

ART. VI.—AN OLD SCOTS SOCIETY.

THERE exists in Boston, U.S., a Scottish Society, a short account of which may be interesting. I shall preface what I am going to tell about it, by referring to an event which led to a considerable number of our countrymen finding a home in New England.

The battle of Dunbar was fought on 3d September, 1650. As is well known, the Royal army was completely defeated and put to flight, the official account stating that 'above 4000 were slain upon the place and in the pursuit, about 10,000 taken prisoners, most of whom were wounded, and many of note and quality taken.'* The prisoners were sent to various towns and strongholds in England; but how to dispose of them was rather a troublesome business, and became a serious question for the Government. Frequent mentions is made of them in the *State Papers* of the period, but I shall only quote a few of the references †:—

16th September, 1650. '1000 Scots prisoners to be sent to Bristol, whence they are to be shipped to New England.'

19th September, 1650. 'Sir Arthur Hesilrigge to deliver to Samuel Clarke, for transportation to Virginia, 900 Scotch prisoners; and 150 men for New England; but they are to be such as are well and sound, and free from wounds. . . . Sir Wm. Armyne, Mr. Bond, Mr. Challoner, and Mr. Martin to be a Committee to consider the proposition of Colonel Rockby for taking off 1000 Scotch prisoners for the service of France under Marshall de Turenne, and to confer with him as to where he intends landing them, and the security he will give for their not returning to England to the prejudice of the Commonwealth.'

17th October, 1650. 'John Allen and partners to be supplied with more prisoners to take the place of those dead whom they received to transport to the Plantations.'

23rd October, 1650. 'The Admiralty Committee to examine whether

* *A True Relation of the Routing the Scottish Army near Dunbar, Sep. 3 instant. The particulars of the Fight, Numbers slain and Prize taken. With an exact List of the Names of the Prisoners.* . . . London, printed Sept. 9, 1650. [The List of Names is of Officers only—292 in all.]

† *Calendar of State Papers—Domestic Series.* Vol. for 1650.

the Scotch prisoners now come and coming into the river are carried to places where they may be made use of against the Commonwealth, and stay to be made of all, until assurance be given of their not being carried where they may be dangerous; the proportion for New England to be shipped away forthwith, as their ship is ready, and the place is without danger.'

11th November, 1650. 'Sir Arthur Hesilrigge to deliver 150 Scots prisoners to Augustine Walker, Master of the Unity, to be transported to New England.'

The main object of the English Government, it would seem, was to get rid of these prisoners so that they should be neither an expense nor a trouble to the Commonwealth. They were, in many cases, 'given away' or 'sold at the nominal price of half a crown the dozen!' In an application to the Government for '2000 of the common prisoners that were of the Duke of Hamilton's army' (taken at Preston in 1648), Cromwell, addressing the Speaker in support of the petition of the individual who had applied for these men, said, 'You will have very good security that they shall not for the future trouble you; he will ease you of the charge of keeping them, as speedily as any other way you can dispose of them.'*

But it is more especially with the disposal of some of them in the North American Colonies that we have at present to do, for undoubtedly a large number were sent thither. I have only been able, however, to find a record of the names of one shipment—that made in the ship 'John and Sara' of London, which cleared at Gravesend for Boston on the 8th November, 1651. This ship had on board 272 'Servants' (as they are called), and on arriving in Boston their names were 'entered and recorded at the instant request of Mr. Thomas Kemble [the

* See article on 'Convicts Shipped to the Colonies,' in *Notes and Queries*, February 5, 1887. Cromwell's letter making the above application is in the Tanner MSS. in the Bodleian at Oxford. It is dated Dalhousie, 8th October, 1648, and is addressed 'For the Honourable William Lenthall, Esquire, Speaker of the Honourable House of Commons.' The individual for whom the application was made was 'Colonel Robert Montgomery, son-in-law to the Earl of Eglinton, whose faithfulness in the late troubles may render him,' adds Cromwell, 'worthy of a far greater favour than any I shall, at this time, desire for him.'

consignee of the ship and cargo,] by Edward Rawson, Recorder,' in the books which are now preserved in the Suffolk Probate Court, Boston. The cargo, in addition to the 'servants,' consisted of 'Iron worke, household stuffe, and other provisions for Planters and SCOTCH PRISONERS.' These articles were admitted free of duty 'by ordnance of Parliament, dated 20 of October, 1651.' The letter of instructions from the freighters of the ship to the consignee is interesting, and is as follows :—

'LONDON, this 11th of November, 1651.

Mr. THO: KEMBLE.

Wee whose names are underwritten, freighters of the shipp John & Sara whereof is comander John Greene doe Consigne the said shipp and servants to be disposed of by yow for our best Advantage and account, & the whole proceed of the servants & vojage Retourne in a joynet stocke without any Division in such goods as you conceive will turne best to acco^{nt} in the Barbadoes & consigne them to Mr. Charles Rich for the aforesajd acco^{nt} & w^t other pay yo^w meete with fit for this place send hither and take the Advise & Assistance of Capt Jn^o Greene in disposall of the Servants Dispatch of the shipp or w^t else may any wajes concerne the vojage thus wishing the shipp a safe vojage & Gods blessing on the same not doubting of your best care & dilligence, Remajne

Your loving friends

JO: BEECH

ROB^r RICH

WILLIAM GREENE.'

How these 'Servants' were actually disposed of cannot now be ascertained; but, in the face of the above letter of instructions, it is not presuming too much to say, that they were treated like other merchandise, and disposed of to the 'best advantage;' that is, the consignee sold them at the highest possible price for the benefit of his constituents. The following extract from a letter regarding another (and previous) shipment of prisoners,* may throw some light on

* Perhaps the 150 ordered to be delivered to Augustine Walker, master of the *Unity*, on 11th November, 1650.

the manner in which they were disposed of. It is dated 'Boston in N[ew] E[ngland], 28th of 5th [July], 1651,' and is addressed by the Rev. John Cotton to 'the Lord Generall Cromwell':—

'The Scots whom God delivered into your hands at Dunbarre, and whereof sundry were sent hither, we have been desirous (as we could) to make their yoke easy. Such as were sick of the scurvy or other diseases have not wanted physick and chyrurgy. They have not been sold for slaves to perpetual servitude, but for 6 or 7 or 8 years, as we do our owne; and he that bought the most of them (I heare) buildeth houses for them, for every four an house, layeth some acres of ground thereto, which he giveth them as their owne, requiring three dayes in the weeke to worke for him (by turnes) and 4 dayes for themselves, and promiseth, as soon as they can repay him the money he layed out for them, he will set them at liberty.'

If disposed of in this way, then the men sent out in the 'John and Sara' would all probably have regained their liberty between the years 1657 and 1661. Some of them, it may be presumed, returned to Scotland; but the greater part, most likely, would remain in America—either in Boston or its neighbourhood, or in 'the Plantations.' It is evident, however, that there must have been Scottish settlers in Massachusetts previous to the arrival of these prisoners, for in the year 1654—only twenty-seven years after the founding of the colony—'Some Gentlemen, Merchants, and others of the Scots nation residing in Boston, New England, from a compassionate concern and affection to their indigent countrymen in these parts, voluntarily formed themselves into a Charitable Society.' 'The 'indigent countrymen' were probably men who had served their term of years as 'servants' and been set at liberty, and if turned adrift, without money and without employment, would naturally excite the 'compassionate concern' of their more fortunate brethren. Unfortunately, we have no means of ascertaining the names of the members of this Society, or how it was managed; but on the 6th of January, 1657, a meeting was held, at which certain rules were agreed to, and from that date THE SCOTS' CHARITABLE SOCIETY OF BOSTON—the oldest society of the kind in America—has existed as a

benevolent institution. The Minute of this meeting has been preserved, and is as follows :—

‘At a meeting the 6 of January 1657 we whose names are underwritten being all or the most part present did agree and conclude for the releefe of our selves, and any other for the which wee may see cause, to make a box, and every one of us to give as God shall moue our harts whose blessing and direction wee doe from our harts desyre to have from him (who is able to doe abundantly aboue all that wee are able to ask or think) both in the beginning and managing of that which we doe intend, and therefore that we may express our Intentions and become our owne Interpreters, (leaving those that shall come after us to doe better than we have begun) hoping that by the assistance of the great God who can bring small beginnings to greater perfection than wee for the present can think of or expect, and lykwise we hope that God who hath the harts of all men in his hands and can turne them which way soever he pleaseth will double our spirit upon them and make them more zealous for his glory and the mutuall good one of another . . . and therefore knowing our owne weaknes to express our selues in this particular we leave our selues and it both to God and to the word of his grace, and doe desyre to declare our Intentions about which we have agreed. That is to say that wee whose names are Inserted in this booke doe and will by God’s assistance give as God will moue us and as our ability will bear at our first entring, but is agreed that none give less at ther entring then twelve pence and then quarterly to pay sixpence, and that this our benevolence is for the releefe of our selves being Scottishmen or for any of the Scottish nation whome we may see cause to helpe (not excluding the prudentiall care of the respective prudentiall townsmen whose God shall cast any of us or them, but rather as an addition thereunto) and it is agreed that there shall nothing be taken out of the box for the first sevin yeers for the releefe of any (the box being as yet in its minority), and further it is agreed that there shall be one Chosen (one of good report, fearing God, hateing covetousnes) quarterly to receive the duties of the said box and lykewise what Legacies may be left unto it, and that the first box maister shall give up all the revenues belonging unto the said box unto the next that is chosen, and so continue quarterly untill the Company may see any Inconvenience in it or cause to alter it, and it is agreed that our children shall have the same liberty with ourselves, they entring (when they are growne up) orderly, and it further agreed that those who doth willfully neglect to pay there dutys and have entred for the space of a twelve month togethir, shall have no benefite hereafter by the said box.’*

* There is something very quaint in the simple manner in which the members began their Society by agreeing ‘to make a box,’ the payments to which were not to be disturbed for a specified time. This plan reminds

Here are the names of those who signed this Minute: Robert Porteous, William Cossar, Alexander Simson, George Thomson, James Moore, James Grant, Thomas Dewar, John Clark, Peter Grant, John Kneeland, Thomas Polson, Wm. Anderson, James Webster, William Gibson, Alex. Grant, Andrew Jamesone, Wm. Ballantyne, William Speed, James Ingles, John Macdonald, Thomas Shearer, George Trumble, Alex. Bogle, John Bennett, James Adams, Malcome Makcallome, John Mason.

Seven of these names occur in the list of 'Servants' shipped on board the 'John and Sara,' and it may be presumed they represent the same individuals. It may be well to repeat their names—Wm. Anderson, Alexander Grant, James Grant, Patrick (or Peter) Grant, John Mackdonald, James Moore, Alester (or Alexander) Simson.

The Society at first was not very prosperous.* To the twenty-seven members whose names have already been given, one only was added in 1658, five in 1659, and one in 1665;

me of what I was told, when a boy, as to a way the poor people in some of our Scottish towns had of laying past a sixpence or a shilling a week in a *menage*, so that at the end of six months they might have a small sum—these weekly savings—which would help towards paying the half-year's rent, or some other special liability. This *menage* was a box (generally opened at Whitsunday and Martinmas), in which the small sums were deposited; and, as in the case of the Society whose history we are considering, was entrusted to the safe keeping of 'one of good report, fearing God, and hateing covetousness.' Probably the *menage* was a custom left in Scotland by the French, as I have found a similar way of allowing savings to accumulate among the people in French villages. From the *menage* the Savings Banks, now of such national importance, were naturally evolved. Possibly the Rev. Dr. Duncan, the founder of Savings Banks, got the idea from having seen the beneficial workings of the *menage* in his youth.

* At the time of its formation the New England people did not look very favourably upon the Scots, who were placed under disabilities from which the English settlers were free. They were not, however, received with the same disfavour as the Irish, against whom the General Court of the Colony passed an Act on the 29th October 1654, imposing a penalty of £50 sterling on every one who brought an Irish man, woman, or child, within the jurisdiction! *Court Records of the Colony of Massachusetts*, vol. x., folio 338.

and then for nineteen years there were no additions ; so that, (to quote from a statement read before the Society on 8th May 1770), although 'it did subsist for some years' yet 'from the Smallness of their Number, Lowness of their Stock, and Mismanagement of some private Trustees it had not the desired Success and Effect,' and it seemed in 1684 as if it were to come to an end. But there were some good and earnest men who did not wish it to go down, and 'encouraged thereto by the Success of a Scots Society in London of the same Nature, established by Charter of King Charles 2d,' they called together a meeting of 'residents in towne and countrie'; and on the 25th October of that year the Society was revived, and 'has ever since without Interruption been continued and promoted to the Compassionate and Seasonable Relief of many.' The account of this meeting is as follows :—

'At Boston in New England This twenty-fifth day of October
Sixteen hundred and eighty-four yeirs. 1684.—The Eternall
Lord and great Lawgiver to his people heath commanded by his word a
Collectione for the necessities one of ane other, for the relieving of them
who are under wants and poverty, good workes of this kind being the
fruits of faith and holiness, which hath been the practise of the Saints in
all ages, in their severall societies, and also of our Countriemen at home,
and abroad in many parts of the world, to Gods glorie, the reliefe of our
countriemen in their povertie and the credit of the actors theirin. As it
hath been begun in this place formerly in a most laudable manner, But
throw some discouragment hath been left over for a tyme to our griefe &
the prejudice of the poor.

'Therefore throw the providence of God being willing to meet together
to consider of this matter, Wee are this day convined being Scottsmen &
the sons of Scotts-men Inhabitants of Bostone and in the Colony thair of
with severall strangers of our Countriemen being of one accord most
willing to renew the former good example, and to give what the Lord shall
enable and move us for this good work, that the poor strangers and families
and children of our natione, when under this dispensatione may be the
more orderly and better relieved. Wee doe recommend this not only one
to an other heire present, But unto all our Countriemen in this Colony not
present, And to all Strangers of our natione that from hencefurth shall
come heir, either to receide or trade as merchants, masters, sailors,
Tradesmen & all others, That all of us may according to the Command of
God enjoyned us give to the poor which is a lending to the Lord, by whom
we have all thinges, And theirby open the bowells of our compassion,

according to our willingness and ability for the releife of such of our nation or their children, who shall be heir, or in providence as strangers brought heir to poverty, being flesh of our flesh, & bone of our bone may be helped in their distress, And this wee doe not by constraint bot by a willing & free heart as in the presence of God, who will reward the liberall giver, and will much nottice the smallest myte to be a good & christian example to all who shall come after us.

‘ And Therefore for the better regulating heirof wee have with one Consent maide these rules and lawes following.’

But it is not necessary to copy the whole of them; it is sufficient to say that they were framed with carefulness in every respect. Two extracts will show this; rule 3d. is to the effect that if any one get assistance above the sum of ten shillings he shall ‘give a bill or bond for the payment of the same, if afterwards he become to be able, payable to the box-master for the use of the sd. Society.’ The 9th rule is worth repeating, ‘It is also heirby provided, that no prophane or dissolut person, or openly scandalous shall have any pairt or portion heirin, or be a member of the Society.’

Of the original members, or those who were present at the meeting held on the 6th January 1657, four only were connected with the revived Society of 1684, viz.: Wm. Gibson, James Ingles, Alexander Simsone and James Webster. Alexander Simsone, apparently was the only survivor of the ‘Servants’ shipped in the ‘John and Sara.’

From 1684 till the time of the Revolution the Society was in a most satisfactory and prosperous condition, and ‘its roll embraced the wealthiest and highest in the province, whose Scottish blood entitled them to its membership. Its quarterly assessments were given with liberal hands; its property was considerable; and its appropriations—governed with caution—were yet generous and ample.’*

In 1770, the funds being then ‘of a considerable value and in a flourishing state,’ additional rules were passed ‘for the better Management thereof’; and a bye-law was added which is rather curious, viz. that ‘the Key Keepers are to attend Gentlemen and others, Scots, or of Scots Extraction, residing

* President’s address at bi-centenary celebration, 30th Nov., 1857.

in Boston, or Transients, to acquaint them with the charitable design of this Society, and to invite them to contribute by the Formality of delivering to them a Silver Key.' But the revolutionary troubles were then beginning, and our prudent countrymen seeing danger ahead held a meeting on the 10th May 1774, at which it was agreed 'that the whole of the Society's bonds be call'd in.' A committee was appointed for this purpose, and on 29th March 1775 'the Books, Bonds, Obligations and Notes were del^d. to J. Greenlaw, Ad. Cunningham, Joint Treasurers; W. Dickson, Secretary; Jas. Selkrigg, Assistant; also the cash on hand, £6 2s. 3½d. The sundries were put under the care of Mr. Cunningham.' The funds, it may be stated, amounted to £924 10s. 8d. 'Lawful money'—about £740 sterling.

'When hostilities actually commenced, that loyalty which has ever been among the strongest characteristics of the Scots, retained the majority of the Society in their allegiance to the mother country.*' Many of the members accordingly left Boston and removed to Canada and Nova Scotia; and among those who did so was the Mr. Cunningham above-mentioned, who carried with him to Halifax the books, securities, and other documents belonging to the Society. There is no record of any work being done by the Society during the 'troubles' (there could scarcely be any, when the books, and especially the funds, had been carried off); but as soon as peace was declared and people had returned to their usual avocations, we find the members (it seems there were nineteen remaining in Boston) bestirring themselves about realizing and disposing of the funds. A meeting was held on 27th December 1782, and a Committee appointed, who were instructed 'to ask, demand, sue for if necessary, and collect from all and every person or persons who are indebted to the said Society on Bond or Mortgage, the several sums respectively due from each and every of the said Debtors, principal and interest.' Mr. Cunningham was written to with the request that he would return the books and securities which were in his

* President's address, 30th Nov., 1857.

possession; but he refused, as he was of opinion that the Society should be dissolved, and the funds divided among the members. The members resident in Boston thought differently, and on the 6th August 1783, a letter was addressed to Mr. Cunningham to that effect. He was told in the letter that 'the interest at this period amounts to a considerable sum, and when received will afford relief to a number of suffering members. Should a dissolution take place as you purpose . . . how trifling will the dividend be among so many! We consider you and the other gentlemen who were members before the commencement of the late war as members still, and entitled equally with us, residents of Boston, to all the privileges of the Society. At the same time, we consider the Society by its institution entirely confined to this town, and that the members here ought to be possessed of the books and papers, and have the management of the affairs of the Society as they ever have had.'

In the meantime the Boston Committee had recovered £42 of the debts, which sum, in seeming violation of the spirit of the above letter, was divided among the members, each one receiving nine dollars; the assets subsequently recovered were, however, retained to form a 'permanent' or endowment fund.* It was only, however, after a lengthened correspondence with Mr. Cunningham, and a delay of about twenty years that the

* This fund amounted in 1821 to about £400, and continued without increase till the year 1846, when it was taken by the Treasurer from the several stocks in which it was invested, and transferred to a mortgage on a farm. From some irregularity, not clearly shown in the records of the Society, it was found when the farm was subsequently sold, that the Society had no valid claim under the mortgage, and so the entire fund was lost. [In 1867 the Secretary of the Society made the following memorandum in the minute book, 'Invest only in first mortgages; and be sure they are registered according to law in the public records.' It is easy being wise after the event!] In 1854 a lady bequeathed 1000 dollars to the funds of the Society; in 1866 a subscription list was opened, and a considerable addition was made to the 'permanent' fund, which the following year amounted to about 6000 dols.; in 1874 Mr. John Templeton bequeathed 5000 dols., which brought the fund up to 11,000 dols. It is now over 16,000 dols. (about £3300).

books and other documents were finally recovered. A minute of a meeting held at the Green Dragon Tavern on 2d August, 1803, records 'that the thanks of this Society be given the Secretary for procuring the books and papers of the Society.'

But while the negotiations were going on, the members had been adding to their number, and prosecuting their work of usefulness. They had also made an application to the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for a Charter of Incorporation, which was granted on 16th March, 1786. The Government, however, probably from political reasons, did not consider it prudent to allow an unlimited membership, and so a clause was inserted in the charter 'that the members of said Society shall at no time exceed the number of one hundred.'

A few extracts from the records of the Society may here be given :

5th May, 1713. It is ordered that Captⁿ. Frizell and Mr. Maxwell, two of the Overseers of the Poor's Box shall from time to time go to all the Scotsmen in the North part of Boston, and Captⁿ. Thomas Steel and D^r. Geo: Stewart to the Scotsmen in the South end, and acquaint them with the good and charitable design of the Society, 'both to relieve any such as contribute thereto when in distress, and Strangers cast in by shipwreck or otherways ; that they should contribute to so good a work in order to relieve themselves in case Providence should so order it that they or theirs should stand in need of help ; and in case any one should slight so friendly an Invitation to give help to the poor which is lending to the Lord, their names are to be returned to the Society next quarterly meeting in order to be recorded as Slighters of the same, and never to receive any benefit or releife out of the said Box.'

4th May, 1714. 'Voted that whoever shall be chosen Treasurer . . . and refuses to serve shall forfeit and pay to the poor fourty shillings.'

5th May, 1719. 'Captⁿ. Tho^s. Steel, the former Treasurer, gave in his Acco^t. of the Society's Stock . . .' from which it appears that it 'amo^ts to the sum of Six hundred and nine pounds, three shillings and eight pence, whereof Fifty six pounds, seven and five pence of *old standing Debts are Desperate*.'

5th February, 1734. 'Cash paid Captⁿ. Watt (£2 0s. 0d.) for Cloes for James Forbes, that came from Virginia afoot, for his passage to London ; he was formerly a servant to the Earl of Marr and got his passage in Cap^t. Cowper.'

7th May, 1734. 'Voted Cha^s. Gordon, if he goes home, and if he doe not go home the petition to be void, £3. 7.'

5th November, 1734. 'Voted Alexander Fyfe and William Ross, as an Act of Charity, not being members of y^e box, £3. each.'

2nd May, 1738. 'Voted that no wine or strong drink be drunk at the charge of the Charity of the Society, but beer or cyder only during the time of the meeting on Business.'

5th May, 1741. Voted 'That no woman unless a native of Scotland, or of Scots progeny, shall be entitled to the charity of the Society as a widow of the contributor, but dureing her being y^e widow of said contributor; that is, upon a subsequeut marriage to any man not a contributor; and during her subsequent widowhoods she shall have no claim on this charity.'

2d November, 1742. 'Further voted, That upon Petitions for Charity towards paying passage money to Scotland, the money granted shall be paid to y^e master of y^e vessell, the petitioner at the same time giving his or her note to repay the said sam to Scots Box when able.'

5th December, 1753. 'Given as charity to a poor W^{do}. Stewart, a Scots Woman, her husband Jn^o. Stewart being Wash'd Overboard in a Storm in their passage from Liverpool to N. York, & She much bruised, &c., by w^{ch}. she lost the use of her left arm—by consent of y^e Presid^t. & Vice Presid^t. a Crown Sterling; more given wth. consent of y^e Presid^t. a Dollar.'

3d August, 1756. 'At the quarterly meeting of the Society . . the following Charities were voted and given to the poor on 12 petitions, £39 0 0

Paid David Lennox, Servitor, his fees, - - - - -	2 0 0
P ^d . the Clerk his fees, - - - - -	2 10 0
P ^d . the Reconing, - - - - -	5 17 0

Paid for Eliz^h. Brown's passage to North Britain w^h. her 3 children, by vote and order of the Society, 40 shillings sterling, - - - - - 20 0 0

4th August, 1761. 'It was Agreed & Resolved upon by this Society at this meeting that each present member shall pay his Clubb or Share of the Reconing, & that no part of the Reconing shall now or at any future meeting be paid out of the Box.'

4th May, 1762. Paid the Boarding, Nursaing, & attending, &c., one Robert Craige, a Sailor, at y^e house of Sarah Smith, - - £34 10 0

Paid to Widow Wood in consideration of her kindness to a poor Scotch orphan girl, - - - - - 0 10 0

Paid to John Johnston, a poor man, for linen for two new shirts, 0 14 0

3d February, 1767. Voted that the quarterly subscription be raised to half a dollar, which 'is very moderate, and that . . . no liquor be called for untill the Business of the Society is over.'

* The pound, (unless otherwise expressed) was not much more than a pound Scots, being only two shillings sterling; but in 'Lawful money' it was equal to sixteen shillings Sterling.

These extracts will give an idea of the manner in which the funds of the Society were expended.

The Scot abroad always observes St. Andrew's Day. It was, therefore, considered most appropriate by the committee, that when the day came round in 1857, the Society should, on it, have a social gathering to celebrate the two hundredth anniversary of its foundation. This celebration took the form of a supper in the Revere House.* 'The President was escorted from his residence by the members of the Society, some of whom, with himself, were dressed in the Highland costume. They were preceded by pipers, who played national airs.' The meeting was most enthusiastic, and the President gave an excellent speech, telling those who listened to him many of the facts which are related in this paper.

It has been mentioned, that when the Charter was granted to the Society in 1786, the number of members was restricted to one hundred. This, as time ran on, was gradually felt to be an embarrassment and an interference with its usefulness. Accordingly, on the 16th January, 1865, the number permitted by the Charter being then reached, a resolution was moved, that a petition be presented to the Legislature of the State praying that the clause limiting the membership should be repealed. The petition stated that 'whatever might have been the propriety of such a precise restriction seventy-nine years ago, it can scarcely hold now, when the number of Scotsmen in the city of Boston is probably fifty times as great as it was then—more to succour in their poverty, and more to relieve them, could they have the opportunity to do so through some organised channel, such as the Scots' Society. That such restriction is entirely unnecessary in a Society, the sole object of which is, according to the second article of their Constitution, 'to furnish relief to unfortunate Scottish emigrants, their descendants and families residing in New England, and to furnish them with information and advice;' and which, in its fourteenth article of the same document, says: "Discussions on religious, political, or other subjects

* Then, as now, one of the leading hotels in Boston.

foreign to the objects and purposes of the Society, shall not be allowed, either at the general or government meetings.”’ The prayer of this petition was granted, and the amended Charter adopted accordingly. The restriction being removed, the number of members was soon largely increased; and at the last annual meeting there were 422 on the roll, about a fourth being life members.

Last year, the amount expended by the Society in charity was about £300; 351 applicants had asked for assistance and 306 had been relieved; and during the year several of our countrymen, who had been unable to find employment and were without means, were forwarded to their old homes in Scotland. ‘Although,’ the Chairman said, at the annual meeting, ‘the past year had been a busy one in the work of charity, there having been a greater number of applicants than in any previous year of the Society’s existence, yet the treasury was able to stand all demands made upon it.’

The current expenses are met by the interest on the ‘permanent’ fund, and the annual subscriptions of ordinary members. The thirty-ninth article of the constitution expressly states that ‘All donations and legacies bequeathed to the Society shall be added to the Permanent fund, unless otherwise specified by the donor. All amounts received from Life membership subscriptions shall be added to the Permanent fund. The Permanent fund shall never be diminished, the interest only to be used for current expenses.’ This fund amounts at present to 16,225 dols., or about £3375.

The Society also owns the following property:

The dwelling-house, known as <i>The Scots</i>		
<i>Temporary Home</i> , valued at -	- \$7000	} or about £2400
The furniture and library in same, -	- 1500	
A burial lot in Mount Auburn Cemetery,	3000	

The Society has a Relief Committee whose duty it is to enquire into the circumstances of those applying for aid, and to see that ‘relief when granted shall be prompt and efficient, whether in the form of house rents, food, clothing, fuel, or money.’ The ‘Home’ is intended to give shelter to Scottish

men and women, or their immediate descendants, who may be in distress, and who are allowed to remain in the house for a time not exceeding three days; but this period may be extended if the officers authorised consider it desirable.

Such is an outline of the history of the Scots' Charitable Society of Boston. It cannot boast of anything brilliant or extraordinary, but it is truly Scottish in thoughtful providence, in generous will, and liberal deed; in manly expression of intent, and in enduring perseverance in pursuit of the end. In the words appended to one of its old rules, 'May this Society subsist as long as Charity is a virtue.'

JOHN MACKAY.

ART. VII.—THE LIMITS OF SCOTTISH HOME RULE.

FOR good or for evil, the problem of Scottish administration, if not of Scottish legislation, suggested by the comprehensive phrase of 'Home Rule,' does not stand where it did at the General Election of 1886. The Scottish Home Rule Association was, indeed, in existence before that time; and what is now known as 'Home Rule all round' had been adopted and advocated by several of the more pronouncedly Democratic of Scottish representatives. But neither the Association nor the cry had any appreciable effect upon the fortunes of that contest. A great deal has happened, however, since 1886. Mr. Gladstone, who was defeated then, has placed the Disestablishment of the Church of Scotland—regarded as an exclusively Scottish question—in the forefront of that Liberal programme with which he hopes to win the next General Election; and he is confessedly in the 'something must be done' stage of opinion in regard to Scottish Home Rule itself. Lord Hartington has recently spoken of the Scottish Home Rule Association as if it were *une quantité négligeable*, but he has recognized its existence and has engaged in controversy with its Secretary. An eminent nobleman, who takes little or no interest in the party controversies of the time,