A history of Scotland from the Roman occupation

Lang Andrew
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Author: Lang Andrew

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A HISTORY OF SCOTLAND
James III...

...and his Son, afterwards James IV.

from the painting in Holyrood Palace.
A HISTORY OF SCOTLAND
FROM
THE ROMAN OCCUPATION
BY
ANDREW LANG

four
IN TWO VOLUMES
VOL. I.

WITH A FRONTISPICE

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
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MDCCCC

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DEAR MAXWELL,

In studying the records of our past, your name has come under my eyes many hundreds of times, since the days of MACCUS, ARCHIPIRATA, and never without pleasantly reminding me of you, and of hours among books, or by the banks of Test and Lea. You will oblige me by accepting this work, that, some day, may remind you of me.

Very sincerely yours,

A. LANG.
PREFACE.

This volume is an attempt to examine the elements and forces which went to the making of the Scottish people, and to record the more important events which occurred between the Roman occupation and the death of Cardinal Beaton in 1546. His assassination did not absolutely ruin, but it greatly weakened, the old ecclesiastical policy of reliance on France and resistance to England. I have done my best, within my limits, to include sketches of social life and manners from a very early period. It may, perhaps, be objected that I have dwelt too long on certain more or less legendary features in these Lives of the first Christian teachers, which contribute so much to our scanty knowledge of society in the seventh and eighth centuries. But I may remark that what are called "miracles" in these ages occupied the human intelligence almost as much as science does among ourselves. To neglect this belief, and the occurrences with which it concerned itself, seemed superficial. The learned editor of Bede's works, Mr Plummer, appears to be of the same opinion, and has honoured me by referring to some notes of my own on this obscure topic.

Having more space at my disposal than Dr Hume Brown, in his recent and remarkably compendious and lucid 'History of Scotland to the Accession of Mary Stewart,' I have en-
deavoured to introduce as much as possible the element of personal character and adventure, when duly vouched for by contemporary chroniclers, or, what is better, by contemporary letters and documents. As is well known, many delightful anecdotes of Pitscottie, Hume of Godscroft, and other old authors must be abandoned, with the legends of Boece. But much more of actual and well-attested romance remains on evidence than can here find place. I am pleased to know that Dr Hume Brown shares with me the belief that the passions, caprices, humours, and adventures of our ancestors, no less than the almost impersonal movements and tendencies of forces and ideas, deserve their place in history.

In my notes will be found discussions of a few differences, mainly on points of chronology, between Dr Hume Brown and other writers and myself. I must not omit the opportunity of confessing my debt to Dr Hume Brown for reference to the Chronicles of Wavrin, which I, like Mr Hill Burton and Mr Tytler, had here overlooked. These chronicles, with some appended documents, illustrate the obscure period of 1461-1464.

Among what are called "general histories" I have made most use of the well-known works of Mr W. F. Skene, Mr Hill Burton, Mr Freeman, Mr E. W. Robertson, and Mr Tytler. The last-named gentleman, by his research in documents then difficult of access, though now open to all in the immense collections of printed State Papers and Club publications, made a new epoch in Scottish history. Documents not fully accessible to him (such as the 'Hamilton Papers' and parts of Mr Bain's valuable Calendars) are now publici juris: indeed, save for some lucky accident, we are unlikely to find much early MS. material beyond what is now edited or in editorial hands.

Where doubts occurred as to the accuracy of printed State Papers, the originals in the British Museum have been consulted for me by Miss Violet Simpson of St Hugh's, Oxford.