

tended its classes, was a very imperfect school of natural science, compared with those that now exist, but this imperfection was chiefly in minor specialties. There were many able and enthusiastic teachers, and, to a diligent student, pursuing a well-selected course, it gave a good general groundwork, suited to the requirements of the time. To any one prepared to build on it, by practical work, in the directions which his own gifts, or the nature of his field might indicate, the training thus acquired was likely to prove of great value. Whilst thus in pursuit of special education, I had also the benefit of learning, incidentally, something of the motherland and its institutions. I listened to the voices of some of its great orators and preachers, and, in Edinburgh, had the opportunity of knowing a little of the work of Chalmers and his contemporaries, and of witnessing the earlier signs of the national uprising, which led to the disruption of the Scottish establishment. My residence in Edinburgh also led, though some years later, to my entering into the most sacred and important of all relationships ; but to this I must refer in a subsequent chapter.

It so happened, and I cannot help regarding this as one of those providential coincidences