

*A Disquisition into the proper Arrangement of the Silver
Coins, applicable to the First Four James's Kings of
Scotland.*

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IN the arrangement and description of the coins of Scotland, in this museum, a difficulty occurs in applying, to each of the first four James's, the silver pieces struck in their respective reigns. This has arisen from the arrangement of them in the *Diplomata et Numismata Scotiae*, wherein an arched crown is given to King James II. This form of crown was not adopted in England till the reign of King Henry VII. nor in France, till after the accession of Francis I. *anno* 1515, as appears by a well preserved testoon, No. 454 of the donations, whereon he is represented in profile with a small open crown, and on the reverse the French shield of arms is ensigned with a crown of the same form with those on the coins of our King David II.

Leake, indeed, in his account of English coins, second edition, p. 151. says, that Henry VI., who succeeded to the English crown, *anno* 1422, was "the first of our (the English) Kings, who appears with an arched crown upon his coins; but upon his great seal he has an open crown floree, with small pearls upon points between. The arched or close crown is not of ancient use, but in the Empire, and thence, perhaps, it was called Imperial." He adds afterwards, "Henry VII. is the first of our Kings that we can be certain

“ certain used it ; and the testoon of Francis I. coined in 1516, is
“ the first French money we see it upon.”

But Folkes, in his account of English coins, published for the Society of Antiquaries 1745, page 15. says, “ King Henry VII. first placed upon his money the arched crown, or the imperial crown, as it is now commonly called ; and by this particular, his coins are readily distinguished from those of all his predecessors. This money, however, has been generally ascribed to King Henry VI. but besides that, several of the mint marks to be found on it are either badges used by King Henry VII. or the supporters of his royal arms, the weight does ascertain it to be his beyond all doubt.”

All the writers on the subject of the coins of Scotland agree, that those of King James I. are distinguished by a sceptre on the right or left side of the King's head, and two flowers de lys, and three pellets, placed alternately in the angles of the cross on the reverse ; and that those of King James II. are known by two open crowns, placed alternately with the pellets on the reverse. Anderson has given to this last King a coin, wherein he is represented, with nearly a full face, a bushy wig, and an imperial crown of two arches, surmounted of a mond and cross.

All the writers on the subject, since the publication of the *Diplomata Scotiae*, agree, that this species of coin is wrong placed in that work, though they differ with respect to the sovereign to whose reign it should be attributed. Mr Hamilton of Glasgow, Mr Snelling, and Mr Frazer, junior, of Frazerfield, are of opinion, it belongs to King James III. ; but this last gentleman acknowledges he is induced to place it in that reign, after the example of the other two, though he thinks this arrangement “ liable to consider-
“ able

“ able objections.” They are led to this determination, by a trial of the weight of the coin, compared with the orders given respecting the coinage ; but such orders, though strengthened by the authority of an act of Parliament, are not always to be considered as the rules for determining to what King a coin may belong, as Mr Hamilton has shewn, by adducing an act of the first Parliament of King James I. after his return from England, wherein it is ordained : “ That the King gar mend his money, and strike it in like weight and fineness to the money in England ;” but he adds, that “ the first mention we have of money in the next reign, we find it nearly double in its nominal value, to what it was in the reign of Robert III.” From all which we may naturally conclude, that some other criterion is to be fixed on than that of the weight, to enable us to decide to which of the four first James's the coin with the arched crown above mentioned belongs.

From the above mentioned English authorities, we have certain information, that an arched crown was never used in England before King Henry VII.'s time. He succeeded to the throne *anno* 1485 ; and from the French coin above mentioned, we are also certain, that an arched crown was not used in France before the year 1515. For, though Leake, in the passage above quoted, says, that Henry VI. was the first who appeared with an arched crown on his coins ; yet he remarks afterwards, that Henry VII. was the first that we can be certain used it. And Martin Folkes has demonstrated, that all these coins with an arched crown, which are attributed to Henry VI. do, by the marks they bear, belong to Henry VII.

The learned Martinus Schmeizel, in his treatise de Coronis tam antiquis, quam modernis, 4to Jenae 1712, page 176. says, “ sub-
“ jungimus coronam Hispanicam. Haec, pro more priscorum tem-
C c “ porum,

“porum, aperta fuit, usque ad Philippum II. qui initio apertam
 “gestavit; deinde vero Henrici II. Regis Franciae exemplo eam
 “clausit, quod haecenus reliqui etiam reges fecere.” And, in page
 177. “Primus vero inter Franciae Reges Carolus VIII. clausa
 “corona usus est, non aliam ob causam, quam quod ab Alexandro
 “VI. Pontifice, Constantinopolitanus Imperator pronunciatus fuerat,
 “sed cum inani titulo statim evanescerit ejusmodi coronae decus,
 “eo Ludovico XII. successor ejus nunquam usus est, donec tandem
 “Franciscus I. qui Caesari Carolo V. infensus, et Imperatoriae Ma-
 “jestatis aemulus erat, invidiae vexatus malo, primus *Regum* decus
 “illud, atque ornamentum, Regio nomine, praeter jus et ratio-
 “nem, usurpavit, ut Chiffletius loquitur.” And to the same pur-
 pose Father Cl. Fran. Menestrier says, in his *Veritable Art du*
Blazon, 12mo, a Paris, 1673, cap. viii. page 194. “Charles VIII.
 “est le premier de nos Rois qui ait porté la couronne fermée, ayant
 “pris le qualité d’Empereur d’Orient, comme on voit en quelques
 “medailles où il est représenté à cheval avec la couronne fermée en
 “teste, et cette legende, Carolo Imp. Orientis Victori semper Au-
 “gusto. Sous l’exergue il y a d’un costé Parthen, pour Parthe-
 “nope, qui est Naples, et sous l’autre exergue de l’autre costé la
 “date 1495. François I. a la couronne fermée sur ses armoires,
 “en quelques endroits, particulièrement au sceau du concordat
 “passé avec Leon X. Il y a plusieurs de ses monnoyes, et plusieurs
 “autres monumens où il n’a que la couronne ouverte. Henry II.
 “est celui qui a pris plus constamment la couronne fermée, que
 “tous ses successeurs ont retenuë. Philippe II. Roy d’Espagne l’a
 “ouverte sur les regles, qui furent forgez de son temps, et elle est
 “fermée sur les ducats qui furent forgez de son temps en Flandres,
 “ce qui fait voir que c’est luy qui en a introduit l’usage pour les
 “Rois d’Espagne, Le Rois de Hongrie l’a portoit ouverte, en ces
 “monnoyes de 1566. Elle est ouverte aux monnoyes de Portugal
 “de Jean III. et de Sebastien. Aux Jacobus d’Angleterre, et
 “d’Ecosse

“d’Ecosse de l’an 1601, elle est fermée. Aupar-avant elle estoit
 “ouverte aux nobles Henris et aux nobles à la rose.”

It is very observable that, from the time of the first coinage of money in Scotland, in the reign of Alexander I. till the reign of King James V. the English model was the rule with respect to the Scottish coins. In imitation of them, we struck the penny, from the time of the above Alexander, till the reign of David II. who, copying after his contemporary King Edward III. of England, first struck the groats and half groats for circulation, which, with their subdivisions, as in England, were the only species of silver coin we had till King James V.’s time. The same Edward who first struck gold coins for currency in England, was imitated in this species of coin by his contemporary King Robert II. before whose reign there was no gold current as coin, in Scotland. It appears from the authorities above mentioned, that no English king before King Henry VII. assumed an arched crown on his coins. Whether the crown with which he was inaugurated had arches or not, is not material: We are certain, from the description of the Scots crown, in the instrument taken when it was deposited in the castle of Edinburgh, *anno* 1707, that the arches at present on it were added by King James V. And it is very natural to suppose, that, when King Henry VII. assumed that mark of imperial sovereignty, his spirited son-in-law, who succeeded to the crown of Scotland *anno* 1488, only three years after his father-in-law’s accession, would, after the practice of his ancestors, adopt this material improvement in the appearance of his coins; and therefore we are induced to believe, that he was the first of the Scots kings who was represented with an arched or imperial crown on his coins.

That this was the case, is confirmed by the three following authorities, *viz.*

C c 2

First,

First, An engraved genealogical tree of the royal family of Scotland, executed in the time of King William and Queen Mary, wherein are represented the portraits of all the monarchs of Scotland, from King Malcolm III. each of whom, down to King James III. inclusive, is adorned with a crown of the same form with that on their respective coins; but King James IV. and all the succeeding monarchs, are represented with arched or imperial crowns. This tree is part of the donation, No. 441. from the Earl of Buchan to the museum of this Society.

Second, The numismata of Thomas Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, collected in the reign of King Charles II. engraved and published in quarto, wherein the coin attributed by Anderfon to King James II. is given to King James IV. And,

Third, The valuable collection of that great antiquary, Sir Thomas Bodley, in the university of Oxford, published in folio, with engravings by Wise, in which the arrangement we have described is observed, and the crown in question placed on the head of King James IV. This ought to be esteemed the most respectable authority, on account of the extensive knowledge of Sir Thomas in all branches of learning, as well as of the period in which he lived. He was born, as narrated in the *Athenae Oxonienses*, vol. I. page 326. on the 2d of March 1544, not thirty one years after the death of King James IV. and therefore it cannot be supposed that he was ignorant of the coins which were applicable to that reign.

It has been conjectured by some of the modern collectors of the coins of Scotland, that the inscription *Dominus protector meus, et liberator meus*, which first appeared upon the groats of King David II. and was adopted by several of his successors, was assumed by that prince in allusion to his delivery from captivity in England. But
so

so strictly did the Scots adhere to the practice of other nations in their coinage, that it is much more probable this motto was borrowed from the French money, as we find it on an old French coin, in a collection of all the European coins of gold and silver, engraved and published at Antwerp, *anno* 1589, No. 112. of the donations to this museum.