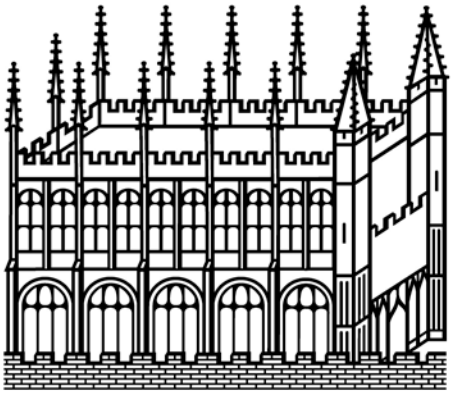
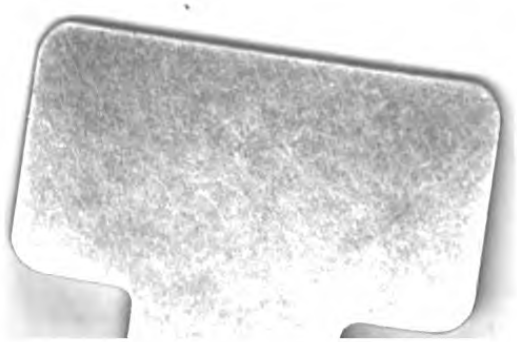


PRINCIPAL LEE'S *INAUGURAL* ADDRESSES



INAUGURAL ADDRESSES

IN THE

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

INAUGURAL ADDRESSES

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UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

BY THE LATE

JOHN LEE, D.D. LL.D.

PRINCIPAL OF THE UNIVERSITY

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR, BY LORD NEAVES

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS

EDINBURGH AND LONDON

MDCCCLXI


BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA

PREFACE.

On his appointment, in 1840, to the Principal's chair in the University of Edinburgh, the author "adopted" (to use his own words) "a practice—which, if it prevailed there formerly, had been discontinued—of opening the winter session by a public address to such of the students as could be accommodated in the largest of the class-rooms;" and, except in one instance, when the interruption was due to illness, he continued to discharge this duty in person throughout his incumbency. It is unnecessary to attempt here to characterise the discourses delivered on these occasions.

The special purpose professedly contemplated in the greater number of them was the same as in similar addresses in other Universities, namely, "to bring under the notice of the audience . . . considerations calculated to encourage as well as to guide young men in the pursuit of the liberal studies for the cultivation of which Universities were originally instituted,"—many of the suggestions offered with this view, while "applicable in some measure to all students," being "intended chiefly for the use of those who were about to enter for the first time on a course of academical instruction." Various other matters, however, in which the whole University had a common concern, were also, of course, referred to in these annual prelections. It will be found that of those of the series which have at present been selected for publication, two or three bear, in great part, upon questions of more general interest—particularly in relation to the early

history of the University of Edinburgh, and its condition at the close of last century, when the author was himself a student within its walls.

To the Honourable Lord Neaves, the editor is greatly indebted for the kind permission to print in this place the annexed Biographical Notice. Apart from the value of that paper otherwise, it will be felt to add very much to the interest of a volume in which there occurs so frequent reference to the author's personal recollections, and which derives much of its significance from the facts of his own life.

WILLIAM LEE.

22*d November* 1861.

CONTENTS.

MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

BY THE HON. LORD NEAVES.*

JOHN LEE, late Principal of the University of Edinburgh, was one of the most remarkable and estimable men of his time. His intellectual qualities were of a high order; his attainments and acquisitions of knowledge were of the most varied and extensive kind. On almost all subjects he was admirably well informed, and in some departments he was unquestionably the most learned man of his age and country. He was more than all this: he was a most pious Christian minister, and he was one of the most friendly and affectionate of men.

Dr Lee was born at Torwoodlee-Mains, in the parish of Stow, on the 22d of November 1779.

* Extracted, with the permission of Lord Neaves, from the opening Address to the Royal Society of Edinburgh, 5th December 1859—(*Proceedings of the Royal Society*, vol. iv. p. 212).—ED.

He received his early education from the care of his mother, whom he was accustomed to speak of as a woman of remarkable intellectual powers and mental cultivation, as well as of distinguished moral excellence. The debt of gratitude which he owed to his parents must indeed have been great, if it bore any proportion to the filial reverence and devotion which he showed them in every form in after-life.

He was sent, when a boy of ten years old, to Cadonlee school, at Clovenford, then taught by Mr James Paris, and in which, during Dr Lee's attendance, Dr Leyden was an assistant. From that school he went to the University of Edinburgh in 1794, being then in his fifteenth year. In his opening Address to the University of Edinburgh, as Principal, in 1842, he refers to its state when he became a student, and recurs with pride and pleasure to the eminent men who then gave and received instruction within its walls. He continued at the University for ten years, having studied both medicine and theology. He took the degree of M.D. in 1801, when his Graduation Thesis was much admired for its Ciceronian Latinity. He was licensed as a probationer of the Church in 1804.

During his attendance at college, he assisted Professor Robison in editing Dr Black's *Lectures on Chemistry.* In 1802, before his college career

closed, he was offered, and he accepted, the chair of Moral Philosophy in the University of Wilna, in West Russia, in which also, I believe, two other distinguished men were invited to become Professors—Thomas Campbell, the author of *The Pleasures of Hope*, and Sir David Brewster, who has now succeeded Dr Lee in the office of Principal in our own University. It is but fair to say that these invitations were made through the medium of the late David Earl of Buchan, who, with some peculiarities of character, was a man of talent and taste, and inspired by a sincere zeal for the advancement of literature and science. Dr Lee prepared himself for fulfilling the duties of this appointment by writing out in Latin a portion of the lectures which he proposed to deliver at Wilna, but the arrangement was broken off by political events which interfered with its completion.

For some time previous to the end of 1805, Dr Lee had been on intimate terms with Dr Carlyle, well known as an eminent clergyman of the Church of Scotland, and then minister of Inveresk, near Edinburgh. He lived a good deal with Dr Carlyle, both at Inveresk Manse and in the Doctor's town residence ; and as Dr Carlyle was then about eighty years of age, and still intimate with those of his own contemporaries who were alive—such as John Home and Adam Fergusson, who belonged,

like himself, to a bygone age, and who had witnessed many remarkable events and social changes —it cannot be doubted that Dr Lee must have derived from this acquaintance a great deal of traditional knowledge as to the civil and ecclesiastical history of Scotland in the eighteenth century, and his natural bias may have been confirmed towards that historical research, and that interest in personal character and anecdote, by which he was afterwards distinguished. Dr Carlyle, at his death in 1805, appointed Dr Lee one of his trustees, and committed specially to his care an autobiographical memoir, which cannot fail to be full of interest, and as to which, I may be permitted to express a hope that it will ere long be communicated to the public.*

Among other eminent clergymen who befriended Dr Lee in the outset of his career, special mention ought also to be made of Dr Finlayson, of whom he always spoke in terms of the warmest regard, and to whose memory he has dedicated one of the painted windows now put up in the Old Greyfriars' Church.

About the same early period, Dr Lee came to be for some time connected with the late Sir John Lowther Johnstone of Westerhall, in the capacity

* This is, of course, the "Autobiography" which has since been published under the editorship of Mr Hill Burton.—ED.

of tutor or guardian, and was thus brought into contact with several eminent public men, with whom Sir John was on familiar terms. I have heard that Sir John made to Dr Lee two offers, either of which, if accepted, would have materially altered his future course in life. One was, to bring him into Parliament for one of Sir John's burghs; the other, to procure him a commission in the Guards. These offers, if made, were certainly declined; but he retained his ward's friendship and respect, and, from his gratitude, derived, during life, a pension of £100 a year, which Sir John settled on him.

After taking his medical degree, he seems to have entertained some idea of following medicine as a profession; and he has been heard to say, that at one time, when a young man, he had three medical appointments in his possession or power; one, as assistant-surgeon to a regiment; another, as surgeon's mate on board a ship; and a third, as a surgeon in the East India Company's Service. Finally he rejected all thoughts of the medical profession, and fixed upon the Church as the field to which he should dedicate his life.

In 1807 Dr Lee became minister of a Scotch Chapel in London, and, in the same year, he was presented to the parish of Peebles. He continued there till 1812, when he became Professor of Church History in St Mary's College, St Andrews, where

he remained till 1821. A portion of the lectures he then delivered, embracing the History of the Church of Scotland from the Reformation, is now announced for publication, and cannot fail to excite a lively and general interest.

In 1820, before quitting his chair at St Andrews, he was appointed Professor of Moral Philosophy in King's College, Aberdeen, where he lectured for one session, chiefly by a deputy, to whom he transmitted his lectures daily by post. He speedily resigned his chair at Aberdeen, and in 1821 was removed to the charge of the parish of Canongate, Edinburgh; and thereafter he successively held the other charges of Lady Yester's Church, and the Old Church Parish, in this city.

In 1824 he was named one of the Royal Commissioners for visiting the Scotch Universities. In 1827 he became Principal Clerk of the General Assembly. In 1837 he was appointed Principal of the United College of St Andrews, but did not long retain the appointment. In 1838 he was offered, but declined, the appointment of Secretary to the Bible Board, then newly constituted.

In 1840 he was elected Principal, and in 1843 he was appointed Professor of Divinity, in the University of Edinburgh. Previously, during the session of 1827-28, he had taught gratuitously the Divinity class, and afterwards, during the session of 1851-52, he taught gratuitously, again, the

Moral Philosophy class, and in 1853-54, the Church History class, in the College of Edinburgh, during vacancies in those chairs occasioned by the death or the illness of their Professors.

He held the appointments of Chaplain to the Queen, of Dean of the Chapel Royal, of Chaplain to the Royal Academy, and to the Convention of Royal Burghs, and he was at his death one of the Vice-Presidents of this Society.

I have ventured to say that he was one of the most learned men of his time, and in some departments of National and Church History, particularly in all that concerns the civil and ecclesiastical affairs, as well as the manners and habits of the people of Scotland, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, his knowledge was most minute and accurate. He was also at home in the cognate subject of the History of the Puritans during the same period. We have lately witnessed in this city the exposure to sale of a portion of his library, consisting of upwards of 20,000 volumes, some of them of the most rare and curious description; and I believe that there was not one of his books with which he was not familiar, and of which he did not know, as well as it could be known, the authorship, the occasion, the object, and the import. The subject of Bibliography had been from his early years a favourite study; and his habits of assiduity and perseverance, as well as

his capacious and retentive memory, enabled him to prosecute it with singular success. Nor was his intellectual power overlaid or paralysed by the immense mass of his acquired knowledge. His opinions on all subjects, and particularly on those to which he had directed his special attention, were clear and comprehensive; while, at the same time, they were marked by that candour and moderation, which I believe to be universally produced by the thorough and accurate study of any branch of knowledge or portion of history.

As in the case of many men of learning and talent, his published works are but an imperfect indication of his actual powers. Principal Lee, however, has left some things behind him, such as the "Memorial for the Bible Societies," and the "Pastoral Addresses" composed by him for the General Assembly, which show at once the force of his understanding, the variety and accuracy of his information, the rectitude of his feelings, and the purity of his taste. His stores of learning also were always at the service of those who wished to make use of them, and his ready aid has been repeatedly acknowledged as having given additional value to some of the most important works of our time on ecclesiastical or antiquarian subjects. I would fain hope that, among his numerous papers, much may yet be found that deserves and demands publication.

Dr Lee's health had never been robust, and was probably injured in early life by habits of abstinence and excessive study. But it was wonderful with what energy and vigour he discharged his duties and followed out his favourite pursuits. He died on 2d May 1859, in the 80th year of his age, and in circumstances which had a melancholy connection with the death of a dear son just returning from India.

No man could be more universally regretted; he had not an enemy or an ill-wisher in the world. The numerous appointments which he successively and simultaneously held are a proof of the esteem and respect with which he was regarded by all; but those only who knew him well can speak to his amiable disposition, to his cheerful and genial habits, and to the charity and Christian kindness which he extended to all men of worth and merit, of whatever opinions or whatever persuasion. An account of Dr Lee, indeed, would be very inadequate if it did not prominently bring forward what I have thus alluded to—his highly amiable and affectionate character. In early life he earned on all sides the love as well as the respect of those who knew him. In his ministerial charge at Peebles, he was long remembered for his quiet and unostentatious but most faithful discharge of his pastoral duties, for his ready and hearty sympathy with all who needed it, for his consolatory

tenderness to the sick, and his great liberality to the poor. Nor were these qualities of the heart extinguished or impaired by the long life of labour and study which he afterwards led; on the contrary, they continued to the end. He was ever ready to relax into a playful cheerfulness and pleasantry in society; while his attention to such of his friends as from sorrow or suffering had more serious claims upon him was unremitting and invaluable.

In consequence, perhaps, of some defect of manner, Dr Lee was not sought after as an attractive preacher. But his sermons were excellent, both in matter and in style, and some of his earlier ones, when read in manuscript, had reached and obtained the approbation of Royalty itself. In other respects he was all that a minister of the gospel ought to be. Orthodox in doctrine, evangelical in sentiment, and blameless in conduct, he had a frankness and freedom from professional pedantry or clerical rigour which are rarely met with in men of his learning and condition. We shall not soon see his like again, if we ever do so in our day. Piety, zeal, eloquence, and assiduity will not be wanting to the Church; but the combination of these with the learning, the wide range of information and sympathy, and the knowledge of the world which he possessed, will not readily be found again.

INAUGURAL ADDRESSES.

I.

[NOVEMBER 2, 1840.]

It cannot fail to occur to me, as it must to many in this intelligent audience, with how much more authoritative and impressive effect you might have now been addressed, if it had pleased the all-wise Disposer of events to preserve in his long unbroken vigour the venerable person whose patriarchal presence had been familiar to some of us for nearly half a century, and who, in the exercise of his grave and responsible functions within these walls, had borne his faculties so meekly as to win, by his bland and benignant demeanour, the hearts which might have been most apt to revolt against a less gentle administration. His name

will be preserved in the annals of Christian philanthropy, as having devoted the evening of a tranquil life to the enlargement of the provisions, long before established by the piety and patriotism of our ancestors, for the general education, and especially for the religious instruction, of the humbler classes of society; and if in any degree these labours of love abstracted him from academical pursuits, the loss was more than compensated, not only by the amount of the benefits conferred on thousands who were ready to perish through ignorance, but by the happy impulse which was given to the benevolent efforts of other cultivated minds, not previously aware of the vast sum of ignorance abounding even in this favoured land, and not previously able to judge from their personal experience, how much more blessed it is to give than to receive.

There are some now seated near me who have still a lively remembrance of the dignity with which the same office was filled by a man of lofty intellect, whose name long reflected a lustre on this University, and on the country whose history he illustrated with a felicity of style and a depth of philosophical reflection,

which Herodotus might well have envied. While he presided in this seat of science and learning, he was wont, at least in his earlier days, to deliver occasional discourses in the public hall, valuable not less for the practical wisdom which they embodied, than for the classic and graceful eloquence by which they were adorned.

The discontinuance of these public addresses for a considerable period has been occasioned by no lack of zeal or activity on the part of the University authorities, but by the want of space for accommodating the increased numbers which, on this account, could no longer be assembled in any one room within the precincts of the College,—a defect which, to our great embarrassment, is still felt as much in the new buildings as it was felt in the old more than fifty years ago. Indeed, at no period was there a hall in this University of such dimensions as ought to have been constructed for the performance of the public acts to which other educated persons, besides the professors or students, ought always to have found easy and welcome access. Hoping that this reproach may yet be wiped away, I may be allowed,

after accounting for the existence of so great an inconvenience, to hint at the only mode in which it can be expected to be effectually and speedily surmounted.

The first movement towards the erection of a College in Edinburgh was made by a most learned and amiable prelate of the communion of the Church of Rome, who died in the year 1558, a few months before the Protestant faith obtained the ascendancy in Scotland. This was Robert Reid, Bishop of Orkney, and for ten years President of the Court of Session, whose literary taste was equalled only by his political sagacity and princely munificence. Both while he was Abbot of Kinloss, and after his elevation to the see of Orkney, his contributions to the advancement of letters had been so liberal as to excite the admiration of the most eminent of his contemporaries; and his testamentary bequest of 8000 merks for founding a College in this city might, at that period, have been sufficient for providing very ample buildings. But, in the confusion of the times, no charge of the undertaking was taken by his executors; and the civic authorities appear to have made no effort to recover the

amount of the legacy till twenty-four years after his death, when not more than one-half of the nominal sum was realised, without interest; and by this time the value of money was so greatly reduced that this was not more than sufficient to purchase the ground on which the projected College was to stand. Other funds, derived almost entirely from the voluntary contributions of professional men and private citizens, were so circumscribed, that the unambitious structure, hastily and parsimoniously finished, was necessarily on a scale far too limited even for the wants of that generation. Additions were made from time to time for about fifty years; but for more than a century and a half, while this University was progressively and rapidly advancing in fame, its claims to public support appear to have been almost entirely disregarded; and, when the foundation of a new College was laid fifty years ago, the boundaries, instead of being enlarged as they might easily have been, were most inconsiderately and injuriously contracted: So that even no space has now been left for a Common Hall, a College Chapel, and other essential accommodations; and we do not possess the means

of assembling in a collective capacity, either for the solemnities of devotion, for the imposing ceremony of conferring degrees and distributing honours, or for any such periodical concourse as the present, and other important occasions, which all of us would hail as being instrumental in binding us more closely together, as a harmonious brotherhood, all intent on fulfilling the same great aim, and not one indulging in any strife, except the generous competition which, without any tincture of selfishness, longs to excel in the endeavour to promote the common interest, and to add to the honourable and useful activity of the body of which we are members.

How these ends are to be accomplished, unless the public shall be so convinced of the benefits derived from our labours as to take an efficient interest in the extension of the sphere of our operations, it is very difficult to perceive. Having introduced this topic merely with a view to account for the long interruption of a practice which we are not yet in a condition satisfactorily to revive, I shall dwell on it no farther at present than merely to take notice that, as we were indebted to an accomplished

bishop of the name of Reid for the liberal donation which gave origin to this academical establishment, we owe to a gallant general of the same name, the latest and most munificent of all the benefactions which was ever destined to our use, and which has come into our possession in the course of the present year. It may, perhaps, be considered becoming and interesting to embrace hereafter another public opportunity of commemorating the substantial services rendered by both the earlier and later benefactors of the University.

In the mean time, may I be permitted to enumerate the most material changes which have occurred since the commencement of the last session.

I have already adverted to one change, more cursorily than I might have done if I had not reflected that every word said in commendation of the departed, might have brought the living inheritor of his office into disadvantageous contrast. But without making any professions which I may fail in reducing to practice, and without giving way to mortification, though the gleanings of the grapes of my predecessors should be esteemed better than all the vintage which I

shall ever gather, determined as I am to give myself assiduously and indefatigably to the fulfilment of an arduous undertaking, I will not suffer myself to be discouraged by the apprehension of finding that my services are altogether unprofitable to those of whom I am bound to take a paternal oversight. It is part of my duty to visit the classes, particularly those which are appropriated to literary and philosophical pursuits; and this I propose to do, not under the apprehension that anything is to call for animadversion, but in the hope that thus I may be able to mark the progress of the diligent and ingenuous youth, not in one department merely, but in every branch of liberal instruction. I have undertaken also to give a weekly lecture, to which all matriculated students shall be welcome; and the objects will be such as tend to foster intellectual improvement, in combination with a sound regard to the religious interests of those who have already attained some proficiency in academical study. Twice in the week lectures will be given on the criticism and interpretation of the Scriptures,—specially, but not exclusively, for the use of Theological students; and on the alternate days there will be meetings for the

practical application of the rules—to which, however, those only will be admitted who take a share in the examination and exercises. It is one of the express conditions on which this class is conducted, that it shall impose no burden on those who attend it ; and on this head no one needs to feel any scruple, for it could not have been undertaken on any other terms.

In the course of the last session the University was deprived of one of its oldest members, Dr James Hamilton, who had long devoted the resources of a most ardent and active mind to the cultivation of a very important branch of the medical profession. Such a place was not easily supplied; but it is now worthily filled by Dr Simpson, whose name has for several years been so favourably known, as to afford a satisfactory pledge that the duties on which he is entering will be so performed as to contribute equally to the interests of science and humanity. The only other addition to the academical body, which was gained before the termination of the session, was the appointment of Mr John Thomson to an office hitherto unknown in our Scottish universities,—the Professorship of the Theory of Music, a branch of science intimately connected with the

philosophy of the senses, which, if it fail to prove attractive, can only fail because the national character must have undergone a chilling process since the spirit-stirring times when Buchanan thought it necessary almost to apologise for the manifestations of the *præfervidum ingenium Scotorum.* The Senatus Academicus have lately had occasion to express their deep regret at the resignation of a most ingenious and able colleague, Mr Moir, whose elegant and original lectures on Rhetoric and the Belles Lettres were deservedly admired during his brief academical career. Happily the Crown has appointed to the Chair Mr William Spalding, a gentleman of kindred genius and taste, whom we have this day had the satisfaction of inducting into his office, and who, I am well assured, will fulfil the intention which his predecessor earnestly contemplated, of rendering this a practical class. Of the other professors who have, for a series of years, honourably and actively occupied their stations here, it is highly satisfactory to know that they enter on the labours of the winter with their usual vigour.

And now, gentlemen, who have come hither for the purpose of engaging in the prosecution

either of general or professional education, I must take leave to address to you a few words of serious admonition, which I well know will be most patiently received by those who require it the least.

It is of incalculable advantage to every one to have attended sufficiently to all the preliminary acquirements which tend to facilitate his entrance on a new path of investigation. It would be well for every student who comes to such a school of learning as this, "inter sylvas Academi quærere verum," if at the portals he had no cause to be startled or deterred by such an inscription as is said to have been suspended over the gate of Plato's school (Οὐδεὶς ἀγεωμέτρητος εἰσίτω); and not less desirable is it that he should have acquired more than the elements of classical learning.

This is not a time for dilating on the utility of such a preparation; but it is no useless digression to say, that while it is not otherwise easy—if indeed it be practicable—to attain a philosophical acquaintance with the principles of spoken or written language, this is, at the same time, the most sure and direct method of arriving at that precision of thought which is of such

mighty and indispensable consequence, both in the investigation and exposition of truth. A large proportion of the errors into which men fall, both in speculation and in practice, may be traced to the neglect of early intellectual discipline, such as is exercised in forming just distinctions and expressing the abstractions of the mind in the most appropriate words. By a slovenly application of terms we are in danger of being misled ourselves and of unconsciously misleading others; but such a choice of expression, as becomes familiar to those who have studied the best models, and who have thus learned to wield with ease and effect the powers of language, is a preservative against many aberrations. If such an instrument be essential to the *attainment* of sound and solid knowledge, it is equally indispensable for its *communication* to other minds; and no man who underrates the accomplishment of being an exact grammarian, is ever likely to prove a skilful logician.

Not less important is a knowledge of mathematics. By this study—that is, if it be prosecuted not superficially, but thoroughly—we become acquainted with the essence of demonstrative reasoning; and in no other way can the

art of incontrovertible reasoning be so definitely exemplified. It is, indeed, to be lamented that some have unwisely attempted to apply mathematical reasoning to subjects for which it was not adapted; but this misapplication affords no ground for depreciating or abandoning the legitimate use of the science; and it is a sufficient recommendation of its utility, that without it the lofty investigations of physical science cannot be prosecuted at all.

From an early period, the Universities of Scotland possessed the reputation of communicating a course of instruction in the mathematics, as well as in physics and in metaphysics, more comprehensive than in some other schools of learning which claimed an undisputed title to a much more venerable antiquity, and which could also legitimately boast of many other solid advantages. Here, according to the unchallenged testimony of Mr Whiston and other English writers of the period, the Newtonian system formed an essential part of the business of the University, while, if not entirely ignored, it was not recognised as worthy to be included in the philosophical course in the schools which might have been expected to be the first to adopt it.

So also we find that not more than a year after the publication of the *Essay on the Human Understanding*, the doctrines of Locke were amply discussed by our professors of philosophy —some portions of them being impugned, while others were strenuously defended. Of this fact we have sufficient proof in the theses published on occasion of the annual graduations in arts from the year 1692 downwards. Every one knows with what lustre the celebrated James Gregory taught mathematics in St Andrews, and in this University, twenty years before that period. But nearly one hundred years before Gregory reached the climax of his fame, mathematics had been a favourite study (and so had logic) both at Aberdeen and St Andrews. In St Andrews, the oldest of our Universities, Napier, the inventor of logarithms, had become a pupil in 1562; and among his fellow-students two became successful professors of mathematics— namely, Homer Blair and William Welwood. I need not say that in this branch of study Scotland has never yet forfeited its right to refer to names of the very highest distinction. Yet it must be confessed to be a reproach, that, with all our advantages in this respect, it has

not been made an indispensable preparation for every one of the learned professions that the candidates shall have passed through a more extensive range of mathematical instruction than has ever yet been imperatively required.

With whatever measure of previous acquisition any of you come to the University, let me most earnestly implore you to devote yourselves with intense application to the studies on which you are prepared to enter, without attempting prematurely to overtake in one year what, if you consult any sagacious and experienced friend, you will find to be more than is within your reach, unless your preliminary (or, as I may call it, your ante-academical) preparation has been more than common. Beware of relaxing your diligence one season, in the delusive expectation that you will be able, by increased efforts of attention, to make up afterwards what has been neglected in its proper place. The habit of negligence, if once indulged, is apt to grow rather than to fade; and it is a most unhappy mistake to suppose that any degree of diligence can enable any one, whatever be his talents, to carry on simultaneously to a successful result a

plurality of studies, when one of them is an indispensable introduction to the other.

It has sometimes been objected to this University that the discipline is less watchful and strict than in almost every similar institution. If there has ever been such laxity as amounted to a connivance at idleness or immorality, it must be confessed that this was a grievous evil —but such, I am sure, never has existed. It has been the custom here to confide to a great extent in the honourable feelings and correct habits of the young gentlemen who have been educated within our walls; and though exceptions must have occurred, this confidence has been very rarely misplaced. If the heart be established in good principles (but certainly not otherwise) minute regulations may well be spared. But though I shall not descend to any circumstantial details, it is not a matter of surprise if the younger students, immediately after their transition from school to college, should not at once cast off all the habits into which the buoyancy of their spirits may occasionally betray them, though these are inconsistent with the decorum which should characterise an academical life. We do not exact

from you the gravity and gloom which might be expected to darken every countenance if a university were still a monastic establishment; but we do expect good order and gentlemanlike deportment—including a scrupulous abstinence from every practice which can prove an annoyance to others, or which can disturb the attention of the diligent, and thus mar their progress. We expect and require that, in every class, the instructions which are delivered to you shall be listened to with silent deference; for, be assured, there is no token of respect so gratifying to your teachers as still and patient attention; and every violation of this rule operates as a distraction to the studious, and is not less injurious to those by whom it is committed.

Gentlemen, many of you in very early life are removed from the prudent and vigilant inspection of your natural protectors; and in the absence of these faithful monitors, I feel myself called upon, with a parental voice, and as knowing the heart of a parent, to remind you of the numberless powerful motives by which you should be animated to the most strenuous and persevering exertions, that you may successfully avail yourselves of the ample resources placed

within your reach for the attainment of proficiency in the arts and sciences. Think of the perpetual feast which you cannot fail to enjoy if you possess the peaceful consciousness of doing your duty wisely and well—think of the bright honours and solid advantages which are the sure reward of sustained and well-directed industry — think of the bitter and incurable mortification of having the fair prospects at which young ambition gazes with eager and delighted eyes, all blasted and withered, because indulging in some delirious dream, or yielding to the sorcery of evil communication, you may be so frantic as to waste the spring of your existence in frivolous pursuits, while others, surmounting many disadvantages, and mastering most formidable difficulties, succeed by dint of unwearying diligence in reaping the golden harvest which you might have easily secured. Look to those who have risen to the loftiest eminence in letters, in science, and in honourable professions, in spite of discouragements which would have unnerved and baffled less resolute spirits. Ponder well how poignant will be the anguish which will sink into the hearts of those who now long and pray for your

growth in wisdom and worth, but whose hoary hairs will go down in sorrow to the grave, if, through the unexpected and inexcusable misapplication of your powers, the fond hopes which clung to them long shall in the end be cruelly defeated; and if the apprehension of such contumely as this cannot rouse you to the redemption of your time, picture to yourselves, on the other hand, the gladness with which they will hail the consummation of their wishes, if the labours of your youthful years shall be finally crowned with triumphant success. Above all, meditate with solemn awe, and great searching of heart, on the high obligations by which you are bound to occupy the talents conferred on you by the Creator, for the advancement of His honour, and for the general good of mankind, as well as for your own eternal peace and safety. Anticipate often the reflections which will visit your souls, when, on the brink of dissolution, all the short-lived attractions of this perishing world will assume the aspect in which they are presented to the disembodied spirit when it casts off the incumbrances of mortality; and never cease to consider what is the estimate which you will form of yourselves,

and what is the account which you will be constrained to render at the tribunal of the Righteous Judge, to whose infallible observation all things are naked and open. Acting now under the inspection of that intuitive Eye which neither slumbers nor sleeps, be assured that His inviolable faithfulness will not fail to mark, with merited ignominy, the abuse and perversion of His good and perfect gifts; however hard a saying it may seem to the victims of infatuation, snared in their own devices, that they must not dare to calculate on perpetual impunity, because the sentence against evil has not been speedily executed.

Finally, let me entreat you, with the most profound earnestness, to remember that, while no useful study is to be negligently or superficially pursued, the first, the highest, the most precious of all, is the knowledge of the only true God and of the way of everlasting salvation. Your other engagements will not be interrupted, nor will your progress in any secular study be retarded, but unspeakably blessed and forwarded, if, with all your other acquirements, you get the understanding of the things which belong to your peace. It is an indication, not

of greatness of mind, but of miserable debasement, if any one has the presumption and folly to think or to act as if he did not believe that the summit of human dignity and blessedness consists in having the heart and the conversation in Heaven. Let the sacred day, which the all-wise and merciful God has set apart for the celebration of his perfections, and for the refreshment of his sensitive and rational offspring, never be invaded or polluted by any pursuits at variance with the spirit or the precepts of Christianity. Avail yourselves regularly of the opportunities of frequenting the House of Prayer, which holy men of old have found to be the gate of Heaven. It is matter of regret that those of us who are of one faith and the same communion do not at present possess the means of assembling together as a united family on the days of holy convocation, that, invoking the blessing from on high, and listening reverently to the words of truth and soberness, we may have our faith confirmed, our affections elevated, our resolutions of holy obedience strengthened, and our hopes of future blessedness brightened and refined. But, though this defect should continue to be

the subject of lamentation and blame (as I do not expect it will), let no one plead this as an apology for omitting the duty of engaging in the public offices of devotion in one or other of the many places of worship in which the words of eternal life are faithfully preached, and those who hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

Trusting then, gentlemen, that you will be enabled to keep your hearts with all diligence, and to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things, purifying your way, and ordering your conversation aright, I commend you to the holy guidance and guardianship of Him who alone is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

II.

[NOVEMBER 1, 1841.]

In publicly opening this session of the University, it is incumbent on me to address to you a few words of friendly advice with respect to the duties which you are bound to fulfil as matriculated students; and before I enter on the not unpleasing task allotted to me, I have to request you to listen attentively while the secretary of the Senatus Academicus reads the *sponsio* which you subscribe when you enrol your names.

Sir W. Hamilton, secretary of the Senatus, then read the *sponsio* as follows:—"Ego A. B. Academiæ Edinburgenæ discipulus, sincerè ac sanctè promitto, quod et syngraphâ hac meâ in perpetuum testatum cupio, mihi ante omnia cordi ac curæ futurum veræ pietatis studium, me etiam in assuetis Academici curriculi studiis sedulum ut adolescentem bene institutum decet,

et quamdiu in curriculo illo permansero, Præceptoribus omnibus morigerum memet præstiturum, nec ullius dissidii, aut tumultus clam palamve, vel auctorem, vel participem futurum, et per reliquam vitam academiam ipsam grato et benevolo animo prosecuturum, idque omnibus officiis pro facultate mea et occasione data testaturum."

This simple declaration imposes on you no hard or questionable obligations, and requires no sacrifice of conscientious conviction from which the most sensitive and scrupulous mind can shrink. It requires no service except what all good and honest hearts must recognise as being not only reasonable and becoming, but essential to the maintenance of order and peace. You bind yourselves only to reverence the God who is above, to respect lawful authority, to be diligent in the prosecution of your studies, to shun every occasion of strife and discord, and to cherish a grateful sense of the benefits which you may derive from your attendance at this scene of instruction. So irresistibly do all these duties approve themselves to every well-regulated mind, that it may almost seem superfluous to announce them. Yet we know too well by experience that it is not unnecessary, either in youth or in age, to inculcate the remembrance

and the veneration of the Creator, and that the other duties with which we are most familiarly acquainted are often left undone.

In addressing myself to those who have only recently been removed from the vigilant and solicitous inspection of parental eyes, I can easily conceive that they may almost feel offended at the supposition that any youthful snares or unworthy enticements can withdraw them from the peaceful and pleasant way in which they have been trained up, or that they should be tempted to act as if they did not habitually bear in mind the omniscient Ruler and Judge who discerns their most secret thoughts and marks all their goings. I am not entitled to assume that there is among the young men attending the University a greater tendency than among others to abandon the principles of religion, to forsake the assembling of themselves together with the faithful in the sanctuaries of divine grace, or to give way to any of the allurements to unholy living. I trust there are none here present of whom such an apprehension can be reasonably entertained It must be universally known, however, that the prosecution of liberal studies does not of itself insure attention to the

highest and most momentous of the offices incumbent on reasonable and responsible beings, whose sphere of action (not limited to the span of human life) stretches out to an interminable duration. There have been too many lamentable instances of men, addicted to ingenious speculation and learned research, who have neglected the attainment of that sublime and saving knowledge which constitutes the essence of life eternal; and there have been times when the ensigns of infidelity have waved over the academic walls which had been consecrated by their founders as nurseries of piety as well as of secular science. I can venture to assure you that though, in the course of general education in the several branches of learning and science, no utterance is ever given to any sentiment calculated to propagate sectarian views, or to trespass on the rule which in ancient times was reputed an essential characteristic of practical wisdom, *Publica privatis secerne, sacra profanis*, yet, on the other hand, not even a whisper of scorn or of scepticism tending to unsettle the foundations of our most holy faith is to be heard from any of our chairs; and that, on the contrary, every fit occasion is seized to render philosophy and

literature subservient to the propagation of sacred truth and the establishment of religious principles. If any crafty and unsuspected assailant should attempt to invade this hallowed shrine, we trust that the minds of the ingenuous youth are not so insufficiently armed as to render the result of the conflict between light and darkness a matter of serious alarm. But in the absence of your natural guardians, whose faithful counsels, dictated by affection, might be expected to sink most deeply into your hearts, suffer me to impress on you the infinite importance of keeping alive continually the influence of that divine admonition, which, while it is capable of making you wise unto salvation, is so far from quenching the ardour of scientific pursuits, that it never fails to ennoble them, by leading the contemplations onward from the discovery of physical and moral truth to the elevated study of the attributes and will of the invisible and incomprehensible Being who at the first appointed the laws of matter and of mind, who, with unwearying and everlasting strength, impels the planets in their orbits, and wields the stupendous force of the elements, and who, humbling himself to behold the things that are

on earth, has breathed a spirit into man, and made knowledge pleasant to his soul. The more we learn of the course of nature, the progress of human intelligence, and the vast resources and achievements of art, resulting from the successful investigations of science, the more are we called upon to magnify the work and to admire the wonders of the Almighty, who is excellent in power and in judgment, and who respecteth not any who, thinking themselves wise of heart, have the weakness to lean to their own fallible understandings: which, incapable as they are of fathoming the secrets of the visible universe, are still more incapable of penetrating the profound mystery of godliness into which cherubim and seraphim desire to look.

On this copious theme I detain you no longer at this time,—entreating you only, with all your other acquirements, to treasure up in your hearts the knowledge of the things which belong to your peace; which, if obtained, will dignify and bless all your other labours, and will be found to your praise, and honour, and felicity, when this world and its works shall have passed away.

In briefly adverting to the two next clauses

in the *sponsio*—those which relate to your diligent application to the labours of your several classes, and your subordination to those who have the honour of conducting your studies, it is almost enough to observe, that in practice these two objects are inseparably conjoined. There is not one of your instructors who does not feel it to be the most gratifying token of your respect, when you apply heartily and steadily to the studies in which you are engaged—not only listening with eager and silent attention to all which it is his province to communicate, but striving by all attainable means to add, by your personal assiduity, to the stock of knowledge of which he professes to furnish little more than the outlines. The most skilful and accomplished professor cannot contribute nearly so much to your improvement as you yourselves, when acting intelligently on his suggestions, are capable of acquiring by your private researches; and, indeed, without your hearty and strenuous co-operation, all the fund of information which he can supply will be of scarcely any value. If you come to this place in the hope of being furnished with a sufficient amount of professional knowledge, you have

formed a very erroneous calculation. You will gain much substantial benefit if you learn, better than you could have done in private by your unaided efforts, how to exercise your faculties, and how to follow in the course which others have successfully trodden. You are not expected implicitly to embrace the views or to subscribe to the dictates of the ablest of the preceptors at whose feet you sit; and, on the other hand, it is to be presumed that you will not think yourselves entitled to reject their conclusions so long as you have not fully examined the grounds on which they are established. But if you are prompted by the love of truth, instead of being led away by extravagant aspirations after originality, you have no reason to apprehend that you will ever be discouraged or discountenanced, because, in the exercise of candid and independent judgments, you think boldly and endeavour to find out a path for yourselves. The strongest minds, however, are generally characterised by modesty; and it is for the most part found that arrogance and self-sufficiency do not conduct to any solid or permanent distinction. Whatever your capacities may be, let me suggest to you that, if, by

your well-directed industry, you commend yourselves to the favourable notice of your instructors, you will thus gain a distinction which scarcely ever proves empty or unprofitable. I could recount to you many names of men, who, now occupying very important stations, are ever ready to acknowledge that, under the favour of Providence, their success in life is chiefly to be traced to the stimulus to exertion which was imparted to their minds by the professors under whom they studied, and to the liberal commendation with which they were honourably discharged from the field of their academical labours.

While I speak of the debt which many have thus contracted to the faithful monitors who took a paternal interest in their progress, I must not forget that you may also gain very great advantages by doing your utmost to keep pace with the most enterprising and able of the contemporaries who have entered on the same honourable course. It is not necessary that competition should provoke any invidious or ungenerous strife. He whose spirit is most fervently roused to ascend to the highest point of excellence is less anxious to surpass the ac-

quirements of his associates than to ascertain, by every fresh effort, that he is day after day rising above the standard which he had formerly scarcely ventured to hope that he would ever reach. Observe, gentlemen, I do not attempt to win you from indolence to activity by holding up to you such a mean allurement as the mere love of praise; but it is no degradation to be spirited on by the pure thirst for knowledge, and the more than manly—the godlike—love of solid excellence.

I have been speaking of the deference due to your instructors. Allow me to suggest to you that, instead of running any risk of wasting your time, in consequence of the random or indiscriminate choice of books on subjects in which you are most interested, it will be well for you to attend to the recommendations of the directors of your studies. You are not certainly to expect that every book mentioned with general approbation will be found, in all respects, to possess the character of a safe guide. Unqualified recommendations are not often given, unless it be in the case of the exact sciences, which rest on the evidence of demonstration. But in such a case as the study of dialectics, or metaphysics,

or ethics, few men in the present age speak of any author, ancient or modern, as being entitled to such absolute authority as to deserve to have all his positions adopted without reserve. No body, indeed, now speaks of any author in the language which was once almost universally applied to Aristotle; and even the infallibility of Aristotle has been questioned for 300 years—though his word, in his own day, made more subjects than ever bowed down before the victorious sword of his pupil Alexander, and though his supremacy continued to be acknowledged for nearly twenty centuries. If any lecturer on the philosophy of the mind refer to Locke with high commendation, it must not be inferred that the purpose is to represent this great writer as an unerring authority. This is a character which Mr Locke himself never pretended to claim, even in that branch of study which he had most carefully and successfully cultivated, and would not have conceded to the writers whom he thought most worthy of being studied. His own expressed opinion was, that "the art of reasoning can only be acquired by habit;" and he added, "for the attaining of this, I should propose the constant reading of Chil-

ing worth, who, by his example, will teach perspicuity and the way of right reasoning better than any book I know, and therefore will deserve to be read, upon that account, over and over again; not to say anything of his argument." That in this passage Mr Locke must not be considered as signifying his assent to all the conclusions of the able controversial writer thus approved, is sufficiently obvious. In like manner, while your professors are best able to direct you in regard to the course of reading to be followed on the several branches of education, it must be recollected that they do not make themselves responsible for everything which may be found in the books that are quoted by them with applause: any more than did a late venerable Professor of Logic in a neighbouring University, who was sometimes blamed for having represented "the volumes of Mr Hume" as being (with some abatement) "the most perfect specimens of close reasoning and logical deduction." This was a strong expression; but the excellent individual to whom I refer was as far as possible from approving or adopting any one of the sceptical views of Mr Hume.

The form of words which has been read in your

hearing, and which every student is required to subscribe, contains a promise that you will abstain from all unseemly discord and tumult. I will not allow myself to imagine that any scenes of riot are likely to be exhibited here. The time has been when such occurrences have not been rare; but let us hope that they will not be revived in our experience. If, unhappily, it should be otherwise, it is necessary for the protection of them that do well that every outrage against good order and peace shall be promptly repressed by strict and impartial discipline, administered by the authorities of the University; for I will not suppose it possible that there shall ever be occasion for appealing to any extraneous jurisdiction—unless it be in the case of those who, from a wish to abridge our privileges, intrude themselves within our precincts for the purpose of fomenting disorder. But I gladly dismiss this subject in the confident belief that not even the slightest hint is necessary to secure the quiet and orderly demeanour of all who, possessing the spirit and education of gentlemen, are well aware that it is for their own credit and interest to seek the peace and uphold the honour of the University.

In alluding to the last particular in the obligation to which you are expected to signify your assent — namely, the good affection and friendly offices which throughout the remainder of your lives you undertake to evince to the University, I have merely to say to you that we make no demands on your gratitude except such as your personal experience may lead you spontaneously to acknowledge to be due. It may have been in the minds of our predecessors that some of their most prosperous pupils would follow the example set in early times, by adding to the contents of the library, or by endowing bursaries, or making provision for prizes, or enlarging and beautifying the fabric, or in some other way contributing to the utility or the embellishment of the old foundation. I do not say that we will remonstrate against the fulfilment of any such purposes, whether on a moderate or a magnificent scale. But I do say from my heart, and in the name of all my colleagues, that we will be well content—nay, we will be highly delighted, more delighted indeed than we could be by the most princely largesses, for which we may have established no legitimate claim—if, in your progress through life, you

shall be able conscientiously to declare, that whatever share of usefulness, or honour, or power, or prosperity, in things temporal or in things spiritual, you have been enabled to acquire, you are bound to ascribe at least a portion of these advantages to the circumstance of having been educated within these walls, to which we now offer you a most cordial welcome.

III.

[NOVEMBER 1, 1842.]

GENTLEMEN, — Among the discouragements incident to advanced life, none is more apt to occur to one who, in the fulfilment of the duties of a public function, is expected occasionally to address a youthful audience, than the difficulty of enlisting their sympathies on his side, so as to impress on them the conviction of the existence of a community of feelings, views, and interests, between the monitor and admonished. At the present moment I cannot altogether divest myself of the apprehension that it must to you appear an unprepossessing and unpropitious circumstance that you are doomed to listen to one whose form is withered by the progress of time, and whose features are clothed with inveterate sadness, as if his retro-

spective vision, lingering on the past, betokened a disposition rather to hold intercourse with the departed than with the living or the coming generation; and thus, while your attention is rather repelled than invited, you may be tempted to challenge the legitimacy of the title of days to speak, and of the multitude of years to teach wisdom.

Yet I venture to trust that the burden of years has not superinduced such a prostration and torpor of spirit as to unfit me for participating with my whole heart in the mingled sensations now swelling the ingenuous bosoms of the youngest in this interesting assemblage. Though my familiarity with academical life, both here and elsewhere, extends over a period of nearly half a century, I am not even now past feeling revived, with an intensity not greatly abated, the buoyant alacrity and eager expectation with which I overstepped the threshold of this seat of learning in the year 1794, when more than half of its irregular, unadorned, and decaying buildings presented to the eye of every reflecting spectator a very intelligible and graphic memorial of the character and condition of the patrons of the arts in Scotland at the date of its first erection, and when

another portion was towering up in polished and solid grandeur, as if to proclaim to all who then observed the contrast now no longer visible, that in respect at least of public munificence and taste the former times were not better than these. Now that the ancient structure has been superseded by a loftier and probably a more enduring edifice (not likely, however, to be soon completed), if we cannot here point to any of the external vestiges of the age of George Buchanan—which, little able as it was to appreciate the value of solid learning and the refinements of classical style, appears to have been still more devoid of all relish and all favour for architectural beauty,—yet happily we have not lost all trace of the honours which had been gained within the precincts of the now demolished walls while they remained in their pristine state. Not only are many great names inscribed in our annals, but many more durable monuments of erudition and scientific attainments are preserved in the writings of numerous authors, who around this spot had their youthful aspirations after excellence roused, and their habits of study cherished and matured, by the training of skilful teachers and the con-

current influence of emulous associates, prompted by no ungenerous rivalry, but all strenuously contending for such superiority as could be fairly and honourably won.

It is doing but stinted justice to this seminary, Gentlemen, to say, that when my acquaintance with it commenced, it held out advantages, in respect both of the transcendant merit of the teachers and the stimulus derived from the genius, spirit, and industry of the students, equal at least to what had been accessible at any former period. Never had the literature of Scotland gained a higher elevation; and while the provinces possessed an ample share of the intellectual wealth of the nation, the University of the capital stood proudly eminent. The fame of Robertson had reached its climax, and the going down of his sun had not been clouded by any mental decline. Another eloquent and philosophical writer, while vigorous in mind and devoted to lofty speculation, had a few years before retired from the ethical chair, after having attained high celebrity by his ingenious Essay on Civil Society, and by the history of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic. The several

faculties in this University vied with each other in recounting the illustrious names by which they were severally distinguished. Cullen had recently ceased to occupy a place among the living cultivators of the science of medicine, whose renown had attracted admiring followers from every quarter of the globe. In that brilliant sphere the names of Black, of the second Monro, of Gregory, and of Rutherford, were conspicuous, accompanied by others of surpassing diligence, all favourably known as medical writers. While, in the departments of philosophy and taste, the other Universities of Scotland had reason to triumph in the lustre which was shed over their several orbits by the presence of such men as Reid and Beattie, Gerard and Campbell, they could not, and they did not, boast of outshining the Fergusons and Blairs, the Stewarts, Playfairs, and Robisons, whose profound and luminous discussions of some of the most subtle and abstruse subjects of physical and moral investigation, were pronounced by the consenting voice of Europe to possess the strongest claims on the admiration of an enlightened age.

Many of the pupils who were then reared

within these walls were worthy of the great masters who gave an impulse to their ambitious and successful pursuits; and it was scarcely possible for any one possessed of an intellectual being to breathe the same atmosphere without being seized with the contagion of their enthusiasm. I name not any who are here present, though I see in my vicinity several, and lament the absence of other, contemporaries, whose attainments are not second to those of any in the same walks of literature, and whose didactic talents are universally acknowledged, and certainly not praised beyond their desert. The number of the present professors whose studies in whole or in part were conducted here at the period to which I have referred, is not less than nine;* and of those who are departed I may be permitted to name Dr Alexander Murray, Dr Thomas Brown, Dr Andrew Duncan, jun., and Sir Charles Bell—all of the highest eminence in their several professions. A very small proportion of the others who held, or still hold, a prominent rank as men of science —lawyers, divines, and statesmen—I shall here

* Dr Monro, Mr Jameson, Mr Dunbar, Dr Brunton, Mr Pillans, Dr Chalmers, Mr Napier, Dr Traill, and Mr Wallace.

add. When I name Thomas M'Crie (one of the best of our historians), James Abercromby, Walter Scott, John Leyden, Andrew Thomson, George Cranstoun, Mountstuart Elphinstone, Peter Roget, George Birkbeck, John Barclay, Mr Thomas Thomson, the Earl of Warwick, David Brewster, Francis Horner, Henry Cockburn, Henry Brougham,* Henry Petty (now

* "I have much pleasure in referring to the warm testimony which so recently as on Wednesday last was borne, by Lord Brougham, at a public meeting in the north of England, to the solid value which he continues to attach to the education which Edinburgh could and did furnish at the period to which I have been referring. On that occasion he is represented to have said—'I look on my education in Edinburgh as having been a very great benefit bestowed upon me by Providence.' I venture to think that I shall not be charged with wandering far from the purpose which specially calls for our attention, if I say a few words with regard to the course of literary and scientific education through which that distinguished man passed before he entered on that public life in which his career has been so splendid. Though descended from an ancient English family, he was born in Edinburgh, and his mother was a niece of Principal Robertson. In 1786, when seven years old, he entered the High School, in a class of 164 boys, and he had the advantage of being instructed by Mr Luke Fraser, who was forty years a favourite teacher, and under whose inspection Sir Walter Scott had commenced his classical studies, along with the late Lord Melville, in the year 1777. The late Lord Jeffrey became a pupil of the same master in 1781. . . . Lord Brougham was dux of the Rector's class in 1791. I personally know how pre-eminently conspicuous at this Uni-

Marquess of Lansdowne), Henry Temple (now Lord Palmerston), the Earl of Haddington, Lord Webb Seymour, Lord Dudley, the Earl of Minto, Lord Glenelg, Lord Langdale, and (not long afterwards) Lord John Russell, it will not, I think, be alleged to be a very easy task to produce within the same compass of time any choicer specimens of deep and varied learning, of splendid eloquence, of legislative sagacity, and of high attainments in science.

One who has studied at the same time, and in the same school, with such men as these, may venture to conclude that there is something, if not in the genius of the place, at least in the principles and character of the institution, calculated to animate and foster the operation of the human faculties, and to lead to great results; but no one is entitled to be distrustful of the probability of seeing such lofty acquirements equalled or exceeded. No such desponding presages have

versity his attainments were, not in one or two branches of study, but in all to which his attention was directed, and particularly in mathematics and natural philosophy, as well as in law, in metaphysics, and in political science. Some of these shreds of information may not be familiarly known to every one; but I allude no farther to a biography which is already, to a great extent, written in our national history."—*Inaugural Address*, Nov. 1, 1857.

ever found favour with me. Equal ardour and equal application will still, as formerly, master every difficulty which can be opposed to the expansive energy of the mind of man; and I entertain no apprehension lest among those who are now collected in this hall, few or none should be destined to rise to a commanding pre-eminence in the vast theatre of human ambition. That many minds cherish such longings is not to be doubted; and though in every case the sanguine anticipations of future honours may not be realised, the occasional failure must be ascribed not so much to deficiency of capacity as to unsteadiness of purpose, languor of exertion, and a prodigal waste of time,—a treasure which, after being recklessly thrown away, cannot be gathered up again.

A vast majority of you, I am fully convinced, have repaired to this place with the earnest determination to avail yourselves to the uttermost of all the advantages placed within your reach, and thus to arrive at the distinctions to which cultivated talents, combined with untainted principles, are the passport. Some of you have resolutely foregone the comforts with which you have hitherto been regaled under the parental roof,

and withdrawn contentedly from the tranquil scenes of rural enjoyment, where nature is seen in her most winning aspect, alluring the contemplative mind to the luxury of lettered repose, and presenting to enterprising spirits the most stirring incitements to court the healthy pleasures of activity. Some of you, without repining, calculate on many hours of solitary labour, perhaps uncheered by any intervals of friendly converse, and on other privations, to which neither youth nor age is willing to submit, unless when the mind is sustained by some high motive of paramount interest. Much have you proposed to do, and much to endure, rather than be left behind in the arduous race on which you have entered; and firmly will you generally abide by your purposes, whatever sacrifices their fulfilment may involve. The experience of past times does not warrant us to predict that no instances of defection will occur. Some languid spirits may sink under the influence of sloth; others may fall down wounded by the fascinations of deceitful pleasure; others there may be who can see no charms in polite letters or divine philosophy, and who, when mustered in the ranks, which they should never

have joined at all if they are impatient of literary discipline, act as if they were more anxious to obstruct the progress of others than to secure any benefit to themselves. Such cases, it is to be hoped, are rare; but when they do occur, the effect is so adverse to the reputation and the utility of any literary or scientific institution, that the offenders, if irreclaimable by admonition and warning, ought to be cut off from the society which is outraged and debased by their presence. And no man who holds a public charge in such a body as this would be faithful to his trust, if, after repeated expostulations had failed to produce amendment, he were to shrink from the clear though painful duty of excluding the unworthy.

That no such hard necessity may ever occur in my experience, I do most earnestly hope; but it is right that it should be explicitly understood by those who are congratulating themselves on their manumission from the rigid restraints of a school, that the time has not come when the discipline of universities is only an empty name.

There are some offences which it would be an indelible reproach to tolerate. We who are appointed to aid you in the application of the

means of acquiring a learned and scientific education, must never forget that it is incumbent on us to feel a paternal solicitude for your moral health as well as your intellectual culture. Now, I am fully persuaded that there are few places in which so many young men have been associated in literary undertakings, in which there has been less ground for complaint or censure than has generally been discovered or suspected here. But still we cannot venture to affirm that irregularities have never existed. I earnestly hope and pray that you may all be preserved from every snare of thoughtlessness, from every tampering with temptation, from every appearance of evil, and much more from its active reality, which perpetrates such havoc in the soul, which frustrates the hopes and poisons the enjoyment of parents, which detaches even the most faithful and honourable friends, and which, with unnatural callousness, or rather with inexcusable and odious cruelty, inflicts incurable wounds on the children of the same family, clothing them with a shame and sorrow that no human comforter can ever wipe away.

Let me remind you that there is no invin-

cible security against dangerous enticement except what is furnished by the principles and by the exercise of pure and undefiled religion; that in vain will you look for peace and safety, if you suffer yourselves to forget your obligations to infinite love—if you cast off the fear of God and restrain prayer before Him—if you forsake the assembling of yourselves with the faithful—if you do not arm yourselves with the mind of Him who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. I know well there is not one of my colleagues who does not cherish a most ardent desire that, along with the studies you pursue under their inspection, and with their efficient assistance, you may "keep your hearts with all diligence," and maintain the principles of piety and rectitude, fulfilling also all the other graces and excellences of the Christian life. And such is the conduct which I do anxiously and confidently expect to characterise all the members of this community.

Gentlemen, you cannot all be equally distinguished. But all may be insured of the possession of substantial benefits if they will only exercise the diligence without which neither wisdom nor worth can be acquired. By hearty,

strenuous, and persevering application, even moderate talents cannot fail to realise much more than the most shining abilities can gain by occasional starts of exertion not steadily carried on with a definite and consistent aim, but sometimes pressing forward with vehement and almost preternatural impetuosity, then slackening the pace or relapsing into voluptuous indolence. While the mind is not strengthened by such alternations of inordinate action and occasional listlessness, a main object of academical nurture is frustrated if steadfast and well-directed habits of industry be not established.

One of the primary and most essential maxims on which every student ought to act, is to keep a regular account of the employment of his time, and to take care that no portion of it shall be unprofitably squandered. I do not say that no intervals of relaxation are to be allowed. Quite otherwise. It is not only prudent, but indispensable, that for the sake of maintaining the mind in a healthy and vigorous tone, the most rational means of preserving the bodily health shall be reduced to practice; and to every student I recommend prudent attention to health,

both bodily and mental. Very many young men are in this respect very inconsiderate. I remember to my great regret, that when I was about seventeen years old, a student in the advanced classes, of which I attended more than was prudent simultaneously, I formed the habit of sitting up almost constantly till three or four o'clock in the morning (a habit which clung to me very long, if indeed I can venture to say that it is even now in any reasonable measure discontinued); and be assured that this is not a salutary practice. Experience, indeed, enables me to testify that the injudicious practice of making the night the chief season of application to mental labour, not only tells severely on the bodily vigour at the time, but ultimately tends to produce a degree of constitutional languor and lassitude inconsistent equally with activity and comfort; while it terminates in an utter incapacity of enjoying rest during the hours which the Author of nature has destined for refreshing the wearied faculties so as to render seasonable labour a constituent of pleasure. Some time should also be devoted to exercise; but on such admonitions as this I cannot dwell minutely; only this I think it right to say, that

I have in former years had occasion to know, that, by inattention to this matter, some most promising students have sacrificed lives the preservation of which might have been invaluable to society, and the loss of which was an irreparable loss.

That man, then, is not likely to be most successful in prosecuting any field of mental enterprise who, without intermission, strains his faculties to the uttermost. "Nec semper tendit arcum Apollo." But there is a wide difference between seasonable and salutary remission of labour and the profuse waste of time in the pursuit of enervating amusements, which inevitably debilitates and dissolves the intellectual powers as surely as it impairs the moral sensibilities. And if those habits of well-regulated intellectual activity, without which the soundness and strength of our spiritual constitution cannot be sustained, have proceeded so far as to induce us to keep a register of our progress, and of the unwelcome interruptions by which our movements are occasionally retarded, we will be the more able to form a just estimate of the incalculable value of time; and the balance of profit and loss, when it is found to be unfavourable, will affect us the more deeply.

Observations like these are so trite, that one is almost ashamed to repeat them; but it is only by frivolous minds, who practically disown their value, that they can be treated with derision. The great lights in the firmament of the heavens were not appointed for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, that man, more forgetful than the stork and the turtle and the swallow, which observe with intuitive accuracy the periodical changes which summon them from one climate to another, should fail to mark the lapse of unproductive springs in which nothing good or profitable has been sown—of summer suns which have risen and gone down, while no noxious weeds have been rooted up, and no buds of virtuous praise have been watered and refreshed—of weeks of harvest, during which no precious fruits have been ripened or gathered: for all of which inexcusable neglects the bitter reflections which arise in the days of darkness and the years wherein there is no pleasure, will be like the flaming sword of the cherubim, which drove back fallen man from regaining the way to the tree of life.

Let me take this occasion of calling the spe-

cial attention of every one who is only beginning his course, to the great importance of conducting his studies in a regular order, without attempting either to omit or to pass hastily over what appears to be merely elementary. At the commencement of every literary or scientific curriculum, it is indispensable that many particulars shall be patiently learned, the utility of which, or their subserviency to the ultimate object of pursuit, cannot be discovered at the first, or even till the journey is far advanced. Everything ought to be acquired in its proper place. Among the preliminary studies which many are too apt to disparage and neglect, the cultivation of the ancient languages of Greece and Rome must not be overlooked. If in former days a profound knowledge of grammatical and philological niceties (particularly in Greek and Latin) may have been overrated, there certainly are too few in the present age who sufficiently appreciate the advantage which proficiency in the dead languages is calculated to impart to all who devote themselves to the liberal professions—not merely as exhibiting the finest specimens of every variety of style, and the most exquisite models of didactic and persuasive eloquence, but as being directly

instrumental in training the mind to habits of accurate thinking, and to the facility of expounding truth effectively, by the skilful arrangement of the successive steps of an argument. Among those who most successfully wield the powers of polished speech, it is easy to perceive how much of their art is derived from the capacity of extracting allusions, examples, and illustrations from the stores of classical learning. It is a vulgar fallacy to suppose that the elevated accomplishments of a scholar extend no farther than to the knowledge of words, the artifices of grammar, and the refined subtleties of etymological conjecture. These studies, when pursued with correct judgment, go far to the formation of the philosophical character; and they furnish the very basis of logical distinctions. Neglect these studies, or grudge the time and labour without which they cannot be mastered, and you forego advantages, the lack of which, though not discoverable by yourselves, will easily be detected by those whose strenuous and well-disciplined minds have gained additional prowess and pre-eminence in the highest excellences of speech, from their free and frequent access to the copious resources of ancient erudition.

This remark, however, must not be misconstrued into an attempt to discountenance the study of contemporary authors, or of those who have flourished since the revival of letters. An exclusive preference either of the old or the new would be highly injudicious. In various departments the moderns possess an unrivalled and unapproached advantage. But the most finished of modern compositions would not have been what they are, if their authors had neglected a cultivation of the classical languages.

It will, I trust, be scarcely regarded as out of place here to refer to a passage in Mr Stewart's life of an illustrious writer whose name is associated with the brightest days of this university:—"Dr Robertson from a very early period of life employed with much perseverance the most effectual means for surmounting the difficulty of guarding against the peculiarities of a provincial idiom. Among other expedients, he was accustomed to exercise himself in the practice of translation; and he had even gone so far in the cultivation of this very difficult art as to have thought seriously of preparing for the press a version of *Marcus Antoninus*, when he was anticipated in the execution of his de-

sign." He was anticipated (I may observe) by Dr Moor, then Professor of Greek at Glasgow, and by Dr Hutcheson, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the same University. Mr Stewart adds, that "to a systematical selection of the more regular and analogical forms of construction is to be ascribed, in a considerable degree, the popularity which this accomplished author obtained among foreigners, who unite in esteeming him, not only as one of the most eloquent, but as one of the most intelligible of our writers. And it may be presumed the same circumstance will secure in his favour the suffrages of posterity, when the passing idioms generated by the capricious modes of our own times shall be antiquated or forgotten."

Thus, to the practice sanctioned by the example of Robertson, has been traced the great and various graces of his own composition, which, for clearness, purity, and dignity, gained the highest encomiums of such judges of style as Burke and Chesterfield, who pronounced his works to be worthy of comparison with those of the best historians extant, not excepting Livy.

Let it, above all, Gentlemen, ever be your great aim, so to conduct your studies, as not

merely to accumulate knowledge, and to become expert in the exercise of the intellectual faculties, but chiefly and pre-eminently to arrive with certainty at the possession of the truth. And here it must be observed, that whenever the understanding is truly enlightened, and the heart animated with the love of truth, there is no risk of any jarring between the dictates of revelation and the conclusions of a scund judgment. The evidence of faith does not supersede that of intellection; the exercise of prayer is unmeaning and unavailing, unless it be at the same time an act of understanding; the sacrifice of praise, if it were not a reasonable service, would be the sacrifice of fools; and no opposition exists between the light of Christianity and the light of science, except the opposition of science falsely so called. That the honour of religion may be vindicated and exalted, it is by no means necessary that learning should be vilified, and that philosophy should be consigned to degradation. In fact, we disparage religion if we pronounce it to be incapable of harmonising or dwelling in unity with the high attainments of a cultivated mind; for such an assertion can be interpreted only into an acknowledgment,

that the free inquiry, which, in the words of an apostolical writer, resolves to prove all things before it holds fast that which is demonstrated to be good, is not so favourable to the growth of piety as the quiescent and implicit credulity which receives doctrines without daring to examine them, and that ignorance itself is at least the nurse, if not the mother, of devotion.

Gentlemen, I began by recalling some of my own early reminiscences, and particularly those which revived the venerable images of the departed instructors under whom I entered on my academical career, and the not less loved idea of the troops of early associates, whose vicinity was capable of giving a powerful influence to more sluggish and quiescent spirits. I have now to say to you, with unhesitating confidence, that, in such respects as those to which I have just referred, your advantages are so far from being less, that they are on the whole greatly more enlarged. I speak not merely of the increased number of branches which are separately and systematically taught, but of various important expedients which are employed both to stimulate and to test the progress of the students. In a

much greater number of classes (in all, I believe, in which it is most practicable and most essential), either oral examinations or written exercises (or in many cases both) are more frequent and more imperatively exacted than formerly; and though I will not venture in presence of my colleagues to say what might be offensive to their feelings, it has been proved by more authoritative and unquestionable evidence than I can presume to offer, how highly they are fitted for the duties of their respective departments, and how eagerly and faithfully they are bent on performing them.

I can scarcely venture to allude to the changes which have occurred in our body in consequence of the death or the resignation of a considerable number, whose places are now occupied by gentlemen of whom I do not say too much when I express my decided conviction that, possessed as they are of universally acknowledged talents and the most solid attainments, nothing on their part will be wanting to prove that the appointments were made with a sound and discriminating regard to the prosperity of the University and the interest of the public. To such of their predecessors as have retired after a long term of active

and faithful service, or who, in the prime of usefulness, may have removed to other spheres of labour, we cordially unite in wishing health and length of days, with peace and honour. On one most affecting change which suddenly overwhelmed us immediately after the conclusion of the last winter session, I cannot touch without the most poignant sorrow. In the unexpected death of Sir Charles Bell, science was bereft of a darling son; and the society which he lately graced by his presence, and enlightened by the inestimable products of his prolific mind, suffered a wound which cannot soon be healed or molified. The elevation of his genius, which soared far above the sordid propensities which cleave to the dust, and raised him from the calm contemplation of nature to the adoration of the great First Cause,—the purity of his devotion to all that is fair, liberal, and dignified, in the pursuits of science,—the variety and riches of his learning,—the elegance and amenity of all his studies and accomplishments,—and his consummate professional skill, enhanced by the felicitous tact with which he adapted the finest and most delicate discoveries to the relief of the sufferings of humanity, were equalled only by

his bland, benignant, and gentle affections,—by his pure love of truth and goodness,—and all the other attractive attributes which rendered him at once the ornament of lettered society, and the pride and delight of his chosen friends. To have been united with such a man, was felt to be a most precious cordial amidst the vexing perturbations of this mortal existence,—to be separated from such a man, has proved to those who best knew and felt his worth, to be a loss so irreparable that they almost refuse to be comforted. It is, however, matter of unspeakable consolation to believe that he sought a better country, which is an heavenly, and that the loveliness of his life, and the peacefulness of his departure, might be regarded as happy indications of the blessedness of his transition from the unsatisfying pursuits of time to the incorruptible inheritance of eternity.

Let the consideration that the brief day of life is rapidly passing away, and that the long night of the tomb is at hand,—that wisdom and worth are not in themselves a defence against the shocks of adversity and the shafts of the last enemy, and that no distinctions are truly valuable but those which shall survive the period of

our temporal being,—stir us up to give all diligence so to pass the time of our pilgrimage on the earth in the strenuous and faithful occupation of our talents, that we may, through the grace of the Divine Redeemer, be admitted to the honours and felicities of the everlasting kingdom. And while we are solicitous for our individual happiness, let us not be forgetful of the debt which we owe to our brethren, in so cultivating the seeds of knowledge, whose field is the wide world of rational beings, that we may be instrumental in the establishment of purity and universal peace overflowing all nature as a mighty stream : a consummation which we may hope will be fully realised, when, in the evening time of the world, " light shall be sown " in a soil so propitious, that, out of the earth, enriched by the accumulated wisdom and experience of ages, and by the progressive influences of divine discovery, truth shall spring up, as a plant,—fair, fruitful, and everywhere indigenous; and from the skies above shall drop down, in the perfection of beauty, the best of all the heavenly gifts, —righteousness blended with mercy,—to renew the face of the moral creation, and to gladden and bless the abodes of men, with the revelation of

the mysteries hidden from many generations, and with the anticipated brightness of the glory which encircles the throne of "the High and Lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy."

IV.

[NOVEMBER 2, 1846.]

TWELVE months ago, in the hearing of some who are now present, I somewhat inconsiderately hinted at a purpose which I entertained of bringing into the view of that audience an account of the extent to which this University has been indebted to its original founders, and its subsequent benefactors. This design, till very lately, I expected to fulfil on the present occasion, in a manner not altogether uninteresting and unprofitable. But for months past, repeated visitations of debilitating and discouraging maladies have unfitted me for almost any exertion, even for what many may conceive to be the easy task of finding out and arranging an accumulation of written materials scattered in various quarters, which a valetudinarian shrinks from exploring.

Nevertheless, I will try to recall, though with little exactness of method, and with still less fertility of illustration, a few old recollections, some of them familiar enough, and others, though demonstrable by the surest testimonies, not generally known. Observe, however, I do not profess at this time to present to you more than mere fragments of information.

I have often had occasion to remark, that the people of Scotland have for a long period been unduly reluctant to acknowledge the debt of gratitude which they owe to the men who were first instrumental in imparting even to the lowest ranks of the population the advantages of education. It is admitted, and with great justice and truth, that the Reformers contributed essentially to the general diffusion of sound knowledge. But who taught the Reformers themselves? Who instituted the schools in which Buchanan and Knox, Ferguson and Row, Winram and Willock, Alexander Arbuthnot, John Douglas, and the first John Spottiswode, were so well instructed, as to be adequately prepared for entering on the higher studies pursued at the Universities. One at least of the number appears to have been taught in one of the schools of the Canons Re-

gular, and another in a Monastery of the White Friars. The others, we know, were educated, one at the Grammar School of Dumbarton, another at a similar School in Haddington, another at Stirling, another at Perth, others at Aberdeen or Montrose. These schools in general owed their origin and their principal support to clergymen of the Church of Rome. Some of the founders of the burgh schools are known to have imbibed views similar to those which were afterwards propagated by Luther and Melancthon. But we cannot say this of them all. It was no small matter, however, that they encouraged the cultivation of classical literature, and liberally furnished the means of having solid instruction imparted to those who were destined to the service of the Church. Thus, I remember, I was much gratified by discovering, nearly thirty years ago, that in 1542 Sir David Bowman, a prebendary of the Collegiate Church of St Mary of Crail, gave an ample grant of lands and houses for establishing a school in that burgh, to be conducted by a succession of Masters of Arts, *qui docebunt pueros literas Latinas et non vulgares in formando eos ad bonos honestosque mores.* This foundation, however, like very

many others, was in the course of half a century rendered almost useless, and the intentions of the pious founder were frustrated through the carelessness of the municipal authorities, on whom the patronage devolved, in allowing the houses to fall into ruin, and the lands to be alienated for the payment of annual sums, so insignificant that they were not worth the trouble of collecting.

The first nucleus of a fund for imparting to Edinburgh the distinction of being the seat of a University, was provided by the will of the pious and learned Robert Reid, at one time Abbot of Kinloss, who died Bishop of Orkney in 1558, by which time the principles of the Reformation had been imbibed very generally by people of all ranks in this city. As Bishop Reid confided the administration of this endowment to the Magistrates and Council of the city, who in general openly espoused the cause of the Lords of the Congregation, it has been inferred that the Bishop himself was not unfriendly to the change in the profession of religion. But whatever might be the fact in this respect, it is certain that little diligence was exercised in securing the amount of the intended benefaction, (£8000

Scots); for twenty years afterwards, in 1580, when the sum should have more than doubled, according to the high rate of interest in those days, the patrons consented to accept one-half, or 4000 pounds Scots, and this also appears to have been greatly misapplied. In the year 1567 Queen Mary granted a charter, containing a large grant of Church property in Edinburgh and the vicinity, for the support of the ministers of religion, the places of education in the burgh, and the poor. This Royal grant was signed by Queen Mary a month after the violent death of her husband, and the witnesses were the Earl of Bothwell, who was married to the Queen three months afterwards, though charged with the murder of the King, and by four other persons of rank, all ascertained to have been partners in the guilt of that bloody deed. That was in the year 1567. In 1562 King James VI., at the age of sixteen, confirmed his mother's donation, and added, or professed to add, some other Church property, which, if it had been realised and preserved, might have amply sufficed to place this establishment on a level with some at least of the most flourishing academical institutions in other nations.

The youthful Sovereign thought fit to arrogate to himself the paternity of the infant undertaking; but he gave it little more than an empty name, accompanied by what was styled a Royal Charter of erection, which ultimately became little better than an unreal mockery. Even the small matter of allotting a site for the building, proved delusive. The house of the Provost of St Mary's Church in the Fields, the scene of Darnley's murder, with the other grounds of that collegiate establishment (called the Kirk-of-Field), are described in the Charter as if they had extended over a vast space:—"Vasta et spatiosa loca quæ præposito, præbendariis, sacerdotibus et fratribus tempore præterito pertinuerunt, maxime apta et commoda pro constructione domorum et ædificiorum, ubi Professores bonarum scientiarum et literarum, ac studentis earundem remanere, et suam diuturnam exercitationem habere potuerint. . . . Volumus et concedimus quod licebit . . . ædificare et reparare sufficientes domos pro receptione, habitatione et tractatione Professorum scholarum grammaticalium, humanitatis et linguarum, philosophiæ, theologiæ, medicinæ, et jurium, aut quarumcunque aliarum liberalium

scientiarum, quod declaramus nullam fore rapturam prædictæ mortificationis." "Licebit" indeed! "Concedimus et volumus quod licebit ædificare!" The funds for building existed, certainly, in land in the city and in the country—in the form of Church lands, gardens, orchards, corn-fields, tithes, fishings, and minerals, and particularly quarries of the finest stone,—but there were leases of all these properties which rendered them unavailing at the time, and perpetual and irredeemable dispositions of others on condition of the payment of annual rents, so low as to be nearly nominal. And then as to the site. The fact is, that twenty years before (in 1563) the Provost of the Kirk-of-Field had conveyed to the Town Council of Edinburgh the whole building of the Kirk-of-Field, with the churchyard (a considerable space near the Royal Infirmary), in consideration of the payment of 1000 pounds Scots. Some of the Prebendaries had also resigned their accommodations, and other appointments, on receiving equivalents. But without any regard to these arrangements, the Government again filled up the office of Provost in 1566, by conferring it on a layman,

with the power of appointing prebendaries; and it is remarkable that the person nominated to this office, a brother of the most corrupt man of his age, Sir James Balfour, President of the Court of Session, who is now generally understood to have been the original deviser of the murder of Darnley, appears to have been selected for the express purpose of furnishing that insidious accommodation which ended so fatally for the unsuspecting victim, and which has loaded the fairest and most accomplished of the Queens of the earth with the suspicion of blood-guiltiness. This lay president of a religious house did not omit any opportunity of making gain of his appointment. But about two years before the date of King James's Charter to the College, a new grant of the office was recorded in the books of the Privy Seal; his Majesty having been pleased to nominate John Gib, one of the menials of his household, to the dignified place of Provost of the Kirk-of-Field, at a time when the chief people in the community were making every effort to prevail on him to consent to the erection of a College on this spot, which they had already secured at a high price. It was therefore

necessary for them again to purchase the ground from the domestic servant of the King, and another equally mean dependant of the Court.

Having mentioned John Gibs, groom of his Majesty's chamber, it may not be out of place to add that, a few years afterwards, the same person received a gift of a great number of Church lands, with the tithes of more than twenty benefices, the value of which, at the present time, would be at least £4000 a-year, and more than fifty times the amount that is now drawn from all the original patrimony granted to the College in the charters of Queen Mary and her son.

It is easy to account for the beggarly reduction in our case of endowments which ought to have yielded an ample revenue. Alienations were permitted to an unlimited extent; and though the charters both of Mary and James declared all that had preceded that date to be rescinded and annulled, yet the practice was continued year after year, these illegal transferences being also afterwards confirmed by the authority of the Crown: so that what had appeared a large and munificent gift, proved at no distant period quite insignificant.

Very different was the conduct of James towards Universities in other parts of his dominions. Not to mention what he did for Oxford, it is stated by Mr Taylor, in his late *History of the University of Dublin*, that King James settled on Trinity College, which is ten years junior to ours, a pension payable out of the Exchequer, and also endowed it with large estates in the province of Ulster. The annual value of these is not stated; but according to Mr Whitelaw (whose *History of Dublin* was published in 1818), Trinity College possesses estates consisting of lands originally forfeited to the Crown, which more than thirty years ago produced on an average of four years nearly £15,250 per annum, exclusive of fines, which form a considerable part of the income of the senior Fellows; while the Provost also possesses a separate estate, said, at the same period, to have yielded an annual income of about £2600.

Certainly none of us has ever uttered a grudge at the wealth bestowed on the learned body now referred to; nor at the distribution of 40,000 acres of the best land in Ulster on twelve Corporations in London, such as Mer-

chant Tailors' Hall and others, which are thus enabled to provide largely for education as well as other purposes of great public utility; or even at the much more extensive allocations of land granted to English and Scots settlers, the record of whose meritorious services has not been thought worthy of preservation; or much less at the wealth and honours conferred on James Fullerton and James Hamilton, who, after having been educated at Glasgow, went over to Ireland about the year 1587, when they established a school in Dublin, in which position they had an important share in the education of Archbishop Usher, and became two of the four fellows of the College in 1593. Each of them was afterwards knighted, and Hamilton was raised to the Peerage, by the title first of Lord Clandeboye, and afterwards Earl of Clanbrissel. Both of them appear to have been well entitled to the favours and dignities which were conferred on them; but it is certain that neither Hamilton nor Fullerton possessed emoluments less than sevenfold the amount of all the revenue which at that time maintained the whole establishment of the College of Edinburgh.

Such were the discouragements which frowned on the early days of this seminary, which sprung up at a time, dark and disastrous, when in years and in judgment the King was a child, and when, in spite of all the warnings and remonstrances of the wise and faithful of the land, the administration of the public affairs was committed to the most profligate, the most venal, the most rapacious, and the basest of men, James Earl of Arran, who was in rapid succession appointed a Privy Councillor, a Judge of the Supreme Court, Governor of the Chief Castles, and Lord-Lieutenant of the Kingdom, and was, in 1584 and 1585, forced on the citizens of Edinburgh as the Chief Magistrate, as another person had been the year before, along with all the leading members of the Council, immediately after a new constitution had been granted to the burgh. A learned society, under such patronage, could not prosper; and although the King, in his charter, constituted the Magistrates and Town-Council patrons of the University, there is not the least doubt that he calculated on being always able to dictate who should be the members of the Council, and how they should conduct the government which they nominally possessed.

It has been thought a strange anomaly that, as appears from a public deed, executed in May 1583, a copy of which is inserted in Maitland's *History of Edinburgh*, at page 235, thirteen of the thirty-three persons to whom the patronage and government of the University had been committed, only twelve months before, were unable to write their names. But the majority of the Council were men of good education, some of them Masters of Arts; and even some of those of the number who could not write were possessed of more than ordinary intelligence, and had sent their sons to be instructed in other Universities. It is a circumstance worthy of notice that, after the Reformation, the trades of Edinburgh gave many proofs of their value for learning. John Preston of Fenton, an eminent lawyer at this period, and afterwards Lord President of the Court of Session, was the son of a baker in Edinburgh. Another man, distinguished for more elegant learning, Sir Adam Newton, tutor and secretary to Henry Prince of Wales, after having held a professorship both here and on the Continent, was also the son of a baker in Edinburgh — one of the thirteen Councillors

who could not write. William Cowper, afterwards Bishop of Galloway, one of the most eloquent writers of the age, was also the son of a tradesman, who, though illiterate himself, was one of the first that founded a bursary. In reality, almost all the most valuable grants which were made to this College during the first fifty or sixty years of its existence, were spontaneously conferred by persons in very humble condition, and scarcely any were ever obtained from persons of rank.

The deficient resources of this Institution did not prevent the first promoters of the scheme from entering on the difficult enterprise within a year after the charter had been obtained. Some temporary accommodation was found in the town residence which had formerly belonged to the Duke of Chatelherault; and it was considered to be an unspeakable advantage that the patrons were able from the first to secure the services of an eminent individual, then in his 28th year, Mr Robert Rollock, who had for several years been a regent in St Salvator's College, St Andrews, and had acquired a high reputation for his proficiency in letters, and his skill and success in teaching all the

branches of liberal study: for it was the duty of a regent to remain in charge of his pupils throughout their whole course of philosophical education. Rollock had during the first session the sole charge of all who were matriculated or enrolled, and continued to conduct them onward till they were prepared for laureation—that is, being raised to the degree of Master of Arts. The second year an additional regent was required; but the third year (1585) a visitation of the plague prevented the formation of a class. The third class, which was opened in 1586, and the fourth in 1587, had the benefit of instructors amply qualified for the task; and by this time all the essential departments of study were simultaneously conducted by the usual complement of masters, every one of whom continued for four successive years in charge of the division of students who had been originally placed under his authority.

This system had long been approved, and continued to be followed in one University of Scotland till within the last fifty years. It had its advantages and its disadvantages; but on the whole it was conceived to succeed well.

I may here mention that the regents were, very generally, young men who afterwards were appointed to the ministry in the Church. It was not always so: some became lawyers and others physicians. At Glasgow, a young gentleman of an ancient family, who took the degree of M.A. in 1637, when he was eighteen years old, and served for a short time as an officer in the army, succeeded soon afterwards in gaining, by competition, the office of regent (he was then, I think, scarcely twenty years old), and continued in this station till he was twenty-eight years of age, when he commenced the study of law. This was Sir James Dalrymple, afterwards Lord Stair, President of the Court of Session. A similar instance occurred in Edinburgh about sixty years afterwards: Mr Charles Erskine, a near relative of the Earl of Mar, ventured, when twenty years old, to engage in a comparative trial with several able candidates, and succeeded in being appointed one of the four Regents in the University of Edinburgh in the year 1700, and was a very popular teacher. He afterwards studied law, and became Lord Justice-Clerk. He was better known by his territorial titles, first as Lord

Tinwald, and afterwards Lord Alva. His scholastic habits did not unfit him for sustaining with great firmness the dignified position of a judge. On one occasion it is said that a young lawyer, not an adept in classic lore, thought fit to indulge in a sneer at the early employment of this judge as a teacher of youth (the teaching being conducted in the Latin tongue). The stripling advocate, during a pleading at Lord Tinwald's bar, referred to a Dutch writer on the Roman Law, and concluded his quotation thus :—"My Lord, this is the judgment of a learned author, whose name is mentioned with great respect in the Icōnes illustrium Batavorum." His Lordship with a benignant smile, but who could not speak without lisping, on hearing the false quantity, said, "Icŏneth, if you pleathe, thir." The young barrister bowed and said, "I thank you, my Lord; you have the advantage of *me*, for *I* never happened to be a schoolmaster." The judge calmly replied, "Nor a thcholar neither, I pertheive."

The stinted finances of the College, or rather the entire want of any certain endowment, prevented the fulfilment of one part of the original design, which was that all the masters

and students, without exception, should here, as in other Colleges at that period, live day and night within the walls, and that the pupils were never to go beyond the precints for rural recreation, or any other purpose, without being accompanied by one of the regents, appointed in weekly succession to take this charge. Means were adopted at first, on a limited scale, to provide rooms for the students; and it was regulated that the rent of a chamber to a stranger should be 4 pounds Scots in the year (6s. 8d. sterling), for which sum every room was to be furnished with a table, a bed, shelves for books and other purposes, and sufficient seating. The sons of burgesses were to pay no rent; but they were to furnish the rooms at their own expense, and this could scarcely be done on a more economical scale.

This part of the plan may seem strange to us, and I must confess that I was at one time impressed with what appeared to be an intuitive preception of its inutility. But many wise men, possessing the advantage of long experience, have deliberately entertained an opposite opinion. If, first of all, it is considered how limited, in those times, was the accommoda-

tion of almost every family below the rank of the nobility, and how perpetual was the noise and bustle in the humbler habitations of industrious burgesses, who rarely could afford more than two, or, at the utmost, three apartments for domestic purposes, as well as for business—very few indeed being able to surrender a separate chamber, of the smallest dimensions, for the quiet prosecution of study and the preparation of literary tasks, especially in the evening, the only period of absence from the College—and, if, with these and other obvious disadvantages familiar to those who now have access to observe the internal economy of the dwellings of many of the working classes, especially in times of sickness, and when struggling with difficulties, we contrast the situation of those youths who, under the eye, and having the benefit of the counsel, of an intelligent, faithful, and kind-hearted regent, ever ready to commend the diligent, to cheer the dejected, and restrain and overawe the disorderly and slothful, we may be struck with many reflections on the probable benefit arising from good discipline and good example, in promoting habits of order and assiduous application, and, at least, securing a

relief from the vulgarity, the clamour, and the pernicious and provoking interruptions to be encountered in not a few of these houses. One object, it is to be remembered, which was then thought of vast consequence, was to familiarise the use of the Latin tongue, even in ordinary conversation, an attainment essential to the maintenance of intercourse with the learned in foreign countries, to which many resorted. But moreover, it appears from the universal and emphatic concurrence of many of our countrymen who, having been educated under this system during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, have left written memorials of their own lives that they ascribed the most salutary efficacy to the oversight and care of the regents who superintended their conduct in the College rooms. It is most touching to read those testimonies to the vigilance, assiduity, and tenderness manifest in the daily communications of the teachers with the taught; for instance the bland and paternal counsels and encouragements addressed to the orphan Andrew Melville, by the venerable head of his College, "My poor fatherless and motherless child, who knows for what good and gracious purposes Providence is reserving you!"

and the not less moving account which James Melville has preserved of the uniform painfulness and urbanity, and what he calls "lovingness," of that learned gentleman, Mr William Collace, on whose face he never saw a frown, except when his father pressed on him the acceptance of a valuable acknowledgment for his unwearied and considerate care. Many other distinguished men, educated in different colleges, have borne testimony in favour of a system which, even after the middle of the last century, such a man as Dr Reid not only approved, but insisted on maintaining in all its primitive efficiency; though it must be acknowledged that, after the Professors themselves ceased to reside within the walls, the original purpose could no longer be secured.

It is a curious circumstance connected with this topic, that, after the Union with England, a number of the most wealthy and influential of the Non-Conformists in England communicated to the authorities here a well-digested proposal in which they held out the prospect of sending at least 200 students annually to this University, provided they could be allowed to erect a building in the precincts or vicinity of the College,

in which the whole of these pupils might have suitable lodging and board, expected to be generally paid for by their parents, but towards which the Association proposed to secure the payment of at least £2000 a-year, to assist those whose means were not sufficiently ample. This scheme proved abortive, because it was not countenanced so promptly as had been anticipated; and some of the funds, which had been provided to a very considerable amount, were afterwards applied to a destination which has proved not unprofitable to another University. I may refer to the Life of Dr Daniel Williams for the details of this plan (p. 35-44).

I have already noticed the fact, that by far the most efficient and valuable support which this University received at first as well as in some subsequent periods of its history, was derived from private beneficence, with only a very small portion from the State. After the legacy of £8000 Scots left by the Bishop of Orkney, the next substantial gift from a like source was a library of about 300 volumes of great value, destined originally for the use of the ministers of Edinburgh by the will of Clement Little, a learned member of the Faculty

of Advocates, and conveyed by the ministers to the University. The ministers of Edinburgh afterwards themselves contributed a sum equal to the legacy of Bishop Reid—12,000 merks, or £8000 Scots—while several individuals of the same body made large additions to the gift. I shall not attempt to enumerate all the early contributions to the University—most of them for the endowment of bursaries. The College of Justice gave £2000 Scots, and some of their number added private subscriptions. The chief benefactors, however, were merchants and tradesmen, from which class the most profuse donation was given by a gentleman named Bartholomew Somerville. The University was likewise indebted for donations of considerable amount to James Dalgleish, Alexander Wright, David Graham, and John Fleming—persons whose names are unknown except for these tokens of their liberality. Among the landed proprietors who contributed to the infant institution were, Sir John Buchanan, Sir Robert Murray of Priestfield, Nisbet of Dean, and Hope of Hopetoun. Not a few of the nobility of Scotland were, at an early period, educated here, some of whom attained great

distinction, influence, and power; but the memorials of their good services appear to have perished, with the exception of the gift of a year's rent of the Abbey of Haddington, by Lord Lindsay, and an addition to the fabric, by Lord Rutherford, afterwards Earl of Teviot—a man who was distinguished in arts and arms, both in Europe and Africa, but left no lineal heirs. The library was originally supported almost entirely by private gifts. One of the most splendid was a donation of books of extreme rarity contributed by William Drummond of Hawthornden, the poet. Another collection of books, not less valuable and far more extensive, was left to the library by James Nairne, minister of Wemyss, in Fifeshire, who had for some years been a Professor in the University, and who also founded two bursaries. This was in the year 1678. Various other large accessions to the library have been derived from Professors and other men of learning at different periods; and if it had not been for these acts of munificence, the time was when the supply of books would have been miserably deficient. Of late years the greatest of the benefactions which have been obtained by us have come through the

bequests of two officers of high rank in the army—namely, General Reid, and General Sir Joseph Straiton.—I ought also to notice the liberal subscriptions which were raised about sixty years ago for the existing edifice.

A more irregular pile of mean-looking houses had rarely been seen than the building, equally destitute of external ornament and internal convenience (supplemented by a few tolerable erections, like farm-houses, reared by private benefactors), which for 200 years bore the name of Edinburgh College. At last, on the 2d November 1789, a printed paper was circulated, containing a brief narrative, in which it is stated that " the buildings of the University of Edinburgh are extremely mean and inconvenient, some of them in a very ruinous condition, and all of them unsuitable to the flourishing state of that seminary of learning ; " and that a plan for building a new university had been prepared by Mr Adam, architect, for which subscriptions were solicited. In the middle of the same month the foundation of a new college was laid, and the subscriptions went on with great rapidity. Among the first subscribers the Principal and Professors at once contributed a sum not

much short of £1000; and many of them soon afterwards subscribed a second time, as did also their families, to an amount highly creditable to them, considering how limited their incomes were at that period. But the meritorious services of those eminent men, universally recognised by their contemporaries, did more than their personal contributions to stimulate the liberality of a grateful public. In the course of two months after the subscription was first opened about £14,000 had been subscribed; and during the remainder of the year considerable additions were made, so that for a season there was a most encouraging prospect of the speedy completion of the buildings. In three or four years, indeed, from the commencement of the operations, all the classes, with the exception of five, were taught in the new buildings. But the difficulties of the times, and the prolongation of the war, interposed an obstacle which it was not easy to overcome. After a long interval of hope deferred, the Legislature was induced to bring the work to a conclusion by a succession of Parliamentary grants.

I shall say nothing more on the deeds and the purposes of the men of former generations.

But, Gentlemen, here we are with few of those attractions which exist elsewhere, and with none of the pomp and circumstance which dazzles the eyes of strangers. We cannot allure you to cast in your lot with us by presenting to your enchanted imaginations a survey of any solid boon which it may be in the power of our hands to convey to you. But riches and honours may still eventually await you as great and splendid as you could possibly acquire, after passing through your studies in fairer and more inviting scenes. We can unrol the records of former days, and we can point to the current of passing events, and there you may see that it is no vain boast which is now uttered. Many of the former pupils of this University have risen with universal applause to the highest honours in the State. Some have been signalised not only by their courage, but by their conduct and their judgment in scenes of jeopardy, in the high places of the field; and have won their distinctions the more easily, and worn them more gracefully, because, like Cæsar, their love of letters equalled their ardour for martial renown. Some have been numbered among the most eloquent orators in the Senate, at the bar, in

the Professor's Chair, and in the sacred functions of ambassadors of Christian truth, and heralds of heavenly peace and grace and mercy. In some of those departments which I have enumerated what other names can be pronounced more illustrious than many which I could now name as having sat in those places which you are now to occupy under the guidance of instructors not inferior in genius, in acquirements, in didactic skill, and in all the high excellencies of polished style, to their justly admired predecessors? Might we not recount a host of profound, elegant, and philosophical historians—beginning with Hume and Robertson, and not closing with Mackintosh—of writers on mathematics and physics, on rhetoric, on logic, on metaphysics and ethics, on political economy, on legislation and jurisprudence, on medical science in its numerous departments, and on theology also,—all of whom received their education, or a large portion of it, in this place? If we even venture to speak of poetry and other works of imagination, need we blush at the mention of one to whom his countrymen have reared one of the proudest monuments of modern times? And if we look to the loftiest elevation of

human ambition attainable by any statesman, we may recognise at this moment in the first Minister of this great empire one who does not disdain to acknowledge the benefits which he derived from the lectures of transcendant ability which he had the happiness of attending, and from his daily intercourse with Professors of great name—but not greater either in their early promise or in their mature performances than some whom we hope long to retain in the enjoyment of the honours accorded to them by living men, before *their* names, with posthumous lustre, shall shine in the same constellation with Stewart and Brown, and Robison and Playfair, and others at whose feet many of us have sat with admiring reverence and almost hopeless emulation.

Gentlemen, grey hairs are upon some of us, and we have counted the duration of human existence. But Universities do not die like individuals. And as such bodies, if well constituted at first, are understood, and sometimes observed to maintain their vigour and agility unimpaired when they reach the confines of the antediluvian longevity of 1000 years, it may be calculated that, in our corporate capacity,

as we are only 260 years old, we are but advancing towards our prime, and may, like the oak, wax stronger and stronger till we exceed a millennial duration. It is sometimes alleged that it is the characteristic of Universities to lag behind the age, and that as we approach the period of superannuation we are the more inveterate in our admiration of the rudimental attainments of dark ages. Such allegations have often been uttered; but chiefly by those whose self-sufficiency is greatest when their shallowness of information is most conspicuous, to all men of sound understanding. I ask, where but in this very University was the doctrine of latent heat brought into view, and other discoveries made which, in their practical application, have produced revolutions in the arts so stupendous, as must have been incredible, had they been all unfolded at once, to the most adventurous minds? Where was the science of Political Economy created in almost full-grown vigour, but in the University of Glasgow, where, as appears from various documents, the great principles of the *Wealth of Nations* had been fully in the view of the author before the year 1759, when he first gave to the world his *Theory of*

Moral Sentiments? And, to go farther back, did we lag behind the age 150 years ago, when the Newtonian Philosophy, according to the testimony of Whiston and other trustworthy authorities, was taught here, long before it was generally received in England or in France?

But I conclude by saying that it must depend more on yourselves than on your most able and diligent instructors, whether you shall receive any permanent benefit here or not. We will not fail to give you access to such a measure of knowledge as can be clearly and satisfactorily imparted during the period of your studies; and, what is more material, you may expect to be guided into the surest and safest paths of research. But without assiduous, strenuous, and persevering efforts on your part, your time will be thrown away. Think, then, of the honour, of the pleasure, of the substantial advantages, you may secure if you will follow in the steps of the most successful of those who have gone before you; and assure yourselves that thus you may secure a prize of equal worth, though not in every case equally splendid. It is a vast matter to cherish the inextinguishable love of excellence, and to form the capacity, as well as

to acquire the habit, of working out for yourselves what can never be imparted to you without your hearty co-operation. Think of the ignominy of sloth, and the scorn which must ever be the portion of those who have an antipathy at knowledge, and who do not thirst for truth as a perennial well-spring of pure and exalted enjoyment. But think chiefly of the account which must be rendered at last of the occupation of your talents and the improvement of your time—your time and your talents imparted that you might advance the glory of your Creator by useful and honourable lives, and by adding to the general welfare of the human race, as well as making provision for your own eternal peace and safety.

May God himself bless you, and keep you, and guide you with His eye. May He lead you into all the truth; may He give you light and strength; and may He prepare you for the glory and the felicity to be enjoyed in "the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

V.

[OCTOBER 31, 1854.]

GENTLEMEN STUDENTS,—As on former occasions, I now address myself chiefly to those who are about to enter for the first time on a course of academical study; and I begin by apprising you that, before you can be recognised as students in any of the faculties, you must inscribe your names in the album of the University—thus engaging to conform to the established rules and observances which, without being either numerous or burdensome, are obviously essential to the maintenance of order, decorum, and harmony; and, indeed, indispensable for the security of your own tranquillity, reputation, and future advantage; for you cannot reasonably expect to profit by your attendance here, or in any similar institution dedicated to

the cultivation of letters, unless you conduct yourselves so as to be on a good understanding with your instructors, and to be entitled to their unreserved commendation with regard to your diligence, your progress, and your consistent and becoming deportment, a testimony which may prove of great avail in obtaining for you a welcome reception from those who are most capable of forwarding your permanent interest.

From the earliest days of this University, it continued long to be the invariable practice here, as it is still in various similar establishments, to enter on the business of every successive academical year by the public reading of the statutes, all constructed on wise and salutary principles, the fitness of which could not reasonably be challenged, although the minuteness of some of the details, and the homely phraseology in which they were generally expressed, might not, in every instance, deepen the impressions which they were intended to produce on the minds of the youthful audience for whose benefit they were promulgated.

The pervading character of the entire code must, however, have approved itself to every

good and honest heart. The great lines of human duty, not of temporary but of everlasting obligation, all prescribed in the beginning of days, and solemnly ratified under the seal and superscription of the Omniscient Lawgiver, were traced with such force and authority as demanded universal and implicit obedience. The primary rules of piety, veracity, purity, kindness, temperance, patience, and rectitude, were declared to be indispensably binding upon the conscience. All profane, immodest, uncourteous, and insulting expressions, were denounced and punished; every tendency to deceitful, sordid, and dishonest practices, was marked by stern reprobation; and if such mean tendencies were formed into habits, the offenders were to be driven out with ignominy from the society which was outraged, if not contaminated, by their presence.

Minor offences, if not at once corrected by admonition and rebuke, were generally punished by fines. As it was thought important that all conversation within the College should be carried on in Latin, those who were conscious of their unfitness to hold their colloquies in the polished style of Erasmus and Corderius

(authors in the zenith of their fame more than 300 years ago) might prudently keep silence with impunity; but if they ventured to speak English, well or ill, or, more probably, if some employed the broad Doric of Teviotdale or Tweeddale, which has immortalised the memories of the "Flowers of the Forest," the Douglasses, Scotts, and Elliots, who fell in the Border wars; while others preferred the choicest dialect of the Celts of Argyll, in which Ossian is said to have sung—for all such deviations from the Latin idiom (or rather from the Latinised barbarisms of comparatively modern schools) they incurred a fine, lighter or heavier in proportion to the frequency of the offence; which, certainly, is not likely to appear to us to be of a very aggravated character, if we admit it to be an offence at all. But our derision should be abated, or altogether checked, if we reflect on the laudable object for which the rule had been first introduced. As Latin was the universal language in which men of learning or science through all the states of Europe conversed and corresponded at that period, and was the medium, also, through which all academical instruction was invariably

conveyed, it was indispensable that stringent and effectual measures should be adopted for rendering it imperative on every student to acquire such a familiar acquaintance with this tongue as to enable him to use it with ease and accuracy both in speaking and in writing. The number of our countrymen who taught with high reputation in foreign Universities is a sufficient proof of the utility of the regulation.

The rules which enforced and secured regularity of attendance, and which prevented triflers or idlers from interrupting the diligent, require no commentary or apology; nor, indeed, is there any occasion for vindicating the firmness with which all irregularities and outrages were repressed. Tumultuary meetings and all acts of insubordination, however casual their origin might be, were peremptorily and promptly visited with severe punishment, under the authority of successive Acts of the Privy Council of the kingdom, in conformity with the express laws then and still in force. The frequenting of taverns, and the custom of playing at games of chance, were interdicted under very heavy penalties, and, after three convictions, every such offender was to be "extruded with

disgrace as one utterly lost and incurable, and a corrupter of the youth." Some other bad customs were branded with marked contempt, and severely punished, such as throwing stones or snowballs, or loitering at the gates to the annoyance of the passers-by, and the inconvenience of those who entered within the walls—an offensive practice from which an innate sense of propriety is likely nowadays to restrain every one possessing self-respect. This brief and imperfect epitome of our old laws may be concluded by referring to one emphatic precept, that "none behave himself otherwise than gravely and modestly, and as becomes a student of good letters, and that all shun bad company as a corrupting plague." I will only add that though the provisions introduced in those days for the maintenance of authority, and for securing the steady attention of the pupils, were of a somewhat too stern and formidable aspect, and though the progress of civilisation and refinement has greatly mitigated the terrors of academical laws, and preferred to subdue the youth, even the most volatile and unreflecting, to the exercise of filial obedience, and diligent habits, rather by the mild influence of honour-

able distinction, than by the harsh discipline of pains and penalties, it is at all times imperative that decorum and order shall be maintained. The substance of our existing regulations is embodied in the sponsio or written obligation which will now be read by the Secretary of the Senatus.

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In this brief engagement you perceive that, first of all, you solemnly acknowledge the supreme and indissoluble obligation which, in every condition of life, is the only sure and safe bond of human society—namely, that of reverencing and remembering the Creator, not only in the days of youth, but as long as you have any being. Enlightened reason cannot hesitate to assent to the dictate of revelation, that "to fear God and keep his commandments is the whole duty of man"—a divine admonition more emphatic and more extensive in its application than the frequently-repeated declaration that this godly fear is "the beginning of wisdom." It is not only the beginning, but the ending, or, in other words, the consummation of a good understanding—that is to say, it is the great aim and end of all perfection: it is the pure

and peaceable wisdom from above, full of mercy and good fruits, which gives to the young an ornament of grace, and to the hoary head a crown of glory: it is the attainment which, more than all others, stamps the excellency and dignity of human character, being profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come—thus including the entire period of man's duration: it is that celestial infusion which imparts the sweetest relish to the cup of pleasure, which allays the bitterness of sorrow, and tears out the sting of death: in short, this fear of the Lord, in its most enlarged signification, comprises the whole wisdom, the whole duty, the whole happiness, and the whole glory of man. He who advances to the full maturity of this wisdom in his declining days may be said to be more blessed in his latter end than in his beginning. But he only is a perfect man who both begins and finishes his course in the steadfast persuasion of this purifying truth, and in a practice conformable to the doctrines of revelation, keeping his heart with all diligence, regulating his thoughts, pondering the path of his feet, setting a watch over his words, and season-

ing all his enjoyments with piety. He only whose life thus embodies a harmonious whole, can abide the inquisition of divine judgment.

I do not think it necessary to expatiate on the importance of applying your minds with the utmost ardour to the prosecution of your studies. Why are you here at all, but for the purpose of intellectual improvement, and acquiring such knowledge as you expect to prepare you sufficiently for engaging successfully in the various pursuits or professions which you have in view? Beware of undervaluing the importance of gaining an intimate acquaintance with the ancient languages. Some may venture to think they have already been too long doomed to the drudgery of classical study. I leave it to others to demonstrate to you how grievous a mistake this is, and how humiliating the dupes of this delusion may find it hereafter to occupy a position very inferior to that of many, who, having aimed successfully at high proficiency in this branch of instruction, have been indebted in no small degree to their accurate and profound erudition as a passport to the most elevated rank in the learned professions, or the administration of public affairs. Not less earnestly do

I recommend a more complete course of mathematical study than is universally pursued. In many instances this study is too long postponed, not less frequently is it discontinued before it can be availing to any practical purpose.

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Gentlemen, I have been accustomed, sometimes, on occasions like the present, to rouse the emulation and to stir up the diligence of young and tender minds by referring to the services rendered to the cause of education, and the interests of truth and righteousness, by the high talents, the able prelections, and the bright example of the many eminent men who conducted the studies of the youth in this seat of learning fifty years ago; and I have ventured also to speak of the splendid career of many of their pupils, as a proof of the pre-eminent skill with which the academical instructions were imparted. It cannot be matter of wonder that I am dissatisfied, when I find that in some works containing the memorials of literary men, my own contemporaries, who have made a figure in their day, the merits of Professors of the highest name are disparaged, and the characters of the generality of the stu-

dents are traduced. A short time ago two volumes were published in London, entitled the *Life and Letters of Barthold George Niebuhr* (well known as the historian of Rome); and I do not by any means wish to pronounce an unfavourable estimate either of the character of that distinguished man, or of the acknowledged merits of the writings prepared by himself for publication, when I censure the recklessness of the editors, who, professing to have taken the greatest possible care to avoid anything like indiscretion towards the living, or a profanation of feelings which Niebuhr would have regarded as belonging to the inner sanctuary of the heart, do not scruple in the least to record particulars, imparted, as is alleged, in the confidence of friendship, which, whether true or false, must inflict the deepest wounds on the affectionate bosoms of surviving sons and daughters, and other relations and friends. I do not hesitate, however, to say that, when he visited Edinburgh—as he did in 1798-9—at the mature age of twenty-three, after having seen a good deal of life, and being trained to public business under the experienced Minister of Finance in Denmark, the subject of the memoir appears to

have been a most inexpert discerner of character, and singularly incorrect in his mode of stating facts. What he says of this University and of the society of Edinburgh during his nine months' residence here, is little more than a series of blunders from the beginning to the end. How should I know this, it may be said? This accomplished gentleman was about four years older than I; his first session at Edinburgh was my fifth; and for some time before his arrival, I possessed the advantage of having met a number of the most eminent men of letters in their family circles, as well as being familiarly acquainted with not a few of the most promising students.

I forbear to animadvert on the taste with which, in his letters, Niebuhr informs the lady to whom he was betrothed of the unbounded dissoluteness of the young men in England—from whose presence, he says, he resolutely shrank—and of the immoral habits of the students with whom he was acquainted; who seem, however, to have been also from England. I will also pass with a single remark another of his statements. He talks of the few young men here who "pretended to be metaphysicians, a class

consisting exclusively of mere empty praters, whose self-complacency was contemptible, and the result of their speculations detestable." I see two or three of his fellow-students near me—Dr Traill, Professors Pillans, More, and others—who were kept in countenance by such men as Dr Thomas Brown, Francis Horner, Henry Brougham, Henry Cockburn, the Rev. Sidney Smith, Anthony Todd Thomson, John Leyden, George Birkbeck, John William Ward (afterwards Earl Dudley, a Cabinet Minister of the highest capacity), Lord Webb Seymour (a most ardent and succesful votary of science), William Temple, Henry Petty (the present Lord Lansdowne), Lord Brooke (now Earl Brooke and Warwick), Peter Roget, the Hon. and Rev. Gerard Noel, David Brewster, Thomas Chalmers. This is a small specimen of the empty praters of that day, of whom he formed so despicable an estimate.—But I must now approach to what I intended chiefly to notice in the biography of this eminent man.

In a letter dated the 31st of Oct. 1798, after saying, "An excellent practice has been established here of reading an introductory lecture before the regular course of instruction,"

. . . . "This day's specimens have convinced me, beyond all doubt, that the reputation of this University is fully deserved, and that the Professors here are all I could wish as men of profound insight, thorough mastery over their subjects, and admirable delivery"—he adds:—"This I cannot say of all of them; one Robison, the Professor of Natural Philosophy, wasted his time with very superficial remarks on the origin and value of the sciences; and further, with very unseasonable invectives against modern philosophy." It is a little singular that, after this depreciating verdict, the writer of it did not think fit to enrol himself as a student in any other class, but the one he so hastily and rashly condemned; though in one of his subsequent letters he says, pitifully enough, "Should it be the necessary price of Stewart's and Tytler's society to attend their lectures, I may resolve to pay it." But with regard to Professor Robison, whose class I also attended, he was of all men the least likely to waste the time of his students with superficial remarks. Let us hear what his biographer, Professor Playfair, says of him:—"His lectures could not fail to be of the greatest use to his

pupils. Few men understood so well the theory and practice of the arts they profess to teach." This was while he occupied the Mathematical Chair at Cronstadt in Russia. But after he came to Edinburgh, in 1774, Mr Playfair enters much more largely into a delineation of his merits—"His lectures were given with great fluency and precision of language, and with the introduction of a good deal of mathematical demonstration. His manner was grave and dignified. His views, always ingenious and comprehensive, were full of information, and never more interesting and instructive than when they touched on the history of science. His lectures were often complained of, however, as difficult and hard to be understood; and this, in my opinion, did not arise from the depth of the mathematical demonstrations, as was sometimes said, but rather from the rapidity of his discourse, which was in general beyond the rate at which accurate reasoning can be easily followed." Mr Playfair adds—"It is impossible not to see in him a man of extraordinary powers, who had enjoyed great opportunities of improvement, and had never failed to turn them to the best account. His powers

of conversation were very extraordinary, and when exerted never failed of producing a great effect. An extensive and accurate information of particular facts, and a facility of combining them into general and original views, were united in a degree of which I am persuaded there have been few examples. He would go over the most difficult subjects, and bring out the most profound remarks with an ease and readiness which was quite singular. The depth of his observations seemed to cost him nothing; and when he said anything particularly striking, you could never discover any appearance of the self-satisfaction so common on such occasions. His range in science was most extensive; he was familiar with the whole circle of the accurate sciences, and there was no part of them on which, if you heard him speak or lecture, you would not have pronounced it to be his *forte*, or a subject which he had studied with more than ordinary attention."

In these extracts I have given you only a few detached sentences from Mr Playfair's paper, which nobody ever alleged to contain an exaggerated encomium. Not less emphatic is the language of Sir David Brewster, who at-

tended the Natural Philosophy Class in 1798, and thus was a fellow-student of Niebuhr—and who, after paying a just tribute to the memory of Dr Robison as a writer and teacher, adds, that, "imbued with the genuine spirit of the philosophy which he taught, he was one of the warmest patrons of genius wherever it was found. His mind was nobly elevated above the mean jealousies of rival ambition, and his love of science and of justice was too ardent to allow him either to depreciate the labours of others or transfer them to himself. To these great qualities as a philosopher, he added all the more estimable endowments of domestic and social life. His piety was ardent and unostentatious. His patriotism was of the most pure and exalted character, and, like the immortal Newton, he was pre-eminently entitled to the appellations of a Christian patriot and philosopher."

Let me close this vindication by quoting a few sentences from the first volume of the *Life of Dr Chalmers*, than whom there could not be a more competent judge of the value of Dr Robison's lectures, which he attended in 1799, the year immediately succeeding that to which I have been referring. Dr Hanna, the biogra-

pher of Dr Chalmers, says—"The Professor of whom he at once entertained the profoundest admiration, and to whom he was most largely indebted, was Dr Robison. In the earliest of his own preparations for the Moral Philosophy Chair at St Andrews, and in the latest of his writings for the Chair of Theology in the New College of Edinburgh, evidence appears of his familiar acquaintance with, and unqualified approbation of, that mode of mapping out the sciences, and drawing the boundary-line between them, which this great master-generaliser adopted. His thorough knowledge, his profound admiration of the Baconian method of investigation, were derived from the same source —Dr Robison's exposition of the distinctive characteristics of that method still remaining as one of the very ablest of which our language can boast. Nor would Butler have been so readily hailed as the Bacon of theology, had he (Dr Chalmers) not been at this period so thoroughly indoctrinated into the distinctive characteristics, and so thoroughly imbued with the true spirit of the inductive philosophy. Ever ready, however, as Dr Chalmers was, in terms of the largest gratitude, to acknowledge

his obligations to Dr Robison, few knew how weighty the debt was which he owed to that pre-eminent philosopher. The nature of that debt, a letter written only a year before his death, reveals." From the letter, which I am sorry I cannot now quote at length, it appears that the introductory lectures of Professor Robison—the very lectures which Mr Niebuhr scorned and villified—had, along with Beattie's *Essay on Truth*, contributed greatly to the deliverance of the mind of Dr Chalmers from a temporary assault of philosophical scepticism to which he had been exposed in his youth—and he specially recommends, to a gentleman visited by a similar trial of his faith, the perusal of the substance of these introductory lectures to be found in the latter half of the article "Philosophy" and also in the article "Physics" contained in the supplementary volumes of the *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

Gentlemen, after this powerful testimony, borne by one of the loftiest minds of the age, we may afford to disregard Niebuhr's contemptuous language regarding one of the most eminent of the Professors of those days; and

we may overlook also, on like grounds, the ignorant scorn which he expresses towards another body of men, the clergy of all denominations, of whom he says that, in general, they are not good for much, as is allowed by every one who knows the country. This body included at the time such men as Dr Erskine, Sir Henry Moncrieff, Dr Blair, Dr Hunter, Dr Hardy, Dr Baird, Dr Moodie, Dr Finlayson, Dr Macknight (the commentator), and many others — not omitting the meek and refined Dr Sandford (afterwards a bishop), Mr Alison (one of the most select orators), Drs Jamieson, Peddie, and Hall of the Seceders, Mr Struthers of the Relief, who attracted crowded audiences, and was certainly a most elegant speaker, and Dr M'Crie, who was one of the best models of what a Christian as well as a Divine ought to be.

I may add, with regard to this book, that it is very far from proving Niebuhr to have been, at the period to which I refer, a diligent and successful student, although, never shrinking from avowing his contempt for men he did not know, he ventures to make the assumption that there was scarcely any scholarship in Eng-

land or Scotland, that philosophy was at a stand-still, and that there was no new book at the time worth reading, except Miss Edgeworth on Education. He also speaks as if he were well acquainted with many families, and refers to Mr Playfair as being a good father; while the fact was, that Playfair was a bachelor, and never had any children.

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Gentlemen, it is now sixty years since I entered within the walls of this University as a student of the liberal arts. I do not conceive that it would be interesting, or attended with any solid advantage, if I were to attempt a description of the emotions which I then experienced; but they were such that, if I could revive them, I might be expected to say that I would gladly descend from this unenviable eminence, and sit down side by side with the youngest of your number, congratulating myself on the repetition of a miracle like that which, in days of old, turned back the shadow on the dial of Ahaz ten degrees. But this is what I do not say, and what I ought not even for a moment to feel. Every change, if not literally

beautiful in its season, is at least well ordered; and though age has its burdens and its cares, it has also its comforts, its privileges, and its hopes.

You may easily conceive, however, that, in reflecting on the long period of my acquaintance with this institution, the changes which I have witnessed must necessarily awaken contemplations the reverse of exhilarating. Every one of the eminent teachers of science to whom I was indebted for instruction has been long withdrawn from the scene in which his presence was daily welcomed with admiring deference and affection. In the roll of the students of the period to which I refer, I cannot find more than twelve whom I know to be alive —there may be more than twice that number, but among the survivors I am not able to name two with whom I was intimately acquainted; and the retrospect of the past would indeed be a dismal void, if it were not for the assurance that there is a better country and a permanent home, never to be darkened by the prospect of change or the presence of woe. Among the latest of the removals from this transitory world, I cannot refrain from adverting to a recent most

affecting subject of universal lamentation—the death of an eminent person already mentioned, the late Lord Cockburn. He entered the University a year before me; but having afterwards attended a number of classes along with him, I had access to know how fond and fervent was the attachment of all who had the best access to witness with delight the opening beauties of his amiable and engaging character. I need not tell you how benignant was his aspect; how genial and blithe his disposition; how winning his conversation; how overpowering the magic of his glowing eloquence; how lofty and consistent his principles of action, harmonising beautifully with the unpretending simplicity of his demeanour; and not only in the exercise of his judicial functions, but in every action of his life, how gracefully blended was the love of justice with the love of mercy. Long will he live in the remembrance of his friends; but no words can express the depth and the tenderness of the emotion which retains his image in the heart, and refuses to let it go. It is not unlikely that some may ascribe the resistless fascination of the pleadings of this great

orator to native genius alone, unaided by learned industry. It is a great mistake. Lord Cockburn, indeed, did not affect to be a profound scholar, but he was a diligent and discerning reader, and, without any parade or ostentation, he accumulated a great store of such solid knowledge as he perceived to be most subservient to practical use. His choice of books was peculiarly discriminating; and he was in reality a much more assiduous student than many who have obtained general credit for deep and persevering research.

And now, young gentlemen, I beg leave to assure you that the most aged of our number sympathise in the feelings with which we all trust that you enter with buoyant alacrity, and with the most earnest purpose of availing yourselves to the uttermost of every aid to which you have access for the prosecution of your studies, and for the establishment of irresistible claims on our paternal regard, and on the goodwill of all who are witnesses of your laudable exertions, and sharers in your success. You now see opened up before you the inviting prospect of the honourable race, which it is at once

your duty and your interest to run. Shrink not from the efforts by which the prize is to be won. We engage to cheer you in your onward progress, and we heartily wish you God speed.

THE END.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS, EDINBURGH.