On again introducing "the Mowbrays, lords of Melton" to your notice, it may not be amiss to recall to your recollection that the last sketch terminated with the death of William de Mowbray, the fifth lord after the Conquest, in the year 1222.

At that period our country had, as we have seen, made great strides towards constitutional freedom. The barons who took up arms against King John, established the fact that resistance was to be expected when the sovereign overstepped the boundaries of justice and the kingly prerogatives. And then to define that justice, and to draw a boundary line around those prerogatives, the barons demanded and obtained the Great Charter of Liberties as a guarantee against future disputes and contentions.

As to the Crusades in which the Mowbrays co-operated so heartily, we have glanced at the great hold they acquired upon the enthusiasm and religious feelings of all classes of the people. Whether the result of those religious wars was a good one, whether chivalry was strengthened in its upholding of veracity, honour, and true gallantry, or whether a baneful influence was cast over the brighter concomitants of ancient warfare by those fierce and bloody conflicts with the infidels, is an open question, and one which finds many and various answers.
With regard to the architectural taste of the age, we have only to refer to the noble works still standing as proofs sufficient of its due appreciation of what was beautiful in design, combined with a most accurate estimate of what was likely to be constructionally lasting, if not almost imperishable.

To resume our narrative concerning the lords of Melton: William de Mowbray had issue by Agnes his wife, two sons, Nigel and Roger. Nigel, in the eighth year of Henry III., paying five hundred pounds for his relief, had livery or possession of all his lands. He married Maud, daughter and heiress of Roger de Camvil, by whom he left no children. An early death prevented him from taking that prominent position in the affairs of men, which we may presume a son of William de Mowbray would have occupied. He, the sixth lord of Melton after the Conquest, died in the thirteenth year of Henry the Third's reign, at Nantz in Brittany, and was there buried, leaving Roger, his brother, the heir to his possessions.

Upon the death of Nigel de Mowbray, Ralph Fitz Nicholas, steward to Henry III., gave to the King five hundred pounds in order to secure a sanction or a command from him in favour of the marriage of Maud, the widow of Nigel, to one of his sons. This marriage does not appear to have taken place, for a short time after (in the seventeenth year of Henry III.) her uncle, Hugh de Patshull, by a judicious payment of three hundred marks to Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent and Justiciary of England, obtained for her the privilege of marrying whom she pleased, besides making certain arrangements as to her dowry. At the same time Hugh de Patshull also obtained the custody of the lands of Nigel de Mowbray deceased,—his brother and heir, Roger, being then a minor. In the following year however (eighteenth year of Henry III.) John de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln and Constable of Chester, by paying to the King a fine of one thousand marks, gained the custody of these estates, together with the wardship and marriage of the young heir. He did not hold the wardship long, for about four years afterwards he assigned it to Thomas de Furnival, whose object in securing it was to marry Roger de Mowbray to his eldest daughter.*

As explanatory of these proceedings I may be allowed to call to remembrance the fact that at the period of which we are now speaking, when one of the king's tenants-in-chief died, leaving an heir under age, his lands were seized by the king and held by him, or committed by him, for certain pecuniary considerations, to others, to be held during the minority of the heir, who so long as he continued a minor was in ward to the king. The king had the care and education of the youth until he attained the age of twenty-one years, expending upon his education, then chiefly military, so

* Dugdale's Bar., vol. i., p. 124.
much as was suitable to his rank and the tenure of his lands. The Great Charter provided that in case the heir were a minor, upon the death of a tenant-in-chief under the king, he should, upon attaining his majority, have possession of his lands without paying the fine levied by the king upon all such transfers in cases where the heir was of full age. Some compensation was thus made to the young baron for the loss of the emoluments arising from his lands during the time they were held by the king or his nominee. The Great Charter likewise provided that whoever had the wardship should see that the estates did not deteriorate in value during the minority of the heir. If the deceased left only daughters the king had the like profits of relief and wardship, and had also in certain circumstances the right of disposing of the heiresses in marriage. A widow, if she held lands of the king, was not to marry without his consent.*

The marriage planned for young Roger de Mowbray by his guardian Thomas de Furnival, like many a similar project, did not take place, for he married Maud, the daughter of William de Beauchamp of Bedford, and being of full age in the twenty-fifth year of Henry III., did homage to the king, and had, without paying relief as just explained, possession of his lands.†

In the year 1244 Roger paid a tax of eighty-eight pounds five shillings for eighty-eight knights’ fees and a fourth part which he held of the king, upon collection of the aid for marrying Margaret, the king’s eldest daughter, to Alexander III. of Scotland: and in the next year the like sum upon making the king’s eldest son a knight.‡ In Henry the Third’s time a knight’s fee being valued at fifteen pounds, or two hundred acres of land, it appears by these payments that Roger de Mowbray held of the king no less than 17,622 acres of land. No scutage or aid was then allowed to be laid by the king, unless by consent of the Common Council of the realm, excepting for the two purposes towards which Roger contributed, and for redeeming or ransoming the person of the king.§

Roger de Mowbray, like his ancestors was much engaged in military operations. He was summoned in the forty-second year of Henry III. to march into Scotland, in support of the king of that country, against his rebellious subjects. And in the same year he attended Henry in his inglorious expedition to Chester against the Welsh. In the forty-fourth year of Henry III., and twice subsequently, he was summoned to attend the king with horse and arms.||

† Dugdale’s Bar., vol. i. p. 125. According to Mr. Courthope’s edition of Nicholas’ Historic Peerage, Roger de Mowbray married Maud, daughter of John de Beauchamp (vide that work, p. 47).
‡ Dugdale’s Bar., vol. i. p. 125. § Fourteenth section of Great Charter.
|| Dugdale’s Bar., vol. i., p. 125.
The rapacity of the Roman court, sanctioned by Henry III., and the little regard shown by him for those rights of his subjects lately secured to them, and for the observance of his own solemn oaths and promises, at length drove the barons to take up arms against him, in order to secure by force and by taking the principal part of the government of the country into their own hands, what they could not obtain from the free will of the king. In 1258 the barons and all their military tenants assembling at Oxford, they compelled Henry to delegate his royal power to twenty-four commissioners, who were to settle the disputes between the king and his subjects. Twelve were elected by the king, and twelve among whom was Roger de Mowbray, by the barons, who also chose the famous Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, as president of the council.*

There is little doubt that Roger de Mowbray took a prominent part in the unfortunate dissensions which distracted this country during the latter portion of Henry's reign, but history, as far as I am aware, has not chronicled his deeds. He, the seventh lord of Melton after the Conquest, died in the Isle of Axholme in 1266, and was buried in the Friar's Preachers at Pontefract. He left many children; six sons and three daughters. The eldest son, Roger (the other sons all died without issue), being then a minor, was placed in the custody of Maud, his mother.†

The present church of Melton was considerably carried towards completion during the lifetime of the Roger de Mowbray, the seventh lord, whose decease we have just noted. To persons acquainted with the chronology of architecture, the style of building used in the earlier portions of this glorious structure, clearly points to the time of Henry III. as the date of their erection. There are in Melton church many extremely beautiful architectural features of the Early English, or First Pointed Gothic, referable to the date of the reign of that monarch. As with the majority of our country churches, so with Melton, the founder is unknown; his fair and beautiful work remains to excite our admiration and stimulate our zeal, whilst his name is denied to our gratitude and our love. Nevertheless, though history be mute in this matter, and the building itself, though speaking in eloquent silence, if I may use such a contradiction, of the master hand of the builder and the munificence of the founder, gives us no clue to their individuality, conjecture naturally attempts to place this benefactor to Melton, the founder of our church, before her eye.

The Church of Melton, like most similar structures, was raised at different periods, and the early portions removed from time to time, and replaced by the present Decorated work. The four central piers and arches, with the north-east arch adjoining, and some remains of capitals showing the character of the arcade of

* Rapin. † Dugdale's Bar., vol. i., p. 125.
the nave at that period, certify that a cruciform Early English Church was built at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Mr. Wing (to whom I am indebted for all architectural information relating to this matter) informs me that these portions in their architectural features are very distinct and clear as to date, and that the year 1220 may be given as the centre of these first operations. As the building proceeded an amazing improvement took place in the style, a superior doorway was erected in the south aisle, the west front was richly finished with a doorway of the very first character both for design and execution, ornamented on each side with a triangular-headed niche corresponding to the same. (At this time remember the porch was not built.) This western front would probably not be executed earlier than the year 1240. After that, the glorious Early English tower was commenced: this, the first portion of the present tower, could not date previous to the year 1250.

Now, although it is impossible to say with certainty by whom the first portions of the church were built—who was in fact its founder—yet remembering that William de Mowbray died in 1222, the early cruciform church appears to have been erected previous to his death, or at all events to have been in course of erection when that event took place. At his decease, as you will remember, his estates passed to his son Nigel, who died about six years afterwards. Then the next heir, Roger, being a minor, the lands did not come into his possession until he was of age, which would be about the year 1240. It was about that date, when the works at Melton (which would appear to have made no progress since the death of William de Mowbray in 1222) were resumed, and then carried on for several years.

It will have been observed that no instances of the last named Roger de Mowbray's liberality to religious houses are recorded. This may be partly accounted for by the fact of the barons having inserted a clause in the Great Charter, forbidding any to alienate their lands to the church. This clause, like others, was, however, frequently set at nought. Perhaps, also, the disturbed state of the country during the lifetime of Roger, and the many and heavy aids demanded by the king from his subjects, might prevent the display of that munificence to religious establishments, for which, as we have seen, the Mowbrays had always shone conspicuous. Still we can hardly suppose that Roger would pass away without leaving some evident token of, at least, his outward reverence for religion—some memorial of his desire to add to the glory of that hierarchy, of which his ancestors appear to have been strong and liberal supporters. Now, presuming this, and presuming further that the ancient church of Melton (for there was undoubtedly a church here prior to the erection of the present fabric) having become dilapidated, and a new one having been commenced by
William de Mowbray, his father, what more natural than for Roger, when he entered upon the possession of his inheritance to continue the work, and by availing himself of the improvements in architecture which had been introduced since his father's decease, to add much to the glory and beauty of the church, in this the fairest of his manors in Leicestershire.

Indeed, if we consider the state of Melton at that period, we shall, I think, arrive at the conclusion that the church must have been raised from one of two sources—either by the munificence of the Mowbray family, who were not only the lords of the manor in the sense we now understand that term, but who were the owners of the greater portion of the lordship—who were in fact "lords of Melton"—or, it was raised by the Prior and Convent of Lewes in Sussex, who at an early period after the Conquest possessed the advowson, or the right of presentation to the benefice. Nichols* gives a list of Rectors presented by the Prior of Lewes up to about the year 1280, when a blank occurs in the list until the beginning of the fifteenth century, as if something had occurred to prevent the ordinary and regular presentations by the Prior. This we know to have been the case, at least for a time, for in 1285, the Prior and Convent having obtained the appropriation of the advowson—that is, in plain words, having obtained the power to take all the emoluments arising from the rectory to their own use, and to appoint a vicarius, or vicar to perform the duties, they did not hold their new possession very easily, as we find some years afterwards (in 1328), having obtained a recognition of their claim to the appropriation (the fact of the recognition being necessary shows the right had been disputed), they had considerable difficulty in obtaining possession from the escheator of the king—John Collingbroke—who had the church lands under his control, apparently as part and parcel of the fee of Mowbray; and again, in 1386, John de Mowbray cited the Prior relative to the advowson.†

Now, although nothing certain can be gathered from these facts in connection with the building of Melton Church, still I think these inferences may be drawn—you will pardon the recapitulation:—the Prior and Convent of Lewes had in the early part of the thirteenth century possessed the advowson of Melton for a considerable time. The church itself, partly by the inevitable inroads of time, and partly by the neglect of the owners of the presentation, who were bound in some measure to care for the preservation of the fabric, had become much dilapidated, was fast falling into decay, and threatened, if it had not already become so, soon to be useless to the inhabitants as a place of worship.

* Vide his Leicestershire, under Melton.
† See the Prior's petition to the king in Nichols' Leicestershire, Framland Hundred, p. 242.
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Or, perchance the building was thought mean and insignificant, and so was doomed by a large-hearted liberality to give place to a more imposing edifice. William de Mowbray, we will imagine, visiting Melton, saw the condition of its church, and listening to the petitions of his tenantry, the suggestions of the priests, and we will hope following the dictates of his own conscience, resolved to entirely rebuild the edifice. To carry this object into fulfilment, the old church would be lowered to the ground, and the present splendid pile commenced, and would soon be so far completed as to be available for the daily ministrations of religion. At his death, in 1222, the works would be suspended. We find the architectural chronology agreeing with this supposition. His son and successor, Nigel, did not obtain possession of his estates until two years afterwards, when he went abroad, and soon after died, without issue, leaving his young brother Roger his heir. Roger, in consequence of his minority, was under the guardianship of his king, and his estates placed in the hands of the king's nominee, until he was of age, which was in, or about, the year 1240, at which date we again find the works resumed, and the finest portions of the present church added to the former comparatively plain structure. Having added so much to the glory of the fabric, Roger, or his immediate descendants, would think the right of presentation should rest with the family of the founder; hence the disputes with the Prior and Convent of Lewes already referred to. The existence of these disputes tends, I think, rather to support the inference, that if not Roger de Mowbray himself, at least his immediate descendants, opposed the claim of the Priory of Lewes to the advowson, and disapproved of the appropriation of the living, amongst other reasons, because the Mowbrays had re-erected the edifice. And if Melton is indebted to that family for its church, it is, I think, to William de Mowbray we must point as the founder, and to Roger, his son, as the principal beautifier of our present noble structure. And we may add, if they left this legacy to their ancient town of Melton, they raised at the same time to their own memory, a far more beautiful and imperishable monument than the whitest alabaster or the brightest brass.

The former Paper I had the pleasure of reading before you, and much even of this, consist chiefly of the military and political transactions in which the Mowbrays, lords of Melton, were such active co-operators. Indeed upon treating of a period when the very walls of our present political constitution were being built—when constant collisions and quarrels were occurring with our then independent neighbours, the Scots and the Welsh,—when might frequently overruled right—we expect little more than constant warfare, both domestic and foreign, and constant disputes between the different powerful bodies in the state. Therefore any brighter aspects of the times, any traits in the national character, tending
to more peaceful and more holy thoughts and aspirations, are eagerly seized by the historical inquirer, as rays of light cast over the gloom of mediæval times. The mention of the founding of our beautiful cathedral-like church in the thirteenth century, cannot fail to remind us that at least one bright redeeming point stood prominently out amid the darkness, ignorance, and superstition which then enveloped the great mass of the people. I refer to the munificence displayed by our ancestors during what are termed the dark ages, in the erection of edifices dedicated to the glory of God, as fit temples in which to celebrate His praise. And be it remembered, these were not only erected among the busy haunts of men, or adjacent to the castle or baronial hall of the feudal lord, but in almost every valley, on almost every hill in our country, where a few tillers of the soil had formed even the smallest hamlet, there the tower or spire of a church rose up in silent majesty. "For," to use the words of Mr. Blunt, "the principle then was, not that money was to be spent and decoration bestowed merely because man might be at hand in crowds to admire and enjoy; but because God was at all events in that place;" so we often find most beautiful specimens of the architect's skill, and unmistakable proofs of the founder's munificence, in localities but little frequented, in some remote and out-of-the-way spot, which in the days when its church was erected would be almost isolated from the rest of mankind, and where none but "the rude peasants of the neighbourhood and the birds that hovered around the pinnacles," would be witnesses of the many beauties shining forth from the almost speaking stones of their church.

The life and long reign of Henry III, terminated on the 16th of November, 1272—a life neither brightened by any shining virtue, nor dimmed by any conspicuous vice,—a reign disorderly and full of agitation, chiefly remarkable for the changes now, if not really introduced, at least discussed and initiated, in the mode of constituting the Great Council of the kingdom, or as it now began to be called the Parliament. This we shall have occasion to refer to presently.

Edward I, known as "the English Justinian," now ascended the throne, a warlike and enterprising monarch, possessed of many bright and amiable qualities. In the sixth year of his reign, Roger son of the Roger de Mowbray whose death we have noticed as taking place in 1266, making proof of his age, and doing his homage, had possession of his whole inheritance. His mother Maud had previously married Roger le Strange. By writ dated 6th April, 1282, he was summoned to perform military service in person against the Welsh, the gathering being at Worcester, on the 17th of May then next ensuing;* and in the same year,

* Parl. Writs, Ed. I.
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perhaps previous to joining the army to which he was thus sum-
moned, "he entailed all his lordships of Thirsk, Kirby Malesart, 
Burton in Lonesdale, Harringham, Melton Mowbray, Epworth, 
and the whole Isle of Axholme, upon the heirs of his own body, 
lawfully begotten, and in default of such issue, upon Henry de 
Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, and his heirs."*

One cannot avoid noticing, that however ready the barons were 
at this period to render to the sovereign all the services attaching 
to their septs, still the idea of the possession of the lands, which 
they held, at least nominally, from the king, belonging to themselves, 
and their heirs, free from any power of his to the contrary, was 
fast becoming fixed in their minds; indeed a strong instance of 
this was given when Edward I., in the sixth year of his reign, by 
his Justices, thought fit to question certain of the great barons, 
as to the title by which they held their lands. John de Warren 
being then asked by what warranty he held his estates, produced 
an old sword, and unsheathing it, said, "Behold, my lord, here is 
my warranty; my ancestors coming into this land with William 
the Bastard, did obtain their lands by the sword, and I am resolved 
with the sword to defend them against whomsoever that shall 
endeavour to dispossess me. For that king himself did not con-
quer the land and subdue it, but our progenitors were sharers and 
assistants therein."†

In the tenth year of Edward I., fighting (according to his 
summons just noticed) against the Welsh, Roger de Mowbray had 
scutage, or received aid from all his military tenants.‡ In the year 
following, by writ dated 14th March, 1283, he was again summoned 
to a muster at Montgomery preparatory to another attack upon 
the Welsh;§ and two years later he levied a fine on the Manor of 
Balshall, in the county of Warwick, upon granting to the Knights 
Templars a warranty or confirmation of the charter granted to that 
body upon the foundation of the Preceptory there, by Roger, his 
ancestor, and by confirming which, "he was (says Dugdale) made 
partaker of all their prayers and other devout exercises."¶ By 
summons dated 14th June, 1287, he was commanded to appear 
with horses and arms at a military council at Gloucester, before 
Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, on the 15th of July then next ensuing.‖
In that year he took part in another expedition against the Welsh,**
and in 1291 he was required to perform military service in person 
against the Scots.‖† In the twenty-second year of Edward I., on 
the 8th of June, he had summons to attend the king with all speed 
wheresoever he should be, to give his advice concerning the great 
affairs of the realm: and the same year he received command

* Dugdale's Bar., vol. i., p. 125.
† Dugdale's Bar., vol. i., p. 79.
‡ Ibid., p. 102.
§ Parl. Writs.
¶ Dugdale's Bar., vol. i., p. 135.
‖ Parl. Writs.
** Dugdale's Bar., vol. i., p. 126.
‖‖ Parl. Writs.
to repair to the king at Portsmouth, well provided with horse and
arms, and thence to attend him into Gascony, for defence of that
province against the French.\footnote{Dugdale's Bar., vol. i., p. 125.}
He had also summons to the several parliaments of 22nd, 23rd, 24th, and 25th, Edward I.\footnote{Courthope's Historic Peerage, under Mowbray.}

This Roger de Mowbray was the first of his family, styled a
Baron by Writ. The great baronial body formed by William the
Conqueror, although complete for a time, could not of necessity,
continue so for many generations. When Roger was summoned
to Parliament by Edward I., many of the descendants of the
great tenants of the Crown under the Conqueror, had made sub-
infeudations of their lands, or had absolutely alienated, by leave
of the king, portions of their possessions; thus increasing the
number, but decreasing the wealth, of those who held of the king
\textit{in capite}; others, again, were reduced in wealth and power by the
fines imposed by the crown, in consequence of their frequent real
or pretended acts of rebellion; and by the feudal exactions in the
shape of reliefs and aids. By these changes the power of the
great barons was considerably lessened, and the sovereign, either
in the reign of John, or in that of his son and successor, Henry
III., began to acquire and exercise a discretionary power, in calling
only such of his subjects to the Great Council, as he thought fit to
summon, and in whose fidelity he could repose confidence. So
now the great council of the state consisted of two parties, those
who were tenants \textit{per baroniam}, in whom the king could confide,
and others not holding \textit{per baroniam}, but yet summoned at the
king's pleasure, and by a writ similar to that addressed to the
tenants \textit{so holding}. These were called the greater barons. In
consequence of the power thus assumed and used by the sovereign,
the dignity of the peerage became personal, and ceased to be what
it had hitherto been since the Conquest, territorial. And it appears
that subsequently to the twenty-third year of Edward I., the
simple tenure of lands, as a tenant in chief of the king, did not
confer upon the holder an absolute right, in defiance of the wish or
will of the sovereign, to sit in Parliament.\footnote{Vide Courthope's Historic Peerage, pp. 19 and 25.}

Besides this, another and a most important addition was about
this time made to the representatives of the nation in the great
council. Historians agree that when Henry III. fell a prisoner
into the hands of the barons, after the battle of Lewes in 1264,
the Earl of Leicester called a parliament in the king's name at
Winchester, which two knights for each county, two citizens for
each city, and two burgesses for each borough, were summoned to
attend. And Edward I., in his writ to the boroughs to return
members to parliament, says, in the preamble, "It is a most equi-
table rule, that what concerns all, should be approved by all,—and
common dangers repelled by united efforts.” Although it is clear that the embryo of the present House of Commons was thus formed, still we must not suppose that the representatives of the people possessed much, or even any power: the only matter to which their attention was at this time directed, was the making grants of money to the king, or rather perhaps it should be said, the giving their consent to such grants as the king should demand. The value and importance, however, of the incorporating of these parts with the body politic, and their effect upon the gradually developing constitution of our country are too well known and appreciated to require comment.

Unfortunately there are few incidents of a strictly local character in connection with the Mowbrays chronicled by the pen of the historian. We have, however, a few memoranda shewing, at least, that Roger de Mowbray took some part in business matters connected with his manor of Melton. He, as lord of Melton, in the twenty-second year of “Edward the king,” gave license to Robert Pesson, to let his tenements in a lane called Swines’ Lane, without challenge or letting of him or his heirs; and he also granted to the same Robert Pesson to enlarge his place in Melton four feet one way, and four feet another, he yielding and paying annually to him and his heirs one halfpenny of silver in acknowledgment. Roger de Mowbray also gave to William Fullour of Melton, clerk, a place next the Backhouse of Lord Delawarr; and he granted to William Prest of Melton, a messuage situate in the Market Place there.*

On the 23rd of August, in the year 1297, Roger de Mowbray accompanied Edward I. in his expedition into Flanders; and the following year being in Ghent (probably in the retinue of the king, who remained in that city for some time subsequently to concluding a truce with Philip of France), he died there. His remains were brought over to England, and deposited in the Abbey of Fountains,† which abbey had, it will be remembered, been enriched by the liberality of his ancestor. Doubtless the solemn requiem for the soul of this the eighth lord of Melton after the Conquest, often rose in magnificent fulness, and again died away in plaintive and soul-touching cadence, within the walls of this his bodily resting place.

By his wife Rose, daughter of Richard, Earl of Clare, Roger left a son named John, who was born on the 2nd of November, 1286, and whose wardship and marriage was, upon the death of his father, given to William de Brewes of Gower in Wales, with the intent that he should marry Aliva, or Alice, de Brewes, the daughter of his guardian. This marriage was solemnized before John de Mowbray was of age. His wife, Aliva, afterwards became one of the co-heirs of her father.‡

* Nichols’ History of Leicestershire, under Melton.
† Dugdale’s Bar., vol. i., p. 126.  ‡ Dugdale’s Bar., vol. i. p. 126.
When John de Mowbray reached the twentieth year of his age,* Edward I. was fast sinking into the grave. His energetic and enterprising spirit was nevertheless yet strong within him. The last king of Wales had fallen dead on the field of battle, and that country had been annexed to the English crown, and admitted to the more important of the English institutions. Scotland, which, upon the death of Alexander III. and his infant daughter, had by internal dissensions and external force, been led to acknowledge Edward's feudal sovereignty, and to refer the claims of the rival competitors for her throne to his decision, did not fall so readily into the course marked out for her by that politic and far-seeing monarch. Baliol, who had been declared by Edward the rightful heir to the crown, soon renounced his fealty and homage, and after him Wallace dared to assert the independence of his country; but both eventually succumbed to the strong arm of the English king. Then Scotland was apparently Edward's own; but soon another disturber of his peace appeared in the person of Robert Bruce, who was crowned king of Scotland in 1306. This event and this date again bring John de Mowbray before us.

Edward being naturally afraid that after all his past efforts to incorporate Scotland with his own country, he should, at the close of his life, see her again assert her national freedom, and successfully oppose his claims, under the leadership of her new king, determined to raise an army which should overwhelm all resistance, an army which for rank and magnificence had probably never been equalled by any which had crossed the borders.

To provide this force, and to engage the hearts of his subjects in the expedition, Edward caused it to be proclaimed through England "that all who were under legal obligation to become knights, and had competent means, should assemble in Westminster at Whitsuntide, and that they would be there furnished with every requisite from the king's wardrobe, excepting the trappings of their horses. Three hundred youths, the sons of earls, barons, and knights," among whom was John de Mowbray, then in his twentieth year, "attended, and purple robes, fine linen garments, and mantles woven with gold, were liberally distributed. The royal palace, though spacious, was not sufficient to hold the vast crowds who poured in; and the Temple and its gardens were also appropriated to entertain them. Its apple trees were cut down, its walls laid prostrate, and tents and booths were erected, in which the young knights appeared in their dresses glittering with gold. Every knight, as many as the Temple church would hold, performed his vigils in it. But the Prince of Wales, by his father's command, passed his vigils in the Abbey of Westminster. There, such was the clangour of the trumpets and

* He had previously been engaged in public matters
clarions, such the emulous acclamations, that the chanting of the choir was drowned in the general exultation. On the following day, the king invested his son with the military belt, and gave him the duchy of Aquitaine. The prince went with his new honours to the abbey, to confer the same dignity upon his associates; but so great was the pressure towards the high altar, to behold the ceremony, that two knights were killed, and many fainted, though each had at least three others to conduct and defend him. The crowd being at length repressed and divided by strong war horses, the prince was enabled to knight his friends.* It was upon the occasion of this grand military assemblage that John de Mowbray was invested with the order of knighthood.†

As a reward for having attended with horse and arms in this Scotch expedition, John de Mowbray, in the same year, though he was then a minor, had possession or livery of the lands of his wife Aliva.

In 1307, John de Mowbray was still in Scotland, and doubtless was in the company of Edward I., when that monarch, impatient to execute his meditated revenge upon Bruce and his followers, and attempting to perform more than his exhausted frame could bear, sank into the arms of death at Burgh-on-the-Sands, on the 7th of July, 1307.

The conduct and character of his successor, Edward II., forms a dark and gloomy picture after viewing the energetic and wise policy usually adopted by the late king. The reputation of Edward I. as a warrior, and as a statesman, was firmly established, on the one hand, by the entire subjugation of Wales, and by his repeated successes in Scotland, and on the other, by his (amongst other things) passing the famous statute of Mortmain. The father, to use the words of Sharon Turner, "left a reputation which always at first, sanctifies the son, . . . everything combined to surround Edward II. with glory, and to promise a reign of peculiar felicity . . . Love, honour, and happiness seemed to be his natural inheritance: contempt, degradation, and misery became his lot." John de Mowbray was summoned to the parliament held at Northampton, on the 13th of October, in the first year of Edward II. (1307), and after the magnificent marriage of that king to Isabella of France, the lord of Melton was summoned to attend his coronation, which took place at Westminster on the 24th February, 1308. He also attended (or was cited to) other parliaments held during that year, and receiving the thanks of the king for his fidelity, was requested to continue his military services until the ensuing feast of S. Peter ad Vincula—the 1st of August. After

† Dugdale's Bar., vol. i., p. 126.
being cited to several subsequent parliaments (including one held at Stamford in 1309), summoned to join in various expeditions against the Scots—he having been appointed one of the chief commanders of Scotland*—we find that in the fifth year of Edward II. doing his homage for those lands which were of Maud his grandmother's inheritance (and which had been held by her second husband, then dead, during his lifetime), entered upon the full possession of those estates.†

The manner in which Edward II. allowed himself to be influenced by his favourites, and the weakness displayed in the selection of them, are facts of which every reader of English history is cognizant. One of the last injunctions of the dying king, Edward I., to his son was—never to recall Piers Gaveston, who had been banished the kingdom on account of the bad influence exerted by him over the prince. Almost the first act of the young king was to disgust his best friends by recalling that noxious personage, and by making him his chief confidant and adviser. Without following the fortunes of Gaveston, suffice it to say that the incensed barons having twice caused him to be expatriated, and he having twice not returned only, but been received with open arms by the infatuated king, it was determined to effect the downfall of the favourite, and to free the kingdom from the ill-adviser of its sovereign. To effect this, Thomas, Earl of Lancaster and Leicester, proclaimed a tournament as an excuse for his friends assembling fully armed, and Gaveston was formally excommunicated by the Archbishop of Canterbury. After many attempts made by the king to save his life, Gaveston was at length taken prisoner in Scarborough Castle by the barons, and soon after executed, or rather murdered, by command of the Earl of Warwick. The death of his favourite under such circumstances naturally excited the king's indignation. He commanded John de Mowbray—then sheriff of Yorkshire, and governor of the city of York—to seize Henry de Percy, because he had allowed Piers Gaveston to depart from Scarborough Castle, of which he, Percy, was then governor, and in which he had undertaken the favourite should be safely detained.‡ What the result of this expedition by the lord of Melton was we do not learn; it is however probable that the reconciliation which was about that time effected between the king and his barons terminated this and similar ebullitions of the king's anger and revenge.

Respecting John de Mowbray I have collected a great mass of information relating to the leading events of his life; most of those events were military ones, and although every writ he received and every expedition he undertook may be valuable to the student of the history of those times, still the facts themselves are too dry in

* Parl. Writs. † Dugdale's Bar., vol. i., p. 126.
‡ Dugdale's Bar., vol. i., p. 126.
THE MOWBRAYS, LORDS OF MELTON.

detail, and do not assist the portraiture of the chief actor sufficiently, to render it desirable to bring them before you in these papers. We must hasten on to the more important transactions of John de Mowbray's life which the chroniclers bring before us.

Thus far John de Mowbray appears to have been a firm adherent of Edward II. In the various disputes between that king and his barons respecting Gaveston, the ninth lord of Melton, as far as the records of his life attest, apparently stood aloof or was too much engaged upon the northern frontier, to attend to the more internal and political dissensions then agitating the minds of the people. Indeed we find, as I have already mentioned, that he received an especial mark of the king's confidence and esteem when Edward, in 1306, thanked him for his fidelity, and requested him to continue stationed in the garrison in which he then was. And the fact that he was employed by the king to seize Percy for allowing Gaveston to fall into the hands of his enemies, supports the idea that he had not at that time leagued himself with the discontented barons. A change however took place in the conduct of John de Mowbray when Hugh Spencer, who gained as much influence over the king as Gaveston had once possessed, came into personal contact with him, which he did under the following rather curious circumstances.

It will be remembered that John de Mowbray married Aliva, daughter of William de Brewes. This William de Brewes appears to have been a man, who by a rough and passionate temper, and by impetuous and hasty actions, was frequently involved in disputes with others, which brought out so many dark traits in his disposition as to leave, in the occasional glimpses we obtain of him, a character by no means creditable to himself, or one likely to secure the esteem or confidence of those with whom he came in contact. Thus, towards the end of the reign of Edward I., Roger de Hecham, a baron of the exchequer, made a complaint to the king in council of gross and upbraiding language having been contemptuously addressed to him by William de Brewes, because of his judgment in favour of the delinquent's adversary. Such contempt and disrespect towards as well the king's ministers as himself, or his courts, being very odious to the king, William de Brewes was adjudged to go in full court in Westminster Hall, and ask pardon of the judge whom he had insulted; and for the contempt done to the king and his court was then to stand committed to the Tower, there to remain during the king's pleasure.* He is also described as having been a "gret wastoure of good,"† that is, he was extravagant in his mode of living, indeed so extravagant that his sense of justice and even of common honesty appear to have been considerably blunted, as is evidenced by the extraordinary method in which he

* Abbreviatio Placitorum lib. impres., p. 257, quoted in Choice Notes from Notes and Queries, "History," p. 73.
† Capgrave's Chron., p. 186.
negotiated the sale of certain of his lands; which transaction brings us to the collision between John de Mowbray and Hugh Spencer, the king's chamberlain, already alluded to.

William de Brewes possessed a barony in the Marches of Wales called Gower-land, which he wished to sell. His notions as to the relative rights of buyer and seller were somewhat peculiar, for having in the first instance sold the property to Humfrey, Earl of Hereford, he again sold it (and took the money) to the two Roger Mortimers (uncle and nephew), who knew nothing of a former sale. John de Mowbray then also (1319) put in the claim of his wife, as heir unto William de Brewes her father, and challenged the barony as hers by the right of inheritance. The matter now appeared sufficiently complicated, but to make it even more so, "last of alle and werst," as the chronicler, Capgrave, observes, Hugh Spencer the younger, desiring this land on account of its proximity to some of his estates, Brewes effected another sale thereof to him, which sale, because Spencer was the king's chamberlain and favourite, was licensed, and he took possession of the lands. These proceedings of William de Brewes,* and Hugh de Spencer, excited great indignation, especially against the latter; and the Earl of Hereford, the first purchaser of the lands, complained unto Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, who with him persuaded many other barons to adopt their cause. These chiefs armed themselves, and assembling at Sherborne, swore to drive the Spencers from their influential position near the king, "come hem lyf, or come hem deth." They did not, however, upon this occasion effect their purpose, for John de Mowbray and the other barons, excepting the Earls of Lancaster and Hereford, consented that certain arrangements should be made and yielded to the king.

Soon after which the lord of Melton, by injunction dated Westminster the 30th of January, 1321, was warned not to attend any illegal or treasonable convention or assembly; and again by writ dated at Bristol on the 21st of the April following, he was requested by the king to co-operate in appeasing the disturbances then existing, and again warned not to attend any illegal confederacies or assemblies. This advice John de Mowbray did not think well to follow, but joined the barons in their great assembly at St. Albans: from whence a deputation consisting of the Bishops of London, Salisbury, Ely, Hereford, and Chichester, was sent to the king, desiring that the two Spencers should be banished the realm as traitors. The king demurring to this request the barons marched at once to London and occupied the suburbs of the city. Edward was then induced to grant their wish, so Humfrey, Earl of Hereford, —no doubt with feelings of considerable satisfaction—with his own voice proclaimed in Westminster Hall, that Hugh Spencer the

* This surname Brewes or "Braose," according to Mr. M. A. Lower (English Surnames, 1849), is now corrupted into Brewhouse!
elder was a traitor, his son Hugh the younger at the same time being banished the kingdom. It was furthermore stipulated on the part of the barons that their rising should be pardoned, because it was done “for the common profit.” In order to secure this pardon a parliament was summoned to meet at Westminster three weeks after the feast of S. John the Baptist, that is, on the 15th of July, 1321.

Soon after which John de Mowbray, pursuant to an ordinance then passed, received letters patent in which he was described as one of the great men who had confederated against the De Spencers, and obtained a pardon for all homicides, robberies, felonies, trespasses, etc., committed in the late disturbances. Similar pardons were also, upon his testimony, issued to forty-three of his followers.

The barons did not hold their power long. Isabella the queen purposing to make a pilgrimage to Canterbury—probably to pay her devotions at the shrine of the so-called “blessed St. Thomas,” sent her purveyors in advance to the castle of Leeds in Kent, to convey an intimation to the officer in command, of her wish to rest there on her way. The castle of Leeds at that time belonged to Bartholomew de Badlesmere, one of the barons associated for purposes of common defence against the king. Upon the arrival of the queen’s messengers, Colpeper, the commanding officer,—Badlesmere himself does not appear to have then been in residence—refused them admittance, suspecting probably that a trap was being laid by the king to gain possession of the fortress, in which were then residing the wife and children of its chief, and where much treasure was deposited. This behaviour excited the indignation of the haughty queen. She complained to Badlesmere, who thereupon was so bold and ungallant as to send her an insolent letter, approving of the conduct of his officer in command at Leeds. Upon the return of the queen she naturally informed the king of the treatment she had received. He raised an army, and inflicted summary punishment, not only upon the over cautious Colpeper, whom he hanged, but upon the other residents and defenders of the castle; the treasure, as may be supposed, went into the king’s exchequer. Edward now feeling powerful again, recalled the younger De Spencer, who during his banishment had followed the not very reputable calling of a pirate, turning his attention more particularly to the plunder of English vessels. Upon his arrival he counselled the king to send writs to all the sheriffs in England, commanding them to raise sufficient troops to fight against those of his subjects who had conspired against him. The associated barons now saw a storm gathering around them, and Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, convened a meeting of the “Good Peers” as they were termed, at Doncaster, on the 29th of November then next (1321), against attending which John de Mowbray was warned
by a writ from the king.* Edward had concerted his measures and carried out his plans with such prudence and alacrity, that he was now in the centre of the kingdom, with a powerful army, ready to fall upon the first of his turbulent subjects who should venture to dispute his authority. This induced many of the barons to throw themselves upon the clemency of their sovereign. In consequence of these defections and of the death and imprisonment of many of his adherents, the Earl of Lancaster saw his army considerably weakened; indeed the only way in which he could hope to retrieve his fortunes, and still hold out against his king, was by soliciting the assistance of the Scots, who promised him aid if he would join them in Scotland, or on the borders. We find John de Mowbray, Roger de Clifford, and forty men-at-arms being about to repair, as they said to the Earl of Murray in Scotland, had letters of safe conduct granted to them by Edward on the 16th of February, 1322, and which letters were to remain in force until the 14th of March then next ensuing. It is not improbable that the license thus granted to the lord of Melton, was used by him, to cover a journey into Scotland, upon matters connected with certain secret negociations then being carried on between the Scots and the discontented barons. However that may have been, the king's forces and those under the Earl of Lancaster soon came into collision, for Edward hearing of the intended junction with the Scots, determined to prevent it by opposing the barons at the principal passes on their way.

John de Mowbray—for he had now finally cast in his lot among them,—and the other adherents of Thomas of Lancaster, having besieged the castle of Tickhill, first, in this last act, came into close neighbourhood with the king's forces at Burton-on-Trent. After spoiling by fire and sword the country through which they passed, and crossing the bridge over the Trent at that place, the barons were obliged to halt in order to dispute the passage of Edward's army which then closely pursued them. The king did not, however, attempt the passage at that bridge, but retired to effect it elsewhere. John de Mowbray was now one of the most active of the discontented magnates. He was publicly declared a rebel—"Hue and Cry" was raised against him and his adherents throughout England, by writs addressed to all the sheriffs, &c., and special commissions were issued empowering the Earls of Kent and Surrey to pursue and arrest him. The Earl of Lancaster, as leader of the rebels, in the first instance intended holding his position at Burton, but altering his tactics he advanced to Boroughbridge in Yorkshire, where being obliged either to force the passage of the river Ure, held by Sir Andrew Harcla, the governor of Carlisle on behalf of the king, or to attack the forces of Edward

* Parl. Writs.
then close upon his rear, the barons preferred attempting the former, in which they signally failed. In the battle which took place there on Tuesday and Wednesday the 16th and 17th of March, 1322, the Earl of Hereford was slain, and Thomas Earl of Lancaster and Leicester, John de Mowbray, and many others fell prisoners into the hands of Sir Andrew.

The king and the two Spencers were staying at Pontefract. Thither John de Mowbray and the other prisoners were taken. On the third day after their arrival they were brought before their peers for trial. The lords who decided the fate of Mowbray and the other rebellious nobles, were Hugh de Spencer the elder, then, or shortly afterwards created Earl of Winchester, Aymer, Earl of Pembroke, John Warren, Earl of Surrey, and Edmund, Earl of Arundel. John de Mowbray now stands charged with rebellion against his sovereign. Among his judges is the father of the man whose grasping covetousness first caused him to waver in his allegiance to his royal master. Will his past services be now forgotten? Will his military prowess exerted so often, will his wealth, his strength, so freely spent in the king's service in Scotland be altogether ignored, or at least banished from the account now to be brought against him? Surely not! But when we find that even the tie of blood does not save the Earl of Lancaster, we tremble for the fate of the less favoured lord of Melton. Thomas of Lancaster had scarcely the form of a trial; he had no opportunity given him to make a defence. When judgment was pronounced against him, he exclaimed "shall I die without answer?" and was hurried away and beheaded, having little time allowed for his devotions. The fate of Lancaster was but too sure an index of that which awaited John de Mowbray. He was soon after removed to York and there hanged with several of his companions in arms; and so far did the vindictive feelings of the king and the Spencers carry them, that they would not allow the dead bodies to be taken down and buried for a long time after the execution.

Thus died John de Mowbray the ninth lord of Melton after the Conquest. A man who began life under what were then considered the brightest auspices, who fought the king's battles, and was rewarded with his favour and approbation, but who, turning his sword against the internal enemies of his country, the perverters of justice, and the seducers of his weak and pusillanimous king, fell a victim to his own, perhaps, injudicious impetuosity and the strength of his enemies, leaving a strange and vivid picture of the

* Capgrave styles him "Erl of Wyncest." Although he was not (according to Sir H. Nicholas) so created until the 10th of May following the battle of Boroughbridge.
† He was son of Edmund Plantaganet, second son of Henry III.
uncertainty of worldly grandeur, and the fickleness of earthly favour and friendship.*

John de Mowbray being executed, his lands, including the lordship of Melton Mowbray, were seized by the king, and his wife and son imprisoned in the tower of London.† Having now traced the noble family of Mowbray from the date of their first possessing Melton, until that lordship under the circumstances just detailed fell into the hands of Edward the Second; having glanced at the spirit-stirring transactions in which they took so active a part; having watched their progress, step by step, in most of the great military operations and political changes which had taken place since the Conquest; having seen them for nearly three centuries holding good their position among the greatest magnates of the land: and finally having seen the representative of this ancient family executed as a rebel, and his wife and child cast into prison, the present era in the history of the Mowbrays, lords of Melton, appears a fitting one at which to close this our second paper upon that subject.

But in speaking of these early possessors of our town, it is almost necessary to refer to the recumbent effigy resting under an arch in the south aisle of the nave of Melton church; which effigy is in the minds of so many connected with some "baron Mowbray," whom no one has yet identified, and respecting whom there appears considerable mystery. I had hoped to have laid before you, this evening, a tolerably complete examination of all the available evidence bearing upon the identity of this effigy. Circumstances preventing this, we must, for the present, content ourselves with what the effigy itself can tell us, and limit our examination almost entirely to its heraldic testimony.

About the time John de Mowbray lived several additions and alterations appear to have been made to the present church of Melton. The south transept may be dated about 1290; the nave, arcades, and aisle windows, about 1310;‡ the chancel about 1320. It is found by consulting the armour as given by the sculptor, that

* John de Mowbray was in all probability the founder of the church of Shustoke in Warwickshire, dedicated to St. Cuthbert. Dugdale says (Warwickshire p. 740, Ed. 1765):

"The present fabric of this church was erected in King Edward the Second's time: . . . and therefore that portraiture in one of the north windows, of John, Lord Mowbray, kneeling before S. Cuthbert, must be of that John that was beheaded at York, for his adhering to Thomas Earl of Lancaster: which John being doubtless a great benefactor to that new structure, and bearing an extraordinary respect to S. Cuthbert, sometime Bishop of Duresme (whose fame for sanctity and miracles was very great in the northern parts, where the said Lord Mowbray's estate most lay), did upon the rebuilding thereof, honour him with the dedication." (Vide the engraving in Dugdale, p. 739.)

† From the extreme narrowness of the aisles, and from the existence of an Early English doorway in the south one, it is probable the walls belong to the Early English church.—Mr. Wing.

‡ Dugdale's Bar., vol. i., p. 120.
Momb in the South Aisle of Saint Mary's Church Melton Mowbray.
the death of the personage whose recumbent figure is under consideration, took place during the reign of Edward I. or early in that of Edward II. It thus appears that this individual, whoever he was, lived during the time these alterations and additions to the church were made; and the peculiar position in which his effigy is placed—in a recess in the wall of the south aisle—goes very far to prove that he was the originator of the alterations then made in that portion of the edifice, or the chief benefactor under whose auspices the more elaborate architectural features were then introduced. Having thus connected the man with his work, the warrior with the edifice in which his effigy rests, the great difficulty is reached, namely, the production of proof as to whom the figure represents, to determine with some fair appearance at least of probability as to which of the mighty men of that warlike age we are indebted with respect to the beautiful fabric which has for so long a time been the heritage of the people of Melton. But this task will not be ours. The evidence will be rather negative than positive, will rather show who it does not represent than who it does, will rather aim at overthrowing a tolerably universal local theory, than at establishing a certain fact.

It is, I believe, allowed on all hands that the comparatively modern inscription and the helmet by its side are equally without claim to any true connection whatever with the recumbent figure beneath them. They are both anachronisms. The inscription is: “This is the lord Hamon Beler brother to the lord Mowbray.”

It will be remembered that Nigel de Albini, the second lord of Melton after the Conquest, dying early in the twelfth century, left two sons, Roger who took the name of Mowbray, and Hamo the ancestor of the Belers: it is this Hamo, if we are to understand the word “brother” in the natural sense, who I presume is pointed to in this inscription—a man who died probably at least one hundred years before a stone of the present church was placed in its position! I think we may discard the inscription as being thus far incorrect.

The earliest mention I have met with of this effigy is the following extract from a Harleian MS. in the British Museum,—

“1583, June 8. At Melton church in com. Leicestr. there lieth one Bellers, who lieth cross-legged, armed all in mail, with his sword, and his shield upon his arm, whereon this coat is depicted in these colours,—per pale sable and gules, a lion rampant argent.”

Again, Nichols referring to this figure says, quoting from the Visitation, 1681, in the College of Arms, “commonly called Mowbray but supposed to be Beler.” And describing the effigy as it appeared in his day says, “in the south aisle ...... under a round arch is a cross-legged knight in a round helmet of mail with a band, his shield on his left arm bearing gules, a lion rampant...”
The arms at present borne upon this changeable shield are gules, a lion rampant argent. I may here intimate that the ancient family of Mowbray bore for their arms, gules, a lion rampant argent; and that of Beler, as a younger branch of the same family and holding lands under them, bore, as was then customary, the same arms differently tinctured; their shield showed per pale sable and gules, a lion rampant argent. It will be observed that in 1583 the shield is described as bearing, per pale sable and gules, a lion rampant argent; these were the arms of the Belers. In 1681 the officers from the College of Arms say, "commonly called Mowbray but supposed to be Beler." In 1795, when Nichols describes it, he says the shield bore, gules, a lion rampant sable, which appears to have been a coat antiently borne by the Belers in common with the one already ascribed to them,* and which coat was perhaps depicted upon the shield by advice of the College of Arms at their visitation in 1681. The present inscription from its style of lettering would be put up about the same time. It is only when we look at the present very modern tincturing of the shield that we find the arms of Mowbray given; it now says, gules, a lion rampant argent. Now, the heraldic testimony appears most strong against the supposition of this figure representing a Mowbray; added to which, if Dugdale may be trusted, we have direct evidence that none of that family up to the end of the reign of Edward III. and even much later, were interred in Melton Church; for the places of sepulture of the whole of them (I mean, of course, the lords of Melton) are given; and although instances are known in which a duplicate effigy, a kind of complimentary memorial, of a departed benefactor was erected in a church towards the building of which he had largely contributed, but in which he was not interred, still the instances are so few that we are not, I think, justified in supposing that this effigy is an exception to the general rule, that where you find a recumbent figure of the date of the one now under notice, you may safely infer that the remains of the person represented were deposited beneath the sculpture. Who the figure really represents—whether the Hamo Beler who, according to the pedigree in Nichols, died in 1304, lies under his grim representative in the south aisle of our church we must not now enquire. We may however call to remembrance the fact that this aisle was formerly appropriated to Eye-Kettleby,—the lords whereof were the Belers—and that connections of that family were interred in Melton Church in the fifteenth century. Added to which we find that in 1622 the arms of Beler were still in existence in the windows of Melton Church as well as those of Mowbray,† the fair inference from which is that both families were

* Sec Nichols' description of Ralph, lord Beler, as depicted in a pedigree of the Villiers' family; Framland Hundred.
† Burton's Leicestershire, edition 1623.
benefactors to the edifice: there are also strong reasons for sup­posing that the Belers were intimately connected with the town of Melton during the middle ages; and when afterwards the manor of Eye-Kettleby passed into the hands of the Digbys, we find members of that family using the south aisle of our church as their place of burial. The epitaph of Sir John Digby who died in 1553, and of his two wives, was a few years ago in existence.

After this, I fear, tedious consideration of the evidence relative to this recumbent effigy, I think the conclusions arrived at are these: that a Mowbray is not interred beneath; that the heraldic testimony and the few facts I have mentioned tend to shew that a Beler reposces under, and is represented by, the armed figure which has rested undisturbed in grim and silent repose through the changes and evolutions of more than five centuries. Still the question is an open one.

Some apology is perhaps necessary for not completing these sketches of the Mowbray family in two papers. My chief reason for not doing so has been the wish rather to give short papers inter­spersed with national incidents, and glimpses of the gradual rise of our country to the height of civilization and true liberty—in fact rather to make these lords of Melton tell their own history of the times in which they lived, than to compress a mass of facts into a dry biography of individual men.

Should an opportunity occur, at some future time, of tracing the career of this family until its extinction in the direct line, in the time of Edward IV., we shall find the subject full of almost romantic interest, and it would, I think, compensate for the, I fear, dry paper I have this evening inflicted upon you.

This Paper, the Mowbrays, lords of Melton, part II., closed the series delivered in the Corn Exchange, Melton Mowbray. The record of the ordinary meetings, &c. of the Society is now resumed.

December 27th, 1858.

The Rev. Robert Burnaby in the Chair.

The Chairman exhibited a silver penny of Alexander the Third, king of Scotland from 1245 to 1285, sent by Mr. Thompson. On the obverse were the words ALEXANDER DEI GRA, X, in Lombardic characters, with a crowned head in profile, and sceptre in front. The reverse was divided by a cross into four parts, and in each of these was a mullet. The legend was Rex Scotorum. Humphrey