XV.—Notice regarding an Ancient Oak Panel from Stirling Castle, on
which is carved the Head of a King of Scotland. Communicated by
Captain J. E. Alexander, (late) 16th Lancers, M. R. A. and G. S.

THIS interesting Relic of the Scottish monarchy is now in the possession of the family of
the late General G. Graham, Deputy-Governor of Stirling Castle. The General purchased
it from an old woman in the village of Torbrecks, who said she had got it about 40 years
before from the sheriff-substitute of Stirling; and it was firmly believed to have come
originally from the Castle.

The panel, five feet six inches in height, and two feet broad, is of oak, in a high state
of preservation (a). The front is divided into two compartments; the upper containing,
among florid ornaments, a Royal Head; and the lower the Scottish Thistle and Fleur-de-
Lis of France, conjoined and surmounted by a Crown.

It is well known that the Palace of Stirling was a favourite residence of James V.
After its erection in 1529, he was continually ornamenting and improving it. One
apartment in particular, which went by the name of the King's Room or Presence Cham-
ber, had a ceiling completely covered with oak carving. The great weight of this
caused one of the panels to fall down; and, instead of its being replaced, in 1777,
the whole ceiling was destroyed and dispersed in different directions. A gentleman who
witnessed this barbarity states that, on the day the ceiling was pulled to pieces by the
workmen employed to repair the roof of the Palace, beautifully carved heads,
larger than life, supposed to be of the Scottish Sovereigns, their Queens, and men of re-
own in the kingdom—among others the effigy of Sir William Wallace—were rolled down
the streets from the Castle. Several bakers seized on some of them, and heated their
ovens with them. Others found their way into the jail, where the prisoners amused them-

(a) See Plate XI. Fig. 2.

The form of the Crown is very elegant. The lower part consists of a circle on which
precious stones are represented interspersed with pearls. Over these a range of fleurs-de-
lis are interchanged with crosses fleurées. This part of the Crown formed the original
diadem of Scotland till the reign of James V. who, in imitation of the crowns of other
sovereigns, added two imperial arches rising from the circle, and crossing each other at the
top, which again are surmounted by a pearl and cross. On the large cross patee of the
crowns exhibited in the Castle of Edinburgh are the letters J. R. V. and from what has
been stated above, there can be little doubt that the head on the panel is that of James
V. one of the handsomest, most accomplished, and chivalrous monarchs of the race of
Stuart (a).