

INTRODUCTION

IT has been generally said that "Sir Andrew Wylie," was, at the time of its publication, the most popular of Galt's works in England. Probably this popularity never meant very much. But if it had been much more extensive than it was, and if the knowledge of the hero of Galt's story had been widespread, we might, I think, have safely indicated Sir Andrew Wylie as the original of the Scot of low comedy and popular jest—in fact, the Bangwent-Saxpence Scotchman.

But the conception is likely far older than Galt, probably at least as old as the Union of the crowns, and the japes that were made then upon the penuriousness of the crowd of hungry adventurers, who accompanied King James southward from Holyrood in 1603.

Never, however, has the type been clothed