

938  
PAISLEY REPOSITORY

No. XXII.

---

LIFE OF GEORGE SCHAW,

*ABBOT OF PAISLEY.*

Extracted from "Lives of Officers of State in Scotland," published in 1726, written by GEORGE CRAWFURD, Esq. of Drumsoy, Historiographer for Scotland.—Author of "Memoirs of Scotland," "Peerage of Scotland," "Topographical Description of the County of Renfrew," "History of the Royal Family of Stewart," Three Novels, published in one volume—"Courtship a-la-mode," a Comedy. "Love at first Sight," a Comedy, and "Ovidius Britannicus," a set of love epistles, in verse. He was born in 1665, and died in 1726.

HE was a younger son of John Schaw of Sauchy and Greenock, by Mary his wife, one of the two daughters and co-heirs of Sir David Annan of Sauchy. He was born in the end of the reign of James I. and his education being carried on in all things suitable to his quality, after a regular study he entered into Holy Orders, and was quickly after made Rector of the parish church of Minto, within the diocess of Glasgow. He did not long continue in that station; for upon the fame of his piety, and other shining parts, he was chosen Abbot of Paisley, upon the removal of Mr. Crichton to be Abbot of Dunfermline, anno 1476.

While Mr. Schaw was Abbot here, he laid out a great deal of money in enlarging and beautifying the fabric of the Monastery. He built a noble Refectory, and other offices that were necessary for the accommodation of the Monks, with a strong and lofty tower pended over the principal gate of the Abbey. The church, the precinct of the Convent, with the gardens and orchards, and a little park for fallow deer, he inclosed with a wall of aisler work on both sides, about a mile in circuit. Upon different places of the Convent, you'll see frequently the Abbot's arms, viz. three covered cups, with a crosier behind the shield, very finely cut in stone, but not mitred; also, upon the middle wall to the north side, he caused place in three different shields, the royal arms in the middle, the arms of the founder, Walter, the Great Steward of Scotland, a fesse checque on the right side, and his own on the left; there are niches at the end of the wall of most curious graved work; in one of them there was a statue of St. James the Apostle, the patron of the Abbacy; in another an image of the Blessed Virgin, with this distich near it, but somewhat more inward.

*Hac ne vade via, nisi dixeris ave Maria,  
Sit semper sine væ, qui tibi dicit avæ.\**

To preserve the memory of the founder of this noble wall, and the time the work was completed, the Abbot, Mr. Schaw, was so just

\* Pass not this way, unless you shall say Ave Maria. May they who bless thee be always in safety and prosper.

to himself, as to cause put up this Inscription upon the north-west corner, which is still remaining\*.

Yai callit ye Abbot George of Schaw,  
 About my Abbay gart make yis Waw.  
 An thousande foure hundreth zheyr  
 Eighty and foure the date but weir †.  
 Pray for his Salvatione  
 Yat made thus nobil fundacioun.

\* Mr. Semple in his History of Renfrewshire, when speaking of the above inscription, says, "Some person or persons has defaced the fifth line of that stone, *Pray for his Salvation*, that it is not now legible. I am informed, the line was razed out between the years 1710 and 1735." If Mr. Semple had read Crawford's Lives of Officers of State in Scotland, he would have seen that the fifth line was standing in the year 1726.

† These two quotations from Gavin Douglas's "Palice of Honour," are similar.

"Jesbedonah the giant mekill of mane,  
 Lay by the handis of michtie Daid slane,  
 With fingers sex on ather hand, *but weir*."

Part III. St. 70.

"The multitude of precious stainis seir,  
 Thairen sa schone my febill sicht, *but weir*,  
 Micht not behald thair verteous gudliness."

Part III. St. 70.

*But weir*, signifies *without war*, and in the above inscription is taken in a softer sense than bloodshed. It means, such as, without dispute, controversy, or debate. It is further illustrated by the following quotation from the Life of Edmund Burke.

"Inur'd was Edmund, from his youth,  
 To squabbles and to fighting,  
 And scenes of war, and desperate deeds,  
 He always took delight in.  
 But not that savage kind of war  
 My hearers may suppose,

Abbot Schaw having now the reputation of a person of virtue and discretion, the King was pleased to commit the education of his second son, the Duke of Ross, to his care, and he discharged the great trust with fidelity and satisfaction, insomuch, that King James IV. in his charter, erecting the Abbot's village of Paisley into a Burgh of Barony, is pleased in the preamble to take notice of this acceptable piece of service in a very particular manner. The Abbot after this coming into great favour, he was at length promoted to be Lord High Treasurer of Scotland, on the 18th of May, 1495, upon the removal of the Abbot of Cambuskenneth from the office. He did not long continue Treasurer, for being grown aged, and not car-

“ For Edmund never got a scar,  
 “ Nor risqu'd a bloody nose.

“ Far different arms he did employ  
 “ Than those our soldiers wield,

“ His dagger was an argument,  
 “ And sophistry his shield.

“ Reasons like red-hot balls he threw;  
 “ With Edmund none could cope,

“ But in a metaphor was slain,  
 “ Or perish'd by a trope.”

I shall close this Note with an Extract taken from a modern Poet, wherein the words *without dispute* are used in the same way, as the words *but weir*, were used by our forefathers. Scott on “The bad Effects of Drinking,” speaking of himself being drunk on a cert ain day, says,

‘Tho’ that day, (O! were’t blottet out  
 Frae mang the lave) *without dispute*,  
 I was e’en leigher than the brute,

Bris’d down wi’ liquor.

ing for it, it seems, to continue in a secular employment, which behoved necessarily to take up so much of his time, in about two years or thereabouts he resigned the white staff, which his Majesty presently put into the hands of Sir Robert Lunkin of Balgony. And now the old Abbot resolving to retire quite from the world, to spend the short remains of his time in preparing for his latter end, thought fit to demit the government of his Abbacy to Robert Schaw, a nephew of his own, who was thereupon canonically elected Abbot of Paisley, to which he obtained the royal assent, by letters patent under the great seal, the 1st of March, 1498. After this he spun out his days in the devotions peculiar to the Romish Church till his death, in the year 1504, and was buried in the aisle adjoining the Abbey Church, where his funeral monument is yet to be seen.



*Difference between Simple and Compound Interest.*

As the solutions to the following questions, by my friend, Mr. John Peden, Accomptant, Paisley, exemplify in a true point of view, the vast difference between Simple and Compound Interest, I judged them worthy of a place in this publication.

*Problem I.* Suppose one farthing had been lent at compound interest, at 5 per cent. in the first year of the Christian æra, or the birth of Christ, and so continued to January 1, 1811, How much will be the amount thereof?

*Solution.* Tabular number for the amount of One Pound for 50 years, is 11.4673997, then this last number squared, is 131.5012558 for 100 years; when squared, is 17292.5802769 for 200 years; when squared, is 299033332.6330308 for 400 years; when squared, is 89420934025616843.1659791 for 800 years, then the last number multiplied by 17292.5802769 produces 1546318680073357941488.4507377 for 1000 years; then the amount for 1000 years multiplied into the amount for 800 years, is equal to 138273260673418658756277636879799725767.0007949 for 1800 years; then the amount for 1800 years multiplied into 1.6288946, being the amount of one pound for 10 years, equal to 225232567635324016787343358814266622383.348453, being the amount of one pound compound interest for 1810 years; then the 960th part of that amount, will be equal to £.234617257953462517486815998764861064.98265463, amount of one farthing compound interest, at 5 per cent. for 1810 years.

*Problem II.* The diameter of the earth, from the latest experiments, is 42078016 feet. A cubic foot of fine gold, is 1506.135168 lbs. Troy weight, and a pound Troy weight of fine gold is equal in value to £.48 sterling. Required, how many globes of fine solid gold, and each of them as large as the globe of this earth, will the amount of one farthing, compound interest, at 5 per cent. for 1810 years, produce?

*Solution.* The answer of the last solution divided by £.48, gives 4887859540697135780975333307601272.18713863 lbs. Troy of fine

gold. Then the cube of 42078016 feet is 74501628045372347908096 feet, cube of the diameter of the earth; then this last number multiplied by .5236, being the 6th part of 3.1416 (the circumference of a circle whose diameter is one) and the product will be equal to 39009052444556961364679.0656, the cubic feet in the globe of the earth; then this last product being multiplied into 1506.135168 lbs Troy, is 58752905757103609690560413 . 7335390208 lbs. Troy fine gold: equal to the globe of the earth. Then the lbs. Troy of fine gold found in the amount of one farthing compound interest for 1810 years, as above, divided by the lbs. Troy of fine gold, found in the weight of the globe of the earth, is equal to 83,193,494.4784609 globes of fine solid gold, each as large as the globe of the earth.

Hence it appears, from Mr. Peden's solution, that one single farthing put out to usury, in the manner aforesaid, would amount to more in value, than eighty three million, one hundred and ninety three thousand, four hundred and ninety four globes of fine solid gold, each as large as our earth!!! a strange and most surprising, but no less certain truth; whereas the amount of one farthing in 1810 years, simple interest is only 1s. 10d. three and one half farthings! Yet the reason is evident to any person who understands and considers, that simple interest is grounded on arithmetical, but compound interest on geometrical progression.

## SIX COMICAL PAISLEY SIGNS.

—○—  
I. *John M'Lean's, Townhead, 1783.*

The reason that this Sign stands here,  
I sell good Whiskey, Ale, and Beer;  
And if that you do stand in need,  
Unto your dram you shall get bread.

II. *Over a Cook's Shop, Townhead, 1783.*  
Pay to-day, and to-morrow for nothing.

III. *In Storie Street, 1793.*  
Whiskey and Ale are sold in here,  
And Porter too, by Robert Speir.

IV. *On Mrs. Wilson's Land, Townhead, 1804.*  
Who lives here? Who do ye think?  
Barney Keir, who loves a drink—  
He loves a drink—I'll tell you why—  
Barney Keir is often dry.  
He sweeps chimneys, and cleans smoke jacks:  
And if your chimney goes on fire,  
He'll put it out to your desire.  
Chimney Sweeper and Soot Merchant.

V. *On W. Thomson's, head of Water Wynd, 1807.*  
Good meat and drink makes men to grow,  
And you will find it just below.

VI. *Sign of the Last, head of the Water Wynd.*  
I have travell'd all day to find good Ale,  
And at the Last I found it.

PAISLEY REPOSITORY.

No. XXIII.

---

MILLAR'S SECOND EDITION

OF

THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF THE FAMOUS

PYPER OF KILBARCHAN;

OR,

The Epitaph of HABBY SIMPSON,

Quha on his Drone bore bony Flags:  
He maid his cheiks as reid as crimson,  
And bobbit quhan he blew his Bags.

---

The following Epitaph, or Elegy, was written by Robert Sempill of Beltrees, about the year 1600. He is allowed to be the inventor of the Stanza of this Epitaph. Allan Ramsay and William Hamilton, in writing the same measure, acknowledge, "The Elegy on HABBY SIMPSON" to be "a finished piece," and a standard for that kind of rhyme.—*See Ramsay's Poems*

" May I be licket wi' a bittle,  
Gin of your numbers I think little,  
Ye're never rugget, shan, nor kittle,  
But blythe and gabby,  
And hit the spirit to a tittle,  
Of STANDART HABBY."

*Ramsay's first Epistle to Hamilton.*

" And on condition I were as gabby,  
As either thee or HONEST HABBY,  
That I lin'd a' thy claes wi' tabby,  
Or velvet plush,  
And then thou'd be sae far frae shabby,  
Thou'd look right sprush."

*Hamilton's second Epistle to Ramsay.*

In the ancient popular Ballad of Maggy Lauder this reference is made to Habby Simpson,

“There’s nane in Scotlan’ plays sae weil,  
Sin’ we lost Habby Simpson.”

It is said, that in one of the rooms of a certain Gentleman’s house in Ayrshire, there is a full length Painting of Habby Simpson, along with a Painting of King Charles the second.

Pennecuik of eccentric memory, published Habby’s Epitaph in his collection of curious Poems.

Habby died in the latter end of the sixteenth century; but I believe no account has ever yet been discovered either of the time of his birth, or how old he was when he died. The Poem itself says, he was “Teethless auld and teuch;” it may be therefore presumed, that he being a strong robust man might live to a great age. His tomb-stone in Kilbarchan parish church-yard, is so much defaced with time, that there are scarce any characters legible, except H. S. the initials of his name, and a figure somewhat resembling a Flesher’s chopping knife, some think it the remains of a Bag-pipe. Tradition says, he was a Flesher as well as a Piper.

In Kilbarchan (1st May, 1810.) there is a family of the name of Anderson, who are related to Habby Simpson by the mother’s side; that Habby Simpson had at least a son, is evident from the following

#### ANECDOTE.

Francis Sempill, son of Robert, the author of Habby’s Epitaph, had upon some occasion offended his father, who for a long time would not speak to him; but by the intercession of some friends, the father agreed to forgive him upon condition he gave a stanza of Poetry extempore. The youth asked his father upon what subject? His father desired him to add another stanza to Habby’s Elegy. Without hesitation Francis repeated,

It’s now these bags are a’ forfairn,  
That Habby left to Rab the bairn,  
’Though they war’ sew’d wi’ Hollan’ yairn,  
And silken thread,  
It maksna, they war’ fill’d wi’ shairn  
Sin’ Habby’s dead.

Semple in his History of Renfrewshire, when speaking of Kilbarchan steeple, says, that it "has a rustic door on the west side, which leads into the public school, above which is a large niche intended for the Colossus or Statue of Habby Simpson."

*EPITAPH.*

KILBARCHAN now may say alace!

For scho hes lost hir game and grace,

Bayth *Trixie* and the *Maidin-trace*,

Bot quhat remeid!

For na man can supply his place,

Hab Simpson's deid.

2. Now quha sall play, *The day it dawis*,

Or, *Hunt up*, quhen the Cock he crawis,

Or, quha can for our Kirk-townis caus,

Stand us in steid?

On bag-pypis now na body blawis,

Sen Habby's deid.

3. Or, quha will caus our scheirers scheir,

Quha will bang up the bragis of weir,

Bring in the bellis or gude play meir,

In tyme of neid?

Hab Simpson coud. Quhat neid ze speir?

Bot now he's deid.

4. Sa kyndly to his nichtbouris neist,

At Beltane and Sanct Barchan's feast,

He blew and then hald up his breist

As he war weid,

Bot now we neid not him arreist,

For Habbie's deid.

5 At fairis he playit befor the speir-men,

Al gaillie graithit in thair geir, quhen

Steill Bonetis, Jackis & Swordis sa cleir then,

Lyke ony beid;

Now quha sall play befor sic weir-men,

Sen Habbie's deid?



12. Aye quhan he playit the lassis leuch,  
 To sie him teithless, auld and teuch,  
 He wan his pypis besyde Bar-cleuch,  
 Withoutin dreid.

Quhilk efter wan him geir eneuch,  
 Bot now he's deid.

13. Aye quhan he plaid the gaitlings gedderit,  
 And quhan he spak the carill bledderit,  
 On Sabbath-dayis his cape was fedderit,  
 A seimlie weid.

In the kirk-zaird his meir stude tedderit,  
 Quhar he lyis deid.

14. Alace! for him my heart is sair,  
 For of his spryngis I got a skair,  
 At everie play, race, feist and fair,

Bot gyle or greid,  
 We neid not luke for pyping mair,  
 Sen Habbie's dead.

---

NOTES ON THE EPITAPH.

S stands for Stanza, and V for Verse, or Verses.

S. 1. V. 1. *Kilbarchan* is derived from *Cella Barchan*, the cell, hut, house, or chapel of Barchan, and not *church*, for church originally signified the people who assembled for worshipping God, and not the walls of the house they met in. The Romans always pronounced the letter C, in the same manner as we pronounce K, and the word *Cella* is not pronounced *Sella*, but *Kella*: hence comes the word *Kelbarchan*. The first teachers of Christianity in Scotland were Presbyters, called in the Scottish language, *Keledees*; a word compounded of *Keile*, *i. e.* a servant, or one devoted, and *Dia*, in the genetive, *De*, *i. e.* God, *Keledees*, therefore, signified *Servants of God*. Some say, from this, that a place of worship was called *Kil*, because set apart for divine service. These *Keledees* were men

of great piety, and for many ages preserved the doctrines of the Christian religion very pure. These holy men were so much given to the exercise of devotion, in meditating on the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, and in prayer, that the very huts wherein they resided were accounted sacred; and after their death, temples or chapels were built on the spot, and set apart for divine service. "To this day," says George Buchanan in his History of Scotland, "*Cella* is taken for a church among the ancient Scots." These Keledees did not consider Rome as their mother church; for it was with great struggle, and not till the year 715, that the Scots submitted to the Romish innovations, as to Pasch, the Tonsure, &c.

Keil is said, by some, to signify a burying place or tomb, being derived from the Gælic, *Keil*, the *burying place*, or *tomb* of Barchan. They alledge, that the *Earse* was once the common language of Scotland, which they think is evident from the names of the most places in Scotland being derived from the Gælic; and to prove that it was so, they quote an instance of the coronation discourse of one of our Scottish Kings being first spoken in Latin, and then in Gælic.

The flags, banners, ensigns, or colours of the Trades of Kilbarchan, have the Portrait of St. Barchan, the titular Saint of the parish painted on them. Near Kilbarchan is a well, called Barchan's Well. Tradition says, St. Barchan resided near Glentyan Mill.

S. 1. V. 2. *Scho*] As different countries have emblematical females to represent them, so has Mr. Sempill here exhibited Kilbarchan under the figure of a woman. In words wherein *sh* are found together, our forefathers commonly put a *c* between them. The *o* in *scho* has the sound of the French *u*.

*Hes*] was formerly used instead of *has* or *hath*.

*Lost her game*] In these times it was customary in Renfrewshire, and in some counties in Scotland it still continues to be so, during the holidays about the new year, fairs, &c. for an equal number of men from two neighbouring parishes to meet, and in presence of old and young persons of both sexes, on some level ground

lying between the two domains, to dispute the palm of victory at the foot ball; a friendly festival, at the expence of the losing party, in a neighbouring ale-house, generally closes the day. If we take the 8th stanza in connexion with this, we will plainly see how Kilbarchan came to lose her game after Habby's death.

*Grace*] Habby graced their merry meetings of all kinds, whether feasts, fairs, weddings, horse-races, &c.

S. 1 V. 3. By the zeal and preaching of John Knox, (whose forefathers were natives of Kilbarchan parish) the great Reformer, and some others, the peoples' eyes were opened to see the mummery and superstition of the Popish Church, and the licentious lives of the Clergy of that communion. The Reformers had a few years before this time got their religion established by law, therefore Protestants were in some measure secure from the effects of Popish wrath. Some person had written a famous Song, but very violent against the Clergy of the Church of Rome, in which they were ludicrously exposed. This Song contains nine Stanzas, and each Stanza concludes with *Hay Trix, Tryme go Trix, under the grene wod trie*, on which account the Song got the name of Trixie. The following Stanzas are given out of it as a specimen.

The Paip, that Pagane full of pryde,  
 He hes us blindit lang,  
 For quhair the blind the blind dois gyde,  
 Na wonder thay ga wrang:  
 Lyke prince and king he led the ring  
 Of all iniquitie,

Hay trix, tryme go trix, under the green-wod trie.

2. Bot his Abhominatioun  
 The LORD hes brocht to licht,  
 His Popische pryde and thrinfald crowne  
 Almaist hes lost thair micht.  
 His plack pardounis ar bot lardounis,  
 Of new found vanitie,

Hay trix, tryme go trix, &c.

3. His Cardinallis hes caus to murne,  
 His Bischoppis borne aback;

His Abbotis gat an uncouth turne,  
 Quhen Schavelingis went to sack.  
 With Burges Wyfis thay led thair lyvis,  
 And sure better nor we,

Hay trix, tryme go trix, &c.

4. His Carmelites and Jacobines,  
 His Dominiks had greit do,  
 His Cordeleiris and Augustinis,  
 Sanct Frances Ordour to;  
 Thay sillie Freiris mony Zeiris,  
 With babling blerit our ee,

Hay trix, tryme go trix, &c.

5. The Sisteris gray, befoir this day,  
 Did crune within thair cloister,  
 The feit ane Freir thair Keyis to bear,  
 The Feind ressavit the foster:  
 Syne in the mirk sa weill culd wirk,  
 And kittill them wantounlie,

Hay trix, tryme go trix, &c.

The Editor, may probably, at some future period print the whole of this Song. That this Song would fill the Catholics, who were very numerous in these days, with rage, must be evident: yet people took great delight in venting their indignation against the Papists by singing it: and to fan up the flame, they often made Habby play up the Air of it on his Bagpipes. Sempill considers the want of Habby to play *Trixie* as one loss among the rest, that Kilbarchan had sustained by Habby's death.

S. 1. V. 3. *Maidin-trace*] Anciently, at all festivals, it was customary to make tours round the places of worship, by going three times round in the same course with the sun, which was reckoned lucky, and was called *Deas soil*, "south about with the sun," the reverse (*car-tual*, or *widershins*) unlucky. This ceremony was of Druidical origin. During the time of Habby Simpson, and long after, it was in use in Renfrewshire, for the Bride and her Maidens, led on by the Piper, to perform the *Deas soil* round the church before the marriage was celebrated, who played a peculiar Air on the occasion, which got the