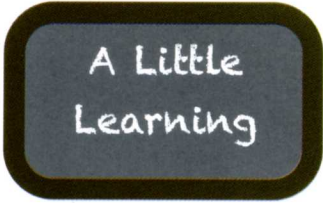




# A LITTLE LEARNING



When Charles I was on the throne and Civil War threatened the land, the Scots were establishing schools in all the rural parishes and burghs of Scotland by Act of the Scottish Parliament.

## Act for Founding of Schooles in Everie Paroche 26th November 1645

The estates of parliament, considering how prejudiciall the want of schooles in manie congregations hath bene and how beneficiall the founding thair of in everie congregation wilbe to this kirk and kingdome, doe thairfore statute and ordane that there be a school founded and a scholemaster appointed in everie paroche (not already provyded) by advyse of the presbitrie, and to this purpose that the heritors in everie congregation meet amongst themselfis and provyde a commodious hous for the schole and modifie a stipend to the schole master, whiche sall not be under ane hundereth merks nor above tua hundereth merkis, to be payit yeirlie at tuo termes.

Although a school had existed in Dundee since 1239 the first record of education in the Hilltown is found in 1656 when the Barony's minister was in dispute with Viscount Dudhope over the payment of his stipend. Scottish schools, run by the Churches, were open to all children, regardless of social status and the Scottish system so impressed the writer, Daniel Defoe, that, in 1708 he compared the ignorance of much of the English population with Scotland where the *'poorest people have their children taught and instructed.'*

Reality was not quite so rosy as might be implied. Although some schools were free, due to the largesse of a wealthy landowner or religious order, most scholars had to pay and attendance was not compulsory. There is no doubt, however, that education was available throughout Scotland and was accepted and valued by its people. 'Stick in at your lessons' is a Scottish sentiment that echoes down through centuries and the openness of the Scottish system ran all the way from the schoolroom

to the university – at least for boys! A generous system of bursaries allowed 'the lad o'pairs' to gain a university education. It was more than two centuries after the Scottish Act that the Elementary Education Act of 1870 began a complete network of schools in England and Wales.

Throughout Scotland churches provided schools. The Church of Scotland, the Free Church, the Episcopalian Church and the Catholic Church vied in their provision of schools and the contribution required from the scholar was, in many cases, small. In the beginning some schools were literally Sunday schools and took place within the church itself.

By the 19<sup>th</sup> century several schools were in place on the Hilltown. The Church of Scotland had Rosebank School, the Free Church had Hilltown School and the Episcopalian Church founded St Salvador's Church and school in 1856 and St Martin's in 1904. Schoolrooms in mills were in operation by 1833 and the 1844 Act, which authorised the employment of children aged 8 to 13, made halftime education commonplace for youngsters working in the mills in and around the Hilltown.

In 1859 the Marist Brothers were invited to come to Dundee to educate the children of the new young parish of St Mary's Forebank. At that time Dundee had only two Catholic churches, St Andrew's (later to become St Andrew's cathedral) and St Mary's Forebank. A school of some kind had been established in halls below St Andrew's Church since its foundation in 1836 and when the Marist Brothers arrived in August 1860 they began work with St Mary's boys there. The Boys' School,



St Mary's Forebank Church

