

## III.

AN ACCOUNT OF ST COLUMBA'S ABBEY, INCHCOLM. ACCOMPANIED WITH PLANS, &c. BY THOMAS ARNOLD, ESQ., ARCHITECT, LONDON. COMMUNICATED, WITH AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE, BY DAVID LAING, ESQ., FOR. SEC. S.A. SCOT.

Although twenty years have elapsed, it may be in the recollection of some Members present, that one of the Society's pleasant summer excursions had for its object a visit to the Island of Inchcolm, in the Firth of Forth. This, I find, was in July 1848. A steamer from Leith was hired for the occasion, and the party, I should think, was about thirty in number. After landing on the Island, and examining the ruins of the Monastery, founded in the year 1123 by Alexander the First, I read some detached notices of its history. The party then adjourned and held a social meeting in the Chapter House, which had been fitted up in a primitive style with benches and forms for conveniently partaking of the refreshments, which had not been overlooked.

Nearly ten years later, Sir JAMES SIMPSON, with an agreeable picnic party, revisited the Island, when he prepared an elaborate communication, which was read to the Society in July 1857, and printed in the Proceedings, Vol. III. pages 489-528, illustrated with woodcuts drawn by

Mr James Drummond, R.S.A. The special subject of Dr Simpson's investigation was the old stone-roofed cell or Oratory in the Island. I refer to it at this time simply to remind the Members of a paper, which exhibits the author's wonderful aptitude and skill in being able to invest with so much interest a matter of dry antiquarian research.

The communication which has been intrusted to me to lay before the Society this evening is also of importance. Mr ARNOLD has brought together, in a clear and distinct manner, the available information regarding the history of this Monastic establishment; while the detailed descriptions and accompanying plans of the buildings prepared by a professional Architect, renders it, I think, peculiarly valuable.

It was my intention to have made a few remarks on the proposed publication by the Society of the CHARTULARY OF INCHCOLM, to which I thought Mr Arnold's communication might have formed the first or introductory part. Farther consideration seemed to render this inexpedient; and I have since learned that previous arrangements had been made for printing the charters by the Maitland Club. In the interim, it will be no difficult matter for the Council, if they see cause, to fix upon some other Chartulary, to be printed for the Members; while the Joint-Editor of the Society's publications (Dr J. A. Smith), and others, have reminded me that, agreeably to more than one resolution of the Society, some steps might now be taken for resuming the *ARCHÆOLOGIA SCOTICA*, and Mr Arnold's paper on Inchcolm seems to be one exactly suited to come into Part I. of Vol. V. of that series.

All this, however, is a matter of arrangement that may be afterwards submitted to the deliberation of the Council.

The first part of this communication is devoted to a sketch of the foundation and subsequent history of the Abbey, with notices of a cell and other early remains on the island. In the second part is given a detailed architectural description of the different parts of the Monastery, illustrated by careful ground-plans, and several views of the ruins.

After this communication was read, the cordial thanks of the meeting were voted to Mr ARNOLD, and a remit made to Mr Laing and the Secretaries to report as to the form in which it should be published for the use of the Members.