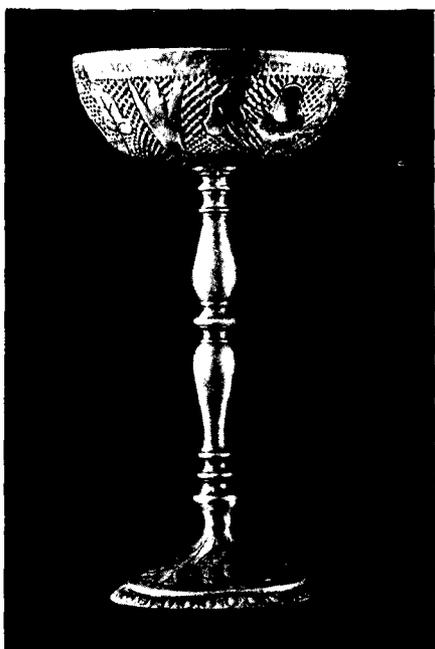


II.

SILVER CUP AT ST MARY'S COLLEGE, ST ANDREWS.

BY W. W. WATTS, F.S.A. (LOND.), VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM.

The description of this object given in the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 1882-83, is meagre and incorrect: it is described as a chalice—which is more than doubtful—and the hall-mark is given as that of London for 1533, whereas such cups did not appear before the end of Elizabeth's reign. A more accurate description is given in *Old Scottish Communion Plate*, by the Rev. Thomas Burns, pp. 423-25. Dr Burns describes (p. 260 *et seq.*) a very interesting group of cups of this shape which were intended for use as chalices: and it is worthy of notice that they date from 1611 to 1633 (I omit the Cathcart Cup of 1656, which hardly seems to belong to this group). It will be observed also that all of them bear the Edinburgh hall-mark; further, that the bowls are plain except for an inscription on the outside which confirms their sacred use.



Silver Wine-Cup, bearing the London hall-mark for 1613-14. The property of St Mary's College, St Andrews.

The St Andrews Cup under consideration was made in London, and bears the hall-mark for 1613-14. Dr Burns states that remains of an older and partly erased inscription can be traced among the present lettering. It was presented to St Andrews by

Dr Guild in 1628, fifteen years after it was made: so clearly it was not made for St Mary's College.

Can it ever have been used for a chalice in Scotland? Possibly, but with great inconvenience, as the nature of the decoration precludes the satisfactory cleansing of the bowl after use.

Was it originally intended for a chalice? No. It is true that secular vessels have frequently been presented to churches and used for chalices, but at the period when this cup was made (1613) there was a definite

prescribed form of communion cup in England which was in general closely adhered to.

Here in the south these cups appearing at the end of Elizabeth's reign were in vogue chiefly during the reigns of James I. and his successors: one belonging to Lord Swaythling bears the hall-mark for the first year of the reign of James I. The curious embossing of diamond diaper work on the bowl recalls the latticinio glass of Venice, and it is possible that this kind of decoration was inspired from that quarter. William Harrison, the contemporary historian of *Elizabethan England*, states: "It is a world to see in these our days, wherein gold and silver most aboundeth, how that our gentility, as loathing these metals (because of the plenty)¹ do now generally choose rather the Venice glasses, both for our wine and beer, than any of those metals or stone wherein before time we have been accustomed to drink." Perhaps the admiration for the forms and decoration of these "Venice glasses" excited the emulation of the silversmith of the day.

The St Andrews cup is a secular wine-cup of a type by no means common. The Victoria and Albert Museum possesses one, the stem of which is unfortunately missing. The Armourers and Brasiers Company of the City of London possess no less than six of these wine-cups with embossed bowls, one of them bearing the London hall-mark for 1606 and the other five for 1632; the same company also own twelve of the plainer type, similar to the group illustrated by Dr Burns at p. 260 of his book: six bear the London hall-mark for 1640, five that for 1633, and one that for 1631. Incidentally it may be remarked that the stem of the St Andrews cup differs from the stems of all the cups to which I have referred.

¹ Owing to the Spanish invasions of Peru and Mexico.