

I.

NOTES OF SOME ENTRIES IN THE ICELAND ANNALS REGARDING THE DEATH OF THE PRINCESS MARGARET, "THE MAIDEN OF NORWAY," IN A.D. 1290, AND "THE FALSE MARGARET," WHO WAS BURNED AT BERGEN IN A.D. 1301; WITH TRANSCRIPT OF A LETTER OF BISHOP AUDFINN OF BERGEN REFERRING TO BOTH, AND DATED 1ST FEBRUARY 1320. BY JOSEPH ANDERSON, KEEPER OF THE MUSEUM.

No event in Scottish history was more momentous in its consequences than the death of the Princess Margaret, the Maiden of Norway, and there is none enveloped in greater mystery. Its precise date is unknown, the circumstances in which it took place are unrecorded, and, to aggravate the mystery, we find that within ten years after its occurrence there were many in her native country of Norway who did not hesitate to avow their belief that she was still alive; nay, that the unfortunate woman who was publicly burned at the stake in Bergen in 1301 was actually the daughter of the late King Eirik and his wife Margaret of Scotland, and consequently the heiress to the Scottish throne.

It is an interesting inquiry for the student of Scottish history how far this belief may be justified by the facts that are now ascertainable concerning the two Margarets, and whether there are any reliable grounds for regarding them as the same person. That the belief in the identity of the False Margaret with the Margaret who is said to have died near the Orkney coast in 1290 existed and was widely diffused in Norway from ten to twenty years after the date assigned for her death, there can be no question.

In this paper I propose to bring together—(1.) The statements regarding the death of the Princess Margaret recorded by the early chroniclers of our own country, with such incidental notices as may be gleaned from contemporary Scottish and English documents; and (2.) The notices in the Iceland Annals, the letter of Bishop Audfinn regarding "the False Margaret," and the passages from Munch's "History of Norway," in which the whole circumstances are by him discussed.

The continuation of Matthew Paris's history (usually attributed to William Rishanger, who died in 1312, at the age of sixty-two, and was

therefore a contemporary writer), says simply that the Princess having been taken ill on the voyage, died at the Orkney Islands, "cum per navigium tenderet in Scotiam, infirmata in mari, apud Orkadas insulas est defuncta."¹

The "Scala Cronica," which was the production of a Northumbrian knight, Sir Thomas Gray, and was undertaken to beguile the tedium of his imprisonment in Edinburgh Castle in the year 1355, states that King Edward "enuoiez au Court de Rome pur dispensacioun, et messagers en Norway pur quere la dit Margaret. Qi messenger fust vn clerk Descoce meistre Weland, qi peryst od la dit pucel en reuenaunt devers Escoce sure lez costres de Boghane."²

Our earliest Scottish chronicler Barbour makes no mention of the Princess Margaret at all. He simply says that the land was desolate for six years after the death of King Alexander, and goes on to describe the contest for the succession between Bruce and Baliol—

"Qwhen Alysandyre the King was dede,
That Scotland had to ster and lede,
The Land sex yhere and mayr perfay,
Lay desolate eftyr his day.
Quhill that the Barnage at the last
Assemblyd thame, and fandyt fast
To ches a King thare Land to stere
That of awncestry cumin were
Of Kings that auch that rialte."

Wyntoun, on the other hand, gives somewhat full details of the sending over to Norway of the Scottish embassy, consisting of Sir David of the Wemys and Michael Scott of Balweary, and adds that when they arrived—

"Dede then was that Madyn fayre
That of Lawch suld have been Ayre,
And apperyd til have bene
Be the Lawch of Norway Qwene;
Bot that Madyn swet for-thi
Was put to Dede be Martyry."

¹ "Willelmi Rishanger, quondam Monachi S. Albani Chronica et Annales, A.D. 1259-1307" (Roll's edition), p. 119.

² "Scala Cronica" (Maitland Club), p. 110.

He alleges as the reason of her being thus put to death that the Norwegians would neither have a female nor one sprung from a foreign race to reign over them, although it was written in their law-book that this might be permitted.

“ For thai wald, that of ná natyown
 Bot of thare awyne, suld bere the Crown ;
 Ná be ná way the female
 Suld be thare Chese, gyy ony Male
 Of Reaw's might fundyn be
 Worth to have that Reaktè.
 Thare Laws wryttyn nevyrtheless
 Contrare and agayne this wes.
 The Norwayis has a wryttyn Buk
 Of thaire Lawys ; thare-in thai luk
 All casys cumand, as thai fall
 And be the Text thai decern all
 Tha casis, but exceptyown
 By that is nane evatyown.
 Be thai Laws yhit they fand
 That the Female to that thare land
 Descendande be lyne, or ony Male
 Suld succeed collaterale,
 Though this was wryttyn in thare Buk,
 This wuld thai nowther rede ná luke
 Na per Ordyre thai wald noucht hald
 Thare Lawys, that wryttyn ware of ald.”

It is evident from this that in Wyntoun's time the facts connected with the death of the Princess (if they had ever been fully known in Scotland) had been already obscured and mystified by rumours of the death of the False Margaret which must have reached this country.

Coming now to the documentary records, we find that on the 17th March 1290, the clergy, nobles, and community of Scotland requested King Eirik to send his daughter to be married to Prince Edward of England. On the 17th April King Edward addressed a letter to King Eirik, stating that he had obtained a papal dispensation for the marriage, and requesting Eirik to send his daughter to him in England without delay. It would

appear that he must have received an answer to this, from which he had grounds for believing that the Princess would be sent into England,¹ for we find that a great ship was fitted out and provisioned at Yarmouth to bring over the Maiden of Norway to England; and the accounts particularly specify what proportions of the beer, beef, hams, salt-fish of Aberdeen, wine and walnuts, salt, sugar, spices, figs, raisins, almonds, and gingerbread, and other stores that seem to have been provided for the special entertainment of the young Princess, were consumed by the messengers or wasted by the sailors. It is clear, however, that she did not come by this vessel, although no doubt Edward was very anxious that she should be sent to him in England. This ship, in which were Henry de Cranebourne, Abbot of Wellbek, Henry de Ry, clerk to the Bishop of Durham, and others, as messengers, left Hartlepool on the 9th May, as appears from the detailed statement of expenses,² and arrived in Norway on the 25th. The messengers were twelve days in Norway, and the vessel arrived at Ravenshore on her return voyage on the 17th June.

¹ "The first step necessary for the accomplishment of King Edward's object was to obtain possession of the Queen of Scotland. Within a month after the Parliament of Brigham, the King of England sent into Norway an embassy, consisting of the Abbot of Welbeck, Henry de Rye, and others, to make the preliminary arrangements for her departure. It was expected that Eirik would accompany his daughter, and much thoughtful anxiety was shown that during the voyage the comforts of the royal party should be attended to. With this view Edward caused a large ship to be arrested at Yarmouth, the victualling and decoration of which he intrusted to the chief butler of his own household, Matthew de Columbariis, who kept an account of the sums which he expended; and this curious document is here printed for the first time. The stores were provided with no niggard hand. They consisted, among other matters, of 31 hogsheads and 1 pipe of wine, 12 barrels of beer, 15 carcasses of oxen (salted, of course), 72 hams, 400 dried fish, 200 stock fish, 1 barrel of sturgeon, 5 dozen of lampreys, 50 pounds of "whale," along with the very necessary accompaniment of 22 gallons of mustard, with salt, pepper, vinegar, and onions in proportion. A stock of little luxuries suited to the more delicate palate and stomach of the baby Princess was not forgotten, such as 500 walnuts, 2 loaves of sugar, grits and oatmeal, with a corresponding allowance of ginger, citron, and mace, 2 frails of figs, the same quantity of raisins, and 28 pounds of gingerbread. The ship was painted, and banners and pencils bearing the English arms were supplied. The crew consisted of forty hands. Six weeks were occupied in making the necessary preparations; and the bill which Matthew de Columbariis tendered to the Exchequer amounted to L.266, 5s. 9d."—*Stevenson's Preface to Hist. Doc. Scot.* vol. i. p. xl.

² *Hist. Doc. Scot.* vol. i. p. 149.

It may be that it was his failure to obtain possession of the person of the young Princess that induced King Edward to make the extraordinary demand that all the castles and places of strength in Scotland should be delivered up to him, a demand which, though agreed to by the Scottish commissioners at Northampton under certain conditions on the 28th August, was, on the part of the Scottish estates, peremptorily refused. We next find two of the messengers who had returned from Norway—the Abbot of Wellbek¹ and Henry de Ry²—among those who went to Orkney to meet the messengers of the King of Norway and the Princess Margaret there. It was to be expected that King Eirik would prefer to send his daughter into Scotland from Orkney, which was part of his own dominions, rather than to send her by a long sea-voyage in the great ship of Yarmouth to England, and thus to place her in the power of her unscrupulous father-in-law.

It seems to have been at one time expected by Edward that King Eirik would himself accompany his daughter to Scotland, and probably it was on this pretence that King Eirik declined to send her in the great ship of Yarmouth. We find that in the letters of credence drawn up for Anthony, Bishop of Durham; John de Warenne, Earl of Surrey; and Henry of Newerke, Dean of York, King Edward says that he has sent them to King Eirik, or to his plenipotentiaries coming to Orkney;³ and in the note of the expenses of Eli de Hamville for fifty days, going and returning, it is thus expressed—“*Domino Elyae de Hanville, eunti cum domino Dunelmensi Episcopo versus partes Scotiae ad obviandum regi Norwegiae ducenti filiam ejusdem.*”⁴

But following Thomas de Braytoft and Henry de Ry, we find that they started from Newcastle on the 15th September, were at Aberdeen on the 22d, and on the 1st October when they had reached the Meikle Ferry in Sutherlandshire they stopped all day at Skelbo, “talking with the messengers of Scotland.” From this it appears as if the Scottish messengers were on their way south from Orkney; and if we allow them the same time to get from the Meikle Ferry to Perth, which the north-going messengers took to go from Aberdeen to Skelbo, they would arrive

¹ Hist. Doc. Scot. vol. i. p. 143.

³ Ibid. p. 130.

² Ibid. p. 133.

⁴ Ibid. p. 144.

in time to enable the Bishop of St Andrews to write his letter to King Edward of the 7th October :—¹

“To the most excellent Prince and most revered Lord, Sir Edward, by the grace of God most illustrious King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Guienne, his devoted chaplain, William, by divine permission humble minister of the Church of St Andrew in Scotland, wisheth health and fortunes prosperous to his wishes, with increase of glory and honour. As it was ordered lately in your presence, your ambassadors and the ambassadors of Scotland who had been sent to you, and also some nobles of the kingdom of Scotland, met at Perth on the Sunday next after the feast of St Michael the Archangel, to hear your answer upon those things which were asked and treated by the ambassadors in your presence. Which answer of yours being heard and understood, the faithful nobles and a certain part of the community of Scotland returned infinite thanks to your Highness. And your foresaid ambassadors and we set ourselves to hasten our steps towards the parts of Orkney to confer with the ambassadors of Norway for receiving our Lady the Queen, and for this we had prepared our journey. But there sounded through the people a sorrowful rumour that our said lady should be dead, on which account the kingdom of Scotland is disturbed, and the community distracted. And the said rumour being heard and published, Sir Robert of Brus, who before did not intend to come to the said meeting, came with a great power to confer with some who were there ; but what he intends to do or how to act as yet we know not. But the Earls of Mar and Athole are collecting their army, and some other nobles of the land are drawing to their party ; and on that account there is fear of a general war and a great slaughter of men, unless the Highest, by means of your industry and good service, apply a speedy remedy. My Lords the Bishop of Durham, Earl Warrenne, and I heard afterwards that our foresaid Lady recovered of her sickness, but she is still weak ; and therefore we have agreed among ourselves to remain about Perth until we have certain news by the knights who are sent to Orkney what is the condition of our Lady—would that it may be prosperous and happy ; and if we shall have the accounts which we wish concerning her, and which we expect from day to day, we will be ready to set forth for carrying out the business committed to us to the best of our power. If Sir John of Balliol comes to your presence, we advise you to take care so to treat with him that in any event your honour and advantage be preserved. If it turn out that our foresaid Lady has departed this

¹ Edward had previously received letters from the Bishop of St Andrews and John Comyn, Earl of Buchan, concerning the rumours of her expected arrival in Orkney. —*Hist. Doc. Scot.* vol. i. p. 146.

life,—and may it not be so,—let your Excellency deign if you please to approach towards the march for the consolation of the Scottish people, and the saving of the shedding of blood, so that the faithful men of the kingdom may keep their oath inviolate, and set over them for king him who of right ought to have the succession, if so be that he will follow your counsel. May your Excellency have long life and health, prosperity and happiness.—Given at Leuchars on the Saturday, the morrow of St Faith the Virgin, in the year of our Lord 1290.”

This letter is the only contemporary document known which mentions the death of the Princess, and it purports to be the mere record of a rumour which the Bishop says he hopes may prove untrue. This, however, may be merely the Bishop's way of putting it. There is little doubt that King Edward would understand that on such an occasion no letter of such purport would be written to him without very grave cause indeed.

This, then, is all that we are able to ascertain from the Scottish side regarding this melancholy event. It amounts to this, that the Bishop of St Andrews, writing on the 7th October, seven days after the Scottish messengers had passed the Meikle Ferry, either could not or would not say that there were certain tidings of her death, though he does let us know that Bruce and Baliol were already bestirring themselves to secure the succession; that while one chronicler says she died in Orkney, another states explicitly that she was put to death in Norway, thus giving ground for the supposition that the claims of the woman who actually suffered death for her imposition in Norway, were partially credited in Scotland as well as in her own country.

Before leaving the Scottish side of the story, I may state what the latest historian of Scotland has said on the subject. In the new edition of the “History of Scotland,” by Dr John Hill Burton, a Fellow of this Society, the story of the false Margaret, which seems to have been unknown to all previous historians, finds a place for the first time in Scottish history in connection with the death of the Princess. Referring to the death of the young Queen of Scots, on her way from Norway, Dr Burton says,—“The announcement of so portentous an event, through indistinct rumours, naturally caused men to talk and doubt. There was none of the solemn detail that might be expected to attend on a royal death, even though less heavily laden with a perplexing future. We are not told of

any who were present, of the disease or its progress, of the spot where she died, or the place where she was buried. The time of the death is only inferred to have been in September, because the first rumour of it is uttered in the famous letter of Bishop Fraser, presently to be noted, the date of that letter being the seventh of October." He then briefly recounts the main features of the story of the false Margaret, and adds— "The whole affair has left on Scandinavian history a shadow of doubt, in the possibility that the child might have been spirited away by some one of those so deeply interested in her disappearance, and consequently, that it may be an open question whether the royal line of the Alexanders really came to an end until the consummation of this tragedy [the burning of the false Margaret] in 1301."¹

Let us now see what light can be thrown on this obscurity from the Norwegian side. The Iceland annals, which were completed within 100 years of the date of Margaret's death, but probably in great part written considerably earlier, have the following entries regarding the marriage of King Eirik, and the deaths of the Queen Margaret and the Princess or Maiden of Norway:—

"(1.) Anno 1281. Eirik, king of Norway, marries Margaret, the daughter of Alexander, the king of Scots.

"(2.) Anno 1283. Death of Queen Margaret, daughter of Alexander, king of Scots.

"(3.) Anno 1290. Death of Margaret the maiden, daughter of Eirik, king of Norway."

The latter entry is important, because it shows that at the time that it was made the annalist believed that the Princess had died in 1290.

In order to avoid confusing the circumstances connected with the true and the false Margarets, we shall now see what Munch, the latest and fullest of the Norwegian historians, has been able to tell of the death of the Princess. He says,—

"Of the mode in which the young Margaret was fitted out and sent from Norway, and of the names of those of whom her following consisted, there is no documentary evidence. But it is clear beyond all doubt (from what follows) that one of the ladies in her suite was Fru Ingbiorg Erlingsdatter, sister of Alf Jarl, and wife of Herr Thore Hakonson. Her husband

¹ Burton's History of Scotland, second edition, 1873, vol. ii. pp. 112-4.

was also in the suite. Hemingford is the only authority for the statement that Margaret's sickness was the cause of their putting in to the Orkneys. It had, in fact, been arranged before her departure that she should be taken to Orkney (which then was part of the Norwegian dominions), and that the Norse ambassadors who were to accompany her were to be there met by the English and Scottish ambassadors. There was apparently no intention that the English ambassadors and plenipotentiaries should go to Norway, but only that they should go to Scotland, or at furthest to Orkney, there to meet the ambassadors sent from Norway, as we see from the letter¹ of 28th August, that King Edward says that he sends Bishop Antony 'to Scotland,' to act as his plenipotentiary.

"Owing to the peculiar circumstances in which the death of the Princess took place, it is not surprising that a certain degree of obscurity should have rested over it, or that it should not have received universal credence. In fact, we know that there were not a few who did not believe that she was dead, because ten years after the event it was found possible for a German woman, though clearly an impostor, to pass herself off for the Princess Margaret, and obtain credence for her story. Her statement was (as will be seen hereafter) that she had been 'sold' by Fru Ingibiorg, the meaning of which in all probability was, that Fru Ingibiorg had come under obligation for a sum of money to hand her over to some parties who wished her out of the way, and that she had been carried off by them to a foreign land. We learn from this, at any rate, that Fru Ingibiorg must have gone on the voyage to the Orkneys, and had the child under her charge, and something in the manner of her attendance upon her in her sickness may possibly have given rise to suspicious rumours among the rest of the attendants. But it is in the highest degree improbable that any one of the pretenders to the Scottish throne who came forward after Margaret's death, though knowing that there was only the life of this young girl between him and the succession, would have secretly leagued himself with Fru Ingibiorg for such a purpose, or bribed her to put the child out of the way; nor does it seem probable either that she would have lent herself to such a piece of villany, or had the hardihood to venture upon the execution of it. It might with more likelihood have been assigned to hatred of the king and royal

¹ Rymer's *Foedera*.

family on her part, engendered by the cruel usage of her brother, Alf Jarl, for whose melancholy death she was at this time mourning. But while that is not suggested, this is still clear, that King Eirik, the father of the Princess, entertained no doubts as to the fact of her death, of which he had personally satisfied himself, for we learn from the letter which Bishop Andfinn caused to be issued at Bergen in 1320, that the corpse of the Princess was brought back to King Eirik by the bishop (here in all likelihood it is the Bishop of Orkney that is meant,¹ and Herr Thore Hakonson (Fru Ingibiorg's husband), that the King caused the coffin to be opened, satisfied himself of the identity of his daughter's remains, and thereafter had her buried in the Christ's Kirk of Bergen, by the side of her mother, Queen Margaret. And there is no trace of Fru Ingibiorg's husband having fallen into any disgrace at King Eirik's court, as would undoubtedly have been the case if his wife had been concerned in such a shameful transaction; neither does she herself seem to have in any way lost favour, for she lived till 1315, apparently enjoying the highest regard."²

We now go back to the Iceland Annals for the story of the false Margaret, to which Munch has introduced us:—

“(4.) Anno 1300. Then came over a German woman who said she was the daughter of King Eirik and Margaret, the daughter of Alexander, the king of Scots, and that she had been sold by Ingibiorg Erlingsdatter. Betrothal of (Ingibiorg) the daughter of King Eirik with John Magnusson, Earl of Orkney.

“(5.) Anno 1301. Then this same woman, who said she was King Eirik's daughter, was burnt, and her husband was beheaded.”

In 1293 King Eirik married another Scottish wife, Isabella Bruce,³ who died in 1299 without male issue, leaving a daughter by his second wife, called Ingibiorg, and was succeeded by his brother Hakon.

In giving an account of the investigation made by King Hakon into

¹ Munch seems to doubt the statement in the letter of Bishop Andfinn, that it was Bishop Narve of Bergen, but the statement is explicit. See the transcript of the letter.

² Munch, *Det Norske Folks Historie*, iv. 197, *et seq.*

³ The Iceland Annals call her “Isibel dotter sira Rodbertz sonar Rodbertz Jarls of Brus (Bruslandi).” She survived her husband and her daughter, and died at Bergen in a good old age.

the case of the false Margaret, of which, unfortunately, no record remains, Munch says:¹—“Probably it was immediately after his return to Bergen that King Hakon made an investigation into the circumstances connected with the appearance there of a woman who gave herself out for Margaret, King Eirik’s daughter, who had died in the Orkneys in 1290. She had come in a ship from Lubeck, and her story was, as has before been related, that Fru Ingibjorg Erlingsdatter had sold her, which apparently, as we have previously indicated, may be taken to mean that Ingibjorg had come under agreement to hand her over to certain persons who wished her out of the way, and on this account had falsely given her out for dead. Probably she also gave out that, immediately on her arrival at the Orkneys, she had been taken on board a ship bound for Germany, or that she had subsequently found means to get there. She was a married woman, and her husband, also a German, was with her. It appears from a letter which the Bishop of Bergen, some ten years later, caused to be promulgated, that in appearance she was a woman well advanced in years, with grey and partially whitened hair, and that she must have been born at least twenty years before the date of King Eirik’s marriage with her assumed mother Margaret (and consequently must have been seven years older than King Eirik himself, who was but 13 when he was married); and that the Princess Margaret had died in the presence of some of the best men of Norway, and her corpse had been brought back by the bishop and Herr Thore Hakonson to King Eirik, who had the coffin opened, satisfied himself of the identity of his daughter’s remains, and thereafter caused her to be interred in the Christ’s Kirk at Bergen by the side of her mother. Although this woman, in short, was a rank impostor, yet she found many among the great men who gave credit to her story, and not a few among the priesthood also gave her their countenance and support. As, according to the then existing law regarding the succession, she would not have been entitled to the crown before King Hakon even if she had been King Eirik’s daughter,—the Margaret who was believed to have been dead,—so her pretensions could not in themselves have been a source of danger to him. But they might, nevertheless, have been extremely distasteful to him, and probably not altogether free from danger in the future, if, as was not at all unlikely, they should be made use of

¹ Det Norske Folks Historie, iv. 344, *et seq.*

by the party of nobles who were discontented with his absolute government. This party would willingly have thrust him from the throne before he showed symptoms of becoming a reforming ruler, but before they could hope to do so they must have a pretender to the crown of the old royal stock to set up in opposition to him. There was then no male representative of the royal house but King Hakon himself, but by setting aside the law of succession, which they probably would regard as null and void, they might start a female competitor, and for this purpose there would have been none more suitable than Margaret, if she could be conjured from the dead again, inasmuch as King Eirik, in the marriage contract of Norburgh in 1281, had expressly recognised the daughter or daughters he might have with Margaret of Scotland as having a right of heirship to the crown of Norway as well as of Scotland. This also explains why they chose to conjure up Margaret from the dead in furtherance of their rebellious designs, rather than to attach themselves to Ingibiorg, the daughter of King Eirik by his second wife, Isabella Bruce. In Ingibiorg's behalf there were no such provisions, and consequently no such likelihood of her being received as a competitor. That this German woman, of her own accord, should have undertaken to give herself out, ten years after the event, for the Margaret who was believed to be dead, and should have ventured to appear publicly in Norway on such an enterprise, seems scarcely credible. She must have been persuaded to it by those who, perceiving in her a certain personal resemblance, schooled her in the part she had to play, so as to give to her pretensions an air of reality. And suspicion here points to Herr Audun Huggleikson,¹ who, though in confinement, seems still to have been able to exert a large amount

¹ Audun Huggleikson appears as one of the attorneys of the Princess Margaret. In the inventory of the state papers delivered to John Baliol in 1292, there is a letter of Audænus, Baron of the King of Norway, and Friar Juar (Ivar) of the order of Minorites, attorneys of the Maiden of Scotland, concerning an acknowledgment of the receipt of 350 merks sterling for the use of their mistress, from the farms of Bathket [Bathgate], and Rathen [Ratho]. From another entry in the same inventory of documents, we find that King Alexander had purchased these lands from Sir John of Boun. Audun Huggleikson appears again as "Oduenus de Hegrenes," entrusted with a mission from King Eirik to King Edward in September 1292. In 1295 he concluded the negotiations for a treaty of alliance between the Kings of France, Scotland, and Norway, against King Edward. (*Hist. Doc. Scot.* i. 338, 423; ii. 8-11.)

of influence, and all the more that he had been now again set at liberty on his pledge given to engage in no enterprise against the king. He had now nothing to lose, but everything to gain, and he might well hope that if his first essay were in some measure fortunate he might yet retrieve his past misfortunes. From his family residence in Hegranes, in Joluster, he could easily keep himself in communication with his accomplices in Bergen, as well as with the German merchants. And since the pretended Margaret came from Lubeck, it is extremely likely that the German merchants, with whom Herr Audun Huggleikson came into close contact in his capacity of customs-master of Tunsberg, had some share in the design.

“Probably the woman and her husband were placed in safe custody till King Hakon himself should come to Bergen and investigate the matter, as we find that her execution did not take place until the following year. No important steps would likely be taken until the king himself was present, for no doubt he himself wished personally to see and examine her, and he may have expressly ordered the matter to be delayed for this purpose. In all probability, also, he would desire the presence and testimony of some of the attendants on the late king's daughter at the time of her death, especially Fru Ingibjorg Erlingsdatter. He did not come to Bergen before the autumn of 1301, and shortly afterwards the false Margaret was burnt as an impostor at Nordness, and her husband beheaded.

“Shortly after the false Margaret's execution, Herr Audun Huggleikson also ended his life. According to a brief entry in the Iceland Annals, he was hanged at Bergen in 1302. His death, and that of the false Margaret, are in fact referred to the same year, and from all the circumstances we may conclude that the two executions took place within a short time of each other shortly after the Yule of 1301-2, and that Huggleikson was implicated with her, and found guilty of being an accomplice in the imposture.”

And thus the whole story would have ended and left us more completely mystified than ever, had it not been that the imposture was ultimately the means of throwing some further light upon the circumstances of the Princess's death and burial in a very curious and unexpected way. The strong hold which the imposture had taken upon the popular mind is evidenced by another entry in the Iceland Annals, which I will adduce presently, by the fact that rumour of it reached Scotland and, as dis-

torted by tradition, was incorporated by Wyntoun into his Chronicle, and by the still more significant facts of which we are informed by Absalom Peterson, that a church was erected to the memory of the impostor on the spot where she suffered, and that songs were made about her.

The last entry which I adduce from the Iceland Annals relates to an event which occurred nearly twenty years after the death of the false, and thirty years after the death of the true, Margaret, which is chronicled by the same Annals in 1290. The occasion of the entry is the obit, in his native home in Iceland, of the priest who had been King Eirik's court-priest in Bergen at the time when the Maiden sailed for Scotland. It is as follows :—

“Anno 1319. Death of Hafidi Steinsson, priest of Bredabolstad ; he had been hird-priest to King Eirik, and was there [in Bergen], when Margaret, the daughter of King Eirik, was sent to Scotland, as she herself afterwards testified before she was burned at Nordness :—‘When I,’ said she, ‘was taken through this self same gate to be carried to Scotland, there was then in the High Kirk of the Apostles, an Iceland priest, Hafidi by name, who was hird-priest to my father, King Eirik, and when the clergy ceased singing then Sir Hafidi struck up with the *Veni Creator*, and that hymn was sung out to the end just as I was being taken on board the ship.’ To this Hafidi himself bore witness when it was told to him that this same Margaret was burnt at Nordness.”

The church that was erected on the spot where the false Margaret suffered no longer exists. Nicolaysen states that it was destroyed at the Reformation. But for a long time the shrine of the martyred Maritte, as she was called, was so popular that there were priests even in Bergen bold enough to enterfere to prevent the reading in the churches of the bishop's edict against pilgrimages to the shrine of the false Margaret, and it would appear that the church dedicated to her could not be removed till the change in the religion of the people swept it away.

It is to this persistent and widespread belief in the martyrdom of the German impostor, that we are indebted for the following letter of Bishop Audfnn (alluded to by Munch, but not quoted by him), a translation of which has been obligingly furnished to me by my friend Professor Stephens of Copenhagen, an Honorary Member of this Society. In his letter enclosing the translation, Professor Stephens says :—“You will see

that it adds to the information given by Munch (who apparently knew no more than is given by Suhm, vol. xii. p. 28, 29, where a short abstract of the letter is given), for he says (pp. 194, 195) that he cannot clearly point out any one of those who had charge of the young Princess, though at p. 348 he rightly concludes that Suhm's 'Tire' was a mistake for 'Thore,' and that Herr Thore Hakonson was one of those with her. You will observe that the Manuscript really has 'Tore.' But it also says that the Princess Margaret '*döde i Orcknöö emellom Narwe biscols hender*' (literally), 'died in Orkney between the hands of Bishop Narwe.' This, therefore, is a second name of one of her guardians on the voyage. Bishop Audfinn's second letter, also referred to by Munch, p. 348, is printed *in extenso* in the original Old Norse by Suhm, vol. xii. p. 338. It is too bad that there should be no copy of Suhm in any of the Edinburgh libraries."

Letter of Bishop Audfinn.

1 Febr. 1320. Bergen.

"Against Pilgrimages to Nordnes, to Saint Maritte (= Margaret).

"To all God's friends now and to come who this letter see or hear sendeth Audfind, by God's grace Bishop of Bergen, God's greeting and his. The wisest men in the land have often blamed us that we permit that so many mad persons have taken part therein [? the Pilgrimages] with much folly, and insist that it is our duty to guide you to a proper faith, you who are misled to fix your hope, and trow, and holiness on a devilish personage, and see with shame that they invoke that woman with great vows and worship, as if she had been one of God's martyrs, altho' she was seized and condemned as a traitor. She said, indeed, that she was the child and lawful heir of the worshipful Lord Erick, King of Norway, of happy memory; but as all this was open falsehood and deception, her end was to be burnt at the stake, by the law of the land and the counsel of the best men then in Norway, at that place on Nordness where such criminals are wont to lose their lives. Eke let all good men, who will understand, know the truth, that it is against God's truth that she was the daughter of King Erick and Margaret of Scotland. She was proved to be a woman 20 years older than answered to the time when King Erick celebrated his marriage with Queen Margaret. He was

then only 13 winters old by such reckoning, and could not have been the father of so aged a female. And then, he had no more bairns than one daughter by Queen Margaret, who by her father's command was to go to Scotland, who died in Orkney attended by Bishop Narve, and in the presence of the best men who followed her from Norway as counselled and directed by her own father. And when God had taken her soul, the said Bishop and Sir Tore and others carried her corpse to Bergen, where her father had the coffin opened, and narrowly examined the body, and himself acknowledged that it was his daughter's corpse. Then let he bury her beside his Queen Margaret, in the stone wall on the north side of the Choir. Some of our priests pretended that the said woman who came from Lubeck in Germany to Bergen, who was greyhaired and white in the head [was the real Margaret]. Therefore may we by no means any longer suffer this pious fraud, as above is said, about honour paid to this woman who was burned in Nordness, but only the soul help of Saint Michael, who is our [? friend] and yours. Accordingly we forbid you all and singular, in the name of God and his Hallows, on pain of punishment, to enter the holy church to worship the said female with offerings or pilgrimage, fasting or common prayers. But if any one should say that she can work any open miracles, which as yet no one has proved, we are willing to examine and enquire into the same with the advice of good men. Made was this writ in Bergen on Candlemas Eve, in the year after the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ mccc. and xx. winters."

[Translated, as well as the barbarous Dano-Norse text has allowed me, from "Diplomatarium Norvegicum. Af Carl R. Unger og H. J. Huitfeldt. 6te Samling, Forste Halvdel. Christiania, 1863," where it is printed from a copy made in the 16th century in Cod. Chart. fol. Royal Library, Stockholm, No. 84 (43), leaf 3. G. S.]

From this letter we learn at least three facts connected with the death of the Princess. That she did die in Orkney; that she was not buried there (as Worsaae states, and as is the general tradition in the Orkneys), but that she was laid beside her mother in the wall of the choir of Christ's Church in Bergen; and that King Eirik had the coffin opened, and satisfied himself of the identity of his daughter's remains. For the first time,

also, we obtain tangible particulars in the names of three persons who accompanied her on the voyage—1st, Bishop Narve of Bergen, between whose hands she died, who took back her corpse to Bergen, and who died himself at a good old age in 1304; Herr Thore Hakonson and his wife Ingibiorg, whose history can all be traced to fit into the events here detailed. And, finally, it leaves no doubt on my mind at least, that the case of the false Margaret was an imposture of the daring political kind to which we have parallels in our own history in those of Simnel and Perkin Warbeck.