. He seems to have exacted from his factors a full and satisfactory statement of all their transactions. His household book, which was commenced on Monday 20th July 1668, immediately on his accession to his estates, is still preserved, and is a venerable looking tome with iron clasps. In it are recorded the daily expenses incurred by the family, summed up weekly, and certified for some time by his sister Margaret, after her death by himself and then after his marriage by his wife, Henrietta Seton. It is interesting as showing the articles consumed by a nobleman's family at the period, and the prices which they cost. A few of the items may be given, the prices being in Scots money. A pair of muircocks were 14s., a pair of woodcocks 12s., a pair of partridges 18s., a pair of chickens 3s., a hen 5s., a duck 3s., a dozen of eggs 1s. 6d., a pound of loaf sugar 14s., a pound of powder sugar 8s., a peck of flour 20s., a wheat loaf 2s., a fat cow L.14, 3s. 8d., a peck of salt 4s. 8d., a pound of candles 4s. 8d., a pound of fresh butter 4s., a salmon 9s., a dozen of trouts 4s., 100 herrings 14s., a gallon of ale 1 merk, a gallon of claret wine L.4, 17s. 6d., and a pint of brandy L.2, 10s. A regular entry is made of the kain fowls that were delivered by the Cumbernauld tenants, and of the sheep and cattle taken from the Forest of Cumbernauld for the use of the family. Occasional entries also occur of sheep brought from Biggar under the direction of Anthony Murray, the factor, and delivered to George Shaw, forester. For instance, on the 19th of May 1669, there were delivered seven score and seven, comprising 16 two yeare old tupes, 12 year hoges, 19 tupe hoges, 17 two yeare old wedders, 13 yeald yeowes, and 70 wedder hoges. It is interesting to note that almost every week a sum is put down as having been given to the poor, this sum generally ranging from a few shillings to two or three pounds. The entry sometimes is "to the poor that work," thus showing that his Lordship furnished labour to such destitute people in his neighbourhood as were able to perform

it. Very few payments are made for amusements. Those that occasionally occur are such as "to my Lord at carts, 4s., to the Fiddler Chisom 14s." Earl William died on the 8th of April 1681, and was succeeded by his son John.

This Earl, the sixth who bore the title since its revival by James VI., was a decided Royalist, and of course had no sympathy with the efforts made by the worthies of the Covenant to thwart the designs of the men of power, and overturn the Stewart dynasty. When William, Prince of Orange, landed in England, he took no part in the general rejoicing, but remained sulkily at his house of Cumbernauld. As might be expected, he lent no assistance to raise the Upper Ward Regiment, the 26th Cameronians, that was embodied at Douglas in 1687, for the purpose of supporting the principles of the Covenant, and the designs of King William. After James VII. had abandoned the throne, and settled in France, the Earl went over to the Continent, and remained for some time at the royal residence to console his fallen master. He returned to Scotland, and joined the party who were resolutely opposed to a union of the two kingdoms of Scotland and England. This measure, as is well known, was highly obnoxious to all ranks in Scotland;—the noble, the divine, the merchant, the craftsman, and the peasant, could see nothing in it but ruin to their respective orders, and, of course, misery and degradation to their country. The inhabitants of the Biggar district were in a perfect flame during the whole time that the Union Parliament, as it was called, carried on its discussions. During the month of November 1706, addresses or petitions against the Union were presented to this Parliament from the parishioners of Covington, Symington, Libberton, Quothquan, Dunsyre, Crawford, and Crawfordjohn. The address from the parish of Biggar was presented on Friday, the 15th of that month, and was no doubt gratifying to the Earl, who was present at the sederunt. The Articles of Union, after calling forth some creditable displays of forensic eloquence and patriotic feeling in Parliament, and the grief and resentment of nearly the entire nation, were, one after another, passed into a law; and Scotland saw the majority of her senators, for the most paltry bribes, barter away her independence, and sacrifice their own dignity and power.

The first effects of the Union were disastrous to Scotland. The abiding sense of humiliation and tarnished honour, the removal of many of the nobles and gentry to London, the ignominious treatment of the representatives of Scotland by the English senators, the improper interference with Scottish commerce, the imposition of new and odious taxes, and the dispersion over the country of a swarm of English revenue officers of dissolute habits and imperious dispositions, all contributed to keep the minds of the people in a state of intense irritation, and to attach them more and more to the exiled House of Stewart. Accordingly, when John, Earl of Mar, was repulsed from the presence of George I. in 1715, then newly landed on the English shores, when the address of loyalty and attachment from the chiefs of clans, which he wished to present, was rejected, and the office of Secretary of State, which he had held under Queen Anne, was taken from him, he set up the standard of rebellion, and called on all true patriots to rally to the rescue of their country.

No sooner was the note of rebellion sounded, than the Government, in virtue of a statute, commonly called the Clan Act, summoned upwards of fifty Scotsmen of note, and, among others, the Earl of Wigton, to appear at Edinburgh in order to give bail for their orderly and loyal behaviour. Only two persons, Sir Patrick Murray and Sir Alexander Erskine, thought fit to comply. The consequence was, that the others were declared rebels, and put to the horn. On a warrant issued by Major-General Williams, the Earl of Wigton was accordingly apprehended on the 20th August 1715, and placed in confinement in Edinburgh Castle. The Earl, by an instrument dated 19th June 1716, demanded that the Governor of Edinburgh Castle should set him at liberty; but the Governor, in reply, said, that as he had been committed to prison in the time of war, he could not be released without a warrant from the King, or those acting under his authority. The Court of Justiciary, however, in the course of a few days, ordered the Governor to free him from his bonds; and accordingly he was immediately set at large, after he had been kept in ward for ten months.

Many of the gentlemen of the Upper Ward at that time belonged to the opposite side of politics from the Earl, and therefore made a stand in favour of the House of Hanover. Captain

Daniel Weir of Stonebyres, the Laird of Corehouse, Sir James Carmichael of Bonniton, Sir James Lockhart of Lee, Baillie of Lamington, Alexander Menzies of Coulterallers, and others, assembled all their vassals, and had them regularly drilled and ready to take the field in support of the movements of the Duke of Argyle, Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Forces. The Duke of Douglas raised a regiment of 300 men, completely officered and trained. The first detachment, consisting of 100 men, commenced their march to the Royalist camp at Stirling on the 27th September 1715, and got the length of Carluke, when intelligence arrived that they were not to advance farther, in consequence of a scarcity of provisions in the camp. They consequently returned to Douglas; but the Duke himself, Baillie of Lamington, Sir James Carmichael, etc., proceeded onwards, and arrived at Stirling on the 29th. They were very likely present at the battle of Sheriffmuir, which took place about a fortnight afterwards.

It was the Earl of whom we are now speaking that, in 1739, carried on a series of litigations with his vassals and feuars at Biggar regarding their respective rights to the Common. This was most likely done preparatory to his effecting the new entail of his estates in 1741. As already stated, he seems to have been altogether unaware of the regrant by Charles II. in 1669.

By the new deed of entail, he became bound to resign his estates and titles in favour of heirs-male lawfully procreated of his own body; but failing these, in favour of Charles Fleming, his brother-german, and his heirs-male lawfully begotten; and failing all these, in favour of heirs-female. One of the special objects of the Earl was, that as his brother was unmarried, and as his only daughter Clementina had in 1735 married Charles Elphinstone, son of Charles, ninth Lord Elphinstone, the peerage of Wigton should not be merged in or identified with any other title. It was therefore expressly stated, that the heir to succeed should be bound and obliged to assume and bear the title, name, arms, and designation of Lord or Baron Fleming, and no other. He therefore provided, that when any heir other than the heir-male of himself or his brother should succeed, or have a right to succeed, to the estates of Biggar and Cumbernauld, and should also succeed, or have a right to suc-

ceed, to the title and dignity of another peerage, then, in that case, and so soon as it should happen, he was bound to denude himself of the estates, and that they should go to the next heir, who should assume the name of Fleming.

The Earl died on the 10th of February 1742, in the 71st year of his age, and was interred in the Church of Biggar. He was three times married. His first wife was Margaret, a daughter of Colin Lindsay, third Earl of Balcarras; and by her he had a daughter, who appears to have died in early life. His second wife was Mary Keith,* daughter of William, ninth Earl Marischal; and by her he had an only daughter, Clementina. His third wife was Miss Lockhart, daughter of the celebrated Sir George Lockhart of Carnwath; but by her he had no issue.

The Earl was succeeded by his brother Charles, of whom nothing of importance is known. He died unmarried in 1747, and the estates went to his niece Lady Clementina, and the title became extinct. Charles Ross Fleming, M.D., Dublin, claimed the title, and voted at some of the elections of Scottish Peers; but the House of Lords, in 1762, decided that his claim was without proper foundation. After the death of this gentleman in 1769, his son renewed the claim, but with no better success; and thus the title of the Earl of Wigton has for more than a century been dropped from the roll of the Scottish nobility.

Lady Clementina Fleming, only child of John, sixth Earl of Wigton, in 1735 married Charles, second son of Charles, ninth Lord Elphinstone. On the death of her uncle Charles, seventh Earl of Wigton, as already stated, she became possessor of the estates of Biggar and Cumbernauld, and she was also, through her mother, heiress-of-line of William, ninth Earl Marischal. Her husband, on the death of his father in 1757, became Lord Elphinstone, his elder brother John having died some time previously. Her Ladyship by this union had four sons—John, Charles, William, and George Keith—and several daughters. Charles and George devoted themselves to the

* Allan Ramsay, the celebrated Scottish poet, composed a dirge or lament on the death of Mary Keith, the Countess of Wigton. It is in the form of a dialogue between two shepherds, Ringan and Colin, who descant on her intellectual endowments, her personal attractions, and kind disposition.

naval service, and rose to distinction. Charles perished at sea, on board the "Prince George," 90 gun ship, when she was destroyed by fire on the 13th of April 1758, during a voyage from England to Gibraltar. William, who was for many years an East India Company Director, married the eldest daughter of William Fullerton, Esq. of Carstairs; and from them, William, the present Lord Elphinstone, is directly descended. In the year 1773, Lady Clementina "did for certain causes and considerations sell, alienate, and, in feu farm, dispone to and in favour of Sir Michael Bruce of Stenhouse, Bart., his heirs and assignees," those parts of the lands of the barony of Biggar and Boghall which she inherited from her father and uncle. In the year following, Sir Michael Bruce, by disposition and deed of entail, sold, alienated, and disposed the same lands to and in favour of Lady Clementina, and the heirs whatsoever of her body, and failing them, to the heirs-female of her uncle Charles, if any existed, to the heirs-male or female of Jean Fleming or Maule, relict of George Lord Ramsay, or to the heirs-male of the deceased William Fleming of Borochoan, etc. This disposition and deed of entail was, however, not recorded in the Register of Tailzies.

John, Lady Clementina's eldest son, was born in 1739. He was an officer in the army, and served under the distinguished General Wolfe in Canada, where, at the Heights of Montmorenci, he was wounded in the neck by a musket-ball. He received the command of a company of invalids in 1760, and at a subsequent period was appointed Governor of Edinburgh Castle. He succeeded his father as eleventh Lord Elphinstone in 1781, and was several times chosen a representative peer for Scotland. He married Anne, daughter of Lord Ruthven, and by her he had four sons—John, Charles, James Ruthven, and Mountstuart. He died at Cumbernauld House on the 19th of August 1794. His mother, the venerable Clementina, outlived him upwards of four years, and died at Cavendish Square, London, on the 1st of January 1799, in the 80th year of her age, and, as formerly stated, was interred in Biggar Kirk; the last of the Flemings being thus appropriately laid in the tomb of her forefathers.

With the death of Lady Clementina, the connexion of the direct line of the Flemings with Biggar terminated. Biggar,

no doubt, reaped very considerable advantages from its connexion with this old and distinguished family. The presence of a chief who often resided at court, who fought in his country's battles, who went on important embassies to foreign kingdoms, and who took a prominent part in the great public movements of the age, must have inspired the inhabitants with pride and confidence, while his vigilant eye would rouse them up to industry and self-respect, causing them to cultivate their fields with care, maintain their dwellings in a state of comfort, and cultivate habits of decency and order. No evidence exists to show that they were ever harsh and tyrannical landlords or superiors, but much, on the contrary, to prove that they treated their tenants and vassals with leniency, and conferred on them many favours. It was through their influence that Biggar was erected into a free burgh of barony. They bestowed on the burgesses very ample possessions, and, with the exception of appointing a head bailie, they appear to have left them very much to manage their own affairs. The inhabitants of Biggar parish, no doubt, sustained occasional losses from their connexion with the Flemings. In the days of feud and foray, revenge for the offences of a lord-superior was too often exercised on his unoffending vassals. The Flemings were at times obnoxious to men in power, or having at least the means of inflicting injuries; and hence their poor tenants were assailed, and their property destroyed or carried off. Murray, Lennox, and Cromwell made Biggar successively a scene of desolation.

The Flemings, as we have seen, were bountiful patrons of religious houses and the Romish faith. The altars in many a religious establishment received their benefactions, and many a mass must have been said for the salvation of their souls. The erection of the Collegiate Church of St Mary at Biggar, and its magnificent endowment, must ever keep their names fresh in the memory of the people of Biggar.

John, Lady Clementina's grandson, who became twelfth Lord Elphinstone, was an officer in the army, and served in different corps. He attained the rank of Major-General, and, on the 23d of April 1806, was appointed Colonel of the 26th or Cameronian Regiment. His brother Charles, who was born in 1774, entered the naval service, and attained the rank of Captain in 1794. He commanded the "Tartar" frigate in

April 1797, when she was lost by striking on a rock, while engaged in cutting out some valuable merchantmen from a French battery at St Domingo; but the crew were all saved. He afterwards commanded the "Bulwark," a 74 gun ship, and was stationed for some time in the Mediterranean. He rose to the rank of Admiral; and in the latter part of his life, held the important office of Governor of Greenwich Hospital. In virtue of the entail executed in 1741 by John, Earl of Wigton, to which we formerly referred, he laid claim to the estates of Biggar and Cumbernauld, the ancient inheritances of the Flemings; and as this was resisted by his elder brother, Lord Elphinstone, a litigation took place, in the early part of the present century, to settle the dispute. The Court of Session, on the 19th of January 1804, decerned in favour of Charles, the second brother; and this decision was afterwards confirmed by the House of Lords, and he consequently assumed the name of Fleming, and took possession of the estates. The Admiral for some time represented the county of Stirling in the Imperial Parliament. In 1816 he married Donna Catalina Paulina Alessandro, a Spanish lady, and by her he had one son and three daughters. Having fallen into pecuniary difficulties, his liabilities amounting to fully £41,000, he obtained an Act of Parliament in 1826, empowering the Judges of the Court of Session to sell certain parts of the lands and barony of Biggar, and lands and barony of Boghall, and to apply the price in payment of his debts. Three of the ten heirs next in succession being at the time of the passing of the Act in foreign countries, three years were allowed to obtain their consent to the sale; and this having been procured, nearly the whole of the ancient possessions of the Flemings in the parish of Biggar were, about the year 1830, brought to the hammer, and, as formerly stated, fell into the hands of five or six different proprietors. The Admiral died on the 30th of October 1840, and was succeeded by his only son John, who was born on the 11th of December 1819.

John Elphinstone Fleming entered the army, and served for some time in the 17th Lancers. At the close of his active military career, he was in command of the 2d Light Dragoons of the German Legion, and held the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. On the 19th of July 1860, he succeeded his cousin John as 14th Lord Elphinstone; but dying at Bournemouth on the

13th of January following, he enjoyed his elevation to the peerage only a few months. After his Lordship's death an attempt was made to attach the Wigton estates in payment of certain debts which he had contracted. His sister Clementina, who, in 1845, had married Viscount Hawarden, an Irish peer, connected with the county of Tipperary, therefore, raised an action of declarator in the Court of Session to have it found that the entails were valid and effectual, and that the estates in consequence were incapable of being alienated by the deceased, or attached by the Trustee appointed to wind up his affairs. It was unanimously decided by the Second Division of the Court in March 1865, that the estates were effectually entailed, and could not be held liable for his Lordship's debts. By a subsequent action it was also declared by the same Division of the Court in February 1866, that Lady Hawarden, in virtue of the terms of the entail, had a right to succeed to the estates at the time John Fleming succeeded to the Peerage as Lord Elphinstone, and that Mr George Dunlop of Gogar House, Edinburgh, who had, in 1854, received a disposition of the Cumbernauld estates from John Fleming, in security for money advanced to him, had no right to the rents or profits of that estate after the said John Fleming had succeeded to the Peerage. The Trustee on Lord Elphinstone's estate afterwards carried the case by appeal to the House of Lords, but their Lordships confirmed the decision of the Court below.

Viscountess Hawarden having died in 1866, her son Cornwallis, who was born in 1852, succeeded to the Wigton estates, and consequently assumed the name of Fleming. On Tuesday the 30th of April 1867, the young heir and his father visited Cumbernauld for the first time. They were received at Castlecary station by the tenantry on the Cumbernauld estate, by a company of volunteers under the command of Captain Watson, and a large assemblage of the inhabitants of the district, and then escorted to Cumbernauld House, where an address was presented to the young landlord by Mr Park, the parish minister. To this address he and his father made a suitable reply. The tenants and a number of friends were afterwards entertained at dinner in the dining hall of Cumbernauld House, and the greatest joy and satisfaction were manifested that the estate was still to remain in possession of a descendant of the old race of Fleming.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Early Conterminous Proprietors.



HAVING given some details regarding the Fleming family, it may not be inappropriate to follow them up with a very brief notice of some of the early conterminous proprietors, to whom special reference has not yet been made. These men, though of inferior rank and influence to the Flemings, yet occupied a prominent place in the district. They were chiefs in their own localities, and had a number of retainers, who were bound to aid them in all their enterprises. Each of them occupied his grim baronial tower, in which he defended himself and his property from the attacks of marauding neighbours, and from which he occasionally led forth an armed band to revenge his wrongs, or obey the call of his lord-superior.

We will begin with the

BROWNS AND DICKSONS OF HARTREE.

Hartree is an estate which lies to the south of Biggar, and was long held by a family of the name of Brown. Richard Brown of Hartree is mentioned in a deed dated at Lanark, 20th December 1409, serving William Douglas heir of his father, by an inquest held at that town. Richard and his son John were, in 1431, appointed bailies to David Menzies, laird of one-half of the barony of Coulter. William Brown of Hartree appears in a suit before the Lord Auditors of Parliament in 1478-9, at the instance of John Martin of Medop. It appears that Richard Brown, son and apparent heir of Andrew Brown of Hartree, had married Janet, a daughter of Malcolm Lord Fleming; and his Lordship, on the 23d September 1536, granted a precept of sasine for infefting Richard and his wife,

and the longest liver of the two, in the L.5 lands of Easter Hartry. Andrew Brown of Hartree was one of the witnesses of the charter of foundation of the Collegiate Church of Biggar in 1545. In 1587, John Lord Fleming granted a precept of *clare constat* for infefting Andrew Brown of Hartree, as heir to Andrew Brown, his grandfather, in the lands of Logan, lying in the barony of Glenholm, his Lordship being superior of these lands.

In 1595, John Brown of Hartree, very likely a son of the proprietor of the time, fought a duel with George Hepburn, a page of James Lord Yester, on Edston Haugh, a field on the north bank of the Tweed about a mile from Neidpath. The cause of this combat was an insulting speecch which Brown had addressed to Hepburn. This warlike encounter excited great interest, and all the principal men in the district assembled to witness it. The combatants fought on horseback with spears and swords dressed in their doublets. The Laird of Buccleuch acted as judge for Brown, and the Laird of Cessford for Hepburn, and the Lairds of Yester and Newbattle also took part in the proceedings. When all was ready, we are told, the two combatants rode tilt against each other with their spears, when Brown missed Hepburn, and was thrown from his horse with his adversary's weapon through his body. Hepburn having grazed his thigh in the charge, did not immediately follow up his advantage, but suffered Brown to lie unharmed on the ground. "Fy!" cried one of the judges, "alight and take amends of thy enemy." He then advanced on foot to Brown with his sword drawn, and commanded him to confess the truth. "Stay," said Brown, "till I draw the broken spear out of my body." This being done, Brown suddenly drew his sword, and struck at Hepburn, who was content to ward off his strokes, but at last dealt him a backward wipe across the face, when, blinded with blood, he fell to the ground. The judges then interfered to prevent him from being further punished by Hepburn; but he resolutely refused to make any confession.

On the 21st of June 1627, Andrew Brown of Hartree was served heir of his father, Gilbert, in the annual rent of 300 merks of the village, demesne lands, and mill of Kilbucho. In the muster roll of a Weapon-showing, held on the King's Muir,

near Peebles, on the 15th June 1627, it is stated that the Laird of Hartree (Andrew Brown) was absent himself, but that ten of his men were present, "horsed, with lances and swords."

On the 13th of August 1630, John Dickson, "servitor" to Sir Alexander Gibson of Durie, Clerk Register, received a charter from the Earl of Morton, of all and hail the town and lands of Kilbucho, the myln and mynlands and multures thereof, the lands of "Moitt or Maynis of Kilbucho," of Raw, Blendewing, Cluch, Goisland, with the patronage of the kirk, and the parsonage and vicarage teinds of the parish. The same John Dickson received, in 1635, two charters from the Earl of Traquair, conferring on him the lands of Burnfoot, Easter Place, Howslack, Blackbyres, Hartree Mill, and Threpland, "with the toure, fortalice, and maner place of the same lands." John Dickson, who thus became the founder of the family of Dickson of Hartree and Kilbucho, followed the law as a profession, and was raised to the Bench by the title of Lord Hartree. Some of Lord Hartree's successors have been distinguished men. We may refer to Lieutenant-Colonel William Dickson, son of the Rev. David Dickson, at one time minister of Newlands, who commanded the 42d Royal Highlanders at the commencement of the present century. He accompanied his regiment in the expedition to Egypt in 1801, and was wounded

"Whan Abereromby, gallant Scot,
Made Britain's faes to tack again."

On his return in 1802, he reviewed his Highlanders before George III., and an immense concourse of spectators, at Ashford; and then, at their head, commenced his march to Scotland, receiving great attention and applause from the inhabitants of all the towns through which he passed. At Peebles, he and his officers and men were entertained at a public dinner by the provost and inhabitants of that burgh, on the 19th of June of the year above mentioned; and, in course of the evening, the civic worthies, feeling proud of the Colonel as a native of their own county, offered to make exertions to return him as their representative to the next Parliament. They were as good as their word, and at next election succeeded in securing

a majority of votes in his favour, and the Colonel sat one Parliament as the representative of the burghs of Lanark, Linlithgow, Peebles, and Selkirk, then united in returning a member to the Imperial Parliament. Shortly after this, Colonel Dickson was raised to the rank of Brigadier-General. He is understood to have been a free, hearty individual, and rather fond of a glass of good wine or whisky punch. In consequence of repeated applications to these inspiring beverages, his nose by and by assumed a somewhat rubicund appearance. On one of his visits to London, he happened to be in company with "that daft buckie Geordie Wales," when his Royal Highness said to him, "Well, General, how much has it cost you to paint your nose?" "I really cannot say," replied the General, "I have not yet counted the cost, as I consider the work still unfinished."

It is worthy of notice that the General's orderly servant, Mr William Harlan, died at Biggar so recently as the 16th of January 1866, at the advanced age of 98 years. At the time of his death he was perhaps the oldest soldier in Great Britain. He enlisted into the 42d Royal Highlanders, or Black Watch, in 1792, that is, seventy-four years previous to his death, and, after serving twenty-two years in that distinguished corps, was discharged in 1814. He accompanied Colonel Dickson in the expedition to Egypt, and attended him during his illness from the wounds which he then received. He remained in the service of the Colonel so long as the old warrior lived, and, after his death, he continued with the Dicksons of Hartree until increasing age and infirmity induced him to retire to quietness and repose in the town of Biggar.

The Tower of Hartree, which was a conspicuous object from Biggar, stood on a knoll surrounded by marshes, near the site of the present mansion-house. It was demolished by the late Colonel Alexander Dickson, who erected the present building in its stead.

The Hartree estate is now the property of Alexander Dickson, Esq., Professor of Botany in the University of Dublin.

Threpland, a farm lying at the foot of the Hartree Hills, a short distance to the west of Hartree House, was a separate holding in the time of Alexander III. At the commencement of the war of independence in 1296, Robert, Laird of Threpe-

lande, swore fealty to Edward I. The name of the proprietors of Threpland was Brown, at least it was so in 1526. At a short distance from the "onstead" of Threpland, at one time stood a cottage or hamlet, called the Hole ayont Threpland, which very probably was built by the company of Germans to whom James V., in 1526, gave a grant of the precious mines of Scotland for forty-three years. These individuals made many excavations in our hills for the purpose of discovering ores of lead, silver, or gold. A hole in the hillside, supposed to be dug by them, can still be traced, and pieces of lead ore are occasionally picked up. This place is referred to in a rhyme, which, it is said, was composed by a vagrant, who had been disappointed in obtaining an "awmous" at the different farm-houses mentioned :—

" Glenkirk and Glencotho,
The Mains of Killbucho,
Blendewan and the Raw,
Mitchelhill and the Shaw,
The hole ayont the Threpland
Wad had them a'."

MENZIES OF COULTER.

One half of the lands of Coulter, at an early period, belonged to a family of the name of Bisset. It then passed in succession into the hands of the Newbiggings and Douglasses. The other half was long the patrimony of a family named Menzies. In the year 1385, Robert Maynheis obtained a charter from Robert II. of half of the barony of Coulter, which his father John had resigned. It is interesting to note that David Menyheis, one of the members of his family, granted, in 1431, his part of the lands of Wolchclide "in frankalmoigne" to the monks of Melrose. At the Reformation, this and other possessions of the monks were conferred on Sir Thomas Hamilton of Byres, in Haddingtonshire, who, in 1619, was raised to the peerage by the title of Earl of Melrose, but who shortly afterwards was allowed to change this title for that of the Earl of Haddington. In 1645, John, the fourth Earl of Haddington, was returned heir of the demesne lands of Melrose, comprehending among others, those of Wolfclyde. The farm of Wolfclyde appears to have been, at a subsequent period, the

property of Sir William Menzies of Gladstones. It now forms part of the Hartree estate; and it is worthy of notice that it still pays annually a few shillings to the Duke of Buccleuch, as Lord of Erection of the Abbey of Melrose.

The family of Menzies continued to hold a portion of the parish of Coulter, particularly Coulterallers, down to the death of Mr Robert Menzies, which happened in 1769. He was the last of the Menzieses* of Coulter,—their possessions in that parish having been sold two years after Robert's death to Mr. James Baillie, writer, Edinburgh.

BAILLIE OF COULTERALLERS.

The family of Baillie of Coulterallers, formerly of Bagbie, and Hardington, is an offshoot from the Baillies of Lamington. It is not accurately known at what time it branched off, but the Baillies were in possession of Bagbie previous to 1555. On the 22d of November of that year, William Baillie of Bagbie, Nicholas his brother, and Michael Short, his servant, and three others, were "replegiated" by James, Earl of Morton, to his regality of Dalkeith, to underlie the law, on the 17th of January following, for the convocation of the lieges to the number of six score persons, armed in warlike manner, and attacking James, Lord Sommerville.

William Baillie of Bagbie, in 1574, purchased the farm of Unthank in the parish of Coulter, of which his father Richard had been tenant, and it is supposed that this Richard was younger son to Sir William Baillie, fifth proprietor of Lamington, from the circumstance that Sir William had a younger son named Richard, to whom he granted a charter of the six merk lands of Walston lying in the barony of Hamilton. On 1st June 1479, William Baillie, secundus, made up titles, as heir to his father in the temple lands of Roberton, in 1584, in which he is designed son of William and grandson of Richard Baillie. His wife was named Janet Mure. His eldest son, named Alexander, who married Judith Campbell, died during his father's life-time, leaving a son then in minority. Mr William

* A detailed account of this family, from the pen of James W. Baillie Esq. of Coulterallers, will be found in the third volume of "The Upper Ward of Lanarkshire Described and Delineated."

Baillie, secundus, made a testament and latter will, which is dated at Bagbie, the 21st day of September, 1597, by which he appointed his wife and his son Thomas Baillie his executors and equal intromitters with his goods and gear. Item he appointed his son Thomas Baillie tutor to his oy and his living. Mr William Baillie, secundus, died the day following, viz., 22d September, 1597, and the testament is recorded in the Commissary Court Books at Edinburgh. Mr William Baillie, secundus, seems to have had three other children beside Alexander and Thomas, viz., James, Margaret and Barbara, and mention is made in the testament of other persons named Baillie, who were debtors or creditors of his ; but none of them are designed his children. Mention is also made of a son-in-law named William Tweedie of Wray, but it is not said which of Mr Baillie's daughters was his wife.

Mr Alexander Baillie, grandson of the above Mr William Baillie, secundus, succeeded to the lands of Bagbie and Unthank, but does not seem to have made up any titles to Unthank. He was appointed ruling elder for the parish of Robertson to the Presbytery of Lanark 18th July, 1639. He granted a disposition of the lands of Unthank to his son Major Alexander Baillie in 1642, and accepted a protection from Montrose in 1645.

Major Alexander Baillie having died, was succeeded in the lands of Unthank by his brother Major Claud Baillie in 1644, and on the death of Mr Alexander Baillie, major Claud succeeded to the lands of Bagbie. He married Jane Baillie, third daughter of William Baillie, the eleventh proprietor of Lamington. He was appointed one of the commissioners for the county of Lanark to gather in a supply in 1666.

To revert to Thomas Baillie, second son of Mr William Baillie, secundus. When tutor of Alexander Baillie of Bagbie, he acquired the lands of Overmains of Cormiston, in the parish of Quothquan, by a charter from William Chaneellor of Shieldhill, in favour of himself and Janet Lockhart his wife, on 10th November, 1603. Mr and Mrs Thomas Baillie were succeeded in said lands by their son William Baillie, who had acquired the lands of Hardington in the parish of Robertson, from William Symington of Hardington, brother of John Symington of Symington, on 11th February, 1633. He sold the

lands of Overmains of Cormiston soon afterwards, but Hardington remained with him and his descendants for several years. On the 2d day of October 1645, the moderator of the Presbytery of Lanark gave thanks to Lord Angus, the Laird of Lee, Sir William Carmichael, James Winram of Wiston, the Laird of Halcraig, Hardington, (William Baillie, first of Hardington,) Gilkerscleugh and Gideon Jack, Bailie of Lanark, all personally present, for their commendable adherence to the Covenant, and their resolute resistance to the enemy in this difficult time.

This Mr William Baillie seems to have died previous to 4th July, 1661, for of that date Major Claud Baillie of Bagbie, granted an heritable bond over all his lands and heritages to Alexander Baillie son of the deceased William Baillie of Hardington and Marjory Menzies his wife. Mr William Baillie was succeeded by a son also named William. Mr William Baillie, secundus, of Hardington, married Grissel Denholm, Lady Closeburn, daughter of Denholm of West Shield, and the contract of marriage (Post-nuptual?) between them was executed the 1st day of May 1674. He seems to have died previous to 1686, and to have left three sons, William, Robert, and Andrew. Mr William Baillie, tertius, of Hardington was a favourer of the Covenanting party, for on 6th September, 1666, Mr William Thomson reported to the Presbytery of Lanark, "that as for the conventicle kept of late at young Hardington's House he can prove by witnesses that Mr Nicol Bluik preached there. The Presbytery thinks fitt that it be recommended to Littilgill, Saint John's Kirk, and William Somervil, the Justice of the Peace, to take notice thereof for the breach of the Act of Parliament." Mr William Baillie, (tertius,) of Hardington, in implement of his father and mother's contract of marriage on 15th April 1686, granted heritable bond of corroboration of a bond he had previously granted on 18th July, 1684, in favour of Robert and Andrew Baillie, two sons only existing of said marriage, in the portions provided for them from the lands of Hardington. This bond is recorded at Lanark 18th September, 1688.

Major Claud Baillie of Bagbie, as has been before stated, granted on 4th July 1661 an heritable bond over all his lands and heritages to Alexander Baillie, son of the deceased William Baillie (First) of Hardington and Marjory Menzies, his

spouse, and he granted on 29th October 1661, to Alexander Baillie of Hillhouse, son to Richard Baillie, his brother-german, another heritable bond for 1300 merks, and to Jean Baillie, his sister, for 1000 merks; so he seems to have been of an extravagant disposition. This Richard Baillie was tenant in Hillend, and third son to Alexander Baillie of Bagbie. Major Claud Baillie sold Unthank in 1666; he was succeeded in the lands of Bagbie by his son William, against whom a process of ranking and sale was brought by Sir William Menzies of Gladstainis, male-creditor and donator to William Baillie (tertius), of Hardington, who had acquired the lands of Bagbie and others from Major Claud Baillie's son William, and also against sundry persons, creditors of William Baillie (tertius), of Hardington, which action having fallen asleep, was wakened and transformed^{and} against Robert Baillie, his only brother and apparent heir, on 15th June 1703 (Mr William Baillie (tertius), of Hardington and his brother Andrew being both then deceased), and again wakened at the instance of William Baillie of Lamington, and James Baillie, Writer to the Signet, son of Alexander Baillie of Hillhouse, for himself, and as representing Sir William Menzies, on 22d October 1719. The bonds by Major Claud Baillie in favour of Alexander Baillie, son of William Baillie, primus, of Hardington, and Marjory Menzies, his wife, and of Alexander Baillie of Hillhouse, were produced, also a decret of apprising at his instance against William Baillie of Bagbie, dated 27th Nov. 1672. During the dependence of this action, the creditors applied to the Court for a judicial factor, and succeeded in having William Bertram, Younger of Nisbet, appointed; and decree of ranking and sale of the lands of Bagbie and Shillowhead, with the Kirklands thereof, within Hardington and Kirklands thereof, the Half-trust lands of Hardington, Fallside, Smellgills, Hillend, and Bank, was pronounced in favour of Mr James Baillie, Writer to the Signet, on 18th July 1721, at the upset price of L.32,067, 14s. 8d. Scots.

This Mr James Baillie, as has been before observed, was son of Alexander Baillie of Hillhouse, who was son of Richard Baillie, brother of Major Claud Baillie of Bagbie, and son of Alexander Baillie of Bagbie and Unthank. He was born in 1660; married Miss Elizabeth Johnston, daughter of David Johnston, merchant, burghess, and guild-brother, of Edinburgh;

and passed Writer to the Signet in 1694. In right of his wife, he was made a burghess and guild-brother of Edinburgh 8th July 1696. He is designed of Wells in 1701, and seems to have sold this property previous to 1704, when he married Miss Anna Livingston, daughter of George Livingston of Salt-coats, in Haddingtonshire. He had three sons by his first marriage,—Robert, who was one of the magistrates of Edinburgh in 1745, and again in 1755; David, who married Miss Helen Bruce of Earlshall, and was killed at a horse-race at Cupar-Fife in 1725; and William, who was Governor of Guinea;—and by his second marriage he had an only son George.

Mr Baillie, who died in 1747, is represented as having been “a very honest and bright gentleman,” and was private agent for the Earl of March, Baillie of Lamington, Menzies of Coulterallers, etc., and had a large and respectable practice. His son, Mr George Baillie, succeeded him in the lands of Hardington and Bagbie, and married Miss Euphemia Bertram, daughter of William Bertram of Nisbet, and had—with several other children—James, Robert, and Menzies. James, who was born in 1732, was a writer in Edinburgh. He purchased Coulterallers in 1771, and died unmarried in 1818. Robert, who was born in 1734, was apprentice to his uncle, the Edinburgh magistrate, and afterwards a settler in Georgia, in the United States of America. He distinguished himself very much in the American War, and was colonel of a regiment of Volunteers in the service of his Britannic Majesty. He married Miss M’Intosh, daughter of John Mohr M’Intosh, one of the earliest colonists of Georgia, and one of whose descendants again distinguished himself in the Mexican War. He died in 1782. Menzies was first an assistant surgeon in the army; then a partner in the firm of Bertram, Gardner, & Company, of Leith, and afterwards Barrack Master at Leith. He was born in 1741, and died in 1804. He married Miss Anne Hodgson. Robert Granbery Baillie, Esq., who was grandson to the above-mentioned Robert Baillie, succeeded to the estate of Coulterallers on the death of his granduncle, James Baillie, in 1818. He married Miss Anna Baillie, daughter of the above-named Menzies Baillie, and had two sons—James William Baillie, Esq., W.S., and John Menzies Baillie, Esq., C.A. He died

13th October 1862, and was succeeded in the estate of Coulterallers by his eldest son James William, who married on 17th March 1857, Wilhelmina, daughter of John Ronald, Esq., S.S.C.

Coulter House, the residence of James W. Baillie, Esq., was the family mansion of the Menzieses. As one of the oldest gentleman's seats in the Biggar district still inhabited, we give the following representation of it.



This house was much altered and partly rebuilt about a hundred and thirty years ago by Mr Robert Menzies, who also built the present stables, planted the trees in the avenue that leads to the house, and surrounded the home park with a stone wall. The house itself has now rather an antiquated appearance, and the apartments, though apparently snug and comfortable, are not so spacious and imposing as those generally found in buildings of more modern construction. The present proprietor, according to report, has for some time been contemplating the removal of the house, and the erection of one more in keeping with the requirements of the times.

Some of the trees in the surrounding woods are old, having been planted by the Menzieses at least a couple of centuries ago. They are consequently of considerable size, even though

growing at an altitude of 700 feet above the level of the sea. A plane in the avenue six feet from the ground, measures 13 feet in circumference, and an ash in the Dove Park, at the same height, measures full $12\frac{1}{2}$ feet. A maple near the house has attracted some attention, and received a notice in several botanical works. The trunk at three feet from the ground measures nearly 11 feet in circumference. At this height it separates into two arms or boughs, both of which are large, the one measuring 9 feet and the other $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet in circumference. The diameter of the circle covered by its branches, some twelve years ago was 57 feet, but at that time, one of its large branches was blown down, and the diameter was thus reduced by several feet. We give a representation of it as it now appears.



THE BROWNS OF COULTERMAINS.

The lands of Coultermains were held for a long time by a family of the name of Brown, a name that prevailed largely in the Biggar district. The first of the Browns that possessed the estate of Coultermains, was Rodger, one of the sons of Richard Brown of Hartree, who is mentioned in a deed serving William

Douglas heir to his father, on the 20th December 1409. Rodger received a charter from James, Earl of Douglas, in 1440, of the lands of Coultermains; and on the 27th of January of that year, he executed at Edinburgh a back-bond, in which it is stated that the Earl of Douglas had granted to him and his heirs a sasine and charter of his demense lands of Coultermains, and that he bound himself, his heirs and assigns, to reconvey the same whenever the Earl or his successors should, in one day, between the rising and setting of the sun, without fraud or guile, make payment of 100 merks Scots on the altar of St. Michael, in the church of Coulter. This deed, although the estate continued in the possession of Rodger Brown and his heirs, was not recorded in the books of Parliament till the year 1525. John Brown of Coulter is mentioned in 1492, as attending an inquest of the gentlemen of the shire of Clydesdale, and his name is found appended to a document dated 1493, in the Shieldhill Charter Chest, resigning the lands of Nether Quothquan, by William Chancellor, in favour of his son John. In the register of the Abbey of Paisley, Richard Brown of Coultermains is mentioned as being, in 1509, proprietor in part of the lands of Calderbank, in the parish of Lochwinnoch. This same Richard Brown, in 1512, along with John Tweedie of Drummelzier, and James Lockhart of Lee, became surety for John Symontoun of Symontoun, when he was arraigned on a charge of treasonably forging false money; and as Symontoun did not appear to underlie the law, Brown and his associates were amerced in the sum of 1000 merks. Richard Brown of Coultermains, along with Malcolm, Lord Fleming, Andrew Brown of Hartree, and others, was, in 1526, accused of treasonable communication with Englishmen in time of war, and received a respite for nineteen years. He was also, along with Hugh Lord Sommerville, on the 24th April 1536, surety for William Chancellor of Quothquan, his brother Robert, and James Chancellor, when they were accused of the slaughter of Thomas Baillie of Cormiston.

In December 1562, James Tweedie of Fruid, most likely the son of the individual who married Catherine Fraser, formerly referred to, was attacked when seated before a fire in the house of William Tweedie, burgess of Edinburgh, and mortally wounded, before he could raise himself up, or parry the blows aimed at him. Patrick Hunter, John Hunter, bur-

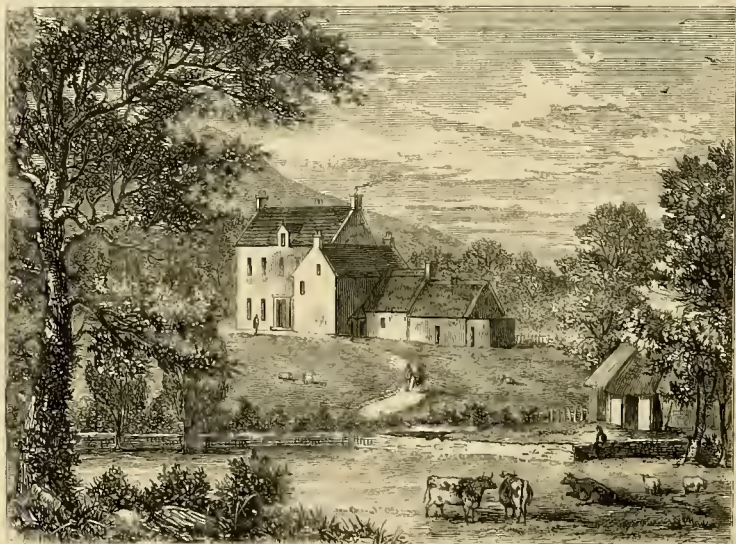
gess of Edinburgh, John Burn of Over Posso, George Paterson of Harestanes, and William Glen, the Laird of Fruid's servant, were tried for this murder; and among the "Prelocoutouris" at the trial were the Laird of Coultermains, the Laird of Carmichael, my Lord Semple, the Laird of Traquair, and the Laird of Coilstone. The panels were on this occasion acquitted. John Brown of Coultermains was arraigned for taking part in the murder of David Rizzio, in March 1566; but it is not known whether he suffered any punishment for this crime or not.

In the year 1571, during the regency of the Earl of Lennox, the people of Scotland were divided into two inveterate factions, called respectively Queensmen and Kingsmen; that is, those who favoured Queen Mary, and those who favoured her son James. Both factions held separate Parliaments, and pronounced condemnation and forfeiture on each other. The Queen's party held a Parliament at Edinburgh, in the autumn of the year referred to, under the protection of William Kirkaldy, the Governor of the Castle, and, of course, passed the doom of forfeiture on their opponents, the Earl of Lennox, the Earl of Morton, the Earl of Mar, and, among many others, James Johnston of Westeraw, John Lindsay of Covington, and John Brown of Coultermains, "for certain crymes," as the author of the "Diurnal" says, "and poyntis of tressoune contentit in the summondis directit thairupone; and decernit the saidis personis, and ilk ane of thame, to have tint and foirfaltit thair lyvis, landis, and guidis, and ordaynit thair airmes to be riffin, and thair namis and armis to be deleted out of the buikis thairof for ever; and thairefter the saidis lieutenentis and nobilitie, with sword, sceptour, and croun, past to the mercat croce of Edinburgh, and thair causit proclame the said foirfaltour." From this it appears that the Laird of Coultermains was opposed to the unfortunate Queen Mary, and took part with the Earl of Murray, the Earl of Lennox, and others, who contended for the government of her son James.

Robert Brown of Coulter, most likely a relative of the Browns of Coultermains, was, in the June of 1596, cruelly slaughtered on the Green of Coulter, and the goods and cattle of his brother carried off, by Thomas Jardine of Birnock, and his two sons, Humphrey and Alexander, individuals who, about that period, committed many barbarous outrages in the Upper Ward. One of their most atrocious deeds was their burning

and destroying the place of Littlegill, in the parish of Wandell, in 1589, "with hail laiche housis, barnes, and byres thairof, and hail insicht and plenessing being thairin, and their crewall burning and slaying of umquhile Alexander Bailzie of Littlegill, Rachel Bailzie, dochter to Mathow Bailzie now of Littlegill, and umquhile Achiesone, servand to the said Mathow, the saidis umquhile three persones being all within the said place the tyme of the burning and destroying thairof." The Jardines for these crimes were summoned to an assize at Edinburgh, but failing to appear, were outlawed. Alexander Jardine was, however, brought to trial, for the murder of Robert Brown, in 1609, and being convicted was hanged.

The estate of Coultermains consisted of two divisions. The one was called the dominical 50s. lands of old extent, and the other the £5 lands of old extent. The 50s. lands lay on the west, and are those which were first acquired by the family of Brown, and on which the old mansion-house was built. Till 1598, this mansion was a tower, or as it is called in the deeds, a fortalice, and the exact spot on which it stood is the north-east corner of the present garden. The family abandoned the tower at that time, and erected a small but commodious dwelling-house near it; and this building remained till 1838, when it was removed by the present proprietor, Mr Sim. We



give a woodcut of it as it appeared at the time of its demolition. Two stones of the old building were carefully preserved, and built into the elegant new edifice then erected. One of these stones has the inscription, J. B. 1598, K. L. ; and the other, J. B., K. L., 1600. The initials refer to John Brown, and his spouse, Katherine Lockhart, a daughter of the old Clydesdale House of Lee.

This Laird died in 1600, and was succeeded by his son Richard, who, on the 12th of May of that year, was retoured heir of his father of the 50s. lands called "Coultermancis," within the barony of Coulter. John Brown, and his son Richard, involved their affairs and estate in pecuniary difficulties ; but from what cause, does not appear ; and wadsets were granted over the lands to Sir James Lockhart of Lee, Malcolm Fleming, younger, of Cardon, Menzies of Coulterallers and Carlops, and Walter Carmichael. It appears that in the end Sir James Lockhart* exerted himself to set the affairs of his relatives the Browns free from embarrassment, and that through his means a charter of resignation in favour of John Brown, and his wife, Jean Sommerville, was granted by the various parties, restoring all their possessions from wadsets, in 1637.

John Brown, the Laird of Coultermains of whom we are now speaking, was what was called a "Malignant," that is, he favoured the side of Charles I. ; and though he did not openly join Montrose, and take part in his military movements, yet he secretly gave him his countenance and aid. The consequence of this was, that he, as formerly stated, came under the lash of the Presbytery of Biggar.

At the period to which we are now referring, when great commotions in Church and State prevailed, and property and even life were insecure, John Brown of Coultermains removed the writs and evidents of his lands to the house of his friend and brother-Malignant, William Lindsay of Birthwood, situated in a solitary but beautiful glen at the foot of Coulter Fell. Here an accident happened, by which the whole papers and

* It may be mentioned that Sir James Lockhart was father of the celebrated Sir William Lockhart, who was the friend and minister of Oliver Cromwell, his ambassador to France, and the commander of his army at the taking of Dunkirk. Sir William married Robina Sewster, the niece of Cromwell, and thus the cousin of the Coultermains family was intimately connected with the great head of the Commonwealth.

charters containing the history of the Browns, and the rights and titles of their estate, were destroyed. The following extract from the Charter of Novodanus of both halves of Coultermains in favour of John Brown of Coultermains, dated 4th February 1659, tells the story :—“ Richard, Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and dominions thereto belonging, to all men to whose knowledge this our present charter shall come, greeting,—Be it knowne that for-as-mekill as we understanding that our loved Johne Broune of Coultermayncs stands heritable infest in all and hail the fyve pund land of Coulter Mayncs, alsweil that halff thereof called the auld or west halff, as in that other halff of the samyne called the new or eister halff of the saidis lands, with houses, biggings, yardis, pairts, pendicles, and pertinents thereof whatsomever, lyand within the parochin of Coulter and our Shereffdome of Lanark, holdin immediatlie of us and our predecessors, Kings of Scotland, be service of warde and relieff, and siclykc, wee being certainlie informed that in the time of the late *troubles* in the year ane thousand sex hundreth and fiftic ane, the said John Broune, for securing his writes and evidents of the saidis lands, haveing committed the samyne to the custodie of William Lindsaye of Birthwode, to be kepte wtin his hous, as a place remote and reteired frome all publicke hieways, the saidc hous, and all within the samyne, and among the rest, the saidis hail writs and evidents, were be ane sad and unexpected accident totallie brunt, and destroyed with fyre, as hes been sufficientlie instructed and made appear to our said Commissioner of Exchequere, be twa severall certificates of the truth thereof produced before them,—ane whereof subscribed be the Moderator and brethren of the Prisbitre of Biggar, and the other, be the Justices of our Peace within that our countie,” etc., etc. The Browns thought it necessary to get a similar charter from Charles II., July 1st, 1661, two years afterwards.

In July 1681, a deed was committed by the Laird of Coultermains, which strongly marks the disordered state of the country at the time, and the disposition of the local proprietors to disregard the laws and settle their disputes by brute force. Alexander Menzies, Laird of Coulterallers, about that period, for the accommodation of the housewives of his neighbourhood,

erected a waulk-mill on his own property, near the foot of Coulter Water, and a short time afterwards built a house contiguous to it, as a dwelling for the person in charge of the mill. Mr Brown offered no obstruction to the process of building this house; but after it was completed, he, on some ground or other, manifested his dissatisfaction. Mr Menzies, in consequence, took out a law-borrows against him; but Mr Brown, paying no regard to this legal protection, assembled a considerable number of persons connected with Coulter, and among others, John Vallange, Luke Vallange his son, John Kemp, James Brown, William Brown, John Patoun, Mungo Inglis, and Alexander Inglis, "all boddin in feir of weir, armed with swords, pistols, axes, and other instruments," and leading them to the waulk-mill in question, there "by force, bangistry, violence, and oppression, did demolish and throw down the said dwelling-house." For this crime, the Laird and his accomplices, just named, were served with an indictment at the instance of Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, his Majesty's advocate, and Mr Alexander Menzies of Coulterallers, on the 30th of the same month of July, to stand their trial; but, unfortunately, the result is not known.

In the chapter on the Covenanters, we have referred to the capture of a James Brown of Coulter by Claverhouse; but this person was not the Laird of Coultermains, though it is very possible he was a relation of the family. John Brown of Coultermains died in 1685, and was succeeded by his son Richard, of whom nothing of importance is known. His son William was the next Laird of Coultermains, who obtained a disposition of the estate from his father in 1704, upon which he expedite a crown charter, and was infeft. The eldest son of William was John, who succeeded in 1736. He studied for the Church, and being licensed by the Presbytery of Biggar, was ordained minister of Symington in September 1743. He was translated to the church of his native parish, Coulter, in October 1750. He married Ann, a daughter of William Bertram of Nisbet and Kersewell.

The memory of this worthy clergyman is still held over the district in the very highest respect. As a minister of the Gospel, he was distinguished for his piety and intelligence, as

well as for his deeds of hospitality and benevolence ; and as a proprietor, for the improvements he made on his ancestral property, by embankments, water-ducts, and planting, thus affording ample employment to his poorer parishioners. With the exception of the old trees which stood round the tower taken down in 1598, he was the planter of all the others, on this now well-timbered property. He built a considerable addition to the mansion in 1753, which formed the principal part of the house that was removed in 1838. An ornamental window, which was carefully placed in the new house, has the above date, 1753, cut on it, and is preserved as a sort of memorial of the worthy minister. His eldest son, called William, was educated for the Church, but was carried off by consumption in 1771, at a very early age. His worthy father received a severe blow from this bereavement ; and when asked by the family when the funeral should take place, he replied, " Do not be in a hurry, you may have two to bury." He died two days afterwards, and he and his son were interred in the same grave. An incident occurred at the funeral which we have heard related by an eye-witness. The minister's man, an attached old servant, was so overpowered by his feelings, when he saw the remains of his master and his son lowered to their final resting place, that he fell, as if he had been dead, into the grave. Water from the baptismal well soon restored him to consciousness ; but the incident, of course, made a great noise at the time at which it happened.

On the Sabbath immediately following the funeral of Mr Brown, a sermon was preached in the Church of Coulter by the Rev. John M'Caul, minister of Symington, from which we give the following extracts :—" Your late worthy pastor had a pleasant countenance and a cheerful temper, which rendered his conversation and company agreeable to all about him. Such was the dignity of his behaviour, that he was a fit companion for persons of the highest rank of life, and at the same time he was so affable and condescending, that he could accommodate himself to people of the meanest station. He was prudent and circumspect in his walk, and possessed in an eminent degree that wisdom which cometh from above, which is pure and peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

He had the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which, in the sight of God, is of so great a price, and was possessed of such mild dispositions, that he was scarce ever seen to be angry or out of temper. The important virtues of integrity and sincerity, uprightness and truth, remarkably appeared in his conduct, which made him detest all deceit, guile, and dissimulation, flattery, and servile complaisance. He was of a compassionate, sympathising, and humane temper, one of the chief excellencies of the Christian character. His heart would not suffer him to give pain or uneasiness to the meanest of mankind, and it gave him the sincerest pleasure to see any one around him happy.

“He was a dutiful son, a tender loving husband, a most affectionate parent, a humane and prudent master, a true and lasting friend. I never knew a couple that enjoyed a greater share of conjugal felicity. Their life, in that respect, was like a bright sunshine day without a cloud. They were never so happy as when in one another’s company. He behaved not only like a parent, but like an elder brother, to his children, and treated them in so affectionate a manner that he was dear to them as their own souls. Perhaps I may venture to affirm, that I never saw a family where order, peace, harmony, and love reigned in greater perfection.

“It pleased the Allwise Sovereign of the world to deprive him of his eldest son two days before his own death. This was a trying dispensation,—for he was a youth of the best, the most amiable disposition. God had early indued his heart with piety and virtue. This appeared from the whole of his conduct and behaviour, and from the pains he took to prepare himself to partake of the holy sacrament of the Lord’s Supper; and his more than ordinary desire to perform this religious duty, and from his intention to devote his life to the ministry as soon as he found himself qualified for that holy office. He was at the same time a most affectionate and dutiful son, and a loving and affectionate brother. He was a warm friend to the poor, to the fatherless and widow, and always ready to do them any charitable office, in which he took great pleasure. His parents’ hearts were quite delighted with these promising hopes, and they flattered themselves that he would be their

support in their declining years ; but alas, how uncertain are all worldly comforts ; it pleased God to take him to Himself.

“ This heavy affliction his father bore with great seeming composure and pious resignation. He often set himself to comfort his family with the most heavenly consolations. The blessing he asked, or I should rather say, the prayer he put up to Almighty God a little before he was seized with his fatal disease, was uncommonly elevated and heavenly, and the discourse he had with his family the most desirable exercise in which a good man could be employed. In this frame and in these exercises, he was suddenly struck with that disease, which in a few hours put a period to his valuable life. They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided.”

John Brown, before the Sheriff of Lanark, 3d July 1795, was served heir to his father, John Brown, Laird of Coultermains, and minister of the Gospel at Coulter, to whom we have just referred. He married Miss Cecilia Grizel Bertram, a daughter of the old House of Nisbet and Kersewell. Mr Brown was a Deputy-Lieutenant of the county of Lanark, and a freemason, hailing from St Luke's Lodge, Edinburgh. He was admitted an honorary member of the Lodge of Biggar Free Operatives in April 1796, and on the occasion presented the Lodge with a donation of two guineas. On the 19th of February 1817, Mr Brown sold Coultermains to the late David Sim, merchant, Glasgow. The present representative of this old family is John Brown, Esq., W.S., Edinburgh, a gentleman well known and universally respected.

The present proprietor of Coultermains, Adam Sim Esq., in 1838, erected an elegant mansion on the estate. It is in the Elizabethan style of architecture, from a design by Mr Spence, architect, Glasgow. It stands on a lawn at a short distance from the right bank of the Clyde, and is finely embowered amid luxuriant plantations. Recently a tasteful porter's Lodge and gateway were erected on the approach from Coulter village, and the house itself was surrounded by a handsome balustrade. Within the space enclosed by the balustrade have been placed some carved stones from the old Cathedral of St. Giles, Edinburgh, several antique dials, a number of old stone implements, two large fossils brought from a quarry at Wishaw, &c. Internally the house is fitted up in a style of



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THE HOUSE OF ADAM SIM ESQ.
COULTER MAINS

great elegance and taste. The lobby is covered with a variety of armour and implements of the olden time; the library is a fine apartment, stored with a rich collection of antiquarian lore; the drawing-room is magnificently adorned with costly furniture, and a perfect profusion of rare and choice works of art; one of the rooms above stairs is fitted up in a very impressive manner, with carved oak panelling in the mediæval style of art, with antique furniture and stained glass windows; and some of the bedrooms are finely decorated with panelling, gilding, and painting, and others have stores of ancient cabinets, mirrors, candelabra, prints, &c.

The great and distinguishing feature of the mansion, however, is its collection of antiquities. Mr Sim, during a considerable portion of his life, has employed himself in gathering together all sorts of things rare, curious, and antique. In this respect he stands out in broad relief among his compeers. He is *facile princeps* the archaeologist of the district. The late James Brown of Edmonston, in his time, acquired some reputation as a collector of local antiquities, but Mr. Sim has far surpassed him in the amount of his labours, expenditure, and success. He has laid almost every hamlet, mountain, and field in Upper Clydesdale under contribution; he has invested the whole of this region with a new interest; and he has awakened a spirit of investigation among ploughmen, drainers, shepherds &c. that has induced them carefully to preserve every relic of bygone ages that they could find, and to offer them on the antiquarian shrine at Coultermains. Here consequently are articles used by the natives when they were evidently sunk in a state of deep barbarism; here are tools of bronze and of iron that mark the gradual progress of art and civilization; here are instruments with which our forefathers tortured and punished the unhappy perpetrators of real or imaginary crimes; here are articles once held in great veneration or terror but now, stripped of all virtue or power, are regarded simply as objects of curiosity; here are warlike and domestic implements familiar to former generations, and now in their very name and appearance, almost unknown; here are coins brought by invaders, or used by the native population centuries ago, and now treasured up in curious cabinets and boxes, and shown to intelligent and inquiring visitors;—and here is a rare collec-

tion of books, written or possessed by notable men connected with the district either by residence or birth. Throughout this work we have referred to several antiquities and objects of interest deposited in this great store, and have even selected a few for pictorial representation, but these must be regarded merely as samples. It would require no small space to give even a short detail of everything rare and interesting in this collection. Instead of attempting to write a description, which would necessarily be meagre, imperfect, and unsatisfactory, we prefer to insert part of the account of "A Vision" which some time ago disturbed the slumbers of that excellent man and distinguished poet, the Rev. James Proudfoot of Coulter.

Where the Clyde, that noble river,
 Deep and clear the valley drains,
 Saw you dwelling sweeter ever
 Than the house of Coultermains.

Stronghold of an antiquarian,
 Filled with relics to the brim,
 Grecian, Roman, and Barbarian,
 All have tribute paid to him.

How he got them all collected,
 It is safer not to say ;
 Some of them it is suspected,
 Have come in a doubtful way.

Fain of him I would think better ;
 But confess much I do fear
 If not thief, he is resetter,
 Of all kinds of goods and gear.

Be this as it may : a vision
 Lately stood around my bed,
 Raised by some astute magician,—
 A disturber of the dead.

All at once before that dwelling,
 Bursts a clear and shining light,
 As the drowsy clock was telling
 Forth the witching time of night.

And a cloud of fearsome spectres
 Lighted down upon the green,
 Passing far all my conjectures
 What their number may have been.

They seemed of all different nations,
 And of various orders sprung ;
 Men of various ranks and stations,—
 Men and women old and young.

One of them, a leading spectre,
 Thus addressed the ghostly crowd,
 And I'm sure that never Hector,
 Spoke in terms so fierce and loud.

“ We are come to rend asunder,
 This audacious robber's den ;
 Place of thievery and plunder,
 Shameful to the race of men.”

Thus he spoke, and bade them batter
 Down the massive oaken door,
 In they burst with clang and clatter,
 Mortals never heard before.

From the pre-historic period,
 Tumbled down a shower of stones,
 Which anon was quickly buried,
 'Neath a thunder-plump of bronze.

Next a cataract of iron,
 Clanged in one unbroken stream,
 O! for bard like Burns or Byron,
 To do justice to my theme.

Armour of all shapes and metals,
 Thundered down upon the ground,
 Broken pots and clouted kettles
 Echoed back the hideous sound.

Rusty swords and spears did rattle,
 Helms and coats of mail upon,
 Battle axes which in battle
 Once their bloody work had done.

Next ensued a fearful scramble,
 For the antiquarian hoard,
 How the spectres rage and ramble!
Suum cuique is the word.

See that witch has grabbed a broomstick,
 Which had borne her through the air,
 And though only like a drumstick,
 Had been steed of metal rare.

Then her stool seized Jenny Geddes,
 Hearty hater of humbug ;
 Would you not be sent to Hades,
 Say no masses at her lug.

Buirly barons hot from Flodden,
 Clutched the brands they erst did weild ;
 Fiery celts from dark Culloden
 Claimed the long forgotten shield.

Wallace wight has got a backful
 Of his old gigantic blades,
 Of the same Brnee has a sackful,
 Broken once on English heads.

Julius Caesar for his mail coat
 Rages like a wild dragoon ;
 Pompey having found his kail pot
 Shakes aloft his cutty spoon.

Robespierre, Murat, and Danton,
 Still on scent of slaughter keen,
 Throw away an old Joe Manton,
 Clutching at the guillotine.

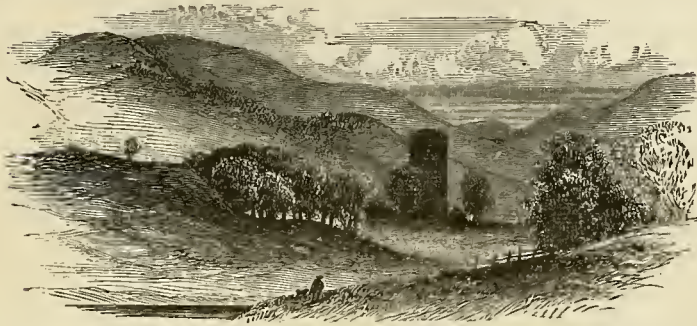
Whilst I lay more than astonished
 Chanticleer his matin crew.
 At the sound the ghosts admonished
 Passed like lightning from my view.

THE BAILLIES OF LAMINGTON.

The barony of Lamington, a few miles from Biggar, was founded by a person named Lambin in the reign of David I. It appears to have continued in this family for a considerable period, but according to Blind Harry, the Minstrel, at the time when the struggle arose for national independence, it was possessed by Hugh de Bradfute. The narrative of the Minstrel regarding the Bradfutes is generally considered to be a good deal mixed up with fiction, if not wholly fictitious, but we propose to give the substance of it, leaving the reader to attach what credit to it he may think proper.

Hugh Braidfoot died previous to the year 1295, and left a son and a daughter. Hesilrig, the English Sheriff of Lanark, put the young Laird to death ; and his sister, whose name was Marion, purchased the protection of the English, and left the

Tower of Lamington. The fragment of an old building still exists near the village of Lamington, which, in the opinion of some persons, is part of the very tower once occupied by the Bradfutes. We give the following representation of it.



Marion Bradfute then took up her abode at Lanark. Sir William Wallace, in the year 1296, occasionally sojourned at Gilbank, in the parish of Lesmahagow, the residence of his uncle, Nicol Auchinleck. It was his wont, when living here, to repair at times for recreation to the town of Lanark; and here he accidentally met with the heiress of Lamington. At the time at which Wallace first saw her, she was little more than eighteen years of age, possessed of great personal attractions, and distinguished no less for her modesty than for her amiable and generous disposition. Wallace fell deeply in love with her; and finding that his love was returned, he, after much hesitation, on account of his own unsettled mode of life and the disturbed state of the country, made her his wife, greatly to the mortification of the English Sheriff, who, it seems, had a design to wed her to his son. Some time after his marriage, Wallace received a visit from his attached companion-in-arms, Sir John Graham, accompanied by a small party of his followers. One morning the two chieftians and their retainers attended mass in the Parish Church of Lanark, which stood at a short distance from the town, and, on their return, the English soldiers, who at that time occupied the town and Castle of Lanark, intentionally fastened a quarrel on them in the streets. After some altercation, swords were drawn, and a sharp conflict ensuing, a strong party of the English were marched from the Castle to the aid of their

friends. The Scots fought stoutly, and slew not a few of their opponents ; but being overcome by numbers, they were forced to retreat, and naturally directed their steps with all speed to Wallace's mansion, where they were admitted by a female domestic, who had presence of mind to bolt the gate behind them. This retarded their pursuers ; and by a back passage they succeeded in securing a safe retreat amid the woody fastnesses of Carlane Craigs. The English, incensed at their escape, seized the wife of Wallace, and barbarously put her to death. The news of this sad event was conveyed to Wallace by an old female retainer of the House of Lamington, and naturally overwhelmed him with the deepest sorrow and distress. On recovering, he vowed from that time to devote himself entirely to the service of his country, and either to drive out the English, or perish in the attempt. It was instantly concerted that an attack should be made that night on the garrison of Lanark ; and Auchinleck being apprised of this resolution, joined them with a small detachment of men. The Scots, divided into several little parties, came suddenly and unexpectedly to Lanark, and, by fire and sword, put the whole garrison, consisting of about 250 men, to death. Among the slain were Hesilrig, the Sheriff, his son, Sir Robert Thorn, and other persons of distinction.

It is stated by the Minstrel, that Marion Braidfute had by Wallace a daughter, who was married to a person named Shaw, and that "rycht gudly men came off yis lady zong." Taking Harry's story as in the main correct, it has been supposed that either this lady herself afterwards, or that her daughter and heiress, was married to Sir William Baillie of Hoprig, in East Lothian, and that by this means the Baillies got possession of the estate of Lamington. Some other writers, while admitting the connexion of the Baillies with Wallace, account for it and also for their acquirement of the estate of Lamington in a different way. They state that William Baillie of Hoprig married a daughter of Wallace ; that her mother, whoever she may have been, was not an heiress of Lamington ; that during the war of Scottish independence the lands of Lamington were held by a family of the name of Seton ; and that Sir William Baillie of Hoprig, a son of Sir William just mentioned, in the reign of Robert II., married Isabel, a daughter of Sir William

Seton, and with her received the barony of Lamington. It was in this way, they assert, that the Baillies formed their connexion both with Wallace and the estate of Lamington, and certainly the historical proofs in its favour are more conclusive than they are in regard to the story told by Blind Harry. His account of the intercourse of Wallace with Miss Bradfute is chargeable with such glaring inconsistencies as very much to shake our faith in his testimony.

The first Baillie of Lamington was taken prisoner at the battle of Durham. After his release David II. raised him to the rank of knight, and, on the 27th of January 1367-8, conferred on him a charter in the following terms, "David, by the grace of God, King of Scots, know all men that I have given, conceded, and, by this charter, confirm to our beloved and faithful servant, Sir William Baillie, the whole barony of Lambiston."

Sir William Baillie left two sons, William and Alexander. Alexander is supposed to be the founder of the family of Baillie of Carphin. William, the heir of Lamington, is designed in a charter, dated 4th Feb. 1395, also proprietor of Hoprig; and it thus seems that these two estates were for some time possessed by the same individual. He gave his son William as a hostage in exchange for David Lesly of that Ilk, in 1432; and this son is mentioned in a document, dated 1466, as still the possessor of the estates of Hoprig and Lamington. He was in 1481 appointed by Parliament captain of 100 men, who were to be stationed in Hermitage Castle, and were to be ready to support both the middle and west borders in time of need. He was appointed by his country one of the conservators of peace; and in this capacity he took part in the negotiations at Nottingham that led to the conclusion of a treaty of peace with England in 1484. His daughter, Mary, was married to Lord Sommerville of Carnwath; and in 1485, he witnessed a charter of the lands of Cambusnethan, granted by that baron to his son.

Sir William Baillie left a son, William, who was his successor, and who married Marion, a daughter of Patrick Home of Polwarth, Comptroller of Scotland in the reign of James IV. He obtained a charter of his lands, under the Great Seal, in 1492; and left two sons, William, his heir, and John, the

progenitor of the Baillies of St John's Kirk, Jerviswood, and Walston. William married Elizabeth, daughter of Lord John Lindsay of Byres, and had a son, also William, evidently a favourite name in the family, who, in 1542, was appointed to the office of Principal Keeper of the Wardrobe to Queen Mary, and who, in 1560, represented the county of Lanark in the Parliament held at Edinburgh before the Queen returned from France. This gentleman was a keen partisan of the Queen. He appeared on her side with his followers at the Battle of Langside; and on this account his lands were ravaged by the Regent Murray, and afterwards forfeited. By his wife Janet, daughter of James, Earl of Arran, he had William, his successor, and another son, said to be the progenitor of the Baillies of Bagbie and Hardington, now represented by James W. Baillie, Esq. of Coulterallers.

Sir William, the next Laird of Lamington, married Margaret, a daughter of John Lord Maxwell, and relict of Archibald, Earl of Angus. By this lady he had one child, a daughter, who, by the negotiations of her mother, was induced to marry a relative of her own, Edward Maxwell, Commendator of Dundrenan, and third son of Lord Herries of Terregles. Baillie conferred the fee of his estate on his daughter and her heirs, on condition that they should assume the name of Baillie, and bear the arms of the House of Lamington, reserving only a life-interest in his estates to himself and his lady. While his wife was still living, he formed an improper intimacy with a Mrs Home, by whom he had a son named William. After his wife's death, he married this woman, with the view of legitimatizing his son; but in this object he failed. The son, thus prevented from inheriting his paternal estates, devoted himself to the profession of arms. Like many enterprising young Scotsmen, he went abroad, and fought with distinction under the banner of the renowned Gustavus Adolphus. When the contentions between Charles I. and the Parliament broke out, and both sides prepared to adjust their differences by the arbitration of the sword, Baillie returned to his native country, and threw in his lot with the opponents of royalty.

Under old Lesly, Earl of Leven, Baillie was appointed Lieutenant of the Scots army that assembled at Berwick in 1644, and afterwards marched into England. He shared in the vic-

tory over the Royalists on Marston Moor, and took part in the siege of York and the capture of Newcastle. When the great Montrose was known to be carrying everything before him in Scotland in the cause of his royal master, Baillie was despatched from England to oppose his movements. He encountered Montrose first at Alford, and afterwards at Kilsyth, and in both cases sustained a defeat. Historians have not failed to vindicate the generalship of Baillie, and to admit that his failures on these occasions were attributable not to himself, but to the nobility and Committee of Estates, by whom his counsels were thwarted and set aside. In the year 1648, he held a command in the army that was raised in Scotland in favour of Charles I., and placed under the direction of the Duke of Hamilton. This army was marched into England; but was remarkably ill-conducted, as the Duke was no general. The consequence was, that his troops were defeated and dispersed by the English Roundheads; and Baillie, after being deserted by his commander, was forced to surrender at Uttoxeter to Lambert, one of Cromwell's captains. He is known to have made an effort to recover his paternal estate of Lamington, but without success.

General Baillie having thus been excluded from his paternal possessions, the next proprietor of Lamington was William Maxwell or Baillie, maternal grandson of Sir William Baillie. He succeeded to the estate in 1607, received the honour of knighthood from James VI., and, in 1612, attended Parliament as a commissioner from the lesser barons of Lanarkshire. He died in 1615, and was succeeded by his son Sir William Baillie. This baron was, in 1639, elected one of the commissioners to Parliament for his native county. In April 1644, he commanded a portion of the forces despatched to Dumfries under the Earl of Callender, and from a report afterwards presented to Parliament, it appears that he had been quartered in Lord Herries' house of Terregles with 30 horse for twenty-three days, and 24 foot for eight days, the charge for the horse and man being 18s. Scots per diem, and the foot 6s, the whole amounting to L.678, 12s. Scots. At first he took part with the Parliament in the war against Charles I., but from some cause or other he changed his conduct, and entered into an engagement to support the cause of that unfortunate

monarch, after he had been placed in confinement by the republican party under Cromwell. For entering into this engagement he was, as we have already stated, taken to task by the Presbytery of Biggar.

Sir William was succeeded by his son William, who is characterized by Nisbet as a "virtuous, frugal, and worthy gentleman." In 1683, he was put in prison for having given refuge to some of the fugitive covenanters. He was repeatedly returned to Parliament as a representative of the County of Lanark. He was at his post in Parliament in 1706, when the debates took place on the scheme for uniting Scotland to England, and formed one of the minority, who opposed that measure, and contended for more favourable terms for his country. By his first wife Marjory, daughter of John first Lord Bargany, he had a son, who predeceased him, and, by his second wife, Harrietta, daughter of William Earl of Crawford, he had daughters only, the eldest of whom married Sir James Carmichael of Bonnington. Sir James agreed that his estate should be sunk into the family of Lamington, and that his heirs-male should bear the title and surname of Baillie. Since that time, the estate of Lamington has been held by several other heirs-esses, one of whom, Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Lord President Dundas, married Sir John Lockhart Ross of Balnagown. This lady's son, Sir Charles Ross, had a daughter named Matilda, who married Admiral Sir Thomas Cochrane, K.C.B. The eldest son of this lady, Alexander Dundas Ross Wishart Baillie Cochrane, Esq., as heir to his mother, is the present proprietor of the Lamington estate. He was born in 1816, and received his education at Eton, and Trinity College, Cambridge, where, in 1837, he took the degree of B.A. In 1844 he married Annabella, a daughter of A. R. Drummond, Esq. He represented Bridport for upwards of ten years in the Imperial Parliament, and the County of Lanark for three months in 1857. He was elected for Honiton in 1859, and this place he still continues to represent. Mr Cochrane has devoted a good portion of his time and attention to literary pursuits. On returning from his travels in Greece and the east of Europe in 1840, when he had only reached his 24th year, he published a poem entitled "The Morea." He has since published a work on Italy, "Historic Pictures" in two volumes, several novels,

such as "Lucile Belmont," "Ernest Vane," "Florence the Beautiful," etc., and other productions.

Mr Cochrane, some years ago, erected an elegant mansion at Lamington in the Elizabethan style of architecture, at which he usually resides a part of the year. The following is a representation of this mansion. He has also erected an

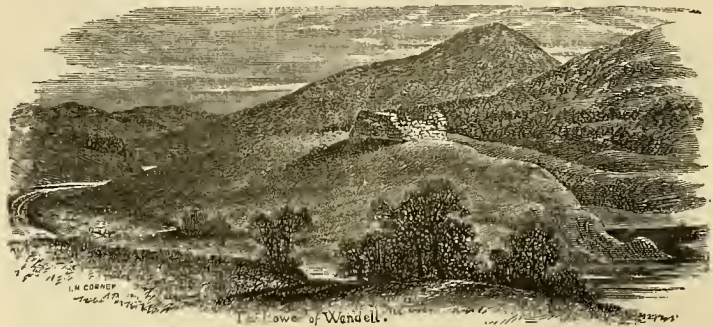


Episcopal Chapel and parsonage and number of neat cottages for the labouring population. The village of Lamington has thus assumed an entirely new appearance, and in point of elegance, cleanliness, and extent of varied prospect, is surpassed by no other hamlet in the Upper Ward.

Mr Cochrane has taken a warm interest in the affairs of the town of Biggar; and has especially been noted for his generous efforts to befriend the poor, and promote the cause of education. From his affability, active benevolence, and ready promotion of every scheme of physical, moral, and intellectual improvement, he is held in great and deserved esteem by his tenantry and dependents, as well as by the population of the district at large.

The neighbouring barony of Wandell in the same parish was long possessed by the Hertesheudes, and then by the Jardines of Apilgirth. In 1617, it came into the possession of William Earl of Angus, Lord Douglas and Abernethie: and at

present is the property of his descendant the Countess of Home. In this barony is a ruinous building called "the Bower of Wandell," which, according to tradition, was a hunting seat of James V. As an old Upper Ward ruin we give the following representation of it



It stands on a rocky eminence that projects into the river Clyde almost opposite the village of Robertson, and is connected by a narrow neck of land with the rising grounds in the neighbourhood. The position, which it occupies, was well chosen for defence before the invention of gun-powder, but it does not seem to have been a building of any great extent or even strength, and most likely was a tower for the occasional residence of the Jardines, and, by their permission, may also at times have been the abode of our Scottish kings, when engaged in rural sports.

THE CHANCELLORS OF SHIELDHILL.

The Chancellors of Shieldhill are the oldest proprietors of land in the neighbourhood of Biggar. They are supposed to have come to this country from France at the time of the Norman Conquest, along with the Sommervilles of Carnwath, whom they acknowledged as their lords-superior. The alliance between them and the Sommervilles appears, according to Nisbet, to have existed at least in 1317, in the time of Robert Bruce. The oldest of their charters extant, is one that is referred to in that curious gossiping work, "The Memorie of the Sommervilles," and was granted by Thomas Lord Sommerville to William, or, as Nisbet calls him, George Chancellor of Shieldhill, in the year 1432. George was succeeded by his son

Alexander, who added some lands to the family estate, and obtained a charter from Lord Sommerville in 1460. He was succeeded by his son George, who resigned his lands into the hands of his superior, Lord Sommerville, in 1472, for infestment, and at that time received a new charter. He is styled "Nobilis vir Georgius Chanceler, dominus de Quodquan." By his wife, a daughter of Ramsay of Dalhousie, he left a son, William, who was his successor, and in whose favour, and of his wife Janet Geddes, a daughter of Geddes of Rachan and Kirkurd, a sasine was registered in 1477. In the account of the famous incident of "Speates and Raxes," which took place in July 1474, William Chancellor of Quothquan is mentioned as one of the parties who turned out to the assistance of his friend and superior, Lord Sommerville, when it was supposed that he was placed in a state of danger in Edinburgh.

The next two Lairds of Shieldhill were John and Robert; but nothing is known regarding them worthy of special notice. The successor of the last named was William, who was infest in his lands in 1533, and was designated of Shieldhill, Quothquan, and Cormiston. In April 1535 he became surety for Hugh Lord Sommerville's underlying the law at the next Justice Aire at Lanark, for art and part of *southrief* and oppression done to John Tweedale, Carnwath, in reiving from him his cows, horses, crops, goods, and utensils. In the year following, his Lordship rendered a similar service to William Chancellor and his brother Robert, when they were charged with the crime of being art and part in the murder of Thomas Baillie, Laird of Cormiston. The Chancellors were fined in the sum of three hundred merks for not appearing to answer this charge; but Lord Sommerville and Richard Brown of Coultermains came forward as their cautioners, and a new trial having been appointed, they gave themselves up to justice, and were acquitted.

William Chancellor was succeeded by his son William, who had a charter from Lord Sommerville in 1546, and who married Agnes, a daughter of Sir John Hamilton of Crawfordjohn. Being allied with the Hamiltons, as might be expected, he was attached to the cause of Queen Mary. He accordingly, with his retainers, joined the Queen's party at Hamilton, and took part in the unhappy encounter at Langside in 1567.

On this account his mansion-house at Quothquan was destroyed, and his lands were devastated by the Regent Murray. The successor of William was Robert, who married a daughter of Symington of that ilk. His son John was the next laird of Shieldhill, and the sasine of his lands is dated 1605. John was succeeded by his son Robert, who was distinguished for his loyalty to Charles I. and Charles II. In consequence of his attachment to the Stewarts, he was, no doubt, either opposed, or at all events indifferent, to the Presbyterian form of church government then established. It was on this account, perhaps, that he and his family got into trouble with the Presbytery of Lanark. On the 24th of June 1630, he was summoned before that reverend court, when "being convick of contempt of word, of raling against his pastor, wes ordainit to find cautione to obeye qlk thing he promisit to do, whairfor he wes injoined to mak his publick repentance in his awin claithes only one day, if he maid a guid confessione, and so be absolved."

The minister of Quothquan was not content with the prosecution of Mr Chancellor himself. He laid an accusation before the Presbytery against Lady Chancellor, and her daughter Susanna, for having resorted to charming in order to restore a child to health. The *corpus delicti* was, that for the attainment of this end they had "buried the claithes of a chyld betwixt laird's lands." The worthy incumbent, on the 23d of September 1630, insisted before the Presbytery that the Lady of Shieldhill should appear before the brethren, and, in all humility, confess her fault, and give signs of unfeigned repentance. It is certain at least that Miss Chancellor, on the 14th October following, did appear before the Presbytery, "and, in presence of the brethren, upon hir knces confessit her grit offence in having any meddling with charmers, and promisit amendment in tyme coming." The reverend gentleman had another contention with Mr Chancellor before the Presbytery of Lanark in 1639. The cause of offence on this occasion was, that Mr Chancellor had broken open the door of Quothquan Kirk, and interred the remains of his Lady in the interior of the said Kirk. As we have stated elsewhere, the Laird had to acknowledge his fault, and was ordered to be censured by the kirk-session of Quothquan.

Robert Chancellor died in 1664, and was succeeded by his son James. The opinions of James on the political and ecclesiastical topics of the day were somewhat different from those of his father. He appears to have attached himself to the cause of the Covenanters. After the Battle of Bothwell Bridge, he was for some time confined in prison on the charge of having given shelter to some of the poor countrymen who fled from that unhappy conflict. On another occasion, he got into trouble by taking violent possession of a piece of ground called the Parkholm, lying on the river Clyde. The river formed the boundary between the lands of Thankerton, belonging to Carmichael of Bonniton, and those belonging to James Chancellor, George Kello, and others. About the year 1638, a violent storm taking place, caused the Clyde to overflow its banks, and form a new channel, thus leaving a piece of ground belonging to Carmichael on the opposite side of the river. It got the name of the Parkholm, and remained for a number of years in a neglected state. Carmichael, considering it to be his property, at length put it under the plough, and year after year carried off the produce, much to the dissatisfaction of the neighbouring proprietors, who entertained an idea that the river should still form the boundary, as before. Carmichael dying about the year 1688, and his son and successor being a minor, James Chancellor and his friends thought the time favourable for establishing their claim to the piece of ground referred to. They mustered about eighty men, furnished with pitchforks, great staves, scythes, pistols, swords, and mastiff dogs, and in a rude and violent manner cut down "the whole growth of fourteen bolls sowing of corn or thereby," drove it home to their houses, and there made use of it in bedding their cattle, or converting it into dung. Thus "corns which would have yielded at least ninety bolls, at eight pounds Scots the boll, were rendered useless for man or beast." During the progress of the plunder, the tenants were confined to their houses under a guard; so it was altogether a riot and oppression, inferring severe punishment, which was accordingly called for by the curators of the young landlord. The Council having heard both parties, found the riot proven, and ordained Mr Chancellor of Shieldhill to pay 300 merks to the pursuer. The Lords of

Session finally determined, in 1695, that the Parkholm should remain the property of Sir James Carmichael.*

James Chancellor was returned an elder by the Presbytery of Biggar to the first General Assembly that met after the Revolution in 1688. He died in the year 1705, and was succeeded by his brother John, a merchant in Edinburgh. He married first, Jean, daughter of John Forbes of Watertoune, and second, Jean, eldest daughter of Sir James Agnew of Lochnaw. Having been vested in the whole lands of Quothquan, he executed a deed of entail in 1727, and under it his descendants still hold possession of the estate.

The members of this family are not known to have taken a very prominent part in the stormy and violent contentions of former ages, which constitute the larger portion of written history. They appear in general to have held on the noiseless tenor of their way, doing good and receiving the esteem and approbation of their neighbours. They have thus contrived to preserve their name and their property for centuries, while the family of many a baron, once powerful and endowed with extensive domains, have disappeared. The present proprietor of Shieldhill estate is J. G. Chancellor, Esq.

THE LINDSAYS OF COVINGTON.

To the west of the possessions of the Chancellors lay the lands of the Lindsays of Covington. For a considerable period they were neighbouring proprietors of the Flemings of Biggar, who held the lands of Thankerton for several hundred years. The oldest writs of Thankerton in possession of the family do not indeed extend further back than the year 1465, but it is understood that these are not the original titles. The lands and barony of Thankerton were sold on the 13th of February 1666 to Sir William Purves. The Lindsays of Covington were not only neighbouring proprietors of the Flemings, but several marriages took place between the two families that united them in a greater bond of intimacy and friendship. The Lindsays of Covington were descended from the Lindsays of Crawford. The first of them was John Lindsay, who was the son of Sir Philip Lindsay, and married the heiress of Covington some time previous to the year 1366. Lord Lindsay, in his "Lives of the Lindsays," gives a detail of the successive Barons of

* Chambers's Domestic Annals, vol. iii.

Covington ; but there is nothing very interesting in it, except to the genealogist. Margaret, a daughter of John Lindsay of Covington, became the second wife of Robert Lord Fleming, who died in 1494. John Lindsay of Covington was one of the persons who witnessed the Charter of Foundation of Biggar Kirk in 1545. That baron, during the very year in which he signed that charter, was arraigned, along with several of his relatives and eighteen other persons, for having assembled a party of two hundred men, armed with lances, culverings, bows, and other invasive weapons, and on the 28th September, marching to the barn of James Sommerville, Rector of Libberton, and there wounding Robert Miller, the Rector's servant, in the neck and other parts of his body, to the effusion of his blood and the danger of his life. Lord Sommerville became surety for Lindsay himself, and he was detained in Edinburgh "until a royal licence was granted for his departure." The record does not say what was his ultimate punishment.

John Lindsay of Covington, about the commencement of the seventeenth century, married Agnes Fleming, only daughter and heir to John Fleming of Bord. Her tocher, amounting to 8000 merks, was paid on the 13th of November 1602 by John Lord Fleming. The eldest son of this pair was George Lindsay, who, on the 4th of November 1623, was retoured heir of his father in the barony of Covington, and also of two oxgates of temple lands called 'Stane,' in the barony of Biggar. This Baron of Covington seems to have married Lady Rachel Fleming, a daughter of John, second Earl of Wigton; and a discharge for her tocher, dated 31st March, 1630, is still preserved.

Sir William Lindsay, the last Baron of Covington, by profuse expenditure, squandered away the family inheritance, so that his lineal descendants became, ere long, merely labouring men. Lord Lindsay has given the following amusing anecdote regarding Sir William, the last Laird, who died previous to the year 1688 :—'Sir William left four daughters; one of whom marrying John Baillie of St John's Kirk, was mother of a daughter married to William Somerville of Corehouse, representative of the Barons of Cambusnethan. Their daughter Isabella married Inglis of Eastshiel, whose only child, Violet, was the late Mrs Lockhart of Birkhill, who died in 1825.

She used to relate to her grandchildren the following anecdote of her ancestor, Sir William, who, it appears, was a humorist, and noted, moreover, for preserving the picturesque appendage of a beard at a period when the fashion had long passed away. He had been extremely ill, and life was at last supposed to be extinct, though, as it afterwards turned out, he was only in a "dead faint," or trance. The female relatives were assembled for the "chesting" in a lighted chamber in the old tower of Covington, where the bearded knight lay stretched upon his bier. But when the servants were about to enter to assist at the ceremonies, Isabella Somerville, Sir William's great-granddaughter, and Mrs Lockhart's grandmother, then a child, creeping close to her mother, whispered in her ear, "The beard is wagging—the beard is wagging!" Mrs Somerville upon this looked to the bier, and, observing indications of life in the ancient knight, made the company retire, and Sir William soon came out of his faint. They explained that they believed him to be actually dead, and that arrangements had even been made for his funeral! In answer to his question, "Have the folks been warned?" (i.e., invited to the funeral), he was told that they had, that the funeral day had been fixed, an ox slain, and other preparations made for entertaining the company. Sir William then said, "All is as it should be; keep it a dead secret that I am in life, and let the folks come." His wishes were complied with, and the company assembled for the burial at the appointed time. After some delay, occasioned by the non-arrival of the clergyman, as was supposed, and which afforded an opportunity for discussing the merits of the deceased, the door suddenly opened, when, to their surprise and terror, in stepped the knight himself, pale in countenance, and dressed in black, leaning on the arm of the minister of the parish of Covington. Having quieted this alarm, and explained matters, he called upon the clergyman to conduct an act of devotion, which included thanksgiving for his recovery, and escape from being buried alive. This done, the dinner succeeded. A jolly evening, after the manner of the times, was passed, Sir William himself presiding over the carousals.' This story will remind the reader of the resuscitation of Athelstane, and his subsequent supper, in *Ivanhoe*.

THE COCKBURNS OF SKIRLING.

The barony of Skirling, or 'Scrawlin,' was possessed by a family of the name of Cockburn for more than three hundred years. The first Cockburn of Skirling appears to have been Alexander, who, some time prior to the year 1362, married Margaret of Monfode, daughter and heiress of Sir John of Monfode, to whom Robert I. granted the whole lands of Skirling and the advowson of the church. The names of many of the subsequent Barons of Skirling appear in our public muniments. We may refer to one or two of them. In the year 1478, the Auditors of Parliament decided that Walter Tweedie of Dreva should restore to Adam Cockburn of Skirling a silver cup double gilt, having a foot and a lid, which Cockburn had laid in pledge for twenty merks. At a Justiciary Court held at Peebles on the 12th November 1498, Sir William Cockburn of Skirling, James, his brother, and John Paterson, in 'Kingildurris,' produced a remission from the charge of being art and part in the slaughter of Walter, son of John Tweedie of Dreva; also of being art and part in the southrief of a sword and shield from the said Walter,—and further, of forethought of felony, in mutilating Andrew Tweedie within the town of Edinburgh during the sitting of Parliament.

William Cockburn of Skirling, who flourished in the early part of the sixteenth century, appears to have had a feud with Alexander Crichton of Newhall. He was, in addition to other acts of oppression, charged with carrying off a box of documents belonging to that gentleman, which he found in possession of Patrick Aitken, burgess, Edinburgh,—with forcibly occupying his lands of Kirkrighill, pasturing on them seven score of cattle and sixty horses and mares, overturning a 'fail dyke,' etc. This case was brought by the Councillors of State before James V. The King, who at the time was sojourning at Crawfordjohn, wrote to his Councillors the following reply:—

'Rex.

Traist Counsalouris, we grete you weil, and hes resavit zour writingis anent the Laird of Scraling, and thinkis zour advise and consel best anent the publishing of dome gevin

aganis him. Quhair ze mentione of ane Minut send, we haue sene nane. Therefor we pray zou yat ye tak yat travil to pass to him and declair quhow it standis. Swa yat his lyf and guddis are in our handis. Gif he cummis in will, we wilbe gracious to him. Failzeand yairof, we sall cause justice be keipit. And yairefter yat ze write to vs ane ansuir, as ze will do vs singular plesour.

‘Gevin at Craufordjone, ye xxix day of March, and of our regij ye xxij zeir.’

James Cockburn thought it proper to come in the King’s will, and this he did on the 31st of March 1536; but no statement has been left on record regarding the punishment assigned him by the King.

Sir James Cockburn of Skirling, most likely a son of the preceding Laird, was a keen partisan of Queen Mary. The Queen, as a mark of her confidence and respect, appointed him Governor of Edinburgh Castle in the spring of 1567, in room of the Earl of Mar. Birrel, in noticing the event, says, ‘The 21st of this month the Castell of Edinburge was randed to Cockburne of Skirline at ye Queinis command. This same day ther rais ane vehement tempest of vunde, which blew a verey grate shipe out of the rode of Leith, and sicklyk blew the taile from the cocke wich standis one the tope of ye steiple away frome it, so the old prophecy came trew,

‘Quhen Skirline sall be Capitaine,
Ye cock sal vant his taile.’

The author of the ‘Diurnal’ states that this change in the command of the Castle was made against the wishes of the inhabitants, who were in favour of the Earl of Mar, as he ‘wes a guid man and na oppressour.’ Sir James Cockburn, however, did not long enjoy the honour of holding this responsible office. James Balfour, Clerk Register, who had been instrumental in getting the banns proclaimed between the Queen and Bothwell, was appointed Governor on the 8th of May of the same year, most likely as a reward for his subserviency. Cockburn still remained faithful to the Queen; and the consequence was, that his lands were ravaged, and his house of Skirling was destroyed by the Regent Murray, while he himself had to seek security in exile.

James VI., as some compensation for the services which Sir James had performed, and the losses which he had sustained in defending the cause of his mother, Queen Mary, with the advice of his Parliament, erected Skirling, in the year 1592, into a free burgh of barony, 'with all the easements, liberties, and commodities in as ample and large form as any burgh of barony within this realm, with power to keep and proclaim a fair to be observed within the said burgh on the fourth of September yearly, and a market day weekly upon Friday. At that period, however, Sir James Cockburn had paid the debt of nature, and his son William possessed the estate of Skirling. This baron was succeeded by his son William, as we find from a 'Retour' that he was returned heir of his father, on the 20th December 1603, of the lands and barony of Skirling, the £20 lands of Roberton and Newbolm, and the £10 lands of 'Heidis,' all of old extent, annexed to the barony of Skirling. This was the last proprietor of Skirling of the name of Cockburn. He disposed of this estate in 1621, to Alexander Peebles of Middleton, Advocate, whose daughter and heiress married Sir John Hamilton of Trabroun, third son of Thomas, Earl of Haddington. This couple having fallen into debt, were under the necessity of disposing of the estate to Sir James Hamilton of Broomhill. This gentleman, in 1641, sold it to James Livingston for £5000. After passing through several hands, it came about the beginning of last century into the possession of John Carmichael, first Earl of Hyndford. This Earl died in 1710, and was succeeded by his eldest son James, who sold the Skirling estate to his brother William, in 1724, for the sum of £7109. John, the eldest son of William, was the next Laird of Skirling, and on the death of John, third Earl of Hyndford, in 1767, succeeded to the Hyndford title and estates; and, on the death of his brother James, became also proprietor of the lands of Hailes, near Edinburgh. This nobleman died without issue, in 1787, and his paternal property of Skirling was inherited by his grand-nephew, Sir John Gibson, Bart., who, in virtue of the obligations of the entail, assumed the surname of Carmichael. Sir John Gibson Carmichael was succeeded by his brother Sir Thomas, who died in 1849. Sir Thomas's third son, Sir William-Henry, is at present the proprietor of Skirling.

THE BAILLIES OF ST. JOHN'S KIRK.

The lands of St John's Kirk, in the suppressed parish of Thankerton, were long possessed by a family of the name of Baillie, a branch, as we have already said, of the Baillies of Lamington. Thomas Baillie of St John's Kirk, like the rest of the Baillies, was a partisan of Queen Mary. On the 27th of February 1572-3, he was delatit for the slaughter of the unquhile James Ballanye and others at the Battle of Langside, 13th May 1568; but the case against him was in the end deserted. He had previously, however, sustained serious losses by the ravages committed on his property by the Earl of Murray, shortly after that battle. On the 4th of January 1642, John Baillie was returned heir of the lands of Thankerton, lately St John's Kirk, with the teinds and pasturage in the Common of Thankerton, the lands of Lockharthill and a portion of Anneston commonly called "Schawcruick," in the barony of Symington, and the lands and meadow called Annetscheill, with pasture in the Common of "Wowston." From this respected family sprung the Baillies of Walston and Jerviswood. The estate of St. John's Kirk, which is pleasantly situated at the foot of Tinto, is now the property of John Waugh, Esq. We subjoin a view of his residence.



APPENDIX.

No. I.

THE NAMES OF THE ABILL MEN IN THE PAROCHIN OF BIGGAR, 1640.

Wm. Broune.	Jon. Stenson.
Peter Telfer.	James Kello.
James Hamilton.	Wm. Telffer.
James Welsh.	Jon. Dickison, younger.
Johne Broune.	James Murray.
Rt. Broune.	Wm. Penman.
Jon. Rob.	Jon. Williamson.
Thom. Lyndsay.	Jon. Young.
Wm. Crichton.	James Porteous.
Jon. Penman.	Laurence Wright.
James Dezell.	Adam Red.
Wm. Smith.	Wm. Miller.
Jon. Wallange.	Jon. Lithgow.
Andro Broune.	Peter Kello.
Jon. Broune.	James Nisbett.
George Marchell.	Wm. Nisbett.
George Wilson.	Patrick Kello.
James Penman.	Andro Purddie.
James Wilson.	Jon. Law.
Jon. Flemyng.	Thomas Flemyng.
James Hutchison.	James Boe.
Wm. Smythe.	Jon. Watson.
James Calder.	James Porteous.
James Dunkin.	James Crichton, younger.
Wm. Gillies.	Wm. Crichton.
Francis Taitt.	Laurie Porteous.
James Telfer, younger.	James Tod.
Laurance Boe.	Jon. Sinkler, younger.

Rt. Buckell.	Wm. Frysel.
Archibald Blair.	Wm. Fleming.
James Smith.	Jon. Bell.
John Paterson.	Thomas Tod.
Wm. Telfer.	Michell Belzie.
Jon. Kello.	James Hutchison, younger.
Jon. Aikin.	James Wallance.
Jon. Grynshill.	George Simson.
Jon. Tennent.	James Sanderson.
Jon. Telffer.	Rt. Paterson.
Alex. Mackmoran.	Jon. Paterson.
Jon. Porteous.	Jn. Symson.
Jon. M'Moran.	Wm. Penman.
Robt. Purddie.	Robt. Broune.
Michell Rob.	Andro Gillies.
Thomas Bartie.	Jon. Penman.
John Porteous.	Wm. Penman.
Archibald Watson.	Jn. Boe.
Andro Aikin.	James Penman.
Jon. Aikin.	Thomas Jackson.
Thomas Lindsay.	George Penman.
Laurie Lindsay.	James Francis.
David Thomson.	Ebr. Miller.
Malcolme Smith.	Jn. Penman.
Wm. Tweedie.	Wm. Wallance.
James Williamson.	Jon. Broune.
Wm. Rob.	Andro Penman.
James Telffer.	Jon. Jackson.
James Thripland.	James Paterson.
James Pot.	Andro Penman.
Jon. Broune.	Alex Murray.
Jon. Belzie.	Jn. Boe.
Alex. Belzie.	Jn. Rob.
Wm. Belzie.	Jn. Paterson.
James Thripland.	Jn. Dunkin.
Alex. Thripland.	Luk Wilson.
Wm. Thripland.	James Wilson.
*Peter M'Moran.	Jon. Wilson.
Wm. M'Moran.	Jon. Jenkinsen.
John Battie.	Wm. Flemyng.
James Law.	Rhd. Flemyng.
Jon. Smythe.	James Broune.
Thomas Jackson.	Thomas Telfer.
Geo. Paterson.	Nicol Paterson.
Jon. Boe.	Andrew Broune.

146 persons.

(Signed) THOMAS CAMPBELL, Minister at Biggar.

No. II.

RENTAL OF THE ESTATE OF BIGGAR AND BOGHALL, 1809,
BELONGING TO ADMIRAL FLEMING.

Thomas Clerk, Spittal and Park,	£92	0	0
George Clerk, Heavyside, Toftfoot Park,	50	0	0
Matthew Cree, Stonehead House, Hillgarden, Moathill, Ballgreen,	32	5	0
Alexander Watt, Biggar Mill and Fore Knowe,	72	0	0
James and Alexander Watt, Hillriggs,	39	0	0
William and George Lindsay, Biggar Common,	20	0	0
Alexander Gray, Carwood and Park,	91	11	0
John Paterson, East Tofteombs and Park,	36	0	0
James Gladstones, West do., Bizzeyberry, and Park,	40	0	0
Mrs. Wilson, Telfer's Oxgate,	6	0	0
Do. Park in Boghall,	7	10	0
Mrs. and Wm. Wilson, part of Westraw,	6	17	6
Widow Masterton, part of do.	5	10	0
Lord Elphinstone, part of do.	9	2	0
Do. part of do.	3	0	0
William Bogle, part of do., and Moss-side,	8	0	0
Andrew Ritchie, part of do.	6	0	0
James Tweedie, part of do.	8	7	0
Thomas Inglis, part of do.	8	7	0
James Watson, part of do.	8	7	0
William Forbes, part of do.	8	7	1
William Jamieson, part of do.	8	5	0
John Gibson, part of do.	7	7	11
Ebenezer Brown, part of do.	8	5	0
William Brown, Barngrass,	28	0	0
William Brown, Rawhead,	24	0	0
James M'Ghie, Langlees and Park,	50	0	0
William Bogle, Moss-side Houses,	12	0	0
James Watson, part of Moss-side,	5	5	0
William Masterton, do.	5	5	0
William Schoolar, do.	5	5	0
Adam Paterson, do.	5	5	0
James Steel, Little Boghall,	20	0	0
James Forrest, Boghall Mains,	50	0	0
George Clerk, Cairn's Park,	12	0	0
Andrew Black, Chamberlain Moss,	8	0	0
Mrs. Clerk, Drypark,	6	0	0
William Johnston, Rapseed Park,	4	0	0
Mrs. Bryden and George Clark, Hay Park,	3	6	8
Wm. Steel, Townhouse and Smiddy Park,	9	5	0

Wm. Johnston, John's Close, Burrowfield,	£3	0	0
John Steel, John's Close, Croftland,	6	0	0
Mrs. Bowe, Cruckdale Croft and Meadow,	3	7	6
Miss Bradfute, John's Cross and Old Style,	8	18	8
Miss Bradfute, Park in Bogs,	5	14	6
George Bertram, Park do. . . .	7	7	0
John Forrest's widow, Park do. . . .	15	0	0
John Craig, Park do. . . .	7	10	0
Dr. Wilson, Park do. . . .	17	17	0
Alex. Steel, Park do. . . .	9	9	0
John Black's Heirs, Park do. . . .	6	0	0
John M'Ghie, Park do. . . .	8	5	0
William Cleghorn, Park do. . . .	11	0	0
Thomas Wyld, Park do. . . .	7	10	0
William Vallance, Park do. . . .	8	0	0
	£954 11 10½		

No. III.

REASONS OF PROTEST AGAINST THE DECISION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO SETTLE MR. PEARSON IN THE CHURCH OF BIGGAR.

Though it hath been often a matter of dispute what number of subscriptions were necessary to constitute that call upon which the Church can proceed to the settlement of a minister, yet there is not any one instance in which this Court hath ordered a settlement to proceed without something which had at least the form and the name, however little it might have of the nature, of a call; but in the present case, the Assembly hath ordered a settlement to proceed *according to the rules of the Church*, although to this moment the call is a sheet of blank paper, without a single name. The concurrence came eleven months after the moderation of a call; and was, therefore, strictly inadmissible in any form. If the unauthenticated extrajudicial subscriptions of, or a promise to subscribe, a call, were to be regarded, why not turn them into a legal shape, and remit for that purpose to the Presbytery to moderate a call *de novo*? The regular course was plain; nor was there the smallest reason for deviating from it by an extraordinary stretch of power. By ordination a mutual relation is constituted, and for this purpose the consent of both parties is equally essential. In what manner the consent of the people is to be expressed, hath been clearly laid down in the law and practice of the Church; and when it is not thus expressed in what is generally named a call, or something equivalent to a call, an ordination is an absurdity, if not worse. "That no person shall be intruded into any office of the Church contrary to the will of the congregation to which he is appointed," say, "that it is not lawful for any person to meddle with an ecclesiastical

function without the consent of the congregation," are express and repeated enactments of our ecclesiastical law; they are ratified and approved by numberless Acts of Parliament; the strict observance of them is solemnly sworn to by every office-bearer in the Church of Scotland; and every member of Assembly, in particular, holds his commission with an express injunction as he shall be answerable, to decide accordingly. All this notwithstanding, the Assembly hath, in the present case, appointed a settlement, not only without the consent of the congregation, but directly in the face of express opposition by every heritor, elder, and head of family in the parish. For, with respect to the seven persons who, out of 1200 parishioners, had been prevailed on to promise a concurrence, they are of such singular characters, and in such singular circumstances, that the hon. counsel (Mr. Henry Erskine) who supported the presentation candidly gave them up; and with respect to the letters from the non-residing heritors (who, by the by, are most of them not of our communion, and all together do not much exceed a third part of the heritors that pay the stipend), they cannot in the present view be of any consideration, whatsoever—they can have no weight in a call which is the foundation of a pastoral connection between a minister and his people. However much some people may think proper to despise, and even wantonly to provoke and insult the people, yet this is certain, that all the laws respecting our ecclesiastical constitution are expressly founded on the inclinations, and enacted with a view to promote the happiness and tranquillity of *the whole Christian people*. We cannot, without the utmost regret, imagine the idea of a church without a people, ministers without congregations; we cannot, in duty to God and our constituents, but protest in the strongest terms against measures which have such a tendency; and though we must hang our harps upon the willows, yet we shall always pray that he who stills the raging of the sea, and the tumults of the people, may preserve peace within our Jerusalem's walls, and pour down prosperity upon the Church of Scotland.

No. IV.

DECISIONS OF THE COURT OF SESSION IN THE CASE OF THE EARL OF WIGTON AND HIS VASSALS.

"Jan. 23d, 1739.

"THE EARL OF WIGTON *contra* HIS VASSALS.

"In the process of Division in the Common Muir of Biggar, at the Earl of Wigton's instance, against his vassals, some of whom were proprietors, others had only servitudes, wherein the Earl claimed not only a proportion of the Muir, according to the valuation of his adjacent property lands, but also a

præcipuum of a fourth, agreeably to the decision of the Muir of Foggo, in 1724. The division was not opposed, and though it had, it is believed that it would have been sustained, in respect there were common proprietors. But the objection being made to the præcipuum by those having only servitudes, that there was no foundation for any such præcipuum in the Act of Parliament, and that they were entitled to a proportion of the whole commonity sufficient for their servitudes, the Lords 'found the superior not entitled to a præcipuum, and that those having servitudes were entitled to a proportion of the Common sufficient for their servitudes.'"

" Feb. 1st, 1739.

"THE EARL OF WIGTON AND LOCKHART OF CARNWATH *contra* THE FEUARS OF BIGGAR AND QUOTHQUAN.

"In the division of the Common Muir of Biggar, it being controverted, whether certain of the charters of property produced by the vassals imported a right of property, or servitude in the Muir,—the Lords found that where lands were disposed with parts, pertinents, and pendicles, or where they were disposed with mosses, muirs, commonities, and parts and pertinents in general, whereon possession in a common muir had followed for forty years, it did import a right of property; but where lands were disposed with parts, pendicles, and pertinents, with common pasturage used and wont, though the possession in the muir had, for forty years, to all intents been the same as in the former case, it was found to import only a right of servitude in the common muir."

No. V.

CHARTER OF THE EARLDOM OF WIGTON.

"Know ye that I, Thomas Fleming, not by force or fear induced, nor by error misled, but of my pure free will, firmly resolved, in my great, urgent, and inexorable necessity, and especially because of great and grievous discords and deadly animosities lately arisen between me and the natives of the Earldom of Wigton, have sold, and by title of sale for ever granted, to the noble and potent Sir Archibald of Douglas, Knight, Lord of Galloway, on the east side of the Water of Cree, my whole foresaid Earldom; and have purely, simply, absolutely, and for ever transferred to the said Archibald all right and claim competent in future to me, my heirs and assignees, in the said Earldom, with its pertinents, for a certain considerable sum of money paid to me in my foresaid great and urgent necessity, to be holden by the foresaid Archibald, his heirs and assignees, in fee and heritage, by all its bounds and marches, in meadows, grazings, moors, marshes, roads, paths, waters, pools,

mills, multures, with servants, thralls, and their progeny, with fowlings, huntings, and fishings, with pit and gallows, sok and sak, toll and teme, infangthief and outfangthief, with fees, forfeitures, and escheats, wards, reliefs, and marriages, tenandries and serviees of free tenants; as also all and whole the other liberties, eommodities, easements, just pertinents, and free customs, belonging, or that can by any right or title whatsoever belong, to the said Earldom, as freely, quietly, fully, and honourably, and entirely in all aud through all, as I, the foresaid Thomas, or any of my predecessors, held and possessed the same Earldom. In testimony whereof, I have appended my seal to these presents. Given at Edinburgh, the 8th day of February, in the year of our Lord 1371."

No. VI.

INVENTORY OF SILVER WORK, GARMENTS, AND OTHER THINGS
WHICH BELONGED TO DAME ELIZABETH ROSS, LADY
FLEMING.

"In y^e first xxvii dosoun viij pair and ane horne of gold Item sax grit buttounis four ringis all of gold Tua crimter paciss of leid ane for ane grit chinze and ane uyir for ane small qlk ar in michael gilbertis handis Item in ane buffet ane siluer lawar Tua siluer caupis ane saltfalt ane luggit deiche Tua chandeleris ane dosane of truncheris ane dosane of spunis sax earuig prikis Item mae of siluer wark Tua coupis ane basin ane brokin saltfalt gilt elevelin spunis Item ane ryding clok aue skirt of blak begayrit w^t welnot Tua harnisingis The ane of welnot pasmentit and wrocht w^t gold And y^e uyir of blak welnot plane Sevin pair of welnot schone This geir aboue writte is put in ane coffer Item ane chapell ruif of reid skarlat euttit out upoun quhit satene & taffitie freinzeit w^t reid and quhit silk aueht tappis of beddis of trie & gilt ane pein of purpouir welnot freinzeit w^t blak and reid silk ane round ruiff of blak satene bordourit w^t blak silk and freinzeit w^t blak silk ane ruiff of gray dalmes pasmentit w^t gold ane blak silk fur eurlingis of gray dalmes for y^e said ruiff and thre bandis to y^e beddis stuipis ane bairnis coit vnslevit of siluer & fugeirrit welnot ane ruiff of ane bed of grene reid and zallow dalmes and thre curtingis to y^e samyne ane collat of gray must welnot pasmentit w^t siluer and gold ane clok of blak dalmes w^t ane collat warrit w^t welnot ane mat of grene reid and zallow taffitie Tua collattis sewit of holene clay^t ane w^t blak silk and ane uyir reid Tua sarkis of holene clay^t ane sewit reid and ane uyir blak Tua pokis w^t missiue writingis This geir forsaid put in ane coffer Item ane harnishing of black welnot ane ruiff of ane bed of purpouir welnot borderit w^t siluer Thre curtingis of dalmes fustit w^t siluer and silk ane pend of purpouir welnot pasmentit w^t siluer four stuipis of y^e same pasmentit w^t siluer ane fute mantill of blak welnot of my ladeis, ane goue of blak welnot w^t ye bodie w^tout slaues ane cap elok of blak welnot pas-

mentit w^t silk ane almay clok of blak welnot freinzeit w^t blak silk and lynit w^t taffitie ane gown of quhit satein w^t ane bodie but slaues pasmentit w^t clay of gold ane gown of cramosie welnot w^t ane bodie but slaues pasmentit w^t gold and siluer ane skirt and slaues of clay^t of gold raisit ane skirt of clay^t of gold and slaues raisit upoun cramosie satein ane ruiff of ane bed of quhit dalmes freinzeit w^t quhit silk ane cap clok of purpouir welnot pasmentit w^t gold and reid silk ane pair of breikis of purpouir welnot but schankis pasmentit w^t gold and reid silk ane coit of purpouir welnot pasmentit w^t gold and silk ane alman clok of blak satein barrit w^t blak welnot and skirtit w^t matrikis ane uy alman clok of dalmes barrit w^t welnot and skirtit w^t matrikis ane skirt of satein cuttit out in doggrane sevin ourlaweris of sarkis w^t ye handis wro^t w^t gold silver & silk This geir put in y^e maist coffer ane burd clay^t of dornik of dalmes champ w^t ane cupbur^t clay^t of ye same sax saruietis of ye same champ uthir four burd clay^{ts} of dornik champit w^t ane copburd clay^t of y^e same seven towellis of dornik ane uyir burd clay^t of dornik ane dosane saruietis of dornik Thre linning burd clay^{ts} auchtene saruietis of linning speinzeit w^t blew fyve wasching towellis speinzeit w^t blew ane auld copburd of clay^t about y^e rest ane auld furrin of toddis This geir put up in ane uyir coffer Item be y^e cofferis ane kame caiss and ane auld kimig clay^t about y^e same ane blak buist w^t drawin schottulis Twa cheiris y^e ane couerit w^t purpouir welnot and y^e uy w^t gray fyve stuillis couerit w^t purpouir welnot.

“ We Johnne erle of Athole chancellor of Scotland, &c. Be yir pntis grantis y^t Johnne flemig capitane of biggar hes deliuerit to us The haill guidis geir claithing and jewellis above specifat contenit in yis pnt Inventar qlk ye said Johnne had in keiping qlk ptenit to Umq^{le} dame eli^t ross lady flemig and we grant us to have resautit y^e same to be keipit be us to y^e utilitie and proffeit of ye said dame eli^{ts} bairnis scrivit w^t o^r hand in Edinburgh y^e xxviii day of october the zeir of god (jav&c.) thre scoir auchtene zeiris. “ERLL OF ATHOLL.”

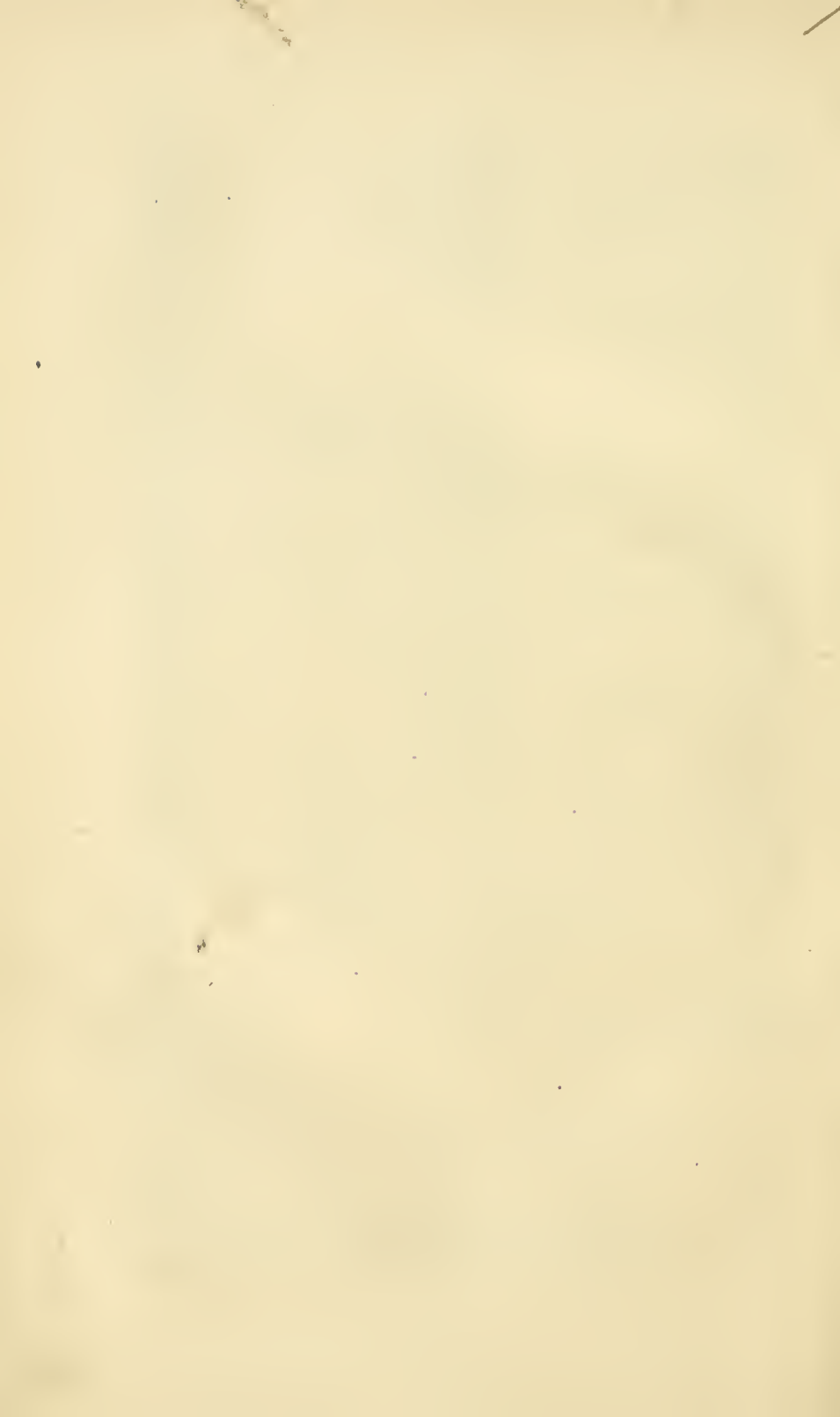
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OPINIONS OF THE PRESS ON THE FIRST EDITION
OF THIS WORK.

**WILLIAM CHAMBERS, Esq. of Glenormiston, Lord Provost
of Edinburgh.**

“For many interesting particulars concerning the Flemings we refer to a slightly known, but meritorious work, ‘Biggar and the House of Fleming,’ by William Hunter,” —[“*History of Peeblesshire.*”]

Dr JOHN BROWN, Author of “Horae Subsecivae.”

“I would like to say a few words about your capital book. I have read it now thoroughly, and much of it more than once, and recommended, and indeed given it to many; and I feel grateful to you, as a Biggar callant, for what you have done. I assure you there are qualities of understanding, expression, and feeling shown in that book that would tell well in any literary work—manly, unaffected, and sincere, with genuine acuteness and taste.”—[*Letter to the Author.*]

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“‘Biggar and the House of Fleming’ is a valuable contribution to the history and antiquities of our neighbourhood; and, being well done, I hope Mr Hunter will be encouraged by his success to undertake another chapter in the history of Lanarkshire. It is a rich mine and little worked.”—[*Letter to Mr Sim of Coulter.*]

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“Mr Hunter, from an early period of his life, had a strong desire to do something for his native place, and even in boyhood collected much of his curious information

regarding sturdy beggars, sorners, and blue gowns, by 'cotta's ingle, or in farmer's ha'.' Biggar, at the close of last century, had, like other places, its whistling lairds and daft Jennies, its wise Willies and witty Eppies, whose comical sayings, merry exploits, and such like folk lore, Mr Hunter took pleasure in noting down. To write the Biggar history he had to ransack the charter chests of the titled, presbytery, session and commissiounary records: and he compelled the criminal annals of our country to yield him their details. Every phase of life is portrayed in that work, from Queen Mary reviewing her gallant army at her cousin's house at Boghall, to John 'o' the Girnelt—from the Provost of St Mary's to the auld bellman."—[*Speech at Biggar.*]

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"The inhabitants of Biggar and its neighbourhood are peculiarly indebted to Mr Hunter; for, through the influence of this work, the circle of their fame has been enlarged, and the interest of the general public in their town and district very greatly increased. I take this opportunity of thanking Mr Hunter, in the name of myself and of my family, for the correct account which he has given of my family and ancestors, which, like the other notices of a similar nature in his hook, has been certainly treated in excellent good taste."—[*Speech at Biggar.*]

The late Rev. Dr AITON, Minister of Dolphinton, Author of the "Life and Times of Alexander Henderson," "The Lands of Messiah, Mahomet, and the Pope," &c.

"In retiring from the field of literature myself, I beg to cast my auld cloak on Mr Hunter, who has done literature and the district an eminent service in collecting and combining a vast variety of very interesting facts of other days long gone by, which were fast sinking into oblivion."—[*Speech at Biggar.*]

"Glasgow Herald."

"The inhabitants of Biggar having got their townsman, William Hunter, Esq., Portobello, to give a lecture on historical incidents connected with the neighbourhood, the lecture showed so much knowledge and research, and altogether gave such general satisfaction, that Mr Hunter was requested to collect and arrange the matter which he had accumulated, with a view to publication. That gentleman has now drawn up a volume, which certainly is highly calculated to make the locality better known, and prove a source of intellectual enjoyment and edification not merely to the inhabitants of the Biggar district, but to the community at large."

"Hamilton Advertiser."

"The author of this work wields a graphic pen. To say that he has furnished a rich repast to the people of the Biggar district, and of the Upper Ward in general, is only to tell half the truth. No doubt the varied associations clustering round 'Biggar Auld Cross Knowe,' the traditions of Boghall Castle, Bizzyherry, 'The Cadger's Brig,' and other localities, and the reminiscences of that venerable Gem of Gothic Architecture, Biggar kirk, and of many a quaint old worthy reposing in its burying grounds, whose

pawky humour and witty sayings are here revived—must possess a charm peculiarly attractive to natives of the place. Still, there is here such an amount of antiquarian lore, historical research, pleasing narrative, and happy delineation of Scottish character, as well as the resuscitation of many curious old documents, both civil and ecclesiastical, illustrative of men and manners in days of yore, as cannot fail to render the work both interesting and instructive to all classes.

“The feretting out of so many rare old manuscripts and documents as Mr Hunter has brought to bear on his history is very creditable to his industry, as the selection and arrangement of extracts from these is equally creditable to his taste and judgment, while the literary execution of the work as a whole at once stamps the author as, in our opinion, a vigorous writer, a plodding and painstaking searcher after truth, and a man of no mean intellectual power. The embellishments that adorn his work add much to its value”

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“In a lecture on local topics originated the splendid volume now before us. We use this epithet primarily with reference to the external aspect of the book, in respect of typography, illustration, and binding; but we need scarcely seek for a modified epithet to characterise its literary merits. With most laudable diligence Mr Hunter has collected a vast amount of interesting materials from every possible source, and has given a most fascinating account of the *memorabilia* of his native town in matters historical, ecclesiastical, biographical, topographical, economic, aesthetic, and social. The historical portions of the volume are exceedingly creditable to the author, indicating a degree of patience in research, and a power of vivid narrative, which are the best qualities of a historian, and which, when found in combination, constitute the perfection of these qualities; while the lighter parts of the book—those relating to notable people with whom the author was familiar in his boyish days, or of whom he has treasured up traditionary stories received from the generation that was old when he was young—indicate no small power of seizing upon the grotesque, and of appreciating characteristics of a state of society which has passed away, and of classes of people who are as extinct as the megatherium.”

The “Scotsman.”

“To Biggar people Biggar is the centre of the world, and this book is written by a Biggar man, and mainly for those who are, or have been ‘callants’ there, and to whom the memories of the Corse Knowe, and of Daft Jenny, Johnny Minto, the Westraw, Bow’s Well, and the Cadger’s Brig are sacred. But with all this—with the local colouring strong and keen—the book is good general reading, the work of a judging, thinking, well knowledged, well languaged man, who could write as well on many a wider subject. We can assure our readers that though they never saw Tinto, Coulter Fell, Cardon, or Bizzyberry, and never even heard the ancient joke that ‘London’s big, but Biggar’s bigger,’ they will find much diversion and not a little instruction in this volume. We heartily recommend the book; it is full of the best research, full of sense and humour, and well worthy of the sonsy, kindly people whose town and region it so worthily commemorates and represents.”

The “Caledonian Mercury.”

“‘BIGGAR AND THE HOUSE OF FLEMING’ may at first sight appear to present little to interest the general reader. ‘BIGGAR AND THE HOUSE OF FLEMING,’ however, as they are here described and pictured, are as apples of gold in baskets of silver. There is an historic richness about them that cannot fail to fascinate every reader, no matter where that reader may be found; there is a brilliancy and beauty, and withal a

studied homeliness about them also, that must prove specially attractive to the people of Biggar themselves; indeed, it may in a word be said that so carefully has our author gathered and grouped the valuable and interesting historic, archaeologic, and biographic materials at his disposal, so tastefully and judiciously has he adjusted them, each in its own place, associated with its own times, and so delightfully has the pencil of the lithographer and the burin of the engraver come to his aid in the illustration of the more important objects of interest in the locality that the work may be said to be perfect, or, if it be preferred, a perfect model of its kind."

The "Glasgow Gazette."

"This is a volume teeming with antiquarian lore of the choicest description, and with drawings representing Roman and Druidical instruments found in the district, together with many having their origin in this ancient kingdom of ours, such as the ancient stone querne or hand mill for grinding corn, which was found at Coulter, &c. The drawings could only be made at great expense, but independent of the antiquarian lore connected with them, the volume is replete with the most amusing and interesting reading. The book is full of historical interest. We present our dutiful regards to its accomplished author. We add with peculiar pleasure that it has been dedicated with great propriety to Adam Sim, Esq. of Coulter."
