

were the royal arms of Scotland, boldly sculptured, supported on the right by Mercy, holding a crown wreathed with laurel, and on the left by Justice, having the balance in one hand and a palm branch in the other, with the appropriate inscription *Stant his felicia regna*, and immediately underneath the national arms this motto, *Uni unionum*. This entrance, which stood facing the east, is now blocked up. Over the smaller doorway which forms the present main access to the Parliament Hall the city arms occupied an ornamental tablet, placed between two sculptured obelisks, and underneath this inscription, on a festooned scroll, *Dominus custodit introitum nostrum*.

An amusing anecdote is told of one of the old frequenters of the Parliament Close regarding the decorations of the ancient doorway. James Robertson, Esq., of Kincraigie, an eccentric Jacobite laird, on being pressed on one occasion by the Honourable Henry Erskine to accompany him into the Parliament House, somewhat abruptly declined the invitation—"But I'll tell you what, Harry," added he, pointing to the statue that stood over the porch, "tak' in Justice wi' ye, for she has stood lang at the door, and it wad be a treat for her to see the inside like other strangers!" The renovators of the old Hall seem to have taken the *daft laird's* hint. Justice vanished from the porch, to reappear in gaudy and tasteless fashion in the great window which was filled till recently with a badly executed copy in painted glass of Sir Joshua Reynolds's design of the same subject for New College, Oxford. An incident, however, in connection with the fate of the ancient warders of the Parliament porch will best illustrate the taste of its beautifiers. Shortly after the modernisation of the old front, the late Bailie Henderson observed a cart conveying along the South Bridge a load of carved stones, among which the statues of Justice and Mercy formed the most prominent objects. On inquiring at the carter as to their destination, he learned that one of the professors, who kept a Polar bear, had applied to the magistrates for stones to erect a bear's house within the College quadrangle, and he accordingly obtained a gift of these *old rubbish* for the purpose. The bailie gave the carter a fee to turn his horse's head and deposit them at his own villa near Trinity, from whence he sent him back with his cart full of stones equally well adapted for the professor's bear's house.

The Great Hall measures 122 feet long by 49 broad, and although the windows have been altered, its curious, open-timbered oak roof remains, springing from a series of grotesquely sculptured corbels. Long after it had been forsaken by the Scottish Estates it retained the high throne at its southern end, where the Sovereign, or his Commissioner, was wont to preside over their deliberations, and on either side a range of benches for the nobles and barons, with lower ones in the centre for the commissioners of burghs: the Scottish Estates having formed to the last only one deliberative assembly. Without this area a pulpit was erected for sermons to the Parliament: the