

**MEMOIR OF
COSMO INNES**

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Memoir of Cosmo Innes by Katherine Burton

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P R E F A C E.

THE following brief and imperfect Memoir of the late Mr. Cosmo Innes is attempted more in the hope of pleasing his many friends of all classes than of satisfying the literary world, or his own immediate circle, domestic or social. Some who have studied under him, either professionally or non-professionally, may be glad to know a few particulars of a life not uninteresting, though its interest is of a calm and unexciting sort. Dean Milman on a similar occasion said of Lord Macaulay that the life of a literary man is best seen in his works. Probably in most instances this is eminently true, but Cosmo Innes, to those who knew him, was by no means the mere literary man; his life was one of action quite as much as of study or reflection; in-

deed, his sanguine temperament and admirably balanced mind induced in him a perhaps excessive contempt of the mere "bookworm," as he was wont to style those who allowed study to absorb their physical or social powers, and a favourite subject of expatiation, even to young people, who do not generally need exhortation *not* to "mind their book," was on how much more was to be learned outside of books (from nature, society, and the circumstances of life) than within their boards. His opinions on this subject are beautifully stated in several of his works. It was one he delighted to trace out and illustrate from the Greek philosophers downwards.

And even in so far as his was a literary life, his subjects were so entirely impersonal, and he so extraordinarily devoid of egotism, that hardly a trace of himself is to be found throughout his writings.

Only in the last of them, the Biography of Dean Ramsay, prefixed to the twenty-second edition of his *Scottish Life and Character*, does he for the

first and last time say a few words about himself—words (to those who know the circumstances to which they allude) as beautiful in their noble, cheerful calmness, as any last words, real or imaginary, of any hero or martyr. The circumstances presently to be detailed will explain our meaning.

To the Editors of the *Scotsman*, the *Courant*, the *Glasgow Herald*, the *Athenæum*, and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the writer's best acknowledgments are due for their admirable obituary notices—some of the materials of which are here reproduced and recognised.

September 1, 1874.