

**INAUGURAL ADDRESS
DELIVERED TO THE UNIVERSITY
OF
ABERDEEN ON HIS INSTALLATION
AS RECTOR, MARCH 22, 1867**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649302000

Inaugural Address Delivered to the University of Aberdeen on His Installation as Rector,
March 22, 1867 by Mountstuart E. Grant Duff

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

MOUNTSTUART E. GRANT DUFF

**INAUGURAL ADDRESS
DELIVERED TO THE UNIVERSITY
OF
ABERDEEN ON HIS INSTALLATION
AS RECTOR, MARCH 22, 1867**

Duff, M. E. G.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED TO THE

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

ON HIS

INSTALLATION AS RECTOR

MARCH 22, 1867.

BY

MOUNTSTUART E. GRANT DUFF

MEMBER FOR THE ELGIN DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

EDINBURGH

EDMONSTON AND DOUGLAS

LONDON: HAMILTON, ADAMS & CO., 33 PATERNOSTER ROW.

1867.

Edmc 4210.25.3

1867. April 29
Gratis.

EDINBURGH : PRINTED BY THOMAS CONSTABLE,

FOR

EDMONSTON AND DOUGLAS.

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| LONDON | HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO |
| CAMBRIDGE | MACMILLAN AND CO. |
| DUBLIN | M'GLASHAN AND GILL. |
| GLASGOW | JAMES MACLEHOSE. |

INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN,—When, in a distant part of the Continent, I learned, through the newspapers, that I had had the honour to be chosen your Rector, my first emotion was one of something like regret that I had deprived you of an opportunity of listening to that most distinguished man who has done so much to make better known to us the Hellenic world, and whose name is so closely connected with those widely dissimilar but equally useful institutions—University College, and the University of London. Your decision, however, and that of your Chancellor, were surely not ungenerous. You preferred to *give* honour rather than to *exchange* it. You preferred to run the risk of being blamed for overrating any small services that may have been rendered to the cause of education and progress by a countryman and neighbour of your own, to placing, amidst general approval, one more leaf upon a brow which is crowned with so much laurel already.

Any regrets which I may have felt were, however, soon forgotten, in the satisfaction of finding myself connected in so flattering a manner with an Institu-

tion which has conferred so many benefits upon the constituency which it is my pride to represent, and upon the whole of Scotland.

The University of Aberdeen, venerable in itself, is even more venerable from its ancestry. The foundation of Bishop Elphinstone was modelled upon the great University of Paris, the Alma Mater of so many *Almæ Matres*, the oldest of Continental Universities, in the modern acceptation of that term. The University of Paris, during the middle ages, was the great centre of Continental study, the 'studium generale' of Europe; for in those days of difficult communication it was a 'far cry' to Oxford; and I observe, in a recent German work, that a German writer, in the time of Rudolf of Hapsburg, speaks of Paris as 'sufficing for the studies of all Christendom;' the theory then being just the reverse of what was held, as an article of faith, by almost every one in England, in our generation, till the cannon of Königgrätz shattered the foolish delusion, namely, that *imperium* belonged to Germany, and *studium* especially to France. That great University of Paris, which was, through the University of Prague, the ancestress of all the German Universities, has passed away; the ploughshare of the Revolution went over it, and in its room arose a mighty and beneficent, but altogether distinct institution, the University of France. If the historical student wishes to hear its old phrases and find its old organization, he must not go to the 'Quartier Latin,' he had much better come here—for here he will find us using its old language and keeping up its old forms, not the less faithfully because sometimes unconscious that we do so.

With feelings and reminiscences like these, was mingled, in my mind, not unnaturally, a hope that, by some word or act, during my tenure of office, I might be able to help on, if it were ever so little, the higher education of Scotland, and make this University even better adapted to fulfil its work than it has hitherto been.

Now, what is that work? There are in this island two distinct kinds of Universities. Oxford and Cambridge, from the enormous wealth accumulated in them and in their Colleges, and from their eminently central position, owe it as a duty to themselves to gather into one focus every ray of learning,—to have a chair or a lectureship for every department of every kind of knowledge,—to be all, and more than all, to the Anglo-Saxon, that Athens or Alexandria ever was to the Grecian name. That this, and nothing less than this, should be the ideal towards which those institutions should strive, will be clear to any one who will take pen and ink and reckon up their astonishing resources, resources to which all those of the great Continental Universities are absolutely trifling, though they have been doing, for the last two or three generations, so much more intellectual work.

The function of the class of Universities to which ours in Scotland belong is entirely different. Under no circumstances could we ever become rich enough to have a chair or a lectureship for every department of every kind of knowledge, and it is not in the smallest degree necessary that we should do so. We ought to have all the great leading branches of knowledge represented, not its minutest ramifications. Our Universities should strive to raise as much as possible

the higher education in the four districts of Scotland which naturally belong to each of them, but they have no occasion to offer any great amount of teaching to the students, of special subjects which are only likely to engage the attention of the few.

For instance, that there should not be in Oxford teachers of the leading languages of the Slavonic family, and a Professor specially devoted to Slavonic literature, is an absurdity and a disgrace; but no one would expect or desire to see such teachers and such a Professor here.

The questions then arise, What are the great branches of the higher education which should be cultivated in such a University as this? Are there any gaps which it would be important to have filled up? First, then, I shall take the Faculty of Arts, represented here by the Professors of Greek, of Latin, of English, and Logic,—of Mathematics, Moral Philosophy, Natural Philosophy, and Natural History.

The fact that this University should have married, as it were, the study of physical science and of the ancient tongues, long before most of the other great educational establishments of the empire ever dreamt of their union, is extremely creditable, and the good service which it did, in this respect, surely deserves to be oftener acknowledged.

It is round the question of the relative importance of the various studies included in the Faculty of Arts that the chief battle amongst educationists is now raging. The penalty for supporting such revolutionary ideas on this subject as I have supported in the House of Commons¹ and elsewhere is, that one is

¹ Hansard, third series, vol. 176, pp. 105-127.

stigmatized by the ignorant and the prejudiced as an enemy of classical education. An enemy of the present methods of classical education I certainly am, an enemy of classical education I certainly am not.

In a world where art is so long and time so short, where so much is desirable to be known, and in which there is so much which it is painful or even dangerous not to know, one would fancy that the first object of every educationist ought to be to make learning as easy as possible. To every shrine of knowledge there should surely be a royal road, if the nature of the ground to be traversed admits of it. Yet this is as far as possible from being the prevailing view; nay, there are men to be found, and eminent men too, who will tell you that they value this or that study simply and solely because it is difficult. I remember hearing the head-master of one of the greatest English schools say this of Greek. He cared nothing for anything that Greek books contained. He scouted the idea of attempting to make the acquisition of Greek more easy to his pupils. 'Meal, meal, and not the mill,' cried the wise German; but my friend, and all the race which he represents, would reverse that prayer.

So far am I from believing that the great argument in favour of classical studies is their difficulty, that I think that argument tells quite the other way, and that, if it were not outweighed by stronger arguments, it would be decisive against their remaining an integral part of the higher education. The whole debate seems to me to turn upon the answer to be given to these two questions: first, Is the training to be derived from classical studies different in kind from any