

SIR A. GRANT.

By the death of Sir A. Grant on the 30th November 1884 the Royal Society of Edinburgh lost one of its Vice-Presidents, who took a constant interest in its proceedings; the University lost a Principal who for sixteen years administered its affairs with remarkable ability and success, and who has left a more enduring mark on its history than any Principal during the present century; and the cause of liberal education in Scotland lost one of its most enlightened and consistent supporters. Although of Scottish extraction, he was, unlike all previous Principals of the University, neither born nor educated in Scotland; and when invited at the age of forty-two to assume his position in Edinburgh, he had already gained distinction, in two widely separate spheres of usefulness, as a scholar and writer on philosophy, as a teacher and lecturer, and as an administrator of education. From the time when his own University course was finished, his whole life was devoted to the practical work or to the organisation and administration of education: first, during ten years, from 1849 to 1859, in the University of Oxford; next, for nine years, from 1859 to 1868, in the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay; and finally, for sixteen years, from 1868 to 1884, in the University of Edinburgh. In Oxford and in India, as well as in Edinburgh, his influence is still felt and his loss regretted by many friends.

By birth he belonged, on the father's side, to an old Scottish family, the Grants of Dalvey on Speyside. His mother was of mixed French and Scottish extraction, and was the daughter of a planter in the Danish West Indian Island of Santa Cruz. The family estate in Morayshire had been sold by his grandfather, and the whole fortune, which had been invested in West India property, had been lost before Sir Alexander succeeded his father as 8th Baronet in 1858. He was born in New York on the 13th September 1826, and passed two or three years of his childhood in the West Indies. The principal part of his school education was received at Harrow, which he entered in 1839, and left as head of the school in 1845. In November 1844 he had been elected to a Balliol scholarship, and he entered on residence at Oxford in the

Easter term of the following year. He came up to the University an excellent classical scholar of the type produced by the great English public schools, and with the social tastes and disposition which are fostered in those schools. He was especially eminent in Greek and Latin composition, and the faculty of lucid and graceful statement developed by these accomplishments proved of invaluable service to him in the various administrative duties which he was called upon in after life to perform. He combined with his scholarly attainments an appreciative taste for modern literature, and especially for the great English poets, and his interest in the philosophical, which are combined with the more strictly literary, studies of the University, and in the speculative questions by which Oxford life was powerfully stirred in the years succeeding the great religious movement of which Dr Newman was the centre, was soon awakened. He read widely and discriminatingly, but with no special eye for examinations; and thus it happened that his name is remembered among those of a select few (including Clough, Mr M. Arnold, Mr Froude, Mr Freeman, M. Pattison, and others), who, by their subsequent eminence, justified the opinion that the second class in *Litteræ Humaniores* often contained men of greater power and promise, if of less minute knowledge, than the first. He graduated in 1848, and in the following year he was elected, out of a large number of candidates, to an Oriel Fellowship. As circumstances had made it necessary for him to support himself from this time forward by his own exertions, he immediately became one of the private tutors, a class somewhat like that of the *privat-docenten* in the German Universities, who performed a much more important part in Oxford education in those days than they do at present. The preparation of the best men for their final examination in philosophy was almost entirely in their hands. Although most of them were men of older standing, he very soon was recognised as the most eminent of the body, and amongst his pupils were several men who have since obtained distinction in various walks of life, who acknowledged the benefit they derived from his instruction. He lived with his pupils on the most easy and familiar footing, and attached them to himself by his friendliness and social geniality. At the same time, he taught his subject—the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle—more thoroughly than it had been taught in England

before his day. While fully realising the living interest which the book, regarded as a treatise on human nature, has for all times, he was one of the first to recognise the truth, now universally acted upon, that it was to be interpreted, not vaguely and arbitrarily in accordance with any theological bias or with the moral sentiment of our own time, but historically in accordance with the evolution of Greek thought and the conditions of Greek life, and with the whole system of the Aristotelian philosophy. The mature result of his study and teaching was his edition of the *Ethics of Aristotle*, the first volume of which was first published in 1857. It is on this work, of which a fourth edition appeared a few weeks before his death, that his reputation as a scholar and a writer on philosophy mainly rests. Though it is more than a quarter of a century since it was given to the world, and though during all that time the subject has been assiduously studied and taught at Oxford, his edition still remains the standard one, and among English scholars his name is as familiarly associated with the *Ethics of Aristotle* as that of Conington with Virgil, and of Munro with Lucretius. In proof of the estimate still formed of its merits by those who are constantly using it, I may be allowed to quote the words of one of the most competent among the younger tutors at Oxford. While admitting that the work is exposed to some criticism in the present day, he adds—"We are too apt not to realise how much such a work has done directly and indirectly for the appreciation of Greek philosophy in this country. It was the first and it still remains the only attempt in any language to unite a scholarly study of the very difficult text with a literary and philosophical appreciation of the treatise in its relation to the whole history of Greek thought. Certainly no one of the German editions attempts anything so extensive, and only one of them (in Latin) has a philosophical value." He goes on a few sentences later—"In Edinburgh his name will always be associated with a most brilliant period in the history of the University. Throughout the world of English-speaking scholars he will be remembered as one of those who have set before themselves and others an ideal of scholarship which excludes neither philosophical thinking nor a regard for literary excellence. We are sometimes apt to boast that this is a specially English or even a specially Oxonian ideal; we are too often

reminded that few even endeavour to attain it, and any of these few can ill be missed." *

It is no paradox to say that even the defects of the work, such as they are, as well as the great merits which make it the best introduction to the study of Greek ethical philosophy, are connected with what was his greatest quality—the largeness and breadth of his nature. It was not possible for him to become a pure specialist—a mere scholar, or abstract thinker, or man of letters. A complete change in his circumstances, which took place shortly after the publication of this work, made it clear that he was rather a man of great general capacity, fitted to obtain success and eminence in any important province of life, than one born with the special bent and genius of a scholar or philosopher. During the last twenty-five years of his life it was to the sphere of action more than to that of thought and research that his energies were directed; and, however great may have been the loss to the University of Oxford, and to classical learning, caused by this diversion of his powers, there is little doubt that his own capacities were expanded by it, and that he was enabled to do more useful work in the world than if he had been appointed to the Professorship of Moral Philosophy in Oxford, for which he was an unsuccessful candidate in the year 1859. His marriage in that year with the daughter of Professor Ferrier of St Andrews, and the grand-daughter of “Christopher North,” was the immediate cause of his seeking a new career in India, and was probably the remote cause of his final connection with the University of Edinburgh. He accompanied Sir Charles Trevelyan to Madras, and began his career in that Presidency as Inspector of Native Schools. From Madras he was soon called to the Presidency of Bombay, where in rapid succession he filled the posts of Professor of History and Political Economy in the Elphinstone College, of Principal of that College, of Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bombay, of Director of Public Instruction, and of Member of the Legislative Council in the Presidency. The best work of his life was probably that which he gave to India, during the nine years of his active employment there. His name was soon as familiarly associated with Bombay as it had been, and still is, with the *Ethics of Aristotle*. An important Government minute of the 3rd October

* *Oxford Magazine*, January 21, 1885.

1868, after his appointment as Principal of the University of Edinburgh, affirms that he had "undoubtedly set his mark on the history of education in India." It adds—"While supporting the complete independence of the University, he used it as the crown of the Government educational system." In a despatch written about the same time to the Governor of the Presidency, the Duke of Argyll, then Secretary of State for India, speaks of "the solidity and reality of his administration," and concludes with expressing "concurrence in the just remarks recorded by your Excellency in Council, relative to the very valuable services rendered by Sir A. Grant to the cause of education in India." A minute of the University of Bombay, of the same time, speaks of "his ability in administration," of "his important suggestions and effective aid in the revision of the bye-laws of the University, especially as bearing on the extension, arrangement, and balance of studies," of "his temper and tact when discharging the duties of the chair," and of "his extensive influence with the public in the matter of endowments and beneficiaries." Great as his intellectual gifts of organisation and administration were, the power of his personality was still more remarkable. Along with his general interest in Indian education he combined a warm personal interest in individuals, and the aid which he afforded to the advancement of able and deserving men among them is still gratefully remembered by natives of India.

He entered on his duties in Edinburgh in the beginning of the winter session of 1868-69, and continued during the remainder of his life to perform them with ever-growing capacity and knowledge, and with the most loyal attachment to the institution to which he came as a complete stranger. With his sound practical sagacity he combined a high imaginative faculty, and while minutely attending to and mastering the details of business, he set constantly before himself the ideal of what the University ought to be as a nursery of intellect and character, and as an organ for the elevation of national life. He gained the entire confidence of his colleagues in the *Senatus*, whether they agreed or disagreed with him on particular questions, by the impression he produced of absolute devotion to the good of the University. He gained the regard and admiration of the students by his frank, dignified, and cordial bearing in all his relations with them, and by his genuine sympathy with them in their aspirations,

their work, and their amusements. He wished every one to feel as he did, proud of his University, and determined to uphold its credit by intellectual effort and by honourable conduct.

Although the pursuits of the last twenty-five years of his life tended to force him into the groove of action, rather than of letters, yet they were by no means barren in literary results. In India, besides delivering several interesting addresses, which may still be read with pleasure and instruction, he was a frequent contributor to the English newspapers published in the Presidency. His recently published *History of the University of Edinburgh* is the most important literary product of his later years. Inspired and pervaded by his idealising love of his University, it is a work at once of learned research and of strong human interest in its record of many of those by whom the chairs in the University were filled at various times. His Lives of Aristotle and of Xenophon, undertaken for Blackwood's series of Ancient Classics, are written with scholarly taste and simplicity, and with that insight and vivacity of feeling which, without vulgarising it, can invest an ancient theme with modern meaning. His last address to the students, delivered only a few weeks before his death, affords more than his more elaborate works a true image of the man, in his intellectual power, his serious enthusiasm, his large-heartedness, the dignity and simplicity of his bearing. It produces an indefinable impression of greatness. His colleagues in the University, certainly, will always think of him as their "greatest, yet with least pretence."

No record of his career would be complete without some reference to the services which he rendered when a member of the Scotch Education Board. His most eminent colleague on that Board ascribes to him the chief credit in preparing the First Scotch Code, which was "a great improvement on anything of the kind previously prepared." He adds—"My own clear impression is, that no man ever knew about educational organisation from top to bottom better than Grant." His eminence as a scholar and administrator was recognised by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, of Edinburgh and Glasgow, which conferred on him their honorary degrees of D.C.L. and LL.D. The most enduring monument of his Principalship will be the New University Buildings, which owe more to his active services and his personal influence than to any other in-

strumentality. The great Tercentenary celebration of 1884 will, through all the future history of the University, be associated with his name. The conception of the celebration was altogether his, and its successful realisation owed more to him than to any one else. The shock of his unexpected death, on the 30th of November 1884, following so quickly on the memorable events of the preceding April, is still fresh in the memory of his colleagues in the University and in this Society.

JAMES NAPIER. By Robert R. Tatlock, F.I.C., F.C.S., F.R.S.E.

James Napier was born in the village of Partick, one of the suburbs of Glasgow, in 1810. His father was a hand-loom weaver in humble circumstances, and his mother was a sempstress. At the age of seven or thereby he was sent to a small day school in the village, kept by Mr Neil, a medical student, where in less than twelve months he learned to read with comparative fluency. On account of the straitened means of his parents, however, he was then sent to work, and found employment as a "tearer" in a calico printing works, his remuneration being 1s. 3d. per week. When he was between twelve and thirteen years of age he was put to his father's trade, and, being conscious of the limited character of his education, he endeavoured successfully to earn a little money, by extraneous efforts of various kinds, to enable him to attend a night school for two winters, by which his writing and knowledge of arithmetic were greatly improved.

Owing to dulness in the weaving trade, he betook himself to that of a dyer, and was employed by the Messrs Gilchrist at their works, Meadowside, Partick, where, at the age of eighteen, he was promoted to the post of foreman "piece dyer," his wages being then 11s. per week. When only twenty-one years of age he married, on the slender income of 13s. per week. About the year 1833, on account of the dull condition of the dyeing trade, a trades-union was formed among the workmen, in which he joined, and would not be dissuaded, even by offers of extra remuneration from his employers, in consequence of which he was dismissed. He was next employed as a