

hand, 'is to write a sort of diary so that I can put there anything particular that happens or is of utility to recollect.'

Kirkcaldy was then pretty much what Carlyle found it in 1816, a long straggling town, picturesque in its way, a characteristic bit of the Kingdom of Fife; filled with a shrewd, hard-headed, and hard-working population; the home of many industries. Carlyle has made both place and people immortal in his rough-hewn, compelling phrases: 'The Kirkcaldy population were a pleasant honest kind of fellow mortals; something of quietly fruitful, of good *Old-Scotch* in their works and ways; more *vernacular*, peaceable, fixed, and almost genial, in their mode of life, than I had been used to in the Border home-land. Fife generally we liked. Those ancient little burghs and sea-villages, with their poor little havens, 'salt-pans', and weatherbeaten bits of Cyclopean breakwaters and rude innocent machineries, are still kindly to me to think of;—Kirkcaldy itself had many looms, had Baltic trade, Whale-fishery &c., and was a solidly diligent, yet by no means a panting, puffing, or in any way gambling "Lang Toun".' An ideal place, as some one else has said, for the nurture of economists, and here at least one world-famous economist was born and nurtured—Adam Smith, of the *Wealth of Nations*.

But there was a quality in the shrewd yet kindly atmosphere of this Scottish town that led to other things than the dry bones of political economy. It nurtured in the boy Sandford Fleming that rare combination of gifts, the genius for dreaming great dreams and the capacity for bringing them to fruition. Here were planted the germs of mighty projects, destined to be developed in the course of time under other and distant skies.

Turning the pages of the old diary, one comes upon this extract copied from *Poor Richard's Almanack*, than which nothing could more surely reveal the character of the boy: 'But dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of. How much more than is necessary do we spend in sleep, forgetting that the sleeping fox catches no poultry, and that there will be sleeping enough