

I.

NOTES RELATING TO "A. Z.," THE ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENT OF THE SOCIETY, BY WHOM THE COLLECTION OF BOOKS AND MSS. RELATING TO THE ORKNEY AND SHETLAND ISLANDS, WERE PRESENTED TO THE LIBRARY. (See *Archæologia Scotica*, vol. iii., p. 267.) BY W. H. FOTHERINGHAM, Esq., F.S.A. SCOT.

It has occasionally been a subject of inquiry, Who was the learned and industrious antiquary so versed in all matters connected with Orkney, and who corresponded with the Scottish Society of Antiquaries under the initials of "A. Z."? I believe him to have been Mr JOHN MUNRO, born in Kirkwall, son of Hugh Munro, a gardener, the nephew and cousin of two respectable surgeons in Kirkwall, both named Andrew Munro. About the year 1790, or a little later, he was a clerk in the writing-office of John Heddle, Esq., town-clerk of Kirkwall; and afterwards resided in London, whence he addressed his communications to the Society of Antiquaries. The identity appears to be shewn, 1st, from the handwriting of the notes being

recognised by Mrs Barbara Fotheringham of 12 Clarence Street, Edinburgh, daughter of Mr John Heddle ; *2d*, from comparison of the handwriting of the notes with a sasine written by him, of Kirkbuster, in the island of Stronsay, Orkney, in the charter-chest of Mr John George Heddle of Melsetter ; *3d*, several of the drawings are initialed J. M. ; and, *4th*, I may quote his own words given in an account of James Stewart, " a noted miser," as he calls him, of the town of Kirkwall, who bequeathed his property, about £5000, to be applied to charitable purposes. They will be found in the notes appended to the volume which contains Campbell's Political Survey. After mentioning that James Stewart with his own hands repaired and even built many small houses, he says, in a parenthesis—" In one of a group of these sorry tenements which stood near the bishop's and earl's palaces, the writer of this note, nor is he ashamed to confess it, first drew breath. Vanity might prompt him to conceal instead of divulging the obscurity of his birth, and the lowness of his extraction or parentage. But the gratitude due to a mother, as fond as she was poor, and who, in the absence of her husband, watched over my childhood with the most tender care, bids me speak the language of affection, not of pride, neither of humility, because I esteem an humble origin remembered no dishonour."

The sorry tenements, in one of which he was born, I think, are some houses situated at a short distance from the Bishop's and Earl's Palaces, towards the south and Scapa, adjoining a field called Quoyangry, and I know James Stewart was the proprietor of Quoyangry, and some adjacent houses. On inquiry I was told that Miss Kitty Munro, a sister of John Munro, was resident in Kirkwall, and died there some years ago, but on her death-bed she had every paper and letter destroyed. I can get no further information of John Munro than that he was a clerk in London, in what department was not known ; but I think what has already been stated is sufficient to prove the identity of "A. Z." with JOHN MUNRO of Kirkwall and London.