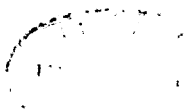


Literary Landmarks of the Scottish Universities

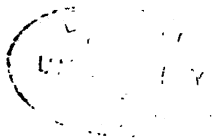
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Edinburgh



Edinburgh

EDINBURGH is the youngest, but not the least important, or the least interesting, of the Scottish universities; and, certainly, no other institution in the whole of Great Britain is more rich in its literary associations.

One hundred and seventy years after the foundation of a university in the city of St. Andrews, and almost a century after King's College was established in Aberdeen, James Sixth of Scotland, in 1582, granted a charter under the Great Seal, authorising the founding of a university in Edinburgh. He was inspired thereto by the zeal of the Magistrates and Town Council, who, "with other respectable citizens," were jealous of the growing intellectual supremacy of sister towns in the Kingdom; were anxious to

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promote the cause of learning in general; and, especially, to encourage the liberal education of the youth of the Capital and its neighbourhood.

The idea of the College was originally broached in 1560. In 1563, certain parts of the structures and grounds belonging to the Provost and prebendaries of the Collegiate Kirk o' Fields were purchased as a site. In 1581, despite the antagonism of the Archbishop of St. Andrews, and of the Bishop of Aberdeen, the work of building was begun; and in March, 1583, the first classes were held in the lower halls of Hamilton House, under two teachers only; one in "Bejan," one in Latin. The first class to be graduated, that of 1587, was forty-seven strong. The Class of 1588 numbered thirty; and in the years immediately following, the general attendance was even smaller.

A "Bejan," by the way, was a Freshman. The term came from the University of Paris; "Bec-jaune," in falconry, meaning a "callow hawk just out of the nest," fresh

from home, and from home influences; a first-year's man. The second-year's men were called "Semi-bejans," or "Semies"; in the third year they were known as "Bachelors," and in the final session as "Magistrands."

The Collegiate Kirk o' Fields, whose site became the original home of the College, was the scene of the death of the unfortunate Darnley in 1567, the mystery of which has never yet been solved. Darnley was not a very admirable young gentleman, notwithstanding the fact that he was the husband of a queen, the father of a king, and the grandfather, so to speak, of a dynasty. The house in which, and with which, he was blown to pieces was afterwards repaired, and it was used, for a time, as a dwelling of the Principal of the University. It existed when Dalziel wrote, in 1803; and its site is now covered, in part, by the Library.

The present "Old College Building" is upon the same spot; except that the early structure faced the College Wynd, in which,

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at the end of the eighteenth century, were the residences of the professors.

The original plan of learning for this new seminary in Edinburgh was borrowed from that which prevailed in the earlier Scottish colleges, although it was divested, as far as was possible, of those antiquated forms and monastic ceremonies which were practised at the time of the rule of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland, and by which the other institutions of the Kingdom had been very much embarrassed at the period of the Reformation.

The session, in the beginning, lasted eleven months of the year; and the classes met daily at six A.M., in the winter; and at five A.M., in the summer. Until the opening of the eighteenth century, the first year was devoted to Latin, Greek, and dialectics; the second year to a repetition of these, and also to arithmetic and rhetoric; the third year to rhetoric, Hebrew, and dialectical analysis; the fourth year to astronomy, geography, disputation, *et cætera*.

The University now has two annual sessions: the first lasting from the middle of October until the end of March; the second, or summer, session from the beginning of May until the end of July.

At the opening of the twentieth century there were forty or fifty professors in the various Faculties, of Arts, Divinity, Law, Medicine, Music, and Science, each Faculty having a Dean of its own. And there were nearly three thousand students, over two hundred of them being women. A comparatively small percentage of these students obtain a degree, or attempt to be graduated. That is not what they go to the University for. They seek a certain amount of solid, valuable information on certain subjects, and in certain lines; and when they obtain this, they drop themselves quietly out. They do not wait, or permit themselves, to be dropped.

The Medical Schools of Edinburgh were born towards the close of the seventeenth century in a small "Physic," or Botanical,

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Garden, near Holyrood Palace. Botany was recognised as a university subject, and the Curator of those "Physic Gardens" was made its first professor. Chairs of Chemistry and Astronomy were shortly afterwards founded; and the Medical Schools grew and flourished to their present greatness.

When the space in the "Old College" became too limited to accommodate the yearly increasing number of students, the "New College Buildings," not far away, sprang into existence; and these are now the home of the famous Medical School; the College of Surgeons and the Royal Infirmary not being connected with the University proper.

M'Ewan Hall, so named from a generous benefactor, is near to the "New University Buildings." It was opened in the winter of 1897-98; and since that time it has been used for the graduation ceremonies and for other public University functions. It is chief among the modern sights of the town; and the local guide-books declare it to be

“one of the grandest buildings erected in Europe during the nineteenth century.”

The earliest records of what, in America, is called “chapel,” and no doubt it was compulsory, show that the gallery at the east end of the High Church, St. Giles, was allotted to the professors and to the students, “until the patrons should find room for a different arrangement in this particular.”

“A Short and General Confession of the True Christian Religion, According to God’s Word,” was prepared; to which all those who received degrees from the College were compelled to subscribe. “The Additional Laws” of 1701 required the students to convene on the Lord’s Day, in their classes, after session, to be exercised in their sacred lessons. And on all days to show proper example to others, by their piety, goodness, modesty, and diligence in learning.

But in modern times, and in all these Scottish non-residential colleges, there are no rules regarding church-going. That, in Scotland, is accepted as a matter of course.

The nucleus of the University Library was the three hundred volumes left by a certain Mr. Clement Littel, or Little, to the Town Council of Edinburgh, in 1580. In each book is the neatly printed inscription "I am given to Edinburgh, and Kirk o' God, by Maister Clement Littel. There to Remain." With the private library of Hawthornden, bequeathed in 1627 by William Drummond, the friend and interviewer of "Royal Ben" Jonson, these volumes are now kept carefully locked away in a small room, off the hall, where they are half forgotten, and are rarely seen by the book-loving and book-worshipping men whose hearts they would delight. They are exceedingly rare autographs, and annotated; first editions, generally beautifully bound, most of them beyond price, some of them absolutely unique. Alas! they do no good to anybody now, except to the very few visitors to the University who, learning of their existence, beg for a sight, or a touch, of them, a request which is always

graciously granted. But there they are "to remain."

The Library has other rich treasures, all as carefully kept from public, or appreciative, view; the Shaksperiana collected by Halliwell-Phillipps, to whom the University once gave an honorary degree; the generally accepted original manuscripts of John Knox's *History of the Reformation*; Thomas Carlyle's holograph deed of gift of Craigenputtock, and the like. But they are as little known to the average Edinburgh man, in the University, or out of it, as are the manuscripts of *The Poems of Ossian* or of *The Iliad of Homer*; notwithstanding the fact that they are of far more sentimental value, if not of far more intrinsic value, than are all the Crown jewels in the Castle, unearthed by the author of *Marmion*, who must have revered the Laird of Hawthornden as much as he revered the commonplace wearers of the regalia of Scotland.

The first patrons of the establishment at Edinburgh evidently intended that every

student should be lodged within its walls, and should remain there by night, as well as by day. And it was ordered that all undergraduates should wear gowns, under pain of expulsion. For a number of years, as many of the students as the College would hold, were, certainly, housed inside its gates. But the custom gradually went into disuse, and it has never since prevailed.

The rent of chambers in that early period was four pounds, if the student demanded a bed to himself; two pounds each person, if two occupied one couch. In later times, according to "Jupiter," otherwise Alexander, Carlyle, "living in Edinburgh continued still [1743] to be wonderfully cheap; as there were ordinaries for young gentlemen at fourpence a head, for a very good dinner of broth and beef, and a roast and potatoes, every day, with fish three or four times a week; and all the small-beer that was called for until the cloth was removed."

Within a few years, an institution calling itself "University Hall" has opened a very

limited number of houses for the accommodation of students of both sexes, where are bed-rooms, studies, common dining, and recreation, or meeting, rooms. The Hall is managed internally by a committee of the residents, elected by themselves, and by each other, for short terms. The board and lodging cost comparatively little. But, naturally, only a few, of either sex, can avail themselves of the limited privileges extended.

This University Hall system, however, is not under the control of the University authorities; and it is, such as it is, in its own small, recent way, almost the only thing approaching to University social home-life which the University has ever known.

The Privy Council, in 1695, recommended that all masters and regents (regents were professors in the early days), and also the students of the several universities of the Kingdom, should be obliged to wear gowns during the time of the sittings of their colleges. "The students to wear red gowns,

that thereby they may be discouraged from vageing or vice."

The recommendation was not adopted in Edinburgh; nor, says Prof. Andrew Dalzel, in his *History* of the Institution, was it easy to see what advantage could attend the wearing of such a badge. The students were "discouraged from vice and vageing" by other means.

But the professors at Edinburgh, to this day, lecture, always, in gowns; which is a pleasant, proper custom.

"Vageing," it may be observed here, is defined by Jamieson in his *Scottish Dictionary*, as "the habit of strolling idly"; and he gives as his authority, Bower's *History of the University of Edinburgh*. Johnson does not seem to have known the word; the nearest he came to it is, "to vagary, to gad, to remove often from place to place." And the *Century Dictionary* comes no nearer to it than "vagabond." "Vageing," evidently, in the argot of the present, was "loafing about."

Some of the early laws for Edinburgh undergraduate guidance are worth recording. In 1668, it was enacted, by the regents, that the censors, in their respective classes, should observe such as "speak Scots, curse, swear, or have any obscene expressions, that the regent may censure them, according to the degree of their offence." For the suppression of tumults, for which the College then had a bad repute, it was ordained that none of the scholars should stand at the gate, or on the stairs, or in the passages to the classes; transgressors to be delated, every one of them to be fined two shillings "Scots"; a "shilling Scots" being of about the value of an English penny.

It was also ordained that no scholar should be troublesome to another, by shouldering or tossing; for, seeing these were the occasions of fighting, whosoever should be found guilty of tossing would be amerced in four shillings "Scots." "If a scholar should strike his neighbour, he was chastised, according to the demerit of the fault. If he should be

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deprehended playing, or carelessly walking up and down, in any of the courts, at the time of their meeting in their schools, for every fault he was mulcted in a shilling fine."

Additional laws for the College, made in 1701, provided that no student, "during hours," should walk idly in the courts; should play at hand-ball, billiards, or bowls, or the like. None were allowed to do, or to speak, wickedly, wrongfully, or obscenely; to indulge in "nasty talk." Such as "profaned God's sacred name, or vented horrid oaths," were to pay sixpence the first time; and thereafter to be severely chastised. All students were to carry themselves respectfully towards the professors; and to obey their professors' injunctions. Those who transgressed were to be fined first in a penny; and after in two pence. Students were obliged to discourse, always, in Latin; also to speak modestly, chastely, courteously, and in no manner uncivil or quarrelsome. If they spoke in English, or "in

Scots," within the College, the charge was a penny for the first offence, two pence for every offence thereafter. They were ordered to carry no guns, swords, daggers, or such arms; to throw no snow-balls or stones at glass windows, or glass houses, or at walls, or at seats, or at desks, or at pulpits, or at anything else, or at anybody. They were to be discharged if they used cards, or dice, or raffling, or any such games of lottery. They were not permitted to enter taverns, or ale-houses, at any time of day; and it was even against the rules for them to walk the streets of an evening!

How far these rules were enforced, two hundred years ago, especially "after hours," when the students, unmarked by red gowns and entirely unrecognisable, had absolute freedom of the city, is not now known.

Edinburgh, in many respects, resembles the German, rather than the English, or the American, universities. The men are scattered in lodgings throughout the town; they have little of class feeling or of social

life in common; their ages vary greatly; and "out of hours" they are subject to no scholastic discipline whatever. They know, personally, but few of their fellows, even by sight; and they feel none of that love of Alma Mater, and of that devotion to her interests, which are so strongly developed in the men of Oxford and Cambridge, and in the men of every seat of learning, be it large or small, salt-air, or fresh-water, on the western side of the Atlantic.

The loss is that of the Edinburgh man. And a great loss it is.

He does not recognise the face of a class-mate when he meets him in after life. He has no college colours to wear. He has few college songs to stir his blood; no college cheer to warm his heart, or to crack his voice; no intercollegiate victory, or defeat, to rejoice over, or to try to explain away; no Greek-letter or local college club to frequent; no class boy to pet, or to be proud of. He knows nothing of that enthusiastic college spirit which means so

much, in the New World, to every man who ever went to college, even for a single term; which means so much, also to his sisters, and to his cousins, and to his aunts.

And the loss is that of the Edinburgh man!

A writer in the *Scotsman*, in 1884, said that the students at a Scottish university, even at that period, had little more cohesion among themselves than the grains of a sifting sand-heap. They drift into the same classes, he added; but when the lecture is over, they fold up their note-books like the Arab, and as silently steal away. There was then, he complained, no common place of meeting, where a man might look upon the countenance of his friend, or hear the sound of a voice, which, in the class-room, must of a necessity be still. And he concluded by saying, that "it did not need natural or acquired misanthropy for a man to pass through an entire university course, and take a degree, without knowing a single fellow-student better than he did on the day of his first matriculation."

Day is Done

This was before the establishment of the University Union, based, in a way, upon the Union Society of Oxford. "The Royal Medical," "The Speculative," "The Dialectic," "The Diagnostic," "The Philomathic," "The Chemical," "The Theological," "The Philosophical," and even "The Total Abstinence" societies, many of them of comparatively recent date, were already in existence, but small in membership; and, as their names imply, limited and peculiarly special in scope. The Union, without effacing or absorbing these, is universal. It is open to all students and graduates of the University; and "its purpose is the provision and maintenance of means of social and academic intercourse for its members." It is a students' club, with a very small entrance fee, and small annual dues. It has a commodious building of its own; it has all the conveniences of a club proper; with the addition of a large hall, in which lectures are given, and in which debates are held. But it is still in its extreme infancy; and it

is, in its dull, cold, social way, about all that the very modern Edinburgh man has to cling to, for University entertainment and amusement. It was absolutely unknown to the Edinburgh man of two decades ago. And the loss is that of the Edinburgh man.

Another interesting, and also very modern feature of the undergraduate life, in Edinburgh, is the Students' Representative Council, instituted in 1883-4, "to represent the feeling and opinions of students, as occasion might arise, and to mediate between them and the University authorities." It consists of eighty members, elected by the students direct; and of fifty-two members, chosen by the different societies of students; and, in a measure, it controls and governs the Union. One of its interesting features is a weekly publication called *The Student*, which is devoted to "University Notes," to "Athletic Notes," and to "Society Notes"; these last relating, not to society in general, with a capital "S," but to the College societies and associations mentioned above.

The graduates have space assigned to them, in which they are invited to indulge in reminiscences, personal and otherwise. Books are reviewed, and local and general musical and dramatic affairs receive a certain amount of attention. It is the only periodical of its kind peculiar to the University, as a university; and it takes the place of the Literary Magazines, the Alumni Weeklies, the daily papers, and all the rest of the journals in which American undergraduates indulge themselves; and out of which they get so much comfort, and do so much good to themselves and to each other.

The Students' Representative Council is not confined to Edinburgh alone; it exists in the other institutions as well. A joint committee of these Councils has published *The Scottish Student's Song-Book*, containing, in a single volume, all the lays and lyrics of all the universities. This volume is exceedingly comprehensive; for it embraces the national airs, and the folk-music of every quarter of the globe, from *The Russian Anthem* to *The*

Old Cabin Home. The college songs, proper and special, are not very many or very original, or very brilliant, notwithstanding the fact that Professor Blackie has furnished some of the words. They are set to familiar airs, ancient and modern, from *Bonny Dundee* to *Upidee*, from *John Brown's Body* to *Sally in Our Alley*. Sometimes they are purely personal; but usually they are general in character. One verse from a production entitled *Our Noble-Selves*, will give a fair idea of the style of composition of the whole; and will, also, show the broadness of the college spirit.

“ They talk about Arenas of the South,
And eulogise the Isis and the Cam,
While they glory in a Porson or a Routh,
The Harvard, and the Yale, of Uncle Sam.
And possibly our rivals may amass
More knowledge than the College by the
Dee,
But none of them can possibly surpass
Our weather, and our heather, and our Sea.”

No college in the world can surpass

Aberdeen in the matter of sea and heather, perhaps; but very few universities will care to attempt to rival her in the matter of climate.

The Constitution of the University of Edinburgh seems, to the lay mind, to be a most complicated document. As it is entirely unlike anything of its kind known on the western side of the Atlantic, some short, but comprehensive, digest of its scope and contents, dug out of the annual *University Calendar*, may be of interest here. We learn, in a vague sort of way, that the University is a corporation consisting of a Chancellor, of a Vice-Chancellor, of a Rector, of a Principal (or President), of professors, of registered graduates and alumni, and of matriculated students. The Chancellor, we are told, is elected by the General Council "for life." Changes in the ordinances and in University arrangements, proposed, or approved by the University Court, must receive his sanction. And he confers degrees.

The General Council and the University

Court have many pages of the *Calendar* devoted to their functions. The University Court consists of the Rector, the Principal, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, and of a number of "Assessors," variously appointed. The General Council is composed of the Chancellor, of the members of the University Court, of professors, and of registered graduates. The Vice-Chancellor, nominated by the Chancellor, may, in absence of the Chancellor, confer degrees; but he may not discharge any other of the Chancellor's duties. The Principal, formerly elected by the Town Council, but now by the curators, also holds his office "for life." The curators number seven, three nominated by the University Court, and four by the Town Council. They retain the position for three years.

The Rector is elected by the matriculated students of the University, on such days in October, or November, as may be fixed by the University Court; and he is president of that particular body. All of which sounds most complex and perplexing.

Rev. Menzies Fergusson, in an interesting little book entitled *My College Days*, published in 1887, tells the story of a Rectorial contest in Edinburgh when he was a student there, some twenty years ago. The candidates that year were men of high standing in the Whig and Tory parties, but seemingly of small importance in the world of letters. Young Fergusson, a Bejan, just matriculated, a stranger to Edinburgh, and to almost every person in Edinburgh, and quite indifferent as to candidates and to parties, was at once beset by students, enthusiastic on one side or the other, to declare his intentions. He does not say for whom he voted; but he describes the electioneering proceedings in a graphic way. Meetings innumerable were held; speeches without number were made; squibs and cartoons were scattered broadcast; songs were composed, and circulated, and sung; the rival factions formed themselves into opposing battalions, and gathered around the statue of Sir David Brewster, in the great

Court-yard, where were shouting, and pushing, and hauling, and some mauling done, to the serious damage of hats and clothes, although only one warrior seems to have received personal injuries; and he, it is gravely reported, "soon recovered from his swoon."

After the battle, both sides united in a torchlight procession, marching shoulder to shoulder, in perfect harmony and good humour, to do honour to the new Lord Rector, who was to hold his office for the customary three years.

The only persons who appear to have profited by the contests were the tailors and the hatters; and the greatest sufferers, naturally, were the parents and guardians, who had to pay the bills.

All this drew the student-body closer together, for the time; but it does not appear to have inspired anything like what the Americans call "class feeling" or "college spirit."

One of the best pictures extant of what Scottish university life was, and was not, a

hundred years ago, is painted by Froude in the first volume of his *Life of Thomas Carlyle*. He said, in effect, and in part, that in English ears, the words, "college days" suggest splendid buildings, luxurious rooms, and rich endowments, as the reward of successful industry. In Oxford and in Cambridge, the students were young men between nineteen and twenty-three, who enjoyed themselves in every possible social way, and who spent handsome allowances. These allowances, on an average, were double in amount per annum the sum which the father of Thomas Carlyle made in any one year of his hard-working life.

The universities north of the Tweed, on the other hand, in Carlyle's time, the second decade of the nineteenth century, had no prizes to offer, no fellowships, no scholarships; they had nothing whatever to give but an education, and the teaching of severe lessons in the discipline of poverty and self-denial.

The students, as a rule, were the sons of



THOMAS CARLYLE.

poor parents who realised, exactly, the expense of a college course, and who knew how well, or how ill, it could be afforded. And the lads went to Aberdeen, to Edinburgh, to Glasgow, or to St. Andrews with a fixed purpose of reaching the very best of results, at the lowest possible money cost.

They selected, generally, the institution nearest to their own humble homes, in order to save charges of travel; they often walked to their destination, in order to avoid coach-hire; they had no one to look after them on their journey, or at their journey's end. They entered their own names on their college books; they found lodgings for themselves, in some near-by street or alley; they not infrequently cooked their own food, which was brought with them, or sent after them, in the carts of local carriers; sometimes they made their own beds, and washed their own dishes and their own clothes; and they were rarely over fourteen years of age when their college careers began. They formed very few, but always economical,

friendships; they shared their rooms, and their meals, and their thoughts with each other; they had their simple little clubs and societies for conversation or discussion; they read hard, they worked hard; hard was their life. Their very poverty kept them out of debt, and out of temptation to unwholesome habits and amusements, and when the term was over, they walked home to their own firesides, to make money enough, during the vacation, by teaching, or even by field-labour, to carry them back to their university, and to keep them there for another session.

As a training in self-dependence, said Froude, no better education could have been found in the British Islands. And he asserted that if the teaching could have been as good as was the discipline of character, the Scottish universities might have competed with any in the world. But he declared that the teaching was the weak point. There were no provisions made by the colleges to furnish personal instruction, as in the

sister institutions in England ; the professors were, individually, excellent ; but they had to lecture to large classes, and they had no time to attend, particularly, to any individual student. The Scottish universities, he concluded, were nothing more than opportunities offered to lads who were able, and ready, to take advantage of the opportunities which they sought, or which came in their way.

This, no doubt, was true enough when the lad Carlyle, towards the close of his thirteenth year, tramped a hundred miles from Ecclefechan to Edinburgh in 1809; and, in a measure, it is true now; but it is not the whole truth, and the four Scottish universities to-day hold their own, very nobly, among the modern universities of the world.

The Rev. James Sharp, Minister of the Established Church of Scotland, at Musselburgh, near Edinburgh, in a personal note, has kindly set down for the benefit of the readers of this volume the story of his own student life in Edinburgh, during full courses of Arts and Divinity, from the autumn of

1877 until the summer of 1885. His words are quoted here in full:

“To the intending student in my time,” he writes, “two ways of finding out how to make a start at the University were available. To wit—from a student who had already been there, or from the *University Calendar*, the intricacies of which presupposed graduation for the full understanding of the same.

“A considerable railway journey, in most cases, to an unknown city was necessary. Never seen Edinburgh before? No? Go in the daylight, leave your box at the station, and then hunt for lodgings. After weary wanderings, you venture to ring the bell of the basement door of a tenement house, in the windows of which you have seen the ticket of strange and familiar device,—‘Lodgings to Let, for Single Gentlemen’; with another to keep it company, containing the announcement, ‘Mangling Done Here.’ In our case,” says Mr. Sharp, “the door was opened by a widow lady who smiled upon her innocent country victims. We were shown the establishment, and we fixed upon a parlour and a bed-room, two of us ‘digging’ together. The price for each, with board, was about twelve shillings a week. ‘But before we bargain,’ said the now businesslike landlady,

'I want to ken what kind o' students ye are.'
'Oh,' we replied, 'we will try to give you as little trouble as possible.' 'But are ye Medical or Deveenity?' 'We are just entering Arts.'
'Aye! ye have plenty o' arts about ye. But it's a 'richt. I can manage Medicals: but those Deveenities are wild deevils!'

"Back to the station for our boxes was our next step. These boxes, among other necessary things, contained scones, bannocks, jam, and the like; the forethought of a kind mother who realised how much her laddie would miss these home-comforts in the Capital.

"Next morning we speered our way to the University, and arriving there, we entered its portals with trembling steps. The bedellus was six feet four inches in height; and we cried up to him to direct us to the Matriculation Office. This haughty beadel is believed to have spoken invariably of the College Staff as 'We and the ither professors.' The matriculation fee was one pound, one shilling; and the card we received gave us entrance to any class. For at that time, there were no entrance examinations to the University. I chose the Arts course, as qualifying me for Divinity. The fee for each class was three guineas; and the occasion of paying that fee was the one opportunity the student had of speaking to his professor, unless

the student was called to the professor's room for misbehaviour. The classes contained some two hundred men each; so that it was difficult for the teacher to know, by name, or by face, more than a very few of the taught; and he seldom attempted to do more than that. Only one Professor (Calderwood), during the whole Arts course, invited us to his house, and not many went; so unsocial and so uncouth is the average Scottish youth. This Professor [Calderwood] knew almost every student by name; and he never passed any of us in the streets without recognition. But he was considered very singular!

“There were several debating societies which met in the evenings, in one of the class-rooms; but they were not largely attended. This, for all that, was the only means whereby we could have any association with each other, when the studies of the day were over. There was no Union then, such as there is now. We scattered in all directions to get our luncheons; and we generally dined in our lodgings, at the close of the College-day's work.

“There was really no student social life. The most of the time in the evenings was spent in lonely study, at home, preparing for the classes on the coming days. The undergraduate was cast upon the city without a soul to care for him. Sometimes a minister would call upon him; and

occasionally, if he were serious-minded, the Young Men's Christian Association would get hold of him and put him in the way of making friends of the right sort. On Sundays there was no Church service which was especially adapted to him or to his wants. There is no College chapel in Edinburgh.

"In the Theological Faculty, when I reached that, there was more sociability. The classes were small, and the professors, having all been ministers themselves, took a particular interest in the pupils, who were going forward to the ministry. Every one of the divinity students was familiar with, and familiar to, his professor; and was made welcome at his professors' homes.

"Great improvements have taken place in Edinburgh, since my time, and in many ways. The Union brings the men more closely together, and there are now students' cricket clubs, football clubs, tennis clubs, golf clubs, and the like. But, so far as I know, there is no further advance of the undergraduates towards personal contact with their professors.

"Perhaps the philosophy of the whole thing is this. The Scotch are gregarious in every country save their own. They do not care for much sociability. At least those lads do not, who are away from their own parishes. The Scottish student, generally, is drawn from a class of the

population which has hard fights to make both ends meet. He must work with all his might to obtain a bursary [or scholarship], and thus to save his father's pockets and his mother's scones.

"We used to get a holiday from the Theological Faculty on the first Monday of every month. This was called 'Meal Monday,' because it enabled the students to go home to replenish their barrels. Dear old times! No luxuries. The liberal arts, sciences, and theology were cultivated on oatmeal, with an occasional glass of beer on a Saturday night."

"I do not remember anything more that is worth saying," concludes Mr. Sharp. But he has remembered a good deal that is worth hearing, concerning the life in his own University not so very many years ago. There is not space enough here to enumerate all the men of letters who have made the University of Edinburgh, or whom the University of Edinburgh has made. Its list of graduates is as long as is the Moral Law, which it has taught to its graduates, and which most of its graduates have taught, in some form or other, to the world at large. They have

turned out songs, those Edinburgh men, and they have turned out sermons, innumerable; sermons predominating. But they have turned out very little that has not lived, or that is not worth living.

Concerning some of the distinguished sons of Edinburgh, as showing what they did in the University, and what the University, in its own peculiar way, did for them, a few words may be said. These words will illustrate further, perhaps, the scope and the methods, the manners and the customs, of the Institution from the time of its foundation, down to a period within the memory of men still living.

Almost nothing is known of the early life of William Drummond of Hawthornden, the friend of "Royal Ben" Jonson, and probably the earliest literary son of his Alma Mater, except the fact that he received the rudiments of his education at the High School, in Edinburgh, where he is said to have displayed precocious signs of worth and genius. In due time, he took his degree

of M.A. after the usual course of study in Edinburgh University. He was well versed in the metaphysical learning of the period; and he devoted himself, even at college, to the study of the classical authors of antiquity; which may account for the purity and elegance of his style. The first edition of his *Poems* was published in 1616, three years before the memorable visit of Jonson, and when Drummond was over thirty. How far he lisped in numbers, before he was graduated, is not clear; but how much he loved his College has been shown in his liberal bequests to its library.

James Thomson made his first appearance in Edinburgh on horseback, riding behind a servant of his father. He walked home the next day, alone, not liking the looks of things; and he is said to have reached the paternal manse, some fifty or sixty miles distant, before the return of the servant and the horse. His second visit was more prolonged. Somewhat contrary to his own inclination, he was induced to study divinity;



WILLIAM DRUMMOND.

but being rebuked by a professor for the flowery and poetic nature of a probationary exercise delivered in the hall, he retired from the consideration of theology in disgust.

During his undergraduate days, he tutored the son of an earl, and contributed certain verses to a poetical volume called *The Edinburgh Miscellany*. A friend of the family, "finding him unlikely to do well in any other pursuit, advised him to try his fortune as a poet in London, and promised him some countenance and support." Accordingly he journeyed South, with almost nothing in his pocket but the first poem of *The Seasons—Winter*, which he sold for three guineas. It consisted, originally, of four hundred and thirteen lines, and was published when its author was twenty-six years of age.

A penny-ha'-penny a line does not seem to be a very great price for a poem which has lived so long as has this particular *Winter* of Thomson's. *Autumn*, "nodding o'er the yellow plain," was written later, and brought a little larger sum.

David Mallet was a friend and classmate of Thomson's at Edinburgh. He must have been a hardworking and a diligent student, for his professors recommended him, and cordially, as a private tutor to the children of the Duke of Montrose. This was an unusual proceeding, except when accompanied by unusual ability; especially in the case of a man absolutely obscure of birth, Mallet's father being the keeper of a small public-house, on the borders of the Highlands. The son seems to have been sensitive upon the subject of his extraction; for he attempted, carefully, to conceal from the world all the particulars of his origin, and of his early career, including even the story of his college life. He was a poet of some contemporary merit; and he disputed with Thomson the authorship of *Rule Britannia*, contained in a play called *Alfred*, which they wrote in collaboration. It is rather interesting to contemplate the fact that one of the various British national anthems is claimed by two Scotsmen, both of the University of

Edinburgh. But the song has lasted nearly a couple of centuries; and the Britons of both sides of the Border, who still assert that they "rule the waves," have not yet become tired of saying so in the words of Mallet, or of Thomson.

"I passed through the ordinary course of education with success," wrote David Hume, on his death-bed, in 1776, "and was seized, early, with a passion for literature, which has been the ruling passion of my life, and the great source of enjoyment. My studious disposition, my sobriety, and my industry gave my family a notion that the law was a proper profession for me, but I found an unsurmountable aversion to everything but the pursuits of philosophy and general learning."

Elsewhere in this interesting fragment of autobiography, Hume remarked, that "it is difficult for a man to speak long of himself, without vanity," which will account for his allusions to his own industry, to his own sobriety, and to his studious disposition; all of them most admirable qualities in an undergraduate, when they are exploited by

somebody else. However, Hume seems to have exhibited every one of these qualities while a student at Edinburgh University, according to the testimony of his contemporaries; and to have been a credit to his Alma Mater.

Hugh Blair, Doctor of Divinity, must be considered here as a literary landmark of the University of Edinburgh, because his contemporaries looked upon him not only as one of the most eminent of divines, but also as one of the most illustrious "Cultivators of Polite Letters" who figured in the cultivated eighteenth century. His father perceived, early in the boy's career, that the boy possessed seeds of genius; and the boy, in 1730, when he was twelve years of age, was sent to the College in order to have the seeds of genius watered and developed. He is said to have remained in the University for eleven years, studying diligently all the time; and he did not receive his degree of M. A. until 1739. He devoted himself particularly to history in his undergraduate days; and, with

some of his youthful associates, he devised and constructed a most comprehensive scheme of chronological tables, for recording, in their proper places, all important and far-reaching events. This work, a very serious and unusual production for undergraduate pens, was afterwards elaborated by another hand, and given to the public as the once familiar *Chronological History of the World*.

Blair was not strong of health in his boyhood, and he was better able, therefore, to resist those attractions of physical excitement which were to be found outside the class-rooms. In later life, he was so successful in his lectures on English composition, before the University, that George Third, or his Ministers, erected and endowed for him a special Chair of Rhetoric and Belles-Lettres, making him "Regius Professor" thereof, with a handsome salary and pension.

On account of his provincial accent, and of certain defects in the organs of pronunciation, we are told that his sermons and lectures were better in print than on the

platform; and that, thanks to his pension, he was probably the first clergyman who ever "set-up" a carriage in Scotland!

John Home, called in the encyclopedias "an eminent dramatic poet," was the author of one eminently successful tragedy, *Douglas*, and of three less popular tragedies, *Alonzo*, *Alfred*, and *The Fatal Discovery*, which are now altogether forgotten.

He was born on the banks of the Firth of Forth, and his father, who was Town Clerk of Leith, is not supposed to have had any flocks of his own to feed, outside the family circle. Home was a graduate of Edinburgh, where his ability, his progress in the study of literature, and his charm of manner made him exceedingly popular. His biographer, Mackenzie, tells us that "his temper was of that warm, susceptible kind, which is caught by the heroic and the tender; and that his favourite model of character was the imaginary 'Young Norval' of the play, upon whom he attempted to form himself, a character endowed with chivalrous valour and

romantic generosity." He saw good in everybody, put his friends upon higher pedestals than Nature had built for them; and he liked to be praised as much as he loved to bestow praise upon others.

He played the titular part in the famous amateur representation of *Douglas*, described in the sketch of Adam Ferguson, given below.

An intimate friend of Home's at the University was William Robertson, the historian. He entered college at the age of twelve; and he must have distinguished himself there as he distinguished himself everywhere else. His monumental work appeared before he was forty, to the great admiration and surprise of Horatio Walpole, who said that he could not understand how a man whose spoken dialect was so uncouth to English ears, could write such fine and perfect English; forgetting that they teach English in Edinburgh.

Robertson became Principal of the University in 1762, and he held the position until he died thirty-one years later. He

established the Library Fund, he was very instrumental in giving the University its "New Buildings," and he made the College so important in the eyes of studious men that he drew to it many serious-minded undergraduates from Oxford and Cambridge.

Adam Ferguson, a graduate of St. Andrews, became Professor of Natural Philosophy in Edinburgh in 1759; and in 1764, Professor of Moral Philosophy, a chair much better suited to his tastes, and to the course of study which he had followed.

During these Edinburgh days, he enjoyed, and ornamented, the intellectual society, for which the Northern Capital was distinguished in the last half of the eighteenth century. "Edinburgh is a hot-bed of genius," wrote Tobias Smollett, in *Humphry Clinker*. "I have the good fortune to be made acquainted with many authors of the first distinction [including Ferguson], and I have found them all as agreeable in conversation as they are instructive and entertaining in their writings."

Smollett might have added that they were, as well, sometimes playful in conduct; for there is a tradition extant that the tragedy of *Douglas*, by the Rev. John Home, was once produced in private in Edinburgh, with the author in the titular part and Adam Ferguson as "Lady Randolph." A Professor of Natural, and of Moral, Philosophy, figuring as "the leading lady" in an amateur dramatic company of grave and reverend college Dons must have been an instructive and entertaining spectacle to any critical undergraduate who chanced to be in the audience. Whether or not the "Lady Randolph," or the "Anna," of the cast, the latter played by the Rev. Hugh Blair, was in proper and appropriate female costume on that occasion, is not recorded.

Professor Ferguson was instrumental in bringing together the two popular poets of Scotland, for the first and only time. Walter Scott, a lad of fifteen, in 1786-87, had the rare good fortune, a good fortune which he thoroughly appreciated, to be noticed by

Burns in Adam Ferguson's house. "Of course," wrote Scott, "we youngsters sat silent and looked and listened." Burns was attracted by some lines on the bottom of a print on the walls of the room, and asked who was their author. Nobody knew but the little, silent, and listening Scott, who whispered the information, "Langhorne." "Burns rewarded me with a glance and a word," added Scott, "which, though of mere civility, I then received and still recollect with great pleasure. . . . I never saw him again, except in the street, when he did not recognise me, as I could not expect he should."

And so the "glance," full of reverence on the one hand, and full of sympathy on the other, was returned; and Adam Ferguson's house, to quote some now forgotten poet, was "the spot where Robert Burns ordained Sir Walter Scott!"

A contemporary of these men at the University was John Witherspoon. He became President of the College of New Jersey, at

Princeton, in 1768; he lived and dared to sign the Declaration of Independence, eight years later; but he has made more record for himself as a teacher of youth in the New World, than as one of the taught in the Old.

Dugald Stewart was most emphatically a university man. His father being Professor of Mathematics at Edinburgh, the boy was born in the house assigned to the head of the Mathematical Faculty, in the very buildings of the College. At the proper time, he became a student of his father; later, he was assistant to his father; and, in 1785, he succeeded Adam Ferguson in the Chair of Moral Philosophy. He did not relinquish his active duties in the University until 1810, when he was fifty-seven years of age.

Lord Cockburn said once: "To me, his [Dugald Stewart's] lectures were like the opening of the heavens. I felt that I had a soul. His noble views, imparted in glorious sentences, elevated me into a higher world."

Although Adam Smith was closely associated with Glasgow, as a student there for

a few years, and as a professor for many years, he lectured on belles-lettres and on rhetoric at Edinburgh in 1748, when he was twenty-five years of age.

Henry Mackenzie, "the Man of Feeling," was a resident of the Edinburgh of the period of Adam Ferguson and Hugh Blair, and Adam Smith, and Home, and Hume, although not of their day at the University. He survived them all, living into the third decade of the nineteenth century; and, like the rest of them, he went in, and out, of college without leaving any very tangible impression as an undergraduate.

Oliver Goldsmith, in the minds of men, is rarely associated with Edinburgh. Trinity College, Dublin, still claims him with pride, as one of her sons. But he went to Edinburgh in the autumn of 1752, to take a course in medicine and anatomy; where he distinguished himself, chiefly, by his amusing simplicity of character, and by his curious and entertaining absence of mind. But he seems to have been almost as fond of

chemistry as of fun. He was as poor in purse as he was rich in the faculty of social enjoyment. Early in his career he became a member of a students' club called "The Medical Society," where he told inimitable Irish stories, sang delightful Irish songs, and, probably, danced fantastic Irish jigs; making himself immensely popular in his own particular circle. "I sit down and laugh at the world and at myself, one of the most ridiculous objects in it," he wrote, in one of his home letters. He is supposed to have tried to make a little money by private tuition. But he did not find himself in entire sympathy with Scotland or with the Scots, in general, and, at the end of eighteen months he journeyed to the Continent, to finish his studies among more congenial surroundings. The Scots and Scotland left but little impression upon his literary work; although he wrote from Leyden that logic was by no means taught so well there as in Edinburgh.

Another Edinburgh man, concerning whom

a great deal is said, in these days, and about whom almost nothing is known, was James Boswell, the author of the *Life of Samuel Johnson*, an immortal book, and, most assuredly, a landmark in literature. He entered the University at the usual early age; but he distinguished himself, particularly, outside the College gates, and in a social way. He shone in high life, and he was particularly fond of the stage and of stage-folk. While he was still an undergraduate, he wrote the prologue for what he supposed to be an original play, presented by a certain dame of quality, who was "in his set," and who wished to conceal her identity as a dramatic author. When the comedy was produced in public, it proved to be not only a gross plagiarism, but an utter failure. Both the failure and the plagiarism were attributed to Boswell; and he was gentleman enough to bear Lady Houston's burden, and to keep the secret, at his own great social expense, until the Lady, seeing the ridicule heaped upon him, was lady enough to confess it all.



JAMES BOSWELL.

During his university days, he began to show a taste for literary composition; and in an early poem of his signed, in print, with his own initials, he thus speaks, modestly enough, of himself:

“ Boswell does women adore,
And never means once to deceive.

.
“ He has all the bright fancy of youth,
With the judgment of forty-and-five.
In short, to declare the plain truth,
There is no better fellow alive.”

He was six-and-forty when *The Tour to the Hebrides* appeared; and no little of the bright fancy of his youth, perhaps, was contained in the *Johnson*, published when the adorer of Johnson was fifty-one.

The two Scottish men of letters who are the most interesting and absorbing figures in literature, are Burns and Scott. Burns never knew the advantages of a college education, or of much schooling of any kind. Scott, for a time, was a student of the University of Edinburgh. Burns was a genius,

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but not, altogether, a gentleman. Scott was a gentleman and almost a genius. Burns wrote from the heart; Scott from the heart and from the head, too. Perhaps Burns, as a genius, was greater than Scott, and will live longer. It may be that Scott, all gentleman and half genius, will stand side by side with Burns, "when the Judgment-Books unfold." Mr. Joseph Jefferson, the player, in his refutation of the theory that there was no Shakspeare, says, in effect—the quotation is from memory—that

" The scholar Bacon was a man of knowledge,
But inspiration does not come from College! "

How much of Scott's inspiration was inspired by his short college course, it is not easy to determine. But Scott was an Edinburgh man.

Fortunately for the young Scott he had not so far to walk to the University as had so many of his contemporaries, for his father's house, on George Square, was but a few steps away. And, unfortunately for

present interest, he had more to say of his school-days in the bit of early *Autobiography* which Lockhart preserved, than of his college life. He left the high school, he wrote, "with a great quantity of general information, ill-arranged, and collected without system, yet deeply impressed upon his mind; readily assorted by his power of connection and memory, and gilded," he added, "by a vivid and active imagination." His appetite for books was a sample, and as indiscriminating, as it was indefatigable; and he always felt that few persons of his age had read so much as he had read, and to so little purpose. The world has good reason to be glad that he read so much; and to doubt that the results were little!

With this small preparation, he entered the University in 1783, in the Humanity class, where he confessed that he speedily lost much that he had learned before. He might have done better in the Greek class, under a better and stricter master, he thought; but he had no knowledge of Greek

to start with, and falling, naturally, behind his fellow-students, on that account he saw—the statement is his own—“no stronger means of vindicating his equality than by professing his contempt for the language, and his resolution not to learn it.”

He made some progress in ethics; he was instructed in moral philosophy, under Dugald Stewart; and, to sum up his academical studies, he attended the classes in history, and in civil and municipal law. His university course, therefore, was not brilliant or particularly creditable, perhaps, because of this more than smattering of “inspiration” which possessed him. His views upon the subject of scholarship, given when he was more mature in mind, must be quoted in full:

“If it should ever fall to the lot of youth to peruse these pages” [of *Autobiography*], he wrote, when he was thirty-seven years of age—“If it should ever fall to the lot of youth to peruse these pages, let such a reader remember that it is with deepest regret that I recollect, in

my manhood, the opportunities of learning which I neglected in my youth; that through every part of my literary career I have felt pinched and hampered by my own ignorance; and that I would, at this moment, give half the reputation I have had the good fortune to acquire, if by so doing I could rest the remaining part upon a sound foundation of learning and science."

Scott, if he had lived longer, might have claimed the University as his very cradle. He was born "at the top," of the College Wynd, now called Guthrie Street. The house was opposite the Old Gate of the Old University; and it was demolished to make way for the New University Buildings.

Professor John Wilson in the University, "Kit North" out of the University, took the Chair of Moral Philosophy in 1820; and he occupied the chair for thirty-two years. There was unusual opposition to his election, on account of the eccentricities of his genius, the recklessness of his temper, and the general lack of fixedness in his purpose. But he was warmly supported by Walter Scott, who urged that the position would give

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Wilson "the consistence and steadiness which were all he needed to make him the first man of the age." And thus, despite his curious impetuosity, and his carelessness of the morrow, he fought his way, by sheer force of talent, to an eminence of the highest moral and literary responsibility.

An entire chapter might be devoted to Wilson, and a delightful task would be the writing of it, especially to one, who, as a very small boy indeed, remembers vaguely the familiar figure, the leonine head and face, the tall and massive form, as he saw Wilson stalking along Princes Street more than once, with his plaid about him, supremely noticeable among noticeable men. "John Wilson," said some one of him once, "was the grandest specimen of the human form I have ever seen, tall, perfectly symmetrical, massive, majestic, yet agile."

His last public act was characteristic of the man. Broken in health, old in years, he struggled to Edinburgh, in order to record his vote for Macaulay, as University Member

of Parliament, a man whom he felt that he had misjudged and misrepresented in previous years.

Mungo Park, as a school-boy at Selkirk, is reported to have made astonishing progress; not only through his natural aptitude; but because of his great application and industry. He served as an apprentice to a Selkirk surgeon for three years, before he went to Edinburgh, in 1789, when he was eighteen. There he remained for three successive sessions, taking the regular medical course, devoting himself particularly to botany; and always working hard.

Henry Brougham entered the University of Edinburgh in 1792, at the age of fourteen. He gave a chapter of his *Autobiography* to the subject of his college life, but he treats of his professors and of their methods, saying nothing of his personal career, except that he devoted himself to mathematics. It was ten or eleven years later when, in his own words, he perpetrated certain "high jinks" in the streets of the town. He

halted, with a party of congenial friends, in front of a chemist's shop, hoisted himself onto the shoulders of the tallest of his companions, "placed himself on the top of the doorway, held on by the sign, and twisted off the venomous brazen serpent, which formed the explanatory announcement of the business that was carried on within."

What a brazen serpent had to do with the selling and the compounding of drugs is not very clear now; but, if Brougham saw metallic vipers after he had started the *Edinburgh Review*, and before he was twenty-five, it is not at all unlikely that he was familiar with "high jinks" of a similar character in his college days. The twisting off of signs seems to have been an important and a necessary part of the course of a British university man a hundred years ago. Fortunately that particular form of mental culture is seriously neglected in the curriculum of modern seats of learning to-day.

Brougham was elected Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh in October, 1859.

He delivered his Inaugural Address the next year. The history of his own times shows that he was, all his life, in the habit of climbing social, intellectual, and frivolous "jinks" of various altitudes, some of them, sometimes, a little higher than his friends approved of, and not always to his own credit.

Mrs. Gordon, in her volume entitled *The Home Life of Sir David Brewster*, says very little about her father's experiences in college, except that his university career was marked by brilliancy as well as by solidity; that in 1793, at the age of twelve, he went up to Edinburgh, on foot, to be matriculated, and that it was his custom to walk backwards, and forwards, from Jedburgh to Edinburgh, and from Edinburgh to Jedburgh, a distance of forty-five miles. In Jedburgh he was born in 1781, and in Jedburgh he spent his early years. It is not easy to think of a Harvard man, or of a Yale man, or of a Princeton man, of twelve or fifteen, as walking, at the close of the college session, from his campus to Portsmouth,

let us say, or to Rye, or to Philadelphia; and then, on arrival at home, and before he went to bed, taking a walk of a few miles more, to talk things over with the boys of Kittery Point, the boys of New Rochelle, or the boys of Merion. Yet the young David Brewster thought very little of such a tramp; and he tramped it more than once, in a single day. If they were not giants, in those times, they were, at least, pedestrians; and the express-train, the automobile, the trolley, and the bicycle are hardly in it. Their exercise did not require so much training as football, as baseball, or as track athletics; but perhaps it told in the end.

Brewster as Vice-Chancellor of the University presided at the installation of Lord Brougham, as Chancellor. He was Principal from 1860 until he died in 1868.

Carlyle, as we have seen elsewhere, tramped a hundred miles from the paternal door-step, at Ecclefechan, to enter his own name on the books of the University of Edinburgh, in November, 1809. He did not reach the



HENRY BROUGHAM.

age of fourteen until the next month. His father, and his mother, to quote his own words, walked with him on the dark, frosty autumn morning to set him on his road; his mother showing her "tremulous affection" at every step; which is a way that mothers have! His companion, on his journey, was one "Tom" Smail, a youth slightly his senior, who had been at college before, and who was, therefore, considered a trustworthy guide. "Tom" Smail seems to have been a commonplace creature, conceited and of no account in the college world, or in the world at large. We hear no more concerning "Tom" Smail. His very name sounds like a joke.

The two Thomases found dull, and forlorn, and cheap lodgings in Simon Square, a dull and forlorn street, hardly changed during the century that has passed. Carlyle said that he learned very little at college, that in the classical field he was truly nothing; his professors never noticing him, and never being able to distinguish him from

another Carlyle, who was "an older and a bigger boy, with red hair, wild buck-teeth, and scorched complexion; and the worst Latinist" of Thomas Carlyle's acquaintance.

The greater Carlyle does not seem to have done much better at philosophy; and the only real progress he made was in mathematics. He carried off no prizes. He tried but once for a tangible reward of that sort, but, although he was well enough prepared, the noise, and the crowd, and the confusion of the class-room so distracted him that he gave up the attempt.

Sartor Resartus is hardly autobiographical, but it contains a fair account of what college life was to its author, who declared that he felt it his duty to say that out of England and Spain his own was the worst of all hitherto discovered universities. But among eleven hundred Christian youths gathered together in one institution of learning, there were, perhaps, according to Carlyle, eleven willing to learn; and Carlyle was one of that Edinburgh Eleven. "By collision" with

the other, and the upper, few, a certain warmth, a certain polish, was communicated to him, he thought. By accident, and by happy instinct, he took less to rioting than to thinking and reading. And so the twig was bent.

Carlyle became Rector of the University in 1865, commemorating his election by bequeathing, in true Carlylian language, his estate of Craigenputtock to found bursaries in the University. His reception by the students upon the occasion of the delivery of his Inaugural Address is said to have been very striking, and very affectionate. By reason of his age and physical feebleness he was unable to make his voice heard throughout the hall; and hundreds of patient men, who, perhaps, under similar circumstances, were never patient before, sat quietly and with deepest respect, unable to catch a word he said.

This, remarks Sir Alexander Grant, historian of the University, was in strong contrast with the too frequent exhibitions of

a little
look I
think,
about
1869
m
1891

undergraduate behaviour, when graceful and charming orations have been interrupted and made inaudible, and even brought to an end "by barbarous noises" [the phrase is his own], for which there was absolutely no reason, and no excuse.

Thomas Guthrie, who, according to his own subsequent account, was always, as a boy, fond of fun and of fighting, entered the University of Edinburgh at the age of twelve; and he spent ten years of his life there. The first four were devoted to the Arts, to the linguistic, to the philosophical, and to the mathematical courses; the next four to the study of divinity, Church history, Biblical criticism, and Hebrew; the last two years to medicine and to science. His University gave him his degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1872.

John Stuart Blackie, still well remembered on the streets of Edinburgh, went to the University after a short period of study at Marischal College, in Aberdeen. He neglected his mathematics, however, and he

failed to obtain his degree; so in 1829, he migrated to Germany, to finish his course.

In 1852, he became Professor of Greek in Edinburgh, a chair he occupied for some thirty years. His aim, as a lecturer, was to direct the attention of his classes towards the consideration of Greek life and Greek thought, rather than to produce exact scholarship. He was the author of, and a vigorous leader in, that agitation for the broadening and elevation of university education in Scotland which resulted in the passing of what is known as the Universities Act.

Another one of the few immortal names upon which we come, somehow to our surprise, in the famous roll of Edinburgh men is that of Charles Darwin. In his short Autobiography, presented by his son, he gives the following account of his college career:

“As I was doing no good at school,” he wrote, “my father took me away at a rather earlier age than usual, and sent me [Oct., 1825]

to Edinburgh University with my brother, where I stayed for two years or sessions. . . . The instruction at Edinburgh," he added, "was altogether by lectures, and these were intolerably dull, with the exception of those on chemistry by Hope. But, to my mind, there are no advantages, and many disadvantages, in lectures, compared with reading. Dr. Duncan's lectures on *materia medica*, at eight o'clock on a winter's morning, are something fearful to remember. Dr. — made his lectures on human anatomy as dull as he was himself, and the subject disgusted me. Later," he said, "during my second year at Edinburgh, I attended Dr. —'s lectures on geology and zoölogy, but they were incredibly dull. The sole effect they produced upon me was the determination never, as long as I live, to read a book on geology, or in any way to study the science."

These Dr. Blanks and Dr. Dashes of his (he or Mr. Francis Darwin carefully omitted the mention of names in full) would have been interested, perhaps, to know the impression they made upon the young Darwin by the manner, and the matter, of their discourses. And one cannot help wondering how less gifted youths at Edinburgh, during

the first quarter of the nineteenth century, were moved, and inspired, by what they heard in the class-rooms of the University.

Darwin's father perceiving that the son had but little liking for the profession of medicine sent him, in 1828, to Cambridge to prepare himself for the Church. The world well knows the result.

When the young John Brown, the friend of "Rab" and of Rab's Friends, entered the Arts classes of the University, in 1826, at the age of sixteen, no doubt a dog of some Scottish breed went with him, as far as the gates, and waited for him until he came out. And with that dog, and some other dogs, no doubt, he spent all his "Spare Hours" during his college course.

In 1828, he began the study of medicine. And he was graduated in 1833.

A direct descendant of Robert Aytoun, the Scottish poet who was a St. Andrews man in the sixteenth century, was William Edmonstoun Aytoun, author of the *Lays of the Cavaliers*, who was a student, and a

professor, at Edinburgh. The younger Aytoun was, even in his college days, exceedingly fluent in the writing of verse; his mother, who was an intimate friend of Sir Walter Scott, having imbued him with a passion for ballad-poetry when he was yet a boy. His first volume was published when he was seventeen.

In 1845, he was appointed to the Chair of Rhetoric and Belles-Lettres in the University, where he was in his own particular element, and where he was immensely popular, raising the number of students in that branch of study from thirty to nearly nine hundred, in the course of some eighteen years. He edited *Blackwood*; and he married the daughter of John Wilson—"Christopher North."

The audience which listened to Dr. Chalmers, during his Professorship of Divinity, was altogether unique within the walls of a university; embracing as it did not only his own regular students, but distinguished members of the various profes-

sions, and many of the most intelligent citizens of Edinburgh. He stood upon familiar ground, that of natural theology and the evidences of Christianity; the impression he made upon his hearers was great; and great was his influence for good.

He had studied mathematics, chemistry, and natural philosophy in Edinburgh, after he was graduated from St. Andrews.

The most distinguished of the pupils of Dr. Chalmers, and the man who, perhaps, most profited by his teachings was Norman Macleod. He studied divinity in Edinburgh, after he left Glasgow where he was distinguished only for his progress in logic. And he always held Dr. Chalmers in the greatest gratitude and affection. The "Good Words" of the Master, passed down to posterity through the student, became household words in Scotland.

Robert Louis Stevenson was delicate as a child, and consequently backward in the forming of letters. He could not read until he was eight; but when he was six he

dictated, to his mother, a *History of Moses* which he illustrated with his own hand. This is his earliest piece of literary work, and it is said to be still extant.

At school, however, he was bright and alert, although desultory in his studies. He entered the University of Edinburgh in November, 1867, when he was seventeen, and he attended his classes as regularly as his disposition, and indisposition, would permit. According to his own statement he was incorrigibly idle at college, and one particular professor, at the end of a session, declared to him that he had no recollection of ever having seen his [Stevenson's] face before; which Stevenson promptly confessed was not unlikely.

His activity of mind was exhibited chiefly outside the College precincts. In the streets and wynds of the famous town, he studied men, of all sorts and conditions; and in his own room, in his father's house, he read eagerly and omnivorously, poetry, fiction, essays, old and new; devoting himself, with

all the mental enthusiasm of which he was possessed, to the study of Scottish history.

In 1871, he gave up the idea of following in the paternal footsteps, as a civil engineer; and he attended the law classes at the University for several, irregular sessions. He was called to the bar in 1875, but he never practised.

During all this period of school and college life, he was trying his 'prentice hand upon literary composition, in prose and in verse, publishing a few, now rare, pamphlets, highly prized by the collectors of "Stevensoniana," but keeping the greater, if not the better, part of his work to himself.

In 1873, he wrote to one of his intimates:—

"I am glad to hear what you say about the exam. Until quite lately I had treated that pretty cavalierly; for I can say, honestly, that I do not mind being plucked. I shall just have to go up again. . . . I don't, of course, want to be plucked. But so far as my style of knowledge suits them, I cannot make much betterment on it, in a month. If they wish scholarship more exact, I must take a new lease altogether."

Thackeray's Perfidia

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And he took a new lease altogether.

In the words of another, and an earlier Scottish poet, not unfamiliar to Stevenson, for this new lease "may the Lord be thankit."