

X.

HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE ALTAR-PIECE, PAINTED IN THE
 REIGN OF KING JAMES THE THIRD OF SCOTLAND, BELONGING
 TO HER MAJESTY, IN THE PALACE OF HOLYROOD. (PLATES X., XI.)

A SUPPLEMENTAL NOTICE.

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The Altar-Piece or Historical Painting, which contains portraits of King James the Third of Scotland and his Queen, Margaret of Denmark, may be considered as by far the most interesting work of mediæval art now existing in this country. No apology, therefore, need be offered for bringing the subject again before the Society.

When the Painting itself was restored to Scotland in 1857, I submitted to the Society a communication respecting it, which appeared in vol. iii. of the Proceedings. A limited number of copies had previously been printed in a separate form, for private distribution, with the above title title: "Historical Description of the Altar-Piece, painted in the Reign of King James the Third of Scotland, belonging to Her Majesty, in the Palace of Holyrood." Edinburgh, 1857, 8vo. pp. 20.

The principal object aimed at was, by investigating the history of the Painting, to record the grounds on which was based the Memorial presented to HER GRACIOUS MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA, which happily proved successful, as Her Majesty directed its restoration, after a period of probably not less than three centuries. At different times it had been transferred, back and forwards, from Whitehall to St James' Palace, to Kensington, and to Hampton Court; and latterly to its most appropriate, and, we trust, its resting-place, in the Palace of Holyrood.

This communication was read to the Society on St Andrew's Day, 30th November 1857. When printed in the Proceedings, I added a Postscript in reference to a point which still remains to be ascertained, Who the Artist was by whom the painting was executed?

In that postscript I was enabled to refer to a List of Paintings published by Mr Noel Sainsbury, in the appendix to his interesting volume of "Original Unpublished Papers Illustrative of the Life of Sir Peter Paul Rubens." Lond. 1859, 8vo. In this list, at p. 355, we find,—

No. CXL.—“A Note of all such Pictures as your Highness [King James I.] hath at the present, done by severall famous Masters' owne hands, by the Life.” The first is,—“*Inprimis*, King James the Third of Scotland, with his Queene, doune by JOAN VANEK.”

Of these Paintings some had evidently formed part of the old Royal collection, suggesting that this one might have been brought from Edinburgh when the city and public buildings were despoiled by the English forces under the Earl of Hertford in the year 1544; and thus have proved the means of its preservation, when the whole Town was set on fire, and continued burning for three days. The mention of the artist's name, VANEK, is no less curious, as it confirms the opinion previously expressed, of his having belonged to the school of the celebrated Flemish Painters, the Van Eycks, who flourished early in the fifteenth century.

My chief object at present is to determine as far as possible the exact date of the Painting, having come to the conclusion that it must have been earlier by twelve or fourteen years than the date 1484, usually assigned. This may seem a matter of small moment, yet it has a twofold importance, inasmuch as it may contribute towards ascertaining not only the name of the Flemish Artist who visited this country at that early period, but also for determining the public Ceremonial which the Painting was intended to commemorate.

For this purpose it is necessary to enter, however briefly, upon some historical details, and to supply references to papers in the Society's Proceedings more or less connected with the present investigation.

I.

THE NORWEGIAN POSSESSIONS IN SCOTLAND.

The piratical expeditions and maritime power of the Norwegians enabled them, about the year 900, to obtain the entire possession of the Islands in the West of Scotland, as well as those of Orkney and Zetland. Harold, King of Norway, erected Orkney and Zetland into an earldom to be held of the Norwegian crown, and in this way the superiority remained for some centuries vested in the Scandinavian Kings. The calamitous termination of Haco's great Expedition, in the destruction of his fleet in the year 1263 (not unlike the fate of the Spanish Armada in 1588), enabled the Scots, in the reign of Alexander the Third, by subse-

quent treaty, upon payment of a sum of 4000 merks of the Roman standard, and a yearly quit-rent of 100 merks sterling for ever, to regain the lordship of the Isle of Man, and all the Western Islands of Scotland, the Orkney and Zetland Islands excepted. At the end of nearly two centuries the arrears of this quit-rent led to long and protracted disputes in regard to the amount that was actually due by Scotland. In the reign of James the Second, in 1457, fresh negotiations were commenced connected with the cession of the Hebrides, which ultimately led to the reunion of the Orkneys to the crown of Scotland. The matter in dispute having been submitted to Charles VII., King of France, as arbiter, he suggested that a marriage between James, the eldest son of King James the Second, and Margaret, daughter of Christian III., King of Denmark and Norway (although both were then but children), would be the easiest mode of settlement. The unexpected death of the Scottish King, August 3, 1460, at the siege of Roxburgh Castle, put a stop at that time to the prosecution of such a scheme.

Before referring to matters connected with this Alliance, it may be useful to take a cursory glance at the actual state of the Royal Family in Scotland during that century.

II.

THE ROYAL FAMILY OF STEWART IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

JAMES THE FIRST, was the third son of King Robert the Third and Annabella Drummond, and born in the year 1394. As the sole survivor of his family, the King resolved to send his only remaining son James to France; but on the Northern coast of England, landing for refreshments, the Prince was taken prisoner, and carried to Windsor, April 6, 1405. The illegality of the capture was pleaded in vain to Henry the Fourth; and on the death of his father, April 4, 1406, the young Prince succeeded to the throne of Scotland; but was still detained in captivity, in various parts of England for the space of nineteen years. "Woe (it had been said) unto thee, O land! when thy King is a child." Most lamentable indeed was the state of Scotland in the fifteenth and sixteenth Centuries, during long successive minorities (with only one exception, that of James the Fourth), owing to the mis-government of the kingdom, chiefly by ambitious or unprincipled governors. At length the King, when he

was about thirty years of age, was ransomed from his protracted captivity for £40,000 sterling raised by the Estates of the kingdom. At the same time he married Jane or Joanna Beaufort, daughter of John, Earl of Somerset, February 2d, 1423-4, and was allowed £10,000 as her marriage portion. On the King's arrival in Scotland with his young Queen they were crowned at Scone, May 21, 1424.

The King was assassinated at Perth in February 1436-7. The Queen Dowager, about the year 1439, married for her second husband Sir James Stewart, commonly called *The Black Knight of Lorn*. She died in the Castle of Dunbar in 1446, and was interred in Perth beside her first husband, King James. After which Sir James was banished, by means of the Earl of Douglas, and died in exile the following year. By the queen he had issue three sons,—*1st*, John, who was made Earl of Athole in 1457, and survived till 1512; *2d*, James Earl of Buchan in 1469,—he adhered to James the Third against the Confederate lords, and died before 1500; *3d*, Andrew, bishop of Murray, rector of Monkland in 1546, Provost of Lincluden in 1477, and bishop of Murray 1482, till his death in 1501. The surviving family of James the First consisted of James, who succeeded, and six daughters.

See an article, March 1858, entitled "Historical Notices of the Family of King James the First, chiefly from information communicated by John Riddell, Esq., advocate," in *Proceedings*, vol. iii. p. 81. Also a tract, printed for private circulation, by Alexander Sinclair, Esq., "Remarks on the Account of the Daughters of James I., King of Scotland," no date, 8vo. pp. 8.

JAMES THE SECOND was born October 2, 1430, and was crowned in the Abbey of Holyrood, March 25, 1437. His marriage with the Princess Mary of Gueldres, took place in July 1449. When besieging Roxburgh Castle, an important frontier fortress near Kelso, which had been in the possession of England for upwards of a century, he was accidentally killed by the bursting of a cannon on Sunday, August 3, 1460. Our modern historians, relying too implicitly on the unfounded statements of Lesley, Buchanan, and Drummond of Hawthornden, have given a glowing description of "the heroic address" by which the widowed Queen, repressing her tears, animated the soldiers to continue the siege,

and revenge her husband's untimely death. In the "Atlas Historique," &c., 1722, the writer says:—" *Marie de Gueldre, femme courageuse, Epouse de ce Roi, vint au siege, et fit emporter la place l'epée à la main.*" All this, however, was a *pure romance*, inasmuch as in "Remarks on the Character of Mary of Gueldres," &c., Proceedings, vol. iv. 1848, pp. 566-577, instead of assisting at the siege, either *sword in hand* or only by her eloquence, it is shown that Roxburgh Castle had actually surrendered before the Lords and others sent messengers to acquaint the Queen of the sad event, while they entreated her to bring her young son from Edinburgh. Along with Prince James she accordingly arrived at Kelso eight days after the melancholy death of the King.

Queen Mary of Gueldres died November 16, 1463, and was interred in the Church of the Holy Trinity, Edinburgh, which she had founded, and which was so recklessly destroyed for railway purposes nearly thirty years ago. (See Memorial of the Society in 1844, printed in *Archæologia Scotica*, vol. iv. p. 448). Besides Prince James who succeeded, of her surviving family there were two sons, Alexander Duke of Albany, John Earl of Mar, and two daughters.

JAMES THE THIRD, the younger and survivor of twin brothers, was born in the Castle of St Andrews, between the 7th and 22d of January 1452-53. His coronation at Kelso, August 11, 1460, was confirmed when Parliament assembled at Scone, in February 1461. He married the Princess Margaret of Denmark, July 18, 1469. The king, June 11, 1488, in escaping from the Confederate forces, fell from his horse, and was carried into a cottage known as Beaton's Mill, on the east of Sauchie Burn, about two miles from Stirling. Having unfortunately told who he was, he was murdered by some unknown person, who had assumed the character of a priest, on the plea of granting him absolution. On hearing the report of his death his eldest son, who succeeded as James the Fourth, having taken part in the conspiracy, was seized with sudden and overwhelming remorse, "which," says Mr Tytler, "afterwards broke out with a strength which occasionally embittered his existence." Queen Margaret died at Stirling in the year 1486, and was interred in the Abbey of Cambuskenneth. James the Third was also buried in the same spot, in June 1488.

See the Proceedings, &c. Vol. vi. p. 14, for "An Account of the Excavations at Cambuskenneth Abbey in May 1864," by Col. Sir James E. Alexander; and "Notes relating to the Interment of King James III. of Scotland, and of his Queen, Margaret of Denmark, &c. (*ib.* p. 26); which I added, along with the Postscript (p. 31), describing the

"RESTORATION OF THE TOMB OF HER ANCESTORS . . . by command of
HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA, A.D. 1865."

Their children were—JAMES, who succeeded; a second JAMES (or ALEXANDER) STEWART, born in 1476, created Marquess of Ormond and Duke of Ross; and promoted, on the death of Schevez, to the See of St Andrews in 1497 by his brother, James the Fourth. He was created Lord High Chancellor in 1502; but did not long enjoy his high honours, as he died, when aged 28, in 1503.

JAMES THE FOURTH was born in 1473. The date usually assigned (and this by oversight was repeated in the Society's Proceedings, vol. iii. p. 11), as March 17, 1471-2,—the correct date was twelve months later, or March 20, 1472-3. He was crowned in the Abbey of Scone, June 26, 1489. His marriage with the Princess Margaret of England, daughter of Henry the Seventh, in May 1503, and his calamitous fate on the field of Floddon in September 1513, are events sufficiently known.

III.

THE MARRIAGE OF KING JAMES THE THIRD.

We have seen that the negotiations for his proposed marriage with the Princess of Denmark were broken off in consequence of his father the King's death, in October 1460. A few years later these negotiations were resumed, and the matrimonial arrangements completed by a contract under the Great Seal, signed at Edinburgh, July 28, 1468. Ambassadors were then appointed by Parliament with full powers to proceed to the capital of Denmark for its confirmation.

Christian, the Third King of Denmark and Norway, in his desire for this alliance, had proposed to endow the Princess with a portion of 60,000 florins, of which 10,000 only were to be paid at the time, and, for security of the remainder, the Islands of Orkney were to be assigned in pledge.

The marriage contract, which had been signed at Edinburgh, was confirmed at Hafnia (the Latin name of Kjobenhaven or Copenhagen), September 8, 1468. This treaty or contract exists in various MS. copies, and was printed by Torfaeus in his *Orcades, seu Rerum Orcadenstum Libri tres. Hauniae, 1697, folio, pp. 191-197.* It is also contained in Rymer's "Foedera."

When the time for payment of the portion agreed upon came round, as the King of Denmark was only able to pay one-fifth of the sum, or 2000 florins, he offered, in lieu of the other 8000 florins, also to give in pledge the Zetland Islands, an offer which was gladly accepted by the Scottish Ambassadors. These Islands, which were thus impledged, were remote and of small profit to Denmark, but their cession to Scotland was important. In the event of the Princess Margaret surviving the King and leaving the kingdom, it was specially resolved that the Islands should be restored as part of her dowry. The Queen, however, predeceased her husband; and the Danish monarch never having found it convenient to redeem the pledge, although subsequent proposals were made from time to time to reclaim this reserved right, both the Orkneys and Zetland have happily remained to this day attached to Scotland, in virtue of these matrimonial negotiations and pecuniary difficulties at that early period.

In the year following (1469) another embassy, consisting of Andrew Muirhead, Bishop of Glasgow; William Tulloch, Bishop of Orkney; Andrew Stewart, Lord Avondaile, the Lord Chancellor of Scotland; and Thomas Boyd, created Earl of Arran, and husband of the King's eldest sister, was sent to Denmark to conduct the young Princess to this country. The commissioners arrived at Leith on the 10th of July 1469, and the royal nuptials were celebrated in Holyrood Abbey on the 13th of that month with great solemnity and splendour. The ceremonies and pageants on this happy occasion, it is said, were long afterwards remembered.

After describing these negotiations Bishop Lesley narrates the marriage ceremony as follows:—

"The saide Ladie Margaret, accompaneit with sindre bischoppis and nobill men of Denmark, returnit in Scotland with the saidis Ambassadors in the moneth of July 1469, and was honorablie ressaved be the King, and the mariage wes solempnisit in the Abbay kirk of Hallierudhouse besyd Edinbruch, the x. day of July, the King and Quene being almaist equall of aige. The King of Denmark,

for the contracting of the saide mariage, as in tocher gaif our [over] and renunceit all thair title and right quhilk thay had and claimed to the Erledome of Orknay, Zetland, and all uther Ylis liand betuix Norway and Scotland, for the quhilkis thair had bene gryit troubles betwix the realmes of Scotland and Denmark of befoir. . . .

“Sone eftir this, in the moneth of November nixt followinge, the Thre Estatis of the realme was convenit, quhair the Quene was crownit, and ane Parliament haldin, and the most parte of the nobill men remanit with the King in Edinbrugh all the nixt winter. And the King and Quene made thair progres in the northie partis the symmer following, quhair thay war honorable received and interteanit, both in the principall citeis and towns and be the nobill men of the cuntrey, to the gret confort of the haille realme.”¹

In like manner, the continuator of Hector Boece's *Chronicles*, John Ferrerius, along with an account of this alliance, and the arrival of the Princess Margaret from Denmark, thus describes the nuptial ceremonies:—

“Non multis interjectis diebus post adventum Reginæ in Scotiam, cum essent universa ad proximas nuptias regio apparatu instructissima, more et institutis Christianis Edimburgi in summo divi Ægidij templo, vel ut alii volunt, in Monasterio Sanctae Crucis ibidem in suburbio sponsalia, præeunte sancti Andree Archiepiscopo totius Scotiæ primato, inter Regem Jacobum tertium et Margaretam Reginam celebrantur: quum Rex jam circiter vicesimum ætatis annum ageret, Regina vero decimum sextum. Quantus fuerit ille dies quamque celebris et non pauci sequentes, non solum in ornatu splendoreque vere Regio, mensarum lautitia atque omni genere apparatuque ciborum, verum quoque in diversis spectaculorum representationibus, vix ullus queat bene dicendo satis pro dignitate referre.”²

IV.

THE DATE OF THE PAINTING.

There can be little doubt that a painting such as this Altar-piece, embracing family portraits, must have had some definite object in its composition. In recent times, Pinkerton was the first to assign a special date to the painting, in his “*Iconographia Scotica; or, Portraits of Illustrious Persons of Scotland*,” published at London 1797. In this

¹ *Historie of Scotland, &c.* (Bannatyne Club, 1830), pp. 37 and 38.

² *Hect. Boethii Sotorum Historia, &c. Accessit Continuatio &c., per Joannem Ferrerium.* Parisiis, 1574, p. 388, folio.

work, engravings are given of three of the compartments, and separate heads of the King and Queen, upon a larger scale; and in his description he says, "This exquisite painting is in complete preservation, though executed, as appears from the age of the Prince, ten or twelve, about 1482 or 1484. Originally intended for an altar-piece, it is in two divisions, painted on both sides."

In his *History of Scotland*, published in the same year, Pinkerton describes the painting in a passage already quoted in the Proceedings, part of which may here be repeated:—"That some eminent foreign painter had also visited Scotland about 1482, appears from the celebrated picture at Kensington, in the form of a folding altar-piece, painted on both sides, or in four compartments. The first represents the king kneeling; behind him is his son, a youth of about twelve years of age, which ascertains the date; and St Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland. . . . Of the two compartments, on the reverse of this grand piece, one represents the Trinity. In the other, an ecclesiastic kneels. . . . Behind is a kind of organ, with two angels, not of ideal beauty, and perhaps portraits of the King's two sisters, Mary Lady Hamilton, and Margaret then unmarried,—a conjecture supported by the uncommon ornament of a coronet on the head on one of the angels. Hardly can any kingdom in Europe boast of a more noble family picture of this early epoch; and it is in itself a convincing specimen of the attention of James III. to the Arts."¹

When preparing the "Historical Description" of the painting there were two points on which I was not satisfied in my own mind, but they were passed over till I might have an opportunity to investigate them thoroughly. The *First* point was the apparent youth of the chief persons who are represented; the *Second*, that no special reason could be discovered for having such a composition painted at that late epoch of the King's reign.

The outline sketch given in the Society's Proceedings, vol. iii. p. 23, exhibits the arrangement and figures of the entire composition on the two sides of each of the panels. It was thought desirable, however, now to give, on a somewhat larger scale, and more finished, exact drawings of the portraits of King James the Third, and of his Queen, of whose identity no doubt can exist, in order to render the present explanation

¹ Vol. i. p. 423.

more easily to be understood. The drawings have been made under the direction of James Drummond, Esq., R.S.A.

The precise ages of the King and Queen are variously stated ; but a near approach may be made by a casual entry in the only existing volume of the Lord High Treasurer's Accounts during the reign of James the Third :—

“COMPT of a Reuerend Fader in God JOHNNE (LAYNG), Bischope of Glasgow, thesaurar to our Souerane Lorde of the office of Thesaurary, maide at Edinburgh the first day of the moneth of Decembre in the yere of God J^miiij^elxxiiij^e yeris, of all his Ressatis & expensis made in the saide office fra the ferd day of the moneth of August the yere of God [iiij^e] lxxiiij^e yeris inclusiuie to the saide first day of Decembre alsa inclusiuie,” &c.

The Almouss at Pasche [April, 1474.]

For the King 23 gownis & 23 hudis, each 13sh. 4d.,	£15. 6. 8.
For the Quene 17 gownis & 17 hudis,	11. 6. 8.
Item for the making of the gownis and hudis,	40sh
Item for the carriage of the clathis fra Striuilin to Edinburgh,	8sh
Item for 40 pair of schone,	40sh
Item for 40 coppis,	5sh
Item, 40 dublaris,	6sh 8d

It was the usual custom then, as afterwards, to furnish a given number of pensioners often called “blue-gowns,” or others, with dresses or perquisites corresponding with the ages of the king and queen. In the above instance Pasche or Easter fell on the 10th of April 1474. From this we may conclude that the King at that time was 23, and the Queen 17 years, making a difference of six years in their ages.

Now, it seems strange that Pinkerton, having entered so fully upon the History of Scotland during this king's reign (more especially from the year 1478), should not, at the first glance, have seen how most improbable it was, that any such painting could have been made at that period. The only ground on which his opinion was formed, and which has been followed by subsequent writers (whether it be the year 1482 or 1484 is not very material), was the apparent age of the Prince. He might, however, have

considered whether this figure was necessarily intended for the King's son. Of the queen and her son, the Prince James, then in his ninth year, we hear nothing, and certainly in the years 1482 to 1484 there was no event calculated to suggest such a family group of figures like the Altar-piece.

I venture, moreover to think, that no one can look at the two figures in the first compartment, of the king and the young prince kneeling, and imagine that a difference existed of upwards of twenty years in their respective ages; or that the queen, in the other compartment, in 1484, could have been the mother of the supposed young Prince, as represented in the painting.

The state of Scotland from the year 1478 to the fatal close of the King's reign was very lamentable. His two brothers, accused of plotting against his life, were arrested and confined as prisoners. Alexander Duke of Albany made his escape from the Castle of Edinburgh and sailed for France in September 1479; and he was forfeited by the Scottish Parliament October 4th, that year. His brother John, Earl of Mar, met with a different fate, but whether his death was accidental, or at the king's instigation, has been contested. The nobility at that period continued in open rebellion against the king, followed by the ignominious death of his favourites by the Confederated lords, after a conference in the church of Lauder. Cochrane, who was accused of procuring the banishment of Albany and the death of Mar, whose title he persuaded the king to confer¹ upon himself, was seized at the church door, and along with other obnoxious favourites was hanged over the parapet of the neighbouring bridge, which forms an episode in the history of Scotland, in July 1482. The person of the king himself was secured and conveyed back to Edinburgh, and detained in the castle as a captive.

The chief accusation against the King at this period was occasioned by his associates and mode of life. He was charged with unworthy and grovelling pursuits in his familiar intercourse with persons of low birth. That his love of music, architecture, and other branches of art should warrant such a conclusion is most unjust. The King at least has received scanty justice at the hands of our historians, and Mr Fraser Tytler, in his excellent "History of Scotland," has the merit of being one of the first

¹ Processus Alexandri Ducis Albania, &c. 4 die Octobris 1479. (Acts of Parl., vol. ii. p. 125.)

to relieve the memory of James the Third from much of the odium attached to his character by Buchanan and later writers. His natural disposition was quite alien to the restless and warlike character of the nobles and border chieftains. Had he flourished in more peaceful times, and in a more civilised state of society, it is unfortunately but an idle dream that he might have rendered his reign the glory of his kingdom. The Altar-Piece itself may be adduced as an undeniable proof of his appreciation of the works of a great artist.

His eldest son and successor felt a constant remorse for having in any way been instrumental in the defeat and death of his father at Sauchie Burn. This repentant feeling was of no transient nature, but continued to the end of his own career, and seems to have been a chief cause of his frequent pilgrimages to celebrated shrines, such as to that of St Ninian in Galloway, and St Duthac in Ross-shire. According to an eye-witness who resided at the Court in 1498, describing the King's person, we are told:—
“His is twenty-five years and some months old. He is of noble stature, neither tall nor short, and as handsome in complexion and shape as a man can be. His address is very agreeable, &c. It is said He never cuts his hair or his beard. It becomes him very well.” This description certainly throws doubt on the engraved portraits of King James the Fourth, which represent him as “all shaven and shorn.” As a personal penance, it is alleged, he wore constantly an iron girdle.

I therefore do not hesitate in suggesting an explanation that would remove any apparent discrepancies in this matter. Such an explanation, indeed, has been strangely overlooked, namely, that the Painting was of an earlier date, intended to commemorate the Marriage and Coronation of the youthful Queen in July 1469. Twelve months or more may indeed have elapsed before it could be completed; yet this strongly confirms the true design of the painting, as such a date would be so much nearer the period of its foundation, when actual progress had been made in building Trinity College Church, Edinburgh, for which it was intended as an Altar-piece. Such a painting, according to many examples preserved in Roman Catholic churches, would serve the two-fold purpose of an Altar-piece, when designed for a church that was founded by the Queen Dowager Mary of Gueldres in 1462: *First*, As an object of veneration placed near the high altar; and, *secondly*, to connect the ceremonial of the

King's marriage along with other family portraits: the Queen Dowager herself, being deceased, is represented as an angel, crowned, seated at the organ, accompanied with one of her daughters, while her confessor, the Provost of the Collegiate Church, is offering a Soul-mass at the High-Altar, near which the deceased Queen was interred.

The kneeling figure of the Prince may not unlikely have been intended for the King's brother, the Duke of Albany; and the shield of the Albany arms, carved on stone, on the North-East exterior, served to commemorate his having contributed to the building of the Church. At that time the Duke had not broken out in open hostility.

It now remains, if possible, to ascertain, or at least to suggest, the name of some Artist in connexion with the above statements. Had the public records of the King's reign been preserved this might have been no difficult matter. We know, however, that the commercial intercourse with Bruges and other towns in the Netherlands was frequent during the summer season. But regarding the Artist himself, unfortunately, we have nothing better to offer than mere conjecture. Within the period in which this Altar-piece was unquestionably painted (1469-1476) there flourished several eminent Flemish painters of the school of Johann Van Eyck or his pupil, Roger Van der Weyden, who died at Bruges in 1464. In particular, we find—

HUGO VAN DER GOES, who was born at Ghent, and died in 1480.

GERARD VAN DER MEIRE, who was alive in 1474.

DIEDRICH STUERBOUT, who died in 1478.

HANS MEMLING, who survived till 1499.

Having, as I hope, established the fact of the earlier date of the painting, this renders a former suggestion not improbable, that he might have been either Gerard Van der Meire, or Hugo Van der Goes. The latter, who died in 1480, is celebrated in the following distich :—

Pictor Hugo v. der Goes humatus hic quiescit,
Dolct Ars cum similem sibi modo nescit.

In addition to the exquisite portrait in the National Gallery, London, of the "Count of Henegau, with his patron Saint, Ambrose," attributed to Van der Meire, previously mentioned (vol. iii. p. 21), the same gallery

has since acquired another picture, with his name and the date of 1474. From the style of painting, however, I am still inclined to attribute the Altar-piece to Van der Goes; and in this opinion I am confirmed by that of a well-known and experienced Art-critic, M. Charles Blanc, in his remarks on the paintings that were collected in the Great Exhibition at Manchester in the year 1857. His words, in his tract *Les Trésors de l'Art à Manchester*, Paris, 1857, are as follows:—

“Les Maîtres qui ne sont point représentés dans nos Musées de France ont naturellement fixé mon attention, particulièrement *Hugo Van der Goes, et Roger Van der Weyden*. Le premier est admirable par un sentiment de grandeur et de largeur que certainement, il n'a pas puisé à l'école de Van Eyck. Plus sobre que son maître dans les détails il est tout aussi profond dans l'expression de ses figures. Son dessin, plus souple, se revêt de couleurs moins éclatantes, mais mieux rompues. Ses grands portraits du Roi et de la Reine d'Écosse faisant partie d'un triptyque, sont des chefs-d'œuvre qui honoreront un Vénitien du Quinzième siècle. Son pinceau est précieux et délicat quand il insiste sur les linéaments expressifs de la chair; mais il a plus d'ampleur et de simplicité dans tout le reste, et ses accessoires, sagement subordonnés, enrichissent la composition et ne l'encombrent point. Au contraire Roger Van der Weyden enchérit encore sur son maître Van Eyck, et nous importune par un luxe de détails non-seulement inutile mais nuisible.”

Among the pictures belonging to the Earl of Shrewsbury at Alton Towers, Dr Waagen notices the following:—“HUGO VAN DER GOES.—The Virgin standing, holding the Child, who is blessing the kneeling Donor, presented by St Anthony the Abbot. Inscribed 1472, in numerals of the shape usual at that time; about 3 ft. high, 1 ft. 10 in. wide. A good, well preserved picture of this scholar of Jan Van Eyck.”¹ Could this have likewise found its way from Edinburgh to England, in July 1544?—among “THE INNUMERABLE BOTYES, SPOYLES, AND PYLLAGES THAT OUR SOULDYORES BROUGHT FROM THENCE, NOTWITHSTANDYING HABUNDANCE WHICH WAS CONSUMYED WITH FYER.”²

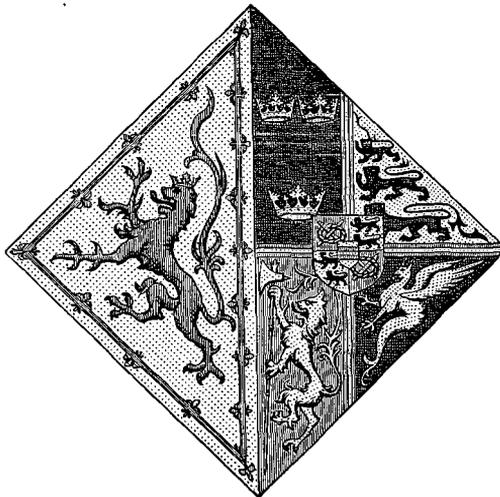
In the “Herald and Genealogist” (vol. i. pp. 289–320, and 401–413), 1863, there is a valuable communication by the editor, John Gough Nichols, Esq., “On the Family Alliances of Denmark and Great Britain.”

¹ Art Treasures, &c., vol. iii. p. 386.

² The late Expedition in Scotlande under the conduit of the Earl of Hertforde, 1544. London, imprinted by Reynolde Wolfe, anno 1544, small 8vo.

Copies were also published in a separate form, with the title, "The Family Alliances of Denmark and Great Britain, from the earliest times to the present, illustrated by Genealogical Tables and a plate of the arms of Denmark. By John Gough Nichols, F.S.A." London, 1863. Having had from the Society the use of the small woodcut of the arms of Queen Margaret, he asked me to compare one or two points in the quarterings with the original painting. In doing so, I was vexed to find it was not quite accurate, and I offered to furnish Mr Nichols¹ with a new cut; but for his purpose this was not required. I have since obtained from Mr Thomas Brown, herald painter, a more correct drawing of the arms, from which the accompanying woodcut is subjoined. This shield, it may be mentioned, differs in the quarterings of the Queen's arms as given by Sir David Lyndsay in his Register of Arms, 1542.

¹ It is with much regret I have to add, that this accomplished and much esteemed Archæologist died November 14, 1873, aged 67. An interesting Memoir of him has recently been printed for private circulation.



Arms of Margaret of Denmark, Queen of Scotland.



