shrubs, made up the grave double, and fixed a stone in the wall, on which are engraved the names of Bessie Bell and Mary Gray.

I am,

Sir,

Your most humble servant,


Note.—Lednock, or Lyndock, lies about seven miles north-west from Perth. Edit.
OF A ROYAL HUNTING

the passage might perhaps be willingly heard in one of our meet-
ing. I therefore here subjoin it, to be used as you shall judge
proper.

Spottiswood, and our other historians, in as far as I remember,
tell us only in general, that in the summer of the year 1563,
Queen Mary amused herself with hunting in the forests of Mar
and Atholl; but Barclay gives us the following particulars of what
happened then in the latter of these two countries.

It seems the Earl of Atholl had been forewarned of the Queen's
intention to honour him with a visit, and resolved to give her the
best reception his country could afford. Hunting was that in
which it principally excelled; and the Earl spared no expenses or
trouble that could tend to bring this diversion to its utmost per-
fection and splendour. He sent out no less than two thousand of
his nimblest Highlanders, to gather all the deer they could from
the woods and hills of Mar, Badenoch, Murray, and Atholl, to the
place that had been pitched upon as most proper for exhibiting
them to view, and for affording, by their means, the best enter-
tainment to the Queen, and to the nobility who were to attend
her. These Highlander, with their usual ardour to please their
chief, travelling with great agility through the mountains by day
and by night, in the space of two months, against the time ap-
pointed, brought together more than two thousand deer, with
many does and roes, to the place that had been pointed out to
them.

Here the Queen and a great number of noblemen, seated in a
valley, and a vast multitude of people that had flocked thither on
such an occasion, enjoyed this extraordinary sight with the
greatest satisfaction. One thing was very observable, and, Barclay
says, made such an impression on his mind, that he could never

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great a velocity; and therefore they did not so much as attempt it. They had even no means of saving their lives left, but only to fall flat on the heath, in the best posture they could, and allow the deer to run over them. This method they followed; but it did not preserve several of them from being wounded; nay, word was brought to the Queen that two or three men had been trampled to death.

In this manner, the deer would have all gone off together, had not the huntsmen, accustomed to such events, followed them instantly, and, with great dexterity, detached from the rest those that were in the rear. Against these the Queen’s stag-hounds, and those of the nobility who were then present, were then directed, and the chace was very successful. About three hundred and sixty deer were that day laid on the ground; five wolves likewise, and some roes, were killed. The Queen was well amused, and highly pleased with this magnificent proof of respect paid to her by the Earl of Atholl.

These are the circumstances of this hunting, related by William Barclay in his second Book Contra Monarchomachos, p. 81, 82, from what he himself had seen.

We meet, in Lindsay of Pitscottie’s History of Scotland, p. 227, 228, 229, with a description of another still more grand diversion of the same kind, given in the year 1529 to King James V. with his mother Queen Margaret, and the Pope’s Legate, by the then Earl of Atholl; but as that history is now in every body’s hands, since we were favoured with the late edition of it, I need not here mention what may be there read.

Neither need I take notice, that the hunting described by Barclay bears some resemblance to the batidas of the present King of Spain, where several hundreds of huntsmen form a line, and drive the deer through a narrow pass, at one side of which the King, with some attendants, has his post, in a green hut of boughs, and slaughters the poor animals as they come out, almost as fast as charged guns can be put into his hand, and he fire them. These are things sufficiently known; and the same manner of stag-hunting is practised in Italy, Germany, and in other parts of Europe.

Perhaps some member of this Society may some day look upon our ancient hunting as a subject not unworthy of being treated of in a particular dissertation; and then the two passages of Barclay and Lindsay, that I have had in view, will, I imagine, be considered.

We may observe, that both these authors confirm, what is indeed otherwise well enough known, that in the sixteenth age there were many wolves to be found in Scotland, though they are now, by all accounts, long since extirpated out of all Britain. Indeed, the French and Spanish geographers, even in their latest publications, are pleased to allow us a plentiful share of the largest and most fierce of these animals; but this arises from their copying, without proper examination, what ancient authors wrote with truth of their own times, though it be otherwise in our days.

I leave it to others to determine whether or not it would be expedient and practicable to root the foxes also out of our island. And I am, with great regard and esteem, &c.

JOHN GEDDES.

Edinburgh, April 1. 1782.