

# BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

THE VERY REV. ALEXANDER FERRIER MITCHELL,  
D.D., LL.D., PROFESSOR OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY IN  
ST MARY'S COLLEGE, ST ANDREWS.

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A PATHETIC and almost melancholy interest attaches to this volume of the Baird Lectures. Their scholarly and accomplished author may be said to have entered on the last stage of the malady to which he succumbed when they were read for him in Blythswood Parish Church, Glasgow, by his friend and former student, Professor Robertson, the closing one, indeed, having been delivered but a few days before his death. In proof of the deep interest which he took in the subject of these Lectures, and of his desire to present them in as perfect a form as possible, it may also be mentioned that he employed his time in revising them while confined to bed during the protracted and painful illness through which he

passed. The editing of them he intrusted to another friend, Dr Hay Fleming of St Andrews, with whom he had much in common—similarity of tastes and interest in the same literary pursuits having led to an intercourse between them which ripened into mutual confidence and esteem. Had Professor Mitchell lived to see the work through the press himself, there is hardly room to doubt that, as in the case of most of his other publications, additional explanatory and supplementary notes on obscure points would have been appended by him. As it is, the editor in executing his task has done what he could in this respect.

When the decease of the venerable Professor took place at St Andrews towards the end of March of this year, it was felt that the Church of Scotland had been bereft not only of one of her ablest and most trusted leaders, but of one of the wisest and warmest friends of her missions; and the many tributes paid to his memory, both from the pulpit and in the press, were all expressive of the high regard in which he was held, and of the sense of public loss caused by his removal. But the loss was not that of his own Church alone, nor of the University with which his name had been so long and so honourably associated. There are those in other communions who had learned to look upon him as “a master of Israel,” and in all Presbyterian Churches especially he was recognised as one of the ablest and most learned exponents of the principles which they

hold in common, and as one of the most earnest defenders of "the faith once delivered to the saints."

As many of those who are familiar with Professor Mitchell's writings may know little or nothing of his personal history, it has been suggested that a short biographical sketch of him would form an appropriate introduction to this posthumous volume. The particulars woven together in the following narrative have been collected from various sources, some of them having been furnished by members of his own family.

Alexander Ferrier Mitchell was born on 10th September 1822 in the old ecclesiastical city of Brechin, with which his ancestors had had an honourable connection for several generations. His grandfather, Alexander Mitchell, and his father, David Mitchell, were both known as Convener Mitchell, probably as having succeeded each other in the convenership of the local guilds. On the maternal side he was descended from another Brechin family, some of the members of which had in their day served in various capacities abroad, one of his granduncles, Alexander Ferrier, after whom he was named, having been a doctor in India, and another, Captain David Ferrier, "a brave and bold sailor,"—in memory of whom there is a tablet on the east door of the old Cathedral,—having made a voyage round the world in the *Dolphin*, in which also he ran the

blockade in time of war into some of the French ports. Elizabeth, daughter of James Ferrier at Broadmyre, the Professor's mother, was a woman of good judgment and deep piety, and from her he seems to have inherited some of the most prominent features of his character. He was one of a family of three, his brother and sister having died, the former at Bloemfontein in South Africa, many years ago. In childhood he had a narrow escape, a cart having run over his body. He was picked up and carried home by the minister of the Episcopal church. As a boy he passed through more than one severe illness, and when taken for a change to Glenesk one summer he was described by a sympathetic friend as "a deein' laddie." To a mother's unwearied care and attention he owed, under the divine blessing, the recovery of his health, and to a mother's religious training he owed in no small degree that knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and that pious disposition by which he was distinguished from his earliest years. His elementary education he received at the grammar-school of his native town, and when fifteen years of age he proceeded to St Andrews to prosecute his studies with a view to the Christian ministry.

In those days the journey thither was not made with the comfort and facility with which it is now accomplished; and the Professor himself has told how, on landing from the North off the ferry-boat at Newport, he walked all the way

to St Andrews—a distance of eleven miles—along with the carrier's son by the side of the cart which conveyed his luggage to its destination. Widely different as were the future careers of those two youths, there were various interesting points of contact in their lives, the one becoming an eminent doctor in the University, and the other filling the honourable position of a magistrate in the ancient city, while both were associated as members of the kirk-session of the Town Church.

At the very outset of his career at St Andrews the young student from Brechin gained the highest distinction, having won the first bursary open to students entering the University, as the result of a competitive examination in classical scholarship. Throughout his course, both in Arts and Divinity, he maintained a highly honourable place in all the classes, distinguishing himself particularly by proficiency in Hebrew and other Oriental languages; while he won the commendation of his professors and the esteem of his fellow-students not more by his attainments in learning than by the sterling integrity of his character and the example of his consistent Christian life. Among his contemporaries at College were not a few who in after-life rose to prominent positions in the Church, one of these being his future colleague, the late Principal Tulloch, with whom he continued to have most cordial relations during a lifelong friendship.

On completing the usual curriculum of study

at the University, Mr Mitchell was in 1844 licensed to preach the Gospel, and after acting for some time as an assistant, first to the minister of the parish of Meigle and then to the minister of the parish of Dundee, he was in 1847 ordained by the Presbytery of Meigle to the pastoral charge of the parish of Dunnichen in his native county.

The Professor had been no passive spectator of the exciting and momentous events which were taking place in the Church of Scotland in the years which immediately preceded and followed his entrance on the work of the ministry; and in his address as Moderator of the General Assembly, four decades afterwards, he gives a graphic account of the impressions made upon him by his visits to the Supreme Court of the Church during that period of acrimonious controversy and painful separation. He says: "My first view of the General Assembly was gained in 1840, where from the public gallery of the Tron Church, in near proximity to Dr John Ritchie, of the Potterrow (whose thoughts were already running in the same direction as those of his successors are now), I listened to the thrilling eloquence of Chalmers, and the calm, thoughtful utterances of Cook, and witnessed the first of those titanic encounters between Cunningham and Robertson, which the pen of Hugh Miller and the histories of the period have made classical. My next glimpse of the Assembly was in 1843, when, from the students' gallery of St

Andrew's Church, beside my friend William Smith, afterwards of North Leith, I witnessed that sad sight which was never to fade from our memories, nor cease to influence the course of our thought and action—the scene when Welsh, Chalmers, Gordon, and many more good and devoted ministers, abandoning in despair the contest of ten years, withdrew from the Church of their fathers, to rear another in which they hoped to enjoy greater freedom and peace. My next view of the Assembly was in 1848, when, along with Dr Tulloch, and two or three other college friends, I took my place for the first time as a member of the House, and when my old preceptor, then Professor of Church History in St Mary's College, filled the chair. The Church at that time was but slowly recovering from the staggering blow she had received in '43, and the great Dr Robertson was shaping out the splendid scheme which was to constitute her mission for the immediate future, and give to her the consciousness and confidence of reviving life. There were plenty of aged men there, whose lives had been honourably worn out in her service; a goodly band of young men, with not a little of the ardour and enthusiasm of youth; not a few of riper years, who, after weary waiting, had at last been promoted to pastoral charges. But that class which is the mainstay of a Church—the men who have attained to experience by years of labour in her service, and are still able

to bear the burden and heat of the day—was more scantily represented.”

The young minister, with so many conspicuous gifts and graces, was not allowed to remain long in the quiet pastoral charge at Dunnichen, where his ministry had been very acceptable; and in 1848—only one year after his ordination, and when not more than twenty-six years of age—he was appointed to the chair of Hebrew in St Mary’s College, St Andrews, through which he had so recently passed as a student. He has himself told of the cordial welcome which he received from the venerable Principal Haldane and the other members of the professorial staff, and of the harmony with which they co-operated in the work of the College.

It was not then a common thing that so young a minister should be called to occupy such a position of dignity and responsibility, nor was Hebrew then so popular a branch of study as it has, for various reasons, since become in our Divinity Halls; but the ability and success with which the Professor discharged the duties of his chair, and the salutary influence which he exerted in many ways upon the students, more than justified the appointment. He was one of the first in Scotland to introduce a scientific method in the teaching of Hebrew, and his class-room became a place of very real work, necessitating careful preparation on the part of the students. Some of these, perhaps, thought him rather exacting, and

the strict discipline which he enforced was not altogether to their liking; but there were very few who did not value his good opinion, or who would not have considered it a kind of degradation to incur his displeasure; while many, imbued with something of his own spirit, attained under his guidance to such a degree of proficiency in the knowledge of the sacred tongue as made the reading of the Old Testament in the original a source of interest and pleasure to them in subsequent years. Dr William Wright, one of the greatest of Orientalists, was one of his students, and two others of them are occupants of Hebrew Chairs in Scottish Universities.

The appointment of the Professor to the Conventership of the Committee on the Mission to the Jews in 1856 marked a new era in its history, in respect both of the method of its operations and the field in which these have ever since been carried on. One of the results of the Crimean war, which had then but recently closed, was the opening of the Turkish empire for evangelistic enterprise; and it may be said that the Professor laid the foundations of the Mission in the Levant at the several stations occupied by the Church of Scotland, which are now known not only as places of great historic interest but as important centres of missionary activity in which the Church bears an honourable part. In the autumn of 1857 he undertook a journey to the East at the request of the Committee, and in the course of his travels

there visited not only the principal Turkish cities on the coast, but Jerusalem and other places in Palestine and Syria, collecting information with a view to find openings for the planting of the Mission at suitable stations in addition to the two which had been already occupied. The report which he presented on his return led by degrees to a great expansion of the Mission, and several of his own students and others were through his influence induced to enter the service of the Committee. With many other claims on his attention, he ungrudgingly gave up a great part of his time to the administration of the affairs of the Mission, over which for nineteen years he continued to preside with great zeal and wisdom, pressing its claims on the members of the Church, and guiding and encouraging the missionaries by an intelligent and sympathetic interest in their arduous work. When in 1875 he retired from the Conventership, the General Assembly expressed its sense of the value of the distinguished services which he had rendered to the Church in this department of her work in the following terms: "The Assembly are satisfied that the present prosperity of the Jewish Mission, and the remarkable progress which it has made, has been mainly owing to the great labour, the learning, enthusiasm, and warm and intelligent Christian interest which Dr Mitchell has devoted during these years to the cause of Jewish conversion in connection with the Church of Scotland." After his retire-

ment from the Convenership he but seldom attended the meetings of the Committee, for the reason, as he was once heard to say, that he did not wish to appear to hamper his successors; but he never ceased to take a deep interest in the Mission, and none rejoiced more than he in its growing prosperity.

While the Professor still occupied the Hebrew Chair, he had shown a special aptitude for another branch of learning, in which he was yet to make a reputation for himself in the Churches not only of Britain but of America. In 1866 he published a lecture, primarily addressed to his students, on 'The Westminster Confession of Faith: A Contribution to the Study of its Historical Relations and to the Defence of its Teaching,' which, as a reply to views then current in certain quarters, attracted no little notice at the time of its publication, and which is not only of special interest as illustrating his theological standpoint, and the calm and temperate, yet earnest and vigorous, manner in which he could defend it, but is of permanent value as a contribution to the literature of the subject with which it deals. In the following year he published 'The Wedderburns and their Work, or the Sacred Poetry of the Scottish Reformation in its Relation to that of Germany'—a subject which was treated by him much more fully in one of his most recent works.

The Professor was known to possess a most

extensive and accurate knowledge of Church History in general, and of Scottish Church History in particular; and when in 1868 he was called to occupy the Chair of Ecclesiastical History in St Mary's College, the appointment was hailed with satisfaction alike by the University and the Church. With an absorbing interest in his subject, and with the true instinct of the historian, he was most painstaking in ascertaining historical facts, never reaching his conclusions but as the result of patient and careful investigation; and those who knew him intimately can tell how little he grudged the trouble of a journey to Edinburgh or London, or even of an occasional excursion to the Continent, in order to prosecute his researches in libraries there with the view of verifying a statement, or of obtaining indubitable evidence on some controverted point. Besides those who had the privilege of listening to his prelections from the professorial chair, there are many in the Churches on both sides of the Atlantic who have profited by his great erudition; and his published writings, which all bear the impress of a master-hand, will always be reckoned standard works in Ecclesiastical History.

It is no part of the purpose of this notice to describe his various works in detail, but the mere enumeration of them will show what a life of unremitting study he lived. Besides those already referred to, he edited, along with the late

Dr Struthers, in 1874, 'The Minutes of the Westminster Assembly from November 1644 to March 1649,' to which is prefixed an elaborate Historical Introduction written by himself; in 1882 he wrote a 'Historical Notice of Archbishop Hamilton's Catechism' (first printed at St Andrews in 1551), prefixed to Paterson's black-letter reprint of the same; in 1883 he published his Baird Lecture, 'The Westminster Assembly: Its History and Standards'; in 1886 he published 'The Catechisms of the Second Reformation'; in 1888 he edited, for the Scottish Text Society, 'The Richt Vay to the Kingdome of Heuine,' by John Gau, the earliest known prose-treatise in the Scottish dialect setting forth the doctrines of the Reformers; and in 1897, for the same Society, 'The Gude and Godlie Ballatis,' reprinted from the edition of 1567, with a full and most interesting Introduction. For the Scottish History Society he also edited in 1892 and 1896, along with the writer of this sketch, two volumes of 'The Records of the Commissions of the General Assembly,' covering the period 1646-1650, from the original manuscript in the Assembly library, with an introduction, notes, and appendices by himself. To these must be added the present volume of the Baird Lecture, 'The Scottish Reformation.'

The Baird Lecture on the Westminster Assembly was received with great favour in America as well as in this country, and a new edition of

it was published at Philadelphia in 1897, in a notice of which in the 'Presbyterian and Reformed Review' the following statement occurs: "The book at once took its rank as the most trustworthy and sympathetic account of the Westminster Standards in existence, and rapidly ran out of print. The public is to be congratulated that Dr Mitchell has permitted himself to be persuaded by the [Presbyterian] Board to revise the text and allow a new edition to be issued to meet the present demand. The revision does not much alter the text. A phrase is more felicitously turned here or rendered a shade more exact or emphatic there; a few additional references are added in the notes; and a few additional citations and remarks incorporated in them: that is about all. But so good a book needed only these little touches of betterment."

The Professor also contributed to various journals and encyclopædias many important articles, chiefly on historical topics relating to Scotland, which, if collected, would form a volume of miscellaneous papers of great interest and value. The most important of these are included in the subjoined list: In the 'British and Foreign Evangelical Review,' January 1872, "Our Scottish Reformation: Its Distinctive Characteristics and Present-Day Lessons," pp. 87-128; October 1875, "Dr Merle D'Aubigné on the Reformation in Scotland," pp. 736-760; October 1876, "Killen's Ecclesiastical History

of Ireland," pp. 713-741: in the 'Catholic Presbyterian,' March 1879, "Calvin and the Psalmody of the Reformed Churches": in the 'Scottish Church,' November 1886, "St Andrews in Covenanting Times": in the 'Year-Book of the Church of Scotland,' 1886, "Brief Sketch of the History of the Reformed Church of Scotland": in 'St Giles' Lectures,' First Series, 1880-81, "Pre-Reformation Scotland"; and in Fourth Series, 1883-84, "The Primitive or Apostolic and Sub-Apostolic Church," being the first of the lectures entitled, "The Churches of Christendom." To Dr Schaff's Encyclopædia he contributed separate articles on "St Columba," "The Culdees," "Patrick Hamilton," "Iona," and "The Keltic Church"; and to the 'Presbyterian and Reformed Review,' published at Philadelphia, he contributed a review of Dr Hume Brown's 'John Knox.' Besides many Reports on various matters presented to the General Assembly, he issued for special purposes a "Statement regarding the Eldership," and a "List of Acts of the Scottish Parliament, and of Acts, Overtures, and Resolutions of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, adopted at various times for the Acknowledgment of the True Reformed Protestant Religion, the Maintenance of Sound Doctrine, and the Subscription of the Confessions of Faith of 1560 and 1647." When at Geneva, on one of his visits to the Continent, he prepared for private circulation,

from the original, which is still preserved among the historical treasures in the Hotel de Ville, "Livre Des Anglois, or Register of the English Church at Geneva under the pastoral care of Knox and Goodman, 1555-1559," with a Prefatory Notice and a Facsimile of pp. 49, 50. To this list of his minor works may be added a sermon on "The Unsearchable Riches of Christ," published in 1879.

The Professor accorded a generous and helpful sympathy to those who were workers in the field in which he laboured himself with so great assiduity and success; and he was not only a member both of the Scottish History Society and of the Scottish Text Society, but took an active interest in their affairs. He was also one of the representatives of the Church of Scotland in the General Presbyterian Alliance from the date of its formation, and took part in the business of all its General Councils, at the first of which, held at Edinburgh in 1877, he laid on the table a paper which he had drawn up on "The Harmony between the Bibliology of the Westminster Confession and that of the earlier Reformed Confessions, exhibited in parallel columns." He was appointed Convener of the Committee on the Desiderata of the History of the Presbyterian Churches; and at the following General Council, held at Philadelphia in 1880, it fell to him, in consequence of the death of Principal Lorimer, who was Convener of the British section of the

Committee on Creeds and Formulas of Subscription, to give in the report containing "Answers to Queries regarding Creeds and Confessions." The Answers as regards the Church of Scotland, which had been prepared by himself, are to be found in the Report of the Proceedings of the Council, pp. 969-984. When in America he also delivered a course of lectures at Alleghany. His connection with the Alliance brought him into close contact with some of the leading Presbyterian divines of Britain and America, with whom his opinions on the history of the doctrine, worship, and government of the Church carried great weight; and Dr Schaff has acknowledged his obligations to him, among others, in his well-known work entitled 'The Creeds of Christendom.'

In 1885 the Church showed her appreciation of the Professor's character and work by electing him to the Moderatorship of the General Assembly, an office which he filled with a union of dignity and authority which reflected honour upon the Church. If there are parties in the Church of Scotland, he never identified himself with any of them, and had learned to call no man master but Christ. He knew his own mind, and could give forcible expression to his convictions when occasion required. Naturally of an unassuming disposition and unobtrusive manners, he never courted popularity nor sought to thrust his opinions upon others; and it was for this reason, perhaps, that he was deferred to even by those

whose views were in some respects widely divergent from his. It was doubtless for this reason also, as well as for others, that he wielded so great an influence in the counsels of the Church, and probably few men had more to do than he with the shaping of her policy in recent years. In paying a tribute to his memory at a meeting of the Presbytery of Edinburgh a few days after his decease, the Very Rev. Dr Scott of St George's said that "by Professor Mitchell's death the Church had lost a laborious, faithful, successful, and honoured minister and professor, and perhaps one of the soundest and wisest counsellors that the Church ever had. He was a man who had friends in all the Churches. He knew how powerfully his influence had told in the Church—always for conciliation, not only so far as those without their own Church were concerned, but those within the Church also. Had it not been for Dr Mitchell's influence the relaxation of the formula regarding the subscription of elders would never have been carried through."

A man of a very catholic spirit, and a lover of peace and concord, the Professor, like many others who longed for a comprehensive union of the Scottish Churches, would willingly have made all reasonable concessions for the attainment of so desirable an object. But he was too loyal a son of the Church of Scotland to consent to any unworthy compromise, and in the hour of danger no one was more ready than he to exert all the

influence at his command in her defence. Readers of Dr Boyd's 'Twenty-five Years of St Andrews' may remember the account there given of the impression made by the Professor's sermon in the Town Church in the height of the contest in 1885, when the question of Disestablishment was brought so prominently before the electors of the St Andrews Burghs. Dr Boyd says: "It had been intimated at the services during the day that Dr Mitchell, our Professor of Church History, would lecture in the parish church in the evening on 'Some aspects of the Church Question deserving of consideration in the present crisis.' Dr Mitchell was that year Moderator of the Kirk: and he very seldom preaches. The church was filled by a great congregation. I should not in the least degree have been surprised to hear Dr Mitchell preach wisely and devoutly: that is his usual way. But it did surprise me to find that man of calm and well-balanced mind fire up into a pathos and vehemence which I have rarely seen equalled and never surpassed. The question of disestablishment had been raised: and one was made to realise how it stirs the blood of good men here. And not merely were there this evening a fire, a keenness, a power of stirring a multitude to the depth of their nature, which are rare indeed, but an incisive severity of denunciation which few had expected from that calm, cautious man. And if the preacher was at white-heat, so was the congregation long before he was

done. Several times there would have been loud applause, had it not been hushed."

The attitude which the Professor maintained in regard to the doctrine and worship of the Church was a strictly conservative one, and may be best described in his own words, taken from an article included in the list of his minor works. In that article, after quoting the advice tendered by an eminent minister of the Church of England to a minister of the Church of Scotland—"Stick by your own Kirk: it is an honest Kirk, one of the few that has fairly rid itself of sacerdotalism and ritualism, and you have no cause to be ashamed of it"—he goes on to say: "The advice is not unneeded in the present day by others than he to whom it was originally tendered, and I give it this publicity for the benefit of all whom it may concern. The Reformed Church of Scotland from the first rid herself of these medieval corruptions, and the attempt to bring her again under the yoke issued in dire disaster to those who made it. This surely is no time for the Presbyterian Churches to swerve from the testimony they have so long and resolutely borne against all such errors. When we think of the mischief they are now causing in the Church of England, and the grief they are occasioning to many of her most loyal sons, rather does it become us to bear more decided testimony to the truths, that under the New Testament there is but one Priest, who ever liveth to make intercession for us, and one

sacrifice once offered, which perfects for ever them that are sanctified; that He has not communicated His priestly office to His ministers either by succession or delegation, nor authorised them to repeat or continue that sacrifice which is the propitiation for sin; and that He has neither Himself imposed, nor warranted others to impose, a load of 'fondly' invented ceremonies in His worship."

If the Professor thus strenuously opposed sacerdotalism on the one hand, he had as little sympathy with Broad Churchism on the other. The non-natural sense in which the narratives of the New Testament miracles are understood and interpreted by some of the modern critics he rejected as subversive of Christian truth, a common saying of his being, "If the Gospel is not true historically, it is not true at all: 'If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain'"; and while he mellowed with advancing years, he never wavered in his deep religious convictions, nor for a moment relaxed the tenacious grasp which he had of the doctrines of Christianity as set forth in the standards of the Reformed Churches. One of his latest sayings was, "I die in the faith which I have always professed."

From his *Alma Mater* the Professor had received the degree of D.D. in 1862, and in 1892 the University of Glasgow conferred upon him the degree of LL.D. in recognition of his eminence as a teacher and an author. A young minister of

the Church, himself one of his most distinguished students, has drawn a picture of him as he appeared about the latter of these dates, which is so true to the life that no excuse is needed for introducing it here. He says: "St Andrews and Professor Mitchell are inseparable. For forty-four years he has taught in the University: first the Hebrew Tongue; next the History of the Church of Christ. As a Professor, Dr Mitchell comes into contact with a comparatively small number of students. The classes in St Mary's are diminutive—in some ways a source of much gratification to the writer and others—consequently he is little known by most men here. Of course, all are familiar with the Figure pacing the town in the bright of the forenoon; or, arm-in-arm with a youthful Professor, walking as far as the Swilcan; or, at a Graduation Ceremony, scanning the audience, if perhaps he may get a glimpse of some old pupil among the crowd of interested spectators. For many of his students have risen high: and some of them have a weight of years to bear. But all are not aware that in the Church History Class-Room English is spoken as she is nowhere else in St Andrews. The beautifully rounded and perfectly balanced sentences, and the elegance of the language, will hardly be excelled. To make the study of Church History what is called popular is one of the few impossibilities of life, but there is no man living who can invest the subject with more interest;

for Professor Mitchell is thoroughly up to date with all his facts, and loses no opportunity of visiting the great German authorities. . . . To be re-proved in class by the Professor is not to be desired: to be 'spoken to' in his ante-room still less so. Many men stand in awe of him—I have always thought unnecessarily so."

The Professor continued to take a warm interest in his students after they had left the Divinity Hall, and had entered on the work of the ministry; and when attending the General Assembly he could generally tell how many of its members had passed through one or other of his classes in St Mary's College. When he retired from the duties of his Chair in 1894, the occasion was regarded as affording a suitable opportunity of giving public expression to the esteem in which he was held by his friends, and to their grateful appreciation of his services both to the Church and the University; and in 1895, while the General Assembly was in session, he was presented, in name of a large number of his former students and other friends, with an illuminated address, a cheque for 200 guineas, and his portrait by Sir George Reid—acknowledged to be one of the best that have yet come from the studio of the President of the Royal Scottish Academy. The Right Hon. James A. Campbell of Stracathro, M.P., with whom he had long had intimate relations, presided at the ceremony and made the presentation. The reply of the Professor, as containing many interesting

reminiscences, and as showing the view which he took himself of his life and work, is here inserted *in extenso*. He said:—

“Mr Campbell, I thank you, sir, with all my heart, for the many kind things—far more kind than I deserve—which you have just said of me, and for the many kind services which you have rendered to me in the course of our lifelong friendship; and I thank, with all my heart, you, my many esteemed friends and pupils, who have united in presenting me with this address expressive of your warm affection, this speaking likeness and munificent gift. Kindness far more than I have merited has followed me all my life through—never more conspicuously than at the close of my public career; and now in retiring from the professorial work I loved, and from the College for which almost for half a century I lived and laboured, it is a consolation to me to know that I carry with me into my retirement the esteem of so many honoured friends and the affectionate regard of so many former pupils. Some have been speaking lately of the loneliness of a Scottish student’s college life. I can only say for myself that the years I spent as a student in St Mary’s College were among the happiest of my life, and that the friendships then formed within the little band of my fellow-students were among the most valued and lasting of those I have enjoyed. I have but to name John Robertson, afterwards minister of Glasgow Cathedral;

John Tulloch, afterwards Principal of St Mary's College; William Milligan, afterwards Professor of Biblical Criticism in Aberdeen; William Dickson, afterwards Professor of Divinity in Glasgow; Drs W. H. Gray, Gloag, and Herdman, and with these some who afterwards joined the Free Church: Dr Thomson, long at the head of the Free Church Jewish Mission at Constantinople; Dr Thomas Brown, younger brother of my late colleague, Dr William Brown, agent for the Turkish Missions Aid Society; and Edward Cross, afterwards Free Church minister at Monifieth, with whom I laboured in happiest intercourse in Dundee, he being assistant to the Free Church minister in the same district of the town when I was assistant to the Parish minister. When in my twenty-sixth year I returned as a Professor in the College where so shortly before I had been a student, I can never forget the kindness with which I was received by my aged instructors there, especially by Principal Haldane, whose kind counsels were then invaluable to me, nor the kindness of Professors Duncan and Alexander, the only two of my instructors remaining in the Old College. St Andrews about that time had the reputation of being rather a hot place. The conviction that I was a man of rather placid temper, who would not add fuel to the flame, I believe weighed considerably with Lord Advocate Rutherford in finally recommending me for the Chair. Within

St Mary's College we were a happy family, and the youth of twenty-six and the two aged Professors beyond threescore and ten continued to work in unbroken harmony—the youth deeming it a special privilege to aid the venerable Principal in his class-work during the last year of his life, as well as to aid him and his aged colleague in their pulpit work. It was soon after this that I began to take an active part in Church work, attending the General Assembly as an elder and as Convener of the Jewish Mission—doing what I could to reorganise it in Turkey, first in conjunction with such venerable fathers as Drs Muir, Hunter, Grant, and James Robertson, and with several brethren nearer my own age, who were bearing the burden and heat of the day—Drs Crawford, Nicholson, Nisbet, William Robertson, and Elder Cumming, and such laymen as Sheriff Arkley, David Smith, Henry Cheyne, John Elder, John Tawse, and the good Edmund Baxter, all now gone to their rest and their reward. Principal Haldane was succeeded by my old class-fellow, Principal Tulloch, in harmony with whom I wrought for thirty years in the College, occasionally taking part of his work, as I had of his predecessor's, when he was laid aside by ill-health, and also taking part with him in Church work, especially in the work of the Anti-Patronage Committee, on whose success so many in the Church had set their hearts. After his untimely removal, though I had served for seven or eight

years beyond the statutory thirty, I continued at my post, and in the most kind and cordial relations both in Church and University work with his successor, Principal Cunningham, heartily co-operating with him in the repeal of what has been termed the Black Act of 1711, and in the restitution of the old formula for ministers and elders, which are now so generally welcomed, and have been acknowledged by one at least of the three who protested against the change to be a great boon. I have often spoken of the pleasure I have had in superintending the work of my students, and my gratification at the zest with which they took to the study both of Hebrew and Church History. The circumstances which led to my resignation are already well known to you all, and I need only say that it was to me a very regretful necessity. I leave in each of the three other Divinity Faculties at least one distinguished pupil, and in St Mary's College two who, with their younger colleagues, I trust will strive to make it more than ever a School of the Prophets, a nursery for earnest, faithful, scholarly, and devoted ministers, who shall set high above all passing isms Christ the personal Saviour, and those great truths as to His divine nature, incarnation, atoning death, and glorious resurrection, to which the historic Church of Christ through so many centuries has clung as her life and strength and joy. Christ before, Christ behind, —according to St Patrick's prayer,—Christ above,

Christ beneath, Christ in the heart, Christ in the home. I heartily thank you all for your great kindness, and especially Principal Stewart and Mr Wenley, and one who once said I had been as a father to him, and of whom I may truly say that he has been as a son to me."

In 1852 the Professor married the eldest daughter of the late Mr Michael Johnstone of Archbank, near Moffat, who belonged to an influential yeoman family that has been connected with Annandale for the last two hundred years. The late Mr Peter Johnstone, brother of Mrs Mitchell's father, who was a proprietor as well as a large farmer, is still remembered as having done a great deal to promote the cause of education in the district where he resided; and her brother, the late Mr James Johnstone, was tenant of Bodsbeck farm, which is the scene of the Ettrick Shepherd's well-known Covenanted story—"The Brownie of Bodsbeck." How much Mrs Mitchell did to brighten the life and to minister to the happiness of the Professor can be known only to those who have had the privilege of being admitted into the inner circle of their friends, and there are not a few who have very pleasant reminiscences of delightful intercourse with them in their house at 56 South Street, where the duty of entertaining strangers seemed never to be forgotten. Their family of four sons and two daughters all survive, with the exception of the eldest son, Robert Haldane, who died several

years ago in Australia, to which he had emigrated along with his brother Johnstone.

Probably few are aware that the Professor spent many of his happiest days, and did much of his literary work, at Gowanpark; his country residence near Brechin, which, with its charm of seclusion and restfulness, no one who has visited it can ever forget, and which his family came to regard as their home almost as much as St Andrews. There he found relaxation in the interest which he took in the work of his little farm, which was his own property, and as long as he had health he enjoyed a ramble among the neighbouring hills, or a walk, varied by an occasional drive, along the quiet country roads. His home in the country, however, was with him no mere place of recreation, still less of idleness, and there, as elsewhere, he never failed to find his chief source of pleasure in the prosecution of his favourite studies.

When the Professor retired from the duties of his Chair he did not cease to take an interest in the affairs of the College, of which he was an ornament while he lived, and with which, as was said in a notice of him at the time of his death, his name will always be associated—like those of Andrew Melville, Samuel Rutherford, and others in remote and troublous times, and that of Principal Tulloch in our own more peaceful days. Nor did he cease to interest himself in the work of the Church which he loved so well and had served so faithfully. Perhaps it was to show his love for

the Church as much as to gratify his own feelings that, amid great bodily infirmity, he undertook the journey to Edinburgh, in May 1898, to attend the General Assembly. He was unable, indeed, to be present there more than once or twice, and when on one occasion he occupied the Moderator's chair for a few minutes, a thrill of respectful sympathy passed through the House. In a letter written a few days after his return home he says, "I am very pleased to have been able to give even such limited attendance," adding, with a touch of pathos, as if anticipating that the visit would be his last, "in the fiftieth year since Mr John Tulloch and Alex. F. Mitchell were first returned as members."

Soon afterwards he removed to his loved retreat at Gowanpark, but his health did not improve, and he was but seldom able to leave the house. Most of the letters he wrote at this time, some of them in pencil, with his head resting on the pillow, were evidently intended to be his parting words to those to whom they were addressed. In one of these, written in the middle of September, he says, "For the first fortnight after I came here I was able to go out of doors, and in my invalid chair bask in the sun for an hour a-day. I am still keeping my bed in the hope of being able to return without risk to St Andrews in the end of the month;" and then, alluding to a subject his interest in which seems to have helped to keep him alive, he says, "I have got five of

my six Baird Lectures transcribed. Of course I must get some one to read them for me."

When he returned to St Andrews, the burden of his infirmities grew heavier, and as the spring approached it was manifest that he was nearing the end. He was greatly affected by the tidings of the tragic death of Dr Boyd, who had paid him a visit shortly before his departure for the south. On the Monday before he died he repeated the words of the second paraphrase in a clear, strong voice, and quoted almost the last recorded words of St Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." On Tuesday evening he desired some one to sing to him, and as Miss Mitchell was unable to control her feelings to do so, Mr Smith, his amanuensis, who had come in, was asked by him to sing "Jesus, Lover of my Soul." When this was done he turned to Miss Mitchell, and said, "What would you like?" and they sang together "Rock of Ages." With uncomplaining patience he had suffered much, but welcome rest came to him on the morning of Wednesday, 22nd March. Having served his own generation by the will of God, he fell asleep amid the tender regrets of his family, leaving behind him a memory that will always be held in honour, and an example of laborious service, of deep piety, and of fervent trust in Christ.

In compliance with his own wish, his remains were conveyed to Brechin, where they were laid

to rest beside those of his fathers under the shadow of the old Cathedral, the members of the local Presbytery, in token of their respect, being present on the occasion. "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

GILMERTON MANSE, *December 1899.*