depends upon nobility of blood rather than a ſeat in the houſe, as appears from the trials of popiſh lords, of lords under age, and (ſince the union) of the Scotch nobility, though not in the number of the ſixteen ; and from the trials of females, ſuch as the queen confort or dowager, and of all peereſſes by birth ; and peereſſes by marriage alſo, unleſs they have, when dowagers, diſparaged them­ſelves by taking a commoner to their ſecond husband.

*Steward of the Chiltern Hundreds.* See *Chiltern Hundreds.*

STEWART (Dr Matthew), was in 1717 born at Rothſay in the iſle of Bute, of which pariſh his lather was the miniſter. Being intended for the church, he went through the uſual courſe of a grammar-ſchool edu­cation, and was in 1734 received as a ſtudent into the univerſity of Glaſgow. There he had the happineſs of having for his preceptors in moral ſcience and in mathe­matics the celebrated profeſſors Hutcheſon and Simſon; by the latter of whom he was inſtructed in what may not improperly be called the *arcana* of the ancient geo­metry.

Mr Stewart’s views making it neceſſary for him to remove to Edinburgh, he was introduced by Dr Sim­ſon to Mr Maclaurin, that his mathematical ſtudies might ſuffer no interruption ; and he attended the lec­tures of that great master with ſuch advantage as might be expected from eminent abilities, directed by the judgment of him who made the philoſophy and geo­metry of Newton intelligible to ordinary capacities. Mr Stewart, however, had acquired, from his intimacy with Dr Simſon, ſuch a predilection for the ancient geometry, as the modern analyſis, however powerfully recommended, could not leſſen ; and he kept up a re­gular correſpondence with his old master, giving him an account of his progreſs and his diſcoveries in geometry, and receiving in return many curious communications reſpecting the *Loci Plant* and the poriſms of Euclid. See PORISM and Simson.

While the ſecond invention of poriſms, to which more genius was perhaps required than to the firſt diſcovery of them, employed Dr Simſon, Mr Stewart purſued the ſame ſubject in a different and new direction. In doing so, he was led to the diſcovery of thoſe curious and intereſting propoſitions which were publiſhed under the title of *General Theorems* in 1746. They were given without the demonſtrations ; but did not fail to place their diſcoverer at once among the geometers of the firſt rank. They are for the moſt part poriſms, though Mr Stewart, careful not to anticipate the diſcoveries of his friend, gave them no other name than that of theo­rems.

Our author had before this period entered into the church ; and obtained, through the patronage of the duke of Argyle and the earl of Bute, the living of Roſeneath, a retired country pariſh in the west of Scot­land : but in 1 747 he was elected to the mathematical chair in the univerſity of Edinburgh, which had become vacant the year before by the death of Mr Maclaurin. The duties of this office gave a turn ſomewhat different to his purſuits, and led him to think of the moſt ſimple and elegant means of explaining thoſe difficult propo­ſitions which were hitherto only accessible to men deep­ly verſed in the modern analyſis. In doing this, he was purſuing the object which of all others he moſt ardent­ly wiſhed to attain, viz. the application of geometry to ſuch problems as the algebraic calculus alone had been thought able to reſolve. His solution of Kepler’s pro­blem was the firſt ſpecimen of this kind which he gave to the world ; and it was impoſſible to have produced one more to the credit of the method he followed, or of the abilities with which he applied it. On this problem the utmoſt reſources of the integral calculus had been employed. But though many excellent solutions had been given, there was none of them at once direct in its method and ſimple in its principles. Mr Stewart was ſo happy as to attain both theſe objects ; and his ſolution appeared in the ſecond volume of the Eſſays of the Philoſophical Society of Edinburgh for the year 1756. In the firſt volume of the ſame collection there are ſome other propoſitions of Mr Stewart’s, which are an extenſion of a curious theorem in the fourth book of Pappus. They have a relation to the ſubject of po­riſms, and one of them forms the 91st of Dr Simſon’s Reiteration. They are beſides very beautiful propo­ſitions, and are demonſtrated with all the elegance and simplicity of the ancient analyſis.

The proſecution of the plan which he had formed of introducing into the higher parts of mixed mathe­matics the ſtrict and ſimple form of ancient demonſtra­tion, produced the *Tracts Physical and Mathematical,* which were publiſhed in 1761, and the E*ſſay on the Sun’s Distance,* which was publiſhed in 1763. In this laſt work it is acknowledged that he employed geometry on a taſk which geometry cannot perform ; but while it is granted that his determination of the ſun’s diſtance is by no means free from error, it may ſafely be aſſerted that it contains a great deal which will always intereſt geometers, and will always be admired by them. Few errors in ſcience are redeemed by the diſplay of ſo much ingenuity, and what is more lingular, of ſo much found reaſoning. The inveſtigation is everywhere elegant, and will probably be long regarded as a ſpecimen of the moſt arduous inquiry which has been attempted by mere geometry.

The *Sun’s Distance* was the laſt work which Dr Stewart publiſhed ; and though he lived to ſee ſeveral animadverſions on it made public, he declined entering into any controverſy. His diſpoſition was far from po­lemical ; and he knew the value of that quiet which a literary man ſhould rarely ſuffer his antagoniſts to in­terrupt. He uſed to ſay, that the decision of the point in queſtion was now before the public ; that if his inveſtigation was right it would never be overturned, and that if it was wrong it ought not to be defended. A few months before he publiſhed the essay juſt men­tioned, he gave to the world another work, intitled *Propοsitiones Geometricae More Veterum Demonstratae.* This title, it is ſaid, was given to it by Dr Simſon, who re­joiced in the publication of a work ſo well calculated to promote the ſtudy of the ancient geometry. It con­sists of a ſeries of geometrical theorems for the moſt part new ; inveſtigated firſt by an analyſis, and after­wards ſynthetically demonſtrated by the inverſion of the ſame analyſis.

Dr Stewart’s conſtant uſe of the geometrical analysis had put him in poſſeſſion of many valuable propositions which did not enter into the plan of any of the works that have been enumerated. Of theſe not a few