

XXXV.—*Memorandum respecting the Tomb of Bishop Kennedy, in the Chapel of St Salvador's College, St Andrews.*

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[*Read to the Society, 15th December 1845.*]

THIS tomb, situated on the north wall of the chapel, near the east end, and probably within the ancient altar space, was originally a magnificent specimen of Gothic work; and even now, after centuries of neglect, and all the damage it experienced from a fall of rubbish from the roof of the building, it is an impressive and interesting structure. The main fabric of the tomb is still entire; but the repose of the relics of the holy Bishop has been several times disturbed, and their present condition is different from what it was at first.

Curiosity has been long exercised in vain upon a half obliterated Gothic inscription, of two lines, which occupies a single block of stone in the back of the tomb. When residing at St Andrews, in 1842, I gave some attention to this legend, with a view to decyphering it; but my success was only partial. My first care was to take a correct copy of all the appearances presented by the inscription, even to the minutest trace. This, at least, I thought, would serve for any future and more skilful investigator, in case the original should be still further injured. My copy is presented to the Society along with this paper.¹ My next object was to endeavour to make sense of the inscription. Here I at first thought I should have some aid from prosody, as the two lines bore an appearance of hexameters; but it was soon discovered that this was a fallacious hope. I afterwards became convinced that the inscription had been tampered with, probably by persons anxious to restore it, and who, in doing so, would of course follow their own hypotheses as to words and letters. This was a serious addition to other difficulties. The theoretical restoration ultimately arrived at is given in a separate paper; it is as follows:—

Columen et decus et tutela hujus ofē magē

Hice finit fanum qui largis cōtulit ortū

quasi dicitur—Columen et decus et tutela hujus officinæ magnæ hicce finit

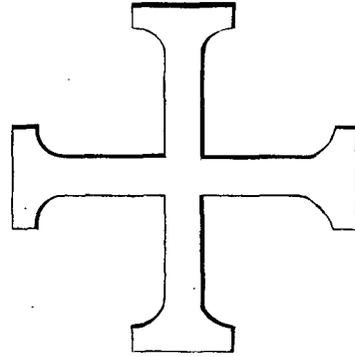
¹ See the annexed facsimile, Plate XXIX.

fanum cui largis contulit ortum: *i. e.*, "The prop, ornament, and guardian of this great school here finishes the fane to which by his liberality he gave birth." Mr Lyon, in his "History of St Andrews," proceeded to some extent upon this interpretation of the legend; but I am far indeed from being satisfied that more than a slight approach has been made to the real reading. It may be well, nevertheless, to have this, as well as the other paper, in the archives of our Society.

The recess of the tomb contains, in its lower part, a sarcophagus of plain masonry, surmounted by a huge slab of black marble. It was known that this was the place whence, in 1683, six silver maces of ancient workmanship had been extracted; one of which is still shown in the College. The supposition has always been that the maces, as articles of intrinsic, as well as sentimental value, had been deposited in the Bishop's tomb at the Reformation, with a view to their preservation. Here, of course, are indications of two intrusions upon the repose of the holy Bishop. A wish was now felt to ascertain the internal condition of the tomb, and a private inspection accordingly took place (June 10, 1842), in the presence of several of the professors. An aperture being made in the back wall of the church, access was speedily obtained to the space covered by the black slab, which was found to be filled with a mass of loose friable earth. On this being cleared out to a considerable extent, a man was at length able to enter, in order to proceed with the work of excavation. It soon became evident that the space was a small square chamber, vaulted longitudinally, and composed of dressed freestones, looking as fresh as when they came from the chisel. When the man had dug a good way down, he began to find bones mixed with the earth; also the fragments of a coffin and a shroud, but all in such confusion, as plainly indicated that they had been dislodged from their resting-place on some former occasion, and huddled back promiscuously with the earth. The skull was at length found entire. It appeared, from fragments of cerecloth, that the body had originally been embalmed. Doubt could hardly be entertained that the remains were those of the high-born ecclesiastic who founded St Salvator's College.

When the whole contents of the vault had been cleared out, it was found to be a little over eight feet long by three feet broad, and sufficiently deep to allow of a man standing upright. Towards the interior of the chapel was a small doorway, built up, but still showing the three lowest of a flight of steps by which the vault had been accessible. It is difficult to account for

the existence of such an access to a vault which must have been intended to receive only one tenant, unless we can suppose that the body of the Bishop was presented as an object of veneration in Catholic times. Perhaps some force is added to this conjecture, by two large crosses of the subjoined form, measuring nearly two feet each way, cut neatly but deeply in outline into the fair stone slabs forming the ends of the vault, as if designed for show, the one at the head, the other at the feet of the body. The presumption seems therefore not unwarrantable, that the place was originally kept open for at least the occasional gratification of the devout.



The distinction of Bishop Kennedy, as not only a great churchman and patron of learning, but an energetic statesman; and one who was thought to have been the means of preserving the Stuart dynasty upon the throne, excited some curiosity respecting his head, as an index of intellectual character. It was accordingly measured by a medical gentleman present, when its dimensions were found to be as follows:—

Circumference over occipital protuberance and eyebrows, 21 inches.

From middle of meatus auditorius to do. over the top of the head, 13½ inches.

From root of nasal bones over the top of the head to the edge of the foramen magnum, 15 inches.

From mastoid process to do., not inclusive of their breadth, 4 inches.

From meatus auditorius to centre of frontal bone, 6 inches.

According to phrenological doctrine, this was a head which, if containing a healthy brain, of good temperament, would denote a man of capacity and vigorous character. The perceptive organs were, however, better than the reflective; so that, in point of high intellect, the head was somewhat disappointing. Firmness was very large, and Cautiousness, Destructiveness, Adhesiveness, and Benevolence were all of super-average magnitude, pointing to a man of determined character, but generous disposition towards his fellow-creatures.

The bones and earth were afterwards carefully replaced in the vault, and the aperture closed up.

Hic finit sanum qui largis contulit ortum
 columen et dousei tutela huius o femage
 Hic finit sanum qui largis contulit ortum

PRESENT APPEARANCE OF THE INSCRIPTION AT THE BACK OF BISHOP KENNEDY'S TOMB.

Hic finit sanum qui largis contulit ortum
 columen et dousei tutela huius o femage
 Hic finit sanum qui largis contulit ortum

ATTEMPTED RESTORATION OF THE INSCRIPTION ON BISHOP KENNEDY'S TOMB.