

NORTHERN MESSENGER

DEVOTED TO TEMPERANCE, SCIENCE, EDUCATION, AND LITERATURE.

VOLUME XXVIII, No. 11.

MONTREAL & NEW YORK, MAY 26, 1893.

30 Cts. Per An. Post-Paid.

JOHN STUART BLACKIE.

No more striking figure is to be seen in Scotland to-day than John Stuart Blackie. A recent interviewer describes him "clad in a great coat, girt about the waist with a red scarf, and with an old straw hat on his head, beneath which I caught glimpses of the fine handsome old face, around which the silvery hair floated like glory."

No sketch of his life could compare in interest with that from his own pen recently given to "The Young Man."

We would like to be able to give it whole but space obliges us to condense it very considerably. He writes:

Though born in Glasgow, and of Border blood, I was at the early age of three years transported to the granite metropolis of the North, and so in respect of early influences and early training, may be entitled to pass for an Aberdonian. Of my early boyhood I have nothing either very sorrowful or very gladsome to tell, nothing that would make a chapter in a novel, or even give matter for a sentimental sonnet. I just lived as the sparrows live, when they hop about picking up what may lay on the roadside, or as the cattle and the sheep live when they are driven comfortably from field to field. Two of my most valuable memories of those boyish days are of the painful order. I was, I fancy, as a rule, a very sober, sensible, and well-behaved human creature; but I was twice flogged, and to this day I have reason to thank my father for such wise castigation. Love, no doubt, as St. Paul has it, is the fulfilling of the law; but in the nature of things men nor boys can be governed by love alone, and whether it be a wild Irishman or a thoughtless Scottish schoolboy, when he does a bad thing he ought to be made to feel that it is a bad thing; and the most effective way to teach him this is to give him a good flogging. My offences were gross, and called aloud for a sharp punishment. I once told a lie, saying that I had been to school when I was sulking in a closet; and again I had a vile habit of flinging odious names at a servant-girl against whom I entertained some grudge; and for both of these capital sins my father wisely administered the correction of the rod. For a lie, as Plato says, is a thing naturally hateful both to gods and men; and the man who thinks or speaks ill of his neighbor is a jar in the harmony of the association of moral beings, which we call society.

As for my schooling, Aberdeen has always been famous for Latin; so being made of good Scottish stuff, and working steadily at what was put before me, as the years grew I grew with them in the deft mastery and graceful handling of this learned tongue; such a proficient in it, indeed, as to be able to express myself in Ciceronian phrase without any feeling of artificial stiffness. I had a practice, which I recommend to all students of languages, viz., to pick

out necessary words and idioms from some classical model, and making a living appropriation of them on the spot, fling them about audibly without the cumbrous intervention of grammar rules or an English text.

Of our schoolboy amusements and exercises outside of the book world I have nothing particular to say. Gymnastic exercises in the form which they have now worthily assumed in the best schools on either side of the sea we had none, but left to ourselves we managed the training of legs and arms pretty well without any systematic culture. We had "robbers and rangers" for our legs, and marbles and hoops



PROFESSOR JOHN STUART BLACKIE, D.D.

for our arms and our fingers, and our eyes; and every Wednesday and Saturday afternoon we had free time to perambulate the green "links" on both sides of the "Broad-hill," giving scope to our kites, which we called dragons, and speeding our balls from hole to hole with that combination of strength and calculation which the noble game of golf requires. For cruel sports, such as hanging cats and bloody noses and a boyish pugilism, I never had any taste.

"I left the school for the college at the early age of twelve. I went through the usual routine of Greek, mathematics, natural history and natural philosophy during

a three years' course in the Marischal College, with credit in three of the classes, and distinction in one; and then for a change of scene I came next to Edinburgh, there to finish my quinquennial career of Arts by attending the logic class and second Greek in the first year and the moral philosophy in the second, to which I added chemistry; a breadth and variety of purely human culture which our Scottish Church has wisely ordained to precede the special studies that belong to the clerical profession, and which, I believe, always admitting our inferiority in the higher scholarship, renders our Scottish theologians more intelligent and more accomplished men

seriously with my enjoyment of life, and with the further progress of my academical studies. But this was not without its advantages—advantages which, on a calm retrospect, I cannot but think greatly outweighing the evil. Along with the stern theology of Calvin, I got the pure morality of the Gospel, and, after studying the two, as the wisdom of life gradually taught me, I formed the plan to stick closely by the Bible, and so, by God's grace, was kept free from the entanglements, distractions and pollutions of those youthful lusts against which St. Paul warns all young men so earnestly in his Second Epistle to Timothy.

After finishing my academical career I had to choose my profession: and my religious seriousness led me, as a matter of course, to choose the Church, in the face of my father's desire that I should enter the law. Theology I accordingly studied for three years, under Dr. Brown and Dr. Mearns in Aberdeen, and had at the early age of twenty finished the prescribed course of study, and might have been formally licensed to preach without further schooling. And why was I not licensed? The why lay in a good idea of my good father. Dr. Patrick Forbes, professor of Latin and chemistry in the King's College, being a stout old Moderate and aware of the narrowness that is apt to be engendered in Scottish youth by a purely native education, had determined to send his two eldest sons to the Continent to put the coping stone on their studies; and being on an intimate footing with my father, proposed to him that his young theological Johnnie should be their companion in travel. This proposal was at once accepted, and led to my residence of two years and three months in the fatherland of Luther in the first place, and thereafter in the home of Dante, Raphael, Michael Angelo, Tasso, and the other great presagers of modern European culture south of the Alps—a residence which gave a new start to my career as a scholar, and a new color to my whole life.

Shortly after I commenced the regular course of my theological study, my father, who doubtless saw that my intellectual vision had been somewhat abnubilated by over-seriousness, sent me to take advice from the same Dr. Patrick Forbes on the method of conducting my theological studies. I came before that stout old doctor, and immediately made a declaration that in dealing with a subject of so extensive a range as Christian theology, I had deemed it advisable to commence with a general systematic scheme of the whole subject, and had accordingly submitted myself to the orthodox guidance of Boston's "Body of Divinity." "Boston! Boston! Body! Body!" said the stout old doctor; "neither Boston nor Calvin, nor any other D. D. must be allowed to stand between you and your Protestant Bible. Let them

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