

CONTRIBUTIONS.

IN EDINBURGH.

IN honesty, I had better say at the start that this letter is more especially for divinity students; but as all agree that they are the ones that most need fatherly counsel, no one, I am sure, will take serious umbrage at me for keeping them particularly in my mind's eye.

Perhaps some members of the graduating class purpose a visit to Edinburgh soon. Perhaps they are as ignorant as the present writer was of the best methods of procedure, and perhaps they would not despise what advice two months of experience can give.

To proceed homiletically then: My first heading is, Do not come alone. Secure a companion if possible. There is no suggestion of matrimony in this; a class mate is all I mean. It is consoling to hear him groaning in the berth above you and to know that he is just a little sicker, if that can be, than you are. That is a fanciful reason, perhaps. The economic reason is a much better one. Rooms here are generally let in suites. They come somewhat high when you are alone, but are very reasonable when two share them. The social reason, however, is the most important of all. Not to mention the well known taciturnity of the Scottish people, the landladies here have such an effective method of quarantining you in your rooms that acquaintance with anyone else under the same roof with you is all but impossible. Social insulation within and without is ideally complete. So bring your society with you. We had a student commit suicide here the other night. Melancholia was the verdict. I've no doubt he was one of those unfortunates who came to this city alone, and whom Scottish life and habits compelled to live exclusively unto himself.

My second advice.—When you arrive here get copies of all the daily papers and look in the columns "Rooms to Let." Your heart will leap for joy at the number of fine comfortable rooms for nice respectable gentlemen (like yourself). Make a list and spend the afternoon in visiting the most promising. You will thereby see some of the worst quarters of Edinburgh, and some of the very dirtiest houses and women you have ever seen in your life. After you have thrown away your papers in disgust, well, I do not know what you had better do. We stumbled on our lodgings by chance as the shades of night were falling fast. Perhaps you could get some real help from the Y.M.C.A. The college authorities can give you no information. If you visit the south side of the city—Warrender Park Road and vicinity, the students' headquarters—you will likely, on enquiry, soon find suitable lodgings.

There is a small residence connected with the Free Church College, in which perhaps you could obtain a room if you wrote early enough for it. Living here is as cheap, if not cheaper, than in Kingston. You can get good board and rooms for about 15 shillings a week.

Third advice.—Take an eclectic course. Even in Edinburgh there are dull theological professors. "And, O Lord, we pray for our professor here in Thy presence, that the dry bones of the theology which he must give us may be made to live." Thus frequently prayed a student of the Free Kirk not long ago in the class prayer meeting, over which the above professor was presiding. But one cannot speak too highly of such professors as Flint of the Established Church, Hyslop and Orr of the United Presbyterian Church, and Dods and Davidson of the Free Church. It is worth while coming over here to sit under any of them. You reverence them for their scholarship, but still more for their fine Christian characters. And your confidence in them and admiration for them is only increased when you meet them outside the class room. If you are a hero worshipper it is likely before Professor Davidson you will swing your censer. When he finished his lecture to-day on "The Prophet Elijah and his Work" the class drew one long breath of recovery and applauded to the echo long after he had left the room. Then each turned to the other and said: "What a grand lecture," and their eyes turned again with affection towards the door through which the venerated professor had disappeared. There was no eloquence! It takes more than oratory to effect students like that! You feel you are in the presence of a man of the ripest scholarship, an ideal scholar, unbiassed as far as that is possible by any theory. Seeking only for the truth, free from self-assertion and dogmatism, perfectly candid and fair in stating the pros and cons of an argument, cautious in drawing conclusions, often putting forth both views on a subject squarely before you and telling you to draw your own conclusions. But more than his scholarship do his reverence and humility impress you. If all higher critics were of Dr. Davidson's type the world would not be long in being won to that view.

What a grand thing it would be if there was only one theological hall in Edinburgh and the above mentioned professors constituted the staff. But it is not so, and so much the worse for the students here. The foreign student, however, can constitute his own ideal theological hall. He sometimes wishes though, that the churches had been more amicable and built their halls closer to one another. But it is great exercise between lectures to compress a ten minutes' walk into a five minute one. One