

A
HISTORY
OF THE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
IN THE
DIOCESE OF CAITHNESS

BY ✓
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J. B. CRAVEN.

KIRK WALL, *Ascension Day 1908.*

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A HISTORY OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE DIOCESE OF CAITHNESS.

CHAPTER I.

UP TO THE FOUNDATION OF THE BISHOPRIC.

Cultus of St. Ninian—and St. Martin, St. Barr or Finbar—His Image preserved in Barra—Dornoch identified with his Personality—Barrie Fair—St. Fergus—Kildonan—Donnan of Ega—St. Drostan—Carved Crosses at Thurso—The Ulbster Stone—Lives of the Earlier Saints—St. Duthus of Tain—Lived near Dornoch—Church at Lybster—Other early Dedications—St. Modan—Criech—St. Devenick—Hospital of St. Magnus at Spittal.

“**A**T the head of Wick is the chapel of St. Ninian.”
“Between the house of Ulbster and the sea is a chapel dedicated to St. Martin.”¹ “At a remote period, a chapel, called after St. Ninian, stood at Navidale,” parish of Loth, in Sutherlandshire.² Here “in old tymes ther wes a sanctuarie.”³

These three small items probably represent the most ancient traces we can now follow in regard to the ecclesiastical history of the Diocese of Caithness, formerly comprehending the district now included in the two shires of Sutherland and Caithness.

The story of St. Ninian, and how he laboured in Pictland south-west himself, and by his missionaries, if

¹ Orig. Par. Soot., ii. 772, 773. ² New Stat. Acot. Suth., 201.

³ Orig. Par. Soot., ii. 737.

not personally, in the north-west, is almost the first bright glimpse we have of the gospel light in Scotland. Founding his stone church at Whithorn, in honour of his friend and patron, St. Martin, his whole life was dedicated to that "work of St. Ninian which was never done." His missionaries appear to have laboured north by the coast-line. Dedications of churches to his memory can be traced on the north-east from Arbroath to Easter Ross, thence by Navidale to the Head of Wick, and across the Firth to South Ronaldshay, St. Andrews parish, North Ronaldshay, and to the Shetland Isles.

It is said that Ninian "was an evangelist to the Irish, and instructed Irish pupils at Whithorne . . . and about the end of the fifth century Whithorne had as a pupil Finbarr, better known by the name of endearment Finnian." It was he who instructed Columba and ordained him deacon.¹

"The legend of St. Fimbar, or St. Barr, the bishop 'qui in Cathania magno cum honore habetur,' is plainly identified with that of St. Finbar, first bishop of Cork . . . marking, perhaps, the early settlement of some Irish colonists, bringing with them the veneration they had rendered in their old country to the patron saint."²

The Scottish account of St. Barr or Finbar makes him born in the "island" of Cathania, between Ross and Orkney. Somehow a great devotion existed in his favour. The name of the island of Barra in the west is derived from him. Here "a semi-heathen cultus of him was maintained" till quite recent times. His image there was clothed with a white shirt every year on his anniversary. The martyrology of Aberdeen says he died in Caithness.³

The oldest sacred edifice at Dornoch was identified with his name. His festival was celebrated on the 25th September, and when the new cathedral of Caithness was dedicated by Bishop Gilbert, it was to the memory of St.

¹ Soot. Hist. Rev. (Rev. A. B. Soot), ii. 387.

² Two Rec. of Caithness, 3. ³ Forbes' Kal. of Scottish Saints, 275.

Bar. The name of "Barrisfair" at Dornoch is found in 1592.¹ Subsequently the cathedral was dedicated to St. Gilbert and the Blessed Virgin.

What Bar was to Sutherland Fergus appears to have been to Caithness. The old church of Wick was dedicated to him. It stood at the east end of the town, at a place styled "Mount Holie."² St. Fergus was consecrated to the episcopal office in Ireland, and eventually "retired into Caithness, still preaching Christianity and converting the people, not more by his eloquence than by the lustre of his virtues." From Caithness he sailed to Buchan, where he built a church which yet bears his name. He spent the last portion of his life at Glammis, where he chose his place of rest. There he died and was buried. His relics were eventually translated to Scone Abbey. The ultimate deposit of the bones of the Saint of Caithness in the Church of Scone marks their early connection."³ In Bishop Gilbert Murray's Charter, *circa* 1222, the Abbot of Scone was appointed one of the dignitaries of Caithness Cathedral, and had the church of Kildonan assigned him. The foundation of the "Abbot's House" is still to be seen there, "while the figure of a human head, rudely carved in stone and called the Abbot's Head, is preserved in the garden wall of the manse."⁴

The image of St. Fergus long survived the Reformation. Its tragic history will be told hereafter.

Kildonan reminds us of the third of the saints of the diocese. The name Kildonan occurs in different parts of Scotland. The saint was "Donnan of Ega, Abbot. Ega is the name of an island in which he was after coming from Erin; and there came robbers of the sea on a certain time to the island when he was celebrating mass. He requested of them not to kill him until he should have mass said." They agreed to this. He was then—along with fifty-two of his company—beheaded. In the west

¹ Abd. Eocl. Socy. Pro., 1891, 31.

² Orig. Par., ii. 771.

³ Two Rec. of Caith., 4.

⁴ New Stat. Acct. Suth., 148.

there are four other dedications to this martyr of Christ.¹

St. Drostan, the disciple of St. Columba, who is named in the Book of Deir, had a number of dedications in Caithness—at Westfield, Halkirk, and Canisbay. He was the first Abbot of Deir in Aberdeenshire.² The diocese had also dedications to St. Columba. These are found at Olig, where the “chapel known as ‘St. Coomb’s Kirk’ is traditionally said to have been destroyed by sand,” Dirlet in Halkirk, Island Comb in Tongue, and Kilcolmkill in Strath of Brora, in Clyne.³

Of these ancient saints few remains exist. Probably one is the very interesting stone now preserved in Thurso Museum, on which is cut the figure of the Cross in an early form. It was dug up near the remains of the old Church of St. Fergus. Another is what is now known as the Ulbster Stone, preserved in the grounds of Thurso Castle. Other fragments also exist.

We can scarcely call up before us the life which these old stories and fragments represent. It is of a mission carried on amid great difficulties and dangers and trials. Those who then fought the good fight of faith carried their lives in their very hands, and, like St. Donnan, were ready at any time when called on to resign all into the hands of the Divine Lord and Giver of Life. From the fragments of their liturgy preserved to us in the Book of Deir, it is shown to have been distinctly of the Ephesine or Eastern type.

“The natives of Sutherland, influenced by Finbarr’s successors, refused to recognise the first three Roman Catholic Bishops of Caithness, and they were compelled to find a precarious existence in the Scandinavian section of the diocese.” After the burning of Bishop Adam, a Celt was consecrated, Gilbert of Moray, “and he was the first to popularise his church at Dornoch.”⁴

The connecting link between the older religious history

¹ Forbes’ Kal., 325.
Forbes’ Kal., 326.

² Forbes’ Kal., 309.
⁴ Scot. Hist. Rev., ii. 388.

and that of the more modern is St. Duthus or Duthac. He is said to have been a native of Tain, in Ross; went to Ireland, where he "betook himself to the study of the precepts and laws both of the Old and New Testaments, which, on his return to Scotia, he taught with all gentleness." He was consecrated by his co-bishops as "*universalis et praecepius pastor*," and was remarkable for his miraculous powers.¹ . . . A canon of the Church of Dornoch, in celebrating the feast of St. Finnbar (of Cork), ordered a fat ox to be killed for the poor, and himself determining to carry a portion to St. Duthac, in a dark and stormy night, the spit on which he carried the food gave a light both coming and going." This story seems to imply a belief that St. Duthac lived sometime in the city of Dornoch, or nearby.² It is taken from the Breviary of Aberdeen. He died at Tain, where for many years his shrine was visited by multitudes of pilgrims. He seems to have had some distant connection with the Earls of Stratherne.³ He had also a chapel in the parish of Wick.⁴

The church or chapel at Lybster, in the parish of Reay, in Caithness, now called St. Mary's, is probably of as early a date as 1200. "There is no other church in Caithness of any antiquity which demands special notice. Ecclesiastical sites of early date are thickly scattered over the county, but the ruins themselves have suffered so much that there is scarcely an architectural feature left to guide us to conclusions as to their date. The church at Lybster is fortunately an exception. It consists of chancel and nave . . . very rudely constructed. There is a doorway with inclined jambs in the west end, but nowhere are there traces of windows, although all the elevations except the east one, which is broken down to a little below the gable line, remain nearly entire. The entrance to the chancel is

¹ See Bishop Dowden's observations on Kirk Madrine inscription for use of this word so applied.—*Pro. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, 1898, 262.

² *Forbes' Kal.*, 330. ³ *My Orkney Hist.*, i. 102. ⁴ *Orig. Par.*, ii. 773.

of the same form as the doorway, having inclined jambs."

Other early, and apparently Celtic dedications, are those of the Church of Reay to St. Colman, St. Cuthbert, and St. Tear—probably Theodore—or some think, Innocents, near Wick,² St. Modan in Canisbay. This is the saint, the silver image of whose head is said to have been made into the chalice now used at Fintray, in Aberdeenshire.³ "Even so late as the beginning of the present [nineteenth] century, devotees were in the habit of resorting to it on Candlemas Day, and exhibiting proof of the most abject superstition. They first crept round the walls of the chapel on their bare knees, each muttering some petition to the saint, and then going to the neighbouring burn, threw handfuls of water over their heads. After performing this latter part of the ceremony, they adjourned to the nearest ale-house and got drunk."⁴ Lairg, St. Malrube, a Celtic saint, was born in 642. He founded a church on an island on Loch Maree, so called from him. He is said to have been killed by the Northmen—lying unconscious till a "bright light revealed him, and after receiving the Body of the Immaculate Lamb," he yielded up his spirit.⁵ Crieich "St. Teavneek" was probably Saint Devenick. This saint is said to have been a very old man when St. Columba was preaching. He went to "the Provincia Cathinorum" to preach. His friend Maurice went to the Picts. These friends desired to be buried together. Devenick, after preaching among "the Cathini," came to die. His body was taken to one of the churches of Mauritius—who the same night "saw angels descending on the church where the holy body lay." Eventually the saint was buried at Banchory-Devenick, near Aberdeen.⁶ Connecting the church with the Norse epoch was the Hospital of St. Magnus, "or Saint Maurices in Caithness." It was combined with the "rectory of the

¹ Prof. Ork. Saga, xcvi., where a picture is given of the west end of this curious church; see also Muir's *Ecol. Notes*, 107, 108.

² Orig. Par., ii. 746; Do., 772.

⁴ Calder, 97.

³ Forbes' Kal., 402.; Orig., 792.

⁵ Forbes' Kal., 383; Orig., 698.

⁶ Forbes' Kal., 323; Orig., 684.

church of Spittal." The nature or purpose of the hospital is unknown. It stood a few miles south from Halkirk, near the foot of the hill called from Spittalhill. "Its foundation, sixty feet by twenty, part of its walls, and its cemetery, the burial-place of the Clangunn, still remain. Around it, and at some distance, were numerous buildings apparently connected with the hospital, and among these, one larger than the rest, at a place called Auchinarras (the field of the altar)." From 1475 the advowson appears to have been in the Sinclair family. "At the Reformation, Master William Gordon (treasurer of Caithness) was parson of Spittal."

CHAPTER II.

THE EARLIEST BISHOPS.

Extent of Bishopric—Halkirk the first Episcopal Church—St. Voloc of Dunmeth—Description of the Northern People—Perils of Missionaries—Andrew the first Bishop—Others nominal—Darrus—Christian—John—Refused obedience to Rome—Blinded at Scrabster—Invokes St. Tredwell—Adam of Melros—Duty of Butter—Increased—Refused by Inhabitants—Burned—Wyntoun's Description—King Alexander's Anger and Vengeance—Harald's Gift to Soone.

“**T**HE Bishopric of Caithness appears to have been co-extensive with the older Earldom, comprehending Caithness and Sutherland so far south as Ekkialsbakki, or the Kyle of Sutherland. In later times the Cathedral Church was at Dornoch. But it would seem as if the Episcopal See had at one time been at Halkirk [High Kirk], near Thurso, where we find the bishops frequently residing. The date of the erection of the Bishopric is unknown.”¹ There was from early times a religious house at Dornoch.

King David of Scotland addressed Rognvald, Earl of Orkney, and the Earl of Caithness, requesting protection for “the monks living at Durnach in Caithness, their servants and their effects, and to see that they sustained no loss or injury.”²

And this request from the King of Scotland was needed. In his “Scoto Monasticon,” Mackenzie Walcott refers to St. Voloc as the patron of Dunnet. This appears to be a mistake, the church intended being Dunmeth in Aberdeen Diocese. But the description of the people amongst whom

¹ Pref. Ork. Saga, lxxix.

² Pref. Ork. Saga, lxxix.

that primitive bishop laboured may give us a good idea of what the northern peoples then were in life and conversation. This saint submitted himself to the greatest hunger, thirst, and cold, that in this life he might satisfy for his own sins, and for those of others. He chose his district in "the northern part of the country, a place of dwelling among the high rocks . . . He preferred a poor little house woven together of reeds and wattels. . . . The race whom he preferred to convert to the faith of Christ . . . no one would hesitate to describe as fierce, untamed, void of decency of manners and virtue, and incapable of easily listening to the word of truth; and their conversation was rather that of the brutes that perish than of men. For they had neither altar nor temple, nor any oratory in which they might give thanks to their Creator; and, as they believed not that Christ had been born, so they had neither knowledge nor faith; but, like brute animals, given to eating, sleeping, and gorging, they finished their lives in the blindness of unbelief, asserting that there was no eternal punishment for sins to be inflicted on the unjust."¹

Such was the country and people which the Church had to civilize and enlighten.

Andrew is the first Bishop of Caithness "who appears in authentic history." Mention is made, however, of "Darrus, 1066," of Gilaldan, consecrated "by Thurstin of York in 1134"; and of Christian, consecrated by the Archbishop of Rouen at Bermondsey in 1154. He died in 1176. But these were probably only nominal. In 1181 Andrew is a witness to the grant by Earl Harald Maddadson to the See of Rome of a penny annually from every inhabited house in Caithness, a grant which subsequently brought his successor John into deep trouble. He is also mentioned in the annotations on the Book of Deir. He died at Dunfermline in 1185, and appears to have been both able and learned. Mention is made of his "Clerk, Murethac."²

¹ Forbes' Kal., 461; Scoto Mon., 131.

² Ork. Saga, lxxx.; Orig. Par., ii. 598.

Andrew was succeeded by John. He refused obedience to the Papal grant of one penny from each house. The Bishops of Orkney and Ross were ordered by the Roman authorities to compel Bishop John to perform this. When Harald, in 1202, recovered Caithness from King William, he "took vengeance on the bishop, by blinding him and cutting out his tongue." Bishop John, however, survived his mutilation till 1213, When the mutilation happened, the bishop was at Scrabster "in his borg"—the castle at Burnside. At first the earl and bishop had "bland words" together, but the earl then had the bishop seized. He caused a knife to be thrust into his eyes and blinded him. Bishop John prayed "during his torture to the Holy Virgin Trollhoena," and went to the bank near by, where a woman helped him. It is said he afterwards recovered his sight and speech by a visit to the shrine of St. Tredwell. This was at Restalrig, near Edinburgh. The man who cut out the bishop's tongue was subsequently put to very severe penance, part of which was to walk about Caithness with his tongue pulled out, and tied by a string round his neck. He had also to go to the Holy Land, use divers disciplines, and fastings.¹

Adam, Abbot of Melros, was his successor. He was consecrated by William Malevoisin, Bishop of St. Andrews, in 1214. He is said to have procured from Pope Honorius III. a confirmation of the erection of the bishopric. "By an old custom, a spann of butter for every twenty cows was paid to the bishop by the inhabitants of Caithness. Bishop Adam reduced the number, first to fifteen, then to twelve, and finally to ten, exacting in every case the spann of butter." The Caithness men complained to Earl John, who asked the bishop in vain for redress. While the bishop was at Hakirk, in Thorsdal, in company with Serlo, Dean of Newbottle, his confidential adviser, and others, the country men assembled in hostile mood, seeking redress. Too late the bishop agreed to a reduction, but the more violent of

¹ Orig. Par., ii. 599; Ork. Saga, chap. cxv.

the crowd dragged him to a hut and burned him to death. He was afterwards buried at Skennet, and eventually at Dornoch. It appears that he was stoned, then mortally wounded by an axe, and finally burned in his own kitchen.

Wyntoun tells the story in vivid lines :

“ Modyr nakyd his body bare,
 Thai band him, dang him, and woundyt sare,
 In-to the nycht, or day outh dawe,
 The monk thai slwe thare, his falawe,
 And the child that in hys chaumyr lay,
 Thare thai slwe hym before day.
 Hymself bwndyn and woundyt, syne
 Thai put hym in his awyn kychoyne ;
 In thair felny and thair ire
 Thare thai brynt hym in a fyre.”

This happened in the year 1222. King Alexander “ was so wroth, that men still remember the dreadful vengeance he took on Caithness for the burning of the bishop : harrying the land, slaying and expelling the inhabitants.” “ He caused the hands and feet to be hewn from eighty men who had been present at the burning, so that many of them died.”¹

No vestige of the episcopal palace of Halkirk now remains. “ It is probable, however, it was in a field to the north-east of the present manse, where the parochial ministers had their residence till the present house was built.”²

Harald Maddadson, was not, however, always irreligious. He granted a mark of silver yearly to the Canons of Scone for the souls of himself and wife, and the souls of his predecessors. “ The bones of Saint Fergus, the patron saint of Caithness, were deposited at Scone ” ; and the abbot obtained a Royal precept from King Alexander II., addressed to the Sheriffs and Bailies of Moray and Caithness, for the protection of the ship of the convent when on voyages within their jurisdiction.³

¹ Two Rec. of Caith., 10 ; Ork. Saga, lxxi. ii.

² New Stat. Acct. Caith., 72. ³ Ork. Saga, lxxx. ii.

CHAPTER III.

BISHOP GILBERT AND THE FOUNDATION OF THE CATHEDRAL AT DORNOCH.

Agencies of Feudal System—Closer Union of the Church to Rome—
Grants of Burghal Privileges—Arrival of Sutherland Family—
William first Earl—New Bishop, Gilbert de Moravia, Archdeacon
of Moray, Cousin of Earl William—A great Builder—Founder and
Builder of Dornoch Cathedral—Constitution granted—Still pre-
served—1223-1245—Lincoln chosen as Model—Cathedral Dedicated
to St. Mary and St. Bar—Different Dignitaries and their Churches—
Site of Building—Description by Neale—St. Gilbert—Collect for his
Festival—Miracles—Miracles in Civilization of Province.

AT the beginning of the twelfth century, there were two great agencies put in operation to bring the wilder parts of Scotland more effectively under the Crown. These were the settlement of the feudal system and the closer union and approximation of the Church to the See of Rome. There may be added also the grant of burghal privileges to the towns, and the consequent enlargement of trade. Many Saxons and Normans settled in the country, "getting feudal holdings from the Crown to replace the old Maormers and Toisechs, who could not adapt themselves to the new system." Thus it was that the ancestors of the Sutherland family first settled at Dunrobin. The first, Hugh Freskyn de Moravia, the son of a Fleming that held in feudal tenure the lands of Duffus, in Moray, had a grant "of the southern land of Caithness." William, his son, is the first who is designated "Earl of Sutherland."¹

¹ Abd. Eco. Soc. Pro., 1891, 32, 33.

After the sad and violent treatment of the last two bishops, it was needful to find a specially fit man for the dangerous and difficult position of Bishop of Caithness. "The person chosen was Gilbert, the Archdeacon of Moray, a member of the great family of De Moravia, and himself already possessed of great estates in Sutherland by the gift of his kinsman, Hugh Freskyn. Gilbert was son of the Lord of Duffus . . . and cousin-german of William, Lord of Sutherland." The policy of the selection is obvious, and Bishop Gilbert devoted his life, means, and intellect to the regulation and improvement of the diocese. He had not merely the strong power of his family behind him, but he also wielded the power of the Crown. "He administered the affairs of Government in the north, and superintended the building and fortifying of several royal castles for the security of the country." He is said to have been the builder of Kildrummy, in Mar. With King Alexander he exercised his influence to mitigate the severity of the punishment of the Caithness people for the burning of his predecessor. But he is chiefly interesting to us as the builder of the cathedral at Dornoch. This he did at his own expenses, and provided endowments besides.¹ "We are assured that even the glass for its windows was made upon the spot, under his own eye."²

But the bishop's first care was to give a constitution to the proposed Cathedral. It has been preserved "for nearly seven centuries, and now lies in the charter-chest at Dunrobin in splendid preservation. It is printed, with an elaborate and learned preface by the late Cosmo Innes, in one of the issues of the Bannatyne Club. The constitution is not dated, but, of course, must have been issued 1223-1245—the years of Gilbert's episcopate. Many other chapters in Scotland were at this time engaged in improving their several constitutions; they mostly chose that of Sarum as their model. Bishop Gilbert, whose near kinsman, Andrew de Moravia, was Bishop of Moray, chose Lincoln

¹ Two Rec. of Caith., 11.

² Robertson's Scot. Ab. and Cath., 48.

use as his guide, it being the use on which the constitution of Elgin Cathedral proceeded. He followed all the particulars of that of Moray except one. There were the same number of canons, the same dignitaries in each; "but in Moray, as in other of the Scotch cathedrals, the bishop sat in the chapter as a simple canon, without pre-eminence of rank or authority. In Caithness the bishop, legislating for himself, and dealing with endowments of his own granting, determined it otherwise."¹

Up to this time, but a single priest had officiated at Dornoch, although at times a number of monks had lived there, and Bishop Gilbert himself, said to have been a pupil of St. Duthus, who at times was living near by.

By the new foundation, the Cathedral of St. Mary and St. Bar was to have ten canons. The bishop himself was to be the chief, having the fruits of six churches for his use. The different sets of tithes, the different tofts, crofts, and manses for the endowment and convenience of each, are named in the constitution. The prebends of the several churches were also assigned to these canons—an arrangement which held good till after the disestablishment of Episcopacy after 1688. The dean had Clyne, the precentor Crieck, the chancellor Rogart, the treasurer Lairg, the archdeacon had Watten and Bowar. The undignified canons held Orlig, Durnet, Canisbay. The dean was obliged to residence at the cathedral for half the year, the other canons to three months yearly of residence. The bishop and dignitaries were bound to provide priests for their cathedral vicars or stallers; the simple canons, merely deacons. Lights and incense were to be provided from the church of Durness; and, finally, the Abbot of Scone was to be of right a canon, though not bound to residence. His prebend was the church of Kildonan.²

The cathedral had now to be built, but the times were favourable, being a period of great activity in church building. Gilbert was his own architect. Unlike the

¹ Two Rec. of Caith., 11, 12.

² Two Rec. of Caith., 12-14.

builders of Lincoln, Bishop Gilbert wisely preferred the low-lying ground to a site which might have commanded the observation of the whole country. We do not know how long it took to build the cathedral, but there is every reason to think that Bishop Gilbert saw it completed, for "he rests in the church which he built with his own hands"—so records the Breviary of Aberdeen.

"At present the Cathedral consists of chancel, nave, transepts, and tower, with some frightful modern excrescences in the shape of porches and sacristy. It appears, however, originally to have had aisles. . . . The whole is or was First-Pointed. . . . The tower is short and thick, resting on arches of two First-Pointed orders, and crowned with a stunted spire."¹

Such was the foundation of Bishop Gilbert. He was the last Scotsman who, in the modern sense, has been enrolled in the Kalendar of the Saints. His festival is on the 1st of April, and still holds a place in the Scottish Prayer-Book of 1637. As the one great saint of Caithness of whom are really known facts undoubted, it may not be amiss to subjoin the ancient collect for his festival. It is thus given in the Breviary of Aberdeen, translated by the late Bishop Forbes of Brechin:—"O God, who didst vouchsafe to distinguish the blessed Bishop Gilbert by many healings of sick men, and by the gift of miracles, grant that by his intercession we may be delivered from the weaknesses of soul and body, and attain to that glory which Thou hast bestowed upon him, through our Lord. Amen." As to his miracles, they include the restoration of his account-books burned by evil men. He restored speech to a dumb man by prayer and the sign of the Cross. A curious story relates another wonder. A certain person had hired the salmon fishings of Caithness, but owing to the lack of fish could not pay his rent. "He earnestly besought blessed Gilbert to wash his holy hands in the water, and so attract the salmon, which accordingly took

¹ Neale, *Ecol. Notes*, 66, 67.

place.”¹ His relics were long venerated and esteemed. Oaths were made even so late as 1545 “touching the relics of the blessed saint Gilbert,” as to innocence of slaughter, oaths to be faithful to liege lords, to be innocent of the hurt of others.² The fate of the relics at the Reformation will be subsequently related.

But the character of St. Gilbert will be best exhibited in “the large share he had in civilising his rude provinces, in interposing between the vengeance of the King and the ignorant multitude. He made himself popular and beloved where his predecessors had been murdered, and for whatever other miracles he was canonised, for these benefits he deserved to live in the affectionate memory of his people as ‘Saint Gilbert.’”³

We might also refer to the effect upon the whole country, especially on that part of it comprehending Dornoch and its immediate surroundings, from the residence and society of a body of learned and refined churchmen, “holding a high position for influence and example, cultivating letters, preaching peace, and (for the most part) practising it.” Saint Gilbert may justly be considered as the founder of law and order in the then dark regions of Caithness and Sutherland.

¹ Forbes' Kal., 355. ² Two Rec. of Caith., 15. ³ Two Rec. of Caith., 14.

CHAPTER IV.

MEDIEVAL HISTORY.

Early History of St. Gilbert given by Spottiswood—At Council of Northampton—Translated Psalms and Gospels into Gaelic—Built Scrabster—Successors mere Names—Alan de St. Edmund friend of Edward I.—Grant of Wood—Proposed Marriage of Edward and Maid of Norway—King Robert confirms Constitution—Bishop Mudy—Family—Will of Sinclair of Dunbeath, 1456—Provisions—His Son Eraden of Caithness—Sanctuary rights granted—Next Bishops—Andrew Stewart—Early Wick Charter—Robert Stewart—Elect and Administrator—Charges against Earl of Caithness for Excesses—Bishop at Dornoch in 1549—Earl lays violent hands on Priests—Arche Keyth—His Servant—Violent and Profane—Curate of Bowar assaulted at Easter—Ornaments of Church of Far removed—Character of this Earl—Church Buildings—Wick—Thurso—Two Churches there—St. Peter's—Kirk at the Ebb—Officials—Seals.

IN the Icelandic annals under the year 1244, we have the entry, "Death of Gilbert, bishop of Scotland."¹

Archbishop Spottiswood tells us that Gilbert, then only "a young canon," took an active part at a council held at Northampton in 1176 by the Pope's legate in presence of William, King of Scotland, and the King of England, when he defended the national rights of the Church in Scotland, urging the bishops to refuse the supremacy of the Archbishop of York. The point was not carried, and "the canon Gilbert was in the mouths of all men, and judged worthy of a good preferment."² It is said also that, for the benefit of the people, he translated the Psalms and Gospels into the Gaelic language. He it was who built the Castle of Burnside, at Scrabster, a strongly

¹ Ork. Saga, lxxxiii.

² Keith, Cat., 209.

fortified place, which was inhabited by the bishops till the time of Bishop Robert Stewart.

The immediate successor of St. Gilbert was William, who died about 1261. This election was not very canonically performed, but he enjoyed the see ten years. Nicolas, Abbot of Scone, was then chosen, but rejected by the Pope. Archibald, Archdeacon of Moray, was then elected by R., the Dean, Patrick, the Treasurer, and Roger de Castello, Canon of Caithness. He was dead before 1279, and the chapter having elected the Dean, Canon Henry de Notingham—a place-name near Forse—as procurator, proceeded to Rome; but confessing that the Dean had one, if not two, illegitimate children, and was, moreover, paralysed, he was enjoined to resign his claims.

These are but names. The next bishop, Alan de St. Edmund, seems more of a personality. He was elected by the influence of Edward I. of England, who made him Chancellor of Scotland in 1291. He had a grant of 40 oaks suitable for the fabric of his cathedral church, to be taken from the royal forest of Ternway, in Moray. Alan was one of the nobles and bishops who, in the name of the community of Scotland, addressed a letter to Edward I. proposing marriage between the Maid of Norway and Prince Edward. If this much desired and most suitable match had been concluded, how differently would the history of Scotland have been written. How much may depend on one gentle, frail life. Bishop Alan was a busy politician. He had many tokens of good will from Edward. His brother was parson of Restalrig; and, at the death of the chancellor bishop in 1291, he and the prior of Coldingham received his executry goods. Edward then ordered William, Bishop of St. Andrews, and Robert, Bishop of Glasgow, to commit the cure of Caithness to some clerk of that country, obedient to the king, "who should be found sufficiently qualified for the office according to the custom of these parts."¹ Adam and Andrew, the two next bishops,

¹ Orig. Par., ii. 606, 606.

do not appear to have reached their diocese, or, if so, done anything in it. Ferquhard, who succeeded in 1310, acknowledges the claim of Robert Bruce as King of Scotland. In 1312 he appends his seal to King Robert's confirmation of the treaty between King Alexander III. and Magnus of Norway regarding the isles of Scotland, and was present that year in St. Magnus Cathedral, in Orkney. He died in 1328, but during his life King Robert granted a charter to the church of St. Mary and St. Gilbert of Dornoch confirming the original constitution.¹

Of the succeeding bishops, Nicholas (elect), David, Alan, Archdeacon of Aberdeen, who died in 1342, Thomas de Fingask, who died in 1360, and was buried at Elgin, Malcolm, Alexander, Robert, and William, we know scarcely more than the mere names. The latter was still in office in 1469.² This was William Moodie, or Mudy, one of the first on record of a family long connected with Orkney and Caithness. He was bishop in 1455. In that year, at Dornoch, for defence of his churches and lands both in Caithness and Sutherland, he gave to his brother, Gilbert Mudy, and his heirs, the keeping of his castles at Thurso (Scrabster) and Skelbole. Mudy had also the grant of 10 mark lands in Caithness, including Dorrar, long afterwards in possession of that family. In 1456, Alexander Sutherland of Dunbeath in his will ordered 30 trentals to be said for his soul, four of which were to be said in Dornoch; and bequeathed to the Bishop of Caithness, for the repair of St. Gilbert's Church, all the fee due to him by the bishop since his consecration to office, except £40; and the same to sing for his soul and to confirm his Testament, £20. His son was "Master Alexander of Suthyrland, Ersden of Caithness." He had a bequest from his father of £200. "My said son passand for me on pilgrimage to Sant Peter of Rome, and to do the thyngis for me and my soul that I have chargit hym under confession, as he will answer befor

¹ Orig. Par., ii. 607; Ork. Saga, lxxxvi.

² Ork. Saga, lxxxvi., lxxxvii.

the hyeast Juge upoun the day of Doum." Mention in the will is also made of the "aylhous of the tour of Gouspy." He left his "croys of gold to Marjory," his daughter. The whole deed is most instructive. Between 1458 and 1464, Pope Pius II.,¹ "in honour of God, the Virgin Mary, and Saint Gilbert, the confessor and patron of the Cathedral Church of Caithness, . . . of new erected a certain sacred immunity within bounds extending three miles on every side around the said Cathedral Church and marked with the Sign of the Cross." King James III. confirmed this grant of sanctuary in 1464.² The next two elect—Prosper and John Sinclair—appear never to have been consecrated. There was a vacancy of twenty-four years, when the affairs of the see were administered by Adam Gordon, dean and vicar-general. Sir Donald Ross was dean of Caithness in 1487. Adam Gordon died at Elgin in 1528.³

Andrew Stewart was the next Bishop of Caithness. We find him bishop in 1503, for on the 14th February of that year at Dornoch he grants charter to Alexander Brysbene of a tenement lying in the town of Wick, for the annual duty of "two shillings of the usual money of Scotland," and attendance at "three suits and our three head courts at the foressaid town of Wick with all arms." The signature is "Andreas Epus. Cathanensis." This is believed to be the oldest charter extant in the town of Wick.⁴ Bishop Stewart was appointed King's Treasurer in 1511, and was dead in 1518. He was succeeded by another Andrew Stewart, son of the Earl of Athole. He seems to have been a militant bishop. He is said to have instigated the Clan Gunn to murder the laird of Duffus, on which occasion we are told "the haill dyoce of Cattaynes wes in a tumult." He died "illegitimate and intestate in 1542."⁵

His successor was Robert Stewart, who appears as elect and administrator in 1542. He was brother of Matthew,

¹ See it in Bann. Mia., vol. iii.

² Keith's Cat., 214.

⁴ Calder, 352.

³ Orig. Par., ii. 607, 608.

⁵ Orig. Par., ii. 608; Keith, 214.

Earl of Lennox, and in 1544 is styled bishop elect and confirmed, which is very unlikely, if he had not been in holy orders, a fact denied by Keith and other historians following his lead. As a bishop or administrator he was useless, if not worse, and the state of the diocese can be realized from a curious "Series of Articles" preferred by him "against George, Earl of Caithness, for various excesses and breaches of sanctuary," 1549. The original, preserved in the Charter Room at Dunrobin, has been printed in the Proceedings of the Scottish Society of Antiquaries.¹ The bishop appears to have been at Dornoch in 1549, when an agreement was entered into between him and the earl. The paper is full of "violent handling," false imprisonments, acts of oppression to priests, servants, and others under the protection of the bishop. The earl is even charged that his man, "Arche Keyth," laid "violent hands, putting on Schir Alexander Mernes his own curat within sanctuarii of the Kirk of Wyk," the said kirk and kirkyaird being thereby "suspendit," and the said Arche fortified and maintained by the earl. The said Arche subsequently "crewallie slew Sir John Simsons, servand and chamberlane to the said reuerend fader, god fader and gossep to the said Arche," who, being sought for everywhere within the diocese, was kept by the Earl "within his place and fortillie of Gernego." Even the festivals of the Church became scenes of violence. On "Pasche day, in anno 1552," violent hands were laid on the "Curat of Bowar," within the sanctuary of Watten, by John Williamson, a tenant of the earl's, and his "complices."

The earl had also polluted the kirk and sanctuary of Far. The earl had taken away all the furnishings of the church, including "the chalice, crissum-stock, Eucharist, and ornaments of the altaris of the said Kirk of Far, sen the Sacramentis can nocht be ministrat." "Marie Geolachis son callet Johne Sutherland in Barredale" had the "messe buik of the Kirk of Far, and utheris Cathenes

¹ Vol. xi., 87 *et seq.*

men the ornamentis of the altar thairof. The Earl should be caused to get these restored." There was also a "puir auld priest, Scher Thomas Cormaksone," who had been deprived of his little office "of his ruid service of the Kirk of Wyk, conforme to his possession thairof the space of xl. or l. years begane," by the "said Erle laitlie, the said reverend fader being in France." The said priest had been "colationat of the said ruid service be presentatione of the pariochinaris."

"George, fourth Earl of Caithness, against whom the bishop's complaints were directed, was a notable character for the many acts of violence and cruelty which he perpetrated. He was one of the jury who acquitted the Earl of Bothwell in 1567, and his oldest son was married to the Earl of Bothwell's only sister."¹ In 1556 he had a remission from the Queen for many acts of violence. Some of these acts are mentioned in these articles of Bishop Stewart.

As to the "rights of sanctuary," every church having by right a baptismal font was, by the ancient ecclesiastical law of Scotland, declared to be a sure refuge to those having right to it for thirty paces around the sanctuary. This is what is meant by "kirk sanctuarii," or "St. Magnus gyrth," at Halkirk. Special sanctuary rights were also granted by the Scottish Kings. They were defined by four crosses.² The power of "fleeing to girths" was eventually abused, yet they continued to be regarded as safe depositories of goods and gear and persons, old and young, in these turbulent, sad times, when religion was "administered" by boy prelates residing "in France," and the public peace in keeping of nobles guilty of murder and sacrilege.

As to church building in Caithness in medieval times, there was but little, and, with one or two exceptions, that was very plain and homely. The old church of Wick, of which perhaps the present Sinclair aisle forms a fragment,

¹ Pro. Soc. Ant. Scot., xi. 97.

² Pro. Soc. Ant. Scot., xi. 99-101.

is described as a long building, plain, low, and dark. The one exception appears to have been the church of St. Peter in Thurso. "It is cruciform, and in the pointed style, and is supposed to be 500 years old." It still stands in ruin, and must have been, when finished, a complete and handsome building. The east and west windows are beautifully proportioned, although now, by emptiness and neglect, the tracery is falling to decay and ruin. The font is still to be seen lying in a neighbouring court, neglected, if not abused to vile uses. At least it might be removed and placed in the ruined church. Another church at Thurso, "the Kirk at the Ebb," stood till recent times in ruin. From a drawing still preserved it appears to have been also a very handsome building, with a great window similar to that of St. Peter's, and supported on the sides by a number of high buttresses, in which appear to have been niches for statues. There seems also to have been a clerestory, if not under vaultings. The encroachments of the sea at "the Ebb" have now entirely swept away this beautiful church, which no doubt for ages stood sentry by the bay which commands the view of the fitful Firth of Pictland.

Lists of the officials of the chapter before and at the Reformation may be seen in the "Origines" and in the "Scoto Monasticon."¹

Engravings of the seals of the chapter may be seen in the frontispiece to the "Two Records of the Bishopric of Caithness," Bannatyne Club, Edinburgh, 1848. The legend surrounding the larger seal is "S. CAPITVLI ECCLESIE SANCTE DEI GENITRICIS MARIE CATANENSIS." On the counterseal the legend, "COLLEGIVM CON-SIGNO : MEUM : CATANENSE : MARIAE."

With the exception of the constitution granted by Bishop Gilbert, and another deed printed along with it, it is not known if any of the ancient records of the diocese are now preserved.

¹ Orig., ii. 616 *et seq.*, and Scoto Mon. (Walcott), 129-130.

CHAPTER V

BISHOP ROBERT STEWART.

Bishop Stewart—of Royal Descent—Provost of Dumbarton—Early History—Accepts Reformation—Plants Kirks—Earl of Caithness opposes Reformation—Stewart a Privy Councillor—Cathedral—Bishop assists Earl in seizing Earl of Sutherland—Sutherland of Ewelick opens St. Gilbert's Grave—Treats the Relics with Indignity—His Loathsome End—Bishop Stewart presides at Inauguration of Douglas—Reforming Party at St. Andrews—Love of Golf and Good Cheer by Bishop—He Marries—Divorced—His Servants appear before Kirk Session of St. Andrews—His Tomb—at Scrabster in 1565—Institutes Boirthuik as Dean there—Indignities at Cathedral Church—Kindness of Bishop to Nicolson.

APPENDICES.—1. Notes as to Bishop Stewart's Seals.
2. John Elder.

"ROBERT STEWART, designated Bishop of Caithness, of the temporalities of which he obtained possession, though he never was in holy orders, was the second son of John, third Earl of Lennox. He was educated for the Church, and there is little doubt that his powerful family connections would have procured for him the highest ecclesiastical preferment, as, while Provost of the Collegiate Church of Dumbarton, he was made Bishop-elect of Caithness in 1542, at the death of Bishop Andrew Stewart, son of John, Earl of Atholl. Before he could enter into holy orders he became involved in the feuds between his brother Matthew, Earl of Lennox, father of Lord Darnley, and the party who supported the Earl of Arran. He incurred the same forfeiture in 1545 with his brother, the earl, and was compelled to live in exile till

1563, when he returned to Scotland, and was not only invested with the temporalities of the Bishopric of Caithness, but was eventually rewarded for complying with the Reformation by a grant of the Priory of St. Andrews from his brother, the earl, during his regency, after the assassination of the Regent Moray.”¹

Stewart took a prominent part in the religious proceedings of his time. On 25th June 1563, he had a commission, as Bishop of Caithness, to plant kirks within his diocese for one year. This was afterwards renewed on 5th July 1568. For his services he was specially thanked by the Assembly in 1570. He was a member of the Assemblies, June 1563, 1568, and March 1573. He dilapidated the patrimony of the bishopric, except a “very small quantitie, by giving pensions most prodigallie to all that socht the same.”²

On 20th February 1541, he is designed in the register of the great seal as “Robert Stewart, postulate of Caithness and Provost of the Collegiate Church of Dunbertane.”³ He makes huge grants in favour of Alexander Gordoun, son and apparent heir to John, Earl of Sutherland (with the consent of the dean, canons, and chapter of Caithness), and constitutes the said Alexander Gordoun and his heirs hereditary bailies of the See of Caithness at St. Andrews, 15th April 1564.⁴ In this and subsequent feu charters he is designed as Bishop of Caithness. In another charter, dated at the Cathedral Church of Caithness 14th Sept. 1560, he is designed “now elect and confirmed” as bishop.⁵

According to Spottiswood, the Earls of Athole, Cassillis, Caithness, and a few others at the reforming parliament of 1560, dissented from the conclusion adverse to the Roman power, saying “they would believe as their fathers before them had believed. The popish prelates were silent.”⁶ Among noblemen “favouring the Catholic cause, and who

¹ Lawson, *Epl. Ch. in Scot.*, i. 55.

² Scott, v. 455, 456. ³ Reg. Mag. Sigill., 601. ⁴ Reg. Mag. Sigill., 404.

⁵ Reg. Mag. Sigill., 697. ⁶ Forbes Leith, *Nar. of Scot., Caith.*, 50.

could easily be persuaded, by God's help, to become Catholics, if proper pains were taken, although at present they are far from a state of grace"—is "the Earl of Caithness." This report is dated in 1581.¹ In 1582 the same earl is noted as one of the chief supporters of the King of Spain.²

In 1546 Bishop Stewart's right to the Provostrie of Dumbarton and other benefices, before he passed to England, are to be restored, that "he mycht heirefter remane within this realme as trew and faithfull subject to the Quenis Grace."³ He always retained his title of Bishop.⁴ As a Privy Councillor in 1578, he is designed "Episcopus de Caithnes."⁵

The Cathedral Church of Dornoch was burned in 1567, when it is mentioned that "Robert Stuart, Bishop of Cattaynes," was then resident in Caithness. He seems to have encouraged the Earl of Caithness in his seizure of the Earl of Sutherland, then only fifteen years old, whom he married to Lady Barbara Sinclair, thirty-two years of age, and who had led an evil and incontinent life with Y Mackay.⁶ Gordon reports the "famishing" of John, Master of Caithness, by his father, to death in captivity, as "his scourge for burning the Church of Dornoch."⁷

"William Sutherland of Ewelick wes ther principall and chieff instrument in executing of these mischieffs; and also ther instrument in burning and demolishing that church. At which tyme he opened St. Gilbert his grave, burst St. Gilbert his coffin with his foot, and threw the ashes of that holy man with the wund, which enormities the almightie God did most justlie punish; for that same foot that burst St. Gilbert his coffin, did afterward rot away and consume, to the great terror of all the beholders, whereby this William Southerland grew so lothsum that

¹ Forbes Leith, *Nar. of Scot., Caith.*, 171.

² Forbes Leith, *Nar. of Scot., Caith.*, 177.

³ Reg. Privy Council, i. 41. ⁴ Reg. P. C., ii. 2. ⁵ Reg. P. C., ii. 683.

⁶ Gordon's *Geneal. Earls of Sutherland*, 150, 151.

⁷ Gordon's *Geneal. Earls of Sutherland*, 157.

no man was able to come neir unto him, and so he died miserable." ¹

It was this Bishop who presided at the "inauguration" of Dowglas "electit an bischop and pastour of the Metropolitan Kirk of St. Andrews." ² In this he was assisted by Spottiswood, Lindsay, and Winram, who, though in priest's orders, could have no authority to consecrate a bishop. ³

Stewart had right to dispose of the revenues of the priory of St. Andrews in any way he chose, only paying out of them a small stipend to the parish minister. Even this he neglected. Fourteen of the canons of St. Andrews had by 1560 joined the reforming party. Stewart eventually succeeded to the title of Earl of March in 1582. He still held his ecclesiastical preferment, but, according to James Melville, he "colluded with the rewallers of the town to hald the monosterie vacant, and in the mean tyme tuk up the stipend, and spendit the sam, with the rest of the kirk-rents of the pryorie at the goff, archerie, guid cheir, &c." ⁴

Bishop Stewart took the usual liberty of the reformed churches and married. His wife was Elizabeth, eldest daughter of John, Earl of Atholl, relict of Hugh, Lord Lovat. She died in 1576, having obtained a divorce against him for impotency. It appears, however, that he left an illegitimate daughter. He certainly did not rule his own household well. In the Session Register of St. Andrews there appear at least five different cases in which his servants, particularly his men "cuks," are "delated, callit and accused of evil conduct."

Stewart continued to live in St. Andrews till his death in 1586. He lies buried in the old chapel of St. Leonard's College. His monument may still be seen. It is "of a Grecian order, and the epitaph states that he died in 1586, aged 63." On the architrave are two Latin lines, which

¹ Gordon's Geneal., 158.

² Keith, Cat., 216. ³ Lyon's History of St. And., i. 382.

⁴ Melville, Diary, Wod. Socy., 126.

may be freely rendered—"Here I leave behind both the honours and troubles of the world; take example from me, and withdraw from its vanities."¹

The learned editor of the Privy Council Register thus refers to this prelate—"1586, 2 April. Between this meeting of the Council and the last, *i.e.*, on March 29, 1586, there died, ætat 70, the King's great-uncle, Robert Stewart, Earl of March, and formerly Earl of Lennox, memorable for so many reasons, but chiefly as having been the husband for some time of the lady who was the wife of Arran. As he had been nominal Bishop of Caithness since 1542, that bishopric was now vacant."²

Bishop Stewart was certainly in his diocese in 1566, for on the 21st July of that year, on a presentation by Henry and Mary, King and Queen of Scots, dated 30th November 1565, he gave collation at his palace at Scrabster, June 1, 1566, to Master Gawaine Boirthuik, lawful son of Michael Boirthuik of Glengelt, to the deanery of Caithness, then vacant by the death of Master William Hepburn. Institution to the parish church and lands of Clyne—the church of Saint Aloyne—was given by Master Thomas Brady, vicar pensioner of Watten, to John Kennedy living at Clynekirkton. Who Saint Aloyne was appears to be unknown. Master Boirthuik held the deanery till his resignation in 1608.³ In that year he was succeeded by Master John Gray, son of Gilbert Graye of Suardell. The dean of Caithness' "mans and croft," in the burgh of Dornoch, was at the east end of the town. This and all the manses of the canons have disappeared, although the sites and crofts may still be traced. Alas! to what indignity did the "revolution settlement" reduce the old cathedral town. In 1786 it is recorded in the Register of Sasines that a party was infested in certain tenements and crofts, also in "ane midden within the west aisle of the Broken Kirk of Dornoch."⁴

¹ Lyon, *Hist. of St. Andrews*, ii. 207. ² P. C. Reg., iv. 60, note.

³ Orig. Par., Scott, ii. 723, 617; Forbes' *Kal.*, 270.

⁴ Ab. Eccl. Soc. Pro., 1892, 39.

Although far from a model bishop or overseer, Robert Stewart was not always self-seeking. On 6th February 1571, James Nicolson, afterwards bishop-nominate of Dunkeld, had a grant of £60 per annum from "Robert, Bishop of Caithness, payable from the Abbey of St. Andrews, becaus he hes bene twyis schorne of the stane, and is continewallie vexit with that infirmitie."⁵

APPENDICES TO CHAPTER V.

I.—*Notes as to Bishop Stewart's Seals—Macdonald's Scottish Armorial Seals.*

2621. Stewart, Robert, second son of John, third Earl of Lennox, Bishop of Caithness, 1542, became sixth Earl of Lennox in 1578, exchanged for Earldom of March, 1582, died 1586. Under a canopy a bishop. Beneath a shield bearing arms: 1st and 4th: three fleur-de-lis within a bordure charged with eight buckles. 2nd and 3rd: a fess chequy within a bordure charged with eight buckles. Surtout: a saltire between four roses. Legend (Goth: l.c): S': robertus: elictus: Cathanen: epus: cfirmat. Diam. 2 in. B.M. 17252.

2622. Robert, Bishop of Caithness, as above. A shield with coronet above it and initials R.S. at sides, bearing arms:—1st and 4th: three fleur-de-lis within a bordure charged with eight buckles. 2nd and 3rd: a fess chequy within a bordure engrailed. Surtout: a saltire between four roses. Oval signet, 1 by $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. B.M. 17254.

2623. Robert, Bishop of Caithness, as above, a bishop standing within a niche. Beneath a shield bearing arms:—1st and 4th: three fleur-de-lis within a border charged with eight buckles. 2nd and 3rd: a fess chequy within a bordure engrailed, charged with eight buckles. Surtout: a saltire between four roses. Motto beneath shield: ILLUMINA. Legend: S'. ROBERTI. STVART. EPI. CATHANEN. Diam. $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. Matrix in Mus. Soc. Antiq. Scot. B.M. 17253.

⁵ Grant's Zetland County Families, 195.

II.—*John Elder.*

He was "a native of Caithness and a clergyman, who had studied at the Universities of St. Andrews, Aberdeen, and Glasgow for twelve years, and was now, probably on account of his religious profession, an exile in England." Elder, who was an adventurer and time-serving humbug, "fled to England in 1541 or 1542." In 1543 or 1544, he addressed to King Henry VIII. a proposal for uniting Scotland with England. He designs himself "John Elder, Clerke, a Reddshank." Only the introductory part of his proposal has been preserved, and has been printed by the Bannatyne Club (*Miscy.*, vol. i.) He tells us that he "was born in Caitnes, which is the northe part of the said plotte, educated and brought up in Sky and Lewis." He calls hard names, saying that Scotland was oppressed with bishops, monks, "Rome-ryders," and priests, that Cardinal Beton was "a carles bird, a common cluner, and a hen-kyller," indeed the very "father of mischief," he and "Beelzebub's flesmongers, the abbotes and all their adherents—babilonickall busscheps false, flattering, subtile, and coveteous." These ought all to be driven out and repulsed, and both realms joined together in one. He also refers to King Henry's "Solomonickall wisdom and sapience, heriocal humanitie and benevolence." His idea, of course, was that of a marriage between Edward and Mary. Elder was patronised by the Earl of Lennox, and became tutor to Henry, Lord Darnley, whom he describes as "a witty, vertuous, and an active, well-learned gentleman."

He also published a little volume of great rarity, "A copie of a letter sent in to Scotland of the arrival and landyng and most noble marriage of the most Illustre Prynce Phillipe, Prynce of Spaine, to the most excelente Princes Marye, Quene of England, solemnized in the Citie of Winchester; and howe he was recyved and installed at Windsore, and of his triumphying entries in the noble Citie of London," with an account of the opening of the legation of "the most reverende father in God, Lorde Cardinall Poole, from the Sea Apostolyke of Rome"; 8vo; black letter; probably 1555; "Imprinted in Flete Street by John Waylande." This letter is directed "to the ryght reverend Father in God, Lord Robert Stuarde, Bishoppe of Cathenes, Provost of Dumbritane Colledge in Scotland.

From the Citie London the 1st of January 1555. By your Reverende Lordshippes humble oratour John Elder." Elder adapted his sentiments quite readily to both sides. No mention now of "babilonicall bishops" or "Rome-ryders," or "false, wylde, and craftie bores."

Memorandum, apparently in the writing of Thomas Bischof, without signature or address (Harl. MS. 289, fol. 75) :—"One Elder, a Scottisheman, my acquaintance, haitht been with me; he tould me he had letters from my lorde Obenze to my lorde of Levenax, my lorde Dernelie, as I think to my lady. Amonges otheris talkes he said my lorde Dernelie was muche spoken of in France, and that my lorde Obenze tould him the King of Naverne asked him in talkes of my lorde Dernelie, his stature, age, and upbringing. Elder said he shew the quene of Scottes in France my lord Derneleis hand, whiche he wrote being eight yeares of age; he seameth to sew for his pencion, and yf he spede not thinketh he shalbe welcum to the Scottishe quene. I know the man, and haitht gone no fardar witht him as yett; yt forcetht not yf he be traited a lytill in his dispeche; he confessed to me he had fyfttie crounes in his departour from the Cardinale of Lorraine; he haitht wytt to playe the aspye where he lestitht. The Lorde preserve your honour in long lyef."¹

¹ Stevenson, *Selections Illus. of Hist. of Scot.*, 101, 102, Mait. Club; see also *Bannatyne Miscy.*, vol. i.; *Laing's Knox*, i. 526, 527; *Athenæ Oxoniensis*, i. 290.

CHAPTER VI.

THE REFORMATION IN THE DIOCESE OF CAITHNESS.

The Poisoning of the Earl of Sutherland in 1567—Portrait of Countess of Sutherland—holding a String of Beads—Y Mackay—State of Strathnaver—Planting of Kirks, Readers, &c., in 1567—Dornoch, William Gray Exhorter—Lesly—Old Clergy conform—Sir Donald Reid—Sir Robert Ferne—Sir William Reid—Bradie or Brady—Prebendary of Helmsdale—Hospital there—James Brady Archdeacon—Roman Party keep Chapel at Glutt—Eyersden Priest—Holy Grass at Thurso—Veneration of Images—St. Fergus—Prunto—Name in Later Times—Archdeacon Watsoun—at Canisbay, Dunnet, and Bower—Description of a Book—Voragine's *Legenda Aurea*—formerly his Property—Notes on this Book.

WE have little or no information in regard to the introduction or progress of the Reformation in the Diocese of Caithness. "There was a church or chapel at Strubster [in Canisbay] situated on a small spot of green in the midst of a remote, wild desert, described in 1726 both as a hermitage and a supposed place of Protestant worship, used at the time of the Reformation, when the worshippers could not meet openly."¹ The Earl of Caithness gave it no countenance, and the same appears to have been the case with other families of the name of Sinclair.

The Earl of Sutherland died in 1567, before much had been done in a reforming way, from the effects of poison administered at Helmsdale Castle by his aunt, Isobel Sinclair, wife of Gilbert Gordon of Gartay. He was succeeded by the son who was born in 1552, Alexander, eleventh Earl, who had narrowly escaped destruction on

¹ Orig. Par., ii. 792.

the same occasion. His charter of many ecclesiastical lands in Caithness and Sutherland has already been referred to. It is dated in 1564, granted by the bishop, his uncle. After divorcing his first wife, to whom he was married in his sixteenth year—a daughter of George, Earl of Caithness—he married Lady Jean Gordon, daughter of George, fourth Earl of Huntly, in 1573. This was the lady cruelly divorced by Bothwell that he might marry Queen Mary. Her portrait is to be seen in Dunrobin. It is not likely that this lady, “virtuous, and comely, judicious, of excellent memory, and of great understanding, above the capacity of her sex,” being of the Huntly family, would favour the reforming ideas.¹ In her portrait she appears to be holding a string of beads.

The third great family in the diocese—that of Mackay—was afterwards dignified with the title of Lord Reay. Y Mackay, then chieftain, in 1556 was prisoner in the Castle of Edinburgh, and when “he returned to Strathnaver, conducted himself turbulently till his death in 1571.” His son Hucheon, who succeeded him, was then only eleven years of age, but grew up to be “most faithful and trusty wheresoever he promised his friendship; a sure and sincere performer of his word.”² This seems also to be the opinion arrived at by the most recent historian of the Clan Mackay:—“As to the social and religious condition of Strathnaver at this period, we cannot say much. The Earl of Caithness was not a friend of the Reformation, neither was Alexander, Earl of Sutherland, who died in 1594, nor his successor, Earl John, who died in 1615. These three earls were at different times warded or compelled to find caution in consequence of their religious views, as the Privy Council Register shows. But we have not come across any entry in which Huistean Du [Mackay] is so dealt with. We conclude that Huistean sympathised with the Protestant faith, like his father, and like his friend, Lord Forbes. Further we cannot go, save to

¹ Douglas, *Peerage*, ii. 377, 378.

² Douglas, *Peerage*, ii. 391.

remark that his initials, with date, are cut on the old church at Durness. This we take to mean that he built it, for he resided at Balnakeil for the most part." Huistean Du died at Tongue, 2nd September 1614.¹

Bishop Stewart, indeed, made some open attempts to "plant kirks," and a set of ministers, exhorters, and readers were in office in 1567. Their names—and for the most part they are *but* names—may be seen in the register of these clergy.²

At Dornoch, William Gray, younger, an "exhorter in the Irish tongue," is all that represents the old chapter. He has license to administer the sacraments, and therefore probably was in the older form of holy orders.

In 1576, Farquhard Lesly is mentioned as vicar pensionary of the parish church of Dornoch. Of the chaplains formerly serving at the altar of the cathedral, we find Sir Donald Reid and Sir Robert Ferne officiating as readers, the former at Far. He had previously been vicar of Kildonan, the latter at Golspie and Clyne.³

Amongst others of the older clergy conforming may have been Sir William Reid, vicar of Reay, Master Walter Innes, the vicar of Thurso; both of whom continued to hold their benefices till 1566 at least. At Latheron, in 1560, Master William Sinclair was vicar. In 1574 we find "the reader was William Sinclair, probably the former vicar." At Watten, Mr Thomas Brady is exhorter in 1567. He had been vicar pensionary in 1552, and then held property in Dornoch. He was prebendary of Helmsdale, "and adopted the Protestant faith." In 1558 he held the office of "chaplane of the chaplainry of St. John the Baptist of Helmsdell." This was "an hospital, subsequently a chaplainry and prebend in the cathedral church." The patronage belonged to the earldom of Sutherland. In the year last mentioned Brady, with consent of the bishop,

¹ The Book of Mackay, by Rev. Angus Mackay, M.A., Westerdale. Edin., 1906, pp. 122, 123.

² Edin., 1830, Maitland Club, 53, 54.

³ Origines, li. 623, 648, 736.

dean, and chapter, made over to Alexander, Master of Sutherland, his prebend of Helmsdall, with its pertinents, including the lands of Marle, the salmon fishing of the pool called "Sant Johne puile," and others, for a feu duty of £20 Scots, and also maintaining the services used and wont in the chapel of St. John of Helmsdaill. Brady was alive in 1580.

Master James Bridy or Brady was Archdeacon of Caithness, 1544-1551 at least.

At the Reformation, Master William Hepburn appears as dean. He was dead before 1565.¹

"It is, moreover, observed by the natives that when the priests were discharged their office in this country, that either this Eyerden or some other priest came to the Glutt of Berridale, a secrett and remote place, and built a chappell there, which lyes on the north side of the water of Berridale. This chapel stands about 2 miles from the chapel on the south side of the river. . . . About 20 paces west of the house (Braemar, on the water of Beridale) there is a chappel. The natives say that one Eyarden was the last priest in that chapell. The greatest part of the image of the sanct worshiped stands yet [1726] in timber there."²

"Dr Smith, of Thurso, tells us the origin of the holy grass growing on the banks of the Thurso river was—that there was [a] chapel between Stamland and Bleachfield, the floor [of] which had been strewn with holy grass brought from Norway, and a burn running beside the chapel had fructified the seed. The holy grass only grows on that spot. The chapel walls stood [in] the beginning of this [19th] century, and a man, Murdoch Tulloch, still living, remembers 'a little God,' or image, which was still preserved when the roof had fallen in, and which the country people used to clothe with a little shirt on Xmas night. The site is now a ploughed field."

¹ Origines Par., ii., 707, 736, 623, 648, 624, 641, 646, 731, 621, 617, 743, 748.

² Orig. Par., ii. 763.

The veneration shown to images of the saints in Caithness was great. In after times the parson of Bower, Merchistoun by name, suffered death for indignities shown to the image of St. Fergus.

"Before the Reformation, Caithness would seem to have been intensely popish. Every parish in the county abounded with small chapels dedicated to particular saints or saintesses; and of these there were images, chiefly of stone, which the ignorant and vulgar regarded as objects of worship. . . . Such was the deep hold which popery had in the district, that many years after the reformed faith was introduced, some of the older inhabitants were accustomed at particular times to visit the old chapels and kneel before the images."¹

John Prunto, or Pruntoch, appears to have been one of the more energetic of the earlier reformed clergy. We find him at Dunnet, at Latheron, and parson of Wick. He probably was in holy orders before 1560, as he appears first as "exhorter." The name is found in earlier times, but others of the same name appear in the earlier Town Council records of Wick (1666), as contumacious, and from their disorderly conduct, punished by the civil magistrate.²

In 1572, John Watsoun, alias Wobster, was presented to the parish of Canisbay. Dunnet and Bower were also under his charge in 1574. He kept a reader at Canisbay. He held the benefices till 1577. In 1574 he is designed as minister of Canisbay, and Andrew Rag his reader. In 1577 a charter of Gilbert Gray, chanter of Caithness, is signed by "Master John Donat, rector of Canisbie, and John Watsoun or Wobster, parson of Cannesbye."³

J. De Voragine, a Dominican, who was consecrated Archbishop of Genoa in 1292, died in 1298. The work of his which attained the greatest popularity was the "*Legenda Aurea*." In 1483, Caxton printed an English version. The

¹ Calder's History, 219.

² Scott, Fasti, v. 359, 363, 370; Wick T.C. Records, MS.

³ Scott, Fasti, v. 358; Orig. Par., ii. 792.

"Legenda" are lives of the saints, and in the earlier copies these are accompanied by the quaintest cuts. An edition was printed at Lyons in 1510, all in black letter, a small, very neat, and pretty folio. A copy of this edition in my possession bears on the last page the autograph, "Mr. Alex. Arbukel Moritu," probably the signature of Friar Arbukel, of the Franciscan order, who held a dispute with John Knox in 1547. The book became subsequently the property of Watsoun. On folio lix. are the words "God's bennisone lyght upon Dein Johne Watsone." As parson of Bower he no doubt considered himself Archdeacon of Caithness. Other notings are, "John Watsoun and Bessie Stirling—God's bennisoun," "Margrat Watsoun," "James Hume," "Dein Johne Watsone wt. my hand at the pen," "James and Thomas Watsone," &c. This interesting and very curious volume came into the possession of the family of Stewart of Brough. It was presented to the Bibliothek of Kirkwall by E. Stewart of Brough in 1699.

CHAPTER VII.

COMMISSIONER PONT AND HIS SONS.

THE TWO "CONSTANT MODERATORS."

John Gray of Fordell, Commissioner—Grahame, Archdeacon of Ross—Archdeacon Innes—Walter Innes, Vicar of Thurso—Pont—Provost of Trinity College, Minister of St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh—Offered See of Caithness—Assembly declines to allow him to be Bishop—Son Timothy—Parson of Dunnet—Family—Smith, Minister of Dunnet—Zachary Pont—Minister at Bower—Wounded by Mudie of Melssetter at Walls in Orkney—Sutherlandshire—Family of Paip or Pape—from Elgin—William Paip, Commissioner—Constant Moderator—Consistent Supporter of Episcopacy—Thomas Paip of Rogart—Nearly Murdered—Relic of Paip of Dornoch—A Little Volume of Rare Pamphlets—1609—Saul Bruce, Constant Moderator of Caithness—Family—Stanstill—Mowats of Buquhollie—Monument at Canisbay—David Bruce of Olrig.

APPENDIX.—List of Succession of Bishops of Caithness, from MS. at Dunrobin.

FROM the year 1570, different "commissioners" had the regulation of the ecclesiastical affairs in the diocese of Caithness. The first of these was John Gray of Fordell, of whom we are told that "he had taken great pains and travels before in the oversyght of the said country," and was "appointed to continue with the assistance of the Bishop thereof (Robert Stewart) head commissioner of the same. He desired, 6th March 1573, to be discharged of his office, both for the weight of the burden, his age, and meanness of the stipend." Grahame, Archdeacon of Ross, succeeded him, with whom was associated John Robertson, Treasurer of Ross. Grahame was removed by the General Assembly in 1587. He was also parson of Killearnan.¹

¹ Scott, *Fasti*, v. 457, 281.

The Archdeacon of Caithness, minister of Bower, was now appointed commissioner for the diocese. This was Robert Innes, who received the appointment to Bower in 1580, was appointed commissioner in 1587, and died about 1608. He was formerly parson of Clatt, in Aberdeenshire. How or why he came to Caithness is unknown, but members of the well-known family of Innes of Innes at one time, it is said, possessed "the third rig of Caithness, which they kept till the year 1540." "Maister Walter Innes of Thursater" appears in 1560; and in 1554 and 1566 a Mr Walter Innes was vicar of Thurso. He is also mentioned as having obtained from the bishop in 1564 a lease of lands in Brims adjoining Thursater. In 1582 a William Innes of "Bryms" had a son, Robert, then married to "Margaret Sinclair, oy or grandchild of George, fourth Earl of Caithness." Whether this Robert Innes, who had several sons, was the same person as the archdeacon of that name is unknown.¹

We now arrive at a more distinct period of Church history.

In 1590, Robert Pont, minister of St. Cuthberts, one of the Lords of Session, and at one time Provost of Trinity College, Edinburgh,² one of the best known of the earlier reformed clergy, was appointed commissioner. He was also, as Stewart was now dead, presented to the vacant see of Caithness. "Before accepting the appointment, he craved the judgment of the Assembly, offering to act as minister of Dornoch, and to take the office of visitation only, at the command of the church. The royal letter of nomination having been laid before the Assembly," an answer was transmitted to the King. It acknowledges the letter "willing us to elect our brother, Mr Robert Pont, to the bishopric of Caithness, vacant by the decease of umquhile Robert, Earl of March, your highness' uncle. We praise God that your majesty hath a good opinion and

¹ Compare Scott, v. 457, 356, 552; Henderson's County Families, 239.

² Charters Coll. Churches, Midlothian, xxviii.

estimation of such a person as we judge the said Mr Robert to be, whom we acknowledge indeed to be already a bishop according to the doctrine of St. Paul, and qualified to use the function of a pastor or minister at the church of Dornoch, or any other church within your highness' realm where he is lawfully called, and worthy to have a competent living appointed to him therefor, as also to use the office of a visitor or commissioner within the bounds or diocese of Caithness, if he be burdened therewith." But as to the "corrupt state or office of them who have been termed bishops heretofore"—the Assembly would have none of it.¹ "Whereupon this see remained void, untill the Assembly, in the year 1600, agreed that a certain number of clergymen should sit and vote in Parliament."² It appears, however, that Pont assumed the office of visitor or commissioner, an office which he subsequently held for Orkney. As he certainly visited the latter diocese in 1592, there is every reason to suppose that he also visited Caithness, as he is said to have been commissioner for that see in 1599.³

MR TIMOTHY PONT, Parson of Dunnet.

"His father, Mr Robert Pont, one of the early coadjutors of Knox in the Reformation, was afterwards long minister of the West Church of Edinburgh, in which charge he continued till his death. This reverend gentleman appears to have been thrice married. His first wife was Catherine, daughter of Masterton of Grange; and of this union, besides our author, there was at least another son, Zachary, and a daughter. In what particular locality, however, any or all of these children were born, seems quite uncertain, nor can it be well determined which of these two sons was the elder. In 1562, about the probable period of their birth, their father was minister of Dunkeld, but immediately in the year following we find him officiating in the

¹ See Grub, 250-252. ² Keith, Cat., 217.

³ Scott, v. 457; my Hist. of Ch. in Orkney, ii, 74.

neighbourhood of Dumfries. . . Nothing whatever of the earlier years either of our author or his brother Zachary may now be ascertained ; but they both received their academical education in the College of St. Leonards, St. Andrews, being matriculated there, 1579-1580, and where they obtained the degree of M.A., in 1583 or 1584. . . Six years afterwards, Mr Zachary, who ultimately, like his brother Timothy, became a clergyman of the Reformed Church, obtained the appointment of printer to the King, though it is doubtful whether he ever exercised his privilege. At an after period, however, they were respectively settled in the cures of two contiguous parishes in the county of Caithness, which appointments they obtained through the influence of their father, who by this time held the office of superintendent of the churches in these northern parts. Mr Zachary Pont, designated portioner of Schyresmiln, previous to November 13, 1599, married Margaret Knox, daughter of the reformer, which marriage Wodrow mistakingly supposes to have referred to Mr Robert, the father of Zachary.

“ Mr Robert Pont, being provost of the Trinity College, Edinburgh, . . on July 10, 1574, granted a charter of certain lands [of the college] to his own son Timothy, our worthy topographer, whilst yet a boy at school. . . This was confirmed April 18, 1583. But from this, for the long period down to 1600, when he appears to have been appointed minister of the remote parish of Dunnet, in Caithness-shire, there is nothing to instruct how or where he was engaged. . . At the period of his appointment to Dunnet, it appears that his brother Zachary was officiating as minister in the adjoining parish of Bower. . . But the advantages which a residence in this locality afforded him of visiting and ‘ surveying the remote Orkney and Zetland Islands ’ may have been a ‘ motive for his seeking to sojourn here. ’ . . In the Register of Assignment of Stipends for the years 1607 and 1608, his name still appears as minister of Dunnett, and most probably he

continued so until the time of his death, which seems to have taken place in, or a little prior to, the year 1614, in which latter year Mr William Smith appears as minister of Dunnett. 'Mr Timothie Pont, parson of Dunnett,' and his brother Zachary, who is designed Archdeacon of Caithness, subscribe as witnesses to a document among the Duke of Sutherland's papers, dated December 7, 1610, and this is the last recorded appearance of him known to exist. . .

"In the acts of Privy Council for July 1609, are recorded the names of such persons 'as desired to be enrolled as undertakers in the intendit plantation and distribution of the forfeited and escheted lands of the province of Ulster.' Among these applicants appears the name of 'Mr Timothie Pont, minister,' who, on 25th July said year, subscribes for two thousand acres, and produces as his cautioner, 'Alexander Borthwick of Nether-Laich.'"¹

"On 20th July 1609, there is a complaint before the Privy Council by Mr Zacharie Pount, minister at Boar [Bower] in Caithness, and George Olipher, in ———, as follows:—"In September 1603, while Olipher, at the said minister's instance, was executing letters of inhibition on the parsonage and vicarage teinds of Walls in Orkney, of which he is titular, Francis Mudie of Breckness assaulted Olipher, and with a great baton gave him "mony bauch and bla straikis"; and in October 1603, when the said Mr Zacharie was in a boatman's house in the Brumis [Brims] of Walls, ready to cross the ferry to Caithness, Mudie first upbraided him, and then wounded him in the head with a drawn sword. Mr Zacharie and defender both appearing, the Lords assoilzie Mudie on his own oath denying the libel.'"²

In Sutherlandshire, after the Reformation, some members of the family of Pape or Paip appear prominently as

¹ Introductory observations (J. Fullarton) to "Topographical Account of Cunningham, Ayrshire, compiled about the year 1600, by Mr Timothy Pont," Maitland Club, 1858, pp. xxviii.-xxx.; see also Scott, v. 356, 360.

² Moodie Book, 17; see facsimile of his signature, &c., Laing's Knox Works, vi. 71.

clerics. The family appears in its earliest history as burgesses of Elgin. In 1363 a charter of William Pop, the son and heir of William Pop, burgess of Elgin, is witnessed by Malcolm of Alves (or Alvis), dean of Cathanes.¹ Some members of the family, previous to the Reformation, were engaged in the legal profession at Aberdeen—some notaries public there, and one a magistrate. Several appear in the earlier records of Marischal College. William Paip was a native of Ross-shire and a graduate of St. Andrews in 1587. He was appointed schoolmaster of Dornoch in 1585. He was Commissioner of Sutherland, associated, apparently, with Pont from 1593-1599, being parson of Dornoch from 1588. He had a presentation to the chantory of Caithness, 22nd November 1599, from King James. In 1606 he was appointed constant moderator of the presbytery. A consistent supporter of Episcopacy, he was a member of the Assembly of Glasgow in 1610, when along with his name appears that of his brother Thomas, parson of Rogart, Chancellor of the diocese.² "Master William Pape was chanter [of Caithness] in 1602; and in 1607, with consent of the bishop, dean, and chapter, he leased to John, Earl of Sutherland, for life and to his heirs, &c., for 19 years, reserving his own liferent the teindsheaves of the chanter's quarter, town and lands,"³ all in the parish of Dornoch. Several members of the family held benefices in the diocese in later times, and descendants still exist.

Strange to find the only remains of these old clergy—whose lives were spent in different scenes and manners from ours—only in some faded signatures to chapter charters, or in a very few old records. It is stated that Paip of Dornoch, when "endeavouring to quell a riot with his two younger brothers in June [1607]," was, with his brother Thomas, "grievously wounded and left for dead, while the other, Charles, Sheriff Clerk of the County, was killed." William, however, recovered, and became pastor

¹ Orig. Par., ii. 616.² Scott, Fasti, v. 328, 342.³ Orig. Par., ii. 618.

of Nigg, in the diocese of Ross, where he died before 1614.¹

The only relic of this worthy son of the Church which I have seen is a little volume of rare pamphlets now in my possession. It bears the signature, in very faded ink, "Gulielmus Pape." On the covers has been stamped in gold the date "1609." Seven curious pieces are bound together in the volume, the first—imperfect—at the end of which the signature occurs, being a treatise, "Rudimentorum Cosmographicorum," in four books. Thomas Morison's "Papatus," Edinburgh, 1594, is another. There is also a copy of Dudley Fenner's "Song of Songs," Middleburgh, 1594. In the volume is also included "A Catechism of the Christian Religion." The title-page is wanting, but from Latin poems, "ad authorem," prefixed, it appears to be by Johann Pincier, German physician and poet, 1556-1624. It includes the Apostles' Creed in Latin prose and verse, and instructions on the Sacraments, Christian Doctrine, and the Commandments.

The constant moderator of the Presbytery of Caithness at this time was Saul Bruce, parson of Reay in 1591, and parson of Olig, 1599-1606. His name occurs in different charters.² "The Bruces, of whom the principal family was Bruce of Stanstill, are of old standing in the county. As in 1562 'David Saul of Stanstill,' and in 1567 'David Bruce of Stanstill'; and David having been a family name, it is probable that 'William Davidson' [mentioned in 1559] was William, David's son, that is, William Saul or Bruce, son of David Saul or Bruce. Saul seems to have been the patronymic or clan name of the Bruces, for in 1630 David Bruce, then of Stanstill, bequeathed 'two hundred merks of his readiest rents to be dedicat and given to the building of an Ile and burying place in the kirk yard of Bower, in the *Clan-Saul* Hillock, where he has ordainit to bury his bodie.'" ³

This family were connected with the Mowats of

¹ Scott, *Fasti*, v. 319.

² Scott, *Fasti*, v. 365, 366; *Orig. Par.*, ii. 747.

³ Henderson, 282.

Buquhollie. A flat tombstone, originally in the church of Canisbay, now in the churchyard, records:—"Heir is ye monument of Isob. Mouat, Dochter to ye Lard Bochoillie, Lady Stansel, quha departit ye 19 day of Maii 1601."

There is also mention of David Bruce, "minister of Olig, or more probably of Halkirk, . . . not in the list of ministers of Olig in 'Fasti.'" He was son of Saul Bruce of Lyth.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VII.

Robertus Stuart,—


"Cui successit Georgius Episcopus Catteynensis postea archiepiscopus Fani Andrææ episcopatum autem Catteynensem resignavit Alexandro Forbes, cui Georgio successit prædictus Alexander Forbes Episcopus Catteynensis postea Aberdonensis Præsul. hic Alexander obiit Lethæ anno Domini millesimo sexcentesimo decimo septimo, cui Alexandro successit Johannes Abernethius Episcopus Catteynensis qui jam floret anno Domini millesimo sexcentesimo trigesimo primo, vir prudens et doctus, hic scripsit quædam vernaculo sermone. Finis."¹

¹ From a continuation of Codex of Fern and Dempster, "De vitis Episcoporum Cattayensium cum continuatione Alexandri Rosæi." (In Dunrobin Library.)

CHAPTER VIII.

BISHOP GLADSTANES.

Reader of Montrose 1585, Minister of St. Andrews—Character of great “pairts”—Nominated Bishop 1600—Admitted to Privy Council—Doubtful if he visited Caithness—Promoted to be Archbishop of St. Andrews—1605—Deeds granted by him—Chapter of Caithness Revived—Andrew Ogstoune—Parson of Canisbay—Succeeds Donat there—At Canisbay before or at 1602—Connection with Mowat of Buquholly—Tutor to Thomas Dempster—who describes him—Seal of Bishop Gladstones—Great Storm, November 1605—partly destroyed Dornoch Cathedral—Gladstones’ Wife—Family—Daughter Married in Orkney—Weemyss.

 **N** the 5th of November 1600, George Gladstones, minister of St. Andrews from 1597, was presented by the Crown to the Bishopric of Caithness. He was a graduate of St. Andrews University, his father having been Town Clerk of Dundee. He began his ecclesiastical career as Reader of Montrose in 1585, and held several charges in Forfar and Mearns previous to his promotion to St. Andrews. Spottiswood says that he was inducted to St. Andrews “and accepted of the people with great applause.”¹

He is described “as a man most learned, eloquent, and of great invention . . . of an easie nature, and soon induced to do many things hurtful to the see.” His “pairts, learning, and readiness” were wonderful.² The king had resolved that the men to be nominated bishops should each be “a preaching and working minister.” “Caithness” had been “long vacant,” but “was capable

¹ Wodrow’s Life, Mait. Club, i. 235. ² Martine’s Rel. Divi Andrææ, 250.

of recuscitation," so now "the three new bishops of Aberdeen, Ross, and Caithness, with one Neil Campbell, as already Bishop of Argyle, were to be the representatives of the revived system of actual clerical Episcopacy till there could be additions." They were nominated "in the ecclesiastical convention at Holyroodhouse on Oct. 14, 1600." They did not ride in the Parliament, but "had been content with appearing in the House." Their duty was "to try the brethren of the ministrie within the boundes."¹

Just after the Assembly of November 1602, the new Bishop of Caithness "was admitted into the Privy Council as a second clerical member of that body, in addition to Mr David Lindsay, Bishop of Ross, who had already sat in the Council for nearly two years." He appends his signature as one of the commissioners in the Treaty for Union with England.²

It is doubtful if he ever visited Caithness. He was much occupied in state and university business, being Vice-Chancellor of St. Andrews University from 1599. He attended, as Bishop of Caithness, in Parliament of April 10, 1604, being styled "*Georgius Episcopus Cathanensis*." He was very soon promoted to the Archiepiscopal See of St. Andrews. "By some extraordinary oversight the date of his transference from the Caithness Bishopric to the Primacy is usually given in history books as 1606, but he distinctly appears in the present volume as 'Bishop of Sanctandros' in the first recorded sederunt of Council, viz., on 5 Mar. 1605, after which he is present at about 22 more of the recorded sederunts. It may be worth remarking that he is never styled 'Archbishop' in the sederunts in this volume, but only 'Bishop.'"³ He was consecrated as Archbishop, December 30, 1610, and died in the Castle of St. Andrews, May 2, 1615, aged about 55 years.

Several deeds are preserved, signed and sealed by the

¹ Privy Council Reg., vi. 166, 174, 374; Melville's Diary, 489, 546, 547.

² P. C. Reg., vi. xxxvi.; vii. 5; xxxiv. ³ P. C. Reg., vii. 52, &c.

Archbishop when Bishop of Caithness. One, beautifully executed, now in the possession of Mr William Brims, Rosebank, Thurso, is dated by the bishop at St. Andrews 20th December, and by the chapter of Caithness at Dornoch, 31st December 1603-4. It is a confirmation of a charter granted by Bishop Robert Stewart "to umqll. Adame Davidstone in Thurso and diocie of Caithnes, to his son, John Davidstone." Attached are the seals of the bishop and chapter.

The clergy signing besides "George, Bischope of Caytnes," are "Maister Williame Pape, chantor of Caithness; Mr Thomas Pape, chancellor of Caithness; Saull Bruce, Persone of Olrick; Mr A. Ogstoune, persoune of Cannisbeye; Maister Robert Innes, Archden of Caithnes; William Gray, thesaurer of Cathnes; Mr Walter Anderson, person of Farre; and Mr Timothy Pont, Person of Dunnett."

We have already given the history of several of these clergy; but there is one distinguished for his learning, and, as his tombstone describes him, most honest, most reverend, and most faithful in all things. This is Master Andrew Ogstoune, many years in the service of the Church.

His predecessor in the parish of Canisbay was "Master John Donat, rector, probably a conforming cleric of the older order. He also appears as rector in 1580 and 1581.¹ "The first minister we certainly know of [at Canisbay] is Mr Andrew Ogstoun—a Buchan man, probably called in to this country and presented by Mowat of Balquholly. He entered to the charge in 1610 or 1611, and continued to his death, which fell out on the 31st of March 1650, being the 83rd year of his age, as I gather from his monument."² Ogstoune was certainly parson of Canisbay in 1602, if not earlier, and his death took place in 1650. This must be the correct date on the tombstone, though the figures look like 1620.

¹ Orig. Par., ii. 792.

² Macfarlane's Geo. Coll., i. 151.

In 1593, the patronage of the parish was in the hands of Mowat of Buquhollie.¹ Ogstoune was a member of the famous restoring Glasgow Assembly of 1610.² He is also remembered as having been the earliest tutor of the famous Thomas Dempster, author of many works on Scottish ecclesiastical history. He has two references to Ogstoune, who was evidently schoolmaster at Turriff, in which parish is the original Balquholly, "the seat of Mowat, who is reckoned chief of that name, James Aerskine, brother to the laird of Pettodrie, who is married to Mowat, the heiress of Balquholly."

"Andreas Ogstonus Turraviensis, praeceptor in clementis grammaticis ineus, vir ingenio mediocri, nec indoctus, scripsit 'Poemata varia lib. I.' vario carminum genere, sed eminet 'Epicedium Forbassi Toparchae ac familiae illius Principis lib. I.' elegiaco versu non inculto, ante annos XXX. publicatum. Vivit adhuc in Orcadibus." Also "Tum Turraviae sub ferula plagosi Andreae Ogstoni tirocinium primum exercuit."³

It was probably Patrick Mowat of Freswick and Harpsdale, 1565-93, who brought Ogstoune to Caithness. He is found on a visit at Slains, Oct. 1585,⁴ and was the father of Lady Stanstill. In later times, numerous members of the family are named in the Canisbay Session record.

Seal of Bishop Gladstones :—"George, Bishop of Caithness in 1600, and Bishop of St. Andrews in 1606, died 1615 :—A shield, with foliage at top and sides, bearing arms : A saltire, and in chief a rose ; legend, S : ROTUND : GEORGII : EPI : CATHANE. Diameter, 1½ inches ; B. Museum, 17255." (No. 1057 in Macdonald's "Scottish Armorial Seals.") An impression is also appended to the charter just referred to.

"In November 1605, a great storm did much damage in the north of Scotland. On the 5th—the very day when Guy Fawkes was discovered in the act of blowing up the

¹ Orig. Par., ii. 792. ² Calderwood, vii. 104.

³ Collns. Abd. and Banff, Spald. Club, 461. ⁴ Henderson, 175.

houses of Parliament in London—the gale was so strong that it blew down the walls and pillars of the nave of the Cathedral of Dornoch. The aisles and transepts had been left bare and roofless since 1570, when it was burned by Y MacKay of Farr and Sutherland of Evelix, in the course of a clan feud with the Murrays of Dornoch. Exposure for 35 years had so dilapidated the building that the gale of 1605 did much havoc. When the news of the gunpowder plot reached the north, the coincidence of time at once impressed the imagination of a superstitious age. The storm was invested with an element of the marvellous. Sir Robert Gordon writes:—‘The verie same night that this execrable plott should have been put in execution, all the inner stone pillars of the north syd of the body of the Cathedral Church of Dornoch—lacking the roof before—were blown from the verie roots and foundation, quyt and clein over the outer walls of the church: which walles did remane nevertheless standing, to the great astonishment of all such as hath sein the same.’”¹

Bishop Gladstones married Christian, daughter of Mr John Durie, minister of Montrose. She died in 1617. His son Alexander became Archdean of St. Andrews. He had also three daughters, one of whom, Christian, married Mr Patrick Weemyss, parson of Hoy, in Orkney, sub-dean of that diocese. Weemyss was a graduate of St. Andrews, and having been “deposed” for loyalty to Montrose, retired to Edinburgh, where he lived in great poverty till the Restoration, at which time he had a royal grant in respect of his sufferings. He got also the benefice of Lady Kirk, in Orkney, the chancellor’s stall, and, born in 1585, died in 1663. Archbishop Sharpe afterwards showed kindness to the widow, daughter of his predecessor in the archdiocese.²

¹ Abd. Eccl. Soc. Pro., 1892, 38.

² Scott, *Fasti*, iv. 484; my Orkney History, ii. 15.

CHAPTER IX.

BISHOP ALEXANDER FORBES.

Alexander Forbes—Student of Heidelberg—Graduate of St. Andrews—Pedigree—Aberdeenshire Man—Kinkell Tombstone of Bishop's Father—Parliament, 1606—Supports Episcopacy—Parliament, 1609—Godwin and Milburne—Apparel of Ministers—Bishop favours Marquis of Huntly—Consecrated May 1611—at Brechin—Deplorable state of Caithness—Bishop admitted Privy Councillor—Need of Ministers and Magistrates—Bishop much engaged in Politics—Roman Party—Earl of Caithness and Countess "Suspect"—Forbes nominated to Aberdeen, 1617—Fuller Restoration of Episcopacy—William Pape—Thomas, his brother, James Gray, Ogstoune—all support Episcopacy in Assembly—Letter, Countess of Sutherland in favour of Gray as Bishop—Table of Grays of Skibo—Slab at Dornoch.

- APPENDICES.—1. Notes on the Earlier Clergy of the Name of Gray in the Diocese.
2. Archdeacon Richard Merchistoun.
3. Note of Tack by Bishop Forbes to Macky Forbes of Strathnaver.

ALLEXANDER FORBES, M.A., of St. Andrews University, 1585, afterwards minister of the parish of Fettercairn, in Kincardineshire, 1588-1593, till his death, was nominated Bishop of Caithness by the Crown, Nov. 22, 1604, and appears to have been restored to the temporalities of his see (which amounted to little or nothing) before 1606. He was a student of Heidelberg University, and matriculated there, 11th June 1603.¹ Before his nomination, Forbes had been member of eight General Assemblies, from April 24, 1593, to November 10, 1602.

¹ Taylor, *Scottish Students there*, Scot. Hist. Review, Oct. 1907.

The new bishop was "son to John Forbes of Ardmurdo, in Kinkell [Aberdeenshire], descended of Brux in Kildrummy, by ———, daughter to Graham of Morphie, in Saint Syra's parish, in Mernis. He was grandson to William Forbes of Ardmurdo (by Margaret, daughter to Sir John Lundy of that ilk), third son to William Forbes of Kildrummy (by Catherine, daughter to Seton of Meldrum), oldest son to Duncan Forbes of Drumallachie (by Elizabeth, daughter to Creichton of Condlan), second son to Alexander Forbes, first laird of Brux."¹ In the old and interesting church of Kinkell there is a tombstone with the figure of a mailed warrior, and a defaced inscription, which, it is supposed, commemorates one of the gentlemen who fell at the battle of Harlaw, 1411. "It was appropriated in the next century (1594) by a neighbouring laird, Forbes of Ardmurdo, described in his epitaph as a man of eminent piety, and evincing his, or his executor's, progress in the new learning, by a text in Greek, sculptured on the monument, 'To me to live is Christ, and to die gain.'"² This is the tombstone of Bishop Forbes' father, and the Greek inscription probably shows that the words were written by the Bishop.

"The red Parliament of Perth" concluded its sittings, 11th July 1606. "The effect of the legislation of this Parliament was to advance the position of Episcopacy in Scotland by a most considerable step, and greatly to increase the social importance of those clergymen who were already at that moment titular Scottish Bishops. . . . Alexander Forbes, formerly parish minister of Fettercairn, now Bishop of Caithness." Constant moderators were appointed—"Caithness, the Bishop of Caithness (Alexander Forbes), or, in his absence, Mr Samuel [Saul] Bruce on the bishop's expenses."³

In the Parliament of 1609, "the most important acts

¹ Collns. Aber. and Banff, Spald. Club, 166.

² Trans. Ab. Eccl. Socy., 1896, 99.

³ P. C. Reg., vii. 227, 283, 301; pref. xxii.

were those in the ecclesiastical department. In fact, the Parliament had been called chiefly with this intention—two English divines, Dr. Godwin and Dr. Milburne, having been sent down to preach before the Parliament, and to indoctrinate it and the laiges in the Anglican direction. . . . This Parliament was decidedly towards that strengthening of the Scottish Episcopacy on which the King was resolved." Eight prelates were present, of whom the Bishop of Caithness was one. An Act as to apparel was passed, by which "every preacher of God's word should henceforth wear blak, grave, and comelie apparrell."¹

In 1606, the first day of "the parliament, ten bishops did ryde betwixt the erles and the lords, two and two, clothed in silke and velvet, with their foote mantles." "Mr Alexander Forbesse, Bishop of Cathness," rode side by side with "Mr Alexander Dowglass, Bishop of Murrey."²

Bishop Forbes "seems to have favoured the relaxation of George, Marquis of Huntly, from the sentence of excommunication, which not improbably paved the way to his promotion."³ Very possibly—the older Scottish bishops were the only broad-minded clergy in the country; at anyrate, Forbes, with the Bishop of Orkney and Archbishop Spottiswood, accompanied the deputation of lay councillors on their visit to the Marquis, who had petitioned for absolution from his sentence.⁴

Forbes received canonical consecration before 3rd May 1611. The solemn service took place at Brechin. Archbishop Gladstones has recorded the circumstances—"All the bishops of my province are now consecrated, for after that I had performed that work so in Leith and Edinr. that the very precisians who had carryed prejudice about that purpose, wer fully satisfyed, being informed that those in the north (who benorth my diocye are more unruly than any in the south) spake calumniously both in publick and prevat of that consecration, I thot meet there also to practise that

¹ P. C. Reg., viii. 304.

² Calderwood, Hist., vi. 493.

³ Scott, Fasti, v. 456.

⁴ P. C. Reg., viii. 626.

action, and thereupon have consecrat the Bishops of Aberdeen and Caithness, in the Cathedrall Kirk of Brechin, being assisted with the Bishops of Dunkeld and Brechin, in the sight of such a multitude of people as I never saw in such bounds. And so the whole north, as well as the south, is well resolved, in so much that I may compare with any prelate in the Island of Brittain, in matter of obedience to God, to the King, and to me, the unworthy servant of you both." ¹

At this time, the state of the diocese was deplorable. The Privy Council Register has several references which show this. "The chief cause of the frequent stouthreifs, murders, and slaughters committed within the bounds of Caithness, Sutherland, Strathnaver, and Ross, is reset given to the authors of the said crimes by the noblemen, barons, and gentlemen within the said bounds," who encouraged them "to insist in their wickedness and evill deedes." These gentlemen were accordingly ordered to find caution not to reset such persons. On 16th August 1611, the king sent a special warrant to "receive and admit Alexander, Bishop of Caithness, to be one of the ordinary number of the Privy Council, and the said Bishop, acknowledging the King's favour shown to him, gives the solemn oath of allegiance, and oath of a Privy Councillor in common form"—the immediate reason being on account of the "incivile and barbarous behaviour of the most parte of our subjects of Caithnes, Sutherland, and Strathnaver," increasing rather than diminishing, and there appears to be no way to suppress it but by "planting of painefull ministers and weele affected civile magistrates amangis thame, to which effect we haif given speciall commissioun to the beirare, the Bischope of Caithnes, to imploy his personall paines," and for his better authority, admit him "to oure previe counsell." ²

The Bishop appears immediately to have gone north,

¹ Wodrow's Bio. Coll., Mait. Club, i. 302.

² P. C. Reg., viii. 480; ix. 238.

for "the Lordis excusses the absence of the Bischop of Caithnes quhill November nixt."¹

He was subsequently very frequently in attendance at the Council meetings, and much engaged in public business. On 12th July 1614, he and others had a commission "to apprehend and exhibit before the Council sundry Jesuits, Seminary Priests, excommunicated and trafficking Papists, verie daungerous pestes in this comonwele, who frequent the diocese of Caithnes, north of the hill of the Ord, where they busy themselves by dispersing books, and giving public and private discourses, in order to divert the simple and ignorant people from the true religion to popish errors and superstition."²

In 1616, at London, he witnesses the absolution of the Marquis of Huntly, having been specially sent to London in regard to that affair. He consented to the absolution by the Archbishop of Canterbury. "It was thought that the bishop of Caithness his consent, in the name of the clergy of Scotland, was a warrant sufficient."³

On 25th July 1616, "George, Erll of Caithnes, Dame ——— Gordon, his spous, and Mr George Sinclare, being this lang time begane, suspect in relligioun, hes not onlie refusit to gif satisfactioun to the Kirk in materis of religioun, bot lykewayes the said Erll and his said spous interteynes in thair houses and service profest papists, to the perverting of nomberis of his Majestie's good subjects and increase of poperie in the boundis of Caithnes." They are ordered to appear "personally before the Lords on 28th August next. They did not appear, and so were denounced rebels."⁴

Forbes was nominated to the See of Aberdeen by *conge d'elire* of July 21, 1616, elected 29th of that month, though still mentioned as "Bishop of Caithness" on November 23, 1617. He died same year.

In the year 1610, the King summoned a General

¹ P. C. Reg., 250.

² P. C. Reg., vii., ix., x. 29, 251.

³ Spottiswood, Hist., iii. 231.

⁴ P. C. Reg., x. 585, 611.

Assembly of the Church to meet at Glasgow. The Earl of Dunbar was the royal commissioner, and various noblemen, barons, and commissioners of burghs attended. The Archbishop of Glasgow preached the opening sermon. In another discourse, the Bishop of Orkney undertook to prove the lawfulness of Episcopacy. The total conclusions of the meeting were in favour of the fuller restoration of Episcopacy. As the royal wish, and that of the king's advisers, was to restore Church property from lay spoliation, a powerful party in the State were opposed to the restoration of Episcopacy, although they did not venture to make any open resistance. The edifice of restoration was nearly complete, and the grace of the episcopate was restored by the consecration of three Scotch prelates in the chapel of London House, on Sunday, 21st October 1610.¹ Calderwood has preserved a list of those who supported the "Church and order" in the Glasgow Assembly. Amongst the nobility in this list we find the "Earle of Cathness"; in the ministerial list of "Cathness—The Bishop of Cathness, Mr William Pope, Mr Thomas Paipe, Mr James Gray, Mr Andrew Ogsburie."

Letter, Countess of Sutherland to Sir Robert Gordon, her son, 24th September 1616 :—"Ye heir that our bischep is to be maid bischeip of Aberdeen. Gif sua be, ye have caus to taik attendance that ane onfriend cum not in this cuntray, for gif thai do, it salbe na small hurt to your brotheris house. Friendis hes travaillit with Mr Jhone Gray, quha is varay sveer to acsep sic office, albeit it var in his offer, for he thinkis that vitht suir contience he can not taik that office, seing that leving is not abill to plant the kirkis. Thairfor gif his Maiestie vald taik sic ordour vitht Chatnes that the bischeipis landis thair mycht be restorit to the kirk, I think friendis suld move Mr Jhone to acsep of it. . ."²

This idea was supported by others. George Gray of Soirdaul, writing to Sir Robert Gordon, 21st September

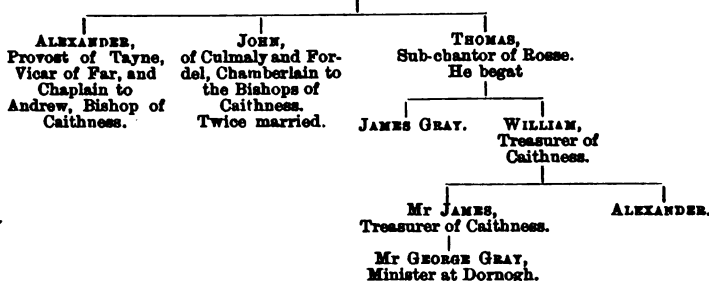
¹ Grub, ii. 296.

² Sutherland Book, ii. 124.

1616, says:—"My ladie, the Schiref and McKy is maist willing gif the moeyen mycht be had to gett Mr Johne Gray to the bishopric of Caithness."¹

"A TABLE OF THE PROGENY OF THE GRAYS OF SKIBO."

WILLIAM GRAY of Skibo was Chantor of Rosse, and had three bastard sons.



"Master John Gray, Dean of Caithness, son of Gilbert Gray of Skibo and Christian Monro, daughter to Robert Monro of Fowlis. Dean John Gray married Barbara Raith, daughter of the parson of Duffus.

"These Grays derive from Andrew Gray, the son of the Lord Gray of Fowlis, who fled out of the province of Angus, 1456, for the slaughter of the constable of Dundee, settled in Ross, where he purchased lands. His grandson was William Gray of Skibo, chanter of Rosse."²

The seal of James Gray, Dean of Caithness, 1569, bears a lion rampant, and the legend, "S. Jacobi Gray."

Slab on the north side of Dornoch Cathedral:—"This monument was erected by John McKay of Tardarroch, Ann. Dom. 1752, in memory of the following persons of distinction, viz:—Mr Jo. Gray, son to Gilbert Gray of Skibo, by Chris. Munro, daughter to the Laird of Fowlis, who was first protestant Dean of Sutherland and Caithness, and was first married to Barbra Keith, daughter to Ludquharn, By whom he had several sons, a daughter

¹ Sutherland Book, ii. 122.

² MS., Dunrobin Library (drawn up by Sir Robert Gordon).

named Cri., and was thereafter married to Eliz. Dowglass, Daughter to Spynie, and Relict to Mr Jo. Dunbar, Parson of Duffus, who was grandchild of Mr Pat. Dunbar, his 4. son to the Laird of Kilbuiack (?). Of this marriage was begot of Siddera, who to A. Gray, dau of Patrick Dunbar"

APPENDICES TO CHAPTER IX.

I.—*Notes on the Earlier Clergy of the Name of Gray in the Diocese of Caithness.*

Dornoch.—William Gray, younger, exhorter in the Irish language, 1569, supplied Criech, trans. to Lairg in 1580. There in 1615.

Lairg.—James Gray, son of the preceding, presented, 1607, by King James. Treasurer of Caithness.

Clyne.—John Gray, Clyne to Dornoch, 1614. Clyne again, 1621. Dean of Caithness. "Son of Gilbert Gray of Snardell." He was evidently the party mentioned in the Dornoch monument. He was succeeded as dean, and at Clyne from Criech by James Gray. This was the person who voted in favour of Episcopacy at Glasgow Assembly, 1610. John Gray returned to Clyne, and died Dean of Caithness, 21st January 1638. His son, Mr Robert, Provost of Dornoch, served heir, 1656.

Rogart.—William Gray, elder, exhorter in the Irish tongue, Criech, Lairg, Kilmailie (Golspie), 1567.¹

II.—*Archdeacon Richard Merchistoun.*

He appears to have been brought to Caithness by Bishop Forbes as a "painfull minister," to combat the popish party, in terms of his special commission. Merchistoun was a graduate of Edinburgh University, 1596, was admitted parson of Edzell, in the Mearns, not far from Fettercairn, Forbes' benefice. In company with the Bishop

¹ Scott, *Fasti*, v., *passim*.

of Brechin and other clergy of that diocese, he supported the pronouncements of the Glasgow Assembly in favour of Episcopacy, 1610. He was settled under Bishop Forbes at Bower in 1612.¹ He had D.D. conferred, but "was drowned by the adherents of popish superstition before 26th March 1633." His son Thomas succeeded him in Bower as Archdeacon, and died in December 1636.²

The strength of the popish party was not exaggerated in the statements embodied in the Privy Council Record.

Archdeacon Richard Merchistoun's zeal cost him his life. Calder thus tells the traditional story:—"In 1613 Dr Richard Merchiston of Bower fell a martyr to his zeal against this species of hagiolatry. He was in the habit of going through the adjoining parishes and demolishing the images wherever he found them. The people of Wick would appear to have been still strongly attached to the old superstition. In the course of a crusade through that parish, the worthy iconoclast entered the royal burgh, and broke a stone image of their patron saint, St. Fergus. The inhabitants were shocked and exasperated at what they deemed an act of sacrilege, and with difficulty were restrained from doing violence to his person. They secretly threatened vengeance, however, and a party of them, following him as he went home in the evening, caught hold of him, and drowned him in the river of Wick. It was given out that it was the saints who did it, and that St. Fergus, in particular, was seen astride of the parson in the water and holding him down."³

John Innes was parson of Wick in 1611, but in 1614 Thomas Annand, formerly of Keith, became parson. He died prior to 1636.⁴ Probably he was a nominee of Bishop Forbes, but we know nothing of him, except that his father was a burges of Elgin, and that before settling at Keith in 1599, he was parson of Moy, near Forres, from 1584.⁵ "Thomas Annand, son to umquhill Sir Jhone Annand, chaplen, was decernit to pay to Hellen Mill ane sufficient croune of the sone quhilk Master Valter Gordone her sone send with him to giff to hir twa zeiris bypast."—March 9, 1572.⁶ Another incumbent appointed in the same year was William Smith, to Dunnet. He proved a staunch royalist. He was a graduate of St. Andrews in 1607, and

¹ Scott, Fasti, vi. 824.

⁴ Scott, Fasti, v. 370.

² Scott, Fasti, v. 356.

⁵ Scott, Fasti, v. 205, 183.

³ Calder's Caithness, 220.

⁶ Rec. of Elgin, New Spald. Club, i. 136.

survived the great rebellion. Scott mentions his tombstone, but on a search at Dunnet I could find no trace of it.¹

III.—*Note of Tack by Bishop Forbes to Macky Forbes of Strathnaver.*

“No. 30.—Tack by the Bishop of Caithness to Donald Mcky Forbes, fiar of Strathnaver, of the teind vicarage of the barony and parish of Durness during the lifetime of the said Donald, and for two 19 years after his death, dated 22nd May 1615 :—‘We, Alexander, be the mercie of God bischope of Cathnes, with advyse and speciall consent of ye deane and chapter of ye said bishoprick chaptorlie convenit . . . at Aberdene 22 day of May 1615.—A. Forbes, bischopp of Cathnes ; M. J. Gray, deane of Cathnes ; Mr Rich. Merchistone, Archdean, consentis ; Mr William Smyth, person of Dunet, consentis ; A. Ogstounne, persone of Cannesby, consentis ; Walter Anderson, p’sone of Kildona’d.’”²

¹ Scott, *Fasti*, v. 360.

² Book of Mackay, p. 414, appendix of documents.

CHAPTER X.

BISHOP ABERNETHY.

Of the Family of Mayen—Earlier History—His Copy of Talaus—Dream—Calderwood—Holy Communion not administered in Caithness—Commissioner to Linlithgow—Aspirant to See of Glasgow—D. D.—Caithness—Visits it five times—Scrabeter—Gavin's Kirk—Assists at Morton's Consecration—Union of Three National Churches—Repair of Dornoch delayed—Dean Gray—King written to by Abernethy—Earl of Caithness obstructs him—Wretched Condition of Peasantry—Lord Berriedale—Abernethy urges Patrick Forbes to accept Aberdeen—John Innes profanes Sacraments—Apprehended, 1621—Bishopric seized by Earl—Archbishops write King as to this—His own Account—Archbishop Law also writes—Synod at Dornoch, 1623—Thurso—Head Courts—Duty payable to Bishop—1633, made Burgh of Barony—Criech—Letter to Sir R. Gordon as to Culmanie—William Abernethy—his Son marries Ulbeter's Daughter—Sinclair's History—William Abernethy nearly killed by Ryan at Brawl Castle—Monro of Reay—his Books preserved—Famine—Royal Letter as to Repair of Dornoch—Erection of Parish of Kintail—Church Services—Roman Recruits—Apparel of Churchmen—Proposal of Liturgy—Subsequent History—English Prayer-Book used—Abernethy and old Bishops oppose Liturgy—Result—Berriedale supports popular opposition—Assembly of 1638—Account of Proceedings at Abernethy—He submits—but eventually refusing to denounce Episcopacy, is Excommunicated—Scott's Account—Mowat stands for the King—Death—Seal—Johnston's Epigram.

APPENDIX.—Notes as to Sir R. Gordon.

JOHAN ABERNETHY, the next succeeding Bishop of Caithness, was a member of an old Scottish family—that of Mayen, in the shire of Banff, a brother to Abernethy of Mayen or Rothiemay, a very old northern family.¹ He was one of the earliest students at the

¹ Macfarlane's Geo. Dea., 169 *et seq.*; see also Nisbet's Heraldry, 1-288.

University of Edinburgh under Principal Rollock, and was laureated in 1587, "became Reader in 1588, was promoted and admitted, 7th Aug. 1593; he was a member of the Assemblies, 1601, 1602, 1608, and 1616." Constant Moderator of the Presbytery of Jedburgh 1606, the members of which refused for two years to admit his government; and no wonder, for he had previously, with forty-one others, signed a protest against the introduction of Episcopacy, but no doubt, like others of the forty-one, found good cause to change his mind and hope for some improvement amid the incessant strifes, for the cause of order and reverence, from the very moderate measures of Episcopal rule to be introduced; and as he was "appointed to confer with others for removing differences of opinion in the Church,"¹ he may have had hopes, which, indeed, for a good time seemed likely, that the pastoral work—rather than clerical-political work—would occupy the time of himself and his brethren. A slight memorial of Abernethy's earlier studies is in my possession—his copy of Talæus, "*Rhetorica, e P. Rami prelectionibus observata; Quarta Editio, 8vo; Francofurdi, 1589.*" On the fly-leaf his name, "Mr Joannes Abernethy, 1591," appears more than once. We find him at an unusually early age occupied in the business of the Church. In January 1602 he is, with a number of moderate and thoughtful men, addressing the Presbytery of St. Andrews, urging, in the dangerous times in which they found themselves, particularly lest "the factioun of the Spaniard prevaile in this yle. The cheefe hope of this case, so farre as we can perceive, will stand onlie on our teares and earnest prayers."² The whole course of events so wrought on the future bishop that he dreamed "that he was putt to the horne," when "he stabbed the bishop through with a rapper." The Archbishop seems to have given him his very utmost support in his attempts to introduce better order and obedience in the district of Jedburgh, but Calderwood, who

¹ Scott, *Fasti*, ii. 480.

² Calderwood, vi. 145.

was secluded there for many years afterwards, was his bitterest opponent, which in those days and in this particular case meant a great deal.¹

In the year 1608 it is reported that "in the kirks of Caithness and Rosse . . . in manie of them the Holie Communion was never celebrated."

Abernethy now appears to have been completely won over to the Episcopal cause. In 1608 Calderwood notes that "Mr John Abernethie," who "had given a proof [of his doubts as to Presbyterian order] at the Bishop of Orkney's last visitation of the Presbyterie of Jedburgh, was, by the bishop's procurement, chosin commissioner, with another like himself," to the General Assembly at Linlithgow, at which "the bishops gott a great vantage."² In 1614, Abernethy fell into ill-health, possibly the result of his labour for "comely order in the Kirk," and had "liberty granted by the haill Presbytery to go to the baths for the recovery of his health."

The See of Glasgow being vacant in 1615 by the promotion of Spottiswood to St. Andrews, "Mr George Grahame, Mr William Murray, persone of Dysert; and Mr Johne Abernethie, minister at Jedburgh, made everie one their owne moyen at court for the bishopricke."³ This is a story from Calderwood, but possibly true enough. He was created D.D. previous to 6th August 1616, and was a member of the Court of High Commission, 21st Dec. following.⁴ On 7th Dec. 1616, he was promoted to the See of Caithness. He still, and while bishop, held his benefice of Jedburgh *in commendam*, the necessity of which will soon be explained. When bishop he appears still to have officiated as constant moderator of the Presbytery of Jedburgh.⁵ While acting as such he seems to have erred almost on the side of laxity. Calderwood (and others, no doubt) being urged by Archbishop Law to attend the Diocesan Synod, where they "sould have libertie to vote

¹ Calderwood, vi. 709 *et seq.* ² Cald. Hist., vi. 779.

³ Cald. Hist., vii. 203. ⁴ Scott, Fasti, ii. 480. ⁵ Cald., vii. 263.

and reason. . . Mr Johne Abernethie, Bishope of Caithnes, said, 'Come and say *hic sum*, and thereafter do as ye please.'"¹

But all was quite ineffectual. As Leighton found afterwards, so Law and Abernethy found now, that no compromise would be entertained. Archbishop Law seems afterwards rather inclined to give "hope of releefe" to Calderwood, "but efternoon, efter that Abernethie, Bishope of Caithnes, and Bannatyne, Bishope of Dumblane, had dyned with him," he was less pliable.²

We must now follow our bishop to Caithness. Charges of non-residence were preferred. Calderwood, who seems to have watched him like a cat with a mouse, notes—"This bishop has his residence still in Jedburgh, that is, from the 1617 year of God till the 1627, and has not all these yeeres seene his diocee foure or five times, at which he went to gather his rents." Say five times, that is once every other year, and when the circumstances are considered, it may be seen that in those days of long, tedious, and dangerous journeys, he did not do so badly.

"Scrabster lies a mile N.W. of Thurso. It was the residence of the Bishops of Caithness, tho' they had their Cathedral at Dornoch, in Sutherland, and in popish times a stately but now ruinous castle, yet they have mostly resided here, as a far more convenient place for good and cheap provisions. The fabrick is wonderfully small, and yet no ruins are to be seen."³

"The Bishop of Cathness, since the Reformation, lived in a small house at Scrabster, which is still extant and belongs to the Croun. He had a grass room in the Highlands called Dorary, where stood a chapel, called Gavin's Kirk, or Temple Gavin. The walls are still standing."⁴

An interesting event took place in 1616, in the consecration of the learned Thomas Morton to the See of

¹ Cald. Hist., vii. 278.

² Cald. Hist., vii. 281.

³ Macfarlane's Geo. Des., 169.

⁴ Appex. Pennant's Tour, 1784, 330.

Chester, subsequently better known as Bishop of Durham. It was performed by Archbishop Abbot, and at the laying on of hands he was assisted, not merely by three other English bishops, but also by Hampton, the Primate of Ireland, and by "John Caithness Abernethy." The date is said to be July 7, 1616. The general authorities state that Abernethy was not consecrated till after December 7, 1616. If the story is correct—the statement is taken from the official record—it shows a happy meeting in concord, holy rite and reception of the Blessed Sacrament of prelates representing the three national churches of England, Ireland, and Scotland.¹

On 23rd February 1615, John, twelfth Earl of Sutherland, writes to his brother, Sir Robert Gordon:—"If I had stayed at home, the church of Dornoch had been well repaired er now, and monie good turnes done that never wilbe done in my absens."²

In the year 1616, the year after "Sir Robert Gordon took the management of Sutherland, as tutor of his nephew, he determined to restore the Cathedral, which had been dilapidated since 1570, and almost a ruin since 1605. The work had been projected in 1614 by his brother, Earl John, who died in the following year. The Dean of Caithness, who was a brother of the laird of Skibo, and a man of much talent [proposed as bishop by the Sutherland and Caithness people in 1616], had got the heritors of the district to undertake the work of restoration. The Earl died at the inception of the undertaking, so that the main part of the work fell to be executed by the tutor. 'By a special providence,' he says, 'a slate quarry was discovered in the neighbourhood, and the Cathedral was roofed from this quarry. The Castle of Skibo was also roofed with the same slate.'"³

The bishop had no sooner got the ceremonies of his consecration past than he applied himself to the necessary

¹ Percival's *Ap. Sucen.*, 201. ² *Suth. Book*, ii. 117.

³ *Abd. Ecol. Pro.*, 1892, 38.

business of the see. On the 10th Dec. 1617, we find him writing to "The King's Most Excellent Majestie" from Edinburgh in regard to "a renunciation of a few Bishop's lands into my favouris," which the Earl of Caithness had subscribed by His Majesty's direction and at the sight of Archbishop Law and the Bishop of Ross. But "in procur-ing whereof, the earl protracteth time, till he also see if he can end with Creditours." The earl had, in fact, returned to Caithness, and had no intention of carrying out his signed agreement, so that the bishop was unable "to attend to his charge."¹

"During this time the peasantry of Caithness were in a most wretched condition. Among other evils, Caithness was overrun with thieves." In 1617, a regular band infested the borders of the counties, their principal haunt being the Ord of Caithness. Murder, rape, and robbery were rampant. At length the authorities grappled with these evils, and in a few days most of the miscreants were caught and hung on gibbets at the highest point of the Ord,² "But the restless and unhappy disposition of the Earl of Caithness was constantly involving him in trouble; and he was no sooner out of one scrape than he was in another. . . . He even disputed with his son, Lord Berriedale, who had lain five years in the jail of Edinburgh in consequence of engagements he had come under for his debts." The county gentlemen warmly sympathised with Berriedale, but the creditors clannoured for payment; and at last the king issued a commission to apprehend the earl and seize the castle for the king's use. Sir Robert Gordon, with Lord Berriedale and Sinclair, younger of Murkle, proceeded north and seized Castle Sinclair, Ackergill and Keiss. The earl fled to Orkney, and Lord Berriedale took possession. At last, having received an annuity, the earl returned and settled down.³

In 1618, Bishop Abernethy is at Edinburgh, and signs a

¹ Orig. Letters, Ecol. Affairs, ii. 526.

² Calder, 156.

³ Calder, 159.

letter to Patrick Forbes of Corse urging him to accept the Bishopric of Aberdeen.¹

On July 30, 1618, the Privy Council Records give us a glimpse of Caithness clerical life. An order is then issued against "Maister Johnne Innes, sumtyme minister" [probably in Wick], who had been excommunicated, but who had "now at lenth reteered himselff to the countrey of Caithnes, quhair he behavis himselff very sclanderouslie, alsweill by prophanatioun of the Sacramentis and making of unlauchfull mariages, as by baptising of bairnes procreat in adultrie, incest, and fornication." He is ordered to be apprehended. In 1621, Innes was in Edinburgh tolbooth, but being liberated on a promise to remove out of the kingdom, passed at once to Caithness, and acts as before, not merely marrying parties in private houses, but "intruding himself in the ministrie in sundrie kirkis." About this time also, "Mr John Sutherland, Chancellor of Caithnes," is denounced as, at the horn, a rebel.²

Even the bishop's own property was not safe. In 1620, the Sheriff and Commissary of Caithness are ordered to apprehend a number of persons "to answer for some particular points of theft committed by them against the said bishop."³

The bishop was present in Parliament, July 25, 1621.⁴

In 1622, the earl is indicted that "he hes thir diverse yeeres bygane seased upon the Bishop of Cathnes his whole estate and living, without forme or ordour of law, for the quhilk he is six or seven times denunciati rebell and put to the horne."⁵ No wonder the bishop could not live in his diocese.

In 1623, the Archbishops of St. Andrews and Glasgow address the king as to "the troubles made to the Bischope of Caithnes by the Earle of that countrey, who liveth subject to no law, and debarreth him of his rent and living, hath broght him to such necessitie, that we are forced

¹ Orig. Ecol. Letters, ii. 545. ² P. C. Reg., xi. 420, 613, 561.

³ P. C. Reg., xii. 317. ⁴ P. C. Reg., xii. 627. ⁵ P. C. Reg., xiii. 125.

humbly to mean his estate to your Majestie." His taxation for rents was never received, and the "disorder of that parte of the cuntry by the Earle thereof, and his evil example, will, unless something be done, force the bishop to quite his place and charge." This letter is followed by one from Bishop Abernethy himself, Edinburgh, 8th February 1623. It records the same deplorable state of matters in the diocese. "That till the time the Earle of Cathnes and that part be reduced to some better obedience, and till that lytle thing I have in that part be better secured to me, and may saifly resort there, I may be so a lytle helped by your maiestie for the present, with greater ease I may patientlie abide a better settling by your maiestie. They that wer before me in that place had often experience of your maiestie's bountie in this kind, whereof I shalbe verie loth to mak my custome. . . Jo. B. of Cathnes."¹

On April 15, 1623, another letter to the same effect is sent to the king by Archbishop Law. "The Bishop of Cathnesse is so distressed by want of paiment of the rents of his poore benefice . . . he can have no relief of the tenentis and taksmen of his Bishopricke. The Earle of Caithnesse pretending to have right, and being in possession of the most and best part of the land and tithes of the said Bishoprick, that he may hardlye maintane his privat estate, much lesse be able to serve your maiestie, and attend his Diocesse in that dignity and place to which your maiestie hath graciouslye preferred him."² But in August 1623 he visited his diocese, when he is said to have been there only five days.

In July 1628, he was again in the north. "Our bishop was 'then' in Skibo." He appointed "the first mercat [at Dornoch] to be the twentie day Juni, being Stt. Margrat's day, and the next the twentie of August, being St. Bernard's day."³

¹ Orig. Let. Eccl., ii. 709. ² Orig. Let. Eccl., ii. 710, 711.

³ Suth. Book, ii. 150.

The last sitting of the bishop in Parliament was in August 1630, his previous one being in August 1621. He was one of the majority of the lords who then ratified the five articles of Perth passed at the Assembly there in 1618.¹

"In a synod held by him at Dornoch in 1623, it was decreed that every entering minister should pay the first year's stipend to the reparation and maintenance of that Cathedral. In this bishop's time Dornoch was made a burgh-royal."²

"Previous to the erection of Thurso into a burgh of Barony in 1633, we know almost nothing of its internal affairs. The Bishops of Caithness were superiors of it from a very early date, and seem to have exercised a local jurisdiction over it. For we find in the Charters granted by them of property within the town, that the persons to whom the Charters were granted were taken bound to answer 'to the head Courtis to be held at Scrabster yierly' [charter by Alexr. Bp. of Caithness to Wm. Murray of Pennyland, dated 28th July 1614]. The duty payable to the Bishop was a pound of white wax, or the value thereof, about 15 pence. Afterwards the feu duty became half a Stone of Tallow or the value, and it still remains so. From the Bishops the superioritie of the town passed to the Earls of Caithness. This must have been after 1616, for in that year we find Alexr., Bishop of Caithness' consent necessary in a charter, granted by Sir James Sinclair of Murkle, of some property within the Town. In 1633 it was erected into a Burgh of Barony in favour of John, Master of Berriedale, &c. Markets were to be held yearly on the feast of 'the Blessed Virgin, commonly called our Lady.' During the episcopate of Bishop Abernethy, several new clergy were appointed to benefices. At Criech—the incumbent of which was anciently chantor of Caithness—John Hossack, M.A., Aberdeen, 1619, appears. As he was deposed by the Presbyterian Assembly of 1649, he probably was a loyalist.

¹ Calderwood Hist., vii. 498.

² Keith, Cat., 218.

At anyrate, he paid no obedience to their sentence, but continued to baptize and marry as before.”¹

As to Golspie and Kilmailie, we have this record :—
 “ John Abernethy, Bishop of Caithness, to Sir Robert Gordon, to provide the vicarage of Culmanie to Mr Alexander Duff, 29 Aug. 1621² :—‘ Right Honourabill,—Yee remember at our last meeting we condescended, as I think that Mr Alexander Duffe should have this yeirs vicarage of Culmanie for the service he hath done at that Kirk ; and seeing he informeth me that he doubts of [his] obtaining of it, these are therefore to entreate you that, as we agreed thereupon, so he may have it ; and that yee may geve a solide and reall direction that he may get it, or else the just worth thereof, that he have no further occasion to complain ; otherways I will be forced to tak some other course with him, which will not so well please you. I desire you to dress that mater so that he have no occasion to think that he is not dealt too vigorouslie by us. Yee shall excuse me that I could not upon such suddain advertisement visit you in Edinburgh at this time, and I wish yee may have a happie journey and a happy and safe returne. I rest your assured friend, J., B. of Cathnes.—To the right Honorabill Sir Robert Gordon, tutor of Sutherland, &c.—Jedburgh, August 29, 1621.’ ”

William Abernethy married Henrietta, or Hendrina, daughter of John Sinclair of Ulbster. This John Sinclair “ was a man of education and ability, and as his name is seldom mentioned without the prefix of Mr or ‘ Maister,’ there is ground for thinking that he was brought up as a pedagogue, or teacher. . . . In 1601 the General Assembly arranged that certain ministers should plant themselves in the families of the Catholic nobles ; and Lord Gordon, eldest son of the Marquis of Huntly, and the Master of Caithness, eldest son of the Earl, ‘ were brought up together under the care of two pedagogues, Thomas Gordon and John Sinclair, who were compelled to declare themselves

¹ Suth. Book, i. 333.

² Suth. Book, ii. 141, 145.

adherents of the reformed faith.' That this was the above-mentioned John Sinclair is certain, as we find him in 1604 writing to his uncle, George Sinclair of Mey, that he and the Master of Caithness lived in the family of the Marquis of Huntly, at Bogg Gight."¹

To the chancellor's benefice of Rogart, John Sutherland was appointed in 1614.²

"Mr William Abernethy, son to the Bishop of Caithness of that name, who was brother to Abernethy of Mayen, in the Shire of Banff, was the first minister of this place [Thurso] that any person can give an account of, only some say there was another Abernethy before him."³ He was previously parson of Halkirk, to which he was admitted before July 1627. "In returning from his church on a Sabbath evening, he was waylaid by Mahan Ryan at the river before the castle of Braal, who, on account of his exercising discipline towards him for immoral conduct, tumbled him from his horse into the river, then bruised and almost suffocated him, so that he was carried home nearly dead." Having, with the other clergy, taken the loyalist part, he was deposed with the other clergy for supporting Montrose.⁴ The same fate befell William Smithe, parson of Dunnet, and David Allerdies, admitted to Olrig prior to 1636.

John Monro, parson of Reay, was admitted by Bishop Abernethy about the year 1623. He graduated at St. Andrews in 1619. He also shared the loyalist clergy's fate, but was succeeded by his son and grandson in the benefice.

Some of his books have been preserved, and are now in the writer's possession. They are:—

1. Egilsham, George, *Hypocrisis*. 4to, Delft, 1612. "Mr Jon Monro."

2. Emmius, Ubbo, *ad confutationem D.D. Hofmanni modesta et Solida Responsio*. 8vo; no title. "Mr John Monro."

¹ Henderson, 68, 69.

² Scott, *Fasti*, v. 342.

³ Macfarlane's *Geo. Coll.*, 109 *et seq.*

⁴ Scott, *Fasti*, v. 362, 354.

3. Vorstius, Conrad, *Theses Theo. et Apolog. de Persona et Officio Christi*, 1612. "Mr Jon Munro."

1634. "At this time, great distress, occasioned by a famine, prevailed in Orkney and Caithness. Owing to tempestuous weather, the corn of the preceding year had not sufficiently filled, and much of it was cut down green. . . To add to the prevailing dearth, the fish, usually found in such abundance along the northern shores, seemed to have wholly deserted them. Many of the poorer sort of the people were reduced to such extremity that, to satisfy the gnawings of hunger, they killed their very dogs and ate them, and greedily devoured sea ware, or whatever would support life." Multitudes died in the open fields, and it is said that many ran into the sea and drowned themselves. The Bishops of Orkney and Caithness earnestly applied to Government for help, which, after a time, they received, but it was nearly too late, and the supply was but limited.¹

King Charles the First to John, thirteenth Earl of Sutherland, about the repairing of the Cathedral Church of Caithness, 22nd June, 1634:—"Charles R. Right trustie and welbeloved cousin, wee greete you well. Whereas wee are informed that of late a beginning was made in repairing the Cathedral Church of the diocie of Caitnesse, wherein we do commend the endeavours of such as did contribute to that purpose; but hearing that the bodie of that Church is as yet to sett up, which will require the assistance of the most able and eminent persones in that diocie, wee have hereby thought fitt speciallie to recommend unto you to assist so pious a work by using the advise and direction herein of the reverend father in God, the bishop of Caithnesse, and by helping to mak up such a generall contribution amongst all the inhabitantis of that diocie as wilbe sufficient to finish that work, wherein, as you will show a zeale to God's service, so we will tak it in verry good pairt at your handes. Wee bed you fairewell

¹ Calder, 161, 162.

from our manour of Greenwich, the 22 of June 1634.--To our right trustie and Welbeloved cousin, the Earle of Southerland." ¹

" No. 39.—Erection of the parish of Kintail, afterwards known as Tounge, by agreement between Donald, 1st Lord Reay, and John Abernethy, Bishop of Caithness, 10 Apr. 1638:—'At Thurso, the tenth day of Apreill, the zeir of God ane thousand six hundred threttie aught zeirs, It is agreid betwixt the honl. pairtyes following, they are to say, ane reverend father Johnne, be the mercie of God Bischope of Cathnes, with consent of the deane and chapter of the Cathedral Kirk , for the love and zeal qlk the saids parties hes and carries to plant the Gospell, and for the better edificatione of the people remaining, and that sall be heirefter within the countrie of Strathnaver; and although there hes bein but twa parochines of auld in the countrie in tyme of poperie, and since of late in or awne tyme thair are bot twa ministers serveing the said twa Kirkis, we find it ane work impossible for twa pastores to thrive (*sic*) that wide and spacious bounds so far sepat from uther be mountains, rocks, watters, creiks, and lochs, of salt as fresh water . . . we think it meitest both to the glorie of God and for the weill of the people, as also for the better and administering of the Sacraments, that pairt betakin of the parochine of Farr, and pairt from the parochine of Ardures, and that there sall be ane third parochine erected in the middest of the country in Kintail, and the Kirk of Kirkeboll to be the parochie Kirk of the said parochine to be erected as said is. . . . J., B. of Caithnes; Johnne Sinclair of Asserie, D. Reay, Hector Munro, Eriboll.' "

This erection never took place, as the Bishop was deposed a few weeks thereafter by the General Assembly, 1638.²

It is well known that at the Reformation the prayer-book of Edward the Sixth was, for a short time, used in

¹ Suth. Book, ii. 16.

² Book of Mackay, 142, 429.

many parts of Scotland. Whatever views the leaders of the newer polity at that time may have held, it was clearly impossible for the readers and exhorters, many of them priests of the older forms, to declaim in "free prayer" Sunday by Sunday. They had been trained in a very different system. The change was too sudden. Possibly, in some cases, as in the Western Highlands, the more broad-minded or perhaps accommodating of the clergy were ready to administer holy baptism according to either the older or the newer form as the applicants might desire. In Caithness, undoubtedly, there was a strong or perhaps powerful party, who desired the restoration of the Roman system. The Earls of Caithness, and many of the Sinclairs, were very lukewarm in their support of the new light. From Sutherland we find more than one youth proceeding to the Scotch Colleges abroad to be trained for the Roman priesthood. John Innes and Gilbert Gordon are two mentioned in this category; others were connected with the well-known family of Menzies, and some with the Sutherland family.¹ The fate of Doctor Merchistoun has already been related. The books of Edward were, however, soon superseded by the Book of Common Order—partially liturgical. "This was read on week days, and on Sundays by the 'Readers,' and also partially by the clergy for nearly a century." In 1601, a revision of the "Psalms in metre" was ordered to be undertaken by Pont; at the same time the ecclesiastical authorities forbade the use of unauthorized prayer in the public service. After the restoration of Episcopacy, in 1606 and 1610, regulation was made as to the apparel of churchmen, when Doctors of Divinity were ordered to be distinguished, as in England, by "black craips about the neck." There is little to show that the people had any objection to the continued observation of the great festivals of the Church, and in many parishes Eastertide was still held as the time when the chief communion was administered. This was ordained by royal

¹ Records of the Scots Colleges, i. 24, 26, 38, 43.

proclamations in 1614 and 1615. Of confirmation, which had fallen into disuse, it was stated that "whereof the use for children is most profitable." The revival of the academic order of Doctors of Divinity had been suggested some time before by Gladstones on his succession to the archiepiscopal see. In 1616, at the Assembly at Aberdeen, the king's instruction "that a liturgy be made which shall be read in every church in common prayer," and that the communion be ministered four times a year, one of these times being Easter, was heartily agreed to. There is reason to believe, that, so far, "the desire for improvement in worship was shared by all parties." A form of prayer was also prepared. In 1618, the five articles of Perth were passed, not merely authorising, but making compulsory, the observation of the five great festivals, confirmation, private communion, kneeling at the reception of the holy sacrament, and private baptism in cases of necessity. The greatest objection to the articles was that raised by the Puritan party to the order that the holy communion should be received kneeling. "In addition, there was a general alarm that the king was about to introduce all the ceremonies of the Church of England." But the preparation of a liturgy was continued under the auspices of Archbishop Spottiswood, "William Cowper, Bishop of Galloway, being designed the chief" compiler. Bishop Cowper was well suited for the work which affected Scotland. Those who will take the trouble to read his excellent works will find some of the prayers interspersed amongst his treatises, models of devotion, and breathing the warmest spirit of ancient times. "He has been justly spoken of as the Leighton of his time." Eventually, the liturgy was ordered to be printed. But it was kept back. The king, himself, it is said, felt that the five articles were almost more than the nation would then receive. King James died in 1625. In 1629, King Charles revived the subject of the liturgy. The book which had been drawn up under the auspices of Spottiswood was presented to the king by the Archbishop

of Glasgow. Laud was consulted by Maxwell, afterwards Bishop of Ross, in 1629, but he strongly advised the adoption, or rather the continuation, of the English prayer-book "without any variation." Laud seems to have ignored the former draft. The introduction of the English prayer-book had been opposed so early as 1617 by many. Struthers, the first dean of the new diocese of Edinburgh, had preached against the English ceremonies. There were, in 1633, when King Charles visited Edinburgh, two parties among the bishops, Maxwell, Sydserff, and Mitchell, in favour of what eventually took shape in the excellent, but very ill-timed, book of 1637; and Spottiswood and the other "older bishops," including Bishop Abernethy, who were "not yet without fear that, if it should be gone about, the consequence thereof might be very sad." Abernethy knew well what was the state of the south of Scotland where he could scarcely keep his place when authorised to act simply as constant moderator of the presbytery of Jedburgh.

The new prayer-book then "was substantially a revision of the English prayer-book, in a ritualistic direction, though this is less observed now than it was at the time, not a few of the emendations of Laud's book having been incorporated with the English liturgy through Cosins' influence at the revision in 1661-2."

The result is well expressed by Bishop Leslie of Raphoe, formerly of the Isles, in lines written on a copy of the 1637 book :—

*"Hic liber ad pacem paratus, bella paravit
Hinc mala : non hic";*

and then we know the result that the reading of the new liturgy in St. Giles, Edinburgh, on the 23rd July 1637, "was the signal for a popular outbreak, which ended in the great rebellion."¹

There is no doubt that Bishop Abernethy strenuously

¹ The writer is much indebted to the learned introduction by Dr Sprott to his "Scottish Liturgies," to which the reader is referred for a fuller account of this stage in Scotch Church History.

opposed the introduction of the prayer-book of 1637. "The bishop of Caithness . . . and some others wes against thir service bookis."¹

"John, master of Berriedale, son of William, Lord Berriedale, warmly espoused the popular cause. After the meeting of the famous General Assembly at Glasgow (1638), he took the National Covenant, and persuaded many of his friends to do the same. He was subsequently one of the five commissioners appointed by the State to get the bond subscribed throughout the kingdom. . . . Sir James Sinclair, of Murkle, also joined the Covenanters in Moray. . . . The master of Berriedale, who took such an active part in the cause of the Covenant, died at Edinburgh in 1637, and was buried in the Abbey Church of Holyrood House."²

But to return to Bishop Abernethy. Like the other bishops and orthodox clergy, he was summoned to appear before the Assembly of 1638. The fullest account is that given by Gordon in his "Scots Affairs"³ :—

"Mr. Johne Abernethy, bishop of Catnesse, his accusation was waved and mitigated, by meanes of a letter sent from himself, and ane other from the presbytrye of Jedburgh in his favours, wher (it seems) he had sometyne been a minister. Both letters contained his excuses by reasones of his siklynesse; also they did intimate both his subscriptione of, and affectione to, the Covenant. His own, further, did professe a willingnesse to submitte to all the actes of the Assemblye, with a most earnest prayer for the good and happie successe thereof. Thes thinges wer weall tackne, and ther acceptaunce was seconded by the Lord Lowdon, Sir William Douglass of Cavers, and Sir Thomas Kerr, and others, who spoke in his favours; specially they tould that he had wryttne a worke to be published, against the innovaiones lately introduced into this church. . . . Yow have heard befor concerning Mr. John Abernethy, the bishop of Catnesse, his submission to the Assemblye. He

¹ Spalding's Memorials, Spald. Club, i. 88.

² Calder, 162, 163. ³ ii. 131, 146.

being citted at this tyme, his accusatione was read, viz., that he was guilty of simonye. His censure was only that he should be deposed from the episcopall charge, and his repentaunce to be made acording to his abilitie at the sight of some of his owne friendes (for he had subscrybed the Covenant alreadye), who wer nominated to bee Mr. Thomas Wilkye, Mr. Thomas Abernethye, Sir William Dowglasse, Sir Thomas Keerr, and some others."

The Assembly, in their joy at the weakness of their brother, subsequently "declared him conditionally capable of a benefice." But he never received one. Accustomed to the older Scottish order, Abernethy had protested against the newer rites. So far he was consistent. Whether he knew what the issue of the Glasgow Assembly was likely to be, we cannot tell, but, like Cranmer, in a moment of weakness, he yielded to the demands of his opponents. But it is gratifying to know that, like that other prelate, he recovered himself and was excommunicated. "Mr. Scott [the learned presbyterian historian of the lives of the Reformers, &c.] mentions that Bishop Abernethy was his mother's great-grandfather, and that on his deathbed he desired to be released from the 'excommunication,' which must have been a subsequent procedure against him; but as he refused to admit that Episcopacy was unlawful and unscriptural, the usurping Presbyterians continued their puny sentence."¹

"Those who imagine that the Covenanting period was mainly caused by religious emotion will do well to correct their theory. The cause of the union of the nobles and lairds with the population was to keep their properties. In the change of the Reformation the supposed Church lands had fallen wholly into their possession, being apparently underholders when the Roman Catholic religion was supreme in the land. The puzzle of such royalist-hearted men as Lord Reay, William Innes of Sandside, and James Sinclair of Murkle, becoming enthusiastic Covenantors is

¹ Lawson, Epl. Ch. in Soot., i. 616.

explained at once by the fact that by far the greater part of the land of all three was to be claimed by the Protestant bishops as belonging to the sees of Orkney and Caithness. The establishment of Episcopacy would strip them, or they would at least be reduced to the position of being heavily rented bishops' tenants. Three-fourths of the earldom of Caithness might have thus been recovered from the actual possessors. These were sufficient motives for hard fighting, apart from the religious sentiment of the time, which was strongest among the people. Between 1625 and 1633 the great political question was the fictional resumption of the Church revenues, and not a proprietor in Scotland but was threatened with reduction from affluence to poverty."¹

One Caithness proprietor, however, Mowat of Bucholie, stood staunch to the king. "When Montrose forsook the Covenantors and raised the Royal standard, he joined him, and at the battle of Alford, in 1645, his name is mentioned as one of the officers that were killed on the side of the Royalists."²

"In Wodrow's MS. there is a complaint to the General Assembly of 1639 by Andrew Ogstone, minister of Canisbay, against Sir William Sinclair, laird of Mey, in which Mr Ogstone complains that a solemn fast having been appointed to supplicate a blessing on the late General Assembly at Glasgow (the famous Assembly of 1638), he got none of his congregation except nine or ten to take part in worship; that the rest remained outside in the churchyard all the time, and would not come into church, although he sent his officer repeatedly for them; that, on the conclusion of the service, when he came out himself and rebuked them for their sinful conduct and contempt of God's word, they all with one voice exclaimed that the laird of Mey had commanded them not to enter the church that day; that Sir William protected all sorts of delinquents, and kept them from satisfying church discipline; that, having sent

¹ "Innes of Sandside," *Northern Ensign*, July 10, 1884.

² Calder, 165.

his officer to cite a servant of his to the Presbytery, Sir William took the summons from the man, beat him, and put him in prison for two nights; and that, in addition to all these grievances, his own horse was this same year stabbed in the stable with a dirk! The minister concludes his "pitiful story" by entreating their "godly wisdoms" to seriously consider his case, and "take such order" that he may henceforth be enabled to discharge in peace the sacred duties of his office. The Assembly referred the case to the Commission, but their deliverance is not given by Wodrow. The reason why Sir William bore such antipathy to the worthy minister is not stated in the complaint. According to the tradition of the place, Mr Ogstone had been Episcopal minister of Canisbay, and having conformed to the Presbyterian mode of worship, it is probable that he had thereby incurred the resentment of the laird of Mey, who, like many others in his rank of life, was no friend at heart either to the covenanting cause or to the rigid discipline of the church."¹

Bishop Abernethy, indeed, only survived the Glasgow Assembly for a very short time. Sick then, he died before 24th April 1639, about the 72nd year of his age. "He married, 1st, Alison Home, who died before 15 March 1631, and had two sons, John M. D., and Mr. William, Minister of Thurso, besides five daughters, Katherine, Elizabeth (who married William Kerr of Thankles), Anna (James Murray of Over-toun), Agnes (William Ker of Newton), and Barbara. He married, 2ndly, and left a widow."

Seal:—(Macdonald's Scottish Armorial Seals, No. 11) "Abernethy, John, Bishop of Caithness (c. 1622-1638). A shield bearing arms: 1st and 4th: a lion rampant, debruised by a ribbon (?). 2nd and 3rd: three piles (?). Legend: "S. IONNIS ABERN . . . EPISCOPI CAT . . . Diam., 1½ in. B. M., 17256."

¹ Calder, 163, 164.

Ar. Johnston's "Epigrammata":—

"10. of Caithness.

"Whereas Abernethy feeds his sheep with words of grace and with grassy pastures, the double labour deserves a double honour."

"10. Cathanesius.

"Abrenethæus oves verbis cum pascat et herbis,
Est duplex gemino dignus honore labor."

The next chapter will give an account of the Bishop as a writer and an author.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER X.

Notes as to Sir Robert Gordon.

The Gordonstoun Library was sold in 1816. "It was begun by Sir Robert Gordon, a Morayshire laird of the time of the great civil wars of the Seventeenth Century. He was the author of the History of the Earldom of Sutherland, and a man of great political as well as literary account. He laid by heaps of the pamphlets, placards, and other documents of his stormy period, and thus many a valuable morsel, which had otherwise disappeared from the world, left a representative in the Gordonstoun collection. It was increased by a later Sir Robert, who had the reputation of being a wizard. He belonged to one of those terrible clubs from which Satan is entitled to take a victim annually; but when Gordon's turn came, he managed to get off with merely the loss of his shadow."¹

¹ Burton's Book Hunter, pp. 97, 98. See also particulars of Gordon—"Tables"—House of Gordon (New Spald. Club), iii. *et seq.* See also more particularly Gordon's edition of "Shaw's Province of Moray," ii., p. 63 *et seq.* Sir Robert Gordon married Lucia, daughter of John Gordon, dean of Salisbury, and died, "March 1656. aged 77 years." Dean Gordon was the son of Alexander Gordon, the titular Archbishop of Athens and Bishop of Galloway, and who was of the Huntly family. The Dean wrote several works urging conformity with England in religious matters. He died in 1619, and lies buried in the chapel of St. Martin, in Salisbury Cathedral, where a flat stone with a few simple words marks his burial place. See my "Scots Worthies," p. 40. The baronet of Gordonston and all his family are buried in the ancient church of Ogston, in Morayshire, where a large monument records their names and deaths. It is given by me in full in Gordon's "Shaw," ii. 76, 77.

CHAPTER XI.

BISHOP ABERNETHY AS AN AUTHOR.

"Christian and Heavenly Treatise, containing Physicke for the Soule"—
 Final Edition, 1630—Latin Addresses to Author—English Addresses
 —Account of this Work—A quaint and fascinating Style—Work
 very popular—Copy found in Shetland—Signs, Symptons, Faculties,
 Prognostics, Remedies—Proof of Diseases in the Soul—Specimen—
 Sixth Chapter—Hardness of Heart—Thirty-Fourth Chapter—
 Contents—Introduction on Spiritual Sickness in General—Specimens
 —"Unsatiabie Avarice"—"The Tympany of Pride"—"The
 Leprosie of Ingratitude"—"The Poysonous Tongue"—"The
 Gangrene of Heresie"—"The Plague of Discontentment"—"Putride
 Hypocrisie"—"The Falling Sickenesse or Epilepsie of Apostacie"
 "The Excesse of Intemperancy"—Buckle's Comments on the Work—
 Edition of 1622—Dutch Edition, 1623—Original Edition of 1615; of
 this no copy can be found—Dignity and Duty of a Christian—1620
 —Gal. v. 24—Extracts.

A CHRISTIAN and Heavenly Treatise; containing
 Physicke for the Soule: very necessary for all
 that would enjoy true Soundness of Mind, and peace of
 Conscience. By M. I. Abrenethy, late Bishop of Cathnes.
 The Third Edition. Ioh, 5, 27—"Loe, this we have
 searched, so it is: heare it, and know thou it for thy good."
 At London, Printed by Richard Badger for Robert Allot,
 and are to be sold at his shop in Paules-churchyard, at the
 signe of the Black Beare. 1630." 4to, pp. 511.

Address:—"To the Reader," 4 pp. "Thine in the Lord,
 Mr Jo. Abrenethy."

Latin address:—"ad Reverendum Antistitem Joannem
 Abrenethium S.S. Theo. Doctorem, Cathenesiæ Episcopum,"
 &c., by "Joannes Strangius S.S. Theo. D.," &c.

Next :—" Lectori, Operi et Authori," by " Patricius Sandæus, Academiæ Jacobi Regis, quæ est Edinburgi, Primarius."

Next :—" Ad Authorem Epigramma," by " Henricus Dantiscanus Andreapol."

Next :—" Aliud ad eundem," by G. Lynd. Ardreapol."

Next :—" In authoris nomen Anagramma."

This is followed by an English verse and anagram.

" The author's name, John Abrenethy. Anagrammatized, Honey in breath : Thus explained, and to the Author—

" The Honey sweet from grace unto thee came ;
Health for the Soule, and pleasant to the heart :
Pour'd in thy *Breath*, it stilleth from the same,
To others to help, and comfort to impart.
That all may get, what is above all money,
Their Soules health, if they will eat this honey."

Next :—" Concinit, Henr. Dantisc," Latin verse of four lines.

Next :—" To the Sicke Soul," three verses, the last as follows :—

" Yet come and see : thy *helpe* from heaven springs :
Compass thou art, with balmes of saving grace ;
The sunne doth shine, with health into his wings :
The golden Oyle distilles, thee to solace.
Deare Soule, why art thou thus, so far dejected ?
Heere, to thy sores, fit physicke is detected."

Next :—An address " To the Author," by William Alexander [Earl of Stirling], followed by two more—all in English—one from " I. P. Oxon.," the other " G. D., Cantab."

This last is addressed " To the authour unknowne," and is as follows :—

" Haile, Soot Platonicke, under frosty Pole ;
Welcome thy Spirit Divine unto our coast :
Thy sea of Eloquence inamours whole
Systemis of worlds, and angels of thee boast :
My golden verse embellish every Page
Should, if it would, containe my riming sage.
G. D., Cantab."

In giving a short account of Bishop Abernethy's treatise, the writer has quoted as from the third and last edition (1630), as it may be supposed that it contained his last version.

A writer to the *Northern Ensign* newspaper, giving a description of the work, remarks :—" In all probability few of the Caithness Bishops in his generation were like him." But true it is that Bishop Abernethy, in his striking and warm love to souls, in his quaint, and almost fascinating, style, in his evangelical fervour, in his show of learning, apposite quotations, knowledge of the fathers in Christian antiquity, in his classical quotations, has won for himself a place beside the great writers of the Spottiswoodian period—Cowper, Bishop of Galloway ; Archbishop Spottiswood himself ; Forbes, the first Bishop of Edinburgh ; Lyndisay, Bishop of Brechin and Edinburgh ; and others like minded. The volume was deservedly popular. In the copy from which I quote, belonging to Mr J. G. Duncan, Wick, and formerly the property of John Hill Burton, an inscription on the back of the title-pages shows that the copy had at one time belonged to "Thomas Gamble, Soldier, Sixth Royal Veteran Batt., Fort Charlotte, Shetland." The book commences with a preface to the Reader :—"Thou hast here the Soules Physick : The Spiritual Sickneses are amply described. The Faculties (as parts immediately affected) are shortly touched. The causes are distinctly set down, as so many fountains, from which diseases spring. The signs and symptoms are particularly specified, as so many branches, leaves, blossomes, and bitter grapes that grow up and arise from any radicall sickness and impurity. The Prognostics shew the difficulties of the cure, with the danger, and all the evils that are likely to ensue. The Remedies are not gathered from among animals, vegetals (*sic*), or minerals (a whole world of those are not able to ease the soule for one moment), but out of the cleere streames of reason, and most pure and perfect Fountaine of Divine Scripture."

The writer then proceeds to show "that there are diseases in the Soule."

He quotes from Cicero, Isocrates, Menander, Plutarch, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, St. Chrysostome, Origen.

He then describes "what a Spiritual Sickness is." "It is a disposition against Nature, resident in the Soule ; grievously manifesting and immediately hurting the functions and actions thereof : and offending God, unto the eternall perdition of the whole person." He then speaks of the differences of mental diseases, and of the "Causes of Spiritual Sickness, Signs and Symtoms, Prognosticks, Shews that the diseases of the soul are curable—How this is to be effected." Then in the second chapter of his work he commences with his detailed treatments, the first disease mentioned being "Blindnesse of Minde."

The writer proceeds under this head to show proof for the existence of God—"natural, scripturall, and spirituall." "All antiquity applauds to this—The Indian Brachmanes, the Persian magi, Pythagoras and Plato, and all the most ancient Poets, Orpheus, Homerus, Hesiodus, Pherecydes, Theognis, &c., begin even at Jupiter.

"That ancient Egyptian, Trismegistus, calleth God, The Father of the World, the Creator, the Beginning, the Glory, the Nature, the End, the Necessity, the Act of all the powers, the Power of all acts, the onely Holy, the onely Inbred, the onely Eternalle, and Lorde of Eternity, Eternity itself, the onely Author of the World."

The sixth chapter treats of "Hardnesse of Heart." "Like unto a scirrous tumour, hard and unsensible. . . groweth hard through the drying up of the inward humidity, leaving behind it clammy and glutinous dregges, which stoope the passages and exclude the animall spirits ; whereby the parte becometh insensible. So in the Spirituall hardnesse, the liquor of Grace, of light, and of reason is exsiccat. The poysonable dregs of sensuality remaine, and stop all entrance of the heavenly graces of

the Spirit, and so it abideth Senselesse . . . It is also called a stony hardness (called by Physiceans—a Tophes, or a Callosity). It signifieth also a brawny, unsensible hardnesse; like unto that white, hard, and dry substance, that conglutinates broken bones. Causes: ‘God hardneth in withholding grace, Satan hardneth, in stealing away grace, man hardneth in refusing grace.’ He that is hardened will not hear the word—‘He playeth the Atheist.’ ‘Correction he refuseth.’”

The writer repeats the story from Pliny, that if a diamond be steeped in the blood of a goat it will be dissolved. “By thy deep meditation, therefore, bathe thy hard heart in the gracious blood of the true scape goat. . . . In his sacred blood, reade at once, thy sinne, God’s justice, thy due punishment, his torment, thy baseness, his unspeakable love, who suffered such hard words, harder strokes, most hard punishment. O hard and hardened and over-hardened sonnes of Adam, whom, so great a blame, so great a goodness, so great a heate of love, so strong a Lover, doth not soften: who for so naughty baggage, did bestow so great prices.

“Behold his hands, his feete, his side, as they were pierced: and thorow these rifts, sucke the honey out of the rocke: and taste and see how sweete the Lord is. So therefore see him, so heare him, so learne him, and be so taught by him (as the truth is in Jesus), that thereby thou mayst cast off this old hardnesse.”

The whole work is divided into thirty-four chapters, as follows:—

- Chap. 1. Of Spiritual Sickneses in generall.
- Chap. 2. The first Blindnesse of Minde.
- Chap. 3. The other Blindnesse of Minde.
- Chap. 4. Madnesse of Mind.
- Chap. 5. The Evill heart of Incredulity.
- Chap. 6. Hardnesse of heart.
- Chap. 7. The spirit of slumber.
- Chap. 8. A cauterized Conscience.

- Chap. 9. A wounded Spirit.
- Chap. 10. Dedolent impenitency.
- Chap. 11. Pestilent self-love.
- Chap. 12. Putrid hypocrisie.
- Chap. 13. The falling Sicknesse.
- Chap. 14. The Gangrene of heresie.
- Chap. 15. The plague of discontentment.
- Chap. 16. The grieve of impatency.
- Chap. 17. The exesse of intemperancy.
- Chap. 18. The Frenzie of passions.
- Chap. 19. The fury of Anger.
- Chap. 20. The passion of Hatred.
- Chap. 21. The consumption of Envie.
- Chap. 22. A trembling Heart.
- Chap. 23. The heaviness of Sorrow.
- Chap. 24. Violent Desperation.
- Chap. 25. Insatiable Avarice.
- Chap. 26. The tympany of pride.
- Chap. 27. The passion of Joy.
- Chap. 28. The passion of Gluttony.
- Chap. 29. The passion of Drunkennesse.
- Chap. 30. Burning Lust.
- Chap. 31. The Leprosie of Ingratitude.
- Chap. 32. The poisonous Tongue.
- Chap. 33. The deafenesse of the Eare.
- Chap. 34. The evill Eye.

The first chapter treats of "Spiritualle Sickneses in generall." It commences thus:—"Forasmuch as the body is but the Soules earthly Tabernacle ; and a sound heart is the life of the bodie ; our chieftest care should be, that a healthfull mind be in a healthfull body : That as, by the soundness of the one, we enjoy the sweetness of this our life ; so by the soundnesse of the other, we may have the happie fruition, both of this life heire ; and of that endlesse life hereafter. All Philosophers almost, have aymed at this health of mind (darkely, and confusedly), and thought

there was no happinesse without it. . . . When Christ cured the diseased bodies, he cured also the sicke soules ; when he opened the eyes of the body, he opened also the eyes of the soul. . . . As for spiritual diseases, they are both many, and most easily contracted ; hardly eschewed ; hardlier found and felt : and most hardly helped and healed. Their cognition, and curation, are both to be respected. And first in generall, they would be touched in their nature, causes, signs, and Symptoms, Prognostics, curation and remedies."

A few extracts will give an idea of the brightness and interesting nature of Bishop Abernethy's treatise, almost reminding the reader of the writings of Bishop Jeremy Taylor :—

"INSATIABLE AVARICE" (p. 382).—"*Signs and Symptoms.*—Beasts are filled, and doe spare the prey, but the avaricious is ever insatiable. The avaricious man is like unto hell, he never saith, It is enough. Having too much he thirsteth for more. Cræsus was not satisfied with his wealth : Nor Alexander content with a whole world. Like hydropicks, the more he drinks, the more he thirsts. The Horse-leech hath two daughters, which cry, Give, give."

"THE TYMPANY OF PRIDE" (p. 398).—"He is like the Peacocke, glorying in his own fethers ; and like a bubble of water, puffed up with the wind ; or like an empty vessell, the more it is empty, it soundeth the more. . . . He will laugh of purpose with Ignatius to shew his white teeth ; and if he could, he would have his ostentation in his horse heeles, with Poppeia, Neroes concubine, who shod her horse with pure gold."

"THE LEPROSIE OF INGRATITUDE" (p. 452).—"There are many sorts of unthankfull men : Some deny that they have received the benefit, some dissemble it, some requite not ; but most ungrateful are they that forget : Shame, honesty, and occasion may amend the former three ; but what can amend the last sort, who so willingly they forget ? . . . He is a mule (as Plato called Aristotle) that

sucketh till it be full, then it flingeth at the mother: He is like a Viper that killeth the mother that bred it. . . . He is a bored barrell wherein costly liquor is in vaine put; Benefits are ill bestowed upon him; he cannot retaine the memorie of his benefactor's kindness."

"THE POYSONOUS TONGUE" (p. 469).—"Like the Crocodile, when he smileth, he poysoneth; and when he weepeth, he devoureth. It resembleth the Panther, which with the sweetness of his breath, and beauty of his skinne, allutheth beasts to approach, that he may kill them. And with the Hiena, it hath the voyce of a man, as a friend; and the mind of a Wolfe, devouring like a fiend."

"THE GANGRENE OF HERESIE" (p. 208).—"Signes and Symptoms.—Heresie is like the Ape, because it counterfeits the gesture of piety; like the Fox in fainedness, the Dragon in cruelty, and the Serpent in subtilty. . . . Heresie is like the viper preasing to slay the Mother Church. It is chaffe among the good corne; it is a contagious leprosie, a poysonable venom, a desperate shipwracke of his owne faith. . . . From Arius his Arian gangrene spred over all the Orient; and this day the Turks are most obstinate in their great heresie of Arianisme; denying Christ's Divinity: the Orient infected the Occident."

"THE PLAGUE OF DISCONTENTMENT" (p. 230).—"But the last and best remedie against all discontentment, is a sweet fruition of God: which thou mayest have by seeking him by prayer, to be thy portion and thy all in all. The heart of man is three-nooked, the world round: the circle cannot fill the triangle: God only must doe it, who filleth all with his presence. Plato said, The mind is not satisfied nor quieted, till it return thither from whence it came. . . . Draw thy mind from the circumference of the World, to God the center."

"THE FRENZY OF PASSIONS—CURATION AND REMEDIES" (p. 270).—"As for affection; at the strangenesse of Christ's death, with the eclipsed sunne, darkened firmament,

renting vaile, breaking rocks, trembling earth, and opening graves: let thy heart be commoved, with hatred of thyself, and sorrow for thy sinnes. Look upon him whom thou hast pierced, and lament for him, as one mourneth for his own sonne; and be sorry for him, as one is sorry for his first borne. Exult in thy Redeemer, say, God forbid that I should rejoyce, but in the Crosse of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. . . Let the love of Christ constraîne thee, and possesse thee wholly, who if he had never loved us, we had never lived; whom we must love, because he loved us first. The Diamond fashioneth the Diamond; fire converteth fewell into fire. The consideration of his love will force us to love him, whose Majesty the highest seraphims admire. He is without Paragon in love. His tender affection towards us stands ever in the Zenith. He humbleth himself to exalt us; and protritely did he gird himself about—we to sit, he to stand and serve.”

“PUTRIDE HYPOCRISIE” (p. 176).—“He is a well without water, and a cloud carried about with the winds. He is full of the swelling words of vanity; he is a pot, whose scum is therein, and whose scum is not gone out of it: A cake on the hearth unturned, and a deceitful bow, clad like sheepe without, and within like a ravenous wolfe. Cruel Nero within; grave Cato without: always double, and a monster. The first part whereof is a Lion, the middle, a Dragon; the whole a chemera. He is like linsiewoolsie, made of linnen and woollen, forbidden in the law, he hath Jacob's voice, and Esau's heart and hands. . . He is like the beast of Ethiopia, called Nabis, or camelopardalis, whose necke resembleth the horse, the feet and legs the Oxe, the head the Camel, and his spots the Tiger. Like unto Protheus, in many formes. He hath a musked mouth, and a stinking breath; an ape in a robe. His words and wayes are like the Hermites breath, wherewith hee both warmeth his fingers, and cooleth his broth.”

“THE FALLING SICKENESSE, OR EPILEPSIE OF APOS-

TACIE" (p. 194).—"The regenerate falleth but sometimes, irkesomely and after a sort unwillingly: He is hunted by sinne till he be wearied. He yeldeth but grudgingly, with some resistance. He obeyeth sinne (as a tyrant) repiningly. He falleth for the most part suddenly, his conscience controuleth him, and judgeth himself to be in the wrong way, till he returne; he thinketh upon his sins with grieve, and riseth again with joy by repentance. . . . Listen not the world's syren songs; consider that although in her fairest shew, she be like the Paradise of God: yet in the end she shall be found nothing but the Sodome of sin."

"THE EXCESSE OF INTEMPERANCY" (p. 248).—"One forest will suffice many Elephants, but both sea and land can scarce furnish the intemperates appetite. Muleasses the King, dejected from his empire, because he was so intemperate, wandring in his exile, thorow Italy and Germany, an hundreth Crounes would not suffice the making of one sauce to him; he had his eyes thereafter burned out by his sonnes, and died miserably."

Abernethy's "Christian and Heavenly Treatise" is very sharply treated by the late Mr H. T. Buckle in his "History of Civilization in England." He refers to the writer's "amazing pretensions to be above Deity" (359; Aber., 122); to his account of the character of Satan—his cunning and experience (Aber., 142); to his descriptions of hell—"while worms are sporting with thy bones, the devils shall make pastime of thy paines" (Aber., 97); to his advice to "frequent the gravest company and the fellowship of those that are sorrowful" (Aber., 416); "To suspect that which pleaseth the senses" (Aber., 63); to beware of the "Table—a snare to the body" (Aber., 215); "When the Scotch Kirk was at the height of its power, we may search history in vain for any institution which can compete with it, except the Spanish Inquisition" (ii. 409).

Abernethy only reflected the teaching and theology of his age; Buckle, the ignorance of theology and even of

Scripture, which distinguishes many writers of his party in ours.

"A Christian and Heavenly Treatise. Containing Physicke for the Soule: very necessary for all that would enjoy true soundnesse of mind, and peace of Conscience. Newly corrected and enlarged by the Author, M. I. Abernethy, now Bishop of Cathnes. 'Loe, this we have searched, so it is: heare it, and know thou it for thy good,' Iob, 5, 27. At London, Printed by Felix Kyngston, for Iohn Budge, and are to be sold at his shop in Pauls-Church-yard, at the signe of the greene Dragon. 1622." 4to, pp. 511. Thicker paper than 1630 ed. Has at end (awanting in 1630 ed.), "A Table containing the Principall things in this Booke."

"The figure declareth the chapter, the letter sheweth the section, as d. Description, c. Causes, s. Signes, p. Prognosticks, r. Remedies." 14 pp.

Pagination seems same as in 1630 ed.

An edition in Dutch appeared in 1623:—"Eeen Christelick ende Goddelick Tractaet inhoudende de Medicine der Ziele, S. Graven-hage." 1623; 4to. Copy in British Museum.

The only two references to the original edition—1615—of Bishop Abernethy's "Christian and Heavenly Treatise," are in Scott's "Fasti," vol. v. 456, who describes it thus:—"Publication—'Christian and Heavenly Treatise Concerning Physick for the Soul,' Lon.: 1615, 4to"; and the following entry in the sale catalogue of Dr David Laing's library—"193. Abernethy (J.), Physicke of the Soule, First edition, old calf, 1615." In the same catalogue occurs mention of a copy of the bishop's other work—"5. Abernethy (Bp. J.), 'Dignity and Duty of a Christian,' calf extra, g.e. 1620." Happily a copy of this latter work, the only one I have heard of, is preserved among the treasures of the Bodleian Library, Oxford; and by the kindness of

Mr Gibson, assistant librarian, I am able to give the following particulars of the volume:—

"The dignity and duty of a Christian. Published and set forth to comfort and encourage all those which be truly Christ's to continue in him, and to be faithful to the death. By Mr Iohn Abernethie, Bishop of Cathnes in Scotland. London, Imprinted by F. K. for Iohn Budge, and are to bee sold at the Signe of the Greene Dragon, in Paul's Church-yard. 1620."

Size, 12mo. Signatures "A-G" in twelves. pp. [1-8] 1-160; 4 $\frac{7}{8}$ by 2 $\frac{1}{4}$. Shelfmark, "8° C 167 Th." Dedication:—"To the right honourable and Religious Lady, Dame Margaret Stuart, Lady Ochiltrie, all happinesse bee multiplied."

Extract:—Chap. I.—1. "THE DIGNITY OF A CHRISTIAN. —The Apostle in these words perswadeth the Galatians, there is no law against them that bring forth the fruits of the spirit: because that such are Christ's, who doe crucifie the flesh, with the affections and lusts. So that the fruitfull in Christ the root, Revel. 22, 16, are saved; not for the fruit's cause, but for the root's cause: For There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Iesus, which walke not after the flesh, but after the spirit, Rom. 8, 1. These words containe our greatest dignity; which is, to bee Christ's. And our most necessary duty, to crucify the flesh, &c. This is the Christian dignity of those Excellent ones, Psa. 16, 3, who in Christ have their Priviledge to become the Sonnes of God, Ioh. i. 12, and a right to the tree of life, Revel. 22, 14, and that because they are Christ's. Wherein these things following are to be considered.¹

¹ See also "Notes and Queries," new series, xii. iii.

CHAPTER XII.

INTERREGNUM—1638-1662.

Dr Hamilton appointed to See of Caithness—Never Consecrated—His Advanced Views—Affray in Thurso Church—Lord Reay not in sympathy with Covenant—Ogstoune—Campbell at Bower—Clerk at Latheron—Dornoch—Special Parliamentary Ratification—Montrose—Lands—Tyranny of General Assembly—All the Caithness Clergy but one sign Montrose's Declaration of Loyalty—Besieges Dunbeath—Leslie's Army—Montrose's fate and Execution—Clergy attend Assembly of 1638—Names—Views on Episcopacy—Church Government "ambulatory"—Tower of Thurso Church—Description of Interior—Pictures—Panels—Church Register begins at Thurso, 1647—Canisbay, 1652—Presbytery Record, 1655—Extracts—Elders' Names—Discipline cases—Canisbay Record—Proceedings—Davidson enters, 1652—English Horsemen there—Calling Names—Smith of Watten—Witchcraft—Many "slighting the word"—Stroma people—Schoolmaster—Maddane's Chapel visited—"Gray-coat," a Witch—Elders "negligent"—Invoking the Devil—Olrig—Dunnet—Thurso—"Plays"—Keiss—Stroma—Joggs—Synod at Kirkwall—Minister in Orkney—Allerdes—Elders and Deacons in Canisbay—Selch floated on "Sabbath"—Yule Day—Stroma—Minister sick—Baptisms at Canisbay—Presbytery Record—First Minute, 1654—Clergy present—Davidson—Monro at Thurso—William Abernethy—Reay—Watten—Geddes first mentioned—Settled at Wick—1659—Smart—People "semi-barbarous"—Cromwell's Troops—at Ackerhill—Itinerating Clergy in Reay's country.

APPENDIX.—Story of William Smith—Comments.

IMMEDIATELY after the Assembly to which Bishop Abernethy had submitted and resigned his see, Dr Robert Hamilton, minister of Glasford, in the Diocese of Glasgow, was nominated to the vacant see. He received it as a reward for his able services as Procurator for the Episcopate of Scotland, in presenting its "Declinator" of

the presbyterian jurisdiction in 1638. Dr Hamilton was one of the newer theologians of Scotland. It was said, probably quite untruly, that he would admit none to Holy Communion unless they received it kneeling, called the Assembly a rebellious conventicle, and that he was an honestest man than any at it. It was even said (by the Presbyterian faction) "that he swore that he would keep the Service Booke in his churche and use it in despyte of puritans and the devill."¹

He was at once deposed. He retired to England, where he died unconsecrated.

Calder gives a curious account of an affray in Thurso church in 1649. A noted freebooter from Strathnaver, Donald Macalister by name, entered the town one Sunday seeking plunder. The congregation immediately rushed out of church, headed by Sir James Sinclair of Murkle. Seizing the weapons at hand, they attacked Donald, who was eventually killed by a triangular silver button cut off Sir James's coat. Neil Mackay, chief of the clan Abrach, who happened to be in Thurso, was also killed in this fray.²

"Lord Reay does not seem to have been in much sympathy with the National Covenant, although he signed it at Inverness, 26th April 1638, at a convocation of the Northern Burghs assembled for that purpose. Many other Royalists were in a similar plight; they had to sign to save their face."³

There is no evidence to show that great change took place in ecclesiastical affairs in Caithness after the General Assembly of 1638. Perhaps a certain number had subscribed the Covenant, just as when Montrose came the same parties took the oath and engagement for the king. But meetings of Presbytery were commenced, and though we have no formal record preserved, we can get some glimpses of the work of the church-going. Reference has

¹ Gordon's Scots Affairs, ii. 56. ² Calder, 167.

³ Spalding Memorials, i. 87; Book of Mackay, 138.

already been made to Ogstoun's proceedings in 1639. During this time, William Campbell appears to have been settled at Bower, and Alexander Clerk at Latheron.

In 1641, the Scots Parliament passed a "Ratificatione in favor of the Minister of Dornoch." By this His Majesty, in his fatherly affection for religion within his ancient kingdom, mortifies and disposes to "Mr. Alexander Monro, present Minister at Dornoch, and his successors, Serving the cuire at the Said Kirke, being the Cathedrall Kirk of the Diocie of Caithness, 'All and Hail the sum of Eight hundred Merks Scots money or eight chalder of Vitual, to be uplifted out of the readiest of the rents of the bishopric in the parochine of Thurso and elsewhere in Caithnes.' Out of this sum the minister is yearly to pay 300 merks for the repair and upkeep of the Cathedral, and 100 merks yearly for a Schoolmaster."¹ In the same year the Commissioners of the Kirk gave in a petition, *inter alia*, requesting that charges in Caithness "be visited."²

Montrose landed at Duncansbay in the middle of April 1650. He at once issued a "'Declaration' to the Gentlemen and Heritors of the Sherifffdom of Caithness." The time of his expedition was propitious enough. Scotland was full of discontent. Argyll and the "root and branch faction of the Kirk" was meantime triumphant. Scores of ministers were "ousted" from their livings by "Commissioners" of the General Assemblies. Soon it was found that the supposed tyranny of bishops was nothing to that of the General Assembly. What was the obtrusion of the Service Book to the renewed activity by Kirk Sessions? Many who had opposed Charles I. now yearned for his son. Yet the arrival of Montrose, duly commissioned to receive the allegiance of all, was but coldly received. The gentry and people preferred to wait. No doubt, the whole of the Caithness clergy, with one exception, signed a declaration in favour of the Royalist general and the king. A few, however, came forward, Sinclair of Brims, Mackay of

¹ Acts of Parlt., v. 509. ² Acts of Parlt., v. 646.

Dirlot, and Mackay of Scourie. In 1645, Reay had held a commission from Montrose. The Royalist party were opposed to the interest of the Earl of Sutherland. In fact, few or no men were raised for Montrose's army. He then went south and besieged Dunbeath Castle, situated on a narrow, precipitous rock, projecting into the sea on all sides but one. It was also surrounded by a moat, filled from the sea. Lady Sinclair surrendered in a few days, and a garrison was left in charge. We know the sad end. General Leslie proceeded to the north with 4000 men, and, at last, in the heights of Assynt, in Sutherlandshire, the noble Montrose was apprehended in the disguise of a peasant. He was delivered to Leslie, hung and quartered. "Such was the fate of a man," says David Hume, "whose military genius shone forth beyond any that have appeared during those civil disorders in the three kingdoms. The fine arts, too, in his youth, he had successfully cultivated; and whatever was sublime, elegant, or noble, touched his great soul." On report of Montrose landing, the Earl of Sutherland had retired to Ross with 300 men, leaving strong garrisons in Dunrobin, Skelbo, Skibo, and Dornoch. There is no evidence to show that Montrose harried the country.¹

A number of the Caithness clergy had attended the Assemblies of 1638 and 1639—Monro of Dornoch, formerly minister of Golspie; William Gray, dean of Caithness, minister of Clyne, whose father, James Gray, was then minister of Lairg and treasurer of Caithness; George Sutherland, minister of Rogart and chancellor of the diocese; Leslie, minister of Bower; John Smart, minister of Wick—yet all these signed the loyalist engagement and took the oath of allegiance to King Charles II. Ogstoune does not appear to have attended the Assemblies; probably his age prevented it.

It seems strange to think that such inconsistency could exist. But the truth probably is, that though both bishop,

¹ *Deeds of Montrose*, 290 *et seq.*; *Calder*, 171 *et seq.*

members of the chapter, and the clergy in general preferred Episcopacy, they did not consider it essential to the being of the Church, much less the only divine government in it. Though they were quite willing to live under it, yet, on the other hand, they did not subscribe to the "Altare Damascenum" of the presbyterian, Calderwood, the learned opponent of Abernethy. Some, we are told, considered church government as a thing "ambulatory"; and, at any rate, they lived and acted under both systems. Some believed that the Episcopal authority could be exercised as completely by a synod of presbyters acting conjointly, as by one having a special commission, only assisted by other presbyters, who, indeed, in all cases, shared in the laying on of hands. At one time it appears as if the restored confirmation might be administered either by the bishop or by the parish minister.

In 1635, the tower of the old church of St. Peter, in Thurso, appears to have been rebuilt or repaired, as this date appears on the stone outside the wall of the tower. On the inner entrance to the tower appears the date, 1636.

"The Bishop occasionally ministered in this church when he resided in his castle at Burnside. . . . Inside the walls at the head of the pews were covered with panelling, on which were here and there paintings of the very rudest execution. One of these represented the offering of Isaac. Abraham was dressed in something like kilt and hose, with a flowing surtout. A pot with fire stood in one corner, the ram bounded forward in another, while above appeared an angel eyeing the scene with an expression of countenance irresistibly comic."¹ One of the large carved panels with the arms of Innes, one of the restoration parsons of Thurso, is now in St. Peter's Episcopal Church, fixed below the west window.

We now come to the age of church registers. The earliest is the Session Book of Thurso, which commences

¹ Calder, 167.

"Sunday, 25 July 1647"; the Session Book of Canisbay, which commences March 14, 1652; and the first section of the Presbytery Record of Caithness, which begins January 31, 1655. There are no local registers preserved in the Sutherland division of the diocese prior to the Revolution of 1688. All appear to have perished. The first extract is negative. It states that in August 1647 there was at Thurso "no sermon, in respect of ye minister being in Orkney at the provincial assemblie." He had not returned by August 15; but on 22nd August the sederunt in session were, besides the minister, John Cunningham, David Monro, commissioners; Robert Murray, . . John Murray of Pennyland, Alexander Cogill, Joshua Mansone, . . elders, &c.

In 1658, 18th July, William McGibbie in "Ormlie, desyring marriage with Marion Allan, whose husband was taken prisoner at Worcester, is appointed to bring witnesses to testify that the said Marion, her husband, called Magnus Cromartie, is dead, or else to desist from seeking her in marriage." James Brodie, Cordiner; and William Mansone are called as witnesses, who depone that they saw Magnus dead at London. The marriage accordingly is authorized. In 1658, one man is summoned for the shocking crime of telling his mother "to goe to the Devill"; and on the 10th May of the same year, "Helene Mowatt and Isobell Mansone" are summoned "for their clattering discourse in tyme of prayer and sermon in the kirk." They were publicly rebuked. Another delinquent is publicly rebuked for "selling aill on the Sabbath day."

The Canisbay minutes are fuller and more interesting:—

"The Session Book of Cannasbey, containing such maters acted therein as came before them, since Master Williame Davidsone, his enterie to serve the cure at the said Kirk, till his admission to be ther actuall minister, and thencefurth dureing his discharge of the function of the ministerie at the said kirke whilk begines upon the 21 day of March 1652."

The names of the elders then standing in office [blank].

"At Cannasbey, March 14, 1652, collected to ye poore, 6s 1d.—Mr Williame Smith, minister at Watten, by appointment of the presbyterie, preiched, being the day immediately preceeding Mr Wm. Davidsons's enterie, and with the elders that wer present sitting down to keepe session, after calling upon the name of God for blessing to ye meitting, proceedis as follows:—Several cases of discipline for adultery and fornication."

"March 21, ye said yeir, collected, 7s 10d.—The said day, Mr Wm. Davidsons, haveing entered to serve ye cure at Cannasbey, preiched, and after sermone, wt. the elders present, calling upon ye name of the Lord. . . Wlk day, Isobell beg, in Stroma, Marie Sinclar, yr., and Margt. Rolmond, all indited of profaineing the Lord's day by scolding and banning to ye offence of God, and evill example of his people, charged and called, compeiring, and being severallie accused, culd not cleir themselves of Guiltienes yrin, whereupon all convict, ar ordained to mak yr. confession in sackcloth, as they are required by ye minister, and pay every one 40 sh., under paine of higher censure."

Mar. 29, 1652.—"No collection nor any session, by reasone the Inglishes being quartered in the bounds, the congregation was few in number, and yr. was not a sederunt of elders. Nather wes ther any delinquents charged."

May 2, 1652.—"Collected, 5 sh. Ther not being a sederunt, By reasone yt. a partie of Englishe horsemen being in our fields, wlk made the congregation fewer in number, and severall of the elders to be absent."

Others that day were sadly engaged:—

May 9, 1652.—" . . Complaint upon John Nicolsone in Slerblie, who had called Donald Mcbeath, younger, ye sonne of a dogge, and excommunicat person." John was heavily fined, both for profaning the Sabbath and calling names.

June 15, 1652.—" . . The elders present asked if

they had any new delations, ansured they had none. But ye minister said if they had beine vigilant ther myght have found some."

June 29, 1652.—" Collected, 2s 6d. No session this day, by reason to ye minister's greiff. The elders remained not, nor convened to assist, and ye officer [Burnie] was slack in chargeing delinquents, notwithstanding both ye elders and officer were admonished to make more conscience of yr. deutie, and that they wuld tak to heart yt. yr. is a curse determined against them yt. doe yr. Lord's work negligentlie."

Jul. 6, 1652.—" Collected, 3s 10d. The said day ther wes a Letter received wlk was sent from Mr Wm. Smith, Minister at Wattin, desyreing yt. the business concerneing Marion Mackbeath, who was slandered be Margaret Groat of witchcraft, theft, and murder, suld be tryed, whereupon it was ordained that the said Margt. Groat, with the witnesses, be charged the next day."

Aug. 9, 1652.—Several women "convict of superstition in going about the chapell," convicted and punished, "and promised never to do the lyke in time coming [Isabell Watsons one of them]." . . . "The said day given to James Warres a diseased lad goeing off of ye cuntrie seeking to recover his health, 30s."

September 16, 1630 [should be 1652].—" . . . And it was thought gude that the minister suld regrate as greivances to the bretherene the their conveying of the congregation to the heiring of the word, the disobedience of delinquents, and the elders withdrawing of yr. assistance to sett wt. the minister in Session, wlk appears to be the ground of all ye disorder and disobedience."

September 27, 1652.—" Collected, 8sh. 10d. Qlk day, it being regrated yt. many ignorant people did slight the word, and wald be goeing in the church yaird in tyme of sermone, whereupon it is ordained yt. every Sabbath one elder suld goe out, tak notice of all they saw staying wtout, and delate them that they may be censured."

October 18, 1652.—“Collected, 2s. . . Qlk day, the session, considering the thine congregation, renewed ther act for the better observance of ye Lord's day, both in Stroma and other remote parts of the parishe, And yt. a catalogue of ye names of each familie in ye parish suld be cited Sabbathlie out of ye pulpit, yt. such as ar notted usually absent sall pay *toties quoties* according to the act before said.”

The minister had a sad time, even delinquents being “fund in bed” on the “Lord's day at nyght, in a seller near the minister's hous.”

Dec. 27, 1652.—“Who bees notted absent [from church] sall pay 40 sh., *toties quoties*.”

Jan. 3, 1653.—Several persons cited who “did superstitiouslie goe about St. John's head.”

Feb. 8, 1653.—A woman, called but compeared not, charged that she “did speak obscene and filthie speeches to the minister's wyff in audience of diverse witnesses. Given to souldiers, 20 sh.” Eventually this woman was “ordained to stand 6 Sabbaths, to be sett in the joggs and a peaper sat on her head.”

May 2, 1653.—“Collected, 6sh. 10d.—The Eall sellers and drinkers on the Lord's [day] in Stroma not being charged, are ordained to be charged with all conveniency.” Fined 6s 8d each, and reproved and absolved. Mention of “Andro Ogstone” as cautioner for a penalty.

May 30, 1653.—“Collected, 3sh. 8d.—Hew Groat ordained to write to Thomas Taillour that he come to teach the schoole in Cannasbey according to his ingagemment wtout longer delay.”

June 6, 1653.—“The people of Mey” to be charged for absence from the kirk.

Nov. 25, 1653.—“Item, Jon. Baine delate for beating his wyfe; both ordained to be charged. . . . To be put in the hand of ye civile magistrat.”

Dec. 2, 1653.—“Andro Mowat, ye pyper, convicted of

drunkenness." If found drunk again, to be sessioned and "pay a dolor."

March 4, 1654.—"Delated Donald Liell for coming out of Stroma on a stormie day, superstitiouslie, to go to Maddane's Chappell, in freswick." To make public confession.

Mar. 11, 1654.—"For moveing the people of Stroma to keepe ye kirk better, It is ordained yt. no passenger comeing over to ye kirk sall pay any fraught, And if any yt. hes boats stay away they shall pay 3sh. 4d, and others 40d."

May 11, 1654.—" . . . It being regrated yt. some barbarous people does laugh at thes that sings the psalmes in ye kirk, wherefor it is ordained yt. who soever sall be fund guiltie thereof sall stand in sackcloath and pay what ye session sall be pleased to inflict."

Jul. 10, 1654.—"Graycoat"—a witch—also mentioned about this date in Thurso Session Record:—"It being dilate of Graycoate concerning Katharine Davidson's housband's death, Isobel Groate declairs yt. when George Groat was on his deathbed, she comeing from his house weeping, mett Graycoat in the way, who asked if it was for him she was weeping, and she answered it wes. Therefore she desyred to sie what they wald give her and she wald mak him weill, for he was witched. They said if she would have cow or horse they would give, and she ansred she would not have yt., but lyff for lyfe. Whereupon she told Catherine Davidsone, she said she wald not medle wt. her, but if it were the Lord's pleasure that he suld die lett him die. Likewise Isobell Groat declairs yt. Gray coat wes in her houss, and hir sonne, Wm. Caldell, being standing at the fyre, she looking to him said he wald be a hard fortunat man, and that he wald die by the sea, wch. fell out."

August 11, 1654.—" . . . Elizabeth Mowat, charged for goeing to St. Meddin's Chappell, called, compeiring," and reproved, next time to stand in sackcloth.

September 8, 1654.—“No session, by reasone of ye truble of ye tymes, yt. no elder culd remaine, Ther being souldiors quartered in and about ye housses.”

October 11, 1654.—“No session, by reasone of the elders wtdrawing, to ye offence of God and ye minister's grieff.” Elders to be reported to the presbytery for “their negligence in the Lord's worke.”

November 22, 1654.—“Alexr. Coghill and Anni Barnatsons are ordained to be charged for yr. superstitious goeing to St. John's chappell.” Some reprov'd, when in great danger at Huna, “for promising never to speir on Saturday.” To stand in sackcloth.

April 11, 1655.—“No session, by reasone the minister preached at Olrick.”

May 23, 1655.—“John Gills being at sea, the rest of the boat getting fishe and not he, Did throw over his hook, saying, ‘If thou slay not in God's name, slay in ye devill's name.’” To compeir forthwith; eventually to stand in sackcloth, and put in the joggs.

June 6, 1655.—“Ther met no session, by reasone the minister was preaching and examining the people in Stroma.”

June 18, 1655.—“There was no session, by reasone ye minister preached at Olrick.”

July 9.—At Olrick; also on Aug. 6th, Sept. 4th and 25th, Nov. 18th, Jan. 28th, 1656; Feb. 28th, March 11th, and April 8th.

July 23, 1655.—“No session, by reason the minister was preaching at Dunnett.”

July 30, 1655.—“No session, by reason ye minister was preaching at Bowar.” Also April 22, 1656.

Sept. 11, 1655.—“There was no sermone nor session, by reason of ane extraordinary tempest.”

Oct. 25, 1655.—“No sermone nor session, by reason of a violent wind yt. raise in ye forenoone.”

Nov. 11, 1655.—“No session, by reason the minister preached at Thurso.”

Dec. 9, 1655.—“Ther was no session, the minister being preaching at Halkrick.”

Dec. 30, 1655.—“Notted yt. after prayer Adam Seatton convict of drinking on ye Sabbath, and haveing masking plays in his housse to ye Englishemen, he is ordained to mak publick confession of his fault the next Sabbath.”

Jan. 6, 1656.—“No session, by reasone wes preaching at Wattin.”

Feb. 4, 1656.—“Ther wes no session, by reason of a storme of snawdrift and wind.”

Mar. 18, 1656.—“No session, by reason the minister preached at Keiss”; also May 6th.

Aug. 28, 1656.—“Henceforth ordered that session be kept on week days, not on Sundays.”

This, however, did not succeed, and the minister, Sept. 23, 1656, “regrated his feare they regarded not ye increasse of sin, nor ye drawing down of judgment.”

Dec. 21, 1656.—“The minister haveing asseyed all meanes to have his session kepted on a week day, elders did not meett to assist him, and delinquents charged gave no obedience, wherefore he resolved to doe his pairt in waiting for them, and doe his best for curbing of sin, so far as come to his knowledge with ye litle assistance he had, but of two or three; and when he culd not get obedience of delinquents, reserve them to ye presbiterie.”

Dec. 20, 1657.—“The people of Stroma, being oft rebuked for profaneing the Lord’s day, and enacted straitlie for ye observation theirof in a more holie way, under paine to undergo the censure of the Session if they contravened, And now some of them delated for playing at the football and danseing on the Sabbath, ar ordained to stand in the joggs, ane of them in tyme of ye lecture, another in time of ye sermone.”

Mar. 7, 1658.—“Some elders meitting, after calling upon ye name of God, Notted—That ye Session, taking to consideration severall complaints put in by the school-master of ye parishe, shewing yt. ye most pairt of parents

puts not the children at all, And they yt. puts any taks them away in ye midst of the quarter from ye schoole, or before the session finds that they have received Instruction, Therefore it is enacted that whosoever puts not yr. children to the schoole according to yr. order, or taks them away that are presented till they be tryed by the minister and elders of yr. profiting, sall pay 40 sh. for contravenoing ye act, and the quarter's pay to ye schoolmaster."

May 24, 1658.—Reported by the minister that "a provincially assemblie" was to be held at Kirkwall, for Sutherland, Caithness, and Orkney. Hew Groat chosen ruling elder for the same."

June 14 and 21, 1658.—No session, "the minister being in Orkney."

Aug. 3, 1658.—"No session, by reasone ye minister preached at Stroma."

Aug. 24, 1658.—"Ther wes no session, by reason ye minister wes at Wick." At Dunnett, Sept. 7; Olrick, Sept. 21; at Wick, May 15, 1659.

Aug. 7, 1659.—"Qlk day, Mr David Allerdis, late minister at Olrick, called and required to undertake to be Session Clerk at Cannasbey, qlk he accepted on condition yt. wt. ye yeirlie benefite ye other clerk had in pension, and ye casaulties of baptisme and mariage, to have consideration, as ye prudence of ye minister and elders sall judge expedient."

Oct. 15, 1659.—" . . . Becauss of the weaknes of ye Session, It was thought gude yt. a list of persones to be appointed elders and deacons suld be taken up and set downe in a roll as follows:—For ye bounds of Mey—The Laird of Mey, The Laird of Dumbeath, James Dundas, elders; George Ritchie, deacon; for Holomer—Gilbert Banks, elder; James Banks, deacon; for Cannasbey—donall Groat, Jon. Dunnett, elders; Andro Dunnett, deacon; for frishwick—The Laird of Balwhollie, Andro Ogstone, elders; Magnus Steven, deacon; for dungasbey—Hew Groat, Jaspert Flett, and Wm. Nicolsone, elders; Hutcheon

Harpur, deacon; for Stroma—Jon. Kennydie, elder of Kermuck, elder; Jon. Mansone, deacon; for brabster, Donald Mcbeath."

Dec. 18, 1659.—"No session, by reason the minister, by ye appointment of ye presbytery, preached at Dunnett."

Dec. 25, 1659.—"It being delate yt. a selch being found in dungasbey, Jon. Watter and Dod. Hendersone did float it on ye Sabbath day, who therefore are ordained to be charged."

Jan. 25, 1660.—"Upon demand, The Session enacts that ye Laird of Kermuck shall have for ye planting of ane seatt in ye church the south syde of the queere under the westmost windo yrof, betwixt ye doore and ye wall yt. divydes betwixt ye church and the queer. . . Delate yt. upon ye 25 of december, being Yule day, and Mononday yrafter, yr. wes great drinking and dansing."

March 4, 1660.—"Item, Jon. Geddes, younger, in Mey, ordained to be charged for snuffing in tyme of singing of ye Psalmes to ye praise of God."

May 27, 1660.—"No sermone nor session, by reason the minister wes bedfast, and heavilie diseased."

June 10, 1660.—"Synod at Thurso, Laird of Dumbearth elected elder by pluralitie of votes over Hew Groat."

July 15, 1660.—"No session, the minister being in Stroma."

July 29, 1660.—" . . . Ordained yt. ye people of Stroma who come not to the Lord's worship on ye Sabbath day, every absenter, 12s, *toties quoties*."

Sept. 16, 1660.—"No session; yet notted yt. yr. wes given Mr David ardes, present clerk, in pairt of payment, a rex dolor, with a rex dolor before, wlk maks 6 pounds 4 sh. less. Mair yrafter received be Mr David frome Donald Groat, 4 punds 4s. Sept. 23.—Another rex dolor given Mr David."

Sept. 30.—"The minister being seik and bedfast, Mr Jon. Smarrt preached. There wes no session. The

minister ill the next three Sundays. On Oct. 14, Mr Smarrt preached again."

Oct. 28, 1660. — "Donald Reid appointed school master."

Bound up in the same volume is a "Register of the names of the bairnes baptized be Mr Wm. Davidsons since his entrie to serve the cure at cannasbey," &c. I subjoin a few entries :—

8th Aug. 1653.—"A son [called George] baptised to Sir Wm. Sinclar of Cannasbay, Knight baronet; Sir James Sinclar of Murkle, Francise Sinclar, in Scrabster; and Walter Bruce of Ham, witnesses."

30th Nov. 1654.—"A son baptised to Magnus Mowat of frishwick, and named Patrick; Jon. Kennedy, Laird of Kermuck; findlay Groat, and Andro Ogstone."

27th March 1655.—"A son baptised to Hew Groat, and named Jon.; Magnus Mowat of frishwick, Malcolm Groat of Wares, and Jon. Groat, portioner of Dungasbey, witnesses."

14th Oct. 1655.—"A daughter baptised to Sir Wm. Sinclar of Mey, and named Elizabeth; Wm. Sinclar of Rattar, Patrick Sinclar of Ulbster, Jon. Sinclar, Tannath(?); Mr James Innes of Sandsyde, and David Sinclar of Dun, witnesses."

20th Oct. 1656.—"Magnus Mowat of friswick, a sonne baptised, and named William; Sir Wm. Sinclar of Mey, Wm. Sinclar of Rattar, Wm. Sinclar of Dumbeath, Alex. Mowat of Greemy (?) witnesses."

7th June 1657.—"Sir Wm. Sinclar of Mey, a daughter, baptised and named Barbara; Wm. Sinclar of Rattar, Johne Bowman, David Murray, Alex. Sinclar, witnesses."

10th Jan. 1658.—"Magnus (*sic*) of friswick, a daughter baptised, named Jean; Wm. Sinclar of Rattar, and Wm. Sinclar of Dumbeath, witnesses."

4th July 1658.—"A daughter baptised to Wm. Sinclar of Dumbeath, named Jeane; Sir James Sinclar of Murkle,

Wm. Sinclar of Rattar, Magnus Mowat of balquhollie, Jon. Sinclar of Tannath, and David Murray, witnesses."

30th Dec. 1658.—"A sonne baptized to Sr. Williame Sinclar of Mey, and named Jon. Witnesses, ———."

14th Oct. 1659.—"Wm. Sinclar of Dumbeath, a daughter baptized and named Margaret; C. George beatman, Wm. Sinclar of Rattar, otrs., witnesses.

29th March 1660.—"Sr. Wm. Sinclar of Mey, a daughter baptized, and named Marie; witnesses—George, Earle of Cathnes, Wm. Sinclar of Rattar.

March 1661.—"Wm. Sinclar of Dumbeath being himself south, commissioner to ye parliament, to him a daughter borne, March 3, being the Lord's day, who was called out of this mortalitie on Thursday, ye 7 of yt. instant." [Last entry.]

Marriage Register :—June 10th, 1652–Dec. 30th, 1664.

July 27, 1656.—"Wm. Sinclar of Dumbeath and Mistress Elizabeth Sinclar wer booked, and being 3 severall Sabbaths proclaimed, wer married, August 23, 1656."

The Presbytery Record of Caithness commences with the following minute :—"Thurso, 5th October 1654.—It wes thoght convenient that yr. suld be more frequent meetings both of minrs. and preachers for consulting about ye affears of ye gospel wtin ye several cogregatios, till the Lord, by his providence, suld offer occasio for there further capacitateing to a more authoritative acting as a Prebrie. (the mebers of the former standing Prebrie. being all deposed by the grall. assemblie of this kirk, for yr. compliance wt. James Grahame, excommunicate in his rebellio and shedding the blood of the countrie). It is therefore appointed that ye next meeting hold at Thurso, the 5t. of Der. next, and so after prayer dissolved the meeting."

The next minute commences thus :—"Thurso, 5t. Decr. 1654.—The qlk. day, the minrs. and preachers met, according to the former appointment; pnt., Mr Wm. Smith, minr. at Wattone; Mr Alexr. Clerk, minr. at Letherone; Mr

Alexr. Munro, minr. at Dinett; Mr Wm. Davidson, preacher at Canesbie; Mr Harie Forbes, preacher at Wick; Mr Andrew Munro, preacher at Thurso; Mr George Anderson, preacher at Halkirk and Reac." Mr William Smith having been chosen moderator, and Mr Andrew Munro clerk, they constituted themselves into a presbytery.

On Jan. 31, 1665, we have the commencement of proceedings for the settlement of William Davidson, who "had been a preacher or minister in Ireland, who fled in the time of the massacre. After staying for a time in England and south of Scotland, he came on an invitation in 1652."¹ He was not, however, legally admitted till 1655. The case was before the "last synod held at Dornoch," before Jan. 31, 1655, and after a meeting at Olrig, 4th Feb. 1655, when Davidson urged the need of discipline, on account of "a great abuse and offence done to God on superstitious days dedicated to Saints in drinking, dancing, &c." On the 31st of February, Mr Andrew Monro reported his diligence "in repairing to Caniesbie and admitting Mr Wm. Davidsons to that congregation."

On 4th Nov. 1655, Mr Andrew Monro was admitted to the Kirk of Thurso by Davidson, "with assistance of the brethren."

The record on 4th Dec. 1655 shows the admission of Mr George Anderson to the church of Halkirk, the Rev. Alexr. Clark presiding.

At the meeting in Thurso, 3rd Jan. 1656, Mr William Smith, late of Dunnet, received a recommendation. He was one of those excommunicated for compliance with the Marquis of Montrose. Smith survived the Restoration.

At Olrig, on 11th March 1656, Mr William Abernethie petitioned for a testificate, which application, together with one from Allerdies, was continued.

At Olrig, on 19th June 1658, Mr James Adams was ordained, Andrew Monro presiding.

For the parish of Reay, Mr David Monro was under

¹ Scott, *Fasti*, v. 358.

examination, 5th May 1657, when he "handled his commonheid." After further trial, he was admitted to that parish, 3rd June 1657, Clark presiding.

Mention is made at Thurso of a "suspected witch," called Gun, who was, however, then declared to be fugitive.

In September 1658, an attempt was made to get Davidson to become parson of Wick. Reasons were given by the Canisbay people at Thurso, 8th Feb. 1659.

At Watten, 9th March 1659, Davidson preached, and Mr James Dunbar was admitted minister of that parish. The Presbytery were not unmindful of charity. Help was given "to ane distressed Ingleshe Knight, called Sr. Anthony Haviland."

On 12th April 1659, at Thurso, "Mr Wm. Abernethie, haveing desyred ane testificat of his conversation since his deposition, the moderator is to draw up the same."

The appointment of Davidson to Wick appears to have been stopped by a message from the Earl of Caithness, "he being informed that there was a well qualified young man in Murray called Mr Wm. Geddes," and desires him to be invited there, that all may "have a hearing of him." He was subsequently taken on trial, Sept. 13, 1658, and after handling his thesis on the power of the civil magistrate, *in rebus ecclesiasticis*, is admitted to the church of Wick on 23rd Nov. 1659, Davidson presiding on that occasion. On April 10, 1660, Geddes has "leave to Murray" in regard to a call from the parish of Olig to Mr William Campbell, minister at Alves. John Smart, who had been parson of Wick before the great rebellion, had been living in retirement, evidently in or near that town. On Aug. 18, 1659, when a visitation of the parish of Bower was ordered, it was also part of the business to see "to the opening of Mr John Smart his mouth, according to the appointment of the last synod." Patrick Sinclair of Ulbster and others depone that Smart had "walked Christianlie as became him," and that they "knew nothing scandalous in him." He was subsequently settled at Dunnet, and received a grant from

Parliament in aid of his sufferings. He died some time after the Restoration.¹

Notwithstanding all the efforts of the clergy, it is certain enough that at this time Caithness "was in a state of semi-barbarism, with the spirit of superstition and popery clinging to her with desperate tenacity." Even elders, when charged for offences on the Lord's day, gave as an apology that they had entirely forgotten what day it was. "Whisky was then a rare beverage in the county, but there was a capital substitute for it in strong ale." There were great numbers of alehouses, and it is to be feared that both old and young, when congregated in these, got drunk, quarrelled and fought, and so gave large business to the session.²

Cromwell's troops visited the country about 1651, in which year Sir John Sinclair of Dunbeath, who had been very active against Montrose, died. These troops placed "a strong garrison in the Tower of Ackergill, and parties of them would seem to have been distributed here and there over the county, and to have remained in it for some time." In the old Canisbay record, references to these "Inglish horsemen being in our fields" is made.

It appears that about this period ministers from Caithness itinerated in Mackay's country.

Minute, dated Thurso, 4th January 1659.—"Mr Alexr. Clerk is appointed to repair to Strathnaver, according to the Lord of Rhaes desyre to supplie them."

Wick, 4th December 1660.—"This day all the brethren present, except Mr David Munro, being absent in Strathnaver."

Thurso, Jan. 1st, 1661.—"This day a letter was presented from Strathnaver, shewing yt. Mr David Munro, minister at Rhae, pr. order of the appointment of the presb., had come the length of Strathie, but because of the tempestuousness and unseasonableness of the weather, was advised to returne: the presb. admits the excuse."

¹ Scott, Fasti, v. 360. ² Calder, 178.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XII.

Story of William Smith—Comments.

“Mr Andreu Fullarton tells me . . . that in Montrose’s time, there was one Mr William Smith, minister somewhere in Caithness. When Montrose came there with his army for the king, he called the ministers in that bounds, and oblidged them all to take the oath of alledgiance to King Charles. They all yeilded except Mr Smith. Montrose called him, and threatened him. Mr Smith told him, he resolved to live peacable under the king’s government, or any government that would preserve liberty and property, but would not take an oath of alledgiance. After all fair and foul means would not prevail, he ordered him to [be] bound with cord about the midle, and the cord to be fixed to the end of a boat, and him to be dragged this way after the boat a mile of way in the sea ; and aye when the boatmen saw him expiring to pull him in, and presse him with the oath. He underwent this out and in again. He was brought into a room, half-dead ; and after he was recovered a litle, Montrose told him he would yet offer him his life once ; if not, he would order him presently to be killed. He answered he was in his hands, and he might doe in that as he saw good : He was resolved in the matter, and would not doe it ; but since he behoved to dye, he had a message to him from the Lord, which he entreated him to hear and consider. ‘ You have dragged me,’ sayes he, ‘ this day, and made me a gazing-stock to hundreds ; but know,’ sayes he, ‘ that within nine (or six, I have forgott) moneths, you shall be taken and dragged,’ sayes he, ‘ as dishonourably as I am, and a thousand shall gaze on you for every hundred that hes looked on me ; and you shall die in the evil cause you have in hand !’ This damped Montrose very much. He left Mr Smith in prison, and went south, and was beat entirely at Old-earn, if I be not forgott, and taken in to Edinburgh, and executed at Edinburgh.”¹

“Heir followes, as is reported, a wicked and ungoellie Declaration quhilk James Grahame causit all the ministeris of Orkney and Caithnes to subscryve and assent to, except

¹ Wodrow, *Analecta*, i. 263, 268 [1812].

ane Mr William Smith, ane of the ministeris in Cathnes :—

“We, the ministeris of the Presbyteries under subscription, considering it convenient to us, and these of our calling, to give publick testimonie to the conscientiousnes and justice of his Majestie’s Service, now presentlie depending, for the gude example of utheris, and removing of quahatsomevir scruple from the myndes of all men, We willinglie, frelie, and with candour declair, That we from our soules detest that continued Rebellion, maliciously hatched, and wickedlie prosecute, aganes his late sacred majestie of glorious memorie, and do from our hartis abhor his delyvering over in bondage and imprisonment, horride and execrable murthour, and other dampnable and malicious pretensis, execute aganes him be the wicked rebellious factioun of both kingdomes; the quihich we will not faill heireftir to preache to our pepill and witness every day of our calling, as als of our lauchfull acknowledgement, prayer and wisches of the happie establishment of his present majestie unto all his just richtis; and particularlie, that it may pleis God to gif a blessing to his excellence, James, Marques of Montrois, Capitane Generall to his Majestie in the Kingdom of Scotland: all quihich we will faithfullie stand to, and to the advancing thereof, without haiffing the least thocht or pretext in the contrare. So help us God.”¹

This amazing tale is first found in northern lore in Mackay’s “History of the House and Clan of Mackay” (pp. 339, 340) “Mr William Smith, minister of Bower and Watten, who, it is said, having refused, notwithstanding of [Montrose’s] flatteries and threats, he brought him to Thurso, and ordered him to be towed to a boat at the harbour, and dragged through the sea to Scrabster roads, a distance of two miles, and there laid in irons on board a ship, where he lay till news came that Montrose was defeated. He was then liberated, and returned to his charge.” This account is copied by Scott. This is a great mitigation of the horrors of the tale Mr Andrew Fullarton, minister of Falkirk and Ayr, poured into the ears of the credulous Wodrow. Let us now hear the historian of Caithness. “Montrose, it is alleged, was so exasperated at the obstinacy of [Smith] that he caused him to be brought to Thurso, and, in way of punishment, to be tied to the stern of a boat in the river, and dragged

¹ Nicoll’s Diary, Bann. Club, 13, 14.

through the sea, with only his head above the water, to Scrabster Roads and back again! After undergoing this bath, it is added that he was fettered and thrown into prison, where he lay till the news arrived of the defeat and capture of Montrose. He was then liberated and returned to his charge. There is proof that this worthy clergyman was confined, but there seems to be great doubt as to the truth of the story about his being trailed through the sea. The authority on which it rests is not given. The tradition is not common in the county; and it looks like a pure fabrication, invented by an enemy to blacken the character of the gallant Marquis. Such a piece of unmanly cruelty, which could only tend to injure his cause, was not in keeping with the noble and chivalrous spirit of the man."¹

Most people will agree that Calder had better opportunities of information and capability of judging than "Mr Andrew Fullarton" in his southern parishes of Falkirk and Ayr. But happily we have another and earlier and still more probable account of the matter. Gordon of Sallagh, in the "History of the Earls of Sutherland," refers to it, and probably gives the true and closer version. "James Graham compells the inhabitants of Cateynes to subscrybe certain new papers and bands, swearing obedience to his excellencie as to the King's generalissimo; which he presents also to the ministers there. They did all subscrybe these papers, except one, Mr William Smyth, whom (upon his refusall) he *sent* to his ships to be put in irnes; but this minister was afterwards released."²

20th May 1650.—"The commission of the General Assembly, hearing of the great defection of the ministers in Orkney and Caithness, in complying with James Grahame, Do appoint them to be cited to the generall assembly, and that the clerk direct out summons for that effect."³

¹ Calder, 171, 172.

² Wishart's Deeds of Montrose, 1893, 296; see also 499.

³ Pro. Com. of Assy., Scot. Hist. Socy., 404.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RESTORATION.

Three Principal Clergy in Caithness at Restoration—Davidson of Canisbay, Monro of Thurso—Geddes of Wick—History of Davidson—Goes to South Ronaldshay—Extracts from Canisbay Record—Synod at Dornoch, 1661—Shipwreck of “Hollanders”—Watty Laird—“Halling of Dulces” and taking of “Lubster” on Lord's Day—Thurso—Monro—Settled 1655—Wife and Family—Character—Panel with his Arms—His Copy of Boyd on the Ephesians, a huge folio of 1300 pages—His Oath of Canonical Obedience to Bishop Patrick Forbes—Subsequent History—Geddes of Wick—Settled 1659—Submits to Episcopacy—Presbytery Clerk—History—Wick Burgh Record—Records of Wick placed in Geddes' care—An Author—Earl of Caithness moves Presbytery to return thanks for Restoration

APPENDIX.—The Rev. William Geddes of Wick as a writer and author.

THE three principal clergy in the diocese at the Restoration were the Rev. Wm. Davidson of Canisbay, the Rev. Andrew Monro of Thurso, and the Rev. William Geddes of Wick. Of the clergy of Sutherland we know little or nothing. Davidson, who has been already referred to, appears generally presiding at the installation of ministers. Probably he had been ordained in the Church of Ireland. In 1666, he was translated to Birsay, the seat of the Archdeacon of Orkney. He almost lived till the Revolution. He was blind in 1673, and, subsequently, had the service of an assistant in deacon's orders. He was three times married.¹ During his residence in Canisbay, his daughter, Mary, became the wife of Robert Drummond,

¹ Scott, v. 393.

Sheriff and Commissary Clerk of Orkney. The marriage took place on April 15, 1665.¹

Some more extracts from his Session :—

6th Sept. 1663.—A woman delated for swearing “by the bread of God.”

27th Sept 1663.—“Mr Jon Smart preached this day. No session.”

March 22, 1664.—“Given unto a poore gentlewoman, called Margaret Forbes, being recommended by the bishop of Cathnes—a rex dollar.”

Aug. 15, 1664.—“Given 12 sh. to a traveller recommended by the bishop.”

April 17, 1664.—“No sermon, the minister having taken beforehand journey to Dornoch to attend the Synod.”

April 24, 1664.—“No sermone, the minsr. not returning from Dornoch.”

May 1, 1664.—“ . . . To ane seik man, recommended be ye bishop—6 sh. Delatit that Watty Laird, ane boy in freshwick, was clumbing the rock upon the Lord's day.” To be summoned. Others for climbing on the Lord's day “and takeing up of eggs,” proceeded against.

June 26, 1664.—“Delated yt. adame baine in ye feilds, dod. baine, yr., and Jon. Mcbaith had out fyres for St. Jon. ye 24 instant. As also all ye elders is ordained ye nixt Lord's day to give ye names of these who had fyre out in ye parish. Strubster had ane fyr in freshwick. Dod. Mowat, Adame baine, yr.,” &c. . . . “delatit yat Jon. Watter in dungasbie did vilifie and abuss ane elder anent payment of ye schoolemr., using idle words, calling those

¹ “Apryle 15, 1665, being Saturday. The minister detained in Canisbay. Did upon warrant from the Bp. of Cathnes, marry Rob. Drummond, Scherreff and Commissar Clerk of Orkney, and Mary Davidsone, lawl. daughter to Mr Wm. Davidsone, Minister at Canisby, Archdeane of Cathness, at the parish Kirk of Canisbay.” From the MSS. of Dean E. Richardsone of Orkney, who preached next day at Canisby Kirk :—Canisbay destitute of “ane minister.” South Ronaldshay Record, 21st April 1667 :—“Child bap. to Donad Mebeth, born in Canisbay—bap. at Peter Kirk.”

who appoyntit the schoolr. fals and void of truth, and cursing himself befor he payit any; the bishop and oysr. should heir it, speiking in such an wicked an saterick maner as was intollerable."

Aug. 30, 1664.—"Sir Wm. Sinclair of Caniesbay, a child baptized, named Kenneth; witnesses, John Kennedy of Carmuchs, and Sinclair of Ratter."

March 24, 1665.—"Given two shillings sterling to twenty-four Hollanders who had suffered shipwrack in Orkney, and six pence to one to guid them."

April 30, 1665.—"No sermon, the minister being upon his journey towards Dornoch to attend the Synod." Next Sunday, no sermon, "minr. not returning from dornoch, being at ye Synod." Men summoned for "taking Lubster" the last Lord's day, and "halling of Dulses."

[After 13th Aug.]—"The minister was absent a moneth in Orkney about his laufull affairs." A woman to "stand two hours in the joggs," till she confess her sin.

Jan. 21, 1666.—"No preaching; the people not meeting by reason of tempestuous weather."

Feb. 18, 1666.—A man "is declaired contumax the session." Refers him to the bishop and presbytery. [Last minute.]

This book, the oldest ecclesiastical record of Caithness, ends with Davidson's departure for Orkney. He was succeeded in Canishay by the Rev. William Innes

The Rev. Andrew Monro of Thurso was settled there, November 4, 1655. He is designed of Coul, and married Christian, daughter to John Munro of Culcraigie, by whom he had four sons and three daughters. Munro was an upright, sensitive, and straightforward man. A gentleman by descent, he had his pew in old St. Peter's Church, Thurso, decorated with his coat of arms and the date, 1676. This fine solid piece of old work is now fixed below the large west window of the Episcopal Church of St. Peter and the Holy Rood, Thurso.

Another relic of Monro is now in my possession. It is

a huge folio, a Latin commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians, by Boyd of Trochrig, principal of Glasgow University, and runs to the great number of 1300 pages.

The work, learned indeed, and now rather rare, is scarcely "suited for the table of a modern divine." The copy bears the inscription, "Mr Andrew Monro aught this book." Like many others of the best divines in the Church of Scotland, Monro refused the Test in 1681, but though trained as a Presbyterian, did not refuse the oath of canonical obedience to Bishop Forbes of Caithness. An account of this matter is to be found in the Presbytery Register, and is as follows:—"Nota, forasmuch as Mr Andrew Monro his declaration anent the present government was not insert in the proper place, because the said declaration was in the bishop's custody when the Register was filled up, and now at the bishop's command the brethren thought fitt to insert the same in this place as followeth:—At Thurso, 3rd May 1663.—The said day the Bishop, with Mr Wm. Davidson, Mr Jon. Smart, Mr Alexander Gibsone, Mr David Munro, and Mr William Campbell, being assembled in presbyterie, after Incalling the name of God, compeared Mr Andrew Monro, minister at Thurso, and judicially declared himself before the presbyterie in these express terms:—'I promise to meet in all church meetings, to continue and act therein, and to give due obedience to Patrick, bishop of Caithness.'"

Some extracts from his Session Record have been given.

21st Aug. 1662.—"No session, expecting further orders from the bishop."

On 13th Dec. 1662.—"No sermon, the miur. haveing retyred himself upon grounds and reasouns known to himself." Notwithstanding this entry, which probably refers to some difficulty as to his acknowledging Episcopal order, service appears to have been performed each Sunday. No doubt Monro afterwards continued his services. He died in 1693, aged about 65.

The Rev. William Geddes was settled as minister of

Wick on 23rd Nov. 1659. He married Catherine, daughter of John Dunbar of Hempriggs and Anna Fraser, his wife, daughter of Andrew Fraser, commissary of Inverness.¹ Her sister Anne married her cousin, George Sinclair, first of Barroch."² Geddes was formerly schoolmaster of Keith, and governor to Hugh Rose of Kilravock. He was a graduate of Aberdeen.³

At Thurso, Nov. 29, 1662.—“The Bishop and the Brethren of the Presbyterie convened. The said day Mr William Geddes, minister at Wick, compeered, and declared himselfe in order to the present Episcopall government,” and promised obedience thereto. Soon afterwards he is made clerk to the presbytery.

He went for a time to Urquhart, near Elgin, where he demitted on account of the Test, but subsequently returned to Wick, where he died in 1694, aged about 64. Mr Geddes seems to have had the entire confidence of the people and magistrates of Wick. The earliest book of records of that burgh commences 6th January 1660, being prefaced by the devout invocation, “In the Name of the Father, the Sone, and the Holie Ghost.” One of the first entries, 18th October 1660, notes an order that it is agreed that the “Evidents” of the burgh be “put in the custodie and keeping off Mr Wm. Geddes, minister,” until of good cause they be required of him.⁴

Geddes was also an author. He published in 1683 at Edinburgh, in quarto, “The Saint’s Recreation, third part, upon the estate of Grace,” in verse, of which a second edition appeared at Glasgow in 1753, 8vo. Some account of these and other works by Geddes will be given in the appendix to this chapter.

The first sign of the Restoration changes appears in a minute of the presbytery, dated Thurso, 29th May 1660. The Earl of Caithness requests the Presbytery to appoint a day of thanksgiving “for that mercie to the land in

¹ Henderson, 221.

² Scott, *Fasti*, v. 370.

³ Scott, *Fasti*, v. 174.

⁴ MS., Register of date.

restoring our King in such a peceable way." This the Presbytery refers to the Synod, which was about to meet. At Thurso, on 24th May 1663, intimation made to the congregation "that the 29 of May should be a day of thanksgiving for his Majestie's restauration to his royale dignities and his three kingdoms."

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XIII.

The Rev. William Geddes of Wick as a Writer and Author.

On the 15th March 1683, the Scottish Privy Council, by a special privilege, which narrates that "Mr William Geddes, late minister at Urquhart," represents that he has been at great care, pains, diligence, and expenses in compiling the books following, and which are now in the press, viz. :—'Memoriale Historicum,' and the 'Saint's Recreation,' and these other books which he intends for the press, viz., 'Geographical and Arithmetical Memorials,' 'Memoriale Hebraicum, for facilitating the Hebrew Language'; 'Vocabularium Latino-Hebraicum in Hexameter verse,' and 'Familiæ Famigeratæ,' do recommend all these books as worthy to be published, and gives him the copyright for nineteen years. The Laird of Brodie¹ refers to Geddes, 28th June 1684 :—'Mr William Geddes cam heir with som of his books. I had promised him som incouragement.'

The only book really printed seems to be "The Saint's Recreation, Third part, Upon the State of Grace, containing and methodically delineating a Christian's Progress, Priviledges, Comforts, and Duties, beginning at Conversion; describing also the blessed Redeemer Jesus, both absolutely and comparatively; and all these in Spiritual Hymns and Songs, suted to Grave, Sweet, and Melodious Tunes; Together with a plain Paraphrase upon the margent, confirming all by Scriptures, explaining difficulties and methodizing the Songs. Compiled by Mr William Geddes, minister of the Gospel, first at Wick, in Caithness, and

¹ Diary, 491.

after at Urquhart, in Murray." Motto, Col. iii. 16 ; Edinburgh, 1683 ; 4to pp. 93.

This edition has three dedications :—"To the truly noble and Right Honourable Lady, Dame Lilius Drummond, Lady to the Right Honourable Lord James Drummond, Earle of Perth, Justice General of Scotland," &c.

The second to "The Right Honourable, most pious and virtuous Lady, Dame Margaret Lesley, Countess Dowager of Weems." She was made "ane happy and successful instrument in that wonderful restauration of our Royal Sovereign, the King's Sacred Majesty." This she did, it is added, by influencing "with Christian advice" the Duke of Abermarle. In religion she had kept "a golden mediocrity of solide, sober, and substantious Christianity."

The third dedication is to "The most excellent, eminently pious, and virtuous Ladies, Dame Jean Rose, Lady to the very Honourable Sir Robert Innes of that Ilk ; Dame Mary Forbes, Lady to the right worshipful Hugh Rose of Kilraick ; and Mrs Elizabeth Sutherland, Lady to the much Honoured Hugh Rose of Clova."

The preface to the reader follows :—"Taking example from Moses, David, and Habbakuk, the Blessed Virgin, and Elizabeth, and the heavenly hallelujahs of angels and saints, he had long desired to reclaim "our profane vulgar from obscene, bawdy songs, to more Christian-like divertisements." "Many of our ayres or tunes are made by Angels, but the letters or lines of our songs by Devils." The third part is issued first. The other two parts, on "Innocency," and the "State of Sin and Corruption," are, however, ready for the press.

Then follow "approbations to the book, in Latin—"Ornatissimo et Dilectissimo fratri Pastori Wickensi in Cathanesia"—from the Rev. William Rait, pastor of Dundee, dated Aug. 5, 1673 ; from Colvill, "Primar of the College of Edinburgh" ; from M. W. A., "The impartial judgment of a sincere friend" ; from "Mr Will. Annand, Dean of Edinburgh" ; and Mr Ninian Paterson, parson of Liberton ; a great Latin scholar of those times. He says—

"Good Master Geddes, it is sweetly done,
To cheer thy heart with Zion's spiritual songs,
Whilst we with Gog and Magog fiercely run
Against each other with our wounds and wrongs."

The first song treats of "Christ's Expostulation with a

Straying Sinner"; secondly, "The Sinner's Conversion and Recovery."

The second song, "The door of Hope, or a Cordial for a fainting Soul"

The third song, "The Pilgrim's Panacea, or Balme of Gilead."

The fourth song, "'The Holy Triplicity, or a Description of Christ's Three Offices.' . . . To the Tune of 'The New Blackbird.'"

* * * * *

"Three Persons there are in Essence Divine;
Of angelic orders, thrice three, that is nine;
Twice three did the Creation-dayes compleet;
God then did all finish he found to be meet.

Four threes are the twelve
Tribes in Israel,
So were the Apostles in truth that excell.

* * * * *

"My exercise is to adore, and to sing
Sweet songs of high praises to Jesus, my King;
The more I do praise, more reason I find
For this finit vessel cannot comprehend
The glory that's there,
That's free of all fear.
Come quickly, Lord Jesu, and cause me draw near.

Then on my Redeemer I'll sweetly rely,
With comfort reposing untill that I dye;
Disclaiming, denying the world and all,
I'll give no repulses when He gives a call.
And for every thing,
I'll joyfully sing
A high Hallelujah to Jesus, my King."

The next poem is "'The Blessed Bethlehemite; The Fountain of Life: or Christ's Excellency,' . . . to be sung to the Tune of 'I will go seek my Saviour,' 'The New Jerusalem,' 'The blessed Bird,' or any other grave tune."

* * * * *

"The Blessed Babe in Bethlehem born
For me his blood did spend;
Beloved of the Father, hence
Love doth to man descend.
The Bishop of our Souls, to watch
The silly, straying sheep;
In Gospel's net our souls to catch,
And in his wayes to keep."

The next part, "Typus Typorum, or a Table of the several Types, Titles, and attributs of Jesus Christ"; then

follows song sixth, "'The Saint's Delight, or Pearle of Price,'
to be sung to the Tune of 'You minor beauties,' &c."

* * * * *

" You stately Firre, and Cedar tall,
You fruitful Vine, and Apple rife,
You Myrtle, Cherrie, Cypress all,
And Laural that decids the strife :
What are yee ? What are yee ?
What are you to the Tree of Life ?

" You Violet and dainty Rose,
Solsequium, and the Lillie fair ;
You fragrant flowers fitt for the nose,
Delighting eyes with colour rare :
What are ye ? What are ye ?
Our Sharon's Rose surpasseth farre."

The next is song seven, "'Honey Drops, or Chrystal-
Streams,' containing a Bundle of precious promises."

* * * * *

" Shall His brave angels me surround,
And guard me from all ill ?
O this great mercie Hath no Bound,
Sing praises then I will.
O then, my soul, let all thy strength,
And faculties each one,
Be consecrat to God at length,
For His Salvation.

* * * * *

" Yet sure will He, most tenderly,
His precious saints embrace.
In spight of hell, they shall prevail,
And see His glorious face.
I'm grav'n upon His Palmes, Therefore
I'll not forgotten be ;
Though I were e'en at death's dark vale,
It shall not terrifie.

* * * * *

" Faith, Hope, and Charity will he
Into my heart infuse ;
With Righteousness and piety,
So his way will I chuse.
The Rubies ar but Rubish, naught ;
The Saphirs not so fine,
As is the saint from Heaven taught,
Adorn'd with grace Divine."

Then song eighth, "'The Pathway to Paradise, or the
Portraiture of Piety by Patterns and precepts,' . . . to be
sung to the Tune of that which is called 'Cromlicks.'"

* * * * *

" With true Nathaniel,
That saint inded,

In uprightness I'll deal,
 So shall I speed.
 For thou requires the heart,
 Which is that noble part.
 O do not thou depart,
 My chiefest good.

" With the Centurion,
 I'll fast and pray ;
 Almes will I joyn,
 Then will I say,
 Do thou this offering take,
 Though it perfection lack.
 O do not me forsake,
 Nor cast away."

The next, "' Christian Memento's, Memorandum's, or Meditations,' To be affixed to several parts of the House, as a help to Mortification and Continual Communion with God, Deut. 6 ; 6, 7, 8, 9."

" These are to be affixed to the Door, the Window, the Head of the Table, the Study-house door, the Chimney, on the bed. . .

" TO BE AFFIXED ON THE WINDOW.

" The sunlight's glorious to our mortal eyes,
 When from the Heav'ns He doth dispense His rayes.
 If such a light the creature doth transmit,
 How glorious then is He who formed it ?
 If Heav'n's pavement be so richly deckt
 With precious gemmes, O what may we expect
 In upper roomes, where is the dwelling-place
 Of Seraphims and Saints ? O great Solace !
 Light of the world take thou to be thy guide,
 In light for ever then thou shalt abide ;
 Where Christ, our light, our life, our joy and peace,
 Shall with transcendent glory crown thy grace."

" FOR THE CHIMNEY.

" If thou wouldst shun the fire of Hell,
 Then seek the Godly fire of Zeal."

In complete copies, a large folding table is found between pages 48-49. The copies do not appear always to be the same. In a copy in the British Museum "the second dedication, which in the foregoing is addressed to Dame Margaret Lesley, is addressed to Dame Lillias Drummond."

A second edition, revised, to which were added other items, edited by G. Park, 8vo, pp. 116, was issued at Glasgow—J. Bryce and D. Paterson, 1753.

Although expressed in stiff and rather unpoetical rhyme, Geddes' verses are full of expressions of the warmest piety, intense devotion to the Divine Master, and thoughts both just and sublime. Their earnestness and style is not unlike the prose of Bishop Abernethy's "Physicke for the Soul." Both show the Episcopal clergy of Caithness at different parts of the seventeenth century to have been devoted, earnest, true followers of the most evangelical writers (in the best sense) of the earlier ages of the Church.

Geddes' volume is rare, and the author acknowledges the kindness of the librarian of the New College, Edinburgh, in lending the copy from that collection.

CHAPTER XIV.

BISHOP PATRICK FORBES.

Unpopularity of the Covenant in the North—People ready to adopt Episcopacy again—Sydserrf—Consecration of Bishops—Consecration of Forbes and others at Holyrood, 1662—Meeting of Parliament—Bishops introduced—History of Bishop Patrick Forbes—Father—Nephew of Bishop of Aberdeen—Much in Holland—Said to have signed the Covenant—At Delft—Army Chaplain—Chaplain to Earl Balcarres—Called “holy and honest-hearted”—Wife—His Family—Daughter in Orkney—Lady Rusland—Bishop in Thurso in Sept. 1662—Presbytery Minute—Holds first Synod in Dornoch Cathedral—Minutes—Those present—Business—Widows of Ministers—Overtures—Lessons to be read—Catechising ordered—Elders—Excommunication only to be given by Bishop—Repairing of Churches—Desolation of Sutherland as to Churches and Ministers—Temporary Supply—Thomson—Conventicles—None of these in Diocese.

IN the northern districts, the Covenant had never been popular, and the greater number, both of the ministers and people, were ready, at the bidding of the civil power, to submit to Episcopacy. The re-establishment of Episcopacy having been declared, the King and Council had next to select fit persons to occupy the vacant sees; and as the cathedral chapters no longer existed, this required to be done by an act of the royal prerogative. The only surviving bishop of the old succession, Sydserrf, was translated to Orkney.¹ The prelates having been nominated, Sharp, Fairfoul, Leighton, and Hamilton were duly consecrated by bishops of the Church of England, in Westminster Abbey, on Dec. 15, 1661, being the third Sunday in Advent. These prelates having returned to Scotland, proceeded to confer

¹ Grub, iii. 181, 187.

the episcopal character on the others nominated for the different Scottish sees. On Wednesday, the 7th of May 1662, "the bishops nominate of Dunkeld, Murray, Ross, Caithness, Brechin, and the Isles were consecrated in the Abbey Church of Holyrood. The consecrating prelates were the two Archbishops and the Bishop of Galloway, and the form used was that in the English ordinal. The Archbishops and the Bishop of Galloway wore their episcopal habits, and the sermon was preached by James Gordon, minister at Drumblade, in the Diocese of Aberdeen; and the royal commissioner, many of the nobility and gentry, and the magistrates of Edinburgh were present."¹

The Scottish Parliament met that day, when the new bishops, including the Bishop of Caithness, were solemnly introduced by a deputation of peers, barons, and burgesses, and took the oaths as lords of Parliament. On the 27th of May an Act of the Parliament was passed for the restoration of the ancient government of the Church by archbishops and bishops. All the former rights of the episcopate were re-established. By another statute, passed on the 11th of July, all benefices settled since 1649 were declared vacant; but every minister in charge who should, before the 20th Sept. coming, obtain a lawful presentation and collation from the bishop, should be entitled to his benefice. The Parliament was then adjourned on the 9th of September.²

The person chosen by the king to be Bishop of Caithness in the reconstituted Church was Patrick Forbes. He was a son of John Forbes, minister of Alford, in Aberdeenshire, "a man of ability, and a keen partizan of the presbyterian party. He presided at the General Assembly held at Aberdeen in 1605, declared illegal by the civil power, for which he was first placed in confinement and then banished from Scotland. He established himself in Holland, and was pastor of a congregation at Middleburg, and subsequently of one at Delft."³

¹ Grub, iii. 198, 199. ² Grub, iii. 200, 201.

³ Funerals of Bp. P. Forbes, xxx. xxxi.

The new bishop, who was a nephew of Patrick Forbes, the learned and famous Bishop of Aberdeen, was a graduate of that university in 1631, having matriculated there in 1627. His mother was Christian, daughter of Barclay of Mathers. The future bishop was first a preacher to the army in Holland, and, it is said, was present at the Glasgow Assembly of 1638, and was one of the first who signed the National Covenant under its direction. But the accounts are different, one mentioning a Patrick Forbes, another a John Forbes, who came forward and offered to sign the Covenant.¹

The future bishop's uncle, Arthur, became first Earl of Granard in 1675 "as a reward for eminent services, both civil and military."² Patrick Forbes was subsequently minister to the Scots congregation at Delft, in Holland, for two years, from 1641-43, when he resigned that charge on being appointed chaplain to a regiment in the service of that republic in 1643. He was subsequently domestic chaplain to Alexander, first Earl of Balcarres, who is said by an opponent to have been, "without doubt, one of the most brave and able gentlemen of our nation, if not the most able." That nobleman died in exile in 1659, at Breda, in Holland, attended in his last moments, we are told, by "one Master Patrick Forbes, an honest hearted and holy man," which may serve as good evidence of the future bishop's high character, especially in regard to a story detailed by Wodrow, to be afterwards referred to. He is said to have married in Holland "a daughter of Colonel Erskine, and had a son, John, Commissary of Caithness, and also a daughter, Jacobina Henrietta, or Hendrina, who married William Buchanan of Rusland in 1672. He died in 1679, and was buried in Kirkwall Cathedral. Lady Rusland married, in 1700, James Fea of Whythall, in Orkney. She died, September 1703."³ Bishop Forbes was also chaplain at

¹ Forbes, *Certain Records*, liii., and notes and authorities cited.

² Funerals of Bp. Forbes, xxxi.

³ Original Fea Inventory, Skail Charter Chest; see *postea*, and *Brown's Diary*.

Dunkirk in 1658 to the Governor-General, Rutherford, afterwards Earl of Teviot; and having become attached to the court of his sovereign, returned with him to England at the Restoration in May 1662.

Having been consecrated to the See of Caithness, the bishop lost no time in coming north. The Estates adjourned on 9th September 1662; and on 26th September we find the bishop at Thurso.

The Presbytery Record of Caithness notes:—Thurso, Sept. 26, 1662.—“The said day, my Lord Bishop and the Brethren of the Presbyterie present. After the invocation of God, the meeting being constitute, then proceeded as follows:—That day Mr Hewe Monro had his popular sermon on Matt. 13, 24, as a part of his tryall in order to his call to the church of Durnes, in Strathnaver, and being removed, was approved.”

On the 21st and 22nd of October following, the Bishop had his first Synod in Dornoch Cathedral, where, we are told, he had been previously installed.

Before his arrival, Mr William Campbell had been settled in the parish of Olig by Anderson, Jan. 2, 1661; and on 25th March thereafter, Smart had been admitted minister of Dunnet, Campbell presiding at the institution. The Earl of Caithness protested against this last settlement.

The minutes of the Synod of 1662 follow; the MS. is worn and defective, being rather a draft than the completed copy:—

“The Diocesan [Synod of Caithnes, Sutherland, and Strathnaver holden] Be the Right Reverend [Father in God] Patrick, Bishop of Caithness, [and the] Reverend Brethren of the ministrie [of] the Diocie of Caithness at [Dornoch], Oct. 21, 166[2].

“The said day the reverend father in God, Patrick, [Bishop] of Caithness, had sermon upon Jer. 8, vs. 22.

[Is there no balm in Gilead ; is there no physician there ? Why, then, is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered ?]

“ Sessio 1^o.—After incalling upon the Name of God, the Catalogue [of the] names of the Brethren being cited, the brethren after [named] were present, vizt. :—Of the Presbyterie of Cathness :—Mr Wm. Davidson, minister att Canesbey ; Mr Alexr. Clerk, minister att Latheron ; Mr John Smart, minister att Dunnet ; Mr Wm. Cambel, minister att Olrick ; Mr Alexr. Gibson, minister att Bower ; Mr James Dunbar, minister att Watten ; and of the Presbyterie of Sutherland :—Mr Wm. Gray, minister att Clyne ; Mr John Rosse, minister att Loth ; Mr Wm. McKay, minister att Rogart. The absent brethren were Mr Andrew Anderson [minister] att Kildonnan, within the presbyterie of Sutherland, [and Mr] Georg Anderson, minister att Halkirk, within the presbyterie of Cathnes, and both were excused by letter.

“ The said day, Mr Wm. Smyth, sometyme minister att [Bower], entered his supplication, humblie petitioning [the reverend] brethren of the synod for opening of his [mouth, ask]ing their authoritie for getting him . . . of the paroch [several lines defective] debursed for the roofo of . . . of his manse, according to . . . is referred to the first . . . Cathnes, and appoynts Mr Wm. David[son, Mr Wm.] Campbell, and Mr James Dunbar, to speak to the [Earl of] Cathnes and remanent heritors of the said paroch [thereanent], and to report to the next meeting of the presbyterie. Mr . . . Munroe, sometyme minister att Latheron, petitioned the [Bishop] and brethren to be recommended to some place within [the Di]ocie for exercising of his gift, which the Bishop re[solves(?)] to take to his consideration.

“ [The said] day presented a supplication from the parishioners of [Durness] for putting Mr Hugh Monroe to his tryalls for [licence in or]der to the ministrie there. He is referred to the presb[ysterie of] Cathnes for that effect,

and appoynted to preach att meeting of the presb., upon Matt. 13, 24, 25.

“ Qhilk day the relicts of Mr Alexr. Munro, minister at [Du]nnnet; and Mr George Gray, minister at Dornoch; [petitioned] the Bishope and Synod for the yeare of Anne, which was granted, reserving the Bishop’s right [to the] stipend of Dornoch. [The] Bishop ordained Mr Wm. Davidson, Mr Wm. Gray, Mr Alexr. . . . Mr Wm. Cambel, and Mr Wm. McKy to meet with him [privately] after the dissolving of this session, for advising [on] and preparing some overtours to be offered to the Synod [next] session, and so with prayer the session closed.”

“ Att Dornoch, October 22, 1662.—Sessio 2°.—[After] incalling upon the name of God, the Bishop exhibited [a minute] containing the overtours condescended upon by [him and] the brethren of the Committee nominat and ap[ointed] thereto in the former session, and read in the open [face] of the Synod by Mr John Smart, Clerk thereof, [the] tenour of which overtours is as follows :—

“ [That] two chapters of the holie Scriptures, one in the old [testament, and one in] the new testament, every Lord’s day be read . . . precenter to the congregation . . . [con]cluding the prayer after [two or three lines awanting, but see minute of 1663].

“ That each minister imploy themselves one day in the . . . catechising of his people.

“ That the worshipping of God in families, and the [keeping] of the Lord’s day be pressed be every minister [in their re]spective congregations, and to report their dilig[ence]. That one schooll att least be planted in every par[ish], the ministers within their respective parishes to [stent] the heritours for a competence to the school-master [accord]ing to the Act of Parliament, with certification that [if] the saids heritors neglect, the Bishope will stent them ac[cording] as the said act of parliament provides.

“ That each minister call to his assistance a competent

number of grave, able, and godlie men for concurring with him in the exercise of discipline, and they to answer therein to the Bishope and presbyterie.

“That the sentence of excommunication shall not be pronounced against any person untill the process be revised by the Bishope and approven under his hand.

“That the twentie-nynth of May be observed according to act of Parliament.

“That each minister use all diligence to sett about the [celebration] of The Holie Communion within their respective congregations.

“That all ministers use diligence for the reparation of the ruinous fabricks of Churches, and ane account hereof to be [made] therof att the several visitations.

“The saids above written overtours, being read and considered, are unanimouslie approven, and the brethren ordained to putt them [into] practice, as they will be answerable.

“The Bishope and Synod, taking to consideration the deso[lati]on of some churches of the presb. of Sutherland for the [present] service whereof, for the tyme untill they be gotten suffici[entlie] provided with able ministers, do hereby ordain that Mr Wm. Mcky do supply the Kirk of Large, and Mr Wm. Gray, the Kirk of Crich ; and Mr John Rose, the Kirk of Dornoch ; each of them one Lord's day in the month, in exercising the functione of the ministrie in all the parts therof as is requisit.

“The Bishope and Synod, considering the great and scandalous abuse of taking oaths of privat persons, upon suspicion of malefice done either to ther person or goods [by witch]craft or any other unlaufull means, do hereby [forbid] the giving or taking of such unlauffull oaths, [under the] highest paine of censure, and every minister [to make inti]mation therof to their respective congregations.

“The said day it is recommended to both the pre[byteries], with the justices of Peace of the respective

[counties, to give so] much of the readiest of the funds for [a bursar] of divinitie and philosophie, and that Mr Wm. Gray, [stu]dent in philosophie, be recommended to the justices of peace [for Suther]land.

“[A] petition being entered be Mr James Thomson for [ane extract] of his process of deposition, It is recommended to the [presbytrie] of Sutherland to search their presbyterie book to [find] out, and let him have it.

“[The] Bishope and Synod delays all process against Mr Hew Monroe, Mr David Monroe, Mr Wm. Geddes, and Mr John McCulloch, untill the 22 of December nixt, or the first of Januarii, sixty-three; That they may be dealt with, and no fair means unasayed to bring them to a submission to the present church government.

“The nixt presbyteriall meeting of Caithnes to be att Thurso, the 26 of Novr. nixt, and of the presbyterie of Sutherland [on] said day, when Mr Andrew Anderson is to preach, and Mr Wm. Gray to moderat.

“The next synodicall meeting to be kept at Thurso the [sec]ond Wednesday of Appryle 1663, and so with [Pra]yer the meeting dissolveth.”

Bishop Forbes, unlike Bishops Abernethy and Wood, held no parochial charge *in commendam*, so was most frequently resident at Scrabster, and regularly preached in Thurso parish church. His activity and zeal were constant, and he succeeded in gaining not merely the affection of the clergy and people, but in preventing any schismatical meetings. On the 4th November 1674, the presbytery note that “the said day compeered the Earl of Caithness as ane of his Majesties honourable privie councill, and by veirtue of ane commission granted to his lordship by the said honourable Councill, enquired if there was any conventicles keepest within the presbyterie and shyre of Caithness, and the brethren of the presbrie showed his lordship there was none, neither did they fear any to be, for quhilk they blessed God.”

CHAPTER XV.

BISHOP PATRICK FORBES, 1663-1664.

Bishop stays all Winter in Caithness—Ordains Hugh Monro at Watten—Elders there—Visits Wick, 1663—List of Elders—Visitation Inquiries—Elders get a “good testimonie”—give the same of their Minister—Discipline Quickened by Bishop’s Visits—Monros—Durness, “a most wild place”—Alexander Munroe, Minister—his Verses—Bishop Forbes had a “particular regard for him”—Diocesan Synod of 1663 held at Thurso—Sermon by the Bishop—Sederunt—Planting of Schools—Churches mostly Ruinous—Justices of Peace uplift Penalties—Clergy ordered to set about the “celebration of the holie communion”—John Munroe at Reay—for Farre—Davidson “declared” by Bishop to be Dean; Mcky, Chancellor; David Munroe, Treasurer; Gibsoun, Archdeacon—Letter, Bishop to Heritors of Farr appointing Munro to serve—Collated by Anderson—Allerdes—Visitation of Thurso—Elders—Minister Recommended—Synod at Dornoch, 1664, Sermon by Bishop—Sederunt—Schools—Records—Woman whose Husbands gone to Barbadoes—Durness Delinquents—John Gray, Student—Rorie Dow—Dunbar at Watten Marries Geddes without Proclamation—Censured—Both Rebuked—Kildonan—Golspie—Tack of Teinds of Farr, &c.—Signatures.

THE Bishop stayed all winter in Caithness. We find him at a presbytery meeting on Jan. 6, 1663, and at Watten, Jan. 20, when being convened with the brethren, “except Mr David Monro, whose absence was excused.” Davidson preached an ordination sermon from St. Mark i. 17—“And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men”; “and after sermon, the Bishop, with the present Brethren, by prayer and imposition of hands, admitted to the function of the ministrie at Durness [margin, “Mr Hugh Monro admitted”], some of the elders, in name of the parish, being present

as commisioners from there to that effect." After the ordination, a visitation of the parish of Watten was made. The names of the elders are given, viz :—David Sinclair of Southdunne, Charles Calder of Lynegar, David Coggle of that Ilk, Alexr. Calder of Newtounne, David Calder of Scouthill, Alexander Calder, in the Strath of Bylbster; James Calder, in the Bridgeend; Robert Sutherland, in Balnafenniele; Wm. Falconer, in Watten; Wm. Sinclair of Catcherie. The minister, elders, and church-officer, being severally removed, were "approven." Session Book not ready. A school desired, and the repairing of the churchyard. "The said day, the Bishop, being to goe south, desired the brethren of the presbyterie to preach at Thurso, *per vices* in his absence, which they undertook for that tyme."

On the 3rd of February 1663, the Bishop appears to have paid his first visit to Wick, accompanied "by such brethren as were called" by him.

"This day there was no sermon, as was appointed, the Bishop and Brethren coming too late, being retarded through the violence of the weather." The Bishop was accompanied by Cambell, Dunbar, Gibsone, and the minister of Wick. ". . . The minister, being requyred, gave a list of the elders as follows, viz :—Patrick Sinclair of Ulbster, Alexander Sinclair of Telstone, Alexr. Sinclair of Thrumster (?), Wm. Bailie of Milton, James Sutherland of Pransie, John Doull of Thurster, Robert Young, in Old Crooke; Wm. Bruce, in Howe; John Bruce, in Myrland; John Calder, in Keiss; John Leith, younger; James Sinclair, in Keiss; Robert Young, in Blingerie; James Doull, in Noss; Magnus Mulliken, John Cormack, James Doull, George Annand, Herie Blair, in Wick.

"The said elders being removed, the minister was enquiryed anent their diligence in theire office. Theire minister gave them a good testimonie. They being called in again, were approven, and exhorted by the Bishop to continue.

"Lykwayes the minister being removed, and the elders being enquiryed concerning him, theye all with one voice gave him a full and large approbation of his life, doctrine, and exercise of discipline.

"The Clerk, Mr Alex. Gordon, with the church officers, George Manson and Donald Ommand, being removed, and the ministers and elders being enquiryed concerning theme, received a good approbation, and were exhorted and encouraged by the Bishop.

"The Session booke not being yet filled up, because of the unexpectedness of the visitation, the same was recommended to the Brethren present to peruse it." The meeting then dealt with two cases of discipline, concerning an adulterer and a perjurer.

"This meeting being especiallie for visitation, other points of Discipline reserved to the nixt meeting at Thurso, which is to be on March 3, 1663. Mr George Anderson ordained to exercise, and Mr David Monro to add. After prayer, the meeting dissolved."

The bishop was absent on the 3rd March, but present again at a meeting on the 25th of that month. A considerable quickening of discipline followed the bishop's efforts. On 29th April 1663, "Donald Gunne, pyper in Reay, being summoned, called, and compeired, was appointed to stand in sackcloth for pypping at Lykewakes, and saying that if all the pypers in Caithness would goe to hell he would goe with them."

"Religion in those parts owed much to the faithful labours of the Munro Clan. The first Protestant minister of Farr was Robert Munro, who was translated from Durness after 1624, and was succeeded in Durness by a succession of Munros. In 1638 the Parish of Kintail (now Tongue) was erected, but there was a Protestant church there at a much earlier date, served by the minister at Durness, who was practically the chaplain of the Reay family." John, second Lord Reay, "for the education of his family, he maintained a tutor, the Rev. Donald Mac-

intosh, afterwards minister of Farr, and thereafter of Strathspey.”¹

Alexr. Monroe, formerly a litster in Inverness, converted by Mr Bruce, who told him he should be minister at Durness, “a most wild place, a parish fifty miles in lenth, where the gossell had never been, and the people were almost mere heathens there.” He was appointed, and had “a great success, and a large harvest of souls. He translated much of Scripture into Irish verses, which are very common there to this day, under the name of ‘Sandy Munroe’s verses,’ and the boyes get them by heart. That when Bishop Forbess had a particulare regard for his piety and usefulness, that his son, Mr Heu Monroe, was minister after him in Deurness a long time, about fifty years; and my relatour knew him. He dyed about the 1698.”²

“The Diocisian Synod of Cathnes, Sutherland, and Strathnaver, May 7, 1663, holden att Thurso by the Right Reverend Father in God, Patrick, Bishop of Caithnes, and the remanent Brethren of the Diocie of Caithnes.

“After sermon had by the Bishope upon Psal. 94, v. 19 [“In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul”], and incalling upon the name of God, the brethren after-mentioned were present, vizt.:—Of the presbyterie of Cathness—[Mr Wm.] Davidson, [Mr Alexr.] Clerk, [Mr John S[mart], [Mr Wm. Ca[m]bell, [Mr Hew Mo]nroe, [Mr James Dun]bar. . . Off the presbyterie of Sutherland—Mr Wm. Gray, Mr Jhon Rose, Mr Wm. McKay. The Brethren absent, viz.:—Mr Andrew Anderson and Mr George Anderson, were excused by reason of their sicknes, whereof the Synod were certified by their letters.

“The said day Mr Wm. Cambell was appoynted Clerk in the roome of Mr Jhon Smart.

“The said day the Bishope made [intimation] that the ordinance of the former Synod had been observed by the

¹ Book of Mackay, 142, 156.

² Wodrow’s *Analecta*, i. 267, 268.

[members] anent the publick reading of two chapters every Lord's day, the singing of the doxologie, the concluding the Last Prayers with the Lord's Prayer, the parents giving an account of the Creed, as is att more length contained in the overtour of the former Synod, and the Brethren declared that they had observed the said ordinance in reference to the said particulars.

"The Brethren, finding their endeavours anent the planting of schools to be unfruitful, do seriouslie recommend to the Bishope to represent to the insuing Parliament that some further course may be taken to that effect.

"The Bishope and Synod, considering the ruinous con[dition] of the most part of the fabrickes of kirks within the Diocie, and the slackness of the heritors to contribut to their reparation, doth also recommend this to be represented to the insuing Parliament.

"The Bishope and Synod, taking to consideration that by the Intromission of the Justices of peace within the shire of Caithnes, with the whole penalties of Scandalous [persons], regrets that the presbyteries of the Diocie are utterlie unable to maintain bursars as Students in Divinitie att Universities, and for sundrie other pious uses about which they were formerlie Employed, did recommend this also to be represented by the Bishope to the parliament.

"The said day did seriouslie recommend to all the bretheren speedie and diligent care to sett about the celebration of the holie communion within their severall congregations, whereanent the Brethren promised to use diligence.

"The said day it is ordained that, according to the act of [for]mer synod, the 29th day of May be observed as a day of thanksgiving, in commemoration of the king's happie [Restor]atione to the exercise of his royall power, and each [of the] bretheren to have sermon in their respective congregations, and Mr McKy to preach at Dornoch.

"The said day the Bishope exhibited a supplicatione

presented to him by Mr Jhon Munroe, sometyme minister att Rhea, humblie petitioning that he would recommend him and his numerous familie for some supplie out of vacand stipends to the Insueing Parliament, and that he might be recommended to the people of the congregation of Farre, in Strathnaver, for exercising his gift amongst them who have been so long destitut of the ministrie of the Gospell, untill they be provided with some able minister of their owne. The said supplication being considered, the Bishope, with the advice of the Synod, promised to represent his condition to the Insueing Parliament, and hereby licensed and commissioned him to repaire to Farre and preach the Gospell there, until that congregatiōne be otherways provided.

“The said day the Bishope declared in the Synod, Mr Wm. Davidson, minister att Canisbay, to be Dean of the Diocie of Caithness; Mr Wm. Mcky, to be Chancellour; Mr David Munro, minister att Large, to be Thesaurer; and Mr Alexr. Gibsoun, minister att Bower, to be Archdeacon.

“The said day Mr Wm. Davidson, Mr Wm. Gray, Mr Alex. Clerk, and Mr Wm. Cambell are appoynted immediatlie after the dissolving of the Synod to meet for drawing up of memorandums of such things as they conceiv fitt to be represented to the ensuing parliament for the good of the Diocie.

“The next Synod is appoynted to hold att Dornoch the third Wednesday of June, in the year imvj. and Sixtie-four, unless the Bishope, upon some important emergent, be constrained to anticipat the tyme; and the moderators and clerks of both presbyteries are appoynted to have their books presbyteriall in readiness, and to bring them to the said synod, as they will be answerable. So, after prayer, the synod dissolveth.”

Patrick, Bishop of Caithness, to the Heritors of the Parish of Far, appointing Mr John Munro to serve the parish temporarily, 14th May 1663 :—“Right Honourabill and much respected friends,—In regard that all the churches

of this presbytery are supplied, excepting your congregations onlie, I did expect that at our last synodically meeting I should have heard some diseres from you in reference to your supplies; and seeing I heard none, I thought it convenient (untill providence offer a way for your full settlement) to send you Mr John Munro to keep up publick duties among you. And tho' he be infirm in bodie, yet I hope yee will have satisfaction of him. . . . P., B. Caithness."¹

"Thurso, Mar. 2, 1664.—That day Mr George Anderson gave an account of his diligence in giving collation to Mr John Monro for the church of Farre, according to appointment." He was succeeded in Farr by Mr Daniel Mackintosh, who, with Mr Hugh Munro, outlived the Revolution.

Mr David Allard, who had been parson of Olrig before the great rebellion, and been deposed for his "compliance with James Grahame," was still alive and in the diocese. On 12th August 1663, he asked aid from the Presbytery of Caithness. He was treated kindly—"everyone of the brethren did condescend to give him a boll of victuall"; and on December 3 of the same year, at another meeting, the Bishop being present, he, too, added a boll.

The next event is the formal visitation of the parish of Thurso by the Bishop and brethren. This took place on Christmas Day 1663. Campbell preached from John xv. 18—"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." The list of elders was as follows:—The Earl of Caithness, Sinclair of Brims, James Innes of Thurstetter, Richard Murray, John Falconer, Alex. Boynd, Oliver Arnot, John Georgeson, James Bruce, Dod. Reed, James Shilthanas, Alex. Oswald, and Alexr. Rorison.

"The minister being removed, the elders were enquired concerning the lyfe and doctrine of their minister. They all unanimously did give him a good report and ample

¹ Mackay Book, 178.

recommendation in his ministerial function; whereupon he was exhorted by the bishop and presbytery to continue.

"The Session book having been delivered up to Mr Wm. Cambell, to examine the same att the last meeting of the presbyterie, the said Mr Wm. gave an account thereof, commending it for punctualitie, diligence, and zeal, whereupon it was approven.

"The Elders being removed, the minister was enquiryed concerning their carriage in their office. He gave them a good testimonie, whereupon being called in, they were exhorted to continue.

"The Clerk being called for Mr Niell Beatoun, the minister and elders being enquiryed (after his removal) concerning his carriage in his office, they all in one commended him for his fidelitie in his calling, both as clerk and schoolmaster, and being called in, was approven and exhorted to continue, and to studie formalitie in wryting the Session book, and keeping authoritie over the schollers.

"The church officers being enquired for, viz., Alexr. Dow and Wm. Chapman, who being removed, and the minister and elders enquiryed anent them, gave them a good testimonie, and being called in, were approved and exhorted to continue faithful in their employment."

The Synod next met at Dornoch. The minute is as follows:—

"The Diocesan Synod of Caithness, Sutherland, and Strathnaver, holden att Dornoch, appryle 20, 1664, by the Right Reverend Father in God, Patrick, Bishope of Caithness, and the reverend Brethren of the presbyteries of Caithness and Sutherland.

"Sessio prima.—After sermon had by the Said Right Reverend Father upon 1 Cor. 12, v. 4, 5 ["Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord."] and Incalling upon the name of God, the Brethren after-mentioned were present, viz.:—Off the presbyterie of

Caithness—Mr Wm. Davidson, Mr Wm. Cambell, Mr Alex. Gibsoun, Mr Wm. Geddes, Mr George Anderson, Mr Hugh Munroe; and of the presbyterie of Sutherland—Mr Wm. Gray, Mr Jhon Rose, Mr David Munroe, Mr John McCulloch, Mr Wm. Mcky, Mr John Demster. The absent Brethren, viz:—Mr Andrew and Mr David Munroes, Mr John Smart, and Mr James Dunbar, and Mr Andrew Anderson, were all excused, and their excuses approven by the Bishope and Synod.

“The presbyterie books being presented in the Synod, the brethren underwritten, viz., Mr Wm. Davidson, Mr Wm. Cambell, Mr Alexr. Gibsoun, Mr Wm. Geddes, Mr Wm. Gray, Mr Jhon Rose, and Mr Wm. McKay were appoynted for the visiting of the saids presbyterie Books, and to make report att the next session, and so with prayer this meeting closeth, and adjourned till three o'clock in the afternoon.

“*Sessio secundo meridiana.*—After Incalling upon the name of God, Inquisition was made anent the establishing of schools in the several paroches, anent the reparation of church fabricks, and the maintenance of Bursers, and the right disposing of the penalties of delinquents, and it being found that all the former grievances anent these things remaine untaken away, the Synod recomends to the Bishope to represent the same to the consell for redress.

“The said day it is recommended by the Bishope to the severall brethren to use all diligence in going about the celebration of the communion, which hath been so long out of use in the diocie.

“The synod, considering that severall women within the diocie, whose husbands have been absent this many years in Barbadoes, and whether dead or alive is uncertain, seeking the benefit of marriage, it is recommended to the Bishop to represent this case to the counsell for advice herein.

“This day compeered Alexr. Sutherland, petitioning the Bishope and Synod to Interpose their authoritie to cause

his wyfe, Christian Smyth, to cohabit with him, who separat from him upon her aleagance of Impotence, and both parties being heard, the case is found so doubtful and full of Intricacie that they cannot determine therein at present, onlie remits the same to friends to use diligence for composing the matter, if possible.

“Anent the reference of the presbytery of Caithness, concerning the delinquents in the parish of Durness, the Bishop and brethren of the synod, considering the great distance of that paroch from the presbyteriall seat, do hereby recommend it to Mr Hugh Munroe to admit them to pnblick satisfaction of Discipline, but not to receive them till they appear before the presbyterie.

“The report being made by the brethren appoynted for the revising of the presbyteriall books of Caithnes and Sutherland, they are approven by the Bishope and Synod, and with prayer the meeting closeth.

“Sessio 3^o. Appryle 21.—This day mett the Bishope with the Brethren, and after incalling upon the name of God, Mr Jhon Gray, Student in divinitie [whose mouth had been stopped for insufficiencie (?)], petitioned the Bishop and Synod to have his mouth opened for exercising of his gift where occasion should offer, he is referred to the presbyterie of Sutherland for tryall of his qualifications in order thereto.

“This day, Rorie Dow, in the paroch of Creich, excommunicat for obstinacie and disobedience to church discipline, supplicating the Bishope and Synod to be relaxed from the sentence of excommunication, upon satisfaction to discipline, whereunto he professed himself very willing, he is referred to the presbyterie of Sutherland and minister of Creich to receive his satisfaction to discipline, and upon his obedience and his exhibition of a commission from the Bishope for his relaxation, to be relaxed thereupon.

“This day, the Bishope, representing to the Synod that Mr James Dunbar, minister att Watten, haud celebrat the

marriage of Mr Wm. Geddes at Wick without proclamatione, contraire to order, which the Bishope and Synod, taking to their serious consideration, did so censure the said Mr Wm., being present, with a sharpe rebuke, which he submitted unto, and the said Mr James, being absent, was referred to the presbyterie of Caithnes to be rebuked, and both of them referred to the Bishope's further pleasure ; and hereby also it is ordained that no brother within the diocie take upon him to marry any persons without the orderlie proclamations of their marriage bands, without a speciall license from the Bishope, under paine of deposition.

"Compeired Mr Ian Riah, in the paroch of Kildonnan, suspect of adulterie with Christian Nianalastar Gow, being summoned, cited, and compeiring, and standing to a denyall, is remitted to the presbyterie of Sutherland for further tryall thereanent.

"This day compeired Margaret Nianwilliam McRob, in the parish of Golspie, and presenting a petition to the Bishop and Synod, desyring that hir husband, Donald McAngus, might be ordained to cohabit with hir, the matter is referred to the synod [? presb.] of Sutherland to use diligence therein. The nixt meeting of the Synod is appoynted to be at Thurso the third Wednesday of Junii 1665, and so with prayer the meeting dissolveth." [Three blank leaves follow.]

"No. 43. Tack of the parsonage and vicarage teinds of the parishes of Farr, Kintail, and Durness, by Patrick Forbes, Bishop of Caithness, to John, Lord Reay, 5th May and 1st June 1665 :—At Dornoch, 5 May and 1 June 1665. —Pa., B. Cathness ; Will. Davidson, Dean ; Alexr. Gibsoun, Archdeacon ; John Dempster, Chanter ; William Macky, Chancellor ; Mr D. Monro, Tresourer of Caithness. Hugh Monro [minister at Ardures], witness." ¹

This deed was probably executed at or after the meeting of Synod at Dornoch. Of that meeting we have no record.


¹ Book of Mackay, 436.

CHAPTER XVI.

BISHOP PATRICK FORBES, 1665-1680.

Letter of Thanks from Parish of Farr—Latheron—Alexr. Ross settled there—Neill Beaton, Schoolmaster of Thurso—On Trials—Other Clergy—Synod at Thurso, 1668—no Record—John Gray, Assynt—George Gray, Loth—Synod at Dornoch, 1669—Bishop Ordains George Gray at Thurso for Loth—Shilpes—Schoolmaster at Wick—afterwards in Orkney—Oswald Family—Synod to be held at Loth, 1670—Visitation of Canisbay, 1671—Bishop ever busy in Diocese—Robert Munro—Desolate Condition of Sutherland—Young Men pushed on for Ordination—MacCulloch—They are Ordained at Thurso—McIntosh—Farr—Fullartone—Bishop visits Orkney—His Daughter, Lady Russland—Preaches in St. Magnus Cathedral—Bishop MacKenzie—Scapa—Earl of Caithness—Died, 1676—Glenorohy—Earl being Sick, asks Prayers of Church—Cumming—Marriage Connections—Holy Communion Administered at Thurso, 1679—Death of Bishop Forbes, 1680—Legacy to Thurso—A Mortcloth of Velvet—Forbes observant of Political Duties in Parliament—Attendance—Earl of Sutherland—Lord Reay—Much at home—Puritan Refugees—Sir John Cunningham, a native of Caithness—One of the Noblest Churchmen of this period—Character by Bishop Burnet.

- APPENDICES.—1. Notes as to Bishop Forbes' Family.
2. Story as to the "Swearing bishope."
3. Bishop's Seal.

 ON 3rd February 1664, the bishop and clergy acknowledge a letter of thanks from the people of Farr "for their diligence and care in provyding them with a minister, Mr John Munro, with whom they declare their satisfaction."

The vacancy in the parish of Latheron next demanded attention. Aug. 2, 1665:—"Anent the paroch of Latheron (being now vacant), the presbyterie, taking to consideration

the desolat and deplorable condition, ordains Mr Wm. Geddes, Minister at Wick, to repair thither to give them sermon upon a Lord's day, and to desyre the Gentlemen and elders ther to appoint James Sutherland to be Clerk for keeping and ordering a Regester," &c. On Octr. 14th, it was reported that Geddes had obeyed the "presbyterie's" ordinance, and had "repaired to Latheron." On Dec. 6th, 1665, the bishop being present, "The Laird of Forse, supplicating the Bishop and Presbyteries for Supply of Sermon to the Parish of Latheron, was desyred to employ Mr Alexr. Ross, a stranger expectant of good report"; if he failed, Mr. Gibsone was "ordained to repair ther." Mr Rosse, a native of Moray, and graduate of Aberdeen, was eventually settled there. In 1680, he was removed to Dornoch, where he survived the Revolution and Dis-establishment.¹

We next have a notice of another clergyman, who, also, long survived the changes, Neill Beaton, then schoolmaster of Thurso. He entered on his "tryalls" on July 4, and was "approven" Aug. 8, 1666. On Dec. 5, he had a "popular sermon on Hab. ii. 4." In 1667, proceedings are ordered to be taken against any who consult with excommunicated charmers. Such are to "stand in sackcloth." In autumn of 1667, Tarras, Innes, and Rosse, are on "tryalls." At Thurso, Feb. 5, 1668, the bishop being present, Tarras' sermon on Coll. iii. 16 is approven. The Earl of Caithness petitions to have Beaton settled as minister at Dunnet. Smart had died before May 6, 1668, when mention is made of "Johne Smart, writer in Edinburgh, second lawful son to the late Mr John Smart, Minister of Dunnet."

A Synod was held at Thurso on Oct. 7, 1668. Of it we have no record, but next day a meeting of Presbytery is held, when, the bishop being present, Mr John Gray is the subject of a petition from Assynt. The matter was put by the bishop to the vote of the Presbytery, when it was

¹ Scott, v. 363.

“carried by pluralitie of votes that the Bishop proceed to Ordinatione.”

Mr. George Gray is desired by the parish of Loth, and when the bishop asked the advice of the Court, it was unanimously decided to proceed to ordination. The bishop was in Caithness in December and January following. ▲ Synod was held at Dornoch in March.

April 7, 1669.—“The Synodicall meeting being at Dornoch the third Wednesday of March, the 17th day of that moneth, the Bishop came to Thurso with Mr George Grey to be ordained Minister of the parish of Loth, expecting the convention of the Brethren, in regard their ordinary meeting in presbyterie was usuall on the second Wednesday of each moneth, but there were then present only Mr Alexr. Gibson and Mr Robert Tarres. The occasion of the mistake was by reason that the Brethren, while they were at Dornoch, resolved upon the 14th day of April, being the second Wednesday, to be the diet of their Meeting.”

“Mr George Grey was that day ordained.” His name does not appear in Scott, as, unfortunately, the volume of Presbytery Records of Caithness, now before us, was then amissing.

On the 29th of May 1670, the bishop preached at Thurso, but on Aug. 28, the Session Record notes:—“No Sermon, no Session, the Minister being about a Worke of Charitie, in aiding a brother at the Celebration of the Holie Ordinance of the Communion.”

In the same month, at a Presbytery meeting, the bishop and Presbytery approve of Mr John Shilpes, schoolmaster at Wick, entering on his “tryalls.” He had a thesis appointed on transubstantiation. Shilpes was afterwards master of the Grammar School of Kirkwall. He was ordained by Bishop MacKenzie on the eve of St. Mark 1683, and appointed minister of the united parishes of St. Andrews and Deerness in Orkney.¹

On Aug. 3, 1670, “James Oswald, Student in humanitie

¹ Hist. of Ch. in Orkney, iii. 94, 102.

at the School of Thurso," asks help from the Presbytery, in order to proceed to the study of philosophy. The Session of Olrig are to contribute.

This is the earliest ecclesiastical mention of a member of a very respectable family, who afterwards gave clergy to both the Episcopal and Presbyterian bodies. "The earliest mention of this family of whom there is notice is James Oswald, of Kirkwall, who was born about 1590, and died about 1660." He got a charter of tenements in Kirkwall from the Earl of Caithness. His son, James, was a Bailie of Wick, and the above-mentioned James Oswald, who was born about 1654, was his grandson.¹ A burial-place in the old churchyard of Thurso is still known as Oswald's tomb. Subsequent reference will be made to the family.

On 5th October, the bishop is at Thurso. It is noted that at this time the windows of Thurso Parish Church wanted glass, but there was no fund to supply it. On 23rd October, "Master Walter Innes" is admitted to "officiate in the office of School Teacher" and Session-clerk of Thurso. A Synod was summoned to be held at "Loth in Southerland, upon the first Wednesday of November 1670." A visitation of Canisbay was held by the bishop in September 1671, and he was in Thurso on 2nd November of that year. We find him there at Presbytery meetings, May, July, August 1672. On 7th of the latter month, Robert Munro, student in divinity, is ordered to have a popular sermon on St. Matt. vii. 13. The bishop is present at Thurso at Presbytery meetings on April 2, May 7, September 17, and October 8, 1673. By the Session Record of Thurso, we find him preaching at different times in that church, "the sd. day the bishop preached." On October 8, 1673, we have this entry in the Presbytery record:—"The Bishop, takeing to consideration the desolatt condition of Sutherland through the long vacancys of severall Churches there, and he, with severalls of the Brethren, having had occasion to have

¹ Henderson, 232.

heard these young men divers tymes preach to good satisfaction—They judged it convenient to expedite their tryales as soon as possible, and, therefore, have appoynted for ordination, the 22nd day of this instant October, he haveing formerly appoynted their Edict to be served at the severall Kirks, and make report thair of against the said day.” The young men were Mr Andrew Monro, Mr John Ross, Mr Neil Beaton.

Thurso, Oct. 22, 1673.—“ Quhilk day met the Bishop and Brethren, and, after prayer, Mr John McCulloch delyvered exegises, sustained disputes, and was approven. The Bishop, haveing receaved ane account of the serving of the Edicts at the respective Kirks without opposition, did, with the concurrence of the Brethren present, proceed to their ordination with prayer and imposition of hands.” The bishop was in the diocese in April and June 1674. In the latter month, he recommends “ Mr Daniell McIntosh, licentiat in divinity,” to enter on trials for admission to the Church of Farr.

On July 19, 1674, the minister of Thurso “ being called to Strathnaver, the said day the bishop did preach there.” On August 30, the minister of Thurso is “ assisting at the administration of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper at Rhæ.” On September 8, “ Mr James Fullartone ” is admitted Session-clerk of Thurso.

In the end of September or beginning of October, Bishop Forbes visited Orkney, doubtless to see his daughter, Lady Russland. This fact we find from the Session Register of St. Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall. Sunday, October 4, [1674], “ Epis. Cathan: Con: Quhilk day Mr Patrick Forbes, Lord Bishop of Caithness, did preach in the forenoon upon Rom. xii. 2, ‘ And be not conformid to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.’ ” We can imagine the happy meeting of Bishop MacKenzie of Orkney with his episcopal brother, their friendly converse, the entertainment by Lady

Russland and her husband, and then the parting, probably at the shore of Scapa.¹ On the same day that Bishop Forbes was preaching at Kirkwall, the Thurso Session grant burial-places at the west end of the church to "Mr Andrew Munro, Minister; Mr. George Munro, Sheriff Clerk; and John Farquhar, late Bailzie in Thurso." The Synod was indicted to meet at Loth on the "third Wednesday of October next," 1675.

George, sixth Earl of Caithness, married Mary, daughter of the Marquis of Argyle, and died at Thurso Castle in the year 1676, without issue. "The earldom being much involved in debt, Earl George disposed the estates and title to his principal creditor, John Campbell of Glenorchy, who, on the earl's death, married the countess and was created Earl of Caithness by patent. Glenorchy's right to the title was challenged by George Sinclair of Keiss, son of Francis Sinclair of Northfield, and after a proclamation in favour of the latter by the Privy Council, in 1681, Glenorchy was created Earl of Breadalbane and Holland."²

This George Sinclair of Keiss, seventh Earl of Caithness, grandson of the fifth earl, died, in 1698, without issue.

Thurso, 3rd May 1676.—"The said day Mr Andrew Munro did represent that the Earl of Caithness, being visited with heavie sickness, did earnestly desyre that all the brethren of the presbyterie should remember him in their publick and pryvate prayers to God." This desire was cordially entertained. The last recorded meeting of the Presbytery with Bishop Forbes was at Thurso, 2nd May 1677.

The Reverend William Cumming, formerly of Dores, in Moray, was instituted as minister of Halkirk on 11th March 1677. The institution, we learn from the Session Book of Thurso, was conducted by the Rev. Andrew Munro. His daughter, Elizabeth Cumming, became the third wife of George Sinclair, first of Barrock; her mother was

¹ Hist. of Ch. in Orkney, iii. 55.

² Henderson, 9.

Katherine, daughter of John Murray of Pennyland.¹ She was previously married, in 1670, to the Rev. George Gray of Loth.

In the summer of 1679, it was resolved to administer the Holy Communion in Thurso church.

The next three extracts relate to that sacred event:—

June 1, 1679.—“The said day the minister and elders judge convenient to intermit and surcease any farther exercise of Church discipline in session till once the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper be administered, which is designed (if God will) to be celebrat on the fifteenth day of this present month of June.”

June 8, 1679.—“The said day the minister and elders consult about ordering all things requisite for decencie in the administration of the sacred ordinance of the Lord’s Supper against the next Sabbath.”

June 15, 1679.—“The said day the Sacrament being celebrate, the minister and elders appoint a Sessional meeting to be on Moonday after sermon, for a charitable distribution and giving of supplies to the indigent members of Christ’s mysticall bodie.”

March 28, 1680.—“Christian Murray, woman-servant to Baylie Nicolson, conveened for drunkenness on ye Sabbath day, and spueing in the Church in time of divine service, and considering that her drunkenness was occasioned by stealth [stealing], ordained her to be rebuked in sackcloth the next Lord’s day.”

And then the end came. The faithful, zealous, “holy, honest-hearted” bishop came to lay down his pastoral staff. In 1680, Bishop Forbes died. The date is unknown. But on his deathbed he was not forgetful of Caithness, but particularly remembered Thurso and its needs. The Session thus records his last effort:—

April 4, 1680.—“The said day the Late Bishope of Caithnes, who, on his death bed, had dedicated a Velvet Mortcloth for the use of ye poore of the parioch, and recom-

¹ Henderson, 98 and 192.

mended the performance thereof to Mr Alexander Skeen, minister at St. Johnston [Perth], his son-in-law, the said Mr Alexander cause deliver it, and the Session enacted that each person who should make use thereof within the town should pay eight pounds to the box, and when it went to the countrey, those who made use of it should pay twelve marks, and that it should not be given to any but such as should give their proper bond for the prejudice it should sustaine to make up the same." Two other entries in 1680 are interesting.

November 24, 1680.—"Mr James Fullarton preached." He was afterwards minister of Dunnet and of St. Ninians, Perth, where he died in 1687. His wife was named Isobell Monro, who survived till 1750.¹

December 19, 1680.—"The minister returned, but no Session because of the buriall of Mary Sutherland, relict of David Campbell, after sermon."

Bishop Forbes was equally observant of his civil duties as a Lord of Parliament, as he was of his ecclesiastical duties as chief shepherd of a diocese. Notwithstanding the remoteness of his charge, he was a frequent attendant at Edinburgh.

He was present at the Parliament of 1663 which commenced its sittings on the 18th day of June,² at that which sat down on the 2nd day of August 1665,³ that which began on the 19th day of October 1669,⁴ and on the 30th November 1669. "The Viscount Frendraucht and Bishop of Caithness took the oath of alledgeance and declaration."⁵ Bishop Forbes was present at the sitting of the Parliament of 1670,⁶ 1672,⁷ and 1673.⁸

"It does not appear that after the first Parliament of Charles II., either the Earl of Sutherland or Lord Reay took much concern in public matters during the reign of the two brothers, but for the most part lived at home,

¹ Scott, v. 361 ; iv. 709.

² Thomson's Acts, vii. 466.

³ Thomson's Acts, 526.

⁴ Thomson's Acts, 548.

⁵ Thomson's Acts, Appx., 108.

⁶ Thomson's Acts, viii., Appx. 1.

⁷ Thomson's Acts, viii. 208.

⁸ Thomson's Acts, Appx. 2.

attending to their own affairs." It is said that the families of Sutherland, Reay, and Fowlis, "whose ladies were to a superior degree pious, amiable persons," showed much kindness to those who felt unable to conform to the established episcopacy. It is said that "many of them found sanctuary in Ross, Sutherland, and the Reay Country." Great disputes seem to have taken place between the Earl of Sutherland and Lord Reay with the Earl of Caithness. The country seems to have been in a continual turmoil. Bands of men, little better than robbers, prowled about, professing to be engaged in righting the wrongs of these great men. The result was great scarcity of victual, frequent starvation, the seizing the persons of free subjects, and robbery and oppression of every sort.¹

In the "Southerland," at the Restoration, the state of the Church was simply deplorable. The kirks of Golspie, Lairg, Kildonan, and Farr had been long vacant. That of Golspie, at the very door of Dunrobin, was vacant from 1649-1653; Lairg, from 1652-1658, if not till 1662. "And as to the stipend of the Kirk of Farr, the Parliament remits to the Bishop of Caithness to take tryell thair of, and of the condition of the parochie, and of any vacant stipends that are due ther, . . . and, in the meantime, Discharges all execution against the Earle of Sutherland for the same."²

It is pleasant to turn from all these scenes of blood, rapine, and robbery, to study the character of one of the noblest churchmen of the Restoration period. This was Sir John Cunningham, the famous advocate, who was a native of Caithness, and educated at Thurso. He was the son of John Cunningham, whom, in 1624, we find Admiral Depute and Sheriff of Caithness, and then in the occupation of Geise, Ormlie, and Broomhill, and married to a lady of the family of Ratter. His son, John, was created a baronet in

¹ Mackay, *House and Clan of Mackay*, 361, 374.

² Thomson's *Acts*, vii. 390. As to the Earls of Sutherland of the time, see Wood's *Douglas Peerage*, ii. 582.

1669. Bishop Burnet, who was by no means favourable to the Episcopal party of this period, makes an exception in favour of Sir John Cunningham.¹ He gives him the following high character:—"He was episcopal beyond most men in Scotland, who for the far greatest part thought that forms of government were in their own nature indifferent, and might be either good or bad, according to the hands in which they fell; whereas he thought Episcopacy was of a divine right settled by Christ. He was not only very learned in the civil and canon law, and in the philosophical learning, but was very universal in all other learning; he was a great divine, and well read in the Fathers and in ecclesiastical history. He was, above all, a man of eminent probity, and of a sweet temper, and indeed one of the piouslest men of the nation. The state of the Church in those parts went to his heart, for it was not easy to know how to keep an even hand between the perverseness of the people on the one side, and the vices of the clergy on the other. They looked on all those that were sensible of their miscarriages as enemies of the Church. It was, after all, hard to believe all that was set about against them." ²

APPENDICES TO CHAPTER XVI.

I.—*Notes as to Bishop Forbes' Family.*

1. A son, John. This is the only descendant mentioned by Scott. He was Commissary of Caithness, and died, October 25, 1668, at Craigievar, in Aberdeenshire, and was buried, October 30, "at night, with torches, in the Laird of Craigievar his yle and burial place at Leochel," thus having his ashes laid with those of his ancestors, in the church-

¹ Mackay, House and Clan of Mackay, 371; Henderson, 201, 208.

² Grub, iii. 229.

yard of Leochel, in Aberdeenshire, predeceasing his father, "whose only son he appears to have been."

2. Jacobina Henrietta, or Hendrina, who married in 1672 to William Buchanan of Russland. He died, 23rd January 1679, "and was interred in St. Magnus Kirk the next Sabbath following, being the 26 of ye sd. moneth." This good lady re-married in 1700, James Fea of Whitehall.¹ "A Jacobina Forbes" meantime married William Mudie, 13th April 1683, but this is not, I suppose, the same lady.² There is preserved the "Inventory of the goods and gear which belonged to Jaccabina Forbes, Lady Rusland, spouse to James Fea of Whitehall." It mentions that Lady Russland died "in the moneth of September 1703."

The lady had, amongst other possessions, "two bedd steids of firr, whereof one hung with curtains of stamped saiten, lyned with yellow cesnutt, with silk pands, with ane head quilting of yellow cesnutt, with fitt pands, utter and inner, conforme thereto, and ane heid piece conforme of cesnutt, with guilded knapps above, and feet beneath. Another bedd hung with blew stamped stuff, with three cornice peices Jepanned." "Eight wanded chairs, wherof two airmed." "Six silver spoons and an Dish single." "Six coffee dishes and cupps conforme, all of leam, with ane teypott." A coffee pot is also mentioned. Her ladyship's library was limited—"Item, ane meikle book, called the 'Romant of Romants'; ane book called 'Grave Counsellis and godlie observations'; another book entituled 'Pallas Armata'; another book entituled 'the art of Warr, or Military discourses'; a book entituled 'Military discipline'; a book entituled 'A light to the art of gunerie'; 'The Historie of Jean de Paris'; 'A new and easiey method to the art of dyalling'; a book entituled 'Consolations for the afflicted'; 'The Love and airmes of the Greek Princes.'"³

Some of the nobility of that time were but poorly found in their domestic economy. Alexander, ninth Earl of Caithness, who died at Hamer Castle in 1765, "apparently possessed but a dozen and a half of silver spoons, an old tea kettle and lamp, sugar tongs and spoon, a couple of small

¹ T. Brown's Diary, 7. ² T. Brown's Diary, 25.

³ Original, Skaill Charter Chest; see also my Hist. Epl. Church in Orkney, from 1688, p. 113 *et seq.*

salvers, a tankard and some plated candle sticks, and the like.”¹

On 22nd November 1700, “James Fea of Whitehall, yor., and Jacobina Forbes, Ladie Ruslan, were contract and married on the 13th of December.”² This James Fea was the builder of the Episcopal Chapel at Stove, in Sanday; and was a determined and earnest supporter of Episcopacy in Orkney.

3. A daughter, name unknown, who married the Rev. Alexander Skene, at one time minister of Perth (1679), and subsequently Provost or Principal of St. Salvador's College, St. Andrews. He was the fourth son of Sir Andrew Skene of Halyards (1619-1653), by Barbara Forbes, daughter of William Forbes of Craigievar. He had the degree of D.D. Appended to one of the University maces is an inscription showing that he had it restored and repaired. Dr Skene died in the Canongate of Edinburgh, in the year 1707. His sister Katherine married William Lindsay, afterwards Bishop of Dunkeld.³

II.—*Story as to the “Swearing Bishope.”*

Reference has been made to a story referring to Bishop Patrick Forbes, the “swearing bishope” of Caithness. It is found in Wodrow's “*Analecta*,” and is given on the authority of “Mr H. Cross, minister of Bower, in Caitnes.” The bishop is said there to have been the son of the minister of Alnes, which, of course, is nonsense. The value of Wodrow's information may be gauged from another piece referring to Murdoch Mackenzie, Bishop of Moray and Orkney, who died, loved and respected by all, at Kirkwall, on the eve of the Revolution. This was supplied by “Mr Walter Ross, minister in Sutherland.” He said that “Mr Murdoch Mackenzie, first bishop of Ross after the restoration, was a very naughty man. He was deposed and excommunicated by the assembly at Glasgow, 1638; and that some of the noblemen, upon the probation found against him, votted, depose, excommuncat, and he should be hanged likewise.”⁴

¹ Henderson, 10. ² Kirkwall Marriage Register, MS.

³ Memorials of Family of Skene of Skene, 52, 53.

⁴ *Analecta*, iv. 269.

A greater tissue of nonsense could scarcely be put together. Mackenzie was never Bishop of Ross, and at the time, instead of being excommunicated, was an active member of the Glasgow Assembly in 1638, and long after a supporter of the Presbyterian party.

"In the end of this moneth [June 1726], Mr H. Cross, minister [at Bower] in Caitnes, was with me. He tells me that it's generally known there that Bishop Forbes, I think the first Bishop after the Restoration there, was son to Mr John Forbes, minister at Alnes, and banished for the assembly at Aberdeen, 1605. That his son quitted his father's principles, and was soon nominated for a Bishop. When there, he was too much given to profane swearing, and was termed 'the swearing Bishope.' A grave minister happened to be with the Bishop, and a gentleman who had an evil habit of swearing; and in that company could not refrain. After once or twice swearing, of which the Bishop took no notice, the Minister thought it proper to give the gentleman a rebuke; and among other things he insisted that it was aggravated, because he swore before the Lord Bishop. The gentleman, with a tart enough pun, replied, he was certainly mistaken in his reproof, for he swore, not before, but after, my Lord Bishop."¹

III.—*Bishop's Seal.*

Macdonald's "Armorial Seals," No. 952. — "Forbes, Patrick, Bishop of Caithness, 1662-1680. Under a canopy a bishop. Beneath a shield with helmet and mantling above it, bearing arms: a chevron between three bears' heads couped and muzzled. Legend: 'S: PATRICII FORBESII EPISCOPI CATHANENSIS.' Diam., 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. Reay Ch: 5 May and 1 June 1665. B.M., 17257."

¹ Wodrow, *Analecta*, iii. 315.

CHAPTER XVII.

BISHOP ANDREW WOOD—1680-1684.

New Bishop, of Isles and Minister of Dunbar—His Ordained Assistants there—Father—Mother—Sister of Bishop Guthrie of Moray—First at Spott—Records there—At Thurso, 1682—In Session with Lord Breadalbane—Session Rules—Church Doors to be open at “seven of ye morning”—Glenorchy—Altimarlaoh—Bishop—Reorganising—Presbytery Record—Bishop at Presbytery Meeting, 1682—Oswald on Trial—Man pretending Dumbness—Clunies at Wick—History—Three of his Books—One belonged to Sir Thomas Urquhart—Relations in Cromarty—Diocesan Synod at Thurso, 1682—Minutes—Sederunt—Moderators—Overtures by Bishop—Holy Communion—Acknowledge present Governments—Observation of 29th May—Absences—Visitations—Catechising—Decalogue and Apostles’ Creed to be repeated weekly—Reparation of Churches—Lord’s Prayer to be used—and Doxologie—Bishop goes south, but returns before winter—Andrew Munro refuses Test, and retires—Elders of Thurso—John Wood now Minister—a relative of the Bishop—Synod, July 1683—at Thurso—Bishop preaches—Sederunt—Minutes defective.

THE new bishop was Andrew Wood, then Bishop of the Isles and minister of the parish of Dunbar. This latter benefice he held *in commendam* till his death, having always an ordained assistant to take his place when he resided in Caithness. The names of these may be seen in Scott’s “Fasti.” Bishop Wood was the son of the Rev. David Wood, parson of Edzell, in the Diocese of Brechin. Bishop Wood’s mother was a sister of the well-known John Guthrie, Bishop of Moray at the time of the Great Rebellion. He was a stout opponent of the Covenant, a man of position and substance. His namesake, the

Bishop of Dunkeld, in his "Memorials," says of him :—" Mr John Guthrie, Bishop of Murray, as he chose not to flee, so upon no terms would he recant, but patiently endured excommunication, imprisonment, and other sufferings, and in the midst stood to the justification of Episcopal Government till his death." A double relationship seems to have existed. Bishop Guthrie's wife was Nicola Wood.¹

Bishop Wood was at first placed minister of Spott, near Dunbar, in Haddingtonshire, in 1643. He was on active Church business in 1648, and transferred to the parish of Dunbar in 1665, being presented by William, Earl of Roxburgh. He was collated on the 9th and instituted on the 28th Feb. of that year. Of his ministry at Spott, a bare record remains in the Session Book, but no particulars of interest are contained in it. The Records of Dunbar during the bishop's incumbency have entirely disappeared.²

Bishop Wood was consecrated about May 1677 to the See of the Isles, and translated to the See of Caithness by Royal letters patent of April 17, 1680, having been elected 26th Feb. preceding. He was installed before June 1681.

We find him first at Thurso in a minute of the Kirk-Session of date Jan. 22nd, 1682 :—" The said day convened Sessionally the Earle of Breadalbane, my lord Bishop of Caithness, and the elders, who, after calling on ye name of God, proceeded thus :—

" 1. The said day it was enacted that each half-year the Church Box should be examined by a select number of the elders and counted.

" 2. It was enacted that all strangers reparing to this congregation should not have admission amongst us without famous testificats testifying to their behaviour formerly.

" 3. It was enacted that there should be locks set before the doors of the church, and the officers were ordained to keep them open, or at least the porch-doore, from seven of ye morning to ten of the clock in the forenoon, for the

¹ My Church in Moray, 56.

² Letter, Rev. Lothian Gray, Spott, to writer; Burns' Benefice Lectures, 221.

convenient retirement of such as waited, none idling at home, and that afterwards they should keep them shutt till the next day, lest the fabrick or the desks should sustain any detrimant, as also intimation should be made to all concerned in burial-places that they should [keep in order] the churchyard where their buriall places lays, otherways they should loose their interest therein."

Feb. 21, 1682.—"The said day conveyed Sessionally the Right Reverend my lord bishop and the elders, who, after prayer, proceeded thus:— . . . Sessional meetings to be held hereafter on the Sabbboth day."

"Glenorchy was about six years Earl of Caithness. . . . He was universally detested by the natives, who regarded him as a military butcher, and never forgot the slaughter of their friends at Altimarlach. They took every method of annoying him. They waylaid and thrashed his factors; they burned the corn, and houghed the cattle of his tenants." "He was grave as a Spaniard, wise as a serpent, cunning as a fox, and slippery as an eel." Deeply implicated in the massacre of Glencoe, a process of high treason was commenced against him, but not merely did he escape after some imprisonment, but he actually received £12,000 to keep the Highlands quiet after the Revolution, "the greater part of which he appropriated to his own use."¹

Bishop Wood proceeded quietly to reorganise the work of the Church in his diocese. We have a new entry in the Presbytery Record:—"The Register of Church Discipline in the Presbytery of Caithnesse since the Right Reverent ffather in God, Andrew, Bishop of Caithness, did first convene the Brethren of the said countrey presbyterially:— At Thurso, Wednesday, March first, 1682 years.—Convened the said Bishop and Minrs.:—David Munro, Minr. at Reay; Alexr. Gibsone, Minr. at Bowar; Robert Tarres, Minr. at Olrick; James Innes, Minr. at Cannisbay; Wm. Cumming, Minr. at Halkirk; Patrick Cluneis, Minister at Wick; James Fullartone, Minr. at Dunnet—who, after

¹ Calder, 191-192.

calling on the name of God, proceeded as follows." The proceedings include the appointment of the Rev. David Munro as moderator, the trials appointed to Oswald, and cases of discipline.

On April 5, the bishop being present, "Donald Fraser, pretending for many years to be dumb, taking charity, and deceiving the people," is appointed to stand in sackcloth in each church within the bounds.

The only new name in the preceding list is that of the Rev. Patrick Clunies, now minister of Wick. He was a native of Ross, and graduate of King's College, Aberdeen. He survived the Revolution, and died in 1691. Almost nothing is known about him, as there are no parochial records of Wick extant before 1700. Three books from his library are now in my possession, which also bear the name of "Abraham Clunies"—Raban's edition, 1632, of Dr Arthur Johnston's "Parerga" and "Epigrammata," a curious little volume, which also bears the signature of the famous Sir Thomas Urquhart, of Cromarty, the translator of Rabelais, &c.; the "Congratulatio" of the University of Edinburgh, addressed to King James VI. in 1617; and Adam King's "Epibaterion," addressed on the same occasion to that king; printed by Andro Hart.

Frances, daughter of Francis Sinclair of Stirkoke, near Wick, "was married to Bernard Clunies, merchant in Cromarty, by whom he had a family. Some litigation took place between her and her uncle (George Sinclair) in regard to the lands which, under a submission, were awarded to him as heir male."¹

The Diocesan Synod met at Thurso, 13th July 1682:—

"The catalogue being cited, the brethren after mentioned were present, viz.:—Of the presbrie of Cathnes—Mr David Monro, minister at Rha; Mr Alexr. Gibsoun, at Bowar; Mr Robert Tarres, at Olrick; Mr James Innes, at Canasbay Mr Neall Beaton, at Latheron; Mr Wm.

¹ Henderson, 106.

Cumming, at Halkirk ; Mr Patrick Clunes, at Wick ; Mr James Foulartoun, at Dunnet ; Mr Donald McIntosh, at Far ; and of the prebrie of Sutherland—Mr Jon Rose, Minister at Dornoch ; Mr Jon Dempster, at Lairg ; Mr Hugu Rosse, at Creich ; Mr James Gray, at Clyne ; Mr Hector Pape, at Loth ; Mr James Hay, at Kildonan ; Mr Alexr. Gray, at Assint. Mr Hugh Monro, at Durnes, his absence and excuse, having procured liberty from the Bishop.

“ Mr Alexr. Gibsoun, Mr Robert Tarras, and Mr Patrike Cluneis appointed to visite the presbrie booke of Sutherland, and Mr John Dempster, Mr Hector Pape, and Mr Hew Rosse, at Creich, appointed to visite the presbrie booke of Caithnes, and give ane account of yr. diligence the next afternoone to the Synod.

“ For conference, Mr David Monro, moderator of the presbrie of Caithness, and Mr Jon Rose, moderator of the presbrie of Sutherland ; Mr Patrick Cluneis, Mr James Gray, dean, appointed to meet the Bishop in the ordained place of meeting.

“ This meeting is continued untill the nixt afternoone, and so closed with prayer.

“ At Thurso, 13 Julii, pro merid: sessio 2^{da}.—Sederunt, the bishop and brethren of the diocie of Caithnes, and after prayer proeeded to discipline thus:—Upon report given by the visitatione of the presbrie booke of Sutherland, it is appointed that the presbrie of Sutherland have ane compleat register in due form, paged and margined, again the nixt Synod, and then to be examined ; it's also appointed yt. the presbrie of Caithness have yr. presbie book completely filled up again the nixt synodicall meeting.

“ The sd. day the Bishop exhibited a paper containing acts and overtures condescended upon be him, and the brethren nominate and appointed for conference in the former Session, and read in the publicke audience of the Synod be Mr Neall Beaton, scribe thereof, the tenor of qch acts are as followeth :—

"1°. That the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper be celebrat once every yeare be each minr. in the diocie.

"2°. That each minr. mynd yr. engagemnt in yr. prayer as to the present government, and government both in church and state.

"3°. That the 29 of May be solemnly kept in commemoration of our gracious sovrayne his happie restauration to the exercise of his royell government.

"4°. That yr. be no citation upoun ane edict delation untill the minister be consulted and aprove of the citation.

"5°. That yr. be no reference from a Session to the presbie untill some of the brethrein, especially the moderatour, be consulted, excepting adultery, 3 lapses in fornicatione, and contumacious persons, and all the ordinar references.

"6°. That yr. be a private tryall the presbie day, immediatly preceeding the Synod, among the minrs. of each presbie, and that no minr. be absent, though remote, under paine of censure.

"7°. Qn. yr. is a necessity upon a minr. to be absent from a presbie, that he excuse himself by a letter, and in case he be absent three tymes, be referred to the bishop for censure.

"8°. Appoints ane visitation of the severall churches as occasion shall offer.

"9°. That each minister catechise his parishioners once every yeare.

"10. That the Decalogue and the Apostles' Creed be repeated before the congregation each Sabbath day.

"11. That no delinquent gett any church benefit untill he be reconciled to the church.

"12. The repairing of ruinous church fabricks, the planting of Schools in country parishes, the collecting of fines, as to the method therof, is continued untill the visitation of the severall parish Churches.

"13. That each minr. give in an exact note of his

stipend, and by qm. payable, to the moderators of the respective presbies.

"14. It is recommended that the Lord's Prayer be repeated every dyet after Divine worship be ech minr., and stand at the doxologie.

"Master David Monro continued moderator of the presbie of Caithness, and Mr Jon Rose of the presbie of Southerland.

"The next Synod to be holden at Thurso, the second Wednesday of July 1683. And this meeting dissolved with prayer."

The Bishop appears to have gone south in the autumn, but was present in Session again on Nov. 30. Before that date, Mr John Wood appears as minister of Thurso. He appears "prior to Sept. 1682," and is mentioned in the Session Record on Oct. 12 of that year. Andrew Munro had declined to take the test, and retired. For that every one will give him a token of respect. Many of the best clergy in Scotland of both views declined that burden, and resigned. Many saw no difficulty in swearing that the king was "the only supreme governor over all persons," when the Confession of Faith itself taught that Jesus Christ was the only Head of the Church, from whom ecclesiastical authority was alone derived, or of swearing that the Established Church government was divine and apostolical, when they at the same time swore that it might be altered by the king. Other clergy refused altogether to acknowledge all the articles of the Confession of Faith as true. An explanation, with the royal sanction, was indeed made, but still a few clergy in the north, who were inclined to Presbyterianism, refused to subscribe, and resigned their charges."¹ Andrew Munro appears to have been one of these. He had indeed taken the oath of canonical obedience to Bishop Forbes, but still naturally in a measure adhered to the teaching given in his earlier training.

¹ Grub, iii. 265-267.

On 30th Nov. 1682, "conveened Sessionally my lo. Bishop and the elders, who proceeded thus:—The Bishop having conveened these persons following, and having sworn them *de fidei administratione*, he admitted them to be elders (viz.)—James Murray of Pennyland, James Innes of Thurster, James Shilthomas of Howburnhead, John Forbes of Torisdail, Thomas Sinclair, John Fortune, Alexr. Innes, John Taylor, Wm. Monro, Dond. Wm. Son, John Burne—al merchants in Thurso; James Campbell, Bailzie; John Murray, Bailzie; James Cunningham, in Geese; John Innes, Aust; Geo. Davidson, in Buckies; James Sinclair, in Brimsyd; Geo. Clerke, in Thurso east; Wm. Budge, in Steanland; Wm. Water in Wedell; James Red, in Fordel; John Paterson, in Thurso. The Session ended with prayer." On Dec. 10, 1682, the bishop being present, it was ordered that none take up the collection but "constitute elders." On Christmas Eve, 1682, the meeting is held by John Wood and the elders. This minister is said to have been a relative of the bishop. At any rate, he was a native of Kincardineshire, but does not appear to have been a person of any power, nor to have gained the affection of his parishioners; also, being ignorant of Gaelic, he could not minister to those who used that language.¹ The Session Record of Thurso itself ends on May 11, 1684, after which follow folios of collections, 1676-1684.

The Presbytery Record shows the Bishop to have been at Thurso on Jan. 3, 1683; and at the same meeting, "Mr John Wood" was present.

The next Synod was held at Thurso on 2nd July 1683. We have the most of the minute, but at the end it is defective:—

"The Diocesan Synod of Caithnes, Southerland, and Strathnaver, holden be the right Reverend father in God, Andrew, Bishop of Caithnes, and remanent brethrein of the diocie of Caithnes.

¹ Scott, *Fasti*, v. 344, 355.

"At Thurso, ij. July 1683.—The said day, the ryght Reverend father in God, Andrew, Bishop of Caithnes, had sermon upon Coloss. 4 chap., 17 v. ["And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it."]

"Sessio prima.—After incalling upon the name of God, the Catalogue being cited, the brithrein after mentioned present—Of the presbie of Caithnes:—Mr David Monro, minr. at Rhæ; Mr Alexr. Gibsoun, Archdeacon; Mr Robert Tarres, minr. at Olrick; Mr James Innes, at Canasbey; Mr Neill Beaton, at Latheron; Mr Wm. Cumming, at Halkirk; Mr Patricke Clunes, at Wick; Mr James Foulartoun, at Dunnett; Mr James Oswald, at Wattin; Mr Donald McIntosh, at Farr; and of the presbie of Sutherland—Mr John Rose, minr. at Dornoch; Mr John Dempster, at Lairg; Mr Hugh Rosse, at Creich; Mr Walter Rose, at Rogart; Mr Hugh Rosse, at Golspie; Mr James Gray, at Clyne; Mr Hector Paibe, at Loth; Mr James Hay, at Keldonan; Mr Hugh Munro, at Dornes, in the presbie of Caithnes; and Mr Alexr. Gray, at Assint, in the presbie of Southerland, excused by letter, being sicke.

"Mr David Monro, and Mr Robert Tarres appointed to visite the presbie booke of Southerland; Mr Hector Paibe and Mr Hugh Rosse, at Creich, appointed to visit the presbie booke of Caithnes, and make report, and give ane account of yr. diligence to the Synod next day.

"The Bishop appointed Mr Alexr. Gibsoun, Mr Neill Beaton, Mr Patrike Clunes, and Mr Donald McIntosh, from the presbie of Caithnes, and Mr Jon Rose, moderator of the presbie of Southerland, Mr James Gray, Deane; Mr John Dempster, and Mr James Hay to meet for conference this afternoone in the ordinary place of meeting at Thurso.

"This meeting continued untill the next day, and closed with prayer." . . . [*Cetera desunt.*]

CHAPTER XVIII.

BISHOP ANDREW WOOD—1684-1688.

Great Storm—Macpherson on Trial—James Munro for Dunnet—Violent Opposition to him—Rattar—Synod at Thurso—1686—Bishop in Thurso that year—William Munro—McIntosh admonished for absence—Synod of 1687—Minutes—Marriage only to be given to those instructed—"Belief" at Baptism—Lord's Day—Holy Communion—Anstruther Harbour—Serious Exhortation to Members of Synod—Last Meetings of Presbytery under Bishop Wood—Synod, 1688, at Thurso—Minutes—Sederunt—Committees—Libel by Dempster against John Rosse—Discipline—Orders—Contumacious persons—Thanksgiving for Prince's Birth—Earl of Caithness and Elizabeth Lesly cited—Wood in Caithness—Grant—David Wood—Bishop's Family—Eldest son, Harie—Deprivation, 1689—Bishop retires to Dunbar—Dies, 1695—Family of Gibsons—Clergy—Letter from one—Fragment of a Sermon—Subject—Archdeacon's large family—Particulars—Tarres—John Alexander of Criech—after at Kildrummie—Subsequent cruel fate—Note of Historical continuity with Bishops Alexander and Jolly—Relics of Bishop Wood—Two Books—His Pocket Hebrew Psalms—Monstrous Child of Latheron—Wood's Attendances in Parliament.

THE north was visited by a very great and long-continued storm, which prevented meetings of Presbytery from Nov. 7, 1683, till March 5, 1684, when a small meeting was held. If any Synod was held in 1684, we have no minute of it, but Bishop Wood was present at a meeting of Presbytery held in October, when "Mr John Wood was appointed to officiate as presbytery clarke." About the same time Mr John Macpherson, then school-master of Thurso, was taken on "tryalls" for the ministry. June 3, 1685, "Mr James Monro produced a letter of recommendation from the Bishop to the presbytery that

they would accelerat his tryalls in order to his entrie to the church of Dunnet, he being formerly a licentiat preacher."

On July 23, 1685, "conveened at Dunnet the Moderator, Mr Williame Cummine, Mr James Oshwald, Mr John Wood, who, after some attempts to enter the church, they were violently opposed be Ratter. They Inquired at Rattar and others in the churchyard if they haid any relevant objection against Mr James Monro his life and conversation, and thay could geave none, whereupon protestation was taken by the moderator in the hands of Donald . . . publicke nottar."

"Aug. 19, 1685.—Conveened the moderator, Mr Robert Tarres, Mr James Innes, Mr John Wood, at Dunnet. The moderator and remanent brethren did attempt to enter the church to give Institution to Mr James Monro, according to the Bischope his appointment, bot they were violently opposed be Rattar and severals of his tenants and followers, who appeared in a hostile manner against the brethren and withstood their entrie into the church, yhereupon the moderator did protest in the hands of Peter Sinclair, publick nottar, and he did institut Mr James Monro in the churchyard of Dunnat, and geave him possessione in the manse and gleib." Monro is said to have deserted his charge in 1689, or was obliged to depart.¹

A Synod appears to have been held in Thurso on 16th July 1686, but of it we have no record.

But Bishop Wood was in Thurso on Sept. 2, 1686.

"The said day the Right Reverend Bischope and the Brethren of the Presbytery, having mett, excepting Mr James Innes, who was excused by letter. Mr Robert Monro and Mr Donald McIntosh excused by reason of the remoteness of their residences. . . Mr Patrick Clunes delivered the doctrine on Ephes. fourt and nynt, and was approven." Trial of delinquents.

¹ Scott, Fasti, v. 361.

“Thurso, 3 Nov. 1686.—Which day the Bishop, having written to the presbytery to enter Mr William Monro, student in Divinity, to the ordinary steps of tryalls usual for probationers, accordingly he was appointed to deliver ane homily before the presbytery on James 9 ch. 18 vers.”

“Thurso, 5 April 1687.—Mr Donald McIntosh being enquired to give the reason of his absence from the meetings of the presbytery since the last synod, gave ane account that his urgent affairs required his being sometyes in Murray, sometyes in Sutherland, and frequently at Dourness; he was admonished to attend in tymes to come.

“Mr William Monro, in respect as in these two tryalls, so because in all the former steps of his tryalls before the Brethren, he was amply approven, therfor appoynts a testimonie to be given him, with a recommendation to our Ordinary, and to be subscribed by the Moderator and Clerk, which accordingly was done.”

The date of the Synod cannot be ascertained, but the portion of the minute remaining is given below. From the approval of the Presbytery Book, signed by the clerk of the Synod, the Rev. John Macpherson, it probably was July 8. On June 1, “Mr John Wood” was “absent” from the Presbytery meeting, “but excused of his obtaining licence from the ordinary for going to Edinburgh.” He was still absent on August 3, 1687, but on March 7, 1688, he “was appointed to exercise and add on Ephes. 4 and 16, the first Wednesday of Apryle.”

Synod held 1687 :—

“ . . . Sentence upon their knees humbly acknowledging their offences.

“It is enacted by the Bishope and Synode that fornicators and adulterers, both men and women, be equallie processsed, and yt. this method be kept with all delinquents of what qualities soever; the passing by of noblemen and gentlemen makes people suppose the church

doe free them from censure, and that they are not lyable to discipline as interior persons are ; but as God is no respecter of persons, neyr. will the Church be, and both Religion and reason will say that it's fitting that the souls of the great men be cared for as well as of the meaner ones, and the greater they are, so the greater need there is that they be brought off their evil wayes, that they may be good examples to the meaner people.

"It is enacted by the Bishope and Synode that the benefit of marriage be refused to persons who have not the Lord's Prayer, the Creed (commonly called the belief), and the ten commandments, and if such gross ignorants seek the benefit of marriage, that the marriage be delayed for some competent time, and in the meantime they [be] enjoyned to learn, with certification as effeirs.

"It is recommended that the privat censures be done impartially, and that bretherein do not conceal one anyours faults, providing brotherly admonⁿ. hath gone befor, and the brother, if admonished, hath not amended.

"Recommends That the fayrs of children be examined in privat, whether they have the belief or not, before Baptisme be administered to the children ; and, if ignorant, to be sharplie rebuked, and anyr to hold up the childe, and the parent to stand beside, and this left to the prudence of the bretherein.

"Appoints that the acts of the former Synode, for observing the Lord's day and anent testificates, be dulia observed, and read at least once evrie year publictlie.

"Recommends to ye severall bretheren That the King's Maties proclamon. agst. leeing makers be punctuallie read, according to the order yrin presented.

"Recommends that the sacramt. of our Lds. Supper be administrated [and] no ways neglected, as the brethren will be answerable.

"Produced ane Act of his Maties Counsell for a charitable contribution for the Harbour of Anstruther, upon Forth, the coppies given to the several bretheren, and they

appointed to give obedience to the Act, and to report their Dilligence.

“Appoints the acts of former Synods to be punctuallie putt in execution.

“It is appointed that Mr Neil Beaton, the last Clerk to the Synod, be punctuallie payed of what rests due to him.

“It is enacted that Mr John Macpherson, pnt. schoolmr. at Thurso, chosen clk. by the Bishope with consent of the Brethren, be punctuallie payed of the Clk.'s fee, as was formerlie appointed, and that the extracts of the Synode actis be given to the presbyteries.

“Continues the moderators untill the nixt Synode.

“The Bretheren were seriously exhorted to be diligent in the work of the ministrie in their severall congregations, and not only to endeavour to bring people to the knowledge and fear of God, but also to exhort them to continue in their Loyaltie and Duties to the King.

“Appoints the next meeting to be at Thurso the first Wednesday of July 1688.

“The meeting closeth wt. prayer.”

Thurso, 4th April 1688.—Presbytery met, but “no doctrine, noe discipline, because of the absence of the brethren (by reason of the storme), excepting Mr Robert Tarres, Mr John Wood, and Mr James Monro, who appointed the next meeting to be held at Thurso the first Wednesday of May; and Mr John Wood appointed to have the exercise and addition, as was formerly established.

“Thurso, 2 May 1688.—Mr John Wood did exercise and add (according to former appointment) on Ephes. 4 and 16, and was approven.”

The last minute of the Presbytery under Bishop Wood runs thus:—

“At Thurso, Wednesday the sixt June 1688, conveened the Moderator and remanent Brethren, and after calling on the name of God, proceeded thus:—Mr Hugh Monro still absent without excuse, Mr Alexr. Gibsone exercised and aded on Ephes. 4 and 17, according to former appointment,

and was approven. Mr Neil Beaton is appointed to have the exercise and addition on Ephes. 4 and 18 the first Wednesday of August, and seeing the synod is to be held” . . [Foot of page of register *cetera desunt*.]

The following is the last minute of the Diocesan Synod of Caithness as a separate diocese. The bishop appears to have been absent :—

“ At Thurso, July 4th, 1688.—The Synod being conven’d, Sederunt *omnes*, except the minrs. of Assint, Lairg, Clyne, and Loath, who were excused by their Lrs. Mr Jon. Rose, minr. of Dornoch, had sermon upon 1 Cor. 12 ch. and 7 v. [“ But the manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal.”] Prayers being said, there was appointed as followes :—Appointed Mrs. Walter Rose and James Gray for examining the book of Caithnes; and Mrs. James Oswald and Jon. Wood for ye book of Sutherland. The conference to meet at four of the cloack in ye afternoon, and the Synode to meet be ten of the cloack next day.

“ July 5th, sess : 2^{da}.—It’s appointed yt. three of the brethren of Caithnes, viz., Mrs. Wm. Cuming, James Oswald, Neil beaton, meet wt. the brethren of the Sutherld. presbytery to cognosce upon and make report to the Bishop of a defamatory lybell emitted by Mr Jon. Dempster agt. Mr Jon. Rosse, the qch. meeting is to hold the first Wednesday of Sept. next, and the sd. Mr Jon. Dempster to be sumon’d at the Bishop’s instance, as he will be answerable.

“ That the acts anent keeping of the Sabbath, testificats, and scandalous psns., be observet, as was formerly appointed.

“ That families be carefully visited by respective minrs., as they shall be answerable.

“ That Sabbath breakers, habituall drunkards, and swearers be processt by the minrs. and yr. sessions, as well as fornicators.

“ That the sact. of the Lord’s Supper be administered once the year at least, as minrs. will be anserable at yr. perill.

“ That the gultie of Adultrie or fornican. be both cited to one and the same day, ye woman being called first, and yraft the man called, and if he confess, their censure is to be according to the practice of the Church ; if the man deny, the woman is not to be put to her satisfaction untill they be confronted, and all means used to bring the man to confess.

“ That persons contumacious and disobedient to the church be declared from the pulpit (after the advice of the presbitrie) fugitive from discipline of the church, and if they do not presently give satisfaction as use is, yt. the delinquent be intimat to all the churches of the Diocese, and if he stay in the kingdom, the church qrin he resides to be acquainted.

“ Recommends to minde the contribution for the peer of Anstruther.

“ The modr. of the presby. of Suthld. to appoint the brethren to wait more exactly upon the presbitry meetings then they have formerly done.

“ The breyn. were advised not to neglect ye reading of the proclm. agt. leeing makers.

“ That the Thanksgiving for the Prince’s birth, and yt. temporall mercie to us be solemnly keeped as to the minrs. part upon the 19th day of July instant (for sooner it could not have ben done here), and that the minrs. exhort the people to yr. dutie in this affair.

“ Ordains the clk. to be payed of his Dues at the first meeting of the presbyteries, with certification yt. the same shall be Doubled in case of failure, and that the punctuall payment be given qn. a coppie of the acts is delivered to the presbie.

“ That the Earl of Caithness, wt. Elizabeth Lesly, before the Bishop and presbytery of Caithness, to compear the first Wednesday of August by Literall Summonds, with certification as effeirs.

"Continues the moderators.

"The next Synod to be held the first Wed: of July 1689.

"The Synod closed with prayer."

Whether Bishop Wood presided at this meeting or not—apparently he did not—he was in Caithness earlier in the same year, as appears by an assignation granted by "Andrew, be the grace of God Bishop of Caithness," who "be thir presents for ane certain soume of money formerly and now at the date heirow payed and advanced to and for us be David Wood, Commissary of Sutherland," makes over to him certain rents and tack duties in liferent, "in time coming during our lifetime and incumbency in the said see. Dated att Scrabster the 7th day of Febr. 1688 years, before thir witnesses, Mr John Wood, minr. at Thurso; and Dod. Macgregor, my servitor. Sic. sub: And: Cathanen. Registered at Wick, 8 Octr. 1691 years."¹

An earlier deed shows some particulars of the Bishop's family. Scott says that the Bishop "married Janet Carmichael, and had a son, David, Commissary of Sutherland, and five daughters, of whom Elizabeth."²

"At Scrabster, the 20th day of August 1683 years, before these witnesses, Mr John Wood, minister at Thurso; John Wood, our lovit; and Rory Smith, servitor to Dod. Harper, nottar publick in Thurso," a gift of escheat made over by the Bishop of Caithness to "our eldest son," Harie Wood, consisting of the lands of Howburn Head and Sandyquoy, escheat by non-payment of £232 Scots, &c.

Deprived of the temporalities of his bishopric, July 19, 1689, by the Act of the Scottish Parliament "abolishing Prelacie," in terms of the "claim of Right of the Estates of the Kingdom," of April 11 preceeding, Bishop Wood retired to Dunbar, where he appears to have resided as minister of the parish until his death in 1695. He was then in his 70th year, and was "buried there in church or churchyard"

¹ MS., Register of Deeds, Sheriff Clerk's Office, Wick.

² *Fasti*, v. 457.

—the last diocesan Bishop of the ancient See of Caithness under the Established Church of Scotland.

The family of Gibsone furnished a number of clergy to the Dioceses of Caithness and Orkney at this time. In Orkney, one held the parish church of Holm; another brother that of St. Andrews and Deerness; and the younger brother, Alexander Gibsone, was minister of Bower, in Caithness, and archdeacon of that diocese. Their father or near relative appears to have been a lawyer in Edinburgh. We find him sending, in 1678, political news to Orkney. "There was no word of peace, all sides being as hott att warre as ever. The King has sent over to Flanders upwards of eighteen or twenty Thousand horse and foot, whose generall is the D. of Monmouth, who went there the last week."

The Gibsones were men of substance, as the Register of Deeds of Caithness can show. They had lands and teinds which they set in tack. Some lands were in Owcorrn, 1687, set in tack to Wm. Murray.¹

In 1685, Wm. Campbell acknowledges to have received from "Mr Alexr. Gibsone, minr. at Bowar, Ten pund ten sh., till compt. of his cess for the year 1685."²

Mr Adam Gibsone, of St. Andrews, in Orkney, had a goodly list of debtors.

We have a fragment of a sermon preached by one of the brothers, not improbably by the archdeacon. It is on the benefits to be derived from regular church attendance. We find then, as now, persons "who come not at the beginning [of the service] and tarry not till the end, who joyn not in the singing, &c.; and though David had with him in his banishment both a prophet and a priest, yet he longed for God's especial temple at Jerusalem. Those who come merely for pretence, or show themselves there with some 'singularitie,' are marked by S. Jude 'with a black coal.' Though priests and people may even be corrupt, yet we ought not to forsake regular church assemblies."³

¹ Wick Reg., Sheriff Clk.'s Office. ² Skaill Ch. Chest. ³ Skaill Ch. Chest.

The archdeacon had a large family. Two of his sons became ministers in the succeeding Presbyterian establishments at Evie and Canisbay. Another son, George, was schoolmaster at Stromness, and another is designed "Mr Archibald." He had also a daughter, Elizabeth, who married Francis Sinclair of Brabster.¹

The Rev. Robert Tarres, of whom we find frequent mention in the church records, was minister of Olig, and died in 1694. He had some means, which his family had difficulty in recovering from Robert Sinclair of Duren; John Sinclair, in the "Breadge of Olick"; and "Donald Mansone, in the Whitefield." His family consisted of an only son, James Tarres, who appears to have died unmarried; Jean, who married Alexander Calder, in Thurso east; Margaret, and Katharine.²

John Alexander, a graduate of St. Salvator's College, St. Andrews, was ordained by Bishop Wishart of Edinburgh, 1668, and became incumbent of Crieich, in the shire of Sutherland, formerly the benefice of the chanter of Caithness. Alexander was translated to Kildrummie, in Aberdeenshire, in 1682.

The aged Mr Alexander of Crieich and Kildrummie, who had taken part in the Royalist rising of 1715, "was seized and carried a prisoner to Aberdeen." He and Dr Garden of Aberdeen were "both thrust into a noisome dungeon at Cupar Angus, where the worst of criminals were imprisoned; and, after many months of suffering, were at last set at liberty on bail."

"His son [Bishop Alexander] was ordained as his father's assistant and successor (as was hoped), while the father continued to minister in the Parish Church. He became eventually Bishop of Dunkeld. Bishop Jolly [of Moray] as a young man had seen and conversed with Bishop Alexander. I myself had the privilege of knowing Bishop Jolly, I am pleased and thankful to say, from my

¹ MS. Letter at Skail.

² Deed of Discharge at Skail; see also Macfarlane, *Geog. Colls.*, 175.

schooldays in 1821 to his death in 1836, and took part in the solemnities of his burial. So it came to this, that I knew and conversed with a man who had known and conversed with a man who had ministered as a Scottish Priest in a Scottish Parish Church. This may be accepted as a bit of commentary on the boasted antiquity of the auld kirk.”¹

Mr Alexander kept his benefice at the Revolution, it being found impossible to intrude a Presbyterian minister. But as he joined the standard of the Earl of Mar, his parishioner, in 1715, and prayed for “the Pretender,” he was “deposed” by the Presbyterian authorities. His son, John, presbyter of the Episcopal Church at Alloa, was consecrated Bishop of Dunkeld in 1743, and was well known and greatly beloved in the disestablished church, “a person of apostolical simplicity, piety, and benevolence.” Bishop Alexander’s sister was the mother of Arthur Petrie, Bishop of Moray, &c., long presbyter at Meiklefolla, in Aberdeenshire.²

Two relics of Bishop Wood are in the writer’s possession—his copy of the Psalms and Proverbs in Hebrew, a very curious little volume, with his name, “Andreas Wood”; the other, his copy of part of Calvin’s works, ‘fifth volume,’ Geneva, 1672; “A.W.” stamped on the boards.

Under the title of “Monstrum Cathanesiense: or a description of a Monstrous Child, born and living in Caithness,” a curious piece was published by “Matthew Mackaile, chyrurgo-medicine,” Edinburgh, 1664. This child lived at the Church of Latheron, and was named Donald Sutherland. He was born 7th May 1663, “was eighteen months and fourteen dayes old, yet as tall as any ordinary child of three years old. . . . He is so big that a string

¹ Sketches of Hist. of Ch. of Scot., Dean Ranken, 1882; pp. 25, 26. There are still alive at Fraserburgh [1907] two persons who had been baptized by Bishop Jolly, who knew Alexander, son of the chanter of Caithness. This brings ancient history still closer to us.

² Scott, v. 333, 559; Keith, 539.

of three quarters in length (wanting one inch) will only surround him at the middle when all his cloathes are off. . . His head, armes, and legs are suitable to his body. . . He hath sixteen Teeth." In the presence of Mackaile and other travellers "he did eat three hard boiled eggs, and six or seven ounces of new cheese, and then would have eaten some boyled Fishes, if he had not restrained him. . . His wrists are more than seven inches in compass, and the brans of his legs are three inches bigger." . . Weight was so great that "a girl of twelve or thirteen years old must carry him from place to place, his arms being about her neck, and when she ariseth with him from the ground she must be assisted. He is of so hot a complexion, that a shirt sufficeth him for clothing." ¹

In the rolls of Parliament, Bishop Wood's name occurs as present in the sittings at Edinburgh, commencing 28th July 1681.²

He was chosen one of "the Lords of the Articles" in the same Parliament.³

In the rolls of Parliament held at Edinburgh, 23rd April 1685, Bishop Wood appears as present,⁴ and again elected one of "the Lords of the Articles."⁵

His name does not again appear.

¹ Mackaile's Moffet Well, &c., Ed., 1664, pp. 139-143.

² Thomson's Acts, viii. 230.

⁴ Thomson's Acts, viii. 451.

³ Thomson's Acts, viii. 235.

⁵ Thomson's Acts, viii. 457.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE REVOLUTION IN CAITHNESS.

Disestablishment, 1690—Change more Political than Religious—New Establishment—Mackay's Opinion of the Relative Strength of the two Bodies—Carlyle of Inveresk his Opinion—New Result—An Entire Separation between two Beliefs—Thurso—Fast Ordained—but Elders all Refuse to Act—Three new ones Ordained—Andrew Munro returns—his Wife—Will—Death—Succeeded by Innes—who has small Encouragement—New Presbytery—Attack the Episcopal Incumbents—Munro Aisle at Reay—Absentees from Presbyterian Ministration—Forse and Crosskirk—Halkirk "lettergae"—Iverach—General Assembly Commissioners—arrive Caithness, 1698—did not Remain—Gentry and People "stick by old ministers"—Bishop's Rents—His Family left in great Distress—Relieved by the Episcopal Charities—Visitations—Innes of Canisbay—Stroma—No Fault Detected—Sorcery and Witchcraft in Wick—Mary Chapell—Agnes Really picks Presbyterian Minister of Wick's Pocket—Laird of Rattar a strong Episcopalian—Dunnet—Refuses to Attend there—Beaton of Latheron—Declines Presbyterian Order—Suspended, but taken off—Durness—Cumming—Arthur Anderson—Officiates, Marries, and Baptizes—Declines Presbytery—His Defence—Married Broynach to Janet Ewing—Janet Scourged and Rescued—No Discipline for the Earl himself—Dunnet and Ratter—Oswald—Death of Innes—His Tombstone at Canisbay—His Wife's in Thurso—Oswald's Tomb in Watten.

- APPENDICES.—1 Memorandum as to Caithness Clergy at Revolution—Taylor to Bishop Keith, 1749.
2. Diocese of Caithness at Revolution, probably by Rev. David Lyon, written about 1740.
 3. Tabulation of Caithness Clergy at Revolution, from Scott's "Fasti."
 4. (1) Rev. John Sinolair of Camus ; (2) Rev. Robert Sinolair of Bulvan.

IN 1690, Episcopacy ceased once more to be the national establishment of religion, and Presbyterianism was set up in its place. This was the natural result of the Revolution. The change was more political than religious, and was the consequence of the support given to William

and Mary by that part of the nation which had both suffered and protested in the previous reign. A body of ministers, about sixty in number, who had been deprived in 1661 for not conforming to prelacy, formed the foundation of the new establishment; any that they chose to admit might be associated with them as elders and ministers. These ministers must first comply by praying for William and Mary as King and Queen, and those disobedient or deemed scandalous were to be forthwith "purged out." All had to subscribe the Confession of Faith enacted at Westminster. "The acts of this Parliament, so far as the clergy were concerned, were more arbitrary and severe than the similar proceedings in regard to the Presbyterian ministers which received the sanction of the estates at the Restoration of King Charles II."

On the 4th December 1690, General Mackay, in a letter to the Laird of Grant, referring to the recent establishment of Presbyterianism, thus expresses himself—"I am sure no man who will duly weigh all circumstances, but will confess with me, that humanly the standing of that government [Presbyterianism] doth consist in making it supportable to the king and kingdom; for let men flatter themselves as they will, I tell you who know Scotland, and where the strength and weakness of it doth lie, that if I were as much an enemy to that interest [Presbyterianism] as I am a friend, I could without difficulty engage to form in Scotland a more formidable party against it, even for their majesties' government, than can be formed for it."

Undoubtedly Episcopacy prevailed almost completely north of the Tay, and even elsewhere. The astute and well-informed Carlyle, Presbyterian minister of Inveresk, speaks more strongly:—"It must be observed, too, that when Presbytery was re-established in Scotland at the Revolution, after the reign of Episcopacy for twenty-nine years, more than two-thirds of the people of the country, and most part of the gentry, were Episcopalists."¹

¹ Autobiography, 249; Grub, iii. 317.

But now a new result appeared from these government measures, and that was eventually the entire separation between the supporters of Episcopacy and Presbyterianism. During the contention in the reign of James, and even after the Glasgow Assembly of 1638, no such definite separation was effected. At the Restoration the object was to induce Presbyterians to join the Church, and to raise some of them to its chief dignities. Now those entrusted with the control of the new establishment endeavoured to prevent any of the Episcopal clergy from having any part in the government of it.¹

So true is this latter fact that one of the first consequences of Presbyterian attempts in the Diocese of Caithness resulted in the beginning of a separation.

On September 15, 1689, the kirk session of Thurso ordered a fast to be observed the next Lord's day. By this time the Rev. Andrew Munro had returned. On Nov. 2 it is noted that no session could be held, as "all the elders refused to come," that is to say, those who had been admitted by Bishop Wood, on St. Andrew's Day, 1682, twenty-three in number. On February 9, 1690, a sederunt was made by the minister "and these following—Geo. Mudie, Tho. Nicoll, Jon. Henderson, Alexr. Manson, James , Alexr. Gerry, being sworn *de fide*, were admitted" elders.

"June 22, 1690.—The said day preached Mr Andrew Monro, formerly minr. at Thurso, who, by ane act of Parlt. in favrs. of some outed minrs., and by the people of the parish, was reponed."

On 8th November 1693, Mr Andrew Munro, minister of Thurso, executed a will in favour of his wife, Christian Munro, of all his worldly effects, reserving his own liferent.² He died in December 1693, aged about 65.³

His successor, William Innes, translated from Carnock, was a true Presbyterian—showing mercy neither to

¹ Grub, iii. 309.

² MS., Reg. of Deeds at Wick Sheriff Clerk's Office.

³ Scott, v. 355.

absentees, Episcopalians, or haunTERS to charmers. Mr Andrew Munro married Christian, daughter of John Munro of Culcraigie, by whom he had four sons and three daughters.¹

Innes assumed office as minister of Thurso in May 1696, but at first seems to have had small encouragement. On May 10, 1697, it is mentioned that that session was poorly attended, "Mr Wm. Innes, minr.; the Laird of Brims, the Bailies of Thurso, and some others."

The minutes of the new Presbytery begin in September 1697. On December 1, 1697, "Mr John Munro was appointed to speak to the Episcopall Incumbents, requiring them to give up the presbytery Registers and other books belonging to the said presbytery, and to report his diligence therein against the next presbytery day."

In the remains of the old parish church of Reay, dedicated to St. Colman, an early Celtic missionary, is still to be seen a tablet with the initials "M. D. M." and "M.," the date 1691, and the Munro arms of the eagle's head, and their motto, "*Timeo Deum*," with this explanation—"The fourth part of this aisle belongs to Mr David Munro and Margaret Munro." The family held the benefice from 1623 to 1722. This David Munro was a son of John Munro, minister of Reay, who was third son to John Munro of Pittonachly. The minister, John Munro, married "a gentlewoman named Anderson." David's wife was Margaret, sister to Mr Andrew Munro of Coul, the minister of Thurso; and, probably by his grandfather's advice and counsel, young John, who appears at first in Reay as an "Episcopal Intruder" in 1697, became reconciled to Presbyterianism, holding the benefice till 1722.²

The Episcopal clergy at first refused to give up the registers and books, "pretending that they had never seen any publick act from authoritie, obliging them to do the same."

¹ Scott, v. 355; and information from Mrs Sinclair of Barrock.

² Scott, v. 366, 367; information from Mrs Sinclair of Barrock.

On April 6, 1698, we find the minister of Thurso busy in his office. "The absentees from the ordinances in Forse and Croskirk compeired, and, being rebuked, they were dismissed with a certificate, that if ever they were found hereafter to stray from the church, they should stand in sacco [sackcloth], and pay a fine."

Good Bishop Forbes' mortcloth was now a source of revenue. "Dec. 10, 1699.—Receaved for the mortcloth to the Mistress of Barrock, 8 lbs." This would be Elizabeth Cumming, daughter of the parson of Halkirk.¹ Halkirk reminds me of a story told by Calder, relating to Mr Cumming's incumbency of that parish. "The lettergae, as the precentor was called, was one Tait, gardener in Brawl. This Tait sung so loud, and with such a large open mouth, that a young fellow of the name of Iverach was tempted to throw a stone into it, whereby his teeth were broken and his singing stopped at once, and he himself almost choked. Iverach immediately took to his heels, the service was converted to laughter, two of Tait's sons overtook him, and the scene was closed with a most desperate fight."²

The need for stronger measures to settle Presbyterian authority in the diocese led, as in other parts of the North of Scotland, to the appointment of Commissions of the General Assembly, who were sent to these parts to "purge out" those whom they deemed inefficient ministers.

"Thurso, 3rd May 1698.—The said day the moderator informed the presbytery that it was fitt that they should now see to provide work for the committee coming to visit their bounds, for which it was resolved that the brethren should confer extrajudicially about the affairs of the country, liable to the cognisance of the said Committee, which was accordingly done."

The committee met with the Presbytery, but very soon went over to Orkney, "and returned not till the end of June, after which all the meeting the presbytery hade during the committee's abode was in conjunction with

¹ Henderson, 98.

² Calder, 220.

them, and what was then done is recorded in the minutes of the said committee. They went from this about the 10 of July (1698), with whom Mr William Innes accompanied to Rosse.”¹

The committee occupied themselves just four days. In fact, “upon their arrival in Caithness, they found that both the gentry and people stuck by their old ministers.” No violent measures could be adopted.

Meantime the poor Scotch bishops received no retiring allowances or grants for the confiscation of their small incomes.

In July 1692, James Hamilton, “wryter to their Majesties’ signet, sole and generall collector appointed for uplifting the rents and revenues of the haill archbishopricks and bishopricks and deneries within the Kingdom of Scotland, by commission for 1692, and in time coming; forasmuch as by my abode and residence at Edinburgh, I cannot conveniently attend the uplifting and Ingathering of the rents and revenues belonging to the Bishoprick of Caithness, and haill pertinents of the samen which lyes in distinct shyres and parishes, and is payable by many severall persons,” gives sub-commission to “Mr John Campbell, son to the Laird of Burbreck,” to exercise his rights as to “whatsoever belonging to the said bishoprick of Caithness, and haill pertinents of the samen, whairoff the late bishop of Caithness was in possession at any time bygone, and that for this Instant cropt and year of God, 1692.”²

The “haill rents and revenues” were confiscated to and received by the Crown.

The bishop must have left little or nothing. His income from the bishopric of Caithness was very small, and from his benefice at Dunbar he had to pay an assistant. So we find that in 1712, “Mrs Wood, being in great distress, is allowed four crowns more than her share,”

¹ See also Calder, 194.

² MS., Deed Register, Sheriff Clerk’s Office, Wick.

as a widow, of the Episcopal charity fund at Edinburgh. In 1719, Bishop Wood's daughter was glad to receive "four crowns."¹ As is perfectly well known, some of the dispossessed clergy died of actual starvation.

On 8th August 1698, the Presbytery "resolved, in obedience to ane Act of the Committee, to visit the churches within their bounds, both vacants and supplied by Episcopal Incumbents, and accordingly resolve their next meeting shall be at Cannisbay. Mr Oswald is appointed to preach then and there"—and this proceeding was carried out.

Mr Innes showed a spirit of meekness scarcely to be expected in the circumstances, when a judicature, unacknowledged by the Communion to which he belonged, forced its inquisitorial visits upon him and his flock.

"Cannisbay, Aug. 24, 1698.—The presbytery met. Sederunt, Mr William Innes, moderator; Mr John Monro, minr. at Rhac; and Mr George Oswald, minr. at Dunnet, who, after prayer, proceeded thus:—

"Mr George Oswald preached on 2 Cor. 6 and 1, and was approven.

"The presbytery, having asked the heritors and others convened how they were pleased with the doctrine, life, and conversation of Mr James Innes, their present incumbent, they replied they were well pleased with his doctrine and conversation, and had nothing to object against the samen. Thereafter the presbytery called for the Session registers, and, having maturely considered them, found the same prettie exact in all the essential parts of discipline."

" . . . The presbytery enquired into Stromay, an Island in the Sea, belonging to the said parish, and found they were much neglected by reason of the Dangerous passage to that place, especially in winter, and whereas the Incumbent preached there twice a year, and that in Summer only, the presbytery appointed him to preach there at least four tymes each year." No fault could be detected.

¹ Register Ad. of Charities, Epl. Chest, Edn.

"The Incumbent catechised the parish once each year," and "the poor money" was "prettie well managed, and properly and seasonably distributed." Of Stroma we shall hear more by-and-by.

Then, as now, "Tinkers" gave anxiety. "Some of them were so athiesticall and brutish as to take upon them to baptize their own children." Of these poor people the names were to be given in, and "proceedings taken."

When Puritanism becomes rampant, it is observable that witches and charmers abound. At Wick, October 12, 1698, the Presbytery "being informed likewise that sorcery and witchcraft abound so much in the said parish [of Wick], the Sorcerers banished out of Orkney lurking there, they recommended seriously to the heritors and magistrats to banish all such out of this town and country."

When the first Presbyterian minister of Wick commenced his incumbency, report was made, 31st August 1701, that the parish church was in a bad state, and that workmen must be conferred with "for minding ye roof and glassing the windows." "A cockstool" was also ordered to be made, and even so late as 1722, "Wm. Corner, James Foweller, Myriol Cormack, and Christian Tayler, being all summond and compearing, were charged [before the Session of Wick] with frequenting Mary Chapell the first Sabbath after the new moon, and particularly of being there this day fortnight, and superstitiously bowing and kneeling about the chappel, thereby prophaning the Lord's day." As these folks were but "poor ignorant people," they were let off with a rebuke, but all others were ordered not to go to Mary's Chapel on the Lord's day, on any pretence whatever. The same year, 1722, October 7—"David Petrie Mosse had raised wilful fire last Lord's day by Tying fire to a Cat's Tail, and had sent her among the corns, when she had burnt some and Endangered others." David, having confessed his fault, is ordered to stand at the church door, and then to be "rebuked."¹ But perhaps the greatest

¹ Wick Session Book, MS.

audacity of the evil-doers of Wick was that charged against Agnes Really or Sutherland, in 1710. In her "dittay," article 3rd runs thus:—"Lykewayes you ar Indytit and accused for comeing to the houss of Mr James Oliphant, minister, on ane or other of the nights of November last, and ther did steall out of his Britches ane genzie and some silver when he was asleep, which she cannot deny." Alexander Doull, Bailie of Wick, was also one of her victims. From him she stole "ane pynt and chopen Bottle of Rumm, Nyn table Napkins, ane long muslin gravat."

The "Laird of Ratter" at this time appears to have given the Presbyterian authorities great umbrage. Oswald of Dunnet makes great complaints against him, that he "not only absented himself and famillies from the Ordinances, but also Incouraged his tennents so to do. . . . The Presbytery appoints (11th Feb. 1699) Mr William Innes to write to him in their name, exhorting him to forbear such practices, and also to attend the Ordinances, and to cause his tennents attend them more punctuallie; with Certification that if he will not be more Incouraging to his minister, and desisted not as aforesaid from such wicked practices, he should be represented to the government as a disorderly, wicked person." This probably was John Sinclair, fourth of Rattar, who married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir William Sinclair of Mey.¹

Attempts were made to suppress the Rev. Neil Beaton of Latheron. These were unsuccessful. Beaton was summoned before the Presbytery. He attended at Thurso, July 5, 1699. He produced his Session Register, admitted that he had not as yet administered the Holy Communion in Latheron Church, that he married parties on Sunday, and, *horribile dictu*, "had once danced up and down the floor at a certain occasion." But after this admission—next day—he, as an Episcopal incumbent, declined the jurisdiction of the Presbytery and retired, and "took instruments thereupon." He was suspended immediately. But the

¹ Henderson, 48.

Presbytery found that they had gone rather far, and had to climb down.

Latheron, Oct. 4, 1699.—A petition was given in “by James Sinclair of Lybster and George Sutherland of Forse, in name of the heritors and parochiners of Latheron,” to take off their suspension from Mr Beaton; also they had before them “a letter from some reverend Brethren in the Presbytery of Edinburgh, giveing it as their opinion that it was expedient at the present junctiōne” to restore him; so, for “weightie reasons,” the sentence was suspended.

This high-handed conduct seems to have been prejudicial in other ways. Thurso, Aug. 16, 1699.—“The Moderatour and Mr William Innes being enquired what return they had from my Lord Rhæ anent the Incumbent of Durness, the Moderatour told that my Lord had been at his house, but that the persons present were so violently sett against Mr Neill Beaton’s suspension that he could not insist upon that affair. Mr William Innes told that my Lord Rhæ expressed himself to him that if the presbytery have a suitable and well-qualified person for that paroch, they might proceed against Mr Hugh Munro, Incumbent at Durness, otherwise the parish would be reduced to great straits in baptizing their children, and in their marriages, so that the opinion was that the presbitry might forbear any procedour against their Incumbent untill they should look out a pretty young man for that paroch.” It is probable that Mr Munro, who had been ordained by Bishop Patrick Forbes, 1663, was obnoxious to the Puritan party, his father having been an ardent, devout Presbyterian minister; his predecessor in the same benefice, “who at his entry found the people almost heathen, but his labours had a great success and a large harvest of souls.” Bishop Forbes, we are told, “had a particular regard for his piety and usefulness.”¹

However, Mr Hew Monro died, shortly after, in posses-

¹ Scott, v. 346, 347.

sion of his benefice. The successor, and "pretty young man," was not appointed till 1707.

On 6th Dec. 1699, it was reported that "Mr William Cumming, Incumbent at Halkirk, did baptize without the bounds of his paroch, and that, after he had been severall times prohibited," this was referred as a grievance to the ensuing General Assembly.

The next entry in the Presbytery Register which interests us is one which reveals a new personality. "Thurso, June 5, 1700.—Mr Arthur Anderson, pretended preaching Deacon," is reported for "several irregularities in marrying persons and baptizing children."

At this juncture, a new Commission from the General Assembly visited Caithness and the North. They met with the Presbytery at Thurso, 20th June 1700. The Commissioners were Messrs John Brand, minister of Borrowstoneness; John Sandilands, minister of Dolphinton; James Hart, minister of Ratho; and Alexander Lauder, minister at Mordington. They sat four days. The chief matter brought before them was the "intrusion" of Mr Arthur Anderson. At present, he was residing in Mey. Cited, called, but did not appear; "only there appeared one, Alexr. McKenzie, who produced a paper, signed by him. In this document, Anderson first pleads his state of health as an excuse for not attending the "diet," but if he did attend, he should desire, first of all, the names of those who had libelled him.

"2^o.—I would crave after knowing the Lybeller or Libellers' names, tyme and space for exculpatione, which by the constitute Laws of the Kingdome, in the happie reign of King Charles the Second, of blessed memory, and the quondam Right Honourable Sir George McKenzie of Rosehaugh, his Majestye's discernedly renowned advocate, was allowed to these impeached for treason." He adds that, whatever his sins and shortcomings may have been, "I trust my God hath for that and other very hainous sins and transgressions and iniquities, upon my unfeigned return

to himself by repentance, received me into his mercie and favour, and rests confident will, in and thro' Christ, his merits, mediation and intercession, in a short tyme, receive me into his kingdom and glory, where I shall be free from all aspersions of malevolous and uncharitable wretches, who have in my journey oft marred my comfort, whom I desyre to put in mind, must, ere long, follow me and appear before the impartiall Judge, who will have a vindication of names as of other things, and so you may proceed, decide and determine, either for or against me as ye list, since I trust shortly to be put beyond the reach of malice. That I did aught for filthy lucre's sake, or out of the contempt of the presbytery, but only to put them out of necessity of sinning, I absolutely deny. . . . *Sic Subr.*, Arthur Anderson, late Minr. at Kilmeny." In the evidence taken by the Presbytery, Mr Anderson is said to be an "enemy to presbytery," and "one who spoke frequently against the [Presbyterian] Church Government," but no one could depone that he spoke "against the Civil Government." Anderson frequently visited Stroma, and also St. Margaret's Hope. Innes was still Incumbent at Canisbay, and, we may suppose, allowed these visits. Also, in the "Kirk of Olridge," he married James Dunnet to Elspet Sinclair; he baptized a child to a person of the name of Reid, in Murkle; he married, also, John Sinclair of Forss, to Elizabeth, daughter of John Sinclair of Ratter. But the chief head of offending was that, on one of the days of June 1700, he married David Sinclair of Broynach, to Janet Ewing, at Cairnsburn, near what is now Barrogil Castle, Mey. Elizabeth Munro (Mrs James Horne), Mey, and 'two young lasses' were witnesses to the marriage. John Douglas, mason, Thurso, was said to be also present, but the fear of incurring the statutory fine or imprisonment kept him silent on the subject. . . . Broynach gave the minister a red guinea, unchanged, for his trouble." Their eldest child, which did not long survive, was baptized by Anderson. Broynach and his future wife had refused to undergo the

"discipline" which the birth of their illegitimate son demanded. They were summoned to appear before the Prsbytery, but as they did not answer this requirement, the Presbyterian minister of Olrig, the Rev. William Macbeath, was empowered "to proceed against them, in order to excommunication," then a serious matter indeed, depriving a man of his property. The clergy turned Janet Ewing out of Broynach; and after this sentence, the Sheriff was required to deal with the two parties. They had no money to pay the fines, so poor Janet was drummed through the streets of Thurso, with a paper crown having the inscription of her single offence. "A mob led by two clergymen, began carrying out the sentence, and the point was reached where the scourging had to take place. Broynach could repress himself no longer, and with a primed pistol and drawn sword, he attacked the ribald procession, the ministers the first to flee. He put a plaid around her already stripped back, and conveyed her away with him to his home." These were the circumstances, fit for the Spanish inquisition, under which Broynach got Mr Anderson to marry him to Janet Ewing. Proof of the marriage became important, as Broynach was brother to the Earl of Caithness, and the descendants come into the line of succession. His nephew, "Earl Alexander, left numerous illegitimate sons and daughters," but we are not told that he had to "satisfy discipline," or that their mothers were scourged through the streets of Thurso. The earl, no doubt, was a Presbyterian.¹

It appears that other parties in the parish of Dunnet were "dissenters" from the ministrations of Oswald beside the "Laird of Ratter." On Nov. 6, 1700, "John Broch, in the parish of Dunnet, being appointed to give satisfaction *in sacco* for interrupting the public worship of God in exclaiming against the minister there," refuses to obey.

On 24th March 1703, Oswald waited on "ye Laird of

¹ Caithness Events and the Broynach Earls, by J. Sinolair, 83-92; Henderson, 10; Calder, 194, 195.

Ratter to deall with his conscience anent ye great scandall given by him in absenting not only himself and familie, but also his tenants, from the publict ordinances, who reported that he promised not to hinder his tenants from the public ordinances, but will by no means grant that eitlier himself or familie will repair to ye church." In June Oswald again reports "his intollerable grievance," and that Ratter did "menace" him when, in a spirit of meekness, he reproved him. The moderator and Oswald were desired to try once more what they could do. Ratter then lost his temper, and after denying the Presbytery's authority, "shoved the minister out of his house by the shoulders."

On the 24th Jan. 1705, "the paroch of Cannisbay being vacant by ye decease of Mr James Innes, late Incumbent thereof, ye heritors of ye said parish, addressing ye presbitry for supply, they appoint their brother, Mr Charles Keith, to preach in Canisbay Sabbath come eight days." The tomb of the last Episcopal incumbent of Canisbay may still be seen on the south wall of the churchyard. It bears the following inscription:—"Heir rests the Dust of Mr James Innes, some tyme for 37 years minister of Canusbay, who left his bodi the 24 day of December, in the year of grace 1704, and of his age 67. Coll. ch. 3d, verse 4, 'When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.' M. I. I. I. M. 1705." His wife is buried in Thurso churchyard. "Here lies Body of Jean Munro, spouse to Mr James Innes, minister of the Gospel at Canisbay." (Munro crest on tomb.)

The Rev. James Oswald, the last Episcopal incumbent of Watten, and brother of the Oswald who tried so earnestly to convert the "Laird of Ratter," married Mary, daughter of Richard Murray of Pennyland. He died in possession of his benefice in 1698. In the church of Watten there is a marble tablet with an inscription in Latin to his memory, which is thus translated by Calder:—"Here reposes the dust of James Oswald, the worthy pastor of the church of Watten, a man of pleasant countenance, and of a genius

above what is common ; who possessed a wonderfully happy power of addressing an audience, and who, while he convinced the understanding, also moved the heart ; kind and affable, adorned with sanctity, and all those other virtues which became him as a minister of the Gospel ; a friend of the distressed, and a peacemaker. Hence he had great influence among all parties, both in moulding the minds of the ignorant to prudence, and in reconciling those who were at enmity. He was born 26th January 1654 ; was called to the ministry, 28th December 1682 ; married in 1683, Mary, daughter of Richard Murray, of the honourable family of Pennyland, and died the 4th November 1698. His surviving widow occupied herself in piously educating the children whom he had left, blessed with plenty, and a comfortable residence. She died June 29, 1738, and was buried in the same tomb with her husband. Her two sons, Richard and Alexander, merchants in Glasgow, reared this monument, sacred to the memory of their parents.”¹

APPENDICES TO CHAPTER XIX.

I.—*Memorandum for The Right Rev. Mr Robert Keith.*²

[Dated on the back, 1749 ; probably in the writing of the Rev. James Taylor.]

The shire of Caithness consisted of Ten parishes att the time of the Revolution, and have not been increased since, and the names of the ministers of these parishes att that period were :—

1. Mr Alexr. Gibson, minister of Bower, Arch Dean of Caithness, who was alive in 1692, as I find by his Daughter's certificate of marriage in my hands, but how soon yrafter he died I know not, only I

¹ Calder, 270, 271.

² Original MS., Episcopal Chest, Edinburgh.

am certainly informed he enjoyed his benefice till his death.

2. Mr Neil Bethune, minister of Latheron ; liv'd till after 1715, and died possessed of his Benefice.
3. Mr Wm. Geddes, minister of Wick ; died betwixt Whit. and Michaelmas 1692, as I see by an acct. of stipend pd. by Lord Breadalbane to his widow.
4. Mr James Oswald, minister att Watten ; liv'd several years after 1690, and died possest of his Benefice. His sons, Mrs. Richard and Alexr. Oswald, merchts. in Glasgow, can inform the time of his death.
5. Mr William Cumming, minister att Halkirk ; liv'd till after 1705, and died possest of his Benefice.
6. Mr Robert Tarras, Parson of Olrick ; liv'd till 1699 or 1700, and died possest of his Benefice.
7. Mr James Innes, Parson of Canisby ; liv'd some years after the Revolution, and died possest of his Benefice.

N.B.—None of the above seven, as I am informed, did ever *conform*, but died in the Christian Faith.

8. Mr John Munro of Craigton, minister of Reay ; was so prudent as to conform to the times, and turn'd Presbyterian ; he died about ye year 1719.
9. Mr Andrew Munro, minister att Thurso, as I was informed, turned Presbyterian also, and survived the 1690 several years. Mr Wm. Munro, Bookseller, his son, or Mr Albert Munro of Coull, his Grandson, can give more certain Information of the time of his death, and if he turn'd Presbyterian ; but the one will be apt to contradict the other as to the last of these facts.
10. Mr James Munro, Parson of Dunnet ; soon after the Revolution retired to Ireland, being accus'd of Adultery.

Soon after the Revolution, a Committee of Inquisitors were sent from the Venerable Assembly of the Kirk to Inquire into the lives and conversations of the Clergy, in

this and the Neighbouring Country's, But having upon their arrival in Caithness found that both the Gentry and people stuck by their old ministers, and had no relish for Cant, Hypocrisy, and Nonsense; They therefore thought it most prudent not to proceed to violent measures; and indeed it is highly probable that if Providence had prolonged the lives of their old ministers to this day, Presbytery would have been as little known in Caithness as it is in the New Testament.

II.—*The Diocese of Caithness.*¹

The Right Reverend Dr Andrew Wood, Bishop.

<i>Parishes.</i>	<i>Presbytry.</i>	<i>Comisariot.</i>	<i>Shire.</i>	<i>Clergyman.</i>
Dornock....	Dornock....	Caithness .	Sutherland...	Mr John Rose.
Crieich	Dornock....	Caithness...	Sutherland...	Mr Hugh Rose.
Golspie.....	Dornock....	Caithness...	Sutherland...	Mr Hugh Rose.
Lairg.....	Dornock ..	Caithness...	Sutherland...	Mr John Dempster, d.
Rogort.....	Dornock....	Caithness...	Sutherland...	Mr Walter Rosey, c.
Clein.....	Dornock....	Caithness...	Sutherland.	
Loth	Dornock....	Caithness...	Sutherland...	Mr Wil. Paip, c.
Kildonan..	Dornock....	Caithness...	Sutherland.	
Assint.....	Dornock....	Caithness...	Sutherland...	Mr Alex. Gray, c.
Thursoe....	Thursoe....	Caithness...	Caithness	Mr And. Monro.
Leathern ..	Thursoe	Caithness...	Caithness	Mr Noel Beaton, c.
Durness....	Thursoe....	Caithness...	Sutherland.	
Farr.....	Thursoe....	Caithness...	Sutherland.	
Reay.....	Thursoe....	Caithness...	Caithness	Mr Jo. Munro, xP.
Halkrig....	Thursoe....	Caithness...	Caithness	Mr Wil. Cumming, c-d.
Bowar.....	Thursoe....	Caithness...	Caithness	Mr Alex. Gibson, c-d.
Wattin.....	Thursoe....	Caithness...	Caithness	Mr Ja. Oswald, c-d.
Olrig.....	Thursoe....	Caithness...	Caithness	Mr Rob. Tarras, c-d.
Dunnet....	Thursoe....	Caithness...	Caithness	Mr Ja. Monro.
Wick.....	Thursoe....	Caithness...	Caithness	Mr Wil. Geddes, c-d. '92.
Cannisby ..	Thursoe....	Caithness...	Caithness	Mr Ja. Innes, c-d.

Dornock, vid. No. 1st. [List of Epl. minrs. dep. by Comr. of Estates in May 1689 (Ridpath's "Epl. Innocence," 4to, 1694): —Acquitted by Council—Mr John Rose at Dornock.]

Crieich, vid. No. 1st. [List of Epl. minrs. continued and not called—Mr Hugh Rose at Crieich.]

Golspie, vid. No. 25th. [No particulars of 25; highest num., 22.]

Lairg, vid. No. 1st. [Turned out of the Council.]

Rogart, vid. No. 1st, 2nd. [Continued and not called—Mr Walter Rose at Rogart.]

Loth, vid. No. 2. [List of Epl. minrs. who enjoy benefices, 1710:—Green-shields' Remarks—Mr Wil. Pape at Loth.]

Assint, vid. No. 2. [List of Epl. minrs. :—Mr Gray at Assynt.]

¹ MS., Episcopal Chest, No. 202.

Thurso, vid. No. 26th. [No partic. of 26.]

Latheron, vid. No. 2. [List. of Ep. :—Greenshields as above—Mr Neil Beaton at Latheron.]

Reay, vid. No. [Blank.]

III.—*Tabulation of the Clergy of Caithness at the Revolution, and their subsequent fate, collected from Scott's "Fasti," Part V., &c.*

Bishop Andrew Wood, died minister of Dunbar, 1695.

Dornoch.—John Ross ; demitted, 1691.

Assynt.—Alexr. Gray ; died after 1727 in possession.

Clyne.—James Gray ; Dean of Caithness, "deposed" by Presbyterians after 1688.

Criech.—Hugh Rose ; died in 1726, "deposed" by do., but continued to officiate.

Golspie.—Hugh Rose ; parish vacant, 1689.

Kildonan.—James Hay ; died in possession, 1708.

Lairg.—John Dempster ; " 1705.

Loth.—Hector Paip ; " 1719.

Rogart.—Walter Ross ; " after 1720.

Durness.—Hugh Munro ; " 1698.

Farr.—Donald M'Intosh ; submitted.

Thurso.—John Wood ; deprived, 1690.

Bower.—Alexr. Gibson, Archdeacon ; died in possession, 1692.

Canisbay.—James Innes ; died in possession, 1704.

Dunnet.—James Munro ; ejected for immorality.

Halkirk.—William Cumming ; died in possession.

Latheron.—Neil Beaton ; " 1715.

Odrig.—Robert Tarres ; " 1694.

Reay.—David Monro ; " 1694.

NOTE.—His son, John, received into communion ; died, 1722.

Watten.—James Oswald; died in possession, 1698.

Wick.—Patrick Clunes; „ 1691.

By this it will be seen that the only member who submitted to Presbyterianism was the Rev. D. McIntosh of Farr. The Rev. Andrew Munro of Thurso had already resigned on account of the test, but came back under the act of Parliament.

IV.—(1) *The Rev. John Sinclair, Rector of Camus.*

In the “Murkle aisle” of the old parish church of Thurso is a mural inscription on the north-west wall, in the following terms:—“This is the burial place of James Sinclair of Borlum; and here lyes James Sinclair, his eldest son, and his spouse, Eliz. Innes, who left behind them the Rev. Mr John Sinclair, who was Rector of James, interred in Leckpatrick, nigh Strabane, in Ireland, 1665.” “Here lyes Isobel Sinclair, who was married to the Rev. George Anderson, minister of Halkirk; and Elizabeth Sinclair, married to John Farquhar, Bailze of Thurso; and Margaret Sinclair, spouse to George Sinclair, in Ulgrimbeg.”¹

The Rev. John Sinclair was instituted to the parish of Leckpatrick in 1665, and to Camus in 1668. He died in 1702, and was buried in Leckpatrick churchyard. A monument to his memory was erected by his widow, who was of the Galbraith family, being the eldest daughter of Colonel James Galbraith, who was M.P. for Strabane in the Parliament of 1634. Their descendants still exist in Strabane. The inscription in Leckpatrick church is in Latin; a translation of part of it runs thus:—“Sacred to the memory of the Rev. John Sinclair, of this parish, dedicated by Anna, his widow, descended from the house of Galbraith. . . . He departed from the living, leaving sorrowful friends, more sorrowful children, and a wife most sorrowful of all, in the 52nd year of his age, and 15 March 1702.” Sinclair also held a living in the Diocese of Raphoe. His son is said to have succeeded him at Leckpatrick, having gone through many adventures during the troubles of 1689, when his family were in 'Derry during the siege. A gold seal, with “the Sinclair arms,” brought from Scot-

¹ Henderson, 255 [“James,” a misprint for “Camus.”]

land by the first of these clergymen, is still in possession of a descendant.¹

(2) *The Rev. Robert Sinclair.*

The Rev. Robert Sinclair was second son to William Sinclair of Hoy and Oldfield, by his wife, Katherine Anguson, and brother of William Sinclair, Commissary of Caithness, whose name is attached to the call to the Rev. James Taylor in 1733. He was instituted to the rectory of Bulfen, or Bulvan, in Essex, June 8th, 1722, and died in 1739. No entry of his burial appears in the parish register. A change in the handwriting takes place in the middle of 1738, so that probably he was away from the parish. He appears to have been a widower when he came to Bulvan, since in 1730 he married again. The following entry is found in the parish register:—"1730. Robert Sinclair, Clerk, widower, and Elizabeth Rochester, a single person, of ye parish of Orset, were married ye twenty-eight day of November, by License, by me, John Foulcr, curate." No children appear to have been born to them so far as the registers show.

In 1731, Mr Sinclair disposed Oldfield, Cairdscroft, and Hallowtoft, in Caithness, to William Innes of Sandside.²

¹ Information from Miss Rosabelle Sinclair, Holy Hill, Strabane; the Rev. W. G. Rennison, rector of Leckpatrick, &c.; see also Henderson, 257, 258.

² Henderson, 146, 147; information kindly supplied by Rev. T. A. Teitelbaum, Bulvan Rectory.

CHAPTER XX.

THE REVOLUTION OF 1688 IN SUTHERLAND.

The Dean located in Sutherland—at Clyne—John Gray, Dean, 1625—Descent—Gray Family—No Church Register preserved—John Ross, Parson of Dornoch—his History—Summoned before Privy Council, 1689—Dead before 1713, when his Widow assisted by Episcopal Charity Fund—New Presbytery—Meet at Crieoch—Golspie—Discouraging both there and at Dornoch—"little success"—Schoolmaster not subscribed Confession—No shelter from the rain—Kildonan—Hay dead—No Tradesman would repair Cathedral—Nor Obedience given by Heritors—Hector Pape, Loth—Wears a Surplice till his death—Vestments—Witchcraft at Dornoch—Woman Executed—Charmers—1716—No "Intruders" or Meeting-houses—Kirk of Dornoch still roofless—Gray of Assynt—his History—Declines Presbytery—Ordained by Presbytery to give in his Demission by reason of age—Agrees—but his Wife and Children forcibly prevent him—Stories of Gray—his Daughter—"The red-haired lad."

APPENDIX.—Old Caithness Church Libraries—1. Caithness; 2. Sutherland.

AS Caithness held the Bishop of the Diocese, so Sutherland held the Dean. He was parson of Clyne—near the little town we know now as Brora.

Between 1625 and 1627 Sir Robert Gordon undertook the repair of the parish church of Clyne and several other churches, "in advancing of which work Mr John Gray, dean of Catteynes, and Mr James Gray, thesaurer of Catteynes, were good instruments, and chieffie Mr John Gray, who repaired the church of Clyne upon his own proper cost and charges."¹ This John Gray, son of Gilbert Graye of Snardell, was presented to the deanery by King James VI. in 1608. His son became Provost of Dornoch.²

¹ Orig. Par. Scot., ii. 723, 724.

² Orig. Par. Soot., ii. 617.

Four deans of the name of Gray held the benefice from that time till the Revolution. The last dean, James Gray, a graduate of St. Leonard's College, was admitted prior to 1682, and died in possession of the benefice. The first Presbyterian minister, Eye Mackay, settled in 1697, was deposed in 1701 for adultery and incest.¹

On 25th October 1679, at Dornoch, an assignation is granted by "Mr Ja. Gray, lauffull son to Mr Wm. Gray, minister at Clyne [also dean], Executor Testamentar to the deceased Mr George Gray, and as executor dative decerned and confirmed to the deceased William and George Gray's laufull bairns procreat twixt the said Mr George Gray and Keathren Murray, sometime his spous." ²

Unfortunately no church register has been preserved of a date previous to the Revolution in Sutherlandshire, so we have little information in regard to the state of the Church and clergy in that division of the diocese.³

The Rev. John Ross, parson of Dornoch at the Revolution, was previously minister of Latheron, in Caithness, and appears to have been ordained by Bishop Patrick Forbes in 1663. He was summoned before the Privy Council, 7th November 1689, for not reading the Proclamation of the Estates, and not praying in terms thereof; but, having shown that the proclamation was not forwarded to the Sheriff-Depute, nor Clerk of Sutherland, and declaring that he had no scruple to read it, and that he had prayed for William and Mary, he was acquitted. He, however, subsequently demitted in 1691.⁴ He had possessed the confidence of the Church, for at the Canongate, Edinburgh, on 10th May 1713, we find from the MS. Register of Charities of the then disestablished Church, when "the list was read, and upon the death of Mr John Ross at Dornock, his relict was put in ye 2d class of widows in regard she had a numerous family." On 3rd

¹ Scott, v. 331, 332. ² MS., Reg. Deeds, Wick Sh. Clerk's Office.

³ Burns, Benefice Lectures, 211, 264. ⁴ Scott, Fasti, v. 328.

March 1719, we find that "Mrs Ross, in ye 2d class of widows, dead, to be expunged."¹

The first minute of the new Presbytery of Sutherland is dated at Criech, May 6, 1707. Of Golspie in the same year it is reported that "the generality of the people possessed an external subjection to the ordinances," but that others needed reproof, and so called in, encouraged and rebuked. But the Lord's Supper could not be administered, "by reason of many difficulties he [the Presbyterian minister] laboured under."

Presbyterian Church matters at Dornoch were equally discouraging in 1708—"but few sit in session" with the minister; and he had to regret "that the gentlemen of the Parish gave so little attendance" at divine service, "and give little concurrence in the exercise of discipline." Little success of the [Presbyterian] gospel in the parish. Even "the schoolmaster had not yet subscribed the Confession of Faith," and the church being almost useless, the meeting-house where worship was performed was in such a bad state that the "minister many a time" was "wett from top to toe" by the rain.

On 12th August 1708, it was intimated that the parish of Kildonan "was now vacant by the death of Mr James Hay, who was incumbent there." So Mr John Robertson is appointed to preach there, and declare the church vacant.

No tradesman would offer to repair Dornoch Cathedral, and in 1709 no obedience was given by the heritors in regard to it, neither would they in that year attend the Presbytery as to the removing of the minister. Same year "weighty grievances" in the parish of Kildonan must be removed before a minister can be settled there.

In 1712 we have mention of the Rev. Hector Pape, incumbent of Loth. He was still officiating, as he was required to intimate a notice as to a delinquent from Tain "from the pulpit of Loth on a Lord's day after sermon." Mr Pape was admitted before 13th July 1682, and survived

¹ MS., Epl. Chest, Edin.

till 15th Jan. 1719. "He was the last that appeared in the pulpit clothed in a surplice."¹ We scarcely hear of such a vestment being in use at that date, but that such were used may be seen from the portrait of Bishop Honyman, Orkney, who wears a surplice, bands and a black scarf.² Gowns were worn. In a list of effects belonging to the Rev. Adam Gibsone, brother of the Dean of Caithness, one item is "a gowne, appreciated at £30."³

Mr Pape was succeeded by a Presbyterian, named Robertson. "It was during the ministry of this gentleman that the last unhappy woman that suffered for witchcraft in Scotland was executed. She was burnt at Dornoch, and the common people entertain very strong prejudices against her relatives to this day."⁴ The spot in Dornoch is still pointed out where this cruel and barbarous execution took place. The Rev. Alexander Pope, minister of Reay, and the translator of "Torfæus" and author of other works, a man distinguished in his time, was a son of the parson of Loth.⁵

But other "charming" practices came under notice. At Golspie, Oct. 20, 1713, before the Synod of Sutherland, a report was made that "some persons when sick, or in providence sustaining loss of cattle, do oblige suspect persons to meet and swear on the Bible, or on Iron, that they bear them no ill-will, or are the cause of their sufferings." They are cited to appear the next Lord's day "to give their oath fasting."

At Dornoch, 15th May 1716, "the Presbytery had presented to them by the clerk the references from the Synod to this Presbytery. As to the 1st of which, that they inquire into the behaviour of the Episcopall Incumbents, intruders, and meeting houses preachers, to commence with the utmost expedition lybells against them, and to send south a particular account of them. The Presbytery accordingly did appoint the severall Brethren to inquire into the behaviour of these Episcopall incumbents and make

¹ Scott, v. 341. ² See it in vol. iii. of my Orkney History.

³ MS., Skaill Charter Chest. ⁴ Old Stat. Act., vi. 331. ⁵ Scott, v. 367.

reports; and as for intruders and meeting house preachers, they have none among them." Reported also that the kirk of Dornoch still "wanted a roof, that the preacher, from wind and rain, was often unable to open the Bible for lecture or text."

We now come to the sad last scene of the old established Episcopacy in the diocese.

The Rev. Alexander Gray was admitted prior to 1682. He was "an eminent classical scholar, and speaking with fluency the foreign languages of the day, was selected as travelling governor to John, Lord Strathnaver [son of the Earl of Sutherland], when he made the tour of Europe."¹ On the 22nd January 1718, at a Presbytery meeting held at Dornoch, it was reported that Colin Mackenzie and Mary Guir, from Lairg, had been married by Mr Gray. He was cited three times to appear before the Presbyterian tribunal, but declined to do so. The Presbytery thereupon resolved to hold a visitation of the parish of Assynt. This took place on the 7th August 1718. "Mr John Mackay reported that he gave timeous advertisement of this visitation by his letter to Mr Alexr. Gray, Incumbent at Assint, to that effect, and the said Mr Alexr. being interrogat if he had advertised the parish of this visitation, answered that he did.

"Mr Alexr. Gray, Incumbent of Assint, and the elders, heritors, and parishioners being called, compeared only Kenneth Mackenzie of Achienty-donald.

"Mr Alexr. Gray being required to give in his demission, seeing by reason of his age and indisposition of body he is rendered incapable to goe about the duties incumbent on a minister To which the said Mr Alexr. answered that upon condition of this presbiterie granting their undoubted security to him for the sum of 300 merks, payable to him at the Term of Mertimas, 1719 years, he would give in his demission Mertimas next, to which proposal the presbetry agreed, and craved of the said Mr Alexr. to subscribe this

¹ Scott, v. 329.

minute, which he was willing to do, had not his wife and children come in in a furious manner and pulled him out by the shoulders, and by no means would allow him to continue longer with the presbitry.

"The presbitry, considering this affair, do refer the further consideration thereof to their next meeting for business." It is said that the "only duty he performed latterly was that of solemnizing marriages and baptizing in bed." He died after 18th May 1727.¹

It is said that when Lord Strathnaver became Earl of Sutherland, he and his Countess went through the country, and arriving at Assynt in spring, when they got near the church, saw a man in a very dishevelled condition, working like a farm labourer, having long hair hanging down. The earl asked if this was Mr Gray, his old friend and tutor. He answered, "Yes, my lord." On the earl expressing his astonishment at his condition, the old minister is said to have replied, "You sent me to live among the nout (cattle), and I'm become one of themselves."²

"Instances of longevity:—Mrs Christian Gray (daughter of the Reverend Alexander Gray, the late learned and worthy Episcopal parson here), died at the age of 100 years at least. The narrator saw and often conversed with her for one or two years after his admission, in the year 1765. She retained the memory of everything of importance that came within her knowledge to the very close of her life."³

"Eminent men:—The narrator should have mentioned at the first a gentleman whom he never saw, but heard of his character, and that was the Reverend Mr Alexander Gray, the last Episcopal parson here. He, by all accounts, was an eminent classical scholar. He could fluently speak the European languages of his day, for which reason he was preferred as travelling governor to John, Earl of Sutherland, when his Lordship made the tour of Europe.

¹ Scott, v. 329, 330.

² Told to writer by the late Rev. Dr Grant of Dornoch.

³ Old Stat. Acct. (of Assynt), xvi. 190.

It is said the Highlanders in friendly conversation called him "An-Feal-a-roy," *i.e.*, the red-haired Lad." ¹

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XX.

Old Caithness Church Libraries.

The Church Registers preserve lists—

1.—That of Caithness.

The following items are interesting :—

St. Bernard, Opera, 1576.
 St. Cyprian, 1564.
 Bellarmine, 1596.
 Davenant, Bp., on Collossians, 1627.
 Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, 1670.
 Burnet on the 39 Articles.
 Origen Contra Celsum, 1677.
 Four copies of Leighton's Prælectiones, 1701.
 Catalogue of Books in Biblio. Bod. 1620.
 Lloyd on Episcopacie.
 Dodwell's Cypriania Dissertationes, 1684.
 Lactantius, Opera.
 Hermes Trismegistus, 1650.
 Canons of Council of Trent, 1587.

2.—Sutherland, Presbytery of Dornoch.

A preparatory office for the Communion, 1674.
 Church Catechism expounded.
 Ashton's six small treatises.
 Davenant, Bp. in Ep. Collos. Camb. 1630.
 Allan and Kettlewell's Select Discourses, 1703.
 Hammond's Practical Catechism, 1701.
 Leighton on 1 St. Peter.

¹ Old Stat. Acct. (Assynt), xvi. 204.

CHAPTER XXI.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE ACT OF TOLERATION.

Latheron—Beaton dies before 13th April 1715—Presbytery's Man obliged to Preach in Churchyard—Synod on Stroma—Kennedy—Sir Alexander Mackenzie—Officiates as Reader—Reported to Synod—Uses Book of Common Prayer—Long Letter of Abuse—Synod Petitions against Toleration—Church Crushed and Oppressed—Toleration Bill introduced into Parliament—Passed by both Houses—Provisions—Bitterly Opposed by Presbyterians—Prayer-Books sent from Oxford—Ulster “signifies” that he was Married by Barkly in Buchan—Barkly Incumbent at Peterhead—his History—James Lyon—Visits Wick—James Lesly—Visits Caithness—in Canisbay—John Gordon Officiates, 1720—Presbytery to Apprehend him—Sinclair of Stemster “disaffected”—Sutherland—Visited by Rev. Alex. Mackenzie, Chaplain to Earl of Cromarty—Officiates in Sutherland by “the Liturgie.”

IN the Presbyterian Synod Record of Caithness it is noted, July 24, 1710:—“Latheron is sixteen miles long and six in breadth, needs one school in Clyth, and one at Dumbeath; here is ane Episcopall incumbent called Mr Neill Beatoun.”

Presbytery Record of Caithness, 13th April 1715:—“The presbytery, finding that the Paroch of Latheron is vacant by the death of the late Incumbent, Mr Neill Beaton, did therefor appoint supplies for that paroch.” But a report is given on 17th June 1715, that “the last day Mr Sutherland was there he found the church doors barred, and was obliged to preach in the churchyard.” Sir James Sinclair, who says he is patron, had blocked up the doors, but desired to have a conference. Two ministers are

to go and demand the keys of the church. Lord Glenorchy also claimed the right of presentation.

On July 14, 1710, the Presbyterian Synod notes that "the isle of Stroma, in the said parish [of Canisbay], a mile in diameter, in which are thirtie families and ane hundred catechisable persons." Reference has already been made to the difficulty of serving this island, and the efforts made by Davidson, Innes, and Arthur Anderson to help its religious needs.

In 1687, John Kennedy, elder, of Stroma, conveyed the whole wadset lands to his brother-in-law, Sir Alex. Mackenzie, son of Bishop Mackenzie of Orkney, who in 1713 disposed the Netherton of Stroma to his nephew, Murdoch Kennedy. About 1721 the lands were acquired by William Sinclair of Freswick.¹

On August 6, 1706, it was reported to the Synod that, probably after the death of Mr Innes, Sir Alexander Mackenzie had taken upon him to "read the Book of Comon Prayer, explain Scriptures, and preach," both in Caithness and Orkney.

The following letter illustrates this affair:—Backed "copie of a letter from the Presbitery to Sr. Alexr. McKenzy, 1706":—"It being represented to the presbytery that you are not only in judgment and persuasion ane enemy to the government and constitution of this church, But also irregular in your practice, maddling with and usurping such parts and duties of the pastoral office as you have neither call nor warrant for, and thereby diverting and withholding the people of Stroma from attending the Lawful publick assemblies of God's people, and withal practising upon the judgments and consciences of such as you have interest in or are any way obnoxious to you to make such as otherwise well disposed to dislike and turn their backs upon the publick established worship, and that you make it your business to mar all publick pious works in the parish of your residence and concern, all which are things

¹ Henderson, 329; see also Forbes of Waterton, 55 *et seq.*

impious and unwarrantable and inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity, to which we hope you are no enemy, but also lyable to severe censure, therefore the Presbytery, for preventing the effects of such disorderly courses, have recommended to me to signifie this much of their desire to you, that henceforth you forbear allowing or entertaining any publick meetings or conferences of People from other families to your own on the Lord's Day, or having any publick discourses to Them, and that none within your family who have been frequenters of ordinances be imposed upon to abstract or refrain them, and you being yourself in your private capacity orderly and regularly, forbearing what may hinder the success of the Lawful ministry established in your parish, or mar good endeavours for promoting publick and pious undertakings. This we desire in the spirit of meekness to entreat of you, as you would consult both your own peace and ours. If this, our admonition, be slighted, or you proceed further in this manner, we assure you we will not fail to make report of the matter to the higher judicatories of this Church, by whome you may expect to be represented to the State, and proceeded agst. as a contemner of authority." ¹

In 1716, the Synod desire to represent to the General Assembly "the sad effects of the late Toleration, and concurr in petitioning to have the same redressed."

Crushed and oppressed in every way by the overwhelming political powers given to the Presbyterian body, those adhering to the clergy of the disestablished church resolved to make an effort for freedom and toleration. A bill for this purpose was introduced into the House of Commons in the year 1712, and passed that house by a large majority. The House of Lords agreed to it with some amendments, and it received, on the 3rd of March, the royal assent, though a very urgent petition was presented against it by the General Assembly. By the Act it was declared to be "free and lawful for all those of the Episcopal

¹ Orig. MS., Epis. Chest, Edin.

Communion in that part of Great Britain called Scotland, to meet and assemble for the exercise of divine worship, to be performed after their own manner by pastors ordained by a Protestant bishop, and who are not established ministers of any church or parish, and to use in their congregation the Liturgy of the Church of England, if they think fit, without any let, hindrance, or disturbance from any person whatsoever." The Act of 1695, against irregular baptisms and marriages, was also repealed. But oaths to the government and prayers for the royal family were required. It was most unwise of the ministers of the Established Church, and also most uncharitable, to oppose this reasonable measure of toleration.¹ This Act, and the kind reception the clergy received from Queen Anne, led to further efforts for the introduction of liturgical services. The University of Oxford, and many well-disposed members of the Church of England, furnished thousands of prayer-books for the use of the members of our communion in Scotland. Nearly 20,000 are said to have been sent down in the course of two years.² But before this time, its regular use had begun in the north, at Inverness, Elgin, and Aberdeen.

One of the first results reported in Caithness from the passing of the Toleration Act was that on May 1, 1717, "Ulbster signified that he was trulie married by a curate, or Episcopal minister, named Barkly, at the house of the Bottome, in Buchan, in the presence also of two Episcopal ministers."

Ulbster was then residing at Brims, and the Court of Inquisition ordered a visit to be made thither, in order that the certificate of marriage might be called for, and exhibited thereunto.

The "Mr Barkly" referred to was the incumbent of Peterhead. He was one who had the utmost courage of his opinions, and was turned out of his cure in 1695 for protesting against the General Assembly's Commission and

¹ Grub, iii. 363 *et seq.*

² Grub, iii. 368.

Nonjurant opinions. He, however, gained access again, and but for his complying with the royal cause in 1715, might have continued to occupy the parish church. But after his "deposition," he "continued to perform divine service to such of his flock as adhered to his ministry, in a house in the west side of the Longate."¹ It was while there officiating in 1716 that he married "Ulbster."

In the year 1715, the Rev. James Lyon, who then had charge of the church folks in Kirkwall, visited Wick. He assisted at the proclamation of "the Pretender" at the cross there in January of that year.² Caithness was also visited after this time by the Rev. James Lesly, formerly incumbent of Evie and Rendall, in Orkney. In 1719, he is found in the parish of Canisbay, baptizing children and generally assisting the members of the church. Mr Lesly had been a confessor for the Church, for in 1716 he was imprisoned in Kirkwall Tolbooth for celebrating marriages, and taking part in the enterprise of 1715. He was still alive in 1721.³

On the 29th June 1720, at a Synod meeting at Kirkwall, "whilk day there was transmitted from the committee for overtures, and to the Synod, a representation by the presbytery of Caithness, anent Mr John Gordon, sometime schoolmaster at Dunnett there, who having been out of the countrey for many years, and particularly engaged in the late Rebellion at Shereff Muir, and become a vagrant, scandalous Beggar, came the last year into the bounds of the presbytery of Caithness, pretending that he hade Ordination as a minr. of the Gospel, hade taken upon him to baptize and marry, and scandalous persons and persons disaffected to the government in Church and State have run to him and taken the Benefits of these Church privileges from him." The Judicatory were most anxious to capture Mr Gordon, "to secure him untill he give sufficient evidence of his being an ordained minister"; and if he

¹ Scott, vi. 633; Constn. of St. Peter's Chapel, p. 1, head 4.

² My Hist. of Ch. in Orkney, 86. ³ My Hist. of Ch. in Orkney, 48, 122.

can't be apprehended, to report him to the Commission of the General Assembly. Moreover, the Presbytery design to proceed against the persons who had called for baptism and marriage at his hands, "or any the like." Gordon was not captured. Was he the person of the same name who was clergyman at Elgin? ¹

Under date 1723, Wodrow mentions in his "Analecta" ² that the third daughter of Sir Andrew Muir of Thornhill, Provost of Edinburgh, married "one, Mr Sinclair, Laird of Stempster, a gentleman that has a considerable fortune in Caithness, but is not well affected to our government, either in Church or State."

In the county of Sutherland, visits were paid by the Rev. Alexander Mackenzie, "late chaplain to the Earl of Cromarty, and late meeting house keeper in New Tarbat, in the parish of Kilmuir Easter." He had a wide district, for in this year, 1717, we find him "preaching and baptizing in the town of Chanonrie." He began his service at New Tarbat in 1715. He was an ardent supporter of the "Prince," and expressed his joy at his arrival. "I thank God he hath heard my prayer; for I was praying for his coming." So much respected does Mackenzie appear to have been, among all sorts and conditions of people, that the officer who sought to apprehend him "could not procure witnesses to attest his laying on the summons." ³ The Presbytery of Dornoch, on 15th May 1717, gave, amongst their instructions to their Commissioners to the General Assembly, referring to Mr Mackenzie, to ask what they shall do in his case, and that "the commissioners apply for the Assembly's advice, how to behave with persons who had children baptized by a Presbyterian minister, and from one who did officiat by the Liturgie of the Church of England, if they should apply to a presbyterian minister for baptism."

¹ Church in Moray, 98 *et seq.* ² iii. 74.

³ Bishop Forbes and Ch. in Ross, 98, 99.

CHAPTER XXII.

TAYLOR AND LONGMUIR.

Robert Keith—Appointed Bishop—His History and Consecration—James Taylor—History from 1722—Lerwick—Old Meldrum—Called to Thurso—Copy of original Call—List of Signatures—Correspondence of Taylor and Keith, 1734-1739—Site of Taylor's Meeting-house—Plan of adjoining Properties—Grove Lane—Account of conterminous Proprietors—Further Notes on Taylor's Meeting-house by old People in Thurso—Old Title-Deeds—Taylor's House or Parsonage in Grove Lane—Good Templar Hall erected on site of this—Woodwork—Candlestick found in the ground—William Longmuir of Wick—Native of Grange—Account of pre-Revolution Church—Customs there—One of the Clergy of Edinburgh.

THE Right Reverend Robert Keith, a native of Kincardineshire and a graduate of Aberdeen, was consecrated at Edinburgh, on 18th June 1727, by Bishops Miller, Rattray, and Gadderar, having been previously ordained in 1710 and 1713 deacon and priest by Bishop Haliburton, the evicted Bishop of Aberdeen. Bishop Keith was a near relative of the noble family of Marischal, and a historical writer of great diligence and ability. His "History of the Affairs of Church and State in Scotland" at the Reformation period is esteemed for the immense collection of original papers with which it is enriched, while his "Catalogue of the Scottish Bishops down to the year 1688" has been both popular and useful. In 1733 he became Bishop of Fife, and in 1743 succeeded Bishop Rattray as Primus of the disestablished Church. At the consecration he was entrusted with the superintendence of the extensive district of Caithness, Orkney, and the Isles. Though chosen to be

Bishop of Fife in 1733, he continued for a considerable period to perform ecclesiastical duties for the north, probably as Primus, *sede vacante*.

Mr James Taylor, who in the year 1722 had been "engaged by the deceast Arthur Nicolson of Lochend for educating his children, and that before his entering into holy orders, he continued in the capacity of Pedagogue during the said Lochend's lifetime and to the 12th Oct. 1725. About the beginning of Aprile (1726), Mr Taylor went to Edr., where he continued till the 10th of August next, during which time he went through such a course of examination and Trials as is usual for candidates for the Sacred Function, and was first canonically Diaconate, and then Presbyterate, by the Right Reverend Father in God, Dr John Fullarton, Bishop of Edr., who at the desire of some well-disposed gentlemen in Zetland, ordered Mr Taylor to return to that County to minister in Holy Things to all such as should join themselves to the Catholic Communion there." Mr Taylor left Lerwick 10th July 1729. He next appears at Old Meldrum, but had removed to Thurso under the authority of Bishop Keith in the summer of 1733. He had been engaged at Peterhead by "Mr George Young, surgeon" in Thurso, and after six weeks' trial, agreed to settle there to minister to the people in sacred things.

The original call has been recovered. This most interesting document is now for the first time published, and we owe its discovery to the diligence of Mrs Sinclair of Barrock, to whom the writer and the reader are under obligations for many of the historical items in connection with this history :—

"REVEREND SIR,—You having, according to your agreement with Mr George Young, Surgeon in Thurso, upon the Eight day of May Last, at Peterhead, come to this country with Bishop Keith's allowance to minister to us hereto subscribeing and several oysrs concerned, in this neighbourhood, in Sacred things, for the space of Six weeks (as was stipulated) and more; and haveing likewise Engaged, that, if we were after tryal made mutually satisfied with

one another, you would, upon Security of Suitable Encouragement, make an Annual agreement with us To perform the Dutys of the Holy Ministry among us. We Do acknowledge That we are entirely satisfied with your Performances and Demeanour since you came to this Country ; And, Therefore, wee do hereby Earnestly call, Invite, and Beseech you To take upon you and accept of the care and inspection of us and all other Good People in our Vicinity, who shall Concurr with us in this so good and necessary work, as the Spiritual Pastor and Watch man of our Souls ; and wee do faithfully Engage To pay all due obedience to your Ghostly administrations, to submit ourselves to your spirituall authority, To honour and Reverence your Sacred Character as a Lawfull Ambassador of the Lord Jesus, and hereby we Doe Likewise promise to secure and provide for you a reasonable and competent subsistence ; and to support and concur with you to the best of our power in every thing that can be promotive of the common interest of our holy Religion and the good of the Church, and to do our best to make your Labours effectuale and your life comfortable, so praying for the Divine Assistance upon your Labours, and our good Designs, wee have signed these presents att Thurso upon the twenty fifth day of August one thousand seven hundred and thretty three years, and we are, Reverend Sir, Your most humble Servants—William Sinclair. Ben. Williamson, Alex. Sinclair, William Sinclair, Pa. Doull, James Sinclair, Ja. Sinclair, Richard Murray, Ja. Sinclair, Ben. Doull, J. Campbell, Geo. Young. Key to Signatures to requisition Mr James Taylor, 25 Aug. 1733 :—James Sinclair, Bart., 3d of Mey ; Ja. Sinclair, son of above, 4th of Mey ; Richard Murray of Clairden and Castlehill, James Sinclair of Holburn Head and Forss, William Sinclair of Freswick, Ben. Williamson of Banniskirk, Alex. Sinclair of Barrock, William Sinclair of Rattar, Patrick Doull of Oldfield, Thurso ; Ben. Doull, Commissary of Caithness ; Jas. Campbell, Sherif Clerk, and of Lochend ; Geo. Young, Surgeon in Thurso."

"THURSO, 14th January 1734.

"RIGHT REVEREND,—Your favour of the 8th of November I received from Mistress Jean Morray upon the 16th of December last ; and shall be careful to follow your Fatherly Admonitions with great Exactness : and endeavour (according to my poor ability) to become all Things to all Men in St. Paul's sense : and to observe that great Apostle's Rules, viz. :—That the Servant of the Lord must not strive ; but be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach, patient in instructing those who oppose themselves : holding fast the faithful Word, as he has been taught, that he may be able by sound Doctrine both to exhort and convince the Gainsayers. In doing which I may humbly hope for the Divine concurrence, and the Benefit of my Saviour's Intercession.

"Nothing less than insuperable Necessity shall hinder me from giving all the Assistance to Mr Longmoor, and the people he ministers to, when they apply to me for that End, that can be reasonably demanded. But I cannot with safety communicate any Secret or weighty Affair to him, because he can conceal nothing.

"We are lately informed by a Gentlemen in Edinburgh who has many Relations here, That some of our Bishops are designing to

advance some Presbyters to the same dignity with themselves, and that there will be a Consecration for that End very soon ; and he has earnestly urg'd that all the Gentlemen of our Communion in this Country may draw up a Deed of Election, in conjunction with Mr L——r and me, for Mr H——r at L——th, whom they do all very much affect, and an Address to Bishop Freebairn to consecrate him, and then assyn him Caithness for a Portio Gregis, and I have been importuned to join, hand over head, to this new and rash proposal : which I absolutely refus'd, till we should acquaint your Reverence therewith, and have your advice, whether you be to retain or resign your Episcopal Relation to us, and if the last, how we may best repair that Loss. If that worthy Presbyter, who, I doubt not may richly merit the great Commendations that are heap'd upon him by our Northern Friends, and several others, shall be, in a regular Canonical way, after he is dignified with a Mitre, appointed to succeed you here, I shall gladly yield him all reasonable and dutiful Submission, tho' I have not the Happiness of his Acquaintance : and have much Reason to believe, That he will greatly disdain to climb to that Eminency by the Scaffolds of a violated Constitution : But I need not fear 'twill in the least suffer, while we are blest with such prudent, discrete, and watchful superiours, who will certainly be (as they still have been) most careful to prevent all uncanonical and temerarious Innovations. 'Tis therefore intreated that your Reverence may honour me with a Return, containing your Thoughts about the above weighty Affair, for as 'twould be highly undutiful, so would it be egregiously stupid, to offer to elect any other Person for my Superior, till I shall be informed that you have resyned, for I have no reason to desire a Change.

"I wish your Reverence, your good Lady, and Children, this and many succeeding years. I begg your apostolical Benediction ; and, with very great Veneration, am, Right Reverend, Your most humble and affectionate Servant and Son,

JA. TAYLOR.

"P.S.—This affair is, by the Edr. Gentleman and several Persons of his correspondence here, to be carried on (it seems) with utmost secrecy and Celerity, and, therefore, I will be impatient to hear from you how I shall determine myself. Mr Longmoor came from Wick to commune with me about the said matter, and Sign'd a Letter together with me to be sent to your Reverence, but within 2 or 3 days he revock'd, and desired that It. might be suppressed."

Addressed :—"To The Right Reverend Mr Robert Keith, att his Lodgings in the Canongate, Edr."

"R. R.,—We are favoured with a letter from Mr Symors,¹ att the Bp. of Edinr.'s Desire, to forward a Deed of Election in favour of Mr Harper as Bp. of Caithness, wherewith we expect yor Rev. will concur, in Respect your opportunitie and habit of Body Encourages you not to favour us wt. a visit, wch. is of Indispensible necessity to us, If you Encline to maintain your Relation. But yor Lop. being

¹ This is probably the same person who is mentioned in Henderson's "County Families of Caithness."

oyrwise provided, from Regard to the Interest of the Church, we hope ye'le forward that good work and Dispencc with our Obedience, yt. we may, in a Regular manner, proceed to the Election of our most worthy friend and beloved Broyr. The Laity, wherever he has served or been heard of, are all in his Interest, and I'm convinced no Clergieman acquainted with him, that Regards the Interest of the Church, will oppose his promotion. And since your Reverence has never favoured us with your presence, nor, for ought we know, enclines it, I hope ye'le forward our Interest in being Instrumental to provide us of a head, wtout qch. our Body must languish. I hope your Rev. will not mistake me as fond of a change, but rayr. zealous for the advancement of our suffering Moyr.

"I wish your Lop. a happy New Year, beg the continuence of your prayers, and am your humble servt. and most obedient son,

" W. L[ONGMUIR.]

" Wick, 14 Jany. 1734.

"To the Right Rev. Mr Robert Keith, To Mr Symor's care."

"RIGHT REVEREND,—Your Letter of the 31st of January I received about eight days since, and am very glad that you was so well pleas'd with the Contents of my last to you, and that it met with such acceptance from good Bp. Gillan, whom I presume to remember with great Affection and Esteem, and whose good Graces I earnestly affect, and will not be insensible of his kind Offices.

"After perusing Mr Symmer's Letter to Barack (who is now at Edinburgh), I immediately suspected that that whole Desyn had at first been form'd, and was to be set forward by some clavicular and unwarrantable means, because there was no mention made of your Reverence in it, and also such uncommon Secrecy and Expedition required. And I imparted some of the Reasons of my jealousy to Mr L——r, who was so far satisfied with them that (as I hinted in the Post Script of my Last to you) he, in Conjunction with me, sign'd a Letter to inform you of that project, and to crave your Advice; and much applauded the Tenor of it; but within four Days thereafter he wrote me an Epistle desiring that it might be suppressed; for he was by that time, he said, fully assur'd that Mr H——r's Caithness admirers would soon have him consecrate, whether we concurred with or opposed them; and, besides, he zealously us'd his utmost Interest with the most of his acquaintances to get a Deed of Election drawn up for Mr H——r, and endeavoured to persuade them that I was resolutely to oppose that Gentleman's promotion, and thereby dissappoint them of the hugeous satisfaction they had conceived to themselves from it; which fallacious Story, tho' many of the Gentlemen who are, some months ago, sufficiently acquaint with his weakness, gave no credit to it, met wth. enough from some few. I'm sorry to trouble your Reverence with this ungrateful Relation of his Inconstancy and Imprudence, and hope you'll think it proceeds from my hearty Concern for ye Church's Interest, and not from any Pleasure I have to publish his Indiscretions, which have already been of very bad Consequence to our common Cause among those with whom he is most conversant. I have frequently offered him my best advice, tho' to no purpose; and sincerely wish that his Superiour's may meet with better success.

But I have too much cause to suspect that his overweening opinion of his own efficiency will be proof against the most prudent and necessary Admonitions.

"Your Reverence is kindly pleas'd to acquaint me that you will signify your Resolutions to me before you Resyn your Relation to this part of your District, and that you desire and order me not to meddle any further in the late new fashion'd project. I have for some years desired to be under your conduct ; and, since I have Possession of that satisfaction, 'twould be a very sensible Grief to me to be depriv'd of it, and your Desire and Order shall be by me faithfully obey'd.

"I have not brought my wife to this country, nor do I purpose to bring her till Whitsunday next, if even then, because this is an age wherein a wise man ought to try for some considerable time before he trust ; which piece of caution I hope to be capable sufficiently to account for to your Reverence.

"Tis earnestly intreated that you'll favour us from Time to Time with your Paternal counsel and necessary admonitions. I begg the Benefit of your Apostolic Benediction, and with just veneration am, Rt. Reverend Father, Your most affte. Son and much obliged Servant,

"JA. TAYLOR.

"Thurso, 25 Feb. 1734."

[To Bp. Keith.]

"RIGHT REVEREND FATHER,—By yours of the 22nd past I am informed of the Legacy left by Mrs Pyncomb to our Suffering Clergy, and how it is to be disposed of : which I shall communicate to Mr Longmoor with the first occasion, and since we are desired to inform you how our shares thereof may be most conveniently transmitted to us ; Please to pay mine to Mr James Weems at ye gral. Postoffice, Bearer hereof, for which you have the Desired Receipt here enclosed.

"If you take the Trouble to enquire for John Dougal (a very discrete young man), who writes in the Exchequer, he will easily inform you how Mr Hunter's Proportion may be most conveniently transmitted to Zetland.

"Your Reverence will have the Goodness, I hope, to allow me to acquaint you that in the Month of January 1733 (or thereabouts), which was six months before I was disengaged from my charge in Old Meldrum, on Mr — Deuchars, a Clergyman in Barbados, left £5000 Sterling to the Suffering Clergy there in ye Diocess of Aberdene, to be divided among them in equal shares. And I never could suspect that any man would be so void of common Equity and Christain Charity as to dispute my having as just a Title to it as any of the Legatees. Yet, I have been acquainted by a very worthy Person in that Diocess that there are desyns to bamboozle me out of my Proportion, for which, I'm very confident, the least shadow of Reason can not be pretended ; but I am not ignorant what prompts some men to oppose my Interest in this affair. God forgive them.

"I hear by good authority that, That Money was at Edr. some week ago, and was soon expected at Aberdene, where, 'tis said, it will be distributed. If I durst begg of your Reverence to write in my

Favours to Bp. Dunbar (who was not of that Diocese when Mr Deuchars made his will), it might be of considerable use to me, and preventing Expence and Trouble in using the ordinary means to expose some men's sinister Designs, for going Cross to the Testator's will. Your advice on the matter will both benefit and determine me. But I'm hopeful your Paternal affection, and seconding me, will carry my point through against all opposers.

"It will be most acceptable to me to hear from you as oft as your convenience can allow. I begg the Countenance of your apostolical Benediction; and with the most profound Respect and all possible Duty, am, Right Reverend Father, Your most obedient and most humble and affectionate Servant and Son,

"JA. TAYLOR.

"Thurso, 3rd December 1734"

"I hear your Reverence has published the I. V[ol.] of your History, and that it meets with general acceptance. I want to know at what price 'tis purchased."

"RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,—The Sensible Sympathy and Fellow-feeling with me in my present difficult situation, your Paternity was pleased to signify in your last wellcome Letter to me of the Twenty-second December last, has given no small encouragement to my poor Endeavours, and will certainly prompt me more vigorously to exert myself to merit the good opinion you have entertained of my conduct, as well as to answer the End of my Mission to Caithness. And I humbly hope that, by the Divine Grace, the aid of your prayers, and ye Benefit of your Fatherly Admonition, I shall be Supported under and, in the Event, get the better of all my Discouragements.

"The bearer hereof, Sir James Sinclair of Mey, is one of my principal Encouragers and Kind Benefactors, who, being necessitate to come to Edinburgh on the account of Health, inclines to wait of your Paternity and desire the Benefit of Confirmation, which I hope you'll not deny him, and the rather that he was entered into the Church of my ministry.

"It will afford me no small satisfaction to hear from your Fatherhood as frequently as your time can allow. I humbly beg your daily Benediction, and with intensest respect am, Right Reverend Father in God, your most affectionate Son and humbly devoted Servant,

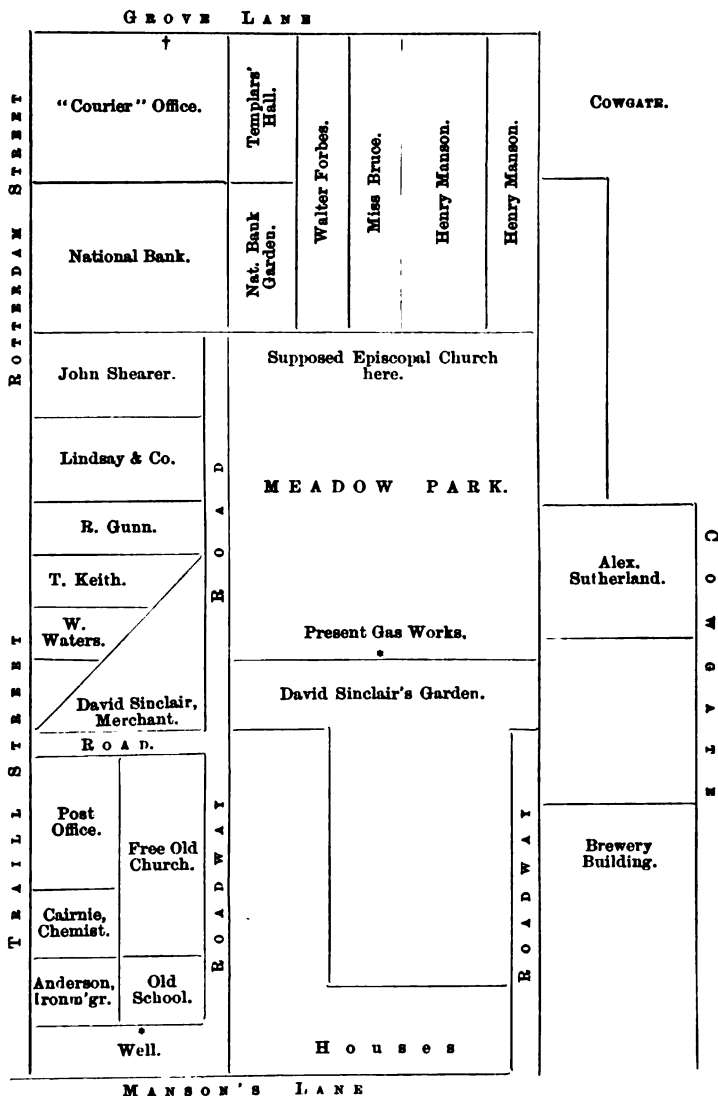
"JA. TAYLOR.

"Thurso, 10 July 1739.

"To the Right Reverend Mr Robert Keith, at his house in the Canon-gate, Edinburgh."¹

¹ From the originals, Epl. Chest.

SUPPOSED SITE OF REV. J. TAYLOR'S CHURCH.



† Christian Finlayson mentioned in Bishop Forbes' History, lived in Mercer's House, No. 7.

All these properties in Grove Lane and Cowgate adjoin the Meadow Park, where, it is believed, the Episcopal Church was situated, and may have reference to the Episcopal Church in title-deeds connected therewith.

Meadow Park.—Acquired by the Free Church in 1843, and afterwards sold to Mr David Sinclair, jun., and now partly owned by the Gas Coy., and houses, stores, and garden by David Sinclair, jun.

Property in Traill Street.—Owned by David Sinclair, jun.; occupied as shops by R. Gunn, baker; John Keith & Co., drapers; William Waters, grocer; and David Sinclair, general merchant.

Property in Rotterdam Street.—Formerly owned by Mr Donald Shearer, draper and general merchant ("Red Davie"), now owned by John Shearer, draper, and Lindsay & Co., ironmongers.

Property in Grove Lane, called Grove House.—Long occupied by the late Dr Smith; it is said to have belonged to Mr James Mackay, messenger-at arms; now owned by the I.O.G.T. Lodge.

Adjoining property in Grove Lane, long occupied as a woodyard by the late Mr George Mackay, cartwright.—This property is believed also to have belonged to Mr James Mackay, messenger-at-arms, and was bought by Mr George Sinclair, grocer, Grove Lane. It is now owned by Mr Walter Forbes, millwright.

Adjoining property in Grove Lane belonged to Mr James Mackay, messenger-at-arms, and bought from his trustees at sale by Mr John Bruce, merchant, Thurso; now owned by his daughters.

Adjoining property in Grove Lane, known as Begg's property, now belongs to Henry Manson.

Property in Cowgate belonged formerly to Mr John Sutherland, clerk, and now occupied by his son, Walter Sutherland.

The site of Mr Taylor's church, after the Presbyterians

took possession of St. Peter's, is believed to have been where the present gas-works stands.

Mr D. Campbell, draper, remembers as a boy playing round the ruins of an old building then standing in a wood-yard and common ground where farmers put up their traps on market days. Mr Manson, sen. (librarian), egg merchant, pointed out the spot where he remembers the angle of an old building, then used as a sawing shed, said to have been part of Mr Taylor's "meeting-house." A large brass candlestick, evidently a church one from its large base, was found in a garden in Grove Lane, and is in the possession of Mr Hector Swanson, 13 Princes Street, Thurso. Mr Manson drew attention to the fact that there was an excellent road made to the ground where the church stood, which would not have been made had the ground been waste.

Mr Alex. Mackay of Brims and Mackay quite remembers his father and grandfather talking of the old church, and that the carving possessed by Mr Brims came out of Mr Taylor's church. It must be remembered that nearly all the county families were then Episcopalians, as shewn by the call to Mr Taylor to minister to them.

Episcopal Church, Thurso, in 1746—where situated as described in old title-deeds: — Walter Forbes' property is described as the "old meeting-house" with the kailyard or garden ground thereto, bounded on the east, west, and north sides by the tenement sometime pertaining to John Sinclair, merchant and bailie in Thurso, and on the south side by the meadow of Ormlie, sometime possessed by Bailie George Paterson. National Bank garden property is described as bounded on the east side by the "old meeting-house" and yard called "Sinclair's tenement." Miss Bruce's property is described as bounded on the west by the "old meeting-house" and yard called "Sinclair's tenement."

"My own impression is that the property formerly called 'Grove House' had been the parsonage [where Mr Taylor lived], as it adjoined the Episcopal church or meeting-house (so described by Bishop Forbes) to the west side,

and apparently there was no other building on the ground described as the old meeting-house but the Episcopal church on the south side ; at least, there was no trace of any buildings 60 or 70 years ago. My son, who was contractor for the joiner work of the Templar Hall when it was erected on the site of Grove House, removed the woodwork fittings down to my store here, and some of them remain still, and they show the building and fittings of Grove House to have been of some architectural pretensions at that time ; and as you state that the candlestick was found in Grove House garden, it has in all probability belonged to the parsonage.”¹

About the same time as Taylor settled at Thurso, the Rev. William Longmuir was settled as Episcopal clergyman at Wick. Longmuir was a native of Grange, in Banffshire. A letter has been preserved written by him to Bishop Keith, in which he gives a very curious and interesting account of the Church in his native country at and after the Revolution.² He was subsequently one of the clergy of Edinburgh. The letter referred to is dated there, Dec. 6, 1749.

We know little or nothing of Longmuir—where he officiated in Wick, or who were the members of his congregation. Thurso was then the chief town in Caithness, and no doubt Mr Taylor had the greater encouragement in his labour. From one of Taylor’s letters, Longmuir would appear to be a person of small discernment and of no great parts.

¹ Letter, Mr Henry Manson to Mrs Sinclair of Barrock, 17th July 1907.

² Epl. Chest, No. 203.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE 1745.

Bishop Keith's appointment confirmed, 1731—Church once more increasing—but the “Auld Stewarts” appear again on the scene—The two “Risings,” 1715, 1745—at Thurso—Proprietors in Caithness favour “Stewarts”—Health of Prince openly drunk—1745—Cause warmly espoused—Royalist Troops at Thurso—Billeted—Armed—Badly Clothed—Women all in their favour—No violence done—Taylor's misfortunes after 1745—His own account—Preserved by Bishop Forbes—Chapel burnt—also its contents—Table of Ten Commandments put to the flames—James Sinclair's Letter—Ulbster and Bowermadden—Frances Sinclair—Burray's Tenants—Gilchrist, Presbyterian Minister, flies from Thurso—Sutherland of Forse—Visit Lady Scotscaider—but go away quietly—Taylor returns—Assembles his congregation in his house—Severe Penal Statutes—Account of these—Church “minished and brought low.”

THE arrangement that Bishop Keith should act as the “Ordinary” of the northern dioceses had been confirmed by the “Concordate” of Dec. 20, 1731, and Bishop Keith continued to perform Episcopal offices for these dioceses until the period of his decease, though his permanent residence was in Edinburgh, in the Canongate. The church had again begun to increase, both in numbers and congregations. But for the third time the Episcopate, the clergy, and many of the people cast their lot into that of the “Auld Stewarts,” and disasters, far exceeding those following the 1715, took place. The step, which to some seemed hopeful, certainly dutiful, was almost fatal to the old Episcopacy of Scotland.

Dr Henderson, in his account of Thurso, written in 1825, has the following:—

"Being anxious to know how the good folks of Thurso behaved during the two rebellions in the beginning of last century, I made enquiries as to tradition, but found very little to the purpose. Of 1715 nothing is remembered, and the little recollected of 1745 is subjoined.

"The town is said to have been occupied by a party of Prince Charley's men from Ross. They were trained near the town.

"The Prince seems to have had some admirers among the fair part of the inhabitants, for some of them are said to have worn his picture near their hearts.

"That the town was in the possession of the Prince's men is probable, from the circumstance that in the Baillie Books it is given as a reason for electing Baillies in May 1746 that there were no Baillies appointed last Michaelmas, upon account of the troubles."

Calder tells us that, in 1715, a "strong feeling in favour of the Stuarts was manifested by a number of the Caithness proprietors. Sir Robert Dunbar of Northfield appeared with a party at the Cross of Wick, and openly drank the health of the Chevalier; while David Sinclair of Brabsterdoran joined the Earl of Mar, and was present at the battle of Sheriffmuir."¹

In 1745, not a few of the better class in Caithness warmly espoused the cause. "Soon after Charles arrived in Scotland, some hundreds of the rebels came to Caithness, in order to stimulate the inhabitants to engage in his quarrel. Their headquarters was in Thurso, where they billeted themselves by twos, threes, and fours on the inhabitants; and from thence they went in detached parties through the country. They were all armed, but very ill clothed, and wore white cockades in their bonnets. . . . The women in general felt greatly alarmed, but their fears were causeless; for no violence or injury was offered to any; nor was any spoil committed by the Highlanders while they remained in the country."²

¹ Hist., 198. ² History of House and Clan Mackay, 523, 533.

Mr Taylor has left us a full account of his misfortunes after 1745, which has been preserved to us by Bishop Forbes in his "Lyon in Mourning."

It relates how that, "some days after the Caithness people heard the result of the Battle of Culloden, Dan. Gilchrist, son of the presbyterian minister at Thurso, accompanied by a mean fellow, David Forbes, came to Thurso with a warrant from the Earl of Sutherland (who had no authority for that end), directed to the Sheriff of Caithness, to apprehend Mr James Taylor, and to burn his meeting-house, though he could be charged with no crime. Being warned of this by a friend, and owing to the barbarity of the commanding officer at Inverness, Mr Taylor retired to a friend's house in the country. Mr Taylor, after this, continued in Caithness some weeks, till he received letters from Sir James Stuart of Burray and his lady earnestly entreating him to go to Burray (as he had used to do several summers before) to read prayers and administer the Eucharist. Mr Taylor answered he would readily come if they thought it safe for him to be within their bounds after the aforesaid warrant had been issued. In answer, he received a letter from Sir James to come in a boat that he had sent for him, saying he would protect him to the utmost of his power. Mr Taylor went to Burray accordingly. Two days after, Sir James got word that Moodie of Melsetter, Lieutenant of Foot, was coming with some ships of war to apprehend him and burn his house. Some days afterwards the ships appeared in Holm Sound, and Sir James sent a boat out for intelligence, which was detained by Mr Moodie. This might have convinced Sir James it was high time to shift for himself; but neither this nor any other warnings could prevail on him to leave his house, and avoid impending danger. On Sunday morning the 25th [May], Mr Taylor was roused from bed by a servant, who informed him that Moodie was advancing towards the house with a party of red-coats. Mr Taylor immediately got up, and when he went into the yard he

saw Sir James and his brother-in-law, Mr Carmichael, running towards the old barnyard. They were surprised by Moodie. Sir James was apprehended, but Mr Carmichael got off by speed of foot.

“Mr Taylor and Mr Watt, merchant in Kirkwall, hastened to the Little Ferry, but were told Moodie’s people had broken their boats. They then made for the east end, and applied to one of Sir James’s tenants to carry them in a boat to South Ronaldshay. Being a coward and a traitor, like all his neighbours, he refused to do this, though offered a large reward. Mr Taylor and Mr Watt might have lain concealed in the rocks, but Mr Taylor, conscious of his innocence, would not do this, and they were taken by Moodie’s men. Sir James Stuart, and Messrs Carmichael, Taylor, and Watt, were put on board a tender in Holm Sound. A letter from Mr Taylor to Sir James, giving an account of the battle of Culloden, was found in possession of the latter. The captives continued on the cutter till it was determined to send them to the tolbooth of Kirkwall. They were guarded by Moodie’s men till they entered the town, when the train bands of Kirkwall met them, who kept them for some time in the street to show them off. After this parade they were carried to the town-house, and a guard placed within and without. At four o’clock next afternoon they were taken out and carried in triumph through the streets, and led on their way for Stromness. At ten o’clock at night the prisoners reached Alexr. Graham’s house in Stromness, where they were allowed to take some refreshment. Here an old man, a tenant of Sir James Stuart’s, came in to condole with him; and Moodie hearing him, came in and kicked him till the poor old man fell down, Moodie cursing and swearing all the time. Immediately after this the four captives were carried on board the Shark, sloop of war, then lying off Stromness, and kept there under many hardships and indignities till the 11th or 12th of June, when they were put on board the Old Loo, man-of-war, whose captain treated them with the

greatest humanity and kindness. Some days after this the Old Loo, with some more ships of war, was ordered to the West Highlands to prevent any ships from France landing there. On the 1st July the four prisoners were turned over to the Terror, sloop. Capt. Norberry sent his 1st lieutenant to tell Mr Duff, of the Terror, how they had been treated while on board the Loo, and to say whatever civilities he might show them there would be done to himself. To this the haughty Duff paid small regard. Within some hours after they came on board this sloop they were cooped up in a hole of about six feet long, and somewhat less in breadth, where they suffered extremely for many weeks. On the 7th August they anchored in the Thames. On the 9th, Sir James was carried to the new prison, and put in irons. Soon after he fevered, and died in a week or two. When Sir James was taken from the Terror, the remaining three were used more harshly than ever. Although the hole they were in only received light and air from the door, the humane captain ordered it to be shut and pad-locked upon them from eight o'clock at night till eight in the morning. In this situation Mr Taylor had often to suck in air through the chinks of the door to prevent his being stifled. Some days after they were turned over to the Pamela, transport. At length, by the indulgence of the Court, each prisoner was allowed half-a-pound of bread a day, and a quarter of a pound of cheese or butter for breakfast; and on flesh days, one-half pound boiled beef for dinner, but no ale or beer. By the avarice and villainy of the victualler, they seldom or never received above three-quarters of said weights, and sometimes not so much. Some thought the flesh unwholesome, being purchased from butchers suspected of dealing in disordered cattle, but they had to take even this or starve. Upon the night of September, Mr Carmichael escaped. Mr Taylor, being suspected of having aided in this escape, for no other reason than that he slept with Mr Carmichael, was examined by the commanding officer, and then put

down into the hold among the throng of prisoners, many of whom were ill with fevers, fluxes, and other distempers. Here, notwithstanding all the precautions he took, he fevered, and continued very bad for two weeks. Had he not been tenderly nursed by a surgeon, a fellow-prisoner, most likely his illness had been fatal. When he began to get better, he wished to get on deck for fresh air, but was refused, and this continued for six weeks, when the commanding officer relented, being convinced that Mr Taylor had nothing to do with Mr Carmichael's escape. About the beginning of December, Mr Taylor, with other prisoners, was put on board the *James and Mary*, transport. Mr Taylor, and a number of prisoners he found on board the *James and Mary*, were forced to sleep in the common hold, which had not been cleaned from the horses' dung, &c., which the *James and Mary* had brought over from Holland. No legal information having been entered against him, Mr Taylor was thereby considered innocent, but did not get his freedom till the 13th February 1747. On the 15th he came to London, and found he could scarcely walk owing to his long confinement and bad treatment. Had he not received aid from Bishop Gordon, his sufferings had been intolerable. Though Mr Taylor expected he would get some compensation for his imprisonment, and to defray his charge to Thurso since he had been found innocent, he only received one guinea. On 15th March he took passage in a trading sloop to Leith, which he reached on the 22nd, and then went to Edinburgh, where he stayed about fourteen days to gather some strength. He set out here for Caithness on 7th April, and reached Inverness on the 11th, and next day was attending prayers with the Rev. James Hay in his house there; but, when half of the litany was read, some one was heard calling rudely at the door. When Mr Hay had opened, he found the fellow Forbes there, who had been sent with some soldiers to apprehend Mr Taylor, and carry him to prison. When Mr Taylor showed his pass to the captain of the regiment, he was

told he might go about his affairs when and how he inclined.

“The next day Mr Taylor took horse for Caithness, and came to his own house, in Thurso, in the afternoon of the sixteenth. He had heard at London and on his way homewards, from several persons, that about the 25th of the preceding June, by an order from the then Sheriff, the wise and mighty zealous Laird of Ulbster (who had neither advice nor commission from any superior Magistrate for that purpose, except from the Earl of Sutherland, in his sham-warrant, or by a letter from his uncle, the honourable Laird of Brodie, urging him, as he regarded the Government's good graces, forthwith to set about so acceptable a work), to Theodore Dun and John Donaldson, then Bailies in the town of Thurso, the pulpit and seats, with the Ten Commandments affixed to a very large frame, were broken down, and carried by great numbers of the Thurso saints, of both sexes, out of Mr Taylor's meeting-house, to a void place benorth the town, and there burnt to ashes in presence of the Godly Sheriff and all the numerous crowd that attended the long-for-wished show. Would not this have merited mighty favours to the prudent actors from any wise Court? And that such a zealous people might be blest with a priest worthy of them, Mr James Gilchrist, the presbyterian incumbent at Thurso, who generally puts his sickle into other men's corn, had (as was believed, at the desire of all his brethren in the county of Caithness, except one), gone to Edinburgh, and thence to London, to asperse and misrepresent the bulk of the Caithness gentry, as enemies to the present establishment; and believed he would soon have the pleasure to see them and their families totally undone. But this wicked design was shamefully frustrated. However, Gilchrist's expedition turned to some account, for he went a-begging through his friends in London, &c., whom he made believe that he could not continue in Caithness for the wicked Jacobites, who had threatened to take away his life and destroy his

family. Honest Whiggery! that never thinks shame of lying for worldly interests. It is well known by many in Caithness that this busy-body could not keep his own house, upon the account of his numerous debts, for which he was duly threatened with captions. It was said he begged more than two hundred and fifty guineas at London; but is not likely, for all this, to get out of his difficulties. The blessing of the Lord maketh rich, but his curse must make poor.”¹

In a letter from “Ja. Sinclair,” dated “Wards, 7th May 1746,” we have some further items as to the result of the rising of 1745 in Caithness. He says:—

“Some Gentlemen in Caithness has left yr. own houses, and is sculking out of the way, as it’s thought yr. is warrands granted for apprehending all suspected persons. Yr. names I forbear to mention. Forse Sutherland had come home, and last week got a call from the Duke to come to Inverness, on which yr. is Different Constructions. Freswick is wt. him just now, but whither Forse goes or not is more yn. I know. Ulbster and Bowermadden is going to Visite the Duke. Dond. Steuart, Æneas Sutherland, and Benjamin Sinclair is come home, and I seed Capt. [torn out] yt. was in Stromness, and Francis Sinclair, but none of these persones gives any news, for they say the last two did leave the Countrie, and yt. oyres sayes they never joyned the Highland Armie. I likewayes seed a man yt. came since the battle from Inverness, who sayed yt. he seed severals of Ld. Loudon’s men (yt. had Deserted and joyned the Prince) hanged at Inverness. He likewayes sayed yt. the Highlanders at Lochhubber, Computed to be yet 8000, besides severals yt. had not yet joyned ym., but were daylie Expected to joyn, and yt. it was thought ane oyr Engadgement would soon happen. I cannot miss to tell you yt. a ffriend of Sir James Stuart’s applied him for some secure place on his ground to abscond himself in for some time, but he got no return, only Burray’s Tennants

¹ Lyon in Mourning, iii. 1541 *et seq.*

(on the place where this gentleman was thought to come) was Discharged to allow him to stay in yr. houses." The letter (in possession of the writer) is addressed "To Malcolme Groatt of Warse, Esq., presently at Kirkwall."

We are, moreover, informed that at the rising, "so hot did it get for presbytery in Caithness that the Rev. Mr Gilchrist, minister of Thurso, a very active anti-Jacobite, had to flee for his life to Edinburgh, and dared not show face in Thurso till after Culloden. And during all this time an Episcopal clergyman ministered to a considerable congregation in Thurso."¹

Sutherland of Forse, "a staunch friend of Government," mentioned above, raised a company of men on his own estate, had them enrolled among the "Loudon Highlanders," and was with them as their captain at Culloden. "After the battle, a party of soldiers was sent to apprehend Sinclair of Scotscladder, who had rendered himself particularly obnoxious to Government. Having got notice of their approach, he withdrew, and hid himself in the hills of Dorrery. When the party made their appearance at his house, his lady courteously invited them in, and regaled them with plenty of meat and drink. They seemed much pleased with their reception, and after a brief search they departed. The visit, happily for the laird, was not renewed; and his meditations among the hills is said to have cured him of his Jacobitism."²

After Mr Taylor's return to Thurso, he appears to have ministered to his flock in an apartment or apartments in his own house. As is well known, it was quite impossible for any Episcopal clergyman to hold an open meeting after the most severe penal statutes were passed, the result of the adherence of the most of the members of the Church to the Stewarts at the rising.

An "Episcopal meeting" was declared to be "every meeting in Scotland where *five* persons or more shall be met together to hear divine service performed by an

¹ Rev. A. Mackay, *Northern Ensign*, March 19, 1907.

² Calder, 201.

Episcopal clergyman." Very severe penalties were added affecting the hearers. They were liable "for the first offence," simply by being present at service, to "forfeit five pounds," in default to suffer six months' imprisonment; and on conviction of subsequent offences to suffer imprisonment for two years. Many expedients were adopted to evade the penal statutes, which continued in force for many years. "Then came instances of Priests performing service sixteen times a day; reading prayers in a hut that contained four, but was provided with holes, so that worshippers standing in the snow without might hear, hence also an arrangement of the Liturgy adapted to the practice of communicating by companies."¹ No religious body could long stand such persecution, or continue absolutely faithful under such penalties; so in some years the Episcopal remnant was indeed "minished and brought low."


¹ Neale's *Life of Torry*, p. xxv.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BISHOP FORBES' VISITATION OF CAITHNESS.

Falconar Consecrated as Keith's Successor—in Caithness when young—New Election, 1761, by Taylor and other three Presbyters of Ross—in favour of Robert Forbes—his Consecration at Forfar—his Letter to Taylor—to visit at once—Journal of 1762—Dornoch—Clyne—Minister there—Struan—Helmsdale—Ord—Ausdale—Langwell—Borrydale—Dunbeath—Causeymire—Auchateebst—Arrive at Thurso—Taylor's condition—Lady Clardon's Description—Street Scenes—Christie Finlayson—Mrs Taylor confined to chair—Campbell of Lochhead—Lady Scotscaddel—Mrs Liddell—Dr Liddell—Murray and Pennyland—Scrabster—Holburn Head—Clet—Bishop of Ossory—Dunbar—Bailie Donaldson—Sunday in Thurso—Communion and Confirmation—Bids adieu to Taylors—Thurdystoft—Lochend—Confirmations—Barrock—has fine Garden—Lady Brabster—Mey—Confirmation—Canisbay—John O'Groat's House—Buckies—Stroma—Kennedy Burial-Place—Freshwick—met Sinclair of Barrock—Keiss—Wester—Noss Head—Confirmation—Ackergill—Chapels—Girnigo—Wick—at Campbell's House—Frances Sutherland—Lord and Lady Duffus—Confirmation—Old Wick—Swenzies—Ord—List of Persons Confirmed in Caithness—Letter from Lord Reay as to Christie Finlayson—Taylor's Death—Bishop Forbes receives his Papers and Sermons—Opinion of these—Proposes Successor—None—Most of the Congregation “go to the Kirk”—Another Confirmation—Bishop Forbes' Journey to Argyll—Death and Funeral.

APPENDIX.—Historical Prayer-Books.

“ ON a regular application from the clergy of Orkney and Caithness, Mr Falconar, presbyter at Forres, was consecrated as their bishop on the 10th September 1741. The officiating prelates on this occasion were Rattray, Keith, and White. In the following year, Bishop Falconar was chosen for the district of Moray.”¹

¹ Keith, 550.

Bishop Falconar appears to have spent part of his younger years in Caithness, and so was well known to many persons there. But by his restriction to Moray and the death of Rattray, by which Keith became Primus, the district again came under his charge *sede vacante*.

At Arpaphily, in Ross, on the 14th October 1761, an election to the Sees of Ross and Caithness took place. A mandate had been issued by the Episcopal College on September 17 authorising the election. The deed is signed by "Lud. Grant, Presbyter at Fortrose; James Urquhart, Presbyter at Ord; John Stewart, Presbyter at Tain"; and at Thurso, October 26, 1761, by "Ja. Taylor." The elect was "the Very Rd. Mr Robert Forbes, Presbyter in Leith, of whose probity, Literature, and oyr requisite accomplishments for ye sacred charge and Dignity of the Episcopal Office we are sufficiently persuaded." Forbes' answer has also been preserved, in which he acknowledges "the Honour ye have done me by your Late Deed of Election." If approved, he promises "to visit you some time next summer." He subsequently informs them that St. John Baptist Day was fixed for his consecration. It took place at Forfar on the day named, and was held either in the disused Priory Church of Restennet, close by Forfar, or "in a large house, dated 1741, still in fair preservation, at the east side of Forfar." The consecrating prelates were Falconar, Alexander (son of the chantor of Caithness, parson of Criech), and Gerard.¹

In intimating the result to the clergy, he notes:—"Here I added to Mr James Taylor what follows:—'If you have not been able to communicate your People, I beg you'll let me know if you wish them to be communicated by me when kind Providence brings me to you, and I will bring with me some sermons fit for that purpose, and that you will use few Words for your greater Ease, as I will know writing must now be a very great Hardship upon you.'"² Bishop Gerard of Aberdeen attended with diffi-

¹ My Bishop Forbes, 357-9.

² My Bishop Forbes, 358.

culty, but managed, having "a chaise," in which he was "fixed" by "Mr Innes." He and Mr Skene, the pastor of Forfar, were present at the consecration, and Mr Innes, referring to the date chosen, remarked, "Indeed, when our friend is once fairly in Caithness, and looks about him, I fancy to myself he will suppose himself to be the Baptist in the wilderness." He set out from Leith on Monday, July 12, 1762. He could brook no delay. "I told Bishop Falconar that the Remotes had been urging me to come among them this season, and that if I did not do so I could not propose to see Mr Taylor in life." Bishop Alexander had indeed proposed Mr Taylor, or Mr Stewart of Tain, as suitable for the Episcopal office, "and that either of them, being on the spot, can do more service than they who live at a remote distance."

The portion of the bishop's journal relating to the Diocese of Caithness is as follows:—

"Thursday, Augt. 3.—We left Polrossie 20 minutes after nine, and having a pleasant road I was at Dornock, the only Town in Sutherland, 20 minutes after 10 o'Clock, leaving the leisurely, asthmatic Mr Stewart to jog on as he pleased; and had visited the Cathedral before he reached me; for Dornock [or Dornoch] was one of the Seats of the Bishop of Caithness, as the Shire of Sutherland was a part of his Diocese. This Cathedral has been a stately Building in the old Gothic Taste, and in the Form of a Cross, the West End of which is ruinous, only the Gable-End and the two Side-Walls, with the 5 South Pillars, including the two in strong Basso Relievo in the two Gable-ends, are still standing. I went up to the Top of ye Steeple, where there is only one Bell, and that very good; but the public Clock (*apage! apage!*) is going to Ruin. I then visited the Bishop's Palace, which has been a stately and strong Edifice, vaulted below, and of five high Stories, including the vaulted one; but the Stair, which is a very easy one, is six Stories high. The Walls of only a part of it are standing. A Blacksmith has his Forge in one of the

Vaults, and was working at it when I was there.

‘Lux mea, tende manus, contra tibi tendo catenas ;
Has nisi qui vinxit solvere nemo potest.’

Dornock of old was a Monastery of Red Friars¹ (Keith’s Catalogue, pag. 243), and is situated in view of Tain and its Frith, which is also called the Frith of Dornock. This little Town, a Royal Burgh, is a mile from the Frith, so that its situation is according to the old man’s wish, viz :—

‘The Ocean at Distance, whereon I may look.’

I waited at Dornock till between 2 and 3 o’clock for Mr Innes, who came at length qn. I was about to mount, and made his Apology, that such a brisk Gale set in from the West down the Mickle-Ferry, that they durst not attempt it for two Hours, lest they should have been blown to the open Sea, and run the Risk of Perishing. Mr Innes brought along with him from Tain one Robertson, whom, upon introducing him to me, I saluted him with the Appellation of Struan, the title of the chief of that Name ; with which Robertson was highly pleased, and became very fond of me.

“Mr Stewart returned from Dornock, though he would gladly have attended me all the Journey ; but I told him I would not travel in his sauntering, leisurely way upon any Consideration, as he thought 20 Scots miles a good Day’s Journey. We left Dornock at 5 o’clock, seven horses in Company, as Mr Innes had with him Messrs Fraser and Robertson, and a servant, and I had the Chaise-Driver and the Guide. The Little-Ferry, three miles from Dornock, is a pretty but shallow Bay, over which we had two Crossings, as the Boat could not contain us and the Horses all at once. The Kirk of Golspie, three miles farther on, though a

¹ *Monastery*.—It is said that in 1271 Sir Patrick Murray founded it. But monks lived in Dornoch more than a century before, when King David commended them to the care of the earl and all good men. A monastery, known in modern times as Franciscan, stood at the south-east corner of the town on the road leading to the links.—*Orig. Par. Scot.*, ii., p. 625.

modern Building, is an exact Cross, and close upon the Shore. Nigh to this Kirk is the Castle of Dunrobin, 5 or 6 Stories high, ye Seat of the Earl of Sutherland. It makes a grand and superb Appearance, just like a King upon his Throne, being beautifully situated upon the Top of a little green Hill, well covered from the North Wind [by] higher grounds, with fine gardens below, high-wall'd, and close upon the Highway, which is along the Shore. It has a most commanding prospect to Murrayshire, and as far as the eye can stretch. We saw Gentlemen and Ladies walking on the Top of the Castle, and taking a view of us with a Telescope. Three miles beyond this you come to the Bridge of Brora [on a field by the Water of Brora, a Battle, it is said, was fought between the Scots and the Danes], half a mile up from which there is a Rock, by breaking down pieces whereof you'll find petrified Wilks, Oysters, Lobsters, &c., as Cadboll informed me, who had gone with the Earl of Sutherland to the Rock, and seen as above; and this Testimony I can depend upon as much as if I had viewed the thing with mine own Eyes; for as Night was coming on we could not go off the Road into rugged paths to take a leisurely view of this Rarity. About 8 o'clock we came in view of the Kirk of Clyn, 4 miles farther on, where Mr Robertson's father is Incumbent,¹ in whose House he most kindly invited me to lodge for one night, as Mr Innes had promised so to do. I thanked him for his Kindness, but told him I wanted much to push on to Helmsdale, and to take the Ord of Caithness early in the Morning, when the Horses would be well rested. 'None of your Thanks or Apologies,' said he; 'come along; and if you do not, remember you must fight me.' 'Indeed, Struan,' said I, 'you mistake your man;

¹ *Clyne*.—Francis Robertson, A.M.. of S. Andrews, presented by Presbytery, *jure devoluto*, 20th January, and ordained 7th May 1719. He sustained a heavy loss by fire, for alleviating of which, and remunerating him for expense of suits at law, a contribution was recommended by the Assembly, 23rd May 1737, to be made in all the parishes of Scotland. Married Janet Sutherland, and died 14th May 1763.—*Fasts*, v. 332.

for my weapons are not carnal, but Spiritual.' 'Well, well,' said he, 'I'll have the easier victory over you. Come along.' Taking hold of my Bridle, Mr Innes, laughing all this time at the kind Contest, began to urge my acceptance. 'With all my Heart, George,' said I, 'provided all of you agree not to tell who or what I am, and perhaps we may have some Diversion by the Concealment. Let me therefore pass for your Clerk, Mr Innes, and, in doing of Business, if you get a Guinea I'll get a Crown.' 'Ha, ha, ha! Well done, Parson,' said he. 'Indeed, you know the Dues right well. Content; it shall be so.' 'There is one thing more,' said I. 'You may remember, it was articulated at Tayne that you could not travel with me unless you allowed me to be Cock of the Day.' 'Yes, yes, by all means you are to be so,' said he; 'and the sooner you awake us in the Morning still the better, as we have a long and rugged Journey to perform to-morrow if we mind to reach Thurso.'

"We came to Clyn 'twixt 8 and 9, and found that ye old Gentleman had supped and said his Family Prayers. However, we were most hospitably entertained. Mrs Robertson is a most decent person, and had three Daughters at home, comely and well-behaved, who, in a trice, had some Chickens, a large Dish of Curds and Cream, &c., upon the Table, with a glass of Good, strong Ale, and the old Gentleman gave us a long Grace, sitting upon Breech, according to ordinary. In the Course of Conversation, I frequently addressed myself to the Son, calling him *Struan*, to try the pulse of the Father, who for some time looked wistfully at me, and at length broke silence in as starched and precise a manner as if he had been seated in the Moderator's Chair; and truly it is a pity he should have that stiff, puritanical Way, as otherwise he is a sensible, affable Gentleman. 'Indeed, worthy Sir,' said he, 'you do my Son too much honour, as that was once an honourable Family, and the late Struan was a very fine Gentleman in every Respect, having [a] notable Genius for

Letters, being an excellent Scholar, and no mean Poet,¹ as I have seen several of his Poems ; but then it was a strange thing that a Gentleman of such fine Sense and strong natural Parts should have joined such a bad Cause, as he was all along embarked in. But what shall we say ? It was, no doubt, his Craze.' At this Messrs Innes, Taylor, and Robertson, junior, were like to burst with keeping in the Laughter. 'Indeed, Sir,' said I, 'every man, you know, has his Craze ; I have my Craze, and you have your Craze, and be that Struan's Craze which you have mentioned. But you have given [him] a most just Character, as he was certainly a fine, polite, knowing Gentleman ; and yet there was something very odd and peculiar about him, as I can give you a singular Anecdote of Him, which perhaps you never heard of before, but Mr Innes can very well vouch the Truth of it. Very remarkable, then, it is, that Struan spent the greatest part of his Life in France, in Paris, too, at Court, and in the politest Company ; that he was a Companion to any man, from the King to the meanest Subject ; and yet, notwithstanding his superior parts and refined Breeding, his greatest pleasure in Life was to be at Ranach, his own Seat, as rugged and bleak a place as any in ye wide world, and there to drink Tippet and Whiskie by turns, or in the interlining Way, as he termed it, with the very lowest Fellows, who had neither Stocking nor Shoe upon them !' Mr Innes affirmed all this to be true. 'Very strange and surprising it is,' said the old Gentleman,

¹ *Poet*.—"Poems on various subjects and occasions, by the Honourable Alexander Robertson of Struan, Esq., mostly taken from his own original manuscripts," were "Printed for Ch. Alexander, Edinburgh, and sold at his House in Geddes's Close, where subscribers may call for their copies." The collection includes a poetical "Epitaph on Alexander Robertson of Struan, Esq., by J. E. Gent," and "Struan's Prayer"; in all, pp. 360. Several of the pieces are in a pastoral style, others in praise of the exiled Royal family ; some, again, are of rather an objectionable turn, and others are translations or renderings of passages from the Classics. One, entitled "Britannia to Her Beloved in Spain," calls on "James of her heart" to

"Come, our Church to restore,
And quell with thy Rod
Those who nothing adore
But Gold for a God."

'that my Chief, a person of so much good sense and a thorough knowledge of the World, should take up with such an odd, unaccountable Way of doing!' And, indeed, there is no other way to account for this than by saying that Struan was greatly of the Swiftian Taste; for the Dean delighted in a touch of Low Life. The witty Horace has long ago observed—Sat. Lib. 2; Sat. 3, l. 270—

'Ac si

Insanire paret certâ ratione modoque.'

And elsewhere he directly says—Ars poet., lin. 295—

'Ingenium misera quia fortunatius arte
Credit, et excludit sanos Helicone poetas
Demooritus.'

Servius uses the word *Insanire* for *making Verses*. According to all these, an English Poet can say—

'Great Wits and Madness are so near allied,
That Thin Partitions do their Bounds divide.'

But to return to our Landlord. He said, 'Struan was once a Family, but now, alas! it is no more.' 'I am glad, Sir,' said I, 'to have it in my power to remove your Concern; for the Family is still extant, as the Representative is alive and in good Health.' 'What, Sir,' said he, 'is Duncan Robertson of Drumachean still in Life?' 'Yes, Sir; he is in France, and has two or three Sons, very pretty Fellows, provided for in the Army, and two Daughters, the eldest of whom is an Absolute Beauty, and married with her own Cousin-German, young Oliphant of Gask.'¹ He rejoiced

¹ 1755. "On June 9th (being the 29th of May, old style), my only son, Lawrence Oliphant of Gask, younger, was married to Mrs Margaret Robertson, eldest daughter of Strowain, at Versailles, by Mr John Maitland, a Presbyter of the Episcopal Church of Scotland, William Drummond of Balhaldie, and the said Duncan Robertson of Strowain, being witnesses." The bride was fifteen and a-half years old, and the bridegroom exactly double her age.—*Jacobite Lairds of Gask*, p. 288-9. "Mr John Maitland, chyrurgeon for the soule," was attached to Lord Ogilvie's regiment in the service of Prince Charles, 1745. He administered the Holy Eucharist to Lord Strathallan on the Culloden field (where that gallant nobleman received his death wound), it is said, with oat cake and whisky, the requisite elements not being attainable. [The writer, having been challenged as to the truth of this, states that his authority was the late Rev. J. F. S. Gordon, of Glasgow.] For his adhesion to the Stuart cause he

greatly at all this, and thanked me most heartily for the good Accounts.

“After much Chit-Chat to the same purpose, I said I was wearied, and desired to go to Rest. I was lighted up to a Room just above the Company, where I had no sooner gone to Bed, and begun to shut my Eyes, than I was suddenly awaked with a most hearty Laughter, the Reason of which I could not know till next Morning, and it was thus:—The old Gentleman having discovered some desire to know my Character or Station of Life, Mr Innes informed him fully and particularly about me; upon which he expressed great Uneasiness. ‘O! Gentlemen,’ said he, ‘you have made me guilty of the worst of manners in not telling me this in due time. I am all affronted in not desiring the Chearful Gentleman to say Grace in my House. I began to suspect there was something under his calling my Son Struan, and his being so well vers’d in the History of, and so much taken with, that Family; but little did I dream his Character to be such as you have told me. Indeed, I must even go upstairs (rising from his Seat), and beg pardon at his Bedside, for my Bad Manners.’ ‘Never fash your head, Mr Robertson,’ said Mr Innes. ‘The Apology would be worse than the Fault; for had you desired him to say Grace, he would frankly have told you, Even say Grace yourself, Sir, for you are King, Priest, and Prophet in your own House.’ ‘That is not enough for me, Sir,’ said Mr Robertson. ‘I am not to know that. I will make a step up——.’ In a word, they could [not] dissuade him from his purpose, till Mr Innes hit upon a nice knack to make him easy. ‘O! Sir,’ said he, ‘pray consider that I have a good Post under the Government, and I could not allow him to say Grace in my presence, and as little would he do it, lest it should come to the Ears of the Great Ones,

was obliged to reside in France for many years, but, returning to his native country, he died at Edinburgh, 17th Dec. 1800, and was buried in Greyfriars’ Churchyard, the last male descendant of a family, several of whom were presbyters of the Episcopal Church at Inverkeithney and Forgue, and all attached to the same Royal cause.

who would readily take it amiss, and then take my Post from me.' The old Gentleman swallowed this down very glibly, and said, 'Indeed, Sir, I acknowledge there is a good deal in what you say ; and I thank you kindly for giving me so weighty an Argument to make me easy.' All this yielded no small diversion to the Youngsters, as I said Grace at every meal with Mr Innes, otherwise I would not have journeyed with him.

"Wednesday, Augt. 4th.—I got up and awaked my Fellow-Travellers 'twixt 3 and 4 o'clock, who were [so] fast asleep that I had enough ado to rouse them. They started up in a Fright, as if a Thief or a Robber had been at their Bedside to take their Purse. I saw them once fairly on Foot, and then stept down Stairs, and mounted 20 minutes after 4, as I found the Family beginning to be in motion, in order to give us Breakfast ; with which we would have been inveigled had not [I] stept off speedily, so lazy were my Companions in getting ready, as they had sauntered away the time too long in getting to bed. I had been jogging on a mile at my own Leisure before they came up with me, Struan being along with them to give us the Convoy, who kindly blamed me for not staying Breakfast, as the Tea-Kettle, he said, was on ye Fire, and the Sisters were ready to give it us. Now it was that I got the diverting narrative of the former night, the Repetition of which gave a second Bout of Laughing.

"'Come,' said Mr Innes, 'let us settle our Route for this Day.' 'Say on, Sir,' said I ; 'for you must know that best.' 'Well, then,' said he, 'I think we should stop at Helmsdale for our Morning Dram, and to give the Horses some Corn before we take the Ord ; and let us take Breakfast at Ousdale, provided we can get Tea there.' 'All good,' said I ; 'and it will be best to article the point of Tea before we alight at Ousdale.' Agreed. We travelled all along in view of the Frith of Sutherland or Murray Frith, and were at Helmsdale 20 minutes after 6 o'clock, where we got fine great Oats for the Horses, and a good Dram and a Piece of

Bread for ourselves. Struan had bidden us Farewell before we came to Helmsdale. Here the Landlord, John Mitchell, was a canty old man of 84, and had been bred a Gardener, of which he showed us a notable Specimen, for he led us to [a] little snug Garden, made out of the greatest Wild with his own Hand, in which we saw Gooseberries, Apples, the hundred-leaf'd Rose, White Lillies, and small Nurseries of Firs, Ash, Beech, Oak, &c. He told us he had good Colly-Flowers in their Season. This Chearful Veteran and his little Garden, to this Day all laboured with his own Hand, were amongst the greatest Rarities I had ever seen or possibly could see. As the Sea flows up at tides almost to John's Door, we chuse rather to take a Turn upon the Beach than go into the House, and John conversed with us most rarely. 'You are truly a vigorous man, John, at your age,' said I. 'Pray, where was you born?' 'At Elgin, Sir,' said he; 'and I had nothing to do with the Presbyterians, as I came in the Episcopalian Times, and was luckily baptized by an Episcopal Minister, Mr Horn.' '*Procul, O Procul, este profani!*' said Mr Innes. 'Well, well, George,' said I, 'you have got it fairly; and the more so, as I dare say it is undesignedly. Stand you by there, and be a Dutchman for once, observe an exact neutrality, and let John and me have out our confabulation.' Looking at Mr Innes, John said, 'Indeed, Sir, take you it well, or take you it ill, I have said nothing but the Truth.' 'Was not Mr Horn,' said I, 'put out at the Revolution?' 'Ay, Sir,' said John, 'and that he was, and mickle had been the more pity.'¹ 'Ye two,' says Mr Innes, 'will become perfectly scandalous if ye hold on. I believe I must enter my Protest against you. I am persuaded you could talk a Moon with this old Sinner.' 'Indeed, Sir,' said John, 'there are sinners among us.'

"At the Mouth of the Water of Helmsdale, little beyond

¹ *Rev. John Horn.*—He appears rather to have demitted on account of the Test—1659-1682, but he lived privately afterwards on his estate at Westhall.

honest John's House, there is a good Salmon-Fishing, plenty of Trout, and a safe Inlet for Shipping. There was one Sloop lying in it. Soon after you ride the Water of Helmsdale [by a very rough Ford] you come to the Ord of Caithness, at the foot of which there is a small purling Stream, where ye can place one foot on ye Shire of Sutherland, and the other on that of Caithness, by standing across the Rivulet, which below the Road, in sight of Travellers, forms a little pretty Cascade some yards high.

"In travelling through Sutherland, we could not fail observing, that though the Coast be flat, yet it is so shallow, with Shelvy Rocks under Water, that no Vessels, even Boats, can attempt steering to Land. As much of the Road through Sutherland is sandy and benty, so you pass over grounds where there is plenty of Rabbets.

"The Ord of Caithness had been represented to me by many in so frightful a shape, that I longed much to see it, and when I came to it, my Imagination had far outshot reality ; for I rode up every inch of it, a thing rarely done by any Persons, and all along looked down ye dreadful precipice to the Sea, on the Right Hand, of some Hundred Fathoms from the Edge of the Road down to the Sea, and frequently perpendicular, where the perpendicular Height will be, I am persuaded, about 40 Fathoms, if not more. My fellow-Travellers, both Gentlemen and Servts., took to the Foot, and walked it from the Bottom to the Top, a full long Mile. Its Steepness, and being all along on the very Brink of a Precipice, are the only Difficulties ; for otherwise it is one of the finest Roads in the World, being so broad, yt. in most places two Coaches might pass one another, and then of fine, hard Channel naturally, which no storm can make Impression upon so as to break it. But then so very steep it is, particularly at entering upon it, that no Machine can be drawn up it by any Cattle whatsoever, unless it be empty ; and even then there must be some Sturdy Fellows at the Back of it, pushing it forward to assist the Horses ; for, if they are allowed to make the least stop, backwards

they must tumble by the very Declivity of ye Place. When we came to the top of the Ord, how much were we surprized to see it all a flat country before us, there being not one Mountain or Hill in all Caithness, but only [some] rising Grounds on one Side; for the Ord itself, high and steep as it is, is not an Hill, but only a Rising Ground [on the South part] to introduce [you] into the Country, and to try the Lungs of Travellers, both Man and Beast. When Mr Innes had got on Horseback, he looked around him and said, 'What a dreadful, dangerous Coast is this! It makes me shudder to think that when any Vessel, great or small, happens to be near it, with a brisk Sea-Gale, there is no Inlet for them, but perish they must, and go to Wreck!' 'O! George,' said I, 'why do you allow your fertile imagination to figure out the most dreadful scenes? Here is a fine day, enlivened with a Chearing Sunshine, so still and calm that the Surface of the Sea is like a piece of Mirror. Let us then enjoy the Present. Look ye there, what a bold and grand Appearance do these high Rocks make, with plenty of Sea-Fowl, great and small, some perching on their Tops, and others flying around them, and plunging into the Sea, and then soaring aloft again.' He acknowledged all this to be very true, but then, he said, he could [not] help ruminating upon the Frightful Hazard of Ships in a Storm upon that Coast; for from the Ord to the Water of Wick, a bold, rocky Coast of about 30 English miles, there is not one Harbour, and only but the Water of Dunbeath and the Small Rivulet of Lathronwheel, where Boats can enter.

"We came [at nine o'clock] to Ousdale, or Ausdale, an Inn, and the first House you come to in Caithness. The Entry to it being laid with Stones, the noise of the Horses' feet brought the Landlady soon to the Door. 'Good Morning, Landlady,' said Mr Innes; 'we have a good mind to take Breakfast here if you can give us Tea?' She answered very briskly, 'Pray, Sir, what kind of Tea do you desire to have?' Looking about to me, he winked,

and said, 'That's so far good, and promises well. Well, good woman, what kind of Tea can you give us?' 'Why, Sir, I can give you Green-Tea, Bohea-Tea, or Coffee?' 'Upon my Word, that is good sense truly,' said Mr Innes. 'Come, let us alight, and get a good Breakfast even in the Wilds of Caithness.' And, indeed, this surprized us all greatly, and proved an agreeable Disappointment to us, particularly to myself, as I had been advised, yea, importuned by some, before setting out, to take a dyed Loaf, or some good Bread, along with me, when entering into Caithness, being so poor and despicable a Country that I could have no good thing to eat in it. Whereas, upon Trial, I found it, though a very bleak, heathy, and mossy Country, yet one of the most plentiful and hospitable Countries in the whole World; inasmuch, that if any Gentleman or Lady, travelling through Caithness, shall chance to put up at an Inn near a Gentleman's House, this Gentleman will take it amiss. Having been Consecrated on St. John Baptist's Day, the Revd. Mr George Innes, at Aberdeen,¹ facetiously said to some of my Friends there, 'Indeed, when our Friend is once fairly in Caithness, and looks about him, I fancy to myself he will suppose himself to be the Baptist in the Wilderness'; which words came fresh into my mind when I looked around and saw such a dusky country. But at Ousdale we called for a Sight of both kinds of Tea, and the Green looked so well, that we made choice of it, and very good it proved, as we could not have had better in all the City of Edinburgh. We asked if we could have good Milk. 'You shall have plenty of that, Gentlemen,' said the Landlady. Accordingly, she caused a Servant fetch us a large Cog of Milk, and set it upon the table with a large Spoon, and then she said, 'Here is Milk,

¹ Incumbent of the congregation now represented by St. John's, Aberdeen, afterwards Bishop of Brechin, being consecrated, 1778, by Bishops Falconar, Rose, and Petrie; died 1781. He was author of a catechism, pretty largely used in the north, first printed 1765, and afterwards in 1803 and 1819. It was known as the "Forty Lesson Catechism," and was based on the teaching of Rattray, Bishop of Dunkeld.—*Walker's "Life of Jolly,"* p. 137.

Gentlemen, and skim off ye Cream for yourselves.' And, indeed, it was the very best of Milk, fresh and cool, clean, and in good Order; and never was there better fresh and powdered Butter than she regaled us with, qch, spread upon good Oat-cakes, made a noble Repast. But [then] we could only have black Oats for the Horses, which did very well, as the Servants took care to double the Common Allowance. Till the Tea-Kettle was got ready, I stept out at the Door to look about me, and see what I could spy, when, behold, I saw two Women moving towards the House in a most leisurely way, step by step, each having a large vessel, or broad Cog, of milk between her hands, taken instantly from the Cows. This induced me to return immediately into the House, and to ask if they had any Farm here? 'Yes, Sir,' said [the] Landlady, 'we have a Farm, for which we pay six hundred marks Scots a-year.' This makes a very large farm in Caithness, of wide extended Bounds, some Miles in Circumference. Methinks I may here very fitly apply the Common Saying—'Contraries recommend one another. *Juxta se posita magis elucescunt.*'

"Mr Innes had never been in Caithness before more than I; and therefore he said after Breakfast, 'Well, my Friends, this is a good Beginning in Caithness, and portends good Things to come.' But in all the Public Houses we halted at while Mr Innes was in Company we could have no Kind of Drink but small Ale and Whiskie, excepting only in those that had entred, and taken out a License, according to the late severe Act. I found out afterwards that the poor Bodies were so neighbourly and communicative as to run Expresses to one another, giving warning yt. when such a number of Riders came to them they should be upon their Guard, as the one with the laced Hat and Pistols before him was a Surveyor, and had come into the Country to spy out what Liquors were sold by those who had never taken out any Licence, in order to subject them to the Penalty. And yet when he made any Discoveries,

by Information or otherwise, he was extremely tender and discreet where he found the People to be poor, and gave them no manner of molestation ; but when Transgressors happened to be people of Substance, he treated them a little roughly. However, it was their own Fault if he did not make matters up even with them ; for Softness and good Manners procured them very gentle usage, but upon Roughness he made them understand themselves.

“ We left Ousdale at 11 o'clock, and took a guide along with us to show us the easiest and best way, which he did by leading us over [a] heathy Moor or Rising Ground, which was nearer, by a Mile or two, than the ordinary Road, it being also so very Rough with Stones for some miles that we could not have made a Trot for them. We came soon in Sight of the House of Sutherland of Langwell, on the left hand, in a low Bottom, and the common Highway is hard by it. The situation of Langwell is so very low, that you can see nothing but the Heavens above you, and yet it is a pretty place, set off with Bushes of [natural] Wood and good Corn-fields upon the Banks of a Water, abounding with Trout and Salmon, the Water of Berrydale [Good Bridges now over these Waters, 1770] and the Water of Langwell joining their Rolling Streams together a little above the House of Langwell, the Proprietor of which is so remarkable, even to a proverb, for his extraordinary Hospitalities, that I was well enough pleased not to come within his Reach ; for, if any Gentleman passes his House, he allows him to go on so far, and then despatches his Servants after him, though none of his Acquaintance in any Shape, to take him Prisoner back to his House, there to be entertained with many good things for several Days, if by any means he can be prevailed upon to stay so long. This is his common Practice. Yea, a Gentleman was once heard to say that he would gladly ride twenty miles to have a meeting, and [to] be acquainted with Langwell. ‘ Why so ? ’ said another Gentleman. ‘ Because,’ said he, ‘ he gives his Meat and his Drink in so great Plenty, and with so much

good Will. For I have heard of him that, on a Day when Company was dining wt. him, and not a very Numerous One, after Dinner he whispered [in] his Servant's Ear— 'John, slack a Dozen of Corks of Wine, then go down stairs and take your Dinner, and when you have done, come up and slack another Dozen !'¹

"North of Langwell, and close on the Shore, at the mouth of the Water, there is, on a Solitary Rock washed by the Sea, the ruinous Castle of Berrydale, the Title of the eldest son of the Earl of Caithness. A little up into the land from this Castle is another Ruin of a [Pictish Building] Castle or strong Hold on Top of a green rising ground, of qch I could get no account at all. Perhaps it may be called Langwell-Castle, as it is on the same side of the [rapid] Water with the House of Langwell. You cross this Water by a very Rough Ford, abounding with very Big Stones, some of which may be term'd Rocks; insomuch that the Horses must sometimes go round them and make a Criss-Cross or Serpentine Way to get well out of it. After moderate Rains, I dare say, it is not fordable; but this happened to be one of the droughtiest Summers in the memory of man, or perhaps that ever was in Scotland.

"About four miles from this Water we came near the Castle of Dunbeath, which is close upon ye Shore, and on the Right Hand, with Corn-Fields, and some planting, particularly an Avenue from the Highway to the Castle of low trees, which, 'tis thought, will never grow higher, being chill'd with the Sea, to which they lie open. Here Mr Innes said to me, 'If you please to go to this Castle, I'll get a Protection for you, as the Sheriff of the County lives in it, young Freshwick.' 'No, no, Sir,' said I; 'you have my

¹ *Sutherland of Langwell*.—The two last lairds of Langwell appear to have been rather remarkable personages. James Sutherland of Langwell is described as "a jovial, hearty man, who liked a glass of good claret, at home and abroad, and was exceedingly merry over it." See account of a dinner at Thurso East, over which he presided.—*Henderson's "Caithness Families,"* p. 169. Robert Sutherland, last laird of Langwell, married, 1762, his cousin, the heiress of Brabster. See an account of her eccentricities, Henderson, p. 170.

thanks; but I look upon your company to be equal to any Protection he could give me.' A little North of the Castle we cross the Water of Dunbeath, in which plenty of Salmon and Trout, in a Ford much like the above. On North Bank of this Water, on a little rising ground, are the Ruins of a Religious House, of which I could get no account till I came to Thurso, where Dr Sinclair, a sensible, intelligent Gentleman, told me it had been a small Monastery, called of old the Chapel or Church of Peace. There is still a stone wall round the rising ground, which would appear to have been a Garden of late.¹

"As there is plenty of Game in all Caithness, and Mr Innes had a good pointer, we had some diversion without going off the Road; but the Fowls happened to be very shy. However, he pop'd down one Muir-Fowl, which made part of our Dinner at Auchintoft, where we arrived $\frac{1}{4}$ before 2 o'clock. This Diversion retarded our Journey a good deal. We dined upon Chickens, and had a glass of Whiskie-Punch; but we could have nothing for the Horses but green Corn and old Bere. Here we were in sight of, and nigh to, Latheronwheel, where, on the Rocky Coast, is a large Cave, to which the Inhabitants resort in the month of Octr. to go a Seal hunting. In dead of night they enter, and row up the Cave as far as the Water will bear them. Then they go out of their Boats, each of them having a Bludgeon, and taking his Station; after which they light their Candle, and make a hideous Noise, which hurries down the Seals from their Recesses in the upper end of the Cave, in a tumultuous throng, with frightful Shrieks. To this Multitude the Men are obliged to give way for a little, lest they should be tumbled down by their Force, and then they kill as many as they can of those that loiter behind, by a Knock on the Nose with the Bludgeons.

¹ "Within a mile to the sea," says a writer of the last century, "upon the brink of this water (Dunbeath), is the Chapel of Balclay. It's certain it was built in the time of Poperie, and I can give no further account of it." This is in the parish of Latheron.—*Origines Par. Scot.*, ii. 763.

These they drag to their Boats, and then set off with their purchase. If their Candle should chance to go out, or a Sea-Gale blow, it becomes dangerous, but not so much as is commonly represented, said our Landlord, James Sutherland, who has been a Partaker in this same sport. Here we were to turn to the left Hand, North and by West, across the Country, away from the bold, high, towering Shore. And now it is proper to remark, that in travelling along the Coasts of Sutherland and Caithness, we could not fail observing the shallow, shelvy shore of the one, and the very lofty Lands and Rugged Rocks of the other, many of them being perpendicular, and some hanging over at Top towards the Sea ; insomuch that we could not spy a Creek where the smallest Sloop could steer to any safe Anchorage in the event of a hard gale blowing upon Land, but Helmsdale only, and that but narrow and confined ; and therefore these Coasts may well be termed the dreery, dull, frightful Shores of Sutherland and Caithness.

“ Our Landlord told us it would be advisable to take a new Guide, as we had the Causey-Mire to travel over. ‘ A piece of ground,’ said he, ‘ that few Gentlemen in Caithness will venture upon without one that knows it well to conduct them.’ We desired him to chuse one for us, as we would take none but of his Recommendation. Accordingly, he got one John Sutherland for us, a sturdy, stout Fellow, with whom we set out at 4 o’clock, and who performed his part very well over the Causey-Mire, one continued piece of mossy Ground for about 2 miles at least, full of Sloughs and Quagmires, directly across the road to Thurso ; but why it is called by such a name I could not conceive, as the smallest vestige of [a] Causway we could not discover in the Whole. However, at Thurso they told me that a Causway had been there of old, but that it had sunk down out of sight by the Ruines of Time. In one slough Mr Innes’s Servant, seeing the surfase much broke with our crossing before him, would chuse a place for himself just hard by us, and behold [he] slumped down to ye Crupper,

and the Horse was laid on his right Leg. I cried to the other Servants to get off to the poor Lad's Relief; but before they could get at him he had disentangled himself, and rose unhurt, the Ground being soft as a Down-Bed; and then with some struggle he got his Horse out safely. Mr Innes, who was always in the Van, turned about upon my Crying, and seeing his Servt. in such a miserable Pickle, he called him all the Stupid Fools and Blockheads in the world that he could not hold in our Track, which the Guide had pointed out. 'Fair and softly, George,' said I. 'We know not who may be the next Fool.' And [indeed] we had not gone far, when down slumps he himself almost to the Horse's Belly. 'O! Friend George,' said I, 'who is stupid now?' 'I bid you take care of yourself,' said he, 'for this is a devilish piece of Ground!' This delighted the poor Servant not a little. The only way of crossing in these narrow Sloughs is to make the Horses go speedily over; for, if they make the least Halt, or too leisurely a Step, down they must sink.

"A little after being out of the Causey-Mire, and about 8 miles from Thurso, we halted at Auchateebst, an Inn, and took a Dram on Horseback, Mr Innes asking if we should stay here all night or push on to Thurso. 'To Thurso, by all means,' said I; where we arrived between 10 and 11 at night, after travelling over another lesser Moss near to Thurso, and riding the Water of Thurso by one of the best of Fords close to the Town, where we called at one [Wm.] Bruce's, who had good accomodation for the Servants and Horses, but none for ourselves; and therefore it behoved us to turn to one Mrs Dunnet's, who keeps a Tavern; but at both these places we were long in getting access, as the people were all in Bed, though we were heartily wearied, having journeyed in one day from Clyn to Thurso, 36 long Scots miles, which were more than 50 such miles in good and plain Road.

"Thursday, Aug. 5.—Early in the Morning the Rev. Mr James Taylor's servant was at my Bedside with an Invita-

tion to take Breakfast with him ; and I was not well out of Bed till a like Invitation came from Lady Clarden,¹ and, if not convenient, to dine with Her, the last of which I accepted of. I stept out to take a walk, and to view Thurso and its Invirous, which is a pretty large Town, with one principal Street, and several Lanes going off from it on both Hands, and though it lies low, yet the situation is beautiful at the mouth of the Water of Thurso, where small ships can enter with a Spring-tide, and lie safe and sure. Here is a great Salmon-Fishing, and it is well known yt., with Two or Three Draughts of a Net in a morning, two thousand five hundred and some odd Scores have been caught. Thurso is likewise close upon the [or rather Pictland-Firth] Pentland-Frith, which swells and rages at high Tides almost to some of the Houses, and at all times shapes a most charming Bay hard by the Town, to the North-West, of a Semi-circular Form, called Scrabster-Road or Thurso Bay, where is Safe Anchorage for Shipping, on firm clay, and land lock'd, with 7 or 8 Fathoms of Water, and two Iron Rings well fixed in the Rocks on the Shore for the greater Security. But, then, the Ships must keep at some small Distance from the Land because of some Shelvey Rocks under Water. Almost the whole of the Semi-circular Form is one continued high Bank or Declivity of the Verdant Grass down to the flowing Waves. When I looked to Dunnet Head or Windy Knap on the Right, I took it at first for the rugged wall of an ancient ruinous Fort, jetting out into the sea, so perpendicular is it from Top to Bottom. Then I viewed the high Hills of the Orkneys, terminating on a point called Hoy-head, upon which is a Rock resembling, at this distance, a Hut or small House, or rather, indeed, a Watch Tower, about 8 Leagues from Thurso. By turning

¹ *Lady Clarden.*—Jean, eldest daughter of John Sinclair of Barrook ; married her cousin, Geo. Murray of Clarden. He died 1752. Her five daughters, confirmed by the Bishop, were—Anne, married Thomas Stedman, with issue ; Barbara, married W. Brodie, Sheriff-Substitute of Caithness, *s.p.* Margaret, Elizabeth, and Jean appear to have died unmarried.—*Henderson, p. 199, 200.*

the eye still to the Left Hand, or to the North-West, you see another point, called Holborn Head, where ends the Semi-circular Bay. On the other side of the Mouth of the Water of Thurso is Thurso East, the seat of Sinclair of Ulbster, Proprietor of the Salmon Fishing, who, in 1746, burnt to ashes the Pulpit and Seats of Mr Taylor's Chapel, wt. the ten Commandments in a large Frame! See Lyon in Mourning, vol. 7, p. 1541. When I went to Breakfast, most agreeably was I disappointed on Mr Taylor's meeting me on Top of the Stair, as I had been informed that he was Confined to his Chair, which, indeed, I found to be the Case of poor Mrs Taylor, tho' she could step from one Room to another wt. one supporting her under the Arm. This was a tender and affecting meeting, as the good old man and his wife shed Tears of Joy.

"I dined with Lady Clardon, Mr Taylor accompanying me, the like of which he had not done for about three years past, which made me afraid he would not be able to make it out, and therefore I offered to help him; but he would by no means take any other assistance than what his Staff afforded him, though Lady Clardon lived at a good Distance from his House. I observed to some of his Friends how glad I was to see him have so much Strength. 'Alas! Sir,' said they, 'the seeing you here gives him a Flow of Spirits for the present. If you were once gone, he will fall as low and flat as ever, and will never think of moving without Doors'; and, indeed, I believe he was never down his own Stair after this, for he died about Christmas 1763. In walking to Lady Clardon's House a great Crowd of people appeared upon the Street, amongst whom was one Christie Finlayson, one of Mr Taylor's Hearers, who cried out, 'God be thanked for this Day, that ever we have seen such Company in our Town.' 'Houts, awa'! Christie,' said Mr Taylor, 'hold your peace.' 'Indeed, Sir,' said she, 'were I to hold my peace the Stones of the Street might Speak out.' 'O, Fie, fie! Christie,' said he; 'do not Speak so loud.' Coming up to Mr Taylor,

she laid her Hand upon one of his Arms, and said, with a lower Tone of Voice, 'Well, Sir, I will tell you what we are like. We are just like a Field that has lain long fallow; but now, God be thanked, we will be plowed up.' But, ah! I found out afterwards, to my no small Concern, that none of Mr Taylor's Hearers had the same zeal with this honest, plain Woman,¹ for, tho' I intreated them to think of a Successor to good Mr Taylor, who could not hold it out long, yet they would not comply with my Request. No, not though I press'd it much upon them, particularly upon Mr Campbell of Lochend and Lady Scotscaddel,² the two principal Persons I saw there, and withal promised to do all in my power to encourage and support a Clergyman amidst them. 'Let me only know,' said I, 'what can be made out here for the Subsistence of a Churchman. Give it only a name, ye shall be assisted from the South; but we cannot do all for you.' But no: they would not so much as condescend on any pittance whatsoever. This was extremely discouraging, and made me long much to be out of the Country as soon as possible. Ah! how Laodicean Lukewarmness, or, rather, icy Indifference, gains ground. Many now-a-days dance to the Tune of *Tempora Mutantur et nos mutamur in illis*. Ps. 119, ver. 135 and 136:—

' Bonus intueri me, tuam ut legem sequar.

Si quis hanc spernit, fluunt mihi more rivi lacrymæ.'

"Finding that Mrs Liddell, then at Moffat, had kindly ordered her House for my Use, I took up my quarters there, and was most kindly used by Mrs Montgomery, a Relation of Mrs Liddell's, who had charge of the House;³ but Mr James Murray, Surveyor of the Customs,⁴ favouring

¹ *Christie Finlayson's House*.—Right side entering Grove Lane.

² *Lady Scotscaddel, or Scotscaldar*.—Probably Isabella, only daughter of John Sinclair of Assery, who married John Sinclair of Scotscaldar, 1731.—*Henderson, p. 40*.

³ "*Dr Liddell's Field*."—Not far from Salvation Army Barracks.

⁴ *James Murray*.—In 1762, James Murray, described as Surveyor of the Customs, resided at Pennyland with his wife Barbara, daughter of James Murray of Clarden, and two sisters, and in January 1770 he died,

me with a visit at Mr Taylor's House in the afternoon, kindly insisted upon my being the first Night in his House at Pennyland, $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile from Thurso, which was complied with, and most elegantly was I entertained there. Dr Sinclair and Messrs Innes and Fraser, my two Fellow-Travellers, accompanied me to Pennyland, where Mr Murray introduced me to Lord Duffus, who was about to mount his Horse after drinking Tea there. At Supper, Mr Murray and Dr Sinclair told me of a remarkable Rock, called the Clat or Clet, and their Description of it raised my curiosity so much that I took Mr Murray's promise to get up betimes in the Morning to visit this same Rock as a whet for Breakfast.

"Friday, Augt. 6.—Got up in the Morning by 6 o'clock to walk with Mr Murray to take a view of the Rarities of the Place, but he was still in Bed. However, I called upon the Servant to awake his Master, and remind him of his promise. Till he got ready I took a view around Pennyland, which is sited near to, and in view of, the Bay of Thurso, upon a Rising Ground, which makes it a delightful Dwelling in Summer, but, as it stands much exposed, it must be very cold in Winter. Down from Pennyland, Westward, upon the Sea-shore, is an old Castle in Ruines, upon a Peninsula of a Rock, on ye Land side of which there has been a Fosse of old, with a Draw-Bridge. This was one of the ancient seats of the Bishops of Caithness, where one of them, it is said, had his Eyes put, and his Tongue cut, out by the Danes for exhorting them, upon their landing here, to be humane and merciful in their Depredations. It is called the Bishop's Castle, or the Castle of Scrabster by the Burnside, as a small Brook runs into the Sea by the Foot of the Rock. I took a narrow Inspection of this venerable Ruin, some of the Wall of

and was buried in Pennyland chapel. Who he was is uncertain, and it is conjectured that he may have been a second son of Richard Murray of Pennyland, who married Jean, sister of William Budge of Toftingall.—*Henderson, p. 194.*

which, upon the Point of the Rock towards the Sea, still stands, and the Vault at the Foot of this wall is almost entire. This point of the Rock is perpendicular, and I would by all means venture down, it being then ebb, to look up the Rock, and to the Top of the Wall, and in casting about I discovered the Remains of a Turnpike Stair, the curve of which towards the Rock is still entire, and three or four of the Steps, tho' shuffled a little out of their place, are plainly discoverable. This Stair I take to have been for descending to the Sea, either for Bathing, or for taking Boat, or for both. With the help of these few steps I scrambled down, and found the perpendicular Point running out [at Bottom] in a Flat into the Sea like a Tongue, upon which I stood and looked at the Top of the Wall, which of old has made a very grand and lofty appearance. This Castle was once decorated with a Terrace-Walk along the face of the fore-mentioned verdant high Bank for a great way, at least up to the House of Scrabster, $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile, which still stands entire and well roofed, and was the Mansion-House of Bp. Patrick Forbes of Caithness, and of his suceessor, Bp. Andrew Wood, till 1688. The Vestiges of this charming Walk are still discernable, as about 100 yards of it are entire in one continued stretch; but the Ruines of Time, and the Ravages of Land-Floods in heavy Rains down ye Declivity, have entirely defaced the greatest Part of it. For my own Part, I am apt to think that this Walk was at first run along the Face of the Green Descent from the Castle to the Point of Holburn-Head, a long mile, making a sequent of a Circle.

“ From the House of Scrabster we walked to view that singular Rock, the Clat, at the back of the point of Holburn-Head. This surprising Rock, of about 100 yards long, 40 or 50 broad, and 100 deep from Top down to the Surface of the Water at Ebb, is thought to have been detached, piecemeal, from the Continent, by the Violence of the flowings of the Pentland-Frith; and, after a leisurely View of it, I am, indeed, of that opinion, because the Rock on both sides

is of a slaty or shelvy Kind, and both on the Continent and the Clet I saw large pieces tore away in part, and hanging over so as to portend their falling off in a short time, one gap on the Continent side being about ten Inches Broad. When you come near to the Clet, by an easy descent you imagine it of a piece with the Continent, and that you are just to step upon it, both Surfaces being on a Level; but all at once the Gap or Gulf opens upon you a Stone-cast wide; for I threw several stones to the Rock, and had enough ado to reach it. The dashing and roaring Noise of the Waves in the Narrow Throat between ye Clet and the Continent, and the Crying of the Birds, are such that there is no hearing one another's speech without very loud Crying. The Birds are vastly numerous, and hatch among the Grass on top of the Rock, which for ordinary is so long that when the Birds are standing you can hardly see their Heads; and there is no getting at their Nests, as the whole Rock, much like an oval, is either perpendicular, or hanging over at Top, so that they must increase greatly in Number [thousands upon thousands]. Mr Murray told me that, when I was viewing it, there was not one for 400 that used to be, because, in the End of June, after hatching, great Flocks of them take wing to other places. In a word, the Clat may be well term'd the little Island of many Birds. It was a very calm Morning, without any Breeze of wind, and yet the impetuous Dashings of the Common Tide, which was beginning then to flow, between the S.E. end of the Clet and ye Rock on the Continent, were such that the Foam of the Billows flew far above our Heads like white Feathers. A long Tract of Time may come to wear away the Clat altogether, for the Impetuosity of the Pentland-Frith in Tides [*i.e.*, Spring-Tides, at new and full moon; for the Nep-Tides have nothing of this violence in them] is such, whether Ebb-Tides or Floods, that no ship can make way against the Tide, even with the hardest Gale, but is rather forced back by the violence of the Current, which must much more make a ship go against

the Wind. Yea, the Ebb-Tide, *i.e.*, the Retiring or Going back of the Floods, is, in some cases, more hazardous than the Flood itself, and continues its violence in the middle of the Frith three Hours after the High Water begins to flow upon the Shore, insomuch that one place of the Frith at Dungsby-Head [North-East] has the ugly name of Hell-Ebb. Again, on the other hand, the violence of the Flood continues in the foresaid Middle likewise three hours after the Ebb Tide begins to retire from the Shore. In a word, the Pentland-Frith is a Prodigy of its Kind, particularly to Strangers.

“ Mr Murray told me he desired the Bishop of Ossory to visit the Clet, but he was in haste, and could not think of walking so far, as it is two long miles from Pennyland, where his Lordship had dined and ate heartily of fried Chicken, and liked it so well that he desired to have a Receipt for dressing of it, as there is no such dish in England or Ireland. There was another Dish, which he took to be Enanmelet, but it happened to be toasted Ears. ‘Toasted Ears!’ said he; ‘what is that?’ ‘Why,’ said Mr Murray, ‘the Ears of a Calf toasted on Bread.’ He liked it much. But what surprized him most of all was the fine Wheat-Bread he ate here, of which he said he had not got any since he came into Strathnaver, through which he travelled in his way to Caithness; and he begged to know how they came by it. When they told him it was baked in a Pot, he was amazed, insomuch that it behoved them to assure him it was so before he could believe it; and he declared he had never ate better in all his Life; and so plentifully did he take of it, that Mr Murray jokingly said, ‘Stop, my Lord, else your Lordship will raise a Famine in ye Country;’ which pleased him so well, that he called to his own Servant, ‘John, pray, give me t’other cut of that fine Loaf.’ And, when he came to Wick, he desired his Servant to see if he could have a Loaf baked in a Pot to take along with them. He had two Servants, *viz.*, a Valet and a Groom. A little below Pennyland, nearer the Shore,

Mr Murray has a burying-place, like a little Chapel, for his Family and Friends.¹

"After Breakfast at Pennyland I went to Mr Taylor's House, where I read Prayers at 11 o'clock, and dined with him upon good Venison sent to him from Christian Finlayson. I then read prayers at three o'clock.

"Saturday, Augt. 7.—I took Breakfast with Mr Taylor, read Prayers at eleven o'clock, and dined with him. By a Card I had a kind invitation from Mr Dunbar, Merchant, to drink Tea wt. him this afternoon at his Lodgings in Baillie Donaldson's House, which I accepted of, and found a goodly Company there of both Sexes, among whom Mr Murray was one. After Tea we had some Glasses of Punch.

"Augt. 8—9th Sunday after Trinity.—I read Prayers and Preached, both Forenoon and Afternoon, for Mr Taylor, from Acts 8, 14, 15, 16, 17. After Sermon in the Forenoon I confirmed 19 persons, after which I communicated Mr and Mrs Taylor, with whom about 18, besides myself, did communicate. *Soli Deo gloria. Amen.*

"Monday, Augt. 9th.—I read Prayers in Mr Taylor's House at eleven o'clock, and then went to Pennyland, where I dined with Mr Murray and his Family, consisting of his Lady and two Sisters, in Company with Mr Campbell of Lochend and his Lady. After a Dinner of Venison I bad a long and lasting A Dieu to good Mr Taylor and his sensible, discreet Wife, and went from Thurso $\frac{1}{2}$ before 5 o'clock, in Company with Mr Campbell and his Lady. We came to Thurdystoft by 6, where we visited Mrs Anne Sinclair, a maiden Lady of some years, and a person of great Decency. We arrived at Lochend 10 minutes after 7, about 7 miles from Thurso, travelling upon natural carpet all the way, Lochend and his Lady driving along in their two-wheel'd chaise. We supp'd upon good Thurso Salmon, and, after Vespers, went to Bed at 11 o'clock.

¹ "At Pennyland, on a rock above the sea, was a chapel, the burial-place of Murray of Clarden."—*Orig. Par. Scot.*, ii., p. 748.

"Tuesday, Augt. 10.—"Twixt 9 and 10 I baptized and confirmed Lochend's Son and Daughter, William and Elizabeth Campbells, in Presence of the Parents only. About 11 o'clock I set out for Mr Sinclair's of Barrick,¹ at Lyth, in Company with Lochend and his Lady, and arrived before 12. Still in good Road. Here is some Planting, but so very low and shrubby, or dwarfish, that it makes a very poor appearance; for it will by no means thrive well in this place, as the Roots come soon to the Water, whereby they are chill'd, or to the Rocks of a slaty kind, which hinder them from rooting rightly. For want of Trees Caithness makes a very bare and naked Figure, and yet I'm persuaded, where grounds are deep and hollow, screen'd from the piercing air of the Sea, planting would thrive very well, as great trees are found on the mosses, of which great plenty in all this Country, when digging for Peats. Barrick has two fine Gardens, in which I ate Heart Cherries, and red and black Currans. There are Plenty of Wall Fruit in them. By two o'clock there was a plentiful Dinner on the Table, of 7 or 8 Dishes of Meat, and all out of Barrick's own Farm; for he keeps a good one in his own Hands, and is a notable Improver of his Grounds. We had very fine Strong Ale here and plenty of good Wine. Near to Lyth is a large rich Meadow or Bottom, the property of Barrick and of another Gentleman. Wick is the nearest Post Office here, and though not so big as Thurso by the one half, yet it is the County Town.

"Set off from Lyth $\frac{1}{4}$ before 5, as we were now to travel from Moss to Moss. We were obliged to take Barrick's principal Servant for a Guide—Bruce; without whom Barrick himself will not venture upon this Road. We came to Lady Brabster's, one of Barrick's Sisters, $\frac{1}{4}$ before 6, and mounted $\frac{1}{4}$ after it, as Bruce had to conduct us to the Castle of May, and to return the same night to Lyth through these dangerous Mosses. We arrived at May,

¹ Alexander Sinclair of Barrock, who married Jean, second daughter of William Sinclair of Freshwick, 1753.—*Henderson*, p. 100.

the seat of Sir James Sinclair,¹ by 7 o'clock. Near to May Castle is a very pleasant and firm Road. After Supper and Vespers, went to bed 'twixt 10 and 11.

"Wednesday, Augt. 11th.—At 8 o'clock in the Morning I confirmed Lady Sinclair of May,² who is likewise one of Barrick's Sisters, as is Lady Clardon at Thurso. After Matins I went to the Top of the Tower of May-Castle, 7 Stories high, where we had a noble View of the Country around, of the greatest part of the Pentland Frith, and of the Orcades. This is a strong old Castle,³ close upon the Coast, and appears to be one of the best Houses in all Caithness, consisting of about 18 Fire-Rooms, two of which being large Dining-Rooms or Halls, and one of these almost a Cube. Just before the Outer-Gate is a Creek, called May-Bay. Near to this, Eastward, is a Ridge of Rocks cut into the sea, called the *Men of May*, shewing their Heads here and there at Low Water, but covered in time of Flood, and raising a very hot and dangerous Tide off Land, which is most violent at Half-Ebb. I went into the Gardens of May, where I saw plenty of Apples, Strawberries, and some Cherries. Left May Castle 'twixt 9 and 10, and, as we had still to pass from Moss to Moss, John Banks, Sr James's principal servant, became our Guide. In going up and down rising grounds the Horses frequently sunk down above the Hoofs in this part of our journey, the extraordinary Dryness of this Summer notwithstanding. We soon pass'd by the Kirk of Canneshay, an exact Cross, close

¹ Sir James Sinclair, fourth of the name, obtained a Crown Charter, 1740, and married Margaret, daughter of John Sinclair of Barrock, by whom he had two sons.—*Henderson*, p. 65.

² In 1739, Mr Taylor, writing to Bishop Keith, presents "the bearer hereof, Sir James Sinclair of May, one of my principal encouragers and kind benefactors," for "the benefit of confirmation, which I hope you'll not deny him, and the rather that he was entered into the church by my ministry."—*See page 219*.

³ "In 1726 the Castle of May was a good old building, with a tower," built about 120 years previously for the Earl of Caithness.—*Macfarlane*, quoted in *Orig. Par. Scott.*, ii., p. 817 *et seq.*

"Fruitful May,
Flank'd with the marine coast prospective
Right opposite to the OrCADE Isles and lands."

upon the Shore, and which has a Steeple upon the West End, but so unskilfully built that the Bell has not full Room to ring. Then we came at Length to *Johnno Groat's House*,¹ now a Ruine, in the Parish of Cannessbay, and three long miles from May. It has been a low House of a Ground-Story only, and of 4 or 5 Rooms in length, of Stone and Lime, standing on a pretty little Green, close upon the Coast. It would appear that a Chapel and a Burying Place have been here of old. The Walls of a Barn and Kiln are still standing. This same little Ruin affected me much, as a Common Tradition goes that there were Groats in Caithness when there was not a Sinclair in all that Country; and now Sinclair is the prevailing name there, and hardly [if at all] one Groat in it, the Representative of which lives now somewhere in Orkney. How are the Vicissitudes of Life ever ringing the Changes, and baulking the Plans and Schemes of Human Affairs? And, alas! how little do we lay these Things to Heart? tho' we know assuredly that this our little *world is founded on the Seas, and Established on the Floods*, which strikingly depicts and exhibits to our view, that all things here below must *reel to and fro like a drunken Man*, having their Foundation in *Mutability*, and their Establishment in *Fluctuation*! *Sic transit Gloria mundi: Varium et mutabile semper!* May we fix our Views and Hopes in God alone, the only true principle of Firmness and Duration.

¹ *John O'Groat's House*.—An old ferry to Orkney. In 1496, John Grot (according to local tradition, one of the three brothers, Malcolm, Gavin, and John), had from William, Earl of Caithness, a grant of lands in Dungsby (Duncansbay). This family continued in possession of lands in Caithness and Orkney till within a recent period. The name still lingers, at least in the south Isles of Orkney. "Grott of Wares," in 1726, was the chief of the family. The old story tells that the "Grots having multiplied to the number of eight, and having disputed about the precedence at table, John Grot constructed an octagonal building, with a door on every side, and placed within an octagonal oak table, so that each Grot might enter at his own door, and no one have the precedence of any other—a measure which is said to have settled the dispute." In 1793, a writer says that "the remains of this table had been seen by many then living."—*Origines Par.*, ii., p. 814-6. See also Peterkin. There was a chapel "at Duncansbay dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and known as Lady Chapel or Lady Kirk."

“ We went down to the Sands on the Shore in Quest of Johnno Groat’s Buckies, but not one to be seen, as the Woman and Children gather them carefully, when they cast up, in order for Sale. I was surprised at the dazzling Whiteness of the Sand, far beyond anything I had ever seen before ; but, by taking some of it into my Hand, and, upon a closer Examination, I found it to consist mostly of Shells pounded upon the Rocky Shores by the violence of the Waves [at] setting in of Floods. At length two Boys came running to us from a Cottage at some Distance with Buckies, after we were all on Horseback, and moving off the Sands. One of them gave me two or three of his Handfuls. I asked at John Banks what I should give the Boy, and he answering, ‘ A Penny will make him happy.’ ‘ Why, then,’ said I, ‘ I shall surprise him with that kind of Happiness ;’ and, pulling out a Six-pence, I reached it down to him, but not so as he might touch it. He stood on Tip-toes, he stared, trembled, and redned greatly, still reaching up the little Hand to what, I am persuaded, had never been offered to him before. After viewing the Eagerness in all the points of Attitude, I dropt the wished for piece into his Hand, upon which away he runs with speed to the Cottage, and fetches down his Mother to us, with another son, a full-grown man, carrying a Stocking full of Buckies and a wooden Dish, or Cog, as a measure, the Contents of which, about 2000, cost a Shilling Sterling.

“ In journeying from Castle-May to Johnno Groat’s House, we were all along in sight of Stroma, an island belonging to the Continent, as being in the Parish of Canneshay. This island is famous for having dead Bodies of Men, Women, and Children above Ground, entire, and to be seen for 70 or 80 years, free of all corruption, without embalming or any art qtsoever, but owing, it is thought, to the plenty of Nitre that is there. The Bodies become very brownish through length of Time ; but so as that the Visage is discernable by any Friend or acquaintance that ever had seen the person alive. I looked over the Ferry of two

miles often to the Burial-place, close upon the Shore of Stroma, which is a Small House like a Dove Cote, the Roof being now off, and the Door broken to pieces; for, being informed that the bodies were now under Ground, I did not Cross the Ferry to View it. This little Repository for the Dead was built by one Dr Kennedy of Cairnmuck, as they term it in Caithness, but I take it to be Kenmuck, as there is such a Place in Aberdeenshire, from qch County, it is said, he had fled to Stroma for Homicide, having killed one Forbes, of the Family of Foveran.¹ Upon this Island the Dr made out a Small Habitation for himself, by building a snug House of two stories, and well slated, with a pretty little Garden; and he ordered his Body to be deposited in the little House, which he had erected for that purpose, standing by itself, without any other House in View of it that I could see. His Body was to be seen here for many years, and would have been so still, had it not been for his son, Murdoch Kennedy, who played such wretched tricks (*O facinus indignum! Referens tremisco!*) on the Body of his Father, for the Diversion of Strangers, as in time broke it to pieces, and the Head was the part that fell first off. He used to place Strangers at his Father's Feet, and by setting a Foot on one of his Father's, made the Body spring up speedily and salute them, which surprised them greatly. Then, after laying the body down again, he beat a march upon the Belly, which sounded equally loud with a Drum. William Sutherland of Wester particularly informed me that, about 40 years ago, he was in Murdoch's House, the same built by ye Fayr, and with him went to the Burying-place, qre he witnessed him thus beating a march, and saw several other Bodies entire, particularly some Bodies of children hanging by Nails and Pins upon the walls like dried Haddocks, as he termed it. Wester's

¹ *Kennedy of Stroma.*—In 1659, John Kennedy, designed as sometime elder of Kermucks, obtained from the Earl of Caithness a wadset of his lands in Stroma, including the Nethertown of Stroma, and the family of Kennedy remained in possession until 1721. John Kennedy appears to have been a grandson of Lady Buchollie, and to have married Janet, eldest daughter of Wm. Forbes of Craigievar.—*Henderson, p. 328-9.*

son, a married man, told me that only about 12 years ago he was on Stroma, and saw there Dr Kennedy's Body entire.¹

"From John O'Groat's House, still travelling from Moss to Moss, we came to Sinclair of Freshwick's, a fine new House, close upon ye Shore, and founded on a Rock, at 1 o'clock, where there is a Creek, called Freshwick-Bay, in which there is good anchorage. Here Sinclair of Barrick met me according to Appointment. He is married on a Daughter of Freshwick's, and has a Family of five promising Children. We dined on many good Things, particularly a large Dish of Muir-Fowl, as Freshwick's servant thinks nothing of going out a Morning or Evening with a pointer and Fowling-piece, and bringing home wt. him a dozen and a half, or perhaps two Dozens, of Muir-Fowl at once. I heard Barrick thanking the Servant for sending a Dozen to his House on such a Day, when he had sent the same number to Sinclair of Ratter; for Freshwick cannot consume in his own Family the one-half of qt his Servant is in used of Killing.

"Set out from Freshwick at 5 o'clock, and in riding along the Shore to the Castle of Keiss, I saw evident testimonies that the Clat has been detached from the Continent, as here are several Rocks separated from the Shore by the violence of the Tides and Storms, one in particular, that has yet a slender Hold of the Continent by a Neck of 8 or

¹ *Stroma*.—"In the island of Stroma were two chapels, called commonly the Kirk of Stara and the Kirk of Old Skoil. A tomb, apparently in one of the chapels, built by Kennedy of Kairnmuck, was noted for its quality of preserving dead bodies uncorrupted; so the bodies laid there in coffins, without bowelling or embalming, forty years ago and upwards to this day, have all the members entire and so firmly dried up that they will stand on their feet!" Pennant names 60 years as the period during which the bodies interred at Stroma had been known to remain undecayed. In 1793, the mummies were destroyed, and the chapel unroofed and mouldering into ruin.—*Orig. Par. Scot.*, ii., p. 793. The fact of these mummies having existed is undoubted, but not without parallel. In the parish of Walls, many bodies of the family of Moodie of Melsetter were thus preserved in a sepulchre, laid out on slabs. A gentleman also informed the writer that in another of the Orkneys, the churchyard of which is on the shore and of a sandy nature, he has seen bodies, or parts of bodies, taken up quite entire, mummified to a brownish colour, from the same causes.

10 Inches of Breadth, on which one could scramble over to the Rock, at the Foot of which, just in ye middle of it, you see a grand arched Porch wrought out by the Waves. One of these Rocks, quite detached, is so near the Shore that one could leap the Distance. There is another Rock in a narrow Creek or Bosom, demolished all to a small rugged Pillar of about 40 or 50 feet high, quite perpendicular and tapering to the Top, which I gazed upon for some time, as one of the grandest pieces of Nature's Ruin I had ever beheld. I saw the Rubbish of the Rock that had lately tumbled down, the pieces of it, some of them very big, lying heaps upon heaps.

"I came to Keiss at 6, the seat of Sir William Sinclair of Dunbeath, the preaching Knight, a wrong headed Man confessedly by all who knew him best, for he has taken up that odd way of strolling about and preaching, without Commission or Appointment of any man or any set of men whatsoever, and vents the wildest and most extravagant Notions that ever were hatched in the most disordered Brain. It was upon account of his Lady, a sister of Sir William Dunbar of Hemprigs, and one of Mr Taylor's little Flock, that I called here. She, poor lady! was confined to Bed, and had been long in an ailing Way, with the Distress of her Husband's unaccountable ways of doing; a shocking narrative of which I had first from Mr Sutherland of Wester, and then from Sir Wm. Dunbar, besides some general strong hints I had got from others, before I could see them. I drank Tea at Keiss, and made my visit as short as possible, the Knight being at home. The good Lady would needs have me to taste something at her Bed-side, and a Dram having been called for, her Ladyship desired to have a grace, at saying of which the Knight kept his Seat. This I remarked afterwards to Sir Wm. Dunbar and his Lady, and Wester, who joined in saying, 'Twas a pity I did not keep my seat, for then he would have been sure to have started up, as he seldom Fails to do things by the Rule of Contraries.

"From Keiss I travelled over a pretty piece of Links to Wester, and came there 20 minutes after 7, where I was most hospitably entertained by that honest old Trojan, Mr Sutherland,¹ and his wife, sister to the Revd. Mr John MacLachlan's first wife, Bettie Sutherland. In journeying to Wester you have a full view of the North Side of Noss-Head, a very high Point of rocky Land, much like Dunnet Head or Windy Knap. At the foot of the Point of Noss-Head I could not fail to observe an Opening, like a Door or Window, through [which] I could see Light, even at that distance of several Miles. This I remarked to Wester, who told me that Opening was very wide and high, and still increasing by the boisterous Waves, which would in time beat down all above the Opening. I told him likewise of my Observation upon the Clat, and the rugged Rocks or Pillars in coming from Keiss, as being detached from the Continent. He said the observation was most just, as he knew some of these to have been detached by the violence of the Shore-beating Billows of the Pentland-Frith, in which Spring-Tides flow, or rather shoot, with the utmost Rapidity, but Nep-Tides in it are not violent.

"At Noss-Head there is a Slate-Quarry, ye Slates of which have the pictures of Flowers and Birds beautifully delineated upon them with a yellow substance much like Gold-Leaf. Mr Sutherland showed me one of these Slates at his House, on which I could trace the Remains of a beautiful Flower, pretty much defaced with Time. Wester is a gentleman of reading, and had been bred to the sea, whereby he had visited many foreign Countries; particularly he was once nigh to the city of Jerusalem, but some Incident or other had prevented his seeing of it. These particulars made his conversation extremely acceptable to the Bishop of Ossory; for they compared Notes together as

¹ *William Sutherland*.—Descended of the Forse family, eldest son of David Sutherland, in Ausdale, and Catherine Polson. His son, John Sutherland of Wester, succeeded and was married to Annie, daughter of Alexander Innes, of the family of Sandside, with issue.—*Henderson*, p. 332.

to the Places they had both been in, and their accounts of them tallied exactly. Wester gave him the Convoy till he came near to the Castle of Dunbeath. Hard by the House of Wester, directly North of it, is a Loch called Loch-Wester, which disembogues itself into the Sea at Sinclair's Bay, in which there is a good anchoring Ground. A Brook runs into the Loch at ye West End. He told me he had two Grandchildren to be confirmed, whom I catechised this night, and found they had been well instructed, equally so with Lochend's Son and Daughter, but would not confirm them till next morning. After Supper and Vespers, the good old man would see me to my Room, where we talked over many things, and his Conversation was so agreeable that he had almost talked me out of my sleep. However, I told him at length that it was high Time to go to Rest. 'I must ask you one question,' said He, 'before I go. Do you intend to visit Sir William Dunbar of Hemprigs?' 'I cannot visit that gentleman,' said I, 'as I have not the smallest acquaintance of him; and as little am I desired by any one to see him.' 'Well, well,' said he, 'is that all? I shall tell you a story which will determine you then. Last Sunday I went to dine with Sir William, and he no sooner saw me than he asked me what had brought me to Ackergill that day.' 'This is not your usual salutation to me, Sir Wm. Why not this day as well as any other day?' 'Why are you not at Thurso to-day?' said Sir Wm. 'Indeed, I am an old man now, and Thurso is at such Distance from me, that I cannot often be there.' 'Ay, but don't you know who is there? Have you not heard,' says Sir William, 'that one B. Forbes is at Thurso to-day?' 'Not I,' said Wester. 'Had I heard that you had not seen my Face this Day, I assure you, Sir Wm.' 'Well, Wester, that Gentleman will readily hear of you, as you are an old Offender, and I am of the mind he will see you at your own House. If so, I will take it kindly if he visits me, and if he does not, I will take it amiss.' 'Indeed, Wester, said I, 'you have my thanks for your Narrative, which determines

me at once. But I hope you'll go along to introduce me.' By all means,' said he, 'I will do so.'

"Thursday, Augt. 12.—At 8 o'clock I confirmed Wester's two Grandchildren, Wm. and Isabella Sutherlands. It was now that Wester gave me the Information about Dr Kennedy's Body, &c., upon the Island of Stroma, as already narrated. We set out by 10 o'clock, and travelled over one of the finest Links I ever beheld, to the Castle of Ackergill,¹ which is a grand lofty tower of 7 Stories at least, situated on a Rock close upon the Shore, and was the first Seat in Scotland of the Keith-Marischal Family; hence, I suppose, Kethness or Caithness. But some observe that the Keiths are descended of the ancient Family of the *Catti* in Germany, hence the *Clan-Chattan* in Scotland, of which are confessedly the MacIntoshes and the MacPhersons, who acknowledge the Keith-Marischal for their chief; and hence, likewise, perhaps Caithness. The wall of Ackergill Castle is at least ten feet thick. You enter first into a Grand Vault, equal with the Ground in its floor, now a Kitchen, where formerly there has been a large Draw-Well, now filled up, but the Circumvallation at Top is still entire. Above this a lofty Hall, 32 by 18 feet, and 26 feet high, of an arched Roof, in which Sir Wm. Dunbar has cut out some large Windows, and is doing it up in a very pretty and elegant Manner. There are 32 steps of a Turnpike before you get on Top of this Hall, where Rooms go off at Right and Left. I went up to the Top of the Castle, and walked round the Roof, there being a Balcony or little Turret on each corner, and had a commanding View of the Country and the Sea. Of old it has had a Fossee on the Land Side. Up the shore, a mile from Ackergill, and near

¹ In 1538 the Tower or Castle of Ackergill was granted, with the half of the lands, to William, Earl Marischal, and Lady Elizabeth Keith, his wife. Between 1561 and 1566, John Keith was captain of Ackergill. It was surrendered to Sir Robert Gordon in 1623 by the Earl of Caithness. A writer in 1726 says that Ackergill was then a strong house, "and yet in repair, and that betwixt that and the sea is a good new house, lately built, but now belonging to the family of Hempriggs."—*Orig. Par. Scot.*, ii., p. 778-9.

the point of Noss Head, are the old Castles of Sinclair and Girnigo, to view which I walked with Wester before dinner. About a third of the way we came to the Ruines of a very singular [little] Chapel of stone and mortar without any Lime, and without Windows either in the East or West Gable, all the windows being in the South-Wall. It is called the Chapel of St. Tear, and the country people, to this very day, aseemble here in [the] morning of the Feast of the Holy Innocents, and say their Prayers, bringing their Offerings along with them, some Bread, others Bread and Cheese, others Money, &c., and putting these into the Holes of the Walls. In the afternoon they got Music—a Piper or a Fiddler—and dance on the Green where the Chapel stands. The roof is off, but the walls are almost all entire. One of the late Presbyterian preachers of Wick thought to have abolished this old practice; and for that end appointed a Diet of catechising in that corner of the Parish upon the day of the Holy Innocents, but not one attended him; all went, as usual, to St. Tear's Chapel. I saw the Font-Stone for Baptism lying on the Green at the East End of the Chapel. Mr Sutherland, of Wester, observed that no doubt it has been called the Chapel of St. Tear from the Tears of the Parents and other Relations of the murdered Innocents. We then proceeded to the two Castles, on the way to which we viewed several high, rugged pillars of Rocks, made so off the Continent by the Impetuosity of the Waves, in the Foundation of one of which a passage is made by the same like an arched Porch. These Castles are founded on the Top of a Rock, still surrounded by the Sea at Spring Tides, and, I suppose, have been so of old by every Flood, as a part of the Gap on the South-East Side [or Corner] of the Rock is partly filled up with some of the Ruines of the Castle; and it is by this Rubbish that you have any Access to go upon the Rock to take a particular view of this august Ruin, one of the grandest I ever looked upon. However, in coming up the Shore, Castle-Sinclair first presents itself to you on the West End of the

Rock; the [only] Entry to which has been by a Draw-Bridge over a deep Gap or Gulph in the Rock, naturally so without any Art, into which the High Water still flows. Behind, where the Draw-Bridge has been fixed, you have the Openings, in a Stony Arch, of two large Port-cullises at some Distance from one another. Behind Castle-Sinclair is the Castle of Girnigo; and remarkable it is that the Distance between the two is only a [natural] deep Gap or Gulph in the Rock, into which the Sea Flows at Tides, and over which there has been a Draw-Bridge for a Communication between the 2 Castles, when the Earl of Caithness lived in Castle-Girnigo, and his eldest Son, Lord Berrydale, in Castle-Sinclair; the former of which has been by far the largest Building, the vestiges of it yet being entire round that whole part of the Rock on which its stately Ruin still stands; and Steps are cut in the Rock under Girnigo, on the side towards the Water, to go down for taking Boat, or bathing in the Sea. I cannot help observing here that Castle-Sinclair appears to me like a Guard or Centry-Post upon the entry to Castle-Girnigo; for it has upon the front of it, near to the Top of the Wall, the Royal Arms at large, with these letters, K. C. II.; and as some of the gilding still remains, you see the Coat Armorial some time before you come close up to the Castle. In a word, when these Castles have been in their Prime, and the two Lords residing in them, they have surely made a most superb Figure, as the most of the way from Ackergill to them is an ascent, increasing more and more the nearer you approach to them, and they are still higher than you in their Foundation, which adds greatly to the Awfulness and Grandeur of their Appearance. On the Continent, a small Distance from the Castle, you see the marks of a large Garden.

“Wester, who knows the Gaëlic, told me that *Girnigo* is derived from *Go*, pronounced in Gaëlic, *Gio*, a very narrow Inlet or Throat of the Sea upon the Shore, where the Flowings make a fretting or grinning noise, hence

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Girnigo—*girn* being the Scots word for *grin*. As he told me this on the spot, I could not fail to observe that the Opening between the North-East Corner of the Rock and the Continent being a very narrow Throat, the flowings of the Sea into it at that Instant made the very same noise as described by him.

“The Earl of Caithness happening to send one Sinclair Express upon Business to the Duke of Lauderdale, then in England, his Grace next morning chanced to see Sinclair going round his fine House at Ham, and looking very attentively at it, upon which he asked him what he thought of it, and if ever he had seen any such House in Scotland? ‘Yes, yes,’ said Sinclair, ‘I have seen many such in Scotland, my Lord.’ ‘Name one of them,’ said the Duke. ‘The Castle of Girnigo,’ said Sinclair. ‘God sin the Liars *girn* i’ the Widdy,’ said the Duke. ‘Well, well, my Lord, *girn* here, *girn* there,’ said Sinclair, ‘I wadna hae been sae lang at Girnigo without meat and Drink; for I came here Yesternight, and got not my Supper!’ This story Wester had from John Sinclair, son of the said Sinclair.

“We returned to Ackergill, and dined upon many good Dishes, particularly a very large One, in which were three or four Kinds of Fish, elegantly dress’d in a rich Sauce. Here I met wt. young Wester, who told me of Dr Kennedy’s Body, as already narrated. And here it was that Sir Wm. and his Lady and Wester joined in giving several affecting Anecdotes of the strolling and preaching Knight.

“We went from Ackergill at 4 o’clock. Wester and Mr Hugo Campbell, Brother to Lochend, in company, and travelled one of the finest natural Roads in the world, a long mile to the town of Wick, where we put up at the said Mr Campbell’s House, which I had no sooner entered, than good Mrs Francis Sutherland, a maiden Lady of about 80, and Aunt to Lord Duffus, was with me. We drank Tea with Lord and Lady Duffus, who importuned me much to be all Night under their Roof; but I begged to be excused, as I could not think of disturbing their Family with my

early Hours. We returned to Mr Campbell's House, Mrs Francis still accompanying me, that she might have Vespers. Here honest Wester bad me Farewell. Between 7 and 8, I confirmed three Children of Mr [Hugo] Campbell's.¹ See my Lists.

"Wick is pleasantly situated at the Mouth of the Water of Wick, where a ship of 50 or 60 tons only can enter and lie safely, and where there is a small Salmon-Fishing, let by Hempriggs at 100 merks Scots a year.

"South East from Wick, and a small distance from it, stands Old Wick Castle, now a ruin, the first seat of the Lord Oliphant;² so that three great men, Keith, Sinclair, and Oliphant, were in one Neighbourhood, and truly too near to one another; for they were always at Daggers drawing, and there was no peace in that country until Sinclair purchased the Properties of the other two, Caithness having been divided amongst them in three Parts.

"Friday, Augt. 13.—By 5 o'clock we set out from Wick, once more to travel through Mosses, and arrived at Sweenzies, a new House lately built by the Proprietor, Mr Sutherland, at 40 minutes after 7, being 9 long miles. Here I took Breakfast, went off as speedily as possible, and came to Achintoft, our old Road, $\frac{1}{2}$ after ten o'clock. We refreshed the horses a little, and mounted at eleven. Several Gentlemen in Caithness having asked how I liked ye travelling through their Country, I told them that if I had a Horse that had Corns in his Toes I would bring him to Caithness in a dry Summer, to ride up and down, hither and thither, as riding through their Mosses was the same thing as riding upon Beds of Down. In our Way to Achintoft we

¹ James Campbell of Lochend, Sheriff Clerk of Caithness, purchased Lochend in 1749; married Mary, daughter of John Sinclair of Forse. His line failed. He died in 1776, having married secondly, Isabella, daughter of Rev. James Oswald, Episcopal clergyman of Watten.—*Henderson*, p. 279.

² "The castle of old Wick, once the seat of the Oliphants, and whose ruins are now known to sailors as the Old Man of Wick, is a tower of three stories, with remains of other buildings, built on a high peninsular rock at the south head of the bay of Wick, and defended on the land side by a deep ditch."—*Orig. Par. Scot.*, ii., p. 780.

had gone about 2 miles off our Road, so that my Guide from Inverness proved of no Use to me at all, but on the contrary; and, therefore, I had much better been without him altogether. We travelled the shortest Road to Ousdale, to shun Langwell, and did not call at Ousdale, but push'd on.

"When we came to the Top of the Ord, we alighted for Ease to the Horses, and walked to the foot of it, where I had the curiosity to set a Foot on each side of the Brook, and so stood on 2 Shires at once. We arrived at Helmsdale, honest John Mitchell's Inn, 25 minutes after 3, *i.e.*, 26 long Scots miles, to Dinner, the stiff Braes of Berrydale, and the yet stiffer Ord making parts of them. I Dined at Helmsdale on Mutton-Collaps and new-haled Salmon, honest John chatting to me very agreeably. He asked me how the not-swearing clergy lived now South-by? 'Why, John,' said I, 'you see I am Meat-like and Cloath-like, as we say in Scotland; and we even do the best we can under God.' 'I see so,' quoth he; 'but in good Faith, Sir, it is even a Wonder there is one of you to the fore!' Set off from Helmsdale 35 minutes after 4 o'clock, and came to Dornoch $\frac{1}{2}$ after 9, being 40 long Scots miles in one Day, taking in the two miles we went off the way. A little North before you enter the Town of Dornoch there is an Obelisk, ending on the Top in a Circle, with two Diameters across each other, called the Earl's Cross, *i.e.*, of Sutherland, I suppose; for I could learn nothing of its History, but that it was in memory of a Battle wt. ye Danes."

The names of the persons confirmed in Caithness are preserved by Bishop Forbes, as follows:—

N.B.—The following belong to the Rev. Mr James Taylor, at Thurso, not well able to write:—

AT THURSO, AUG. 8TH—6TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY—
CONFIRMED—

Alexander Callum.

George Swanson.

Lady Clardon, Sinclair, *alias* Murray, and 5 daughters.

Mrs Anne,
Margt.,
Barbara,
Bettie, and
Jean } Murrays.

Anne Sinclair at Thurdystaff.

Elizabeth Doull.

Lady Scotscaddell, Sinclair.

Christian Finlayson, *alias* Waters, Baxter and 2 daughters.

Janet and }
Christian } Waters.

Jas. Campbell of Lochend and

His Lady, Sinclair.

Janet Swanson and her son

Richard MacGhie.

Alexr. Thomson.

AT LOCHEND, AUG. 10TH, 1762.

William and } Campbells, son and daughter of Lochend, after bap-
Elizabeth } tizing them, all in presence of the parents.

AT MAY, AUG. 11TH, 1762.

Lady Sinclair of May.

AT WESTER, AUG. 12TH, 1762.

William and } Sutherlands, grandchildren of
Isabella } Mr Sutherland of Wester.

AT WICK, AUG. 12TH, 1762.

Margt.,
Isabella, and } Campbells, daughters of Mr Hugo Campbell,
Janet } brother to Lochend.

In all, 27.

(Signed) ROBERT FORBES.

In regard to the famous Christie Finlayson, the bishop's opinion of that worthy matron is supported from another source. In a letter, dated Durness, 5th March 1756, Lord Reay directed Mr Thomas Baikie, merchant in Thurso—"You'll at sight of this give a Boll Meal to Christie Finlayson, spous to Thomas Brimner, once my servant, and now in Friswick's service. This omit not, and acquaint me of the same."¹

Good Mr Taylor lingered on in the service of God and his church some eighteen months more, dying about Christmas 1763.

¹ Original Letter, *pene* author.

"April 18, 1763.—Sir Stuart Thriepland produced a Letter from a correspondent in Caithness representing the distressed and necessitous situation of Mr Taylor and family at Thurso. Upon which representation the meeting, by a special order, appointed the collectors to pay to Sir Stuart Thriepland five pounds sterling out of the charity fund, for behoof of Mr Taylor."¹

The fact of Mr Taylor's death was communicated to Bishop Forbes by Mrs Liddell, who is mentioned in the bishop's journal. The bishop writes Mrs Liddell, who had forwarded Mr Taylor's papers to Leith, in the following terms:—"Madam, I hope you received my answer to your Letter, informing me of good Mr Taylor's death. The Box containing some of his papers came safe to hand on Friday, the 2d of March, and though it was evening, I delayed not to make it open, and to examine the contents of it, which I could hardly do with dry eyes. But, ah! how was my concern increased when I viewed the subjects of his Discourses? So very good and excellent are his Sermons, that they might be delivered in any Audience, from the King down to the meanest Subject. What Pains, what Labour, has that worthy man been at, to plant true, genuine Christian Principles in the remotest corners of our Country! and now, alas, woe's me for it, how neglected, how *almost* forgotten! To prevent the *altogether*, how happy would I think myself to have it in my power to rouse my Cathnesian Friends out of their present Lethargy, that so they might see, and steadily pursue, their truest happiness before it be too late! In my former Letter I told you I had one in view to be successor to good Mr Taylor, who, I hoped, would do Honour to the Character, and how well my Hopes are founded I leave you and my other Friends to judge, when I tell you that he is not only well seen in the Reading and Studies of a Clergyman, but is likewise an excellent Mathematician, and has a remarkable genius in laying out of ground in

¹ MS., Reg. of Charities, Adv. Liby.

the several Tastes of Gardening, Pleasure Ground, and Farming. He has likewise a thorough knowledge in the Culture of Flowers, Shrubs, Plants, Fruit Trees, Forest Trees, &c., both Foreign and domestic. Shew him any soil, and he will tell you instantly what it is good for, and how to be managed to turn out to account. In a word, such is his superior genius in all these Particulars, that his Advice and Direction have been sought for by some of the First Gentry and Quality in Scotland, and his plans have been received by them with Thanks and a good Reward. But then his principal Delight is in the Office of a Churchman, and he is pleased to entertain such an attachment to me, that he will chearfully officiate in any charge under my Inspection. You see he is well qualified to labour in both the spiritual and temporal vineyard, and, were he amongst you, I am persuaded he would be of general use and advantage to the whole country, as, with all the knowledge he is master of, he is very modest and easily communicative, and would be ready to instruct young gentlemen in the Mathematics that inclined to attend his lessons and Lectures upon that higher part of Education. He has a wife and two or three children. I intend once more, God giving Health and Strength, to visit my Friends in Ross, but how much will it grieve me to be disappointed of the opportunity of lengthening my journey into Caithness? which must be the case if I have no pastor, no flock to visit, it being a poor affair for a Churchman to be jaunting from Family to Family, only to eat and to Drink, and to employ the Time in common and ordinary Chit-Chat, when the design of his journeying ought to be solely to do duty in the weighty and important Parts of his Office. Be so good as to lay this letter before my Friends with you, as they chance to come in your way, and let them narrate to others, in conversation, the good qualities of my Friend, as to human Science and worldly matters, which may tend to render him acceptable even with those with whom he would have no connection in the Clerical character, but

let my letter be seen by none but Friends only." The bishop concludes the letter still hoping. But it was all in vain. On the 2nd August, "Mrs Liddel, Thurso," writes the bishop "that the most of the Peopel that adheared to worthie good Mr Taylor do all go to the kirk."¹

Yet it appears not all, for on August 29, 1767, at Edinburgh, "Borthwick's Closs, Elizabeth Sutherland, Daughter of Lord Duffus and Lady Sinclair of Orlig, was confirmed by Bishop Forbes, "with ye chrism."²

Bishop Forbes subsequently visited Moray, Ross, and Argyll in 1770. He died at Leith on the 18th November 1775, of an ulcer in the kidneys, and was buried in the Maltman's Aisle of South Leith Church on the 21st November. He was "attended to the grave by Bishop Falconar, and six presbyters as chief mourners."³

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XXIV.

Historical Prayer Books.

1. "Book of Common Prayer." 8vo. London: Baskett, 1721. With "Companion to the Altar." London: E. Parker, 1721. Picture before "Companion," of Institution of the Lord's Supper. Bible and Crown at bottom. Also, "Whole Book of Psalms," by Sternhold and Hopkins. London: Susanna Collins, for Company of Stationers, 1721. Bound in calf. Inscription:—"Jane White, her Book, Feb. 6, 1722-3." Note at end:—"Jane White, the owner of this Book in 1722, was probably Jane Whyte or White, granddaughter of David Sinclair of Broynach, second son of Sir James Sinclair of Murkle, and brother of John, 8th Earl of Caithness.—J. H. 16th Jan. 1889." Now the property of Mrs Sinclair of Barrock.

2. Account of a Jacobite Prayer Book, now belonging to

¹ Copies in Bp. Forbes' MS., Ed. Theo. Liby.

² Bp. Forbes' MS. Register, Leith.

³ Note in Bp. Rose's Prayer Book, 1683, at Macintosh Liby., Dunkeld.

Colonel J. H. Henderson, Bellevue, Wick :—"The Book of Common Prayer," &c. Edinburgh: Printed by Adrian Watkins, His Majesty's Printer, MDCCLII. 12mo, with a number of curious cuts. In the Morning prayer, attempts at covering over or obliterating "George" in the prayers for the king and royal family. At Evening prayer, both names quite rubbed out. Same state in the Litany. In Communion service, at the first prayer for the king, "James" pasted over "George." At the second prayer for the king, "George" nearly obliterated. In the service for "Gunpowder Treason," "George" twice obliterated. Service for "King Charles Martyr," "James" pasted over "George." Same in "King's Restauration." In the "Form of Prayer with Thanksgiving" for the Accession Day, the name "George" rubbed out in the Proclamation; and in the service itself, "George" scored out twice, as also "George" in the name of the Prince of Wales. "George" also rubbed out at the commencement of the Proclamation authorising the use of the "Three Forms of Prayer for the special days of Gunpowder Treason, King Charles Martyr, and the King's Restauration. The volume is complete in a nice old gilded binding, and bears the name "Margaret Honyman, 1805," with a note, "This M. H. was the daughter of William Honyman of Gramesay, and sister of Cecilia Honyman, who married David Henderson of Steinster. Margt. Honyman married and became Mrs Groat." The Honyman arms may still be seen quartered on an old house in Thurso, not far from the ruins of St. Peter's Church.

3. At Thurso Castle is a Prayer Book, in which is written :—"The Right Hon. Lady Dorothea Sinclair, 1754." On the fly-leaves :—"The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments Together," &c. "Edinburgh: Printed by Richard Watkins, one of Her Majesty's Printers, 1744;" and bound with it, "A Companion to the Altar." "Lon.: John Beecroft. At Bible and Crown, 1752."

4. Prayer Book. Basket, 1716. "Elizabeth Sutherland, her book, Ap. 16, 1734." [Lady Elizabeth Wemyss].

5. "Compleat Collection of Devotions," &c. [Deacon's]. "London: Printed for the Author," &c., 1734. Part I. only. Found in an old house in Thurso. Dates probably from the ministry of Rev. James Taylor.

CHAPTER XXV.

MODERN HISTORY : WICK, THURSO, DORNOCH.

WICK :—Longmuir appears, 1758, as assisted—up to 1769, but place not named—Bishop Forbes officiated in Mr Campbell's House—1792—Church Tolerated as to Religion—1839—Proposal for Church in Wick—falls through—Bishop Low—1854—Service started under Bishop Eden—Petition—Particulars—Bishop Officiates in room at Pultneytown Academy—Committee—Clergy from 1857—Church Built and Consecrated, May 13, 1870, by Bishop Eden—Description—Parsonage added.

THURSO :—Service begun in Drill Hall, 1881, by Bishop Eden—Account—Assisted by R. Eden and Murdoch—Sermon published—Large Attendance—Meeting in September—Those present, 1882—Service again begun—by Canon Murdoch—Baptism—Appeal issued—Headed by Sir Tollemache Sinclair and Mrs Sinclair of Barrock—W. Lumsden Walker then appointed Priest in charge, Dec. 3, 1882—Site for Church given—Bazaar held—Statement at opening—Church opened in May 1885—Consecration Service by Bishop Eden published—Confirmation held—Sermon by Archdeacon of London preached and published—Dedicated to Mrs Sinclair and Mrs Owen Williams—Walker succeeded by Fergus and Plant—Walker reassumes charge, 1898—Chancel Foundation Stone laid by Bishop MacLean, 1905—A Memorial by Mrs Sinclair to her son—Dedicated, 4th September 1906.

DORNOCH :—Under Tain—Summer Services now held—Need of a resident Priest for Dornoch, Golspie, and Brora.

WICK.

IN an address of Presbyters of Ross and Caithness, 1758, Longmuir's name does not appear, and when Bishop Forbes visited Caithness in 1762, there was no clergyman at Wick. However, by the "Register of the Administration of the Charitable Constitutions, &c.," Longmuir appears

as aided yearly from 1754 to 1769, but his residence is not stated.¹

When Bishop Forbes visited Wick he held divine service and a confirmation in "Mr Campbell's house."

No reference to any Episcopal meeting occurs in the Session Record, or in the Burgh Record of Wick.

In 1792, the Episcopal Church became a tolerated religion in Scotland, but we hear no more of attempts at restoration of service till 1839, "when several families in the neighbourhood of Wick made a proposal to Bishop Low, who then had charge of all the district north of the Spey, for the erection of a church in that town; but nothing appears to have been done. The matter lay in abeyance till December 1854, when communications were opened with Bishop Eden, who entered energetically into the matter; and in February 1855 the following advertisement appeared in the local papers:—

"The Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Moray and Ross has intimated his intention of celebrating Divine Service in one of the Rooms of the Pulteneytown Academy, on Sunday, 18th instant, and also of administering the Holy Communion.

"Service will commence at the usual hours.

"His Lordship has further intimated his wish to meet as many of the Episcopalians as possible on the day following, for the purpose of consulting as to the best steps of providing them more frequently with the ministrations of their Church.

"Pulteneytown, Feb. 8, 1855."

"The service was held as advertised, but stress of weather prevented the attendance of the more distant members. At the meeting on the 19th, the Bishop undertook to supply services once a quarter from Inverness; and steps were taken to organize the local Episcopalians, and ascertain what support would be given to a resident clergyman. The names that appear as a Committee to receive communications and subscriptions are—'Sheriff Russel, Wick; George Sutherland, Esq. of Forse, Lybster; Captain Tudor, Pulteneytown; and Josiah Rhind, Esq., agent for the Commercial Bank, Wick.'

¹ Orig. Adv. Liby.

“The use of a room in the Academy was granted by the British Fishery Society ; and in it the services continued to be held till the church was built. In 1857, the Rev. Walter B. Arthy, Chaplain, R.N., undertook the charge ; but—without a church, without a parsonage, and with a congregation only in the process of formation—the changes of clergymen were frequent, and the vacancies sometimes of considerable length. The following is a list of the clergymen, viz. :—Mr Arthy, July to Dec. 1857 ; Dr Aspinall, Jan. 1859 to Christmas 1862 ; Mr Hunt, Jan. to Oct. 1863 ; Mr Davies, July 1866 to Aug. 1868 ; Mr Mackenzie, Aug. 1868 to Jan. 1869 ; Mr Petrie, June 1869 to Nov. 1872 ; Mr Archibald, March 1873 to Oct. 1876 ; Mr Sutherland, Nov. 1876 to Feb. 1882 ; Mr Connon, 1882 to 1893 ; Mr Duncan, 1893 to 1905 ; Mr Hellawell, now rector, 1905.

“As the congregation became more consolidated, a church became more and more of a desideratum. A movement towards supplying this want was made in 1863 by Rev. Mr Hunt, but it fell through for the time. It was resumed in the end of 1866, and continued without intermission till the object was obtained. The church was consecrated, and solemnly set apart for the worship of God, under the name of St. John's Church, on May 13th, 1870, by Bishop Eden, sixteen years after he had held the first service in the Academy.

“It is built in the early decorated or transition style of Gothic architecture, which prevailed at the end of the 13th century, from the designs of Alex. Ross, Esq., architect, Inverness. It consists of nave and chancel, with vestry and organ chamber, in which is placed a Scudamore organ. The cost in all was £1245. The funds were aided very much by the exertions and liberality of the late Major Horne of Stirkoke (who finally became responsible for the balance of the debt in order that it might be consecrated), and of the late F. S. Bentley-Innes, Esq. of Thrumster, and of others who are yet alive, whose names would otherwise equally deserve mention.

"Adjoining the site of the church was a feu belonging to Major Horne, which he had expressed an intention of giving as a site for a parsonage. After his death this was disposed by his representatives to trustees for this purpose. The possession of this piece of ground, and the difficulty of procuring a suitable residence for a clergyman, kept the matter always before the congregation. In 1877 the congregation again made an effort, and, chiefly by the liberality of Mr Duff Dunbar of Hempriggs, found themselves in a position to build.

"The parsonage is in the cottage style, built, like the church, of local blue stone, with dressings of Covesea free-stone. It consists of three rooms and kitchen on the ground floor, and bedrooms with gabled windows above, with scullery and servants' room, and has a plentiful supply of closets and store-rooms so dear to the housewife. It differs from the more ordinary style of Wick buildings by extending to the breadth rather than to the height; and so lessens the amount of mason work, without proportionally increasing the expense of roofing. It stands in the centre of the feu, shut in from Moray Street by a wall, and separated from Francis Street by the Church, towards which it fronts."¹

THURSO.

Service was begun in the Drill Hall, Thurso, on August 14, 1881, by the Right Reverend Bishop Eden, Primus. During the week the hall had been prepared for the services by the erection of a platform at the east end, with the usual ornaments of a cross, candlesticks, and vases of flowers. The Holy Communion was celebrated at eight o'clock in the morning, and again at mid-day. The Primus was the celebrant at the latter service, attended by the Rev. Robert A. Eden as chaplain, and assisted by the Rev. A. D. Murdoch, of All Saints, Edinburgh. The

¹ "The Bazaar," a sheet issued at Wick in connection with a bazaar for St. John's Church and Parsonage, Sept. 13, 1878.

Primus preached from Exodus iii. 2. The sermon was chiefly historical, and was listened to with great interest and attention, and was afterwards published. It is entitled, "The Past and Present Position of the Episcopal Church in Scotland: A Sermon preached in Thurso on Sunday 14th August 1881, by Robert Eden, D.D., Bishop of Moray, Ross, and Caithness, Primus. Published by permission, 1881." The attendance at the eleven o'clock service was considerable, but in the evening many had to stand throughout the whole service, the congregation overflowing the limits of the hall, and crowding the passage and staircase. The Rev. R. A. Eden preached in the evening, the prayers being said by the Rev. A. D. Murdoch.

In the end of September 1881, a meeting of the adherents of the church was held, with a view to deliberate as to the future of the church in Thurso. There were present—the Rev. A. D. Murdoch, The Master of Rollo, Mr Philip Hope, Mr Dickson, Mr Watty, Mrs Horne of Stirkoke, Mrs Watkins, Banniskirk; Miss Blinkhorn, Westfield; Miss Ogilvie, Thurso; and others. A letter of apology for non-attendance was received from Sir Tollemache Sinclair, M.P. Thanks were voted to the Primus for his assistance, and it was hoped that eventually the services of the church would be rendered permanent.

On 1st August 1882, the services of the church were again commenced in the Drill Hall, by the Rev. A. D. Murdoch. The congregation numbered from 80 to 200, and the support given was much more general than on the previous year. The music was improved, and the fittings increased. A baptism took place, the Rev. A. D. Murdoch giving a statement of the church's teaching in regard to that sacrament. The Rev. Thomas Barnes, Dorchester, assisted in the services.

On the 8th September 1882, an "appeal for building a church in Thurso" was issued. It was stated that after the revival of the services this year, increased success followed. "Though several families were absent, the com-

municants number over 20, and the attendance has varied from 50 to 200. The offertories average over £3 a Sunday. An appeal is now made to churchmen in general for aid to re-light the lamp of our church in this, the most northern town of our island."

A subscription list is appended, headed by Sir Tollemache Sinclair with a donation of £100, and Mrs Sinclair of Barrock with one of £50. The treasurer, A. H. Ferryman, Esq. of Lochend, signs the appeal, and intimated a donation of £60. A hearty recommendation by Bishop Eden is appended. The building committee consisted of Sir Tollemache Sinclair, Sir John Sinclair, Sir Robert Sinclair, Mr Ferryman, Capt. Elmslie, and Mr Watty.

The next matter was the appointment of a priest in charge, and the Rev. W. Lumsden Walker, then curate of All Saints, Edinburgh, received the appointment, and began his labours in Thurso on Advent Sunday, December 3, 1882. Regular and permanent ministrations were now commenced. At Easter 1883, the writer had the great pleasure of assisting at one of the services in the Drill Hall.

A site for a church was given by Sir Tollemache Sinclair, and plans were prepared by Mr Alexander Ross, architect, Inverness. In aid of the building fund a bazaar was held in the Town Hall, Thurso, in the end of August 1884. Prominent among the county families, through whose exertions chiefly the bazaar was organised, were Mrs Sinclair of Barrock, the Ulbster family, and Mr Ferryman of Lochend. Over £500 was realised, £180 being taken at Mrs Sinclair's stall. In opening the bazaar, Sir Tollemache Sinclair remarked, "An Episcopal church in Thurso is no new thing, for there were services in connection with one as late as 1760, so that there is a probability of my grandfather having been well acquainted with an Episcopal church here."

A "grand athletic festival in aid of the church funds followed, Mrs Sinclair of Barrock having been the principal means of bringing it about."

The building of the new church was proceeded with, and though not completed, it was opened for divine service in May 1885. The church was consecrated on Sunday, Sept. 7, 1890, under the title of the "Church of St. Peter and the Holy Rood." The "Consecration services by the bishop of the diocese" were printed, the preachers being the Archdeacon of London in the morning, and Canon Murdoch in the evening. In the afternoon Bishop Eden held a confirmation. The morning sermon was subsequently published under the title of "A Plea for the Episcopal Church of Scotland: A Sermon preached on Sunday, September 7th, 1890, at Thurso, at the Consecration of the Church of St. Peter and the Holy Rood, by the Venerable William Macdonald Sinclair, B.D., Archdeacon of London, Canon of St. Paul's, Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of London, and Hon. Chaplain to H.M. the Queen. Price Threepence. Thurso: Printed and Published by William Docherty, High Street." It is dedicated to Mrs Sinclair of Barrock and Mrs Owen Williams. Text, Acts ii. 42—"They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship."

After a very able and interesting historical account of the history of the Church in Scotland and in the north during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the preacher concludes very effectively by quoting Isaac Casaubon's entry in his diary after being present at the consecration of Archbishop Spottiswood and two other Scotch bishops at London in 1610—"The words in his diary might well be our own—'This Lord's day, by God's blessing, was not ill-spent. For I was invited to be present at the consecration. . . I witnessed that ceremony, and the imposition of hands and the whole service. O God, how great was my delight! Do thou, O Lord Jesus, preserve this Church, and give to our friends who ridicule such things a better mind.'" In an appendix to the sermon, a list of books of reference, ten in number, is added. On this memorable day six candidates received the

blessing of confirmation, thirty-seven persons received the Holy Communion, and the collection during the day amounted to £23 4s.

In July 1891, the Rev. W. Lumsden Walker resigned the charge, having been presented to St. John's, Drumlithie, in Kincardineshire. He was succeeded by the Rev. J. M. Fergus, now rector of St. Columba's, Nairn. In 1896, the Rev. H. F. Plant assumed charge of the mission. In 1898, the Rev. W. Lumsden Walker returned to Thurso, and is now priest in charge.

On May 26, 1905, the foundation stone of the chancel of St. Peter's and the Holy Rood was laid by the bishop of the diocese, assisted by the writer and the priest in charge. This beautiful and costly work was undertaken by Mrs Sinclair of Barrock as a memorial to her son, Mr Norman Alexander Sinclair, at the cost of over £1000. The chancel was dedicated by Bishop MacLean on the 4th Sept. 1906.

"The chancel is early Gothic, simple and dignified in design, the details partaking largely of the best Scotch work. Arches between chancel and vestries are segmental and deeply moulded on the side next the chancel, and have an oak screen of plain design. Clerestory windows have engrailed crosses in arched heads, with richly-leaded glazing of cathedral glass. The ceiling, springing from a deeply-moulded stone cornice, has a series of seven cants divided into panels with moulded ribs, and is rich and pleasing in effect. There are vestries for the clergyman and the choir; the choir stalls are of oak, and the whole chancel is paved with black and white marble; the steps from the choir to the sanctuary, and those leading up to the altar, are of the purest white marble. Between the choir stalls, and just in front of the altar rails, there is fixed in the floor a small brass tablet bearing the inscription:—'To the Glory of God, and in loving memory of Norman Alex. Sinclair, Yr. of Barrock; died May 11, 1904, aged 34 years. This Chancel is built by his mother.—Eternal rest grant him, O Lord; let light perpetual shine

upon him.' Some oak panels (representing the Ascension and the Descent of the Holy Ghost) which Sir Tollemache Sinclair bought on the Continent and presented to the church have been framed, and make a reredos than which there are few finer in Scotland. The tabernacle has been built into the north wall of the chancel. There was an early celebration of the Holy Communion, but the dedication service began at 11.30 a.m. Besides the bishop and the Rev. W. L. Walker, clergyman of the charge, the Rev. J. B. Craven, rector of Kirkwall, and the Rev. G. V. Hellowell, rector of Wick, were present, and took part in the service. After matins, the choir sang the "Veni Creator," all kneeling, after which the bishop, standing at the entrance of the choir, offered up the dedication prayers. He prayed that Almighty God would vouchsafe to receive the chancel, humbly offered to the glory of His name; that He would hear the prayers of those who, in that place, made their supplications unto Him; that He would pardon those who came to Him with repentance and faith; that God's blessing might rest on the donor, and that her act of faith might be remembered in the hour of death and day of judgment; that His grace and blessing might attend those who in that place were baptised, confirmed, and who received the Blessed Sacraments of the Lord's Body and Blood. Thereafter, seated in his chair in the choir, the bishop addressed the congregation. The service was choral throughout. There was a large congregation, among whom were Mrs Sinclair of Barrock, the donor; Sir John and Lady Sinclair, Lady Sinclair of Murkle, Lady Burroughs, Mr and Mrs Udney of Udney, Mr Archibald Sinclair of Ulbster, Mr and Mrs Sinclair of Mey, Mrs and Miss Pilkington of Sandside, Mrs and Miss Henderson of Stemster, the Misses Henderson, Ormlie Lodge; Mr and Mrs Cram, Watten Lodge; Mrs and Miss Horne of Stirkoke, Mr Algernon Sinclair, Mr George Sinclair, Mrs Owen Williams." ¹

¹ *The Scottish Chronicle*, Sept. 14, 1906.

DORNOCH.

At Dornoch, the ancient cathedral city of Caithness, services have been held recently during the summer months and at other times occasionally. This new sphere of work has been developed under the charge of the priest in charge of St. Andrew's Church, Tain. It is earnestly to be hoped that by-and-by a permanent character will be given to this work, and a priest placed in charge of the scattered members of the church in the county of Sutherland, having as centres of work, Dornoch, Golspie, and Brora.

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