

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ARBROATH

PERIODICAL LITERATURE.

J. M. M'BAIN.



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BIBLIOGRAPHY  
OF  
ARBROATH PERIODICAL LITERATURE  
AND  
POLITICAL BROADSIDES

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**Arbroath :**  
BRODIE & SALMOND, BROTHOCK BRIDGE.

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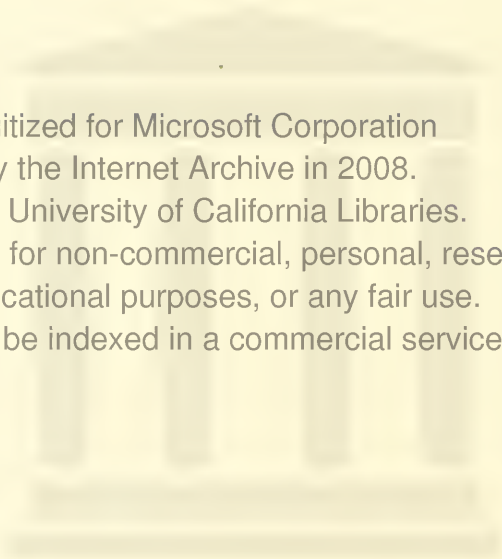
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## P R E F A C E.



IN its nature, the periodical press is very ephemeral. Of the many million copies annually thrown off, how few attain to the dignity of preservation. Newspaper editors, and a few of their antiquarianly-inclined subscribers, file and bind their papers, but, as a rule, the many million copies of our dailies and weeklies find themselves old, worn-out, and cast aside ere they attain the age of twenty-four hours. Of an immense number of periodicals which, during the last hundred years or so, have been born and have died, no vestige remains to tell how they looked or what they tried to teach. It is to be regretted that these should be allowed to pass away without leaving some memorial of their having existed.

A history of the periodical press of the nation would be both interesting and useful, but the task of writing such would be a herculean, and, if attempted by a single individual, an impossible one. The work, if ever undertaken, must first be done for each locality by someone possessing local knowledge, without which it would have little real value.

In the following pages I have attempted to do for Arbroath, what I hope to see done, in course of time, for every city, town, and village throughout the kingdom, that can boast of a periodical press. When the whole has been accomplished, the work of the compiler of "A history of the periodical press of Great Britain and Ireland" will have become a possible one.

The first part of this volume is devoted to the history of Arbroath periodicals. The second part, which I hope will be found no less interesting, narrates the political history of Arbroath during the stirring times which

centred in the Reform days of '32. At that period no newspaper or other periodical was published in Arbroath, but a collection of Political and Municipal Broad-sides, which has been preserved, in a measure supplies the place of those repositories of local history. From this bundle of time-stained and tattered memorials of the past, we learn that our forefathers took a keen and intelligent interest in the social and political advancement of the nation, and that they stood manfully in the forefront of the battle of Reform.

J. M. M'BAIN.

BRITISH LINEN CO. BANK HOUSE,  
ARBROATH, *August, 1889.*



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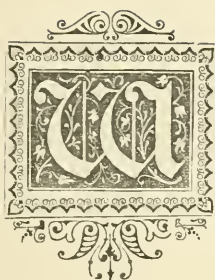
PART I.

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PERIODICAL LITERATURE.



## INTRODUCTION.



WHEN Paul made his memorable visit to Athens we are told that “all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing.” That this cultured people were not content with the oral interchange of the news of the day, but had their written record of passing events, we may be sure. Long before the day when Paul delivered his famous oration on Mars Hill, the Romans had their public journal: first, their “Annales Maximi,” recording the leading events of the year, and later, their “Acta Diurna,” a publication which contained much the same class of news as we find in the newspapers of the present day.

The following freely translated paragraphs from these “Acta Diurna,” will afford a fair idea of their contents:—“On 26th July thirty boys and forty girls were born on the Estate of Cuma, belonging to Trimalchio.” “On same day Mithradates, a slave, was crucified for speaking irreverently of our master’s tutelary genius.” “A fray took place in a tavern at the lower end of Banker Street, in which the keeper of the Hog-in-Armour Tavern was dangerously wounded.” “Tertinus, the ædile, fined butchers for selling meat which had not been

inspected by the overseers of the market." "The broker, Ausidius, fled from town to-day, taking money with him belonging to other people."

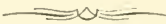
The history of the newspaper in modern times is an exceedingly interesting one. The Germans, we believe, can claim the honour of being the first nation in Europe to introduce the newspaper. The earliest productions of the kind in England—which, like their German fore-runners, were in manuscript—were called "news letters," and were chiefly written by dependents of noblemen, who employed the writers to keep them advised during their absence from Court, of what was taking place there. Some of these writers would have more patrons than one, and the same news would be sent to each. In the 16th century "news pamphlets" were not uncommon. They had no fixed name nor regular time of issue, the title being derived from the chief event narrated, thus—"Newes from Germanie," or in war times, "Newes of the Battle"—and such like. About the beginning of the 17th century the first authentic periodical newspaper was published in England. It was sometime before Scotland followed. From the middle of the 17th century various papers were *published* in Scotland. The first of these was "A Diurnal of some Passages and Affairs," printed at Leith, Number I. being dated November, 1652; but only twelve monthly numbers appeared. It may be of some interest, however, to note that this paper was first printed and published in London, and was thereafter re-printed in Leith. Other papers, chiefly devoted to Scotch affairs, were printed and published in London. "The Scot's Scout's Discoveries" (1642) "The Scotch Intelligencer" (1643) "The Scot's Dove Sent Out and Returning" (1643) "Intelligence from the Borders of Scotland, written from Edinburgh" (1644) "Mercurius Scoticus" (1652) "The Theme or Scot's Presbyter" (1652)

and "Mercurius Politicus"—this, like the "Diurnal," making its appearance first in London and thereafter in Leith (1653.)

The first newspaper entirely written, printed and published in Scotland, was the "Mercurius Caledonius." It began on 31st December, 1660, and expired on 22nd March, 1661. It was edited by Thomas Sydserf, son of the Bishop of Orkney. Between this date and 1680 various papers, devoted to Scotch interests, were printed in London, and were either published or re-printed and published in Scotland. But it was not till 1705, when the "Edinburgh Courant" appeared, that Scotland can be said to have had a genuine newspaper of its own. This paper was for a time edited by the celebrated Daniel Defoe. In 1710 the "Scot's Courant" appeared. Other Scotch papers followed, all published in Edinburgh till 1715, when Glasgow appeared in the field with the "Glasgow Courant." In 1748 came Aberdeen with her "Journal." From then till now such publications have gone on increasing in number and influence. For the first half of the 18th century, as we have shewn, the publication of Scottish newspapers was confined to Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen. After that other towns followed, but owing to fiscal restrictions their progress was slow. While the newspaper press was prized by the people who were longing for political freedom, it was looked upon with much disfavour by many in power. "You must curb the press," said Southey to Lord Liverpool, "or it will destroy the constitution of the country. No means can be effectual for checking the intolerable license of the press, but that of making transportation the punishment of its abuse." Every effort was made to limit its circulation; one expedient being to tax it. At first each paper, half a sheet or less, was charged a duty of a half-penny, and for each sheet a penny, but while this had the effect of crushing a number of papers, it failed to put down others whose existence was obnoxious to the

opponents of a free press. By degrees the stamp duty was raised till it reached a charge of fourpence on each paper, besides a duty of one shilling and sixpence on each advertisement which appeared in its columns. The passage of the Reform Bill awakened a keener desire for information, and the pressure of the duty on these vehicles of public news was felt all the more keenly. In 1833 Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer moved the repeal of the newspaper duty, and in this he was supported by William Roebuck, but they failed to carry the measure. Nothing daunted however, the advocates of repeal persevered in their endeavours, and they were so far successful that in 1836 the duty was reduced from fourpence to a penny. The opponents of repeal were greatly enraged, and they prophesied that most awful consequences would result from this step, declaring that a cheap press would only be a profligate press. One member proposed a repeal of the soap duty instead, which, he said, would be a greater boon to the working classes.

Notwithstanding these alarming prognostications, the newspaper press, which in 1855 was set entirely free from these fiscal trammels by the repeal of the stamp duty, without these dreadful results following, has steadily grown in influence and power, proving itself a lever by which the masses have been elevated politically and socially. The periodical press which has thus grown in power, has also in recent years increased enormously in number. Not only every city, but every town and nearly every village has its local paper, and as each of these contains the very material from which history is obtained, they assume in this, as in other respects, considerable importance.

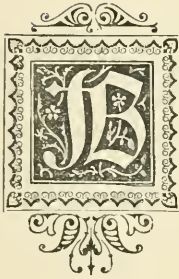




# BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ARBROATH.

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## I.—PERIODICAL LITERATURE.



BEFORE proceeding to trace the history of the periodical press of Arbroath, some reference to the intellectual condition of the burgh prior to the starting of a local printing press will be necessary. The circumstances amid which the need for some convenient record of public news grew up, and the steps in the path which, through the intervening years, has brought us to our present position, are naturally most interesting. We will deal with these, however, as briefly as possible.

### **Arbroath as an Ancient Seat of Learning.**

Historians are largely indebted to the monastic writings of Arbroath for the ample materials which these supply for the elucidation of the early history of our country. The Chartulary of Aberbrothock has proved an invaluable repository of information, extending over a period of from three to four centuries, and referring, as it does, not only to the monastic and parochial economy, but to the educational and agricultural history of the period. It also

throws considerable light on the jurisprudence and internal government of the country.

The Abbey of Arbroath, one of the richest monasteries in Scotland, was also one of the chief seats of learning in the country for two or three centuries. Besides contributions to the ordinary literature of the period, documents of great historical importance were written within its walls. As a monastic school, the Abbey sent forth men who rose to considerable eminence, and whose names found a permanent place in Scottish history. But with the decay of the Romish church came the extinction of this once famous seat of learning, and for nearly three centuries we have little or no information regarding the intellectual life of the Burgh.

### A Literary Revival.

During the last decade of the eighteenth century there appears to have been a shaking among the dry bones, and an intellectual resurrection followed. At this period there is evidence that Arbroath possessed a few men of literary tastes, the leading spirit among whom was Alexander Balfour, at first a clerk and afterwards a manufacturer or green cloth merchant. Through his instrumentality a Literary Club was formed, at which papers were read and topics of a literary, philosophical, and social nature discussed.

In 1797 a movement was set afoot for the establishment of a Public Library. The project was eagerly taken up, and on the 24th August of that year the constitution was adopted, and the Library started with forty-seven subscribers.\* The official record of the Institution bears the signatures not only of these forty-seven, but of subsequent members.

\* In "Arbroath: Past and Present" this date was inadvertently given as 1791.

The list is an interesting one, containing as it does names still familiar from the prominent position their possessors then held in the burgh ; municipal dignitaries, clergymen, lawyers, doctors and merchants ; besides several landed proprietors in the neighbourhood. As in the Literary Society, so in the Library, Alexander Balfour took a prominent part. That his services were thoroughly appreciated by his contemporaries, is evident from the fact that he was elected an honorary member, a distinction, so far as we can learn, never since conferred on any other person. The minutes bear that honorary membership was conferred on him "as a reward of his literary merit, and in consideration of the trouble bestowed by him in assisting to form the library."

#### **Introduction of a Printing Press.**

So far as we can learn, it was not till this period of intellectual revival that Arbroath possessed a printing press of her own. About the year 1798, John Findlay started business in Arbroath as a printer and publisher. During his residence here, of somewhat less than twenty years, he showed a good deal of mercantile and literary activity. One of his first ventures was the introduction to Arbroath of a periodical magazine. In the following pages we shall endeavour to give a chronological account of the various local periodicals which have been issued from the Arbroath press, and at the same time say something about the chief contributors thereto.

1799.

#### **The Arbroath Magazine.**

The "Arbroath Magazine." October, 1799. Monthly, 48 pp., demy 8vo., printed and published by John Findlay. Although designed to take its place as a newspaper, it really contained little

"news." Beyond the sailings of vessels to and from the port; births, deaths, and marriages; the Arbroath assize of bread; the prices current of grain; a list of local magistrates; and an occasional paragraph recording some passing event, it contained little or nothing of local interest. Portions of a very brief history of Arbroath occupied two or three pages of each of the first three numbers. The rest of the contents were made up of essays and poetry.

After lingering for a year, its existence terminated. This was neither for want of energy on the part of the publisher nor of talent on the part of its contributors. Of those whose names we know as being included in the list of contributors, two afterwards became well known as literati.

David Carey, a native of Arbroath, and then quite a young man, wrote for the "Arbroath Magazine." After leaving Arbroath he went to Edinburgh, where he was for a time employed in the publishing house of Archibald Constable. From thence he went to London, where he filled various posts in connection with the periodical press. While there he displayed great ability in advocating the measures of the Whig party, whose side he espoused. This brought him under the notice of Mr Wyndham, who offered him a colonial appointment, which, however, he declined. On the change of ministry he wrote a telling satire on their successors entitled "Ins and Outs, or the State of Parties, by Chronohotonthologos," two large editions of which were sold out within a week or two after their appearance. Carey afterwards filled the editorial chair of the "Inverness Journal" for about five years. He was an author of considerable ability and versatility, a poet, a novelist, and a successful pamphleteer. While in London he published "Pleasures of Nature, or the Charms of Rural Life," and other poems. "The Reign of Fancy, a Poem," "Lyric Tales," "Secrets of the

Castle," a novel in 2 vols., besides "Ins and Outs," to which we have already referred. While in Inverness he published, among other works, a volume of poems, containing "Craig Phadric, Visions of Sensibility, Legendary Tales, and Occasional Pieces," Inverness, 1811. This volume is now chiefly valuable for the notes to the piece "Craig Phadric," which contain valuable information on the early history of Inverness.

The other contributor referred to, and who, we have reason to believe, acted in the capacity of editor of the magazine, was Alexander Balfour, poet and novelist, to whose connection with the Arbroath Library we have already referred. He was a native of Monikie, in the neighbourhood of Arbroath. In 1793 he obtained a situation in Arbroath, and four years thereafter he commenced business as a canvas manufacturer on his own account. From the time of his coming to Arbroath till the end of his life, he assiduously cultivated literature, latterly as a profession. To the "Aberdeen Magazine" (1796), the "Edinburgh Magazine and Literary Miscellany," published by Symington, the "Dundee Magazine," and to other periodicals, he was a frequent contributor. For Dr Brewster's Encyclopædia, he wrote an account of Arbroath, and to the "Northern Minstrel," published in Newcastle; the "Literary Mirror," by Murray, Montrose; the "Temple of the Muses," a London publication, he contributed a large number of songs and poems. Some of his patriotic songs were re-published in London, set to music, and during the French War, were exceedingly popular in this country. Among his permanent works were "Campbell, or the Scottish Probationer," "Weeds and Wild Flowers," "Contemplation," "Characters omitted in Crabbe's Parish Register," &c., &c. The friendship formed between Balfour and Carey, during the former's Arbroath residence, remained unbroken till the death of the latter in 1824.

Notwithstanding the able literary assistance which Findlay got from Carey, Balfour, and others, the pecuniary support was not sufficient to warrant the continuance of the magazine, and it came to an untimely end in 1800.

### Introduction of Book Printing.

But although unsuccessful with the Magazine, Findlay's literary and commercial enterprise found other outlets. At that time the London publishers were largely supplied by provincial printers, Arbroath, Montrose, and Perth taking no mean place in providing this supply. Findlay, from time to time, printed and published a large number of works. One of the largest of these was "Hollinshed's Scottish Chronicle," or a complete history and description of Scotland. The prospectus of the work states—(1) that the work will be comprised of 14 numbers, making two handsome volumes, quarto; (2) each number will contain sixty-four pages letterpress, price one shilling, to be paid on delivery; and (3) that a list of such subscribers as chuse to have their names prefixed to the work shall be printed in the last number. The work, which was remarkably well got up, is now rather interesting, containing as it does the names of some well-remembered and notable citizens.

In 1803 Findlay printed and published an edition of Burns' Poems (now very scarce), and another edition of same in 1812. In 1805, Ossian's Poems and a number of other popular works followed. The most of those books, while bearing to be printed in Arbroath, also bear the London imprint. Many of them bore the name of Lackington, Allan & Co., of London, and other famous metropolitan publishers of the day. "Tolland's History of the Druids," which Findlay published in 1813, was the cause of a bitter dispute between him and Robert Huddleston, of Lunan, the editor of an edition of Tolland then publishing in Montrose.

**District Newspapers.**

Notwithstanding the enterprise of Findlay, he attempted nothing further in the shape of a newspaper, and Arbroath, for a considerable time, had to depend on the neighbouring towns for its foreign, domestic, and political information.

Three months after the death of the "Arbroath Magazine," the "Dundee Advertiser" came into existence, the first number appearing on 16th January, 1801. It then bore the title of "The Dundee Advertiser and Angusshire Intelligencer." So far as this district of Angus was concerned, it contained at that time little local news, but as, from its commencement, it advocated Liberal principles, it was welcomed by a considerable section of the community. The "Montrose Review" followed in 1811, and the "Dundee Courier and Argus" in 1816. For many years these papers, but especially the "Review," were welcome visitants to Arbroath households. The "Review" was brought from Montrose by the letter-carrier Thomas Alexander, or Tammie Elshender as he was familiarly called. His bag was but a slender one on the other days of the week, but on Fridays it assumed portly dimensions, and at the end of every street could be seen little groups, eagerly on the outlook for the approach of Tammie. If perchance a breakdown took place, preventing the publication of the paper in time for Tammie's departure from Montrose, it was no uncommon thing for some eager Arbroath subscriber, when he found Tammie arriving without his usual Friday's budget, to take his staff in hand and set out for Montrose, a distance of thirteen miles, in order to get his newspaper, or rather the copy of which he was the joint proprietor along with, perhaps, half-a-dozen others. The price being sevenpence, it was not every family that could enjoy the luxury of a paper all to itself, and while the first reader had his paper on the day

of publication, it was no unusual thing for the last reader to get it after it was about a week old, but the share of the cost was regulated by the period of the week assigned to each reader, the earlier paying the larger share of the subscription.

From the death of the "Arbroath Magazine," in 1800, till the end of 1835—except in the form of locally printed broadsides, chiefly employed for commercial, but occasionally for political and municipal announcements, and to which we will have occasion to refer further on—Arbroathians had to rest contented, as we have said, with getting their news through the press of the neighbouring towns. In 1835 the first Arbroath newspaper, properly so called, appeared, and from that day to this the town has not been without a newspaper of its own.

### 1835.

#### *Arbroath Argus.*

Its publisher was John Bremnar, bookseller and printer, the editor being John Sim Sands, an Arbroath lawyer. Bremnar's plant being insufficient to permit of his doing the printing, Peter Brown, an Edinburgh printer, was employed. The "Argus" was published monthly. It was a four-page 4to paper, and the selling price was threepence. The articles were of a light, jaunty character, non-sense more than sense predominating, and it frequently indulged in scurrilous attacks on prominent citizens. This, in a large measure, was the cause of a disagreement between the publisher and the editor, and, after a partnership of less than a year, the co-partnery came to an end. Sim Sands, however, continued to carry it on on his own account, the printing still being done in Edinburgh.

As a commercial speculation, it was fairly successful, its circulation rising to about five hundred copies—a large number for a local paper in



those days in a town the size of Arbroath. It was alleged that not a few became subscribers because they enjoyed the piquancy of the articles when their neighbours' faults or failings, real or supposed, were the subjects, while others considered it to be their interest to support the paper in order to save themselves from the lash. The "Argus" had an existence of fully more than a year, when it became a weekly under a new name.

1836.

**Arbroath Journal.**

The success of the "Argus" proved beyond doubt that there was ample room for a newspaper in Arbroath; so, towards the end of 1836, the monthly became a weekly under the title of the "Arbroath Journal"—a 4 pp. demy paper, price 4½d. The "Journal" continued with varying fortunes till 1842.

When the "Argus" became the "Journal," the name of the firm who printed and published the paper changed also. The "Argus," as we have said, although published in Arbroath, was printed in Edinburgh, but the new firm of Anderson, Sands, & Co.,—the senior partner being Mrs Ann Orkney or Anderson,—having procured sufficient plant, the "Journal" was printed in Arbroath, the premises being in Horner's Wynd, now known as Commerce Street.

Its first editor, John Sim Sands, was a clever man, but, as in the "Argus," so in the "Journal," many of his articles were of a most caustic and bitterly personal description—a style of writing which, as might be expected, gained for him more foes than friends. Not only were individuals assailed, but public institutions came under his lash, and the officials of these institutions were consequently driven to act on the defensive. Articles and advertisements in contemporary journals bear

ample evidence of this, and, in an action for libel, raised by a legal firm in town, the proprietors of the "Journal" were mulcted in damages.

Notwithstanding the acknowledged ability of the editor, and the ample field for a good paper in Arbroath, the "Journal" did not thrive, and at one time the weekly issue fell below 100, and, if our information be correct, more than once there was a hiatus in its career. In 1841, it passed into other hands, and towards the end of that year a notice appeared in various issues intimating that "Mr John Sim Sands has ceased to have any connection in any way with the 'Arbroath Journal.'"

But although the "Journal" has long since passed away, the name of John Sim Sands is still remembered in Arbroath. His metrical account of Deacon Elshender's exploits (the longest piece in his "Poems on various subjects, Satirical and Humorous," a book now scarce, but prized by Arbroathians), in which he gives a humorous and graphic account of the wonderful imaginary adventures of the Arbroath Munchausen, will serve to keep his memory green for many generations. Shortly after Mr Sands' connection with the "Journal" ceased, he left Arbroath. He died in Perth on the 31st of August, 1866.

Mr Sands' interest in the "Journal" was, in 1841, acquired by J. Daniel, an Aberdonian, but his connection with it was of very short duration. During Daniel's proprietorship of the "Journal," Mr Ben. M. Kennedy became its editor. No sooner had Mr Kennedy entered on its management than a marked change for the better took place in its tone, a feature which remained visible during the latter months of its existence. The last number of the "Journal" appeared on the 19th March, 1842, the plant and good-will of the concern having become the property of Mr Kennedy. Of its successor, the "Guide," of which Mr Kennedy became proprietor and editor, we shall speak further on.

1837.

**Memoranda of the Abbey.**

“Short Historical Memoranda of the Abbey of Aberbrothock, compiled from History by James Alexander, keeper of the Abbey Buildings, Arbroath, printed by John Bremnar.” A 10 pp. tract, though not a periodical in the true sense of the term, was published annually for five or six years, “Deacon Elshender,” the keeper, having had it reprinted from time to time (with a slight variation in each) for the purpose of selling it to the visitors to the Abbey. The composition was not particularly elegant, and here and there were paragraphs amusingly obscure. Here is an extract from the 1837 issue:—“A blank seems here to interfere with the history of this Abbey: except from traditionary tales, but these are not the object of this pamphlet; its intention being rather to trace what can positively be stated from historical facts, having been set on fire by an infuriated mob at the Reformation, and afterwards acted upon as a common quarry,—thereby destroying the most beautiful remnants of ancient architecture. But happier times have now dawned upon this venerable pile, and the remains of consecrated antiquity shed a halo on the religious mind, venerated alike, as if in unison with grey haired virtue.” Well done, Deacon! You must have felt relieved after this outburst of rhapsodical eloquence! Some of the issues were embellished with a fairly-good representation of the Abbey. The block was cut in wood with a penknife by John Bremnar.

1838.

**The Arbroath Miscellany.**

The “Miscellany,” a 4 pp. demy, was ushered into existence in March, 1838, but it could scarcely be called a newspaper. It had some

interesting papers, chiefly written by its editor, on local traditions, and articles descriptive of local scenes. It was edited, printed, and published by John Bremnar, and appeared monthly. It had an existence of about eighteen months.

The year 1838 saw the advent of another paper of much greater importance than the "Miscellany," and one which, for a time, bade fair to be a most formidable rival to the "Journal."

#### **Arbroath Herald.**

On the 30th Nov., 1838, the first number of the "Arbroath Herald" appeared. It was an eight-page paper, 17 in. by 12 in., price 4½d. It was well printed, and excellently conducted, and, in the latter respect, it formed a great contrast to the "Journal."

In politics, it was Liberal, as indeed have been all the newspapers ever published in Arbroath. But the chief ground on which, in its opening number, the "Herald" claimed public support was "the utter absence of all personal abuse, and the strict attention to truth, purity of language, and selection of subjects." From the first to the last number it adhered to this, and it deserved much better support than it appears to have got. The paper continued only thirteen months, and, in their valedictory address, its proprietors stated that, while it was not commenced with very sanguine expectations of making money, they frankly confessed that it not only did not pay its way, but that financially it was a losing concern. It was conducted by Robert W. Anderson, a young Arbroath lawyer, and James Duff. The former acted as editor, and the latter as printer and publisher.

Mr Anderson removed many years ago from Arbroath to Forfar, where, in addition to his legal business, he held a number of important public appointments. He died in Forfar on 27th July, 1888. He was

the first to obtain leave to give verbatim reports of the Town Council proceedings.

James Duff, the printer and publisher, was essentially a newspaper man. He was born in 1797, and died in 1882. In 1811 he was apprenticed to the proprietors of the "Dundee Advertiser," Mr Rintoul being then editor. The "Advertiser" at that time was a weekly, with a circulation of 600, the price being 6d. The work was then done, by two journeymen and three apprentices, in an old building in New Inn Entry, a mighty contrast to the magnificent premises, splendid appliances, and numerous staff of that journal to-day. When quite a lad, Duff was entrusted with the most responsible work in the office, and during his service there, he came into contact with many men of note, George Kinloch, and Robert Nicoll, the poet, being among the number. Besides doing his duty at the "case," he did good work with his pen.

After twenty-seven years continuous service there, he came, as we have said, to Arbroath, and established the "Herald," of which, although he was not the recognised editor, the literary part of the work largely devolved on him, and it was a great disappointment to him when he felt called upon to abandon his Arbroath venture. On the relinquishment of the "Herald," he returned to Dundee, where he established himself as a general printer, in which business he continued to thrive till his retiral in 1869.

On the completion of the seventieth anniversary of his connection with the printing trade, he was presented by the master-printers of Dundee, with an illuminated address. Even after his retirement from business he continued his connection with periodical literature, contributing interesting articles on a variety of subjects to the local press.

1841.

**The Arbroath Argus Redivivus.**

The "Arbroath Argus Redivivus," a four pp. 4to demy monthly paper, price  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d, appeared in December, 1841. It was owned and edited by John Bremnar. From a letter in the first number, in which the writer expresses his regret at the change of tone in the conduct of the "Journal," which had then just passed into other hands, and, from the drift of leading and other articles in the earlier numbers, it was at once made clear that the citizens, both in their private and public capacity, might expect to "get it hot" if the editor differed from them. Certainly, if for nothing else, the revived "Argus" was distinguished more for plainness than politeness of speech. Its life, however, was a short one.

1842.

**The Arbroath Guide,**

The lineal descendant of the first "Argus" and of the "Arbroath Journal," made its bow to the public on 26th March, 1842. It has changed its form more than once, being at first a 4 pp. 24 by 18 in. paper, afterwards 16 pp., 15 by  $10\frac{3}{4}$  in., and again it was restored to its original size, which has since been increased in breadth. The price has also been on a sliding scale, beginning at  $4\frac{1}{2}$ d, then  $3\frac{1}{2}$ d,  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d,  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d, and 1d, at which price it now sells.

The first proprietor and editor, as we have already said, was Ben. M. Kennedy, and under his vigorous management the number of its subscribers steadily increased, and its influence in the community soon began to manifest itself. The "Ten Years' Conflict"

was raging at the time, and the editor espoused the cause of Moderatism, bitterly attacking the Non-Intrusion Party in the Church, and when the ecclesiastical disputes eventuated in the Disruption, the "Guide" for a time became a bitter opponent of the Free Church.

Notwithstanding that the "Guide," at its commencement, received substantial aid from Lord Panmure and from various gentlemen in the locality, Mr Kennedy found it up-hill work to get it established on a firm basis, and he was once on the point of abandoning it. Other counsels prevailed, and by "putting a stout heart to a stey brae," he was able ultimately to see the "Guide" a valuable property.

A native of Caithness, in early life Mr Kennedy spent some years in Mauritius and in France. On his return home, he became editor of the "John o' Groat Journal," and he held that appointment when he was offered and accepted the editorship of the "Arbroath Journal."

In 1846, he assumed J. S. Ramsay as partner and joint editor of the "Guide," but the union was not a happy one, and it came to an end in 1853. In that year, Thomas Buncle, who had acted as manager for a number of years, partnered Kennedy, and, on the death of the latter, in 1861, Mr Buncle became sole proprietor, and, to his able and judicious management, the long-continued success of the paper is mainly due.

Besides his success as a newspaper proprietor, Mr Buncle has gained more than local distinction as a printer and publisher of beautiful editions of various works, chiefly of a local character.

In 1856, Mr D. M. Luckie, a Montrosean, and then editor of the "John o' Groat Journal," became editor—a position which he

held till 1862, when he left for New Zealand. There he took a good position as a journalist. His success as such, led to his appointment as Government Insurance Commissioner—an office which he still holds. He was succeeded as editor of the "Guide," by Mr George Hay, the present holder of that office. Mr Hay, before coming to Arbroath, occupied, for more than two years, the post of Editor of the "Dundee Courier and Argus." Prior to that he was Editor of the "John o' Groat Journal," so that each of the "Guide's" Editors have acted in a similar capacity on the staff of that journal. Besides faithfully fulfilling his duties as Editor of the "Guide," Mr Hay has done good service to the community in producing such an excellent work as his "History of Arbroath" has proved itself to be.

The "Guide," as a faithful chronicler of local events, has been a model paper. In its columns, the various local histories—Miller's "Arbroath and its Abbey," Blair's "Chronicles of Aberbrothock," Hay's "History of Arbroath," M'Bain's "Arbroath Past and Present," and Carrie's "Ancient things in Angus"—first appeared in serial form. Its "Poets' Corner," has for many years been a nursery for local verse-writers, not a few of whom have taken a respectable place among the minor poets of Scotland. The meteorological observations of Dr Alexander Brown, the "Arbroath Astronomer," have regularly appeared in its columns.

1846.

#### The Pennyworth.

"The Pennyworth; or, Forfarshire Literary Journal and Monthly Advertiser," a monthly periodical, 16 pp. royal 8vo, edited, printed, and published by Ben M. Kennedy, was ushered into existence



on 28th July, 1846, and was issued on the last Tuesday of each month. In the preliminary announcement of this journal it was stated that it would contain one or more original articles, selections from new publications, notices of the Arts, Sciences, and Literature, and a chronicle of the remarkable events of the month.

In form and appearance it was like Chambers's Journal. It received a cordial reception from, and was very favourably reviewed by, many of the leading newspapers and magazines. It was of a non-political character, and bade fair to prove an honest though not a formidable rival to "Chambers" and "Hogg." The original articles showed considerable power, and the extracts were judiciously selected, so that it deserved greater success than it obtained. After a struggling existence of twelve months, its career was closed. In taking farewell of his readers, the editor complains, we think, however, without just cause, that the taste of the times was against the reception of good, wholesome literature. "The fate of the 'Pennyworth,'" he says, "is another proof added to the many now on record, of publications of the kind being ill-adapted for provincial towns. We regret not our having made the essay, however. Our desire was to place at the disposal of the public a publication in which we endeavoured to combine instruction with amusement, and that, too, at a price which put the miscellany within the reach of all. We have now discovered that, however successful in fixing our price so as to suit the pockets of the people, we have miscalculated as respects the matter best adapted to the minds of the million. If not savoury, ours has been at least a wholesome literary dish. Such, however, is the morbid taste which prevails, such the high-seasoned food which must be provided, such the fearful *hashie* of horrors and mysteries required in order to interest the generality

of readers, many of them more the creatures of impulse than reflection, in fact, such the exciting description of writing wanted by the public—desirous of being astounded rather than instructed, thrilled rather than amused—that we are forced to abandon our little publication to its fate, as one not adapted for the times.” “The Privateer,” a poem of considerable merit by Thomas Watson, in which Captain Fall’s attack on Arbroath is humorously told, first appeared in “The Pennyworth,” as also did the same writer’s “Horseman of Vetties Giel.”

1854.

**The Arbroath Journal and General Advertiser,**

Arbroath: Printed by J. Bremnar & Son. A 4 pp. folio double demy, published weekly, price 1d. Only the first page, however, was printed in Arbroath, the other three pages being printed in London, and made to do duty throughout the kingdom as a “local paper” of any town or village where “an enterprising printer” thought he could “turn an honest penny” by palming it off as an entirely home-spun article. The local page contained usually four columns of advertisements and two of local paragraphs. It ran for three years.

1855.

**Saturday Evening Guide.**

This—a later, and when first started, a cheaper edition of the “Arbroath Guide,” price one penny—was commenced in November, 1855, and still continues to appear every Saturday. When it was first published, the price of the “Guide” being then 4½d., this

evening edition came to be known as the "Penny Guide," by which name it is often yet called. What we have said of the "Guide" may be held as repeated here.

1856.

**Arbroath and Forfar News and Angus Advertiser,**

Printed and published every Wednesday morning, by John Mitchell, 8 pp. 16 by 21½ in., price 4½d. The publishing office was in Hill Street, on the site now occupied by the Post Office.

Its editor and publisher, John Mitchell, was a man of capital parts and large newspaper experience, having for many years previously edited and successfully conducted the "Montrose Review." He was only one of the proprietors of the "News," the major part of the funds being supplied by several Arbroath gentlemen, who believed there was ample field in Arbroath for another well-conducted newspaper, and that the speculation would be a paying one.

The first number appeared on 2nd April, 1856, and as it was excellently got up and admirably edited, it at once bade fair to be a success; but its very success was the death of it. The proprietors expected that, at the end of the first year, it should have yielded a handsome dividend, forgetting to take into account the extra expenditure incidental to a new undertaking; and when they found that, after payment of working expenses, there was nothing to divide, they insisted on a withdrawal of their shares. As the printer could not replace the sums thus abstracted from the business, the result was a collapse. It thus lived little over a year.

Besides the usual local and general news and well-written leaders, a series of articles of a historic nature, entitled, "Arbroath

in former Days," appeared in its columns. The name of the writer of the articles was not given, but they were generally understood to be from the pen of Mr David Miller, the author of "Arbroath and its Abbey."

1858.

**Aberbrothock Club.**

"Aberbrothock Club, or the sayings of Timothy Tripoly, Saunders Sago, and Eppy Prunello, as reported by Franco Bergohausen, Esq." Printed by W. Haig, Hill Street, Arbroath. 4 pp. 8vo demy. It was ill-printed, ill-spelt, and altogether a most wretched production.

In the first number, after a brief introduction, giving a description of the personal appearance, and an estimate of the mental qualities of the various members of "the Club," the purposes of the publication are thus set forth:—"They have met in Eppy's dwelling for at least three decades for the purpose of deliberating in a homely way on affairs public, political, and social, special and general, foreign and national;" and it goes on to say that it has been resolved "that in future we shall meet in some public place, say in the White Hart Hotel, every Fursday night weather permittin' and that for the benefet o' the nation in general an' the men an' women o' this toon in particklar, a reporter be employed to wrate doon correctly a' 'at we say."

It will thus be seen that the chief object in view was to comment on or gossip about the passing events of the day. The style was as indicated by the title, colloquial. The conversations were carried on chiefly in the Scottish dialect, but the writer or writers were quite incapable of writing correctly a single sentence of

Scotch. As to the matter, it was the most miserable drivel that ever appeared in print. As might be expected, only a few numbers saw the light.

From this period down till 1885—excepting denominational publications, year books, and MS. magazines, of which some account will be given later on—no new literary venture was attempted.

1885.

**The Arbroath Herald.**

The "Arbroath Herald and Advertiser for the Montrose Burghs." Printed and published by Brodie & Salmond, Brothock Bridge, Arbroath.

Except for very short periods, at considerable intervals, Arbroath up till 1885 had only one newspaper running at a time.

Notwithstanding that in other respects Arbroath has always been a go-a-head place, it has been far behind other towns, of even smaller size, in the matter of newspapers. We do not know if there be a single town in Scotland, with a population equal to that of Arbroath, with only one newspaper. Mr John Brodie, bookseller and printer here, believing that there was ample room for two papers, on the 5th February, 1885, issued the first number of the (revived) "Arbroath Herald."

It was a modest little 4 pp. paper ( $12\frac{1}{4}$  by  $9\frac{1}{2}$  in.), and was at first chiefly meant as an advertising sheet. But from the beginning one of the pages was devoted to local news, including one or two short leaders, and it was issued gratis.

It was prophesied that this venture would not last many months (the wish probably being father to the prophecy), but it was not many weeks in existence till it began to make itself felt as a power

in the community. Its leading articles, which were almost entirely confined to local questions, were powerfully written, and were the means of calling attention to matters seriously affecting the well-being of the inhabitants.

As might be expected of an organ so outspoken, its advent was hailed by many as a boon; whilst by others, on whose toes it trod, it was denounced with much bitterness. Thus "the little Herald," or the "Heraldie" as it was occasionally, either derisively or affectionately called, soon became an acknowledged power in Arbroath.

Notwithstanding the prognostications of an early death, it continued to grow in size and power. It grew from a four to a six page paper, and increased not only in size but in circulation, till on the 8th September, 1887, it came out as a full-fledged 8 pp. newspaper ( $22\frac{1}{2}$  by  $16\frac{1}{2}$  in.), no longer gratis, but price one penny. At this time Mr J. B. Salmond (who before this had been a frequent contributor) partnered Mr Brodie, under the firm of Brodie & Salmond. Larger premises were secured, and new machinery and plant introduced, and with Mr Salmond as editor, and Mr Brodie as manager and printer, the "Herald" made a bid for a larger share of public patronage. Since then the paper has steadily grown in influence and power.

There has all along been an open, manly, and generous tone in its editorial columns, and whether exposing abuses or speaking encouragingly on questions affecting the well-being of the community, it has never descended to personalities or unfairness of argument on the one hand, or to flattering or fawning on the other. Taking it all in all, it has held the balance, when writing on public questions or public men, with justice and equity.

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In politics the "Herald" supports, with marked ability, the party of radical reform and advancement in the local as well as in the Imperial Government.

In other respects it is also an excellent paper. Besides giving full and correct reports of public meetings, and of local occurrences, it invariably contains a considerable number of original papers by local writers on literary subjects. Several series of most interesting papers have appeared in its columns, and its influence for good in this respect has been specially apparent.

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## Year Books.

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A CONSIDERABLE number of Year Books or local Almanacs have been published in Arbroath from time to time by local booksellers. As a rule they consisted of a London-printed, illustrated sheet, which constituted the Almanac proper, supplemented by several pages of information concerning local Boards, societies, mortifications, and other institutions of public importance. These, along with trade advertisements, formed the regular penny Almanac. They usually appeared during the New Year holidays, and were thus convenient advertising mediums for the festive season. Most of them seemed to gain a fair circulation, but several never reached a second issue, while others presented themselves only intermittently. With the exception of those we shall presently mention, however, none of them were of any permanent importance, and need not be further referred to here.

1871.

**Bremnar's Almanac and Local Register.**

"Bremnar's Illustrated Arbroath Almanack and Local Register," price one penny, was first issued on New Year's Day, 1871, and has since continued to be published annually.

Besides containing the usual information to be found in almanacs, a useful register of all public boards, societies, charities, educational institutions and the like is given. It is largely taken advantage of as an advertising medium.

John Bremnar, the publisher, to whose various contributions to local periodical literature we have already referred, is still alive, a hale and hearty octogenarian. Born in Brechin on 14th December, 1803, he was brought to Arbroath in infancy, so that he has been a resident here for the long period of eighty-five years. He has been in the bookselling and printing business on his own account for the long period of sixty-seven years. Although still in business, he has done little or nothing in a literary way for the last twenty years or so, but prior to that he made considerable contributions to local literature. In 1842, the first edition of his "Abbey of Aberbrothock, its ruins and historical associations," was published, a second edition appearing ten years later. In 1853 he wrote and published "The Cliffs and Caves near Arbroath," being descriptive of a ramble from Arbroath to the romantic fishing village of Auchmithie (the Musselcrag of "The Antiquary") in the course of which he descants on the botany, geology, and marine flora of the district. Of a like nature are his "Pilgrimage to St Vigeans," his "Pilgrimage to Arbirlot," his "Loiterings by the Sea Shore," and other works. His "Inchcape Rock," a local legend in metre, and



other rhymes which he has written, all treat more or less of scenes in the neighbourhood of Arbroath.

1880.

**Hood's Forfarshire Almanac.**

“Hood's Forfarshire Almanac and Official Directory” for the burghs of Dundee, Arbroath, Montrose, Brechin and Kirriemuir. Arbroath: Jas. F. Hood, price sixpence, 100 pp.

This was an exceedingly useful and admirably got up year book. It contained full and carefully-compiled lists of all the public boards, societies, and institutions in the different towns in the county of Forfar. Special attention was given to all educational and philanthropic agencies throughout the district. It also contained a judiciously-compiled calendar of events in local history, which elevated the work into one of more than passing interest, and made it worthy of a place on the shelves of local book collectors. Its information was full and varied, and, when after two years its publication was discontinued, it was much missed by business men, not only in Arbroath, but in the neighbouring towns as well.

1889.

**The Arbroath Year Book.**

“The Arbroath Year Book and Fairport Almanac,” with general directory for Arbroath, Carnoustie, Friockheim, and surrounding districts. Arbroath: printed at the *Arbroath Herald* Office, by Brodie & Salmond, publishers. This is an admirably-planned and well-executed undertaking, and has met with a hearty welcome in business circles,

Besides a calendar, which gives lists of interesting events in local history, lists of boards and societies with their office-bearers, lists of local clergymen and churches, along with full information concerning schools, scholarships, charities, literary, sporting, and other clubs, it also contains a new feature in such annuals, so far as Arbroath is concerned, namely, a directory giving the names and addresses of the householders in the burgh. It has been well patronised as an advertising medium. An artistically designed title page, consisting of three local scenes from the pencil of Mr James Greig, an Arbroath artist, adds beauty to an otherwise well got up directory.



## DENOMINATIONAL PUBLICATIONS.



THE various churches in Scotland have, for many years, had their representative magazines, giving an account of the operations, missionary and other, carried on by the respective denominations.

Prior to the introduction of these, however, the keen battle fought by the opposing parties in the Church of Scotland during the "Ten Years' Conflict" called for the strongest and sharpest of weapons. These were produced in ample profusion, in the shape of pamphlets, newspapers, and other periodicals. Here the need for a paper of a polemical nature was strongly felt, and "The Presbyterian" came into existence as the organ of the Non-Intrusion party in this locality, and it was conducted with immense vigour.

1843.

### **The Presbyterian.**

"Arbroath: Published on the first Saturday of every month, by James Adam, Bookseller, to whose care all communications to the Editor are to be sent." At its commencement the "Presbyterian" was an 8 pp. quarto-demy paper, price 1½d.

The first number was published on 7th January, 1843, and it continued this size till 5th January, 1845—25 months.

From February till December, 1845, when it ceased to exist, it was changed to 16 pp. 8vo demy.

The Evangelical party in the Church was represented in this quarter by a set of able men, who soon earned for themselves more than local fame—Principal M'Cosh, of Princeton ; Principal Lumsden, of Aberdeen ; Dr Wm. Wilson, of Edinburgh ; and Dr Nixon, of Montrose, being then members of this and the neighbouring presbyteries. It was an open secret that Lumsden, then of Barry, and Wilson of Carmyllie, were joint editors of the "Presbyterian." The paper was printed at the "Dundee Warder" office, the conductors of which paper were also partisans of the Non-Intrusionists.

While the "Presbyterian" contained articles on Church history, and gave information as to the progress of the movement throughout Scotland, it contained full details of local ecclesiastical events, and from its columns it would not be difficult to construct a history of the rise of the various Free Church congregations within the bounds of the Presbytery of Arbroath. The younger members of the Established and Free Churches, should the "Presbyterian" fall into their hands, would be astonished to witness the bitterness with which the controversy was waged on both sides in those stirring days.

The Non-Intrusion party here, as in many other quarters throughout Scotland, met with very serious opposition from site-refusing landlords. In this locality they were bitterly opposed by Lord Panmure, who was sole heritor of several parishes in the district, and an extensive proprietor in others. His hostility to

the "Evangelicals" was undisguised and relentless. The "Presbyterian" throughout its pages bears ample testimony to this. In an article of considerable length, a writer, presumably one of the editors, delivers himself of a most scathing denunciation of the character and conduct of this nobleman; which, bold and defiant, and regardless of public opinion as he usually was, made him not only tremble, but was the means of leading him to moderate the rigour of his persecution of the Free Church party within his domains.

The time of the Disruption called forth several publications akin to the "Presbyterian." These did their work for a few months and ceased, but this journal continued a vigorous life for three years—years which marked an important epoch in the history of the Church; and when that transition period had passed away, its purpose having been served, it closed its career at a time when it was still in full health and vigour.

### Local Supplements.

During the past few years it has become customary for the different congregations, while distributing these denominational publications, to have local covers or supplements, in which is given the congregational news of the month. In some cases, this is done through the medium of a separate sheet, entirely devoted to articles and information having reference to the operations of the various agencies in connection with the congregation. Some of these, besides being useful to the congregation immediately concerned, are of considerable interest to outsiders. We shall refer to them in the order of their appearance.

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1882.

**The Ladyloan Free Church Supplement.**

“The Ladyloan Free Church Supplement” was commenced in April, 1882, and has been admirably conducted. A special feature in this magazine has been a “Sketch of the Free Ladyloan Congregation,” by the Rev. J. Moffat Scott, which appeared in its columns in monthly instalments, and has since been carefully revised, and republished in book form. Besides being interesting to the congregation, the volume forms an acceptable addition to our local history. We may mention in passing that Mr Moffat Scott is the author of another volume of local, as well as of general, historical interest, “The Martyrs of Angus and Mearns.”

1882.

**Knox Free Church Supplement.**

“Knox Free Church Supplement,” commenced in August, 1882, and continued till April, 1886, when it was dropped for financial reasons. Besides the record of congregational incidents, this magazine contained poetical selections, and an occasional original hymn, from the pen of the pastor, the Rev. J. P. Lilley.

1883.

**St Mary's Banner of Faith.**

“St Mary's Banner of Faith,” a monthly magazine for St Mary's [Episcopal Church], Arbroath,” was started in January, 1883, and still continues to be published. Here too, only the cover is local. It contains the usual congregational intelligence, with occasional notices of special meetings of the denomination elsewhere in Scotland.

1884.

**The Arbroath Parish Magazine.**

“The Arbroath Parish Magazine.” This is an insert under the cover of “Life and Work,” an organ of the Established Church of Scotland. The local portion, which dates from October, 1884, gives very full details of the congregational transactions.

A speciality in this magazine, with which we were pleased to meet, and only regret that its recurrence is so infrequent, is an occasional page giving extracts from the records of the Kirk Session of Arbroath Parish. These extracts give the present members a vivid picture of “Life among their ain folk,” in the days of yore. We cannot resist the temptation of reproducing one or two of these.

The Kirk-Session was a much more important body in days gone by than it is now. It fulfilled many functions, and among others it did duty as a sort of Police Court. Take this parallel case to the modern “drunk and disorderly” :—“Feb. 16, 1670, John Ramsay, sailer, and John Ramsay in Seaton, and Pat. Lesly, are appointed to be cited to the next dyet, for drunkenness upon ye Lord’s day, in tyme of divine service.” Many cases of this kind are scattered over these records. We poor moderns have no tribunal before which to cite scolding wives, and can only now “grin and bear it.” Henpecked husbands were better protected then, as witness :—“June 15, 1670. Margt. Mawder being cited for scolding, confessed her guilt, and was rebuked before ye Session.” Margaret got off easy; not so another termagant who appeared before the same body in the following month :—“July 27. Margaret Fullertone being convicted of scolding,

was rebuked before the Session, and appointed to pay thrittie shil. Scots in penaltie." It is to be hoped that Margaret kept "a calm sough" thereafter.

Here is an instruction to the elders. If their successors in office to-day attempted to obey the resolution, which we presume is still unrescinded, we fear they would have a stiff job of it—"It is recommended to ye elders to take notice of extravagant persons as go to the Heughs [cliffs], or go forth in boats upon the Sabbath day."

The Kirk was the advertising medium, and although the members of Session were in many respects strict Sabbatarians, in those days they saw no impropriety in holding a sale of the grass in the Abbey burying ground on the Sabbath. "June 2, 1670. The Churchyard grass the said day was Rouped to 14 lb. Scots." There was no fire insurance agent then to worry the life out of the parishioners with his canvass for business, as is now the case, but the Session occasionally, without premium, took the place of an insurance company, and indemnified the sufferer for the calamity of a conflagration. "September 28, 1670. The Session appoint Isobel Anderson to have on dayes collectione for her supplie—her house being latelie burnt with fyre."

The area of the Church was a clear space, no fixed seats being therein, pews being a modern invention. People either stood or knelt during the service, or they brought stools with them whereon to sit. There were a few desks or seats in some of the Churches prior to the Reformation, but it was long thereafter till the Churches were filled with pews. At first it was only people of rank who were allowed to erect these. Here is a record of the erection of two of the pews in the Parish Church in Arbroath, which still remain. It is dated 27th April, 1670. "Alexr. Peirson, merchant



in Arbroathe, produced a warrand, under the hand of John Ochterlony of Wester Seaton, and his son, James Ochterlony of date ye day of                    impowring him to raise two peews in ye room Allotted for ym in the Church of Arbroth, ye first of which is to be for ye use of ye Lairds of Seaton and their heirs ; ye most remote from ye pulpit, for ye said Alexr. Pierson and his Heirs the which warrand being maturely considered by the members of Session, all of them did consent thereto and did empower the said Alexr. to raise ye peews for ye use aforesaid." We make no apology for introducing these extracts, for they not only show how interesting those magazines may be made, but we are sure the extracts themselves will be most acceptable to our readers.

1885.

**Princes Street U. P. Congregational Record.**

"Congregational Record, Princes Street United Presbyterian Church, Arbroath." This Magazine (4pp.) differs in several respects from the others which we have noticed above. It is a quarterly (all the others being monthlies) and is quite distinct from the denominational magazines of the U. P. Church. It is entirely local, and contains a very full and faithful record of the many departments of Christian work carried on by this admirably-organized congregation. It also gives interesting obituary notices of prominent members.

1887.

**East Free Church Monthly.**

"East Free Church Monthly," commenced May, 1887, and continued till April, 1889. Following in the wake of Free Ladyloan, a history of the congregation was commenced,

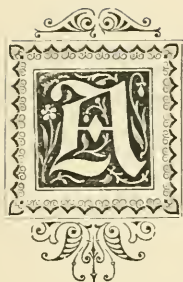
but after running three chapters, bringing down the story to 1863, the historian comes to a sudden halt. He gives his reasons for doing so in the following sentences :—" Thus far, nothing of any great moment, in the way of a difficulty, has occurred in writing this brief history of our church. I now find, however, that difficulties of no mean order stare me in the face. After due consideration of all the facts of the case, I consider it wisest not to continue these papers on exactly the same lines as the former ones. Everyone must admit that old sores, whether in society or the Church, are best kept out of sight. The re-opening of them never fails to do harm. The East Church has passed through many troubles—I would almost be inclined to say revolutions. In this matter the East Church has been particularly unfortunate. I therefore think silence the best policy under the circumstances. To enter at all into anything like a history of the period immediately following that narrated in my last paper would, I am sure, only serve to recall facts and memories that are best hidden out of sight and forgotten." The East Free Church has had an interesting history and one well worth telling, and its discontinuance is to be regretted.

1888.

*High Street Free Church Monthly.*

"High Street Free Church Monthly" was started in February 1888. While giving the usual congregational news, it contains a series of interesting articles on the various departments of congregational work, and in this respect it has kept more closely to the main end for which such publications are intended, than most of the other local, denominational magazines have done.

## MANUSCRIPT MAGAZINES.



AS a further indication of the literary life of the burgh, the manuscript magazines—of which, during the last thirty odd years, there have been a few—are worthy of notice.

The literary or mutual improvement societies, of which the town for many years has had many, have been the means of giving a healthy stimulus to the intellectual life of “young Arbroath.” The MS. Magazines have, as a rule, been the outcome of one or other of those societies.

It may be that the first efforts of the young journalists were feeble, but, being healthy, they were full of promise. Time has proved, in the case of not a few of these Arbroathians, that the early cultivation of their literary tastes developed into a fair amount of success in the line of authorship.

It will not be necessary to notice all the MS. Journals which have from time to time appeared in Arbroath, and after a brief existence, expired. We shall only specially refer to three—one the production of young men who had entered on the business of their life, another of boys yet at school, and a third, what might be called a home or domestic journal, each of these being representative of its class. They will serve to show the nature of

these juvenile literary efforts, and the kind of subjects which the youthful aspirants to literary fame attempted to tackle.

Since the birth of this century, Arbroath has had, springing up now and then, such literary and mutual improvement societies as those to which we have just referred. Alexander Balfour, the poet and novelist, whose contributions (1799-1800) to the Arbroath Magazine we have already mentioned, was, as we have shewn, the moving spirit in one of these, of which he was also the originator, but, although his pen was seldom idle, we find nothing of the nature of a MS. Magazine in connection with this society.

#### Fairport Mutual Improvement Association Magazine.

Somewhere, early in the fifties, a society was formed, the membership of which was composed of pupil teachers. It was named the Fairport Mutual Improvement Association, and its main aim, as set forth in the rules, was to make its members "model men." In 1856, with the view of further improving their style of composition, the "model men" started a magazine. It was conducted entirely in manuscript, the members contributing articles which were filed between stiff vellum boards. These were adorned on the front with the title, and a sketch of a quill pen, underneath which were written Byron's lines:—

"All hail to thee my grey goose quill!  
 Slave of my thoughts, obedient to my will,  
 Torn from thy parent wing to make a PEN,  
 The MIGHTY instrument of LITTLE MEN."

The articles were written only on one side of the paper, the other side being reserved for the criticisms of the readers and the replies thereto by the authors. At the beginning were a list of the

contributors, and a table of contents, which was, of course, gradually added to as the magazine grew.

The work reached the mature age of eight numbers, and was only abandoned in consequence of the chief contributors, William Jolly, Alexander Coutts, and James Donald, who had finished their apprenticeships as pupil teachers, having to proceed to Edinburgh to complete their professional studies. The subjects treated were certainly varied enough in character. They consisted of essays, criticisms of books, descriptions of scenery, original stories, biographical sketches, and, of course, poetry from the budding poets among the "model men."

The originators of the venture, Messrs Jolly and Coutts, were the most prolific contributors. As an indication of the contents, we give the titles of a few of the papers:—By Mr Donald, essays, "The Improvement of the Memory," the "Acquisition of Knowledge;" criticism, "Alison's Europe;" description, "Ross-shire," and some tales. By Mr Jolly, essay, "Elements of Correct Style;" criticisms, "My Schools and Schoolmasters," "Ossian," "Sterne;" description, "Ascent of Benaven," and two or three stories. By Mr Coutts, essay, "Novels;" criticism, "White's Land-Marks of English History." The style of the papers, as a whole, was decidedly creditable, the composition showing evident care and remarkable ease, considering that the authors were then only about eighteen years of age, while the treatment of the subjects showed much reading and intellectual power; the stories, no small constructive and dramatic interest; and the poetry, a very fair command of rhyme, whatever may be said of the *afflatus* that makes the poet.

The criticisms by the members of each other's papers were numerous, vigorous, and amusing, with smart retorts and defences, and they were, withal, temperate and pointed.

This magazine was a highly creditable effort, zealously carried out by young men who, with high moral aims, earnestly endeavoured to improve themselves in the use of the pen, as, in their debates, they set themselves to acquire a fluency of speech, and a readiness to meet their opponents in argument. It certainly produced after literary fruit in at least two of the youthful aspirants. William Jolly, F.R.S.E., F.G.S., F.S.A., Scot., &c., H.M. Inspector of Schools, is well known throughout Scotland, not only as an authority in scholastic matters, but as an author of good repute, and a lecturer on educational and other subjects. He has written very valuable treatises on the geology of various districts in Scotland. The chapter on the geology of Oban in Professor Blackie's *Altavona* (in which work Mr Jolly figures as "Hilarius") was written by him. His contributions to the magazines are numerous and important. He is the author of one of the best Biographies that has appeared in recent years, "John Duncan, Scotch Weaver and Botanist." As an educationist, a scientist, an archaeologist, and an author, he has proved that his early training at the mutual improvement<sup>t</sup> society in his native town has been of service to himself and advantage to others.

The other member of the little society, to whom reference has been made, was James N. Donald, whose editorship of Chambers' "Etymological Dictionary" and other educational works, gained for him some fame in that department of literature. His career, which promised to be a very creditable one, was cut short, he having met a terrible death in the railway accident at Morpeth in 1877.

Other two societies of the same class as this, the members o

which had their MS. magazines, produced authors whose writings proved the benefit which these early efforts are calculated to confer. Thomas Jamieson, Librarian of the Advocates' Library, who edited editions of some of the older authors, amongst others that of "Barclay's Ship of Fools," which was published in three handsome volumes; Alexander Main, whose Shakesperian studies attracted the notice of Charles and Mary Cowden Clark, and gained him employment on their edition of Shakespeare, and who has also published "Wise, Witty, and Tender Sayings of George Eliot," and an abbreviated edition of "Boswell's Life of Johnson;" James S. Neish, author of "In the Byeways of Life," and other works; Peter Thomson, editor of the "Edinburgh Evening News;" William Durie, H.M. Customs, Lerwick, who writes with much acceptance for different Magazines; and others.

#### The Fairport Magazine.

In 1876, two school boys (now the Rev. Wm. Marwick and Dr Henry Angus, now in New Zealand, son of the Rev. Dr Henry Angus of Arbroath) started a manuscript Journal, under the title of the "Fairport Magazine."

The first No. appeared in October, and consisted of 16 pp. It contained the first chapter of a story by the editor (Wm. Marwick), entitled "The Two Young Crusoes," and the first chapter of a story "The Far West," by Henry Angus, besides short articles and poems by other juvenile contributors. The Magazine continued fortnightly for a time, and the December No. contained an announcement that the January No. would be *printed* and that a new story would be commenced.

In 1877, a printing press was got, and the two boys named

set up as printers. The only number of the printed set now in existence is wonderfully well executed. It contains "Harry Bradford," chapter III., "Arbroath and its Abbey," and "Young Ronald of Morar." It bears some resemblance to the old-fashioned chap-books, and is quite a curiosity in its way.

In January, 1878, the Magazine was restarted in MS. form with new and wonderfully well written stories. Besides the two lads named, the chief contributors were two young ladies, Miss E. H. Smith of Glasgow and Miss M. E. Angus, Arbroath. This magazine continued till nearly the close of 1878. Throughout its existence it showed considerable promise, at least on the part of its chief contributors.

#### **The Manse Journal.**

The family MS. Magazine is one, which, from its very nature, is less known to the outside world than are those to which we have just referred, and yet it is of a class which serves to elevate and enliven the domestic circle in which it exists.

One of these, bearing the title of "The Manse Journal," was the joint production of the gifted family of the late Rev. Dr Crichton of Free Inverbrothock Church. The eldest son, Andrew, who had gone to the Edinburgh University in 1852, was the projector of, and the chief contributor to, this monthly.

The first number appeared in 1855. It consisted of eight quarto pages, double columns, and was written as closely as small print, in a clear, beautiful hand. It continued for somewhere about three years. The articles showed that the contributors inherited a full share of the brilliant talents and the intense love of literature which



characterized their father. The contents included articles on biblical subjects, sketches of scenery and descriptions of rambles in the country, while those written by Andrew embraced pictures of student life, sketches of excursions to Glasgow and other towns, of skating incidents on Duddingston Loch, and the like. The family contributions also included short poems and essays of considerable merit.

Besides writing for "The Manse Journal," Mr Andrew Crichton became a frequent contributor to a number of the leading Magazines of the day. After completing his studies, in course of which he took the degree of B.A., he was licensed by the Free Presbytery of Arbroath, and was immediately thereupon appointed colleague to the Rev. Dr Charles J. Brown of Free North, Edinburgh. There he remained for nearly six years, when he received and accepted a unanimous call to Free Chapelshade, Dundee. His ministry there was very brief, but exceedingly successful. Crowds flocked to hear him, and he at once became the most popular preacher in Dundee. As a proof of his popularity it may be mentioned that at the first letting of seats after his translation, hundreds of applicants were disappointed. His constitution, never very robust, soon broke down, and he died in July, 1867, at the early age of thirty.

No less able and indefatigable as a contributor to "The Manse Journal" was his brother, the late Dr James S. Crichton. The doctor, who died in 1887, at the comparatively early age of forty-six, took a foremost place in literary and scientific circles, and his death caused an irreparable blank in nearly every literary, scientific, and philanthropic society in Arbroath.

**The Ruskin Reading Guild Journal.**

The last of the MS. magazines to which we will here refer, is the organ of the Ruskin Reading Guild, which was started in October, 1887, under the guidance of the Rev. Wm. Marwick, to whose youthful literary productions we have already referred.

The aim of the Guild has been to diffuse a knowledge of the writings of John Ruskin, and of the authors on whom he looks as his masters, and to promote, by the method of association, careful and thoughtful reading and study of good literature. The membership of the Guild is not confined to Arbroath, branches being formed in Glasgow, Elgin, Edinburgh, and Dunfermline, with associates elsewhere throughout the country, the membership being open to all students of Ruskin and his masters.

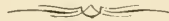
The MS. Journal, edited by Mr Marwick, the founder of the Guild, was issued monthly from Nov., 1887, to May, 1888—seven numbers, and two in November and December, 1888—and includes articles on “Sesame and Lilies” (which was the book first chosen for study by the branches forming the Guild), on “Dante’s Minor Works,” “Carlyle’s Life of Sterling,” &c.

The magazine was transmitted from branch to branch, and was read at branch meetings, and was then passed on to the associates. On account of the labour involved in its production in MS. form, the necessarily slow circulation, and its growing popularity, it was decided to turn it into a printed magazine, in which form it not only represents the Reading Guild, but the Ruskin and Carlyle Societies throughout the country and is intended to aid, as far as possible, the work of St George’s Guild.

The first number of the (printed) “Ruskin Reading Guild

Journal"—32 pp., price sixpence, Brodie & Salmond, Arbroath, publishers—appeared on New Year's Day, 1889, and has since been continued monthly. Besides giving full information about the various Ruskin and Carlyle Societies, whose organ it is, it contains able articles from well-known writers. It has already taken an honourable place among the literary journals. Mr Marwick continues to act as editor, and he is aided by an editorial committee, comprising Messrs William Jolly and Henry R. Howatt, the president and secretary respectively of the Ruskin Society of Glasgow; John E. Fowler of the Ruskin Society, Liverpool; Henry E. West, secretary of the Carlyle Society of London; J. Marshall Mather, author of "The Life and Teaching of John Ruskin;" Albert Fleming, companion of the Guild of St George Rev. John Wellwood, Drainie; Rev. Hugh Cameron, Montrose and J. B. Salmond, editor of the "Arbroath Herald."

The printing and general get-up of this new venture are admirable, and reflect high credit on the publishers. This journal has been well received and favourably reviewed by most of the leading papers. It has been spoken of as rich in promise, and the typography has been referred to as reflecting great credit on the Arbroath press. It has been eagerly taken up by the Ruskin reading public, the first number having been exhausted in a few days after publication. It has since been reprinted.





PART II.

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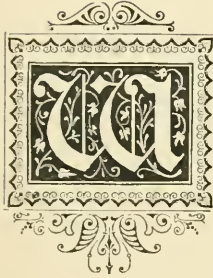
POLITICAL AND MUNICIPAL  
BROADSIDES.



# BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ARBROATH.

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## II.—POLITICAL BROADSIDES.



WE have already shown that Arbroath had no newspaper immediately preceding, nor during the stirring times which eventuated in the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832. The want of such an organ of public opinion was in a measure met, and its usefulness foreshadowed, by the political and other circulars, handbills, and posters, which emanated from the local press. The late Mr James Caird, of Tower Nook, a keen politician and a very intelligent citizen, made a splendid collection of these broadsides, which, some time prior to his death—which occurred nearly twenty years ago—he handed over to Mr David Carnegie, a well-known local poet. This collection Mr Carnegie recently gifted to the writer, in whose possession it now is.

As this—what we may call—wall literature is genuine history, and was really the precursor of those newspapers, whose history we have been endeavouring to describe, we think some notice of these broadsides and their contents may fairly be entitled to

preservation in a permanent form. They are nearly all political. From the numerous and pithily-written memoranda thereon, in the handwriting of the collector, we are better able to trace the events which they commemorate. Although it is easy from the tenor of these MS. notes to ascertain with which side in the Parliamentary contests Mr Caird sympathised, he has very wisely embraced in his collection both the Whig and Tory productions, thus affording us a lively picture of the local political arena of the day.

#### Agitation for Parliamentary Reform.

For a long time prior to '32 a keen agitation for reform was going on, and in this agitation Arbroath—which for many years was noted for the advanced Liberal opinions of the bulk of its inhabitants—took an active part. We have before us records of public meetings crying loudly for reform from 1817 onward. At a large meeting held on the West Common, in January of that year, a number of telling speeches were delivered. From the advertisement announcing to the public the result of the meeting, we find that it was resolved to form a Committee to prepare a series of resolutions, and to draw up a petition to the Prince Regent and to both Houses of Parliament, expressing the sense of the inhabitants of the absolute necessity of a radical reform in the representation of the people, which resolutions and petitions were to be submitted to a meeting to be afterwards held. Although attended by thousands, the meeting was most orderly and decorous, and in this respect formed a striking contrast to political meetings held elsewhere at this critical period. For example, in London, that same week, an attack was made on the Prince Regent while



returning from the opening of Parliament. It is thus described in the newspapers of the day: "The concourse of people assembled was much greater than has been witnessed on any similar occasion since the attack made on the King in St James's Park in the year 1795. On the return of the Royal procession the violent malcontents had increased considerably, and on its entrance into the Mall of St James's Park, they broke out into acts of tumult and violence, accompanied with the most foul, shocking, and insulting language; gravel, stones, and other things were thrown at the Royal carriage, and at the military; the life-guardsmen were insulted with scurrilous language, and the glass of the State carriage was broken three times." Following on this a reward of £1000 for the apprehension of the person or persons concerned in the attack was offered, and in Parliament, Lord Castlereagh presented a message from the Prince Regent signifying "that he had received accounts from unquestionable authority that plans, meetings, and associations were on foot, both in the Metropolis and various parts of the kingdom for purposes hostile to the peace and government of the realm, and tending to the subversion of the law and constitution."

But notwithstanding the determined opposition on the part of the Court and Parliament to the wishes of the people, Arbroathians, true to their character as a law-abiding community, conducted these, as they did all their meetings, with the utmost decorum. A deputation from the meeting was appointed to wait on the Provost to ask the co-operation of the Magistrates and Council. In response thereto the Provost summoned a Council meeting, at which it was agreed to convene a meeting of the inhabitants. Placards were accordingly issued calling "a meeting

of the Magistrates, Dean of Guild, Guildry, Convener of Trades, Incorporations, Burghers, and other inhabitants of Arbroath and its vicinity, to be held in the Convent Churchyard, on Monday, the 3rd February, 1817, for the purpose of taking into consideration the distress of the country and petitioning for a Parliamentary reform." The meeting was accordingly held under the presidency of Provost Duncan. It was not only the largest meeting held in Arbroath up to that time—the audience being variously stated at from 4000 to 8000—but it is notable as being the first meeting of the kind in any burgh in Scotland, at which the Magistrates and other public bodies took a leading part. A series of firmly-worded resolutions were passed attributing the misery and distress then prevalent, not to temporary and unavoidable causes, but to the long series of glaring abuses in the administration of public affairs; in the maintenance of an immense standing army; in the operations of the Corn Bill; and in the general corruption which an undue influence on the executive had introduced into every department of government. The resolutions, seven in number,—which are remarkably well drawn up, but too lengthy for quotation here—concluded by urging economy in every department of the State; the reduction of the standing army; the repeal of the Corn Bill; the abolition of sinecures and unmerited pensions; the shortening the duration of Parliaments; and the restoration to the people of their rightful prerogative of electing their own representatives. It was agreed to embody the resolutions in a petition to Parliament, and the meeting further pluckily resolved that copies of the resolutions should be sent to the London and Edinburgh newspapers in order "that other places, stimulated by this example, may be induced to come forward and unite in the same laudable and important undertaking."

In the newspapers of the day we have traced this petition, and we find it presented to the House of Commons by General Sir Robert Ferguson on the 10th March. In supporting it, the gallant general stated that nine-tenths of the people of Scotland were favourable to reform. Mr Boswell replied that the petitioners were not landlords, but persons of inferior rank in life. In this he was supported by the Lord-Advocate, who asserted that nine-tenths of the people of Scotland did not want reform, "because," said he, "neither the landed interest nor corporate bodies have petitioned." This may have been true of prior petitions; but the Arbroath petition, then under discussion, gave the lie to this; for, as we have shown, it emanated from the various corporate bodies in the burgh. In this the members of the Corporations in Arbroath set a patriotic example, which in time was followed by their brethren in other places throughout the kingdom.

#### **Indignation at the Peers' Rejection of Reform Bill.**

During the years that followed, the people continued to fight the battle of reform, while the Administration as strenuously opposed it. When in 1830 there was a disposition favourable to the demands of the people, the Duke of Wellington resolutely refused all concession. The result was that he was driven from office.

The fight continued, and in 1832 the English Reform Bill was passed by the Commons, but was rejected by the Lords. The outcry in the country at this proceeding of the Upper House was loud and terrible. The voice of Arbroath was added to the general shout of indignation. Our next poster, containing the following announcement, is dated "Arbroath, 14th May, 1832:—A General Meeting of the Inhabitants was held this day in Spring Garden,

Lindsay Street, in terms of a requisition signed by 274 persons, to take into consideration the steps necessary to be adopted in the present eventful crisis." The resolutions, five in number, were all "carried by acclamation."

In these resolutions "the meeting deeply deplores the confirmation of the intelligence that the House of Peers have nullified the Reform Bill, and, under the influence of a factious and unprincipled combination of irresponsible advisers of the Crown, have overturned the most Liberal and patriotic Ministry to which the people of this country ever gave their confidence;" and it is further resolved "that this meeting have learned with the greatest satisfaction that the House of Commons have nobly responded to the voice of the nation, and, by a large majority, declared to His Majesty that they cannot place confidence in any administration that will not support the entire bill of reform as passed by that honourable House." The meeting further determines "to petition the House of Commons to withhold all supplies and grants of money to any administration that may be formed until the People's Bill of Rights becomes the law of the land." It is also resolved that the meeting expresses to the Right Hon. Earl Grey and his late colleagues in office, "the high sense the inhabitants of this town entertain of the ability, firmness, and patriotism, and true British spirit they have evinced in the introduction and progress of the Reform Bill," and they conclude by agreeing to petition the House of Commons in conformity with these resolutions.

A petition was accordingly drawn up and signed by the Chairman, which petition, it was resolved, should be sent to Mr Horatio Ross, the member for this district of burghs, for presentation; and thereby hangs a tale. At the foot of the

placard is a statement that "in consequence of Mr Ross's name having appeared in the "Morning Chronicle" as a member of a "Conservative Club;" and for other kindred reasons given, "the Reform Committee have taken upon themselves to forward the petition to Joseph Hume, Esq., M.P., that old and tried friend of the people."

We shall refer to the differences of opinion between Mr Ross and some of his former Arbroath friends further on. Meantime as showing the keen feeling which existed in consequence of the action of the House of Lords, a placard is issued by the Reform Committee in which regret is expressed "that some disorderly persons attempted in the evening [of the day on which the meeting referred to above was held] to create a riot and raise a bonfire. Such conduct" the Committee goes on to say, "is unworthy of Scotchmen and highly prejudicial to the cause in which the Scottish nation is now engaged. It is only by constitutional means, by perseverance, union, and abstaining from violence, that Reform can be secured. The real friends of Reform are appealed to, and earnestly requested to check and repress every appearance of riot or outrage." The prompt action of the Committee seems at once to have broken the neck of this incipient riot.

#### **Skirmish between Mr Hume and Mr Ross.**

Important events were passing rapidly in those stirring days. The Duke of Wellington attempted to form a ministry and failed. The Arbroath indignation meeting was held, as we have said, on 14th May, and our next document is a copy of a letter from Joseph Hume to the Provost of Arbroath, which afterwards was the cause of a bitter correspondence between Mr Hume and Mr Ross.

the sitting member. It is dated, House of Commons, 15th May, 5 p.m., and is in the following terms:—"I am pleased to inform you that the Duke of Wellington has failed to form an administration and has retired. Earl Grey has been sent for and will make all arrangements to go in as before to carry the bill. This is a glorious conquest for our country, which I cannot delay to communicate to my friends in Arbroath, and we have done the business, not only without your representative, Mr Ross, but against him. As Mr Ross said to Mr Gillon, member for Lanark, that the man would be an enemy to his country who would not support the Duke of Wellington, I consider it an act of justice to myself, to Mr Ross, and to the independent men of Arbroath, to make this communication."

Shortly after this a three-page circular was addressed by Mr Ross to his constituents, containing a denial of the statement said to have been made to Mr Gillon, and the correspondence which followed thereon. The correspondence contains a letter from Mr Hume to Mr Ross, in which he repeats what he said in writing to the Provost of Arbroath; this is followed by a reply from Mr Ross flatly contradicting his ever having made such a statement, and demanding that Mr Hume should instantly write to Provost Kay and make the only reparation in his power by contradicting *in toto* the contents of his letter to the Provost. In answer, Mr Hume owns receipt of the letter and says:—"I shall write to Mr Kay that you state the report to be false." Mr Ross, as might be expected, is not satisfied with this, and replies:—"As you have thought fit to communicate to the Provost of Arbroath a statement respecting myself, which is utterly false, and have added to the wrong you have done me by sending

me a shuffling and evasive answer, instead of a manly admission of your error, I must repeat the demand I made in my last letter, and insist upon your writing an immediate contradiction, to the Provost of Arbroath, of the contents of your former letter as far as they relate to me." Mr Hume, after an interview with Mr Gillon, finds that it is virtually a repetition of the story of the "three black crows," and he thereupon writes to Arbroath withdrawing the statement; and so ends this little brush.

#### Passing of the English Reform Bill.

While this personal squabble is going on, the cause of reform is progressing, and it is now a matter of history that the English Reform Bill was carried on the 7th of June. Great were the rejoicings throughout the country, and a poster, bearing date 15th June, 1832, informs us that Arbroath participated in the general joy. It is headed in large letters "Jubilee," and after mentioning the fact that the English Reform Bill had become law, the Magistrates offer their congratulations to their fellow citizens, expressing the hope that the Scotch and Irish Bills will soon follow. Referring to the proposed National Jubilee, they suggest that as the season is not a suitable one for an illumination, public dinners should be held, and that a voluntary subscription should be entered into for the purpose of providing a dinner to those who are not able to attend the public dinners, and also, if the subscriptions prove sufficiently ample, that a display of fireworks should be provided. From a MS. note on the back of the bill, we learn that the subscription was successful, and that a piece of beef and a supply of porter was distributed among the poor.

The passing of a Reform Bill for Scotland is now eagerly

looked forward to, and meetings to hasten it on are held. A broadside, dated "Arbroath, 3rd July, 1832," tells us that "A General Meeting of the Prospective Electors of Arbroath being held in the Trades Hall" a number of resolutions were passed, the first being "That this meeting hails with inexpressible satisfaction the near prospect of the Scotch Reform Bill being the law of the land, . . . and as popular elections have hitherto been unknown in Scotland, the electors of Arbroath are determined, by due preparation, to exercise their important duties aright." The other resolutions bear on the mode of choosing candidates, and on the importance of co-operating with the electors of the other burghs in the group.

#### Passing of the Scotch Reform Bill.

A Committee is appointed to watch the progress of the ensuing election with power to call meetings when they see cause. This committee contains the names of men who, though now gone over to the great majority, are still well remembered. The mere mention of their names will recall, to the memory of our older citizens at least, the active part which they took in all affairs of local importance. They were Messrs George Gibson, tanner; William Arrott, M.D.; William Renny, jun., merchant; Alexander Mann, merchant; William Bower, wood merchant; Robert Lyon, writer; William Finlayson, merchant; William Paterson, manufacturer; James Anderson, writer; William Salmond, shipowner; Alexander Esplin, baker; James Jenkins, machine merchant; James Keith, tin-plate worker; John Knight, brewer; Alexander Guild, writer; Thomas L. Crichton, spirit merchant; Robert Miln, flax-spinner; David Lumgair, manufacturer; John A. Anderson, writer.



The Scotch Reform Bill was passed amid universal rejoicing—every city, town, and village throughout the kingdom holding high holiday. The Arbroath reformers were not behind their neighbours. The year of jubilee had come, and here it was celebrated in right royal style. Public dinners, processions, and all sorts of jollifications were indulged in, while “the Auld Kirk bells” rang out a merry peal, and immediately thereupon electioneering became the order of the day.

### **Electioneering Campaign.**

Ere the Bill was passed, and long before the House was dismissed, the aspirants for parliamentary honours, eager for the fray, had stepped into the arena ready for the fight. A contest began which was carried on with great energy and much bitterness for six weary months. Patrick Chalmers of Auldbar was the earliest in the field, his address “to the free and independent electors” bearing date 6th July, while the first public appeal of Horatio Ross, the sitting member, was not issued till four days thereafter.

The perusal of these two posters impresses us with the value of railway and telegraphic communication. Mr Chalmers’ public announcement was made, as we have said, on the 6th. Had Mr Ross’s local agent been able to have telegraphed to his client that his opponent was already in the field, he could have wired his instructions back, and, almost simultaneously, Mr Ross’s placard could have been found on our walls beside that of Mr Chalmers. But here is the announcement dated 10th July:—“To the free and independent electors of Arbroath.—Mr Ross has communicated his fixed intention to leave London by the Leith

steam vessel on the morning of the 8th inst., for the purpose of being in Arbroath to-morrow. He is most desirous to appear before the electors of this place, and they are therefore respectfully requested to meet in the Trades' Hall at eight o'clock on the evening of Wednesday the 11th inst., when" &c., so that Mr Chalmers' opinions on the leading topics of the day are before the electors five days before Mr Ross is able to expound his.

On the same day as Mr Ross's bill is posted on our walls (10th July) another address "to the prospective electors of the Montrose District of Burghs" appears, in which the writer announces his intention of soliciting the suffrages of the electors for the honour of representing them in the reformed Parliament, "in opposition to the two gallant gentlemen who have respectively offered themselves;" and the writer goes on to say that his motive for doing so is "that I do not think the conduct of your present member has latterly been such as to justify you in trusting to him your newly-acquired rights; nor do I think that Captain Chalmers has stated with sufficient plainness the lengths he would pledge himself to go in support of those measures now rendered absolutely necessary for the amelioration and improvement of the condition of the great mass of the people."

He then goes on to enumerate the grounds on which he founds his pretensions for the distinguished honour to which he aspires. Among these are his determination to "endeavour to bring about a repeal of that odious decree of usurpation, the Septennial Act, and the shortening the duration of Parliaments to three years;" the repeal of all taxes that press more immediately on the industrious and working classes, more especially that on corn; the total abolition of all taxes on knowledge; the destruction of

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all monopolies that give commercial advantages to particular classes at the expense of the community; the withdrawal of all exorbitant or unmerited pensions and sinecures, and a general reduction of all salaries throughout every department of the State; a reduction on the amount of the Civil List by about one-half; the abolition of slavery; the expulsion of bishops from Parliament; the abolition of tithes; the extension of the blessings of education and useful knowledge to all classes; a reduction of the standing army; a reformation of the burgh and corporation systems; and an improvement in our civil and criminal laws; and he concludes by saying—"I should give my support to a government formed on Liberal principles on all occasions when I found them acting for the public good; but I could never give myself to act with any government professing Tory, or what are now called Conservative principles; because I honestly and conscientiously believe the foundation of their principles are inimical to liberty, determinedly aristocratical and contrary to the spirit of the times in which we live." This is signed "One of Yourselves."

The whole address, of which we have given but a feeble epitome, is conceived in a most enlightened spirit, and it provided ample food for reflection on the part of the new electors before pledging themselves to any of the candidates. This, and this alone—as was made plain from after manifestos issued under the same *nom de guerre*—was the object of the writer, as he afterwards declared he never had any desire or intention of really becoming a candidate for Parliamentary honours.

It was well-known that the author was Mr James Goodall, agent for the British Linen Company Bank, and more than one of the electioneering circulars were attributed to him. At first he avoided

taking side with any of the candidates, but, as might be expected from one holding such a prominent position in the town as ex-Provost Goodall did, he could not long remain neutral, and in subsequent posters we find him acting as chairman of Mr Chalmers' meetings. The cause of Mr Ross was warmly espoused by another Arbroath banker and ex-Provost, Mr William Kid, cashier of the Arbroath Banking Company.

#### **Electioneering Literature.**

To enter into a detail of the contents of the various broadsides issued by each of the candidates and their partisans, would just be to rehearse what is said and done at every contested election; crimination and re-crimination, charge and counter-charge following each other in rapid succession; friend falling foul of friend, and nobody, except the election agents and the printers, deriving much benefit therefrom.

Many of the placards were certainly in very bad taste. These were characterised in one poster as "of an infamous nature," calculated to outrage the feelings of the public, and intended to injure private character. "The authors of such disgraceful publications"—this placard goes on to say—"cannot be actuated by any but the worst of motives; their aim being to traduce and defame their political opponents, and to stir up public commotion, and violence."

Here is a short bill, issued in Mr Ross's interest, which, along with many others in the collection, is marked by the collector as being the production of Mr John Sim Sands:—"Electors of Arbroath, don't be wheedled out of your votes by needy and interested lawyers. Each vote they procure for Captain Chalmers

puts money in their pockets. Electors of Brechin, be firm and remember the former attempts of Arbroath madcaps to take you by storm. Electors of Montrose, support your townsman, your favourite, your friend. Electors of Forfar, judge for yourselves, allow no Arbroath committee to drag you at its heels."

This, however, is quite mild ; not so others. One of Mr Ross's supporters writes of Mr Chalmers thus:—"What are the merits, what do we know of the fitness of Mr Chalmers for a trust so high and important as the one to which he aspires? . . . he is young and inexperienced, and has everything to learn, even the forms of the House, which, unhappily for himself, he so anxiously aspires to enter. . . . I will not have the bad taste to impute to him, as an offence, that he is principally known among you as a gentleman who has occasionally kept a pack of fox hounds for his amusement. . . . But I have never heard of a single public measure which he either originated or carried into effect."

The other side retorts in an equally caustic fashion. After referring to Mr Ross's pledges at his first election, numerous charges of acting contrary thereto are hurled at his head. For example—"When Mr Hume wrote to his friends urging expressions of the public feeling in order to aid ministers [in their efforts to pass the Reform Bill], Mr Ross strenuously urged that public meetings should not be held. He was opposed to the formation of political unions when such unions in other places were powerfully aiding the Government, and preserving the public peace. . . . He voted with the Tories to increase the agricultural representation to the prejudice of the burghs. . . . Then came the overthrow of the Government, and Mr Ross was

absent from his post or sleeping at it. . . . I consider Mr Ross as a Tory. A tree is known by its fruit. . . . The most ultra-Tory in the country might subscribe his address and vote for the adoption of Conservative measures."

### Charges of Bribery.

On both sides, charges of bribery were openly made, although they do not appear to have been supported by any evidence. A partisan of Mr Ross speaks about "the secret service money so profusely circulated among both electors and non-electors for the purpose of raising the shout of 'Chalmers for ever,' and also of the meetings regularly summoned, and as regularly held at taverns, where the electors and non-electors are plied with pies, porter, and punch." Like charges of bribery were alleged from the other side.

Parliament was dissolved on the 3rd December, 1832, and then came the tug of war. Each of the candidates made their appeal to the electors, and these were followed by large placards put forth by the respective committees, Mr Wm. Kid signing as chairman of Mr Ross's, and Dr John Stevenson as chairman of Mr Chalmers's; the first boldly announcing their determination to carry their man, whom they declared as standing pre-eminently superior to his rival—whose only claims, they said, consisted in his wealth and incapacity. The appeal concluded as follows:—"Fellow Electors! Be not dismayed by the shallow artifices of the enemy. Spurn their weak threats of intimidation. Beware of their cajollery. Treat with contempt their clap-trap addresses. The victory is ours! Already have 262 out of 473 voters of this burgh solemnly pledged themselves to support our cause. But to quiet for ever the venomous tongue of calumny, and to teach a lesson to those who

would continue in the New Era, the system of returning to Parliament men of straw, let those who are yet undeclared fly without delay to the standard of Ross of Rossie !”

In reply, their opponents refer indignantly to the “unhandsome and unmannerly insinuation that Mr Chalmers’s only claim to the honour to which he aspires consists in his wealth and incapacity,” which statement they characterise “as being as impudent as it is false,” and they call on their opponents to publish if they can the names of the 262 electors whose votes they claim. They add that Mr Chalmers’s friends have struggled from principle against the entire Tory influence of this town, against the indirect influence of a powerful banking establishment and against other influences.” This reference to the banking influence, we learn from a manuscript note on the back of this placard, led to a correspondence between Mr Kid and Dr Stevenson, the former demanding if he meant the Arbroath Banking Company, and the latter retorting that he would tell him this when he explained to whom he referred in his bill by the epithet “men of straw.”

#### **Action of Non-Electors.**

While each of the candidates had their committee, the non-electors had theirs, and, like the others, issued their manifesto. In a poster, dated 13th December, they called a public meeting of the non-electors to be held in the Trades Hall. The meeting was accordingly held under the presidency of Mr James Small, when a series of resolutions were moved and carried, in which it is declared:—(1) That those excluded from the franchise have a deep interest in observing that those who enjoy that important trust, exercise it in a proper manner;” (2) “that this meeting takes a deep interest in

the present contest," &c. ; (3) "that the non-electors of Arbroath have been attentive observers of the conduct of Mr Ross during the last session of Parliament, and are thoroughly convinced that he is at heart a lukewarm and reluctant reformer, an enemy of popular rights, and a determined supporter of the aristocracy, and that he ought not to be entrusted with the representation of this district of burghs;" (4) in the fourth resolution they express their unbounded confidence in Mr Chalmers; and (5) they "call on the electors of Arbroath to vote for Mr Chalmers." They then agree to issue an address to the electors. In this address they reiterate what they have said in their resolutions, and they conclude by proposing a vote of thanks to the Provost of Dundee, and to the "Dundee Advertiser" for their zealous support of the people's cause during the present contest.

#### Result of Election.

The election day came and resulted in the return of Mr Ross by a majority of 261, Mr Ross polling 796, and Mr Chalmers 535. The voting in Arbroath stood thus:—Ross, 225; Chalmers, 192; Arbroath majority for Ross, 33. So angry were the non-electors at the result that some of them proposed calling a meeting to pass resolutions to have no dealings with the individuals who voted for Mr Ross, but better counsels prevailed and boycotting was not resorted to.

From the foregoing narrative it will be seen that then, as now, there were two *Liberal* parties in Arbroath. Then, they simply called themselves *Liberals*, each claiming to be "the real M'Kay." Now they are known by the respective names of Liberals and Liberal Unionists.



As the names of many of the members of the different committees are still well remembered, it may be interesting to record them here:—Mr Ross's Committee—Messrs William Kid, banker; Robert Lindsay, of Almericlose; William Spink, sen.; Jas. Kay of Woodside, Provost of Arbroath; David Muir, shipowner; Jas. Weir, merchant; Andrew Duncan, merchant; David Paterson, manufacturer; James Kirkland, merchant; Wm. Cargill, shipowner; James Campbell, flaxspinner; Captain Henry Ambrose, R.N.; George Phillip, merchant; Patrick Sturrock, shipowner; James Walker, merchant; Robert Gordon, flaxspinner; James Gibson, tanner; James Christie, baker; Alex. Livie, shipowner; Henry P. Palmer, physician; Samuel Renny, manufacturer; David Rodger, shipowner; James Anderson, merchant; Lieut. Geo. Lyall, R.N.; John Towns, manufacturer; Alex. Sturrock, ironmonger; George Dove, blacksmith; Thos. Duncan, corn merchant; Capt. Thos. Webster; John Souter, merchant; Thos. Cargill, baker; Charles Findlay, surgeon; Wm. Andson, merchant; Alex. Smith, flaxspinner; James Renny, yr., manufacturer; Geo. Kidd, ropemaker; Jas. Kay, grocer; John Lindsay, North Tarry; Alex. Milne, corn merchant; Wm. Renny, yr., manufacturer; Lieut. John Anderson, R.N.; Robert Allan, merchant; James Dempster, merchant; Wm. Chapel, shipowner; Alex. Crighton, earthenware merchant; John Cargill, shipowner; Walter Just, manufacturer; John Ogilvie, flaxspinner; Thomas Leslie, shipowner; and George Canning, merchant. Of this committee, Mr Kid was chairman, and Mr Canning, vice-chairman. Mr Chalmers' committee consisted of Dr Stevenson (chairman); Mr W. F. Lindsay-Carnegie (vice-chairman); and Messrs James Goodall, banker; Walter Jamieson, merchant; David Ormond, ironmonger; James Keith, tin-plate worker; George Barry, brewer; James Milne,

dyer; James Borthwick, merchant; Thomas Lyon, shoemaker; Alex. Hunter, cabinetmaker; John Anderson, jr., merchant; Wm. Crockart, jr., merchant; Charles Anderson, manufacturer; Wm. Garland, manufacturer; Stewart Gellatly, bookseller; David Gardyne, baker; Robt. Campbell, merchant; David D. Cargill, merchant; Wm. Finlayson, merchant; Wm. Bower, wood merchant; Thos. L. Creighton, spirit merchant; Wm. Gibson, tanner; John Knight, brewer; Chas. Durie, merchant; Geo. W. Wannan, surgeon; James Sturrock, merchant; David Peacock, jr., coal merchant; Francis Webster, manufacturer; James Webster, manufacturer; and James Jenkins, machine maker. Only two of these are still alive—one of each committee—Dr Chas. Findlay, now of Glasgow, and Dr Geo. W. Wannan, of Arbroath.

#### **A Famous Legal Action.**

So keen had been the fight for some time prior to, and during the first election after, the passing of the Reform Bill, and so bitter were the feelings which it engendered, that a considerable time elapsed before the effects thereof had passed away. Electors of all ranks had their grievances, which, if they did not proclaim from the house-tops, they did on the walls of the burgh.

In one notable instance, the aggrieved, after making his complaint public through the medium of a large poster, found that it obtained a wider publicity than he had bargained for. Before giving a copy of the placard it may be needful to make a preliminary explanation.

While the political discussions which preceded the passing of the Reform Bill were going on in the summer of 1831, the Earl of Airlie, Lord-Lieutenant of Forfarshire, along with a number of

the freeholders, requested the Convener of the County to call a county meeting "for the purpose of taking into consideration the plan of reform lately submitted to the House of Commons, and determining on the propriety of addressing both Houses of Parliament in regard to the same."

In compliance with this requisition, a meeting was held in Forfar on the 16th May, 1831, at which the Earl presided. An animated debate took place, when certain resolutions were moved by the party to which his Lordship adhered, while an amendment, moved by Lord Duncan, approving of the ministerial plan of Reform, was carried by a majority of thirty-five votes. Following thereon, the placard to which we have referred appeared on the walls of Arbroath and elsewhere throughout the county. It was in these terms:—"Reform.—List of the majority and minority at the meeting of the Freeholders, Commissioners of Supply, and Justices of the Peace of the County of Forfar, held at Forfar on the 16th May, 1831, called at the request of the Earl of Airlie, John Hay of Letham, James Mudie of Pitmuies, Robert Scott of Abethune, Robert Lyel of Newbigging, James Mill, of Woodhill, and George Chaplin of Colliston, 'for considering the Reform Bill.'"

"Majority in favour of the King, his Government, and his People."

[Then follows a list of 59 names.]

"Minority against the King, his Government, and his People."

[Then follows a list of 24 names.]

"For the King,.....59

Against the King,.....24

Majority for the King,.....35"

This placard had not the printer's name affixed as required

by law. Some weeks thereafter, the Earl of Airlie issued the following proclamation :—" *One Hundred Guineas Reward.*—A most false and scandalous placard, headed 'Reform,' having appeared in several of the Burghs of Forfarshire without any printer's name or date being attached to it, in which it is stated that the Lord-Lieutenant and thirteen Deputy - Lieutenants of the county voted at a county meeting, held at Forfar on the 16th ult., 'against the King, his Government, and his people;' and this placard having come to the knowledge of the Lord - Lieutenant only this day, on his return from Edinburgh to Cortachy Castle, a reward of one hundred guineas is hereby offered to any person who will give such information as may lead to the detection of the author and printer. The reward will be paid on conviction by the Clerk of Lieutenancy. By order of the Right Honourable the Earl of Airlie, Lord-Lieutenant. — (Signed) Tho. Carnaby, C.G.M., Forfarshire.—Cortachy Castle, 14th June, 1831."

Mr Alexander Petrie—a well-known citizen recently deceased—knowing that it was printed and circulated by the firm of Lindsay & Petrie (of which firm his brother was a partner), without supposing it contained anything objectionable, went to the office of Mr John Nicol, Deputy Clerk of Peace here, who acted as local agent for the Earl of Airlie, and emitted a declaration that the firm named were the authors, printers, and publishers of the placard, he having seen them printing it and knew from themselves that they were the publishers thereof. This declaration was submitted by the Earl to Crown Counsel. The Lord Advocate declined to prosecute, pointing out that while the terms of the document were certainly irritating it did not constitute an indictable offence, but was merely a piece of factious impertinence.

On receiving this opinion, Lord Airlie gave up the idea of prosecuting, but declined to give Mr Petrie the proffered reward.

In November, 1832, Mr Petrie raised an action in the Sheriff Court against the Earl for payment of the hundred guineas; but the Sheriff-Substitute assoilzied the defender, and found no expenses due. The pursuer appealed to the Sheriff-Principal who adhered to his Substitute's decision. Ultimately the case found its way to the Court of Session, when the Lord-Ordinary altered the interlocutor of the Sheriff, decerning in terms of the libel, and finding Mr Petrie entitled to expenses, both in the Court of Session and inferior Court. In a long note which followed the decision, the Court pointed out that had the respondent (Lord Airlie) chosen to prosecute he might unquestionably have convicted the printer under the Statute 39, Geo. III., c. 27, but the respondent having obtained from the advocator all that he stipulated for, he was not entitled to evade payment of the price which he offered for it.

### **Bribery Repudiated.**

In connection with the burgh election, as we have already mentioned, charges of bribery were freely made and indignantly repudiated. In one of our posters "Robert Boath, Starcher in Aberbrothwick" solemnly declares on oath before two Justices of the Peace, that he had not received any bribe, and that no bribe was ever offered to him by any one. That his refusal to take the oath tendered to him at the polling booth arose from his not clearly understanding what was required of him, and from his feeling indignant at having oaths put to him which he did not see put to his fellow electors.

Another "free and independent," "John Low, residing at High Common of Aberbrothwick," makes the following declaration in a placard which was duly posted throughout the town. "It having been falsely and maliciously represented in the list of electors, published for the Burgh of Aberbrothwick, that I refused to take the bribery oath at the late election,—I hereby declare that I never refused to take the oaths required; and I further declare, that I was prevented by deafness alone from understanding what was said to me; and after being made acquainted with the reason of my vote not being taken, Mr Ross's agent, at my request, stated to the polling sheriff that I was quite ready to take both the oaths prescribed by the Reform Act. In witness whereof I have subscribed this Declaration at Aberbrothwick, the fifth day of January, 1833, (signed) John Low."

#### County Election.

This is the last of the 1832 electioneering broadsides in our collection, which it is needful for our purpose to quote. The county member, the Hon. D. G. Hallyburton, who had sat for Forfarshire in the last Parliament, was again returned in the Liberal interest unopposed, and, at this period, in consequence of there being no contest, his posters are of the ordinary electioneering-address nature.

#### Dissatisfaction with Mr Ross.

Our next placard is dated 1834. From the '32 election onwards, Arbroathians, who have always been keen politicians, watched the parliamentary conduct of their representative, and were not slow to express their opinion thereof. That opinion, so far as a

considerable number, at least, of his Arbroath constituents were concerned may be gathered from what follows.

Mr Ross having invited the electors to meet him in the Trades Hall, the following broadside appeared on the walls of the burgh. It is pretty long but we give it entire as we believe, and as later events showed, it gave expression to the feelings of the bulk of his constituents:—"To the free and independent electors of Arbroath. Fellow electors, Mr Ross, M.P., has issued 'tickets' requesting you to meet him in the Town Hall on Monday, at half-past eleven o'clock, for the purpose of hearing explanations of his conduct as your representative in Parliament. Electors! Mr Ross's Parliamentary conduct is sufficiently known to you all, and has grievously disappointed the hopes that were entertained when he was first elected for the boroughs. The principles which he then professed have been gradually moulded into hateful Toryism. The promised explanations must therefore be a mere mockery, if the speech which he uttered at Montrose last Tuesday be taken as a sample. Mr Ross may be a very true and faithful representative of the coterie of Tories in these boroughs; but I deny that he is the representative of the Liberal portion or great bulk of the community. On these grounds I must respectfully decline his invitation to a close meeting.

Should curiosity draw any Radical or steady Whig to the meeting, let him mark well that Mr Ross has already voted—

- (1) For flogging in the Army.
- (2) Impressment in the Navy.
- (3) Against inquiry into the gross bribery at Liverpool.
- (4) Against *any* alteration of the Septennial Act.

- (5) To depreciate the currency.
- (6) Against the ballot.
- (7) Against the abolition of sinecures.
- (8) Against any reduction of the Army.

And last, though not least, he has now declared that he regrets having voted for Mr Whitmore's motion on the Corn Laws, and wishes for inquiry before this odious monopoly shall be abolished! I need not give advice to my friends, the non-electors, who, it appears, will not be admitted. (Signed) An Elector, Arbroath, 1st February, 1834."

The bulk of the electors who accepted Mr Ross's invitation to meet him in the Trades Hall to hear his explanations, and generally to receive an account of his stewardship, do not appear to have been satisfied therewith, and it was evident either that he did not represent at all—or represented very inadequately—the views of this Radical burgh.

It is true that a small, but — from their social position — a powerful knot, of the Arbroath electors who formed one of the *Liberal* parties, to which we have before referred, still clung to him. We find the newspapers of the neighbouring towns making reference to them and to the member in any but complimentary terms.

The "Montrose Review" says:—"His friends in Arbroath may be busy, as we believe they have not been backward, in blowing 'false music in his ear' by representations of accessions to the number of his professed adherents. It may be true that Mr Ross is waxing stronger—although we doubt it—as his rivals are waxing weaker; but what of that? In Montrose, where the election was decided, the names of Chalmers and



Ross are entirely forgot as party distinctions; and instead of a little Radical knot, inimical to the member for the district, the great body of the constituency regard him, to say the least of it, in a very pitiable plight." But the "Dundee Advertiser" used much stronger language on the occasion. After going over the various items of his Trades Hall speech, and making anything but a complimentary commentary thereon, the editor concludes in these words, "Electors of the Angus Burghs! it is impossible that you can really be hoodwinked by this humbug of a representative. *You* at least do not require further information about the Corn Laws. [Mr Ross wanted 'further information' about various measures which the bulk of his constituents had set their hearts upon carrying, and amongst the rest he wanted further enquiry about the Corn Laws.] *You must* be persuaded that those laws are bottomed on the grossest iniquity; and that unless they are speedily abolished our struggling traders, manufacturers, and artisans, must at no distant date, be borne down and driven from the markets of the world, by those who have food at one-third or one-half of the British cost of it. Why then, electors, do you tolerate this ignorant driveller or perfidious representative—neutralizing, so far as you can, the votes of the member for Dundee, and of those of every honest and enlightened advocate of our commercial and manufacturing prosperity."

After making the circuit of the burghs, and in each repeating the speech which called forth the foregoing commentary, Mr Ross returns to his place in Parliament, leaving a feeling of dissatisfaction in the minds of many of his constituents.

### A Ministerial Crisis.

We come now to November 1834. Between the passing of the great measure of Reform and this period there was the continued din of war. While there were not a few earnest, thoughtful men who continued the work of reform with a calm determined purpose, there were others among those who had also taken a leading part in the struggle which eventuated in the passing of the Reform Bill, who in their eagerness for further changes in the constitution were pushing even salutary reforms with perhaps too great precipitancy. On the other hand there were those, who, feeling the bitterness of having lost power, were determinedly opposing all measures of reform, vainly struggling to repress liberty and re-establish the reign of corruption. But neither the sun nor the moon would stand still, nor the clock turn backward at their bidding.

It was evident for some time that a momentous crisis was impending. The death of Lord Spencer was seized upon by the King as a favourable opportunity of abruptly dismissing the Melbourne Ministry with the view of placing the reins of government in the hands of the Duke of Wellington. This proceeding created quite a sensation throughout the country, and called forth indignant protests from the Liberal party in every corner of the kingdom.

Arbroath, true to its principles, protested vehemently against the King's action, and the following broadside was posted throughout the town:—"Notice to the inhabitants of Arbroath. The Magistrates and Town Council, deeming it to be highly expedient, at this crisis, to express to His Majesty the public sentiments on the late sudden change of Government, have

unanimously agreed to the following address, which is in accordance with a requisition presented to them by electors and householders of the Burgh:—

“To His Most Excellent Majesty, King William the Fourth. —The humble address of the Provost, Magistrates, Town Council, and inhabitants of the Royal Burgh of Aberbrothwick, in Scotland. —May it please your Majesty,—We, as most devoted and loyal subjects of your Majesty, feel it to be our duty, at this time of general consternation and apprehension, arising from the sudden and total alteration in the Government, to express our alarm at the change which has taken place in your Majesty’s Councils. In common with all classes of your Majesty’s subjects, we still deeply entertain those sentiments which have been so often and so unequivocally evinced throughout the empire—of the necessity of a thorough reform of abuses in Church and State,—the great foundation for which was laid in the reform of Parliament so happily carried through under your Majesty’s auspices. And we have seen, with the liveliest gratitude to your Majesty, the steady adherence to liberal principles which has hitherto distinguished the public measures of your Government. In every department of the empire the most well-grounded reliance was placed that the same responsible advisers, who, under your Majesty, have supported and carried through so many measures, most satisfactory to the people, and essential to the well-being of the State, would continue to follow the same liberal and salutary course. And proportionate alarm and dismay have been spread by the intelligence that those advisers have been dismissed, to make room for others who have uniformly and obstinately opposed all reform; who were the open enemies of measures which will ever

be the glories of your Majesty's reign; and who are still in avowed opposition to the enlightened policy which the circumstances of this country, and the spirit of the times, require. We therefore venture to approach the throne with this humble address, most respectfully but earnestly entreating your Majesty to call to, and retain in, your councils those only who are possessed of the public confidence, as known friends to the reform of all abuses in Church and State; and who are actuated by those liberal principles, so important to the peace and prosperity of the country, which have hitherto distinguished your government. We would further most humbly entreat your Majesty, in a crisis so delicate and difficult, and so pregnant with important results, to call together the great Council of the nation—the Parliament—to deliberate upon and recommend such measures as the emergency requires.

“The above address now lies in the Court-Room, for the signatures of the inhabitants, and will remain there until Friday evening at six o'clock, when it is to be forwarded to Earl Spencer for presentation to the King.—Council Chambers, Arbroath, 25th November, 1834.”

But this very mild expostulation did not state the case so well as a section of the community considered it ought to be put before the King, and a well-known local politician, David Thomson, weaver, who from his advanced views bore the sobriquet of “Radical Thomson,” drew up a petition to the King which he invited the inhabitants to sign. David was a very intelligent man, a fluent speaker, and a ready debater, and he was looked upon as a leader among the non-electors. This broadside is of considerable length but as it shows the temper of, and conveys to us the views held by, the section of the

community which "Radical Thomson," so well represented we give it entire :—

"THE PEOPLE'S ADDRESS TO THE KING.—Now lying for signature at Bank Street, West Port.—Unto the King's Most Excellent Majesty,—May it please your Majesty :—We your Majesty's dutiful subjects, the inhabitants of Arbroath, deeply impressed with a sense of duty which the love of our country and attachment to the illustrious house of Brunswick demands us to fulfil, beg to approach your Majesty with an expression of our sentiments on the subject of the late change of the administration of our country. It is with feelings of the deepest regret that we should at any time find it necessary to address your Majesty on the exercise of your prerogative in other terms than that of grateful approbation ; but the astonishing circumstance of your Majesty having called to your councils men who are decidedly and uniformly hostile to the strongest wishes of your people, and the establishment of the rights and liberties of mankind, compels us, on the present occasion, to present your Majesty with an unequivocal testimony of our disappointment, indignation, and alarm. Never were the just expectations of the intelligent and enlightened portion of your Majesty's subjects more sanguine than previous to that extraordinary event, of having their inalienable and indefeasible rights conceded, namely—an unlimited extension of the elective franchise, together with a total abolition of all monopolies, civil and ecclesiastical, and an extensive reduction of the present overwhelming amount of taxation. When suddenly the appalling intelligence reached us of your Majesty having called to the most responsible offices in your Majesty's government, a tyrannical and universally

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detested faction; thus at once destroying the hope your people have so long with confidence indulged, that your Majesty would influence your Government to persevere in carrying on the great work of Reform. We nevertheless humbly trust that your Majesty, as the father of your people, will not turn a deaf ear to their voice, but will manifest to the world that your Majesty still adheres to the great principles of liberty, which alone can give security to the throne, prosperity and happiness to your people, and that, by dismissing your present Ministers, and calling to your councils—those only on whom the reliance of your people is placed—as the distinguished friends and supporters of the ‘rights of man.’ We would further most humbly impress on your Majesty’s recollection the circumstances which called your Majesty’s illustrious house to the throne of these realms; also the events which have occurred in the kingdom of France. Having gone thus far, should your Majesty still persevere in opposing all concession to the just demands of a dutiful and loyal people, we wash our hands of all responsibility as to consequences in presence of our country, which is already convulsed to its very core.

All who wish Tory domination for ever put down, and who wish equal laws and equal justice—in short, who wish a just and rational system of government established, sign the above.”

The petitions were both largely signed and duly forwarded for presentation to his Majesty. A manuscript note on the back of Thomson’s tells us that its author found some difficulty in procuring the wherewithal to pay the expenses connected with the address. Here is the note:—

“Thomson nearly stuck for money to pay the printing of this address; but he was not long in falling upon a plan to raise the wind. The ‘Political Union’ although defunct had thirteen or fourteen shillings of a balance on hand, for a gift of which David annoyed the committee, or part of the committee, until they authorised John Hovel to give him the whole money, and thus put an end to the [Political] Union in Arbroath.”

The “Political Union” here referred to was a society got up by the advanced Liberals for the purpose of watching the progress of the Reform Bill; and the purposes for which it was started having been secured, it necessarily became defunct.

Similar societies existed in all parts of the kingdom during the Reform agitation and did good service to the cause.

#### Retiral of Mr Ross.

A dissolution of Parliament was now imminent. It was rumoured that Mr Ross had intimated to the Provosts of the burghs within the group that it was his intention, in the event of a dissolution, to present himself to the constituency for re-election. Mr Chalmers, who had before this given the electors to understand that when a vacancy occurred he meant again to contest the seat, now formally proclaimed his purpose by issuing an address. A new combatant, however, entered the field in the person of Mr John Temple Leader, of London, a gentleman connected with the manufacturing interest of this district, and afterwards member for Westminster. His address, as well as Mr Chalmers’s, was of a thorough-going Liberal type.

The signs of dissatisfaction with Mr Ross’s services had become so unmistakable that, reckoning discretion to be the better part

of valour, he issued an address to his constituents in which he intimated his intention, upon the dissolution of Parliament, to take his leave of the burghs.

### The Electors "Lectured."

Not content, however, with this simple intimation, he proceeded in this address (which is too long to quote here), to lecture those of his constituents who presumed—in what they considered the exercise of an undoubted privilege—to address the King in the terms of the petitions, the contents of which we have already reproduced. "Nothing," he says, "can in my opinion be more disgraceful than the attempts which are now making in several quarters to interfere with his Majesty's undoubted privilege of selecting such Ministers as he may think fit for aiding his councils in the government of this empire; and it is with peculiar pain that I have observed measures of so unconstitutional a tendency encouraged and supported within a district to which I feel sincerely attached, and to which I am so deeply indebted. I also respect the privileges of both Houses of Parliament; and I consider the preservation of the rights and dignities of the House of Peers to be essential for preserving that proper balance among the three estates of the realm by which the people, on the one hand, are preserved from any oppression on the part of the Executive, or, on the other, from the still more dangerous thralldom of Democracy. From the sentiments which have been expressed in the various addresses forwarded to his Majesty from your district regarding the recent exercise of his royal prerogative, I fear that my reappearance as a candidate might, instead of allaying, tend to increase that



excitement which unfortunately prevails; and I therefore feel it my duty at once to announce the resolution I have taken. I sincerely hope, however, that before the day of election arrives, there may be an end to that irritation, so inconsistent with the dispassionate exercise of the important franchise with which you have been entrusted under the reformed constitution. I sincerely hope you will not entrust your interests either to a reckless or destructive demagogue."

The electors were quite enraged at being talked to in this fashion, and their wrath found vent through the press. Commenting on it, the *Montrose Review* says:—"Surely the electors will not brook this outrage upon propriety. They ought not to lose a moment in calling on Mr Ross to resign a trust which he has not the good taste to hold even as a sinecure, but must insult his constituency for doing—what he, as their representative, has shamefully neglected to do—their duty."

#### Election of Mr Chalmers.

For a time a keen canvass was carried on by each of the two remaining candidates, but as their programmes were too much akin, the contest lacked the exciting elements of the '32 campaign.

On the 16th December, 1834, a month before the polling day, Mr Leader seeing that his chance of success was, to say the least of it, doubtful, issued an address in which, after thanking those electors who had pledged themselves to support him for their kind reception, he gracefully intimates his withdrawal from the field. In doing so he says, "I find that the ground has to some extent been preoccupied by one already known to you as a reformer, and an estimable neighbour, whom I cannot well

oppose on political grounds owing to the small difference between us in our political opinions. . . . Believing as I do most firmly that the excitement inseparable from a contested election, more especially in a manufacturing district, must be highly detrimental to the interests of trade, and consequently of almost every individual amongst you, I have resolved at once to resign my pretensions to the honour of representing you in Parliament; and I do so the more cheerfully because I am certain, from what I have seen, that you will choose for your representative none but an able and enlightened reformer."

Mr Ross and Mr Leader being now both out of the field, and no other candidate appearing, Mr Chalmers was, on the 15th January, 1835, duly elected member for this district of burghs.

#### The County Election—A Contest.

The county election was not got over so quietly. The Hon. D. G. Hallyburton had no sooner announced his intention of again asking the suffrages of the electors, than intimation was given that he was to be opposed by the Hon. John Stuart Wortley. The following poster although issued by Mr Hallyburton's committee, describes very fairly the opinions freely expressed about the two candidates at the meetings of the electors held in various parts of the county.

"To the Free and Independent Electors of Forfarshire.—Fellow electors,—you are now called on for the first time to exercise your new born privilege—a privilege the most important ever conferred on a free people, a privilege long and unjustly withheld, and one which but for a Whig ministry and a reforming

Government would have been denied to you to the present hour. You are now called on to elect a representative in Parliament to advocate your rights and interests, to defend your liberties, to crave redress for the grievances under which you labour, to put an end to the crying abuses which exist in our institutions, to obtain a cheap and efficient Government, a reduction of taxation and public expenditure, the abolition of sinecures and unmerited pensions, and a thorough revision of the civil list. Electors, to accomplish all this you have two candidates before you. You have on the one hand Mr Hallyburton, a steady, tried, and consistent reformer, a man whose honesty of principle the breath of calumny has not dared to assail, who has kept himself aloof from the intrigues and measures of party, who has uniformly acted and voted with the people, and who gave you that right which you are now called upon to exercise. On the other hand you have Mr Wortley, not only a Tory, but from predeliction principles, and hereditary instinct, an anti-reformer; a uniform supporter of the Duke of Wellington, who held office under, and left office with him; who opposed the Reform Bill out and out, and who voted against the extension of the franchise now conferred upon you—a Tory, whose family and connections collectively, and individually, hold sinecures and pensions to an enormous extent, and whose father is at this moment one of the Wellington administration. Electors of Forfarshire, do your duty. The eyes of Scotland are upon you. Let not a Tory be sent to Parliament to represent this great agricultural and commercial county. Keep in view that the first act of a Tory Parliament will be to repeal the Reform Bill and limit the franchise. Let us show to the world that we are determined and consistent reformers. Let

us hasten to the poll, and let our watchword be, in the hour of trial and victory—"Reform and Hallyburton!"

#### Humorous Election Squib.

The contest was not without that humorous element, which is sometimes met with on such occasions. The following amusing announcement, the authorship of which was attributed to John Sim Sands, was issued in the interest of the Hallyburton party:—

"Wellington Boots. Sir Robert Take-him-in, Hook-nose, & Co., bootmakers to his Majesty, 15 Waterloo Lane, immediately adjoining the Tax Office, London, beg leave most respectfully to intimate to the public in general, and to the 'Free and Independent Electors of Forfarshire' in particular, that they have shipped, *per* the Belmont Castle, Wortley, owner and master, a large and elegant assortment of Wellington Boots, of all sorts, sizes, and descriptions, which they guarantee will fit every customer. These valuable articles of commerce are made up of the very best material, being composed of best Londonderry calf-skin, orange bend, cat-o'-nine-tail crop, and Morocco tie-him-up cordovan, and which for durability, elasticity, and softness have never been equalled in these kingdoms!!! Electors purchasing may rest assured that the Wellington Boots will be sold far below prime cost, as in consequence of the recent *re-peal* of the duty on leather, they are lower in price and more limited in demand than ever they were known to be before. Credit will be given to all in want of the needful, on their giving their bare word of honour, to be redeemed, on the hustings, on a day to be afternamed, and which is the only pledge that the advertisers can take in. Owing to a regimental

patent pressure spring in the instep, as well as from the stuff of which the article is composed, the advertisers warrant their boots to wear for ever and never to come off, a desideratum for those wishing to sleep warm and comfortable, and the invention entirely of the advertisers—in short, the Wellington Boot is the first-rate article of the kind ever offered to the inspection of a liberal and discerning public. Specimens may be seen, and further particulars learned, by applying to the different law agents at the different polling places of the county, to the advertisers at the Charles Street Committee Rooms, or to the master on board. Unmerited pension-holders, tax eaters, and tithe pig collectors allowed a handsome commission.”

#### English Corporation Reform Bill.

The next political broadsides in our collection were drawn up in consequence of the factious opposition to, and the many mutilations made upon, the English Corporation Reform Bill by the Peers during its progress through the House of Lords. This conduct of the members of the Upper House greatly exasperated the Liberal party throughout the kingdom, and called forth the strongest remonstrances. As will be seen from the following poster, Arbroath added her voice to swell the cry of indignation which rang through the land:—

“Fellow citizens,—A petition to the House of Commons in support of the English Municipal Reform Bill, and also praying for an abolition of the hereditary peerage, will lie for signatures, until Friday first, at the shop of J. Bremnar, bookseller, High Street, and at D. Thomson’s house, North Grimsby, nearly opposite the church. *N.B.*—The petition is in strict accordance

with the plan of Mr Roebuck.—Wednesday, 2nd Septmber, 1835.” The petition was numerously signed, and it was forwarded to Mr Chalmers for presentation. A placard, of which the following is a copy, informed the petitioners that their representative had done his duty in this respect:—

“Inhabitants of Arbroath,—The following letter was this day received from Mr Chalmers, your representative, acknowledging the receipt of your petition ‘praying the House of Commons to support the English Municipal Bill, and abolish the hereditary branch of Legislature?’—‘House of Commons, 7th Sept., 1835.—Sir,—I had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 4th to-day, and have presented the petition which accompanied it. This being the last day on which probably I should have had an opportunity of doing so, I had not time to give notice of my intention to Mr Hume and Mr Roebuck, who did not happen to be in the House at the time my name was called. I have no doubt that many petitions of a similar tenor will be presented next session. It was resolved at the meeting of the Liberal members to-day not to reject the second alterations of the Lords, but to reserve till next session any attempts to improve the Municipal Corporation Bill. Parliament will be prorogued on Thursday. I shall probably leave town in the steamer for Dundee on Wednesday.—I have the honour to be, sir, your obedient servant, P. Chalmers. To Mr D. Thomson, North Grimsby, Arbroath.’ The above,” the placard goes on to say, “is at once an incontrovertible proof of the sincerity of Mr Chalmers’ professions of attachment to the principles of free representative government, and ample encouragement for the people to approach the elective branch of the Legislature with an honest and unequivocal expression of

sentiment, and that without regard to the political principles of their civic rulers."

#### Congratulatory Address to Mr Chalmers.

On Mr Chalmers's return to the district, after concluding his first session as parliamentary representative for the Burghs, he received ample evidence that his services had proved more acceptable to the electors than those of his immediate predecessor had done. This was conveyed to him in an address by the electors of Arbroath, approving of his Parliamentary conduct and acknowledging the great attention he had given to the local interests of his constituents.

"To Patrick Chalmers, Esq., of Auldbar, M.P., for the Angus District of Burghs and Inverbervie. Sir,—We, the undersigned electors of the royal burgh of Arbroath, avail ourselves of your return, at the close of a long protracted Session of Parliament, to express to you the high sense we entertain of the faithful and consistent manner in which you have performed your arduous duties as our representative in Parliament, in conformity with the public declarations you made when elected; and of the very praiseworthy attention you have at all times given to the local interests of the inhabitants at large. Strongly impressed as we are with these sentiments, we are not the less so with the fact, that no man can properly perform his duty in Parliament, as now constituted, without great personal sacrifice, and without entertaining a deep and earnest conviction that his labours must be zealously devoted to promote the general interests of the country. We confidently trust that in you we are honoured with such a representative. We sincerely pray that you may long be spared in

health and strength to pursue, in your place in Parliament, such a line of duty as may, under Divine Providence, lead to the judicious amendment of the institutions of the country, and to the peace, prosperity, and happiness of this great empire."

This address, we learn from a foot-note to the placard, was signed by the Magistrates and Town Council and by upwards of three hundred electors in the burgh. Comparing the number of signatures with the large list of names on the electoral roll of Arbroath to-day, it may appear insignificant; but it must be borne in mind that three hundred was more than a majority of the electorate of the burgh then. It will be recollected that the number of those who voted for Mr Chalmers in Arbroath in 1832 was one hundred and ninety-two, so that his popularity had considerably increased during the first short period of his service.

The address was presented by Provost Andson and the other Magistrates of Arbroath on behalf of the electors, and in order to show that they had fulfilled their duty they issued the following broadside, which is the last of the political placards in our pack, which we will transfer to these pages:—

" Notice by the Magistrates to the Electors of Arbroath. The Magistrates waited on Mr Chalmers, at Auldbar, on Tuesday last, and presented the address by the electors to him, to which Mr Chalmers made the following reply :—' Arbroath 21st October, 1835.—To the electors of Arbroath. Gentlemen,— I have had the pleasure of receiving from the hands of the Provost and Magistrates of Arbroath the very kind and flattering Address with which you have honoured me. If anything could have added to the gratification I have experienced since my

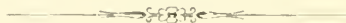


return among my constituents, it is this deliberate expression of your approval of my Parliamentary conduct, and of your satisfaction with the attention I have given to your local interests. I assure you I have not entered upon a Parliamentary life without a due sense of the magnitude of the trust committed to my care, and of the labour necessarily attendant upon a faithful discharge of its duties. I look for no reward beyond the approbation of an enlightened and independent constituency; and this also will prove my best incentive to future exertion. A steady perseverance in that line of conduct which has gained for me your confidence, will, I hope, enable me to retain it, and wishing to you the enjoyment of every blessing which may tend to the advancement of your interests, temporal and eternal, I beg you to believe me, Gentlemen, your most obedient and faithful servant, P. CHALMERS. Auldbar, October 20, 1835.’”

A study of the political posters, which we have selected from our collection, and reproduced here, will suggest many points of resemblance to incidents of recent date, and thus afford proof of the adage that “history repeats itself.”

It might have been interesting had we reproduced more of these Political Broad­sides, or given larger extracts from those on which we have drawn, but in either case this would have swelled out the book—we think unnecessarily—to too great dimensions. We have only chosen as much as is needful from those which were indispensibly required to form a connected narrative of the leading political events of the period under consideration. By weaving these into the general history of the time, we have been enabled to tell the story of the part played by our Arbroath reformers in the struggle for political freedom in

a clearer and more concise manner than would have been possible had we burdened our narrative with the full text of the many documents in our possession. We might also have availed ourselves much more freely than we have done of the pithily-written, but occasionally somewhat caustic, manuscript memoranda on the posters; but as these notes were in many cases anything but complimentary to some of the leading men of that day, whose memories are yet held in high esteem, we have deemed it prudent not to make use of them, except in so far as they help to elucidate the facts recorded in the prints.



## MUNICIPAL BROADSIDES.

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THE collection of broadsides is not so rich in municipal as it is in political posters. Still there are a few which serve to fill up a page in our local history before the period when the Arbroath newspaper press began to record, week by week, the passing events of interest to the community with that fidelity which has all along characterised it.

### Burgh Reform.

We have elsewhere\* at some length explained the constitution and powers of the Town Council and other corporate bodies prior to the passing of the Reform Bill.

In many burghs throughout the country there was a profligate waste of public money. Burgesses who had the deepest interest in the Corporation funds had really no voice in their disposal. In many cases magistrates and councillors remained in office year after year for nearly a life-time, and, as if the office were hereditary, it not unfrequently descended from father to son. It was no uncommon thing for the honest burghers to see the public property plundered without their having the power to prevent it.

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\* "Arbroath : Past and Present," pp. 84-95.

We have already shown that the members of the Arbroath Town Council and of the various corporations in the burgh had early given ample evidence of their determination to forward the work of reform even at the cost of the extinction of their own peculiar privileges.

In the early years of the century they exhibited a praiseworthy desire to amend, or at least to ameliorate as far as possible, by their own hands, the obnoxious acts which so oppressively and unfairly bore on the inhabitants. The following quotation from the *Scotsman* of October, 1818, exemplifies this:—

“The Magistrates and Council of the town of Arbroath petitioned last Convention of Royal Burghs to sanction some alterations in the constitution of the burgh of Arbroath, but the Whithorn petition had so shattered the nerves, disturbed the susceptible minds, and shocked the fine feelings of so many provosts and bailies who were members of the Convention, that they thought it inconvenient to take any more petitions into consideration at last meeting. The petition from Arbroath, among others, was, therefore, not even read. But the Magistrates of Arbroath were too much in earnest to merit the respect and affection of their townsmen, to wait for the tardy co-operation of self-elected jundos—of those, who, if animated with the same liberal spirit, would have shown more zeal in forwarding the good work of burgh reform. The Town Council of Arbroath, previous to the election in September last, gave notice to the guildry and trades, that though they could not of themselves legally alter the form of election, they would nevertheless take the recommendation of the guildry and trades in filling up the vacancies in the council, and would themselves elect the persons

so recommended. The guildry and trades accordingly nominated certain persons of their number, who were subsequently actually elected by the Magistrates and Council. It ought also to be noticed, to the credit of the town of Arbroath, that the Guildry of that burgh was, if not the first, at least one of the first public bodies in Scotland who forwarded resolutions in favour of jury trial to the House of Lords."

Not only the Council as a body, but its members as individuals advocated strenuously, and in some cases eloquently, the cause of Burgh Reform. At a public dinner held after the last parliamentary election, which took place prior to the passing of the Reform Bill, when on 23rd May, 1831, at Aberdeen—the then returning burgh of the group—Mr Horatio Ross was unanimously elected, having received *all the five votes*, Mr Canning, one of the Magistrates of Arbroath, and grandfather of Sir John Kinloch, the present member for East Perthshire, in proposing the toast of "Burgh Reform," spoke as follows:—

"I am afraid you will consider it presumptuous for so humble an individual as a Bailie of Aberbrothock to offer himself to the notice of this highly respectable company, but I am induced to do so from having observed that while the system of self-election has been by several speakers eloquently denounced, no bumper has yet been proposed to Burgh Reform, with which the other was wont to be constantly associated. But your silence, I apprehend, proceeds from the very natural supposition, that as the Lord Advocate's Bill will, if carried into law, deprive the self-elected of one of their most important privileges, you consider the members of the Town Councils as poor innoxious creatures, who, though they had the will, will speedily be deprived of the power to do harm. You view us,

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in short, as a sportsman does a partridge or a moor fowl that has been quinned, as too contemptible to be deserving of a shot. But though incapable of soaring to the mischievous altitude to which some of us dared to wing our flight we will be left with the capacity to fly along the surface, and occasionally to light and dab at whatever falls in our way. To be plain, Town Councils may still be the fruitful source of inconceivable mischief, if the same cosmetic with which it is proposed to wash out the stains of our Parliamentary, is not applied to obliterate the foul blots that contaminate our Burgage representation. In the eye of a candidate for a seat in the Honourable House it may appear that the deprivation of the suffrages with which Town Councils under the present vicious system are exclusively invested should operate as a powerful cathartic capable of purging and purifying the system and restoring renewed vigour and energy to the whole body self-electic (if I may coin a word for the purpose); but, a citizen—a free and independent citizen—of any of these burghs will view it in a very different light. He cannot shut his eyes to the glaring fact, that to a few irresponsible individuals is committed the management and appropriation of the whole revenues of the burghs, and that the citizens at large have no more control over their proceedings than the inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire have over the deliberations of the Divan. It may be argued, that so many of the burghs having on the present heart-stirring occasion emancipated themselves from the yoke of ages, have earned for themselves, and should obtain an immunity from further molestation. But, I put no faith in death-bed repentance. The miser who becomes prodigal under coercion relapses into his sordid habits as soon as the compulsory

clause is removed. In like manner the members of Town-Councils, when the patriotism which has been roused by the present glorious and animating struggle shall have evaporated, and they shall have breathed once more the congenial atmosphere of the council chamber, will return to their ancient practices. To alter a line of Pope—

‘The creatures will be at their dirty work again.’

If a vacancy in the church is to be supplied—if a parish schoolmaster is to be appointed—if a public work of any kind is proposed—then do the private interests and the inveterate prejudices of the self-elected interfere to disappoint the expectations of the people, or to mar the utility of the undertaking. I object to the present abominable system for another reason, that it admits of one or more of the select body exercising an unlimited control over the others; and its constitution is such, that even in the best of the burghs one individual, under a pretended zeal for liberty and respect for public opinion, may attempt to lord it over the whole body with an iron despotism, and may insult with vulgar abuse every member who dares to differ from him in opinion. Burgh reform then, in every view that can be taken of the subject, is a desideratum that cannot too speedily be accomplished; and if not to be the accompaniment, it ought to be the immediate follower of the great measure which at present engages public attention to the exclusion of every other topic.”

The following broadside proves that those who held the reins of Government in Arbroath in 1831 were not theoretical but were out-and-out practical reformers. In addition to the usual

number whose term it was to retire, and, what was most common, be re-elected, a number more gave in their resignations, with a view to throw open the offices to popular election. The Council thereupon intimated—"To the Burgesses of Arbroath. At a meeting of the Town Council, held this day, the following resolutions were proposed by Mr William Renny, junior, seconded by Mr George Gibson, and carried unanimously. Resolutions:— That the present state of the Council, in consequence of the resignation of so many of its members, affords a good opportunity of evincing to the public the desire of the Council, that not only the interests but the wishes of the Burgesses should be consulted in the election of the Magistrates and members of the Council. That, with this view, the Burgesses be requested, prior to the election of the thirteen permanent Councillors who fall to be chosen at the ensuing election, to submit to the Council the names of any twenty-six of their number whom they would recommend to the notice of the Council as best qualified for filling the situation of permanent Councillors for the ensuing year. That the Provost be instructed to call a general meeting of the Burgesses, to be held on as early a day as possible, for the purpose of enabling them to comply with the wishes of the Council. The Burgesses are therefore respectfully requested to meet in the Guild Hall, on Tuesday first, the 20th inst., at three o'clock afternoon, for the purpose of arranging the plan of procedure to be adopted, and for appointing a day to prepare the list of twenty-six, in terms of the resolutions of the Council. It will be necessary that the Burgesses produce their certificates of admission, in order that their names may be enrolled to entitle them to vote in the



nominations. By order of the Council. James Kay, Provost. Council Chambers, Arbroath, 15th September, 1831.

In compliance with this invitation the Burgesses met and selected a committee of five of their number, whom they authorised to prepare a list of the burgesses, distinguishing those who were qualified according to the set of the burgh to fill the offices of Provost and Bailies. From this list each burghess was to select the names of twenty-six individuals, and the twenty-six having the greatest number of votes were to be submitted to the old or retiring Town Council, from among whom they would choose the new Magistrates and Councillors. This mode of procedure having been duly carried out, the old Council met, and in conformity with the arrangement, appointed the first popularly-elected Magistracy and Council in this burgh. The following is the result of that novel election :—

James Kay, of Woodside, Provost.  
 William Andson, }  
 Alexander Sturrock, } Bailies.  
 John Stewart, Dean of Guild.  
 David Forbes, Convener of Trades.  
 William Bower, Treasurer—a Burgess Councillor.  
 James Goodall, }  
 William Renny, Jun., } Old Provosts.  
 William Finlayson, }  
 David Muir, }  
 George Canning, } Old Bailies.  
 George Philip, }  
 Robert Allan, merchant, }  
 Thomas Leslie, shipowner, } Burgess Councillors.  
 James Anderson, merchant, }

John Towns, merchant,	}	Guild Councillors.
Jas. Renny, Jun., engineer,		
Jas. Kirkland, candlemaker,	}	Trades' Councillors.
Jas. Christie, Baker,		

### The Police Act.

*The first proposal to adopt the Police Act negatived.*—In those days the Town Councils did not possess those ample and compulsory powers in regard to the lighting, paving, drainage, and cleansing of towns which are necessary for the preservation of the health and comfort of a community.

The passing, in August 1833, of the General Police Act put it within the power of the inhabitants to avail themselves of its provisions. But as might be expected, when the opportunity was placed within their reach, a considerable difference of opinion arose, and much bitter feeling was manifested.

For a month or two after the passing of the Act the question was eagerly debated by the citizens, but the Town Council, in answer to a requisition presented to the Provost, made it known to the inhabitants through the medium of the following placard, that they would have an opportunity of discussing it formally, and of exercising their powers of either adopting or rejecting its provisions:—"Notice is hereby given, that, in virtue of the powers contained in an Act passed in the third and fourth year of His Majesty King William the Fourth entitled 'An Act to enable burghs in Scotland to establish a general system of police,' the occupiers of premises in the Burgh of Aberbrothwick (as extended by the Act 3 and 4, William IV., entitled 'An Act to amend the representation of the people in Scotland') of the real

value of ten pounds sterling and upwards, are hereby required to meet, upon Thursday the 21st November next, at 12 o'clock, within the Town Hall of this burgh, when the said Act will be laid before the meeting. (Signed) Wm. Andson, Chief Magistrate. Dated the 24th October, 1833."

Great were the preparations on both sides for the coming struggle. The advocates for the adoption were led by Messrs James Anderson (writer), James Gibson (tanner), and Robert Lyon (writer), while the leaders of the opposing force were Messrs George Canning, Wm. Kid (banker), and James Anderson (merchant). The speeches at the public meeting were spirited and able on each side. A motion to adopt was proposed and seconded, and a counter motion for a future meeting to be held, at which a regular poll should be taken, was also put to the meeting when the amendment was carried. Immediately following on this, the opponents of the adoption of the Act issued the following poster, of which Mr Canning was the reputed author:—

"To the inhabitants of Arbroath and suburbs.—It may be proper to warn the inhabitants that the adoption of the General Police Act will entail upon every tenant within the town and suburbs who pays £2 of rent or upwards, an assessment of 11d per pound at least, with a certainty that in a few years it will amount to 1s 6d. From the great extent of ground which Arbroath and its suburbs occupy, as compared with the amount of the population, and the consequent existence in many places of large areas destitute of houses, a natural obstacle appears to present itself to the introduction, on a salutary principle, of an efficient system of police; but when to this is added the glaring fact that all the streets (if streets they may

be called, which streets [they] are none) in the suburban districts are absolutely impassable, and in a state of utter darkness, how is it possible that the clauses of the Act with regard to paving, cleaning, and lighting can be beneficially carried into effect without incurring an expense which would not only absorb the maximum rate of assessment, but incur a debt which none of the present generation would live to see extinguished? Again, as to the article of water, is there any man who can pretend to say that a supply sufficient for the whole inhabitants could be introduced under an expense of several thousand pounds? It is clearly impossible to accomplish this part of the Bill alone, therefore the highest rate of assessment for a series of years would be requisite; and how the other departments would, in the interval, be conducted, let those who are so eager to foist this measure on the town in their wisdom determine. In a compactly built and wealthy town like Montrose, where the streets are already comparatively good, and in general well lighted, and where water has already been introduced, the adoption of the Police Act was highly commendable; but in Arbroath, where a great portion of the town is in want of everything comprehended in the Act, and where a large proportion of the inhabitants consist of the humbler classes, who can barely earn a livelihood, and who can ill afford to pay such a heavy and perpetual assessment, how is it practicable to adopt all or any of the clauses of this Act without leaving the very objects proposed to be accomplished by it only half done, and entailing upon the town *for ever* one of the most grievous burdens which ever was imposed?

“How the inhabitants within the royalty, who already enjoy

gratuitously all the advantages of lighting, paving, and cleaning can quietly submit to be deprived of these privileges, and suffer themselves to be saddled without end with the expense of making streets of the quagmires in the 'Jaw Hole' of the parish of St Vigeans, appears altogether inexplicable. But will they submit? Certainly not. Let every occupant of houses or premises, then, of the value of £10 or upwards, hasten to the poll on Monday, and resist the introduction of all, or *any part*, of this Act. Once even partially adopted, the assessment never can be got rid of. The clerk, and the treasurer, and the collector, and the superintendent, will be for ever ringing in our ears. The voters must bear in mind that if one iota of the Act be adopted, the appointment of the three officers first above mentioned, and all the paraphernalia of an expensive establishment will become indispensable; and we may rest assured that we shall not find persons so very patriotic as to undertake to perform the duties of any of these offices for nothing. At some future period, when the town is more densely built and peopled, and when those more immediately concerned shall have rendered their streets somewhat passable; when the inhabitants in general shall be better able to sustain the burden of assessment, and when we shall have learned as to the working of the Act in other places, *then* let us turn our attention to it, but not till then.—Arbroath, 23rd Nov., 1833."

This placard proved to be very effective, and the result of the poll was a rejection of the Act. Meantime the expense of lighting, paving, and watching the town was defrayed from the surplus revenue derived from the Harbour, and this continued till 1836 when the subject of Harbour extension and improve-

ment—of which we will speak further on—was brought before the community, and a resolution was adopted with a view to relieve the Harbour of this charge by the adoption of the provisions of the General Police Act, whereby the expenditure referred to should be raised by assessment. In conformity with this resolution, a requisition was presented to the Provost to call a meeting to consider the propriety of adopting the provisions of the General Police Act. The meeting was held on 19th August, and after the usual preliminaries were gone through the Act was quietly adopted. On the 15th September following a meeting of electors was held, when Commissioners were appointed, who in turn met and appointed their officials.

#### The Harbour.

Our next broadside has reference to Harbour affairs. The Arbroath Harbour is not a thing of yesterday. It has already seen some five centuries. Again and again during its long history have its financial difficulties been matter of serious consideration to the towns' folk. In 1836 it was felt that in consequence of the increasing trade of the burgh the harbour should be enlarged, so the Magistrates and Council issued the following invitation:—

“Meeting of the inhabitants.—As there appears to be a general feeling among the inhabitants that it will be necessary to devise measures, very soon, for enlarging the Harbour, in order to meet the increased trade of the Burgh, the Council met yesterday, when it was resolved that a meeting of the inhabitants should be called to take the subject into their consideration, and to devise measures, along with the Town Council, for carrying

this important object into effect. Accordingly, the Magistrates and Council request a meeting of the merchants, manufacturers, ship-owners, and householders of Arbroath, to be held in the Town Hall of Arbroath, on Thursday, the 28th July, instant, at 12 o'clock noon, to take the above subject into serious consideration, and to adopt such measures as shall appear to them to be proper, for facilitating the object in view. Arbroath, 7th July, 1836."

Prior to the meeting various calculations as to how the funds should be raised, were made by those most actively interesting themselves in the matter, and a hope was expressed that the neighbouring landed proprietors would allow the quarries on their estates to be worked gratis, to afford a supply of stones for the operations. It seems they had a precedent for this, the laird of Tarrie—when the harbour was building in the reign of George II.—having granted such a permission. For this liberal action on the part of the then proprietor of the estate of Tarrie, it is said that the Magistrates decreed that all grain grown on the said estate should be for ever exempted from shore dues when shipped at the port of Arbroath.

The meeting called by this poster was accordingly held. It was numerously attended, and its objects heartily gone into, resulting in an application being made to Parliament for placing the management of the Harbour in the hands of Commissioners. It was at this meeting that the proposal was made (to which we have already referred) to relieve the Harbour funds of the expense of the lighting, paving, and watching of the town.

**Railway Matters.**

The only broadsides which now remain to be noticed, are connected with the opposition which several of the landed proprietors in the neighbourhood gave to the railway projects which were then receiving the material and moral support of the community. We explained the nature of this opposition in "Arbroath: Past and Present," and need not therefore repeat it here, but the following broadsides—which explain themselves, and therefore require no commentary—may be interesting as samples of the last shots fired in our local railway battle.

The first is a poster issued by the Magistrates :—

"To the inhabitants of Arbroath.—Yesterday morning a letter was received from London, which contained an extract from a petition presented to the House of Lords by John Hay, Esq. of Letham, against the Arbroath and Forfar Railway Bill, in which he asserted "that many of the subscribers are unable and unwilling to pay their subscriptions." On receiving this letter the Magistrates considered it to be their duty to hold a meeting of the Town Council, when they resolved that the Provost should call on Mr Hay for an explanation. The following letter was accordingly despatched to that gentleman by an express.—Arbroath, 18th April, 1836.—John Hay, Esq. of Letham.—Sir, There was laid before the Town Council to-day a copy of your petition to the House of Lords against the Arbroath and Forfar Railway Bill, in which there are many allegations which surprised them. But there is one expression which they cannot overlook, namely "that many of the subscribers are unable or unwilling to pay what they have subscribed." As the Council are not aware of any of the subscribers who are either unable or unwilling to



pay their subscriptions, I was directed by them to request of you to mention who those individuals are, to whom you allude, as being unable or unwilling to pay their subscriptions to the Arbroath and Forfar Railway. You will please favour me with an answer by 12 o'clock noon, to-morrow. I write this both as Provost, and as Preses, of the sub-committee to the railway. I am, &c.,

WM. ANDSON.

The Provost not having received any answer to this letter, the following letter was sent to Mr Hay, at one o'clock to-day. Arbroath, 19th April, 1836. John Hay, Esq. of Letham.—Sir, I wrote you yesterday requesting an explanation of an assertion in your petition to the House of Lords, against the Arbroath and Forfar Railway Bill, in which you say “that many of the subscribers are unable and unwilling to pay their subscriptions.” I required an answer to-day by twelve o'clock, but not having received any answer to my letter, I must conclude that the expression in your petition was unjustifiable and unfounded. As the inhabitants are in a state of considerable excitement in consequence of the expressions in your petition, so much so, that a requisition was presented to me last night to call a public meeting of the inhabitants (a copy of which I enclose) I shall feel it my duty to give publicity to the letters which I have written to you on this subject. I am, &c.,

WM. ANDSON.

Here the subject rests, and while the Magistrates hope the inhabitants will be satisfied that they have discharged their duty in this matter, they have the satisfaction to state that at a meeting held this day of a number of gentlemen who signed a requisition to call a public meeting on the subject, these gentlemen

approved of the steps already taken and concurred in thinking that under all the circumstances no public meeting would be necessary. Arbroath, 19th April, 1836."

Next day the Provost having in the interval received Mr Hay's reply, caused the following placard to be posted throughout the town.

"Notice to the inhabitants of Arbroath.—Arbroath, 20th April, 1836.—In reference to the notice issued by the Magistrates of yesterday's date, regarding certain expressions in the petition, presented to the House of Lords by John Hay, Esq. of Letham, against the Arbroath and Forfar Railway Bill, Provost Andson has received a letter from Mr Hay, of which the following is a copy:—To Provost Andson of Arbroath. Letham-Grange, 19th April, 1836. Sir,—I am as much surprised at the tenor of your letters as the Town Council are by the perusal of my petition against the Arbroath and Forfar Railway. My explanation will be given through medium of counsel in the House of Peers, and I beg leave to decline all further correspondence with you on the subject.—Yours, &c.,  
J. HAY."

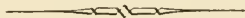
Notwithstanding the strenuous efforts of Mr Hay and the other landed proprietors equally determined with him to prevent the introduction to this locality of the railway system, the legislature, as might be expected, declined to listen to their arguments, and sanction was given to the promoters to proceed with the formation of the line then in contemplation, the Arbroath and Forfar Railway.

The several broadsides which we have here reproduced, as we have already shown, do not exhaust our budget, but they are sufficient to afford a fair sample of the wall literature which did

duty in those days for the newspapers through which we now make our views and opinions known.

In them we see reflected the ability, the courage, and the indomitable perseverance with which our forefathers fought the battle of reform, and thus helped to secure the many privileges which we, their descendants, now enjoy.

In our day, when men of every rank can have the world's news of yesterday laid on their breakfast tables at the small cost of a penny, we may be inclined to look down rather contemptuously on these curious placards of our forefathers. But are the advantages and pleasures all on our side? In these days of hurry-scurry, when we have news of all descriptions, almost *ad nauseam*, what would many of us not give for a day among the *douce* but determined reformers of '32; who, gathering in eager-eyed crowds around the bill-poster, as he unrolled his bundle of broadsides, discussed, and that, too, as we have seen, to some purpose, the latest moves backward or forward on the political draught-board in that game fraught to them with such important issues.





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