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Editorial Correspondence.

NORTH BERWICK AND THE BASS.

IN the course of my perigrinations in Auld Scotia, I found myself one fine summer evening in the hospitable manse of North Berwick, the guest of the Rev. G. W. Sprott, D.D., whose presence in our General Assembly as a delegate from the Church of Scotland in 1879 is a matter of pleasant remembrance to many of us. Dr. Sprott is a native of Nova Scotia, the son of one of the old pioneer Presbyterian Ministers who left behind him the record of a laborious and useful life, extending over more than half a century, at Musquodoboit, where he died at the great age of ninety years. Dr. Sprott received his education for the ministry in the University of Glasgow. At the close of his curriculum he directed the attention of some of his fellow-students to the destitute condition of the Church in his native province. At that time, in 1851, the Church of Scotland in Nova Scotia had been nearly extinguished. Some of the ministers had returned to Scotland, others had joined the Free Church, so few were left, indeed, that the Synod of the Kirk in Nova Scotia became *defunct* in 1843 and did not meet again for nine years. One of his companions, having listened to the appeal, shrewdly replied that, if such were the case, he had better go himself. The result was that two of them agreed to accompany him. At all events Messrs. Sprott, Alexander Maclean, (now of Hopewell) and Allan Pollok (now of Halifax) were licensed and ordained by the Presbytery of Bute and came out together in January 1852. After

fulfilling his appointment of three years in Nova Scotia, Dr. Sprott served another term of three years in Ceylon as minister of the Scotch Church at Candy. There after he was presented to the Chapel of Garioch, Aberdeenshire, from which he was translated to North Berwick. Dr. Sprott is not a demonstrative man. He is rather reticent. But when occasion offers, he speaks to the purpose. He is full of antiquarian lore, and is an author of some repute. He is highly conservative, and has a proper veneration for his profession.

I was interested in his quaint old church, and church-yard, and especially in the well-kept records of the Kirk-session, beautifully engrossed and complete from the year 1661. Among the attestations of the minutes this one belonging to 1688, caught my eye,—“seen and approved by Gilbert Burnet, *Clk. Pres.*” This Burnet, then minister of Salton, became the celebrated Bishop of Salisbury who wrote one of the best histories of the Reformation. He was also one of the great preachers of his day—when the hour glass was still used in the pulpit, of whom it is said that when the time for the sermon was exhausted Burnet’s *hummers* would encourage him to turn up the glass and run off the same once more. On the sea-shore are the remains of an old church, where tradition says the devil preached to the witches, and the ruins of a nunnery founded by St. Margaret. At a short distance is Tantallon Castle, formerly a stronghold of the Douglas’—a noble ruin overhanging the sea. North Berwick Law, a conical rock, rising 612 feet above the sea, is a remarkable landmark, used in old times for beacon-fires which spread the news even faster than the telegraph now does. North Berwick is called the *Scarboro’* of Scotland, being the most fashionable place of summer resort on the East coast. The native popu-