

No. II.

NOTICE OF PATRICK CHALMERS, M.D., OF HASSELHEAD AND FEDERAT, PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE IN ABERDEEN, AND OF HIS PRACTICE AS A PHYSICIAN IN ABERDEEN IN THE END OF THE SEVENTEENTH AND BEGINNING OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES. BY JOHN I. CHALMERS OF ALDBAR, Esq., F.S.A. SCOT.

In looking over some old boxes, I came upon the ledger of Patrick Chalmers, physician in Aberdeen. That portion of it which gives the account of his medical practice begins in 1684; but as he married in 1681, Rachael, eldest daughter of Alexander Forbes of Foveran, with

whom he received a tocher of 6000 merks, and settled in Aberdeen in 1682, it is possible that he commenced practice in the last named year. He was the eldest son of the Rev. William Chalmers, minister of Skene. He studied medicine at the universities of Leyden, Paris, and Padua, and took degrees at each of them. The diploma as doctor of medicine at Padua is dated 1677, and is on vellum, tastefully illuminated. At the death of his father, he succeeded to the lands of Hasilhead and Smiddyhill, and to the barony of Fedderat, all in the county of Aberdeen; but, in 1718, having been concerned in an expensive lawsuit, which was given against him, he found it necessary to make them over to trustees for the liquidation of debt, and they were sold. The lands of Hasilhead were however rebought in 1728 by his youngest son William, who had received a legacy from a female relative, Lady Strachan of Glenkindie. These lands remained in the family for about 150 years, and were ultimately parted with in 1758, thus terminating the connection of the family with the county of Aberdeen. Dr Patrick Chalmers's professional income appears to have varied in amount from £384, 16s. Scots in 1684, as per ledger, to £1084, 2s. 2d. in 1694, which is the largest sum entered in the ledger in any one of the thirty-six years' practice there recorded, the average of the last four years being about £600 Scots. Probably old age was coming upon him, and lessening his practice. But from the year 1700, in which he was appointed by Earl Marischal to the chair of Medicine in Marischal College, there is a diminution of receipts in the ledger. Probably his college duties took up a good deal of his time.

By his wife Rachael Forbes he had a family of thirteen children, which shows that, while ushering into the world the progeny of his friends and country neighbours, he was not altogether unmindful of family duties at home. His youngest son and thirteenth child, William, became, as I have said, proprietor by purchase of Hasilhead, and ultimately, after twenty years' residence as a merchant at Gibraltar, where he held the offices of Paymaster to the Forces, Commissary-general to the Forces, and judge of the Admiralty Court, he returned to Scotland with a moderate fortune, and, after living a few years at Hasilhead, purchased, in 1753, the barony of Aldbar. He was married to his cousin-german, Cecilia, daughter of John Elphinstone of Glack; and to this lady belonged the

old dresses which were exhibited in Edinburgh a few years ago at the meeting of the Archæological Society, and more recently at Aberdeen ; while the gold laced and embroidered coat was the court costume of her husband ; and, in all probability, the splendid cut velvets of a more sober hue were the garments worn by the old doctor and professor on state occasions, and which he had probably brought home with him from Genoa.

A number of valuable books collected by him in Italy and Holland are now in the library at Aldbar.

Among his patients are most of the county names of Aberdeen, including the Earl of Aberdeen, the Ladie Haddo, the Ladie Frendraught, Ladies Marie and Bettie Gordon, Count Leslie, Burnet of Leys, the lairds of Elsick, Finzean, Fasque, Pitfoddels, Warthill, Portlethen, Ballogie, Murthill, Bognie, and many others.

It is to be regretted that most of the accounts are yearly ones, and, with the exception of some cases of "chylid birth," they do not show a scale of charges that can be compared with those of the present day. In this department, the charge for delivery and medical attendance would appear to vary from eight pounds Scots for a baillie's wyfe, to the munificent sum of £66, 13s. 4d. in the case of the Ladie of Drum. There is another entry for "Stonywood's Ladie in a fever ; staid a night," £24, 4d.

In the ledger I found an old prescription, which is most likely in the hand of Dr Patrick or of his son George, who was also an M.D., and resided in Aberdeen. At the end of the ledger will be found various entries of receipts and expenditure connected with the doctor's landed property. I send the prescription, which will probably be of interest to medical members of the Antiquaries'.

Mr STUART read some notices from the ledger, which was sent by Mr Chalmers for exhibition, as illustrative of the diseases and manners of the period. Fever and ague, rheumatism, scrofula, pleurisy, cholera, flux, small-pox, and hydropsie occur frequently. The sums seem to have been in payment of accounts rendered, till towards the end, when fees of a guinea are occasionally entered. Besides the stated sums, there is an entry at the end of the accounts of some years showing the value of the gifts which had been offered by patients, "propynes of meil and malt," and in 1692 they included a hat.

In 1686, from the Earle of Aberdeine for himself, £67; and there are frequent entries of payments by the Earl. In 1689, from James Paule for his aigou, £11, 12s.; and the entries of ague are frequent. In 1690 the propynes of meil and malt are estimated at £26, 13s. 4d. Fevers occur frequently. In 1691, the Laird of Steniewood paid for his lady and himself, in fever, £29; Polmais paid in that year, for his wife's distemper in her stomach and vapours, £5, 16s.; and Gordon of Auchiries, for heat in his urine, paid £3, 2s.; the Laird of Murthill paid for himself, in ane iliack passione, £39, 2s.; Dr Sibbald, for two attendances in one year, paid £14, 10s.; Sir Charles Maitland for his sister []; Achlossen's swelled bellie, paid £14; for propynes this year, a hat, &c., £13. In 1693, my Lady Banph, for a Lent fever, paid £37; the Laird of Glenkindie, for a belching and burning in his stomach, paid £13, 4s. Fevers and colics occur often; and the Dean of Guild of Banff had hernia carnosia, for which he paid £5, 16s. From the relict of Bed. Fyf, for vapours and curved breist at the opening, £27; Mrs Durret, maid to my Lady Dunfermline, paid for her "vapours," £5, 16s; James Smith, in Abercherder, for madness and enchantment, £14, 10s; from Col. Buchan, the commander of the forces of James II. in Scotland after the death of Dundee, and for his second son in small-pox, £13, 4s. Frequent entries of ladies in vapours turn up, such as the Laird of Cannon Birnes for his lady, £8, 14s. From John Toss' wife for him—died of drink, ulcer at leg, £5, 16s. The "poks" seem to have prevailed in 1694. James Brebner paid for his sore eyes and scrofulous chouks, £13, 8s.; from Hay of Montblairy there is a fee of £13 for cacochimie, which occurs often; Captain David Garioch paid for drunkenness, £6; from the Lady Cushny, for herself, there is a payment, obstruction *fistula in ventre*, £11, 9s. In 1695, the presents amounted to £40. Next year they only came to £9. The Prior of Monymusk, in 1697, paid for his daughter, who was scrofulous, £6, 12s.; and soon after, for amputating her finger, *spina ventosa*, he paid £6, 12s; Mr Robert Abercrombie paid for two years' attendance on his family, £24; from Mr George Skene, for George Gordone, younger, who died of palsie, there is a fee of £11, 12s.; for Auchlossen's daughter Barbara, who had a spasmodic fever, he received £19, 1s.; from the Laird of Pittfodders, for his lady, fear of abortione: his daughter, jaundice, £13, 11s. 6d.; from

Lord Haddo, for his lady's childbirth, £59, 2s; from the minister of Strichen for spleen, cacochimi, £19, 6s.; from Bedlie Rag, for himself, cockhectick, £14, 10s.; from James Carnegie for his son, melancholie, £5, 16s.; from Wil. Ogsten, for levitie, £12, 18s. In 1707, my Lord Fraser paid for his lady £54, 16s. Mr Blackwell, Laird Balquhain, Lady Eglintoun, Laird of Bognie, Sir Donald M'Donald, Lord Haddo, Sir John Johnston, Lady Warthill, occur among the patients; and among the list of diseases are frequent instances of rheumatism, pleurisy, scrofula, gonorrhœa, cholera, flux, hydropsie, flooding, suffocation, stone, gravel, &c. From the Sheriff of Murray for itch, £6, 9s.; from Mrs Duncan, in gratitude for her salvation, £12, 18.

For graduating two doctors of phisick, £124; from the Earl of Aberdeen, costive, £24; from Mrs Helen Leslie for vapours and itch, £6, 6s.; from Alexander Cushnie, cut of a fungous lip, £12, 12s.

1721, from the Lady Envery, for her husband's cheik again, a guinea, £12, 12s.; from Envery's brother Charles, a guinea, £12, 12s.

MONDAY, 8th April 1861.

JAMES T. GIBSON CRAIG, Esq., Vice-President, in the Chair.

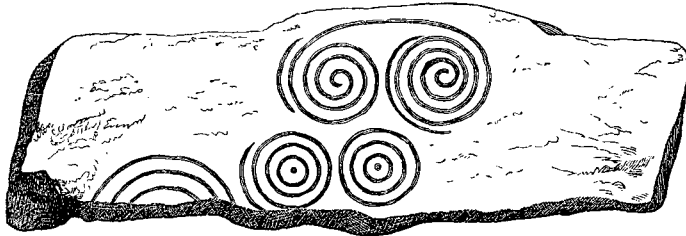
The following gentlemen were balloted for and admitted Fellows of the Society, viz. :—

Colonel JONATHAN FORBES LESLIE of Rothie, Aberdeenshire; and
GEORGE ROWE, B.A., Esq., Master of John Watson's Hospital, Edinburgh.

The Donations to the Museum were as follows :—

Stone (sandstone), 3 feet 6 inches long, 15 inches broad, and 8 inches thick, ornamented with incised concentric circles, found in a "Pict's House" in the Island of Eday, Orkney. By ROBERT J. HEBDEN of Eday, Esq., F.S.A. Scot. In reference to this donation, Mr Hebden writes as follows :—"The place where it was discovered is a large pile of stones that was formerly what is popularly called a Pict's House, but was destroyed about forty years ago for the purpose of building a United Presby-

terian kirk. From the description of old people, there was a long passage or room flagged over, and numerous passages branching out and leading to small quasi-circular cells, some few of which that remained undisturbed I have since opened, but discovered nothing but a rude clay urn, which was unfortunately broken in the removal, a few flint flakes, and the stone in question, which was lying on its face just at the entrance of one of the passages where the former quarrying had stopped. It appears to me to have been split for a lintel, and probably the other half answers that purpose in the U.P. church. The building is externally about 20 yards in length by about 10 in breadth; the ground below and around it (it stands on the slope of a hill, with a small hollow on the west side between it and a higher hill) is covered with small cairns, tombs, or walls, some of them circular and all nearly covered with peat moss, the walls or dykes entirely so, except where they have been exposed in digging for peats. The greatest number of these buildings lie in the



hollow or slope below it. The most of the dykes run in all directions, without the slightest attempt at regularity (except the circular ones). Some of them are regularly built walls, and some merely stones heaped in line."

Stone Ball, 3 inches in diameter, covered over the surface with small rounded projections, found in the Isle of Skye in 1847; and

Upper part of a broken Rapier Blade, 7 inches long, much corroded, but showing traces of having been inlaid with gold; it has been pointed to form a dagger;

By Sir KENNETH S. MACKENZIE of Gairloch, Bart.

Iron Cannon Ball, 3 inches in diameter, and a Lead Bullet $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch

in diameter, found on the farm of Monelaws, Coldstream. By A. J. DOUGLAS, Esq., Monelaws.

Portion of a Bronze Torc of a curiously grooved or twisted pattern, similar in style to one presented to the Museum by the Society of Northern Antiquaries, Copenhagen. One of the hooked extremities is unfortunately broken off. It is believed to have been brought from Germany;

Two small Iron open or cup-like Lamps, from Germany, similar to the Cruisic of Scotland; with Iron Handle for suspension;

By JAMES JOHNSTONE, Esq., Curator S.A. Scot.

Regularly-shaped oval close-grained dark-coloured Stone, 5 inches in length, $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches broad, and 2 inches thick, and gradually thinned off to the outer edge, which is sharp. The stone, from its dark colour, may have been used as a touch-stone. Found in Broughton Moss, Peeblesshire. By ANDREW KERR, Esq., F.S.A. Scot.

Small circular Ring or Wheel of Copper, with two bars crossing each other in the centre, $\frac{3}{8}$ ths of an inch in diameter, described by the donor as a piece of Gaulish Money from Bar-le-duc, in Old Lorraine. By the Rev. E. L. BARNWELL, Ruthin, Wales.

Two Casts in Plaster of small Shields, one displaying the letters I.H.S., the other M., with a crown over it, from Farnell Castle, Forfarshire, which are figured and described in the "Proceedings," vol. ii. p. 198. By ANDREW JERVISE, Esq., Corr. Mem. S.A. Scot.

Coloured photograph, 22 inches by $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches, of the Glass-stained West Memorial Window recently erected by the donor in St Lawrence's Church, Ludlow. By BERAH BOTFIELD, Esq., M.P., F.S.A. Scot.

Three Bricks from Nineveh, with inscriptions in cuneiform characters. By ADOLPHUS M. SCEALES, Esq., Blackburn House, Bathgate.

Iron Spear-head with Socket, 8 inches long, found at Cluden Mill near Dumfries. By Mr JOHN DOUGLAS.

Two Celts or Axe-heads of bronze, about 6 inches long, and 3 inches across; and a Spear-head, or Dagger-blade, of bronze, 11 inches long, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ broad at the base, which is rounded and pierced with four holes for fixing to a handle. These weapons were found at Sluie on the Findhorn, and were exhibited by Sir JOHN DICK LAUDER, Bart.

A valuable collection of relics of stone and bronze from the North of

Scotland, collected by the late Sir Thomas Dick Lauder; was exhibited by the Dowager Lady Dick Lauder.

Copy of Baskett's Bible, Edinb. 1726, with an inscription and two specimens of penmanship written by M. Buchinger, born without hands or feet—1674—were exhibited by A. J. Lambe, Esq.

The following communications were read:—