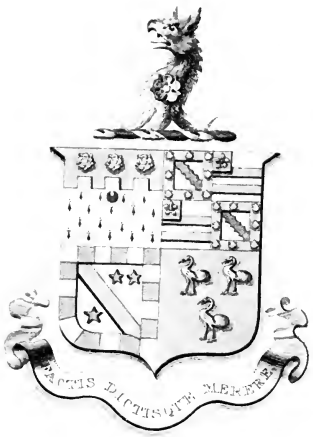

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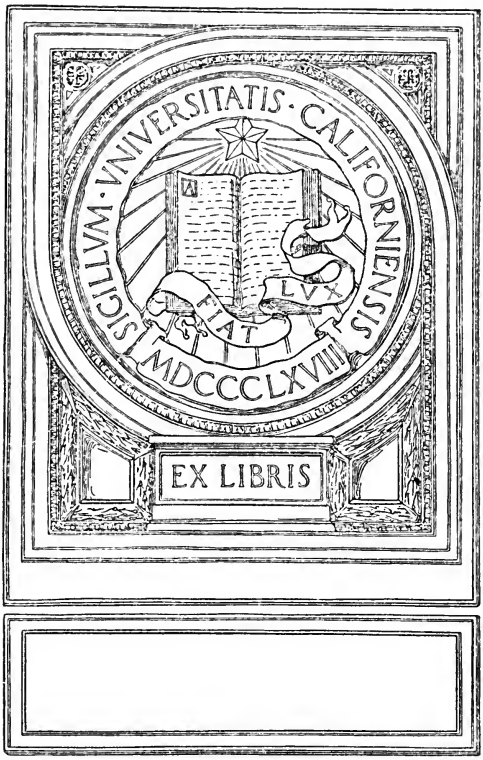
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THE

ETON ABUSES

CONSIDERED.

IN A LETTER

ADDRESSED TO THE AUTHOR OF

SOME REMARKS

ON THE

PRESENT STUDIES AND MANAGEMENT

OF

ETON SCHOOL.

'Tis Education forms the common mind,
Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclin'd.

POPE.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

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Sir,

Your 'Remarks on the present studies and management of Eton School' have induced me to refer to some notes, which I made a few years back on the same subject, but which circumstances have hitherto prevented me from bringing before the public. In remodelling these, and in adding others, I trust that you will at once understand, that I have no intention whatever, in a general sense, either of replying to your arguments, or detracting from your merits. I am merely desirous of adding fresh weight to those facts, which have been as gratefully received by all who are open to conviction, as they probably are unacceptable to the few, who are either prejudiced by interest, or wilfully deaf to reason.

Throughout your 'Remarks' there is but one question on which I would materially differ from you, and on that subject I will at once enter: I allude to the Newcastle Scholarships. You appear to be as much dissatisfied with the fruits which they have produced, as with the manner in which the candidates are prepared and the examinations conducted. From whatever sources you

derive your information (and on almost every other point it is singularly correct) I cannot but think that in this instance your impressions are erroneous, and your assertions partial. You have yourself stated that in consequence of the absence of all "collective examination after a boy has reached the fifth form, all motive for competition is removed at the very moment when it ought to be applied." Now, it is only the higher boys who have the privilege of becoming candidates for the Newcastle Scholarship, and the consequence is, that the fifth form, which was formerly the most idle part of the school, has now a motive for exertion, which has already produced the happiest effects.

You appear, too, to consider that the success of a candidate depends entirely upon the pains which are bestowed upon him by his tutor. "As the Scholarship is at present managed," you say, "it *may be* as much a trial of what can be done for a boy by his tutor, as of what he can do for himself." Now, Sir, you will excuse me if I do all in my power to prove the fallacy of these arguments: indeed, I lay particular stress upon these points, first, because I should much regret that the kind-hearted nobleman, by whom the institution was founded, should consider that his beneficence had been misapplied, and its effects nullified; and secondly, because the candidate would naturally be dispirited should he be led to suppose that success was dependent on the exertions of his tutor, and not on his own talents. The arguments which I adduce are as follow:—

The subjects of examination for the Newcastle Scholarship are—1st, the school-business of the preceding year; a Gospel; the Acts; and the collateral parts of Theology: 2nd, such portions of Demosthenes, the Greek Tragedians, and such original compositions and translations in Greek and Latin, prose and verse, as the examiners may determine on. Of these latter subjects no one has the slightest intimation up to the moment of examination. How, then, is a tutor to prepare a boy peculiarly for such a trial? The first Newcastle scholar was Allies, a pupil of Coleridge; the next Cresy, a pupil of Green. These two tutors may pass without incurring a charge of having overwhelmed their pupils with learning; before any competent jury they would have a verdict of "not guilty" of having taught their pupils the use of weapons which they themselves had never been able to wield. In short, the Newcastle scholar has invariably, I believe, owed his success to his own industry and talents. You should have been careful, Sir, of treading on this ground, for this foundation has gone further towards propping up the sinking fortunes of Eton than any blessing which has befallen it for ages. Where there are so many members of the system to which the application of the knife might prove salutary, I cannot but consider it as ill-advised to apply the instrument to such a sound and healthy part.

One more word on the Newcastle Scholarship, and I shall drop the subject. I allude to the objections which you have raised to the private tutors being selected for public examiners. There

is but one case in point in which your objections could have any degree of solidity, and that I consider to be without the range of probability: I mean the chance of a tutor being permitted to be the examiner of his own pupil. The private tutors who have been selected as examiners are Mr. Jenkyns, Mr. Durnford, and Mr. Selwyn, all of them able scholars, and men, I believe, incapable of partiality; and an Etonian needs not to be told that a private tutor has no more intercourse with the boys in general than if he were many miles distant. Not one of these gentlemen knew either the names or persons of the candidates till they met them in the examining hall.

Having now said what I consider to be sufficient respecting the Newcastle Scholarship, I shall, before proceeding to follow up your scrutiny of the system of education at Eton, confine myself to a few remarks on the qualifications of its professors, and their fitness to discharge the high and important duties committed to their trust.

It is no slight responsibility to have in our hands the administration of learning and morality to some hundred of our fellow creatures, at the most important period, too, of their existence—at that age when bad impressions are most easily received, and of course most fatal in their effects: it is no slight responsibility, when we consider that we are daily sending forth to the alluring enticements of an evil world those who, had they experienced from us a little timely interest or parental admonition, might have become valuable

members of society, and ornaments of that station which they are probably destined to disgrace. Again; the youth of Eton reckons among its ranks the flower of the aristocracy—those who from birth are the hereditary legislators of the kingdom — those who are called upon (more especially in these *our* days) to uphold the established religion, as well as to protect the rights and liberties of their fellow countrymen. When we consider that from the forms of Eton issue numbers who are destined to fill the highest offices in church and state—that it is from thence we look for many of our future governors and statesmen, men to whom we must confide all that is nationally or individually dear to us—surely our officiousness may be pardoned and our anxieties excused.

I have said that I meant to address to you a few remarks on the Masters of Eton. In adopting this step, I have no feeling but respect, and no motive but the desire to be of use. It is irksome at any time to be obliged to find fault; it is more so when we are compelled to be personal. With few of the Masters of Eton have I had any intercourse, and too many years have rolled over my head since I was an Eton boy to permit me to be prejudiced by any puerile remembrance of local discomforts or individual dislike. I wish, therefore, that you will consider the strictures which I am about to hazard as applying as much as possible to the office, and not to the individual. I will commence with the Head Master; stating, in

as few words as possible, the duties which I consider to be required of him.

The 'Head Magistrate' of a school like Eton should not only be an excellent scholar, but an elegant one; he should not only be content with instilling into the minds of his pupils the dry routine of classic information, but should be most particular in pointing out to them the beauties of the different authors with which he requires them to be versed. The cold rules of the Greek grammar will never entice a boy to a love of the Greek language; where the exquisite beauties of a Homer or a Sophocles, if displayed to him in their proper light, might eventually make a Porson or a Scaliger. The Head Master of Eton should be as learned as a Busby, and as active as a Commissioner of Police; he should make himself acquainted with the character and pursuits of every boy under his immediate charge, appear to take a friendly interest in each, and should be perfectly well bred. "Maxima debetur pueris reverentia:" he should, therefore, be careful never to make use of an expression towards a boy which he would be unwilling should be used towards himself; he should admonish a boy in private, and punish him publicly; he should show no more favour to a nobleman than he would to a commoner; and, above all things, *he should never lose his temper.*

That the present Head Master of Eton is possessed of many of these qualifications in an eminent degree—that he exercises the im-

partiality I have recommended, and may boast of considerable learning, activity, and discrimination of character—I have great satisfaction in bearing testimony; but there are one or two points on which I almost feel inclined to quarrel with him, and to which I anxiously hope that he will turn his attention. I allude, in the first instance, to the very *cavalier* manner in which I cannot but think he treats the elder boys. A youth of eighteen must assuredly feel that were he placed in any other situation, and his age would entitle him to act a far more important part on the stage of life, he would not be liable to the indignity of being called a liar, or perhaps threatened with the rod. Every one must, at some period or other, be called upon to act for himself; the sooner, therefore, that you can induce a boy to regard himself as a man, the sooner will he act the part of one. It is well to instil into him an awe for your authority while he is yet a child; but the nearer he approaches to manhood, the nearer should he be admitted to your familiarity. Had Dr. Keate followed this plan, I cannot but think that he would have derived valuable assistance from many of the upper boys while they were yet under his care, and left a kindlier impression on their minds when they have ceased to be so. Where no concern is expressed by the tutor, there can be none felt by the boy. Between an Eton Master and his pupil there is neither a kindly interest on the one side, or respect on the other. To the Head Master the feeling of a boy is about the

same as that with which a patient regards his operator, or the prisoner his turnkey.

The fact of applying the word "liar" to a boy, which I have just alluded to, more particularly when he has reached that age at which such an expression is most acutely felt, and with the knowledge too that he is denied the power of replying to it, is ill-advised,—I had almost used a harsher term. It leads me, however, to touch upon a subject which I conceive to be of the most paramount importance. I refer to the horrible system of falsehood which prevails among the boys in their intercourse with the Masters. To love truth for truth's sake is the principal part of human perfection; while, to be guilty of a lie, is so inconsistent with the name and character of a gentleman, that the imputation of it ranks him with the most degraded part of mankind. In an academical institution so extensive as Eton, there must, I confess, be many boys who are willing to avoid punishment by deviating from the truth: the Masters, consequently, meeting with such frequent instances of falsehood, and mixing too little with any but their immediate pupils to be able to distinguish the vicious from the well-intentioned, become habituated to the system, and are naturally sceptical of a boy's assertion, when in reality his statement is correct. The feeling that one is the object of suspicion is commonly an incentive to do wrong: the consequence, therefore, is that an innocent boy, aware that he has incurred the character of a liar, conceives that it is his best

policy to reap every advantage which that character may hold out to him. Till a boy is actually convicted of a *lie*, he should never be treated as a *liar;* the system at Eton is to treat every boy as if he were one. I would, therefore, strongly recommend to the Masters, whenever they may be in any degree of doubt as to the guilt of those confided to them, to question them first on the subject, warning them at the same time of the importance and necessity of truth and the detestable qualities of a lie. If, after this, a boy should still persist in shuffling off the truth, and the Master can by any means obtain proofs of his guilt, punish him summarily and severely; but if, on the contrary, by showing that you place some reliance on his word, you can obtain from him a confession of the fact, not only refrain from correction, but praise him openly before his schoolfellows. I am very much mistaken in my estimate of human nature, and the gentleman-like feeling which I believe prevails among the Eton boys, if this system would not prove beneficial in its effects. The late lamented Mr. Young, to whose merits as a tutor and a gentleman I feel pleasure in bearing testimony, pursued this plan, and the consequence was that a boy, being raised in his own estimation by having his honourable feelings appealed to, never in any instance, I believe, told him *a lie.*

The next subject to which I would draw the attention of Dr. Keate is the old monkish custom of flogging, which, although abandoned in a great degree at other public schools, is still carried on

in its full force at Eton. To apply the rod to boys up to the age of twelve or thirteen, may be efficacious, and perhaps necessary; but to inflict so degrading a punishment upon a youth on the verge of manhood—possessed perhaps of the finest feelings, and stung almost to madness by the stigma which thus attaches to him—is repulsive in the last degree. I will quote a passage from the Edinburgh Review, which contains every argument that can be brought forward against so pernicious a system: "We are convinced that nothing but habit, which deadens the minds of honourable men to the impropriety and indecorum of such an exhibition, could have concealed from them the inexpediency of the mode of punishment itself. It is an essential requisite of every good punishment, that the pain of it should increase, as the number of inflictions increase, or, to speak learnedly, that its intensity should vary directly as its quantity. Thus it is a disagreeable thing to be imprisoned in a solitary dungeon for one day; but is more than twice as disagreeable to be so imprisoned for two days; for a week, painful in the extreme; for a year, it would drive most people to distraction. Solitary confinement is, therefore, a good punishment. But with flogging, the case is just reversed. This punishment is not inflicted at Eton so severely as to cause lasting pain, or to disable the body. Beyond the momentary smart, which few boys are sufficiently tender to fear, its efficacy is alone derived from the disgrace and ridicule which attend it. Now, for the first time, a boy feels considerable shame,

and so for the second and third, if the intervals are tolerably wide. But if the floggings follow close on one another, he is soon callous to the feeling of shame; and on each successive infliction, the sharpness of the punishment becomes less, till the fear of it ceases to operate on his mind. In those cases, therefore, of resolute irregularity, where an efficacious punishment is most to be desired, this penalty of flogging utterly fails; while, on the other hand, it sometimes falls with unnecessary hardship upon a youth of seventeen or eighteen years of age, who is accidentally caught tripping, and by whom the disgrace is severely felt. We hope that the impolicy and unfairness of this unseemly punishment may before long occasion its abolition, at least for a considerable part of the school."

"Beating," says Locke, "and all sorts of slavish and corporal punishments, are not the discipline fit to be used in the education of those who would have wise, good, and ingenious men; and therefore very rarely to be applied, and that only on great occasions, and cases of extremity."

There are other defects in the intercourse between the Master and the scholar, which tend materially to lessen the respect which is due to the former. I will, however, only instance one. The custom of a boy actually placing *a fee*, to the amount of £10 or £15, in the hands of the Head Master on his quitting school—as he would *fee* the waiter of a tavern—is well known to Etonians; —this fact needs no comment.

I have now done with the Head Master. Of his

Assistants I shall say little,—merely confining myself to a few remarks on the system under which they are selected. At Harrow the Masters are picked men from both Universities. At Eton they are almost invariably chosen from King's, a College whose character is but too well known. At the University they are exempt from all public examination, and at the end of three years claim their fellowships as a matter of right. Yet it is from this College—where exertion is far from being imperative and little is to be gained by superior attainments, that the Masters of Eton are selected;—selected too, for the most important of all offices, to be the instructors and moral guardians of their fellow-creatures. At other Colleges, in both Universities, the undergraduates must necessarily pass through very strict examinations in arithmetic, algebra, mathematics, and geometry. Now, from the defective system which exists at Eton, of teaching boys little or nothing except Latin and Greek, it so happens that these are the *very* qualifications which are most required of a Master; as in the way of *private business** he might impart much valuable information to a boy, of which the present Masters, in consequence of having been exempted from all University examination, in all probability know nothing. Indeed, with the exception, perhaps, of having made a certain proficiency in the dead languages,

* So defective is the system of education at Eton, that a large portion of the boys receive private instruction from their tutors, for which the latter make an extra charge. This forms no integral part of the school duties, and is styled *private business.*

it is not unlikely that they are totally deficient in every branch of science, which it is absolutely necessary should form a part of the education of a gentleman of the present day. On the system of 'setting a thief to catch a thief,' it may perhaps be indispensable that the Masters should be Eton men, for having been educated there themselves, they are, of course, well acquainted with the haunts of delinquency, and the manner in which the school discipline is evaded; but why such a College as King's should be the sole *Depôt* from whence they are supplied, I can see no expediency whatever. Let it be understood, however, that I make no allusions to the character or attainments of the present Masters, but to the manner in which the general system is conducted.

I had proceeded so far in my task when the "Reply" to your "Remarks" was put into my hands; the author I shall leave in *yours*, to be dealt with as you may think proper. Of his arguments, though I may once or twice have occasion to refer to them, I shall take no particular heed, though there is one so amusingly fallacious that it would be too great a tax on one's good nature to let it pass by without comment. "It is," he says, "acknowledged at all hands, that whilst *crack scholars*, sent up from other schools to surpass every rival competitor, fall off and continue to retrograde from the time they first set foot in the University; Etonians, on the contrary, gain ground, and progressively improve." Now, if I rightly comprehend this argument, and I do not think it would be easy to misconstrue it, it ap-

pears that a University education is not only inefficacious to any one who has not had the good fortune to have been an Eton boy, but is actually pernicious in its consequences. While the Etonian progressively improves, the *crack scholar* from any other quarter progressively falls off. On this unfortunate *retrograding* system, the *crack scholar*, if he were to remain for a sufficient period, must infallibly become an idiot!

The arguments which you have adduced against the studies as at present conducted at Eton, I consider to be conclusive; as indeed I believe the remedies which you have provided not only to be practicable, but as most likely to be efficacious in their consequences. There is one point, however, in which I think that you are wrong. You say that the first step to be taken towards reform must consist in the "entire abolition of the ridiculous system of original composition." You must agree with me, on a second consideration, that till this system is abolished at the Universities, for which you yourself allow that a public school is the preparation, it cannot possibly be altogether discontinued at Eton.

It struck me very forcibly while perusing your "Remarks," that wherever you have occasion to introduce the subject of education, your strictures have reference principally to those boys who are willing and desirous to learn. The clever and the industrious will attain to knowledge and distinction, whatever may be the obstacles with which they have to contend; and if it were of such spirits that Eton, or any other public school, was

in any degree composed, it would hardly be worth while to run the risk of promoting animosity or causing pain, for the purpose of producing a change, which, unless carefully digested and skilfully brought about, might possibly be more injurious than happy in its effects. But every person who is at all conversant with schools, or, what is more to the purpose, with the nature and disposition of a schoolboy, must be aware that the industrious are invariably far out-numbered by the idle. Such being undoubtedly the case, I cannot but deprecate a system (and that such a system exists at Eton few will be inclined to deny) under the prevalence of which a scholar has so many facilities in evading the prescribed instruction of the school. The business, especially as regards a boy in the fifth form, may be divided into three departments; viz. composition, construing, and learning by heart. Of these, the latter is the only one which it is not in his power altogether to elude: the first he escapes, either by borrowing an "old copy," or by inducing a cleverer boy than himself to perform his task; and the second is of little importance to him, as he has already heard the lesson construed in his tutor's pupil-room. Indeed, from the attendances in school never lasting above three quarters of an hour, and the vast number of boys which are necessarily under the superintendence of each Master, it is impossible that the latter can examine more than four or five at each time. The consequence is, that many a boy will run the risk of being thus selected: indeed, should it unfor-

tunately happen for him to be "called up" on an occasion when he is unprepared, a kind neighbour manages to prompt him in the most difficult passages; by which means, and the addition of the slight previous knowledge which every boy in that part of the school must of course be possessed of, he is able to escape punishment—the sole object which he has in view. Under these circumstances, and the evil consequences which I have already stated as attendant upon correction by the rod, I cannot but come to a conclusion that the system of education at Eton, whatever effect it may have upon a willing and intelligent boy, is the worst adapted to improve a dull and idle one that can by any possibility be imagined.

But when a reform takes place at Eton (and take place it must), I should hope that it will not merely comprise a change in the system of teaching the dead languages: I should hope that it will take a far more sweeping range; in a word I am anxiously desirous that the period should arrive when the education of an Eton boy may in after life prove of some use to him, and not be solely ornamental—when that information shall be carefully imparted to him which ought to be required of every gentleman in these times;—and that, when he is launched forth into the world, he may feel that the time which he has exhausted, and the sums which have been expended on him, have not altogether been thrown away. In the fifteenth and sixteenth century, when even women were deeply read in the classics, and every learned treatise was composed in Latin—when, indeed,

that language was almost as much the channel of communication in the polite world as French is in the present day,—it was, of course, necessary to use every exertion to render a boy an efficient scholar; but it so happens that something more is now required of every person who bears the character of a gentleman;—it so happens that we have now a literature of our own,—that England has produced authors who may vie with those even of Greece and Rome; and I will ask any reasonable person whether it is not preposterous to confine a boy's education solely to a knowledge of Latin and Greek, neither of which he will probably "keep up" after he has left school, and of the latter of which it is not unlikely that, in three years, he will be unable to read even the characters.

A parent sends his son to Eton—he costs him a large sum, and considerable anxiety—he is, of course, desirous that he should make a proper figure in the world; but what are the chances of his doing so?—what are the advantages he has reaped?—what is the quantum of information which he has acquired?—Why he knows nothing whatever of algebra, arithmetic, mathematics, geometry, French or Italian, or even history, ancient or modern; indeed, if it has so happened that he was sent to Eton at an early age, he probably is unable to read, write, or even spell his own language with correctness. Putting aside every other branch of science, a knowledge of the language and history of their own country should unquestionably be considered as the most essential

feature in the education of the rising generation. "There can scarce," says Locke, "be a greater defect in a gentleman than not to express himself well, either in writing or speaking; but yet I think I may ask my reader, whether he doth not know a great many who live upon their estates, and so, with the name, should have the qualities of gentlemen, who cannot so much as tell a story as they should, much less speak calmly and persuasively in any business? This I think not to be so much their fault as the fault of their education."

The points next in importance I consider to be French and mathematics. Why these two branches of knowledge should not be grafted on the old orthodox stock, I can see neither argument nor reason. They certainly form a principal part of a gentleman's education, and as such should be introduced where education is the chief object. The author of the "Reply" to your "Remarks" has observed, that "if the plan of incorporating the business with an extra master into the regular business had not signally failed in a public school, famed of late for its diversity of systems, I should still be averse to bringing a French or mathematic master into closer contact with the school." Really this is a very singular person, and a very singular style of argument. He neither tells us why he objects to the plan himself, or where it 'failed,' or from what cause it 'failed,' or because it 'failed' elsewhere (in a place, too, "famed for its diversity of systems"), why it should necessarily 'fail' at Eton. I can discover

no reason why a French gentleman by birth and education should not be placed on the same footing with the other Assistant Masters. With respect to incorporating a mathematical master in the establishment, I can only say, that if the Eton Masters had had the advantage of having graduated at any other college than King's, they would themselves have been efficient to teach others, and thus have precluded the necessity of the step in question. The author of the "Reply" observes, that the introduction of French and mathematics to the regular business has already signally failed elsewhere; of course implying that the same would be the result, were a similar plan to be adopted at Eton. Now, if the Masters are able to compel a boy to learn Latin and Greek, I cannot see why they should not compel them to learn French or mathematics: if they cannot, we must confess that it says but very little for the discipline of the school. Of the propriety of introducing these branches of knowledge into a public school—of their importance in every profession, in every situation of life—of the advantage which the person who is attained to a proficiency in them has over him who is not—every one must be so well aware, that it would be a waste of time to bring forward any arguments on the subject. Those arguments have been understood and appreciated at Westminster, Harrow, and the Charter-house; for at these schools these branches of science have been more or less introduced. Why then should Eton be the only school where they are discouraged and

despised? Why should her rulers be alone unwilling that those under their charge should reap every advantage of their time and labours? Really it is quite disheartening to have to reason, probably in vain, on a question which every one else can see in its proper light. I shall say nothing more on the subject; Euclid and Dr. Keate must settle it between them.

Of the light in which, from the defects in the system, the Eton boys are led to regard religion, and the manner in which religious instruction is dispensed, I could alone write enough to fill a large pamphlet. I must, however, hasten to the conclusion of my task, and will not, therefore, weaken my arguments by introducing them in a cursory manner. Nevertheless, there is one point which I have much at heart, and to which I implore the Masters of Eton to turn their most serious attention; I mean the compulsory attendance upon Divine Worship, but most particularly on holydays, when the idea, which is uppermost in a boy's mind, is, how soon he shall be out of church, and how he shall enjoy himself when he is out. This is not the frame of mind in which a human being should wait upon his Maker. Indeed, it is a well-known fact, that those boys who are not under the immediate eye of the Masters, are not unfrequently employed in cutting out their names on the benches, reading light works, or composing the exercises of the week: if a whole day is too long a period for a boy to be left to his own resources, I can see no cause, in the event of church service on holydays being

abolished, why the time should not be given up to science.

The author of the "Reply" admits, that this system of exacting attendance upon Divine Worship will allow of no defence; and yet he brings forward, as an alleviating circumstance, that the same system is still acted upon at other Collegiate foundations. Now, if the system is bad, (and bad he confesses it to be), I can discover no reason why Eton should not take the lead in setting a better example. She stands high among our Collegiate Institutions—her authority is likely to be influential—and the system is allowed to be pernicious, —why then should she not take the lead? I am sure that it would have its effect.

I have now done with the author of the "Reply." It may be a matter of wonder to many that the collective talent of the Provost, Vice-Provost, Fellows, and Masters of Eton, should have been inadequate to produce more effective arguments, with which to arm their champion for the contest. I will, however, candidly confess that the inefficiency of their defence is not so much in consequence of the want of ability in their literary Dymoke, as to the paucity and barrenness of the facts with which they have supplied him.

I now arrive at the last, and probably, the two most important subjects which I have to discuss; —first, the personal discomforts of the boys on the Foundation; and secondly, the misapplication of those funds which were set apart by the Founder for their use. Every one who has seen Long Chamber, must have been impressed with a pow-

erful feeling of disgust at that absence of every appearance of cleanliness and comfort which constitutes the character of the place. The curtainless beds huddled together—the white-washed walls covered with dirt—every thing indeed about it adds to that look of wretchedness and destitution, which is only to be encountered in a workhouse of the most indifferent description.

The custom of allowing a number of boys to sleep in the same apartment is, in every point of view, indecent and ill-advised: but at Eton, where a boy is expected to write his exercises and learn his lessons out of school, I would ask of the authorities of the place, how they can possibly expect a boy to prepare himself, in a room where there are upwards of forty others besides himself, or how they can find it in their hearts to punish him for that deficiency, which is entirely caused by their own neglect of his comforts, and their indifference in providing him with a more fitting place in which to prepare himself for the ordeal. To prove the strength of this argument, I will bring forward the simple fact of the Collegers being allowed (I say allowed, for the system has the countenance of the Masters) to provide themselves with rooms *without* the walls of the College. Indeed these rooms are, for the most part, in the Town of Eton, where a boy is under the penalty of being flogged if he is even seen. A boy should never be permitted a haunt which is not under the *surveillance* of the Masters; and yet these rooms the authorities can never set foot in, and why?—because by so doing they must, of course, give

proofs of their being conscious of the system, and thus compel themselves to take away a privilege which they know to be indispensable. Of an evening, when a boy has the fewest inducements to play, and in consequence is more willing to learn, he is locked up in College, and thus excluded from the privacy of his own room, so that, in every point of view, my original argument against this ill-regulated dormitory must hold good.

By the statutes of the Founder, as I shall have occasion to show hereafter, the scholars were lodged, three by three, in different apartments, while each Fellow was kindly allowed a room to himself. On the present monopolizing system the Fellows, and their respective families, occupy each a whole house. I am afraid the Founder had neither foresight or gallantry enough to comprehend that a period would ever arrive, when ladies should be the inmates of the 'antique towers,' or when silk petticoats would be heard to rustle among the old cloisters. I have no wish to deduct from the comforts of the fair inhabitants, or to deprive them of what they, doubtless, believe to be their rights, or rather the rights of their husbands; but if, by some little domestic arrangement, they could spare an extra room or two for the King's Scholars, they would, I have no doubt, appease the shade of the Founder, and, what is of far more consequence, impart a good many additional comforts to the poor boys, which they neither do, or, without their kind interference, are likely to enjoy at present. It might have been advisable to

have treated this subject in a more serious manner, but it would be to no purpose to talk to ladies of old laws and musty statutes: an appeal to their better feelings is far more likely to have the desired effect.

I have spoken about the discomforts of the Collegers, but the subject to which I am principally desirous of attracting attention is, the treatment of the lower Collegers, or *fags*. Perhaps there is no state of existence so destitute of enjoyment, or rather so utterly replete with misery, as that of a boy who 'goes into College early.' Besides the common sources of grief, (and they are no trifling ones), of leaving a fond mother and the social endearments of home for the anticipated terrors of the rod and the grammar, the younger Colleger at Eton has to undergo hardships and privations which are probably unequalled even by those of the most miserable slave in the West Indies, or the most wretched inmate of a modern manufactory. Deprived of his blankets in the coldest nights, and the more piercing the cold the greater the liability—subjected to physical pain from the upper boys at the most trifling mistake or trivial delay—kept out of bed frequently till one, two, or even three o'clock in the morning—as completely a slave as any acceptance of the word can imply—compelled to clean knives, light fires, make beds, and other the most menial offices,—unable to learn his lessons from the appropriation of time which is thus exacted from him, yet, conscious that he will be punished for not having done so,—between the floggings of the

Master and the beatings of the boy to whom he is a *fag*, his life is as miserable as life can well be made. It is so long since Dr. Keate was himself an Eton boy, that I have no doubt these facts have escaped his memory, or they would have been remedied long ago. But there are others whose impressions are more vivid, and who are anxiously desirous that the comforts of the King's Scholars should be better attended to, and their existence rendered somewhat brighter than it is under the present system.

The next and last point on which I have to touch is, the misapplication of the funds of the College. It is singular that a scholar, who ought to be 'fed,' 'clothed,' 'lodged,' and educated' out of the funds of the College, if the statutes were adhered to, should nevertheless cost his parents, on an average, from £90 to £120 a year; and yet, strange to say, he is doomed to taste no other animal food but mutton, and to sleep in an apartment where there are upwards of forty other students besides himself. I feel half unwilling to propose a general reform in the management of the College revenues, or to urge any public enquiry into the subject, as I fear the disclosures to which such investigation must lead would be but little edifying, and might, probably, tend to cast some severe reflections on the worldly-mindedness of those, who are not merely Professors of Eton, but Professors of Christianity: but, *in the name of justice,* I call upon those who have the superintendence of the funds to 'feed,' 'clothe,' 'lodge,' and 'educate' the scholars of Eton, not only in

conformity with the terms, but in the true spirit of the statutes framed by the royal and beneficent Founder of this noble Institution. This alone can prevent enquiry.

That it may not be imagined, however, by those who are but little versed in the subject, that I have been too severe in my strictures, I shall bring forward a few of the most startling facts connected with the question, a simple exposition of which will prevent the necessity of any further comment. The following plan of arrangement is the best adapted, I think, to throw a clear light on the subject: on one side is condensed the spirit of the statutes, and on the other is stated the manner in which they are at present adhered to. It is but fair, however, to observe, that this horrible system of fraud in no way originated with the present authorities of the place, who can, therefore, only be looked upon as the receivers of the stolen goods.

FUNDS.

STATUTES.	PRACTICE.
Require that the fines and land-tax should be applied to the common use; "ad communem utilitatem."	They are appropriated by the provost and fellows to their own use.
Entitle the fellows to £10 a year stipend, and 2*s.* a week, or £5 4*s.* a year, for commons.	They have increased their stipend to £50 a year, and receive, in lieu of commons, on an average £550 a year each, or £10 11*s.* 6*d.* per week, instead of 2*s.*
Entitle the provost and seven fellows to allowances amounting in all to £200 per annum.	They receive nearly £7,000.

CLOTHING.

STATUTES.	PRACTICE.
Require that the scholars should be supplied with dress and bedding; with all, in fact, "quæ ad vestitum et lectisternia eorundem aliaque iis necessaria pertinent."	With the exception of a coarse gown, the scholars receive nothing appertaining to dress from the funds of the college.

COMMONS.

Provide ample allowances for breakfast, dinner, and supper, with the use of certain fisheries.	One meal (breakfast) is not supplied at all; the only kind of meat provided for the scholars throughout the year is mutton, and that neither good in quality or sufficient in quantity, and for this there is no reason in the statutes.

EDUCATION.

Require that each scholar should be instructed *gratis*, under a most strict oath to be taken by both masters.	Each scholar is charged £6 6*s*. per annum; an increase of £2 2*s*. having been made by the present rulers of the college.

LODGING.

Allow the fellows each a separate apartment.	They reside in spacious houses, free from taxes and the expense of repair, with stables and coach-houses attached to them.
Provide one room for every three boys, free from any expense.	Upwards of forty boys sleep in one apartment; those who sleep in the two adjoining rooms pay a sum of money annually to the second master.

ILLNESS.

Ordain that a scholar should be maintained, during a short illness, at the college expense; if longer than a month, to receive a sum of money.	No part of this statute is, under any circumstances, adhered to.

MISCELLANEOUS.

STATUTES.	PRACTICE.
Required to be read to the scholars in a body three times a year.	They are not only never read, but the scholars are not allowed access to them.
The fellows are allowed to hold no benefices whatever.	They hold them to any amount.
Ordain thirteen servitors to wait upon the provost, fellows, and *scholars* in hall.	The lower boys now wait upon the upper, which latter in their turn perform the same menial offices for the provost and his company on the occasions of their dining in the college-hall. To exact *in public* from the son of a gentleman the same duties which are required from the waiter of a tavern, cannot in these days but be considered in a disgraceful light.

Such are the abuses which are at present, and have been long practised at Eton. Had the Provost thought proper to follow the advice which was given him by Lord Brougham, before the Committee of the House of Commons, in 1819—had the moderate restitution which his Lordship recommended been made to the King's Scholars—this subject would probably never again have been brought before the public.

My task is now finished. It is not unlikely that I may be accused of many misstatements. That I have been knowingly guilty of such—that I have even exaggerated, at least wilfully—I most strongly and conscientiously deny. Should, however, such by any accident have been the case, I am both open to conviction and willing to be corrected. I love Eton; in many points I

reverence her even to bigotry. She has produced many among the great and noble of mankind—she stands high among the academical institutions of the day; but she has still her faults, and I am afraid that they are no trifling ones. I would wish to see her follow the more liberal course which has been pursued by other schools—I would wish to see the King's Scholars in a certain degree restored to their rights—I would wish to see the education of her sons adapted to what is required of a gentleman in these times, and not to what was considered essential in the days of Henry the Sixth. Could I believe that such would at some definite period be the case—could I even suppose that the rulers of Eton would be led to glance dispassionately over these pages, I should feel content; for I should be satisfied that they had not been written in vain.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

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