

energies rather on physical and natural than on medical science, men such as Hutton and Black. In mathematics it had boasted in succession of a David Gregory and Colin Maclaren, both friends and *protégés* of Sir Isaac Newton; and in later times, of a Matthew Stewart, John Playfair, and Sir John Leslie. Both these last, with their predecessor Robison, had also rendered its chair of natural philosophy a very celebrated one; and of its moral science, it must be enough to say that its metaphysical chair was filled in succession by Dr Adam Ferguson, Dugald Stewart, Thomas Brown, and latterly by the brilliant Wilson, who, if less distinguished than his predecessors in the walks of abstract thought, more than equalled them in genius, and in his influence over the general literature of the age. Such men are the gifts of Providence to a country, and cannot be produced at any given time on the ordinary principle of demand and supply. But even when they exist, they may be kept out of their proper places by an ill-exercised patronage; and it must be conceded to the old close corporation of Edinburgh, that in the main it exercised its patronage with great discrimination, and for the best interests of the city. It was of signal advantage that the established religion of the country was numerically and politically so strong at the time, that the disturbing element of denominational jealousy could have no existence in the body; and, influenced and directed by the general intellect of the city, its choice fell on the best possible men, whether Episcopalian or Presbyterian, that lay within its reach. Further, the legal profession contributed largely to the earlier intellectual glory of Edinburgh. Kames was one of its first cultivators of letters on the English model. Monboddo, with all his vagaries a very superior man and very vigorous writer, belonged to the same class. Mackenzie, though in a different walk, and of a later time, belonged also to the legal profession. Almost all the