ty of Fife, who ſettled in Orkney at the time of the Reformation. But as there were no males remaining of the elder branch of the Stranges of Balcaſky, Sir Robert became the male repreſentative of it, and was found by a legal inveſtigation to have a right to the ar­morial bearings and every other mark of honour belong­ing to that ancient family.

He received his claſſical education at Kirkwall in Orkney under the care of a learned, worthy, and much reſpected gentleman, Mr Murdoch Mackenzie, ſtill alive (1795), who has rendered infinite ſervice to his coun­try by the accurate ſurveys and charts he has given of the iſlands of Orkney and of the Britiſh and Iriſh coaſts.

Originally intended for the law, Mr Strange ſoon be­came tired of that profeſſion, and perceived that his ge­nius deciſively led him to the arts of drawing and en­graving. For this purpoſe he was introduced to the late Mr Richard Cooper at Edinburgh, the only perſon there who had then any taſte in that line of the fine arts. He was bound with him as an apprentice for six years ; during which time he made ſuch progreſs in his new profeſſion, that his friends entertained the higheſt expectation of his ſucceſs; nor were they diſappointed.

In the year 1747 he married Iſabella, only daugh­ter of William Lumiſden, ſon of Biſhop Lumiſden; and ſoon after his marriage he went to France, where with the moſt ardent application he proſecuted his ſtudies, chiefly at Paris, under the direction of the celebrated Le Bas, who engraved many excellent prints from the Dutch painters. It was from Le Bas he had the firſt hint of the uſe of the inſtrument commonly called *the dry needle ;* but which he afterwards greatly impro­ved by his own genius, and which has added ſuch ſuperior beauties to his engravings.

In the year 1751 Mr Strange removed with his fa­mily from Edinburgh and ſettled at London, where he engraved ſeveral fine hiſtorical prints, which juſtly ac­quired to him great reputation. At this period hiſto­rſeal engraving had made little progreſs in Britain, and he may be properly conſidered as its father.

The admiration he always had for the works of the great Italian painters made him long desire to visit Ita­ly, the feat of the fine arts ; and the farther he advan­ced in life, he became the more perſuaded that a jour­ney to that country was eſſential to an artiſt who had the laudable ambition to excel in his profeſſion. He therefore undertook this journey in the year 1760. In Italy he made many admirable drawings, ſeveral of which he afterwards engraved. Theſe drawings are now in the posseſſion of Lord Dundas.

Everywhere in Italy Angular marks of attention were beſtowed on Mr Strange ; not only by great perſonages, but by the principal academies of the fine arts in that country. He was made a member of the acade­mies of Rome, Florence, and Bologna, and profeſſor in the royal academy at Parma.

To ſhow the eſtimation in which his talents were held at Rome, we cannot but record the following anecdote. The ceiling of the room of the Vatican library, in which the collection of engravings are kept, is elegant­ly painted by Signor Rotfanelli. It repreſents the pro­greſs of engraving ; and the portraits of the moſt emi­nent artiſts in that line are there introduced, among which is that of our artiſt. Under his arm he holds a portfolio, on which his name is inſcribed. He is the only Britiſh artiſt on whom this honour has been con­ferred.

In France, where he resided many years at different periods, his talents likewiſe received every mark of at­tention that could be beſtowed on a foreigner. He was made a member of the royal academy of painting at Paris.

His majeſty King George III. ever attentive to the progreſs of the fine arts in Britain, and ſensible of the advantages of which engraving particularly has been to this country, even in a commercial light ; and desirous to give a mark of his royal approbation of the merit of Mr Strange, whom he conſidered as at the head of his profeſſion and the great improver of it—was graciously pleaſed to confer the honour of knighthood on him the 5th of January 1787.

Such was Sir Robert Strange as an artiſt ; nor was he leſs diſtinguiſhed by his truly amiable moral quali­ties, which endeared him to all who had the happineſs to know him.

With regard to his works, he left fifty capital plates, ſtill in good condition, which are carefully preſerved in his family. They are engraved from pictures by the moſt celebrated painters of the Roman, Florentine, Lombard, Venetian, and other ſchools. They are hi­ſtorical, both ſacred and profane, poetical, allegorical.

From his earlſeſt eſtabliſhment in life, Sir Robert carefully preſerved about eighty copies of the fineſt and moſt choice impreſſions of each plate he engraved ; which, from length of time, have acquired a beauty, mellowneſs, and brilliancy, eaſier ſeen than deſcribed. He did this with a view of preſenting them to the pub­lic at a period when age ſhould diſable him from add­ing to their number. Theſe he collected into as many volumes, and arranged them in the order in which they were engraved. To each volume he prefixed two por­traits of himſelf, on the ſame plate, the one an etching, the other a finiſhed proof, from a drawing by John Baptiſte Greuſe. This is the laſt plate he engraved; and which is a proof that neither his eyes nor hand were impaired by age. It likewiſe ſhows the uſe he made both of aquafortis and the graver. Each volume, besides a dedication to the king, contains an introduction on the progreſs of engraving, and critical remarks on the pictures from which his engravings are taken, Theſe volumes were ready to be given to the public, when Sir Robert’s death and conſequent circumſtances delayed this magnificent publication ; a publication which does ſo much honour to the artiſt, and to the country which gave him birth @@(b)

@@@(b) Solicitous to make all our biographical articles the vehicles of truth, and particularly desirous to do juſtice to the memory of our illustrious countryman Sir Robert Strange, we applied for information reſpecting him to the perſon whom we conſidered as the moſt capable of furniſhing it, and to whom we imagined that our applica­tion would be in a high degree grateful. With ſome difficulty we obtained, as a favour to ourſelves, the ſketch