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Alex. M. Munro.

(1861 Old Machar - 1911 St Machar)

Editor

Assistant Aberdeen City Chamberlain

SCOTTISH NOTES AND QUERIES

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ABERDEEN, JUNE, 1887.

THE object of *Scottish Notes and Queries* will be to establish literary relations between cultivated men and women.

Antiquaries, archæologists, artists, bibliographers, ecclesiologists, philologists, as well as scientists generally, may enjoy the give and take that these pages are designed to afford by freely communicating with each other on

those subjects most dear to them. If it should be argued that there is no lack now-a-days of such means of intercourse, we assent, with this demurrer, that within a very large area of us there is nothing quite analogous to what we aim at. Besides, it will be generally admitted that, for such purposes as ours, our daily journalism affords a somewhat doubtful medium — inconvenient and fugitive — for the embodiment of subject matter which ought to claim more than a mere passing interest.

Our title is comprehensive enough, but in a locality which counts itself traditionally rich in many departments of intellectual activity, and singularly rich in some, our *locale* is fortunate. And "the times are ripe," for, following the heritage of such names as Joseph Robertson, Cosmo Innes, John Hill Burton, and John Stuart, there is a large living constituency of those who have earned well-merited distinction in similar walks, as well as in philosophy, scholarship, criticism, and literary research, and a still larger school of young men who are in the thick of the fight, or but buckling on their armour. These are in turn environed by an ever-swelling chorus of enquiring, thoughtful readers, interested more or less in the topics germane to our main purpose, and to all these we freely open our friendly columns.

Outside these topics we shall have nothing to say, and shall have no opinions—neither religious nor political. Our regards will be chiefly towards the past,

"A link among the days, to knit
The generations each to each,"

but our notion is, that no concern for either the past or the future is worthy unless it subserves present needs. On these lines we shall aim at the useful as well as the curious, and are quite willing that the measure of our usefulness be the measure of our survival.

We highly appreciate the sympathy of the valued few who have encouraged us thus far, and hopefully bespeak the support of a wider circle.

THE EDITOR.

CAULD KAIL IN ABERDEEN.

A SONG, printed in 1776, begins—

“Cauld kail in Aberdeen
And custocks in Strathbogie,
And yet I fear they'll cook o'er soon,
And never warm the cogie.”

Another song, perhaps more modern, but referred to by Burns as old, begins—

“There's cauld kail in Aberdeen
And custocks in Strathbogie,
Whare ilka lair maun hae his lass,
But I maun hae my cogie.”

The first of these songs seems throughout its sixteen lines to be characterised by an incoherence and obscurity, such as may have arisen from its having been in the keeping of defective memories or in the hands of clumsy restorers. The second song, in all its forty lines, seems to have been either well preserved or very skilfully restored.

The first two lines of both songs have proved to possess a vitality which has enabled them to survive the songs themselves, and probably, over the world, there are millions of men who know these words but know nothing of the remainder of the lines.

“Cauld Kail in Aberdeen” has come to be a sort of proverb or catch-word, and a suitable salutation to an Aberdonian wherever he may be found. Unfortunately, however, it seems to have parted company with any application or meaning it may originally have had; or, if any meaning is attached to it, a sort of gentle sneer at the homely fare proper to Aberdeen in the olden time, seems to be attributed to it. I do not think that it originally inferred anything of this sort, but the contrary, whe-

ther it was a catch-word before the songs were composed, or whether it was first formulated in these songs.

Both in England and Scotland “Kail” seems from very ancient times to have been used as a metonymy for food generally, and good food too. Thus Harold, in answering some unreasonable pretensions of Canute the Great, says—“Does he alane ettle to eat all the kail of England”; and in the “Godly Sangs” it is said:—

“The Melrose monks ne'er wantit meal
As lang's their neighbours' lastit;
The Monks o' Melrose made guid kail
On Friday when they fastit.”

In more modern days the use of the word is illustrated in Burns's Earnest Cry and Prayer to the Scotch Representatives in the House of Commons, when he says—

“God bless your Honours a' your days
Wi' soups o' kail and brats o' claes,”

and many other illustrations to the same effect; in particular we find that the “kail bell” was the familiar name for the call to dinner. “Kail” means primarily all the plants of the family, including curly kail and cabbage, or “bow kail,” but, as has been shown, it also means the cooked dishes, of which these plants formed a principal ingredient.

Whether any of the old cookery books tell how kail should be cooked I do not know, but Burns supplies the deficiency in his “Apostrophe to Scotch Drink”:—

“Whether thro' wimplin' worms thou jink,
Or, richly brown, ream o'er the brink
In glorious faem,”

where he sings—

“On thee aft Scotland chows her cood
In souple scones, the wale o' food,
Or tumbli' in the builin' flood
Wi' kail and beef,”

by which I humbly think that strong ale was poured into the boiling flood, before it was dished and served up.

Kail was a leading item also in the food of cattle. Hear Burns again in “The Ordination”—

“Now, auld Kilmarnock, cock thy tail,
And toss thy horns fu' canty;
Nae mair thoult' rowt out o'er the dale
Because thy pasture 's scanty;

For capfu's large o' gospel kail
 Shall fill my crib in plenty,
 And runts o' grace the pick and wale,
 No gi'en by way o' dainty,
 But ilka day."

Custocks and runts mean practically the same, namely, the stalks of the kail or cabbage plants. Some authorities say that the runt meant the entire stalk, and that the custock was the pith or core, but, according to my experience, a stalk was a custock whether it was in or out of the ground. As a cooked dish, however, I never heard them called runts. The custocks had a great deal of juicy sweetness to impart to the "boiling flood," and when thoroughly boiled they were handed round the circle at the kitchen fire, and being split up, the succulent core was eaten with salt and butter.

"Kail" then was a soup of the richest composition, and it is conceivable that "custocks" were as good as artichokes, so that neither of them were dishes of which Aberdeen or Strathbogie had need to be ashamed.

The quality of "cauld," however, requires examination, for those unacquainted with the subject are apt to class cauld kail with cold potatoes, pottage, or "sowens," for which nothing can be said in praise. Such classification, however, would be a great mistake, for, as a fact, cold kail, properly "exhibited," as the doctors say, that is, spread thickly on an oatmeal hannock, and well peppered, is a morsel no hungry man would despise. Therefore I say that originally the expression "cauld kail" may have been used to indicate an especially desirable dish, and could not have been used in a contemptuous sense.

There is room for another view of the matter. We are well acquainted with the sort of humour which leads a man when inviting his friends to a feast to minimise it, ostentatiously, calling a great spread a "family dinner," or "just a chop," or a luxurious supper, "an egg," or "a spelding;" and it is not improbable that, in the same view, the ancient Aberdonians may have at one time, and for a time, got into the habit of concluding their most hospitable invitations in the form of an offer of "cauld kail."

The song first quoted is too incoherent to be analysed, but the sentiment of the first stanza of the second song seems quite distinct. It means that Aberdeen with its cauld kail, and Strathbogie with its custocks, are comfortable and well off, and that the lads and lasses can marry when they like, but the writer was not to be content with mere plenty; he must have more than that—

"But I maun hae my cogie."

Having all these various considerations in view, I submit that the words forming the title of this note were used as an acknowledgment of the comfortable abundance and hospitable usages of Aberdeen and Strathbogie. I do not think that anything contrary to this conclusion can be drawn from the expression "cauld kail het again" as applied to an old sermon doing duty a second time. This phrase seems to me to savour of the present century, about the period of the nativity of the Free Church. I do not believe that any Scot of the Covenanting times would have likened a sermon he disapproved of to "cauld kail." "Cauld sowens," or "sautless pottage" are different.

Perhaps some one, versed in the literature of the Reformation, may be able to throw new light on this question.

C.

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF LOCAL PERIODICAL LITERATURE.

THAN periodical literature, no other form is at once so prolific and so ephemeral. Newspapers, magazines, reviews or journals, be they as brilliant as they may, are soon forgotten, destroyed, or lost. The daily newspaper fares worst. Every one knows that it contains the very materials from which history is made. Hundreds of thousands of readers look forward with mighty interest to their morning or evening paper, and yet, out of an edition of say twenty thousand, how many could be collected at the end of a week? Of a more handy size, and of greater permanent interest, the magazine runs a better chance of being preserved. We have all known the type of old gentleman whose ambition it was to preserve the *Gentleman's* or complete his

file of the *Scots Magazine*; and his modern counterpart, who, from a totally different point of view, preserves every item of local periodical literature he can lay his hands on, who binds them elegantly, and in a few years sells them at a ransom. But these are in the minority. In fact, it is to trading on his knowledge of how periodicals are destroyed that the latter solely owes his existence. Besides, this latter type has sprung up of very recent years, and there remains more than a hundred years of our periodical literature which has been very scantily preserved. It will thus be seen that the difficulty of making a complete bibliography of our local periodicals is immense. The following notes are an attempt in this direction, but they are necessarily incomplete. My best thanks are due to J. P. Edmond, Esq., but for whose ready assistance and large information these notes would have been very meagre indeed; as also to A. D. Morice, Esq., for access to his unique collection of local periodical publications. It is to be hoped that the readers of *Scottish Notes and Queries* may be able to add to the list or supplement the brief notes.

1623. Almanac. *A New Prognostication for the Years of our Lord God 1623. Being the third after Leap-Years. Serving most fitlie for the Kingdome of Scotland and all partes of North Britaine, &c.* [Woodcut of large *Fleur de Lys.*] Aberdeen, Printed by Edward Raban, For David Melvill. 1623. This is the first Aberdeen Almanac that is known, and although we have not direct trace of one every year after, yet there can be little doubt that there was not a break in the series, down to the days of Chalmers, by lineal descent as it were, through Brown, Forbes, Forbes the younger, and Nicol. Full particulars about these interesting Almanacs will be found in Mr. Edmond's *Aberdeen Printers*. In 1754 Francis Douglas issued an opposition Almanac to James Chalmers's.
1657. "Weekly Diurnall" is spoken of in this year, under date 29th July. From the Burgh Records we read—"The said day the counsell appoints a weekly diurnall to be sellit for the use of the inhabitants, and John Forbes, stationer, to furnish the samen weekly, and appoints the deane of gild to pay the said John for the samen, wherant thir presents to be his warrand." (Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Aberdeen, 1643—1747, p. 165.) In the Burgh Accounts we find the following entry:—"Item, payit be the comptor to John Forbes, stationer, for fyften diornalls, at the magistrats ordor, four pund ten sh. (*Miscellany of the Spalding Club*, Vol. V.,

p. 181.) "Can this," asks Mr. Edmond (*Aberdeen Printers*, p. xxxv.), "have been the earliest newspaper published in Aberdeen?"

1745. "News Schedules" are mentioned as having been published by James Chalmers about this time. Writing in October, 1745, the Rev. James Bisset in his Diary (see *Miscellany of the Spalding Club*, Vol. 1, page 351), says that Chalmers had to flee for refusing to print any more of the rebels' declarations. "I am afraid," adds Bisset, "we shall have no more of his news schedules." Dr. Stuart in a foot-note, suggests that these were "probably handbills containing the news of the day." When they first appeared I cannot say, but it is not unlikely that they owed their existence to the interest in the '45 rising.
1746. They seem to have been revived, for in this year Chalmers issued a broadsheet with an account of the battle of Culloden.
1748. *Aberdeen Journal*. This is the first newspaper published north of the Forth. The first number, which was reprinted as a supplement to the *Aberdeen Journal* of January 12th, 1848, was called *The Aberdeen's Journal*. From Tuesday, December 29th, 1747, to Tuesday, January 5th, 1748. The imprint runs thus—"Printed and sold by James Chalmers and by Alexander Thomson, Bookseller. Subscriptions and Advertisements are taken in by James Leiper, Merchant, Alexander Thomson, Bookseller, and James Chalmers, Printer. Postages paid by the publishers." Beginning as a folio, price 2d., it has ranged to greater sizes, through all gradations of prices, from 2d. to 7d., from 7d. to 1/4d. in our own day, and from 1/4d. to 1d. Started by Chalmers, it was kept in that family for nearly one hundred and thirty years, and in 1876 it was acquired by the "Aberdeen and North of Scotland Newspaper and Printing Company Limited." On Friday, 25th August, 1876, the *Journal* became a daily paper, although the weekly edition still continues. The prospectus which the new Company issued, details the principles of the paper. "Holding fast by the distinct constitutional principles of Church and State, the conductors of the *Journal* will advocate whatever reforms may be found expedient in either, and on general questions they will speak out freely and without reserve, beyond such as is imposed by a sense of propriety, right feeling, and good taste." In 1884 a new limited liability company acquired the *Journal*, and this company still holds it. An interesting account of the *Journal* will be found in *The Selected Writings of John Ramsay, M.A.*, 1871.
1752. *Aberdeen Intelligencer*. This weekly newspaper was started on 3rd of October, 1752, by Francis Douglas and William Murray. After running a few years it was, after the 22nd of February, 1757, incorporated with its more successful rival, the *Journal*.
1761. *The Aberdeen Magazine*. Started in the beginning of 1761. 8vo. This magazine appeared



M M
MUSTER
1704

~~Bethlehem Church of N.Y.~~
William Kelly. Del. 1887.

monthly till December from the press of Francis Douglas. Each number consists of 56 pages, and contains a good deal of interesting local gossip. It is the first magazine which appeared from the local press.

1770. In this year John Boyle is said to have published a weekly "which continued only for a year or two." But neither Wilson in his *Delineation of Aberdeen*, nor Ramsay, who evidently copies Wilson, names it. Was it called the *Intelligencer* (second)?
- 1785? *The Looking Glass* (?) I have seen a reference (I unfortunately forget where) to a paper of this name, but the date does not seem to be correct.
1786. *The Caledonian Magazine, or Aberdeen Repository*. Vol. I. [Motto.] Aberdeen: printed and sold by A. Leighton. From Friday, October 6, 1786, to Friday, October 5, 1787. 8vo. This is a totally different Magazine from the next publication of the same name.
1787. *The Northern Gazette; Literary Chronicle and Review*. Aberdeen: Printed by James Chalmers and Co. Numb. 1. Friday, April 6, 1787. Price Three Pence. 4to, 8 pp., to No. 39, Thursday, December 27, 1787. This paper has a newspaper-magazine character, most of the literary articles being copied from London periodicals of the period. While claiming a "high degree of impartiality" in politics, it smacks somewhat of the Tory, as became a magazine issued by the proprietors of the *Journal*. A series of letters runs through it, purporting to be the work of the editor, and signed by "Alexander the Corrector." Burdened by the hateful Stamp Duty, *The Northern Gazette*, like some of its successors, evaded the duty by becoming a monthly in the shape of *The Aberdeen Magazine*. For the discovery of this very rare periodical I have to thank my friend, Mr. Arthur King, Aberdeen.
1788. *The Aberdeen Magazine, Literary Chronicle and Review*. 8vo. January, 1788—December, 1791. Fortnightly, 32 pp. Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Price 3d. 4 vols. The preface to vol. 1 states that "to support the Aberdeen Magazine on liberal, extended, and impartial principles is the open profession of the Editors." Besides some music and local gossip, it is a worthless production, characterised by the pomposity and sickly didactic writing of the period.
1788. *The Caledonian Magazine, or Aberdeen Repository*. Vol. I. for the year 1788. [Motto.] Aberdeen: Printed by A. Shirrefs, the Editor. Five volumes bring it down till 1790. It contains a good deal of local gossip, and especially the never failing "original poetry." The history of how there came to be two volume I.'s is given by Shirrefs in the preface to his *Caledonian Magazine*. Leighton, who took Shirrefs in as a partner in the first *Caledonian Magazine*, eloped, "his creditors seized his property, and a stop was put to the work." Shirrefs, finding that he was left with his erring partner's plant, resolved to

carry on the magazine. "He at first intended to have continued the *Caledonian Magazine*, but was afterwards persuaded to adopt the present plan as affording, at some expence, a more extensive field for literary knowledge and amusement." No. I. appeared in January, 1788. Price 6d. 8vo.

1796. *The Aberdeen Magazine or Universal Repository*. 8vo. June, 1796—1798. Monthly, 52 pp. 3 vols. Printed by Burnett & Rettie, Netherkirkgate. It contains, among other local matter, an "Old paper concerning Aberdeenshire clergy," and a Life of Dr. Liddel.
1802. *The Intruder*. To No. XXVI., Friday, Oct. 22, 1802. Price 1½d. 8vo. Printed by J. Burnett, Aberdeen. Written almost entirely by the late Charles Winchester.
1804. *The Inquirer, a periodical paper. Published at Aberdeen, from December 5, 1804, to March 13, 1805*. 8vo. Printed for Wm. Gordon by J. Burnett. Only 15 numbers were published of this weekly, 8 pp. each. It contains some Antiquarian jottings, while retaining the character of a journal.
1806. *Aberdeen Chronicle*. No. I. Thursday, October 9, 1806. Printed by Alex. Aberdeen and Co., Netherkirkgate, where, and at the shop of Burnett and Carlier, Head of Marischal Street, Orders, etc., and Letters may be addressed. The first number was gratis, and its opening remarks inform the public that the editors have "declared themselves uninfluenced by any Motives of Party, and that they shall at all Times study to promulgate Truth and that impartially." This weekly varied in price from 6d., 6½d., to 7d. Some years after its start it passed into the hands of "John Booth, jun., Chronicle Street." The last number appeared on Saturday, 25th August, 1832, the *Aberdeen Herald* succeeding it. "The arrangements connected with this change," says the farewell speech of the *Chronicle*, "have been made with our full concurrence."

J. MALCOLM BULLOCH.

(To be continued.)

THE BELFRY, S. FITHACK'S, NIGG.

AN open stone belfry is a common and characteristic feature of our Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century churches.

The Nigg belfry is a good example of these picturesque 'bits'; but others, of as great interest, are to be found at Dyce, Inch, Tullynessle, Pitsligo, Drumoak, and Fetteresso. They belong to a period commencing at about 1620 and extending considerably over a century. In general structure and size they resemble each other closely, but in the design of the non-essential parts they

shew great variety and freedom. The individual character of each belfry is, to a great extent, obtained by the treatment of the roof. Here the fancy of the builders had free scope; and the results are, without exception, admirable.

These belfries are usually western; but at Nigg, with good reason, the belfry is placed on the eastern gable, towards the Bay. The long wrought-iron finial, the strongly defined north-point, and the quaint pennon give that nautical air which we feel a seaside church should have.

The pennon is dated 1763; and on the die of the belfry is inscribed—

[?] M
[?] ♦ M
MINISTER
1704

On the bell itself is the following inscription:—

IN U[S]UM ECCLESIAE DE
NIGG
IOHN MOWAT OLD ABD.
ME FE 1759
SABATA PANGO
FUNRA PLANGO

The ornaments and lettering of the bell are sharp and well defined, and beautifully modelled. The topmost band consists of a series of fleur-de lys; below is the inscription, which occupies a circumference and a half. The other half-circumference is filled with a running foliated ornament, somewhat like a Gothic cresting; below, a band of the same ornament, inverted, finishes the belt.

These letters and ornaments have probably been modelled or cast in wax, and affixed to the wax-finished mould of the bell with little brads or pins, which shew in the casting. In this respect the appearance of the new S. Nicholas' Bells is precisely similar. The diameter of the Nigg bell is $1' 5\frac{3}{4}"$ at the rim,

and the pitch of its note about G. The profile and moulding, though of the usual type, want the refinement of the bells of M. van Aerschodt.

The bell is hung to the wooden stock by vertical iron bands, with eyes at the lower ends passed over hooked horizontal bars, which go through the north and south *double* ears of the crown, and at the top passed through the eyes of bars parallel to those below the stock, and fixed with screwed nuts. The Bells of S. Nicholas are now being hung to the oak beams in exactly the same way. The Nigg bell has, however, additional straps, similar to the others, passing through the east and west *single* ears of the crown of the bell.

Perhaps it may seem strange to compare the home-made bell of a ruinous seaboard church with the great bells of the city peal; but they are one and all examples of the Arts of the Middle Ages, which lingered on with us until the middle of last century, and which still survive, along with much else of the middle ages, in the Low Countries.*

When we examine such things the middle ages seem to have overlapped and come very near us, and we regret that we have just missed being of them.

We should like to know something more of John Mowat and his foundry at Old Aberdeen.

WILLIAM KELLY.

THE PROPINQUITY REGISTER OF THE BURGH OF ABERDEEN.

THIS Register, which is in the archives of the Burgh, consists of four books, and embraces a period of one hundred and sixty years, viz., from 1637 to 1797.

By means of a bundle of draft "briefs" and the Council Registers, however, this period can be greatly extended, as it would appear that previous to 1637 these attestations

* The new peal of bells is in many respects thoroughly mediæval. Perhaps the only thing about the bells which gives the impression of Revival, as distinct from *survival*, is the character of the lettering and running ornaments. But essentially, the bells, the bell frames, and the mechanism are mediæval.

of propinquity were engrossed in the Baillie Court books.*

The title generally given to the Register is scarcely correct, for although the larger portion of the contents consists of entries recording propinquities, yet there are others which have not the slightest connection with such matters. The books were evidently open for recording depositions made before the Magistrates from whatever cause.

An analysis of the contents goes to show that the entries in the Register may be appropriately divided under the following four heads:—

1. The requests made by applicants before the Magistrates for a "Birth Brieve," and the evidence of the witnesses they bring forward to support their claims. The method of procedure is well represented in the selection of extracts taken from the first volume of the Register and printed by the Spalding Club in the fifth volume of the Miscellany of that Club.
2. This class is intimately connected with the preceding, and relates to the official appointments of "actors, factors and doers" for parties in this country wishing to realise the effects of relatives dying abroad. These "procurators" are commissioned "to medle, intromitt with, uptacke and receive goods, gear and debts."
3. Depositions as to Shipping, which mainly consist of two classes of entries, the first relating to the loss of vessels or of damage to goods by stress of weather, and the second the evidence adduced as to the amount of ransom paid to the French privateers who had seized on some luckless merchantman journeying between Aberdeen and the various ports of the Continent.

As a specimen of this latter class take the following entry:—

"25 October, 1705.—In presence of Baillie Gordon compeared, John Burnet and Alexr. Charles, Merchants in Aberdeen, and being solemnly sworne: De-

pones that the ransome payed in France for the Ship the Anna of Pitenweem, wherof Alex. Dalyell is master, amounted to, when payed in France, to fyve thousand and nyntie four livers, and this is the truth as they shall anser to God, which is conform to the Factor's account sent in.

(Signed) JOHN BURNETT, Jr.
ALEX. CHARLES."

4. Depositions made as to the quantities of salmon and pork cured, evidently made with reference to the duty imposed on the salt used in curing and packing these articles. These entries are confined to the latter volumes of the Register.

Besides these entries of the general character indicated above, there are many others of a special character scattered through the books, such as that recorded under date 3rd September, 1712. As this interesting piece of local history has never, so far as I am aware, appeared in print, I give the entry *in extenso*:—

"Compeared John Anderson and John Pratt, shyp-masters in Aberdeen, and John Smith, one of the Toune Officers of Aberdeen, and being solemnly sworn, deponed that upon Friday last, in the forenoon, ther coming a ship out of the sea into the road of Aberdeen, with a flagg upon her toppmasthead, and fying a gunne, and she being discovered to be a French privateer. The deponents, by order of the Magistrats of Aberdeen, upon and of the foresaid signall, and the cessation of arms being proclaimed both for sea and land at London and France, went and called for one of the boats of Footie, in the suburbs of Aberdeen. And therein went aboard of the said privateer in the road of Aberdeen, having then her said flagg displayed upon the said topmast-head. And after they went aboard demanded of the Captain of the privateer what he wanted, seeing he hade putt out and made the foresaid signalls, who without answering anything except that it wes for his ransoms, ordered the deponents to his cabine, and told them they were his prisoners of warr, and would not permitt them to goe ashoar againe aboard of their own boat, except that they would ransome. And the deponents having told him severall tymes that they hade come aboard of him by order of the saids Magistrats, and upon the faith of the said signall, that therfor, and in respect of the cessation of arms as said is (a proclamation whereof by her Matie. Queen Anne they produced and delivered to him, and which he kept) They would not ransome. Yet, nevertheless, he told the deponents that he had no regard thereto, and would not suffer them to goe ashoar againe without they would ransome. So that he carried them to sea, and detained them untill the Sabbath day thereafter in the afternoon that the Deponents and Captain of the said privateer entered in a communing anent the said ransome, so that for ther liberation and urgent bussens ashoar they were

* Shortly before this the record of admission of Burgesses of Guild and Trade, which had previously been kept in the Council Books, was transferred to a separate Register, which begins in 1632.

forced to agree with the Captain of the said privateer for one hundereth and ten pund Sterling money of ransom, conform to the ransom brief subsc. by them and Louis de Villay, Captain Commander of the said privateer, the Neptun of Calis, of four mounted guns, and about sixty men. And also Depons that they agreed with John Moorison, sailler in Alloway, who was a ransom aboard the said privateer, to be hostage for them for ther ransome, and that thereafter, about ten o'clock at night, upon the said Sabbath day the said privateer putt the deponents ashoar upon the Island of May in the South Firth; and the deponents heard the Captain of the said privateer desyre his boat's crew, who brought them ashoar, to bring him off two shep off the said Island. And depons that they did see his said crew take four shep off the said Island, and carry them aboard. And that the said Island is the place where the Light Hous is in the entry to the Firth of Forth, otherways called the river of Edinburgh. And this is the truth."

Another special entry is that on the 17th July, 1652, when an English vessel, which had stranded on the sands at "Newburghe" was sold by public auction. The entry consists of an extract of the Admiralty Court, held in that place.

The mode of procedure adopted by a person wishing to obtain a "Bore Brief" was to make a statement before the Magistrates of their claim, and then call two or more witnesses, who are generally described as "honourable and famous men," to depone as to what they knew in the matter of the propinquity existing between the several parties.

Of the genealogical value of these "briefs" Cosmo Innes says,* "They were used at first to deceive foreigners ignorant of Scotch pedigrees, and have been the fertile source of error at home, after length of time had rendered it difficult to correct their mis-statements. Deceitful as such documents usually are, they occasionally furnish the most valuable information of events near their own date, and which there could be no object in mis-stating." While these remarks apply in a more or less degree to several of the "briefs" in this register by far the greater number of the depositions are made in the personal knowledge of the parties testifying and consequently their value is such that the genealogist of the North-Eastern Counties cannot afford to overlook them.

The material value of the "birth brieve" was in some cases considerable, endowing as it did the holder with an official acknowledgment of his being next-of-kin to a deceased relative who by his commercial transactions in the Low Countries had left something worth succeeding to.

The statements made by the various witnesses are often highly interesting as proving the very close relations which existed between the various classes of the community, while they occasionally give us glimpses of facts which are instructive from a historical point of view. They tell us of the state of trade between this port and the Continent, they speak of the effects of the press-gang, and they shew us the "Scot-abroad" making his way in Sweden, the Low Countries, and the West Indies, as the successful merchant and the prosperous planter.

The form of the "birth brieve" was regulated in great measure by the nature of the claim set up by the party applying for it, but the following is a specimen form which was that granted in simple cases where the "brief" did not extend further than proving the applicant to be of honest parentage:—

"Know all men by these presents, particularly those whom it may concern
 "That Mr.of.....appeared before
 "us the Mayor, Aldermen, and Magistrates
 "for the time being of the City of Aberdeen in
 "Council assembled, and in name for vse and
 "behoof of [James Gray], born in this our
 "City of Aberdeen as appears by the Parish
 "and Church Registers, on or about the.....
 "day of.....16.....requested and sought
 "of us a Certificate of the Birth and parentage
 "of the said [James Gray], and for that purpose
 "produced to Credible Witnesses vizt., N. N.,
 "aged.....years, and N. N., aged.....years, or
 "thereabouts both living and dwelling in the
 "City of Aberdeen [here if you please may
 "describe their professions or callings].
 "Who upon Oath here before us declared and
 "witnessed that to their perfect knowledge He
 "the said [James Gray] afore-said was born
 "and brought up of Christian, honest, and
 "worthy parents in the State of Matrimony,
 "true and legitimate, and no man's slave. His
 "Father having been....., and his Mother

*Sketches of Early Scotch History, p. 218.

".....so that no doubt can remain of such his honest Birth and unblameable parentage. In Testimony whereof wee can't refuse to Grant this our Authentick and Magisteriall Attestation, and the Great Seal of this City, sending Greeting, and recommending the said [James Gray] unto all men in full credit to pass into all places unhindered, and to be admitted in all Guilds, Imploys, Corporations, and Communitys, as one of honest birth and unblameable parentage. In Witness whereof wee have hereunto affixed our City Seal under the Subscription of our Town Clarke. Granted and done in Aberdeen, ye.....day of.....one thousand....."

It is to be observed that the above Certificate is said to be sealed with the Common Seal, while the earlier "briefs" bear to have been granted and sealed under the "privie" seal, or as it is sometimes called, the "secret" seal of the burgh.

ALEX. M. MUNRO.

ARCHÆOLOGICAL NOTES ON OLD DEER.

THE parish of Old Deer, lying some twenty to thirty miles to the North-East of Aberdeen, presents many very interesting archæological features. The village in which the church is situated, lies nearly in the centre of the parish, and some half-a-mile from it, beautifully placed on the banks of the Ugie, are the remains of the Cistercian Monastery of Deer. Beside the parish church are some vestiges of an older ecclesiastical building, which had stood probably on the site originally occupied by the earliest church structure of all, the mud-built cells of Columba, and his disciple, Drosstan. These carry the reflective mind back very far, but there are other remains of frequent occurrence in the parish which go far beyond them in antiquity. A little beyond the Abbey ruins, which are on the left bank of the stream, there is an open space or common, on the right bank, called Aiky Brae, a name supposed to preserve the memory of a time when the whole slope was covered with a forest of oaks, in whose dark recesses the so-called Druids performed their religious

rites. About the beginning of the present century, the rough and uncultivated ground was of much greater extent than now, and towards the bottom of the hollow, near where the Railway passes, there were a number of Erd-houses, or earth dwellings, indicating the site of a village or settlement of early inhabitants, all traces of whom have now disappeared. From this hollow, Aiky Brae sloped upwards with a pretty rapid ascent and to a considerable height, and slightly to the South-West, separated by a slight depression, is the hill of Parkhouse, a rounded knoll, visible from great distances all round. On the apex of this high rising ground stands what till very lately was an almost perfect so-called Druidical Circle, known in common tongue as The Standing Stones. Several of the great monoliths still preserve their upright position, and several have fallen and lie as they fell. A low wall of small loose stones connects the standing stones, and on one side is a very ponderous stone, usually called The Altar. It rests on other large stones, and forms a great table, some seventeen feet in length. All around outside the circle there are small cairns or groups of stones, but the spot was many years ago planted with trees, and these are now so much grown, and so thick, as to prevent the *entourage* of the circle being easily made out. The circle itself is clear of trees, and when one comes on it, through the surrounding thicket, it has a weird and solemn aspect. Some years ago the enclosed area was carefully examined to a considerable depth, for the purpose of ascertaining whether it had ever been used as a place of sepulture, but no evidence of this was procured. The soil had clearly been unremoved. Excavations were made in some of the cairn-crowned spots outside, but no traces of burial were anywhere found. The old Druidical circle of Parkhouse is an interesting spot to visit on a fine summer day. As the visitor ascends the slope of Aiky Brae and looks back, a lovely view is obtained of the house of Pitfour, with the beautiful lake in front of it. The ruins of the Abbey lie below. To the right the dome of Aden is seen among the trees, and close to it the tower, and spire of the parish church (copied from the Cathedral at Dunblane) rises into the air.

There are many other similar relics in the parish, though none so complete as Parkhouse. Attention may be called to some of these in future issues of *Scottish Notes and Queries*.

W. FERGUSON.

ANTIQUARIAN NOTES ON LEASK, PARISH OF SLAINS.

THE old Chapel of Leask stands in the middle of a plantation of firs and alder. An ever-flowing rivulet, supplemented by a rill from the Chapel Well, half enclosing it from the south side, makes it altogether a pleasant picture. The original well was diverted from its site by a drain leading to the road towards Pitlurg House, the seat of Mr. Gordon of Parkhill and Dyce.

Tradition says the Chapel was erected in the Sixth or Seventh Century, but some Antiquaries have considered that perhaps the end of the Thirteenth or beginning of the Fourteenth Century would be nearer the date of its erection. It was dedicated to St. Adamnan of Iona, and is exactly of the same size, and stands in the same position, as the old Chapel of Forvie, from which it is distant four miles due north. The font is octagonal in shape and in fine preservation. It was removed many years ago to the manse garden, Slains. One gable has a fine Gothic arch, nearly entire. Upwards of thirty years ago some vandals stripped the walls of their coating of ivy, which has detracted very much from their former appearance. The walls are three feet thick, and are evidently built of rough, unhewn stones, as they have been gathered from the fields, with the exception of some sea-stone pavement of the same kind as that used in the construction of the tower of old Slains Castle, for the square work of doors, windows, bars, and wall presses or aumbries. There are a good many blocks of old red sandstone, still having a firm hold of the lime, which exhibit the effects of the frosts of many centuries.

In the Miscellany of the Spalding Club, Vol. II., page 261, there is published a curious bond of manrent:—"Witnessing me, Jhon Cheyne of Esselmont, till be bundyn

and oblist, and to be becumyn men and servand to my Lord of Erroll for all the days of myne lyf, myne allegeans acceptit allenarly to our Soverane Lord and Kyng. Dated at the Chapell of Laske, the IX. day of Septembir, the yer of God a thousand four hundreth nyntie and nine yeris. Befor thir witnesses, Wilyam Hay of Ardendracht, Mastir Alexander Cabell, Parson of Banchory, and Gilbert Hay."

We are indebted to the late General Gordon of Pitlurg, who inherited the antiquarian taste of his ancestors, for preserving this fine old ruin, by having it walled in and planted with trees. His servant, John Leith, used to relate many spectral stories about the Chapel and its surroundings, but the "shades of the departed" were for ever laid at rest after the General's orders were fully carried out. In laying out the ground John came upon a stone, partly dressed, measuring four feet long by two and a-half broad, with what he said was an *unreadable inscription*, which may be still within the walls.

The burial ground attached to the Chapel had extended considerably beyond its bounds, as more than once graves have been discovered on part of the adjoining farm when draining, and rich crops of corn and grass grow over the place where

"The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

Many generations have passed away since those who ministered to, or sat in judgment on their fellow-mortals, were buried within these walls, and their mouldering bones wasting within the narrow bounds.

It would be interesting to the archæologist to have the ground floor of the Chapel exposed, as we should probably thus learn the mode of sepulture adopted, and arrive at the probable age of the building.

The late Mr. Jervise, F.S.A. Scot., says:—"The surname of Leask, which is still common in Aberdeenshire, has probably been assumed from these lands, and possibly the ruins are those of a place of worship which had been built for the old lairds of Leask and their retainers." The old name of Leask, now Pitlurg, was first changed to "Gordon Lodge" about 160 years ago.

About a mile to the north-west from the

old Chapel is what is known by the name of the Poll-hill of Leask. On the highest point is a green mound, resembling a ship with the keel uppermost, and measuring upwards of 90 feet by 32. It terminates in a point at both sides. Dr. Wilson, in his "Pre-historic Annals," says—"This form of barrow, occasionally found in Scotland, probably owes its origin to the Northmen, who invaded and colonized our coasts at the close of the Pagan period." Be this as it may, an investigation of the contents of this long standing memorial, would no doubt prove its sepulchral character. The late General Gordon had this curious mound walled in, and planted with trees for its preservation. The site, which was a favourite haunt, he called his "Observatory." Contiguous to the Poll-hill there were numerous cairns and knolls, which were erased during cultivation, seventy years ago. Much that would have been of interest to the Archæologist, in the shape of urns, stone celts, and balls, were broken up, and used for road-making purposes. In proof of this, fragments of pottery and wrought stones have been exhumed in cutting the roads for the inlet of drains, and forming small bridges.

Upwards of sixty years ago there was another prominent mound on the farm of Bogbrae, known as the Elfin-knap, of which many weird stories are still told. It was demolished in the process of reclaiming part of the farm, and in clearing away the turf from the top and sides, four stone pillars, upwards of four feet high, supporting slabs of stone, serving the purpose of a roof, were discovered. A large stone battle-axe was found in the bottom, embedded among charcoal, probably the war-axe and ashes of the chief whose interment the mound had been raised to commemorate. During the months of March and April, 1877, five stone battle-axes and a stone ball were found in this neighbourhood, within a radius of a mile and a-half. Three of these were discovered by a lad on the farm of Bogbrae. He found the smallest one in a cairn of stones, carted from the farm to be broken into road metal, and believing that there might be more on the same ground, he searched for and got other two, and also a stone ball.

Sir John Lubbock, in his "Pre-historic Times," page 78, says—"Of the better qualities of rock suited for celt-making, the type of the felspathic extreme of the series of trap rocks is the pure felstone, of a pale blueish or grayish green." This quotation probably describes the kind of stone of which two of the above are formed. The third is perhaps composed of a kind of iron-stone. It is rudely fashioned, and may belong to the early stage of weapon manufacture. The site on which they were found is high, and about three-fourths of a mile west from the moss of Lochlundie. The soil is thin and has a rocky bottom. It has been under cultivation for some time, and the markings on two of the axes indicate that they have been in contact with the implements of husbandry. Curiously enough, about the same time another lad found a very peculiar axe of porphyry. About three-fourths of it is rugged and knotty, and well adapted for being inserted in a handle. It was found in a mossy hollow, where there is the indication of the former existence of a forest; but the weapon had been formed and wrought long anterior to the time when the poet sang, "Woodman, spare that tree"! The same lad found, in cutting a drain near to the moss of Lochlundie, a very finely formed axe, of a species of small-grained granite, which measures in length eleven inches, and weighs four and a-half pounds. Mr. Hay,* Moss Farm, Leask, on hearing of this wonderful "find," contributed to it another fine axe, which had been in possession of the family for thirty years, thus making six found within a very limited range. There are not many districts within the same compass where so many ancient implements have been found.

The battle fields of Harlaw and Culloden have their relics turned up every now and then by the spade and the plough, in the shape of broken dirks, claymores, and flintlocks. The battle field of Leask, also, has its relics, and though unrecorded, these six axes and stone ball are probably memorials of warlike deeds enacted it may be more than twenty centuries ago.

J. DALGARNO.

* Mr. Hay is in possession of a barbed arrow-head of pure agate, found in this locality. It is as sharp as a lancet.

TWA AULD STORIES ABOUT KIRK SEATS.

IN old times there were no seats in the churches unless the worshippers brought them. By a request or petition to the Magistrates and Council, the inhabitants were allowed to build pews or dasks or table seats, while the public bodies, such as the Advocates or Lawyers, the Litsters, the Bakers, Hammermen, and other of those forming the Incorporated Trades were allowed to build lofts, for their own particular use as worshippers. This liberty, however, did not give them in the least a vested right to the space the seats, pews, or lofts occupied. At this period no seat-rents were exacted; the sitter who had built his seat sat rent free. In the course of time the Magistrates and Council saw the necessity of making a charge for the church seats. Of course there was opposition, principally by the Incorporated Trades. A Head Court of the Town was called for and held on the 15th February, 1701, at which the Magistrates made the proposal to farm "the hail dasks in both churches." This was protested against by William Douglass, Convener of the Trades, and by Mr. William Alexander of Auchmull. The Magistrates were advised to think over the matter, and report to next Head Court. This war of seat renting or stenting continued for nearly fifty years, and I think the Trades carried the case to the Court of Session. In the year 1741 they disposed all the seats, lofts, and dasks to the Magistrates, and agreed to pay the same as other people.

There is one case that shows the persistence of some people. In the year 1749 the Master of Kirkwork represented to the Council that Isobel Skene, a daughter of James Skene, Merchant in Aberdeen, had been the cause of great annoyance in the New Church (*i.e.*, the old East Church), and had been so for many years, and would not allow the people to whom the Master of Kirkwork had let the seats to possess them, as she held that they belonged to her, having probably been built by her father or grandfather. The Council, to prevent further disturbance with her, ordains the Master of Kirkwork to cause take out the seats to which the said Isobel

Skene pretends property, and to send them to her, and to cause build new seats in their room, which he is to rent as the other seats in the Church. And in respect the said Isobel Skene is *dull of hearing*, and also de-pauperit (a very poor person), appoints the Master of Kirkwork present and to come to provide her with a seat in the latron gratis.

In May, 1741, the Magistrates and Council thought "that it would adorn and beautify the New Church of the Burgh" if the lofts "therein were brought forward between the pillars on each side of the said church, and new lofts made where the same are wanting." This was done in consequence of the Traids having disposed to the Council "the hail seats and lofts erected at different times by the said Traids"; and there is little doubt they were of different designs, the expense to be paid out of the treasury charge, and Wm. Chrystal to execute the said work. This improvement caused them some trouble, as by the alteration of the lofts, from the fronts being brought further forward, it was found "the stool of repentance, as it formerly stood, was eclipsed from the pulpit by one of the lofts, so that there was a necessity of removing the said stool of repentance to another convenient place of the church, where the trespassers can be seen by the Minister." "The Magistrates, finding there was a void place betwixt the Sailors' Loft and west gavel of the New Church, they caused fix the stool of repentance there; and notwithstanding its being done by the Magistrates' authority, yet the Shipmasters had presumed (without making any proper remonstrance to the Magistrates or Council) to put up a large board on Saturday night last, before the stool of repentance, of purpose to eclipse the same from the view of the pulpit, as they themselves acknowledged, under pretence that they had an Act of Council for building their loft, and that the repentance stool could not be put up in that place." "The Magistrates find that the Act in favour of the sailors gives them a tolerance to erect a loft in the west end of the New Church for their accommodation, yet this gives them no property in the church"; that the Magistrates and Council may dispose of any void and open place in the church for any proper purpose they may think conveni-

ent; "and find that the Shipmasters putting up the foresaid large board at their own hand, with the design to eclipse the view of the stool of repentance from the pulpit, was a contempt of the Magistrates' authority and an insult on the dignity of the office." "The Shipmasters appear to take it as a great affront that it was put up in the foresaid place, so near their loft." The Council "considered it an affair of very little importance to make a division and keep up any heats in town about, therefore, in order to preserve peace and unanimity in town, and to avoid any debate about a matter of so small moment, the Council recommend the Magistrates to remove the stool of repentance, and to commune with the Ministers how far one stool of repentance is sufficient, which, if they agree to, then that none be put up in the said church, and that if they insist to have" one in the New Church, that it be put up in a place where it will be least offensive to the congregation. Provost Robertson and Alexander Aberdein dissented from the above Act, and in case of any process being commenced by the sailors with regard to the same, or the imprisonment of George Buchan, that the Magistrates may be only liable in damages and expense of the process, having acted without the concurring power of the Council, without which they could not legally act in the matter. The sailors gained their point, and the stool was relegated to the dark passage on the ground floor which passed from the south door to the north door at the west end of the church. Immediately above this passage was a loft, very dark; above this, at no great height, was the Sailors' Loft, which was well lighted, having above it a narrow strip of a loft near the roof, which was used by the sexton, Peter Carr, and the bell-ringers. The entry to it was from the bell-chamber. The entry to the first, as well as the Sailors' Loft was by a staircase at the south door of the church, as you entered on your left hand. A step or two up there was built into the wall "a holy-water stone," a drawing of which is in the Advocates' Library, among the interesting collection of drawings formed by Logan, the author of "The Scottish Gael."

J.

A LEGEND OF PORTMALHOMACK.

THE following beautiful legend was told me not long ago by a native of Portmalhomack: In days long past, one morning early, a man, named Campbell, strayed down to the sea beach to the spot where the harbour now is. He saw a mermaid in the water. He gave pursuit and caught her. She struggled hard to get free, but her captor was too strong for her and held her fast. She then had recourse to pleading. Campbell at last consented to let her go on three conditions. The three conditions were:—

I. That there should never be a broken wave in the pool in which she was caught. II. That not one of his descendants should ever be drowned. III. That his descendants should always have plenty of this world's goods.

I. The pool in which the mermaid was caught is now the harbour of Portmalhomack, and it is a fact, according to observation, that a broken wave has never been seen in the harbour. No matter how high the wave may be, the moment it strikes the outside head of the pier it falls flat. II. So far as known not a single descendant of Campbell has been drowned, though many of them have followed the occupation of fisherman or sailor. A good many years ago a ship was wrecked in the Bay of Aberdeen, and all on board perished with the exception of one man, whose mother's name was Campbell, and a descendant of the Campbell who caught the mermaid. He was unable to swim, and had to float well nigh an hour before being picked up by the life-boat. III. Those who have sprung from Campbell have never been known to be in pinched circumstances, but have enjoyed a fair competence. One of them said to the mother of my informant, that when she changed a pound note, the silver seemed to grow in her purse.

I am making a collection of the Riddles that used to be common round the fireside as amusements during the winter evenings. Will those who know any kindly give me help? In writing them, give them as spoken, and always go on the supposition that I have not yet got them. Give the district from which they come.

WALTER GREGOR,
PITELICO, FRASERBURGH

MARISCHAL COLLEGE PORTRAITS.

IN Marischal College Hall hangs a portrait of the founder of the College Library—Dr. Thomas Reid, "Secretary to his Majesty [James VI.] for the Latine Tongue," and grand-uncle to his more famous namesake. Reid died in 1624. From the College Accounts it appears that this portrait is a copy made in 1707 by Charles Whyt? Who was Charles Whyt, and where is, or was, the original painting which he copied?

When the Hall of old Marischal College was built, about 1700, there seems to have been a praiseworthy desire to adorn it with portraits of eminent alumni or benefactors; and several were painted or purchased, actually at the expense of the Senatus. The head of Robert Gordon of Straloch is one of Whyt's copies, as shown by his account (paid 8th August, 1707), which has been preserved:—

" Item, ffor painting of Strathloch's picture,.....	<i>Lib. Ss.</i>	10 0
Item, ffor horse hyre to Strathloch,		0 16
Item, ffor horse hyre back to Strathloch with the picture,.....		0 16"

The late Professor Knight, in his MS. "Marischal College Collections," (written about 1840,) gives many details regarding the College pictures. He speaks of other two portraits in the Hall as Whyt's work:—

Dr. Patrick Sibbald, Professor of Divinity, 1681-1697; and

Mr. Robert Low, Postmaster, Dantzic, a benefactor about 1700.

An unfortunate result of the neglect with which, till recently, the University pictures were treated, is that these two portraits have been allowed to drift into the group of "Unknowns." Their identification is much to be desired.

The Catalogue of Marischal College pictures given in the *University Calendar* is by no means accurate. Thus the fine head of Bishop William Forbes is not mentioned, though undoubtedly in Jameson's style; while the portrait of Bishop Patrick Forbes is erroneously attributed to that painter. Another unnamed picture can, there is every reason to believe, be identified as that of Dr. William Johnston, the first Professor of Mathematics. It, also, seems to be a genuine

Jamesone. A portrait of Bishop Patrick Scougal as a man of middle age, is entered as being one of his son Henry, who died in his 28th year.

P. J. ANDERSON.

Queries.

NOTE.—Each paragraph, containing one or more Queries, will receive a consecutive number, to which Correspondents may conveniently refer.

[1.]—LOCAL CLUBS AND LODGES.—Can any of your correspondents give me information, or a clue for search, regarding a club that is said to have existed in Aberdeen about the end of last century? It was called the "Independent Friends Club." I am unable to give anything beyond the name, and even the terms of it I am unable to define.

[2.]—Will some of your local archæologists favour us with a few notes upon the history of the many Societies and Lodges that seem to have flourished in Aberdeen about the beginning of this century? These belonged to the Masons, Gardeners, Barber and Wigmakers, &c. Where was the Narrow Wynd, which gave its name to one of these Societies? Who is now the official collector of the "Bishop's Rents?"

JAMES GAMMACK.

[3.]—MEANING OF THE BILLIARD TERM "LOVE."—"How does the game stand, marker?" "Fifteen, *love*." Can any of your philological friends explain the word *love*, as used by the billiard-marker? I have an egg in the nest which looks like the "real potato," but I shall not hatch it until some of your readers have time to cogitate. W. B.

[4.]—PASSAGE FROM TENNYSON'S "MAUD."—Can any of your readers explain the italicised words in the following verse from the lyric in Tennyson's "Maud," "Come into the garden, Maud"?

"From the meadow your walks have left so sweet,
That, whenever a March-wind sighs,
He sets the *jewel-print of your feet*
In violets blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise."

I have heard the "jewel-print of your feet" explained as the daisies which were trampled

down. But daisies are never violet, nor "blue as your eyes."

XERXES.

[5.]—TUMULUS OR MOUND IN BERRYDEN, ABERDEEN.—The subject of my enquiry is a mound or hillock of very considerable dimensions, situated in a garden in Berryden Road. It is of oblong shape with rounded summit, and at one end is surmounted by what looks like a skeleton summer-house, constructed by the intersection of two arches built of bricks. These bricks are badly shaped, but bear evidence of some attempt having been made to mould them in the usual modern form. Most of them are more or less glazed, like our ordinary brown earthenware, and the vitreous covering seems to have protected them from the action of the weather. A small iron cross rises from the top of the arches. It is very much corroded, just enough of the horizontal bar being left to show that it had once been shaped like an arrow, and had probably done duty for a weathercock. Its worn condition is an evidence that the structure must have stood for a considerable time. At the other end of the ground a triangular pyramid is erected. It is not hewn from the solid, but is built with a red kind of quartz, containing a large quantity of mica, which glistens like silver in the sun. Its side, at the base, measures about four feet, and it is perhaps eight or nine feet in height. It stands on a pedestal of blue granite, whose side measures about seven feet. Close by, but lower down on the east side of the hill, there are the remains of what may have been a chapel or place of worship. An arched recess still exists intact; and, embedded among the vitrified bricks of which it consists, is a cross, distinguished from the surrounding wall by being formed of red quartz, like the pyramid just described. Immediately in front of this is a circular well-like formation, but, being filled with stones and rubbish, its depth does not appear. In front of this again is an arched doorway, about three feet wide and five or six feet high: if the accumulation of earth and stones were removed, it would doubtless be found to be considerably higher. A wall, still of brick, is continued from this northward, but it is hidden in ivy and earth, and cannot be traced. Enough, however, is seen

to shew that the building is carried into the hill, but without excavation nothing further can be ascertained. A slab, on which is sculptured a full representation of the Scottish arms, with the supporters, is set up against the wall. A well, whose environment has some pretensions to notice, exists not far distant, at the bottom of the hill. In pursuing investigations of this kind, it is not an unusual part of the method, to discover if possible the proverbial "oldest inhabitant," and elicit all the information he may possess on the subject. I believe I have done this, but with a very small and disappointing result. He never remembered it different, only it was in better condition. He had been told that the property at one time belonged to a wealthy gentleman, who, being of a fanciful turn, had taken advantage of the naturally picturesque situation and adorned it with the quaint structure whose appearance now attracts the attention of the curious passenger. This is all I have gleaned concerning the mound in Berryden; and I shall be glad to know, through your pages, if any more light, as to the origin and object of such a monument, can be thrown. The hill has an artificial appearance, but its large dimensions (although in England and on the Continent some tumuli are much more extensive) may probably weigh against any opinion of this kind.

ZIGZAG.

NOTE FROM STONEHAVEN.—Commenting on the recent discovery of stone coffins and remains at Stonehaven, Mr. Thomson, Sheriff Clerk Depute there, writes:—

"Such finds are common enough in the streets of both the new and the old towns of Stonehaven, this being at least the third within my own personal recollection. The type of grave is that of slabs, built in the form of a rough box, and if an entire human body had been deposited therein, the limbs must have been doubled up in a sitting or coiled position. This has led to the supposition that these are pre-Christian graves, possibly Pictish."

"The remains were found not far from the Cross, and I am aware that after sentence of death had been carried out there, the culprit's body was sometimes buried at the foot of the gallows. It is possible the remains may have been those of such criminals."

BOOK BUYERS PLEASE NOTE.

WILLIAM DIACK, BOOKSELLER, has Removed from 34 Schoolhill, to No. 8 BELMONT STREET. Large Stock of Books—OLD, RARE, and CURIOUS—Medical, Classical, and General—New and Second-hand.