

SCOTTISH HERALDRY AND GENEALOGY.

To the Editor of the *Archæological Journal*.

Sir.—

Although neither a Scotsman, nor a professional Herald or Genealogist, I have recently spent a morning among the saltires and fesses, and the records of "who begat who," then on view in Auld Reekie, and may perhaps be permitted to congratulate the Archæological Institute on the success of an exhibition which, if not what might have been expected from the ancient manor houses and charter chests of broad Scotland, is nevertheless very creditable to those who proposed and those who carried it into execution. No less a Scot than Duncan Forbes, of Culloden, tells us that length of days to man, and long standing to families, are among the greatest of temporal blessings, and Sir Walter Scott has recorded his opinion that family traditions and genealogical history, studies in themselves insignificant, serve to perpetuate a great deal of what is remarkable in ancient manners, and record many curious and minute facts which could have been preserved and conveyed through no other medium. It has been said of the trunk of an elephant that it could tear down an oak or pick up a pin. In the former of these feats it might be compared to our historians of the last century, but since that time they have availed themselves of the latter power, and the life producing pages of Macaulay owe much of their interest to his familiarity with such information as is to be gleaned in the untrodden paths and by-ways of knowledge, and in collections such as that now under notice.

From this point of view there are many who, with myself, have spent an hour or two very pleasantly, and with much instruction, in the rooms at Edinburgh. The Scottish Lyon never ramped more proudly or in better company, and Achaius himself and his tressured descendants, could they have risen from the land of myths or stepped down from the walls of Holyrood might well have been gratified, and would certainly have been instructed by the show. Even the living Lyon, "Rex fecialium," had divested himself of his gorgeous hide, as had other heralds and pursuivants, Bath and Marchmont, Unicorn and Carrick, whose collected "spolia opima" dazzled the eyes of beholders. The sutors of Selkirk have not indeed contributed the birse, but the banner of Buccleugh was there displayed with its trippant stag, the gathering word of Bellendaine, and the crescent and blazing star, so indicative of a moonlight raid. There, too, might be seen the famous pennon from Cavers, blazoned with St. Andrew's cross, and semeé of the bloody heart, as yet uncrowned, together with a truly heraldic lion,

such as the "terra leonum" itself could not produce, so ferocious was his aspect; and near him stood forth the proud "Jamais Arreyre" of the House of Douglas. This, though reputed to have been taken from Hotspur, and immortalized in Border song, is evidently a Douglas pennon, the ensign of James, the second Earl—Earl also of Mar—and was without doubt, carried at Otterborne by the ancestor of its present owner and exhibitor, Douglas of Cavers, who well earned his family motto of "do or die." The national tradition is, however, worthily supported by a pair of gloves—a real Percy relic—said to have been taken by Douglas in single combat with Hotspur before the walls of Newcastle in 1388. They are, without doubt, original, and bear the Percy lion worked in seed pearls, and may have been, as is supposed, a "gage d'amour." Of less antiquity, though scarcely of less interest, is the Royal banner taken and re-taken on the field of Worcester by Edmund Hay, in whose family it still remains. Though not of large size, it is heavy with embossed emblazonry, and must have tried the strength of arm of the bearer. A banner, or rather pennon of the Earls Mareschal, borne on Flodden field, by John Skirving, of Plasoland, is preserved in the Advocates' Library, and it is to be regretted that it is here represented by a photograph only. The value of these evidences of Scottish valour is most enhanced by their preservation in the families of those who won them. The past and the present are thus brought into a most interesting apposition.

Of illuminated pedigrees the collection displays a splendid example of one of the House of Douglas from the "dark grey man" down to 1590, adorned with some hundreds of coats of Arms. The material is either vellum or a very superior kind of parchment, so skilfully put together as almost to cover all the joinings. It is exhibited by the Earl of Home, and is probably a part of the inheritance won in the great Douglas cause. Lord Breadalbane has sent a large pedigree of the Campbells of Glenurchy, with good miniatures of the chiefs of each generation, and there is one dating from 1585, of the Setons of Winton, the real Setons, whose armorial cielings may still be seen at their house near Saltoun. There is also a genealogy of the Royal House, prepared in 1790 under the direction of the Earl of Buchan, founder of the Scottish Society of Antiquaries, and one of the Erskines of Pitrodie, "a weel kenned" branch of the house of Mar. There was also a printed pedigree of the Cadells of Banton and one of the Mac-Crae's of Conra with their branches; from Finlay Dhu Macgilchrist, with their de'il may care motto of "Nec curo nec careo," and one or two others of families of less note.

The remainder and bulk of the collection, is of a somewhat miscellaneous character. There are various armorial bearings of guilds, corporations, ecclesiastical bodies and dignitaries, kingdoms and principalities, and private persons, some from public halls, courts of justice, churches, castles and dwelling houses, carved in wood or stone, painted, or embroidered. There is also a fine impression of the imperial great seal of Scotland, shewing the lion in the first quarter, the Unicorn supporter, and the jewel of St. Andrew, no unfit emblems of the share taken by Scotland in the united empire. Also a curious bronze door knocker, dated 1572, and bearing the quartered coat of Bruce of Muness in Shetland upon the anvil; drawings from armorial tombstones, a few rubbings, well executed, from monumental brasses, one especially from

the Netherlands of large size and bronzed, some engraved broadswords and pistols, silver plate, china, linen woven with armorial devices, and one or two suits of armour of known age. Also some horse caparisons very richly emblazoned.

There are also some fine armorial panels from Aberdeen and the abbey church of Dunfermline, and others executed in a rough but most effective style, very suitable for modern use, combining effect with economy of work. There is a large collection of heraldic seals, matrices in iron, silver and gold, and impressions in metal, wax and plaster, some of very early date, and illustrating the first use of armorial bearings, combined arms, and quarterings. The collection of armorial book plates is extensive, but chiefly modern, as indeed is the practice. One very curious one, of quarto size, gives the arms of Scrope of Danby, with 28 quarterings and their fine old bold but modest motto "Devant, si je puis."

There are also some cases of unfolded charters with armorial seals, one being by the nobles of Bohemia with 99 seals. Also patents of titles and dignities, commissions, grants and confirmations of arms, funeral and processional rolls, a tournament roll of the reign of Henry VIII., manuscript books of arms, some from Her Majesty, a number of more or less rare books on heraldry, and a book or two of pedigrees. Also a collection of engraved portraits of Garters and other Heralds, and one or two portrait prints of old Scottish worthies, with the arms of four generations of ancestors included in the wreathed margin. Also a copy of the funeral escutcheon of Robertson of Ströwan, shew-the seize quartiers, now so rare.

Some of the most valuable, and to the Scottish Genealogist, most interesting parts of the collection consist of the illustrated books of pedigrees and heraldic emblazonments contained in manuscript volumes which were necessarily exhibited in cases, and thus beyond the handling of ordinary visitors. These seem to have been specially due to the public spirit and energy of the Lyon King whose exertions both in the collection and the arrangement of the components of the exhibition cannot be too highly commended. To him, and to the officers of the Scottish Corporation ably seconded by those of the English Institute the success exhibition is to be ascribed.

On the whole it must be admitted that the collection was one of considerable interest, and well deserving the attention which seems to have been bestowed upon it, though it neither was, nor did it pretend to be in any sense a national collection, even of armorial bearings and pedigrees, though it is possible that it may lead the way to something of a broader and deeper character, something really worthy of a nation so great in warlike exploits, and not less great, in these later years, in all the arts of peace.

A real national collection to illustrate the origins, genealogies, heraldry, and general antiquities of Scotland would be of great interest and most attractive, nor is there any country in which the materials for such a collection are more abundant or more conveniently to be obtained. Sir William Napier, in his well-known rebuke to the Secretary at War, reminds him that he is of a name and nation unaccustomed to submit to injuries, and indeed the Scottish character, still pugnacious and self-asserting, was in the old time intensely warlike, and notwithstanding the boast of "shoulder to shoulder," the

clans and great families were almost always at feud with each other. But their conflicts differed materially from those of modern warfare. The use of the broadsword was not consistent with close columns or serried ranks. There was room for the display of personal strength and courage, and in consequence the arms and relics of ancient wars are closely associated with the deeds of individual warriors, and are preserved by their descendants and clansmen with praiseworthy pride and care. Hence a peculiar interest attaches itself to Scottish arms and the old materials of war, to the crests and badges, ensigns and war cries, which they regarded with almost religious devotion, and under which they won many a victory and encountered many a death stroke. Such a collection, to be successful, must be conceived in a broad and liberal spirit, embracing not only armorial ensigns and family genealogies, weapons and accoutrements used by those whom they record, but illustrations drawn from the ancient abbeys, churches, castles and manor houses of the land, jewels, family trophies, charters from the charter chests and muniment rooms of the nobles and old landed gentry, and examples of the ancient implements of the chase, of domestic life, and of legal punishments, not only such as might be inflicted by Lauderdale, or in the presence of a Claverhouse, but such as were in use in most parishes and local councils. Such a collection, too, might be more readily compassed, and its interest, when completed, would be most materially enhanced if it were held, as now, under the same roof with the portraits of Scottish worthies. Such a scheme, meeting with general support, might be made to throw light upon the social, corporate, and ecclesiastical life of Scotland in remote ages, and exhibit to the eye and sense of the beholder the ancient state and gradual and finally rapid development of the national character. Other nations, like those of the Iberian peninsula, have reason to be proud of their ancestral glories, but to Scotland it is especially given to illustrate the history of the past by the light of a not unequal present, and to show that that present, rising gradually from the past, is in arts and arms, in statesmen, in soldiers, in skilful administrators, in sages of the law, in financiers, in poets and historians, critics, political economists, physicians, philosophers, and men distinguished in science and the mechanical arts, in no way inferior to those of her far more wealthy and advantageously-situated neighbour, to whom she has so long been united, to the great and manifest advantage to both countries; preserving, nevertheless, and may she long preserve, her national character and peculiarities.

A collection such as is here contemplated, including objects of incidental and abstract value, must, of course, be undertaken by persons whose rank, position, and character, would be a guarantee for the safe custody of the objects entrusted to them, and for their safe return without expense to their owners.

With such a collection it would also be desirable to provide something more than a mere catalogue or even a handbook; a volume that should provide a sketch of the origins of the nation and of its historic families—Highland and Lowland—those whose names are identified with the history of the country, and many of whom still own their ancestral lands and mansions, and still stand in the fore-front of its society. We should there be told succinctly, but clearly, how far to trust in traditions and records, or to physical or moral peculiarities for

evidence of Irish, Gaelic, Norwegian, Saxon, or Anglo-Roman descent, and how far each has contributed to the making of the Scottish nation. Since the days of Pinkerton and Chalmers much has been done to elucidate and discriminate between the component parts of the nation, but the searching light of modern criticism has only begun to be directed upon the origin and ancestry, clans and great families of the country, who for centuries wielded the power of a proud and warlike aristocracy, but who combined with their pride of place a strong attachment to their native soil.

It would be interesting, while looking at the devices and seals of the Lords of Douglas, to learn whether that greatest of Scottish families sprung autochthonous from Douglas dale or from some Saxon or Norman colonist or conqueror, or from Theobaldus Flandrensis who certainly held land in the dale in the 12th century. And so of the Hamiltons: did they really spring from an obscure Leicestershire hamlet, and whence came their mythical crest and motto? Was the first Wemyss a colonist or a troglodite? When first did the Setons invoke St. Bennet in their punning war cry? in what forest did the Seton-Gordons win their boar's head, and what is the evidence for the descent of the Aberdeen Gordons from the bold archer who pierced the lion heart of Richard, and whose right arm and bow they bear in remembrance of the deed? What is the connection between the Houses of Murray and Douglas, shewn by their stars in common.

Of Murrawe and the Dowglas,
How that thar begynnynng was;

But in thare armys bath thai bere
The sternys set in lyk manere.

A coincidence which has been thought by Scottish heralds to indicate a common origin. An Anglo-Norman descent has been claimed for Bisset and de Bosco, Baliol and Bruce, Campbell and Cunyn, Cheyne and Fleming, Gordon, Grant, and Graham, Herries and Ker, Maule, Maitland, and Melville, Morville and Oliphant, Riddell and Rollo, Seton, Say, and Somerville; Charteris is said to spring from Chartres, Beatoun from Bethune. Of the descent of most of these there can be little doubt, others need a critical enquiry, such as might be briefly entered upon.

Did the Drummonds and Livingstones, and the ancestors of Leslie come, as is said, from Hungary? or Innes from Berowald Flandrensis? Do the Boyds of Kilmarnock, like the royal Stewarts, descend from Alanus Dapifer, and is Eyton's account of Flauld and Macbeth to be accepted? Does Lenox derive from the Saxon Egfrith of Northumberland, Home and the great Earls of Dunbar and March, from Cospatrick, Abernethy from the Norwegian Orm? These are but Lowland difficulties, many of which admit of a tolerably accurate solution.

The origin of the Western clans from Arran to Cape Wrath, Sutherland, and the Moray Firth, is a larger, more difficult, and far more national question. Lord Forbes is thought to spring from the Irish Mac Firbis, and it was the opinion of Dr. Todd, resting upon admitted Irish records, that their pedigree could be traced to the 5th or 6th century, far beyond that of the Houses of "Bourbon or Nassau" or any other even royal stem. Are the Macdonnells and Mac Donalds, Macleods,

Mackenzies, and MacCrae's "Scoti" from Ireland, or the offspring of Harold Harfagr, those proud Lords of the Isles with their all embracing motto "*per mare per terras*." These questions may not admit of satisfactory solution, but a slight sketch of the opinions of such critics as Skene or Donald Gregory would add immensely to the interest of the volume, illustrated as it would no doubt be by trophies of the several clans, giving the distinguishing tartans of each, their weapons, their armorial ensigns, their badges, and their war cries.

A man or a family are by no means the safest evidence for their origin, but nevertheless it is well to know what they or the older and more credulous race of heralds put forth on their behalf. Sir Bernard Burke's volumes, which for the most part present each man's account of his ancestry, are not altogether authority, but are nevertheless of great value, and have much advanced the study of genealogy, and it would therefore be well to collect and display all original family pedigrees, many of which are richly illuminated, and very curious.

Scottish charter chests are also numerous and well filled, for the most part with old and singularly well preserved documents, often with heraldic seals, and containing the titles to the estates of their owners. Some have of late been printed, though privately, but a much larger number remain in seclusion. An exhibition would lead to the cataloguing or probably the printing of very many, and in no way could family pedigrees be so fully completed or be so correctly established.

The heraldry of Scotland differs little from that of England, either in its rules or charges, so that Lyon and Garter might converse in their common tongue. It is curious how little Scottish heralds have borrowed from France. Even the fleur-de-lys so common in English coats, is rare in Scotland save as an adornment to the national tressure. The rampant and ruddy Lion, the tressure, the chequered fess, and the saltire or cross of St. Andrew are common, either as marking descent from royalty, or from respect to the patron saint. The tressure flory, counter flory, "*First by Achaius borne*," is a common form of augmentation, and is seen in the arms, among many others of the Lord Lyon, Seton, Maitland, Charteris, Livingstone, Kellie, and Middleton. Napier of Thirlestane, uses the tressure "*to wreath his shield*."

The stars and crescents of the border families with their "*reparabit cornua luna*" speak volumes of their moonlight raids, and their familiarity with the "*snaffle, spur, and spear*," and are found in the arms of the Scotts and Somervilles, Falconers, Kirkaldys, Kinnairds, Arbutnots, Murrays, Sutherlands, and many other well known names. Indicative of a rieviers life is the spur rowel of Ker, and the winged spur of Johnston. Thirlestan adds spears to his tressure.

—In fair remembrance won,
Yon sheaf of spears his crest has borne.
Hence his high motto stands revealed,
'Ready ay ready' for the field.

The mottos indeed of many of the Scottish families are redolent of war and deadly feud, and thus reflect the national character and habits. Such are the "*Jamais arreyre*" of Douglas, the "*Hazard yet forward*" and "*St. Bennet and Set on*" of Seyton, "*Je suis prest*" and "*toujours prest*" of Lovat and Carmichael, "*Nunquam non paratus*"

of Johnstone, "Watch Weel" and "Gardez bien" of Halyburton and Eglinton, "This i'll defend" of Macfarlane, "keep tryste" of Bathwele and Sempill. Others relate more directly to the avenging of injuries, as the "Ne obliviscaris" of Argyle, "I byde my time" of Loudon, "Oublier ne puis" of Colville, "but siccar" of Sutherland. Others prescribe caution, as the "Gang warily" of Drummond, "Touch not the cat but the glove" of the clan Chattan. The "Furth fortune and fill the fetters" of Athol savours strongly of the hope of ransom.

Other devices and mottos are of a purely savage character, such as the "Spaire when thou aes nocht" of Hay of Yester, and the "spare nocht" and "ein do and spare nocht" of Tweedale and Macgregor, and

—Kirkpatrick's bloody dirk
Making sure of murders work.

expressed by the dagger crest and the "I mak sicker" of the motto. Scott, too, commemorates the "dagger crest" of Mar, still used by the Erskines. Sinclair contents himself with the single but expressive word "Fight," and Lindsay has the war tent for his crest, and "Astra castra numen lumen" for his motto, and finally there is the summons of Breadalbane, "follow me," and the responsive mottoes of the various Chieftains who owe him their allegiance.

Sometimes the arms and devices preserve the memory of some family exploit mythical or real, as the "I dare" and human effigy of Dalzel, the boar's head and bow hand of Seaton-Gordon and Gordon, the three shields and the yoke with the "serva jugum" of Hay. The tenure horn is said to be still preserved at Penycuik, and is commemorated in the crest of the family, and in their motto of "free for a blast," and Sir Walter Scott has made well known the "Betyde, betyde" of his Bemerside neighbour. An early event in the family of Leslie is commemorated in the belt buckles in their arms, and the "gripfast" and "gin the buckle byde" of their mottoes.

Neither are "armes parlantes," canting heraldry as it has been called, nor allusive mottoes, unknown in Scottish coats. Such is the Crane of Cranstoun, and of mottoes the "Fare fac" of Farefax, the the "Deeds Schaw" of Cathcart, the broken globe and rainbow and the "At spes non fracta" of Hope, and the cock, the crest of Law, the far-fetched pun being in the Cock-a-leary-law cry of that bird, almost as poor a conceit as the boar pig, (verres), crest of de Vere.

The "Amo" of Buccleugh seems to bear allusion to the females his supporters.

The allusions to the Chase are less common than might have been expected in the sons "woody Caledon." The Foresters indeed bear hunting horns, Lovat a stag's head crest, the Macintoshes a wild cat, and the famous caberfae is the emblem of the

— Chiefs of Kintail

The stag in whose standard bounds wild in the gale.

Among the objects of interest would be a complete collection of the rare and valuable publications of the Bannetyne, Roxburgh, Spalding and other Clubs, whose books have largely contributed both to the national and family history. Also the works of Innes and Sir W. Fraser, and many other less expensive and less known works of topography and family history, of more or less value.

Various anecdotes exhibiting pride of ancestry and in their armorial bearings might be collected, and would form an appropriate place in the suggested volume. The history of the Innes family whose Dukedom descends in the female line, and whose armorial bearings are probably the earliest to be found in Scotland, was written at the suggestion of the Duke of Roxburgh, a Kerr, though by the distaff only. "I will teach those proud Kerrs," said his Grace, "that I am of as good blood on my father's side as on that of my great grandmother," and the Innes charters at Floors are said to be of very ancient date.

Such an exhibition as is suggested would probably lead to a new and much needed edition of the Peerage of Scotland, and to the completion and correction of the Baronage, left imperfect for nearly a century, much to the discredit of the gentry of Scotland. The materials for these works are now ample, charters and records formerly locked up are now accessible, and would be examined in a far more critical spirit than existed a century ago.

The suggested exhibition, comprehensive in its subjects, and supported, as it would no doubt be, by the whole nation, would afford both amusement and instruction, and would interest not only men like Jonathan Oldbuck and Sir Arthur Wardour, and similiar worthies, now almost extinct, of the Heavysterne and Dryasdust school, but would administer solid and valuable instruction to all interested in Scottish history and manners, costume and environments to the painters and writers of fiction, and fitting subjects for the pen, pencil, or needle, for such of the fair sex as are skilful in design and embroidery.

For such, and so truly national a purpose, the Lyon King, never wanting in patriotism, in union with the Scottish Society of Antiquaries, might send forth a sort of fiery cross through the length and breadth of Scotland, with the certainty that the response would be worthy of the sender and of the subjects sent, and out of it would no doubt spring large additions to the national museum and the portrait gallery, and it would quicken into life various contemplated works of an historic and antiquarian character, and especially the great work on the national portraits—after the example of Lodge,—which a spirited and much respected Edinburgh publisher is known to have long had in preparation.

The writer of this letter sat down to pen a few lines, which, under the attraction of the subject, have expanded to a most unreasonable length. Alas, I fear the same attraction will not be felt by you, Mr. Editor, nor by my readers, if you should admit my not only long, but I fear lengthy, production into your pages.

C.