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The Chancellor of the University.



THE General Council of the University at its meeting in April unanimously elected the Earl of Elgin and Kincardine to the Chancellorship of the University in succession to Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, whose loss the whole University so deeply mourns.

The three great offices of the University are the Chancellorship, the Rectorship, and the Principalship, and each presents in the mode of appointment or in the nature of the duties certain interesting peculiarities, the result largely of historic evolution. The Rector, who is, in virtue of his office, the president of the chief governing body of the University, the University Court, charged especially with the administration of all the property and funds, is elected by the students, many of whom have entered the University for the first time only a few days before being called upon to use their franchise, and scarcely any of whom at any time concern themselves with higher University administration. The students virtually also elect a second member of the Court, the Rector's assessor, who although appointed by the Rector is in recent times always nominated by the Students' Representative Council. It is true the typical Rector never, or very rarely, attends meetings of the Court, and hence the justification for the appointment of an assessor. But we have had in this University notable exceptions to the usual practice in the rectorships of Emeritus Professor Bain and the Marquis of Huntly.

Then the Principal who is president of the teaching and disciplinary body of the University, the Senatus, is appointed not by any body within the University but by the Crown.

And, finally, the Chancellor, whose mode of appointment is the only one on a truly democratic basis, in that he is chosen by the votes of the body, the General Council, of which he is president, has scarcely

ever been known, except at his inauguration, to preside at meetings of the Council, and is more usually associated—although in Aberdeen only on rare occasions—with the ceremonial conferring of degrees, which the *Senatus* has the sole power to give or withhold.

But who among us will venture to say that these anomalies prevent our attaining a wonderfully congruous whole, or that they have embarrassed the efficiency of University administration? Most of us, indeed, view sympathetically these chequered arrangements, as evidence of the ancient lineage of our Scottish Universities, just as we look with an interested and fascinated eye on the mixed architecture of an ancient cathedral.

In choosing Lord Elgin for Chancellor the Council has followed the unbroken custom of the University in electing to its highest office a peer of the realm, if we except the earlier Chancellors of King's College and University who were bishops, although the first of these were presumably spiritual peers. Most of the members of the Council have lived under three Chancellors, including Lord Elgin—and very few under more, as the late Duke of Richmond and Gordon held office for the long period of forty-two years. And it is a curious fact that all three, the Duke, Lord Strathcona, and Lord Elgin, are associated with the county of Elgin. The Scottish seat of the Duke is in the county, Lord Strathcona was born in it, and Lord Elgin derives his chief title from it.

As the association of the Elgin family, except in name, with the county is not well known in Aberdeen, and as the people of the North have a traditional liking for genealogical inquiries, it may be of interest to state that the Elgin family, who trace their descent back to Thomas de Bruys of Clackmannan, who died before 1348, and is believed to have been a kinsman of the Royal Bruces, were first brought into association with Elgin in 1583. In that year, Edward Bruce, second son of Edward Bruce of Blairhall and Easter Kennet in Clackmannan, and grandson of Sir David Bruce of Clackmannan, received from King James VI a grant of the temporalities of the dissolved Abbey of Kinloss, in the county of Elgin, with the position of Commendator of Kinloss, and the seat in Parliament previously held by the mitred Abbot. He was a distinguished lawyer, became a Lord of Session, accompanied his Sovereign to England, from whom he received numerous favours, was appointed Master of the Rolls, received the Hon. M.A. of Oxford, and is buried in the Rolls Chapel, Chancery Lane. Extensive grants of land in England were made to him by the King. In 1600-1 he was created Lord Kinloss, and subsequently, in 1604, Baron Bruce of Kinloss. The former title later on went through a female to the Dukes of Buckingham and Chandos, while the latter title, descending in the male line, is still held by the Earls of Elgin.

The first Lord Kinloss was succeeded in his estates and titles by his son Edward, who, dying unmarried, was succeeded by his brother

Thomas. Thomas was closely attached to the Royal family, and had bestowed on him in 1633 by Charles I the dignity of Earl of Elgin in the peerage of Scotland. He appears to have sold the Kinloss estates to Brodie of Lethen. The estates of Cothill and Collestoune in Aberdeenshire also belonged at this time to the Bruce family.

The Bruces warmly espoused the cause of the Stuarts, and shortly after the Restoration, Robert the second Earl of Elgin was granted, besides other dignities, the Earldom of Ailesbury, in the peerage of England. This Earldom later became extinct through failure of direct heirs, but was subsequently revived in favour of one of the Bruce family, and raised after a time to a Marquisate.

Charles, the fourth Earl of Elgin, died in 1747. Walpole says of him he was offered, but declined, a Dukedom shortly before his death. One of his daughters married the third Duke of Richmond; and a grand-niece became the wife of Prince Charles Edward, the young Chevalier. As he left no son, the Earldom of Elgin and the Barony of Bruce of Kinloss devolved on Charles Bruce of Broomhall, ninth Earl of Kincardine, a descendant of Sir George Bruce of Carnock who was a younger brother of the first Lord Kinloss.

It is interesting to note that David Bruce of Green, a younger brother of the father of Lord Kinloss and Sir George, is an ancestor of the Bruces of Kennet, now represented by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Chancellor of St. Andrews University, and that Sir George took for wife a daughter of Archibald Primrose of Burnbrae, an ancestor of Lord Rosebery, Chancellor of the University of Glasgow. Thus the ancestral blood streams of three of the present Scottish University Chancellors may be said to have mingled in the early part of the seventeenth century.

It is almost unnecessary to say that the Earldom of Kincardine has no association with the Kincardine that borders the Dee, although the suggestion of an association appears to be strengthened by the fact that the minor dignity of Baron Bruce of Torry was conferred along with the Earldom. Both titles relate to the Kincardine and Torry that lie by the Forth. The Earldom and the Barony were created by Charles I in 1647 in favour of Sir Edward Bruce of Carnock, a grandson of Sir George Bruce of Carnock. The Bruces of Carnock like the Bruces of Kinloss were strong supporters of the Stuarts. The second Earl held high office under Charles II. Burnet, in the "History of His Own Time," says of him that "he was the wisest and worthiest man of his country," but quaintly adds "and fit for governing any affairs but his own, which he by a wrong turn and by his love for the public neglected to his ruin". But the Earl had impoverished his estates in support of the Stuart king for whom the strongly Whiggish Bishop had no love.

On the death, in 1705, of the third Earl without issue, the Earldom passed to the Bruces of Broomhall, who, as already stated, were also descended from Sir George Bruce of Carnock. Thus, within a space

of about forty years, the Broomhall family succeeded to the two Earldoms of Kincardine and Elgin. The present Lord Elgin is the lineal descendant of this family; and Broomhall remains to this day the chief seat of the Earls of Elgin and Kincardine. The present Earl has for many years leased for his autumn quarters Dunphail in Upper Elginshire which came into possession of Lord Elgin's father through his first wife, the heiress of the Bruces of Dunphail, but which descended to a daughter—a half-sister of Lord Elgin—who married Lord Thurlow.

Several members of the Elgin and Kincardine families, as has already in part been indicated, were men of considerable note. Sir George Bruce of Carnock, whose name has repeatedly been mentioned, was a man of exceptional ability and enterprise. He was one of the first to undertake in Scotland the mining of coal on a large scale. It is of his mines, which were carried under the Forth, that the well-known story is told regarding the terror of King James VI, on momentarily suspecting treachery in his host, when on a visit to the mines he was brought up through a shaft in a small islet in the Forth, convenient for shipment of the coal. Sir George enjoyed the esteem of the King, by whom he was knighted and was made a Lord of the Privy Council and Exchequer. He was also appointed one of the Commissioners to treat of a Union with England.

Passing over a number of distinguished members of the families between the time of Sir George and the present Earl, I would wish only to recall briefly the great public services of the grandfather and father of our Chancellor.

Lord Elgin's grandfather, the seventh Earl of Elgin, was Ambassador successively to the Netherlands, to Prussia and to Turkey. It was while in Turkey that, as an intense lover of Greek Art, and anxious for the preservation of some of its finest remains from complete neglect and apparent gradual dissolution, he obtained leave of the Sultan first to sketch and measure and make casts of the world-famous marble sculptures of the Parthenon, and subsequently to remove a considerable proportion of these and other Greek sculptures to England. As if the gods of the ancient Greeks were incensed at the removal, the vessel in which the marbles had been shipped was wrecked, and sank off the island of Cerigo, and there the marbles lay for three years before the exact position of the wrecked ship was located and the marbles recovered and transhipped to this country. A somewhat similar fate, it will be remembered, befell the attempt, also eventually successful, on the part of Sir Erasmus Wilson, the founder of the Chair of Pathology in the University, to bring the obelisk, known as Cleopatra's Needle, from the plains of Egypt to the banks of the Thames. The Elgin marbles, now housed in the British Museum, constitute one of the greatest Art treasures of our nation, and are a perennial source of inspiration to all lovers of art. It is said that although the sculptures were purchased for the Museum at a cost of

about £35,000, this sum amounted to less than half the expenditure of Lord Elgin on his researches in Greece and on the collection and transport of the sculptures.

The eighth Earl, father of the Chancellor, had a distinguished Oxford career, winning a first class in classics, and became one of the most capable diplomatists and administrators of his time. He began his public career as Governor of Jamaica and ended it as Governor-General of India, where he died in 1863. He had also been Governor-General of Canada, in which country the Chancellor was born in 1849, and he was Envoy and Plenipotentiary to China and Japan at a critical time in the relations of the West with the Far East. He acquired great distinction in all the high offices that he filled, and rendered invaluable service to the commerce and prestige of the Empire in the treaty which he arranged with China and Japan and in the reciprocity treaty between Canada and the United States. He received several honours, including a peerage of the United Kingdom under the title of Baron Elgin of Elgin.

But great as have been the public services of many of the present Lord Elgin's forebears, none has had a more impressive record than Lord Elgin himself. There are few men in public life who have rendered larger or more useful service to his country than Lord Elgin has done in his characteristically unostentatious way. Following the traditions of his family on both sides of the house—for on the maternal side he is a grandson of the first Earl of Durham, one of the most sagacious and far-seeing of the earlier Governors of British North America—Lord Elgin has taken a prominent part in the government and administration of our dependencies and colonies as well as in the affairs of the mother country. And it seems not inappropriate that the University of Aberdeen—which, in proportion to its size, has perhaps sent more of its most gifted sons into the service of our outer Empire than any other Scottish University—should continue to have for its Chancellor, as it had in a very special manner in Lord Strathcona, one who has been so intimately identified with British administration beyond the seas.

Apart from local administrative work, in which he has always taken a leading part, Lord Elgin began his wider public service with his entry to the Ministry of Mr. Gladstone in 1886 as Treasurer of the Household and First Commissioner of Works. He exhibited in these offices, as in his own county of Fife, such conspicuous administrative capacity that in 1894 he was invited to occupy the highest governing post to which a subject of the Sovereign may aspire—the Viceroyalty of India. This invitation must have been particularly pleasing to Lord Elgin, as in accepting it he was entering a post which as already stated had previously been held by his father. This was a unique distinction, for, so far as I know, there is no other instance of father and son acting as Viceroy of India.

The five years of Lord Elgin's Viceroyalty covered a period of exceptional turmoil and distress in the affairs of our great Eastern

Empire. He had scarcely reached India when grave troubles arose among the restless tribes of the North-West Frontier which necessitated a brief but arduous campaign in almost pathless mountains for the relief of Chitral. A year later, the insurrection broke out afresh and involved the whole of the North-West Frontier. Before the insurgent tribes were finally subdued in 1898, it had been necessary to put into the field a larger army than had been mobilized at any time in India since the Mutiny. It was in these campaigns, and notably on the heights of Dargai, that the Gordon Highlanders brought fresh glory to the regiment in deeds that still thrill us with their recollection. Following the lead of General Wade in the final pacification of our own Highlands, Lord Elgin's Government was insistent on the construction of good roads. Properly constructed roads were made through the chief mountain passes and the principal valleys, so as to facilitate future military operations, should they unhappily ever become necessary. The campaigns during Lord Elgin's reign effected complete submission of the tribes, and have been amply justified by the period of practically unbroken peace with which they have been followed on the North-West Frontier.

But almost greater anxieties befell the Viceroy in the sudden outburst of plague in the Bombay Presidency in 1896—the first visitation of this dreaded disease in India for a long series of years. The deaths were in a short time numbered by hundreds of thousands, and within a few years amounted even to millions. The outbreak was tackled with great promptitude. The highest medical and sanitary skill was made available, and an important Scientific Commission was appointed. But although the most enlightened and strenuous precautions were taken, such were the difficulties of coping with a disease so insidious in its methods of spread that it was not until after some years that the epidemic showed signs of abating. The difficulties were enormously increased by the resistance of the natives to sanitary measures, due to the prejudices of custom and caste and religion. But in spite of these difficulties it may be said that it was under Lord Elgin's Viceroyalty that the Indian native learned his first extensive lesson on the character and virtues of Western sanitary measures.

But Lord Elgin had to cope not only with war and pestilence. He had also to face the third great traditional enemy of the human race—famine. A great drought in 1896 was followed by a widespread shortage of crops, and by a famine which in a few months affected more or less 65,000,000 persons. The enormous mortality that would in ordinary course have followed was largely prevented by the vigorous organization by Lord Elgin of relief operations, which mainly took the excellent form of wages for labour on public relief works, such as irrigation works. The relief was thus made to assist in providing a remedy against the causes of future famines.

These were not the whole of Lord Elgin's difficulties and services. It fell to him to undertake the anxious task of establishing the cur-

rency of India on a fixed gold basis. This he successfully accomplished. For purposes of revenue the question of certain very important and debatable tariff changes had also to be faced, amid great opposition, but was solved with such wisdom that the settlement Lord Elgin achieved has endured to this day.

Amid all the grave distractions to smooth government and the progress of public works, it redounds to the credit of Lord Elgin that no less than 5,000 miles of new railways were constructed in India during his tenure of office.

It is not surprising that at a great banquet in Calcutta given in his honour on the termination of his Viceroyalty, when, along with an almost extravagant praise of his services, the "tremendous trials and overwhelming anxieties" of his reign were recalled, Lord Elgin expressed doubts as to his having the courage to undertake the duties of his great office when it was offered to him, could he have foreseen the difficulties that were to beset him. But he modestly expressed the hope that he might have deserved the epitaph on the simple tombstone of Henry Lawrence at Lucknow that "he tried to do his duty". He did this, and more. Members of all parties bore, at the close of his tenure of office, generous testimony to the great value of his services. As one responsible writer put it, "he had justified the highest expectations, and had made a reputation as a wise administrator and an able statesman which had far surpassed the highest hopes". In spite of the succession of grave misfortunes which by the hand of Providence befell India during his Viceroyalty, Lord Elgin left India so improved in its finances and trade that Sir James Westland, the Financial Member of the Council of the Governor-General—one of the many distinguished alumni and graduates of this University who have held high posts in the Government of India—was able, in presenting the last budget of Lord Elgin's Government, to claim that with the exception of the United Kingdom no other country in the Old World could show an equally favourable result.

Lord Elgin's next period of service to our Over-seas Dominions was as Secretary of State for the Colonies in the Ministry of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. He held this office from 1905 to 1908. Here also he had several difficult tasks to face. Important questions of government and of Asiatic labour in South Africa required solution. One of the earliest acts of his administration was the granting of a constitution and responsible government to the recently conquered Colonies of the Transvaal and the Orange River. This was severely criticised by the opposition in Parliament, but few now doubt its wisdom. It served to reconcile the Dutch population of these two Colonies to the incorporation of the territories in the British Empire and paved the way for the subsequent Union of the South African States.

It was during Lord Elgin's Secretaryship that the Colonial Conference of 1907 was held, at which several important resolutions re-

garding imperial defence and other matters of imperial interest were passed. Arrangements were also made for having an Imperial Conference every four years, and the foundations were thus laid for an Imperial Council in which all parts of the British Empire might ultimately be represented.

Lord Elgin also carried through Parliament important legislation regarding the Constitution of the Australian States, and the financial relations of the Dominion of Canada with the Provinces of Canada. Long-standing difficulties with the United States in relation to Newfoundland were likewise dealt with, and were finally and satisfactorily settled; and sources of friction between this country and France in regard to the New Hebrides were removed. Altogether Lord Elgin's services to the Colonies were not unlike those to India. They were required in matters of great delicacy and difficulty, and were rendered with courage and wisdom.

Lord Elgin, although a prominent member of the Liberal Party, is of too open and judicial a mind to have ever been a political partisan. It was a distinct tribute to this quality, and to his proved faculty for dealing with difficult questions, that he was appointed by a Conservative Government Chairman of the Royal Commission to inquire into grave allegations regarding certain of the officers of the South African Army in relation to war stores.

It was also a Conservative Government that invited Lord Elgin in 1904 to act as Chairman of the small but important Royal Commission that was charged with the difficult and invidious task of determining the extent to which the small remnant of the Free Church that refused to enter the Union of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches was in a position to carry out the trusts and make use of the property devolving on it under the momentous and much criticised decision of the House of Lords. The Commission performed its duties with great expedition and with marked impartiality. Parliament adopted its recommendations and appointed an Executive Commission, again with Lord Elgin as Chairman, to carry them into effect. The great battle over the Church property is now, for many of us, an almost forgotten tale—so rapidly does time dull the public memory of even stirring national events.

But it is mainly in connexion with his services to the Scottish Universities that some of us have had an opportunity of personal contact with Lord Elgin and his work.

He was one of the youngest members of the Commission appointed under the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889, of which his friend, Lord Kinnear, who has been his colleague in several public bodies, was Chairman. Although the labours of the Commission were not completed until 1900, and extended therefore over the five years during which Lord Elgin was Viceroy of India, the more weighty part of the duties of the Commission had been carried through in the four years preceding his departure for the East. The principal graduation ordin-

ances had been issued, a preliminary examination had been made obligatory for all graduation curricula, women had been granted the right of graduation, and the finance ordinances had been settled. Lord Elgin bore his share in the epoch-making changes embraced in these ordinances, and obtained an insight into the constitution and workings of the Scottish Universities system that gave special point to his subsequent services to the Universities as Chairman of the Carnegie Trust and as Chairman of the recent Departmental Committee appointed by the Treasury to inquire into the need in the Scottish Universities for additional assistance from the Government.

It has been my privilege to represent the University of Aberdeen on the Carnegie Trust since its foundation in 1901, and I can say with some knowledge that next to giving the money, the best thing that Mr. Carnegie did was to obtain the consent of Lord Elgin to act as Chairman of the Trust and of its Executive Committee. Lord Elgin's chairmanship has been an unqualified success.

He came to the work with a highly cultured mind, but without noticeable prepossession in favour of one form of academic culture rather than another. He has held the balance evenly between all the various educational purposes to which the funds of the Trust are applicable. His extreme fairness and impartiality have been equally conspicuous in dealing with the claims of the different Universities. It is not possible to conceive of any one who could have more safely and justly guided the Committee in the delicate matter of adjudicating upon the various claims. Special pleadings by the representatives of special interests have never influenced him unless they were based on indisputable facts. Along with a readiness to listen to all sides, he has shown a quickness of judgment and a capacity for organization that proved of great practical value, especially at the commencement of the work of the Trust, when the administration of the income from Mr. Carnegie's unprecedented endowment of £2,000,000 had to be arranged and regulated within a brief time. The Trust has had in its Chairman the benefit of a mind not only naturally apt for administration but trained and whetted by large experience in the highest spheres of public work.

This is not the occasion to discuss the policy of the Carnegie Trust. The Trust has not found it possible in every matter to take its own views. It has necessarily been restrained by the terms of its foundation, wide and generous as those terms are, and were intended to be. There is, however, I think, agreement in all quarters that although some alterations in the method of dealing with the payments to students might possibly be made with advantage—the question is admittedly difficult—the administration of the Trust under Lord Elgin's leadership has, independently of the great pecuniary assistance rendered to students, been of the very greatest benefit to the four Scottish Universities, in enabling them to extend their teaching accommodation, to enrich greatly the equipment of their laboratories and libraries, and to make

many urgently needed additions to their teaching staff. The meetings and operations of the Trust have also served the entirely useful purpose of bringing the Universities into closer acquaintance with one another. Each has been given occasion and opportunity for a fuller knowledge and appreciation of the work being accomplished by the others, and has been provided with a fresh incentive to discover and make good its own deficiencies.

In a recent statement to the University Court in connexion with the submission of the Annual Accounts of the University, it was mentioned that, apart from the payment of students' fees and exclusive of a sum of about £12,500 devoted to Fellowships and Scholarships and Grants for Research, the University had received from the Carnegie Trust, during the eleven years of the existence of the Trust, no less than £96,277, and this without any inroad on the capital funds of the Trust.

The sympathetic spirit and the judicial mind shown in the work of the Carnegie Trust by Lord Elgin has been equally displayed in his Chairmanship of the Treasury Committee on University Grants. After a most careful inquiry into the requirements of each of the Universities, Lord Elgin's Committee, with the usual expedition and directness attaching to all Lord Elgin's work, generously recommended an addition of £40,000 to the annual government subsidies, already amounting to £72,000, to the Scottish Universities. The report was presented to the Treasury in 1910, and was accepted and at once acted upon by Parliament. The share of the new grant falling to the University of Aberdeen is £9000, and represents a somewhat larger proportion of the total grant to the four Universities than the allocation in the preceding grants.

Lord Elgin has already received at the hands of his Sovereign and from various Universities fitting recognition of his services to the State and to higher education. He received the Knighthood of the Garter on his return from India, and he is a G.C.S.I., a G.C.I.E., and a Privy Councillor. Oxford University has given him its honorary degree of D.C.L., and Cambridge its LL.D.—a degree which he has also received from each of the four Scottish Universities. And now the University of Aberdeen has elected him to its Chancellorship—the highest honour within its gift. In the history of the University and of the two ancient Universities merged in it there can be but few Chancellors that have come to the Chancellorship with a more solid and distinguished record of service to the Empire at large and to the Scottish Universities.

We all bid him a cordial welcome, and trust that he may long occupy the Chancellorship and that, forsaking the custom of absenteeism usually associated with the office in a Scottish University, he may come often among us to guide us in our deliberations and to honour us in our public ceremonies.

MATTHEW HAY.