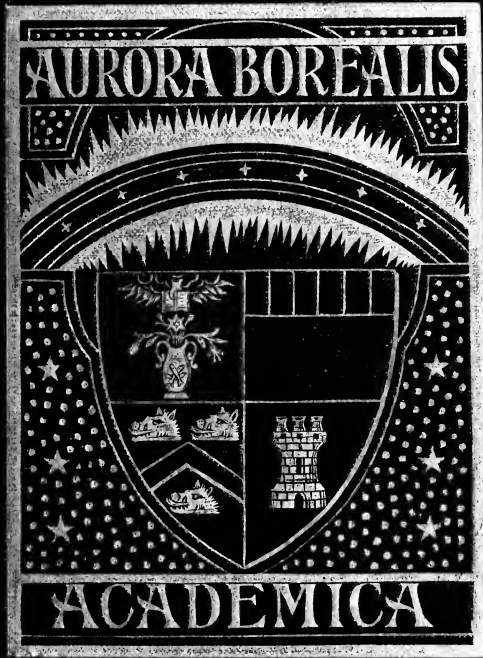


UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



3 1761 01637268 2



541  
504

E268

---

7/6



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2007 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation

Aurora Borealis Academica

1860-1889



*Presented to the*  
LIBRARY *of the*  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
*by*

Robin S. Harris



Aurora  
Borealis  
Academica

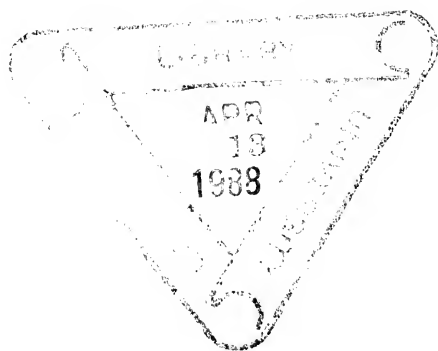


Aberdeen  
University  
Appreciations

1860-1889



Aberdeen  
Printed by the  
University Printers  
1899





There's an old University town  
Between the Don and the Dee  
Looking over the grey sand dunes,  
Looking out on the cold North Sea.

\* \* \* \* \*

O'er the College Chapel a grey stone crown  
Lightsomely soars above tree and town,  
Lightsomely fronts the Minster towers,  
Lightsomely chimes out the passing hours  
To the solemn knell of their deep-toned bell :  
Kirk and College keeping time,  
Faith and Learning chime for chime.  
The Minster stands among the graves  
And its shadow falls on the silent river ;  
The Chapel is girt with Life's bounding waves,  
And the pulses of hope there are passioning ever.

—WALTER C. SMITH.







My lanely attic window luiks  
On auld Yerl Marschal's honour'd biggin'.

\* \* \* \* \*

There's mony a change sin' we war here,  
There's naethin' but the auld blue sky  
That I wad ken but auld Grey freer.

\* \* \* \* \*

But though these bonnie wa's be strange  
They're unco dear to my auld e'en.

They've gathert grandeur wi' their years  
Through love that grew wi' ilka race,  
Till ilka lan' some witness bears  
O' honour for the honour'd place.

A ha' where poverty micht lift  
Its head into the licht o' lore,  
An' honest worth secure the gift  
That only gowd could buy before.

—WILLIAM FORSYTH.



## PREFACE.

ON 15th September, 1860, Aberdeen ceased to possess the characteristic of two independent Universities. The ancient foundations of King's College and Marischal College, which had subsisted side by side for well nigh three centuries, were merged by Act of Parliament in the University of Aberdeen. By the Commissioners appointed under that Act the new corporation was invested with all the powers and privileges of its constituent parts ; the four traditional faculties were explicitly recognised ; their curricula were broadened and brought into harmony with those of the other three Scottish Universities ; and the interest of the graduates in their Alma Mater was stimulated by their admission to a share in her government. While the Fusion deprived Aberdeen academic life of many picturesque features that had come down from an earlier age, it cannot be disputed

## PREFACE.

that the general effect of the 1860 reforms was to raise the level of higher education in the North of Scotland.

In 1889 another Act of Parliament constituted another body of Commissioners, who introduced into our University system changes more violent than had been dreamt of by their predecessors of thirty years before. The revolutionary tendency of their Ordinances is noticeable in the fundamental Faculty of Arts rather than in the professional Faculties, and perhaps in the University of Aberdeen rather than in her wealthier southern sisters of Edinburgh and Glasgow. The professor no longer draws his own fees, but is paid, not certainly by results, but by the partition of a fee fund or pool. The old fixed M.A. curriculum of respectable mediocrity has been practically swept away, and in its stead appears a complicated system of Options, under which it is practicable for the graduate, who has aimed at distinction in some limited sphere, to have passed by almost every subject of study formerly thought indispensable. So innumerable are the combinations open to the student, that it is theoretically possible for all the entrants of any year to adopt different



## PREFACE.

curricula ; and thus the continued existence is threatened of that pleasing bond of union so familiar to the men of 1860-89, the " Class,

Brought together by chances strange,  
Knit together by friendships sweet".

Doubtless there are many and great advantages in the new system. The schoolboy entering College is under no compulsion to listen to distasteful lectures, but may attend such professors as strike his fancy ; the professor, independent of the size of his class, is tempted to no unseemly exertion in the endeavour to rival his colleagues ; and women are admitted to all the privileges of the University.

The effects of these changes will be far reaching and cannot be fully appreciated for many years to come. But it seemed desirable to the editor of this volume that, before the students of 1860-89 had grown too old or too absorbed in extra-academic life to recall the surroundings of their golden prime, a few should be asked to put on record—for the gratification of their contemporaries and the enlightenment of their successors—some reminiscences of the men who endeavoured, with varying success, to show to them the high white star of truth.

## PREFACE.

The editor gratefully acknowledges the readiness with which his requests for contributions were responded to. He disclaims all responsibility for the opinions expressed by his twenty-seven contributors, whose points of view will be found as varied as the merits of their styles. His thanks are especially given to Mr. W. Keith Leask, to whom are due not merely three of the sketches, but many valuable suggestions made both while the book was being planned and while it was being printed; and to Mr. W. F. Webster, who specially photographed several of the subjects of illustration.

A melancholy reminder of the fleeting character of all academic annals is afforded by the death, as the sheets were passing through the press, of two of the subjects of appreciation: Emeritus Professor John Forbes in his ninety-seventh year, and Emeritus Professor Sir John Struthers in his seventy-seventh year.

P. J. A.

University Library,  
Aberdeen.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE LORD RECTORS OF 1860-1889 - - -	1
By the Marquis of Huntly, P.C., LL.D., Lord Rector 1890, 1893, 1896.	
THE PROFESSOR OF GREEK, 1860 [1855]-1886 -	25
By Robert A. Neil, M.A. (1870), LL.D., Fellow and Lec- turer, Pembroke College, Cambridge. Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF MATHEMATICS, 1860 [1851]- 1878 - - - - -	33
By William L. Mollison, M.A. (1872), LL.D., Fellow and Tutor, Clare College, Cambridge. Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF LOGIC, 1860-1880 - - -	43
By Alexander Mackie, M.A. (1876). Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF LOGIC, 1880-1893 - - -	57
By William Keith Leask, M.A. (1877). Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	

## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE PROFESSOR OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY, 1860 [1845]-1880 - - - - -	71
By the Rev. William L. Low, M.A. (1862).	
Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF NATURAL HISTORY, 1860 [1853]-1882 - - - - -	83
By William Bannerman, M.A. (1872), M.D.	
Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY, 1860 [1846]-1876 - - - - -	95
By the Rev. W. Robertson Nicoll, M.A. (1870), LL.D.	
Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY, 1876- 1894 - - - - -	103
By Alexander T. G. Beveridge, M.A. (1884), M.B.	
Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF HUMANITY, 1860 [1852]-1868 -	112
By the Rev. W. Robertson Nicoll, M.A. (1870), LL.D.	
Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF HUMANITY, 1868-1881 - - -	120
By William Keith Leask, M.A. (1877).	
Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF ORIENTAL LANGUAGES, 1860 [1847]-1870 - - - - -	132
By Principal Sir William D. Geddes, M.A. (1846), LL.D., Litt.D.	
Portrait from a photograph by Shearer.	

## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE PROFESSOR OF ORIENTAL LANGUAGES, 1870- 1887 - - - - -	150
By the Rev. Stephen Ree, M.A. (1872), B.D.	
Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, 1860 [1852]-1867 - - - - -	155
By the Rev. James Donald, M.A. (1858).	
Portrait from a photograph.	
THE PROFESSOR OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, 1867- 1887 - - - - -	161
By the Rev. Stephen Ree, M.A. (1872), B.D.	
Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY, 1860 [1843]- 1877 - - - - -	169
By the Rev. Stephen Ree, M.A. (1872), B.D.	
Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY, 1877-1889 -	176
By the Rev. Donald Macmillan, M.A. (1887).	
Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL CRITICISM, 1860- 1893 - - - - -	181
By the Rev. James Cooper, M.A. (1867), D.D., Professor of Church History in the University of Glasgow.	
Portrait from the painting by Sir George Reid, P.R.S.A., LL.D.	

## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE
<p>THE BURNETT LECTURER, 1888-91 - - -</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">By John Forbes White, M.A. (1848), LL.D.</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">Portrait from a photograph.</p>	189
<p>THE PROFESSOR OF LAW, 1881 [1843]-1891 - -</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">By James Duguid, M.A. (1867), Lecturer on Conveyancing.</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">Portrait from the painting by Sir George Reid, P.R.S.A., LL.D.</p>	205
<p>THE PROGRESS OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL - -</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">By the late Emeritus Professor Sir John Struthers, M.D. (1845), LL.D.</p>	212
<p>THE PROFESSOR OF ANATOMY, 1863-1889 - -</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">By William Leslie Mackenzie, M.A. (1883), M.D.</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">Portrait from the painting by Sir George Reid, P.R.S.A., LL.D.</p>	237
<p>THE PROFESSOR OF SURGERY, 1860 [1839]-1882 -</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">By James Cantlie, M.A. (1871), M.D.</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.</p>	249
<p>THE PROFESSOR OF PHYSIOLOGY, 1860-1877 - -</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">By John Gray McKendrick, M.D. (1864), LL.D., Professor of Physiology in the University of Glasgow.</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.</p>	264
<p>THE PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE, 1860 [1839]-1875 -</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">By John Gray McKendrick, M.D. (1864), LL.D., Professor of Physiology in the University of Glasgow.</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">Portrait from the painting by Sir George Reid, P.R.S.A., LL.D.</p>	275

## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE, 1875-1891 - -	281
By William Leslie Mackenzie, M.A. (1883), M.D.	
Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF MATERIA MEDICA, 1860-1878 -	292
By Edward Payne Philpots, M.D. (1870), and John Ruxton, M.D. (1883).	
Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF MATERIA MEDICA, 1878-1886 -	302
By Alexander T. G. Beveridge, M.A. (1884), M.B.	
Portrait from a sketch by Sir George Reid, P.R.S.A., LL.D.	
THE PROFESSOR OF MEDICAL JURISPRUDENCE, 1860	
[1857]-1883 - - - - -	308
By John Gray McKendrick, M.D. (1864), Professor of Physiology in the University of Glasgow.	
Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF MIDWIFERY, 1860-1869 - -	313
By Angus Fraser, M.A. (1858), M.D.	
Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY, 1862-1888 - -	318
By William Bulloch, M.D. (1894).	
Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	
THE PROFESSOR OF BOTANY, 1860-1877 - -	326
By Sir George King, K.C.I.E., M.B. (1865), LL.D., F.R.S.	
Portrait from a photograph by Wilson.	

## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE LIBRARIAN AND REGISTRAR, 1877-1893 - - -	336
By John Malcolm Bulloch, M.A. (1888).	
Portrait from a photograph.	
THE MATHEMATICAL COACH, 1860 [1856]-—— -	340
By John Malcolm Bulloch, M.A. (1888).	
Portrait from a photograph by Macmahon.	
THE SACRIST, 1860 [1843]-1879, MARISCHAL COL- LEGE ; 1879-91, KING'S COLLEGE - - -	350
By John Malcolm Bulloch, M.A. (1888).	
Portrait from the painting by Archibald D. Reid, A.R.S.A.	
THE UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS, 1860-1889 - - -	355
By Robert Sangster Rait, M.A. (1894).	
MEN AND MANNERS, 1860-1889 - - - -	368
By William Keith Leask, M.A. (1877).	
EXTRA-MURALISM, AN IMPRESSION, 1884-1888 -	381
By John Malcolm Bulloch, M.A. (1888).	
INDEX - - - - -	395



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS OTHER THAN PORTRAITS.

KING'S COLLEGE IN 1889, FROM THE NORTH-WEST.	
<i>Frontispiece</i>	
From a photograph by Mr. W. F. Webster.	
TO FACE PAGE	
MARISCHAL COLLEGE : THE QUADRANGLE, 1860-1889	vii
From a photograph by Annan.	
KING'S COLLEGE IN 1860, FROM THE SOUTH-EAST	141
From a painting by Sam Bough, A.R.S.A.	
KING'S COLLEGE : INTERIOR OF THE CHAPEL	- 155
From a photograph by Mr. W. F. Webster.	
MARISCHAL COLLEGE : PROFESSOR STRUTHERS, ROBERT GIBB AND THE WHALE	- - - 243
From a photograph.	
KING'S COLLEGE : THE NORTH-WEST CORNER OF THE QUADRANGLE	- - - - - 351
From a photograph by Mr. W. F. Webster.	

ILLUSTRATIONS OTHER THAN PORTRAITS.

TO FACE PAGE

KING'S COLLEGE : INTERIOR OF THE LIBRARY, 1860- 1870 - - - - -	360
---	-----

From a drawing by R. W. Billings.

KING'S COLLEGE : INTERIOR OF THE LIBRARY, 1885- ——— - - - - -	361
--	-----

From a photograph by Mr. W. F. Webster.

THE HIGH STREET, OLD ABERDEEN, FROM THE ENTRANCE TO KING'S COLLEGE - - -	374
---	-----

From a photograph by Mr. W. F. Webster.

# AURORA BOREALIS ACADEMICA.

## THE LORD RECTORS.

**A**N account of the Lord Rectors of the University of Aberdeen since the fusion of the two colleges of King's and Marischal, in the year 1860, would be incomplete without reference to two Rectors who left their mark upon the Universities before that date.

Mr. Joseph Hume, who was elected Rector of Marischal College in the year 1825, was the first who advocated a resident, as apart from an absentee, rector ; he held meetings of the Rectorial Court, which had fallen into abeyance since the year 1738, in the face of the strongest opposition from the professors and the authorities. He tried to obtain recognition of the students' grievances, and investigated the position of the bursaries ; but although the influences at work were too much for Hume at the time, and the Commission which was appointed to inquire into the Universities in 1826 came to nothing, yet it is but just to give

## AURORA BOREALIS.

him the credit of having first called attention to the privileges of which the students were being deprived, and to the necessity for reform.

The career of this remarkable man shows how much can be done by the energy of an individual. Born at Montrose in January, 1777, he studied medicine at Aberdeen, at Edinburgh, and in London, and became a Member of the College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, in 1796, and a Doctor of Medicine of Marischal College in 1799. He was appointed assistant surgeon in the marine service of the East India Company, and in India he was able to render important services through his knowledge of chemistry and medicine. He subsequently obtained civil employment, and was publicly thanked by Lord Lake for the efficiency of his services. He returned to England in 1808, and was first returned to Parliament for Weymouth in 1812, next for the Aberdeen Burghs in 1818, during which time he joined the great reforming party in the North of Scotland, and remained one of the most useful independent members of the legislature until his death in 1854. He had been elected member for his native city of Montrose in 1842, and continued to represent it until his death. It is interesting to note that after his term of office in the rectorship, the reforms that he advocated were allowed to lapse, and he wrote from London "deeply concerned that

## THE LORD RECTORS.

the hopes held out to him of having induced the majority of the Senatus to make alterations and improvements in the University had not been realised". A sentence from Hume's speech when opening the Rectorial Court on 14th November, 1825, is also worthy of mention. He observed : "That every other individual belonging to the college was appointed by the patrons or by the Senatus ; the only one appointed by the students was the Rector ; and the object of the founder seemed to have been, that there should exist a sort of umpire between the governors and the governed. It had been with that view that the Rector was selected by the founder, and therefore he [the Rector] considered it to be more especially his duty to ascertain the rights of the students, and see justice done to them." This was the first bold stand publicly made for strengthening the position of the Rector, though another generation had arisen, and Hume himself had passed away, before any step was taken to carry out the reforms he advocated.

The other name to which it is proper to allude is that of Mr. John Inglis, both from his having been last Rector of King's College before the Union and also on account of the prominent position which he took in carrying out the fusion of the two colleges. John Inglis, the fourth son of the Rev. Dr. John Inglis, minister of Old Greyfriars, Edinburgh, was

## AURORA BOREALIS.

born in that city in 1810, and died in 1891. He was educated at the High School of Edinburgh, and in 1825 entered Glasgow University ; gaining the Snell Exhibition at Balliol College, Oxford, in 1829 he passed from Glasgow to the English University and graduated with honours in 1834. He studied law in Edinburgh and was called to the bar in 1835, and soon obtained one of the greatest practices that ever fell to the lot of a pleader. Solicitor-General in Lord Derby's administration of 1852, and shortly afterwards promoted to be Lord Advocate, the same year also saw him elected Dean of Faculty ; he became Lord Justice-Clerk in 1858, and Lord President of the Court of Session in 1867, which high office he held until his death with the title of Lord Glencorse.

Inglis first tried to enter Parliament for the constituency of Orkney and Shetland in 1852, but was defeated ; his second venture was more successful when he was returned for the pocket-borough of Stamford, in Lincolnshire, without opposition in 1858.

But although Inglis' services to his country as a lawyer and a judge were so distinguished, it is indisputable that as a University Reformer, in which direction his chief effort as a legislator was made, his name is entitled to rank in the highest place. His experience of the English and Scotch

## THE LORD RECTORS.

systems during his Academic career had convinced him that "while philosophy might have her home on the north side of the border, the Scotch Educational System could not compete with the English in producing breadth and soundness of classical scholarship". He successfully devoted his energies towards the removal of local differences which retarded the development of the Universities, besides advocating legislative measures. That these efforts were recognised was fittingly proved by his election to the Lord Rectorship of Glasgow in 1865, and to the Chancellorship of Edinburgh in 1869; while in 1858 Edinburgh had conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws, and in the following year Oxford made him a D.C.L. But the first appreciation of the work, which continued through forty years of his life, came from Aberdeen. He had been defeated for the Rectorship of King's in 1855, by the Earl of Ellesmere, and on the death of that nobleman in the spring of 1857, he was returned against Colonel Sykes. He sat on the University Commission of 1858, and was mainly responsible, as occupying the position of Lord Advocate, for the Act of Parliament of 1858 which united the two colleges. He delivered his inaugural discourse in October, 1857, praising the eminent position King's College had taken in the past as a seat of learning, and applauding the services of the great men who had

## AURORA BOREALIS.

been connected with it. He pressed for reform and improvement in the administration and government of the University, "enabling it to promote, and at the same time to keep pace with the march of intellectual progress, and to increase its reputation, and extend its just influence and authority". There is no doubt that the intimate knowledge of Aberdeen which Inglis acquired as Lord Rector of King's, together with his experience on the Universities Commission, were of the greatest service in enabling him to carry the Act of 1858. Previous to the fusion of the two colleges into the University of Aberdeen, the Senatus had almost full administrative power except in certain matters where the authority of the Chancellor and the Rectorial Court could be appealed to. The new Act vested the ordinary administration of the affairs of the University in the Senatus Academicus, but introduced a new governing body called the University Court, "providing that it shall be a Court of Appeal from the Senatus, that it shall possess a certain jurisdiction over individual professors, that it shall control the administration of the Senatus, . . . of the property of the University or college, and that it shall exercise other powers". When therefore, on the 15th September, 1860, the two colleges were inseparably united and incorporated into one University and college under the style and title of the University of Aberdeen, the



## THE LORD RECTORS.

students were confronted with a new order of things, resulting from the tardy recognition of their rights and privileges. This change it will be well to explain briefly.

The Act of 1858 ordained that the rector elected by the students, voting in "nations," should preside over the University Court, so that the new body represented the old Rectorial Court. Although it was affirmed that the original charter of King's provided for the election of the rector by the students, they had not apparently exercised their power, which had fallen into the hands of the graduates and the Senatus, notwithstanding several attempts made by the students in the early part of this century to have the charters examined and their rights established. At Marischal College the students had retained their power of electing the rector ; they chose their procurators and voted by nations. The holding of a Rectorial Court was a rare occurrence at either college. The new Act not only confirmed the students' right of electing the rector, and gave them another voice on the Court through his assessor, but transferred large powers hitherto exercised by the Senatus to the Court. The changes made under the Union as regards the rectorship were that the election should be triennial instead of annual, that no professor in a Scotch University was eligible, and that in the case of equality of

## AURORA BOREALIS.

nations the election should be settled by the casting vote of the Chancellor of the University. It is worthy of note that Aberdeen alone of the four Scotch Universities follows the ancient method of electing her Lord Rectors, *viz.*, by nations and procurators. This practice takes us back to the French and Italian Universities of the twelfth century, upon which the Scotch University system is based, the idea and intention being that the students should elect the rector as their representative on the governing body. In Edinburgh, however, the election by nations was never adopted; in St. Andrews it was abolished under the Commission of 1858; and in Glasgow, though the nations are still adhered to, the procurators have gone.

The area comprising the nations in Aberdeen has been altered at various times; the present divisions, fixed after the Union, being Mar, Buchan, Moray and Angus.

“Mar” includes the city of Aberdeen and its neighbourhood, with the parishes of Banchory-Devenick, Belhelvie, Drumoak, Durris, Dyce, Fintray, Kinellar, Newmachar, Maryculter, Newhills, Nigg, Peterculter, Skene, Cruden, Ellon, Foveran, Logie-Buchan, Methlick, Slains, Tarves and Udney.

“Buchan” nation includes the county of Banff and such part of the county of Aberdeen as is not included in Mar.

## THE LORD RECTORS.

“Moray” includes the counties of Moray, Nairn, Inverness, Ross, Cromarty, Sutherland, Caithness, and Orkney and Shetland.

“Angus” nation consists of all matriculated students not included in any of the other nations.

It is now enacted that in the event of an equality of nations the numerical majority of votes shall decide the contest ; and if the votes also are equal, the chancellor shall give the casting vote.

The first election under the new system was an embittered contest, ending in most tumultuous proceedings, probably engendered by the feelings which had been aroused between the two colleges regarding the Union. Mr. E. F. Maitland, then Solicitor-General for Scotland, who was afterwards raised to the Bench as Lord Barcaple, opposed Sir Andrew Leith Hay, who was Convener of the County of Aberdeen, and had been Liberal Member for the Elgin Burghs. Edward Francis Maitland was born in 1808, and died in 1870. He was the youngest son of Adam Maitland of Dundrennan, Kirkcudbrightshire. Educated at Edinburgh University, and called to the Scotch Bar in 1831, he was appointed Sheriff of Argyleshire in 1851, and held the office of Solicitor-General for Scotland under Lord Palmerston's Administrations of 1855 and 1859. He was Curator and Assessor of the Edinburgh University in 1859, and from his Alma Mater he received the degree

## AURORA BOREALIS.

of LL.D. He became a judge of the Court of Session in 1862. He acted for some years as editor of the *North British Review*, and as a Liberal took an active part in the political and literary work of his time. Maitland had a majority in the Buchan and Mar nations. Leith Hay had a majority in Moray and Angus, and a numerical majority of thirty-eight votes over all. The Chancellors of both colleges had died that year, the Duke of Richmond (Marischal) on 21st October, and the Earl of Aberdeen (King's) nine days before the election, so that the Vice-Chancellor, Principal Campbell, had to give his casting vote. He decided in favour of Maitland, who was duly elected, notwithstanding the protests from the procurators of the Moray and Angus nations, and much opposition from the students, who sent a deputation to wait upon Mr. Maitland, but to no purpose. Maitland delivered his Rectorial Address on 16th March, 1861, in Marischal College, and the scene may be described as a pandemonium. The supporters of Sir Andrew Leith Hay smashed the forms in the hall and pelted their opponents with pease-meal and other missiles, Maitland himself not coming out of the fray unscathed, as he received a blow from a piece of wood, severely cutting his nose. The disturbance was quelled by the intervention of the police after the hubbub had lasted for more than an hour. The rector delivered his address, which

## THE LORD RECTORS.

was a discourse on "University life, its objects, its pleasures, and its duties". It is a curious fact that this address, the first after the fusion, was the last delivered in the old graduation hall at Marischal College, later addresses being delivered in the Aberdeen Music Hall, until the completion of the Mitchell Hall in Marischal College enabled the Lord Rector's address to be delivered there in October, 1895.

In 1863 the students' choice fell upon John, Earl Russell, K.G., the eminent statesman, third son of the sixth Duke of Bedford, and born in London on 18th August, 1792. He was educated at Westminster School and Edinburgh University: and as Lord John Russell entered Parliament as member for the Borough of Tavistock in 1813, and made his first motion in favour of Parliamentary Reform in 1819, and continued to bring the subject almost annually before the House of Commons, until he stood forward as a minister of the Crown to propose the great Bill of 1831. The fortunes of the measure belong to the history of the time; suffice it to say, that on the 4th of June, 1832, the bill obtained the royal assent, and that the country was saved from the throes of revolution and civil war, which at one period appeared imminent. Russell acted as Colonial Minister in Lord Melbourne's administration in 1839, when self-government was given to Canada, and showed his

## AURORA BOREALIS.

far-sighted statesmanship by announcing to his constituents in the city of London (for which seat he was member in 1845) his conversion to the total and immediate repeal of the Corn Laws. He became Prime Minister in 1846, remaining in office until February, 1852, and subsequently held the post of Foreign Secretary in the administrations of Lord Aberdeen (1852) for a short time, and of Lord Palmerston (1859), during which he strongly advocated the cause of Italian Unity and Independence, and ably preserved British neutrality in the Civil War in America. But the question with which he has been chiefly identified in the public mind is Parliamentary Reform ; in 1852 and in 1854 he brought in Reform Bills, and moved the resolution which defeated Lord Derby's Reform Bill in 1859.

Elevated to the Upper House under the title of Earl Russell in 1861, he became on the death of Lord Palmerston, in 1865, Prime Minister for the second time, and with Mr. Gladstone as leader of the Commons, introduced a Reform Bill in 1866, and being defeated, resigned. He did not hold office again, though he remained an active supporter of the Liberal party in the House of Lords until his death in 1878. Among other works he published *The Correspondence of John, 4th Duke of Bedford* (revealing much of the secret history of the early part of George III.'s reign), *The Life, Diary*

## THE LORD RECTORS.

*and Letters of Thomas Moore, and The Life, Times and Correspondence of Charles James Fox*, the great Whig statesman. It is interesting to note the conspicuous Parliamentary career of Lord Russell in connection with this article, because it was during his tenure of the Lord Rectorship of Aberdeen University that he became Prime Minister the second time, and at this period, with the assistance of Lord Lansdowne, he laid the foundation of the present system of national education, supported by Parliamentary grants, and administered by the Privy Council. His rectorial address, delivered on 11th November, 1864, was entitled "Is there any law or general rule by which the decline of states is governed ; what is the general aspect of the world at present ; and does it teach us to hope or to despond ?"

In 1866 the two candidates for election were Mr. Grant Duff, then M.P. for the Elgin Burghs, who had unsuccessfully opposed Earl Russell in 1863 ; and Mr. George Grote the historian. The votes of the nations were equal, Mar and Buchan giving a majority for Duff, Moray and Angus for Grote ; but the majority of votes was in Duff's favour, and he received the chancellor's casting vote. The Right Hon. Sir M. E. Grant Duff is the son of the late J. Cunningham Grant Duff of Eden. He was born in 1829, educated at Edinburgh and Balliol

## AURORA BOREALIS.

College, Oxford, where he took his degree in 1853. He was called to the Bar in 1854, and entered the House of Commons as member for the Elgin Burghs in December, 1857, which constituency he continued to represent in the Liberal interest till July, 1881. He held the office of Under Secretary of State for India from December, 1868, till the termination of Mr. Gladstone's administration in February, 1874, and became Under Secretary of State for the Colonies when Mr. Gladstone was again called to power in May, 1880, resigning that office and his seat in Parliament on being appointed Governor of Madras in 1881. He held the governorship until 1886—an active and successful administration of the great southern province of India. He has published his *Elgin Speeches, Studies in European Politics*, and other works.

He was the first working Lord Rector that Aberdeen had, and the first to attend the ordinary meetings of the Court. He advocated a reform in the Faculty of Arts, the object being to diminish classical teaching, to optionalise Greek, and to encourage the teaching of political economy. In his second year of office he brought forward a motion in the University Court inviting the Senatus to “consider the revision of the Bursary Examination with a view to the better distribution of the marks assigned for proficiency amongst the various studies already



## THE LORD RECTORS.

encouraged, and to the introduction of certain new studies, which are now very generally believed to form essential elements in a liberal education". Although declaring himself to be a warm friend of classical education, and only disapproving of some existing methods, his proposals raised much criticism; especially a speech delivered to the Court on 21st October, 1869, in which he said: "You will find Aberdeen men are doing hard intellectual work all over the world, but you will hardly find one distinguished in classics," drew from the Professor of Greek at that time (now Sir W. D. Geddes, Principal of the University) a trenchant reply and an eloquent defence of "Classical Education in the North of Scotland". But although Mr. Grant Duff's views may have been too sweeping, he must be credited with having done much by his proposals to broaden the curriculum, and extend the system of Scotch University education.

His interest in this movement led to his being again chosen as a candidate for the rectorship in 1869, when his opponent was Sir W. Stirling Maxwell, Bart., M.P. The Mar and Buchan nations again gave a majority for Grant Duff, Moray and Angus for Maxwell; but in the Angus nation the figures were fifty-six to fifty-five. A protest was entered on behalf of Mr. Duff's committee and procurators against the vote of a student who had not matriculated

## AURORA BOREALIS.

till eight weeks after the opening of the session and whose name had not been placed on the list of voters : the exclusion of this vote made the nations equal. The chancellor nevertheless gave his casting vote in favour of Maxwell, who, however, declined to accept on the ground that there was a majority of students against him, and also on account of the protest that had been made. The opinion of counsel was taken as to whether Mr. Duff could be held to be elected, and it was decided that a new election must be held. Accordingly in February, 1870, another election took place, when most of the students absented themselves. Mr. Duff was opposed by Mr. Bernhard Samuelson, M.P., whom he easily defeated. Mr. Grant Duff's first address was delivered on 23rd March, 1857, on "University Work of Scotland ; its nature". The second address was delivered on 18th November, 1870, on "Teaching Reform in Aberdeen University ; the Reorganisation of the Bursaries ; and Classical Teaching".

Professor Thomas Henry Huxley, who was elected Lord Rector in 1872 after a close contest with the Marquis of Huntly, was born at Ealing, Middlesex, in 1825, educated at the school in that town, and afterwards studied medicine at Charing Cross Hospital. He entered the medical service of the Royal Navy, serving under Sir John Richardson at Haslar, and in 1846 was appointed assistant surgeon

## THE LORD RECTORS.

on board the *Rattlesnake*, commanded by Captain Owen Stanley. This vessel was commissioned to survey the intricate passage within the Barrier Reef skirting the eastern shores of Australia, and to explore the sea lying between the northern end of that reef and New Guiana and the Louisiade Archipelago. Imbued with a passion for natural history, Huxley devoted himself to the study of the numerous marine animals collected from time to time during the survey, and made them the subject of scientific papers which he sent home. These papers were published by the Royal and Linnæan Societies, and on the return of the *Rattlesnake* in 1850, his fame and position as a naturalist were assured. Elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1851, he had the following year one of the two Royal Medals, annually given by the society, awarded to him in recognition of the scientific value of his papers and researches. He was appointed Professor of Natural History in the School of Mines in 1854, and from that time his contributions upon various and all-important science questions connected with natural history, comparative anatomy, physiology and geology were numerous and most valuable. He served as a member of the London School Board until 1872, and was an efficient member of Royal Commissions on scientific subjects, especially connected with fisheries, of which he was a Government inspector

## AURORA BOREALIS.

for some time. Edinburgh University gave him his LL.D. Professor Huxley's term of the rectorship is notable for the efforts he made on behalf of medicine. He desired that the curriculum should be divested of all subjects which were not necessary for the education and training of a medical man. He insisted upon the student acquiring a knowledge of botany and natural history before entering medicine ; and proposed to optionalise Greek for the M.D. degree. It will at this date be seen how largely the views of the Aberdeen Rectors, between 1866 and 1874, were adopted by the Royal Commission (shortly afterwards appointed), and were eventually carried out under the Act of Parliament of 1889. Professor Huxley's address was delivered on 27th February, 1874, and was entitled "Universities, actual and ideal".

The Rectorial Election in 1875 resulted in the return of Mr. W. E. Forster, whose opponent was Lord Lindsay, the present Earl of Crawford, over whom he had a majority in the Mar, Buchan and Moray nations, while he polled the same number of votes in the Angus nation. The Right Hon. W. E. Forster was the son of William Forster, who was a minister of the Society of Friends, and who died on a slavery mission in Tennessee. He was born at Blackpool, Dorset, in 1818, educated at the Friends School at Tottenham, and became a worsted manu-

## THE LORD RECTORS.

facturer at Bradford. His first appearance in public life was in connection with a Famine Relief Fund, raised by the Quakers in 1846, which he assisted in distributing in Ireland. He stood for Parliament in the Liberal interest for Leeds in 1859, but was defeated, and was first elected for Bradford in 1861. He became Under Secretary for the Colonies in 1865, and was Vice-President of the Council on Education from 1868 to 1874, and in that office had charge of the English Education Bill of 1870 in the House of Commons. He acquired a great reputation for his conduct of this measure, and of the Ballot Bill in the following year. His acceptance of the Irish Secretaryship under Mr. Gladstone's ministry of 1880 was coeval with the outbreak of crime in Ireland; he proposed and carried the Peace Preservation Act, giving the administration power of imprisoning suspected persons without trial. This measure was strongly opposed by the Land League which had extended its branches all over Ireland, and when in 1881 Forster arrested the leaders of the League, his action was denounced with the greatest bitterness, but this did not deter him from carrying through the Land Act of 1881, which may be said to have revolutionised the system of Land Tenure in Ireland, conferring unparalleled privileges on the tenants. In May, 1882, the Cabinet resolved to release the chief political suspects, and Forster resigned office.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Although continuing to sit in Parliament until his death in 1885, and strongly supporting the views he held as to the necessity for preventing intimidation and crime in Ireland by firm measures, he took little further part in public affairs. His Rectorial Address in Aberdeen was delivered on 24th November, 1876, and was entitled "What help University life affords to students to be politicians".

The contest of 1878 was between Lord Rosebery and Lord (then Mr.) Cross, the former having a majority in Mar, Buchan and Moray nations, the latter in the Angus nation. Lord Rosebery was born in May, 1847, and was educated at Eton, and Christ Church, Oxford. His first introduction to official life was as Under Secretary of State to the Home Department in August, 1881, which post he held until January, 1883. In November, 1884, he became First Commissioner of Works. After holding the office of Lord Privy Seal for a short time, he took the seals of the Foreign Office in Mr. Gladstone's third, and short lived, administration of 1885. In January, 1888, he was elected a member, by the City Division, of the London County Council, and was first chairman of that body. On Mr. Gladstone forming his fourth Government in 1892, Lord Rosebery was appointed Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and when Mr. Gladstone retired in March, 1894, he succeeded to the

## THE LORD RECTORS.

Premiership, which he held until June, 1895. Lord Rosebery has always been a firm friend of National Education, and has deeply interested himself in all social subjects. His intimate knowledge of the history of his country has been especially marked. In November, 1891, he published a monograph upon the younger Pitt, and has made many public contributions upon historical subjects. His address as Lord Rector of Aberdeen was delivered on 5th November, 1880, and was entitled "History ; and a History Chair in the University". He is an LL.D. of Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Cambridge Universities.

In 1881 the students elected, in the person of Dr. Bain, a Lord Rector who was able to give personal attention and to attend regularly to the business of the University Court. His opponent was Sir James Paget, M.D., and Bain had a majority in all four nations. It happened that during this period another University Commission was sitting, and reform was deferred pending their report, every attempt that the University itself made in that direction being frustrated ; so that although Dr. Bain was re-elected in 1884, defeating Lord Randolph Churchill by a majority in three nations (Angus alone going for Lord Randolph), he was unable during his six years' tenure of the office to see any great progress made, but his influence was felt in the framing of the Bill which subsequently became law in the session of

## AURORA BOREALIS.

1889, and the minutes of the Court show how great were the services he rendered to the University ; one of these being the abolition of the graduation oath. A royal commission, appointed in 1866, had reported that it should be abolished, but, though the other Scotch Universities had acted upon this recommendation, nothing was done in Aberdeen until Dr. Bain brought the subject before the court, and secured its removal on the ground that " we are now the only public University in the British Dominions where the shadow of a religious test still lingers ".

Alexander Bain, LL.D., was born at Aberdeen in 1818, entered Marischal College in 1836, and took his degree of M.A. in 1840. From 1841 to 1844 he taught the class of moral philosophy, and in 1844-45, the natural philosophy class in Marischal College. In 1845 he was elected Professor of Mathematics in the Andersonian College, Glasgow, but held the office for only one year. He was assistant secretary to the Metropolitan Sanitary Commissioners in 1847, and afterwards held the same post to the General Board of Health. From 1857 to 1870 he was Examiner in Logic and Moral Philosophy in the University of London, and also throughout those years acted as Examiner in Moral Science at the Indian Civil Service examinations. In 1860 he was appointed Professor of Logic in the University of Aberdeen. His numerous literary



## THE LORD RECTORS.

productions date from 1840 almost to the present time, and include text-books on astronomy, electricity and meteorology ; a manual of English composition, and treatises in mental and moral science and logic ; he has also written a *Biography of James Mill*, and a *Criticism on John Stuart Mill*, with personal recollections. Dr. Bain's Rectorial Address, delivered on 15th November, 1882, was upon "The University Ideal : Past and Present".

On the retirement of Dr. Bain after his six years of office in 1887, the Right Hon. George J. Goschen, M.P., was elected Lord Rector, defeating Mr. John Morley. Born in 1831, he was educated at Rugby and Oriel College, Oxford, and first entered Parliament as member for the city of London in 1863. He held office as Vice-President of the Board of Trade in 1865, was President of the Poor Law Board from December, 1868, to March, 1871, and then became First Lord of the Admiralty until February, 1874, under Mr. Gladstone's administrations. When the break up of the Liberal party over the question of Home Rule for Ireland occurred, Mr. Goschen joined the Unionist ranks, and was elected member for the city of Edinburgh in 1885 as a Liberal Unionist.

During Lord Salisbury's second administration he was offered and accepted in January, 1887, the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer, an office which he held until the resignation of the ministry in August,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

1892. On the formation of Lord Salisbury's third administration in 1895, he went to his old post at the Admiralty and still holds it.

His Rectorship of Aberdeen may be said to have been momentous for the University. Aberdeen students first honoured him, when choosing so eminent a representative from a southern University, whose sympathies were strongly academic, as evinced in the admirable Rectorial Address on "Intellectual Interest," which he delivered at Aberdeen on 31st January, 1888; he was subsequently chosen by the Edinburgh students as their Lord Rector, being thereby afforded the means of acquainting himself with the needs of the Scotch Universities during the important period which culminated in the passing of the Act of 1889. To these happy auspices we may also fairly attribute the raising of the Parliamentary Grant to the Scottish Universities from the sum of £40,000, at which it stood under the Act, by a further annual contribution of £30,000, and specially the separate grant of £40,000 to the Aberdeen University Extension Fund, during Mr. Goschen's tenure of the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. Higher Education in Scotland has had no truer friend than Mr. Goschen, and Aberdeen in particular has cause to thank the students for enabling him to give practical proof of his friendship to their "Alma Mater".





Wm D. Geddes,

## WILLIAM DUGUID GEDDES.

*Nos rite coepturi ab Homero videmur.*—QUINT.

**A**N account of the work Sir William Geddes did as Greek professor, of the services he rendered to Aberdeen, and through Aberdeen to a large part of Scotland, should properly be written by some one who knew the University before he became professor, and could fully estimate the difference his influence made: but the writer should also be a pupil, and the combined qualifications are rare.

The Latin scholarship of Aberdeen has a creditable and continuous history. Principal Geddes' New Spalding Club edition of the Latin poetry written by Aberdonians has made it clearer than before that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries our countrymen were not lacking in that power of writing Latin, which was the passport to the educated society of Europe, and supplied the natural instrument for the thought of their time, public or personal. Ruddiman's name was a household word for at least a century after his death, and Melvin kept up, with the fresh life that

## AURORA BOREALIS.

a strong personality was sure to give, a long and clear tradition of Latinity. But Greek was little known : the difference between the Greek and Latin attainments of Aberdeen students, was very great ; men who read and enjoyed Horace and Buchanan from their University days till their deaths had never been able to read Greek with any comfort ; and the difference extended to such men's knowledge of the history, political, intellectual and artistic, of the two nations. The remarkable labours of Dr. Francis Adams were recognised wherever Greek medicine was a subject of interest : but they were single-handed, the circle they reached was small, and though they gained Dr. Adams great respect, they could do nothing for the knowledge of Greek in the University and among the students.

If Greek was to be made an instrument of education comparable to Latin, there was but one way for Aberdeen—that the Greek chair should be occupied by one who would gradually but surely raise the standard of Greek teaching—a work to be done only by constant care, backed by wide knowledge, high enthusiasm, and a clear comprehension of the character and needs of the students to be taught. Professor Geddes was appointed to the King's College chair in 1855. He had the scholarship necessary, and more (how he acquired

## WILLIAM DUGUID GEDDES.

it with the help available, remains a marvel), and he had the invaluable experience gained as a parish schoolmaster, as a master in the Grammar School of Aberdeen, and as rector of that institution. The difficulties he met and surmounted can be estimated only by those who lived through the early years of his professorship ; but the leading power and the spirit that animated it were soon recognised, and the natural results followed. His own *Greek Grammar* was an excellent instrument in raising the standard. It is an interesting and instructive thing to compare the Greek papers set in 1855 with those set in 1880.

The difficulties of making any dead language an efficient means of education are so much insisted on now that a teacher who surmounts them ought to receive all the more credit, and this is especially the case with Greek ; the elaborate grammar, the delicate syntax, the play of particles and compounds, the clearness that may be so easily mistaken for commonplace, are such mountains in the way of teacher and learner before the stage is reached where a sentence of a great Greek writer ceases to be a collection of symbols, and becomes a model of thought and expression. Professor Geddes did what could be done to surmount these difficulties. Dufferdom might be amazed and resentful, for there is dufferdom even in Aberdeen, and even

## AURORA BOREALIS.

an Aberdonian boy has said, "Greek is a very difficult subject, the alphabet, you know, and thereabouts". It became possible in time to "leave the ground," to set papers to bajans which contained but little of mere grammar, and to find through the labours of schoolmasters, many of them trained by the professor himself, that bajans before their entrance had read and understood a fair amount of Homer and of the Greek tragedians.

The books read in class during two winters, together with those read privately for the degree examination, gave a liberal and excellent course in the language and literature of Greece for ordinary students. During the third and fourth years the professor saved from neglect those who wished to pursue the study: his "Hellenic Society" met weekly, and teacher and taught by its means kept up the old relations, while the well-selected subjects for honours ensured that the best students should have plenty of material on which to exercise that independent labour and thought which must at some stage be a main part of a scholar's training.

It may reasonably be said that the Aberdeen mental character tends in the study of language to the grammatical, the merely positive side of hard accuracy. For such minds there was plenty pabulum in the Greek class. But for those who might say of this side, in the words of Alan Breck, "It



WILLIAM DUGUID GEDDES.

doesna suit my genius, which is all for the upper guard," for the thought and form, for what is still best called by the old word "humane"; there was "humanity" too, the vision of some of the great figures of ancient literature, comparison of them with the great figures of more recent times, something of that philosophy and art of Greece, which give, and always, it seems, will give, so much inspiration, something of insight into language in its great aspect as the essential thing in the history of mankind and all the races of mankind. The present writer can testify that he remembers nothing he has heard more fascinating than a lecture by Professor Geddes on the connexion and spread of Aryan languages and peoples. He can testify also that between 1870 and 1878 there was a great advance in the standard expected from honours candidates in Greek. There was no check in the steady advance made during the whole of the professor's teaching days; intelligent students knew that the work expected from them had more than its counterpart in the incessant work of scholarship (and much besides of wide intellectual interest) to which he gave up his time. However Greek Verse Composition may be regarded, it was a feat to guide the advance in such an accomplishment that Aberdeen students had made during these years. The *Flosculi Graeci Boreales* have recently received

## AURORA BOREALIS.

an emphatic commendation from so great an authority as Professor Jebb.<sup>1</sup>

Order reigned supreme in the Greek class-room : there the spontaneity or the original sin of the natural bajan never came within distance of giving trouble. It is said that the professor's perfect health enabled him to do his thirty years' work without an hour's absence from his class. His presence, venerable even at a time of life when other men could have no claim to such an epithet, was a power of discipline in itself. He left no loop-hole for frivolity. He commanded respect from the first. The bajans' earliest acquaintance with University life was made in the Greek class-room at nine o'clock of an October morning : they received from the Greek professor, in a brief impressive lecture, what the young student chiefly needs, a kindly mixture of encouragement and warning—encouragement to do his work and get the best out of it, warning against the dangers that will beset him, among them, not the least of risks at Aberdeen, the danger of that disregard of simple rules of health and work which has had much to do with those gaps in class lists of twenty or thirty years ago, that make them like army lists in time of war. Serious and lighter spirits, who had little in

<sup>1</sup> There is no edition of a Greek book in modern times more "humane" than Sir W. Geddes' *Phaedo*.

WILLIAM DUGUID GEDDES.

common beyond an uneasy instinct that there might be more inside University walls than met the eye, must have felt alike, in the face of such an address, that something of austerity and of serious purpose would be for them part of the genius of the place. The feeling was confirmed by the deeply impressive short prayers with which the first Greek class began every day ; students on whom Greek itself left no great mark have never forgotten this trait, so characteristic of a great Scottish teacher. Such feelings are, of course, for most men more lasting, and probably more of an education than the daily lesson. The notes of one student on the *Works and Days* might be headed HASON, the notes of another on the *Cyclops* might state very clearly, "this is the only extant Greek play written in Iambic trimeter" : but both of these students have since done well in the world, and they are not the men we take them for if they would hesitate to ascribe some of their success to those hours in the Greek class under such an influence. Sympathy for the student character in general, and special sympathy for individual students, where it was needed, were given in plenty. He won the hearts of Highland students by learning Gaelic. None of his students who showed interest in the work can fail to have benefited by the kindness and helpfulness the professor was so ready to extend, or can

## AURORA BOREALIS.

fail to think of it still with gratitude ; this book would lose much in purpose if it did not help to show that few things can be more lasting than the regard of pupils to old teachers. And in the cases of the ordinary students, where some knowledge of home or private circumstances might settle a doubt as to a pass, examiners for degree in Classics ever found the Greek professor ready with the quietly-given information which determined the case in favour of many.

This is not the place for any discussion of the place due to Greek in any University system of education or in the Aberdeen system. There will never be an end, any more than of attempts after the ideal commonwealth, of attempts after Milton's "reforming of education, one of the greatest and noblest designs that can be thought on and for want of which this nation perishes". But it cannot be forgotten that during many years Sir William Geddes had not only to do his work, but to fight for the doing of it, to justify its existence and the part he considered it should bear in the training of Scottish youth. The way in which he did that work, bringing to Aberdeen not only a new knowledge of Greek, but what may fairly be called a new ideal of scholarship and of a scholar's life, constitutes a lasting title to gratitude and fame.





*Frederick Fuller.*

## FREDERICK FULLER.

The mathematics and the metaphysics :  
Fall to them, as you find your stomach serves you.

—TAMING OF THE SHREW.

**T**HE progress of the study of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in the University of Aberdeen, from 1850 to 1880, is so intimately connected with the names of Professor Fuller, the late Professor Thomson, and Dr. Rennet, that repetition might perhaps be avoided if the work of these three coadjutors were treated as a whole ; it is, however, possible to isolate to some extent the work of each, and here the professorate of Frederick Fuller is our special study. In 1851, the chair of mathematics in King's College became vacant by the death of Professor Tulloch, and fortunately for the University Frederick Fuller was elected to the professorship. Fuller was born in London, on November 1, 1819, and was thus only thirty-two years old at the time of his appointment. He had graduated at Cambridge as fourth wrangler in 1842, and in that year was elected to a fellowship at Peterhouse, of which college he was a member, and of which he subsequently became mathematical lecturer and tutor. He had

## AURORA BOREALIS.

thus gained experience both in teaching and controlling students, experience invaluable to one who was to become a successful University Professor. Among Fuller's contemporaries at Cambridge were such giants as Stokes, Cayley, and Adams, while among his pupils were Lord Kelvin and Professor Tait, so that it can be readily understood that the new Professor brought with him to Aberdeen a high standard of what mathematical teaching and attainment might be. Fuller thus combined with the energy of youth and mathematical ability of a high order, ample experience gained in Cambridge, then as now the special home of mathematics in Great Britain. And it must be frankly admitted that at King's College a mathematical professor in whom these qualities were combined was sorely needed, for Professor Thomson found it necessary, until Fuller's arrival, to teach elementary mathematics to his students in Natural Philosophy so that they might understand his special lectures.

In 1860, on the union of King's College and Marischal College, Fuller became Professor of Mathematics in the reorganised University. At the same time the new regulations made by the Commissioners instituting Honours examinations in the various departments, and extending the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, gave a stimulus to all branches of study, and to none more



## FREDERICK FULLER.

than that of mathematics, for up to this time the mathematics exacted for the degree of Master of Arts included only the first six books of Euclid, Algebra up to quadratic equations, and Elementary Trigonometry, and a glance at the papers set for the degree of M.A., both pass and honours, when Fuller left Aberdeen, will show the advance made since 1860.

Those who have not had experience of a Scotch University may have difficulty in realising the task before a mathematical professor owing to the size of the classes—which in Fuller's time might vary from 80 to 140—and the diversity of age of the students, boys of fifteen sitting side by side with men of thirty. Add to these difficulties the special difficulty attending all mathematical teaching in large classes, the varying ability and knowledge of the students. When in their semi-session students entered Professor Fuller's class, the only university examination which most of them had undergone was the bursary competition in the previous year, in which a knowledge was required of arithmetic and the first book of Euclid, and probably few had gone beyond these limits before entering the university. Their first session was then devoted to Classics and English, and before they came under Fuller's teaching, there was the vacation extending from March to October. Those students who were

## AURORA BOREALIS.

anxious to make progress in mathematics, and whose circumstances made it possible, read during the vacation, chiefly in Aberdeen with Dr. Rennet, and many students in these six months made more progress than most schoolboys beginning mathematics at an early age make in six years. Most of the students, however, found it impossible to have a tutor during the vacation, and thus, on entering the mathematical class, for most of them a year had elapsed since they had faced a mathematical examination, and that examination had only included arithmetic and the first book of Euclid.

To such classes, large in numbers, varying greatly in age, ability and knowledge, the Professor, with the help of an assistant, had to impart during two sessions the mathematics necessary for the degree of Master of Arts, while at the same time he stimulated and developed the special mathematical ability almost invariably to be found among his students. Professor Fuller perfectly realised the task before him and its difficulties. Pure mathematics do not readily arouse the sympathy of the average man ; the human interest of literary, historical or philosophical study so readily appealing to large numbers in presence of an able lecturer is wanting, and there are thus many chords to which students respond of which a mathematical professor cannot easily avail himself. The imagination of a few students may be

## FREDERICK FULLER.

touched, but his appeal is almost exclusively to the intellectual side, and to this alone Fuller addressed himself. To enter his class-room was to enter a region of clearness, order and precision. Vagueness and want of method had no place there. Pope's line, "See mystery to mathematics fly," here became unmeaning. The student felt absolute confidence in the competence of the teacher and in his method of teaching. This complete confidence and the great and uniform courtesy (leading to a reciprocal courtesy on the part of the students) with which Professor Fuller treated his students, made it impossible that any question of discipline should arise, and thus the difficulty sometimes felt in dealing with large classes was, as the mathematician would say, eliminated, and the energy of the Professor was entirely thrown into the teaching of the class.

The course that Professor Fuller planned out for the two sessions was as follows : in the semi session, Euclid, Algebra, Trigonometry, and in the tertian session, Geometrical Conic Sections, Analytical Geometry of two dimensions, the Differential Calculus, and the elements of the Integral Calculus. It was obvious to all that each day's work was carefully mapped out. Each morning, as "Freddy" entered beaming genially at the class through the spectacles he wore, we got the impression of a man happy in the work into which, after prayers, he plunged.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

There was great activity but no hurry, there was nothing omitted for want of time, no difficulty which the class could appreciate was passed over. His method of teaching in each subject was the same. He himself practically re-wrote the text-books on the black board ; students will remember how often he covered the three black boards which adorned his class-room, and no doubt many of his pupils, now teachers themselves, still use his proofs and find the value of their terseness and clearness. Those who were Fuller's students will especially remember his masterly exposition of the Principles of Arithmetic.

He also illustrated each subject by working out the typical examples which he had set as home work for the students. In the selection of these typical examples he showed the utmost skill, there were always some which most members of the class could solve, and others intended to test those whose mathematical skill and knowledge were greater. He gave his classes written examinations about once in three weeks, and these had an important place in his teaching. His old students may remember in these examinations his fixed idea that twelve propositions of Euclid should be written out within the hour, a speed not attained by many even in these days of incessant examination.

Few stories are told of Fuller ; in fact, from the

## FREDERICK FULLER.

instant of entering the class-room, when prayers were said almost with the chalk in his hand, until the last moment, there was on his part intense activity, and on the students' part almost incessant note-taking. Weariness sometimes overtook the less ardent, and once when he had filled his three black boards with a proof of the binomial theorem, catching with a sidelong glance a view of an opened umbrella, he merely remarked without ceasing to write, "Does it rain, Mr. —?" and the umbrella collapsed. It was currently reported that in going anywhere he refused to use a cab on the ground that he really could not spare the time.

Any one who has taught mathematics will understand that Professor Fuller, with one assistant, could not give students the personal attention so necessary in mathematics. Moreover the University made no provision for teaching honours students in their fourth year. Fortunately, Dr. Rennet, whose name has been well known to Aberdonians for the last forty years, began his career as *the* mathematical coach of Aberdeen in 1856, and students had thus just the private help they required to enable them to reap the full benefit of Professor Fuller's admirable teaching.

In 1878, Professor Fuller retired, and was succeeded by his old pupil George Pirie. The advance in the study of mathematics at Aberdeen can be best realised by the change that took place

## AURORA BOREALIS.

during Fuller's tenure of office in the mathematical examinations of the university. When Fuller came to Aberdeen in 1851, the candidates for the degree of Master of Arts were, as has been said, examined in Euclid, algebra up to quadratic equations, and elementary trigonometry, and there was no separate examination for honours. When he resigned, candidates were examined in Euclid, algebra up to theory of numbers, trigonometry, conic sections, treated geometrically and analytically, the differential calculus and the elements of the integral calculus. There was an examination for honours comprising geometry, algebra, plane and spherical trigonometry, analytical geometry of two and three dimensions, theory of equations, differential and integral calculus, and differential equations. These details are dry, but they do give an idea of the immense stride made by the University, and it would be difficult to find elsewhere so great a change in so short a time. The mathematical examinations of the University from being of an elementary character became for the pass degree of as high a character as in any British university, and the examination for honours would have been creditable to any University. These changes were doubtless due in part to the recommendations of the commission of 1858, but without such teachers as Fuller and Thomson (aided as they were, efficiently, by Dr. Rennet) the best of schemes

## FREDERICK FULLER.

and recommendations would have remained a dead letter instead of imparting as they did a vigorous impulse to the study of mathematics. There was increased efficiency in all the departments of the university after 1860, and this opened up fresh avenues of usefulness and work to Aberdeen students. When, after the great mutiny, positions in the Indian Civil Service were thrown open to competition, it was fortunate for Aberdeen that the professors had accustomed their students to such a standard, that with some special preparation they were able to compete for these posts with success. This success belongs to all the departments of study, but to no one more than Fuller belongs the credit of opening to Aberdeen students this great avenue of usefulness.

Professor Fuller's Cambridge training and experience joined to those of Professor Thomson, benefited Aberdeen mathematicians in another way, as under them the stream of Aberdeen men to Cambridge, which began about 1854, with the late Professor Slessor, Mr. Justice Stirling and Professor Barker, who were senior wranglers in 1858, 1860 and 1862 respectively, steadily continued, and still continues, to the mutual advantage of both Universities.

No mention has been made of Fuller's services to the Senatus as a man of business, but it is well known these were great and valuable.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

In recognition of Fuller's eminent services as Professor, his portrait by Sir George Reid, P.R.S.A., subscribed for by friends and old students, has been presented to the University, and now hangs in the Senatus room. His services were also recognised by Government in his appointment as one of the university commissioners under the Universities Act, 1889. He happily still lives, having rendered services to Aberdeen which the University will not readily forget, and of which the influence will long be felt, for the chairs of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy are now held by Pirie and Niven, both pupils of Professor Fuller's.

*λαμπάδια ἔχοντες διαδώσουσιν ἀλλήλοις.*







*Alex Bain*

## ALEXANDER BAIN.

The clearest head and the sincerest heart.

—POPE.

**T**HOUGH we knew his *Grammar* from our youth, Bain himself we had not seen till that vivid day when, after wandering aimlessly in a drizzle of rain and in quagmires of mud, among the Irish stirks of St. Luke's Fair, we were confronted with his notable personality, and were plunged without preamble of any sort into the first lecture of his English course. That this thin, sharp, almost hatchet face surveying the well-filled tiers of benches belonged to no ordinary man even we, schoolboys as most of us were, could divine. The impression rested on a tripod of countenance, manner and voice—each supporting the others. The prominent and finely-formed nose, the small sparkling hazel eyes, the mobile and expressive mouth, made a picture stamped with alertness. The hair brushed athwart the baldness and ending in a tip-tilted point at each ear accentuated the piquant archness of the face, and suggested the fox-terrier as the only just comparison. His movements were like his mind,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

active and nimble, but noiseless and devoid of fuss. He enforced a proposition with extended finger or outstretched arm, and these were his only gestures except when he was tackling an abstruse topic, and then he helped out his meaning by folding and re-folding the skirts of his gown over his knees. His clear, polished elocution, that modulated itself so perfectly to fit all shades of emphasis, completed the charm, and the general effect was magical and immediate.

It was a cause of murmur amongst a few aspiring souls that the English course confined itself to an exhaustive handling of rhetoric, and that the history of literature as such was not even touched upon. Earlier in his reign it was different—so rumour said, but his practical instincts, guided by experience, had modified his original plan. Looking back over a quarter of a century we see that in aiming at the greatest good of the greatest number his instincts kept him right. Arguing that the field of English literature is too vast to be effectively dealt with in sixty half-hour lectures, he provided us with a compendium of critical principles to pilot us in our own efforts at writing. He laid great stress therefore on the homely and prosaic virtues of clearness and precision, on the merits of brevity, on the arts of transition and connection, and on the building of paragraphs.

## ALEXANDER BAIN.

Part of the time, however, was devoted to criticising poetry, and here, while he had much to say regarding felicitous diction, apt imagery and good melody, he did not perhaps sufficiently sympathise with the more imaginative side of the art. The criticisms, always shrewd and acute, and always pointing a principle, which was his ultimate aim, were on occasion coldly unappreciative. His own constitutional tendency being away from emotion, he rather frowned upon "gush" and hyperbolic outbursts. Shelley's *Skylark* was condemned for its incoherent imagery, and Shakespeare's "New-born babe striding the blast" was mercilessly stigmatised as rant.

Magic casements, opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas in faery lands forlorn,

and all such vaguely ethereal picturing did not appeal to him, intellect being supreme over feeling. The imaginative few thought he had an exaggerated horror of exaggeration. If there was an embryonic Keats in the class, he went hungry away; but even a Keats might have profited by the hard Johnsonian pruning of luxurious overgrowths. That the professor was not blind to the beauties of artistic poetry, however, was proved by his reading of Gray's *Elegy*, the echoes of which still linger round individual stanzas.

We can point to no stylist (Edinburgh claims

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Stevenson !) as the outcome of those twenty years' teaching. Yet who will affirm that the general gain in utilitarian qualities spread over a diffused area is unequal to one brilliant product? It has been freely said that Bain's own books are deficient in style, and they are cited as a proof of the futility of all rhetorical teaching. This transcendental usage of the word "style," that seeks to limit it to the graces and charms of imaginative expression so conspicuous in Ruskin and Pater, will cut out all but a narrow circle of aspirants. If the style is the man you will hardly find a truer transcript of a man in his work than in Bain's books. Order, lucidity, relevance, force—these were his ideals, and though they did not exclude other considerations, they were paramount. The precise diction, the short, sharp emphasis, the closely-welded paragraphs, reflect as in a mirror the whole character of his mind. If austere in the imaginative region and wanting in musical cadence and flow, it is yet a style with individuality and distinction. Every man has his limitations ; had Bain been constitutionally predisposed towards the gifts whose absence his critics deplore, he would have been impoverished in other directions.

It was the Logic and Psychology class, however, that invoked the professor's most potent spells. This was his sphere ; here he had done his most

## ALEXANDER BAIN.

original work, by which he was favourably known outside his own country—a virtue of great merit in students' eyes ; here his exceptional endowment found proper scope. The analytic character of his mind, noticeable in the English class, and sometimes doing him injustice there, was in place when expounding discrimination and the great law of relativity as the basis of all intellectual exercise ; and as he, day by day, built up in rigidly logical sequence the fabric of his system, we began to understand the power of the instruments he was placing in our hands. He wrote out deliberately all the leading propositions on the blackboard, and greatly assisted the memory as well as the judgment by putting everything under numerical heads. Of course, there were not wanting those who complained that the lectures, though models of lucidity, were “dry”. This merely meant that intellectual effort was required to take in their bearing and adjust their perspective. If they were dry to some, it was in the sense that champagne is “dry,” the antithesis being “sweet” ; they were stimulating and exhilarating to the great majority, and they were conspicuously and scrupulously free from anecdote and padding and catching digressions, which sometimes sweeten a lecture to effeminate palates. The dreariness of formal logic was relieved by the piquancy of the examples and the sly innuendoes that we read into

## AURORA BOREALIS.

the collocations of *Barbara* and *the Major*. The inductive methods showed him at his best, and opened our eyes to new worlds, first teaching us to think for ourselves. Their application to the causes of Dew was a lesson in research that told favourably on every student. The difficulties of definition were faced with a seriousness and thoroughness that at first appalled us. Equally educative and impressive was his elaborate exposition of the brain and the organs of sense, as the physiological basis of his psychology.

Throughout, what struck us forcibly as a distinctive feature was the wealth of examples, drawn from the whole circle of the sciences. Mill's *Logic* itself was no more indebted to our logician in this respect than we were, for excursions into regions of chemistry and astronomy that we have never traversed since. Moreover, he sometimes pitched his illustrations in a lower key, so that the strictly scientific, dignified and bookish flavour disappeared, to the enhancement of their effect. "A scuttle of coals will raise a man to the top of — Mont Blanc." "A hungry man enjoying a juicy beef-steak comes suddenly upon a — cinder." Many such "told," and the class responded with gusto; only, to gauge their full effect, one must reproduce the delicate management of the voice and the italic emphasis that etched the leading words so indelibly on the



## ALEXANDER BAIN.

memory that it became a trick to imitate such displays.

Apart from these sparkles there were no jokes. When the winter sun on a clear day threw a frosty gleam in at the southern window and silhouetted the doctor's profile on the blackboard, being especially liberal in its treatment of his most prominent facial feature, the incipient hilarity was promptly suppressed by a cold signal to pull down the blind. Or, when the professor in his rapid use of the same blackboard did at times perpetrate a solecism in spelling, on which the class with wicked alertness pounced exultant, he went calmly on neglectful, and to all appearance gloriously oblivious.

Generally he was thought cold, hard, perhaps unsympathetic ; he kept up the tradition of professorial dignity which made him difficult of approach. Those who did approach him survived and ridiculed the difficulty as a myth. Later on, it dawned upon us that this steely armour was but a factor in the economy of discipline. Any other manner might in those days of large classes have opened the door to disorder. Stereotyped jokes being generally forecasted are received with counterfeited glee and are a bar to strict rule. When the class exploded at some scintillation, the lecturer relaxed not a muscle but went on unchecked, and we were thrown back to our notebooks if we were not to lose the thread.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Not till you knew him personally did the great fund of geniality that lay behind the professorial mask disclose itself. Our first introduction was when the English prizemen visited his house to select their prizes—a practice all his own; two years later the prizemen in Logic dined at Ferryhill Lodge. On both occasions we became aware of side-lights of character hitherto unsuspected.

Frequent intercourse brought his amiability into greater prominence; and his stories and good sayings made a walk with him one of the week's pleasures. Without the voice and the humorous twinkle and the dead halt at the crucial point to give due impressiveness, these lost much. They illustrated features of character, or expressed a general dictum in neat, brief, aphoristic form like "a headache is nature's danger signal against excess". He had a fine command of humorous irony. A student, rusticated for unseemly conduct, called on the professor, and urged that although in the row, he was there as a moderating force, attempting to keep the rioters in check; he was silenced by the remark: "For myself, I well believe that, but your difficulty will be to get others to believe it". He enlivened a commonplace by a happy turn; when something was characterised as nonsense, he retorted: "I wonder you do not qualify it with a strong epithet". Confronted by the

## ALEXANDER BAIN.

inquiry whether the Old or the New Testament is the better teaching medium, he baulked a dogmatic settlement, like Sir Roger de Coverley, with "Each has its merits". Many of his sallies were early recollections of Professor Knight, who evidently impressed him deeply, and whose thin, shrill, shrieky voice he mimicked to perfection.

The one term that describes him best is practicality. Anything dreamy or visionary was alien to his nature. Intellectual sanity and clearness of vision, coupled with a tenacious will that no emotional wave could shake, these were the constituents of his mind. His every action was grounded in principle and free from caprice and hap-hazard ; whatever he did was done on a system. The whole course of his day worked like a clock, and was modified for no man. The prime motor being regard for his health, on which his work ultimately depended, all his arrangements were made subsidiary to that consideration. Hence came his strict regimen in meals ; his ample and frequent exercise, which in his active days he varied by riding, driving and walking. The last was more a run than a walk. How well we remember his slight stooping figure (for he was not of heroic stature) racing home along the King Street Road, outdistancing all competitors ; *we* did not dawdle, but he soon shot out of our ken. He would sit through a

## AURORA BOREALIS.

luncheon fit to tempt a Lucullus and touch not a dish ; when a railway journey had to be faced he would pass the night midway rather than vary his dinner-hour. His holidays were planned in accordance with original inductions as to the best weather and the avoidance of crowds.

His attitude of seeming frigidity to his class was studied. He had a nice and scrupulous judgment in the matter of eccentricity, and once remarked on the risk to a certain professor's discipline by his affecting a moustache. The same sensitiveness ruled his elocution, in which he had taken great pains to perfect himself by eradicating everything provincial and Scotch. To this his residence in London and his intercourse with the Grotes largely contributed.

Utility—what's the good of it? was always in his mind, and whatever could not stand that test, he endeavoured to remove. It was characteristic that he never delivered inaugural lectures, looking upon them as a kind of trifling ; when Lord Rector, he abolished the graduation oath as an unmeaning ceremony ; he attacked the predominance of classics ; he made proposals to facilitate the conduct of public business ; he poured ridicule on the transcendental Hegelianism that cannot express itself in intelligible language.

He was not a great reader. Desultory reading he

## ALEXANDER BAIN.

seldom indulged in ; novels from their habitual exaggeration were impossible to him. He read with a definite purpose, making the books his own, and having their contents at command when wanted. Talking to Mill about the rapidity with which reviewers can judge a new book, when slow mortals like himself had not half mastered it, he got the reply, " Ah ! but then you *read* books ". His whole scheme of thought was so mapped out in his mind (his indexes are each a regular plan of campaign) that when a new fact or apposite illustration turned up, its significance was recognised in a moment and it was pigeon-holed or ear-marked there and then for future use. His jottings, made anywhere and everywhere that a happy thought occurred to him, were all before him when he was writing, and being marshalled in perfect order, not only economised time but guaranteed an exhaustive survey of his materials. That he was a student in an emphatic sense may be seen in his " Essay on Study ".

His helpfulness to others, in stimulating them to undertake inquiries that he found no time to prosecute, was another gift. He was always ready with wise guidance in any new project, and though constitutionally chary of praise, he enhanced its value by its rarity, so that his slight word of commendation was more potent than others' flattery. When he conferred a favour, he looked for no return ;

## AURORA BOREALIS.

gratitude consisted not in returning unnecessary benefits to the donor, but in handing them on to the needy and thus leavening the world with the spirit of benevolence.

This is not the place to analyse his philosophical tenets. The clerical outcry against his appointment looked foolish in after years when it was ascertained that a man might pass through the class without being able to classify the professor philosophically. The more knowing students could make inferences and push his principles to their ultimate issue, but the subject was never directly expounded, nor was there the slightest attempt to play an aggressive part or to proselytise. He provided instruments and methods, whereby we could test everything for ourselves; what was incontrovertible and well-grounded and securely ascertained he indicated but he did no more. It was not surprising, therefore, that the animosity which assailed him in 1860 gradually died away, and that some of those who protested most strongly were ready to acknowledge their mistake.

Throughout we have spoken of him in the past tense, because his work is done; but happily he is still with us—a hale octogenarian, less active in body than was his wont, but as keen and alert and critical in mind as of yore. He conversed with De Quincey in the forties, and he has outlived his

## ALEXANDER BAIN.

most brilliant pupils. When we remember that in the lottery of life he did not draw the prize of a strong physique, his eighty winters attest the practical character of his mind, which early divined the secret of longevity to be fresh air and exercise, rigorous self-restraint, no self-indulgence or excitement. Rich in saving common sense, he has not scorned the unexempt condition by which all mortal frailty must subsist—refreshment after toil, ease after pain; yet he has lived according to nature's sober laws and holy dictate of spare temperance. And now, while

He husbands out life's taper at the close,  
And keeps the flame from wasting by repose,

he contemplates with calm fortitude the inevitable "decay of nature and the foreshadowings of the tomb".

That his scheme of life did not exclude hard work is proved by the number of his books. These form a small library in themselves, and range through Grammar, Rhetoric, Biography and Criticism, up to Education, Physical Science, Logic and Psychology. Together with his teaching they have had no small influence on our era. His *Grammar* has been imbibed by thousands of Hindoos; his *Education as a Science* is translated into all the leading European languages. What he said of

## AURORA BOREALIS.

John Stuart Mill may be applied with hardly less truth to himself : "No calculus can integrate the innumerable little pulses of knowledge and of thought that he has made to vibrate in the minds of his generation".







*W. Minto*

## WILLIAM MINTO.

Our pleasant Willy, ah ! is dead of late ;  
With whom all joy and jolly merriment  
Is also deaded, and in dolour drent.

—SPENSER.

**S**TERNE at Calais was inclined to pity the man who could travel from Dan to Beersheba and cry out that all was barren. Yet the standing defect of the University of Aberdeen has been the lack of great men to afford to the *probi bonæque spei adolescentes* of the prize formula the early stimulus and mental quickening, to provide which is so peculiarly the function of a real seat of learning. To most of us the journey was the reverse of sentimental ; there are few “spots of sunny greenery”. But there is one man whose memory is very pleasant to all who knew him. This is Minto, and the name rises naturally without any formal addition of Mr. or Professor.

There was no English Literature chair up to 1860, and we remember hearing thirty years ago one of the most distinguished graduates of Marischal College say that the consequence was the loss of much judicious private patronage in the public services

## AURORA BOREALIS.

through the willing instrumentality of Lieutenant-Colonel Sykes. The commission that conjoined the subjects of English and logic in a single chair either had a cheerful belief in the ability of man, or was more likely perplexed by the lack of endowments. There is no natural affinity between the two subjects, and it cannot be said that Professor Bain was in any way seen at his best in the English class, though it was the careful work of a strong man. But if the breezy "member for the universe," the ex-M.P. for the Elgin Burghs, Grant Duff, was responsible mainly for the election of Professor Minto in 1880, we have all since agreed that in this particular the judgment of the Lord Rector was right and happy. In Aberdeen, at least, it may be safely said that no more successful choice has been shown since the fusion of the colleges. In fact the election of Minto inaugurated a new era in the North. He carried to its complete development the style and tone that Black had adopted in dealing with his men. He had a wider horizon and experience than the more restricted and local traditions which he found in operation ; and, as a result of this, it has been seen that, if there be next to no loyalty to the University itself, there is a great deal of it to the memory of Minto. The men of the present day can hardly conceive a time when the appearance in King Street of a professor behind us would send us

## WILLIAM MINTO.

scattering up a side street to avoid the great man, who regarded crossing the line in any genial way, to meet his students, as a mistake in theory and in practice. What may have been found convenient in the individual colleges before 1860 we cannot say, but the retention of such ways in a University was a sign of provincialism and ignorance which it was happily given to Minto to break down once and for ever.

It has been a debated point with his old men (of whom we are not one, having been under his predecessor), whether Minto was more acceptable in English or in Logic. We think there can be no doubt that it was in Logic that he shone. English he knew well must ever be a secondary and non-essential part of the curriculum, the refuge of the passmen or the hold of a few. He had, also, but three hours in the week to devote to it, when at the end of the day the men came in a more or less fagged condition from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., and in a mood little inclined to fresh note taking. But there was no lack of interest, through his easy and judicious treatment of the subject. He was fresh in every way and on every name of importance, never retailing aridities or commonplaces, and never rattling with wearisome persistency his peas in the bladder, in the belief that sound constituted substance. He wisely confined himself to a period, and he believed Chaucer to be best

## AURORA BOREALIS.

adapted to constitute a didactic medium. He sent more readers to the library than all his colleagues combined, and upon the societies, literary and debating, his influence was very marked. This was his second contribution to the academic life in the North—he aroused intellectual interest, besides personal regard. When at the graduation dinner, in 1884, of his first Bajan year, Minto was told by his best student, that in the English and Logic classes he, and he was sure every other, never looked at his watch, we can remember that he was greatly pleased with the appreciation, and that he often would refer to it in a gratified way.

In logic it may be frankly admitted that he was not equal to his predecessor, Bain—at least so far. “I come after a big man, you see, in his line ; I feel I don't fill his boots,” he would say in a depressed tone, which we once tried to lighten by explaining to him what was the general view. Bain was the natural scientist with a drift towards principles, but not towards metaphysics ; Minto was the writer filling the logic chair, and doing his day's work with acceptance and faithfulness. Each of them was handicapped by a side to his work which was uncongenial. Bain shone in the methods and in such fields of induction as afforded him scope for bringing in natural science ; Minto was happiest in rendering perfectly clear the great outstanding difficulties of

## WILLIAM MINTO.

logic, with an eye for the pricking of some inflated windbag of Hegel, or for tracing the origin of leading doctrines and their turning points in history. In this last respect Bain was singularly weak, through the essentially non-sympathetic and non-historical attitude of his mind. Much of the psychology of both was indicative of a general rather than of a special acquaintance with the constantly shifting and advancing nature of such literature. This is the necessary Nemesis of the physiological school, and here Minto was conspicuously inferior to Bain. But for the majority of the class we think that Minto was more cut out and acceptable. Bain lacked vista and imagination. He had never been a passman at any one period, and he pursued his way undisturbed by the thorny difficulties of the subject, and what he gained as a brilliant formal lecturer he rather lost as a teacher. Lucidity, perfect lucidity, was Minto's note, and nothing gave him greater pain than the detection in 1885 of a perfect epidemic of "cribbing" in logic, through the writing out of abstracts on blotting paper, and the most elaborate preparations and rehearsals carried out by several parties of four men to one table. He believed that he had made logic interesting, and somehow fancied the result was an impeachment. He had, however, not made allowance for human nature, which that year reasserted itself with vigour and success.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

From time to time he altered and expanded his course of lectures. We have seen two sets, where the improvement in precision and treatment is marked. He kept up an easy and steady flow of language in the class, reading in a way from small slips of paper about the size of playing cards, a handful of which he would bring in and select pages as he proceeded. A swift writer could have followed him, as he had the literary man's instinct for the mental punctuation of his sentences, and the *Logic* in Murray's series of University Extension Manuals will to those that never knew Minto convey a fair idea of the work in the class, ever lightened up by a happy illustration or anecdote. He would bring down the house with his "sookin' the papist" story of the ancient lady who explained the "toopicans, crosses and fal-lals on the Free West Church" as due to the wet nurse of Dr. Davidson, who had thus subtly influenced through heredity the early mind of her charge! He was a happy oral examiner, "putting on" his man as Izaak Walton did his worm, using him as if he loved him. Nervous men who can remember the ordeal with Bain will know what this means. Those of us who were shy or diffident and who, like the Abbé Sieyès, have lived through it, can only recall the doctor's orals as a Reign of Terror.

To see Minto at his best and very best, and to see



WILLIAM MINTO.

his hold upon and interest in his men, you had to meet him at a class supper or the dinner of a society. There was ever ease in his presence and under his chairmanship. He was a ready and graceful toast speaker, and he struck a happy note in those social hours. "It was different in my time," he would say in an affected tone of terror. "In our days, you know, we had a dinner at half a crown or so in the old *Lemon Tree*; plain leg o' mutton and a puddin'. Not this sort of thing," he added with a glance down the table at the guests in evening dress. "Heigh-ho! for the good old days of high thinking and plain living." Then he would turn to the waiter with a whisper of "Glass of ale, please, from the wood," and produce his pipe, after formally begging permission from those round him to smoke. "There are few things," he used to say, with a genial wink through the bottom of his glass, "so touching to me as a Bajan class supper about midnight. There then begins a strong trend up of the men to me. I see it coming, and I know what it means. They wish to delicately pump me and see if they have passed. I can't refuse to tell them, as you do; you have no bowels. I *must* tell them, or I should be unhappy. Now, here I sit, having put my hand to *the plough*, and I can't go back!" Yet no more discriminating examiner ever was; he would see honest effort in many a tangled mass, and patch up an answer on

## AURORA BOREALIS.

the poetry of Surrey and Wyatt to let many a quaking candidate through. Men knew his generosity in this respect, and perhaps even trusted to it. "I had youth and beauty at my feet to-day," he once said, with a playful dig in our ribs, "youth and beauty, you dog. They were the sisters of ——, who either came or were sent by him to plead with me to let him through. They went down on their knees, and begged with tears that I should tell them he was safe. He wasn't. I could only escape by the lucky remembrance that the list had been posted that morning." He was equally judicious in dealing with the best men. "Confine yourself to the English questions in the degree paper," he whispered to the Seafield medallist one year. "I wish to let Troup the examiner see what *we* can do in English here." No other professor would ever have dreamed of so genially identifying himself with a student in the work of the class.

His type of intellect was strongly marked. It was that of the general as opposed to the specialised scholar. This, indeed, may be inferred from his graduating with triple honours in classics, mathematics and philosophy, which no one has done before or since, and which it is to be sincerely hoped no one will ever be foolishly tempted to do again. There can be little doubt that the heavy strain caused to a constitution never over-robust by this

## WILLIAM MINTO.

and the pressure of journalistic work ended in his own early death, as similar circumstances led to that of his class-fellow, Professor W. Robertson Smith. Though Minto was a Ferguson scholar in classics, at no time had he any pure classical instinct or capacity. He had little of historical feeling or touch on the past, and the attitude of the scholar to research was not habitually and consciously present to him. Like his master and predecessor, he was rather too much at ease intellectually ; he had no deepening sense of the hunger and thirst of the specialist to take stock every decade of the advance of knowledge in his own field. He had thus strange fits of prejudice and narrowness. He had little belief in history, and rather regarded it as an old almanac or a fiction pre-agreed upon. He had an overweening contempt, like our late moralist Professor Fyfe, for minutiae. Greek accentuation they both ignorantly decried, heedless of the stinging note on such sciolists by Porson on the *Medea*. But his general type was acceptable in the highest degree to all with whom he came in contact. He had many interests, if he had no passions. Even his novels and playwriting, regret them as we may and do from the opposing and specialised point of view, may not have been useless to him in the gained experience of men and the world.

It is by his books that Minto will be known to the

## AURORA BOREALIS.

coming generation, for the bust in King's College Library hardly represents the man we knew. He has left much honest and solid work behind him, which it is alike wonderful and satisfying to contemplate in consideration of the circumstances under which it was written. His time available for such was greatly broken in upon through his engagements on the staff of the *Daily News* and the *Examiner*. We have heard that a good deal of his prose manual was composed in Aberdeen at great heat; he would early in the day light the gas and pull down the blinds, to absorb himself in work in a tranquil atmosphere. To that manual all students will turn with pleasure and profit who desire a fresh and interesting treatment of the subject. Many of the greater names could not be better done, and the introductory analysis of the style and thought of De Quincey, Carlyle and Macaulay, is a remarkably able and accurate study of the three great writers that cannot but be valuable to young students, if they only bear in mind Buffon's belief that the style is the man after all, and that no mere victorious analysis can ever reveal the source of an author's power. Only in the case of Addison do we think that Minto reveals a curious lack of judgment and insight. His *Characteristics of English Poets from Chaucer to Shirley* is a book best appreciated by those who work in that contested field. The complete

## WILLIAM MINTO.

study of the Elizabethans is the pasture of men of the days reached by Methuselah ; much of it was neither known to nor available by Minto, as a glance at Saintsbury's superficial *Elizabethan Literature* and bibliographical appendix will show. But for ripe and original judgments Minto's book is excellent. On Marlowe, the key to the position, he is strong ; and on Chaucer, Langland, Greene, Spenser, he has much original matter. As a Bajan he was, he told us, drawn to the close study of Shakespeare's sonnets, and in the history of their interpretation he will fill a niche in literature—both for his general view of the dark woman in cxxvii.-clii., hopelessly impossible as we hold it to be, as well as for his happy identification of Chapman as the poet of "the full proud sail" of sonnet lxxxvi. He did much excellent work, too, for Ward's *English Poets* and for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Defoe as the prince of journalists attracted him ; and when he worked at that book for John Morley's *English Men of Letters* series, the writer at the next desk in the British Museum singularly enough was John Hill Burton, then engaged on his *Age of Queen Anne*. He liked to talk of those days and his life as a London journalist, and the ability to turn over night a Government Blue-Book into an article for the papers he attributed to his Bajan experiences of working for an examination.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Cicero for a politician stayed too long at the bar ; Minto for a scholar stayed too long in Fleet Street. Yet for him it had some advantages. Ulysses-like he had seen many men and known their mind. He alone of his colleagues impressed his students with the feeling of the old mediæval wandering scholar who had realised and concreted in his own experience the *Universitas*. There was this charm in Bain, to our way of thinking the only charm, that he also impressed the class with a feeling that here was visibly before it a man who had known great men, one giving definitions and criticism familiar to men the world over through his works and translations of them into other tongues. He "scored off his own bat" as it were, and added to knowledge ; there was no "stealing runs" by other men's brains. So, too, with Minto. He knew there were "hills beyond Pentland," and, politically a Home Ruler, was convinced that the application of that doctrine to learning was ruinous, knowing that to betray complacent ignorance or indifference to the best work in foreign arsenals and dockyards is to court wilfully educational supersession as a first-rate power. He thus brought the outside world to the gates and gave the look beyond, which it is the peculiar and the indispensable function of a university to provide.

He was naturally of a hasty and quick temper. But it was well kept under control. He was

## WILLIAM MINTO.

sympathetic and affable to a degree, and his affability was natural and not consciously assumed. He never forgot the academic treatment to which he had been exposed as a very young man, and to which he never referred but with strong emotion and tears. It could never occur again, but much of the sympathy which he extended to his own men had been learned then by himself in the school of experience and affliction. He knew the traditions of the University well ; he remembered he had been himself a Bajan, to whom every parasang, every milestone on the road was familiar. He set himself studiously to catch the tone and mind of the men, and the hold which he thus early gained on their affection and esteem he maintained and increased to the end. John Colvin he regarded as "a part of the place". The feeling was mutual, and he viewed with a pleased smile the spectacle of the old man closing the door of the logic class-room, and genially blowing a kiss to all within.

He over-shadowed his colleagues in both colleges. Of this there is not the slightest doubt : "'tis true, and all men's suffrage". Time will only confirm this judgment. Those who have had in any way, by personal experience, by research, or by contact with others, to examine and study in detail the working of the Scottish university system, will confess that the natural tendency of the graduates is to

## AURORA BOREALIS.

swear *at* and not *by* their Alma Mater. Not one of Minto's old men has ever turned on him, or will turn. "Gladly he would learn and gladly teach," like his own Chaucerian clerk. He rated and carried himself very modestly, and, as a man of judgment and long-trained critical faculty, he set himself much more readily to find out what good could be said of a man rather than what could be found to his discredit. The sympathy and the eagerness evinced by all classes inside and outside the University to hear the slightest bulletin during his illness were quite unique in the north; they showed beyond all question how far he was the *Bien-aimé* of his dynasty. At an international conference of academic scholars, no doubt the North would have been ready to put forward his predecessor as its representative man. But as its second, and as a very good example of the general scholar without any aptitude or training for the exhibition of finished and detailed learning, it would none the less readily have felt secure in selecting William Minto. *Ultimus Romanorum.*







*David Thomson*

## DAVID THOMSON.

I have done the State some service, and they know it.  
—OTHELLO.

**D**AVID THOMSON, after an educational career begun at a Continental school, continued at Glasgow University, and completed with distinction in 1839 at Trinity College, Cambridge, was in 1845, at the age of twenty-eight, appointed Regent and Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University and King's College of Aberdeen.

The senior wranglership of his year had been predicted for him ; but, being unable through illness to take all the papers, he was deprived of the chance of fulfilling the prediction, and came out among the senior optimes.

From the very beginning, however, of his career at Aberdeen his power made itself felt ; and when early in 1880 that career was closed by death, he had been for more than thirty years one of the most effective and influential personalities in the northern University world.

During his professorship of thirty-five years, the services which he rendered to the University,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

whether as professor in dealing with his subject, or as member of the Senatus in helping to shape its policy, were both great and varied. He began these services in his own particular field of natural philosophy, by initiating that upward progress in the standard of attainment which continued to the end of his life. It was no small service to raise the University teaching of this important subject from the level of popular lectures to that of an exact science. By doing this he placed the University, so far as his department was concerned, abreast of the requirements of the day, requirements which were certain to advance with the rapid advance of applied science.

The credit due to him for this service is enhanced by the difficulties which he had to overcome. The mathematical teaching was not at that time up to the level required for the scientific treatment of natural philosophy ; and he had himself to supply what was lacking until Professor Fuller came to do his part nobly in the mathematical field.

In alliance with this worthy fellow-worker he gave the University the impulse which started it on that career of success at Cambridge, and other "arenas of the south," which is one of the proudest features of its recent history. The greatness of this service cannot easily be over-estimated. A sense of power and an *esprit de corps* were generated, which

## DAVID THOMSON.

stimulated every serious member of the student body, as was soon made evident when under the guidance of the present principal, Sir William Geddes, the classical side began to follow suit. All lovers of the University will hope that the impulse is not yet exhausted.

Nor were the deficiencies in the mathematical standard the only difficulties which he encountered at the outset. In the examination halls "copying" and "cribbing" prevailed to a scandalous extent, and in examinations for a "pass" were regarded as very trifling offences. The effect of this upon the value of degrees, and upon the standard of acquirement, not to speak of the even more important moral standard of the students, could be nothing short of disastrous.

To Professor Thomson all deceptions and shams, degrading and demoralising in effect, as well as essentially immoral in themselves, were an unspeakable abomination. In the interests alike of students and University, and of truth and honesty, he at once attacked the evil. When at the close of his first session the examination papers showed that wholesale copying had been practised, he demanded another examination under stricter surveillance. The students refused. They found, however, that in the new professor they had met an antagonist of an unwonted kind; for he prevailed upon the Senatus

## AURORA BOREALIS.

to suspend till October the whole of the bursary payments conditionally due in April. It was a severe lesson, and one which none but a fearless and determined man would have ventured to inflict. How much courage and determination were required may be judged by the fact that it was only by a majority of one that the Senatus consented.

The measure was justified by results, for the days of wholesale copying were at an end. Although, knowing the weakness that comes over some consciences in dire straits, he continued keenly vigilant to the last, and found an occasional offender and victim, he had by his bold and decisive action succeeded in purifying the examination halls, and thus performed for the University a service of the highest value.

His action left him a legacy of temporary unpopularity, and he was referred to among the students as "The Fiend". But in time that feeling gave place to one of a very different kind, and he was commonly called by the affectionate title of "Davie".

Aberdeen students since that day owe to him, and to the stricter *régime* and healthier moral feeling on the subject which followed his action, much of the success which they have achieved in every field where the test of written examinations has been applied.

## DAVID THOMSON.

The change of feeling with regard to him was probably due to his personal characteristics, and to his supreme excellence as a professor. The University was at that time fortunate in enjoying the services of other professors of remarkable teaching power. It is no disparagement to them to express the conviction that there never was a more supremely efficient teacher than Professor David Thomson. Absolute clearness—logical sequence evident in every step—deliberation sufficient to permit each step to be taken in and noted and to render needless the smallest repetition—exemplification of laws already unfolded—the whole enlivened with occasional touches of the driest humour—such were some of the characteristics of his lectures. As he unfolded the laws of matter or followed step by step the discoveries of electrical science we were not only following the movements of the great minds of past days, we were, to use old Kepler's expression, "thinking God's thoughts after Him".

In performing the duties of his office in such a manner he was rendering a service of far wider import than the mere teaching of natural philosophy. On the benches before him were young men with minds growing, developing, undergoing training by means of the University course, who in a large proportion of cases were destined to be

## AURORA BOREALIS.

teachers themselves, as schoolmasters, ministers, professors. It was no small service, whether he meant it or not, to furnish them with the conception of something at least approaching an ideal teacher, a conception which would furnish inspiration in after years. His absolute clearness, his refusal to deviate from the strict sequence of thought, must have had its effect on the future thinkers, writers, preachers, or lawyers before him. In fact, they were not only learning natural philosophy, but getting a piece of splendid mental training besides.

His power as a disciplinarian was no less remarkable. The good students, of course, were thoroughly interested, and occupied with the subject. But in every class there are some who, failing to recognise their opportunities or their duties, make no attempt to grasp the teaching, but devote themselves to finding amusement in disturbance. One student of great natural ability and brazen assurance made in another class-room such sport as almost to turn the whole thing into a burlesque. In Professor Thomson's class-room he sat as if afraid to move lest he should draw "Davie's" eye upon him. He had observed that "Davie's" way of quieting a disturber was to invite him up to the board for examination, and there by means of question, satire and sarcasm, aided by the student's ignorance, to make it feel like the rack and boot and



## DAVID THOMSON.

thumbscrews combined. He had not only seen it, but tales, many in number, had come down from past years, and afforded great amusement. He had no desire to provide a new story. He knew that if he gave the opportunity it would not be neglected, and that his fellow-students would so enter into the fun as well as justice of the thing that he would get no sympathy. The result was that, if there had been such a thing in the natural philosophy class, he might justly have got the prize for good conduct.

One student who felt dissatisfied with his career because he had found himself unable to get the better of "Davie" in the class-room, thought he would redeem his failure at the end of the course by forcing from the professor a certificate which he was sure would be very unwillingly given. He called on the professor, prepared to do battle for his rights, and eager for the combat. He was received with the greatest urbanity. When he stated that he had called for his certificate, he could scarcely believe his ears when the professor said, "Oh, yes, Mr. —, with pleasure ; sit down". Paralysed with surprise, he sat while the professor examined his record of class attendance and work, wrote out the certificate, and handed it over carefully put up in an envelope. He was shown out with great politeness, and departed. His frame of

## AURORA BOREALIS.

mind was somewhat mixed. He had been disappointed of a fight, but at least he had the spoils of victory—he had his certificate. On the way home it occurred to him to wonder what “Davie” had said, and unfolding the certificate, he read : “ Mr. — attended the natural philosophy class during sessions—and—with regularity, and sometimes behaved himself with propriety ”. His feelings may be imagined : they were not triumphant.

We are tempted to select a few stories to illustrate what has been said above of his dealing with disturbers and triflers ; but space forbids, and it must suffice to say that many of them have been collected and recorded elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

From the very first, Professor Thomson took an active part in the work of the *Senatus Academicus*. Very soon after coming to Aberdeen, he was chosen its secretary, and his influence immediately began to be felt. To quote the words of Principal Sir William Geddes : “ Coming while still young into a body of then elderly professors, he was soon appointed secretary, and the qualifications which he showed in the conduct of business made him for a long time the directing pilot in the somewhat troublous period of transition, when the colleges had to

<sup>1</sup> In a memorial volume by the present writer, published by Messrs. Wyllie & Son, Aberdeen.

DAVID THOMSON.

be transformed under the pressure of the demand for University extension and reform”.

The union of the two Universities of Aberdeen had long been held by many to be desirable in the interests of the advancement of learning, and the better utilisation of the endowments held by them for the purposes of University education. To effect this, attempts had been made from time to time for 200 years, but without success. At length, however, the movement, which took its rise in King's College in the year in which Professor Thomson became sub-principal, achieved the object, and in 1860 the two Universities became one.

This result was led up to by a vehement controversy which raged, sometimes with great heat, for years, and divided the North of Scotland into two keenly hostile camps. The point which caused the bitterest feeling and the sharpest division of opinion was the question of the distribution of the faculties, when fused, between the two colleges, or rather, simply, the site of the arts classes. This is not the place to stir the ashes of a controversy whose embers are probably not yet extinct. No account, however, of Professor Thomson would be satisfactory without at least a statement of the position which he took up. We shall therefore state his view, and simply leave it as a record of what he held to be wise and just in the circumstances. He

## AURORA BOREALIS.

contended strenuously that while Medicine and Law *must*, for obvious reasons, have their home in Marischal College, Arts *ought* to go to King's ; because to place Arts also at Marischal would be to practically extinguish King's—an act of intolerable injustice to the older institution, the owner of the larger endowments.

But whatever side men take on such questions as these, there are certain services rendered by Professor Thomson at that time which will be acknowledged by all. When many convinced Fusionists wavered, and influenced by the clamour around them would have accepted half measures, Professor Thomson performed a service of the highest value when with unflinching firmness and courage he held his ground, and contended that there should be complete fusion, or none at all. To have united the Faculties of Divinity, Medicine and Law, and left two rival Faculties of Arts, one at King's and one at Marischal College, would have been a lame and impotent conclusion indeed. Moreover from the financial point of view it would have been wasteful. That such a thing was prevented was due in large measure to the firm attitude and powerful arguments of Professor Thomson.

In another direction his services, though not lying so much on the surface, were no less real. His views were broad and comprehensive, and

## DAVID THOMSON.

tended to widen the outlook of others. Naturally devoted to his own and kindred subjects, he was nevertheless above all narrow jealousy of other departments. He had no jealousy of the encouragement of Classical Learning, or English Literature, or any other branch which might rightly be included in a University education ; but desired to see the University equipped to fulfil every function which could properly be required of her. His knowledge, broad-mindedness and influence would have been invaluable in more recent times.

He was a man of wide general culture. His kindness, geniality, racy wit and wide accomplishments made his company delightful alike at home and in society. It was society's loss that his weak health obliged him to live very quietly ; but all who knew him well, whether among his colleagues or in the wider circle of his acquaintance, became warmly attached to him, and felt his friendship to be a tower of strength.

On his death in 1880 the University Court entered upon its Minutes the following expression of its sense of the loss sustained by the University :—

“ Professor Thomson occupied his Chair for upwards of thirty years, and was eminently distinguished during the whole period as a teacher of the very first order, a large number of his pupils having taken high places, some even the very

## AURORA BOREALIS.

highest, in competition for public offices of all kinds. He took an active part also in the general administration of the University, and his advice was always valued, and in most cases adopted.

“Few have been called away leaving a higher character as a philosopher and a gentleman among his colleagues, his students and the general public.”





*James Nicol*



## JAMES NICOL.

I like well thy countenance, thou hast an honest face.

—PERCY RELIQUES.

WITH his class-room we had been familiar from our earliest bajanhood. For in those days of the late sixties when a Students' Representative Council existed only in the imagination of academical Utopians and the Students' Union was but a pious aspiration, our various societies yet so far received official recognition as to be permitted to hold their meetings within the College buildings, and the Debating Society to which every Arts student belonged had its home in the natural history class-room. There on Friday evenings we had met since our College days began, and had held high debate on such burning questions as whether Napoleon or Wellington were the greater general, or what might have befallen civilisation had Hannibal not wintered in Capua. Under such circumstances we made acquaintance with the room and incidentally with its flanking mural ornaments—the skeleton of the cow

## AURORA BOREALIS.

and of the horse — and the cetacean vertebrae perched in the corners behind the benches ceased to excite our wonder.

We first saw the place by daylight, when in fulness of time we gathered there as a class to be initiated in the sciences of zoology and geology : magistrands most of us, with a proud sense of seniority over the few enterprising semis, who, availing themselves of the option to take the class in their second year, hoped thereby to read harder for honours in their fourth. Add to the whole a scanty sprinkling of medical students who, for one reason or another, found the winter course more suitable than the summer class chosen by most of their *confrères* ; you might distinguish them by a certain affectation of smartness, and they showed their flippant independence of the *literae humaniores* by answering " Here " to the roll-call in place of the sturdy " Adsum " of the Arts man.

Dingy in comparison with our gaslight impressions was the room as thus seen, its diamond-paned windows looking northward through the murkiness of the Gallowgate to the grey light of the winter afternoon ; but our hearts were warm to it from old association, and we were cheered by the well-established tradition that the professor was the most lenient of men in the

JAMES NICOL.

matter of examination. No student with ability and application sufficient to have brought him successfully to his magistrand year needed to fear that the professor of natural history would stand between him and the coveted degree. It would have been easy for him to do so ; perhaps some men might have thought it their duty to do so ; for those of us to whom the subject was not utterly new could be counted on the fingers of one hand, and the lines of study necessary to its mastery were foreign altogether to the bookish methods of metaphysics, mathematics and the classics.

Moreover, the subject was distasteful ; we had no ambition to fathom its mysteries. In so far as the animal creation was good for food, it was well ; but the guts and the gills what had they to do with the moral noetic faculty of man ? The place predestinate and ordained for them was the midden. Away with them ! So it came about that the attainments of even the best of us were meagre ; but it required something worse than meagre knowledge to pluck a man in natural history. Once, only once, tradition ran, had that pinnacle of academic distinction or depth of academic degradation been achieved by a man otherwise graduand—in his case, too, with honours. King's College was amazed, the professoriate pleaded for pity on the unhappy wight, but Nicol stood firm : “ He said

## AURORA BOREALIS.

that the cow had no anal opening, and I cannot pass him ”.

Up to the time of our taking his class we had seen little of Nicol. His duties did not bring him to the Old Town College, where hitherto our work had exclusively lain. He was even exempt, or had exempted himself, from the occasional Sunday attendance at the College Chapel that was given by all the other holders of Arts and Divinity chairs. As Dean of the Faculty in our later sessions, his duty brought him to the graduation ceremony, and we had seen our seniors receive their degrees, “*Jacobo Nicol promovente*”. Otherwise, we had not met him in our walks abroad ; how he spent his days or what friends he cultivated we knew not ; his antecedents were unknown ; no romantic tale was told respecting him, of youthful triumph over the *res angustae domi* or of an academic career that we might emulate. In the *University Calendar* the only title to distinction accorded to him was Fellow of the Geological Society, and we had faith in the profundity of his knowledge in that science ; for had he not stood in debate against Sir Roderic Murchison himself, and refused to resile from his own opinions ?

Thus was he practically unknown, in all but name, as he stood before us in his class-room on the opening day of our magistrand session. On the shady

## JAMES NICOL.

side of middle life, somewhat large of bone, spare of flesh yet not lean, erect in figure and firm in gait, he looked a man in hard condition, unused to luxury and capable of physical endurance. Time had made his head bare from the crown to the broad sloping brow, but the fringe of hair on the temples and occiput had not quite lost the luxuriance and the brown hue of earlier manhood. The eyes shone with undiminished brightness under the level eye-brows, if the crow-feet at their angles and the weathering of the face betokened years of exposure to the storm and stress incidental to a life spent much out of doors. The nose straight and refined ; the upper lip clean-shaved, in contrast with the untrained luxuriance of the whitening beard and whiskers. A kindly man, withal, to look at ; but something in the firm straight mouth told of a possible dourness it were better not to provoke.

In dress he had long ceased to follow the vagaries of fashion ; he was not even careful of his appearance in his old-fashioned way ; sometimes his waistcoat would be buttoned awry, and then a whispered query would pass round the class whether the mistake should be geologically described as a " fault " or a " slip ". Out of doors a wide-skirted brown greatcoat of antique cut, that probably had seen rough weather in many a geological excursion, was the distinguishing badge by

## AURORA BOREALIS.

which his approaching figure was most quickly identified. Many was the jest it called forth, and great was the glee when on a memorable occasion it fell into the students' hands "for one night only".

It was when Professor Huxley, newly appointed Lord Rector, came to Aberdeen to deliver his address. He had been welcomed and fêted with the utmost hospitality, and the festivities ended in a banquet given by the students in the Music Hall. As on more recent occasions, the cloak-room arrangements were imperfect, and a junior medical student shivering in evening dress was fain to accept a loan of the last available coat—obviously not his own. Not a student at Marischal College but could have told who the real owner was, and we shouted with merriment as its new wearer buried himself in its ample folds ; we might have trod on the tail of it as he walked. It got about that Nicol half suspected he had been the victim of a student's prank, and the chief actor therein was jokingly warned by his friends that there was a rod in pickle for him. They claimed that their predictions were fulfilled when he presented himself for his oral examination in natural history. "Can you tell me, Mr. Macritchie," asked Nicol, "how many toes has a hen?" *Incredibile dictu!* The candidate knew no more of the matter than the hen herself!

## JAMES NICOL.

Less legitimate was the fun we made of his voice, which in our time had degenerated into a husky falsetto. Full of life and exuberant spirits ourselves, too inexperienced to suspect the existence of the fatal underlying malady of which the huskiness was a manifestation, we mimicked that voice in our merry-makings and thought it sport. But if his voice was poor, not so the language to which it gave utterance—simple, perspicuous, absolutely free from pedantry, and avoiding the use of a so-called scientific terminology when plain English was equally applicable. Scorning all affectation, he more perhaps than any other of the professoriate spoke in the undisguised accent of his native Doric. For which reason his students, ever ready to fasten on a teacher's peculiarity, parodied his lectures in such guise as, "We will see this more fully afterwards when we come to consider the classification of the mammals"; and summarised his style epigrammatically in his nickname of "Jeames".

Such, after the lapse of a quarter of a century, are the writer's recollections of Nicol's personality.

The course of natural history which he laid before us had decided merits. The exposition was lucid, the constituent parts well balanced. For illustration of the forms of the animals described, or of those structures known to anatomists as the "hard parts," he availed himself of the resources of

## AURORA BOREALIS.

a fairly-stocked museum. The more perishable "soft parts" were explained by well-drawn diagrams or by models. The whole would have served as an excellent text-book. As teaching, it lacked that inspiration which proceeds from a teacher whose life-work centres in the subject he teaches. A field naturalist might have done much among Arts students to stimulate their interest in the forms, habits and distribution of wild animals. A comparative anatomist would have exercised much influence over the medical students ; for these coming to his class, as they did, about the middle of their course of study, were already expert in the methods of anatomical research, were familiar with the anatomy of the human body, and, moreover, by the happy idiosyncrasy of the professor of that subject, they had been taught on broad scientific lines rather than in the narrow path of mere surgical utility. An enthusiastic teacher of comparative anatomy could not have desired material more fitted to his hand, and the results of his teaching would have redounded to the credit of himself and of the University.

It was not Nicol's fault that he was not the man to achieve such results ; he was not an anatomist but a geologist, diligent, ardent and distinguished as such. He had adopted geology as a life-study years before his appointment to



## JAMES NICOL.

Aberdeen, and that event was antecedent to the Union of the Colleges and the vitalising of the medical school. Looking back on his teaching, one is impressed with the idea that he had acquired his knowledge of zoology laboriously and without enthusiasm in order to fulfil the duties of his chair. When the subject touched upon his favourite geology his interest in it rose ; that antediluvian-looking monster the king-crab of the Moluccas he handled with affection as the nearest surviving representative of the fossil trilobites ; the chambered nautilus interested him on account of its extinct congeners the ammonites ; and the fossil gryphaea, " strange old-world oyster," as he called it, was an especial favourite. But of the modern marine fauna, cast ashore in abundance in Aberdeen bay after any winter storm, no fresh specimen found its way to his lecture-room, and no dissection by his own hand was ever shown in demonstration of the structures he described.

When he came to lecture on the geological part of the course the difference in his tone was markedly apparent. He spoke from the fulness of his knowledge, and his living interest in the subject was undisguised. If he did not search the lines of Torry fishermen for waifs and strays of the marine fauna, he would describe with animation what rock structures we would meet with in a walk to Cove ;

## AURORA BOREALIS.

or would tell us in what road-side dykes we might discover travelled boulders scored by glaciers in the days when the ice-floe filled the North Sea, and the Tap of Benachie was a lonely rock peering through the ice-cap of a frozen land. He spoke with the earnestness of one who tells what is worth knowing, as he expounded the mineralogy of our native granite and pointed out that, adamantine though it seems, it could by slow process of time and weathering be resolved into the elements of a not unfertile soil. It came as a surprise to us when he expressed doubt as to the durability of the polish that can be imparted to its surface. "It remains to be seen," he said, "whether it will stand the test of time,"—his thoughts carrying him away from his class-room and the polishing yards of Aberdeen to the wild corries of the Cairngorms, where he had seen, as we then had not, how the granite crags are rotted by wind and rain and frost into fantastic unstable pinnacles like tottering towers of Cyclopean masonry.

But chiefly he loved to dwell on the geology of the West Highlands. "Oban in the West Highlands," "The Basalt of Staffa and the Scur of Eigg," "Torridon Sandstones," "The Quartzites of Sutherland," "Hebridean Gneiss," and "Durness Limestones," were catchwords among his students. Upon the stratigraphy of those rocks the

## JAMES NICOL.

great controversy of his life turned. At a meeting of the British Association in Aberdeen in 1859 he brought forward proofs that the quartzites should be geologically considered as overlying the metamorphic rocks of Eastern Scotland. In this he was opposed by Murchison, who argued that the Eastern metamorphic rock was really superimposed on the quartzite. Nothing could well be simpler than the point at issue ; but the available evidence was scanty, and the argument turned on the interpretation of a fault-riven rock-section requiring much technical knowledge and scientific acumen to unravel. Nicol failed to carry opinion with him ; but he knew he was right. The British Association met again in Aberdeen in 1885, and his views were declared to be completely verified. Alas, he had not lived to see the day.

It was characteristic of the man that he refrained from using his position as professor to impress his students with the correctness of his views on this matter, though the controversy was one which he regarded as of vital importance to his reputation, and he continued elsewhere to battle stoutly in defence of his opinions. Equally characteristic was it that his lectures gave no indication of the delight he took in the wild beauty of the scenes where his studies led him ; yet his writings show that he viewed them with a whole-hearted appreciation,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

and that the poetic feeling was strong in him. It could hardly have been otherwise with him ; for he was born in romantic Traquair, the son of its parish minister, whom Professor Veitch describes as " one of Scotland's true singers," one of that band, Scott the greatest of them, who revived the traditions of the Border Minstrelsy in the early years of the century. To the elder Nicol's house on a day, as students of literature will remember, came Wordsworth journeying through the Border country. There he met Hogg, William Laidlaw and Dr. Anderson, and in their company went on his way to see and sing of Yarrow.

Not to his students did the younger Nicol exhibit any indication of such early literary associations. To them Staffa might be described as noteworthy in presenting the best marked columnar basalt in Scotland, and the Oolite of Eigg as characterised by yielding Saurian remains and fossil tree-trunks of *Pinites Eiggensis*. Yet elsewhere he could write of those inner Hebrides : " Who that has ever sailed along that coast can have forgotten their myriad forms and magic outline,—whether breaking through the thick shroud of mist and storm, or illuminated by the midday sun, or bathed in gorgeous tints—crimson, and green and gold, as he hastens down into the western ocean ".

So little we knew his inward thoughts even at the end of our session.





William Martini

## WILLIAM MARTIN.

Myself when young did eagerly frequent  
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument  
About it and about; but evermore  
Came out by the same door where in I went.

—OMAR KHAYYÁM.

**I**T is difficult to do justice to Professor Martin. I have the best evidence that for years he was an efficient and respected professor, and of his unfeigned religious zeal and high character there could be no doubt. Though he was not, and did not profess to be, a man of wide reading, he had mastered a few books thoroughly, and among these books was Butler's *Analogy*. But during my time at college it must be admitted that he was something like the butt of his class. He was a perpetual entertainment and delight to the students, in fact, some of them looking back, can see that if it had not been for the hearty laughter they got out of him and his class, they could scarcely have survived until this day. No honest sketch could possibly be written without recognising the facts. I never meet with an Aberdeen contemporary but the talk immediately turns upon Martin. I venture to ask that what I am to write may be taken as said with sincere respect

## AURORA BOREALIS.

for the memory of a good, conscientious, earnest, and in his way, able man.

The mystery of Martin's antecedents was very deep indeed. It was known that he had been for a long time professor at Marischal College. It was also believed that previous to that period he had been in some way associated with St. Andrews. This turns out to be perfectly true. He was, if I mistake not, a teacher at Madras College. In Mrs. Oliphant's life of Principal Tulloch, there is allusion to the interest he took in getting Tulloch his St. Andrews appointment. What his claims to be a professor of philosophy were I have not the least idea. His only publications I can trace are two tiny pamphlets, one of them an address delivered to the Evangelical Alliance in 1852, on "British Infidelity ; its Aspects and Prospects". In this important production he says "Infidelity can in our day scarcely do more than revive old objections and advance old theories ; the whole cycle of objections to the Christian faith having been trodden so thoroughly during the last eighteen centuries as to leave little that possesses much claim to originality to reward our modern gleaners". The other is a pamphlet called "Creed and Circumstance," which appeared in Glasgow in 1855. It is delightfully characteristic of his style as the following sentence will show : "The palm in India—the cedar in



WILLIAM MARTIN.

Lebanon—the pine in Norway—the rice in the South—the corn and wheat of the higher altitudes—the tea plant of China—the cocoa and bread fruit of the South Seas—each is adapted to climate, temperature and position. All these are independent of man. They spring unbidden. 'Tis the spontaneity of nature that sends them up." I have no doubt this quotation will be a source of great comfort to Professor Martin's old students. It may be noted that his preference for "'tis" was as marked as if he had been a "man of the *Scots Observer*".

The professor must have been fairly old in 1870, but it would have been hard to tell his age. He had a long brown beard, only slightly whitened, and a wig. His wig was no specious production of art. Everybody could see what it was. In my time some daring intellect suggested that his nose was as false as his hair, and the idea mysteriously gained ground. Certainly the nose was blue in colour, and through a long bitter winter he had never occasion to blow it. The suspicion deepened, till one cold morning, amidst breathless silence, Dr. Martin produced a large red pocket handkerchief. I see it now. There was a pause of agony, and then—how shall I put the thing delicately enough? Never have I heard such thunders of applause. The doctor was puzzled a moment, and then he reflected that with such a

## AURORA BOREALIS.

professor it was no wonder that the lads at times were unable to control their enthusiasm.

If I say something of the humours of his classroom, it is because they were attended with no pain to himself. There are plenty of people who would have died of shame over one-tenth of the insults at which Professor Martin simply smiled a superior smile. I never saw the faintest trace of his being even partially annoyed by the jokes of the class and its disorder. He was too sure of himself and his own greatness and wisdom, and of the pitiable folly of young men, to be other than compassionate. In a certain way he was not a bad teacher. He had three books, one of them Butler's *Analogy*, the other an American production by Wayland, and a third which I do not remember, and his business was to knock these into our heads. He wrote on the blackboard clear summaries of them, and expected answers that would exactly reproduce them. In addition, he delivered lectures. They were "eloquent" at times, and very old. The most famous of the number was on "Conscience," "The Terrors of Remorse," etc., etc. It was always known when that lecture was to be delivered, and as the professor rolled off his periods, they were followed by such frantic and prolonged applause, that if I recollect well, he had to carry the thing on for some days. No doubt as to the genuineness of this applause

## WILLIAM MARTIN.

ever visited him. He honestly believed the lecture to be the greatest thing in the eloquence of the world. His class was often, and indeed for the most part, noisy, and his habit was to inflict fines on offending students. Often, however, he was unable to discover them. One student in my class had an extraordinary gift of whistling in such a manner that nobody could detect the culprit. One day he was peculiarly exuberant, and Martin was so irritated that he made every student in the class stand up and declare that he was not the whistler. This accomplished, the professor said "There is a liar among you". On this, the class naturally turned upon him, and demanded he should retract. When one writes of the thing, it seems little more than rough horse-play, but it was amusing enough at the time. He would fine another student half a crown for talking. The student would rise to remonstrate, and be fined another half-crown, and in the course of a few minutes his fines would rise to the sum of fifteen shillings. The student would see the professor at the end of the hour, and represent to him truly enough that he did not possess fifteen shillings in all the world, whereupon the fine would be magnanimously remitted. A favourite diversion was to bring in a fowl which could only be expelled from the classroom after infinite trouble and confusion. Martin, I think, lectured for two hours

## AURORA BOREALIS.

with an interval of an hour, during which time some of the students went to the higher natural philosophy class. Most remained outside, but a few of us stayed with the professor in the class-room, the professor being diligently engaged writing on the blackboard. The students outside would howl their thoughts and observations in perfectly audible terms to the door, addressing their teacher sometimes as "Billy," and sometimes as "Doctor". But Martin went on quite unmoved, save that he would sometimes give us a pitying smile, as much as to say, "What fools these fellows are!" I think it was in my day that he received his degree of LL.D. from the University of St. Andrews, and some kind of address was got up expressing delight that his boundless learning and abilities had been recognised at last. Martin took the address in good part, but explained that the University of St. Andrews had been pestering him to accept the degree ever since he could remember.

The professor was at that time a bachelor, and lived in lodgings somewhere in the Spital. There he would ask students to come and read essays to him. I once went, and was greeted by the remark: "You are behind your time". "Only two minutes, professor," said I, pointing to the clock. "Ah, Nicoll," said he, "*I count my time by minutes.*" It is fair to say that during his long vacations it is

## WILLIAM MARTIN.

understood that he preached here and there in the country, especially, if I mistake not, in the Shetland Isles, and that his labours of this kind were very useful and very much appreciated.

Out of the goodness of his heart, Dr. Martin held a Bible class on Sunday evenings. It used to be conducted at his lodgings, but the scenes became so violent, that it was transferred to a room in the Music Hall. I attended the first meeting for the session. Martin explained to us that we might choose Romans or Hebrews as a subject for study during the winter, and that he would take a vote as to the theme next meeting. Some of the men profanely treated the vote as they would a rectorial election, and canvassed either for Romans or Hebrews. Bills were put up, of which I remember one :—

### VOTE FOR HEBREWS AND POLL EARLY.

How the question was decided I never knew, as I did not go back to the class. One day Martin asked me to stay at the end of the hour. I fully expected to be fined for some misdeed, but all that happened was that he asked me why I did not come back to the class. I made some lame excuse. Martin looked at me somewhat suspiciously, and said : “ A young man should read the Bible. It’s a lamp to his feet, Nicoll.”

## AURORA BOREALIS.

I should be very sorry if these words were thought unkindly. They are certainly written in no unkindly spirit, for all the students of Martin I have met are full of reminiscences which give them great pleasure. I know also as a fact that some distinguished men trace back religious impressions to his teaching. Whatever else may be said of him, it must be allowed by all that he acted directly up to his highest conception of duty, that he was a sincere and fervent Christian, and that he maintained his mental independence with unwavering firmness.





John Fyfe.



## JOHN FYFE.

Whatever sceptic could enquire for,  
For ev'ry why, he had a wherefore :  
He could distinguish and divide  
A hair 'twixt south and south-west side.

—HUDIBRAS.

**L**IKE the character of Hamlet one's recollection of "Johnny Fyfe's Class" stands quite by itself. The professor was unlike any other professor ; the class unlike any other class ; the magistrand year unlike any other year. Two occasions during student life are fixed in my memory as marking the accession of a new dignity which I felt keenly I had to live up to. One was on that memorable morning when we first entered the Greek Classroom with the consciousness of a new-born importance as members of the Aberdeen University. The second was when as magistrands—as leaders of thought and action in our little world—we passed to the study of Moral Philosophy. I can even remember on the last occasion the special sensation which attached to the piling up of our sticks in the lobby. In those days—how it may be now I do not know—

## AURORA BOREALIS.

the walking-stick was a special badge of dignity attaching to the honourable estate of magistrand. A bajan, semi or tertian would no more have presumed to carry a walking-stick than a Grammar School boy would have donned the Toga academica.

I enter, in imagination, the philosophy classroom clothed once again with all the dignity of a newly-fledged magistrand. I see again—I have never seen it since—I hope it is still there—the little wooden pulpit in which sat the dear old man fluttering his notes, or at intervals adjusting his spectacles or his teeth. These teeth used to cause him a great deal of trouble. They never seemed to fit, and he had got into a habit of perpetually putting them in place with many facial contortions. In our day he was clean shaven, and every queer little grimace which he exhibited when warming to his subject stood out in clear relief. Out of the pulpit every one knew the broad hat set well back, the perennial black suit, the unusually short trousers overhanging very conspicuous yellowish white socks.

His lectures stick perhaps more in the memory than those of any other professor. They were, it must be admitted, almost totally devoid of original thought. His strength lay not in philosophy but in teaching philosophy—so lucid was he, so methodic

## JOHN FYFE.

in his arrangement—no abstract dreamer, but clear cut, simple, vigorous, a philosopher of the common-sense school in more senses than one. The feature of his lectures was his system of illustration, which abounded in bright humour, not of the dry, grave old Scotch type, but productive of side-splitting roars, which left no dry eye in the house. Against the Experimentalist Philosophy which has so long prevailed in Aberdeen he launched the thunder of his invective and the keen shafts of his wit. Here are some of his tit-bits :—

“If it be argued that we are descended from an arboreal type then we must concede that our ancestors had an excellent training in the higher branches.”

“The old stoics held the theory of an *Annus Magnus* or Cycle, in which the universe returns to the point whence it started. This is now resuscitated in a more materialistic form. Look at a boy blowing up an ox-bladder and then making it collapse again. Now remove the boy and imagine the bladder has the power of inflation and collapsing—there is the Universe !—there is the Cycle !—there the *Annus Magnus* !—there Spencer’s rhythm ! (Scornful grimaces. Deafening cheers. He continues, addressing one of the class.) Were you ever here before ?” “Yes, sir.” “Do you remember being here millions of years before ?” “No,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

sir." "Not remember it? *Dear me!* We have been here thousands of times. Don't you remember discussing with me millions of years ago? Was it the same discussion? Did I use the same words? Have I no power to change a word? Am I bond? (Pious indignation of professor.) How long will it be till you are magistrands again? Some think that in the nineteenth century development has reached its climax. Haeckel thought he was the last puff."

"Some objected that there were missing links in the chain of evolution. That wasn't any difficulty with Haeckel. He just turned to his blackboard (illustrative action by professor) and wrote down a scheme of all the groups of animals. Wherever there was a blank in the scheme he just invented a name indicating an intermediate group and put it down. Then he turned triumphantly to his critics and exclaimed: 'There you have it! Where are your missing links now?' But we should like to see them filled up in Nature as well as Haeckel's blackboard."

"It has been suggested that although organic does not arise from inorganic it may have done so in primeval times when conditions of temperature, pressure, etc., were totally different. In other words, gentlemen, suppose a block of ten tons is thrown over a wall by night and does a deal of

damage, a sage philosopher starts a theory that Mr. A. B. did it. 'Why?' 'I've seen him throw stones.' 'Ten ton stones?' 'No, but who knows but that *in the dark* he may be able to throw ten tons?'

"Fichte at first held the theory that no one existed but himself—that he was the only Ego. But this was awfully lonely—*awfully* lonely for poor Fichte. He longed for other Egos apparently, because he was of so quarrelsome a nature. It was poor fun for Fichte to be setting up Kant and Locke and knocking them down again, when Kant and Locke were just fictions of Fichte's own imagination! So he got out of it in this way. 'Pure reason tells me they don't exist, but practical reason tells me they do.' And Fichte didn't make any difficulty about it. *He just believed them both.*"

Announcing the Debating Society's subject, "Should M.P.'s be paid?" he added, "Yes, by results, then we'd be free of taxation".

His diagrams, by which he split up theories, etc., into sections and sub-sections were marvels of ingenuity. But in order to complete their symmetry, it was often necessary for him to add theories which he explained might have been held, but which nobody had ever held. His rigid codification of faculties, etc., had its amusing side too.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

“Rousseau thought his whole soul and being burned with a disinterested and loving benevolence towards all mankind, that he could sacrifice every other emotion for the sake of  $E, \gamma$ , secundo in the diagram.”

A good story of his irony and humour is the following: A student gave him in an essay copied word for word from Principal Pirie's *Natural Theology*, a book the professor knew well. He contented himself with returning it next day to its owner marked “Verbose rubbish.—J. F.”

His generosity to poor students was well known. “I knew,” writes a friend, “of several kindly actions done in an unostentatious way that have not come under the cognisance of the most knowing.” He was passionately fond of his work. In the course of a correspondence with a distinguished class-fellow of mine relative to the Black Memorial, to which he largely subscribed, he says: “I hope I will not be shunted off the rails like a wheezy old engine before the present term class become magistrands”. And he loved all magistrands as peculiarly his own flock. “Remember,” he used to say, “on you the moral tone of the whole body of students largely depends.” “Ah,” exclaimed the genial old gentleman on the last day of a magistrand session, “You don't know how I shall miss you. When the quadrangle is deserted and all my

## JOHN FYFE.

magistrands leave me, I feel as if I had nothing to live for, and my spirits sink very low indeed." His interest in current events was very feeble. "I never read the papers, or but rarely. I only read the bills and posters on the walls in the morning. Saves time and money."

He was of course only known to me as the professor, but really the most distinguished part of his career preceded his professorship. His connection as a teacher with the University dated from the year 1854, when he was appointed substitute for Professor Hercules Scott, then in infirm health. This office he held for five years. He was required to deliver Dr. Scott's course of lectures during the first hour, but had a freer hand during the second hour, when he gave a lucid *résumé* and exposition of Hamilton's Philosophy. It might be suggested that Besant's notorious Alexander McIntyre (of *My Little Girl*), graduate as he was of the ancient "University of Aberdeen," came under Mr. Fyfe at this time. Certain it is, from a remark let drop by Sir W. Besant when in Aberdeen last year, that the character was drawn from life, and that the original of McIntyre had studied at King's in the late fifties. McIntyre was great on Hamilton's Philosophy, and at no other period was this philosophy so prominent in University teaching at Aberdeen. Further, certain it is that some of Mr. Fyfe's

## AURORA BOREALIS.

students of this time went altogether to the bad. For, in acknowledging a presentation of an enlarged class photo in 1877, the professor made the following remark in a touching speech (in which by the way, carried off by his emotions, he entirely broke down, somewhat to the shame of the class, for they had made the presentation more as a little joke than otherwise) : " 'This morning,' he said, " I happened to look over the portraits of the last class I conducted for Professor Scott, and as a parting wish I cannot do better than utter the prayer—God grant none of you may have a career like some of them." Query : Was he thinking of the original of McIntyre ?

It was as librarian, however, that he chiefly made his mark, his *magnum opus* being the University Library Catalogue, a colossal task once described as "utterly impossible" by the late Professor Milligan.

It is remarkable that so lovable and genial a man should have been so little known personally. The explanation of this was his intense bashfulness. He shrank from notice, from conversation, from thanks. He very seldom even looked you straight in the face. Only twice have I met him personally. One was on inviting him to our magistrand supper, the other was in the Rev. Jas. Smith's Committee at a contest for the Council's Assessorship — an occasion on



## JOHN FYFE.

which I recollect he caused some amusement by asking that he should be bracketed on a sub-committee along with his great philosophical opponent, Professor Bain. I have heard that the only time when he came thoroughly out of his shell was when in the company of elderly ladies. He then became the life of the party, brimming over with good humour and hilarity.

God rest good old Johnny Fyfe ! We loved him better than some of our greater men.

## ROBERT MACLURE.

A suit of sable bombazine he wore ;

His form was ponderous, and his step was slow.

There never was so wise a man before ;

He seemed the incarnate " Well, I told you so ".

—LONGFELLOW.

**D**URING my time at the University of Aberdeen, professors were literally "wropt in mystery". The antecedents of some of them could be found out, but this was not true of all. There was no telling where Dr. Maclure and Dr. Martin had come from, what had been their histories, and how they had got their chairs. This was even more true of Maclure than of Martin. There was a vague impression that he had been a teacher somewhere, but I never knew any man who had even a guess at the place.

Turning over some old volumes of a periodical called the *Classical Museum*, I discovered one or two contributions from his pen. I remember in particular that he discussed the question "Whether Milton was whipped at Cambridge". Since then, thanks to



*Robert Mallin*



ROBERT MACLURE.

a volume in the British Museum, I have found out something. The volume is from the library of "Hebrew" Scott, who is treated elsewhere in this book. It contains a complete copy of the testimonials sent in by the candidates for the Professorship of Greek in the University of Edinburgh at the 1851 election, when Professor Blackie succeeded, and Professor Scott has pasted in at the beginning the newspaper account of the Town Council meeting which decided the result. Dr. Maclure was a candidate. His testimonials are by no means brilliant, but they reveal some interesting facts. He studied as a young man at Glasgow, and the eloquent Sir Daniel Sandford speaks well of him, though he seems to have been in his class merely as a private student. In his youth Maclure was occupied as a tutor to boys attending the Edinburgh Academy, and he then went to London and remained a number of years. He established a classical seminary of his own in London, somewhere in Marylebone, and connected it with King's College. What the nature of the connection was I do not exactly know, but it evidently involved some clerical supervision, as he has testimonials from several of the clergy of that period. He had at least one pupil of distinction, Henry W. Watson, who was Second Wrangler in 1849. During his time in London he published a little book entitled *A Praxis on the Latin Potential*

## AURORA BOREALIS.

*and Subjunctive Moods.* This work is not to be found in the library of the British Museum, but it is spoken of by Dr. Maclure's friends in a way that curiously recalls the praises given to Lord Iddesleigh's lecture on "Nothing". The most interesting feature of the testimonials is the evidence they give that Dr. Maclure had some kind of connection with the more respectable literary Bohemians in London. He has certificates from two of them—J. A. St. John, one of a family who were free of the city of Prague, and another from Leitch Ritchie, who was so long connected with *Chambers' Journal*. Ritchie was a kind, warm-hearted man with a distinct sense of humour, and as his *Wearyfoot Common* shows, a clever and thoughtful story-teller. He writes about Maclure that he "vindicated for many years in the southern division of the kingdom the reputation for learning and intellect which Scotland has so long enjoyed," while shut out from professional prizes by being a graduate of a Scotch University.

The probabilities, and, in fact, the certainties are that Maclure had not an easy time in London. He had apparently to teach both classics and mathematics. No doubt he made the best of it. After a long interval he returned to Edinburgh as one of the classical masters in the Academy, and as one of his friends says, "brought to Scotland the additional

## ROBERT MACLURE.

advantages which necessarily arise from mixing with polished literary society". He was evidently a good teacher at the Edinburgh Academy, and one of his sponsors quaintly testifies to "your entire freedom from those peculiarities which frequently mar the labours of a public instructor".

Among the list of candidates for the Edinburgh chair was Hannah, the Rector of the Edinburgh Academy ; P. C. Campbell, then minister of Caputh, afterwards Principal of the University of Aberdeen ; Veitch of the *Irregular Greek Verbs* ; Franklin Lushington, who brought testimonies apparently disregarded, and, in particular, a genuinely felt letter by William Vernon Harcourt, then a very young man ; Blackie ; Macdouall of Belfast ; Bonamy Price ; John Conington ; and Dr. William Smith. When the Town Council met, it was announced that the names of Dr. Maclure and Mr. Campbell were withdrawn, and the candidates proposed were : Smith, Macdouall, Blackie, Price and Hannah. At the first vote, Smith headed the poll with nine votes to eight for Macdouall, five for Blackie, four for Hannah, and three for Price. At the second vote there were eleven for Macdouall, eleven for Blackie, nine for Smith. At the last vote, Blackie and Macdouall were equal with sixteen votes. The Free Church party apparently favoured Dr. Macdouall, and he was expressly recommended by Dr. Candlish,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

but the Lord Provost gave his casting vote for Blackie, who produced no fewer than three extensive pamphlets of testimonials.

How and in what way Dr. Maclure found his way to Aberdeen University I do not know, but he was comfortably seated there when I entered in 1866. Perhaps the truest definition of him would be to say that he was a good schoolmaster. He was a handsome, somewhat corpulent and stately old man, who walked very erectly and demeaned himself as according to the ideas of those times a professor should. I fancy the students to-day do not understand the immense interval which separated at that time pupils and professors in King's College. I have known two trembling little bajans encounter a professor in King Street and doff their bonnets, while the great man regarded them with a stony stare, and made no sign. I never heard of a student dining with a professor in my time, although there were legends about classes being asked to dine at Dr. Maclure's house, and not conducting themselves with strict propriety. Nobody but a Scotsman could understand how a professor may be venerated. The main reason for this reverence was perhaps the deep regard long cherished in Scotland for learning. Even then, however, money was not despised in Aberdeen, and the professors had good incomes and abundant holidays. It did not matter



ROBERT MACLURE.

how they were appointed or what they had been, whether they were known outside or not. Some of them came, so far as people knew,

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,  
From that great deep, before our world begins.

Their antecedents were, as I have said, mysterious—as mysterious almost as Melchisedek's. A university college was once opened in a certain town, and a list of professors was announced. Nobody had ever heard of them, and it was profanely suggested that they had been created for the occasion. This might have been the case with some of the occupants of the Aberdeen chairs. All you could say was, that one day morning dawned upon the mountains and they were professors.

I have seen something since those days of Oxford and Cambridge Dons at close quarters—something also of literary men and women—and should therefore know what vanity is. We had in Aberdeen Professor Martin and Professor Maclure, and it is a small thing to say, that each of them had enough vanity to supply Oxford, Cambridge, Fleet Street and Paternoster Row all put together. In fact, it is soothing and refreshing in these days where every public man is so mercilessly handled, to think of this abnormal, satisfied, impenetrable conceit. For Dr. Maclure there was but one name. He was universally and invariably spoken of as "Cocky".

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Sometimes he would be called Cocky Maclure, but this was rare. His whole aspect suggested his nickname, and as he grew older, he advanced in a certain haughty and imperturbable style. I do not suppose that the feelings of his students would have ever given him a moment's concern. They were remote indeed from his exaltation. But he was not by any means an inefficient professor, and he was rather a favourite than otherwise. He had the gift of governing his classes, for no rebel could stand out long against that stony stare. He also communicated a good deal of information, and had a real perception of literary beauty. Sometimes his illustrations of the Latin writers from modern literature came like a cool wind. I am not at all surprised to find that in early days he lived among literary men.

Dr. Maclure was a good elocutionist, and on occasion, would favour his class with a reading, "The Cottar's Saturday Night," or something else. For such favours he was rewarded with ringing cheers, but he was not a man to take liberties with, and when asked too often to give recitations, he would refuse. There was something about him honourable and gentlemanly which the students did not miss, and he will continue to be remembered by his old pupils with affection. The distance at which he kept them was doubtless the result of

ROBERT MACLURE.

a theory. There was evidence after his death in 1868 that where he was really known he was greatly loved and respected. I quote from a poem which appeared in the *Edinburgh Courant* at the time, and bore the signature Robert Steggall.

Death might have taken from the dwindling band  
Others full dear, less dear than I held thee,  
Thou gentle breather of humanity!  
For it was thou who, in my springtime, knew,  
By nice discernment of conflicting moods  
And delicate adaptability,  
And skilful, arch, provocative, to wring  
A tuneful note from my distempered soul.  
Yea, and wert first, by music of thy voice  
And kindling fervour and fine ecstasy,  
To stir the unsuspected springs thereof  
To the new joy of song! And never quenched  
Thy goodly precepts, as the sacred fires  
That glow before the altars of the Lord  
Have hung for years in many a soul, a sign  
And surety 'gainst disaster.

. . . . .  
Pillowed soft upon thy spotless life,  
And folded up in coils of circling love,  
And robed in ample honour, take thy rest!  
'Tis we who linger, mourn our poor estate,  
And sit in silence while we wait and watch  
The grass that grows o'er paths of faded feet.  
I mourn thee as a loving son his sire—  
I mourn thee as the grateful mourn the good—  
I mourn thee as a friend, a sovereign friend.

## JOHN BLACK.

Postquamst Orcino traditus thesauro,  
Obliti sunt Romae loquier Latina lingua.

—NAEVIUS.

**A**BERDEEN, says Professor Blackie, is famous for her beef, granite, and Latin. In the first two of the products there has been no decline. To the outside world we are known as a University rooted and founded on Latin, and the type of mind in the North, it may safely be said, is one peculiarly favourable to its growth. It cannot be mere chance that the firm and clear-cut outlines of the tongue have found a congenial soil in the Northern University. Boece wrote Latin with a stylistic grace that sets him far above his successors in Scottish history, Major and Lesley ; while the mastery of form displayed by Florence Wilson—" *Musis carissimus*," as Buchanan addresses him—in the *De Tranquillitate Animi*, is perfectly Ciceronian. Gilbert Jack at Leyden greatly extended the fame of our northern Latinity, and it is fitting that out of the four great Scottish masters—Buchanan, Johnston, Ruddiman and Melvin—three should belong to us. Scott has admirably caught



John Black,



## JOHN BLACK.

the true colour and tone in the pedantic allusiveness of Dugald Dalgetty, and Besant in *My Little Girl* has seen how Alexander McIntyre bears the same traits. Mr. Kipling even makes an Aberdeen engineer at the Straits Settlement quote the ancient tongue, though the dialect is a hopeless failure with the novelist. The cast and tone of the Aberdonian are familiar to all at home and abroad. It would show bad insight to attribute this type to the alumni of Glasgow or St. Andrews, where, since Turnbull and "the ghost of Wardlaw slept," Latin writing is a lost art.

Blackie himself did little for the subject of his chair, and the job perpetrated to secure his elevation over our one great scholar in the century, Melvin, is one of the most disgraceful even in the annals of Scottish Universities. He was too volatile, too erratic, too un-Roman in his fibre for the long and persistent application, alike in teacher and in taught, that is needed for such a study. His method was windy and unsubstantial, and his memory in Aberdeen, which is rather that of a transient and embarrassed phantom than of a serious scholar, is powerfully suggestive of Carlyle's firmly-etched word-portrait: "Blackie here last night. High winds, before which the wondrous Being scudded, compassless and rudderless, over a shoreless continent of Dead-Dog." In the hands of George

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Ferguson the teaching of Latin hardly went beyond grammatical drill, though he appears to have been the most successful teacher at King's College, as King's then went. Maclure was inferior to him, and gave just offence by pronouncing Latin with the English accent—ever the mark of the weak scholar. We have heard some speak favourably of him as the most gentlemanly man in the faculty, but Latin scarcely flourished in his reign. Yet, if inside the walls of the University little was done, there was maintained all along the line in the North a very exact knowledge of the grammar and syntax, and many of the old parochial schoolmasters could turn out highly creditable specimens of Latin composition. This was the tie which so long united the provinces closely to the city, and now that link is snapping through the presence of illiterate board school teachers, whose attainments are naturally bounded by the requirements of the code, with its one book of Cæsar. Thus our characteristic feature as a Latin seat is fading. "I am about the last of the old brigade," Professor Minto used to declare, "reared on the soil by an old parochial." But the link was continued much later; and we can remember perfectly, up to at least 1873, their annual presence at the Bursary Competition in the days when evening papers and sixpenny telegrams were things of the future. Professor W. Robertson Smith,



## JOHN BLACK.

who was trained exclusively by his own father for the University, used to regret the surrender of the Latin thesis exacted on ordination from candidates for the ministry of the Free Church, while to their latest day such men as Professor Legge at Oxford and Professor Grub at home retained their interest in the Latin training of their youth. The older race before the fusion, so far as retention of intellectual interests went, had nothing to fear from their successors. This we owe to Melvin, who for nearly a century has held the North in mortmain, and exercised on its education a lasting and beneficial influence which, "albeit an unthankful age will not allow," as Knox said of his own petty detractors, is familiar to all who have studied in detail the working of men and manners in our midst.

Black succeeded to the Latin chair in 1868. Before that he had been engaged as a school inspector of the old *régime*. That kind of work is not favourable to the retention or to the development of scholarship, and the results were obvious in the chair. Yet he had the virtues of his very defects; he was unquestionably the best formal teacher in the University. Indeed, he was a born teacher in so far as the attitude and the manner are concerned, and any lack of touch came rather from indolence than want of ability. He was himself at his ease and at once set others at theirs,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

and it was to most a feeling of relief to turn from the discipline of the other classes to his. No man ever held the curb easier and yet with greater success ; by him all pædagogic tricks and traditions were dismissed, and over the northern counties to-day his influence on teaching and on teachers has been more marked than that of his colleagues. He aroused interest in the subject, and his method of maintaining discipline was, like that of Professor Fuller, his always having something to say and knowing that he could say it. His two predecessors in the chair had been remarkable for their sesquipedalian style and verbiage. Black was a wit and a humorist, with an eye for the proportionate and the fitting, and he had fully taken to heart the advice of Thackeray's footman : " It is gen'rally best in poetry to understand puffickly what you mean yourself, and to igspress your meaning clearly afterwards—in the simpler words the better, p'r'aps ". He was a clear thinker, and appreciated a clear style.

Our own memory of him is very pleasant and vivid. He knew well the student mind and taught right up to it, and with the great bulk of the class he was the most acceptable teacher of his day. Emphatically a solid man, he made little or no pretence or display in the wares he conveyed, and with the passman his gifts of ready utterance and

## JOHN BLACK.

clear exposition were the chief features of success. He talked face to face, and was the only professor who discarded every scrap of written notes and dictated material. In this our conviction is that he acted well and advisedly ; though, perhaps, he did injustice to himself in at least not giving more attention to some formal lectures on the literary and historical aspects of his subject. He allowed no writing, no dictation of note and comment to disturb the interest, and the outstanding characteristic of his class was its entire aloofness from the yet too painfully intact Aberdeen method of lecturing. The popular preacher and the orator are fully conscious of the value of the living word ; and, whereas in the other classes the physically best part of the hour was wasted in the merely mechanical drudgery of note-taking with but little contemporaneous absorption or understanding, the effort of Black was entirely directed to arouse the interest at the time in the work. This naturally threw the passman and the grinder out of their bearings, but the result was one over which later on his pupils are firmly agreed. His class was easier to pass for the average man, set free from a mass of notes and from dull grinding, while the prizemen had always to go halves in matter and in manner with the professorial mind. His list was thus a truer general test of ability than that

## AURORA BOREALIS.

of his colleagues, and he insisted more on literary capacity and neatness of statement. This is a feature of his work to which due attention has not been given ; while an outside examiner in other classes would have often reversed the position taken by mere note-takers and passers of flash currency, he would have rarely altered the judgment on men by the professor of Latin.

He knew his strength and his defects, and he wisely made no pretence to finished or wide Latin scholarship. Such had never been "in his time," as a divinity colleague of Black used to say, in airy and cheerful disregard of "pronunciation," with the ready admission of the consequence that he "never was a pop'lar speaker". We doubt if Black had heard of Lachmann and Ritschl, or at least if he was fully aware of their great position in modern Latin and linguistic learning. Bentley he alluded to gingerly and in a way that did not indicate an exact acquaintance ; Maclean he followed closely and exclusively in Horace. When we sat for the Fullerton Scholarship he had produced from the Library, to save printing the papers, old and finely tooled folios of Plautus and other authors in which the text was like an unknown tongue, and as perplexing as was, we remember, for the passmen their blending of a Bohn's translation of Lucretius with the modern text of Munro ! He had not more

## JOHN BLACK.

than a popular and vague knowledge of Roman history, and beyond Arnold we do not think that his sober wishes had ever learned to stray. Greek he had well-nigh forgotten, and philology beyond Peile he did not profess. But what he knew was all living and vitalised knowledge, and with greater industry he could have done justice to his undoubted natural ability. Terence we think was his best work, and wisely adapted to the necessities of the case towards the end of the session, when "the sound of the grinding" was high, and a faint blink of sunshine used to enter the class in the early hours of the spring day.

You saw him at his best as a *raconteur*. His class had thus a literary touch and flavour beyond the others. The Latinist was never so happy as in allusive references to men and books, and he possibly sent more pupils to the Library than all his colleagues combined. He shone in a Horatian parallel from modern verse, or in an off-hand quotation from Cockburn's *Memoirs* or Story's admirable work, *Roba di Roma*. He was a clever reader, and he knew the value of the pause and of vocal inflexion. In summer he used to carry in his waistcoat pocket a little copy of Colman's *Terence*. A neat and orderly man in all his ways; lucidity was his note. He handled the version, that time-honoured product of Latin scholarship in the North, with ease and with

## AURORA BOREALIS.

tact, bringing to bear on it the gist of points raised during the week. From first to last he was himself most interested in the realistic aspects of Latin—Roman antiquities, the topography of Rome and the teaching of Pillans' *Geography*. He was, perhaps, happiest in this last of all his work ; he could throw off on the board a sketch of the bay of Naples and work in the shade in a really clever way, ever critically viewing with pleasure his own neat draughtsmanship and writing. His writing was a source of perfectly legitimate pride, and he would quote with gusto the saying of Bismarck that the man whose caligraphy was illegible at ten paces should be shot. It was as neat as that of Melvin, and years of experience and the example of past masters in Latin and Greek have imbued us with a rooted and prompt disbelief in the classical attainments of one who writes a slovenly and illegible hand.

He was growing and mellowing when he was cut off. Had he lived he was marked by universal consent for the Moderatorship of the Church and for the Principalship, through his wide circle of influential friends and supporters. He was the business man of the Senatus, and he often dropped a remark to show that he was fully conscious of the fact, ascribing his precision in details and his grasp of principles to a slight experience during one

## JOHN BLACK.

vacation in a legal office. In business he was *facile princeps*, and the practical touch of Latin and the old Romans was an idea ever present to his mind. What he had lost for the pure scholar he had gained for the administrator.

He did much to promote a genial intercourse between the students and himself, and to thaw the old geological era of barrier reefs and icebergs. He recognised his men on the street, and this he alone did of the professoriate in his day. An epoch was introduced in 1875 by asking him as the first professorial chairman to a class-supper. It looked, as was confessed at the time, rather hopeless and against all precedent ; as soon might the Pope of Rome or the Emperor of All the Russias have been thought of to open the Debating Society. He was a little late in arriving, and the "bookies" were jubilant over their free offering of long odds ; but a rattle of the cab up to the door soon ruined their bets and restored the general equanimity. He had had no hesitation about coming, and never was there a better and an easier chairman. It was the day of small things, and the speeches were of a subdued cast. The organiser of the supper and the author of the invitation was entrusted, as the wit of the class, with the toast of "The Ladies". His rising was the signal for an ovation ; but, getting no farther than these two words, he sat down in

## AURORA BOREALIS.

funereal silence. Genially then did the chairman congratulate the speaker on his terse and happy style !

All his days Black was popular as a man and as a professor. Long after our own acquaintance with his class we were on a walking tour with others in Tomintoul. Late on a Saturday night we entered the "Richmond Arms," and perhaps our general appearance and the absence of luggage may not have been such marks of the *bonâ fide* traveller as to inspire confidence in our respectability or academic past. We were shown into a room where there was a group of an Arts class on the wall. Naturally we impinged upon it. This attracted the attention of the landlady. "Ye may ken somebody there," she said with a slight suspicion of doubt in her voice. As luck would have it the first ray of light struck her own son, in the top line, if we remember—his name, at least, we do recall, Grant. It did not seem to allay her hesitation, as this might have been a cunningly prearranged attack on the maternal susceptibilities. The second ray over our shoulder lighted on the centre—"a p'int o' licht," as Dr. Rennet would have said, "hits A and syne stots aff to B". It revealed "John and the Duke". Our ducal chancellor we believe is landlord of the inn, but our recognition of him was not so favourable to us as was that of the Latin



## JOHN BLACK.

professor. He alone by report had been known of all his colleagues. "And I kent Blackie," she added. "He comes here often and tries me on wi' his Gaelic, but he hasna the soleedity o' John." There was a copy of Becker's *Gallus* in the room, with on the fly-leaf of the volume the old familiar handwriting of Black. We re-read the story that evening in the "dark Tomintoul" of Sir Walter Scott, and once more fancied ourselves a bajan under the professor who was, if not the best scholar, unquestionably the best formal teacher in the Arts Faculty of our day.

## ANDREW SCOTT.

*Rusticus, abnormis sapiens.*—HOR.

“Rough, but a diamond.”

IN the group of professors holding office at the time of the union in 1860, there was no more notable figure in respect of outstanding picturesqueness than Andrew Scott, and the academic gallery would be incomplete and even sorely defective that did not present some image of the Professor of Hebrew and his singular or rather unique career. At the distance of seven-and-twenty years which alas have rolled away since we last gazed on his manly and mirth-evoking countenance, I recall his name and figure not without emotion, feeling that in the memories of these years many incidents have been softened down and queernesses innate from his cradle have become mellowed and subdued, in the light of those *Fugaces Anni* which are sweeping us all with our mingled freight of virtues and frailties to the same silent bourne. Though not without grave failings, as “the poor inhabitant below” would have been the first to own, Andrew deserves not only a place in the recollection of friends, but a niche in the



*Andrew Scott*



## ANDREW SCOTT.

Walhalla of the University, a brave honest soul who had ideals and struggled towards them not unsuccessfully.

He was a true Scotsman, not of the canny but of the chivalrous type, and his jocular friends would rally him on his being a more typical Scot than Sir Walter himself, inasmuch as Andrew bore not only the name of Scott, but that of the patron saint of Scotland as well. Yet oddly enough he ran a narrow escape from being born an Englishman, as he drew his first breath within a few miles of the English border. There he was reared, a stalwart Borderer, whose destiny it was, like Ulysses, to see many lands and know the manners of many men, becoming eventually, what makes him memorable in this record, Professor of Hebrew in the University and King's College as far back as 1846, and thereafter in 1860 the first Professor of Oriental Languages in the United University.

It was in his much loved Liddesdale, under the shadow of the Cheviots, that he saw the light, on November 8, 1800. The poet Heine who was born the year after, in 1801, used to joke about his being the *first* man of the nineteenth century, and Andrew might have claimed hardly less appropriately to have been the *last* man of the eighteenth century, to which with his conservative views, he may be said to have in heart and soul belonged. His parentage

## AURORA BOREALIS.

was humble but respectable, his father, William Scott, being a schoolmaster at Burnsmouth in the parish of Castleton, which gets its name from the chief hamlet, so-called, in that pastoral dale.

Andrew was thus not only a Scott, but a Scott born and bred in the land of the "Bauld Buccleugh," and feudal chieftainship and national patriotism made the amalgam of his early upbringing, with the echoes of Chevy Chase and the exploits of "Kinmont Willie" sounding in his ears, and with the blue Cheviots separating him from the "Englishers," whom Andrew rather despised as a "glaikit kind o' fowk," across the hills that bounded his horizon. There was thus infused into his being, from the tales of Border raids, a strain of nomad-adventure and haughty courage that never deserted him ; sensitive he was withal, to the verge of being sudden and quick in quarrel, but faithful as steel to all friends, especially Liddesdale friends ; hospitable, too, like his namesake and fellow countryman, another Andrew, better known as Dandie Dinmont, and in the event of need arising, not less full of pluck in the event of a scrimmage than that stalwart Borderer. A good rattan was therefore Andrew's constant companion, and when young he was known to have been a great runner, swimmer, and wrestler ; an athlete long before the age of athleticism.

He was the third son of his father, the "scule-

## ANDREW SCOTT.

maister," whom he always spoke of as an honest man, proud though poor, and full of the independent spirit native to the Borderer. His mother was an Isabella Veitch, wife of the said William, and from her he seemed to derive his sensitivity, as she was a "kittle" person, and came of a kittle race, being a cousin of Veitch, the quaint scholar, who gave us the *Greek Verbs*. After receiving the earlier part of his education from his father, inheriting likewise from his parents a simple and unaffected but deep vein of piety that never deserted him, coming out in the solemn tones in which he would speak of Thomas Boston of Ettrick, and of the impression that divine left behind him among the valleys of Tweedside, Andrew was sent to the school of New Castleton then taught by one Ebenezer Wells. The minute particulars of his early days, which we are now to record, were obtained from his brother Thomas, schoolmaster of Beith in Fife, who wrote his recollections of Andrew soon after his death, and to whom we owe the dates of his family correspondence afterwards enumerated. Thence he proceeded to the College in Edinburgh, about 1818 or 1819, attending among others Professor Christison, the Professor of Latin, during the last session of that distinguished teacher. During college and for some years thereafter, Andrew maintained himself as a teacher or teacher's assistant,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

first under a Mr. Robert Nichol (an adventure teacher), and afterwards conducted one of the Latin classes in Leith High School in room and in absence of Mr. Steele the Rector. At College the most important fact in his biography was his obtaining the second prize in the Hebrew class at Edinburgh in the spring of 1829.

Regarding the Arts course in Edinburgh he had little to relate except that he always spoke with pride of his having been one of six or seven in a large class who took out by right the M.A. degree of that time—a rare thing then in Edinburgh, where a desultory system of attending classes with no well defined and orderly curriculum was the order or rather no order of the day. Among his college contemporaries he numbered two who afterwards became colleagues to him in Aberdeen, James Nicol of Traquair, the eminent naturalist; and Peter Colin Campbell, afterwards the learned Principal of Aberdeen University. Apart from Scott's knowledge of Hebrew, evinced as above, it is very doubtful if, as an M.A. of Edinburgh in these days, he carried forth with him any very special acquirement; but one thing he attained, on which he was wont to pride himself, and that was a knowledge of Latin that was more than respectable, even creditable, considering his peculiar and fitful and somewhat Bohemian modes of study. False quan-



ANDREW SCOTT.

tities he was scholar enough never to abide, and he spoke with scorn amounting to loathing of bad Latin in diplomas, such as Doctor Divinitatis, which he would utter with rising gorge as an atrocity for which he had no toleration.

His *bête noire* in Latinity was the solecism of inserting a tick *between* the L's on the occasion of writing LL.D. This at once stamped a man in his opinion an ignoramus in Latin, and he would sometimes refuse to append his signature to a diploma where such an offence by some blundering colleague confronted him among the previous signatures. As a *per contra* to this Rhadamanthine particularity, it is right to mention that his delight in good old Scotch Latin was commensurate with his contempt for degenerate modern Latin, and with a twinkling eye of patriotic pride he would recall the *Delitia Poetarum Scotorum* of 1637 as the high water mark of Scottish classicality in the olden time.

After finishing his course at Edinburgh, as before observed, in 1829, his first appearance seems to have been as a teacher at Tain in the same year in the position of *interim* rector of the academy. It was there, in that old *nidus* of the Norsemen, that he obtained the whiff of those breezes from the Scandinavian world, which never deserted him and which led him to speak to his latest days of Scania and Dania with peculiar emotion. Ere long we

## AURORA BOREALIS.

find him in a private tutorship at Hallcraig, Lanarkshire, where we have note of him on September 2, 1830. Thence, after a short stay, he darted off as a naval instructor, chiefly on board the ships in the Mediterranean fleet. There he is found, May 19, 1831, on the *St. Vincent* at Spithead, then with the *Actæon*, touching at Corfu, December 8, 1831 ; at Nauplia di Romania, April 10, 1832 ; Sultan's Valley, Constantinople, March 29, 1832 ; Tripoli in Barbary, November 5, 1832 ; Naples, June 1, 1833 ; by excursion to Tivoli, October 1, 1833, and back to Constantinople, where we find him on January 28 and June 4, 1834. A glance at these localities will show what a variety of moving accident must have passed around him in his Nomadic pilgrimage round the shores of the Mediterranean.

Ere long, however, he returns from the Mediterranean, and now appears in the spring of 1835 as classical master at Dollar Institution, an office in which he had for his predecessor the famous William Tennant, the author of *Anster Fair*, and at this time professor of Hebrew at St. Andrews University. Henceforth Dollar, next to Aberdeen, was to Andrew Scott the centre of his Scottish associations, and, more even than Aberdeen, was the home of his most tender recollections, embracing friendships and attachments lying nearest to his heart. It was there that he made the acquaintance of David Gray, afterwards Professor

## ANDREW SCOTT.

David Gray, of Marischal College, and there also he became engaged to a young lady of the place to whom he was tenderly attached, and whose demise in decline was one of the sadnesses of his life. There was something deeply pathetic in the way in which the stalwart Borderer would melt over the memory of his ladylove "now in the mools," and one cannot help thinking that much that was "bizarre" in his mode of life was due to the circumstance that he had loved and lost, and so life had ceased to be radiant socially for him. Dollar, where his nuptial hopes had been entombed, was accordingly a kind of sacred place to him, and those who did not know his history were apt to smile at the fervour and frequency of his allusions to that shrine. His stay at Dollar was, however, sufficiently long to enable him to make some good Latin scholars, and among these he was always wont to speak with pride of Frederick Crombie, afterwards professor in St. Mary's, St. Andrews, who had been his favourite pupil at Dollar. Long after, the two travelled together in Switzerland, and Andrew would relate with semi-mortification how the pupil took the "shine" out of the teacher in Continental conversation, when Crombie would, as Scott phrased it, "knap French or German right and left just like a penguin in their travels".

At Dollar, Andrew remained fully six years—for

## AURORA BOREALIS.

him a pretty long continuous period—till 1841, when for some unexplained cause he made a dart for the New World and became a settler for a while in Canada. Here we find him at Brockville, near Montreal, on December 4, 1841, and he now renews acquaintance with the Rev. P. Colin Campbell who was by this time Presbyterian minister at Brockville. Andrew soon obtains the position of master in the grammar school of that town, but does not find the situation in the democratic atmosphere surrounding him at all agreeable. It was here that he contracted his heart-hatred for the rampant Liberalism of the New Democracy which he could never abide, and he soon determined to get back to the old Scotch frying-pan out of the American and Canadian furnace. Meanwhile a great event had taken place in the old congested country—the Disruption, namely of 1843—and both Campbell and Scott turned their faces homeward, where it was supposed that positions and parishes had become twice as numerous as they had been in the pre-Disruption days. The result was that Campbell obtained the beautiful parish of Caputh in Perthshire, and Andrew Scott, who sailed from Quebec on July 7, 1844, got the grammar school of Pulteneytown, Wick, whence he writes on April 1, 1845. He had not long to wait for a higher place, for Professor Bentley had just died in King's College, Aberdeen,





## ANDREW SCOTT.

and Andrew Scott had access to the Home Secretary, with whom the appointment lay, and 1846 saw him installed in the Hebrew Chair in Old Aberdeen. His long migrations in quest of office were now over and he had reached the goal of his ambition. The income was then little over £200, enough for a bachelor of his Spartan habits, and so he gathered his chattels and books around him in an upper storey of the Fraser buildings, then forming the south side of the old King's College quadrangle, and there in a suite of rooms formed out of the old and disused dormitories of students where they lived in the ancient days, he made for himself a modern snuggerly and eke gave dinners, always with good wine and equally good jests, entertaining among others the Laird of Powis, who would return the compliment by inviting him to what he called ambiguously his "goose" dinners at Powis House. In that wing of the college buildings he remained until the demolition and rebuilding in 1860. And so life moved on, with uniform tenor henceforth to the close, varied only by Senatus debates and sometimes discords over the elections of professors, diversified also by the troubles of the fusion time and the advent of the Inglis commission of 1858, which introduced many changes, doubling Andrew's income, but depriving the old college of its autonomy, and despoiling him of the vote he had exercised so potentially under the

## AURORA BOREALIS.

old regime. On three different occasions of election Andrew's vote had been especially potential, bringing in Fuller in 1851 as professor of mathematics, P. C. Campbell in 1854 as professor of Greek, an event which led next year to Campbell's promotion to be principal, and again in the election of 1855, when the Greek chair fell to the writer of this article. In these elections Professor Andrew could not avoid, with his peculiar temper and brusque manner, trampling on many toes and incurring some jibes if not worse treatment, but these he spurned aside as he did likewise the censures he exposed himself to by his practice of voting as a rule against all Honorary degrees. These he regarded with great aversion as "soiling one's addition" instead of gracing it, and when out on any excursion he would in his sensitivity often decline the simplest hospitality in a country manse, for fear he might be expected thereby to countenance a claim for the bestowal of D.D. on his Reverend host at some distant date.

As a great collector of books, and especially of travels (Edward Daniel Clarke he often referred to under the name of the "greatest of modern travelers"), he was, what not all collectors are, a great and omnivorous reader. Folklore of all kinds, antiquities, even chap-books like *The Deil at Bal-darach* or *Leper the Tailor* he would first devour and then bind in good buckram, stowing them on his



## ANDREW SCOTT.

shelves. The catalogue of his books is a curiosity for its miscellaneousness—ranging, as we have said, from *Leper the Tailor* up to *Hafiz* and the *Hitopadesa* or the *Nürnberg Chronicle*, of which last, with its splendid engravings and quaint contents, he was specially proud.

During his long wanderings, and especially his four years spent on the Mediterranean, he had seen much that was amusing as well as gathered not a little that was instructive. His acquaintance with Arabic, on which he rather plumed himself, dates from this Tripoli and Constantinople period, and when he dined out in after days and had occasion or was disposed to praise the coffee after dinner, he would throw in an eastern touch and say by way of compliment, "I declare you could not get finer in the cafés of Constantinople". Being a far-wandered bachelor with no domestic ties, he naturally fell into nautical unmethodical ways, but what he lost in method and orderliness, his friends gained correspondingly in the resulting picturesqueness of style and anecdote, so that over a tumbler of toddy he would be very amusing as well as instructive in his rehearsals of things he had seen and heard. It was not without a touch of pardonable pride that he would enumerate the various countries where he had travelled. "Yes, lads," he said once in almost Gibbonian phrase, "I have sojourned in every capital

## AURORA BOREALIS.

in Europe except those of its extremities, Russia and the Iberian Peninsula." Before all was done, however, he made up for this lacuna in his travels, at least so far as Russia is concerned. It was one of his latest expeditions to visit St. Petersburg and Moscow, and his excursion extended as far down the Volga as Kazan, the capital of Russian Tartary. This marked the extreme limit of his wanderings as well as the last of his journeys, for it was in the return journey home through Stockholm that he fell ill and had his most serious experience in a fight for life. His illness assumed a threatening aspect, and there gathered around his sickbed a number of semi-interested spectators who would "undertake" for him, including a chaplain and the Scotch Consul. In his prostration there was muttering round his bedside as to wills and testaments, and even hints at preparation for obsequies, not agreeable to Andrew, when he suddenly woke up from the seeming lethargy, bade the gentlemen take themselves off, and seizing his rattan, gave them to understand "'saul, it is not come to *that* just yet". By a strong effort he raised himself from the sickbed, and a sudden access of energy supervened enabling him to get safely out of Sweden, much to the astonishment of the spectators in his hotel.

In narratives of this kind *quarum pars magna fuit* he would largely indulge, and occasionally too, if

ANDREW SCOTT.

rumour can be trusted, these "yarns" were spun where they were less appropriate—from the Professor's desk, and the hour which might, could, would, or should have been devoted to the mysteries of Hithpael and the Hebrew verb, passed gaily away with Oriental stories of Algiers and the East, greatly to the delectation of not over studious divinity students, some of whom wanted only to "mark time," instead of setting a mark on time as every student should wish to do. Like another contemporary character in Aberdeen, of whom Walter C. Smith has sung,

Nor sun, nor moon, nor star, nor chime,  
Set punctual tide for him or time,  
For all his habits were at strife  
With orderly mechanic life.

And yet when Andrew did set to work he did so with considerable "go," and he could teach with spirit and even vehemence for a time, making good scholars in this field also, among whom he used to vaunt of the lately deceased Professor John Fyfe as being a Hebraist after his own heart. Moreover he always kept up the *form* of a high ideal, and in the oldest of our calendars he was careful to insert so as to justify his position as professor of *Oriental* languages and not of Hebrew alone, a paragraph to this effect:—

"Should *three* or more students come forward, instruction will be given in the Arabic, Persian,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Hindustani or Sanscrit languages *two* days weekly at such hours as may be found convenient." Then followed a billet of books to be used, a very respectable *quantum*, and this flag was always kept flying, though it is very doubtful whether the requisite *three* ever turned up. There can be no question, however, that he had a good apparatus for the purpose ; his store of books in Persian and Arabic was highly creditable,<sup>1</sup> including Golius, Freytag and Meninski, and his collection of Oriental MSS., sold at his death, and unfortunately lost to Aberdeen, is now among the treasures of Cambridge University library, where the late famous Orientalist, Professor Wright, had the sagacity to discern their value.

We have referred to Professor Andrew's idiosyncrasy as to modern Democracy. It is proper to note that he felt and spoke as keenly about European politics in the sixties, when the crisis as to Schleswig-Holstein was in progress. There his Scandinavian sympathies were all for Denmark and against Bismarck and his abettors, and he would almost foam at the mouth when he denounced, as he often did, the pusillanimous action of Lord John Russell and the English Cabinet of the time in leaving Denmark the prey of the German eagle.

<sup>1</sup>The catalogue of Andrew's books contains 1791 entries, and occupied *nine nights* at the sale.

## ANDREW SCOTT.

The great aggrandisement of Germany undoubtedly commenced with that aggression, and if Andrew were looking up to-day he would find not a few confirmations in both hemispheres of his early denunciations.

To return to more private and personal reminiscences. Professor Andrew twice did me the honour of organising a joint excursion in which we were fellow travellers. One was in 1857, the year of the Manchester Exhibition, which we went to see together across the borders ; the other and far more enjoyable one in 1856 was nearer home ; "Macgregor" being on his native heath ; for it was an excursion within the loved soil of Fife and in the vicinity of his favourite Dollar. Here he acted as cicerone through such places as Denino with its quaint little kirk, a parish that boasted of Tennant as once schoolmaster ; Anstruther, where we visited Chalmers' birthplace, and I remember him saying with an obeisance as he entered the place, "mony a powerfu' word has been poured out here" ; Kilrenny, where he himself would pour out about worthy James Melville and his quaint autobiography ; Falkland, where we surveyed the palace of the Stewart kings, and climbed the nearer Lomond, enjoying the noblest of prospects. But the gem of the excursion was St. Andrews, which was to him a city of delight, with its old memories of Beaton

## AURORA BOREALIS.

and Sharpe, and the bottle dungeon around which the billows beat in an easterly storm in thunder, whence it was that Wishart was hoisted out in order to be burned. We put up at the "Crosskeys," and *inter alia* made the acquaintance of Professor Spalding, who, as an Aberdonian, was glad to greet two colleagues on pilgrimage belonging to the Aberdeen staff. When going away we happened to be rather late for the train, and I had to run on before while Andrew more leisurely walked up behind. The steam was already up and the whistle ready to sound, but the driver saw there was an elderly gentleman behind me and wisely and coolly waited for his arrival. It was the only place where I could say the railway took time to wait for a passenger.

By the close of the sixties the end of all his pilgrimages was drawing near, and the once strong man, who seemed made of iron, felt his powers ebbing. It was at Leven, in his favourite Fife, and in the autumn of 1870, that he was seized by his last illness, and after only four days of sickness he passed away. The event was announced in the *Aberdeen Journal* in the following terms :—

"At Leven on the 10th October, at half-past eight morning, Andrew Scott, A.M., Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Aberdeen."

ANDREW SCOTT.

*Quid non, longa dies, quid non consumitis, anni ?*

When I remember all  
The friends so linked together  
I've seen around me fall,  
Like leaves in wintry weather,  
I seem like one  
Who treads alone  
Some banquet-hall deserted,  
Whose lights are fled,  
And garlands dead,  
And all but he departed.

## JOHN FORBES.

*Ce titre de langue primitive et parfaite appartient à l'hébreu.*

—RENAN.

THE Professor of Hebrew, as he is popularly called, though Professor of Oriental Languages is his official title, labours under the disadvantage that his students are all preparing for active work in the Church, and that a minute knowledge of Hebrew as a language is not considered an indispensable element in the equipment of a popular preacher or a successful ecclesiastic. For such students a general knowledge of the language, such as will enable them to grasp the general bearing of linguistic arguments, is regarded as sufficient; and questions dealing with the history and contents of the literature of the Old Testament possess more importance and excite greater interest. For ten years after the fusion Andrew Scott occupied the chair, and, being a layman, did not concern himself with the critical questions arising from Hebrew literature, even though these were of special interest to his students and were then beginning to attract in this country the attention since so widely accorded to them by theological students. The purely





John Forbes



## JOHN FORBES.

linguistic aspect of his work was sufficient for Scott, and even therein he was not regarded as a hard taskmaster.

When Scott died in 1870 Dr. John Forbes became Professor of Hebrew, for he did not profess to teach other oriental languages. He was then sixty-eight years of age, only two years younger than the man he succeeded. For many years he had devoted himself, with great earnestness and care, to the study of the Old Testament, and he had also had a long educational experience ; but even with these advantages the appointment of a man so far advanced in life would, in ordinary circumstances, have been a risky one. Fortunately, Dr. Forbes retained a physical vitality and a mental elasticity that enabled him to enter on his professorial work with vigour and enthusiasm, to continue at it for seventeen years, and then to retire with his love for study unabated as is witnessed by the production of a new publication lately issued in the ninety-sixth year of his age. His appearance was pleasing and his manner was genial and attractive. The illustrative portrait shows him as known to his students of 1870-87, but the signature belongs to his ninety-seventh year, and is copied from a holograph letter to the University Librarian asking him to send all the recent commentaries, in any European language, on the Revelation of St. John.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

His brow,  
Bald, pale and pure, seemed modelled by a master  
In polished ivory; and like the glow  
Of veiled lamps lit in urns of alabaster,  
Benevolence and wisdom shone below  
So soft that in their light young Love might sigh,  
"Could I grow old, as he looks so would I!"

With a voice that retained the resonance of youth, a manner that was bright and vivacious, a patience that could not be ruffled or exhausted, and, above all, a fine old-fashioned gentlemanly courtesy that was irresistible in its fascination, he succeeded in attracting his students to the study of his subject. As a teacher he was methodical and practical, seeking to lay a sure basis for a knowledge of the language, and displaying, especially in his written exercises, great skill in exhibiting clearly the essential principles of its structure, unencumbered by exceptional forms or accidental variations.

With the literature of the Old Testament he also dealt, but fulness of treatment was not possible in the time at his disposal. He contented himself with indicating the principles of interpretation and criticism as illustrated in the study of selected portions of the Old Testament. His favourite study had given him an exceptional familiarity with the Scriptures, and had made him acquainted with the best work of critics and expositors. Shortness of eyesight, however, his sole physical defect, prevented him from giving a continuous series of written

## JOHN FORBES.

lectures, and he did not possess the faculty of fluent and ready speech. His expositions were consequently defective in smooth connection and literary finish ; yet they were remarkably suggestive, and probably more valuable as a means of instruction than if they had been elaborated in a written form. Accepting, as a whole, the traditional views regarding Old Testament literature, he also displayed a scrupulous anxiety to give a fair statement of an opponent's position, and to meet every objection in its strongest form. Profoundly reverent in the spirit in which he himself approached the study of the Scriptures, he was always ready to receive new light from any quarter, and showed a marvellous aptitude for reconciling diverging views. Though he dealt only with the outlines of a wide subject, his expositions were at once instructive and stimulating.

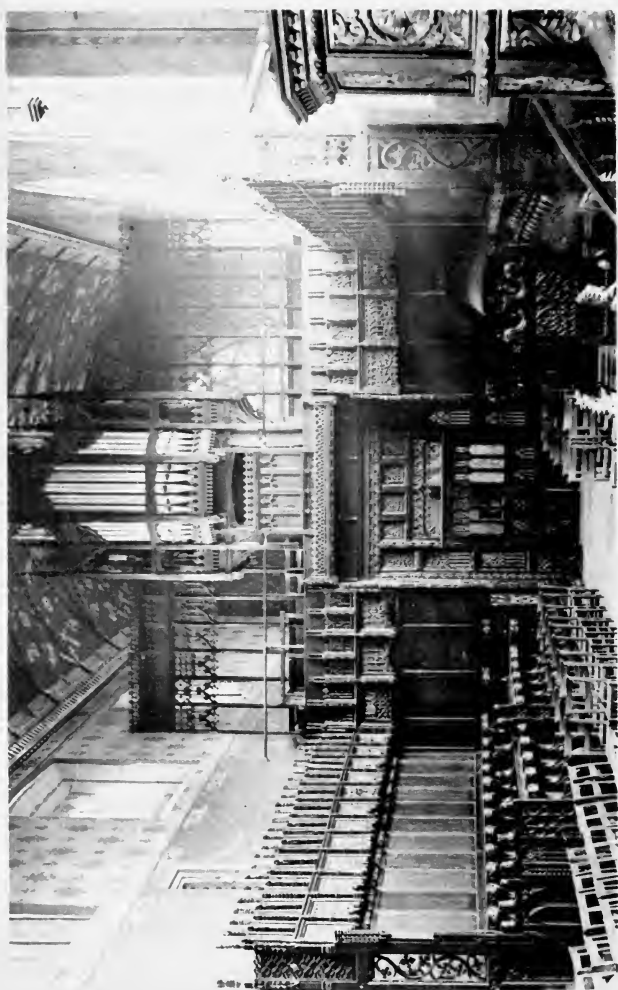
The subject of "parallelism" naturally received considerable attention in his class-room, as this had been a life-long study with him. In his writings he has shown such anxiety to acknowledge the labours and suggestions of others that his own distinctive contributions to the elucidation of this subject are apt to be overlooked. "Parallelism" is generally regarded as a form of literary expression characteristic only of poetical compositions, but Dr. Forbes holds that it is really an essential element in Hebrew thought, a law of thought in the

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Hebrew mind, that is always easily recognised in poetry but also makes its influence felt in all the forms of literature that emanate from a Hebrew mind. His commentary on the Epistle to the Romans is designed to show the influence of this principle throughout that epistle ; and in one of his latest published works he maintains that this principle provides a key to the arrangement of the Book of Psalms. In dealing with this subject in his classroom, he gave his students an opportunity of discerning the wonderful subtlety of his mind in developing the thoughts of others, and its marvellous kaleidoscopic power of combining in harmonious symmetry the manifold suggestions due to each individual element of a literary composition.

The secret of Dr. Forbes' influence over his students lay in his personality. Courteous in manner, without a trace of pride or affectation, he won respect without an effort. His natural abilities of mind, coupled with unaffected modesty, commanded admiration ; and his patient earnestness in teaching, accompanied by warm sympathy, secured esteem ; while the genial kindliness of his disposition and the mellow sweetness of his character called forth warm affection. Of the men in the University whose influence was always an inspiration towards higher and better things, none holds a surer or warmer place in the memory of his students than John Forbes.











*Robert Haipherson*

## ROBERT MACPHERSON.

*Mementote praeceptorum vestrorum qui vobis locuti sunt verbum Dei.*

THE divinity students are standing in knots of two or three, but fall quickly into their places as the door of the College chapel opens, and a well-knit but slightly-stooping figure of middle height, robed in a Geneva gown with a broad velvet collar, passes without haste, and with eyes bent on the ground, to his chair at the foot of the pulpit. When he has seated himself and looks round you observe the bald forehead, the refined and intellectual features, and a certain fixedness of gaze which arises from short-sightedness. His whole appearance has the unmistakable stamp of the student and divine. When he begins his lecture you hear a voice that is not musical, but sonorous and impressive, distinctly holding conviction and even passion behind it. You feel that he is interested in his work, and that he means that you shall be interested in it too.

When Robert Macpherson won the prize of the divinity chair he was forty-six years old. He had

## AURORA BOREALIS.

been "making himself" ever since he left College, where he had been Hutton prizeman. The duties of his military chaplaincy at Fort-George (1835-43) left him with leisure to pursue his favourite study of theology; and the work of his parochial cure at Forres (1843-52), though much more exacting, did not interrupt his progress in learning. When Dr. Mearns died in 1852 he felt that his scholarship gave him the right to aspire to the vacant chair: his being his son-in-law added another motive.

By this time the Church had begun to rally after the sore stroke of '43, but her ministers had in general been too busy defending and reorganising to devote themselves to theological study; so it happened that only two candidates came forward for the divinity chair. The examination was a searching one: Macpherson was victorious. It was singular that Trail, the other candidate, succeeded him fifteen years later. Their planets were destined to cross at several periods.

Macpherson was happy in the time of life at which it fell to him to discharge the duties of the chair. From forty-six to sixty-one his powers were in full vigour, and there was no falling off to the end. He was always recasting his old lectures or writing new ones. His way of "refreshing the machine" was like Sir Walter Scott's—to work hard at some other part of the same subject. Even

ROBERT MACPHERSON.

Milligan's joining the Divinity Faculty in 1860, though a boon to the Hall, was not taken advantage of as a relief from his own labours. His lectures on the Resurrection (in refutation of Strauss), written when he was sixty, were the proof of his unwearied diligence to the last, and were the crown of his life-work.

While the writer was attending the Hall, Macpherson delivered an interesting course of lectures on the Historical Evidences of the Truth of Scripture, founded chiefly on Rawlinson. It was our first introduction to a subject which has since proved so rich in apologetic value. I have a vivid recollection of the determined opposition with which he met the "Broad Church" teachings then current. The pleas of Baden Powell for a non-miraculous Christianity were his special aversion. Dear to him as the very heart of the Christian creed was the old Latin Soteriology, which was carried over by the reformers into all the Protestant confessions. I can recall with what emotion he once repeated the words of some objector to the Atonement, who said that it represented God as demanding a sacrifice "like some heathen deity of old". His voice was lost as he quoted the obnoxious utterance. This was not a rare example of the intensity of his beliefs, which were sometimes expressed with a surprising vehemence. He was dogmatic, as it

## AURORA BOREALIS.

behaved a teacher of dogma to be. *Quicquid voluit valde voluit.* But his vigorous expressions did not spring from the love of exercising authority, but from his moral earnestness and his reverence for revealed truth.

He always commanded respect, and in most cases attention, so that the hour we spent with him was a tranquil one, undisturbed by any calls to order. The task of hearing discourses must occasionally have been trying, but I have no recollection of any hitch occurring. He never indulged in sarcasm when criticising, but was tolerant and encouraging—sometimes offering a gentle hint (as he once did to his son Duncan, then and afterwards one of our best men, who had used the expression, “in your heart of hearts”) to beware of the danger of being too rhetorical in preaching. During one of the sessions I attended there were ninety-nine students enrolled, many of them parish schoolmasters who had come up for what was called a partial session.

Whilst his kindness to his students was never demonstrative, you came to understand how kind-hearted he was, and this awakened warmer feelings than those of respect towards him. You had to “love him ere he seemed worthy of your love”. A student whom I knew was addressed by him at parting with gentle earnestness: “Preach the old

## ROBERT MACPHERSON.

doctrines ; this is how you will win men to Christ " ; then fetching from his desk some lectures on Romans he said : " You can look over these, as you will find writing sermons a hard task at first " .

In Dr. Mearns's time and previously, the Divinity classroom was the middle one in the square tower, but, upon his death, Ferguson, the Professor of Latin, obtained possession of it, and the College chapel was accordingly benched to serve as a classroom for the new Professor of Divinity. Macpherson continued teaching there until 1863, when the two new classrooms in Divinity were built on the site of the old Public School.

When he officiated in the chapel or in one of the city churches he read his sermons closely, owing to his short-sightedness ; but when he assisted an old friend in the country he used to extemporise, and he then preached with a fervour and a homiletic simplicity that riveted the attention of his hearers. In his younger days, his services were specially in request on Communion occasions.

An old friend of his, who had known him before he came to Aberdeen, has often told me that in private life he was one of the most genial of men. He was always grave and serious in the Chair, as was becoming, and never uttered a sentence that could provoke a smile ; but when with his old friends, or the members of his home circle, he

## AURORA BOREALIS.

would completely unbend, and would often be the merriest of the party.

A worthy successor of the revered teachers who had adorned this chair with their piety and learning, having carried on its best traditions for fifteen years, Dr. Macpherson departed this life on the 23rd January, 1867. He had lectured as usual to his students on the day before. *Mutabimur in immutabilitatem.*







*Samuel Trail*

## SAMUEL TRAIL.

Long may the doctrines by thy sages taught,  
Raised from the quarries where their sires have wrought,  
Be like the granite of thy rock-ribbed land—  
As slow to rear as obdurate to stand.

—HOLMES.

THE Faculty of Divinity, as constituted at the union of the colleges in 1860, embraced four chairs, Systematic Theology, Church History, Oriental Languages, and Biblical Criticism ; the latter originating at that date. A layman may hold the chair of Oriental languages, for the other three chairs ministers of the Church of Scotland are alone eligible.

At the union of the colleges the three clerical professors had assigned to them a position that brought them into contact with students of other faculties than the divinity, and that calls for a brief notice. These professors then became permanent lecturers on the Murray foundation. This arrangement did not command universal assent when proposed by the University Commissioners. A large body of the alumni of King's College protested, and

## AURORA BOREALIS.

succeeded in reducing the ordinance of the University Commissioners ; but a special Act of Parliament was immediately obtained, by which the Commissioners' proposal was brought into operation. The effect of this scheme was to practically obliterate this valuable foundation, whose existence and purpose became almost unknown to the students—a result scarcely compensated by a substantial augmentation of the salaries of these three professors. In the period embraced in the present sketches, the professors fulfilled their duties as Murray lecturers by conducting in rotation public worship on Sundays in the college chapel. Students in Arts were required, at the beginning of each session, to state whether they would attend, and a roll of those who expressed their willingness to attend was called, at the beginning of each service, by censors, who were the bursars of the tertian class. This apparent supervision was only nominal, for absentees were not called to account. The number of students that attended was much smaller than it might have been, generally beginning well in the bajan year, and yearly getting less ; and nothing was done to encourage attendance. The accommodation provided for the students was inadequate, uncomfortable and mean, the internal condition of the chapel being for many years a disgrace to the University—a disgrace now happily removed. The services also were not

## SAMUEL TRAIL.

of a specially attractive nature. Instrumental music was excluded, and for a time even a choir was unknown. The lecturers also, however capable in other respects, were not pulpit orators ; none of them even possessed the gifts that make a permanently interesting preacher. The lectures did not always strike a hearer as being specially prepared for the place where they were delivered ; and tales were in circulation to show that some of the lectures had done duty elsewhere, as evidenced by rural illustrations, and by references that presupposed a more varied and a more highly-organised congregation than that found in the college chapel.

To the chair of systematic theology a peculiar interest attaches on account of the method adopted for selecting its occupants. The other chairs in the faculty of divinity are under the patronage of the Crown, but the occupants of this chair are selected by examination. The examining body consists of representatives from the Synod of Aberdeen (through whose aid Bishop Patrick Forbes was able to found the chair) and from the University. Their procedure on the occurrence of a vacancy is minutely prescribed in the royal charter of confirmation, even to the form of public advertisement to be used in inviting candidates, which runs as follows : *Viri literati et virtutibus imbuti invitantur, qui sese cupiunt offerre et examinationi pro eodem vacante loco subicere,*

## AURORA BOREALIS.

*ut idem locus detur digniori et aptissimo.* The subjects in which proficiency is required are also detailed in the charter, while finally it is provided that the successful candidate should be *in fide integer*. The history of the chair does not manifestly point to the conclusion that this method of appointment is much superior to the unscientific process of selection by a Government official. It is true that the final provision of the charter has hitherto been fulfilled, for even the faintest breath of suspicion as to the orthodoxy of its several occupants has never arisen ; but it cannot be said that the men selected have proved themselves strikingly brilliant or suggestively original in their work. At the same time the several occupants have possessed competent scholarship and have shown sufficient teaching aptitude, though they may not have been animated by high theological ambition or inspired with infectious enthusiasm.

At the union of the colleges in 1860 Dr. Robert Macpherson, professor of divinity in King's College, became professor of systematic theology, the chair receiving this new designation in consequence of the erection of a separate chair of biblical criticism. Dr. Macpherson had been appointed in 1852, having defeated the only other candidate, the Rev. Samuel Trail, LL.D., minister of Harray and Birsay, who on that occasion had to content himself with the degree of D.D. as his reward in the contest. At

## SAMUEL TRAIL.

that time Dr. Trail had been a parish minister for eleven years ; he returned to his parochial duties in Orkney, disappointed, indeed, but not dismayed, and there continued his theological studies, though he can scarcely have entertained the hope of ultimately securing the same professorship, seeing that his successful rival was of the same age as himself. In 1862 English orthodoxy was startled by the publication of Bishop Colenso's work in which he called in question the historical accuracy and the traditional authorship of the books commonly attributed to Moses, and from remote Orkney Dr. Trail contributed a pamphlet to the library of criticisms produced by the daring bishop's views. In the production of a chronological Bible published in 1864, he also had a part. Perhaps more writings might have come from his pen had he remained in Orkney ; but Dr. Macpherson died in 1867, and Dr. Trail, presenting himself again as a candidate, secured on this occasion the coveted position. Thereupon his literary labours ceased ; with him, as with so many others, the abundant leisure of a professor in a Scottish University quenched, instead of stimulating, his literary ambition.

When Dr. Trail entered on his professorial duties he had reached his sixty-first year, and had left behind him all uncertainty as to his theological

## AURORA BOREALIS.

position, and much also of the natural enthusiasm so necessary for effective influence over other minds. In his class-room three days of the week were devoted to lectures on natural theology, evidences of Christianity and Christian doctrines ; the other days were spent in examinations on text-books and hearing students' discourses. The lectures were full and clear in matter, but hard and cold in form. A rigidly logical frame of mind rendered him impatient at the introduction of any matter that, however interesting in itself, was not strictly relevant to the subject under discussion. A long continued and carefully cultivated habit of minutely criticising theological expositions had rendered him suspicious of the fallacies that may lurk under an ornate and rhetorical style and unconsciously influence the writer. He could show with cold precision that the glitter of an irrelevant adjective, or the glow of a picturesque simile, had produced on another reasoner the erroneous impression that some coveted position had been successfully established. The effect upon his own style was evident ; he carefully pruned down his language till his lectures, always severely logical in structure, became also bare and chilly in form. Rejecting the aid of literary graces in the exposition of his subject, he naturally did not think it necessary to commend it to the attention of his hearers by the



## SAMUEL TRAIL.

use of any of the arts of elocution. The statement of his own theological position was always clear and definite ; he never took refuge in the hazy, nebulous exposition that promises much but gives little instruction. He was less successful in his treatment of objections, apparently not realising that there are minds whose questionings on theological matters cannot be satisfied by a logical process that takes no notice of emotional elements. An omnivorous reader, he was well acquainted with the literature bearing directly and indirectly on his subject, but his criticisms of other men's views were too evidently influenced by the fixedness of his own theological position. In his reviews of modern opinions there was a want of sympathetic appreciation of what was really valuable therein, a tendency to emphasise the weaknesses as specially characteristic of all modern contributions to theology, an undercurrent, unrecognised it may be by himself but easily noticed by his hearers, that always led to the conclusion :—

Better the paths that to the past are true,  
And sweeter the old faces than the new !

His text-books were not of modern date—Butler's Analogy, Pearson on the Creed, and the Confession of Faith—and he had neither the agility of intellect nor the readiness of speech needed to excel in expository examination. To his method of examina-

## AURORA BOREALIS.

tion on his own written lectures he attached importance. He dictated a series of questions, and required written answers on the following day. He had persuaded himself that by this method each student must have carried away a connected view of the substance of his lectures. The result aimed at might have been attained if he had been able to secure that no student could make use of the answers drawn up by a fellow-student. His criticisms of the students' discourses were given in private, and generally occupied so much of the hour that only selected portions of the discourses were read to the class, on which he sometimes made remarks.

As a professor Dr. Trail was a diligent student of his subject, careful and conscientious in all his work ; but owing to the natural constitution of his mind and his ordinary manner, he was not able to excite in his students a continuous interest in, far less a warm enthusiasm for, the important subject committed to his charge. A painstaking teacher he was, a laborious instructor ; but not a stimulating force that could mould other men's characters, or rouse other men's energies into healthful, vigorous activity.





*W. P. Rice*

## WILLIAM ROBINSON PIRIE.

The Past, wherein death stores, to keep it true,  
The truth of life, whose treasures bit by bit  
Research extracts and analyses too.

—LYTTON.

**T**HE chair of church history passed in 1860 into the hands of the Rev. Dr. William Robinson Pirie, who already occupied a prominent position in the University, as well as in the ecclesiastical life of Scotland, and had still in store for him higher distinctions in both spheres during the remaining twenty-five years of his career.

After thirteen years' experience of ministerial life in the small rural parish of Dyce, in Aberdeenshire, Dr. Pirie was in 1843 appointed Professor of Divinity in Marischal College. Philosophy, however, was his favourite study, and in 1846 he unsuccessfully applied for a transference to the Chair of Logic and Moral Philosophy, which then fell to the lot of William Martin. Philosophical studies still exercised their fascination over him, and in 1858 he published a philosophical work, and for its actual reception by the public he was evidently

## AURORA BOREALIS.

prepared, as tradition affirms that before its publication he declared that it would either revolutionise the study of philosophy, or fail to attract special notice. His love of philosophy remained with him, and is clearly manifested in his later publication on natural theology. For seventeen years he continued to teach divinity in Marischal College, till the re-arrangements consequent on the fusion of the Colleges assigned to him the subject of church history.

Those who studied church history under Dr. Pirie are not likely ever to forget his outward appearance and manner. His short but compact figure, his erect and vigorous gait, his bold strong features surmounted by a heavy crown of tangled hair, his easy confident manner, and his almost ostentatious carelessness of dress, could not but arrest attention. His broad Aberdeenshire accent, and the metallic tones of his voice served only to heighten the impression produced by his remarkable readiness and fluency of speech, his deft ingenuity in argument, and his somewhat scornful humour. The whole set forth one whose natural confidence in himself had been fully justified by results.

The influence both of his philosophical studies and his earlier theological teaching could easily be traced in his treatment of church history. In dealing with

## WILLIAM ROBINSON PIRIE.

his subject he adopted the method of written lectures. These he read closely, and, though a fluent extempore speaker, seldom paused, at least in his later years, to make any oral comments. He used no text-books ; and his occasional oral examinations generally assumed the form of discussions on matters of philosophical and ethical interest, his lectures not providing much material for inquiry into merely historical facts. It was a vast field that he deliberately undertook to traverse in a course of lectures extending over only two winter sessions. The beginning of his subject he found in the Garden of Eden. He first dealt with the history of the Jewish Church, giving special attention to the theory of Judaism. His treatment of Old Testament life and thought was based on the older views of questions of criticism, and took no cognisance of modern opinions and researches. When he came to the domain of church history proper, he had special regard to the development of doctrine. His method did not involve much acknowledgment of the work of his predecessors or contemporaries in research and exposition. The lectures were evidently constructed on the assumption that the significant facts of his subject were already familiar to his audience. For those students to whom this assumption was applicable, his lectures were generally interesting and often really instructive and suggestive ; but to the

## AURORA BOREALIS.

student who was not thus equipped, the lectures were too vague to be instructive, and too critical to be inspiring. Hero-worship was not one of the elements of his own nature. He called no man master. Great men were criticised with racy freedom ; but in the absence of a sufficiently detailed setting, the weaknesses of their work or the imperfections of their teaching too often bulked so largely in his account that the real position and power of such men received insufficient acknowledgment. With a maximum of philosophical theory and a minimum of historical fact, with the critical element more evident than sympathetic appreciation, the lectures failed to impress upon the students an adequate view of the subject, or to do justice to the undoubted abilities of the lecturer.

The professor may be said to have been seen at his best in the class-room, when he was criticising the discourses of his students. Unlike the other professors, he did not require the students to give in their manuscripts that he might peruse them privately. On the day set apart for that work he heard two discourses in succession, and, when both were concluded, he proceeded to deliver his criticisms, taking the discourses separately in the order in which they were delivered. He made no notes, and it bore high testimony to the alertness of his mind that he seldom, even when the discourses were



## WILLIAM ROBINSON PIRIE.

on closely cognate subjects, confused the opinions or statements of the authors. His criticisms were always given in a kindly spirit, and often brightened by his characteristic humour. In his criticisms he had evidently the interests of his students in view, and when constrained to find serious fault either with the matter or with the style of the discourse, he showed a kindly desire not to discourage the student.

In his position as professor Dr. Pirie's greatest influence over his students probably arose from the success he had attained, and the abilities he displayed, as an ecclesiastic—an influence by no means unimportant when it is remembered that his students were all men preparing for actual ecclesiastical work. Though in ecclesiastical matters a man of war from his youth, he entertained no bitterness towards his opponents, and could always speak of them with just appreciation of their merits and motives. He had secured an exceptionally high position in the Church of Scotland. From the troublous period around the year 1843 he emerged with a reputation for natural sagacity, business capacity and debating power; which he subsequently maintained and increased, till, after holding the Moderatorship, he was accepted as the acknowledged leader of the General Assembly. He displayed a zealous and active interest in all the

## AURORA BOREALIS.

work of the Church, and in some things took a prominent and decisive part ; yet he never sought to arrogate too much honour to himself, or to ignore the claims of others. He was a living example of the attainments, qualities and habits necessary for success in ecclesiastical affairs, and thereby exercised, over the students who were brought into contact with him, an influence that was not the less marked and valuable by being to a great extent incidental and indirect.

In 1877 Dr. Pirie became Principal, on the death of the Rev. Dr. Peter Colin Campbell. At that time the Principal was an academic officer little known to the students. A glimpse of him was got at the public declaration of the results of the bursary competition in Arts, on the rare occasion of the introduction of a new professor, or at the triennial speeches of the Lord Rectors ; and in his capacity of Vice-Chancellor, he presided on graduation day and capped the graduands. Apart from these appearances, the students had little knowledge of the principal's position and duties and generally considered them mainly ornamental. There have been students who attended classes for years without being able to recognise their principal when they met him on the street. Dr. Campbell was a scholarly man, had a great regard for academic tradition and propriety, and hid a kindly nature under a somewhat austere

## WILLIAM ROBINSON PIRIE.

manner. He presided with dignity and firmness over University ceremonials, and successfully upheld the reputation of his office.

Dr. Pirie was his successor. Though not possessing an imposing presence, nor caring greatly for academic tradition when it obstructed his path, nor having much love for ceremonial display, Dr. Pirie brought, to the performance of his duties as principal, a long experience of University work and life, and a well-recognised business capacity. In his time the *Senatus* was the executive of the University. Its proceedings took place with closed doors, but rumour reported that the discussions were often lively and the debates warm, and that the chairman needed a clear head, a quick judgment and a strong hand to guide their deliberations with success. These qualities were already fully developed in Dr. Pirie before he became principal, and enabled him to give eight years of valuable and effective service as the ruling head of the University.

## JOHN CHRISTIE.

I love temperate and moderate natures.—MONTAIGNE.

**H**IS were features which the memory, however elusive, is prompt to reconstruct, determine and clear after their kind as the features of his intellect. One recalls the frontal curve with its significant possibilities, the keen dark eyes that appeared to see as far through a stone wall (or a student's head) as any human organs could ; the firm, straight mouth with its note of character and reserve. One frames them in a head of iron-grey hair and the beard of a Nazarite. One puts in the crows' feet at the eyes where the humour lurked, and the little upward lines from the shaven lip that registered the smothering of frequent smiles. One throws the gown over his broad shoulders, gives him a coloured handkerchief in the right hand, a silver snuff-box in the other, and plants him erectly in his chair.

That, as near as may be after nine years, is Dr. Christie. And one has tried, after George Eliot, not to be led away with " the fatal facility of



*Schubert*



## JOHN CHRISTIE.

drawing a griffin," but to draw, however painfully, "a real unexaggerated lion".

We came as students to his class with inherited traditions of respect which in our two years' course were maintained and deepened, and in due time handed down to others. One recalls the undergraduate appreciations which wrought themselves into such phrases as "a plain man, Professor Christie," and "there is no nonsense about the Doctor". These of course excluded the higher qualities of imagination and enthusiasm, but then equally they barred the fitful gleams of some teachers that challenged the title of genius, or the embarrassing eccentricities of others that made the temper of the chair—and consequently of the bench—uncertain on any given day.

If Professor Christie made no pretences to the divining-rod within his field, he laid down a straight furrow with the plough; and we cheerfully renounced necromancy, pots of gold, and the alluring vibrations of the hazel-twig for the solid work of the coulter. Some of us acquired at Dr. Christie's feet a lasting horror of Dousterswivels in divinity.

The doctor's lectures, of course, were mainly concerned with the history of the Church. The rhetoric was not peculiarly sparkling, but "a lad of average parts" could scarcely mistake his facts.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

They were given with an insistence, and in a lucid relationship that facilitated their transfer to the note-book, and ensured their resurrection (under reasonable conditions) upon examination day. His views were practical and impartial, if somewhat impatient of the aberrations and extravagances which mark the records of the Church.

Symeon Stylites, of the fifth century, who selected for his manse a lofty pillar in the desert, would have been, in the doctor's eye, an ungrateful incumbent of a Donside parish—which we gathered was his ideal of ecclesiastical economy. Luxuriously balancing a pinch of snuff, with what a playful glance at his portly form he seemed to say: "You may have your choice, gentlemen, of the model Christian, but in my opinion the Reverend Symeon Stylites of Antioch comes in as a second, desperately behind!" And it would be rash to say the doctor was wrong.

The chair which Professor Christie occupied combines divinity with church history, and in his treatment of historical theology he discovered strong convictions. Staunchly adhering to the literal interpretation of the Westminster standards; innocent of reservations, mental or expressed; untroubled by mystical leanings or by any apparent religious emotion, he made his students feel the remorseless logic of Calvinism. His theological



## JOHN CHRISTIE.

statements were couched in a bald, uncompromising style, more nearly resembling a road surveyor's report than a prelection upon the ways of God to man. The doctor, good man, had his limitations, like us all !

Professor Christie came to the chair with a long experience of teaching, none the worse in some respects that it was gained in parochial schools. It had the grip, the definitiveness, the practical purpose of the parochial dominie, to whom our Scottish scholars owe so much.

A dominie once, a dominie for ever ! The ferule peeps out from the professorial gown. And it must be said that Dr. Christie broke his intellectual bread exceedingly small. Scarcely Socratic was the oral. It abounded in leading questions given with an intelligible, perhaps unconscious, inflexion—upward for "Yes," and downward for "No". But the pedagogic superiority was tempered by a kindly, humorous, almost paternal manner, that makes these catechetical hours very pleasant to recall.

The "evenings at home" in the Church History Manse were not formal receptions that wearied and irritated the guests, but delightful interludes in the monotony of the session. If a man flattered himself that his idiosyncrasies in class were unmarked by the doctor, some quaint remark, which

## AURORA BOREALIS.

amused not only the other guests but the victim himself, discovered that little escaped the professor's penetrating eye. He was a musical enthusiast, and—may we whisper it?—we enjoyed the professor's songs at his own piano fully more than his sermons from the chapel pulpit.

Some of us have forgotten the precise significance of Homoiousian Hypostasianism and Dynamistic Monarchianism and (shade of the sainted doctor!) might derange the dates of the General Councils, but we have an abiding memory of the man.

As students, we respected his character and convictions and relied on his genial tolerance. To-day, we recognise his impress on any worthy conceptions we have obtained of the clerical office.

He died in 1889, that fateful year for the Scottish Universities. *Ultimus Romanorum!* He was the last of the Moderates; the last of that long line that distinguished the University of Aberdeen.

They were scholars and men of affairs; dignified and benignant; unemotional, but of granitic convictions.

They neither coveted nor won the popular sympathies. But their influence remains.





W. Milligan

## WILLIAM MILLIGAN.

*Instar discipuli dilecti.*

THERE are few among our "Northern Lights" of brighter lustre or further-reaching ray than Professor Milligan. His is a name to conjure with among the divines not of Scotland only but of England and America. Last summer in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral the writer of these lines made the acquaintance of a young clergyman who had never been in England before—the examining chaplain of one of the bishops of South Africa. "You are from Scotland?" he said, as soon as we had got acquainted: "Did you know Dr. Milligan? His books on the Resurrection and the Ascension are text-books for all our students of divinity." A few days later I had the privilege of meeting the venerable Wesleyan scholar, the late Rev. Dr. Moulton of Cambridge; his eyes filled with tears at the mere mention of the name of Dr. Milligan!

My own memories of Dr. Milligan go back very nearly to the beginning of his career as a professor. I began my Arts course in the autumn of 1863, and

## AURORA BOREALIS.

I made his acquaintance at once ; for, to my great benefit, I joined a Greek Testament class which he then taught every Sunday morning throughout the winter session. I do not remember that I was ever absent : I enjoyed that class so much. I think he shone in it fully as much as he did as a teacher of divinity students. Young as we were, he made us feel at once that we were fellow-students, searching with him, though of course under his guidance, into the inmost meaning of the Holy Scriptures. Freedom, moreover, and reverence went hand and hand with him. His mind was open to light from any quarter, but he bowed down with absolute submission to the Inspiration of the Word. His sermons at the College Chapel, which Arts students belonging to the Church of Scotland and lodging in Old Aberdeen were then required (and very properly) to attend twice every Sunday, were to me another great delight. I had to admit (for every Scot in those days discussed on the Sunday evening the sermon he had heard during the day) that his more elaborate forenoon ones were sometimes a little too flowery ; but those which he delivered (I think from a few notes) at the afternoon service were models of what expository sermons ought to be. I recall, in particular, one course of his on the Epistle to the Philippians, full of the most beautiful appreciation of St. Paul's tenderness. Then I began to know the

## WILLIAM MILLIGAN.

man as well as the preacher and professor. I met him regularly at the Hellenic Society, and scarcely less frequently in connection with the Missionary Association, in which he took a keen personal interest. Under the spell of Dr. Norman Macleod, whose visit to India gave a huge impulse to our missionary zeal, the association began to enlarge its operations. The eminent ministers who came to preach in its behalf were generally the guests of Dr. Milligan ; and it was characteristic of his thoughtfulness—and a recognition of the students rather uncommon in those days—that he used to invite the office-bearers of the association to dine with him on the Sunday to meet those preachers. I happened to be secretary of the association one year and president another, and in this way had the advantage of meeting socially such notable ministers as the late Dr. Watson, of Dundee, and Dr. A. K. H. Boyd, of St. Andrews. The conversation of both was delightful, though very different. Dr. Boyd gave us a short but crisp and unforgettable sermon on the niggard religion that thinks less “ will do ” for the service of God, from the text (2 Kings xvi. 17) which tells how “ sottish ” Ahaz took down Solomon’s splendid sea of brass “ from the oxen which were under it, and put it on a pavement of stones ”. Dr. Watson, as he drove over in the cab from Old Aberdeen to the East

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Kirk, told how he meant to take his text from Esther i. 1 ("from India even unto Ethiopia"), but when he saw the smile with which we received it, either his courage failed or his sagacity took the hint, and when he got into the pulpit he gave out St. Matt. xxviii. 19.

In all his intercourse with his students Dr. Milligan strove to surmount the barriers which, on their side, prevented them from opening their minds to a teacher who always thought of them as ere long his "fellow-presbyters of the Church of Scotland". This appeared even in his entertainments: one winter he tried the plan of substituting, for the more formal sort of party, the old-fashioned genial supper. The Rev. Dr. Samuel Trail was there—at the beginning of his professorship, when we were deeply impressed with the sense at once of his strong convictions and the depth of his learning, which indeed, in the department, at least, of last century theology, was very respectable. The conversation turned on a new departure which the divinity students had taken on their own initiative—engaging old Mr. Calvert to give them lessons in elocution—for in those days there was no lecturer on that art in the hall. A compliment from Dr. Milligan upon our enterprise evoked a counter compliment to the professor from a Buchan student, whose "Doric" it would certainly have been hard



## WILLIAM MILLIGAN.

for any master of elocution to subdue. "You have a most beautiful vice (voice), Dr. Milligan." "Oh, Mr. W——." "But we all know that you are the emmiablest [amiablest] of all our professors!" "What!" inserted Dr. Trail, "do you not remember, Mr. W——, that comparisons are odious?" "I didn't say the eblest [ablest], Dr. Trail," was the instantaneous and unabashed reply! The comparative estimate of the two men was absurd. It was unfair alike to Dr. Trail's good nature, which was very real, and to Dr. Milligan's ability and, I may add, to his righteous severity against evil; but it reflected the popular opinion of the Divinity Hall, and perhaps of the Aberdeen public at the time (1867).

Very soon, however, we and the whole Church were to learn, and increasingly to know, alike the strength and keenness of the intellect and the purity, warmth, and depth of the convictions which were hidden under that modest diffidence of tone and genial gentleness of manner. Years of diligent study were fast making him a master of his subject; and when in 1870 he joined the company who were engaged in the revision of the English New Testament his scholarship was recognised, and he took his place among the foremost of the distinguished band with whom he was associated. If the work of the Revision Committee entailed much labour, he found

## AURORA BOREALIS.

it stimulus as well ; and the last fifteen years of his life (1878-93) were his years of fruitfulness. I have often thought of him as a signal illustration of the Psalmist's promise :—

And in old age when others fade  
They fruit still forth shall bring.

The harvest of those years was rich and valuable. It included, in 1878, his brilliant article on "The Epistle to the Ephesians" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, his *Commentary on the Gospel of St. John*, his address as moderator of the General Assembly (1882) which moved me, I remember, to tears of joy, and called forth the rapturous praise of Canon Liddon ; his *Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, his Baird Lectures on the same book, and above all the two works by which he is now most widely known, *The Resurrection of our Lord* (1881), and *The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of our Lord* (1892). These books became popular at once. They maintain their position in a way which seems to justify the tribute paid to their author by the late Rev. Dr. John Macleod, of Govan—that we might say of Dr. Milligan that he was one of that select company of divines to whom it has been given by their writings permanently to enrich the theology of the Church. His time of literary productiveness and of literary grace was his time also of public activity as an educationist and as a citizen, and, in the Church of

## WILLIAM MILLIGAN.

Scotland, as at once a courageous champion of the Faith and an ardent advocate of a practical and spiritual reformation.

So fresh were his mental powers, so cheery and bright his manner, so keen his public sympathies, that even those who knew him best found difficulty in acquiescing in his resignation of his chair (July, 1893) ; and certainly none who heard the long and eloquent speech with which, at a public dinner given him on the occasion, he took farewell of Aberdeen, could have guessed that even while he spoke his life-blood was being drained by the disease by which he was so soon to be cut off. I had one more interview with him ere his departure from Aberdeen. He was lying in bed in his daughter's house ; and he told me he was convinced that the most pressing need of the Church of Scotland was the revival of the weekly Eucharist.

Dr. Milligan died in Edinburgh on the 11th of December, 1893. An excellent portrait by Sir George Reid hangs in the Senatus room at King's College, and in the chapel where he so often preached, and was the first in recent times to celebrate the Communion, a Holy Table of carved oak has been erected to his revered memory.

It could be no true account of Dr. Milligan that contained no mention of the lady, herself the daughter of a poet, who was the partner of all his thoughts

## AURORA BOREALIS.

and the help-mate of his sacred studies, and whose charming hospitality made the Biblical Criticism Manse at Old Aberdeen as delightful within as its situation, looking through the ancient elms to the crown of King's, is beautiful without.





W. Robertson Smith

## WILLIAM ROBERTSON SMITH.

Was fruchtbar ist, allein ist wahr.—GOETHE.

**W**ILLIAM ROBERTSON SMITH, one of the most brilliant graduates of the University of Aberdeen, was born at Keig on 8th November, 1846. He received his early teaching at the hands of his father, the Rev. W. Pirie Smith, D.D., an excellent scholar and a thorough teacher, while to his mother, who in her venerable age still survives, he doubtless largely owed the mental activity that distinguished him through his whole life. Proceeding directly from the Manse to the University along with his gifted but sickly brother George, he carried off the first bursary against formidable competitors, and retained this position of eminence through the whole curriculum. He attracted the attention of the professors on the classical side by the wide range of his knowledge, remarkable in so young a student, manifested, for example, by the readiness with which, when called on, he furnished passages from English Literature illustrative of the Latin and Greek passages forming the

## AURORA BOREALIS.

subjects of the class work. Having had no public school training, Smith kept somewhat aloof from his class-fellows, taking little interest in their sports, though figuring largely in the authorship of the poetical effusions that pour out at Rectorial elections. Yet his class-fellows were proud of him, and rounds of applause followed many of his brilliant displays in the classroom. To his more intimate associates visiting him at Keig he would unbend, at one time vivacious over the merits of his breed of rabbits, at another, in his study, rapturous over his new Latin (Facciolati) lexicon—the recent gift of the father to his sons. A breakdown in his health prevented him from competing for honours at the end of the curriculum, though he was awarded the University prize for general scholarship. At this point of his career it seemed likely that science was to claim him as her own, for he elected to compete in mathematics for the Ferguson Scholarship, open to the graduates of all the Scottish Universities. An easy first, he attracted the attention of the examiner, Professor Tait, by his marked originality, and was chosen to be assistant to the Professor in the following year when he went to study in the Free Church College of Edinburgh, having turned a deaf ear to all inducements to proceed to Cambridge. But even in these early days of his devotion



WILLIAM ROBERTSON SMITH.

to theological studies his mind turned to deep problems in science, for then appeared his paper on "Electrical-stream Lines," which Professor Chrystal says has become a classic. In this strict domain he would brook no interference from outsiders. An old class-fellow (Mr. John Macdonell) tells me that he used to walk with him in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, Smith declaiming vehemently against the Metaphysicians, and especially against Hegel for daring to assail Newton. These views ultimately took shape in a paper which excited much controversy in philosophical circles in Edinburgh, Dr. Hutchison Stirling being Smith's chief opponent. At the early age of twenty-one he was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and contributed papers on J. S. Mill's "Theory of Geometrical Reasoning" and kindred subjects. Freshness of idea and of treatment characterised all his work. He struck out new lines of thought and clothed them in words that excited attention. It was in these circles that Smith made the acquaintance of the late J. F. McLennan, an acquaintance which ripened into the closest friendship. It was from McLennan that Smith first derived the pregnant idea of the value of the *comparative* method as applied to the investigation of primitive society and religion, a method which he was to work out in later years

## AURORA BOREALIS.

with brilliant results. Even in those early days the germ of his later principles of historical criticism may be found. During his whole lifetime he acknowledged the influence and power of Professor Bain, in whose class he had been a prizeman, though he never was a disciple. His fellow-students, and even the Professor, seemed to feel that there was no acceptance on Smith's part of the Professor's philosophy. The bed was too narrow for him ; he craved for a larger and wider area, delighting in the growth and development of an idea, in its relation to the past history of mankind and its place in the present.

In University circles in Edinburgh Smith now took a prominent place. He was a recognised leader in every movement, a chief in debating societies, where the wide range of his knowledge and his grasp of fundamental principles attracted the notice of all. His early aloofness had given place to a warm sympathy with student life, and, strange to say, he was the prime mover in establishing a gymnastic society in connection with the Free Church College, and he attended regularly, much to the benefit of his health. The range of his activity knew no bounds.

Men of science still hoped that he was to give his life to their subjects, but the influence of his Hebrew teacher, Professor A. B. Davidson, and his

## WILLIAM ROBERTSON SMITH.

determination to go forward to the ministry of the Free Church, gave a new bent to his life-studies. Summer vacations spent at Göttingen and Bonn turned his attention to the Old Testament and the Jewish Church, and now his career was marked out for him. Appointed to the chair of Hebrew in the Free Church College of Aberdeen at the early age of twenty-three, Robertson Smith carried his enthusiasm, his learning and his great gifts as a teacher into the classroom which he was to occupy with distinguished success for eleven years. An old student has said that he combined the best qualities of Aberdeen teaching with the learning of a pundit, illustrating every point by stores of knowledge gathered from every literature, and expounding every point with marvellous lucidity. He sympathised with his students and stimulated them by his own student spirit, guiding them through all difficulties and showing how to conquer them. These were to Smith years of perfect enjoyment, of work well done and of preparation for higher spheres of influence. In his well-stored library, surrounded by his tall old folios, the contents of which he seemed to have at his finger ends, he prospered in his work. His friends never failed to wonder at the rapidity with which he accomplished his labours, a rapidity which he used to attribute to the faculty of concentration derived from his

## AURORA BOREALIS.

father. During these years he was an active member of the Old Testament Revision Committee and was busy with his articles on "Angel" and "Bible" for the '*Encyclopædia Britannica*,' articles which were destined to affect his career and change the course of his life.

For the storm was now impending which ended in the Free Church declaring that it was inexpedient that Robertson Smith should hold his Chair in the Free Church College. The bitter controversy did Smith good service by bringing out the man in all his force as a theologian, debater and speaker. It displayed his vast learning and his power to use it. And if he suffered martyrdom in being driven from his much-loved Church, he gained for that Church liberality of thought as the final issue of the prolonged struggle. He lived to see victory along the whole line. The younger ministers gathered round him as their champion, and at the close of his great speech in the Assembly at Glasgow, his friends rose in their thousands to applaud their leader. Worn out and unwell, as I am told by Professor Lindsay, he was unable to prepare for this all-important address, of which he had but a few hours' notice, and with only a few words written on a sheet of paper he made his great speech. The fervour of his delivery and his solemn tone excited and enthralled the vast audience, even his foes being

## WILLIAM ROBERTSON SMITH.

lost in admiration. On such occasions Smith rose to his highest level. Then would pour out the words that burn. Who can forget the noble dignity of the man who, when expelled from the Church and yet offered his salary, leaped to his feet and declared with flashing eye that he would disdain to eat the bread of a Church that would not accept his services? Ill-timed expulsion indeed, to drive out the only man among them able and willing to reply to Professor Tyndall when, as President of the British Association at Belfast, he proclaimed views hostile to the Churches. Robertson Smith replied almost on the spur of the moment, controverting the President on his own ground of science, and the Churches were glad indeed to have as their champion a man of science and yet a defender of the Faith.

The beauty of Robertson Smith's character was never more clearly seen than in his reference to the Free Church after his deposition. While he had words of scorn for unfair treatment, his love for the Church remained unabated, and he advised all his friends to cling to it in spite of his expulsion. He believed in the future, and to the end of his life always spoke of his father's Church with affection. But while Robertson Smith bore himself calmly through those troublous days, Scotland, especially in the Highlands, was convulsed to her centre.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Families were divided, as in the old pre-Disruption days, and party feeling, for and against, ran high. Smith used jocularly to say that he knew when he was in a favourable Highland quarter, for in that case he got the best bedroom in the hotel, otherwise he got the worst. Once when we were together near Glencoe, Smith, contrary to his wont, retired early, as he had been climbing Ben Nevis. When he left the room (in which there had been free talk about "the Case" during dinner) the old waiter rushed in saying in an animated whisper, "Is yon him? Is yon Robertson Smith?" "Well, you wont do him any harm, will you?" "Na, na, he's safe here." On another occasion in far-off Loch Inver the quiet of midnight was made hideous to me by two Highlanders, who after their discussion over their cups in the public-house continued it loudly under the full moon: "He's a heretic, I tell ye". "Weel, he's an ill-used man, *whatever*," was the reply.

During those years of enforced idleness, when the Case was dragging out its weary length, Smith frequently travelled abroad. Happy are the score of men that possess the lithographic journal of a tour in Holland and Germany in 1876, with illustrations of scenery and incidents of the journey by his companion, Sir (then Mr.) George Reid. At other times Italy, Spain and North Africa were the countries visited, Mr. R. A. Neil, Mr. Shipley,

## WILLIAM ROBERTSON SMITH.

Mr. Sutherland Black, the late Professor Middleton, Sheriff Æneas Mackay and others being his fellow-travellers. They all speak of his unfailing knowledge and his brightness of spirit, of his infinite resources under difficulties, of his management of obdurate officials whom he disarmed by his courtesy, of his boldness of speech in every language, baffled only once by a curious *patois* near the Jura. Seasickness would interrupt only for a few necessary moments his discussion of interesting topics with a French savant, and after a hard day's walking he would discuss at midnight the higher mathematics with an eminent professor when his friends were all asleep. On the Nile he acted as dragoman for his party, for during a prolonged stay at Jeddah, in the dress of an Arab and exposed to much personal danger, he had mastered Arabic thoroughly, gaining the affection of grave Sheiks by his marvellous acquaintance with their tongue. He camped with Sir Richard Burton, who prided himself on his long-acquired knowledge of Arabic. But the camp broke up when the dragoman said to a Sheik, "Speak to the little man, he knows our language best". On this point Mr. F. C. Burkitt tells me that he has never known any one who could roll out the long cadences of Arabic poetry like Robertson Smith. He had complete control of the Semitic gutturals and other sounds, but above

## AURORA BOREALIS.

and beyond this, his power of declamation was thrilling. Or on a Scottish hillside (and he preferred the hills that were bare of trees, reminding him doubtless of his native Bennachie) he would expatiate on the beautiful life of the shepherd, and looking up to the mountains he would break into a low chant, crooning to himself in a rapt ecstatic manner a Hebrew psalm which his companion, Mr. J. G. Frazer, instinctively felt was, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills". At such times Smith seemed to fall into deep reverie. For, in truth, he was like a finely strung musical instrument—responsive to every touch. At one moment he overflowed with boyish exuberance of spirit, at another he relapsed into silence under the influence of some passing thought. Every one that climbed hills with him knew his constant and curious habit of walking in front, sometimes turning round to continue with recovered breath the thread of the animated conversation that never failed, for he was the most brilliant of talkers. And yet when he wanted information on any subject unknown to him, he was the most patient of listeners, drawing out the knowledge he wanted by well directed questions. He seemed instinctively to divine the answer before it was half given. He picked up the points with electrical rapidity, and his conclusion came, as Mr. J. G. Frazer says, as if "by the



## WILLIAM ROBERTSON SMITH.

pulling of a trigger," now and then in some playful paradox, but always lighting up the subject from a new point of view. In every circle his merry laugh and high-pitched voice, pouring out streams of wit and wisdom, made him a conspicuous centre.

Ever busy and getting stores of knowledge, he delivered lectures, at the invitation of 600 prominent Free Churchmen in 1881, on the Old Testament in the Jewish Church, which when published attracted much attention. A well-known Cambridge scholar (Mr. F. C. Burkitt) writes me that, when he left Harrow and was travelling with his parents in Scotland, the perusal of these lectures in an Edinburgh hotel determined the course of his life : Edinburgh and its attractions had no charm for him till he had finished the all-absorbing volume.

From Scotland to Cambridge was an easy step. His reputation had gone before him, and at Trinity he was heartily welcomed. Old friends were there, notably Dr. William Wright. Then came Christ's College with its Fellowship in 1885 and the beautiful rooms which he adorned with pictures and etchings, the gifts chiefly of loving friends. For Art he had a close affinity, and his knowledge grew to be deep and wide. He had abundant sympathy for all that was beautiful, and he detected differences in quality with fine appreciation, just as he used to distinguish the flavours of different

## AURORA BOREALIS.

vintages of his favourite Burgundy and Bordeaux. Music alone had no charm for him. Like many scholars he thought that it interrupted conversation. "God save the Queen" was recognised by him only with difficulty, and yet, as Mr. Burkitt says, his ear was singularly sensitive to the rhythms of Arabic poetry.

Honours and duties now came thick on Robertson Smith. First joint editor with Spencer Baynes of the '*Encyclopædia Britannica*,' and afterwards sole editor of that great work, he commanded the love and respect of all the contributors. Many able men can tell of friendly advice, of help willingly given. When an article gave trouble to its author, Smith by his wise suggestions would make the way seem plain and the difficulty was overcome. No wonder then that he met with a brilliant reception when, as Editor, he took the chair at the great dinner to the chief contributors in the Hall of Christ's College on the completion of the work, or that men still speak of his noble speech on that occasion, full of dignity and courtesy.

Shortly after this came the Lord Almoner's Readership in Arabic, to be followed by the University Librarianship in 1886, and finally by the Professorship of Arabic in succession to his friend Dr. Wright in 1889. In every office he filled he left the mark of original independent work. His

## WILLIAM ROBERTSON SMITH.

keen eye detected some possible improvements in the library, and the changes which he introduced have been continued by his successors ; while his knowledge of the price of manuscripts in every European market made him a bold and judicious buyer when opportunity offered. His position in the University was unique, for he was only an honorary graduate, yet his wisdom and clearness of vision carried weight everywhere. One feature of his character attracted universal attention, his statesmanlike method of carrying out his suggestions. In Robertson Smith's case action followed on thought. He would not temporise by putting responsibility on some other committee. When his mind was made up as to the best course, his aim was to carry it out. The same vigour and courage which he showed in his own trial in Scotland were to be seen in his University life at Cambridge, and made him a man of mark by the charm and distinction of his energetic personality.

But the tear and wear of such mental and physical activity could not fail to tell on a constitution not originally strong. One friend traces the breakdown to his self-imposed long hours in the University library, after which he would work at his own special studies and lectures till long past midnight. These were the days of his new studies in Comparative Religion and Anthropology, of his

## AURORA BOREALIS.

'*Kinship and Marriage in early Arabia,*' and of his '*Religion of the Semites,*' a line of study in which he directed several of the ablest men of the day, who bear willing witness to the inspiring influence of Robertson Smith. The former of these books appeared in 1885 and shows clearly the influence of J. F. McLennan in the early days of his Edinburgh life, while the latter appeared first in the form of the Burnett Lectures in the University of Aberdeen. University honours crowded on Smith from Aberdeen, from Dublin and last of all from Strassburg, the German University conveying in terms of the highest praise this distinction rarely accorded to British scholars. Robertson Smith lived to see his life-work crowned by the approbation of Europe. More recently the University of Brussels has reviewed '*La Théorie du Sacrifice et les Recherches de Robertson Smith*' with high appreciation of his labours and their results.

In the early days of January, 1890, I left him at Cambridge in brilliant health, full of work and hope. A week afterwards he was struck by the fatal disease which for years he bore with splendid courage and unflinching brightness, surrounded by devoted friends, chief of whom was Mr. A. E. Shipley. Even in these sad times he did not spare himself in his own or other men's work. Dr. Schechter, University reader in Rabbinic, tells me that in one

## WILLIAM ROBERTSON SMITH.

of his many visits to Smith to consult him about some difficulty, he felt that the professor was unwell and weary and he proposed to leave the question over to another day. "No," said Smith, taking down one huge volume after another, "you shall not leave this room till I get to the bottom of the difficulty."

What schemes of vast magnitude passed through that active brain, schemes destined, so far as England is concerned, to come to an end by the death of the promoter! One of these was a great "Encyclopædia of Islam," of which he was to be editor, having as collaborateurs the best scholars of Europe. Oriental studies of every sort were to be guided by him, for all scholars looked to him as their chief. By such workers the death of Robertson Smith is felt to be irreparable. His place is vacant.

Professor Wellhausen, of Göttingen, in a letter to me describes Robertson Smith's characteristics and position in some masterly words. "I came to know Robertson Smith in 1871, when in our conversation he opposed my views with vigour. Afterwards we had much correspondence. He amazed me by his brave courage in sickness and suffering and by his manly bearing. His learning was wide; indeed he was himself an Encyclopædia, yet no pedant. Full of liveliness and versatility, he played lightly with

## AURORA BOREALIS.

his subject, but disputed with hard blows, always clear and logical. He possessed in a remarkable degree the power of constructing an entire enchanting picture out of fragments and single traits, and from the charm of this power it is hard to escape. He has been blamed for this desire to systematise and build up. It is true that he has not seldom made mistakes, but even his errors have proved fruitful. He has helped to pave the way for a new and more realistic guidance of the study of Semitic Antiquity."

Robertson Smith's own desire to live a little longer is beautifully expressed in his remark to his close friend, Professor Lindsay: "I should like to live a little longer for two things—to survive my mother that she may not have the pain of hearing of my death, and next, that I may finish my book in which I intend to show to the world the Divine Revelation of God in the Old Testament".

But it was not to be. Robertson Smith died at Cambridge on 31st March, 1894, and lies buried in the churchyard of his native Keig. Cambridge mourned over her lost adopted son, in whose lonely grave the hopes of many scholars lie entombed.





George V. Smith



## GEORGE GRUB.

He was most serene and genial by disposition, full of racy words and quaint thoughts.—R. L. STEVENSON.

**G** EORGE GRUB—familiarly and affectionately known for many years to Aberdeen lawyers as “the Doctor”—was born on 4th April, 1812, in the classic quiet of Old Aberdeen, and of a family which had been long known and much respected there. His father was Convener Grub, and was only one of many of his name who had assisted in the government of the Ancient City. Even more important, perhaps, as influencing the future professor, was their devoted attachment to what, at the time of his birth might still be called, in the memorable phrase of Sir Walter Scott, “the suffering remnant of the Scottish Episcopal Church”. At the centenary of the Consecration of Bishop Seabury, in 1887, Dr. Grub was in his glory, and told how his father had heard Seabury preach a hundred years before, and vividly remembered the abundant use of gesture which accompanied his eloquence. His Jacobite proclivities, and his chivalrous Toryism, came from the

## AURORA BOREALIS.

same source ; as did also another characteristic—his intense love of Aberdeen, his pride in the loyalty of the city in the days of Charles I., and his enthusiastic admiration for the Royalist “Aberdeen Doctors”.

George Grub early showed a marked love of literature, and although he chose law as his profession, his tastes seem from his earliest days to have developed strongly in the direction of the study of history, in which he was afterwards to achieve such marked distinction. He was apprenticed to Mr. Alexander Allan, a member of the Society of Advocates in Aberdeen, which society then held the exclusive privilege of practising in the Sheriff Courts in Aberdeen. He was admitted a member of the Society in 1836, and in 1841 his literary tastes received their first recognition from his brethren by their appointment of him as their librarian—an office in which he continued until his death. In 1843—only seven years after his admission as a practising lawyer—he was appointed Lecturer on Scots Law and Conveyancing in Marischal College and University, a tribute to his knowledge of his profession, and an evidence of the opinion of his qualifications on the part of his fellow-members in the profession, to which there are probably not many parallels. On the fusion of the Colleges in 1860, Mr. Patrick Davidson, who held the time-honoured post of

## GEORGE GRUB.

Civilist in University and King's College, received the appointment of Professor of Law in the United University. He, however, never took up the work of the chair but appointed Mr. Grub as his substitute, and from the first the substitute entered on the work with zeal, and practically performed all the duties. On Mr. Davidson's death in 1881, Mr. Grub was appointed to the chair, and continued to exercise the professorship until 1891, when he entered on the well-earned retirement which unfortunately he was privileged to enjoy for a very short period only, his death taking place on 23rd September, 1892. Mr. Grub thus occupied the almost unique position of having been practically the sole teacher of law in the city of Aberdeen for a period of not less than forty-eight years, and at the time of his retirement there were only twelve members of the Society of Advocates who had not received their training at his hands. His general learning and conscientious teaching had endeared him to many students, and we can well remember the enthusiasm with which his appearance was greeted at the annual dinner of the Society. Perhaps at no time was he seen to better advantage than at those annual gatherings. Surrounded as he was by men, almost all of whom had been his pupils, he invariably rose to the occasion in flashes of ready wit and often of smart repartee,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

and he seldom failed with kindly raillery to call up incidents of his classes which reflected rather the humour than the legal knowledge of his students.

In 1864 he received from his University the well-deserved honour of the degree of Doctor of Laws, and when he retired from the Chair of Law the Society of Advocates unanimously resolved to present him with some token of their regard and esteem. In deference to his own desire this took the form of a portrait which was painted by Sir George Reid, and which was at Dr. Grub's request placed in the library of the Society which had so long known him as its librarian.

Probably we cannot better indicate the hearty esteem which led up to this gift than by quoting at length the minute of a meeting of the Society held at the time of his retirement from the Chair of Law. That minute runs as follows: "All the present members of the Society with the exception of about twelve at the head of the list have been students under him. The Society has during his professional career recognised the erudition, the literary culture, the legal and historical knowledge and research which Dr. Grub has brought to bear upon his work, and has seen with pleasure the esteem and affection with which successive generations of students have regarded him. In thus recording its appreciation of Dr. Grub's services to it, the Society trusts

## GEORGE GRUB.

that he may be spared to enjoy in a green and happy age his well-merited retirement." In Dr. Grub, Sir George found an excellent subject for his brush, and the painter has represented him as we have often seen him when endeavouring to impress upon his students some of the mysteries of law. In the artist Dr. Grub found a congenial literary spirit, and it is recorded of him that after one of his sittings he remarked: "Sir George knows Scott as well as I do, and that is saying a good deal".

The portrait was presented to Dr. Grub by Mr. C. B. Davidson, the president of the Society, on 10th June, 1892, in presence of a representative gathering not merely of lawyers but also of leading citizens of the town. When making the presentation, Mr. Davidson, in alluding to the Doctor's qualifications, not only as a lawyer but also as a historian, said: "They remembered the erudition and research displayed by him in his lectures. He was eminently an historical lawyer. He knew from whence the stones that went to build up our great edifice of law were to be quarried, and he knew the men, the times and the circumstances by which these were all built together into the edifice in which they now lived. He recorded for them the various stages of the development of our legal system and expounded and elucidated for them the principles of our law. It was not, however, in law only that Dr. Grub

## AURORA BOREALIS.

distinguished himself. He shone in the region of ecclesiastical history. It was upon this subject that he was recognised by all as a great and impartial authority, and while this was his *magnum opus*, he was associated with such men as Joseph Robertson, John Stuart and Cosmo Innes in the work of the old Spalding Club, and the prefaces to a number of the volumes of the club gave evidence of the intimate knowledge of the history of our country which he possessed."

So far we have endeavoured to sketch what Dr. Grub was as a lawyer and a teacher of law. Outside his strictly professional work he will be remembered chiefly as the author of his *Ecclesiastical History of Scotland*, which remains to this day the standard authority on the subject. Written from the standpoint of a member of the Scottish Episcopal Church, that work has been ever considered as an almost unique example of fair and impartial consideration of the course of Church affairs in Scotland. Indeed Dr. Grub used to say that his view of the duty of a historian was to depict events as they happened and to leave others to draw the conclusions which seemed to them most fair. But he could express his own views clearly enough ; and while he never pretended to admire Presbyterianism, he frankly admitted the wrongs of the later Covenanters. "I cannot," he would say,

## GEORGE GRUB.

“ understand the man who, knowing the facts, justifies the proceedings of the Covenanters under Charles I., or the conduct of the Government of Scotland towards the Covenanters under Charles II.”

As a man, Dr. Grub will ever be remembered with affection by all who came in contact with him for his kindly and courteous bearing. Possessed, as has been said, of a ready and quick wit, it was never used to wound. For a number of years he occupied the position of one of the Examiners of Law Agents in Scotland, and there his kindly spirit was always manifested in the endeavour to help the student who seemed to be suffering from nervousness rather than from want of knowledge.

His long life was crowned by a deep and earnest piety, which in his latter days showed itself in quiet faith and confidence : “ I have everything,” he said, “ to be thankful for ” ; and of few public men can it more truly be said that he went to the grave full of years and sincerely mourned by his fellow-men, among whom he probably left no single enemy.

He lies buried in the churchyard of St. Machar, not far from the graves of two famous Aberdeen Non-jurors of 1688, whom he ever held in special honour, Dr. George Garden—the first minister, he used to boast, of the congregation with which he was himself connected, St. John’s—and his like-minded brother, Professor James Garden.

## THE PROGRESS OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL.

THE editor was so good as say to me that I must be the writer of this section. The progress of the medical school is the most remarkable and pleasing part of the history of Aberdeen University during the period, but the space allowed is insufficient to enable me to do justice to the subject, either as a record of the activities or as regards style. Much has had to be omitted, and much has had to be in the form of notes rather than of narrative.

*Before the Union.* For some twenty years, from 1818, the two colleges arranged to have a joint medical school. That arrangement came to an end in 1839, and for the next twenty years, on to the Union of the Colleges in 1860, each college again had its separate medical school. During these latter twenty years, King's College had one medical professorship (styled "medicine and chemistry"), Marischal College five professorships (chemistry, anatomy, surgery, practice of medicine, "medical jurisprudence and medical logic"), the other branches being, for each college, taught by lecturers.



## PROGRESS OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL.

For the medical degree, during this period, King's College required examination, but not necessarily residence ; Marischal College, besides examination, required one or two sessions of residence, but did not always adhere to the rule in regard to residence. The course of medical study for both was the usual one of four years. It may be remarked that no University requires the whole, or even the greater part, of the course of medical study to be taken in residence at its own school.

*At the Union.* By the Scottish Universities Act, 2nd August, 1858, under which the two colleges were united as the "University of Aberdeen," professorships of physiology, materia medica, midwifery and botany, were created ; the two chairs of chemistry were combined, and the name of the professorship of "civil and natural history" in Marischal College was changed to that of "natural history" in the University. The Act was to take effect from 15th September, 1860. The ordinance of the Commissioners under the Act regulating the course of medical study for degrees was approved by the Queen in Council on 26th June, 1861, to take effect at the beginning of winter session 1861-62. Residence at Aberdeen was required during one of the four years of medical study. Thus, 1861-62 was the first session under the new regulations, but students who had already commenced medical study were

## AURORA BOREALIS.

entitled to complete their course under the former regulations.

*After the Union.* When my personal knowledge of Aberdeen began, session 1863-64, the following was what I saw. For anatomy, the accommodation was depressing to contemplate. Manifestly an entirely new set of rooms was required. For chemistry, the rooms were passable according to the notions of the time and the then numbers in the school. The other departments were amply and handsomely accommodated in the lecture rooms that had been vacated at the Union by the removal of the Arts and Divinity classes to King's College, each professor having his own lecture room ; and there were several of the vacated lecture rooms standing unused. There was no laboratory teaching except the summer session course of practical chemistry, and a small amount of dissection. In regard to our status in the University, it was discouraging to find professors in the "Medical" Faculty regarded, alike in the Senatus and the town, as merely professional. The number of the students of medicine was diminishing.

*Prospects of the School.* Notwithstanding the depressing situation, it could be seen that, by the adoption of modern methods and pursuing a high University ideal, the medical school had a possible great future. That meant laboratories and good

## PROGRESS OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL.

museums with practical training in all the departments, professional and scientific ; the recognition of the fact that the sciences included in the Faculty—chemistry, anatomy, physiology, botany, zoology—besides their more or less professional utility, have wide bearings of general interest ; and, further, the keeping in mind that the duty of a University is not merely to teach but to extend the boundaries of knowledge by research.

*Some difficulties.* These aims meant time and opportunity, but the first step was within our reach, that of having the vacated unused lecture rooms transformed to serve as laboratories and museums. A difficulty in the way of this was the still existing feeling that had been so strong before the Union between what were called the Old Town and New Town parties, now concentrated on the question of the site of the new library. As a person who could have no sympathy with either party, I read with surprise and alarm a print by the New Town party in which they proposed to bring over the books from King's College and distribute them in these unoccupied rooms. Besides being an unworthy proposal for the future of a great library, that would have been fatal to the progress of the medical school. Thereupon I submitted to the Senatus a scheme of allocation of these rooms for laboratory and museum purposes, and by a happy conjunction

## AURORA BOREALIS.

of interests the scheme was carried. So far, the future of the medical school was thus safe, and the transformation of these rooms was accomplished from time to time as each professor desired.

Another difficulty we had was of a more lasting kind. Laboratory teaching and museum-making imply expenses, for instruments, materials and assistance, and we were stinted in the necessary grants, which it belonged to the *Senatus* to determine. Our case was the harder in that the medical school was, as it still is, the chief support of the University.<sup>1</sup>

*As to the Number of Students.* The following figures, from the first year of the Union up to the date of the new Act of 1889, are taken from returns made to the House of Commons, and, for 1888-89, from the *University Calendar*. The figures speak for themselves, but, in estimating the progress of the united University, the first four years may be passed over as transition years during which there were students under the old as well as the new regulations :—

<sup>1</sup>The above is but a very general reference to what was for long a serious hindrance and discouragement to the medical school. For full information on this subject, and as to the income and expenditure in connection with each Faculty, not obtainable from the *University Calendar*, I refer to the Report of the Royal Commission of 1876 on the Scottish Universities (vol. iii., p. 39, No. 7852). The management of the funds and property of the University was transferred from the *Senatus* to the new University Court by the Universities Act of 1889, a change which I strongly recommended to the Government when the Bill was being prepared.

## PROGRESS OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL.

Year.	Arts.	Divinity.	Law.	Medicine.	Total.
1861-62.....	393	69	12	160	634
1862-63.....	375	69	8	164	616
1863-64.....	353	54	12	158	577
1864-65.....	331	54	8	139	532
1865-66.....	324	47	15	136	522
1866-67.....	313	35	20	176	544
1867-68.....	320	40	12	176	548
1868-69.....	321	30	10	166	527
1869-70.....	310	40	15	188	553
1870-71.....	328	37	12	189	566
1871-72.....	331	39	19	216	605
1872-73.....	325	54	21	256	656
1873-74.....	352	42	13	251	658
1874-75.....	336	36	14	250	636
1875-76.....	348	38	25	285	696
1876-77.....	333	28	21	295	677
1877-78.....	334	24	13	334	705
1878-79.....	352	19	19	344	734
1879-80.....	372	27	23	316	738
1880-81.....	382	32	23	335	772
1881-82.....	417	25	35	336	813
1882-83.....	450	27	23	368	868
1883-84.....	439	32	28	360	859
1884-85.....	462	31	30	378	901
1885-86.....	460	27	27	378	892
1886-87.....	440	33	18	378	869
1887-88.....	453	32	27	406	918
1888-89.....	392	38	29	450	909

These figures do not bring out that most students of medicine took the summer as well as the winter session, but the number given is that of individuals in each academic year.

Those who watch the ups and downs of the medical schools look to the number of the beginners

## AURORA BOREALIS.

in forming an opinion of the genuineness of any seeming prosperity. The following figures, taken from my anatomy class lists, show the genuineness of the growth of our medical school. It will suffice to give them in averages of five years :—

Years.	Winter. Beginners.	Summer. Beginners.	Total.
1864-65 to 1868-69.....	20	16	36
1869-70 to 1873-74.....	31	22	53
1874-75 to 1878-79.....	32	39	71
1879-80 to 1883-84.....	32	48	80
1884-85 to 1888-89.....	35	65	100
The year 1864-65.....	18	11	29
The year 1888-89.....	38	71	109

I may add that our students of medicine at Aberdeen not only began with us, but, with very few exceptions, took the whole of their course with us, although not required to do so by the regulations. I used to reckon that about one-third of our students of medicine at Aberdeen were from England or the Colonies. In the Edinburgh school, I was accustomed to a still larger proportion from beyond Scotland.

*The Examinations for the Degree.* These underwent a change corresponding to the change in the teaching. They had been in word knowledge only. Those who had written what was called a very good paper, were passed on that, a practice that was soon stopped. The orals were conducted at three little tables in the faculty room,—no specimens

## PROGRESS OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL.

on the table, no practical work,—and there had been no clinical examination in connection with medicine and surgery. But far too much importance is still attached to the written part of the examination.<sup>1</sup> We also increased the number of the outside examiners, at first only three in number ; and we had the order of the examinations so changed as to bring the elementary subjects early, as they are now. For these changes we had to go to the Privy Council for alteration of Ordinance. We were strengthened in seeking these changes by the visits from the inspectors of the Medical Council.

*The Science Degree.* The movement for the institution of this degree arose in the Medical Faculty. Although the degree already existed in other Universities, it took ten long years till the objections raised at the Senatus, and renewed at the old University Court, were admitted to be groundless. The conditions for the degree were finally agreed to at the Senatus on 14th May, 1889, my last act there. The conditions were substantially the same as those now in operation through the Commissioners under the new Act. It is not expected that the number of graduates in science alone will be great, but the

<sup>1</sup> In France and Germany the examinations are entirely oral and practical. Written examinations began in this country within my recollection. They are not a test of real knowledge, and tend to promote cramming.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

institution of the degree is a recognition of the position of science in a University, and of the status of science professors previously looked on as "medical" only. It will be from the students of medicine, as hitherto, rather than from students of science only, that the science professorships will derive their support.

*Other wants of the Medical School.* In my previous experience it had been the custom of professors, in the opening or closing lecture of the session, to speak of the needs of the University; thus, through the students and the press, reaching the public. My doing so was at first disapproved at Aberdeen, on the ground that it was only making the weaknesses of the school known. But how are wants to be supplied if they are not made known? Three wants more especially I thus spoke of, and also discussed at the meetings of the General Council of the University—medical bursaries, a professorship of pathology, and extension of the buildings.

*Medical Bursaries.* While the bursaries in Arts were legion, and in Divinity nearly one for every student, there was in Medicine but one, and that in the form of money to pay annually the apprentice fee and infirmary dues of a student (the Dr. John Milne, founded 1808, value about £23). Publicity could not fail to rectify this contrast. The following figures giving the number of bursaries held in each



## PROGRESS OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL.

Faculty in session 1890-91, with the number of students in each, in session 1889-90, as stated in the *University Calendar* for 1891-92, show the progress made in this movement.

	Number of Students.	Number of Bursars.	Aggregate Annual Value.
Arts.....	401	227	£3960 9 0
Divinity.....	30	28	621 10 0
Law.....	25	4	38 0 0
Medicine.....	433	32	670 2 0
Total.....			£5290 1 0

Chief among the benevolent donors was the late Mr. George Thompson, of Pitmedden, who, in 1882, gave the handsome sum of £6000, at the same time attaching conditions as to the competition, etc., which secured the bursaries to the medical students. This gift provided nine bursaries, varying from £20 to £30, three awarded in each year. The same kind friend to the medical school gave us, in 1886, the further handsome sum of £3000 to found a travelling Fellowship in Medicine, open by competition every second year to the medical graduates of the University, regarding the conditions to be attached to which in order to secure his purpose he had previously sought my advice. Other medical benefactions have since come in and will no doubt continue to come. I would express the hope that some of them may be for the purpose of promoting

## AURORA BOREALIS.

original researches by graduates in medicine or in science, conducted in the laboratories of the school.

*Professorship of Pathology.* After some years of advocacy, care being taken to bring the plea under the notice of Sir Erasmus Wilson, there came, in 1882, from that wealthy and benevolent gentleman, the munificent sum of £10,000, for the foundation of a chair of pathology. The offer was made through Dr. Pirrie, who had been Wilson's school-fellow at Huntly. I took care to have inserted in the deed of foundation, of course with the consent of the donor, as vital to the utility of the chair, the condition that the professor "shall devote his whole time to the duties of the chair and shall not engage in private practice". Before an appointment to the chair was made, care was taken to have the ordinance altered so as to include the class in the curriculum, and a room was assigned for a laboratory, though that was now a great difficulty. The final step necessary to the utility of the chair was to secure that the professor shall also be pathologist to the Infirmary, and after some difficulty I was able to arrange that to the satisfaction of all parties.

I look on the institution of this chair, under the conditions mentioned, as a notable event in the history of the Aberdeen medical school ; as dealing

## PROGRESS OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL.

with the subject which, next to anatomy, is the most fundamental in modern medical education.

*Extension of the Buildings at Marischal College.* It is necessary that the reader should understand the relation that subsisted between Her Majesty's Board of Works and the University. The recommendation of the Commissioners under the Act of 1858, was that the "maintenance and repair" of the buildings should be undertaken by the Board. Happily the Government took a liberal interpretation of these words and, besides "maintenance and repair," gave us such new buildings as seemed absolutely necessary. We knew that our connection with the Board of Works was to cease under the Bill which passed in 1889, and as "compensation" for the loss of this favour which we had enjoyed for these thirty years, the University receives an annual sum of £703. Her Majesty's Board of Works was the best friend the University had during that long period. Without that help the progress made would not have been possible.

I need not here go into details, but the following is my estimate of the sums thus received by the University through the Board of Works :—

AURORA BOREALIS.

New buildings at King's College	£14,200
„ „ Marischal College	11,500
	£25,700
Maintenance and repair for thirty years, estimated at £700 a year	- - - 21,000
Compensation under the Act of 1889, for loss of the privilege, £703 a year capitalised at 3 per cent., equal a sum of	- - - 23,400
	£70,100 <sup>1</sup>

Through the increase of the numbers in the medical school, it at length became evident that a large extension of the buildings at Marischal College was essential. The rooms originally available as laboratories, which had enabled the school to make its modern start, had for some years been found too small for our steadily increasing numbers. Our attention was now given to the question how to obtain a large extension of the buildings at Marischal College. Evidently the best way was to double the breadth of the wings, outwardly, and to carry forward the broadened wings, as required. Instead of following the example of Edinburgh and Glasgow

<sup>1</sup> My estimate of the whole of the benefactions received by the University during the thirty years, including foundations for bursaries and scholarships, new professorships, etc., and the above £70,100 through Her Majesty's Board of Works, gives a total of £215,521.

## PROGRESS OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL.

Universities, in offering to the Government to find pound for pound, the University lost some years in the vain hope that the Government would make this great extension all at once, through the Board of Works, although it was known that that connection would cease with the next Universities Act, and although £80,000, or more, all at once for new buildings was a very large order to come under the head of "maintenance and repair". Our last grant for new buildings through the Board of Works was the handsome one of £6000, for the purpose of doubling the breadth of the south wing of Marischal College, promised to me at interviews with the authorities in London on 25th November, 1887; an extension in the right direction, and one that gave great additional accommodation for several of the departments. I feel bound to say that, in the course of my many dealings with the Board of Works in regard to Marischal College, I ever found them willing to do what was reasonable, subject sometimes to delay under the higher authority of the Treasury.

*The New Anatomical Buildings and Museum.* Some notice will be expected from me of the new Anatomical Department. As already indicated, the anatomical rooms as I found them in 1863 were hopeless. Being placed at the back of the college with some vacant ground behind, there was space for new buildings. These were proceeded with

## AURORA BOREALIS.

from time to time on the plan I had formed,—the museum room, the theatre, the laboratories for dissection and microscope work, and the various accessory rooms necessary for a modern anatomical school. I reckoned the total cost at about only £4000, but, being at the back of the college, ornamental exteriors were not required. I have the pleasure of being able to say that that commodious, convenient and handsome suite of anatomical rooms, as I left them, were not equalled by any in the United Kingdom, though those of Edinburgh University were larger, as required by a larger school. The museum room being, like most of the new rooms, lighted from the roof, admitted of glass cases being carried uninterruptedly round on the walls, floor and gallery, leaving the floor space for the larger skeletons. The size and proportions of the various glass cases were carefully planned in relation to their respective uses.

The *Museum* proper was still to form. It is due that a work of this kind, extending over a quarter of a century, should not be passed in a history of the Aberdeen medical school with only a general notice. Only those who have more or less engaged in such work can understand the amount of consideration, time, and personal labour implied in forming a museum of anatomy, human and comparative, worthy of a University. Moreover, as

## PROGRESS OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL.

the professor of anatomy is occupied throughout the day with the work of the school, museum-making has to be done mostly during holiday times or in the evenings. It is, however, extremely interesting work, both in the doing and in the result. A good museum is a great influence in a school. The student, reading in it, learns directly from nature and is trained to observe ; and it enables the teaching in the lecture room to be demonstrative. Beyond the medical school, too, such a museum, showing the structure of man and that of the higher animals of the same structural type, is useful in promoting an interest in biological science in the city and district.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As there is no record as to when or by whom the museum was formed, it may be well here to mention some at least of the things in the comparative part of the collection, and at the same time to make acknowledgment of the kind help of former students. Some few of the skeletons were obtained by purchase, but most of them were obtained as carcasses, to be dissected first, or as bones in the rough state, requiring to be macerated and otherwise prepared before being mounted. Care was taken not to lose the rudimentary structures, and to have all the small bones in their right place—not always attended to in preparing museum skeletons.

Obtained as carcasses, horse, cow, dog, boar (local), red deer (Balmoral). From Wombwell's menagerie when at or soon after leaving Aberdeen, tigress, tapir, giraffe, kangaroo. Bones of camel, young elephant, showing the epiphyses, crocodile (Prof. George King—now Sir George King—Calcutta). Grunting ox of India (Dr. John Anderson, Calcutta). The large Indian elephant (the late Dr. John Gunn, at Moulton). It is the finest skeleton of

## AURORA BOREALIS.

*The Hospital Part of the School.* This essential part of the medical school has likewise undergone change and improvement. Students of the early part of the period will recollect at the old Royal Infirmary Drs. Keith, Pirrie, and Kerr, excellent and well-known surgeons, and, chief among the physicians, Dr. Kilgour, who had long been a tower of strength to the school. On his retirement, soon after I went to Aberdeen, an important change was made in the system of clinical teaching. Hitherto only the senior physician and senior surgeon had given what was called the clinical course, which consisted of two lectures a week in the hospital

an elephant I have seen anywhere. The preparation of the bones took us two years, the mounting of the skeleton took us a whole autumn. Bones of hippopotamus (Dr. John Robb, Zanzibar). Bones of Greenland bear and seal (by whaling ships). Among the cetacea, lesser fin-whale (*B. rostrata*), stranded at Aberdeen; the true bottlenose (*Hyperoodon*), at Fraserburgh; parts of a 64-foot-long razorback (*B. musculus*), at Peterhead; from it are these great paddles with their dried finger-muscles, ribs, neck vertebrae, etc. These, my three first cetaceans at Aberdeen, were purchased by me and presented. Lower jaw of a 65-66 feet long finner (Wick). Rudimentary hind-limb of right-whale (Davis Straits). Large pilot whale (*Globicephalus melas*), stranded near Edinburgh; smaller pilot whale (at Cove); porpoise (local). Black whale (*B. borealis*) (Dr. James Dewar, Orkney), a very fine skeleton and showing the whalebone well. White whale (*Beluga*), carcass from Wick (Mr. Adam Mackay). Skeleton of 50 feet long fin-whale (*B. musculus*), stranded at Nairn (Dr. Brodie Cruickshank), carcass towed to Aberdeen. Other skeletons variously procured, dugong, sloth, great ant-eater, larger kangaroo, ornithorhynchus; emeu, apteryx, bull frog, large turtle (Aberdeen meat preserving works),



## PROGRESS OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL

theatre. On my explaining to the managers that we had recently in Edinburgh changed that system to that of all the three acting physicians becoming jointly clinical teachers, they resolved to have that system, and soon afterwards the three surgeons voluntarily adopted it. Thus, the clinical teaching came to be more and more clinical, and less of the lecture kind.

As time went on, it became evident that the hospital buildings were behind the age, and, in 1885, a committee was appointed with instructions "to consider the whole system of the hospital," a committee of which I had the very serious honour

smaller turtle; large codfish. Series of the anthropoid apes, gibbon, orang, chimpanzee, gorilla (bones obtained through Anthropological Institute). Life-size model and two great photos of young gorilla (*Pongo*) obtained by me when in Berlin, with casts of adult anthropoid hands and feet. In regard to the viscera of various animals, I desire to acknowledge frequent obligation to that esteemed Aberdeen naturalist, Mr. George Sim. The specimens of human anatomy are too numerous to be indicated, but I may mention cases containing the skull and other bones found in prehistoric short stone cists in Aberdeenshire; casts of Bushman and Bushwoman made for me, in London, from Bush-people I saw when they were exhibited in Edinburgh; and a series of wax models showing the development of various parts in the embryo, and some of adult structures, which were selected by me during visits to museums on the continent. I desire specially to mention that, in the work of forming the Anatomical Museum, I had the valuable assistance of my faithful attendant, Mr. Robert Gibb, who took intelligent interest in the work and never grudged sitting with me at extra hours.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

to be chairman. There was no difficulty in condemning the building, notwithstanding its pretty front, as, like most old hospitals, requiring entire reconstruction. The raising of the necessary funds was taken in hand by Lord Provost, now Sir William Henderson, as the Queen's Jubilee movement of Aberdeen. After more than a year of no small amount of inquiry and consideration, including the question of removal to another site, a long history not requiring now to be gone into, what was resolved on is now seen completed,—new pavilions, surgical and medical, constructed on modern principles, erected behind, and the old building converted for purposes of administration and teaching.

The hospital staff has been strengthened variously. The residents, formerly two senior students, who paid for their board (£40), had, on my suggestion, following the change we had made in Edinburgh, been required to be passed men, the payment abolished ; and subsequently we increased the number of the residents to four. The offices of assistant-surgeon and assistant-physician were instituted. The professors of surgery and practice of medicine are now entitled to be on the hospital staff, which must be beneficial alike to the University and the hospital. By the care and legal experience of Sheriff, now Professor, Dove Wilson, a new charter was obtained for the Royal Infirmary,

## PROGRESS OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL.

under which the system of management was simplified and rendered more effective, by a Board of Directors, with powers.

*Our Students of Medicine.* A book with so much about professors must not leave out the students, for and by whom professors primarily exist. If ever there was ground for the notion that the student of medicine is an idle person, it must have been before my time. The work before him is great, greater than that required for any other degree. As among the youths of the outside world, and there in greater proportion, a certain number of students in all the faculties are inclined to what is called pleasure rather than to work, and here comes in a difference between one medical school and another, and between one professor and another. "Let us deliver our teaching to them, and if they don't work, reject them at the examination; we are professors not schoolmasters," is a doctrine I have heard; a cruel one, to me a repulsive one. The seeing to it that this kind of youth shall work may sometimes be irksome, but it is our duty, even were it on no higher ground than the good name of the school. I think it may safely be said that such care, exerted over a series of years, has contributed to give the medical school of Aberdeen, apart from what else may be said of it, a well-deserved name as a working school; a name,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

however, that will not long survive unless such care is continued.

But what I wish to say of the medical students is, that the great body of them require no compulsion. The medical student takes to his work with pleasure. The new world of science is dawning upon him, especially the revelation of the interior of the human body. His work is largely objective, a new thing to him after his years at school or at college ; all he requires is at first to be shown the method, to be helped out of the habit of trusting to word-knowledge. What I mean here is that the individual has to be trained, shown how to use his observing powers, to get his knowledge at first hand from nature, in the laboratory, not to trust to the word-knowledge obtained from lectures or books. That means a great deal more than assembling a crowd of students for an hour in what is called a practical class ; it means training the individual, the most precious part of medical education, perhaps not always given. I ask the many students that have passed through our hands, now settled in practice, what they now think was the best part of the teaching? Was it the "spoon meat" of the countless lectures, or was it the training they got individually to use their own faculties? The drawback in medical education, under the now superseded Ordinances, was the number of lectures

## PROGRESS OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL.

required to be attended, leaving too little time for real practical work, and tending, along with the system of written examinations, to encourage word-knowledge and cramming. So many lectures are not required by the new Ordinances—if the professor chooses.

Looking back on the long series of years, I am free to say that I could not have wished to have a more attentive and industrious body of students, and that to move among them throughout the day was a pleasure to me. It cannot, indeed, be otherwise than interesting to have the teaching of young men at the age when their minds are opening, nor can it but be felt as a deep responsibility to have the teaching of a science which, besides its professional value, has to deal, among other problems, with the great problem of Man's place in Nature.

*After Graduation.* It is interesting to know where our medical graduates settle ; in what parts of the world the school is bringing forth fruit. That is but in part determined by where they came from. As above stated, I reckoned that about one-third of our medical students (during the period under review) came from England or from abroad. Those from Scotland were mainly from the Aberdeen district and north from it, but not a few were from the Western Isles. At first they were very local, without that supply from the more northern counties that

## AURORA BOREALIS.

we came to have, and it was not till after some years that they began to come north to us from Forfarshire. As the school grew, it became more and more rare to see names from the Aberdeen district in the Edinburgh lists. The places in Scotland from which our students came are fully in possession of our graduates, and a fair number are settled in the midland and southern counties and towns of Scotland. Those from abroad came from India, Ceylon, and all the British Colonies, but very few from Canada, in which the medical schools are well organised on the Scottish model. Those from England and abroad, generally, I think, went to settle where they came from, but a very large number of our students of Scottish nationality are settled in England. Many, of course, in London. At the half-yearly dinner of the "Aberdeen University Club, London," the medical part is manifestly the predominating, their number being some two to three times that of all the other members of that large body. They are to be found in considerable number in all the large provincial towns of England and throughout the counties. In Manchester there is an Aberdeen Medical Graduates' Association, at whose meetings I have had the pleasure more than once of being present. Some of our medical graduates are professors or demonstrators in the medical schools of London and the provinces and are doing good scientific work. Not a few are

## PROGRESS OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL.

in the public medical services, especially the Indian, having generally taken high places at the competitive entrance examinations, and rendered valuable services to science as well as to medicine in India.

It is a remarkable fact that a large number of youths come from England to Scotland for their medical education. If it is less costly in Scotland, that is in no way to our discredit ; but it is better too—things that do not often go together—better in at least that more time and care is given by the teachers, and our climate and the national character have something to do with it. It is also a remarkable fact that so many of our medical graduates of Scottish nationality are settled in England, and do well there, and in the Colonies. Our Scotch colleges bring forward many more youths than can find satisfactory footing at home. They therefore go forth to the world and generally do well, mainly through the continuance of the industrious habits they acquired at home and at college. Thus, the Aberdeen Medical School has played its part well in the world, in supplying good men, not only in its own geographical area, but also for service throughout Her Majesty's dominions.

*In Memoriam.* The pleasure with which we look back on these many generations of students is saddened when we think of those, not a few, who have passed away, victims to overwork or to the risks of

## AURORA BOREALIS.

their profession. I recall some who died while yet students, whose faces rise to memory as they sat before me in the bloom and hopefulness of youth. Their fellow-students will remember them affectionately. I have noted with sadness, from time to time, the passing away of many who had made their way in the profession. Among the many, I cannot but mention especially four, brilliant students, and afterwards demonstrators in the class—Dr. Robert Smith, Dr. James Simpson, Dr. Fife Jamieson, Dr. James Anderson—who had all attained distinction and all fell victims to overwork.

The monument to Robert Smith, erected by his fellow-students and friends, is in the secluded churchyard of Kincardine-O'Neil, where we laid him ; that to Fife Jamieson is in the venerable Cathedral of Old Aberdeen ; James Simpson and James Anderson rest in Allanvale Cemetery. A medal in anatomy was founded in memory of Fife Jamieson ; a medal in clinical medicine, in memory of James Anderson. These four young men, martyrs to overwork, will long be affectionately remembered by their fellow-students and by the many students whom they assisted me to teach.







*John Struthers*

## JOHN STRUTHERS.

What a piece of work is a man!—HAMLET.

“**T**HAT is Professor Struthers—he has peculiar ideas on everything,” said the Magstrand in my ear, some twenty odd years ago. The professor of anatomy rose to address the Congress after Professor Bain. By “peculiar” the Magstrand meant “individual”. It was his way of indicating to me one of the living forces in the University, which I thought of then as a “far-off divine event”. What made the Educational Institute seek after a professor of anatomy? This surely is the least popular of studies, the least fitted to the minor school ages, the least in general charm. But Professor Struthers was more than an anatomist. Indeed, I doubt whether anatomy was ever his primary passion. Man was to him always more than muscles. His presence at the Congress proved as much.

And he had the art of speech. He was facile, graceful and keen. He always took a frank part in educational controversy, and the great controversy of that day was the classical *versus* the scientific.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

At the Congress I speak of, as everywhere else, he made his points with an easy expectancy of effect. His pleasing tones rose and fell in a delicate irony all his own. Every time I have heard him, he has stood for the liberal mind. Now and again he spoke in exaggeration of medicine and the studies organic to it ; but, then, he goes back in easy reminiscence to days when the Aberdeen Medical School was a thing of shreds and patches ; when, to win a hearing even for essentials, he had to fight every inch of the ground ; when " grammarism " was slowly yielding to the evolutionary " Aufklärung ". In the main he was right ; but, his polemic over, he seems less so now than he did then. For, after all, form is the imperishable, the immutable, the perfect ; content is the passing, the adaptable, the finite. Form, even when it degenerated into " grammarism," dominated Arts ; content dominated Medicine. But when Struthers lectured and spoke, concrete science needed to assert her claims. Now the " action " has gone too far, for I hear that moral philosophy attracts less than botany ! and in Scotland ! Even geology would, I believe, sidle up to logic and the metaphysic of an external world. But the reversion—the reaction—will come. In the Arts there is no haste. Philosophy, in her time, will again paint her " grey in grey," when the senses have been cloyed with over-many specialisms—

## JOHN STRUTHERS.

anatomy among the others. The great Clearing was necessary, and Professor Struthers was of it and for it, and his public speaking was part of his apostolate. To-day he shows himself not unaffected by the classic spirit that came to him in such questionable shape long ago.

In another direction, too, Professor Struthers spoke to men. He was a pioneer in evening lectures for the people. He did not shrink from the effort to make scientific object-studies lucid and simple. Nor did he fail. He drew crowds to his anatomical theatre : men and women, young men and young women, of the intellectual ages. He set before them sound material in anatomy and physiology. He was not as profound as Helmholtz ; he was not as brilliant as Tyndall ; but he touched in his descriptions with the pencil of a masterly irony. He led the intellectually conventional gently along the margins of the doubtfully orthodox. Darwinism was only coming in. The flouting request, " Show me a monkey changing into a man," was even then taken,—not for stupidity, but—for cleverness. Professor Struthers was a Darwinian when the name meant reproach and obloquy. He would hint at an " adaptation " here, a " rudiment " there ; an embryological survival—the never-failing " recurrent laryngeal "—clenched the sketch of race history as summed up in the individual history. He taught us the primary

## AURORA BOREALIS.

lesson of the comparative method : that we are, in our every relation, a continual Becoming. And he put this in the concrete. He planted the idea with the skill of an old hand. These commonplaces of a later time were new revelations to young men on the margin of the great world of experience, and the impressions never faded. My memory palpitates with them still. On those evenings Professor Struthers was at his best. Other lecturers that I have heard were as lucid, as rich in suggestion, as commanding. But I have heard none more penetrative, none more individual, none more at ease in his particular atmosphere.

And now of his Anatomy. Professor Struthers came to Aberdeen in 1863, three years after the Union of the Universities. He followed two distinguished men—Allen Thomson and Lizars. He brought with him an individual reputation as a teacher ; from his first professorial hour to his last he asserted the claims of his department, and the superb Anatomy School of to-day owes not a little to his persistent vigour. Like every object science, anatomy in those days was too bookish. Professor Struthers changed all that. The primary temptation of the lectured student is to rest in words. The primary difficulty is to persuade him that things observed have any intellectual value at all. The sermon Professor Struthers preached, day in, day

## JOHN STRUTHERS.

out, was—investigate for yourself, dissect, analyze, observe, verify, systematize from the actualities. And to the scalpel he added the microscope, an instrument in every student's outfit now ; then it was a privilege of the few. To this exacting objectivity in method, Struthers applied the living ideas of Darwin—variation, natural selection, adaptation, survival. From Owen, he had learned the great generalities of comparative anatomy ; from Darwin, he had learned the dynamics of animal life. In his teaching, he brought the two into synthesis. He made the writ of the evolutionary idea run in the valley of dry bones, so making the bones live. Into how many a forgotten corner did he shine the lamp ! To-day the part of his course I seem best to recall is the extra course on comparative osteology. The fascination of discovering a selected variation in every line, and margin, and nodule lightened the awful weariness of descriptive anatomy, whose details are surely the "spurious infinite" of Hegel. And as with the bones, so with every muscle, and artery, and vein, and nerve. As taught by Struthers, the analytic study of anatomy in the concrete ceased to be purposeless or unrelated ; it became rather a discipline in synthesis. By his insisting on the general idea, he brought his technical work into relation with current thought on the great topics of life. When every other impression of his teaching

## AURORA BOREALIS.

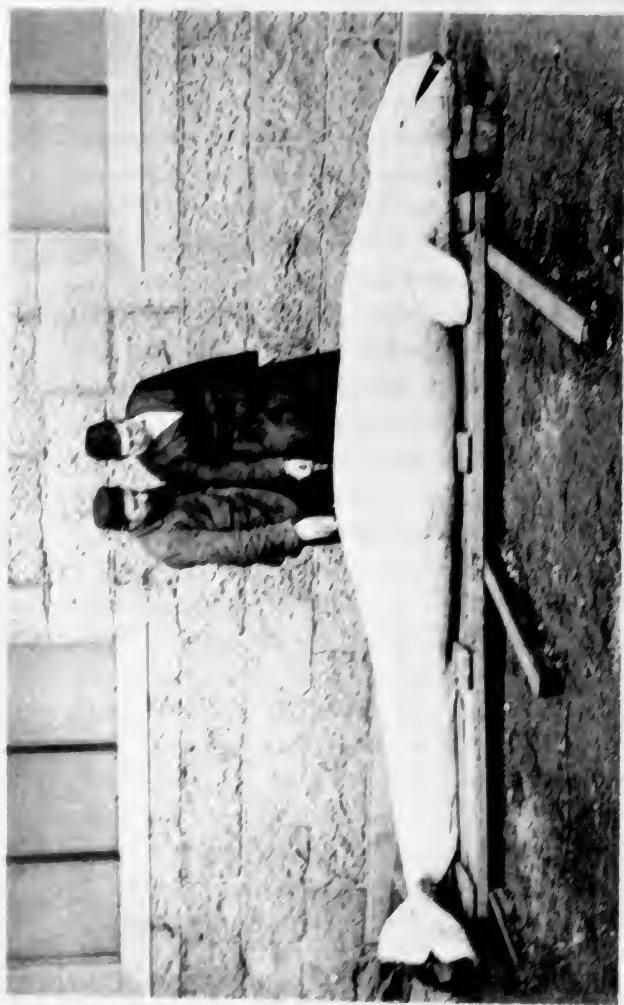
fades away, this will remain. For, after all, the "idea," this classical Platonic ghost, is what shall prevail—even in anatomy.

In the dissecting-room, he moved like a master of detail. He was critical, exacting, and, perhaps, not over-ready to praise. A word of encouragement is a wonderful stimulus when eyes and fingers are straining to lay out every structure in perfect order. And occasionally the word did come in a friendly personal talk over a beautifully white bone, or a mangled brachial plexus, or a series of supracondyloid processes, one of the professor's specialties. But the best of his discipline was at the morning orals. "Come away, sir, come away down," and the beginner went down into the arena, there to be pumped of what he had stored from dissecting-rooms, museum and book. "The length?" queried the professor. "Half-an-inch, sir," replied the beginner. "Have you measured it?" "No, sir." "Let us measure it—yes, I thought so, three-quarters of an inch. Now, sir?" "It's much the same, sir," hesitatingly replied the beginner. "The same! No, sir—miles of difference, *miles* of difference." After that the beginner measured everything. Next time he could give dimensions to twelfths of inches, and he *had* measured them.

But who does not recall the great Cetacean Epoch? Two skeletons—the Tay whale and another—lay side







## JOHN STRUTHERS.

by side at full length in the old Upper Hall of Marischal College. To-day, the pictures look on at scenes more elegant, if no more fascinating. The period of odours had passed (one student, a psychologist, had for weeks "discriminated" a distinctly bad smell). The period of measurements had come. Day after day, for hours on hours, those observations went forward. The record ran into many sheets. "Four and a half, six and a half, five and a quarter," until one imagined some great Cetacean tailor dictating measurements for winter furs in the Kara Sea. But the anatomist revelled in the details, which were to determine the species. Tireless in gathering facts, tireless in arranging them, never careless of a new variation,—these were the qualities that marked Professor Struthers. The Tay whale was a fine monster, and Struthers, by most elegant generalship—for a beast like that demanded a campaign—converted it into a fine museum specimen. The cartoons of the time and the current class songs marked the dissection of the Tay whale as an event for history. At the place where the whale first lay, the dissection by Professor Struthers was announced by handbill; there was a charge for admission; a band, I believe, played to herald the triumph of intellect over bulk. The owner knew his business. But the professor declined nothing that should enable him to win so fine a specimen, and, in the end, he carried off his

## AURORA BOREALIS.

whale to clean it and sweeten it and prepare it for presentation to future generations.

The incident illustrates Professor Struthers' great ambition. He meant to be a museum-builder, like John Hunter. "These specimens follow me everywhere ; they went with me to Aberdeen ; they sojourned there ; and now they have followed me back here." We were in the Museum of the Edinburgh College of Surgeons. There was that in his voice which told of a longer day past than to come and brought "the eternal note of sadness in". But his dearest ambition had not been unrealised. The small museum, off the old dissecting-room, was a pleasant arbour of white bones, and old flesh, and models : man and his correlates met here to exhibit their comparable features. The union of the dead taught us the unity of the living. The series of seven skeletons was alone a fine lesson in how the human "moves upward, working out the beast". There were greater places ; but there was none more lovingly tended. The well-ordered room expressed an intense individuality. It grew, here a little and there a little, out of reverence for the great scientific traditions and for the great pioneers of modern science.

But those things are not the whole man. Professor Struthers belongs to the fighting line : he is, first and last, a reformer. He found the Medical

## JOHN STRUTHERS.

School poor in funds. He set out to enrich it. He led the way in expanding the teaching premises. To-day, the expansions go beyond his wildest visions; yet he did his part in the sixties and seventies ; the nineties reap of his sowing. Laboratory teaching now covers more than anatomy and chemistry ; but, by tradition, anatomy asked the lion's share and got it. Professor Struthers, however, fought for the whole school. Year in, year out, he asked for money, and the money came. Bursaries, though many, never became all the fashion, as in Arts. But prizes and even fellowships increased. Best of all, under the new powers of the University Court, Assistantships have increased, and the University realises that a school lives by its new blood. Within Struthers' time as professor, the school steadily grew more adequate to the many fine minds that sought in medicine to satisfy the lust of knowledge. Doubtless, Struthers trod on corns ; he wounded susceptibilities ; he provoked opposition ; perhaps, in his over-zeal for the modern, he made mistakes. But his efforts in the Faculty, in the Senatus, in the University Council, in the General Medical Council, resulted in substantial progress. The medical preliminary is less a sham. Physics and biology are more a reality. The "clinical" year has come. The "five years course" has come. Anatomy, perhaps, still absorbs the lion's share ; but other subjects

## AURORA BOREALIS.

are not relatively so insignificant. At these and many other problems of medical politics, he slaved for years. A statesman piloting a constitutional reform in the House of Commons were not more astute, or more strenuous in season. In his older age, he goes on still. The spirit is willing. But the gaze turns more to the past : younger eyes, not noting how their advantages grew out of labour and travail, are bent on new lands and, in the darkness, follow new pilot stars.

Professor Struthers became a knight just as he was doffing his armour. His cross of honour came to him as the reward of single-mindedness in many a "tented field". The title stamps, it does not increase, his worthiness, and it provides an occasion for pleasant memories and the other offices of friendship. A strong character is the correlation of many forces. Some are of the man ; some are of the environment. Struthers, placed anywhere, would have impressed his personality on the society that made him possible and on the pupils that fell within his effects. Some—a vanishing few—carry with them only examination memories. "No professor could ever set a paper worth doing." That is their motto—not without a light flavour of truthfulness, if not of truth. Others recall an intense, persistent, dominating professor, who afterwards revealed himself as a delicately courteous and kindly friend. The harshness of the

JOHN STRUTHERS.

professor passes in the synthesis of a paternal smile. "My lambs! I always called them my lambs," and the grey eyes soften and the talk stumbles and you have seen for an instant into the heart of a mystery.

“To-day”—so I wrote to myself on the 16th of June—“I met Sir John Struthers at the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh. He was there, with the medical profession, to meet Lord Lister, the new free citizen of this city. The reformer of surgery had his fitting reception in the College of Surgeons, where, too, our anatomist had first his high office of teacher, and last his high honour of President. The contrast of surgeon and anatomist sets one thinking. The inventor of a method sets the whole of his world off on a new tack. The teacher, the disciplinarian, the constructive reformer of institutions, prepares the fruitful soil. The surgeon—the dissector of the living—presupposes the anatomist, the dissector of the dead. Not an hour of all that carving is wasted. And Sir John Struthers—pale, thin, bent, just emerging from acute illness—is a living type of the invincible laboriousness that spreads order in the world as Lister is the type of the invincible will that forces a new methodic idea into its detailed differences. Ideas alone are not enough; the world is conquered by patience in detail, and it were hard to estimate which were less essential to medicine—

## AURORA BOREALIS.

the surgeon or the anatomist. To-morrow Sir John sails for Norway—'Norroway over the faem'—in hope of stimulus and more vigorous blood. To-day, he would be with his friends, not to miss a historic meeting. There he sat, meditatively discoursing, in his Fellow's and ex-President's robes, under the roof where he had, forty years before, taught how many men to be exact, lucid, thorough. His specimens are there, lovingly ordered in his memory as in their cases. Life is slowing down in the twilight shadows ; but the spirit of knowledge is keen as ever. The eye readily fills ; the voice, in its delicate plaint, has the tenderness of much sorrow ; yet his look is forwards, full of hope, facing the future, unsubdued."







*William Perrie*

## WILLIAM PIRRIE.

Low lies the hand that oft was stretched to save ;  
Low lies the heart that swelled with honest pride.

**S**CATTERED throughout the world are many men, who, when the name of the "Barron" is mentioned, immediately change their tone of voice, distend their mouths in speaking, and assume a half-jocular air, whilst they indulge in a quotation of a distinctive character.

These men were pupils of the late William Pirrie, Professor of Surgery in the University of Aberdeen, and they must needs change voice, feature and language in an attempt to recall lucidly a teacher who, more perhaps than any other of his time, stamped his creed and his peculiarities on his students ; peculiarities which lent emphasis to his utterances, instilled his pupils with interest in the man, and sent them into the world with a lasting picture of a remarkable individuality deeply impressed on their memories.

Great teachers leave with their pupils an impression, a pictured presence, well nigh impossible to convey in writing. The greatest teachers are those

## AURORA BOREALIS.

of the various religious beliefs, and they taught, not by writing, but by the influence of personality and by the power of speech. A real teacher implants in his pupils' memories, words, sentences, principles, modes of action, ground work of beliefs and beliefs themselves, which are carried into the daily life of the individual, and, may be, handed down to posterity.

A teacher of the true stamp was William Pirrie, a teacher who loved his work, who looked forward to his lecture hour as the happiest of the twenty-four, and who, when he became acquainted with any new fact, thought first of all "how best he could put it before the students". A quotation from his book, *The Principles and Practice of Surgery*, testifies to this statement. At page 592 of the third edition he writes: "Being Professor of Surgery in the University of Aberdeen, and one of the surgeons of the Aberdeen Hospital, and it being one of the principal aims and one of the greatest pleasures of my life to diffuse an accurate knowledge of surgery, and to excite enthusiasm for the study of that science," etc. This quotation better serves to explain the goal of Pirrie's ambition. Few, very few, men with such likings and desires have been, or are to be, met with; and it was because Pirrie was animated with such purposes that his name is remembered with fervent admiration and gratitude by his pupils. Withal, however, the "Barron's" teaching is invari-

## WILLIAM PIRRIE.

ably recalled with a voice and a manner meant as a flattering "take off".

To assume that this indicates disrespect would be to make a mistake, whilst to understand it as implying unmixed adulation would be still further wrong. It is in a spirit of mirthful appreciation that Pirrie is spoken of; there is admiration accompanied by a wink of mirth, flattery embroidered with a fringe of good-natured mimicry.

The dignity of "Barron," to which Pirrie's pupils elevated him, is unique. The name was bestowed not as a nickname, but as a complimentary and fitting title. An unusual dignity in Britain, it served to prevent confusion with all others. Who gave him the name or when exactly it was bestowed, is lost in the dim past of the "forties". The spelling with a double "r" no doubt arose from the fact that his own name was spelt with two "r's," and it served to increase still further the distinction which his admirers wished to bestow upon him.

William Pirrie was born in the parish of Gartly, Aberdeenshire, in the year 1807. His "upbringing" was no doubt in that severe school of hardihood, indigenous to the north of Scotland in the first half of the century, which produced many men of great eminence. The code of training will be best gathered from the following account of a Gartly mother and her son.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

A young lad was engaged to herd sheep, "fe'ed as a herd," in fact, to a farmer in Gartly, at no great distance from his parents' dwelling. One day the laddie presented himself to his mother, and, throwing down his bonnet, declared in a dogged manner he "wis' nae gaun back til's place".

"Aye! what for?" inquires his mother.

"'Kis' I canna get eneuch to ate," says the loon.

"What do they gi'e ye to your breakfast?"

"Tatties and saut," was the reply.

"And what get ye tae your denner?" asks the mother.

"Jist tatties and saut."

"Well! and what do they gi'e ye for your supper?"

"Naething bit tatties and saut again," wailed the laddie.

Whereat the mother broke out with: "Gae back tae your place, ye nickum; settin' you up wi' saut!"

Pirrie proceeded at an early age to Marischal College, Aberdeen, to study arts. Here he does not seem to have distinguished himself, although he was wont to relate that he gained the prize in the natural philosophy class for the best kept note book. This in itself was no great indication of mental ability, and the term "plodding" perhaps best describes his career as an arts student. The moment, however, he

## WILLIAM PIRRIE.

became acquainted with natural science a new man appears; the laggard in classics and mathematics becomes a keen student and a close observer. For Pirrie, science and the practice thereof held indeed "in her right hand a length of happy days". Throughout his life the happiness increased, until it developed into an intensity of delight in every detail of his life's work, whether as a surgeon or as a teacher. The education for the business of his life was obtained in Aberdeen, and supplemented by courses of study in Edinburgh and Paris.

After graduating M.D. in 1829, Pirrie was appointed lecturer on anatomy and physiology in Marischal College; for nine years he lectured on these subjects, thereby laying the foundation of the true surgeon. From anatomy he was transferred in 1839 to the chair of surgery, and it is as professor of surgery that he is remembered.

As a teacher the one great characteristic he possessed was enthusiasm. It was an infective, bursting enthusiasm, which was wholly irrepressible; it was not his brilliancy as a surgeon, but his zeal as a teacher that held the student spell-bound. The intense desire to "put things nicely," and, "to have his ideas all arrang't," was at once his forte and his foible. In supreme attempts at clearness, he not unfrequently misplaced words, and at times became truly aphasic towards the climax, putting "the cart

## AURORA BOREALIS.

before the horse," and thereby producing a word-dilemma of which he was wholly unconscious. What if "pus corpuscles" would come as "cus porcuscles"? what if Paget was re-christened "William," and Ferguson "James"? what if the operation devised by the American surgeon Marion Sims was ascribed "to the great Dr. Sims Reeves of New York"? Pirrie was unconscious of the slip and his audience was all the happier. One example of what is meant will suffice : One Monday morning, the extraordinary fact that an acupressure pin could be removed from the femoral artery, in the short space of four hours, without subsequent hæmorrhage, was communicated to the surgery class in the following manner :—"Gentlemen, you saw Dr. Keith, with the greaatest skill, amputate a boy's thigh, at the Infirmary, last Saturday at twelve o'clock. You saw him also apply acupressure, by the Aberdeen twist, by means of a pin with a yellow head, to the main trunk of the femoral artery. Now, gentlemen, on the following morning, Sunday morning, at five o'clock, I went to the Infirmary to see a patient I was greatly interested in. I aalways visit my wards when I have an interesting case at five o'clock in the morning. Well, gentlemen, as I was waackin' towards mi oun ward, my ears were shocked to hear the morning of the Lord's Day being desecrated by some profane person whistlin' 'The



## WILLIAM PIRRIE.

Braes o' Mar'. On opening Dr. Keith's ward door, whence the sound proceeded, what do you think I, for instance, saw now? I saw the little boy, whose thigh Dr. Keith had amputated the day before, sitting up in bed, twirling between his finger and thumb the yellow headed pin that had been applied to his femoral artery, and whistlin' 'The Braes o' Mar'. Gentlemen, what do you think of that, whistlin' 'The Braes o' Mar'.'" His enthusiasm had reached such an intensity, that words, not ideas were left to him; he had lost sight of the announcement of the great scientific fact that in four hours the femoral had been permanently occluded, and clung to "The Braes o' Mar" as a drowning man to a straw, repeating the sentence again and again in complete oblivion of their purport. The effect on the audience can be easily conceived, but Pirrie drowned all mirth with, "Is'nt it so nice to have your ideas all arrang't?"

But, "his very failings leant to virtue's side," for it was these word dilemmas and word stammerings which betrayed his burning enthusiasm, and contributed to excite interest in the man and his subject. It was seldom Pirrie allowed private engagements to interfere with his public duties, and the curtailing of a lecture was a matter of intense grief. "Gentlemen, it's with the greaatest reluctance I have to stop at this point, in this moast interesting subject, but I

## AURORA BOREALIS.

have been called into the interior of these islands to see a friend of mine, and it would neither be fair to my patient nor to my profession, were I to delay my going." With heartfelt and genuine regret depicted on his face, he left the class-room, and in the seclusion of his carriage no doubt communed with himself if he had put it to the students nicely !

The respect he paid to the great surgeons of the past was altogether reverential in its quality. Who can forget the impression made on his mind, when on entering Pirrie's class-room he beheld a black board bearing the following legend : "The Baron Dupuytren ; Who was he ? What was he ? Where was he born ? Where did he study ? What hospital did he give his great services to ? With what great improvements on surgery is his name associated ? Where is he buried ? How did the French reward him ?" This last question was answered by Pirrie with marked distinctness and point : "They nam't a street aifter him, that's how they reward their surgeons in Paris". Alas ! alas ! ye unappreciative Aberdonians, as yet no street in "the granite city" bears the name of our "Barron".

His old teacher, "the great Liston," was apostrophised thus : "His faalts, if he had any, were like the sputs that are said to exist upon the surface of the sun, lost in the bleze of his brightness". As Pirrie eulogised his teacher, so can all old Aberdeen

## WILLIAM PIRRIE.

men, in turn, revere him for the instruction he conveyed and the example he set.

Pirrie had in his museum an ankylosed hip-joint,

A preparation on a stan',  
Put up by Astley Cooper's han'.

Only a pupil of Pirrie's can fathom what the sentiment, expressed in these lines by Dr. Philpots, meant to the "Barron". When showing the preparation referred to, Pirrie did so with the following embellishments: "A specimen, the handiwork of the greaate man himself; ye can touch the actual bone which he himself handled, and took such greaate pride in showing". It was a sort of fetish which the poor piece of deformed bone excited in Pirrie's breast, for to him it was hallowed by the sanctity of Astley Cooper's name. And so it was ever thus with Pirrie; the names of distinguished men were revered in a manner peculiar to himself, and presented to the student in a form of superlative greatness, little short of saintly.

The lines about Pirrie, composed by Dr. Philpots, now of Bournemouth, are fresh in the memories of all Aberdeen students who were at the University in the "sixties". Philpots was a rhymer of no mean order, and supplied verses memorialising all the medical professors of the time. Pirrie was delineated as follows:—

## AURORA BOREALIS.

With pins, wires twisted round, beneath,  
An' his affianced "freen' till deeth,"  
(Of course I'm meaning Dr. Keith),

There came the Baron Larrey.  
Wi' preparation on a stan',  
Put up by Astley Cooper's han',  
He looked as learned, as fine, as gran'

As once did Ambrose Paré.

Oh! the Baron Dupuytren,

Dupuytren, Dupuytren,

Oh! the Baron Dupuytren,

The user of the needle.

The names incorporated in the stanza are those with which Pirrie delighted to conjure; and the reference to the "pins and wires and needle" testifies to his advocacy of the virtues of acupuncture.

Wherever Aberdeen medical graduates foregather, be it in the far East or in the far West, Pirrie's name is ever foremost in their minds; and with his pronounced and pre-eminent personality stories of his sayings and doings are intimately entwined. They are always told anent his enthusiasm as a teacher. The story of the old woman with a bad cough, who presented herself in the outpatient room at the Hospital, is told as evidence of his resource in finding teaching material. Pirrie asked, "What's the matter wi' you, my good wumman?" "A bad hoast," she replied. "Now," exclaims Pirrie, "make a large square circle now, and jist hear whaat this good wumman says". Wound up in the spirit of teaching, he walks towards the

## WILLIAM PIRRIE.

black board with chalk in hand, ready to transcribe the patient's statement. He repeats his question, and kindly encourages the old woman, who is rather scared at the wonderful effect of her simple words. "Now tell these nice gentlemen, whaat it is, that is the matter wi' you now". "A bad hoast," repeats the patient. "Now, gentlemen, is'nt so nice to hear the dear, good wumman, in her own vernacular way, describe her symptoms? Notice now—see'til this see;" meanwhile he writes, "*Scottice*—hoast; *Anglice*—cough; *alias*—bad cold;" adding, "it's so nice to have your ideas all arrang't". And Pirrie had his ideas arranged perfectly. His descriptions were distinct, complete and thorough; and if, in his desire to impart knowledge concisely, he used interpellations such as: "for instance," "notice this now," "what could be nicer than that now," "its just worth your pains coming here for no other purpose than just to hear that now," were numberless, they but served to work Pirrie up to a climax which, when the last crux of the dissertation was reached, left an indelible impression on the student's mind, which stood him in good stead at the examination table and in after years.

One morning Pirrie was lecturing on "cleft palate," and he had in his hand a dissection of the parts in which he took great pride. Not content with showing the specimen from the lecture table,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

he walked up through his class, crossing desks and forms, saying, "Do you see, for instance, that now? Isn't it so nice to see the delicate parts themselves before you? It's just knowledge appealing to the eye. See'til the little muscleie how nicely it works round the bone." Such an exhibition of enthusiasm in teaching is a thing of the past; it was buried with Pirrie. The story will provoke a smile from men who condemn lectures, and would refer students to their text-books for information; but in the case of an old Aberdeen man, Pirrie's example has urged him to work for work's sake, and sent him into the world with the conviction that a session with a good teacher is worth a cycle of text-book drudgery.

Pirrie was of excellent physique, tall, erect, broad chested, an early riser, a total abstainer, or as he himself put it, "I neither drink, smoke, snuff, nor chaw tobacco, and I'm as happy as them that does them aal". Kindly in purpose, liberal with his purse, a regular church goer, he was ever ready to aid charitable objects and religious ends.

Withal he had a peculiar self-consciousness, it can scarcely be styled vanity, but to an onlooker it seemed as though his every act was studied. His very walk betrayed his feelings; but Pirrie never walked—he waacked—a totally different procedure to any one who knew Pirrie; it was a studied, slow,

## WILLIAM PIRRIE.

unbending, colossal gait, which after a time became second nature to him. It was as much part of his character and enthusiasm, as the gratified pleasure with which he performed a rapid amputation or wound up a bout of teaching.

By these statements let no one imagine that any old pupil of Pirrie's who recounts the "Barron's" sayings and doings, does so in a spirit of detraction. Far other is the purpose and motive. Without these quips and foibles Pirrie would have been remembered merely as an excellent surgeon and a good teacher. But these qualities are common to many illustrious men, and Pirrie's name, with such epithets merely, would have been gathered, like theirs, into Time's waste basket and forgotten. Without these attributes he would not have been a distinct character, with them he became a personality in the eyes of his students, he became in fact "The Barron".

As a hospital surgeon he attained great eminence both as an operator and as a consultant. Keith, his colleague, was a surgeon of the first rank ; and the stimulus of rivalry, friendly withal, and therefore as usual all the more keen, acted as an ever present goad to excel.

Pirrie was honoured by being nominated surgeon to the Prince of Wales in Scotland. A large and lucrative practice rewarded his skill as a practi-

## AURORA BOREALIS.

tioner, for, after Keith's death, Pirrie had no rival north of Edinburgh.

Pirrie's contributions to surgery may be summed up in the one word—acupressure. In pre-Listerian days, there is no doubt that the use of the "pin and wire," as a means of arresting hæmorrhage had a distinct claim to serious consideration. Clean, neat, and in the hands of Pirrie and his colleagues, effective, acupressure stood a fair chance of becoming widely adopted by Aberdeen graduates; but Listerism removed the basis of the useful conception, and the practice of acupressure has become a matter of history.

Pirrie's text-book, *The Principles and Practice of Surgery*, was a faithful exposition of surgery, and had no superior at the date of its production. One of the charms of the book was its historical allusions. Illustrious men in surgery were delineated in terms of superlative admiration, and their work upheld as a standard to go by.

Space alone compels me to draw these reminiscences to a close. Bright and fresh his image rises before me as I write, and I feel, by laying aside my pen, that I am burying Pirrie again. Far other is my wish; the opposite is my desire. By touching on the episodes of his life, I know I have attempted what so many old students could have done much better; but I have tried to depict Pirrie as he was



## WILLIAM PIRRIE.

known in his class-room, not in his private life. My intention, however, is accomplished if by transcribing these bald and meagre details, I can induce those who knew him, to take down these reminiscences from the shelf, and, with them as a text, live again in the spirit of the past, and recall fond memories of their old and revered teacher, William Pirrie.

## GEORGE OGILVIE.

His nature is too noble for the world.

—CORIOLANUS.

**A**BOUT three o'clock in the afternoon of a winter day, thirty years ago, a number of youths might have been seen jostling and pushing their way into the physiology class-room, through a somewhat gloomy doorway at the top of the stairs leading down to the chemical department in Marischal College. They entered a room neither spacious nor lightsome. A few diagrams hung upon the wall, a book or two, but no apparatus and rarely any specimens, lay on the table, but, in the dimness of the winter twilight, there was one bright spot, a little square table brilliantly lit with gas, and on which stood half a dozen microscopes. The students at once made their way to the microscopes, under which were displayed with scrupulous care specimens showing the structure of the lungs, liver, skin or other organs of the body. In those days such specimens were rare and were to be found only in the hands of a few experts, and the ordinary student looked



*Geo. O. Colvill*



## GEORGE OGILVIE.

at a section showing Lieberkühn's glands, or at one revealing the sweat ducts of the skin, with feelings deeper than those of mere curiosity.

Then, at the appointed time, the professor issued from his retiring-room—a man rather above middle height, of spare build, of reddish complexion, with a pale, thoughtful face, with eyes quick, penetrating, but restless, glancing quickly to right and left beneath shaggy brows under a square, powerful forehead. In the erect position, with his hands on the table, or more often grasping the back of a chair, the professor assumed a posture not to be described as graceful, looked straight before him, apparently closed his eyes, and began his lecture. His voice was not melodious, being somewhat shrill and with that ring about it often betokening a critical mind. Usually he lectured without notes. The matter was carefully arranged ; the sentences were well constructed ; the method was critical as well as expository. It was evident the lecturer spoke out of the fullness of knowledge, sometimes knowledge of a practical kind, always knowledge which was the fruit of much reading and of a critical examination of the facts and theories placed before the student. There was conspicuous fairness in criticism, an evident desire to be just, and a careful balancing of probabilities. There was not much to enliven the lecture. There were no flashes

## AURORA BOREALIS.

of wit ; occasionally a dry remark showed that a sense of humour lurked below ; but, on the whole, listening to the lecture was a severe mental exercise, and, as a rule, the student was busy with his notebook. The hour wore away, and at its close there was a stampede for the microscope table. Here the professor presided, directing special attention to the specimens which illustrated the subject of his lecture, while he had a kindly word for every one. All felt his was a personality that commanded respect ; no student ever dared to be forward in his presence ; a somewhat cold, almost timid manner effectually prevented anything like undue familiarity. Such was Professor George Ogilvie, the subject of this sketch.

Professor Ogilvie took a great personal interest in his students. He held strongly that a teacher in a University, and even the University authorities as a whole, should not be satisfied with the communication of knowledge and the maintenance of order, but should also take a share in the moral training of the student. In more than one address he gave expression to this opinion, and he carried it out in practice. His students still remember the gatherings in his house, graced by the charming presence of his wife. These gave to many a notion of what a cultured and refined home was, while they were brought into more personal

## GEORGE OGILVIE.

relations with their teacher. Dr. Ogilvie was in the habit of taking each student for a few minutes into a small side-room, where he had the opportunity of inquiring as to his studies and as to his aims in life. This ordeal was somewhat dreaded before it actually took place, but after it was over the student felt that he had been kindly dealt with, and the words of encouragement were a precious possession.

Dr. Ogilvie had a quiet, unassuming, almost timid manner. A stranger was not likely to form a fair opinion of his talents and acquirements. In conversation he seemed to be almost distrustful of himself, but as he felt more at ease he soon showed the qualities of a keen and powerful mind, stored with information on many subjects. His criticisms were sharp, incisive, going to the root of the matter, but as he assumed that one knew much, they were not always easy to follow. This is well illustrated by the trenchant style of his writings, as in chapter ix. of *The Master Builder's Plan*.

There is not much to be said about his uneventful life. He came of a good stock, being the son of John Charles Ogilvie, M.D., a physician of repute in his day in Aberdeen, and he was the grandson of George Ogilvie of Auchiries, Aberdeenshire. On the mother's side he was a scion of the family of Forbes of Boyndlie, near Fraserburgh.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

He was born in Aberdeen in 1820. Educated at the Grammar School of Aberdeen, and at Marischal College, then a University, he earned the degree of A.M. in 1839. His medical curriculum was taken at Edinburgh, where he graduated as Doctor of Medicine in 1842. After two years spent in London, Paris and Vienna, he settled in Aberdeen in 1844, with the intention of becoming a physician. The bent of his mind being towards science, he soon became lecturer on physiology in the Medical School of King's College, Old Aberdeen. In 1849 he obtained the same position in Marischal College, and, on the fusion of the two Universities in 1860, he became Professor of the Institutes of Medicine, the old name of the chair of Physiology, in the University, a post which he filled till 1877. In the previous year, 1876, he became heir to the estate of Boyndlie, assuming the name of Forbes. When he resigned his chair he retired to Boyndlie, and lived the quiet life of a country gentleman, interested in his estate and especially in his plantations, until 1886, when he passed away.

His contributions to medical literature and to physiological science were not numerous, but they were excellent of their kind, and they mark the progress of scientific thought. He never engaged much in original physiological work unless we in-



## GEORGE OGILVIE.

clude in this the cultivation of histology and the use of the microscope. He was an accomplished histologist, as matters stood in his day. The modern methods of physiological research, dating from the time of Johannes Müller, who died in 1858, such as those of electro-physiology, associated with the name of Du Bois Reymond, of hæmo-dynamics developed in the school of Leipzig by Ludwig, and of the functions of nerve and muscle, as worked out by Helmholtz, were practically unfamiliar to him, although no one was better acquainted with the literature that had already begun to flow from the pens of laboratory workers. The development of research in physiological laboratories, and the practical teaching of students, came after his day. Dr. Ogilvie was much more a naturalist than a physiologist in the modern sense of both words, and, in addition, it was the philosophic aspect of the subject that was always reflected by his thoughts.

Perhaps his most important work, the one with which his name will be associated, is *The Master-Builder's Plan, or the Principles of Organic Architecture as indicated in the Typical Forms of Animals*, which was published in 1858. About this time the doctrine of special types, first enunciated by the mystic Oken, was in favour with biologists, mainly owing to the splendid researches and brilliant powers of generalisation of Richard Owen. Ogilvie

## AURORA BOREALIS.

was greatly attracted to it as affording an explanation of the variety of animal forms and yet the relationship that each form had to a great type, such as that of Radiata, Annulosa, Articulata and Vertebrata, and he discussed the subject with much wealth of material in the work referred to. In the concluding chapter he showed the relation of the theory to Natural Theology. The Architect of the world had, as it were, before His eye, when animal forms were created, certain typical forms, and all animals were created so as to conform to one or other of those types, due regard being had to the special requirements of each creature according to its environment. Form was, according to this view, not to be explained merely by the principle of adaptation, but while marvellous adaptation must everywhere astonish the observer of animal forms, the form, modified as it might be, was the representative of the idea in the Creative Mind. The Creator was an artist who, conscious of His power, like all true artists, placed Himself under restrictions in the development of His ideas. Thus, He did not create a new organ for each animal want, but He modified organs so as to adapt them to the particular use. Flight was thus accomplished by modifications of the fore limbs of vertebrates or by modifications of the dorsal laminæ or appendages of the articulate type in insects, where these

laminæ no longer serve as respiratory organs, as they do in the lower class. In the last chapter Dr. Ogilvie enlarges upon the order in living nature as suggesting an intellectual appreciation of the works of the Creator, and leading still further "minds of a proper moral balance to recognise also those higher attributes which form the basis of religious reverence". He further suggests that "His manifestation of physical equity . . . shadows out His attributes of moral equity, that is, holiness and justice".

All this was written before the appearance of Darwin's *Origin of Species*, a book which swept away the doctrine of special types and led naturalists to take a still wider view of the development of the Animal Kingdom. Dr. Ogilvie lived to see the idea of evolution take possession of the mind of the naturalist. But although the point of view has changed, much of the reasoning of Dr. Ogilvie appears to me to be sound, while the bearing of the question on the problems of natural theology only requires to be re-stated. The mind of the Creator is still reflected in His works, but we now see so far into His method as to recognise that He did not work, or rather does not work, in uniformity with a few typical ideas, but that there is an orderly progression from form to form in obedience to the influence of external forces, all of which, however,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

may, by the devout mind, be still regarded as manifestations of the Divine energy.

In 1859 Dr. Ogilvie read an important paper at the famous Meeting of the British Association in Aberdeen, on the *Genetic Cycle in Organic Nature, or the Succession of Forms in the Propagation of Plants and Animals*. This was published as a separate volume in 1861. It deals with the phenomena of the alternation of generations, chiefly in animals, and it shows an extensive and minute knowledge of the life history of many of the lower forms. Although the discussion of the subject has now been much widened by recent investigations, the ultimate problems are clearly outlined by Dr. Ogilvie, and the book presents a fair picture of the state of scientific opinion at the time. Again, in a paper read before the Aberdeen Natural History Society, in 1866, on *Compound Animals*, he dealt with the question of the analogy between the zooids or buds of polypes and the ova of higher animals, and he gave an interesting account of the corporate life of a colony of compound animals. In addition, he published a few special lectures and a pamphlet on *Ferns*, while he showed his ecclesiastical bias by writing for the Club of Deir a valuable and suggestive paper on *The Early Progress of Christianity in Buchan*.

Dr. Ogilvie was a devoted adherent of the Episcopal Church of Scotland. Not only was he a man

## GEORGE OGILVIE.

of deep and unobtrusive piety, but he found pleasure in ecclesiastical forms and observances. The explanation of this habit of mind is given in the following passage from the *Master Builder's Plan* : " And here one can hardly forbear remarking how applicable these observations on order, as a ruling principle in high art, are to its existence and influence as an element in the practical development of religious truth. The systematic arrangement so evident in all departments of the material universe, both great and small, find their counterpart in the order of the hierarchy, the adornment of the sanctuary and the ritual of the service, so pointedly enjoined in the ecclesiastical system of the Jews, and certainly not less discernible, though of clearer significance and greater reality, in the Christian Church—the pattern shown on the Mount—on which the former was modelled, as a shadow of good things to come " (p. 167).

This sketch of Professor Ogilvie, or, as he was known later, Professor Ogilvie-Forbes, will show that he was a man of noble type. Looking back over the years, I can recall the time when, acting as his class assistant, I felt the inspiration and encouragement of his character and example, and now, with larger experience and fuller knowledge, I think of him as one of the best men it has been my fortune to meet. He was a true student of Nature,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

a man of calm philosophic temperament, a far seer, and a deep thinker. He was not a specialist in the modern sense : he was greater, inasmuch as with clear and calm outlook he faced many of the great problems that perplex the minds of men, and more especially, perhaps, the minds of those who devote their lives to the sciences that deal with life and living things. Taking him altogether, he was a rare man and our *alma mater* has reason to be proud of the memory of her distinguished son.





*J. MacArthur*



## JOHN MACROBIN.

“ My Lord,—you played once i' the University, you say ? ”  
“ That did I, my Lord, and was accounted a good actor.”

—HAMLET.

**T**HERE are many ways by which a professor may increase the fame and prosperity of a University. He may be so distinguished in his own department as to attract the attention of the learned in all parts of the world to the University he adorns ; he may be a man of social position and influence among his fellow-citizens ; or he may show an aptitude for the business of the University, and an unflagging zeal in developing the department with which he is specially connected. The subject of this sketch was a remarkable example of the variety of talent last mentioned. The University of Aberdeen, and more especially the Faculty of Medicine, owes more to Dr. Macrobin than is remembered by the present generation. He did good service in his day by a distinct personality and by the habit of regarding the welfare of the medical school as the chief business of his life.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Dr. Macrobin graduated at Edinburgh as Doctor of Medicine in 1827. During the session of 1831-32, he acted as assistant to the famous Dr. Charles Skene, the Professor of Medicine in Marischal College, and, in 1839, he became his successor. In those days there appears to have been a good deal of looseness and irregularity in the methods of appointing professors. Macrobin was appointed assistant by the Crown (probably with the view to succession) apparently without the knowledge of Dr. Skene himself, the Senatus protested, but without effect, and Macrobin held the post till Dr. Skene's resignation in 1839 when he was appointed professor. At the union of the Universities in 1860, he became Professor of the Practice of Medicine in the University of Aberdeen, and this office he held till 1875. He was thus connected with the teaching of medicine for forty-four years. He died in 1879.

He was the author of a small book, *Introduction to the Study of Medicine*, published in 1835, and, so far as I am aware, he made no other contribution to the literature of the subject. He took no active part in clinical teaching, nor did he hold public appointments. He was not eminent as a lecturer. To what, then, are we to attribute the great influence he wielded for many years, first in Marischal College, and afterwards in the University? It was largely owing to his kindly disposition and goodness of

## JOHN MACROBIN.

heart, combined with what we can only describe as a passionate devotion to the interests of the medical school. He acted as Dean for many years, and in the exercise of his duties was allowed an amount of discretion inadmissible in these days when the Universities are bound hand and foot by ordinances, and when a Dean has ever before his eyes the University Court, or that still more awful tribunal, the General Medical Council. In the good old days when Macrobin reigned he had enormous power. The preliminary examination in general education, which was then by no means severe, was practically in his hands, and he had a large share in the choice of the passage from Celsus or from *De Bello Gallico* which tested the candidate's knowledge of Latin. He it was who selected two or three props. from the First Book of Euclid, and furnished a few arithmetical questions. It is no exaggeration to say that all through a student's career a word from the Dean was paramount, and that he exercised this autocratic power with wisdom and discretion. He took especial care of aspirants to a medical degree who had a struggle to meet the necessary expenses. Many a poor youth owed much, not only to the kindly advice, but to the substantial help of Macrobin. He interested himself in a promising youth; he raised up friends for him; he guided his course; and he took much trouble in

## AURORA BOREALIS.

the way of correspondence to launch him on his professional career.

Dr. Macrobin took a special interest in the English students who began to be attracted to the University thirty or thirty-five years ago with the view of obtaining the doctorate in medicine. Many of the home-bred students often thought the strangers were unduly favoured. No doubt they were clever fellows, who had already attended full courses of instruction in the medical schools of London, and they worked hard, but the way in which they succeeded in 'a short time in attending the requisite number of *Anni Medici* led us sometimes to imagine that the Dean had a method of his own for the compression of time. Thus it was no uncommon thing for an Englishman to attend all the requisite classes and to pass all the examinations in twelve or fifteen months, and to come off with flying colours. Far be it from me to say that regulations then in force were broken, but at all events there was no sticking at the mere letter. The spirit was interpreted by the Dean to the advantage of the candidate so that his path became easy. In this way, and by much personal kindness, the Dean encouraged the attendance of English students, with the result that they have formed for many years a not inconsiderable proportion of the medical students of the University. It need hardly be said that

## JOHN MACROBIN.

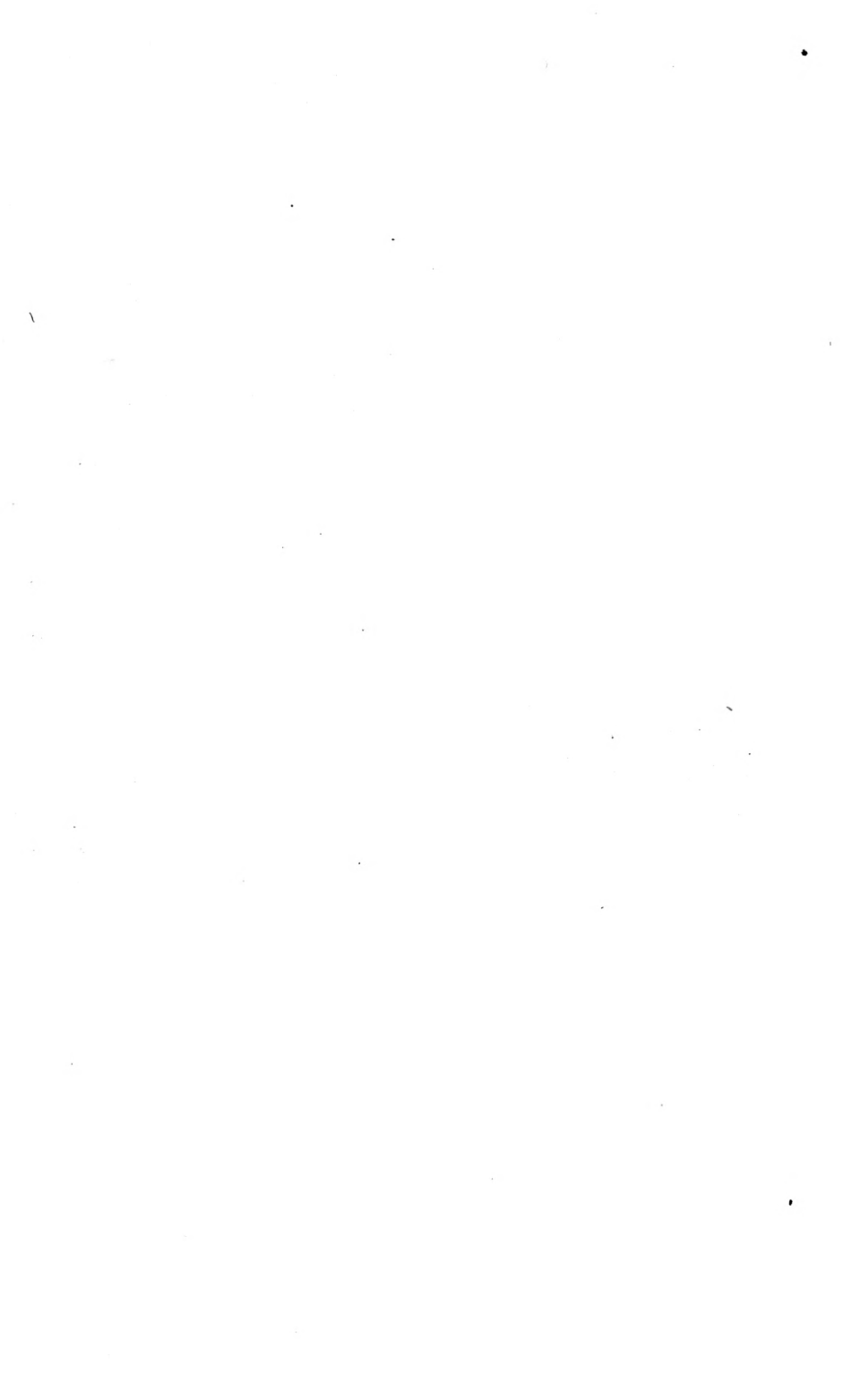
now-a-days the regulations as to time of residence and examinations are much more stringent, and that we are in danger of going to the opposite extreme.

I have said that as a lecturer Dr. Macrobin was not brilliant. Still, his teaching was sound, on the old lines. The proof that he endeavoured to keep up to date was given us by the many-coloured slips of paper that formed his manuscript, from the yellow of an antiquated page to the white and blue of yesterday. On the whole he was listened to with attention, but occasionally he was obliged to make an appeal to our sense of what good behaviour should be. Further, it was not safe to incur the Dean's displeasure. He took a prominent part in all examinations, and it was therefore politic to be on good terms with him. In those days the result of an examination was soon communicated, and there was a certain dignity in the ceremony of being individually ushered into a room where sat or stood the members of the Medical Faculty, there to receive the verdict from the lips of the Dean. If the candidate was satisfactory he went across the room and out by a stair that led to the quadrangle where his appearance elicited the plaudits of his fellow-students ; but if he failed, he issued from the awful precincts by another door which led to a back stair. Alas ! in these days we are contented with a Pass List !

## AURORA BOREALIS.

On certain occasions the Dean found it impossible to restrain by his words and presence the more unruly spirits. One remarkable instance I recollect took place at the installation as Lord Rector of Lord Barcaple. An unseemly riot occurred, and, as the Rector could not proceed, Macrobin, with a few colleagues, rushed into the fray, with the result that the Dean was soon on his back, crushed beneath a number of excited students. This, however, was the culmination of horrors ; the boldest spirits quailed at the possible results ; and from that moment the gathering became orderly and the Rector was accorded a hearing.

So for many years Macrobin pursued the even tenor of his way. He took a great interest in the affairs of the Free Church and in the promotion of medical missions. Many have a kindly regard for his memory, and perhaps this slight sketch will indicate that he did much in his own way for the welfare of the medical school of the University.





*J. W. Smith - Skand*



JAMES W. F. SMITH-SHAND.

“Perhaps,” said the Senior Physician quietly, “the Post-Mortem will show which of you is right.”—STAFF-ROOM STORIES.

BREAKFAST was over ; we had taken the edge off our morning politics, and sat watching for the Chiefs. Nine was the physicians' hour. “There's Smith-Shand,” said Middleton, and marched off to the staff-room. The Senior Physician walked, without haste, up the path. He lives in my vision still : middle height, full figure, beard and hair fair to reddish, “sprent with grey,” prominent eyes, face downwards, unregarding the world to right and left, hat slightly tilted, umbrella under arm, hands in overcoat pockets, or knit behind—objectively, a placid, reflective man, carrying a whole world in his head and not finding it too heavy. When the evening came round, we three met again ; we analyzed—freely—the things our Chiefs said and did ; not often, we were more than critical ; all but always, we were graciously pleased to consider the Chiefs worthy of their Residents. But of Smith-Shand, the tale was ever the same ; his name was to us a symbol

## AURORA BOREALIS.

of everything pleasant, kindly, considerate, unexcited. Except, perhaps, Professor Brazier—that good, kind gentleman—I have never known a professor better liked than Smith-Shand. His resident physician of my time—a highly-strung, critical fellow—saw him at his best and his worst; the students knew him both in the class and at the bedside; but the opinion never varied.

What was his dominant feature? It is hard to say. The quiet characters, like quiet pictures in grey, may be finely effective, but they are never easy of analysis. Smith-Shand lived in equilibrium. His outlook on the world was calm, speculative, intellectual. He was not without sensibility. He had an eye clear as crystal; he had a delicate ear; he had a fine touch. One had but to see him examine a case to learn that. His whole organisation was finely poised and proportioned. And he had humour. To some he appeared unconcerned. I once heard a mother complain that he seemed heedless of what happened to her infant. She had, it is true, given the patient cheese and pastry when milk was ordered, and Smith-Shand had given her the “intellectual” estimate of her actions—quietly, in an off-hand way, not as if this were his only case. The “personal” estimate pleases erring mothers best. But callous or careless he was not, and the infant would have thriven

JAMES W. F. SMITH-SHAND.

under his hand like a tended flower. Perhaps his personal reminiscence of Homburg indicates his mental diathesis. He had gone from Berlin to Homburg and, like every young man, sought out what was to seek—the *Casino* among other things. He had never seen the game of *Rouge et Noir*, but he saw some placing their money and he placed his to see what would happen. He saw what happened; he was left with one asset—his return ticket. He had no alarm in pushing his luck to all he had. Neither had he any sign of regretting the experience. The intellectual interest in chance and its issues satisfied him, as illimitable symbols satisfy the mathematical mind. The same perfect servience—not subservience—to the intellect, marked his whole academic work. His personal “affects” (to use a Spinozism) were invasive and powerful. To be with a man that took everything as a “result,” that saw “in the green the withered tree,” that never deviated from his balance for any stress that the day could bring forth, was like working in the cool air, which bathes the senses without touching the consciousness. His peculiar atmosphere he carried with him in all he did. He was collected, lucid, accessible, and these three qualities win every student in the end.

As a teacher, Smith-Shand belonged to the days of minute clinical observation—a faculty apt to

## AURORA BOREALIS.

lapse in these days of improving objective methods. Experimental medicine was a thing of secondary interest to him. His lectures were the carefully-sifted notions of the great physicians ; selected by the action of prolonged experience ; cleared of dross by reflection ; illuminated by cases from daily practice. All the main departments of medicine found a place—heart, lung, nerve, muscle, the specific fevers and so forth, through the huge encyclopædia of known ailments. For large masses of medicine, teaching like this was of the highest value. Lucid, relevant, practical, these notions, driven home in detail day by day at the bedside, served a man well when he went into the world as a private adviser and had to let out in action the ideas absorbed in the dumb midnight, not without trouble and toil. Of the great modern movement—the movement towards immunisation—Smith-Shand gave us no conception ; he moved among things ascertained and orthodox ; he had not troubled his mind with ideas yet in the air. “ I have altered my views on tuberculosis twice already,” he said, with an ironical smile, “ and I am not prepared to alter them again.” This was on the great puzzle—is the bacillus, or its medium, primary in consumption ? But his intention was simply to warn us against over-ready assent to the prophets of new and simple doctrines. And the advice was sound. Yet, is the physician proper not apt to go

JAMES W. F. SMITH-SHAND.

on blistering an empyema when he should be preparing for a surgical operation? That is the danger of this unstimulating medical diet. But he was open to new ideas, and in his clinical work tried them freely. When Koch's tuberculin was a novelty, he injected some cases of lupus with the interest of a young physician. But his fine intellectual poise kept him from raving over the new discovery; he paid the man of science the compliment of putting his drug to the test. He recognised the movement, but he did not inflame.

And of the ever-accelerating accumulations of pathology, he gave only what was of value for practice. In the time, he could do no more. A few months is too little for more than a sketch of medicine; but the sketch was masterly. Knowledge flowed in a limpid stream of silver speech. For Smith-Shand had a delicate tenor voice; he could touch off the romance of the "Good Rhine Wine" with any one, and I hear him still, as he smilingly assented, at our Graduation Supper, to sing of the "free and bounding river". And the delicacy was not more than the sweetness. In his class-room, from three to four of the afternoon, a voice was heard reading placidly, without halt or haste, without feeling; pens were scratching in many pitches of sound. Now and again a foot would scrape on the floor—the phrase was repeated.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Then the current ran on again. Once more a foot scraped, sometimes many feet—the phrase was repeated, and once more it was pens and a voice. That was Smith-Shand lecturing—the only university medical lecture that was truly a “lecture” —a reading without “demonstrations”. The hour struck ; the voice was just ceasing ; the professor folded his papers, bowed slightly, and passed back to his room. We, on our part, shut our note-books, pocketed our inks, undid our pens, and rose to go. And a last class-room point : our class had a foible of singing the Old Hundredth every day just before lecture. Sometimes the professor entered in the middle of the penultimate line. But the music went on ; the professor smiled ; the ultimate line ended, and work instantly began. I have known professors *look* angry in a similar case ; Smith-Shand's smile was alone worth the fee. Humour is a great thing to have.

At the bedside, his quiet exposition slid into the mind like a twice-told tale, so familiar it seemed, and so simple. His questions, put without eagerness or the wish to confound, never flustered the pupil. To-day, you had heard in the class-room of bronchitis, acute and chronic ; how in the early stage you gave relaxing expectorants, in the later, stimulating ; how the bronchitis of heart-disease was to be treated, and so on. To-morrow, you

JAMES W. F. SMITH-SHAND.

were at the bedside of just such a case. Of course, the description was "general," and was true of every case ; but you never thought of that. "What would you prescribe? Bi-carbonate of potash. Yes? Syrup of Tolu? Yes?—Yes,—and the whole made up with infusion of senega, a good stimulating expectorant and cardiac tonic." He ran over the elements of the complete prescription—and his prescriptions were all soberly practical and well built—and then the camp shifted to the next bed. Some of the students thought Smith-Shand slow. But he was not. The amount picked up when the eye and ear were bent on learning was enormous. The quiet ease of his intellect proved the excellence of the machine. His teaching devices were characteristic of his ingenious humour ; they were mainly verbal or anecdotal. The stethoscope is an indispensable time-saver in civilised medicine ; "but," said Smith-Shand one day, "an old pupil told me the other day that in his practice in the East of London he hadn't used a stethoscope for three months ; he hadn't time !" As a lesson to examine serious cases, not only for the most recondite, but also for the most obvious signs, take this : "I was asked, by an old pupil, to see an old gentleman patient, who had fallen off a 'bus, up Deeside, and showed symptoms of paralysis. 'Have you examined the lower bowel?' I inquired.

'No,' he said. I examined and found the cause of paralysis in a very simple local obstruction. When we retired to consult, my friend remarked : 'What a d——d fool I've been !'" Or again, to indicate the fact that, in locomotor ataxia, the rate of touch-perception is greater than the rate of pain-perception, take this : "You prick the patient's leg with a pin. He first says—*Now* ; then he says—'*ow* !'" Or again : "An old gentleman patient of mine used to spend his leisure in picking chalk-stones out of his finger joints. It is needless to say that those quarrying operations were attended with a good deal of blasting." Or again : "At a club, in Aberdeen, an old gentleman fell down in apoplexy, which is sometimes due to temporary cerebral congestion. The mental state present at the moment of shock may persist until consciousness returns. On opening his eyes, his first question was : *What is trumps ?*" These quips were delivered with inimitable delicacy and effect. Smith-Shand never missed fire.

Then I remember him as a consultant. A tale still runs of his earlier days. He was called to the bed-side of a dying humorist. He examined, paused, and stood thinking of his verdict. The patient and he were old friends. Opening his eyes, the patient said : "Isn't oor Jamie lookin' —— wise?" I leave out the adverb. I once asked him to see a



JAMES W. F. SMITH-SHAND.

case of influenzal pneumonia—the stupid, indefinite sort of pneumonia where a temperature and a little percussion dulness alone guided one. The case was clear enough, but the wise friends liked age as well as knowledge. As I detailed the case, Smith-Shand, with a gentle teacher's smile, said : “ You don't get prune-juice expectoration in *every* case, you know ”. He examined the patient with the most perfect system ; he missed nothing, and on retiring, he expounded his view with complete lucidity, justifying every element by a convincing objective logic. And in it all, he showed the manner and delicacy of the master physician. One felt calmer and better for the lesson.

In his professional examinations, he was exacting, but sensible. What impresses me now is the amount of detail we acquired unconsciously, and what a worthless thing the peddling little bits of examinations were. As a test of knowledge, they were laughably worthless. As a stimulus to read and re-read and inwardly congest, they were excellent. And there is virtue in that “ congestion ” of the brain. Of course we knew a lot that was never asked. Of course ! and again of course ! It was there the professor had his fun ; that is where all the value of it was ; at least no other was ever detected. (I merely express our state of mind immediately after a bout in the examination room. Who could help feeling

## AURORA BOREALIS.

raw about a system whose instruments of selection left some of our best heads out of the final roll-call?) But Smith-Shand did his best to pick out all the worthy.

Of his place in the School one thing was true : he carried the traditions of the older, exact, clinical medicine well into the scientific era. He was a bridge from old to new. He told us once that he was the first to introduce the clinical thermometer into medical practice in Aberdeen. That was precisely the kind of revolution to expect from the man : a simple, fruitful, far-reaching move—a thing done without advertisement. The little instrument has given many an anxious moment since then ; possibly it has killed even more doctors than the telephone, but we cannot well go back on the *tactus eruditus*, or should I now say the educated sense of temperature ?

Like a full yesterday, that last evening of my freedom comes back to me. Friends had met to wish a friend joy of his going forth from the University to his appointed work in the provinces. The chairman had spoken his eulogies ; the open hearts had assented ; the night sped in an interchange of hopes and memories and the pathos of parting ways. Suddenly, there was a message for the chairman—always at every one's service.

JAMES W. F. SMITH-SHAND.

He had to rush to that bedside. "Poor Smith-Shand!" was all he could say when I met him next morning. The good friend of us all, him we thought of without malice, sudden death—death sudden to us—had taken. It was eleven in the evening, or nearly. Gentle, sweet-mannered, possessing his soul, the Physician had gone home. "And thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be."

## ALEXANDER HARVEY.

No distance e'er can wear away  
Esteem long-rooted, and no chance remove  
The dear remembrance of the friend we love.

—SOUTHEY.

THE task of writing this chapter was undertaken by two of Professor Harvey's pupils, who, in order to refresh their memories, met seven other brother graduates in London, where over a good dinner, they revelled in recollections of by-gone student days, and fully discussed "the dear old doctor," calling to mind, amongst many others, the incidents referred to herein.

He was the son of Dr. Harvey of Braco and Broomhill, in the county of Aberdeen, and was born there on the 30th of April, 1811. On the death of his father he succeeded to the family estates, as also to considerable landed and other interests in the West Indies. Owing, however, to the emancipation (which about this period came into force in the latter country), the value of his foreign securities fell to such an extent as materially to alter his circumstances financially, which caused him to devote his attention to the study of medicine,



*Alfred Harney*



## ALEXANDER HARVEY.

and after a course of study at Guy's Hospital, London, and the Universities of Paris, Dublin, and Edinburgh, he graduated at the last in 1835, and commenced to practise his profession in Aberdeen.

In 1840 he married Anne Farquharson Smith, daughter of Mr. Alexander Smith, advocate, of Glenmillan, shortly after which event he was appointed physician to the Royal Infirmary, Aberdeen, and lecturer on the institutes, and later on, the practice, of medicine, at King's College, before the "fusion" took place.

In 1852 he left "the Granite City" to practise in Southampton, where, after remaining a few years, he was recalled to fill the chair of materia medica in the then newly constituted "University of Aberdeen". He was then elected for the second time a physician to the Royal Infirmary, later on becoming senior, and afterwards consulting, physician thereto.

In 1878 he resigned all his medical appointments, and moving to London, spent ten years of a well-earned and happy old age at his residence, 16 Hanover Terrace, Holland Park, where he died in 1889. He was interred in the London Necropolis, Brookwood. His portrait may be seen in the Faculty room at Marischal College, and in 1894 the Marquis of Huntly unveiled his bust in marble in the new picture gallery there.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

He was President of the Harveian Society of Edinburgh in 1877, when he delivered the Harveian oration of the year. His family is eminently and honourably associated with the medical profession. His father was a graduate in medicine, and although he never practised, founded the Aberdeen Medical Society in King Street. His maternal grandfather was Dr. Alexander Gordon of Aberdeen, whose treatise on puerperal fever, published in 1795, was sufficiently meritorious to cause the Sydenham Society to re-publish it in 1849. His son Robert has had a most distinguished career in the Indian army, and is now officiating as Surgeon-General of the Indian Medical Service at Calcutta ; he is the fourth medical graduate in direct descent, therefore ; while Surgeon-Captain Sidney Burnett of the Bombay army (a grandson of the late professor) represents the fifth generation of that family associated with the healing art.

Professor Harvey contributed a variety of works to medical literature, amongst which we may refer to the following—*First Lines of Therapeutics* (1879), a work of sufficient moment to be noticed, as it was, all over the world, especially in America, Canada and France ; it was ably criticised by Sir Thomas Watson, Sir J. R. Cormack, Dr. Austin Flint and Dr. Horace Porter ; the last when writing of it said : “ I want this book to live, and grow, and prosper,



## ALEXANDER HARVEY.

and to be read out to the profession in the four corners of the earth". His work, *On the Remarkable Effect of Cross-breeding*, conclusively proves him to be the first physiologist who noticed the process of transmission of diathesis from the male to the female, by the medium of the foetus, and proclaimed for the first time an aphorism, whose origin is probably unknown to most of those in the present day, who refer to it as a medical axiom. Drs. Carpenter, Kirkes, Mr. Savory, and other eminent physiologists refer to this work when writing upon the subject of gestation. *Man's Place and Bread Unique in Nature, and his Pedigree Human, not Simian*, is the name of a small book Harvey wrote in 1865. His *Trees and their Nature, or the Bud and its Attributes*, is a work characterised by a scholarly element, although clothed in the simplest of language; a most gratifying reference to this work is made by John Ruskin in his *Modern Painters*. *The Testimony of Nature to the Identity between the Bud and the Seed* (1857), is a supplementary volume to the work upon trees. At the desire of Sir James Clark, Bart., he published *Four Letters on Administrative Reform in Relation to Medical Schools and the Examining Medical Boards*, and lastly, in conjunction with the late Professor A. D. Davidson, *A Syllabus of Materia Medica for the use of Teachers and Students*.

The above list might be added to, but from it

## AURORA BOREALIS.

we gather that he was a great student of nature, possessing a mind eminently adapted for medical work and the genius of originality to such a marked extent that in the days in which he lived, when the science of physiology was primitive as compared to what it is to-day, he was very justly looked upon as one of the leaders of medical science. Few men were more painstaking at the bedside, more sympathetic, more logical, or diagnostically more correct than Professor Harvey, and few made better efforts to impart their knowledge to students. Most of us who used to "go the rounds" of the hospital with him, can doubtless picture him seated at the bedside of some sufferer, upon whom he would first gaze silently and intently for a considerable time, and then with a voice which was the essence of sympathy say: "Now, tell us, my good woman, where you have any pain".

As illustrating his thirst for originality we may refer to the eager way with which he used to take up any new remedies, which, in his day—as compared to our own—were very few and far between. During the time he was physician to the Infirmary the bromide of potassium first came into notice, and it is hardly exaggerating to say that, in order to test its virtues, he tried it upon every case which came under his care, a circumstance humorously referred to by Dr. (then Mr.) Philpots in the

## ALEXANDER HARVEY.

original song he gave at the medical students' annual supper in 1867, which ran thus :—

“ The bromide of potassium, there can't be any doubt,  
Cures ague, typhus, measles, croup, small-pox, rheumatic gout,  
Cured Ellen Cushney's heart disease, and Mary Cruickshank's  
too,

And Alexander Wood, as of course it should, it cured of 'tic-  
douloureux' ”.

So Harvey said, with a shaky head, as a kind of a quiet reminder,  
“ To satisfy me you need not be a most outrageous grinder ”.

The names referred to above are those of hospital patients who were mentioned in the professor's clinical lectures.

It may hardly be out of place, having referred to the medical students' “ annual suppers,” to state that they were institutions which were not only patronised by the students, but were so far encouraged by the professors and lecturers themselves, as occasionally to be honoured by their presence.

At these suppers it was the custom to sing original songs having special reference to *Alma Mater*, in which any little eccentricities of character associated with professors, hospital staff, lecturers, demonstrators, *et hoc genus omne*, were humorously alluded to, as witness the above verse.

Professor Harvey, unlike his confreres, had no special academical nickname, as had “ The Barron,” “ The Mole,” “ The Frog,” etc., but he had a peculiarity of pronunciation which was essentially his

## AURORA BOREALIS.

own, and which waggish students delighted to "take off". This was a difficulty in pronouncing the letters "n," "f," "p," "c," etc. We need do no more than quote one illustration of this peculiarity, by giving his remarks upon the "hop," as they were heard by us when attending his lecture: "Humulus Lupulus, or the commol hop plaldt, is a tolic, and stomachic bitter. Used as a pillow, it acts as a sedative, but it is gelerally exhibited in the form of a decoctiol, with which you are all more or less acquailted, in bottles decorated with a red pyramid, or al opel hald." This humorous reference to Bass's and Alsopp's beer (both of which were favourite beverages with Aberdeen students) was looked for each year at the proper time, and always "brought down the house".

He could hardly be said to have been a fluent lecturer, and, as he often used to remind his class, he lectured upon a subject which they could master better in the dispensary, and by book study, than they could by hearing him hold forth. As the pharmacopæia of the period to which we refer was never varied, his lectures were each year little better than duplicates of previous ones, so that it was not at all uncommon for those students who sat in the top rows of the class-room (some of whom were "chronic," and had taken out his course more than once) to anticipate the learned professor's re-

## ALEXANDER HARVEY.

marks, by intoning in unison the termination of any sentence they knew by heart ; and one of their favourites they thus treated was his stereotyped remark upon hyoscyamus, which always ran thus : " I must now call your attention, gentlemen, to Hyoscyamus, the Hyoscyamus Niger, commonly called ' Henbane,' from the—pernicious—effects it—is—said—to—have—upol—the—commol—or barl—door—fowl " ; the last fifteen words of the sentence having been intoned by " the gallery," the amiable teacher, with a good-natured smile, would look up to his class, and remark : " Really, gentlemen, some of you appear to know my lectures as well as I know them myself " ; then followed the usual " ruff " (or class-room applause). This incident was rehearsed year after year—exactly as before.

He was always anxious for his students personally to experiment upon any new drugs which came under his notice, and the writers of this article both took overdoses of cannabis indica, in order to relate their experiences to him, which resulted in one of them attacking an imaginary tiger seated on the hearth-rug of his sitting-room, an attack which was associated with a general " smash up " of the fender, and the contents of the mantle-shelf, with the poker. The other exhibited the peculiarity of his delirium to the public, for on his way up Union

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Street he sat down on the brass plate of a fashionable millinery establishment, and amused the passers-by with a series of ludicrous antics and yells, which soon collected a crowd, and he would no doubt have been promptly "run in" by a policeman who happened to be near, had it not been that some of his fellow-students, who were passing, explained that what appeared to be at first sight the result of an overdose of "Glenlivet," was a state brought about by a poisonous dose of "a new drug". This little incident came vividly before the writer when, years afterwards, he prescribed the drug in physiological doses in a case of hydrophobia, with markedly good effects.

But to conclude, Professor Harvey was a gentleman of unusually refined and suave manners. He gave all who came in professional contact with him the idea that his great mission in life was to make himself useful and agreeable to every one. His pupils looked upon him as not only their instructor, but as a kind friend, and his valued advice was often sought after by them, in matters other than academical. Everything he did, said, or taught, was associated with that kindly manner which was so eminently characteristic of him, and at the examinations it was plainly evident how he put himself in the place of those he examined, and made every allowance for the nervous excitement

## ALEXANDER HARVEY.

brought about by the ordeal they were undergoing. We picture him as we write about him, and can almost feel his friendly arm linked in ours as was his wont, as we mentally cross the College quadrangle, see the variegated bandanna, the snuff-box, hear the voice, the kindly word, recall the well-filled class-room, the clinic, the advice, "never to percuss with the fingers, but always use the pleximeter," the "pleuritic friction sound," which was almost always hunted for, and generally found in every diseased chest, the mixture of bromide of potassium, combined with "full doses of the compound tincture of cilchola"; these are all points still fresh in our memories, after a lapse of some thirty years, and our associations with him generally, whether as professor, physician, friend, adviser or what not, are all of so unusually pleasurable a nature, that we count them as no small factors in the sum total of what helped to make our student days "the happiest of our lives".

ALEXANDER DYCE DAVIDSON.

Blithe and debonair.

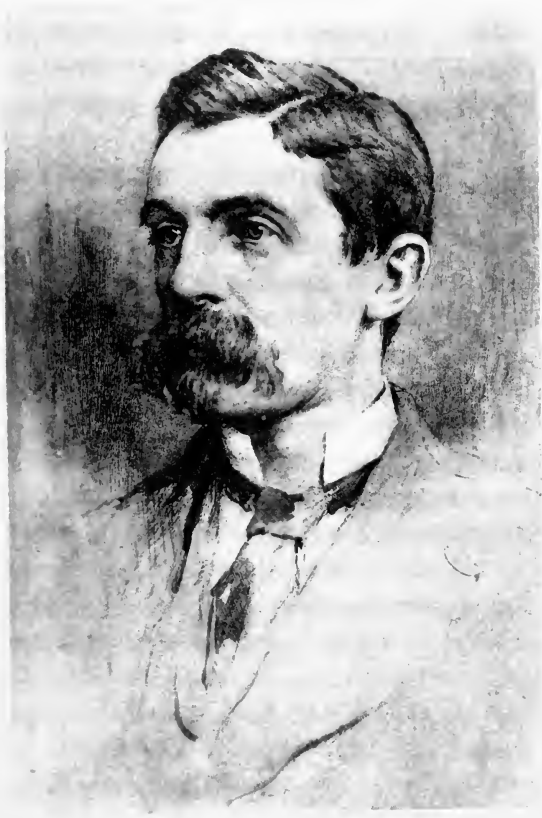
—L'ALLEGRO.

“ **A** MAN with many friends and no enemies ”  
—that is a summary of the characteristics  
of good old “ Dycy ”.

I have known two types of professor—your severe and dignified personage who keeps students in their proper place and is adored by admiring crowds at a distance—and your good fellow who breaks down the partition between professor and student—your Minto, your Donaldson, your Dyce Davidson. Our professor erred on the side of the latter type. Among students he was as a boy among boys, and we loved him and laughed with him almost as one of ourselves. I am glad to remember that conception of inherent professorial dignity he had none. A pleasant, happy-go-lucky fellow !

A man of many parts, too—a chemist and druggist, a professor of materia medica, an oculist, a general practitioner. When first he became professor he intended to drop the last occupation, but from one cause or another he continued in





© Alex. Dyer Davidson.



## ALEXANDER DYCE DAVIDSON.

general practice to the last day of his life. As a University lecturer he was unambitious. He had a due sense of proportion, an important qualification in the professor of a subject which consists largely of judicious skipping. Witness his *Syllabus of Materia Medica*, a book compiled in conjunction with his predecessor Harvey. It consisted simply of a list of pharmacopœial drugs (with doses) classified into four groups in order of importance, marked 1, 2, 3 and 4. It was an understood thing among us that we might safely skip 3 and 4, but I am afraid some of us had only a bowing acquaintance with 2. "A work which," said the *Aberdeen Journal*, "continues to retain a high place, not only in the estimation of students, but in the opinion of scientists." That, however, was laying it on a little too thick, perhaps a pardonable offence in an obituary notice.

Dr. Davidson was a man who aged very fast. His earlier career gave brilliant promise. He was a man of keen insight and very acute intellect. He heartily enjoyed an argument, and if you had any weak point in your armour you were pretty sure to have it punctured in any contest of wits with him. Owing, however, to frequent and painful illness he failed to maintain that promise. He suffered severely from gout ("I have it in all my joints except my jaws," he used to say), and had some-

## AURORA BOREALIS.

times on this account to be carried into his class-room on Peter Robb's back. This affected his mental powers so much that he lost to some extent concentration and acuteness. He was, however, a man who possessed the knack of attracting to himself and retaining the friendship of many extra-professional men of ability or even genius in literature, art and science. Robertson Smith, Niven, Philip were among his intimate friends.

His lectures were conversational—quite free and easy. His students will recall the afternoons in the classic old natural history class-room, where stood the professor beaming upon us from his good-natured, handsome, somewhat effeminate face through his *pince-nez* and perpetually ironing out his gouty fingers. As an examiner too we have pleasant recollections of him. He used frequently to brighten that memorable *mauvais quart d'heure* of oral examination by some bright little joke which put us at our ease. "What," he asked a friend of mine, "is the dose of croton oil?" "One minim." "Oh, you're not like the student who told me it was a table-spoonful three times a day. I asked him what he would do next if the result proved unsatisfactory. He couldn't say, so I told him what I should do would be to send for the fiscal." The student who told me the anecdote used to add that he laughed at the little joke as

ALEXANDER DYCE DAVIDSON.

long as he decently could, so as to filch away as many of those critical moments from examination as possible. Another student remarked that "Dycy's orals were quite friendly and conversational," "although," he dryly added, "I am bound to say that in my case the conversation was somewhat one-sided".

The students paid, I fear, little attention to the pharmacy class—one of the few compulsory summer classes. The professor believed in this class in preference to the old system, under which the student put in three months in a shop under a qualified druggist, with the result, as he used to say, of acquiring a minute practical knowledge of the lozenges, but of little else. In this subject of pharmacy, I had, I recollect, the distinction of taking the first place. It has only to be said that there were but two candidates including myself at the class examination on that occasion, to show at once how high was the distinction and how great was the interest the students took in pharmacy. One story about this class is worth repeating. It was told me as genuine by the then sacrist, Peter Robb. After the class there used to be a great deal of *débris* to clear away in the shape of pills, powders, etc. Peter was sweeping up on one occasion in the presence of a friend when the following colloquy took place:—

## AURORA BOREALIS.

"Fat div ye dee wi a' yer peels, Peter?"

"Oh, a jist flings them oot."

"Od, a wis ye wid gi me a puckly. I wid fin' a 'ees for them."

An indiscriminate puckly is handed him—a very job lot of all kinds of pills. A week or two afterwards Peter meets him again and asks:—

"Weel, John, foo's the peels gettin' on?"

"Oh, brawly, brawly. A jist taks twa ilka necht, and sometimes they work, and sometimes they dinna."

Professor Davidson's chief merit was as an oculist. His skill as an operator was great, although latterly his fingers gave him much trouble in this connection. But to the last his results were good. As general practitioner, too, his popularity was great. This depended mainly on sheer merit, though no doubt assisted by good influence, for he had never a shred of clinical manner. All the poor of the Free West Church he used to attend gratuitously.

Poor "Dycy" had a most tragic and picturesque end, and the mention of his name must, first of all, call up in the minds of his old students that wintry afternoon when the news of his death was first spread among us. And that death became him well. Struggling still to lecture while the fatal hemorrhage was pouring into the pons varolii, utter-

ALEXANDER DYCE DAVIDSON.

ing, as his last words just as the black shadow of unconsciousness finally gathered down upon him, the exclamation, "Monday, at four o'clock!" as an indication to the students of his determination to resume punctually at that hour, there we see a lover of his work dying honourably in harness. Young, handsome, good-natured, quick-witted, and genuine to the core—a hater of all cant and sham, we mourned him deeply.

## FRANCIS OGSTON.

You know the law ; your exposition  
Hath been most sound.

—MERCHANT OF VENICE.

**F** FRANCIS OGSTON, who lectured on Medical Jurisprudence or Forensic Medicine for forty-four years, belonged to a family well known and much respected in Aberdeen. He was born in 1803, and was the son of Alexander Ogston, the founder of the well-known firm of Messrs. A. Ogston and Sons, soap manufacturers. Educated at Marischal College, he took the degree of Master of Arts, and finally became a Doctor of Medicine of the University of Edinburgh in 1824. Settling in his native city, he soon acquired an extensive practice, and for nearly half a century he acted as police surgeon and medical officer of health to the city, although for many years the duties of the latter office were not arduous. He began to lecture on medical jurisprudence in 1839, and when that lectureship was raised by the Crown into a chair of medical logic and medical jurisprudence in 1857, Dr. Ogston was





Hay, 1.15



## FRANCIS OGSTON.

elected to the office. At the union in 1860, he became professor of the University. He held office till 1883, when the infirmities of age obliged him to resign. The evening of his days was spent in retirement and he died in 1887.

Such was the uneventful career of a man who, in a quiet way, had much to do with building up the medical school of Aberdeen University. Up to the time of his appointment to the lectureship in 1839, the number of graduates was small, and all who had ambition, and who could afford it, went to the Metropolitan University, even then famous as a medical school. This explains how it was that most of the founders of the Aberdeen medical school were graduates of the University of Edinburgh. Ogston, aided by Thomas Clark, then the Professor of Chemistry, did much to improve the educational facilities in Aberdeen, to raise the standard of teaching, and to make the examinations more thorough. He had the satisfaction of seeing his labours crowned with success.

He himself was an eminent teacher. His lectures were based on a wide and deep knowledge of the subject, they were prepared with great care, and although they were delivered in a somewhat monotonous manner, with a singular trick of allowing the voice to rise instead of to fall at the last word in the sentence, they were always listened to with great

## AURORA BOREALIS.

attention and respect. One felt that the knowledge imparted was not mere text-book knowledge, and that the statements were always subjected to the review of the lecturer's own personal experience. Dr. Ogston had an eminently judicial mind. After discussing a difficult question, involving nice points of discrimination, his summing up was that of a judge, his opinion being given in well-balanced and weighty sentences. Thus, although he published little or nothing during his tenure of office, he became a recognised authority, and his opinion in courts of law was always held in great respect. Evidence of Dr. Ogston's grasp of his subject may be found in a volume of his lectures, published before his death.

But Dr. Ogston was not only a medical jurist. His chair also included the subject of medical logic. So far as I am aware, the University of Aberdeen alone devoted special attention to this subject. The course consisted of a number of lectures on what might be called Applied Logic ; that is to say, the students were instructed in the laws of reasoning and in the various methods employed in the investigation of phenomena, while the illustrations were culled from medical literature. To those who had not attended the curriculum in Arts, including logic and metaphysics, I believe the course was of great value. The more

## FRANCIS OGSTON.

thoughtful students recognised this, but it must be confessed the subject was not popular with the rank and file. Dr. Ogston took a great interest in this part of his course, and, by apt illustrations, he endeavoured to fix the attention of his hearers. It was delightful to observe the pleasure he took in exploding some of the fallacies that have too often crept into medicine, more especially in the department of therapeutics. Over-worked as the student of medicine now is, my opinion has always been that he might profitably dispense with more than one of the courses of instruction now forced upon him, and that a few lectures on medical logic would develop his powers of independent thinking. By our present methods, his absorptive capacities are strained to the uttermost, while there is no time and scarcely any faculty for reflection.

Dr. Ogston was a lovable man. Under a somewhat cold manner he had a warm heart, while there was a substratum of quiet humour now and then revealed by the twinkle of an eye or a pithy sentence. He was singularly modest and unpretending, and yet he was a strong man, who went his own way and let the world wag. One of his most distinguishing characteristics was that sagacity and power of seeing things as they really are, and not as they appear to be, or as we

## AURORA BOREALIS.

may wish them to be, which is developed in the best sons of the north-east of Scotland. Dr. Ogston was for many years a steady light in the northern heavens.





W. Dyce



## ROBERT DYCE.

In hys tyme ilk wyfe's hennis clokit,  
Ilka gud mannis herth wi' bairnis was stokit.

—JOHN O' YE GIRNELL.

**D**R. ROBERT DYCE, the first Professor of Midwifery in the University of Aberdeen, was an Aberdonian by birth and education. His father, Dr. William Dyce, a well-known practitioner in Aberdeen, was for many years Lecturer on Midwifery in Marischal College and University, whose portrait, painted by his distinguished son, William Dyce, the well-known Royal Academician, adorns the walls of the Medico-Chirurgical Society in King Street.

The younger Dyce was born in Aberdeen in 1798, and after studying at Marischal College, where he took the degree of M.A. in 1816, he continued his studies in medicine in Edinburgh and London, taking the M.D. degree at Marischal College, and the membership of the Royal College of Surgeons in London in 1821. After graduation he entered the Army Medical Service, and served both at home and abroad till 1836, when, on the death of his

## AURORA BOREALIS.

had got beyond the somewhat stately manner of the Professor, and found behind the warm-hearted kindness of the man.

As far as Diseases of Women were concerned, the lectures on that subject were few. Gynæcology had not in Dr. Dyce's time attained the status it now occupies, when those who practise that branch of medicine undertake many of the most serious and difficult operations of surgery. In those days the armamentarium of the gynæcologist consisted mainly of a stick of lunar caustic, a speculum and a sound—he was not supposed to presume so far as to undertake any surgical proceeding of any importance, and so much was this the case, that when the distinguished professor of Midwifery in a sister university ventured to publish a pamphlet on a surgical subject, his equally distinguished colleague in a surgical chair tore up the pamphlet, and trampled it under foot before the eyes of his astonished class. As far, however, as it extended at the time, Dr. Dyce's lectures on Gynæcology gave a student a fair idea of the outlines of the subject, and the same may be said of the lectures on Diseases of Children. If not brilliant, they were useful, and many practical hints were given which stood the students in good stead in their after lives.

As an examiner, Dr. Dyce was eminently just

ROBERT DYCE.

and reasonable : his endeavour was to find out how much a student knew, not to find out if there was *anything he did not know* ; and as his kindly manner was calculated to put the student at his ease, there was never any complaint of a want of "fairplay" in Midwifery, or any idea that anything except the student's appearance at the examination table would have the slightest bearing on the result, a state of affairs unfortunately not existing with respect to some of the other examiners for degrees.

In the future of his students Dr. Dyce took a keen interest, and was always ready to do anything in his power to advance their welfare.

His contributions to medical literature were not numerous, and consisted of a few papers on practical points, connected mostly with Diseases of Women ; but apart from his medical work, he had a keen interest in art ; and he was also in his earlier days much interested in Entomology and Ichthyology, subjects which had engaged his attention when he was abroad in the Army Medical Service.

## JAMES SMITH BRAZIER.

Wha played on the pipe and the *phial* sae sma'  
They hae ta'en awa' Jamie, the flow'r o' them a'.

—LOGIE O' BUCHAN.

ON a damp, foggy afternoon in October, 1886, I was a member of a class of excited young students. We evacuated the dissecting-room at a rush and made for the cold, wind-swept stone corridor which separated the two halves of the lower quadrangle. For five minutes the struggle in this passage was desperate. At length the "bottle-washer" lifted the latch on the inside and the chemistry class-room was carried by storm. I shall never forget the impression it made upon me. It was dimly lighted, and its dinginess was saturated with antiquity. It looked like the workshop of an alchemist of the fourteenth century. The semi-circular lecture bench was covered with beakers, florence flasks, bottles, tripods, and weird-looking retorts, which would have gladdened the heart of Paracelsus. Everything was neatly laid on large sheets of white paper.

At the last sound of the bell Professor Brazier



*James Smith Brazier.*



## JAMES SMITH BRAZIER.

stepped from behind the massive cold grey granite pillar on the left, and, amid loud applause, took his place in the centre.

He was tall and portly and looked about sixty-five. His pit-marked face, with its fine grey eyes, beamed kindly on the class. A large broadcloth frock coat of somewhat ancient cut fitted his figure well, and was a marked colour contrast to an expansive area of shirt-front of dazzling whiteness. His silvered hair was parted carefully and his beard neatly trimmed. His whole toilet seemed to be performed with the same neatness and care which characterised his lecture table. Precision and exactitude were evidently important things with him.

The introductory lecture was delivered in a simple, convincing fashion, and was profusely illustrated with experiments. In those days the chemistry of Marischal College was not a big item in the curriculum. The course was gone through leisurely and a great many experiments were demonstrated. Organic chemistry was practically untouched, and for the ordinary student was a *terra incognita*. A profound knowledge was not expected in the examinations, and the "pass" in chemistry was big. Every March, poor Peter Robb used to hand out many a "sustained in chemistry, not sustained in anatomy".

## AURORA BOREALIS.

The chemical staff was composed of professor, assistant and laboratory assistant, and the three were a quaint study in evolution. Who shall forget the lean, slender, morning-coated, side-whiskered "bottle-washer" (Taylor), who sat sphinx-like in a triangular seat at the back of the class-room? He had seen many generations come and go, and had sat in his triangle through twelve sessions, with the utmost propriety. On one occasion a rowdy student told him a story during the lecture. The effect was magical. The impassive countenance melted into smiles, and Taylor was giving himself up to loud and hilarious laughter, when a glance from the lecture table restored him to his senses.

Then at the right end of the lowest bench sat Jones the assistant. He had already appropriated the professorial type. The side-whiskers of Taylor had been developed into a beard. The morning-coat had become evolved into a frock, and the visible shirt front was in size something between Taylor's and the professor's. From the first bench to the lecture table was an easy transition. Increase the stature, improve the quality of the broadcloth, and expand the linen, silver the hair, and then you had Professor Brazier. The three evolutionary types seemed chums rather than master and assistants.

The whole place was permeated with an old



JAMES SMITH BRAZIER.

fashioned touch. In the practical class this was striking. There was a circular bench round which the students took their stand. At the beginning of the session each man was presented with a primitive cylindrical arrangement, something like a section of a stove-pipe. Fitted into a round hole in the table, the cylinder converted itself into a sink. In the private part of the laboratory there was a vast kitchen range, with a number of good old-fashioned kettles merrily steaming on the hob. What these were for I have never been able to divine. Over the professorial sanctum sanctorum an air of tranquillity prevailed. A dead partridge under the deodorising action of charcoal occupied a central place on the table. In glass cupboards round the sides of the room could be seen wonderful crystals, Geissler's tubes of marvellous make, and aniline dyes in small stoppered bottles. A frictional electrical machine stood upon the floor.

The professor himself abjured the hurry-scurry of To-day. Somewhat brusque in his outward manner, he possessed a warm heart, and was an ideal Dean of the Faculty. Every student in trouble found in him a good adviser and a perfect gentleman. In his later years his health had not been good. Some respiratory or circulatory affection had made him short of breath, and when speaking

## AURORA BOREALIS.

or lecturing he gave extraordinary puffs. Although known as "Jamie," the sobriquet carried with it affection and complete respect.

If only a fair lecturer, he was a superb technician. Of the many practical teachers I have seen, he was by far the greatest. All his experiments seemed to come off. "Negative phases," so common in laboratories, seemed unknown in his. When a precipitate of a given colour had to make his appearance at a given time, down it came as certainly as the sun rises in the East. On one occasion only do I remember an experimental failure. It was dramatic. A combustion of two gases was to take place in a heated glass tube. "So far so good." The professor leaned against the bench, gave his puff, and said: "I have never done this experiment in my class before". He lighted the Bunsen—bang went the tube in a thousand pieces, and he added with perfect presence of mind: "And I shall never do it again".

On occasions too he liked to draw the student away from dry equations, and give him a *souffçon* of historical chemistry. From his habit of posing with folded arms, a student was nicknamed "Napoleon". Jamie was lecturing on nitrate of potash, and began: "When Napoleon was in Egypt". This was greeted with loud applause. He paused, and puffed, and made another attempt. "When

## JAMES SMITH BRAZIER.

Napoleon was in Egypt"—uproar, howls and hisses. He stopped, took a long breath, and looked dangerous. "What is the meaning of this unseemly interruption?" "When Napoleon was in Egypt." The devil seemed in the men, and the result was pandemonium. With a tone of bitterness, almost inconceivable in the old man, he said: "After this I shall teach you the dry bones of chemistry".

Jamie's early chemical career was lost in antiquity. He had been trained in the Liebig school and stuck to its traditions to the last. In his early days he had come under the magic sway of Faraday, who was his hero and whom he worshipped. The first prize in his class was always Bence Jones' *Life and Letters of Faraday*. It was said he had bought a hundred copies of this book, and had distributed them judiciously during his professoriate. I possess the last one, although I did not gain it. In London he worked under Hoffmann, the greatest chemist of the time, and in the laboratory of the Royal Institution he met all the rising chemists of the day. Here he did his classical work, the isolation of the radical  $C_{12}H_{26}$ , and he was one of the first to prepare Tetramethylhexane.

He went to Aberdeen as assistant to Dr. Andrew Fyfe, whom he succeeded as professor in 1862, and for twenty-six years he continued to teach with

## AURORA BOREALIS.

success. His scientific work done in Aberdeen was small. He had probably drifted too far from the centre, and the stimulus in the northern city cold was insufficient. In his explanations "Catalysis" played so great a *rôle* that it became a by-word, both inside the laboratory and outside. A story on this point is worth handing down. One day, when the Tay whale was at its height of decomposition and the putrefactive bacteria were slowly but surely resolving the great mammal of the deep into elementary compounds, the odour was so strong that Jamie was drawn to his little door at the foot of the stairs. "Charon" was standing, anthropoid-like, viewing with satisfaction his labours, when Jamie said: "Dreadful smell here, Robert". "Yes—action o' Catalysis, sir!" But the old school of chemistry which had taught him to attribute all sorts of chemical reactions to "Catalysis" had also given him his training in rigorous experimentation, and his mastery of technique was worthy of Faraday or Hoffmann.

The session of 1888 saw a marked change in the old man. He seemed thinner and ill. One day during his lectures he stopped and looked about him in a dazed fashion and passed into a faint. The faithful Jones observed that something was wrong and rushed to his side. He was carried to his room. After a time he recovered and was

JAMES SMITH BRAZIER.

conveyed home, but he never lectured again. In a year he passed away. Full academical honours were awarded to him, and many a student felt that they had lost a friend in him who was laid to rest in Nellfield Cemetery.

## GEORGE DICKIE.

Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,  
Nor in the glistening foil  
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies.

—LYCIDAS.

**G**EORGE DICKIE was born at Aberdeen on 23rd November, 1813, in the house named Cherryvale, where he spent the greater part of his life. The old house still stands, little changed in itself, but much altered as to its surroundings. When Dr. Dickie was born, the house stood practically in a rural suburb ; now streets run westward of it for well-nigh a mile. The house stands in the corner of what was once a large and delightful garden sloping downwards to the Denburn, which in Dr. Dickie's early days was a bright and pleasant brook of clear water. The garden, when I knew it best (1860-1866), was filled with plants gathered from very various sources, most of them being of botanical rather than of horticultural interest ; for Dr. Dickie was a botanist first and a gardener afterwards.



*G. Dickie,*





## GEORGE DICKIE.

Dr. Dickie received his early education at the Grammar School, and in 1830 (his age being then only seventeen) he took the degree of Master of Arts at Marischal College and University. He subsequently studied medicine both at Aberdeen and Edinburgh, his teacher in the science of which he ultimately became so faithful a student and expositor having been Dr. Knight. In 1834, he took the membership of the Royal College of Surgeons of England with the intention of entering the medical service of the navy. For domestic reasons this intention was abandoned ; and with a heavy heart he entered on the practice of medicine in his native town ; devoting, however, every minute that could be spared from professional toils to his well-loved botanical studies. During the college session of 1839, and for some years subsequently, he taught *materia medica*, botany and, apparently, to some extent, zoology in the King's College Medical School ; and in 1842, he received the honorary degree of M.D. from the King's University. In 1844 he was appointed librarian of King's College. The small emolument of that post made it necessary for him, I understand, to continue the practice of medicine in his spare time. The leisure left to him for scientific work was thus but small, and his increasing passion for botany rendered his position so irksome that he began eagerly to look abroad

## AURORA BOREALIS.

for some means of escape from it. In 1845 the chair of botany in the University of Glasgow became vacant, and Dr. Dickie offered himself as a candidate for it. But, as stated in a letter written in November, 1845, to Sir Joseph (then Doctor) Hooker, which, with some others, has been kindly put at my disposal by that illustrious botanist, Dr. Dickie notified his retirement from the field in the following characteristically modest words : " Having lately been informed that Dr. Walker-Arnot is a candidate, I have withdrawn my name. However desirable such an appointment would have been for me, still I am bound to do homage to Dr. Arnot's very high claims as a botanist." During the following year, Dr. Arnot (who had got the Glasgow chair) recommended Dr. Dickie to apply for one of the chairs in natural science in the Colleges of the Queen's University, in Ireland, then about to be created. He followed this advice, and in 1849 he was appointed professor of botany and zoology at Belfast. And the capital of Ulster continued to be the scene of his labours and his home until 1860, when he was appointed to the chair of botany at Aberdeen, which was founded on the fusion of the two Universities in which, prior to that date, the Granite City had rejoiced. A more appropriate appointment could not possibly have been made. A graduate in Arts of Marischal College, Dr. Dickie

## GEORGE DICKIE.

had been a teacher and librarian in King's. His sympathies were therefore with both parties in the burning controversy which, after having exercised cultured Aberdonians for many years, culminated in the unification of the Universities, and in the establishment of single sets of chairs in all the Faculties in the practically united colleges. He was, moreover, an ardent admirer of the good features of the Aberdonian character and a most loving censor of its bad ones.

Well do I remember the first appearance of Dr. Dickie when, at eight o'clock on a cold morning early in May, 1860, he delivered his introductory lecture as professor in the old botanical class theatre at Marischal College. The earnest gentle manner and quiet dignity of the man, the singular picturesqueness of his face, and his homely manner of speech very soon subdued the tendency to make a disturbance which existed pretty strongly amongst those of the students whose sympathies were with Marischal College, and who were disposed to resent the appointment to the new chair of a quondam lecturer at King's. And, long before the lecture ended, every student was attentive and silent because his heart had been won by the new teacher. Dr. Dickie's course of teaching consisted of fifty lectures in the class-room and of six or seven field excursions held on the Saturdays of the latter half of

## AURORA BOREALIS.

the session. The class-lectures were not exclusively devoted (as in the early years of his teaching career had sometimes been customary) to morphologic and systematic botany, but they also included a brief outline of vegetable histology and of the physiology and geographical distribution of plants. It was as a systematic botanist, and especially as an expert in the group of *Algae*, that Dr. Dickie had chiefly made his own reputation. He had collected extensively and carefully in the North of Scotland, and he knew the flora, both phanerogamic and cryptogamic, familiarly and accurately. But, for him, histological and physiological research had a very deep interest ; and, during the second half of his course of lectures, no names were more frequently on his lips than those of Henfrey and Schleiden—the chief exponents in those days of the kind of botany which at present is almost exclusively taught in colleges in this country. Every lecture morning there used to be placed on the broad sill of the window at the east end of his lecture-table several microscopes under which were placed preparations (made mostly by his own hand) illustrating either the minute structure of some vegetable tissue or some of the organs and phenomena of reproduction, in both flowering and flowerless plants. Dr. Dickie fully recognised that botany plays but an ancillary part in the curriculum of

## GEORGE DICKIE.

medical education ; and his chief effort in teaching it was to utilise it as a means of quickening and training his students in the arts of observing natural phenomena with truthfulness, and of drawing conclusions from their observations with accuracy. In addition to his ordinary class-lectures, Dr. Dickie, during one afternoon every week of the session, devoted himself to giving instruction in the higher botany ; and to these afternoon meetings the general public, as well as the University students, were gratuitously admitted.

As a lecturer Dr. Dickie's manner was admirable. He spoke with deliberation, and his enunciation was clear and distinct. His language was homely and graphic, and his explanations of difficult points were singularly lucid. His manner was grave, but he was by no means deficient in humour ; and his temper was most amiable. His intense earnestness showed itself at every turn and secured for him, during the earlier years of his professorate at least, the absolute attention of his audience.

Dr. Dickie was a naturalist in the good old-fashioned sense. He knew something of every branch of natural science, and a great deal about his own particular branch. In him there burnt strongly the feeling that all departments of the study of Nature are sacred and holy, and that the most despicable form of conceit in a scientific man

## AURORA BOREALIS.

is to decry all other branches of knowledge than one's own. At heart a systematist, Dickie's only regret was that he could not devote more attention to the other branches of botanical inquiry. Dickie despised no worker because he was only a physiologist, but merely regretted his narrowness, and was always ready to learn from him if he had anything new to disclose. Dickie's was a kind and catholic spirit. He loved his fellow-men, and he also loved all living things besides. Coleridge's fine lines were never better illustrated than in his life and character :—

He prayeth best who loveth best  
All things both great and small,  
For the dear God who loveth us  
He made and loveth all.

Dr. Dickie was a man of deep religious nature. In addition to the religion just alluded to which burned within him naturally, he had assimilated to some extent the tenets of the Scotch Presbyterian creed. But he was utterly free from harshness and bigotry. Bred in the old teleological school of naturalists, he was one of the first to recognise, to some extent, the reasonableness of the views of Nature promulgated by Darwin in his *Origin of Species*. Dickie was much struck by the observations of that great philosopher on the phenomena of Dimorphism in *Primula* and *Linum*, and he published some observations of his own (*Journal of the*

## GEORGE DICKIE.

*Linnaean Society*, vol. ix.) on similar phenomena in *Eriophorum*. And in his wonderful book on the *Fertilisation of Orchids* Darwin acknowledges the kind help afforded by Dr. Dickie in supplying him with living plants of *Listera cordata* and with observations on its flowering.

In 1860 Dr. Dickie published his *Botanists' Guide to the Counties of Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine*—a book based largely on his own collections. This was followed in 1864 by a similar volume on the *Flora of Ulster*, also based on his own work. He was the joint author with the Rev. Dr. McCosh of a work entitled *Typical Forms and Special Ends in Creation*. Besides these books, Dr. Dickie (according to the Royal Society's List) published no fewer than eighty papers mainly on botanical subjects in various scientific journals, but chiefly in those of the Linnæan Society of London and of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh. His first paper (on the reproductive organs in *Pilularia* and *Chara*) appeared in 1837; his latest (*On Some Himalayan Algæ*) in 1882. A large proportion of his writings were on sea-weeds. And indeed, after the death of Dr. William Harvey and until his own decease, Dr. Dickie was the chief authority on *Algæ* in Great Britain.

In private life Dr. Dickie was much esteemed. He was sincere, straightforward, and invariably

## AURORA BOREALIS.

gentle and kind. With people struggling against poverty he was especially sympathetic. In one of his letters put at my disposal by Sir Joseph Hooker, Dickie asks his correspondent to help in the sale of some lenses ("doublets" as they used to be called) which were then (1845) being made by a young man in Aberdeen who had been an apprentice to a watch-maker. "Some time ago," writes the good Dickie, "the lad was to be seen grinding and setting lenses in one corner of a small apartment, while his widowed mother was filling bobbins in another." Chief among his friends in the Medical Faculty of the University were Professors James Nicol (Zoology and Geology) and Alexander Harvey (*Materia Medica*). These were men in character very like himself, being true and earnest students of Nature, and kind and gentle withal.

Dr. Dickie's health, from his childhood upwards, was delicate, and his frame far from robust. After the conclusion of the class session of 1860 he took a party of his students on a botanical tour to Ben Macdhui and Cairngorm. Having overtaxed his strength during that excursion, a painful disease developed itself in one of his ears in the course of the succeeding autumn and winter. This was complicated by bronchitis, and the result was that, during the sessions of 1861 and 1862, he was unable to conduct his class, and his place was taken by



## GEORGE DICKIE.

Dr. Alex. Dickson (afterwards professor at Glasgow, and finally at Edinburgh). As years passed on bronchitic attacks became more frequent, and the affection of the ear gradually induced great deafness. In 1877 he was therefore constrained to resign his chair. He lived only five years after his retirement ; and, on 15th July, 1882, there passed to his rest one of the best of men.

## ROBERT WALKER.

His life is distinct and in method ; and his actions as it were cast up before.—JOHN EARLE'S *Microcosmography*, 1628.

ONE of my earliest boyhood's impressions of the personnel of my greater fellow-townsmen was "The Dean". I had heard him spoken of long before I could have hoped to place him, long before I could identify him. I had no idea what kind of a Dean he was—*The Dean* was sufficient. I remember vividly the first time he was pointed out to me, and the long-anticipated impression of his dominant Deanship was not disappointed. Later, I came to read his speeches and his characteristic essays—I shared his taste for antiquarianism—and his whole style was so individual, his point of view so much like that of the vanishing Burgher of Bon-Accord in days of old, that though I have never spoken to him yet, he has impressed his personality as irrevocably on my memory as his golden cornucopia beside the Song School had struck my boyish fancy. My impression was finally fixed by recognising him unmistakably in one of Mr. Meredith's novels.

I begin with Alexander Walker, in writing of his



*Robert Walker.*



## ROBERT WALKER.

younger brother Robert, whom I knew as Librarian of the University, not because of similarity, but by reason of startling contrast. The Dean was well known : the Librarian was scarcely heard of by anybody non-academic. I was summoned by him one dull November day to pay my tribute of eight ill-spared guineas to the University exchequer. True, my father had been at the same school (in Little Belmont Street) with him and his twin brother (the minister of Castle Douglas) in the late forties ; I had seen him frequently in the University Library some time before I entered King's : but I had rarely come across Mr. Walker himself until I met him at the receipt of custom on that November day of 1884.

Buoyed with the primary belief in a man of academic distinctions, we all approached Mr. Walker with a touch of reverence, for had he not been a high wrangler in 1865, an assistant professor in his northern Alma Mater somewhat later, and an examiner in mathematics at Edinburgh University ? Indeed the atmosphere of the arenas of the south still clung to him, for he expected somewhat of the deference demanded by Dons of English public schoolboys, educated, by a long course of fagging and football, into a keen perception of the duty due to one's seniors and superiors. As it was, Mr. Walker had to deal with a constituency drawn from the democracy, a constituency that based its

## AURORA BOREALIS.

estimates of worth on the possession of brains and bursaries, and construed good manners into a dogged devotion to the dominie. Mr. Walker was never able to accept the compromise, and the absence of the more accommodating mien was a perpetual source of genuine pain to him, expressed by a careworn look that roused sympathy in the older students who appreciated the difficulty of the art of life. A man with more humour would have been able to pass over the deficiency of etiquette : would have understood that the student who failed to take off his hat on entering a room was guilty of no conscious disrespect, but was unable to abandon the code that regulates the but and the ben. A more dominant man would have fulminated in outbursts of bad temper. As it was, I fear we simply got on Mr. Walker's nerves. We were rough and ready ; he was punctilious. We treated the whole situation of studentship as a healthy jest : he was serious and strenuous. Therein lay many troubles.

Moreover, he was not bookish. He was Registrar first, Librarian afterwards : and mere official functions are seldom a success. The bookman is born. Mr. Walker was not born a bookman. And that added to his troubles, and accentuated the difference between him and The Dean, who was born a bookman, but who could gratify his tastes only as the pastime of his leisure. Yet when you came to know Mr.

## ROBERT WALKER.

Walker more intimately you found deep down in his nature certain mental attitudes which demonstrated unmistakably his essential kinship with The Dean. He had the same tenacious clinging to the sound, solid institutions of an older age : he had the same innate kindness beneath a very different exterior ; and his cultivation of the rose-tree recalled the Omar Khayyam spirit which has always animated The Dean. His solicitude for the accurate conduct of the University registers was too poignant to permit of his dividing his attention with the mere library ; but it had its due reward, for Parliament obligingly made an Act (in 1889) in which his instincts for the work of the Court and the transaction of the business of the Council were permitted unfettered scope. Everything comes to the man who can wait. And thus it is that Mr. Walker has found the congenial task, where his scrupulous care as permanent official steadies the unstable tendencies of the shifting constituencies with which he has to deal. I shall not readily forget the Librarian of our day ; and at stated intervals my memories of him are emphasised by my receiving a tiny octavo pamphlet (containing the dull minutes of the General Council), on the cover of which my name is properly spelt, and my " style " is accurately and fully observed in a bold hand that clearly demonstrates the use of a " j " pen.

## DAVIE RENNET.

"I'll set it to a tune and sing it to you."

"And what is't?" asked my uncle.

"Davie," says Alan.

—KIDNAPPED.

IF you take the trouble to run through the directories of all the towns of this country, you might spend days before coming across the surname *Rennet*: it is rare. Look for *David Rennet* and you will find that the combination is rarer still. Look once again for *Davie Rennet*, and you will discover that it is not merely the rarest form of all; it is quite unique. A unique soul in a unique city—that is the subject of this gossip. Not that I shall speak of Davie Rennet; the surname is a courteous superfluity of recent years that the necessity of having a peg to hang his LL.D. on has brought into use. We know only "Davie".

Davie is just seventy in point of years, but he is at once much younger and much older than that in point of everything else. He was born in the parish of Marykirk, in the county of Kincardine, but a residence of four and forty years in Bon-





J. Renne



## DAVIE RENNET.

Accord has made him an Aberdonian to all intents and purposes. He has been teaching mathematics all his life, but in the specialising process he has made himself an all-round educational philosopher and citizen. His mission has been serious, but he has faced the world like one of the great wits who keep their fellow-men from being drugged with care. In short, Davie has no double : he is *sui generis*.

Possessing so many sides to his striking personality, Davie is difficult to describe, and no mere picture can interpret all that he stands for to those who have known him. It is not that one may not think him out ; it is that his influence affects one's heart quite as much as one's head, and there you encounter a force that must remain largely inarticulate. I do not propose to estimate his position as a mathematician, not only because I am incapable of doing so, but because that part of him is but one reason for the value we all set on him. Had he been but a mathematical coach he would most certainly not have stood where he does to-day, nor should I have been writing now. For the mere Dominie dies when one has outlived the immediate need for his stuffing. What a boy carries with him from the schoolroom into the world is not the mysteries of Madvig, nor a mnemonic scheme for scanning verse, nor a portable mass of the formulæ

## AURORA BOREALIS.

of optics, but a general sense of the philosophy of which they form but a part, and of the inspiring character of the teacher who had the formation of character well in view. Davie has imparted the secret of formulae as cleverly as any man. To some the secret has been of immense immediate value. It has made a Smith's Prizeman of one man and a first at Sandhurst of another. On the other hand, it has come with no meaning for some of us, remaining unassimilated in the memory only in view of a hateful examination. To the latter class I fear I belong. I have seen my Todhunter become tattered without a pang : my Drew lose its covers without a sigh : I have made my Barnard Smith support my window frame and let the fresh air into my rooms (in lieu of into a non-mathematical brain). And yet I remember Davie and count on him as one of the influences in my boyhood, and the experts are standing everywhere ready to testify to his excellence as a mathematician. To take the latest instance, Professor Chrystal dedicates his recent book, *Introduction to Algebra*, " To David Rennet, LL.D., in memory of happy hours spent in his classroom . . . in days of old ". That speaks volumes of praise. And I, who grimaced in agony under the mathematic thumbscrew, and who have escaped it without a trace of its corrective influence, am able to go back with the pleasantest memories

## DAVIE RENNET.

across Golden Square in the chill afternoons of a certain winter, and seat myself on a hard old bench on the first floor of the gaunt house that stands at the corner of Silver Street. Seated there, in imagination, I fancy I try to solve some of the problems of his personality, though I could not now evaluate  $\pi$  to save my life.

Davie is greyer than he was in those days, but he is still young, much younger than seventy. That is to be explained not merely because he has always been in touch with the young, but because his subject and all that hangs upon it is still young. When Davie started his great campaign—unostentatiously and unofficially—he was confronted by the solid (and shall I say stolid?) battalions of the classicists. For centuries they had had it all their own way, and some of them even down to recent times believed that this was going to last for ever. But Davie, like the chickens that perched on Waldo's little body on the sun-baked African kopje, was wiser. He felt that his subject had vast possibilities; that the virtue of versions was not the last word; that mathematics were to become an integral part of the educational system, and not remain the mere trimmings of the trencher. That was a great hope to go forward with; and, buoyed with this conviction, Davie has looked out on the world with the assured belief that his subject was to win. The

## AURORA BOREALIS.

square and the central circle which he has seen daily through his wicker window screen for six and twenty years has symbolised his work, and he has lived to see his hope become a reality.

Furthermore, the fact that he has never become a University Professor, but has hovered on the widening outskirts of extramural teaching, has helped him to preserve his youth. He has had to be perpetually on the alert, ready to hold his own against all comers, to adapt his methods to all the changes that four and forty years have demanded of him. Had he come to occupy a seat at the Senate, he might have stopped short of the highest achievement; or, drifting away from the close contact which the "skyllie" indicates, he might have been carried far away to the dry sands of mere mathematicism, unrelated in its purest technicality, enervated in its absolutism. To the extramural teacher, however, that danger has little temptation, for if Davie has had to train men to get their M.A. degree and to annex an exhibition at Cambridge, he has also had to show another type of youth how Sandhurst may be reached, or how the Staff College may be entered, and the ordinary lad in an accountant's office has had to be trained in the practical manipulation of figures. Thus has Davie been brought into touch not merely with the University, but with the everyday life of his fellow-

## DAVIE RENNET.

townsmen, and with the greater sphere of the Empire's work.

That means so much to a man of imagination. It has, on the one hand, kept Davie at the grindstone from morning to night—and few people recognise the enormous work he has accomplished week in and week out these four and forty years. On the other, it has broadened his sympathies enormously. To have been able to watch his "men" climb from rung to rung must have had an immense inspiring effect. The immediate world was but the granite-bound square with the gardened circle in the centre. But far beyond that has stretched the vista of wider fields of action. The promise of May for him has been the Wrangler list. The advance of an army on Kabul or Chitral, on Benin or Khartoum, has been made easier by the men who scraped the "skyllie" in Golden Square before the golden gate of Sandhurst swung "Sesame". From time to time, when one has turned homewards again from the busier life that takes small count of academic distinction, from the restless existence that was previously unthinkable, one has found Davie keenly interested in that outside world, remote as it must remain from the essential work of his life. He has been interested not merely from the personal homely kindness that all kinsmen feel for one another, but because he has always been eager to see how

## AURORA BOREALIS.

far a man had built on the foundation laid down years before, even in sorrow and anguish, at the hard desk, looking out on the little patch of blue we prisoners called the sky. Therein, I take it, Davie shows how clearly he has grasped the meaning of a University such as ours—that it can never become a seat of learning in the sense of Oxford : that it must always remain a stepping stone, a method of earning one's bread in the first instance, whatever else be the final result.

Mark you, I say to a man of imagination. To the ordinary "crammer" such achievements mean but the lengthening of his prospects of "successes," pretty much as a dog show entails another triumph for Spratt's biscuits, or as the latest record means a new puff for the latest tyre. To Davie each successive achievement of this kind has brought no houp-la exultation : but it has added zest to life. It has sharpened the edge of his wit as he has bid the generation of to-day think of the generation of yesterday that had done the great thing. It has added buoyancy to his step even when the tramp on the hard floor from 8 a.m. has induced mere physical weariness. It has made him all the jauntier as he turned to the Newsroom in the late evening to fill in the outlines of his morning paper. Thus, watching the world from the vantage ground of his remote Northern City, Davie has ever



## DAVIE RENNET.

possessed that sense of perspective which is half the battle of youth, for the most of us spend the years in building great ramparts around and about us, beyond which we look with increasing doubt and disinclination.

And then Davie is so much older than seventy in that he has retained the individualities of an earlier generation, not from affectation but from the sheer force of his character. Take his swift use of the Doric. To-day, he stands almost alone among his contemporary townsmen in his mode of speech, which is the most fitting form in which his clear-cut thought could shape itself. This is specially notable at the present time when the rest of the North is struggling to annex the veneers of the South. I say veneer, because the kernel remains so unutterably Scots in its mode of thinking and methods of acting. Davie has not been misled. He does not experiment with the immutable. He is oak throughout: not walnut with a mahogany face on it like a cheap piano. He is solid silver: not a piece of electroplate that you get at a cheap jeweller's. And I for one am fascinated by this individuality. I am arrested by his unconscious sense of style; his fine sense for the right word; for the phrase illuminated by his imagination; for the kindling humour and the penetrating criticism; in short for his entire naturalness amid the imitative qualities of those

## AURORA BOREALIS.

around him who in aping the South are really wallowing in a foreign language, with its aloofness, its general inarticulateness.

But herein I give my case away. Were I to feel ever so finely about Davie, I must necessarily fail in picturing him in other than Scots itself. Aught else is but a monochrome photograph at the best. Scots alone can add the colour of life itself; and hence I fall back on the spoken word of Davie:—

“DAVIE.”

“There’s nae sic men amakin’ noo”—

Awyte the sayin’s unco true.

Jist think o’ een

That foe and freen

Ca’ naething else bit “Davie”.

Man, he is a swippert craitur

Fu’ o’ wut an’ human natur,

He’s a leevin’ Alma Mater:

Faur’s a chiel like Davie?

Gang ye sooth, an’ east, an’ north,

Ca the kintra wast the Forth,

Ye’ll never get

At ony yett

A lealer lad than Davie.

Ither fowk forget their Doric,

Tyavin’ phrases allegoric,

Fyou can gie’s the braid historic

Scots-wha-hae o’ Davie.

’Twas Silver Street that kent him ere

He rase to fame—an’ Golden Square—

Wi’ laddies blate

That vrocht wi’ sklatae

An’ skylic un’er Davie.

## DAVIE RENNET.

Some, he'd say, were fit for brakin'  
Steens instead o' problem makin' :  
Nature's sel' hed made lackin'  
A' the touch o' Davie.

I think I see his smokin' kep,  
An' fyles I am sure I hear him step  
Aroon' the room  
In winter gloom,  
The bonnie beardit Davie.  
He wid han'le like a brither  
Loons fa ne'er were in a swither.  
Tell me faur ye'll get anither  
Dominie like Davie.

Then o' nichts ye'd af'en meet  
The Doctor steppin' doon the street ;  
A dacent lum  
As heich's a drum  
Rose on the pow o' Davie.  
Daun'erin' doon to see the papers,  
Notin' Parliament'ry capers,  
Lauchin' at the beylies' vapours—  
Naething 'scapit Davie.

Aye—an' what tho' time an' tide  
Hae cast yer laddies far an' wide,  
By east, by wast ?—  
They min' the past,  
An' dream aboot ye, Davie.  
Bide they hame or be they roamin',  
Ilk een toasts ye, bumpers foamin',  
Noo ye're gettin' to the gloamin'—  
Aifter wark—my Davie !

## JOHN COLVIN.

Hee was none of the worst students in the house for he kept the set houres. . . . His authority was great over men's good names. . . . No man was more methodicall at his business. . . . Thus he spent his age till the tappe of it was runne out. . . .—  
JOHN EARLE'S *Microcosmography*, 1628.

ON a certain crisp autumn morning, long after I had left the University, the inspiring ceremonies surrounding the opening of the session enticed me early from bed ; and but half-rested I wandered across to the Aulton, hearing in the far distance the resonant notes of the bell in the tower that summoned a new generation as gladly as it had gathered many another to the grey old pile. The generation was new, and yet the quadrangle was invaded by precisely the same old types—the shambling schoolboy just from the country, awed by the long-desired mysteries of baje hood ; the swaggering semi, but recently fledged from the same resort, but with a fine fund of patronage in every movement ; the tried tertian, with his keen anticipation of final escape from dominieism ; and the superbly lazy and indifferent



*John Colvins*









## JOHN COLVIN.

magistrand, bearing the indisputable badge of attainment, that seasoned walking stick, which is like no other walking stick in the world. All that was old. But for once there was a new feature. A silver-laced uniform mingled with the crowd, and above a hundred cloth caps and bowlers one solitary tall silk hat towered, rising resplendent from a band of silver.

A new sacrist had invaded King's, for John Colvin had vanished. And it was not only a new man, but a new order that had arisen in the land. That silver-laced uniform was a symbol of the embroidered curriculum, which the latest of innumerable acts had worked in perplexing elaborateness, foretelling how the old plain course was to be tortured amid numberless diversions called Options, so that the roads which lead to Rome were to become bewilderingly numerous.

To the silk hat and the silver lace, and to their wearer I had no objection to offer. Only, none of these things appealed to me like the mufti of the genial, bent old man whom we all knew as "John". His surname, "Colvin," was a superfluity ; and let me point out as a further great gulf between John and him of the silk hat, that the latter is known only by his surname. That means much. It implies a certain formality to which "John" was a total stranger. He dated, you see,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

back to the days when the University was still a dual force, when Marischal College as well as King's granted degrees in Arts, and ere the "Fusion" had begun to rouse the wrath of opposing reformers. Born at Stonehaven, he entered Marischal College in 1843 in his late twenties, and for nine and forty years he clung to each college in turn with a curious tenacity until he became one of the landmarks of our Alma Mater. During the last twenty years of his tenure he served King's College as sacrist, jingling his keys year in and year out with the optimism which really gave him his eighty long years of life ; meeting the grandsons of men whom he had known as beardless boys at Marischal College in the old days ; and welcoming all who crossed his path. The one touch of officialdom about him was his massive mace, and that wonderful purple gown of his, donned every Sunday when he bore the Bible to the Chapel pulpit. The gown, like the wearer, was old and a little faded. The silk hat with the silver lace would have ill become the old man, and the procession along the nave of the chapel would obviously have been out of place.

"John" had seen great things in his time, boisterous crushes—which became less boisterous I think in consideration of his years ; rectorial exploits, and as much pease-meal as would have fed the whole Aulton for a year. He had come to welcome

## JOHN COLVIN.

as professors learned scholars whom he had known as bajans ; and thus it was he never became the mere servant, for the professors of the eighties saw him with the eyes of bajans in the sixties or earlier. One felt this with great force when his portrait, painted by Mr. Archibald Reid, was presented to him one Saturday morning (12th November, 1892) in Marischal College. The scheme had been started by the students of '91 ; it was taken up by the alumni of every year since '43. Only one official of the latter year was living at the time, namely, Professor John Stuart Blackie, who has joined John Colvin in that green quadrangle where they have met their immortal namesake Shon Campbell.

How the days change, for since that Saturday morning Professor Minto, who made such a charming speech, has gone over to see "John". Little wonder that everybody felt thrilled that morning, for

having reigned so long supreme,  
John was at last, 'twould almost seem,  
The only academic theme  
Quite non-polemic.

The University cannot forget "John" even if it would, for his face looks down benevolently on us from his canvas, full of kindness and common-sense. Nor will those of us who can go back, even to '91, forget his helpmate Mrs. Colvin, "a most gentle woman ; one of nature's real ladies,"

## AURORA BOREALIS.

as another great John, who lived to become Sir John, Struthers, and who has also joined our John, put it in a letter which he wrote for the presentation ceremony.

John did not see his beloved colleges very often after that day. He went back to live in his native town, coming up to Aberdeen only occasionally ; and the relaxation from routine told upon him more noticeably than the many days of duty. He died just of old age on the second day of May, 1895, and with him vanished almost the last of the old men who had been at the making of the united University.

## THE UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS.

TWO great names naturally attach themselves to any retrospect of the various buildings that have formed part of King's College. The obvious starting-point for even our present survey, modern as it is, must be a question as to how much there remained in 1860 of the work of William Elphinstone and of Gavin Dunbar. Before the founder died, two sides of the quadrangle had arisen, and both had resisted the ravages of time up to the year when "the Collaeg of our soverane lord" ceased to exist as a separate University. On the north side of the quadrangle stood the chapel with its crown tower, unsurpassed for chaste beauty of outline by its sister steeples at Edinburgh and Newcastle, and then, as now, beyond question the noblest piece of academic architecture in Scotland. In the east, the hall and public school, dating from the time of Elphinstone, stood undisturbed. The ground floor was occupied by the public school ; the upper storey by the "Great Hall," with its reminiscences of the days when *Alma Mater* had provided material, as well as

## AURORA BOREALIS.

mental, pabulum for her sons, and had tried to inculcate upon the hungry youths, who assembled there to dine, the duty of plain living as well as of high thinking.

The other master-builder of the University had not been so fortunate. The row of dormitories which ran from west to east, parallel with the chapel, and was terminated by the quaint towers familiar to us in the picture in the Senatus Room, was the work of Bishop Dunbar, our second great benefactor. The tenancy of generation after generation of undergraduates had, by the beginning of the eighteenth century, brought it into a ruinous condition, and the building which occupied its site when our period opens, dated only from about 1725, and owed its existence to the liberality of Dr. James Fraser, of Chelsea Hospital. Only one fragment of Dunbar's erection could be seen in 1860—the Eastern Tower, still known to Aberdeen students as the Ivy Tower. A gale of wind, in the year marked in the annals of the College, as well as in the history of the nation, by the first Jacobite rising, had deprived it of the graceful little spire which alone gave it significance. Dr. Fraser had built in the classical taste of the period, and the most notable part of his structure was the cloister-like piazza, which ran along the whole length of the building, and may be compared to that which is the distinctive

## THE UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS.

feature of the interior of the quadrangle of Queen's College, Oxford, which dates from about the same time.

Opening from the piazza were two class-rooms, Greek and moral philosophy. Above the class-rooms were the disused students' rooms; unoccupied for half a century, save, for some years in the fifties, by the professor of oriental languages, commonly known as "Hebrew Scott". The rooms, however, were not entirely abandoned to memories of the past. The east attic, known as "The Lobby," had long been used for dancing. A portion of the west end, too, formed a manse for one of the regents.

Our survey of the appearance of King's College in 1860 is nearly finished. In the eastern corner of the quadrangle stood the large square tower, commenced, under the auspices of General Monk, in the time of Principal Row, and completed (except for a later addition) during the tenure of office of Dr. Middleton, the Restoration Principal. The west front of the College is an unfortunate addition made in 1824-25. Designed in the Renaissance style, it fails to harmonise with the Gothic of the older architect, and it interferes with the effect of the south buttresses of the Crown Tower.

The alterations made on the College at the Union were sufficiently drastic. Hall and public school,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

piazza and lobby, were alike condemned. The first session of the united University saw the demolition of Fraser's buildings ; no student of the now existing University of Aberdeen attended lectures in the old class-rooms. The chemistry class was removed to Marischal College, and the professor of moral philosophy succeeded to the chemistry class-room in the west front. Humanity had been taught in the moral philosophy room till 1852, when it succeeded to the old divinity room on the second floor of the square tower, the professor of divinity appointed in that year teaching in the chapel. In 1860 the hall was assigned to the professor of humanity, and the vacant humanity room in the tower became the temporary logic class-room. There the first occupant of the chair, Professor Bain, delivered his first lecture to a class of students who were attracted purely by love of learning and the fame of their teacher. One of their number, George Croom Robertson, rose to high philosophical eminence. Greek and English were taught in the public school ; mathematics and natural philosophy remained where they had been before the Union, on the first floor and on the third floor of the square tower respectively. Meanwhile, a suite of class-rooms was being erected on the south side of the quadrangle. The architecture is plain and severe, and adds another



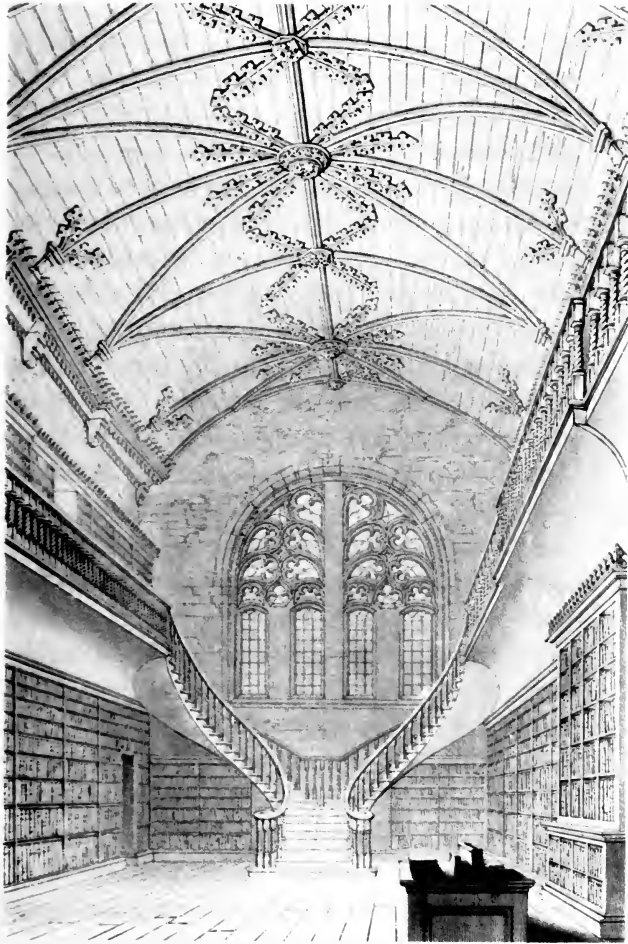
## THE UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS.

inharmonious style to weaken the artistic effect of earlier work. The building contains four commodious class-rooms and retiring-rooms, assigned to the chairs of logic, mathematics, Greek and humanity. The destruction of the hall and public school followed. They were replaced by two divinity class-rooms on the ground floor, with, above them, a lecture-room and laboratories for the chair of natural philosophy. The eastern side is built in the same style as the southern.

Only a few years passed before the College was again in the hands of the builders. With the year 1870 are connected two important events in the recent history of King's—the erection of the spacious library and the first restoration of the chapel. The library had originally been placed in an erection which projected from the south side of the chapel into the quadrangle, one of the benefactions of Bishop Stewart. It was rebuilt in 1725 by Dr. Fraser. There is a curious element of mystery about the fate of this building. The fact, indeed, is clear that somewhere about the year 1773 it was destroyed by fire. But we know nothing of the circumstances, and are ignorant even of the exact year. The minutes of the *Senatus* contain no reference to the nature of the conflagration, and the *Aberdeen Journal* of the period is also silent on the subject. After the fire the books were arranged

## AURORA BOREALIS.

in the ante-chapel, and there they remained for nearly a century. The walls were covered with shelving, and all the available space was utilised, as a reference to the illustration will show. But the room was sadly inadequate, and the library usually presented a picture of confusion : floor and bar littered with volumes of all ages and all sizes. In 1870 the books were removed to the new library. It occupies the site of the College kitchen of the old days, and consists of a long and lofty hall—200 feet long—with double transepts. On the north side, rooms for the librarian and his assistants and for the professors open off the main building. The roof is designed as a copy of the chapel roof which disappeared at the restoration of 1891. The library was completed in 1885 by the addition of the Melvin Transept, built to receive the library of Dr. Melvin, removed from Marischal College. It contains a stained-glass window in memory of Dr. Melvin, representing two Latin poets—George Buchanan and Arthur Johnston—and two grammarians—Ruddiman and Melvin. The four combine to suggest the Scottish Latinity of four centuries, and all except Buchanan are connected with Aberdeen. The whole effect is impressive ; no library in Scotland is housed so magnificently. As one stands in the corridor beside the bust of a distinguished young graduate who was









## THE UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS.

killed at Cabul in 1879, and looks up the long lines of books to the Melvin window, one feels that here, if nowhere else in Old Aberdeen, modern art has done its best to avoid forming too obvious a contrast to "ancient worth".

The removal of the books from the ante-chapel led to a scheme for the restoration of the edifice. It was then that the responsibility was taken of placing the beautiful carved oak screen one bay nearer the west end of the chapel. It was a serious step to take, and it has been justified only by its utility. The restoration scheme caused the loss of several portions of the ancient carved oak, which had survived the Reformation and the Covenant. The west window, which has retained its original tracery, was filled with stained glass by Dr. John Webster. The lower portion is occupied by Scripture subjects ; in the upper there are eight medallion heads. Of these, Bishop Elphinstone and King James IV. represent the founders of King's College, while the new ideal which led to the foundation of Marischal College finds expression in the combination of John Knox with the Earl Marischal. Bishops Patrick Forbes and Gilbert Burnet, and Principal George Campbell and Dr. Beattie complete the group, and indicate various spheres in which alumni of Aberdeen have earned distinction. Windows in memory of Principal

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Peter Campbell and Professors Mearns and Hugh Macpherson have also been placed in the chapel during our period. It does not fall to us here to describe later changes. We must leave the sacred building with its cold stone floor, which threatened the integrity of the screen, and its uncompromising wooden benches, guiltless of leanings towards ecclesiology.

In 1872 a new moral philosophy class-room was built out from the south-west corner of the quadrangle, and the old room was converted into the cloak-room, which formed so large a part of the social life of the College in the eighties, and the mention of which cannot fail to call up memories of strange and weird music which filled the eleven o'clock interval between lectures. The most prominent feature of the new moral philosophy class-room was the old pulpit, with which his students came almost to identify Professor Fyfe, and which still stands for moral philosophy in their recollections. It may be of interest to place on record the genial professor's own account of how the pulpit came to occupy the place of the more academic rostrum of other rooms. "Professor Martin," he said to the present writer, "used to lecture in peripatetic fashion, and when I was appointed to the chair there was no chair to appoint me to!" and he went on to tell how there was not time to erect



## THE UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS.

a lecture platform before the beginning of session 1876-77, and how it occurred to him that the pulpit from which the magistrands had read their essays to him when he acted as substitute for Professor Scott, might have been preserved. It had escaped destruction, and it was forthwith placed in the class-room, where it remained till 1894.

Of the extra-mural buildings connected with the College in its early days, none remained in 1860. The old grammarian's manse had been replaced by the house still attached to the chair of humanity. On the retaining wall may yet be seen the Elphinstone arms, surmounted by a mitre, reminding the passer-by of the early associations which gave to the humanist's manse the popular name of "The Sign of the Mitre". Further down the street the Snow Church had vanished. Beside its site had stood the canonist's manse. A new house had just been erected for the Sub-Principal, more modern, but assuredly not more picturesque than the old house in which Thomas Reid had written his *Inquiry into the Human Mind*, and which had been last occupied by Sub-Principal Macpherson. In accordance with an ordinance of the Commission the manse was attached, after Professor Thomson's death, to the chair of church history. Still further down the street and opposite the gate of the College a new "mediciner's manse" had been built for Dr.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Gregory about 1842. It was now transferred from the chair of chemistry to that of divinity and biblical criticism. The house known as Chanonry Lodge was purchased for the principal during our period. The old "chaplainry," which had been used as the systematic theology manse, was sold, and a new house was built beside the north wall of the chapel, where in early days was situated the College cemetery, and where, more recently, Principal Jack's house had been. The northern door of the chapel, which opens into the garden, was, before the Reformation, used only when some member of the College was being carried to his last resting-place under the shadow of the crown. It was fitting that at the commencement of the new era there should be a change of the manses and of their occupants alike, and it is a curious coincidence that the only two manses regarding which there is no change to be recorded either at the union or immediately before it belonged to two professors who, almost alone of the King's College incumbents of Arts chairs, had not retired in consequence of the union. These were the Greek and mathematical manses, which had been built to the south of the College in the end of last century, and the building of which had prevented an outburst of vandalism with regard to the chapel.

The Aulton is much less picturesque to-day than

## THE UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS.

it was before all these changes were made. The quaint old houses have vanished with the vanished type of picturesque old Scotsmen who inhabited them, and the traditions associated with both are themselves passing beyond the ken of the modern King's College student. The College itself has not become more beautiful since Elphinstone's hall and Fraser's piazza have disappeared, and the eel no longer disports itself in the well which furnished the old kitchen with water. In the neighbouring houses, "roofs of slated hideousness" have been taking the place of thatch and tile. All along, the year 1860 may be taken as the *terminus ad quem* of the old, and the *terminus a quo* of the new.

When we turn to Marischal College we find that there is little to relate. Here the year 1840, not the year 1860, is the determining date. The giant of reform had done his work. The ancient monastery itself with no architectural pretensions, with its seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century more or less incongruous additions, had always formed a contrast to Elphinstone's tower and chapel. Its demolition had, by the year 1834, become absolutely essential to the continued existence of the College. Nothing remains of it except the stones with the inscriptions : "Thay haif said ; quhat say thay ; lat thame say". *APETH ATTAPKHΣ*. The new building, in Archibald Simpson's severe

## AURORA BOREALIS.

but impressive style, admirably suited to the use of granite, was finished in 1844. In 1860, its Arts class-rooms were transferred to the medical chairs, in accordance with the scheme of union. It may be of some interest to place on record the arrangements of the Arts class-rooms in Marischal College, when Arts classes were taught there, for the last time, during session 1859-60. The room at the north end of the main building (now the practice of medicine lecture-room) was the Latin class-room ; the corresponding room at the south end belonged to the Greek chair. Natural philosophy was taught on the first floor of the north wing ; moral philosophy and mathematics occupied the ground floor, the mathematical room being immediately under the natural philosophy—on the right-hand side as one entered from the quadrangle. Natural history was located in the present room in the south wing, and theology also found a habitation in that wing. The main change at Marischal College in 1860 was the transformation of these rooms into medical lecture-rooms and laboratories. During our period some important improvements were made in connection with laboratory and classroom accommodation, more particularly in the department of Anatomy. These extensions are described, in the present volume, by the distinguished scientist to whom they owed their existence. The reputation of

## THE UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS.

Aberdeen as a Medical School has arisen within the last forty years, and it is due to the exertions of Professor Sir John Struthers, in a sense in which it cannot be ascribed to any other single individual. But the general appearance of the buildings was in no way interfered with. The historian of the era that begins with the year 1889 will have a widely different story to tell.

We have attempted to picture the University buildings as they have appeared between 1860 and 1889. If much that we have recorded may seem trivial, it may be the more useful to recall it, for trivial things are the most easy to forget ; but, small as many of those changes are, they will appeal to alumni of the period, to whom memory will not fail to suggest, in connection with their undergraduate days, just such trivial things as an old pulpit or a crowded cloak-room, and who will hope that, among the departures of recent years, the student of the new era has not lost the loyalty and the *camaraderie* that gave meaning and zest to the academic life of the not distant past.

## MEN AND MANNERS.

Who shall fill our vacant places,  
Who shall sing our songs to-night ?

—THE ISLE OF BEAUTY.

WE have a grievance against the Southron. He is assured that at the Northern University the kilt is worn exclusively by all classes, theological Latitudinarianism flourishes, while a general air of immorality prevails. We have found this belief in all quarters, and have argued against it in vain. We know that the kilt has, since the first year at the Grammar School, formed no integral portion of our wardrobe, and we would cherish the hope that, in respect of the latter charges, our own walk has been blameless, albeit for long there was a lingering belief in the mind of the late Provost of Worcester College, Oxford, that the Free Church of Scotland was a free-thinking communion !

On investigation, we find the assured Southron draws his ideas from *Alec Forbes*. Thus are we wounded in the house of our friends. "Here is a

## MEN AND MANNERS.

book," said a High Street bookseller to us, "that sells fairly well in summer to Americans. They swallow anything, you know, and it is written in Scotch." Then out came George MacDonald's book again, to take away our breath. We recovered sufficiently to disclose the city of our nativity, and to assure him that the book was not written in Scotch, not at least in the Scotch spoken by us. We protest against that conglomerate of theological "havers" and spurious jargon being taken as a veracious chronicle. Educated Americans know us by Whittier's *Lines on the Laird of Ury*, though the author admitted the scene was imaginary. An allusion in Bingham to the rood-screen of the chapel, Dugald Dalgetty in the *Legend of Montrose*, Alexander Macintyre in Besant and Rice's *My Little Girl*, drawn, as we happen to know, from an actual graduate—such is about the sum total of reference in literature to the University of Aberdeen, if we except the allusions to it, not uncoloured by his own memories, of the younger Colman in the *Heir at Law*.

Yet there is an Aberdeen type withal, unlovely and ungracious. It has been fostered and cherished by the professoriate, for as in no other University the system of note giving and taking has prevailed. Hence it is that in actual and original literature our output has been so small. The grinder has

## AURORA BOREALIS.

replaced the scholar, and the child has been the father of the man. The readers in the library have been surprisingly few, and men have taken a degree with honours who have never darkened its doors, but have confined all their energies to their notes, as to an unaltering code of the Medes and Persians. Flattery and admiration have been lavished on this type and creation ; the fundamental difference between hard-headedness and thick-headedness has been ignored by persons who have lauded as ideals such intellectual sandbanks with a mere voracity for notes. " Chinese, I doot," said old Professor James Legge, with a fine Buchan sarcasm and accent that thirty years in China had in no way affected, " will never hae a gweed chance till we get it pitten intill the Aiberdeen coorse." That the system may be responsible for some success in public competitive examinations we do not doubt, but surely to see it gravely eulogised by those who ought to know better augurs but little for their recognition of the fact, that a University exists for the creation of learning alone, and not for routine examinations and the elevation of dull men.

This want of living intellectual interest has fatally reacted on the professions. Aberdonians have a habit of quoting Bain's *Rhetoric*. They will remember therein the Emersonian adage, that " where snow falls there is freedom ". So it is in Univer-



## MEN AND MANNERS.

sities ; and where true learning is in the air, where it has once taken root in the mind, the dangers of academic wreckage are reduced. But dull, weary grinding has been at the root of that high average of "weeds" and "wasters" in our midst, and we can fearlessly assert that in this respect the percentage in the English Universities has long been very small, and efficient safeguards have been wisely enforced. Melvin knew the career of every one of his pupils ; but few Aberdeen professors have in any way taken a moral interest in their men, and what the painful results have been is often a source of bitter reflection to graduates with a memory and knowledge of their own class records. The grinder and the note-taker were the idols. The class might have professed Mormonism or esoteric Buddhism, and run the gamut of the Decalogue, so long as each man paid his fees and worked examinations. Such was the moral interpretation that was put by the authorities on the University motto !

Little wonder, then, if loyalty has been a plant that has taken slight root with us. It is a nipping and an eager air for our frail little Picciola, or prison flower, in Aberdeen. Those who keep class records, and know the fatal facility with which ties snap in after years, best can feel this. There was so little done to provoke an affection for the place ; no one would care to live his time over again, and

## AURORA BOREALIS.

even a fifth year would be a terror to any one but the most indifferent loafer. In official circles we fear is a belief that there prevails this feeling of loyalty, on which extension-schemers may safely draw ; they think it is really sleeping, and a cry upon it by themselves as the prophets of Baal will at once show that the age of chivalry is not dead, but will cause 10,000 sovereigns to leap from their pockets. It is a sorry delusion ; but, as they sowed, they have reaped. The whole difficulty of the extension problem lies precisely there. In an experience longer and wider than that of most, we have never met with ten men who had this feeling. Recently, the *Glasgow Herald* in a leader referred the too early deaths of Professors Minto, Elmslie and Robertson Smith as due to the killing pace of competition. Little place was there for true learning, for genial ties and pleasant memories : rather too much giving up to grinding of what was meant for mankind and for knowledge in the only true sense—thinking applied to life.

University seats owe much to their surroundings. They are, indeed, like the Horatian poet, born and not made ; or, if made, they are the products of long ages. We hold no brief for the buildings of Marischal College in their present or past stage, or even for the " old hulking block " from which Professor Masson saw the stars as he never sees them

## MEN AND MANNERS.

now. There we are no worse off than are Edinburgh and Glasgow. In the surroundings of King's College we are more near the ideal as at St. Andrews, and any affection that Aberdonians may cherish for their *Alma Mater* will invariably be found to centre round them. Nature does after all count, and educationally Dean Stanley found St. Andrews at its best for him with a sleet driving over the links and up the streets of the ancient city. Stevenson thought the view by night from the Calton Hill one of the educational forces for Edinburgh men, and "stimulating as the hoariest summit of the Alps". One of the constant forces that we in Aberdeen have lacked has been the influence of great men. Life has been hard in the North. Refining spirits have been absent, and the academic tone has but too freely taken on the tint of the landscape

Where Ugie winds through Buchan braes,  
A treeless land . . .

Melvin has been our last pure scholar and "presence to be felt and known," and any philosophic hero-worshipper in the market-place with his lantern would be searching yet in vain had he begun his quest with the days of Hector Boece. This has been a loss of the gravest import to us all ; ready as we have been for the advent of the hero and the great man, he has not come. We hold intellectually from

## AURORA BOREALIS.

no feudal superior, and no one has our affection in fee. There has been no Hamilton, or Dugald Stewart, or Lord Kelvin, no faintest breath of "the man of all men given to me in my youth to know, the man that still I fondly think I see in my dreams," as Masson has lately eulogised Thomas Chalmers. Surely all the more should we make the most of what little we have of historic associations.

Much, indeed, of such amenity is passing away. The Old Town, as we first knew it, was the place untouched by the fusion of the Colleges, vaguely unconscious of the parting of the ways. It sat still by the shores of old romance, unmoved by railways and municipal reforms, "after the manner of the Zidonians quiet and secure". The grass grew green in the streets during the long summers that still, after thirty years, have for us an air of the opening stanzas of the *Castle of Indolence*. Communication with the outside world was but small and fitful, and the long and lazy High Street lounging irregularly through it all seems, across those years, still to possess a charm beyond that of her more splendid sister of the same name in Oxford. Others may not feel so, and candour compels us to state that we have heard no one say so; only for us "this old town," as Nathaniel Hawthorne said of Salem, "my native place, though I have dwelt much away





## MEN AND MANNERS.

from it both in boyhood and maturer years, possesses a hold on my affections the force of which I have never realised during my seasons of actual residence there". It has lost much of its old remoteness and picturesqueness, but we may all be thankful that the mean surroundings of Marischal College, with its street Arabs and ice-cream vendors, are in memory but a passing phantom. In summer the old town should be seen as it appears through the haze from "the bents sae brown" of the sea line; in autumn, "when the wan leaf frae the birk tree is fa'in'," from the Chanonry and the back of the cathedral; and "in gloomy winter" from the Seaton Road. Nor are we quite sure that in some respects Stevenson's chosen view is, in its power and mental influence, superior to that of the Murcar Links with the sea in storm, or to one from the lighthouse with the bay at Nigg in a similar condition. Many miles of Buchanan Streets and Sauchiehall Streets will be needed to equal this: respectable hours and the exigencies of landladies prevent it, we fear, from being familiar to most.

Froissart said of the English of his day that they took their pleasures sadly. We shall not deny the soft impeachment with relation to Aberdeen. We never can find what amusements existed in the late fifties and early sixties. Probably there were none—none but the opening day of the session, the last

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Wednesday of October, with the Aulton Market and its shows, sunnily fragrant in our recollections of "the stance"—our academic *campo santo*—still sultry with the sighs of several generations of Fat Women and still sacred to the hornpipe of the Infant Roscius. We never were in what the press affectionately and allusively styles "the old temple of Thespis" in Marischal Street, nor was the present theatre in our day much frequented. A few, indeed, took themselves seriously as critics of the legitimate drama, and studiously modelled their recitations on Barry Sullivan, who was "worth an eternity of Henry Irvings," as we remember Professor Minto declaring. The hall of the Mechanics' Institute in Market Street was greatly attended for dioramas, concerts and mesmerists. The Alhambra was not much in evidence, to use the current phrase; once we were there, with highly distinguished company to still conscience and give a tone to the whole. The best seats, if we remember, cost a shilling, and never since have we laughed so much. The entertainment was in every way unobjectionable to the most fastidious taste, "not calculated," as the Last of the Barons used to say of his surgical lectures, "to bring a blush to the cheek of the most innocent here, see, or the most awfully delicate of my female acquaintances!" Penny shows in the now demolished Weighhouse Square on the Quay were great



## MEN AND MANNERS.

sources of cheap amusement. Rare acting have we seen there, at much less than "popular prices," nor was a penny considered wasted, in returning up Market Street, on Willie Melvin, the blind fiddler at the old post office, for his really admirable versions of *Auld Robin Gray* and *The Flowers of the Forest*. Dancing, if we wanted it, we could provide for ourselves, and, in lieu of pianist and violinist, a performer on the comb would never be found fault with. All this was a humbler scale of accomplishment than the dancing academies in the days of Professor Masson (M.A., 1839), but the sight of masculine "partners" in their grave Terpsichorean revels is yet a source of choice recollections. It was the day of Dan Godfrey, Coote, Gungl, D'Albert, and other composers of dance music; besides the *Blue Danube* waltz of Strauss, we think the chief favourites were the *Mail Train galop* and *The Foxhunters*. Students' nights at the theatre were as unknown as the Derby.

The lack of amusements, however, had one good effect. It produced no constant craving for them and ensured a higher taste. The last music-hall absurdity or pantomime ditty was not all important, and we were less "music hally" and much more classically sentimental and operatic than is the case with the present generation. Discipline

## AURORA BOREALIS.

was far better kept inside and outside, and the force of long tradition and of class feeling (as with members of "a year" and class) was a factor that will take many a day for the present to regain. Now it would seem as if a much lower social class were being tapped by educational changes, and the connection between the University and the provinces appears in danger of snapping through the undue prominence of town schools.

On every hand we stand at the parting of the ways. The system of a fixed degree and curriculum is over. It had its grave blots; it gave the special scholar no chance, it sacrificed his interests to the salary of the professor, and never rose free from the Johnsonian censure of "giving every man a bite and no man a bellyful". One result of the new degree is already perfectly obvious. Its value, educationally and commercially, has seriously fallen. Another consequence is that the tie of union is slighter, and that loyalty, ever a plant in the North of sickliest growth, is impaired. A chain is no stronger than the weakest link, and it is along the line of least resistance, the cheapest subjects and the easiest classes, that the attack will be made and is being carried on. Learning will suffer, and it is useless for us to expect to maintain our old place in the public service by examinations. Every year ousts us from them, and the true conception of

## MEN AND MANNERS.

Universities, as outposts of a nation's hopes and learning, has indeed of late fallen on evil days and evil tongues in Aberdeen.

Extension is in the air. Town Councillors airily affect the tone, and convivial nondescripts assume at various centres the title of University Clubs, where much windy imagination is displayed. But we forget meantime the sane decision of Professor Bain in his *Essays*, that the true function of a University is with its Arts Faculty. Medical studies are prosecuted elsewhere now, and the medical student has ceased to be a monopoly and a national export. We may raise piles, wings and blocks in Marischal College, and soon find the tide has turned, learning too late that our final dependence is on Mar, Buchan and Moray, and not on Angus. The claims of Arts have been sacrificed to vain talk of centralisation and to fancy architectural designs. Imagination has overridden facts. The pure science classes, as was proposed, should have been transferred entirely to King's College, and by this simple adjustment all conflicting time-tables could have been settled, while the first year medical would have become, to *his* great advantage, a student in Arts. By this time extension on a truly great scale would have been completed, and the desired Botanical Garden have been in bloom. We should now be riding out at double anchors the storm that will

## AURORA BOREALIS.

fiercely break on us, when a teaching University in London will sweep the last Englishman from our streets. The whole hope for the future lies in the speedy undoing of the evil caused by missing that opportunity. All Arts graduates should resist the tendency to convert University matters into a cockpit for two equally ambitious and incompetent parties.

## EXTRA - MURALISM.

AN IMPRESSION OF 1884-88.

The maddest, most merry,  
The saddest to bury,  
The sunniest season of life.

THE precise value of his University to any man is, I take it, his abiding impressions of its influence upon him. Rarely does he come to this ultimate appraisement after the manner of the quantitative analyst. Memory even disintegrates the vague paternal assurance, vouches safe at the start, of general "mental improvement" on the one hand, or of subsequent success as gauged by a banking account on the other. The valuation is nearly always vague, for the simple reason that it is largely an emotional and not a hard intellectual process. For does not the fine phrase "Alma Mater" involve a touch of sentiment which admits no pair of scales or foot-rule? Impressions indeed will almost invariably cluster round a particular personality, or a particular point of view, which is scarcely ever quite the same for any two men.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

For myself this remembered influence of the University from 1884 is summed up in my title—Extra-muralism ; by which I mean the whole atmosphere of literary or other student societies, and all that they imply, more particularly the conduct of the magazine *Alma Mater*. As a matter of fact, extra-muralism, for me, represents the world-beyond as regarded from that narrow little world-within, which we call the University, and which is something quite different from the whole theory on which the arenas of the South rest.

The Scots University, affording a very inexpensive education, is never a luxury. It is a positive necessity of life. It is the quickest way by which a youth may hope to "get on" and occupy a better position in the world than his father did before him. Many a boy of the same social status, if born in Lancashire, would undoubtedly graduate in a cotton factory ; in Wales he might go down a mine ; and in a hundred towns he would enter some branch of the Civil Service. In Scotland a University lies within reach, and to that end his whole young life is bended. The question, indeed, is mainly a financial one after all. It is necessary to get a bursary ; it is advisable to get prizes, for these are the finger-posts on the road to success. And such devotion towards this goal is necessary that the far-off horizon grows obscured ; and the University becomes an

## EXTRA-MURALISM.

end in itself, instead of a means to an end. Thus the glorification of a "First Bursar"; thus the unstinted admiration for the prize-taker. How he is to put his knowledge to use is of small moment. Enough that he has taken the Fletcher, the Fullerton or the Ferguson. We have all known the man who flourished for years on the reputation of that first bursary. We have all known the unrivalled Latinist—the Grecian—who had as much appreciation of literature as of sub-marine engineering, who regarded the Roman's language as a superbly elaborate system of grammatical torture, and for whom Euripides previously stood for mastery of the tragic trimeter. Do you deny the contention? Why, I take the current *Calendar* to find of W. A. Hunter, not that he helped Scotland to get Free Education, which will be remembered, but that he won the Ferguson; of W. M. Ramsay, not that he has re-created Asia Minor, but that he took a first-class in moderations; of David Ferrier, not that he has out-distanced all brain specialists, but that he is Professor of Forensic Medicine in King's College, London.

All this is exactly the point of view with which we entered King's College. And it is the point of view that Minto was the first man to dispel. He had been out in the great busy world. He had jostled with the restless crowd in Fleet Street, with

## AURORA BOREALIS.

its divers interests and its breathless struggle. And he had come back to the old place where they remembered not that he had conducted the *Examiner* against heavy odds, but that he had taken triple honours ; returning to tell the younger generation which revered him for that early achievement what donship and dominieism were really worth in the battle outside. He was ever keen to turn our eyes on the little world-beyond which we had created for ourselves and which I have called Extra-muralism. Thus he would announce a discussion in the Debating Society with no perfunctory haste. He would indicate the desirability of going out to the Literary Society to hear Mr. X Y Z hold forth on some writer or other ; he would draw attention to some particular article or verses that had taken his fancy in *Alma Mater*.

And yet I know the "clever lads from the North"—they are affectionately spoken of as if they were favourite fillies training at Newmarket—did not squander too much of their useful leisure on the societies. "The Debating" always gathered the biggest crowd, not that the audiences were dialectic enthusiasts, but they appreciated the delight of seeing the discomfiture of Youth and the cock-sureness of Maturity. The debates were rarely on novel, and still more rarely on subjects of immediate interest. How often have I seen that poor old



## EXTRA-MURALISM.

Rozinante, "Is the theatre demoralising?" spurred and goaded into a panting gallop for the benefit of Eighty-Four, just as it had been whipped for the delectation of Seventy-Four or Sixty-Four. And I suppose it is still being thrashed, even though the student of to-day, moving with the rest of the population, stands patiently at the pit door grasping his shilling without a qualm save that of immediate economy and the landlady. The Literary Society was, and probably remains, a much more select body. Hilarious youth exhausted itself at "the Debating," and was chary of lingering to be bored at "the Literary"—always thus abbreviated—where callow youth went on summarising the latest word on Keats and Shelley year in year out as if no newcomers had entered the field. In fact, the scope of the English Men of Letters Series seemed to mark the limits of our literature. Now and again an enthusiast, who felt for himself and who had views of his own, arose. Thus I shall never forget how Grierson, with breathless eloquence, could illumine Byron; and I have recollections of W. Ch. Spence's incisive summing up of a score of authors. The Literary Society was the meeting ground of undergraduate and graduate alike. The Celtic Society was even more select than the Literary, though its numbers were always larger, for it was by its nature clannish, and for that very reason it was enthusiastic.

## AURORA BOREALIS.

Towards the end of our curriculum in 1888 we got the length of attending the theatre in a body, amusing that "dress" circle, for which nobody "dresses," with a noisy programme of the latest music-hallism, while the spangled ladies of the chorus peeped wonderingly from the wings. A Dramatic Society flourished at spasmodic intervals, and even "new and original plays" were produced in defiance of requirements of the Lord Chamberlain's office, and sundry antiquated enactments of George, King by the grace of God. The Drama gathered strange souls round it from every Faculty, while nearly all the other societies were supported by Arts men. Medical students of prolonged residence and extensive experience of the wicked world would attend a rehearsal at 9 a.m., while a class could never induce them to rise before noon. I remember one imaginative Italian-Spaniard drafting a scheme for a gorgeous carnival, in a vain attempt to recall the vivid colouring of that sunny Spanish shore which, in pursuing medicine, he had not seen for many a day. For a whole week he crowded the "cage" with a series of magnificent diagrams, in which, with a lavish display of paint, he had disguised Messrs. Wordie's prosaic lorries as romantic triumphal cars. Most of us only laughed, and the zealous artist rolled up his scheme with a sigh; but he was not to be balked of brightness,

## EXTRA-MURALISM.

for casting off the dust of Marischal College from his feet, he took to electricity, and dazzled Ealing nightly with sputtering arcs.

The charms of Extra-muralism were only beginning to dawn on the student of fifteen years ago. In an earlier day, I am told that he practised conviviality as a fine art. The Tree of Knowledge was replaced at regular intervals by the Lemon Tree ; and Bursary Night was celebrated at Pegler's with something of the enthusiasm of the old English hunting squire. But by the eighties the student world had begun to wear a new face. Bands of Hope and Mr. Murphy had talked to the young generation not in vain ; and even a Temperance Society had sprung up. Bursary Night was almost a tradition, and, again, the Bajans' " supper " had ceased to engage the attention of the police. Almost the last howff of the convivialists was " Duffus's," which survived to link the old individualistic extra-muralism with the new, in the shape of *Alma Mater*. Every Friday evening, and, later, on Saturdays, the editors of that admirable journal assembled in the little parlour at Duffus's to discuss the next week's issue. The cosy little bar with the shining mugs still remained to tell of a vanishing day which carried on the curriculum of Peter Butter's College. The silent imperturbable black-coated James — whose surname no man

## AURORA BOREALIS.

knew—flitted about the low-roofed rooms, and up and down the brass bound staircase ; but gradually the editors got shamefaced about their sanctum, and on a vague threat from some puritan to expose the mysterious meeting-place, Duffus's was abandoned, even though most of us drank nothing but ginger ale.

Never had a paper so many editors as *Alma Mater*. Of course, the practice scouted the theory, and the magazine was almost invariably conducted, and "put to bed" by one man, who was strong willed enough to override his colleagues. The dominant one was an absolute necessity ; but the fiction of the many had to be kept up in deference to the theory of democracy on which the University is based, and which afterwards found expression in the Students' Representative Council. That body, from time to time, was roused to a sense of the enormity of the one-man show by some noisy theorist : and drew up rules and regulations for the equal apportionment of labour. For a few weeks the little journalistic republic, thus re-established, went on happily ; but the usurper invariably arose and ruled the roost till the next day of reckoning. And this process will always go on. For the student, who knows not of Dons and Proctors and Bulldogs, will never hear of that one-man magazine, though Fleet Street never questions the wisdom of

## EXTRA-MURALISM.

the provision. As for myself, let me say that, during a connection of six years with *Alma Mater*, carried on long after graduation, I learned more to help me in the business of my life than from any other side of the University; and I believe other men could say the same. One met students from all the Faculties, and the work was very amusing, interesting and instructive. Otherwise, it gave one the rare chance of keeping hold of the University even after one had ceased to be a student. Indeed, the final solution of the permanence of the magazine, which all of us must in loyalty desire, is for the Representative Council to induce one of our graduates with time on his hands to remain as long as possible on the staff; otherwise, with such a shifting population as the University must always be composed of, the difficulties in the way of continuing this admirable feature of Extra-muralism are needlessly increased.

The disciplined Extra-muralism, which now reigns in the place of the conviviality in the sixties or seventies, got a great impetus, I think, with the formation of the University Battery, in connection with the City Artillery. It organised the physical side of education, which the football, cricket and golf clubs had done long before; and it was followed by the tennis, shinty and swimming clubs and by the Medical Staff Corps, all of which

## AURORA BOREALIS.

emphasise a side of life that had been largely neglected in the past, even though a billiard-table was erected at King's College in the seventeenth century, and archery was practised at Marischal College, to the terror of the neighbours. The Battery formed a meeting-point for all the Faculties, and under the old system in Arts, where the men of one class did not mix with the others to any extent, that was exceedingly desirable.

But of course the rallying-point of all Extra-muralism was the foundation, and, later, the recognition of the Students' Representative Council. Its rise and progress forms a most fascinating study in the development of the democratic tendencies on which the Scots Universities are based. Historically, it is sound ; and its ancient pedigree, going right back to the old " Nations " of mediævalism—which was a form of Extra-muralism—entitles it to the highest respect, even where faults and deficiencies may be noted. New-fangled it is not in any true sense, and in a University like ours which has preserved so much of the old spirit of Lord Rectorism it deserves to be fostered with affection. The Union, which we of '88 days knew not, is its legitimate outcome, and makes still more for the cultivation of that Extra-muralism which is so welcome and so necessary.

It needed no Act of Parliament to induce Aber-

## EXTRA-MURALISM.

deen to proceed on these lines. The eighties realised the true picture of the Rector by enthroning Dr. Bain. The later generations have happily declined to supplant a local man by impossible politicians and pompous addresses, which were intended to turn out prigs, but which actually resulted in the lavish distribution of peasemeal, the activity of the police, and the pillorying of the undergraduate by the daily newspapers.

Not the least valuable form of Extra-muralism was the Students' Concert—the work of the Choral Society—which brought town and gown into close embrace once a year. The University, unhappily, has always been in, rather than of, Aberdeen,—in striking contrast to Oxford and Cambridge. The monastic origin of the older University perhaps induced this aloofness ; but nobody can doubt that it should be broken down. The admission of the municipal government into the University Court did part of the work, even although the Town Council has haggled over the reconstruction of Marischal College in pretty much the same way as it did with the valuable salmon fishings in days gone by. The rebuilding itself has even been supported by the townsfolk, and the Mitchell Hall forms a splendid meeting-place for all. But formerly that audacious concert was almost the one point of contact. What a function it used to be—the scramble for tickets,

## AURORA BOREALIS.

the greater scramble for all the available cabs to convoy the fair to the Music Hall, the enthusiasm, the delight of the singers! That the society is capable of greater developments nobody who knows about the life of the "Sang Schule" and the issuing of Forbes's "Cantus" can doubt. Its intrinsic value would be greatly enhanced by the performance of academic music alone. Think of the endless series of student songs which Germany alone supplies, while the creation of songs peculiarly appropriate to Aberdeen University is surely not impossible. This music movement has certainly got a new lease of life by the issue of the "Students' Song Book," in which all the four Universities are represented editorially, though the book owes its success mainly to the splendid labours of the Rev. Millar Partick, who has toiled incessantly on its behalf. In Edinburgh and Glasgow the students make constant use of it. With the outside public it has been an enormous success, edition after edition being called for.

Looking back to 1884 these are some of the things that I remember most vividly, because they have been of most usefulness to me. Of the precise amount of Latin learned I know not. I am sure I should not recognise a tragic trimeter if I saw it. Conic sections have vanished as if they had never been. The vaguest elements of physics alone



## EXTRA-MURALISM.

remain, and moral philosophy is but the veriest farrago of farce. But Minto I cannot forget even if I would, for I listen daily to those jangling bells of St. Clement Danes pealing from that tiny island in the traffic of the Strand, the same old bells that summoned Dr. Johnson to church, and that echoed in Minto's heart long after he had quitted the crowd in Fleet Street where he had battled with the busiest. Far in retreat, far north, he carried the memories of the world-beyond, which knows nothing of First Bursars ; and just for that reason he is unforgettable.



## INDEX.

- ABERDEEN**, Earl of, Chancellor of King's College, 10.  
**Aberdeen**, Medical Graduates Association, Manchester, 234.  
**Aberdeen University Club**, London, 234.  
**Adams**, Dr. Francis, 26.  
**Adams**, Professor John C., 34.  
 "Adsum," 84.  
*Alec Forbes*, 368.  
**Alhambra**, 376.  
**Allan**, Alexander, 206.  
*Alma Mater*, 382, 387.  
**Anderson**, Dr. James, 236.  
**Anderson**, Dr. John, 227.  
**Anatomical Museum**, 225.  
**Angus Nation**, 9, 379.  
*'Απερὴ ἀνδράρκης*, 365.  
**Arnot**, Professor Walker, 328.  
**Aulton Market**, 376.
- BAIN**, Alexander, Professor of Logic and Lord Rector, 21, 43, 60, 111, 237, 358, 391.  
**Barcaple**, Lord, *i.e.*, Maitland, E. F.  
**Barker**, Thomas, Senior Wrangler, 41.  
 "Baron" or "Barron," the, 251, 297, 376.  
**Beattie**, James, Professor of Moral Philosophy, 361.  
**Bentley**, James, Professor of Oriental Languages, 140.  
**Besant**, Sir Walter, 121.  
 "Billy," 100.  
**Black**, John, Professor of Humanity, 120.
- Blackie**, Professor John Stuart, 113, 115, 120, 121, 131, 353.  
**Boece**, Hector, Principal, 120.  
**Boston**, Thomas, 135.  
**Botanic Garden**, 379.  
*Botanists' Guide*, 333.  
**Boyd**, Dr. A. K. H., 183.  
**Brazier**, James S., Professor of Chemistry, 282, 318.  
**Buchan Nation**, 8, 379.  
**Buchanan**, George, 120, 360.  
**Buildings of King's College**, 355.  
**Buildings of Marischal College**, 223, 365.  
**Burnet**, Bishop Gilbert, 361.  
**Burnett**, Dr. Sidney, 294.  
**Bursaries in Medicine**, 220.  
**Bursary Competition**, 14.  
**Bursary Night**, 387.  
**Burton**, John Hill, 67.  
**Burton**, Sir Richard, 197.  
*Butler's Analogy*, 167.  
**Butter's**, Peter, College, 387.
- CALVERT**, Mr., 184.  
**Campbell**, George, Principal, 361.  
**Campbell**, Peter Colin, Principal, 10, 34, 115, 136, 140, 142, 174, 362.  
**Campbell**, Shon, 353.  
**Candlish**, Dr. Robert S., 115.  
**Carlyle**, Thomas, 121.  
**Celtic Society**, 385.  
**Chalmers**, Dr. Thomas, 147, 347.  
**Chanonry Lodge**, 364.  
**Chapel Attendance**, 86.  
**Chaplainry**, 363.

## INDEX.

- Characteristics of English Poets*, 66.  
 "Charon," 324.  
 Choral Society, 391.  
 Christie, John, Professor of Church History, 176.  
 Christison, Professor Alexander, 135.  
 Chrystal, Professor George, 191, 342.  
 Churchill, Lord Randolph, Candidate for Lord Rectorship, 21.  
 Clark, Sir James, 295.  
 Clark, Thomas, Professor of Chemistry, 309.  
 Clarke, Edward Daniel, 142.  
 "Cocky," 117.  
 Colenso, Bishop, 165.  
 Colman, George, the Younger, 369.  
 Colvin, John, Sacrist, 69, 350.  
 Colvin, Mrs., 353.  
 Commission of 1826, 1.  
 Commission of 1858, 5, 161, 223.  
 Commission of 1876, 18, 216.  
 Confession of Faith, 167.  
 Conington, John, 115.  
 Cooper, Sir Astley, 257, 258.  
 Crawford, Earl, *i.e.*, Lindsay, Lord.  
 Crombie, Professor Frederick, 139.  
 Cross, Sir Richard, Candidate for Lord Rectorship, 20.  
 Cruickshank, Dr. Brodie, 228.
- DALGETTY, Dugald, 121, 369.  
 Darwin, Charles, 241, 271, 332.  
 Davidson, Professor A. B., 192.  
 Davidson, Alexander Dyce, Professor of *Materia Medica*, 295, 302.  
 Davidson, Charles B., 209.  
 Davidson, Patrick, Professor of Scots Law, 206.  
 "Davie" [Rennet], 340.  
 "Davie" [Thomson], 74.  
 "Dean" [Macrobin], the, 277.
- "Dean" [Walker], the, 336.  
 Debating Society, 83, 384.  
*Delitiæ Poetarum Scotorum*, 137.  
 De Quincey, Thomas, 54.  
 Dewar, Dr. James, 228.  
 Dickie, George, Professor of Botany, 326.  
 Dickson, Professor Alex., 335.  
 Dinmont, Dandie, 134.  
 Donaldson, James, Professor of Humanity, 302.  
 Dramatic Society, 386.  
 Duff, [Sir] M. E. Grant, Lord Rector, 13, 15.  
 Duffus's, 387.  
 Dunbar, Bishop Gavin, 355.  
 Dupuytren, Baron, 258.  
 Dyce, Robert, Professor of Midwifery, 313.  
 Dyce, Dr. William, 313.  
 Dyce, William, R.A., 313.
- EARLY Progress of Christianity in Buchan*, 272.  
*Ecclesiastical History of Scotland*, 210.  
 Edinburgh University, 8.  
*Education as a Science*, 55.  
 Ellesmere, Earl, Lord Rector, 5.  
 Elmslie, Professor W. G., 372.  
 Elphinstone, Bishop William, 355, 361.  
*Encyclopædia Britannica*, 200.  
 Examination for Degrees, 218.  
 Examination for Theology Chair, 163.  
 Extension of Buildings, 223, 379.  
 Extra-muralism, 381.
- FERGUSON, George, Professor of Humanity, 121.  
 Ferguson Scholars, 65.  
 Ferrier, Professor David, 383.  
 "Fiend," the, 74.  
 First Bursars, 383, 393.  
*First Lines of Therapeutics*, 295.  
*Flora of Ulster*, 333.  
*Flosculi Graeci Boreales*, 29.

## INDEX.

- Forbes, John, Professor of Oriental Languages, 150.  
 Forbes, Bishop Patrick, 163, 361.  
 Forster, William F., Lord Rector, 18.  
 Fraser Buildings, King's College, 141.  
 Fraser, Dr. James, 356.  
 Frazer, J. G., 198.  
 "Freddy," 37.  
 "Frog," the, 297.  
 "Fusion," the, 352.  
 Fyfe, Andrew, Professor of Chemistry, 323.  
 Fyfe, John, Librarian, and Professor of Moral Philosophy, 65, 103, 145, 362.  
 Fuller, Frederick, Professor of Mathematics, 33, 72, 142.
- GARDEN, Dr. George, 211.  
 Garden, Professor James, 211.  
 Geddes, [Sir] W. D., Professor of Greek, 15, 25, 78, 142.  
*Genetic Cycle in Organic Nature*, 272.  
 Gibb, Robert, 229, 324.  
 Glasgow University, 8.  
 Glencorse, Lord, *i.e.*, Inglis, John.  
 Gordon, Dr. Alex., 294.  
 Goschen, George J., Lord Rector, 23.  
*Grammar*, Bain's, 43, 55.  
 Grammar School, Aberdeen, 27.  
 Grant Duff, M. E., *i.e.*, Duff, M. E. Grant.  
 Grierson, H. J. C., Professor of English, 385.  
 Grote, George, Candidate for Lord Rectorship, 13.  
 — friend of Dr. Bain, 52.  
 Grub, George, Professor of Law, 123, 205.  
 Gunn, Dr. John, 227.
- HAMILTON, Professor Sir William, 374.
- Hannah, Rector of Edinburgh Academy, 115.  
 Harcourt, Sir W. Vernon, 115.  
 Harvey, Dr., of Braco, 292.  
 Harvey, Alexander, Professor of Materia Medica, 292, 334.  
 Harvey, Dr. Robert, 294.  
 Harvey, Dr. William, 333.  
 Hay, Sir Andrew Leith, Candidate for Lord Rectorship, 9.  
 Hegel, 241.  
 Heine, 133.  
*Heir at Law*, 369.  
 Hellenic Society, 28, 183.  
 Helmholtz, 239, 269.  
 Henderson, Sir William, 230.  
 High Street, 374.  
 Hoffmann, Professor, 323.  
 Homer, 25, 28.  
 Honours Examinations, 34.  
 Hooker, Sir Joseph, 328, 334.  
 Horace, 126.  
 Hume, Joseph, Lord Rector, 1.  
 Hunter, John, 244.  
 Hunter, William A., 383.  
 Huntly, Marquis of, Candidate for Lord Rectorship, 16.  
 — Lord Rector, 293.  
 Huxley, Thomas H., Lord Rector, 16, 88.
- INDIAN Civil Service Competition, 41.  
 Inglis, John, Lord Glencorse, Lord Rector, 3.  
 Innes, Professor Cosmo, 210.
- JACK, Gilbert, 120.  
 Jack, William, Principal, 364.  
 James IV., King, 361.  
 "James," 387.  
 "Jamie," 322.  
 Jamieson, Dr. Fife, 236.  
 "Jeames," 89.  
 Jebb, Professor, 30.  
 Jenkyns, William, 360.  
 "John" [Black], 131.  
 "John" [Colvin], 351.

## INDEX.

- "Johnny," 111.  
 Johnston, Arthur, 120, 360.  
 Jones, Henry T., 320.
- KEITH, Dr., 229, 254.  
 Kelvin, Lord, 34, 374.  
 Kerr, Dr., 229.  
 King, Sir George, 227.  
 King's College Medical School, 212.  
 King's College Quadrangle, 141.  
 Kipling, Rudyard, 121.  
 Knight, William, Professor of Natural Philosophy, 51, 327.  
 Knox, John, 361.  
 Koch, Professor, 285.
- LACHMANN, Karl, 126.  
*Laird of Ury*, 369.  
 Legge, Professor James, 123, 370.  
 Lemon Tree, 63, 387.  
 Lesley, John, 120.  
 Library of 1870, 360.  
 Library, Site of, 215.  
 Library, Dr. Fraser's, 359.  
 Library, Dr. Melvin's, 360.  
 Library, Bishop Stewart's, 359.  
 Lindsay, Lord, Candidate for Lord Rectorship, 18.  
 Lindsay, Professor T. M., 194, 204.  
 Lister, Lord, 247.  
 Liston, Robert, 256.  
 Literary Society, 385.  
 Lizars, Alexander J., Professor of Anatomy, 240.  
 "Lobby," the, 357.  
*Logic*, Mill's, 48.  
 ——— Minto's, 62.  
 Lucretius, 126.  
 Luke, St., his Fair, 43.
- MACDONELL, John, 191.  
 McIntyre, Alexander, 109, 121.  
 Mackay, Adam, 228.  
 Maclean, A. J., 126.  
 MacLennan, J. F., 191, 202.
- Macleod, Dr. John, 186.  
 Macleod, Dr. Norman, 183.  
 Maclure, Robert, Professor of Humanity, 112, 122.  
 Macpherson, Duncan, 158.  
 Macpherson, Hugh, Professor of Greek, 362, 363.  
 Macpherson, Robert, Professor of Systematic Theology, 155, 164.  
 Macritchie, David, 88.  
 Macrobin, John, Professor of Medicine, 275.  
 Maitland, Edward F., Lord Barchape, Lord Rector, 9, 280.  
 Major, John, 120.  
*Man's Place and Bread*, 295.  
 Manses, 363.  
 Mar Nation, 8, 379.  
 Marischal College Buildings, 365.  
 Marischal College Medical School, 212.  
 Marischal College, Mitchell Hall, 11.  
 Marischal College, Rectorial Court, 1, 3.  
 Marischal, Earl, 361.  
 Martin, William, Professor of Moral Philosophy, 95, 112, 117, 169, 362.  
 Masson, Professor David, 372, 377.  
*Master Builder's Plan*, 267, 269.  
 Master of Arts Degree, 34, 40.  
 Maxwell, Sir W. Stirling, Candidate for Rectorship, 15.  
 Mearns, Duncan, Professor of Systematic Theology, 159, 362.  
 Medical School, 212.  
 Medical Staff Corps, 389.  
 Melville, James, 147.  
 Melvin, James, 25, 120, 121, 123, 128, 360, 371, 373.  
 Melvin, Willie, 377.  
 Middleton, Alexander, Principal, 357.  
 Mill, John Stuart, 48, 53, 56, 191.

## INDEX.

- Milligan, William, Professor of Biblical Criticism, 157, 181.  
 Milne, Dr. John, 220.  
 Minto, William, Professor of Logic, 57, 122, 302, 353, 372, 383, 393.  
 Mitchell Hall, 11, 391.  
 Mitre, Sign of the, 363.  
 "Mole," the, 297.  
 Moray Nation, 9, 379.  
 Morley, John, Candidate for Lord Rectorship, 23.  
 Moses, 165.  
 Murcar Links, 375.  
 Murchison, Sir Rod., 93.  
 Murray Lectures, 161, 162.  
*My Little Girl*, Besant's, 109, 121, 369.
- NATIONS**, Voting in, 7, 8, 390.  
 Neil, Robert A., 196.  
 Nichol, Robert, 136.  
 Nicol, James, Professor of Natural History, 83, 136, 334.  
 Niven, Charles, Professor of Natural Philosophy, 42.  
 Non-jurors, 211.
- OGILVIE**, Dr. John Charles, 267.  
 Ogilvie [Forbes], George, Professor of Physiology, 264.  
 Ogston, Francis, Professor of Medical Jurisprudence, 308.  
 Omar Khayyam, 336.  
 Owen, Richard, 241, 269.
- PAGET**, Sir James, Candidate for Lord Rectorship, 21.  
 Paré, Ambrose, 258.  
 Pathology, Chair of, 222.  
 Patrick, Rev. Millar, 392.  
*Pearson on the Creed*, 167.  
 Peglers, 387.  
*Phaedo*, edited by Professor Geddes, 30.  
 Philpots, Dr. E. P., 257, 258, 296.
- Piazza, the, 356, 365.  
 Pirie, George, Professor of Mathematics, 39, 42.  
 Pirie, William Robinson, Professor of Church History, 108, 169.  
 Pirrie, William, Professor of Surgery, 222, 229, 249.  
 Powell, Baden, 157.  
 Powis, Laird of, 141.  
 Price, Bonamy, 115.  
*Principles and Practice of Surgery*, 250, 262.
- RAMSAY**, William M., Professor of Humanity, 383.  
 Reid, Sir George, P. R. S. A., 42, 187, 196, 208.  
 Recano, J. B., 386.  
 Rectorial Court, 1, 3, 7.  
 Rectors, 1.  
 Reid, Archibald D., A. R. S. A., 353.  
 Reid, Thomas, Professor of Moral Philosophy, 363.  
 Rennet, [Dr.] Davie, 33, 36, 39, 40, 130, 340.  
*Rhetoric*, Bain's, 370.  
 Richmond, Duke of, Chancellor of Marischal College, 10.  
 Richmond and Gordon, Duke of, Chancellor, 130.  
 Ritchie, Leitch, 114.  
 Ritschl, F. W., 120.  
 Robb, Dr. John, 228.  
 Robb, Peter, 305, 319.  
 Robertson, Professor George Croom, 358.  
 Robertson, Joseph, 210.  
 Rosebery, Earl of, Lord Rector, 20.  
 Row, John, Principal, 357.  
 Ruddiman, Thomas, 25, 120, 360.  
 Russell, John, Earl, Lord Rector, 11.
- St. Andrews University, 8.  
 St. John, J. A., 114.

## INDEX.

- Saintsbury, Professor G., 67.  
 Samuelson, Bernhard, Candidate for Lord Rectorship, 16.  
 Sandford, Sir Daniel, 113.  
 Science Degree, 219.  
 Scott, Andrew, Professor of Oriental Languages, 112, 132, 151, 357.  
 Scott, "Hebrew," *i.e.*, Scott, Andrew.  
 Scott, Hercules, Professor of Moral Philosophy, 109, 110, 363.  
 Scottish Universities Act, 213.  
 Seabury, Bishop, 205.  
 Seaton Road, 375.  
 Senior Wranglers, 41.  
 Site of Classes, 214, 379.  
 Sim, George, 228.  
 Simpson, Archibald, 365.  
 Simpson, Dr. James, 236.  
 Skene, Charles, Professor of Medicine, 276.  
 Slessor, George, Senior Wrangler, 41.  
 Smith, James, General Council's Assessor, 110.  
 Smith, Dr. Robert, 236.  
 Smith, Walter C., 145.  
 Smith, Dr. William.  
 Smith, W. Pirie, 189.  
 Smith, Professor William Robertson, 65, 122, 189, 372.  
 Smith-Shand, J. W. F., Professor of Medicine, 281.  
 Societies, 384.  
 Song-book, 392.  
 Spalding, Professor, 148.  
 Spence, W. Ch., 385.  
 Steggull, Robert, 118.  
 Stewart, Professor Dugald, 374.  
 Stewart, Bishop William, 359.  
 Stirling, Dr. Hutchinson, 191.  
 Stirling, [Sir] James, Senior Wrangler, 41.  
 Stirling Maxwell, Sir W., *i.e.*, Maxwell, Sir W. Stirling.
- Stokes, Professor, 34.  
 Struthers, [Sir] John, Professor of Anatomy, 237, 254, 367.  
 Stuart, John, 210.  
 Students, Number of, 216.  
 Students of Medicine, 231.  
 Students' Concert, 391.  
 Students' Nights, 377.  
 Students' Representative Council, 83, 389, 390.  
 Students' Song-book, 392.  
 Students' Union, 83.  
 Sullivan, Barry, 376.  
 Sykes, Lieut.-Col., 5, 58.
- TENNANT, William, 138, 147.  
 Terence, 127.  
 Testimony of Nature, 295.  
 Tait, Professor P. G., 34, 190.  
 Taylor, "bottlewasher," 320.  
 "Thay haif said," etc., 365.  
 Thompson, Allen, Professor of Anatomy, 240.  
 Thompson, George, 221.  
 Thomson, David, Professor of Natural Philosophy, 33, 34, 40, 71, 363.  
 Trail, Samuel, Professor of Systematic Theology, 156, 161, 184.  
*Trees and their Nature*, 295.  
 Troup, Charles Edward, Examiner, 64.  
 Tulloch, John, Professor of Mathematics, 33.  
 Tulloch, Principal, 96.  
 Tyndall, Professor, 195, 239.
- UNION of King's and Marischal Colleges, 6, 79, 213.  
 Union, Students', 390.  
 Universities Act of 1858, 5, 6, 7.  
 Universities Act of 1889, 18, 24, 216.  
 Universities Commission of 1826, 1.  
 Universities Commission of 1858, 5, 161.



## INDEX.

- Universities Commission of 1876.  
University Battery, 389.  
University Buildings, 355.
- VEITCH, William, 135.  
Version, the, 127.
- WALKER, Alexander, 336.  
Walker, George, 337.  
Walker, Robert, Librarian and Registrar, 336.
- Watson, Dr., 183.  
Webster, Dr. John, 361.  
Wellhausen, J., 203.  
Whale, the Tay, 242.  
Wilson, Sir Erasmus, 222.  
Wilson, Florence, 120.  
Wilson, J. Dove, Professor of Law, 230.  
Wranglers, 345.  
Wright, William, 146.













LF  
968  
A87  
1899  
C.1  
ROBA

