

when he thought the ear of God only was listening, the young student—alone in his room—was overheard by some of the household, pouring out his soul to God in earnest breathings. In 1825, when in his fourteenth year, after having attended the High School of Glasgow for five years—where he enjoyed the tuition of Doctors Dymock and Chrystal two distinguished classical scholars—he entered himself as a student at the university of his native city, where he studied under Professors Walker, Sandford, Buchanan, Mylne, and Meikleham, during four successive sessions. Throughout his entire course he was distinguished by conscientious and exemplary diligence, and a scholarship which was greatly above mediocrity. In years long subsequent to those of his student life, he shewed how well he had profited under his able instructors at school and college, by the ease and accuracy with which he could find his way through even a difficult Latin or Greek writer. He particularly distinguished himself in the class of Moral Philosophy. In the autumn of 1827, he commenced the study of Theology under Dr. Mitchell, whose prelections, according to the arrangements then existing in the Hall of the United Secession Church, he attended for two years. While a member of this class, Mr. Gibson was acknowledged to stand at the head of his compeers in his knowledge of Hebrew; and being in this, as in other respects, ever “ready to communicate,” he was wont during both sessions of the “Junior Hall” to meet with those of the students who were less proficient, and assist them in the preparation of their lessons. Subsequently he studied systematic divinity for two sessions under Dr. Dick; and, the chair having become vacant by the death of that eminent man,—one of the ablest divines whom Scotland has produced—the superintendence of his studies, during the last session of his theological course, was entrusted to the Rev. Dr. Johnston of Limekilns, under whose ministry Mr. Gibson had for some years been privileged to be placed. At this small seaport Mr. Gibson spent the recesses of the Hall-session throughout his course as a theological student. For a few hours daily he taught a public school. The mornings and evenings were devoted to study. He was thus providentially brought into close intimacy with a pastor whose pulpit teachings, and friendly counsels told usefully upon the student’s entire character and career. And in future years it was the delight of Mr. Gibson to bear his warm and grateful testimony to the advantages which he had derived from the ministry and counsels of his friend and preceptor. He was one of a series of students whose lot was providentially cast at that little seaport for a time, and who now—from a distance of many years—look back on those early studies, and that valued pastorate, with feelings akin to those of Jay when he traced the record of Cornelius Winter’s watchful supervision of his youth, as an instructor and a friend.

During the second session of Mr. Gibson’s attendance at the class of Dr. Mitchell, he was seized with an alarming illness; and fears were entertained that his constitution had been permanently enfeebled by disease: but means were blessed for his recovery, and his residence at Limekilns was believed to be greatly helpful in re-establishing his health.