

II.

NOTE ON HERALDIC REPRESENTATIONS AT KING'S COLLEGE, OLD ABERDEEN. BY P. J. ANDERSON, M.A., LL.B., F.S.A. SCOT. (PLATES I., II.)

Dr J. A. Smith, in his "Notes on Melrose Abbey,"¹ describes a tablet on the westmost buttress "now wasting fast under the action of the weather," on which are sculptured in high relief the Royal Arms of Scotland, with the date ANNO DNI 1505. Mr Seton cites this² as the earliest occurrence of the two unicorns as supporters.³

On the northernmost of two buttresses, projecting from the west side of the crowned tower of King's College, Old Aberdeen, is found on a stone in fine preservation (measuring 56 inches by 34½ inches) a dated example of the Royal Arms earlier by one year than that now, or lately, extant at Melrose.⁴ In general character the Aberdeen and Melrose representations correspond, but there are differences in detail. On the King's College shield (Plate I.) appears a spirited lion rampant within a double tressure having sixteen fleurs-de-lis. The unicorns are regardant, with spirally twisted horns, and are gorged with crowns composed of alternate fleurs-de-lis and crosses pattée. From the front of the crowns depend chains, which pass under the forelegs, are reflexed over the animals' backs, and are fastened to rings near the hind feet. The nearer forelegs meet under, and support the shield; the more distant are elevated, and touch the crown. The tails hang down between the hind legs, and have no upward curl. Above the shield is a closed

¹ *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, ii. 171, 1856.

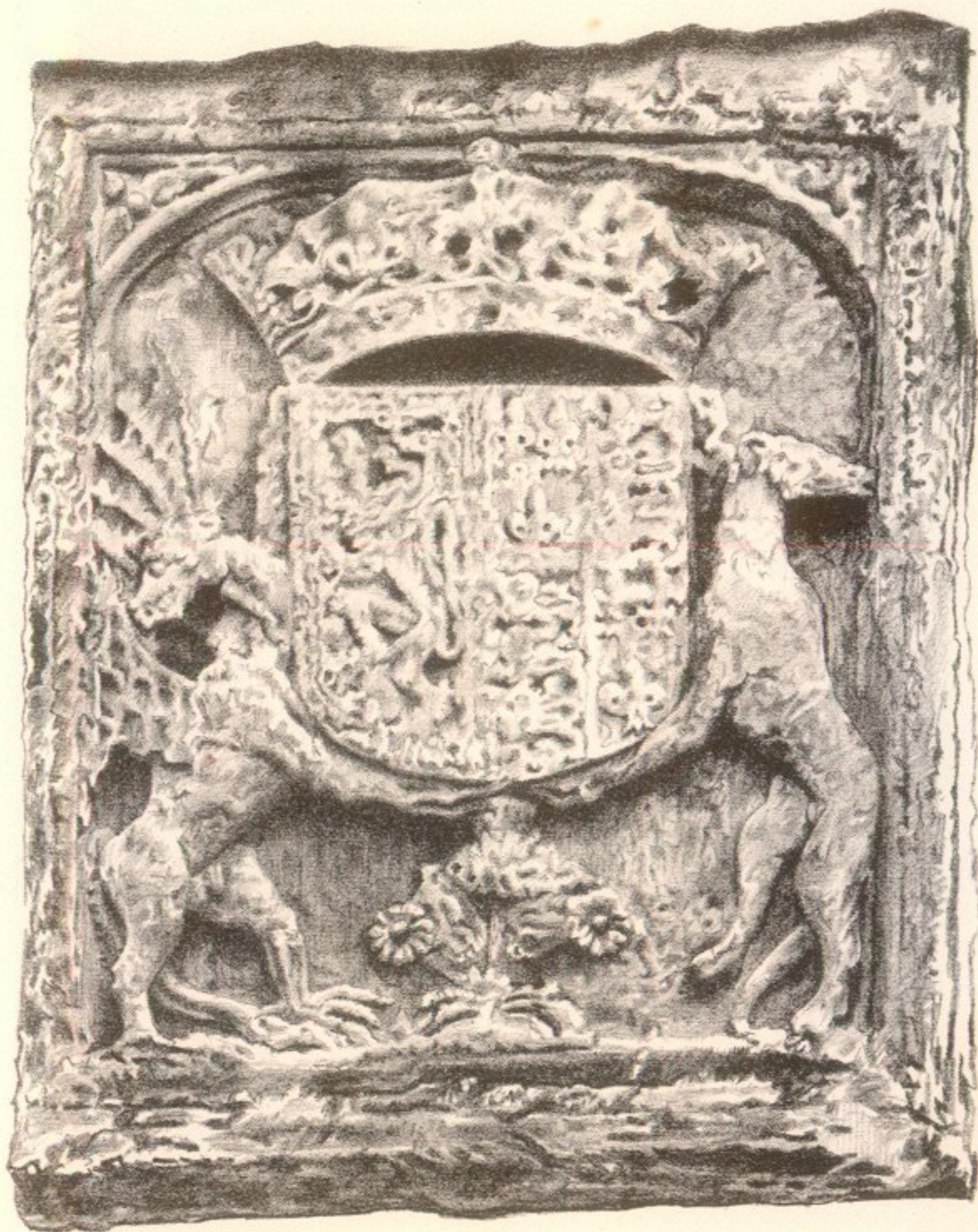
² *Law and Pract. of Her.*, p. 273, 1863.

³ Mr Henry Laing, *Suppl. Cat.*, 1866, Nos. 11 and 1008, gives earlier examples of the unicorns on seals; and, according to Mr Stodart, *Scottish Arms*, 1881, ii. 3, "there is reason to believe that an example of the two unicorns as supporters, not later than the reign of Robert III., is the stone with Royal Arms at Rothesay Castle."

⁴ Orem, *Descr. of the Chanonry, &c.*, 1791, p. 174, misled by the old form of the fourth figure, gives the date as 1509; and in a description of King's College, printed in 1885, during the visit to Aberdeen of the British Association, it is stated to be 1502.



ARMS OF JAMES IV. DATED 1504.
AT KING'S COLLEGE, ABERDEEN.



THOMSON & DUNCAN, LITHRS ABERDEEN.

ARMS OF MARGARET TUDOR QUEEN OF JAMES IV
AT KING'S COLLEGE ABERDEEN.

helmet in profile, with thistles taking the place of mantling, and surmounted by a wreath on which rests an imperial crown unarched. Projecting upwards from behind the crown appears the crest: a demi-lion affrontée holding a sword in his dexter paw. Behind the head of the lion passes a scroll, bearing the motto *IN DE FENS*. From the position of the lion, it would seem as if the sinister paw had at no time carried a sceptre. Across the top of the tablet runs the inscription *ANNO D NI 1504*. Between the rings at the base we have the remains of the national emblem.

According to an adjacent inscription,¹ the building was begun four years prior to the date on the tablet. Mr Cosmo Innes states² that the roofing of the chapel was executed in 1506.

In a corresponding position on the southernmost of the two buttresses are the arms of Alexander Stewart, archbishop of St Andrews, son of James IV. The stone (45 inches by 36 inches) is much decayed, but the letters *A. S.* can be traced. According to Orem, the supporters were two angels, but now only the outline of two figures can be distinguished.³ The same arms, equally defaced by time and weather, occur above the door in the north wall of the college chapel.

On a buttress in the west end of the college chapel is a stone (42 inches by 33½ inches), with the arms of Margaret Tudor, queen of James IV. (Plate II.): Scotland impaling France and England quarterly; supporters the red dragon and white hound of Henry VII., both regardant. Above the shield is an imperial crown, unarched; below, a thistle flanked by two roses. No date or inscription.

The south wall of the college chapel, forming at present the north side of the quadrangle, was at first a partition separating the chapel from the "Bibliothek" and "Jewel house," now removed. The original sandstone has been partly covered by a granite casing, in which nine coats of arms are inserted.

¹ "Per serenissimum illustrissimum invictissimum J. 4. R. quarto nonas Aprilis anno millesimo et quingentesimo hoc insigne collegium latomi inceperunt edificare."

² *Fasti Aberdonenses* (Spalding Club), p. lvii.

³ Mr Laing, *Suppl. Cat.*, No. 1010, describes a seal of the archbishop in which the shield is supported on the dexter by St Andrew, and on the sinister by the Virgin.

These, beginning at the west end, are—

1. A shield bearing a chevron between three boars' heads erased.¹ Above: a mitre between the initials W. E. At sides: OB. A.D. MDXIV. Æ. S. LX[XX]IV.

[Bishop William Elphinston, the founder of the university and college, and its first chancellor. Previously chancellor of the kingdom. His arms appear several times on the carved woodwork in the interior of the chapel.]

2. A shield bearing three cushions within a double tressure flowered and counterflowered.² Above: a mitre between the initials G. D. At dexter side: OB. A. MDXXXI.

[Bishop Gavin Dunbar, the third chancellor, fourth son of Sir Alexander Dunbar of Westfield.]

3. A shield bearing a fess chequy surmounted by a bend engrailed.³ Above: a mitre between the initials W. S. At dexter side: OB. A. MDXLV. Below: . . . IT VULNERE VIRTUS.

[Bishop William Stewart, the fourth chancellor, son of Sir Thomas Stewart of Minto.]

4. A shield bearing the Royal Arms, with helmet, crest, supporters, collar of St Andrew, mottoes, &c. At sides: IA. 4. R. [This is not a contemporary carving. According to Kennedy (*Annals of Aberdeen*, 1818, ii. 397), it was originally placed above the outer gate of the college.]⁴

5. A shield bearing a saltire and chief. Above: the initials H. B. At sides: OB. AD. A. MDXXXVI.

[Hector Boece, the historian, first principal of the college.]

¹ So on seals of the bishop, in Laing, *Descr. Cat.*, No. 898; *Suppl. Cat.*, Nos. 1031, 1032.

² So in Laing's *Descr. Cat.*, No. 899; *Suppl. Cat.*, Nos. 324 [?], 1033.

³ Cf. Laing, *Descr. Cat.*, No. 900, "a fess chequy surmounted by a bend;" *Suppl. Cat.*, No. 1034, "a fess chequy." Nisbet, *Syst. of Her.*, 1721, p. 50, adds a rose gules in chief.

⁴ Cf. Orem, p. 183. Evidence that this representation of the Royal Arms is of a date considerably later than that indicated in the representation on the west wall, is afforded not merely by the general style of the workmanship, but by four details which are individually conclusive. (1) The unicorns are imperially crowned; (2) they are gorged with antique crowns; (3) the collar of St Andrew appears; (4) so does the motto *Nemo me impune lacesset*.

6. A shield bearing a lion rampant coupé in all joints. Above: the initials R. M. At sides: DEC. ABD. A. MDLXXIX.

[Robert Maitland, dean of Aberdeen, an early benefactor to the college.]¹

7. An oval shield bearing, Quarterly: first and fourth, three cinquefoils; second and third, three crowns [not antique]. Above I. F. Below: A.D. MDCCXXIV.

VIR NUNQUAM SINE LAUDE NOMINANDUS IACOBUS FRASERIUS I.U.D.
UNICUS MUSARUM FAUTOR ALMAM MATREM ABERDONENSEM AEVI INIURIA
PARTIM LABANTEM PARTIM IACENTEM SOLUS FERE RESPEXIT EREXIT
PROVEXIT.

[James Fraser of Chelsea, doctor utriusque juris, librarian to the King, a munificent benefactor to the college, son of Alexander Fraser, minister of Petty, "generoso Frasierorum stemmate."]²

8. A shield bearing the same arms, but with supporters, two harts; a baron's coronet; crest, a hart's head; and motto IE SUIS . . .

[Several members of the Lovat family studied at King's College in the seventeenth century.]³

9. A shield bearing a garb between three lions' heads erased [that in base has disappeared] within a bordure embattled. Crest: a demi-lion holding a branch with leaves. Above: the letters C. I. B. Below [FORTIOR]⁴ QUO [MITIOR].⁴

[Colonel John Buchan, a younger son of Auchmacoy,⁵ a contributor to the fund towards raising the "New Building."]⁶

Over the entrance to "Cromwell's Tower" is a shield bearing a chevron between three boars' heads erased.⁷ Above: a mitre between the initials V. G.

¹ *Fasti Aberd.*, 128, 131.

² See *Fraserides sive Fumbris Oratio et Elegia in laudem desideratissimi viri Jacobi Fraserii*. Perorante Joanne Ker. Aberdoniae, 1732.

³ *Fasti Aberd.*, pp. 468, 499, &c.

⁴ So in Orem and Kennedy.

⁵ See Stodart, ii. p. 141.

⁶ *Fasti Aberd.*, pp. 556-7.

⁷ Cf. Laing, *Descr. Cat.*, No. 901, "Quarterly, 1 and 4 Gordon, 2 Badenoch, 3 Seton;" *Suppl. Cat.*, No. 1035, "Quarterly, 1 Badenoch, 2 Gordon, 3 Seton, 4 Fraser."

[Bishop William Gordon, fifth chancellor, and last pre-Reformation bishop of Aberdeen; fourth son of Alexander, third Marquis of Huntly.]

Over the entrance to the Crown Tower is a modern shield with tincture lines, bearing: Argent, on a chief indented azure three crescents of the field. Crest: a falcon rising. Above: the initials I. S. At sides: OB. AD. MDCCCXL. Below: the motto ALIS NUTRIOR.

[John Simpson of Shrubhill, a native of Rothes, founder of the Simpson Greek and Mathematical prizes and Simpson bursaries.]

Within the chapel, in the centre of the eastern apse, in the space formerly occupied by a window, is a shield bearing, on a chevron, between a crescent in chief and a cinquefoil in base, a human eye.¹ Above on a scroll: CONFIDO SED CAVEO. Below: the inscription—

M. S.

HENRICUS SCUGALL R.P. PATRICII EPISCOPI ABREDONENSIS FILIUS PHILOSOPHIE IN HAC ACADEMIA REGIA PER QUADRIENNIIUM TOTIDEMQUE ANNIS ITIDEM THEOLOGIE PROFESSOR ECCLESIE IN AUCHTERLESS UNO ANNO INTERSITITE PASTOR MULTA IN TAM BREVISSIMO CURRICULO DIDICIT PRÆSTITIT DOCUIT CÆLI AVIDUS ET CÆLO MATURUS OBIIT ANNO DOM. 1678 ÆTATIS SUÆ 28 ET HIC EXUVIAS MORTALITATIS POSUIT.

In the floor of the chapel are four armorial tombstones.

Almost opposite the apse: a stone with a shield bearing three boars' heads erased. Above, an esquire's helmet and mantling. At sides, the letters I. C. Inscription round stone: IOANNES CRVCSCHANCIVS DÑS TILLIMORGEN GENERIS SPLENDORE RELIGIONIS PUR [ITATE AC FIDEI IN] TEGRITATE CLAR⁹ OBIIT 21 NOVEMB. A.D. 1604 NUNC VIVO ET VIVAM DAT SEMPER VIVERE CHRIST⁹. MORTE SVA TANDEM SIT MIHI VITA MORI IHΣOTΣ ANAΣTAΣIΣ KAI ZΩH.

To south of last: a stone with a shield bearing a stag's head erased, amid the branches of a tree in pale between two greyhounds counter salient. At sides, the letters M.P.V.S. Inscription round stone: DOMINVS PETRVS VDNEVS VIR VNDE QUAQUE HVMANISSIMVS [INCLYTE HV]² IVS ACADEMIÆ

¹ Cf. Stodart, ii. p. 372, i. pl. 105.

² Missing letters supplied from Prof. Thomas Gordon's MS. *Collections* in University Library.

OLIM SVBPRIMARIVS FATIS CESSIT 24 APRILIS A.D. 1601 SECVRVS RECVBQ
MVNDI PERTÆSVS INIQVI ET DIDICI ET DOCVI VULNERA CHRISTE TVA ΠΑΣΑ
ΘΕΩ ΔΟΞΑ.

[Peter Udney, humanist, 1583; regent, 1584; sub-principal, 1593.]¹

To north: a stone with a shield bearing a stag couchant. At sides, the letters A. S. Inscription: IVDICII ADMIRABILIS LABORIS INDEFESSI PIETATIS EXIMIE ADOLESCENS ANDREAS STRATHAVCHIN⁹ DORMIVIT IN DNO 3 NON APRI 1604 ÆTATIS SVÆ 20 PROGENVIT PALLAS DOCVITQ MINERVA LABORES PROVIDA QVEM IVVENEM MORS INOPINA RAPIT JEHOVA CORNV SALVTIS MEÆ.

Opposite the more easterly of the entrances to the chapel from the quadrangle: a stone with a shield bearing a fess checquy between three antique crowns; in chief a cross.* The inscription is much defaced, but VALTER⁹ STEVART PRIMAR⁹ HVIVS can be traced on the lower portion of the stone.

[Walter Stewart, regent, 1580 [?]; sub-principal, 1572; principal, 1583.]²

From the middle of the roof of the chapel rises a slender hexagonal spire covered with lead, and bearing on its six sides two coats of arms, each repeated three times. Calling the side facing the Crown Tower I, and numbering the others in order, on I, III, V., we find shields each bearing a bough-pot containing three lilies. Above: a crown between a thistle on the dexter, and a fleur-de-lis on the sinister. Below: the initials c. r. On the sides II, IV., VI., are shields, each bearing three fishes in fret. Above: a crown between two thistles. Below: the initials c. r. (fig. 1).

The armorial bearings of Old Aberdeen (as shown on the ceiling of the Cathedral of St Machar *circa* 1520)³ and those of the College of St Mary in the Nativity, afterwards called King's College (as shown on the matrix of the original College seal, "believed to have been given by the founder," and still extant),⁴ exhibit the fishes, the bough-pot, and the

¹ *Fasti Aberd.*, lxxxii.-vi.

² *Fasti Aberd.*, lxxix.-lxxxv.

* Compare the forms of the Stewart arms given by Nisbet, p. 129, by Laing *Descr. Cat.*, No. 796, and *Suppl. Cat.*, No. 1039, and by Sir Lindsay, Reprint of 1788, pl. 38.

³ *Lacunar Aberdonense* (New Spalding Club), 1888, p. 102.

⁴ Laing, *Descr. Cat.*, No. 975; *Notes and Queries*, 6, xi. 251.

lilies combined in one composition. The blazon of the first quarter in the quartered coat of arms, matriculated 26th September 1888 by the University of Aberdeen, runs thus:—

Azure, a bough-pot or, charged with three salmon fishes in fret proper, and containing as many lilies of the garden, the dexter in bud, the

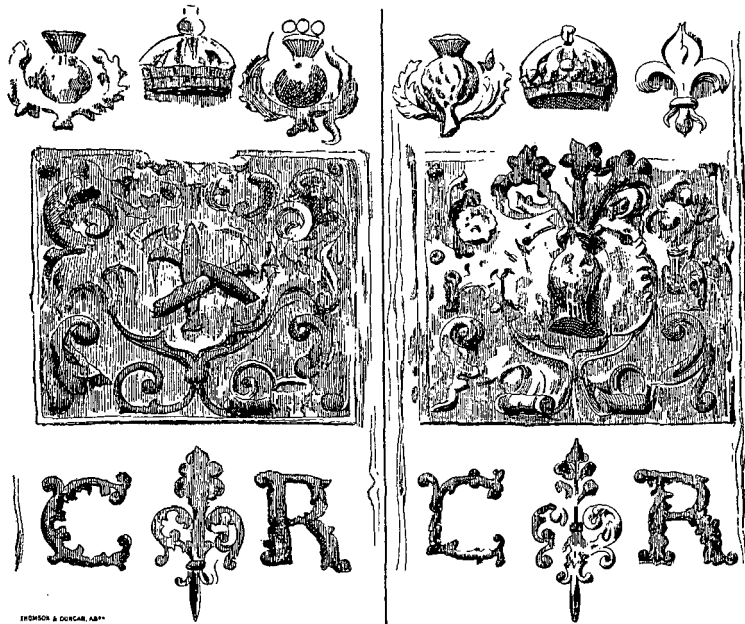


Fig 1.

centre full blown, and the sinister half blown,¹ also proper flowered argent, issuant downwards from the middle chief amid rays of the sun, a dexter hand holding an open book, likewise proper.²

¹ This peculiarity appears in the representation on the Cathedral ceiling.

² A full account of the circumstances attending this matriculation will be found in the *Aberdeen University Calendar* for 1889-90, App. G. See also *Notes and Queries*, 7, vii. 63.