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## JOHN TURNBULL SMITH, LL.D., D.L.

**W**ITHIN fair distance of the Tweed at Drumelzier, where it flows past the grave of Merlin the Sage, stands the ancient Church of St Begha or St Bees at Kilbucho, in the county of Peebles. Indeed, what is now called the parish of Broughton was formed by the incorporation of Kilbucho, Glenholm, and Broughton, and the new Parish Church stands in Kilbucho. Here then was born on the 5th of August, 1843, the subject of this article. There may have been in this year of the so-called Disruption of the Church, certain conditions in the horoscope of John Turnbull Smith which were destined to develop into his becoming in these later years one of the staunchest supporters of the Church of Scotland.

In those days the Church was ably served, according to Knox's wise scheme, by a body of scholarly parochial schoolmasters, many of whom had studied for the Church and were superior Classical scholars. Of these was the schoolmaster of Kilbucho, whose son John, after drinking in knowledge at the well of St Bees, was to become one of the foremost educationists of the capital. Another of the master's pupils was

Alexander Dickson of Hartree, who became Professor of Botany at the University of Edinburgh. It was he who presided at the jubilee dinner of the veteran schoolmaster, and presented him with a timepiece and a purse of sovereigns in name of friends and former pupils of Kilbucho and Dolphinton, whither the family had removed in 1849, when the younger son John was in his sixth year. The evening of Mr Smith's days was spent at Hamilton, where he passed away aged 86, being survived by his wife, Helen Turnbull, for other six years, when she rejoined him, aged 89. Two daughters died some years ago, but the elder and only other son Thomas, who was agent of the Bank of Scotland at Gorbals, Glasgow, and Provost of Govanhill, is enjoying a well-earned retirement at the age of 74.

With the view of becoming a Chartered Accountant, John Turnbull Smith was indentured in October, 1859, to the late Mr Kenneth Mackenzie, C.A., a younger brother of the late Mr John Ord Mackenzie of Dolphinton. He was admitted a member of the C.A. Society in 1867. Even before this date his apprentice-master had given him a share in his business, and the partnership continued until the death of Mr Mackenzie in 1880. Thereafter Mr

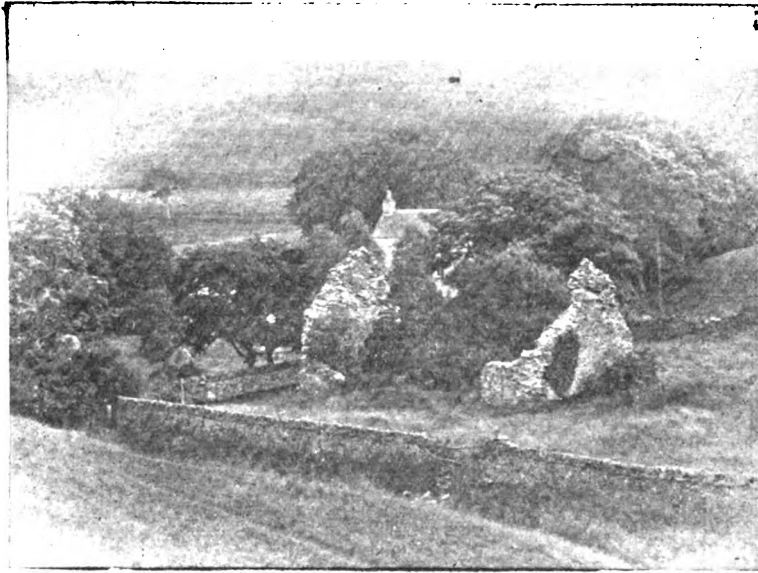
Turnbull Smith carried on the business alone. In addition to a large general accountant business, he became auditor to the Church of Scotland, to the Highland and Agricultural Society, to the Leith Dock Commission, to the Royal College of Physicians, and to other public institutions. His private appointments included those of auditor to the Earl of Wemyss, the Earl of Zetland, the Right Honourable Arthur James Balfour of Whittingehame, and others.

In 1883 Mr Turnbull Smith was elected a director of the Life Association of Scotland, and on the death of the then manager in 1885, he was asked by his co-directors, including the

purely professional life of Dr Turnbull Smith. Such a successful development of his business life might have sufficed for any ordinary man, and so it has in most cases, but the subject of this biography is "by ordinary." Insurance work and accounting have formed his vocation; but among his avocations which he has carried on as earnestly as his business, are (1) The Merchant Company, (2) Education, (3) The Church of Scotland, (4) The Sabbath School and Church of St Bernard's.

#### IN THE MERCHANT COMPANY.

Mr Turnbull Smith joined the Merchant Company in 1882, and was elected an assistant



KILBUCHO CHURCH AND MANSE.

late Earl of Stair, K.T., who was chairman of the Association, to accept the post of manager. This Mr Turnbull Smith acceded to, and he has held that office ever since. His relationship with his directors, with his fellow-officials, and with all connected with the Association has always been most cordial and friendly. Shortly after becoming manager of the Association the Faculty of Actuaries elected him a Fellow of their Faculty, and he subsequently held the appointment of honorary treasurer to that body. For three years he held the office of chairman of the Managers' Association in connection with the Scottish Life Offices. The foregoing is a necessarily brief resumé of the

in 1887, an office which he held for three years. In 1890 he was made treasurer of the Company, and in the following year he was elevated to the Mastership. Next year he was re-appointed, and on demitting office in 1893 he became senior assistant for one year.

As an assistant and as treasurer of the Company, Mr Turnbull Smith was also a Governor of the great charitable and educational institutions connected with the Company, and as Master he became Preses of the various Boards. As treasurer he was collector of the Widows' Fund, and was on that Board for a period of five years.

On vacating the chair in 1893 Mr Turnbull

Smith was re-elected to the Board of one of these Institutions—The Merchant Maiden Hospital—an office which he held for four years. But a more important appointment conferred on him in 1894 was the honorary treasurership of George Watson's Hospital, an office which he held until 1899. During all this time he was Convener of George Watson's Boys' College, probably the largest school of the kind in the United Kingdom. At all the examinations of the various schools of the Merchant Company, Mr Turnbull Smith and his wife were indefatigable in their interest and attendance; and one recalls the keen competitions for, and the pleasure the pupils showed in receiving at their hands the valuable watches and other prizes presented to the scholars by those two generous friends year after year.

On resigning the treasurership of the Company in 1899, he was elected honorary treasurer of George Grindlay's Endowment, an office which he vacated in 1901.

In addition, Mr Turnbull Smith has represented the Merchant Company on the following Boards:—(1) The Edinburgh Savings Bank, 1891-93; (2) Peterhead Harbour Trust, 1891-93; (3) Trustees for Bathgate Academy, 1891-93; (4) Governors of Fettes Trust, 1891, continuously to date; (5) Robert Christie's Bequest, 1892-3; (6) Burgh Committee on Secondary Education, 1892, continuously to date.

In 1891 Mr Turnbull Smith gave evidence on behalf of the Merchant Company Institutions before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Town Holdings.

In 1892, on the 14th December, he and Mrs Turnbull Smith gave a conversazione in the Museum of Science and Art, which was attended by the members of the Merchant Company, the staffs of the Company's schools, and representative citizens, 2000 invitations being issued.

In his valedictory address to the Company as Master, Mr Turnbull Smith outlined his scheme for the creation of a Central Board to be representative of the four Hospitals with a joint purse arrangement among them, and having a Superannuation Fund for teachers. These important proposals were afterwards developed, and were carried through by the Merchant Company Endowments Act of 1895.

During all these years Mr Turnbull Smith had worked among those diverse interests, quietly rejoicing in the work he had been permitted to do, and gratified with the successful

results achieved. He sought no other reward. But his fellow-citizens thought otherwise. Accordingly, on the occasion of his retiring from the Mastership of the Merchant Company, he and his accomplished helpmeet were made the recipients of valuable testimonials. His successor in the Mastership, in making the presentation, said:—"Mr Turnbull Smith, it is my pleasing duty, on behalf of many friends connected with the Merchant Company and its Trusts, to present to you as a mark of our great esteem this silver tray and fruit service, and to Mrs Smith this pearl and diamond necklet, with the hope that in after years they may recall pleasant memories of the time when you were our much respected Master, and of the amicable relations which always existed 'twixt you and every one connected with the Company. May they also in some slight measure acknowledge the unfailing courtesy with which Mrs Smith and yourself grudged neither time nor trouble in our interests. The inscription on the salver is as follows:—"This tray and a silver fruit service were presented to John Turnbull Smith, Esq., on his retiring from the office of Master of the Edinburgh Merchant Company, by members of the Company, Governors of the various Trusts, and headmasters and officials connected therewith, in recognition of his eminent and valuable services to the Company and its Institutions during the past six years. There was also presented at the same time to Mrs Turnbull Smith a pearl and diamond necklet in acknowledgment of her active and graceful co-operation during her husband's term of office as Master. 10th November, 1893.""

Mr Turnbull Smith, in accepting the presentation, said that he appreciated the presents for their own beauty and value, but to him they were a thousand times more beautiful and valuable because behind them was the affectionate esteem of the givers. The value of these presents were also enormously enhanced to him on account of the address having connected them so closely with Mrs Turnbull Smith, who had in the most interested way shared with him the pleasures and responsibilities connected with his term of office, and who by her sympathy and support had made the performance of his Merchant Company duties along with his other duties possible. He little thought then, when, six years ago, he was asked to allow himself to be nominated as one of the assistants of the Merchant Company, that his official connection would culminate as it had done that day. He now re-

called with the greatest possible satisfaction that six years ago they placed him at the top of the poll for the vacant assistantship, that three years ago they unanimously and cordially elected him to the office of treasurer, and that two years ago they as unanimously and cordially conferred upon him the highest honour they had in their power to bestow when they placed him in the Master's chair. The duties which the Master of the Merchant Company was called upon to discharge were not child's play, but demanded an amount of time and attention which could not well be over-estimated. His duties in connection with the Merchant Company had been made light and pleasant by the spirit of ready helpfulness that had prevailed throughout the Company, and very specially among the assistants, the Governors of the various Trusts, whether Merchant Company representatives or those of the Town Council and clergy, the officials, and the headmasters and teachers of their great schools. During the past two years he had been greatly helped by the wise advice of their old Master, Bailie Macdonald, by the modest but untiring services rendered to him by the new Master, but perhaps most of all by their excellent secretary Mr Heron, upon whose appointment they might all congratulate themselves.

#### HIS INTEREST IN EDUCATION RECOGNISED BY THE UNIVERSITY.

As Mr Turnbull Smith was a son of the school, his interest in education was hereditary, but education had developed into an exact science since the days of Kilbucho and Dolphinton. Nevertheless this busy city man set himself to master the intricacies of the new order of things, and apply them to the vast Teaching Colleges under his care as Master of the Merchant Company. It may be mentioned in passing that the establishment in 1870 and 1871 of the Merchant Company Schools was the outcome of the movement which had originated in the Company and among the Governors of its Trust for the reform of the hospital system of maintaining foundationers. These are now the best equipped and most highly organised Teaching Colleges in Scotland, if not in Britain. But more: there is a network of Bursaries and Grants spread all over the Colleges and the University. Mr Turnbull Smith had much to do with all the foregoing; his interest in the Colleges was a living one, appearing in a very practical way at every examination and exhibition. Moreover, he was in touch with the Bursary

schemes, with the careers of former pupils, with the intimate relationship developing annually more and more between the Merchant Company and the University. All this led inevitably to his coming to be regarded as one of the foremost educationists in Scotland. Academic recognition was but the natural reward of his unselfish labours in the cause of education. It came as an honour all the greater because conferred on one who was not previously a graduate. The University of Edinburgh is wisely sparing of her Degrees.

It was on the 10th of April, 1897, that John Turnbull Smith received the Degree of Doctor of Laws at the hands of the venerable Principal, Sir William Muir, Vice-Chancellor. At the Graduation Ceremonial a very hearty reception in particular was given to Mr Turnbull Smith, along with Sir Douglas MacLagan and Lord Russell of Killowen. Sir Ludovic Grant, in presenting him, said:—"The signal services which Mr Turnbull Smith has rendered to the cause of Secondary Education—a cause which the University cannot but be deeply interested in—give him a pre-eminent claim to academic recognition. He has for a number of years been the presiding genius of the Edinburgh Merchant Company, whose schools, I need hardly remind an Edinburgh audience, are institutions of the utmost value and importance. Admitted a member of the Company in 1882, Mr Turnbull Smith was elected successively assistant, treasurer, and Master, finally becoming Old Master in 1893. Of the manner in which he has thrown himself into the Company's work, especially the management and organisation of its endowed schools, it would be impossible to speak too highly. He has laboured with a devotion and zeal which are only less admirable than the ripe judgment and administrative ability with which they have been united. Amongst the many important educational movements in which he has played an important part, I would mention in particular the change in the tenure of the Chair of Political Economy in the University of Edinburgh, and the Act of 1895 for the better administration of the schools and hospitals. Though no longer its Master, Mr Turnbull Smith's official connection with the Company is not yet at an end, for he is Convener of the Educational Committee of George Watson's College, and represents the Company on the Fettes Trust, and the Burgh Committee on Secondary Education. The University rejoices to show her appreciation of educational work of such value by en-

rolling Mr Turnbull Smith amongst her honorary graduates in law."

DR TURNBULL SMITH AND THE LIFE ASSOCIATION.

Dr Turnbull Smith now received the congratulations of his many professional and private friends. It was felt by all that the honour was well earned and highly merited. None of the congratulations, we may well believe, delighted him more than those of the staff of the head office of The Life Association. They voiced their sentiments in the following terms:—"We, the members of the head office staff of the Life Association of Scotland, desire to offer to you our warmest congratulations in connection with the distinguished honour conferred upon you by the University of Edinburgh. Your great interest in, and untiring efforts on behalf of, education generally, and more especially in connection with the educational institutions of our own city, are well known to every one; and the appreciation by your fellow-citizens of the work done by you in this direction was shown by your election some years ago to the honourable position of Master of the Merchant Company.

"You have identified yourself for many years past with various public movements—civic, philanthropic, and religious—which have been stimulated and extended by your influence and generous liberality.

"You are also deservedly held in esteem for your shrewd business qualities, coupled with unflinching courtesy.

"As an expression of our satisfaction at the honour done to you on this occasion, we beg your acceptance of the accompanying Doctor of Laws gown, hood, and trencher, which have been subscribed for by all the members of the staff. We trust that you may be long spared to enjoy the present and other honours which have been conferred upon you."

(Signed by all the members of the staff.)

DR TURNBULL SMITH AND ST BERNARD'S SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Another ceremony, one even of a more gratifying nature, inasmuch as it was connected with his beloved Sunday School work among the young, awaited Dr Turnbull Smith and his wife. In his more public work, however greatly he had been helped and encouraged by his wife, which, indeed, he was ever the first to acknowledge, she was too womanly a woman ever to appear prominently. Her influence was exerted entirely behind the scenes, by loving assistance, tactful sympathy,

and that complete camaraderie that constitutes the true marriage. But now in St Bernard's they both appeared upon the same plane, indeed she had been a teacher in the Sunday School for a longer period than he, and he had actually obtained his wife from the Sunday School. But it will be better to allow the story to unfold itself as we proceed. On the 12th of April, 1897, the ceremony took place. Mr Begg, in making the presentation, said that the teachers, one and all, regarded their superintendent, Dr Turnbull Smith, as a model and as a friend. To his wonderful combination of zeal, organising power, and attention to every detail was largely due the high position which St Bernard's holds amongst the Sunday Schools of the country, while his unflinching kindness and courtesy gained him the friendship of both teachers and scholars. They rejoiced in the honour that had come to him, and felt that they had some share in that honour, as not the least important part of his work in connection with education had been done in St Bernard's. In choosing the form of their gift they felt it should be something that could be shared in by Mrs Turnbull Smith, who had been a real helpmeet in his work, and whom they regarded with feelings no less warm than they entertained towards himself. Accordingly they had selected an article of household adornment, and they trusted that Dr and Mrs Turnbull Smith might long be spared to possess it.

Dr Turnbull Smith, who wore his Graduation robes, returned thanks on behalf of Mrs Smith and himself in an interesting speech. In reviewing his twenty-five years' work as superintendent, he made feeling reference to some of his colleagues who had in that time passed away. He acknowledged the loyal help the teachers had all along given him, and especially the unflinching sympathy and support of his wife and fellow-worker. He owed her to St Bernard's Sunday School, as his fellow-superintendent, Mr T. J. Wilson, and Dr M'Murtrie, the late minister of St Bernard's, also owed their wives. To this work, too, might be traced his connection with educational matters, and any distinction they had brought him. In reference to the honour he had just received, and which he valued most highly, nothing had given him greater pleasure than the expressions of esteem and friendship of which it had been the occasion. Amongst these he was specially gratified by this gift from the teachers of St Bernard's, and by the kind thought which accompanied it.



The lady of whom Dr Turnbull Smith spoke so affectionately has been a teacher in St Bernard's Sunday School for thirty-eight years. At the time of her marriage to the superintendent of the Sunday School her name was Miss Katherine Murray Bewley, the eldest of four daughters of the Rev. B. F. Bewley, Rector of Wayford, Somersetshire. This lady in her married life has but carried to greater development the many practical interests of her earlier life. She has been a leader in all the schemes of helpfulness in connection with the parish. She would abhor the role of Lady Bountiful, but in a beautifully quiet, but thoroughly practical manner, and with sympathetic tact, she has spent a lifetime of loving service among the families of Stockbridge. More one dare not write concerning this silent, gentle influence.

#### DR TURNBULL SMITH AS AN AUTHOR.

In another way Dr Turnbull Smith has performed a great service for the Church. Last year he wrote and published a most interesting history of the Church and Parish of St Bernard's. No one was more fitted for this than he. He joined the church as a seatholder and member in 1861, and was ordained an elder on the 19th February, 1871, at the age of twenty-seven. He is now the senior elder of the church, and has been a trustee since 1879. Out of its fourteen ministers, he has "sat under" five. The Rev. Dr Matheson, mystic and poet, and A.K.H.B. were two of them. This book is written in three sections—Edinburgh, Stockbridge, St Bernard's. Most interesting notes are given of Old Edinburgh, and of the picturesque districts of Stockbridge and of Dean. But the book is most valuable from its history and reminiscences of St Bernard's and its fourteen ministers. Portraits of them all are given in the highest form of illustration, in addition to reproductions of other objects of ecclesiastical interest in the church. The volume has appealed most of all to those connected with St Bernard's, and many have been touched by its references more especially to the past. To any Stockbridge lad it is a mine of information, told in simple and interesting words. As a history of the congregation, it is specially valuable, giving an account of its origin and development from the beginning, and its value in this respect will increase with time. The book is one of the finest specimens of the printer's and bookbinder's arts. Type, paper, and illustrations are of the best. And

yet it contains one very serious blemish! It is like the play of Hamlet with Hamlet left out. The name of the most important layman in the congregation is not to be found. Dr Turnbull Smith does not once refer to himself, or to his work for and in connection with the church. Some such account might have been added by another hand. And thus the volume remains—an unselfish record of the church, its ministers, assistants, and others, and himself omitted! And herein is a parable. This typifies the man. He has risen to be a foremost citizen of the capital; he is the head of a large Insurance Association; he has been honoured by his fellow-citizens and by the University; and through all this successful career Dr Turnbull Smith has remained unspoiled. He has great intellect, but no pride of intellect; he enjoys great popularity, but is accessible to all; he must have earned a large income, but has used it as a trust on behalf of the poor and for religion; not content with working six days a week, he has given the seventh to the young, and by so doing has kept himself young in mind and soul and body. In this respect only has he emulated unconsciously the Jesuits, who devoted their very best men to become teachers of the young. Among the boys there is no greater boy. See him at the annual excursion of the thousand pupilled Sunday School, which he and Mr T. J. Wilson have personally conducted without an accident year after year. Look at him again on the Saturday afternoons at Peebles golfing with his young nephews and nieces and a host of other youngsters, who hail him as a sort of honorary uncle. And yet there is no more dignified and firm man of business amid all this modesty of demeanour. And this brings one to what is in one sense the culmination:—

#### DR TURNBULL SMITH IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

He is one of the most eminent laymen in the Assembly. He is trusted by all parties for his sober common-sense and calm judgment. Lord Balfour of Burleigh and Dr Turnbull Smith could settle the question of the Union of the Churches satisfactorily were all the ecclesiastics left out. And they would do so with the confidence of all the cliques. And until such laymen take the matter up it may probably never be settled. He approves of a United Church of Scotland on the basis of Establishment. He would never consent to secularise the endowments. He is vice-convenor of the Endowment Committee, but for all that he views with strong disapproval the planting down of a church just because there is a rival

in the same street. But in those cases where population has grown and necessities increased there is no stronger advocate of church extension by word and purse than he. He speaks little in the Assembly; he acts more. And here again he carries out the principle of his life—Deeds, not words only. So this imperfect sketch of a great Edinburgh Borderer must close, but his life goes on. May it long continue here, blessed with the solace and company of his accomplished wife, the object-lesson of a true marriage, the type of an upright business man, the exemplar of a sincere Christianity.

C. B. G.

### EDINBURGH BORDERERS' UNION.

**T**HE thirty-fourth anniversary of that flourishing organisation, The Edinburgh Borderers' Union, was held on 6th December, 1907, and was presided over by Councillor Stuart Douglas Elliot, whose energy and geniality have done much to place the society in its enviable position. In



COLONEL STUART DOUGLAS ELLIOT.

the course of an eloquent speech, he said:—"There was one striking thing about the Borders, and that was that its streams of poets and poetry never seemed to fail, for never a year passed without one or more volumes of Border poetry being published. They had lately had Mr Inglis' volume of Hawick poems, and there was Mr Ballantyne's poem on Queen Mary's visit to Jedburgh, while they had also Colonel Elliot's contributions on the Jamie Telfer ballad, discussing how far it was reliable. He

had been specially asked to call their attention to the coming issue of a volume entitled 'Rule Water and its Inhabitants,' by Mr Tancred of Weens. This book, he believed, would prove to be a very valuable contribution to local history; and it would be published at a price of 3/6 he thought—which would bring it within the reach of all. There was another publication to which he would like to refer, namely, the 'Border Magazine,' which had now attained to its twelfth volume, and thus bade fair to become a permanent repository of Border literature. The magazine contained articles on Border subjects, and he hoped that it would long continue to be published. He might mention that when the 'Border Magazine' was in its second volume he spoke about it to Mr Craig Brown on the occasion of the Union's visit to Floors Castle a good many years ago. At that time he (the Chairman) had got his first volume of the magazine bound, and in speaking about the publication to Mr Craig Brown, who was to have addressed them that evening, that gentleman remarked, 'I am keeping copies unbound until I see the second volume, as many magazines never reach that stage.' However, the 'Border Magazine' had not only reached its second volume, but twelve handsome volumes of the periodical had now been issued, and he hoped that the periodical would long continue to flourish."

### BORDER BOOKS.

#### NO. II.—EPHEMERIDES.

"Ephemerides; or, Occasional Poems, written in Scotland and South Africa. By Thomas Pringle. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 65 Cornhill, 1828."

**T**HOMAS Pringle, the author of "Ephemerides, was born at Easterstead, or Blacklaw, in the parish of Linton, Roxburghshire, on January 5, 1789. He was educated at the Grammar School of Kelso, and when seventeen years of age went to Edinburgh University. In 1811 he entered as a clerk into the service of His Majesty's Commissioners on the Public Records of Scotland. Pringle discharged his duties faithfully, giving complete satisfaction to his superiors in office. In 1816 he published a number of poems in the "Poetic Mirror." In 1817 he contributed several articles to the "Monthly Magazine," a periodical that was started after the "Scots Magazine" was stopped; about this time he became editor of the "Edinburgh Star" newspaper. In 1818 he married Margaret, daughter of Mr William Brown, a farmer in East Lothian. In 1819 he published "Sketches in Teviotdale," gave up the editorship of the "Edinburgh Star," and returned to the Register