

sympathies outgrew the adverse influences of a sunless childhood. And his doctrines in metaphysics and ethics sometimes, I think, unconsciously recognise principles which break the logical symmetry of his professed Utilitarianism and philosophy of Custom and Association, producing, as in the case of Locke and others, an ambiguity in the exposition of his most important conclusions. As Sir James Mackintosh suggests of David Hume, it would indeed be a matter of wonder if his esteem for moral excellence should not at least have led him to envy those who are able to contemplate the perfection of excellence in the Supreme Reason that is accepted by them as the support of their lives, and the all-reconciling unity of existence.

## 2. Obituary Notes of the Rev. Dr Guthrie. By the Rev. Dr Lindsay Alexander.

Dr Thomas Guthrie was a native of Brechin, where he was born on the 12th of July 1803. His father, David Guthrie, was one of the principal merchants in that ancient city, and long occupied an influential position in it, being versant in all its affairs, and for several years holding the place of chief magistrate. Thomas was his sixth son. Having received a sound elementary education under different teachers in Brechin and the vicinity, Thomas was, at the early age of twelve, entered as a student in the University of Edinburgh; and there, for ten consecutive sessions, he continued prosecuting studies through the prescribed curriculum in arts and divinity, with the addition of certain branches of natural science, to which he spontaneously betook himself. In 1825 he received from the Presbytery of Brechin license as a preacher, and began forthwith to preach as occasion presented itself. Shortly after he was offered the presentation to an important charge, but as the offer was clogged with conditions which appeared to him to threaten his independence of thought and action he declined it; and no other professional opening appearing he went to Paris, where, for the best part of a year, he prosecuted medical studies at the Sorbonne, attending the lectures of Gay-Lussac, Thenard, and St Hilaire, and witnessing surgical operations by Dupuytren and Lisfranc at the hospitals. On his return home, being still dis-

appointed in his professional prospects, he purposed spending a year at one of the German universities, but from this he was turned aside in consequence of the death of his elder brother, who was a banker in Brechin, and who, dying somewhat suddenly, left his business in danger of being transferred to other hands, unless some one should be found to carry it on until such time as his son, then a boy, should be able to succeed him. In this emergency the only one of the family who was free to come to the help of the minor was his uncle Thomas, and he at once threw himself into the breach, and for two years conducted the business of the bank. On this he looked back with satisfaction as affording not the least valuable part of his training and education, as it brought him acquainted with the busy world, enlarged his knowledge of men and things, and gave him an aptitude for the management of affairs of which he found the advantage in after life. Whilst engaged in the business of the bank he did not intermit his studies or neglect opportunities of preaching when these were offered to him. He thus let it be known that he had no intention of abandoning his proper profession, and was only waiting till some suitable sphere was opened for him to enter upon the active discharge of its duties. Such a sphere was at length obtained by his being presented to the church and parish of Arbirlot, in Forfarshire, where he was ordained minister on the 13th of May 1830. Here he continued to labour with much assiduity and success for seven years, caring not only for the spiritual interests of his people, but bringing all the resources which previous culture and observation, as well as natural ability and good sense, had enabled him to accumulate, to bear upon the promotion of their temporal welfare. Here he laid the foundation of that eminence as a preacher which he afterwards attained, and here also he entered on that acquaintance with the condition, habits, wants, and perils of the poor, which in after years he turned to such excellent account in his philanthropic efforts. The fame of his power in the pulpit as a preacher, as well as of his administrative ability in his parochial cure, having reached the metropolis, where personally he was a stranger, he was in 1837 presented to the church and parish of Old Greyfriars, Edinburgh, as colleague with the late Rev. J. Sym. This charge he accepted, on the understanding that he would

exchange it for a single charge as soon as arrangements could be made for erecting a new parish in one of the more densely crowded and spiritually destitute parts of the city. This was accomplished when the new church was built in what used to be the West Bow, but where Victoria Street now stands; and on this Mr Guthrie entered as the minister of the new parish of St John's in 1840, determined, as far as in him lay, to work out the theory of the old parochial system in the centre of the city, and among a population many of whom were sunk in vice and degradation. Here he continued till the great secession from the Church of Scotland in 1843, when, having cast in his lot with the retiring party, of whose principles he cordially approved, and in whose proceedings he had taken an active share, he resigned his parochial charge and removed from the church of St John's, carrying with him his congregation. After some time, during which he preached in the Methodist Chapel, Nicolson Square, a new place of worship was erected not far from that which he had left, and to this, which came to be called Free St John's, he removed in 1844. In this church, where subsequently he had for his colleague the Rev. Dr Hanna, he continued to preach from Sunday to Sunday to audiences which crowded every corner, where room to sit or to stand could be found, for twenty years. During this period he was undoubtedly the most popular preacher in Scotland, perhaps in Britain. Persons of all ranks, and of every variety of culture, were found among his regular auditors; and illustrious strangers, statesmen, economists, and men of literature who visited the city, were often seen in the crowded pews. The care which he bestowed on the preparation of his discourses, the skill with which he arranged his topics, the vigour and perspicuity of his style, and, above all, the felicity of his illustrations and the truth and vividness of his descriptions, with the earnestness of his tone and the ease and naturalness of his delivery, combined to secure him this pre-eminence among the pulpit orators of his day.

But it was not only in the pulpit that, at this time, Mr Guthrie distinguished himself and drew to him popular esteem and homage. Even more, perhaps, as a philanthropist than as a preacher was his fame spread through the community. In him all good causes found an able and willing advocate; but it is chiefly with efforts

for the prevention of intemperance, and the rescue of destitute and degraded children, that his name is associated. Though not exactly the founder of ragged schools, he was the first to take a just estimate of their importance, the first to arouse the community in their favour, and the first to organise them formally and on an adequate scale; and to his powerful advocacy and persevering assiduity and care it is chiefly owing that these institutions are now so firmly established throughout the kingdom, where they have largely contributed to diminish pauperism, prevent crime, and add to the industrial strength of the nation. If his efforts for the suppression of intemperance have not met with the same success it is not because these were put forth with less zeal, perseverance, and self-denial on his part, but because the evil has grown to such a gigantic height as to render almost hopeless all attempts to remove or cure it. Nor, in referring to his labours for the benefit of others, should his great effort to raise money for the erection of comfortable residences for his brethren in the ministry be overlooked or mention of it omitted,—an effort to which, at a great amount of personal sacrifice, he devoted an entire year, traversing the country from end to end, visiting family after family, “from Cape Wrath to the Border, and from the German to the Atlantic Ocean,” and bringing into the treasury of his Church, for the purpose he had in view, upwards of L.116,000. It was when appearing on the platform, as the advocate of such schemes of benevolence, that he came out in all his strength as an orator. On such occasions all his faculties had full play, and his mastery over his audience was complete—at one time guiding their judgments by reasoning and strong good sense, at another, bearing them along on the stream of impassioned declamation—now melting them to tears by some deep touch of pathos or some thrilling tale of sorrow or of suffering, and anon convulsing them with laughter by some rich stroke of humour, some amusing description, or some ludicrous anecdote. The only weapon of the orator which he did not use was sarcasm, for which his kindly nature had no taste.

In recognition of his abilities and valuable public services, the University of Edinburgh conferred on him, in 1849, the degree of D.D. In May 1862 he was raised to the Moderator's chair in the

twentieth General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland,—a dignity which, in all probability, would have been conferred on him some years earlier had the state of his health permitted him to undertake the duties of the office.

Gifted with a vigorous constitution, Dr Guthrie had enjoyed good health, notwithstanding the excitement and toil attendant on the discharge of his official functions and his philanthropic efforts. But the continuous over-exertion to which he was exposed, especially in connection with the Manse scheme, began at length to tell upon him, and alarming symptoms, the prelude of that disease which ultimately carried him off, became apparent. By the advice of medical friends he was induced, though reluctantly, to retire from the public exercise of his ministry, and from all engagements that might have an exciting effect upon the system. This took place in 1864, when a valuable testimonial was presented to him, amounting to L.5000, contributed by friends and admirers in all parts of the kingdom. On his retirement from the pulpit, Dr Guthrie devoted himself chiefly to literary pursuits. He became editor of the "Sunday Magazine," and contributed largely to its pages. Whilst thus employed he found time to make repeated excursions to the continent; and of his contributions to the "Sunday Magazine" not the least striking and instructive is a series of papers containing graphic sketches of what he saw when abroad, with characteristic observations and reflections on the scenes and incidents he describes. Most of his papers in the magazine were subsequently collected and published separately. These, with some volumes of sermons and a few pamphlets, comprise Dr Guthrie's efforts as an author. His writings have been widely circulated in Great Britain, the colonies, and the United States, and have afforded instruction and delight to thousands who never saw his face or heard his voice.

After his retirement from the pulpit Dr Guthrie was enabled to continue his literary labours in the enjoyment of a considerable measure of vigour till towards the close of 1872, when his illness began to assume a more virulent form. In the beginning of the following year he went to St Leonards-on-the-Sea, to obtain the benefit of the milder climate of that locality; and there, on the 24th of February, he closed his mortal career. His remains were

brought to Edinburgh, and were interred in the Grange Cemetery. The funeral was attended by a very large company, including the magistrates and council of the city, ministers of nearly every denomination, both in the city and from different parts of the country, representatives of various public bodies, the directors and children of the Original Ragged School, as well as the personal friends and relations of the deceased. The procession extended for about three quarters of a mile, and moved through an immense crowd of people of all classes, assembled to show the last mark of respect to one than whom no citizen of Edinburgh was better known or more universally esteemed, as well for his private virtues and noble character as for his unwearied exertions for the benefit of others, especially for the relief of the destitute and the recovery of the fallen.

### 3. Obituary Notice of Mr R. W. Thomson. By Professor Fleeming Jenkin.

MR R. W. THOMSON, most widely known as the inventor of the road-steamer, died on the 8th of March 1873, in the fiftieth year of his age. By his death the community has lost a distinguished engineer, a remarkable thinker, and a highly original inventor.

Born in 1822, in Stonehaven, Mr Thomson furnishes one more example of the many Scotchmen who by sheer force of character, without any adventitious aid, have risen to be leaders in their profession and benefactors to their country. His father started on a small scale the only factory which even now Stonehaven possesses, and destined his eldest son (the subject of our memoir) to the pulpit, but the lad showed such dislike to classical studies that he was sent to Charleston, U.S., at the age of fourteen, to be educated as a merchant. Commerce proved as distasteful as the classics, and he returned at the age of sixteen to this country, where he began his self-education, aided materially by a weaver who chanced to be a mathematician.

Now, when scientific and technical education is almost thrust upon careless students, it is well to remember how this able and successful engineer acquired his knowledge, and to learn that energy in the pursuit of science is far more important than the