

I.

NOTICE OF THE EXISTING MSS. OF FORDUN'S SCOTICHRONICON.

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In the Introduction to the "Chronicles of the Picts and Scots," edited by me for the Scottish Record series, which opens with an account of the work of John of Fordun, I added the following note:—

"There are twenty-one MSS. of the 'Scotichronicon' still preserved, and, besides the imperfect copy printed in Gale's 'Scriptores,' vol. iii., two separate printed editions, one by Thomas Hearne in 1772, the text of which is taken from a MS. in Trinity College, Cambridge, which appears to contain the work as Fordun left it; and another by Walter Goodall in 1759, taken mainly from the Edinburgh College MS., which contains Bower's additions. A new edition of Fordun, from a collation of all the MSS., and discriminating between the original text and the additions of the different continuators, would be a great boon to the Scottish historian."

Since I wrote that note I have carefully examined all the existing MSS., so far as they were accessible to me, and it has occurred to me that it might not be uninteresting to the Society if I lay before them shortly the results of my inquiry. I am the more desirous to do so, as the examination I have made leads to very definite conclusions as to the character of the printed editions, and also because I shall have to introduce to your notice a very interesting MS. which appears to me to have great claims to represent the original work as it was written by John of Fordun himself, if it was not actually his autograph.

In stating the number of MSS. still in existence, I was guided solely by the lists preserved at different times of these MSS.

The first list which I have found is an "Account of the Scotichronicons extant A.D. 1701, under the name of J. Fordun, of Bishop Elphinston, or Liber Sconensis Cuprensis Paslatensis, &c.," which is contained in a MS., in the possession of Mr David Laing, in the handwriting of Father Thomas Innes. This list contains nineteen MSS., all said to be of Fordun's Scotichronicon.¹

The next account of them is given by Bishop Nicolson, in his "Scottish Historical Library," published in 1702, where he gives an account of John of Fordun and his history, and notices some eleven MSS. This account was reprinted by Hearne in the fifth volume of his edition of Fordun, published in 1722, who examined most of these MSS., and adds his remarks upon them, as well as a notice of another MS. then in the possession of Mr James Anderson.

Finally, Sir Thomas Hardy, in his valuable catalogue of the materials relating to the "History of Great Britain and Ireland," vol. ii., published in 1865, gives a list, in which he enumerates only ten MSS. as now extant.

These lists, however, merely enumerate the MSS. and the possessors of them, and term them simply MSS. of Fordun's Scotichronicon, with or without what they call Bower's additions, but without attempting to classify them according to their value, and without any more minute analysis of their contents. This has been the main object of my examination of all the MSS. which were accessible to me. I have in all examined seventeen MSS. I first endeavoured to identify them with the MSS. noticed in these different lists, and then to classify them according to their true character and contents. In this examination I have received much assistance from Mr David Laing, and I wish to take this opportunity of expressing the obligations I am under to him both on this and other occasions. Mr Laing had himself examined many of the MSS. with very much the same object in view, and, with that readiness which he always shows to make his immense stores of accurate information available to other inquirers, he has given me much useful information and many valuable suggestions.

In laying the result of my examination before you, I must, in order to

¹ By permission of Mr Laing, this list is printed at the end of this paper.

make my remarks intelligible, ask your attention for a few minutes to the printed work. The work, which, in its complete state, is termed the Scotichronicon, and which was published in 1759 by Walter Goodall, consists of sixteen books. There is prefixed to them a "Prologus," commencing with the words, "Incipit liber Scotichronicon. Debitor sum, &c." Then follow the titles of the chapters of the first book, annexed to which are six lines of poetry, beginning, "Incipies opus hoc, &c." Then follows what the writer terms "Præfatiuncula. operis," after which we have the main body of the work divided into sixteen books. The last chapter of the sixteenth book is termed "Conclusio operis;" and annexed to this are eight lines of poetry, commencing "Hic opus hoc finit, &c." The latest date in the main body of the work is the year 1447.

Now, it is impossible to examine this work without seeing at once that it is the compilation of two different authors who lived at different times, and that the name of the writer of the earliest part was Fordun, or Johannes de Fordun.

Thus, in the poem at the end, the writer of it says—

"Hic opus hoc finit, et scribere desinit auctor,
Quod Scotichronicon jure vocare solet."

And again—

"Quinque libros Fordun, undenos auctor arabat,
Sic tibi clarescit sunt sedecim numero."

That is, that of the sixteen books comprising the Scotichronicon, five had been compiled by Fordun, and eleven by the author who writes. Again, in the "Prologus," he says that he had undertaken, at the request of Sir David Stewart of Rosythe, to transcribe the historic work, "per venerabilem oratorem dominum Joannem Fordoun presbyterum nuper et egregie inchoatum, in quinque libris luculenter et distincte chronographatum," and not only to transcribe it, but also to continue the work to his own time; and he adds that Fordun, after completing his fifth book, had left "multa in scriptis, nondum tamen usquequaque distincta, sed per quæ curiosus indagator opus continuare facilius poterit ad promissa;" that is, had left materials for the rest of his work. He adds, that in transcribing Fordun's part, he inserted from time to time what occurred to himself; but, as he did not intend by that to derogate from so excel-

lent a work, he had distinguished his own insertions by annexing the word "scriptor," while he denominated Fordun "auctor."

At the end of chapter twenty-three of the sixth book he adds five lines, beginning, "Hactenus auctorem de Fordun sume Joannem," implying that Fordun had compiled the first twenty-three chapters of the sixth book, as well as the first five books.

Very little is known of the life of this John of Fordun. Camden says that he was born at Fordun, in the Merns; but there is no authority for this, and it is a mere conjecture derived from his name. Pitts and others identify him with a John de Fordham, Abbot of Ford, in England; but for this, too, there is no authority, except a distant resemblance in the names. But Fordun seems to have given his own name very distinctly, for there is every reason to think that the six lines annexed to the titles of the chapters of the first book were written by himself, and the initial letters of the words in the first three lines—

" Incipies Opus Hoc Adonai Nomine Nostri
Exceptum Scriptis Dirigat Emmanuel
Fauces Ornate Ructent Dum Verbula Nectant,"

give the name IOHANNES DE FORDVN.

The continuator who added the eleven books calls him a presbyter, and by the writer of the Royal MS. he is called "Capellanus Ecclesiæ Aberdonensis." He was probably what was termed a Chantry Priest of the Cathedral of Aberdeen.

The period when he compiled his part of the Scotichronicon can be established within a few years by the work itself.

In Book xi. cap. xiv., he mentions Richard the Second, king of England, and adds in the older MSS., "qui nunc est," this expression being omitted by the continuator. Fordun must, therefore, have written in the reign of Richard II.; that is, between the years 1377 and 1399.

But we can come still closer to the date, for in Book v. cap. lx., he gives a genealogy of King David I., which he says, "a Domino Cardinale Scotiæ et Legato nobili doctore Waltero de Wardlaw, et Episcopo Glasguensi, dudum acceperam;" and Walter, Bishop of Glasgow, was made Cardinal in the year 1381, and died in 1389.

The original work of Fordun must, therefore, have been written after 1381, and before 1389.

The name of the continuator who compiled the other part of the work is nowhere indicated in the body of the work itself, but his date can also be pretty well fixed.

He was born in the year 1385; for in Book xiv., cap. 50, under that year we find, "Eodem anno ego ipse, qui hæc compegi, qui in primis quinque libris intitulatus sum scriptor, de utero matris meæ natus sum in mundo." He compiled his continuation at the request of Sir David Stewart of Rossythe; and Sir David Stewart of Durisdeer, who purchased the Barony of Rossythe, first appears so designed in 1436, and died in 1444. He commenced his work in the year 1441; for in the first book, and 8th chapter, in noticing the Emperor Constantine the Great, he adds, "Hoc tamen noto quod a tempore hujus Magni Constantini usque præsentem diem hujus scripturæ, qui est vii. dies Novembris, anno Domini MCCCCXLI." &c. He completed his work in 1447, which is the last date mentioned in it.

We have, therefore, the first five books, part of the sixth book, and the materials for the remainder, left by Johannes de Fordun, who wrote between 1381 and 1389.

We have also the first five books interpolated, and eleven books added, by a writer who was born in 1385, and compiled his work between 1441 and 1447.

One great object, therefore, in analysing the MSS. of this work, is obviously to discriminate between the original composition of John of Fordun in the fourteenth century, and the additions of his continuator in the succeeding century; and, in classifying the MSS., my first group consists of those MSS. which appear to represent the original work of Fordun.

They are four in number. The first is a MS. now belonging to Trinity College, Cambridge (MS. Gale, O. ix. 9). It formerly belonged to Thomas Gale, the historian, and originally to King's College, Aberdeen, to whom it was presented by Hector Boece, Principal of the College, as it bears on the first page, "Collegi Aberdon. ex dono Magistri Hectoris Bois Primi Primarii ejusdem." Gale printed the first four books, and the first eleven chapters of the fifth in his "Scriptores." Why he stopped there it is difficult to say, as there is no break in the MS. at that part. Hearne printed the entire MS. in 1772.

It is a paper MS. It contains no preface, but commences with the first five books of Fordun, without the interpolations marked "scriptor." Then follow the titles of the chapters of the sixth book, fifty-eight in number, but the text of the first twenty-three chapters alone is given. This is succeeded by what appears to be materials for the work, numbered, but not divided into chapters. The first part of it consists of different editions of materials already used in the fifth book. That book ended with the death of David I., and with the accession of Malcolm IV. commence the materials for the rest of the work, ending with the year 1385. At the end of the reign of Malcolm IV. we find the sentence, "Explicit liber quintus. Incipit liber sextus," which shows that what preceded this were materials which he intended to have added to the fifth book. In the middle of these materials, and at a date with which they do not correspond, are inserted the documents connected with the English claims, including the "Instructiones" and the "Processus" of Baldred Bisset, which belong to the year 1301.

This MS. thus corresponds generally with the description given of Fordun's share of the work in the "Prologus." It contains the first five Books without the interpolations marked "scriptor," and the materials for the rest; and the last date, viz. 1385, falls within the period of eight years, from 1381 to 1389, when Fordun must have completed his work.

Hearne considered this MS. to be the autograph of Fordun, but this opinion cannot be supported, as the handwriting is of a later date; and in the titles of the chapters of book vi., of which the text is not given, there is a list of the bishops of St Andrews, ending with "Dominus Jacobus Kenydy Episcopus," who was bishop from 1440 to 1466, showing that this MS. was transcribed between these dates, and had been to some extent tampered with by the continuator.

The second MS. is the Cottonian (Vitellius E. xi.) It has at the top of the first page the name of Schevez, and the name occurs again after the titles of the chapters of book first and at the end of book five, which shows that it belonged to William Schevez, Archbishop of St Andrews, from 1478 to 1496. It is a paper MS., and it is imperfect. Some leaves appear to have been lost after the first five books, and it commences again in the middle of a sentence in the reign of Malcolm IV. The last date is 1363; but as this terminates a page, there may have been also a leaf at the end lost. The handwriting is of the same period, and closely resembles that of

the Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. ; but it cannot be a transcript from it, for it contains three chapters which are wanting in the latter MS., and these have obviously been omitted in the latter from a mere blunder of the scribe, who seems to have passed from the end of one leaf to the beginning of another, and to have passed over an intermediate leaf, in the middle of a sentence, leaving that part of his MS. unintelligible.¹

The third MS. is in Trinity College, Dublin (561). It is a paper MS. of the fifteenth century, and contains a "Prologus" to be found only in one other MS. Then the first five books of Fordun, but differently divided, the fifth book alone corresponding. The chapters of the sixth book are omitted, and likewise the first part of the materials for the subsequent history, which in this MS. begin with the coronation of Malcolm IV. and end with the year 1363, after which are placed the documents connected with the English claims. After this follows part of the Latin life of Saint Servanus, which shows that the MS. must have belonged either to Culross or Lochleven, where Saint Servanus was peculiarly venerated. It is, however, possible that it may have come from Glasgow, as the life of Servanus is usually conjoined with that of Kentigern ; and Glasgow possessed, in 1432, a volume containing the lives of St Servanus and St Kentigern, and the scribe may have commenced to transcribe it.

The "Prologus," however, must have been written by the continuator who added the eleven books, as it contains the expression—

"Undecim libros ipsis quinque ut patet in magno ubi supra distinctibiliter
adjecti,"

and the first five books contain some of his interpolations.

This MS., therefore, also cannot be earlier than the middle of the fifteenth century, and is also tainted by his alterations.²

¹ See Hearne, vol. iii. p. 743 line 22. The omitted part follows the word "prostravit," the sentence is thus concluded—"quorum detruncata capita Alexandro novo regi nova munera presentavit, propter quod ipsius honore militari rex insignavit." Then follows a new paragraph, beginning "Alexander rex Scotorum." See Goodall, ii. p. 34. The sentence beginning "Angliam, &c.," is the conclusion of the following :—"Eodem autem anno estate vero predicta Cardinalis quidam nomine Gualo missus est legatus in Angliam, &c."

² In a letter I have from the late Dr J. H. Todd of Trinity College, he says, "I do not think our MS. older than 1500, but it is probably not later than 1508-15."

The fourth MS. is in the well-known library of Wolfenbüttel, a small town not far from Brunswick, and in the duchy of that name.

I first became aware that a MS. of Fordun existed in that library by observing it in Sir Thomas Hardy's list, and the result of a communication with the librarian led me to believe that it belonged to this group. I therefore took an opportunity this summer of going to Wolfenbüttel and carefully examining the MS. It is written on parchment, and is certainly a MS. of the time of Fordun. The librarian pronounced it to have been written in the latter part of the fourteenth century, between 1380 and 1400; and a comparison of the handwriting with that of dated MSS. in the library of the same period confirmed this opinion. Its history is curious. In the year 1575, died at Frankfort, Matheus Flaccius Illyricus, the author of a work termed "Catalogus Testium Veritatis." He had been a Franciscan monk, but joined the Lutheran Reformers, and became Professor of Hebrew in Wittenberg, and afterwards Professor of Theology in Jena. Owing to the publication of some theses about original sin which were thought to be heterodox, he lost his professorship, and he is said then to have donned his Franciscan frock, and wandered about Europe, visiting the monasteries and examining their libraries. He formed a large collection of historical MSS., which enabled him to write his "Catalogus;" and it is said that when he found a valuable historical MS. in the library of any monastery, he was in the habit of slipping it into the large sleeve of his Franciscan frock and carrying it off. After his death his MSS. were purchased by Henry Julius Duke of Brunswick, who founded the library of Wolfenbüttel, at the rate of a thaler and a half, or 4s. 6d. a piece.

On the first page of the MS. there is written in the well-known handwriting of Flaccius, "Chronica regnorum Scotiæ et Angliæ per Johannem de Fordun ni fallor;" and on the next page, in an older hand, "Liber Monasterii Sancti Andreae in Scotia." Then follow the titles of the chapters of the first book, and the lines beginning "Incipies." After which are the five books of Fordun; of course, without the additions

I have not had an opportunity of examining this MS. myself, and I am indebted to the Rev. Dr Dickson of Trinity College, Dublin, for a full and careful analysis of it, which I take this opportunity of acknowledging.

of the continuator. Then 15 chapters of the sixth book, being the chapters from 9 to 23 inclusive, then the documents connected with the English claims in 1301, and then the materials for the history to the year 1385, which is the latest date. This MS. omits all those features in the other MSS., which can be assigned to a later date than that of Fordun himself, and if not his autograph, has certainly been transcribed in his lifetime. It is the oldest known MS., and contains some curious features. At intervals occur the words, *Tu autem domine*. This is part of the antiphon, *Tu autem domine miserere nostri*, found at the end of the lectiones in the "Proprium Sanctorum" in the Breviaries, and shows that it was transcribed for the purpose of being read aloud to the monks.

In the first thirty-three chapters, which are beautifully written, the initial letters are rubricated; but the rubrical letters are after that omitted, and a blank space left for them, and the writing becomes less careful. At the end of chapter 52 we find this sentence, *A Deo decamus gratias Plume me fault pour meulx escrivre et du vermail pour rubrichier*.

In book iii. the writing again improves, and after chapter 53, we have *Ex my gray gusse penne*.

In the materials for the history after the five books there occurs, at page 180, as in the Trinity College MS., "Explicit liber quintus. Incipit liber sextus;" but at page 199, we find "Explicit liber sextus et incipit liber septimus," which is not to be found in any other MS., and shows that Fordun intended his work to have consisted of seven books.

This MS. also throws some light on the origin of the work. In the beginning of the same century appeared in England the work termed the Polychronicon, by Ranulph Higden, a monk of Chester. It is impossible to examine this work without seeing that Fordun compiled his work on the same model. Both are made up, in the early part, of extracts from other writers, with the name of the author prefixed to each extract. Higden compiled his work in seven books, to correspond with the seven days of creation; and this MS. shows that Fordun intended his work to consist also of seven books. Higden advocates the English claims, and gives the fable of Brutus and his three sons, which occupies a prominent place in the English argument. Fordun meets it with an elaboration of the Scottish fable of the descent from Scota, daughter of

Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Higden calls his work Polychronicon, and Fordun calls his Scotichronicon. Fordun was acquainted with it, as he twice quotes it; and his work seems to have been called forth by that of Higden, and to have been intended as an answer to it.

The next group of MSS. I have to notice are those which contain the whole sixteen books of the Scotichronicon. They are five in number. The first two, viz., the MS. in the Edinburgh College Library, and that in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge (171), do not anywhere indicate the name of the continuator. The other three MSS. assign the additions to three different authors—the Royal MS. in the British Museum (13, E. x.), to Walter Bower or Bowmaker, Abbot of Inchcolm; the Donibristle MS. to Patrick Russell, a Carthusian monk of Charterhouse, in Perth; and the Harleian MS. (712), to Magnus Makeculloch, a cleric of the Diocese of Ross. The claim of the latter is soon disposed of; for he states that the MS. belong to William Schevez, Archbishop of St Andrews, and was written for him by his “clericus familiaris” Magnus Makculloch, in the town of Edinburgh, in the year 1483. It is clear that he could not have been the compiler, as the latter was born in the year 1385, and he must only have been the transcriber. The MS. appears to be a transcript of the Royal MS., with which it closely corresponds. Mr Stuart tells me that he found another transcript by Magnus Makeculloch in Lord Dalhousie’s library.

The Donibristle MS. assigns the continuation to Patrick Russell, as we find at the end of Book v. the following colophon:—

Predictos quinque libros Dominus Johannes Fordoun presbyter compilavit. Residuum vero quod sequitur Dompnus Patricius Russell monachus vallis virtutis ordinis Cartusienensis continuavit et ad finem perduxit, additis tamen interim et insertis nonnullis ab incerto auctore, prout et in prioribus quinque libris.

This colophon, however, is written on the MS. in a later hand and in fainter ink, and, as we shall find, has been taken from a very different MS. There is another of the same date as the MS. which appears to give the true account of it.

Hunc librum scribi fecit Dominus Symon Finlay, capellanus altaris Sancti Michaelis ecclesie Sancti Egidii de Edinburgo, quem post suum obitum reliquit canonicis monasterii insule Sancti Columbe de Emonia. Orate pro eo. Ejus alienator anathema sit.

and with the property of the Island it no doubt passed into the possession of the Earl of Moray, through his ancestor James Lord Doune, who was commendator of Inchcolm. It closely corresponds with the Edinburgh College MS.

The Royal MS. assigns the continuation to Walter Bower. This MS. is commonly called the Black Book of Paisley, and, has immediately before the Prologus, "Iste liber est Sancti Jacobi et Sancti Mirine de Pasleto." Then follows,

Incipit Prologus in librum Scotichronicon inchoatum per sancti memorie dominum Johannem de Fordoun, capellanum ecclesie Aberdonensis, nec non continuatum compilatum et completum per etiam bone memorie venerabilem in Christo patrem Walterum Bower, abbatem Monasterii Sancti Columbe.

This is confirmed by a MS. to be afterwards mentioned, which belonged to the Carthusian Monastery or Charterhouse, in Perth, and is an abbreviation of the sixteen books. It is there stated in the "Prologus,"

Præfatum ejusdem Scotichronicon volumen quantum ad primos quinque libros venerabilis vir Dominus Johannes Fordon Presbyter, dudum inchoans diserto stilo compilavit. Residuum vero in undecem libros late protensum Reverendus in Christo pater Dominus Walter Bowmaker olim Abbas insulæ Sancti Columbe, qui obiit anno Domini M^o.ccccxlix, diligenter studio continuavit et usque in finem laudabiliter complevit.

This statement is quite explicit that Bower compiled the eleven books added to Fordun's five. The date also corresponds with the date assigned by the work itself to the continuator, and as it appears from the MS. itself, that the abbreviator belonged himself to the Monastery of Charterhouse, of which Patrick Russell was also a member, we may hold it as established that the work in sixteen books is the compilation of Walter Bower or Bowmaker, in which he incorporated the imperfect work of John of Fordun.

On comparing the works of Fordun and Bower, the character of the additions made by the latter appears to be as follows:—In the first five books of Fordun he has made large interpolations, but without otherwise altering Fordun's text. These interpolations, with few exceptions, do not appear to be of any historic value. Secondly, he has completed the sixth book by adding the legend of the St Waldeve contained in the first

eight chapters, and the account of the bishops and priors of St Andrews down to his own time in the last thirty-four, and has interpolated the whole of the seventh book, which is of not much value to the history of Scotland. Then, in the materials left by Fordun for the rest of the history to the year 1385, he has omitted that part of it which precedes the coronation of Malcolm IV. He has inserted the documents connected with the English claims in 1301, in their proper place, and taken the text of the "Instructiones" from a better source. He has throughout made large interpolations in the text, and added some additional matter in the shape of an obituary, and he has occasionally altered and changed Fordun's text. The interpolations are not of much value, but the obituary is a valuable addition; and the alterations he has made in the text can only be characterised as intentional falsifications of history to suit a purpose—a proceeding which, in this case, can perhaps be justified by the fact that Fordun had himself set the example by falsifying the text of the older chronicles which he has interwoven into his five books. From 1385 to 1447 Bower is narrating events which happened in his own lifetime, and for that period is entitled to the character of an independent historian.

My next group of MSS. consist of abridgments of Fordun, with Bower's additions. They are three in number, and are all in the Advocates' Library. The first is the MS. usually termed the Chronicle of Cupar (35. 1. 7), and bears the title of "Liber Monasterii Beate Marie de Cupro." It consists of the text of the sixteen books, somewhat abridged, and with occasional additional matter, broken up into forty books. The second MS. is the Carthusian MS. of Perth (35. 6. 7), already adverted to. The third is a small paper MS. (35. 6. 8). At the beginning we find, "De libro Scotichronicon hic aliqua extrabuntur qui niger liber Pasleti dictus est," indicating that it is an abridgment of the Black Book of Paisley or Royal MS.; and the colophon is,

Hujus opusculi possessor venerabilis et circumspectus vir Magister Johannes Gibson, canonicus Glasguensis ac Rector de Renfrew.

Qui liber extractus est de magno ac nigro libro Pasleti.

Quarto marcii hujus libri finis extitit anno millesimo quingentesimo primo per me Johannem Gibson juniorem.

These abridgments are, of course, of little historical value.

The last group of MSS. consists of those which contain the five books of Fordun without Bower's interpolations, and append a continuation by a different hand.

The first MS. in this group belongs to the Catholic Library in Broughton Street. It is the MS. which formerly belonged to the Scotch College in Paris, and was so much prized by Father Innes. This appears from our finding on the first page, in a hand of the end of the seventeenth century, "Ex libris Collegii Scotorum Parisien. ex dono illustrissimi et nobilissimi Domini Jacobi Comitis de Drummond Anno Domini 1694." It contains the five books of Fordun, without Bower's additions. Then follows in a later hand, "Explicit liber quintus. Incipiunt tituli libri noni;" and this is followed by twenty-three books transcribed from the Chronicle of Cupar, beginning with the ninth, but omitting books 16, 20, 21, 22, 25, 37, 38, 39, and 40. The date of the transcript of these books is given as 1509.

The next is a MS. in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (Fairfax, 8), usually termed Bishop Elphinstone's History of Scotland. It contains the five books of Fordun, without Bower's additions, to which is added a continuation in six books, the first fourteen chapters of which are the same as those in the Wolfenbüttel MS., the remainder of the continuation differs from that of Bower. There is another copy of this history in the library at Glasgow College (F. 6. 14), and a third in the Advocates' Library (35. 5. 2). Mr Laing tells me that there is a fourth in the possession of Sir Hugh Hume Campbell, and Mr Stuart found a fifth in Lord Dalhousie's library. The two last I have not seen, but the three former I have examined. The Oxford MS. belonged to Lord Fairfax, who states that he obtained it from Lady Hawthornden, the widow of the poet Drummond of Hawthornden, and attributes the compilation of it to Bishop Elphinstone; but there is nothing in the MS. itself to connect it with Bishop Elphinstone. He adds, that it appears to have belonged to the monastery of Dunfermline, and that the Earl of Dunfermline told him, in 1657, that he had a very fair ancient MS. of the history of Scotland formerly belonging to that monastery. In book viii. cap. 17, in narrating the league between Charlemagne and Achaius, king of Scots, the writer adds, "Et usque in hanc diem hujus opusculi scripturæ videlicet Anno Domini millesimo quadragintesimo octogesimo nono inviolata et incon-

cussa manet conservata," which appears to give the year 1489 as the date of the compilation; but this is, in fact, the date of the transcript merely, for the Advocates' Library MS. has in the same passage the date 1461.

The Glasgow College MS., which Mr Laing, who has examined it more carefully than I have, considers a superior MS. to the Bodleian, has at the end the words in French *c'est tout*, and then this colophon,

Iste liber scriptus fuit apud Dunfermlin Willelmo Sancti Andreæ Archiepiscopo de mandato Domini Thome Monymelle monachi et sacristi ejusdem loci,

which confirms the statement by Lord Fairfax, that the original MS. belonged to Dunfermlin; and as William Schevez was Archbishop from 1478 to 1496, this transcript must have been made between these dates. In the sentence above quoted, however, this MS. also has the date 1461, which is conclusive as to its being the date of the compilation itself, and not of the transcript. The text incidentally mentions the death of James II., which took place in 1460, so that it could not have been written before that date.

Elphinstone matriculated as a student at Glasgow College in 1457, when he was, according to Boece, in his twentieth year, and did not graduate as M.A. till 1462. He was nominated Bishop of Aberdeen in 1483, but was not consecrated till 1487. He could not, therefore, have been the author of a continuation written in 1461, but the Bodleian MS. may have been transcribed for or by him, in 1489, after he was Bishop of Aberdeen, and so become associated with his name.

This MS. contains (in book vi. cap. 14) the following sentence:—

"Item, notandum est quod ista omnia superscripta gesta per nobilem et discretum clericum, dominum Johannem de Fordune, collecta sunt et compilata, cætera sequentia vero per venerabilem patrem Dominum Abbatem de Insula Sancti Columbæ, qui in tempore suo dictus est Dominus Walterus Bouwære, sicut reperimus in magnis cronicis notatum; quorum anima in pace requiescant, et hæc signantur usque ad tempus regis Jacobi secundi hujus nominis. De residuo vero quis ea compilavit scietur in fine hujus præsentis libri, quia de futuris contingentibus non est determinata veritas. Non mireris, O lector, si diversorum auctorum et cronigraforum in præsentis opusculo de eadem nobilissima regum prosapia opiniones et scripturæ inferendo duobus vel tribus vicibus recitentur. Nam, secundum jura, fortior est sententia quæ plurimorum auctoribus approbatur."

The author certainly did not take his narrative from Bower, as it differs materially from his statements, and in some instances is directly opposed to him.¹ The sentence occurs immediately after a narrative which corresponds with the fourteen chapters of book vi. left by Fordun, and the meaning seems to be that a continuation had been written by Bower, which would be found "in magnis cronicis," but that the "residuum" or continuation in this MS. was written by another author, whose name would be found at the end of the book.² It must be received as an independent narrative of events from the accession of Malcolm IV. to the death of James I., which has never been published.

The last MS. of this group, and the last I shall notice, is the Harleian MS. (4674). This is a very fine MS. on parchment, and contains the five books of Fordun, without Bower's additions, to which is appended a continuation in five books, making ten books in all. It seems to be the same MS. which Hearne describes as then in the possession of Mr James Anderson. The name of "W. Gordone, cancellarius Dunkeld," appears upon it, from which it may be inferred that it once belonged to Dunkeld. On the first page is the name Johannes de Fordun, with the following lines:—

"Usque sextum codicem laus sua convaluit
Hinc ad finem operis alter onus subiit."

After the fifth book, the colophon appears in rubrical letters, which has been improperly transferred to the Donibristle MS.

Predictos quinque libros Dominus Johannes Fordoun, Presbyter, sicut prænotatus, compilavit. Residuum vero istius libri venerabilis Pater et Devotus Dompnus Patricius Russell, monachus vallis virtutis ordinis Carthusien. diligenter studio continuavit et usque in finem laudabile compilavit.

The continuation differs both from Bower and from the history attributed to Bishop Elphinstone, and I consider that this MS. contains an independent continuation, properly attributed to Patrick Russell.

And now the remark I have to make upon the analysis of these

¹ For instance, the account of the conflict on the North Inch of Perth in 1396 is entirely different from and at variance with Bower's.

² Where it is not to be found, however.

MSS. is this. Before the early history of any country can be correctly stated, there is a preliminary process which must be gone through, and is quite essential, and that is a critical examination of the authorities upon which that history is based. This has not yet been done for the history of Scotland. Many excellent histories of the country have appeared—Tytler's History, ponderous in its dry detail; Robertson's "Scotland under her Early Kings," above all praise for research and sound judgment; and Burton's History of Scotland, with its charm of lively style and graphic narrative—but all are tainted with this defect. The early chronicles are referred to as of equal authority, and without reference to the period or circumstances of their production. The text of Fordun is quoted as an original authority, without adverting to the materials he made use of, and the mode in which he has adapted them to a fictitious scheme of history; and the interpolations and additions of Bower are not only founded upon as the statements of Fordun, but his falsifications of Fordun's text are quoted as the statements of Fordun himself in preference to his original version of the events. The history of Scotland, at least prior to the fifteenth century, must always be to a great extent based upon Fordun's narrative; and a critical edition of his text is almost essential to a right comprehension of the history.

I trust, therefore, that I have shown that the statement in the note to the introduction to the Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, that a new edition of Fordun would be a great boon to the Scottish historian, is borne out by an examination of the MSS.

The original text of Fordun ought to be edited from the Wolfenbüttel MS., which should be taken as the basis, collated with the Cotton MS., and those in Trinity College, Cambridge, and Trinity College, Dublin, and the sources of his history pointed out, with the alterations he has made on his materials.

The additions of Bower, so far as they are of value with his narrative from 1385 to 1447, when he may be viewed as an independent annalist, should be separately printed; and the continuations attributed to Bishop Elphinstone and Patrick Russell should be viewed as unpublished independent histories, and edited as such.

ACCOUNT OF THE SCOTICHRONICONS EXTANT A.D. 1701, UNDER THE NAME
OF J. FORDUN, OR BP. ELPHINSTON OR LIBRI SCONEN. CUPREN.
PASLAT., &c.

1. Scotichron. sive Hist. Guil. Elphinston in Biblioth. Bodlyana Oxon. (Fairfax. 8.)
2. Scotichron. J. Fordun fol°. in Biblioth. Cottonian. London. (Vitel-
lius E. xi.)
3. Scotichron. sive Liber Paslaten. in Bibl. Regia Jacobea fol. London.
(13. E. x.)
4. Scotichr. Jo. Fordun in Bib. Benedictin. Cantabrigien. fol. (Corpus
Christi. 171.)
5. Scotichron. sive Hist. G. Elphinston penes Henr. Jones in Com.
Beselurea.
6. Scotichron. Jo. Fordun in Biblioth. Yelverton V. Com. de Longue-
ville.
7. Scotichr. Jo. Fordun penes Th. Gale (erat) H. Boethii. (Trinity
College, Cambridge. O. ix. 9.)
8. Scotichr. Jo. Fordun in Bibl. Trinitatis Dublinen. (561.)
9. Scotichron. Jo. Ford. in Biblioth. Edynburgen. (College. Edin.)
10. Scotichr. Jo. Ford. penes Com. Moravien. (fuit dominum Drumcairn)
(at Donybristle).
11. Scotichr. sive liber Carthus. de Perth in Biblioth. Jurid. Edyn.
(35. 6. 7).
12. Scotichr. sive libri Sconens. Compendium penes D. Rob. Sybbald.
13. Scotichronicon sive libri Paslat. Compend. penes eund. (Bibl. Jurid.
35. 6. 8).
14. Scotichr. aliud ex multis compilatum in Bibl. Jurid. Edynb. (35. 5. 2).
15. Scotichr. sive Chron. Insæ. S. Columbæ penes Vicecom. Tarbart.
16. Scotichr. (*blank*) penes Com. Drummond apud Stobhall.
17. Scotichro. Jo. Fordun in Coll. Scot. Parisien. (now at St Mary's,
Broughton Street, Edinburgh).
18. Scotichr. sive Liber Cuprensis penes D. Ricard. Hay Can. Regular.
(Bibl. Jurid. 35. 1. 7).
19. Chron. Melrossen. in Bibl. Cottonian. 4to. (Faustina, B. ix.)

20. Scotichron. per Patr. Russel Carthus. 7 libris penes Wil. Cuningham.
21. Chron. Scotiae, quod erat Bibl. S. Andreae in manibus D* * * *
22. Chron. Winton. in Bibl. Cotton. (Nero, D. xi.)
23. Chronicon Winton. in Bibl. Jurid. (A. 7. 1).
24. Aliud in Bibl. Norwicensi.