

in courts, without imbibing some of the sordid which prevails there, our *Philosophical*, our *Divine* Poet, seems, upon these promotions, to have turned Politician! and instead of enlarging his flowery acquisitions on the banks of Parnassus, grew ambitious of spacious dominions in Terra Firma; having projected the settlement of a large colony, and making great plantations at Nova-Scotia, in America, at his own expence, and that of such adventurers as should be engaged in the undertaking.

His Majesty gave him a grant of that country by his royal deed, on the twenty-first of September, 1621,<sup>n</sup> and did intend to erect an order of Baronets, for encouraging and supporting so grand a work; but, to the jealousies which began to disturb the two or three last years of his reign, the suspension thereof is ascribed, till a more favourable conjuncture of affairs should offer; which that King did not live to see. But his son, King Charles I. on his coming to the crown, was very forward to countenance and prosecute the same; which, as it was schemed or painted out, especially in the pamphlet which Sir William himself published, to encourage adventurers, promised mighty advantages to the nation. This pamphlet he now set forth, is intitled, *An Encouragement to Colonies*; quarto, London, 1625, and the same was published again, with an additional title, or another on the same subject, five years after.<sup>o</sup> The King was so won by these representations, that he made Sir William Alexander Lieutenant of New Scotland, and founded, in the said first year of his reign, the order of Knights Baronet in Scotland, whose aid was appropriated to the said plantation and settlement, upon the consideration of each having a liberal portion of land allotted him there. The number of these Baronets were not to exceed one hundred and fifty; and they were endowed with ample privileges, pre-eminence, &c. as that, the title should be heritable, and they take place before all Knights, called *Equites Aurati*; all lesser Barons, commonly called *Lairds*; and before all other gentlemen, except Sir William Alexander, his Majesty's Lieutenant of Nova-Scotia; who (with his heirs, their wives and children) is not only accepted, in each of their letters patent, granted to the Knights his companions, but likewise the charter granted to himself by the King, in the year aforesaid, did ex-

pressely bear this exception and provision. Further, that they should have place in all his Majesty's and his successors armies, near and about the royal standard, for the defence thereof; with other honourable distinctions of title and precedency, to them, their wives, and heirs. But none of them to be created Baronets, either of Scotland or Nova-Scotia, till he had first fulfilled the conditions designed by his Majesty, for the good and increase of that plantation; and till he had confirmed the same to the King, by his Majesty's Lieutenant there. These patents were ratified in parliament, and registered in the books of Lyon, King of Arms, and the Heralds: But after Sir William sold Nova Scotia to the French, they were drawn up shorter, and granted in general terms, with all the privileges &c. of former Baronets; and it is now become an honourable title in Scotland conferred at the King's pleasure, without limitation of numbers. For a fuller view of the first term of these patents, with the armorial ensigns granted to the order, and the badge thereof, which they wore about their necks in an orange coloured ribbon; as also of the arms, supporters, and motto of Sir William Alexander himself, we refer to the volumes containing the same.<sup>p</sup> He had now further given him, a peculiar privilege of coining a small copper money; a grant which was inveighed against, even at that time, with great bitterness; and indeed the whole enterprize, at least as to Sir William's aims and ends, has had but an ill-favoured representation made of it, by some of his own countrymen, and especially in a work, otherwise designed to honour both them and him.<sup>q</sup> but such

<sup>p</sup> *The British Compendium or Rudiments of Honour*, &c. vol. 2. 160. 1725. and vol. 3. intitled *English Baronets* 160. 1727, p. 326. &c.

<sup>q</sup> For, not to mention here, the private schemes and proposals of the author, Sir Thomas Urquhart, being a prisoner of war; for restoring him to his liberty and estate at Cromarty; nor other strange singularities in the said work; it contains chiefly, the praises of such Scotsmen who had been famous in arms and arts since the year 1600: Therefore a kind of continuation of Dempster, how little soever thereof appears in the title. [The Discovery of a most exquisite jewel, &c. found in the kennel of Worcester streets, the day after the fight, &c. 80. 1652.] Herein, having mentioned Sir William Alexander (afterwards created Earl of Stirling) with applause; as the first, who of late, had been famous for English poetry, and named some of his quarks; he yet goes on thus: "The purity of this gentleman's vein was quite spoiled by the corrupt-like

<sup>n</sup> Crawford, p. 463.

<sup>o</sup> Intitled, *The Map and Description of New-England; together with a discourse of plantations and colonies*, Lond. 4to. 1630.