

## II.

NOTICE OF A GOLD WATCH, SAID TO HAVE BELONGED TO PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD STUART, AND OF ITS LATE POSSESSOR. By GEORGE SETON, Esq., F.S.A. Scot.

In the month of October last (1863), a maiden lady, the late possessor of the watch which forms the subject of this paper, breathed her last in a humble lodging in the Old Town of Edinburgh. She was born on the 18th of May 1806, and accordingly had reached the age of fifty-seven. For family reasons she had abandoned her paternal surname, and had assumed that of her maternal grandmother, the eldest sister of John Leslie, eighth and last Lord Lindores, who died without issue in the year 1814. Being in very reduced circumstances, for about seven years prior to her death she had been a pensioner on the Fund for the Relief of Indigent Gentlewomen. Under a Will dated 29th July 1861, she had appointed, as her sole executor, a highly respected clergyman of this city connected with the Episcopal communion, and among her various legacies, which chiefly consisted of books and trinkets, the following bequest occurs:—

“My gold watch (which belonged to my beloved grandfather and aunt, and the filagree case and dial of which was once the property of Prince Charles Edward Stuart) I bequeath to his Majesty Victor Emmanuel, King of Sardinia (and now, I suppose, King of United Italy), as the indisputable representative of the royal race of Stuart, as well as in admiration of his character, with my prayers that he may be made wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.”

From other passages in the Will, it would appear that the “grandfather and aunt” here referred to as having possessed the watch, were the father and sister of the mother of the testatrix. On the other hand, however, I am informed that the watch belonged to her *father's* maiden sister, who is said to have got it from a Miss Oliphant, the niece of a silversmith in Blackfriars Wynd, and who is known to have possessed a number of genuine relics of Prince Charlie.

With reference to the ground of the bequest, it is desirable for me to state that the King of Italy—whose father Charles-Albert, formerly Prince

of Carignano, succeeded Charles-Felix as King of Sardinia in 1831—has nothing whatever to do with the descent from Henrietta-Maria (daughter of Charles I.), being sprung from a branch of the Ducal House of Savoy, long antecedent to the alliance which brought about the connection of that family with the sovereigns of these kingdoms. The opposite impression, however, is very commonly entertained, and has doubtless, in the present instance, been the chief means of making Victor Emmanuel the possessor of the old lady's curious watch. As shewn in a "Genealogical Table," which I published as far back as the year 1846, the undoubted representative of the unfortunate house of Stuart is Francis V. of Modena, son of Beatrice, Duchess of Modena, the eldest daughter of a former Victor Emmanuel, King of Sardinia, who abdicated in 1821. And it is somewhat remarkable that Theresa, the sister of Francis of Modena, is married to Henry, Duke of Bordeaux, better known as the Comte de Chambord (son of the Duke of Berri, and grandson of Charles X. of France), the equally undoubted representative of the Bourbons. In terms of the bequest above quoted, after communicating with the British minister at Turin (the Hon. H. G. Elliot), the watch was duly transmitted a few weeks ago by the executor of the testatrix to the King of Italy.

I have the pleasure of exhibiting and of presenting to the Society a very excellent photograph of the watch, taken under the superintendence of our esteemed treasurer, Mr Thomas Johnston. The arrangement of the Roman figures upon the dial is, I fancy, somewhat unusual, the little square plates on which the hours are engraved being placed in the form of diamonds or lozenges, and producing rather a pleasing effect. The most curious portion of the watch, however, is the filagree case, which, it will be observed, is ornamented with six white stones or crystals, and which is probably of oriental manufacture. Our Museum furnishes specimens of several ancient watches, none of which, however, bear almost any resemblance to the one under our notice. I am told that two of the largest collections of watches in this country are those belonging to Mr Charles Octavius Morgan, M.P. for Monmouthshire, and Sir Charles Fellows, in which, perhaps, some similar watches may be found.

If the watch is curious and interesting, its late possessor was un-

doubtedly much more so; and although not exactly the subject for a Society of Antiquaries, I shall venture to give some notion of the character and accomplishments of the deceased, by reading a few extracts from her numerous volumes of manuscript, with a sight of which I have been favoured. They are all very neatly written or rather printed, somewhat in the style of Charlotte Bronte's MSS., and some of them are tastefully bound. The following are the most important:—

1. "Genealogical Memoir of my Ancestors, 1846," in which she enters very fully into the history of the House of Leslie, concluding the pedigree with her own name, under which she writes:—"My unfortunate self, the last tip of the tail!"

2. "Military Memoranda by Brown Bess," 1845,—(her Christian name was Elizabeth)—the title-page bearing the following declaration of "Tib" in Sir Walter Scott's "Monastery":—"I ne'er thought a man looked like a man unless he had steel on his breast and at his side too." This volume contains a mixture of manuscript and newspaper cuttings, the former embracing the following:—"The Social Wrongs of the Soldier" (from the United Service Magazine). "The Soldier as represented in the New Testament." "Prayers of Henry IV. of France and Prince Eugene." Verses "On the Presentation of a Sword by the Bengal Civil Service, as a testimonial to a certain hero" (Sir Robert Sale). "Epitaph on Lord Keane."

3. "The Denniead, or the most curious work extant on the Campaigns in Afghanistan, in Doggerel." By E. L., 1843. On the title-page is an acrostic on the surname of *Dennie*. The poem consists of fourteen cantos, including the following:—"Dennie's Passage of the Bolan." "Storm of Ghuznee." "Dennie's March from Cabul to Jellalabad." "Death of Colonel Dennie." A large copy of the "Denniead," with illustrations, was sent to Colonel Dennie's son, Henry William Dennie, Esq., late captain in Her Majesty's 28th Regiment of Foot, in accordance with a very anxiously expressed bequest in the will, in which the deceased leaves it to the legatee to determine "whether such a work should be preserved or destroyed." She also bequeaths to him "a gold chain, having for its snap or clasp 'the gun of Ghuznee,' which I request him to accept as associated with the memory of his heroic father." I am unable to explain the origin of her intense admiration of Colonel

Dennie; but it is understood that she never actually set eyes upon the gallant soldier.

4 and 5. Two Volumes of Miscellanies. The former includes music, heraldic drawings, and verses, both original and published; and the latter, heraldic memoranda, pencil drawings of Scottish kings, and poetry and prose, original and published, chiefly the latter. Among the original verses are the following:—"Lord Lindores." "Norman Leslie's March to Ancrum Muir." "St Andrew's Day." "One Hour with Thee!" "The Loch Leven Serenade."

6. Original Verses, on separate sheets, the subjects being:—"The Gentlewomen's Fund." "On Ghuznee—an Otter Terrier." "On Ghuznee's Death." Two likenesses of her favourite dog "Ghuznee" were bequeathed "to a very worthy, honest, and respectable man in humble life, of the Edinburgh Police Establishment, . . . as a testimony alike of my esteem for his character, and gratitude for his friendly feelings and services experienced during many years."

Towards the close of her Will the deceased says:—"As no real mourner can consign me to the dust, I desire no artificial ones—I consider the fopperies of death as the vainest of all vanities, and desire no parade or ostentatious display of any kind." The Will, which appears to have been made against her inclination, as being only "much ado about nothing," is followed by a curious "Protest or Declaration" explanatory of her views and feelings in making it, and containing also a lengthened statement respecting certain family misunderstandings.

The verses which I propose to read are those on "The Presentation of a Sword to a certain Hero;" "The Epitaph on Lord Keane;" "The Gentlewomen's Fund;" and extracts from the lines on "Ghuznee's Death."