

the bill for abolishing the heretable jurisdictions in Scotland. Lord Keeper Guilford had a principal hand in the statute of frauds and juries; of which the Lord Nottingham observed, 'That every line was worth a subsidy.' Lord Chancellor

Somers projected the act of union between England and Scotland, and a bill to correct some proceedings both in common law and equity, that were dilatory and chargeable.

LIFE OF THE CELEBRATED JOHN NAPIER.

Written by the Earl of Buchan.

I HAVE undertaken to write the life of John Napier, of Merchiston, a man famous all the world over, for his great and fortunate discovery of logarithms in trigonometry, by which the ease and expedition in calculation, have so wonderfully assisted the science of astronomy, and the arts of practical geometry and navigation.

Elevated above the age in which he lived; and a benefactor to the world in general, he deserves the epithet of *Great*.

Napier lived in a country of proud barons, where barbarous hospitality, hunting, the military art, and religious controversy, occupied the time and attention of his contemporaries, and where he had no learned society to assist him in his researches.

This extraordinary person was born at Merchiston, in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, in the year 1550.

He was the son of Sir Archibald Napier, of Merchiston, master of the mint in Scotland, and of Janet Bothwell, daughter of Mr. Francis Bothwell, one of the senators of the college of justice.

That his family was of ancient establishment in the counties of Dunbarton and Stirling, appears from the public records, and from the private archives of his house.

John de Napier, from whom he sprung in the 12th generation, was one of those proprietors of lands, who swore allegiance to Edward the First, of England, in the year 1296. William, from whom he counted in the ninth generation, was governor of the castle of Edinburgh, in the year 1401, whose son Alexander was the first baron or laird of Merchiston, and was the father of another of the same name, who was vice-admiral of Scotland and one of the commissioners from king James III. at the court of London, in the years 1461. and 1464.

From the family of Lennox, earl of Lennox, he derived a co-heirship by the marriage of Elizabeth Mentieth, of Rusk, to his great-grandfather's father, Sir John

Napier, of Merchiston: but on his ancestors he reflected more honour and celebrity than he received, and his name will probably be famous, when the lineage of Plantagenet will be remembered only by genealogists, and when posterity may know more of his, than we now know of the families of Plato, Aristotle, Archimides, or Euclid.

It is fit, that men should be taught to aim at higher and more permanent glory than wealth, office, titles, or parade can afford; and I like the task, of making such great men look little, by comparing them with men who resemble the subject of my present enquiry.

From Napier's own authority we learn, that he was educated at St. Andrews, where, writes, he, 'in my tender years and bairn-age, at schools, having on the one part contracted a loving familiaritie with a certain gentleman a papist, and on the other part being attentive to the sermons of that worthy man of God, maister Christopher Goodman, teaching upon the Apocalyps, I was moved in admiration against the blindness of papists: that could not most evidently see their seven hilled city of Rome painted out there so lively by saint John, as the mother of all spiritual whoredome: that not only bursted I oute in continuall reasoning against my said familiar, but also from thenceforth I determined with myself by the assistance of God's spirit to employ my study and diligence to search out the remnant mysteries of that holy booke (as to this houre praised be the Lord I have bin doing at all such times as conveniently I might have occasion),' &c.

The time of Napier's matriculation does not appear from the register of the university of St. Andrew's as the books ascend no higher than the beginning of the last century; but as the old whore of Babylon assumed, in the eyes of the people of Scotland, her deepest tinge of scarlet about the year 1566, and at that time corresponds to the literary bairnage, of John Napier,