



REV. DR. WHYTE



*“ Who hath not glowed above the page where fame  
Hath fir'd high Caledon's unconquer'd name ;  
The mountain-land which spurn'd the Roman chain,  
And baffled back the fiery-crested Dane,  
Whose bright claymore and hardihood of hand  
No foe could tame—no tyrant could command !*

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*That race is gone—but still their children breathe,  
And glory crowns them with redoubled wreath,  
O'er Gael and Saxon mingling banners shine,  
And, England ! add their stubborn strength to thine,  
The blood which flowed with Wallace flows as free,  
But now 'tis only shed for fame and thee.”*

## Sair'd Him Richt.



*He*

“O, come awa', Mary, ne'er be sae camstarie,  
An' roam 'mong the knowes whaur naebody may see;  
Losh, what can be ailin'—has daddie been railin'—  
An' fley'd the blythe looks ye ance cuist upon me.”

*She*

“Ye blaw o' your lasses as straucht as the rashes,  
To tryst sic a warbie they're needfu', I ween,  
A wee bechlin youchal, puir bowleggit drochle,  
Wi sic a vain ablich I wadna be seen.

“There's young hirtchin Leezie ootbye at Auchlishie,  
Gin ye saw hoo she lauchs when even'd to you;  
An' shauchlin Kate Morgan, ye think sic a bargain,  
Says gin ye spak' till her she's sure she wad spue.

“Try dumpie Bess Rankin, her een set for winkin',  
An' shauchlin Meg Low, wi ae shouther agee;  
Or lang rachlie Nannie, thro' age growin' cannie,  
Gae wa'—for ye'll ne'er mak' a bauchle o' me.”

THRUMS.

W. LINDSAY.



BY THE EDITOR.

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NO. IV.

REV. DR. WHYTE,  
PREACHER.

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“I say the Pulpit (in the sober use  
Of its legitimate, peculiar powers)  
Must stand acknowledged while the world shall stand—  
The most important and effectual guard,  
Support, and ornament of virtue's cause.”

—*Cowper.*

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THE love of sermons has been for many generations a characteristic of the people of Scotland, and the respect and veneration we entertain for our great divines has been in the past, and even is in the present, little short of worship. The thunder of a Knox, the wonderful oratory of a Chalmers, the melting, pathetic simplicity of a Guthrie, are as it were, woven into the fabric of our national history.

Whatever we may think of the wisdom of the stand that the old Cameronians took for conscience sake, we cannot withhold from them our respect and admiration.

The history of religion in any nation is to a very great extent

the history of that nation, because the best minds of all ages have been trained to the service of the Church, and the gifted men who have come to the front as preachers have always to a wonderful extent moulded the customs, manners and education of the common people.

The little town of Kirriemuir, in which the subject of our sketch was born, has been remarkable for many things, not the least of them being the excellence of its ministers; who have at all times dispensed to its people the Bread of Life. Of course this could only live along with a deep religious feeling in the community. The little red-town of a few thousand inhabitants, so pleasantly situated on the brow of the Braes of Angus, is also famous for the abundant crop of preachers, poets, novelists, artists, and editors it has from time to time given to the world. Out of a long list I may name three, who stand prominently forward in different fields of thought, viz: Sir Charles Lyell, Geologist; Mr. Lawson, Editor of the *Edinburgh Courant*, now of London; and Dr. Alexander Whyte, the famous preacher of Free St. George's, Edinburgh.

From having come into personal contact with many of the working men in Kirriemuir, men in very humble positions in life, I can say that they are, as a rule, above the average in knowledge and intelligence. Some of these men are deeply read in literature and philosophy, so there is little wonder, when the average is so high, that out of their ranks there should have come, from time to time, men whose name and fame have become world-wide,—men who are ornaments to, and benefactors of their species.

The working people in the small towns of Scotland, fifty years ago—before the introduction of steam power—were a different race to what they are to-day. Notwithstanding the twenty years we have had of the system of National Education, the increased facilities for acquiring knowledge afforded by free libraries, free lectures and penny newspapers, yet it would seem that, intellectually, they have taken *two steps* backwards. Men of the people have become mere machines—the factory system has so driven the life and spirit out of the most of them, that they have lost all power of thinking for themselves. They have become so much slaves of the ring—if they have a mind of their own they cannot, or perhaps dare not show it. Our material prosperity has been much increased—but what a price has been paid for this prosperity—it has been bought at the price of strength, health,

and intelligence. There is a true, sound ring in the sentiments of the minor poet who sang:—

“Lang syne, among the weavers there were sober thoughtfu’ men,  
Wha’s only wealth was rowth o’ books in their wee but an’ ben ;  
The mists o’ ancient history they could wi’ ease dispel,  
An’ licht and triflin’ seemed the task when to their hands it fell.

“An’ when the poets they took up, o’ this there was nae en’,  
It seemed nae minstrel e’er had liv’d o’ whilk they didna ken ;  
Theocritus they could discuss, an’ Homer’s lofty lays,  
An’ ither bards that learned men delight to laud an’ praise.

“O’ this translation an’ o’ that they could the beauties trace,  
An’ to each honour’d name assign its station an’ its place ;  
While Shakespeare, Milton, Goldsmith, Gray, and famous Dr. Young,  
They could recite wi’ keen delight, and quote wi’ ready tongue.

“Oor Scottish poets, too, they could dissect wi’ meikle skill,  
An’ mony a kindly word they spoke o’ Hogg an’ Tannahill,  
While Ramsay, Ferguson, and Scott, they took them a’ by turns,  
But nane o’ them got half the praise they gied to Robby Burns.”

And then when our poet comes to speak about the question of religion he sings:—

“The grave seceding elder, crown’d wi’ locks o’ silver gray,  
Had mony a quaint remark to mak’ and pointed thing to say,  
For he had searched its every nook, the kirk an’ state domain,  
An’ could the darkest riddles read, an’ duty’s path make plain.”

It was among men of the above stamp that Dr. Whyte had the good fortune to pass the days of his boyhood. We are told that the sum total of his scholastic acquirements when a boy, was that he had only learned to read. His love for books, even from his earliest days, was quite a passion. All the public libraries of the town of Kirriemuir he had devoured.

There is a story told that when he was one day seated on a tombstone in the Kirkyard of the Parish Church, a man named James Mills, the father of my good friend W. B. Mills of the *Observer*, asked young Whyte what book it was he was so anxiously poring over. When told that it was Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, he said, “ Ah, my good boy, you are I doubt wading beyond your depth,” but on entering into conversation with the young reader he found to his surprise

that he fully comprehended the classic poetry he was so diligently perusing.

James Mills, although only a working plasterer, was a man of much solid learning, with a fine literary taste and well up in mathematics.

After this little episode in the Kirkyard, Mr. Mills took a deep interest in the intellectual culture of the clever boy—so that Alexander Whyte, at this period of his life, profited much from his intercourse with a man whom dame Nature had endowed with a fine brain and a warm heart.

For the mutual improvement of a small circle of literary working men, Mr. Mills kept in his house some of the leading periodicals of the day, *Blackwood's Magazine*, *Hogg's Instructor*, and *The Young Men's Magazine*, a first-rate Glasgow publication. These literary working men also had besides many other valuable books which they kept for reference, such as a copy of the *Popular Encyclopedia* or *Conversation Lexicon*—and a copy of the famous *Penny Encyclopedia*. By this time Alexander Whyte was working as an apprentice with one James Ogilvie, a shoemaker—but after he became acquainted with Mr. Mills, and was welcomed to the use of his books and periodicals—he was there after work hours, reading, always reading, every night, and on Saturday nights he would sit and read far into the Sunday morning.

Strange to tell, Alexander Whyte was fifteen years of age before he was initiated into the mysteries of arithmetic. Three young men—John Dickson, Jemmy Hall and John Wilkie—all hand-loom weavers, agreed to meet along with Whyte in Hall's house three times a week to study this branch of learning. John Dickson, as the one best up in the science, was teacher—I use John's words when speaking to me of the future great preacher at this period of his life:—

“You see,” he said, “Dr. Whyte when a laddie had sic a thirst for reading, that it was wi' great difficulty I could get him to fix his mind on any figures.” “But,” John also added, “he was always a man with a mind for considering first principles: he only needed to have the rule explained to him thoroughly, when he at once mastered the whole thing.”

This little school where Dr. Whyte first got the elements of his mathematical training, began in the month of May in one of the early fifties, and only was continued until the fall of the year, when

it was broken up by Dickson and Hall and Wilkie requiring to go to work on the harvest field.

Ill equipped as our young man was in learning himself, still he managed somehow to get appointed as schoolmaster to a small hedge-side school in the little village of Padanarm, a few houses that stand on the roadside about half-way between the towns of Forfar and Kirriemuir. For his work here he was promised the modest salary of seven shillings a week, which small sum was only paid sometimes.

I remember the school of Padanarm well: it was held in a small room on the west end of the house of an old friend of mine, named David Milne, and I think I am right in stating that David's contribution to the cause of education in his parish, was that he gave this room rent free. David was a character, and he and his brother Willie lived in a room in the east end of the house, and their loom-shop was in the middle between the school-room and their dwelling-room; there was no woman body about the premises, so that the Milnes had the distinction—if that is the proper name for it—of having the dirtiest dwelling in the county. Yet among the litter with which every corner of the house was strewed, I have often seen lying among that litter many valuable books, such as *Chambers's Information for the People*, *Butler's Analogy* and *Scots Worthies*. A more honest, innocent, God-fearing man than old David Milne never breathed God's air, but he was choke full of the most extraordinary eccentricities.

It was in this small school that the future Edinburgh minister first embarked on his professional career, at a salary that would not enable him to feed on better fare than oatmeal and milk, and without the means to put a decent coat on his back. However, his hardy spirit, strong mind, and fixed purpose to achieve distinction bore him up. In tracing the events of Dr. Whyte's early days, it has seemed to me that some unseen power always arose in the time of need to help him along. As we go on with the strange story of his education this will become quite apparent.

The scholars at this little hedge-side school at Padanarm were all the children of the poor, as the better class of farmers sent their sons and daughters to the academies of Forfar or Kirriemuir. After teaching here for a year he, by the kind influence of the Rev. Mr. Livingstone, the Free Church Minister of Kirriemuir, was



appointed to be teacher of the Free Church School in the parish of Airlie, at a fixed salary of £10 a year and the fees.

Mr. Whyte now had money for the first time in his life to enable him to buy books and to live in something like comfort. The Rev. David Whyte—a very able and good man: then Free Church minister in the parish of Airlie; took a deep interest in the school presided over by his namesake—who, by the bye, was no relation,—the rev. gentleman visited the school every day.

The young Mr. Whyte had been teaching at Airlie for about a year before he told the minister that his education had been so meagre, that he had no Latin and no Greek. Old Mr. Whyte reproached him very much when he told him this, for not doing so at first, because as, he put it, he had lost a year of valuable time.

The good minister at once began to teach the teacher. At the end of another year young Mr. Whyte wanted to go off to the college of Aberdeen; but this the minister would not hear of, because he said it would be the height of folly, as he would find he would only from his limited knowledge of the languages be a drag in the classes; and at last got him to remain under his tuition for another year.

At the end of his third year as a teacher at Airlie, some members of the Free Church there got up a Subscription to enable him to pay the expense of attending the Grammar School of Aberdeen for six weeks before the college session commenced. They managed to collect the sum of £12. With this sum young Mr. Whyte went to Aberdeen to study, in the month of August, 1858.

The following letter he wrote to a friend in Kirriemuir gives a graphic picture of the work in the Grammar School of that City at that time:—

ORCHARD COTTAGE,  
OLD ABERDEEN,

13th Aug., 1858.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I must fulfil my promise and pen you a few lines, few they will be at present for two reasons: first, nothing of great importance to communicate; and secondly, *very little time*.

I landed safely here on Saturday forenoon, secured comfortable lodgings, spent the day in arranging matters, and being very tired slept very soundly at night. On Sabbath I went to three of our churches here. Heard Dr. Davidson in the afternoon. He is said to be the best

preacher north of the Tay, perhaps you would more readily have agreed with this had it been said north of the "Dighty." He preached a very thoughtful and spiritual sermon from John vi., 63, "It is the spirit that quickeneth." But I must here remark on the deeply earnest tone of all the discourses I heard; they were very refreshing, and they will be needed here, for the study obtrudes on every corner of the mind and every moment of time. By the way I intend to take a sitting in Dr. D.'s (the Free West) if I can secure one.

Then on Monday came the tug of war; by 9 a.m. I found myself in the Grammar School. Imagine to yourself a small square house as plain and unclassical as possible, with benches like a church and a little desk in a corner, the place altogether capable of holding 40 or 50 students. It was about two-thirds full on Monday, it is altogether full now. Seated in the desk is a young man, apparently about 24 or 26 years of age, thin, whiskerless, and spectacled; ranged before him are the students, young men, youths, and boys, from 12 up to double that age. I will in a few words give an epitome of a day's work: We enter, he is reading a chapter, the young men are, some of them, following him, others learning their lessons, some copying from their neighbour's written exercise, having spent the previous night idly, some testing the toughness of their neighbour's skin with a pin, some eating berries, some handing about written papers containing sham invitations to tea, or notices such as this:—"Students desiring of joining the Ciceronian Grinding Club meet at such and such a place with 7/3 in their pocket." Others sticking up bills on their neighbours back, such as "Sale of Spanish Asses, this is a specimen," and this going on till the prayer be said. Then, perhaps, Virgil is read, we are in the VI. Æneid at present, reading perhaps 30 lines a-day. After it is read and parsed comes the Greek Grammar and Xenophon. Then it being about 12 o'clock we get out an hour, and go home and take lunch; back by two and begin to Cicero, we are reading his oration against Cataline, about half-a-page a day. Then on Monday, Wednesday and Friday we write versions (in school, not at home), Friday's being a trial version, that is no Monday. Dr. Barrack tells the number of errors in each, and assigns places in the class accordingly. Of course I do not know yet how I may do. To-day we wrote the trial version, began at half-past 1 o'clock and finished by 3. You get home as soon as you are finished; the school was more than half empty before I got through. But there were young men behind me who were at college last session, others who have been writing versions here for a year or two. But we will not know how we stand till Monday. Last Monday 3 students had *sine errore* versions, that is without an error, the rest varied from 1 to 30 errors.

It is very hard work here, John. Virgil and Cicero are new acquaintances to me, and yet I get on fine with them, indeed I will translate as well as two-thirds of the Class, but they are far ahead of me in Greek and Versions. I must close for I have a great deal of work to-night, yet to-morrow is a play-day, but not to me I assure you.

Read this to my mother, please. Kind regards to all friends, you know all whom I mean. Tell my mother that if any letters come to send them immediately to me. Write soon.

Yours very truly,

A. WHYTE.

He had not been at this school for many days when he saw an advertisement in the newspapers for a teacher—to teach a number of combmakers in the evenings. Whyte applied and got the appointment, which was worth £25. This with the £12 from Airlie enabled him to pay his way during his first session at college.

*(To be concluded).*



*“ Though rich be the soil where blossoms the rose,  
And barren the mountains an’l cover’d with snows  
Where blooms the red heather and thistle so green ;  
Yet for friendship sincere, and for loyalty true,  
And for courage so bold which no foe could subdue,  
Unmatched is our country, unrivall’d our swains,  
And lovely and true are the nymphs on our plains,  
Where rises the thistle, the thistle so green.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Oh, dear to our souls as the blessings of heaven  
Is the freedom we boast, is the land that we live in,  
The land of red heather and thistle so green ;  
For that land and that freedom our fathers have bled,  
And we swear by the blood that our fathers have shed,  
No foot of a foe shall e’er tread on their grave ;  
But the thistle shall bloom on the bed of the brave,  
The thistle of Scotland, the thistle so green.”*

## Simmer is Comin'.

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Through the deep, darksome Doll surly Winter is howlin',  
Ower Ben Reid an' Ben Tirrin he's bockin' an' chowlin';  
But he'll juist hae his day, sae he e'en can be yowlin'—  
    For his glumshin an' roustin' I carena a flee;  
        For Simmer is comin',  
        Sweet Simmer is comin',  
    Wha'll gar him cow'r doon wi' ae blink o' her ee.

Creep in ower wi' your stools, while there's peats on the ingle,  
An' let's hae an auld sang in oor ain hamit jingle,  
Or e'en aiblins a tale that will gar oor lugs tingle,  
    O' mighty deeds dune in the days o' langsyne—  
        For Simmer is comin',  
        Blythe Simmer is comin';  
    Tho' 'tis Winter without we'll haud Simmer within.

Tho' auld Winter be ourycht,\* cauedrife, an' eerie,  
The fond laverock will yet lilt in praise o' his dearie,  
An' the hale glen re-echo, in notes sweet and cheerie,  
    The death-knell o' Winter, sae dowie an' drear—  
        For Simmer is comin',  
        Braw Simmer is comin',  
    The flower-spangled Simmer sae loesome an' dear.

Should we e'er hae to wade through the snaw wreaths o' sorrow,  
O, ne'er lat us grow mauchtless an' think we've nae marrow!  
Juist ye look at the broos ploo'd wi' mony a furrow  
    O' those wha hae tholed their dreich winter o' wae—  
        But Simmer is comin',  
        Bricht Simmer is comin';  
    Dour Winter maks dearer the lang Simmer day.

THRUMS.

WM. LINDSAY.

\* Dunbar. Awry, beyond what is right.



BY THE EDITOR.

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NO. IV.

REV. DR. WHYTE,  
PREACHER.

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“ I say the pulpit (in the sober use  
Of its legitimate, peculiar powers)  
Must stand acknowledged while the world shall stand—  
The most important and effectual guard,  
Support, and ornament of virtue's cause.”

—*Cowper.*

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(*Concluded.*)

Our young scholar is now on the highroad to become a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. What a story his life is of firm determined effort, and intellectual victory! His early days were indeed a real example of the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties. I do not know if there be any portrait of Dr. Whyte when a young man; if there is, it would be interesting to compare the two, then and now. His picture of to-day tells us that he is a man likely to carry to a successful issue whatever he undertakes. There is the power of gaining a battle against great odds in the firm mouth and resolute chin; and his finely-formed head denotes spirituality and also intellectual power of the very highest order.

He has now been at College for some months, fighting hard with his studies,—the battle is more hard because of the want of early training,—but he is perhaps also benefited in many ways by the

extensive course of desultory yet substantial reading of his boyhood. I will let him tell his own story:—

45 SPITAL,

Saturday night,  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 10 o'clock.

MY VERY DEAR JOHN,—

. . . . . For the first ten days after I came up I wrought very hard preparing for our examination. The night before the Greek examination I sat all night. Scarcely rose from teatime the night previous till I rose to go to College at 9 next morning. As soon as that hurry was over my teaching work began, and between it, and preparing the work of three classes, I have literally never had a spare hour. The only spare time I can get is an hour or two in the Public Reading Room on Saturday night. I have three classes, as you are aware—Mathematics from 9 till half-past 11 o'clock; Chemistry from quarter to 11 till quarter to 12 o'clock; then Mathematics again from 1 till 2; and Greek from 2 till 3 o'clock; then the preparation for all these classes, and my two hours' teaching nightly. On Monday I start a new class, which will occupy me another half hour. The teaching is hard, wearing work, but the salary is very good.

I have scarcely got a book opened since I came North. Only on Sabbaths I have read Isaac Taylor's "Restoration of Belief," a noble book. But I get a rich intellectual treat on Sabbath nights from Mr. Mee, a Baptist minister here. I assure you in all calmness, I have heard sermons from him, that for *thought* and beauty of expression leaves Candlish far behind. Let me candidly confess that the first time I heard him I could not follow him, I felt my mind paralysed as it were with the loftiness of his thinking, and the purity and grandeur of his language. I have taken notes of some of his sermons; you may see them. Imagine such a man preaching to 60 or 70 people every Sabbath!!! But his little chapel is packed in the evenings, principally with the intelligent men and women of the city. Last Wednesday night there was a paper read at a meeting in connection with his church (a kind of essay class), on "Revelation," by a young man. All are welcome to go. After leaving the combmakers I went and heard the paper. It was pretty good. After it was read there arose some discussion on it. I think he recognised me from having seen me in the church, for he motioned me to say something. I said nothing on the essay, except that I thought it had not touched the question at the point, that is, its point of defence and attack at the present day, referring to the controversy between Mansel and Maurice, and then put the question to Mr. Mee—"Can you tell me the point at which the system of Maurice impinges on that of Sir William Hamilton, as applied to Revelation by his disciple, Mansel?"

I know where they join theologically, I wish to know where they disagree philosophically?" In some such words I asked the question at him, stating that circumstances had put it out of my power to read either of the books, though I was anxious to learn, and expected he would inform me. Imagine my wonder when he confessed himself unable to answer me, avowing his entire ignorance of such a dispute, but Mr. M'Combie of the "Free Press" rose and said that he believed there was such a question open at present, but confessed also his ignorance of its terms. I wondered, for had I had three days to spare I had read the books. Both appeared struck with the question, and Mr. M'Combie appeared as if he wished to talk with me, but I came away. I intend, however, to go back when I can manage it. I tell you this as I know it will interest you. I generally go to Dr. Davidson.

I hope your spiritual and intellectual life is growing. Read, Pray, Think. And remember absent friends, specially such friends as

A. W.

There is something remarkable in the freshness of interest and spiritual enthusiasm displayed in the following letter, which gives us a peep into the inner life of this earnest student of divinity:—

ORCHARD COTTAGE,

24th Decr., 1858.

MY DEAR JOHN,—

I was beginning to think ere you wrote that I was forgot, or if not forgot altogether, at least *neglected*. But the old kind voice spoke in your letter, and its echoes answered—He loves you still!! I have little to communicate of importance. I am studying very hard, the whole time is occupied. We often grind till two hours past midnight; but as this is too wasting, we will bed earlier, and rise by cockcrow. I am *now suffering* for my devotion to literature and neglect of Classics. In Latin I am now pretty good, indeed as good as one-half of our class, the advantages of the majority thereof, compared with mine, have been as 4 to 1. But I am making head fast, and though my name cannot appear on the prize list at the end of the session, yet I will then be an average Latin scholar, which perhaps will be *better* for *me* than prizes will, say for those who get them. Gross Egotist!!! In Latin we have read a *Book of Quentius Curtius*, and nearly one of *Ovid's Fasti*, the latter poetry. In Greek our class is much farther back, and I am no exception. We are reading *Xenophon's Cyropaedia*. The Professor told us to-night to get a *play of Euripides*, as we are to read it preparatory to the reading of the Father of Greek Poetry—Homer. When the



New Year is past we have to begin and revise all the work of the session preparatory for our Examination. *This causes double work.* So much for Classics.

I have just returned from the D. Society. I had the honour of being Chairman one night, an almost unparalleled honour on a *Bajan!* (first year student). Last night I led the debate on Cromwell, opened by a speech of 20 minutes; a *Magistrand* (fourth year student) replied in a speech of equal length. Then followed eight speeches, 10 minutes each. I carried, or rather *Cromwell* carried! A grand subject!! Of course I can't say anything of my speech, only this: had you been present *you* would have been gratified with the reception it met with.

We don't meet in College on Monday, being New Christmas, nor on Monday week. I had thought of coming south on the Saturday week, but I think I can't come, time and money are precious! I go to-morrow morning, along with two or three Free Church students, to breakfast with Professor Lumsden of the Divinity Hall. Perhaps I may let you know what kind of a gent. he is. I am still attending Dr. Davidson on Sabbath forenoon, but I cannot get a seat. Many such as I have just to wait till members are seated, and then we get in. He is lecturing through the Book of Esther. Rather dry one would think, but he shows what a vast fund of moral and spiritual truth it contains, and how this may be made available for us when in the hands of a man of ability and spiritual sympathies.

I still feel the want of a sympathetic companion. I know diligent and far-on students, but they are *nothing else*. I know *good* young men, but their *heads* are *light*. Their goodness has too narrow a basis for our age and the state of our intellectual life. A few of us have originated a prayer meeting in the Greek Class-room on Friday and Tuesday evenings, when we enter into devotional exercises mutually. We, *I* at least, have much need of such. Oh that I could meet a young man (or woman) of deep spiritual life and broad intellectual culture, my heart and head ache for want of living sympathy and intercourse. Kirry was better for these, and you'll agree it is not over-prolific of such. A. W.

Mr. John Dickson, the friend to whom this letter was sent, paid a visit to Mr. Whyte at the close of his first session, and stayed a week with his old friend. John has many pleasant stories to tell of this visit, of the long walks to all the places of interest in the granite city of the north, of the long talks about men and books and events. He told me he one day asked Mr. Whyte the question, "If he could now see that a collegiate course was indispensable to fit a man to be a teacher of the

people": a point, it would appear, that young Whyte had in his callow days much doubted. "Yes, I think so now," replied our student, "for if I have been taught nothing else of great importance, I have been taught to think." Perhaps one of the great advantages a man of culture has over a self-taught genius is, that he is enabled from his training to bring all his intellectual forces into the field properly marshalled to battle with ignorance, folly and vice.

When the work of his first session was over, Mr. Whyte occasionally preached in Mission Halls, and such like places, in the City of Aberdeen, and his labours in this way were very much appreciated by all who heard him. A Free Church Minister, having been sent away for a season for the benefit of his health, fixed on our young student to preach for him in his absence. John Dickson tells the story of this engagement, for it took place when he was on his visit to his friend in the granite city.

The two friends were sitting in the room at Orchard Cottage, when a knock came to the door—a young gentleman was admitted, who stated that he had been sent by his father to offer Mr. Whyte an engagement to fill his pulpit for three months. Mr. Whyte at first demurred—because he had little or no experience in preaching. The young man stated that his father had told him that Mr. Whyte was the best preacher in Aberdeen. After some consideration, Mr. Whyte gladly accepted this offer, which, considering his financial position, looks like a providential interference to enable him to pursue his studies at the University.

We now pass to the second and third session at college. The following letter will give a good idea of his progress in his studies:—

ORCHARD COTTAGE,

17th April, 1860.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—

I hope you have rested in the assurance that, though I have been long silent, it has not been the silence of forgetfulness or neglect. I've read somewhere—"Never make a man your friend till you *know* him, but having made him your friend let him be so to the end." A noble maxim, and well worth our endeavour to realize the blessing it implies. Well the session is over, that is, another step is taken onwards on the journey of life. You'll have heard of the mishap that has befallen me in my examination, my not having passed

my examination in Chemistry. It no doubt looks a serious matter from the Kirry point of view. To me, I assure you, it has no such aspect, for what is implied in it is this only: A paper was put before us with 24 questions in it, one-third of which had to be answered. I wrote out answers to 9 of them, and some half answers. You'll think that was more than one-third, I thought so too, but some of them must have been wrong. But, in truth, the whole class all along was a sham, an old, dottle man sent to twaddle for an hour a day to sixty wild young fellows, more alive to his eccentricities and stupid remarks than to their studies; breaking in on the monotony by humming tunes, cock-crowing, and every imaginable noise. These things made the class intolerable to me, and I left it, coming home and working at my other studies. This will partly account for my position. But it is quite normal to this class to pluck a number of students annually; some years there have been 20 stuck, this year there were 12 of us. (Between ourselves, many of the fellows who were plucked, rejoiced that they had your friend among them for reasons you will understand). We get an examination at the entrance next session, when we'll all pass, I hope. Pass or not, I'll not spend many hours preparing for it, more important work awaits me. Enough, and more than enough, of this humbug. But I've been at some pains to shew *you* the state of the matter, knowing that you would be rather taken aback with the news. Trouble not yourself, for it troubles not me.

And now, that the harness is off, what are you doing? Do you ask? Let me answer you fully. I will be teaching at my usual place two hours every night, and I have got another hour's teaching in private, assisting two boys to get up their lessons for the *Gymnasium*—a large school where boys are prepared for college. The salary for the last is not large, but it helps somewhat. Tell my mother of this, she does not know. I only got it on Saturday last. But now for the most important part of my day's work. All my teaching being after 5 o'clock, you see I have a long day. Doing what? Well I came back to Orchard Cottage last week, and have a room alone. I wished it so. There are no students left in the Old Town, so I have no hindrance from enjoying my time as I think fit. Last ten days I have walked about a good deal; I assure you I was requiring it. I have gone daily and spent an hour or two in the Reading Room—all the papers and reviews. I have got begun to read Sir Wm. Hamilton's works in Mental Philosophy. Reid's works also, the Father of "The Scotch Philosophy," with M. Cousins, all lie on my table. I have also, during these few days, read, and I hope I may say mastered, "The Limits of Religious Thoughts Examined, being the Bampton Lectures for 1858." The book

of the season. Perhaps you have heard me speak of it. A noble book, but a stiff one. But for a bedding to these, I have not forgot fiction. You know it was always one of my canons that, in our later fiction, there is a very great deal of sound education for head and heart held in solution. And, assuredly, I have had my opinion strengthened during the past fortnight. I have read, "Yes and No; glimpses of the great conflict," a work published by Macmillan, Cambridge, a few weeks ago. The author not known. Oh, John, a grand book! I wish you could read it, it would raise you above the petty, sordid, degrading cases, and influences of ordinary life, and would lift you into the spiritual, the heavenly, for a time at least, and is not this a blessing, yea, verily, one of the greatest man can bestow on man. It is the life-history of a sceptic, and the love of a noble woman is made in the hand of the Divine Spirit, the first instrument to recall him "to himself." Gradually and slowly the training proceeds, gradually the love ripens. But a riper love has been ripening, and ere the earthly love can find its consummation, the heavenly has taken the "hero" home, where all doubt is forever dispelled, where faith grows light; in a word, where *Christ is, and where we'll be like him.*

Another I have read is, "A Life for a Life," by the author of "John Halifax." You'll remember how you liked it, let me just say of this, that it is a *riper book*. If you have not read it, try and get it, and I promise you a treat such as seldom comes to our share in this cross-grained life of ours.

Have you seen "Macmillan's Magazine," one of the finest, most scholarly, chaste, high-toned periodicals we possess? Almost a model magazine for a cultivated, well-read family? Or "The Cornhill," edited by Thackeray? A marvel of cheapness, with two capital novels publishing monthly in it, one by the Editor, and the other by Trollope, entitled "Framly Parsonage." A delightful story. I see all these in the Reading Room. You see if I want the society of friends—and to me it is a great want—I have the advantage of plenty of good reading.

But it would enhance the pleasure if I knew that *Kirry friends* were enjoying the same.

Ever, in the bonds of brotherly affection, yours,

MR. JOHN DICKSON.

A. WHYTE.

During his second and third sessions in King's College, Aberdeen, he acted as Missionary to a congregation at Woodside, and the salary he got for his services there paid his fees and kept him. In his fourth year he was appointed to a missionary station at Huntly, under a Rev. Mr. Williamson, at a salary of one pound a week.

The following extracts from a letter to his mother tell us how things were faring with him in his last year in Aberdeen :—

No. 1 COLLEGE BOUNDS,

11th January, 1861.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

Since I wrote you I have been a week at home from college, owing to Toothache and Rheumatism in the head and neck. I suffered very great pain for four or five days, and at last had a tooth pulled (the buckmost tooth in the lower jaw).

Very shortly after, I was able to go out again, but it had weakened me greatly owing to want of sleep. Several nights spent sleepless with racking pain. But, at present, I am as well as I have been all the session. I am, at present, very thin, but I hope to hold up till the end of the session, when I will get a little relaxing of my work. Eleven weeks to-night will finish it. You may have an idea how I am *enjoying* it when I know so well to a day when it will be over.

Dear Mother, I am sick, sick tired of the work here, spending night and day, and the spring of manhood in *grinding* Trigonometry and other trash, which, if it was to be learned, ought in my case to have been over at 15, instead of 25. But 3 months will finish it. God willing, I will spend the summer on work more like a man's work, and bearing more on the future sphere of action which I hope, under God, yet to attain to. But I'll tell you of these things afterwards.

We have had a terrible contest in the Election of a Lord Rector for the University. Sir A. L. Hay, a local landed proprietor, and Mr. Maitland, Solicitor-General for Scotland, were the parties proposed. I, along with the great body of our students, supported Maitland. The Medical Students, as a body, and a large number of the Divines, supported Hay.

At a Public Meeting held for the nomination, I had the honour of seconding the motion for Maitland, but it was a frightful scene. I got myself well-nigh blinded with peas thrown, and latterly rotten eggs were had recourse to. I escaped as easily as any of the speakers. We carried the day, and I expect to see Maitland down shortly to be installed Rector. I assure you, he is a good deal beholden to your son for his seat!

Now that the Election is over, and the New Year Holidays, we are again working very hard. I have Logic in addition to other classes, which makes me doubly hard wrought. But it is a profitable study. Had I had time to get it up, I might have taken the First Prize in the class. As it is, I don't expect one. But I may tell *you* that my class-

fellows think me the best Logic Scholar amongst them. Though I don't get a Prize, I may (D. V.) grind it during the summer to pass an examination for *First Honours* in Logic—a much more honourable thing than taking a class prize.

Should I be able, as I hope to be, to take *First Honours* in Logic and Moral Philosophy, it is the highest honour the University can confer on a student. I'll see how the summer finds me as to health and time.

A. W.

The seconding of the motion for the appointment of Mr. Maitland as Lord Rector, about which Mr. Whyte so modestly tells us in the above letter, was another of those seemingly providential turning points in his life. From information I have from students who were present and saw the scene, it would appear that Mr. Whyte on this occasion actually made a great speech. The hubbub, a perfect tumult of confused voices, was at its worst, gray peas, rotten eggs, and even paling spars were being thrown. When Mr. Whyte got on his legs to speak, in a minute the magic of his voice stilled the tumult, and the silence was so great that you might have heard the fall of a pin. His oration carried with him all the waverers, and thus secured the election of Mr. Maitland. A son of the newly appointed Rector was present at the meeting. He went home and told his father that he was in a great degree indebted to Mr. Whyte for his success. Mr. Maitland happened to be a trustee for a bursary of £19 a-year in the New College of Edinburgh. As this bursary was in the gift of Mr. Maitland to give to any poor student, he settled it on Mr. Whyte when he went to Edinburgh to finish; and he was also fortunate to be appointed assistant to the Rev. Mr. Moody Stuart, at a salary of one pound a-week.

Of the other important events in the life of the Rev. Alexander Whyte, D.D., the reading public are already well informed; of his ordination in Free St. John's, Glasgow, in 1866; and his translation to Free St. George's, Edinburgh, in 1870, where he still remains, and where he has earned, and justly earned, the distinguished position of being, if not the foremost, among the foremost of Scottish divines.

I have lingered so long on our preacher's early and student days that there is little space to spare to mention his contributions to literature. All Dr. Whyte's books are delightful, his "*Bunyan Characters*," his "*Samuel Rutherford*," and his "*Characteristics of*

*William Law* ;" but in my view the most delightful of them all is the little book published last year on the father of German philosophy, Jacob Boehme. This book is the outcome of a lecture to the students attached to St. George's Free Church, and it is perhaps the most successful attempt that ever was made to give a popular presentation of the mystic Boehme and his philosophy. I have carefully read Dr. Hans Lassen Martensen's book on the life and teaching of Jacob Boehme, as translated from the Danish by T. Rhys Evens ; but this short essay of Dr. Whyte's gave me a better idea of the man and his works than ever I had before. When speaking of the difficulty of comprehending the style of this great philosophic shoemaker of the sixteenth century, Dr. Whyte says :—

" Let all intending students of Jacob Behmen take warning that they will have to learn an absolutely new and unheard-of language if they would speak with Behmen and have Behmen speak with them. For Behmen's books are written neither in German nor in English of any age or idiom, but in the most original and uncouth Behmenese. Like John Bunyan, but never with John Bunyan's literary grace, Behmen will borrow now a Latin word or phrase from his reading of learned authors, or, more often, from the conversations of his learned friends ; and then he will take some astrological or alchemical expression of Agrippa, or Paracelsus, or some such outlaw, and will, as with his awl and rosin-end, sew together a page of the most incongruous and unheard-of phraseology, till, as we read Behmen's earlier work especially, we continually exclaim, O for a chapter of John Bunyan's clear, and sweet, and classical English ! The *Aurora* was written in a language, if writing and a language it can be called, that has never been seen written or heard spoken before, or has since, on the face of the earth. And as our students learn Greek in order to read Homer, and Plato and Paul and John ; and Latin in order to read Virgil and Tacitus ; and Italian to read Dante ; and German to read Goethe,—so William Law tells us that he learned Behmen's Behmenite High Dutch, and that too after he was an old man, in order that he might completely master the *Aurora* and its kindred books. And as our school-boys laugh and jeer at the outlandish sounds of Greek and Latin and German, till they have learned to read and love the great authors who have written in these languages,—so Wesley, and Southey, and even Hallam, himself, jest and flout, and call names at Jacob Behmen, because they have not taken the trouble

to learn his language, to master his mind, and to drink in his spirit."

I will conclude this brief and imperfect sketch of this great preacher, with a passage from a Lecture he delivered in Free St. George's, Edinburgh, on the evening of Sabbath, the 24th February, 1895, on Esau. I have selected this passage because I think it is characteristic of the man, being solemnly impressive, and also in some measure biographical:—

"Young men! come home with me, and I will tell you! Take my arm home to-night, all of you who have not up to this night quite sold your birthright. Oh! never, never do it. Die, and we shall bury you with honour, and with assurance; but, oh! my son, my brother, never, never till the day of your death, sell to man or woman or devil your divine birthright—your birthright of truth, and honesty, and honour, and especially of chastity. Sell everything but that. There must be some men here to-night just at the crisis, and just in the temper, in which Esau came home so hungry from the hunt. There are men in this house who are saying this to themselves—'I am alone; I have nobody to care for me. If I had, it would be different, and I would be a better man. But in all this big city, in all broad Scotland, there is no one for whose sake I need keep my head above water. Though I go out of this house, and sell myself to hell to-night, no one will lament me. What profit shall it do me to make any more stand against the gambling-table, or the dram-shop, or anything else?' My own son! ring my bell to-night, and I will talk with you and will tell you the rest. I have not lived to gray hairs in a city, and been a minister of city families, and city young men, without learning things about birthrights and their sale, and their redemption too—things that cannot be told on the housetop. No minister in Edinburgh knows more, or can speak better, about these things than I can do. If you have no minister who can tell you about Esau, and about himself, and about yourself, and about Jesus Christ, ring my bell! It will be late that I do not open the door! I will be busy that we do not have another hour over Esau—you and I."