REMINISCENCES

OF

ETON.

BY AN ETONIAN.

FLOREAT ETONA.

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MDCCCXXXI.

TO

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE

DUCHESS OF KENT,

&c. &c. &c.

THIS WORK,

IS

WITH HER KIND PERMISSION,

MOST RESPECTFULLY AND HUMBLY DEDICATED,

BY HER GRATEFUL,

AND OBLIGED SERVANT,

THE ETONIAN.

Bognor, Dec. 10, 1831.

PREFACE.

A Preface, like a handsome portico to a building, should be the index of what is to succeed. The Etonian trusts that it will require no comments from him to recommend his literary bantling to the perusal of the public, independent of those that are Etonians, when they advert to the distinguished patronage under which his work makes its appearance; that of the most excellent and royal consort of one of our late noble Princes. To Englishmen the house of Hanover is dear; and may the same affection ever flow towards those who are engrafted on its illustrious stock. The author detests flattery; but he cannot fail from remarking in this place, that the exalted personage, who so kindly condescends to permit the dedication of this work to her, has ever been, like her great prototype Queen Charlotte, a pattern

of excellence and goodness, worthy of imitation by all grades of society.

The sensible experience of the want of the *quantum sufficit*, is the only apology which the author adduces for the appearance of his *Reminiscences*. He trusts that his little bark will not be too violently tossed, which he presumes to launch on the waves of literary scrutiny; but that it may go well from the *stocks*, and that its progress may meet with no Simooming blast, previous to its attaining the wished for haven, that of public favour. It is with an acheing heart, that in the following pages he reverts to scenes of juvenile felicity, when no care for the morrow, (the temporary infliction of the budded birch excepted), ever arose to blight the present enjoyment. Then all was happiness, all was sunshine. But now what is it? A dark future to look upon.

Fearing least he should advance too far into the Slough of Despond, he will put the harness to his back, and under the influence of his ancestorial motto, *Nil Desperandum*, will proceed to the execution of what he proposed, his *Reminiscences*.

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REMINISCENCES

OF

AN ETONIAN.

CHAPTER I.

ROSALIND. A traveller! by my faith you have great reason to be sad: I fear you have sold your own lands, to see other men's: often to have seen much, and to have nothing, is to have rich eyes, and poor hands.

JAQUES. Yes I have gained experience.

As you like it.

CONSIDERING that many of my predecessors *in ârte scribendi*, or in plain English, the art of scribbling, have usually thought proper to say something of themselves, as the proem of the *quid sequitur*, I propose to follow in the same beaten track. Newton, Milton, the Bard of Avon, all the worthies of olden times, nay those exalted characters, who have taken an airy flight from this world at Tyburn tree, and the more modern

Golgotha, the Old Bailey, have all been celebrated by their Biographers. My intention is not to wait for posthumous fame, but to blow my own trumpet. For the information then of those, who honour this little work with a perusal, I shall briefly state my parentage; which, though not encircled with the splendour of a coronet, and those flattering distinctions which the world generally attaches to the scions of nobility—though no eagle hovered over my cradle to augur future greatness—though no prophet foretold my exaltation to a Prebendal Stall, or some snug Living, (for I fear that he would have been a lying prophet), still was my birth, as far as worldly consideration goes, somewhat above that of the common herd of mankind.

My father was a Proctor of Doctors' Commons, and was the lineal descendant of the renowned Admiral*, who sooner than lead a life

* An anecdote is extant respecting him: when he obtained the command of the English Fleet, he procured also the command of a ship of war for one of his brothers, imagining that he had as much courage as himself; but in the first action, his brother deceived him, by shewing the greatest cowardice, and

of inactivity, when his country's battles were to be fought, entered into the service of the usurper Cromwell, and conquered Van Tromp, in the celebrated engagement, in which the arrogant Dutchman lost his life. My name it is needless to mention, for whatever Englishman knows it not by this time, must be little versed in the history of his native land. His father had been what in those days was termed, *a squire of high degree*, (a character almost out of date in these degenerate days) and was possessed of considerable property in Yorkshire: he was moreover the lord of two Manors, near to Wallingford in Berkshire: but from a system of great extravagance in his hunting and canine establishment, was compelled to dispose of the greater part of his *broad acres*, and in the general wreck (by persuading my father to join in cutting off

keeping without the reach of cannon-shot. He immediately sent him to England. "I have deceived myself, (said he to his officers), my brother is not made for war; but if he cannot shew face to the enemy on board a ship, he can at least be useful to his country at the tail of a plough." He intrusted him with the cultivation of his estates, and left them to him when he died.

the entail,) the two Manors had wings, and flew away. The same unfortunate mania for spending money was inherited by my father and again by his son: too truly verifying the old adage, *What is in the bone, &c.*, and from what I can understand, at the time of his marriage with my mother, he had scarcely any thing else, than his business as a Proctor: but *that*, from the few which then followed the profession, was attended with great emoluments, and united to that of his matrimonial dowry, enabled him to live in tolerable affluence.

The beautiful Village of Upton in Buckinghamshire, situated somewhat more than a mile distant from our great storehouse of education Eton College, was the place of my Nativity in the Year 1791, my father renting a very pretty Cottage Ornee in the above retired Village, where he might have said in addition to the house, with Horace,

> —— modus agri non ita magnus;
> Hortus ubi, et tecto vicinus jugis aquæ fons,
> Et paulum silvæ super his *fuit*.

An event of such importance occurring to the community at large, it was necessary that something remarkable should take place, which was nothing more or less, than the loss of the Coachman's hat, in the urgency of his haste on one of the Carriage horses, to procure the attendance of the medical adviser of the family, Dr. Macqueen; as well as that also of my most excellent father, in making the experiment of a nearer way, than that of the common footpath, finding himself immersed nearly to his chin in one of the ditches, which intervene between Upton and Eton. With these two untoward events, symbolical perhaps of those, which have already overflown the writer of these lines, the birth of him who was to prolong the old Admiral's race, took place.

The years of infancy past off like those of most children, during which time I sustained the greatest loss, which can befall a child, that of a beloved mother, and soon succeeded by an only brother, who was named after his ancestor,

Richard. When I was considered of sufficient age to have Latin and Greek flogged into me, I was sent to the neighbouring Village of Slough, to the especial care of a Mr. A——, or I might say, with greater propriety to that of Mrs. A——(as I went as a *sans culotte*) to undergo the drudgery, as well to Tutor, as to Pupil, of learning my A B C, from thence I removed with him to Langley Broom, no inappropriate name for its owner, who wielded the birch with a most powerful arm. If flogging was an evidence in favour of his attention to his pupil's proficiency, no one could have been more solicitous, nor with greater justice have been termed, the Prince of Floggers, than the above-named pedagogue. He certainly brought his pupils forward, as well as acted upon them on the *reverse:* no drone would he willingly allow in *Langley Broom Academy for Young Gentlemen*, eminently displayed as those letters were on a Gibbet-shaped board, under which the entrance from the high road ran across the heath to the

house; and if there was one boy *dronishly* inclined, be assured that he had no *honied* life of it.

At eight years of age, I was entered at Eton, that little world of life and happiness, and was placed, as was then considered high for my years, in the *Lower Greek*. At this time my father left Upton, and constantly made Doctors' Commons his place of residence for many years. Though I lost the near neighbourhood of my father by his removal, still was it amply compensated by the kindness of my maternal Grandfather, who resided at Ankerwyke House, only five miles distant from Windsor, not far from the Bells of Ousley, a romantic public house on the Thames, and directly opposite to the far-famed Runnymede. Upon the grounds attached to the venerable old Mansion was a majestic yew tree, under which, among the old inhabitants of the Hamlet, in contradiction to History, the tradition was, that the celebrated signature of England's liberty, the Magna Charta extorted from King John by the independent Barons, was there signed, by that

hitherto tyrannical prince. It certainly was one of the finest specimens of that almost antiquated species of tree, which is any where to be found in this country: and admirably adapted to the purpose for which it was then supposed to have been used. How frequently in the Holidays, have I, together with my cousins and perhaps a friend from Eton, whom with my kind Grandfather's permission I had invited to pass a few days with us, given the old Gardener the slip; and then, by placing our sentinels, have we received the peaches, and the various productions of a luxuriant garden, handed over to us by our confederate on the other side, and enjoyed a noble feast, seated on the branches of this venerable tree. Here ensconced among its foliage, we bade adieu to the cares of school, regardless of all except the present pleasure. It sometimes escaped our usual foresight, to erase certain footmarks which had been made in our depredations, when crossing the borders: but as we had entered into a holy

alliance, and were nearly of a size, Nobody did it, Nobody knew any thing about it: and unless the injustice of punishing all, for the sake of finding out the guilty, was used, we were tolerably sure of coming off clear. But we were *once* detected, and that in a most unlooked for manner. For several days we had, like the Indian Chiefs, held a Palaver, the intent of which was, how we should manage the exportation of a large bag of apples, which we had dislodged from sundry fine trees in the orchard, to our desks in the College: at last it was finally resolved by the captain of our band, that we should go to one of my grandfather's tenants, and with his compliments, beg the use of his taxed cart to convey us to school on the following day; (the carriage being engaged elsewhere). Of course a ready assent was given, and we said that we would call in the morning for it. Having bribed the groom to drive us, and that very early in the morning, we soon reached our Dames with the fruits of our pur-

loining: so far all appeared to go on well, but by the sequel it proved otherwise: for as old Nick, or some other mischief-making fellow would have it, my grandfather unfortunately went to the parish church of Wyraydisbury on the following Sunday. At the expiration of the service, as he was the Squire of the place, the farmers and others waited to make their salaams to him in the church-yard, the usual resort of the village loungers for a short period before and after the service. Among the number was our goodnatured taxed cart-lending farmer, who after sundry remarks doubtless as is generally the case with them on the wetness of the season, or the ruinous low price of corn, and hoping that his honour was well, blundered out, that he was much pleased in being able to oblige him with the use of old *Rose* and the cart, to take Master Henry, and the other young gentleman, and the apples to school. I afterwards understood that he heard the story of the apples and the cart with perfect composure apparently: for when

excited by any thing, and in this case there was just reason, he was generally, what would be termed, a violent man. But this calm was the precursor of a storm, and proved a *Red sea* to us. The truth soon flashed upon his mind: and it being a heinous offence, forgery of his name, and abduction of the apples, a note was dispatched to Dr. Langford, the Head Master, (which note was conveyed by the identical groom that drove us over), requesting that we should be severely punished, which was as duly honoured by the acceptor: for we made expiation for our offence on the block in the *Lower School*, as is the case always, when put *in the bill* by the assistants, for neglect of the lesson, or any scholastic faults: then punishment inevitably follows.

Should I enumerate all the various tricks practised at home, they would lengthen out too much my Reminiscences of Eton, or according to the clerical phrase, would be beyond the limits of this discourse: suffice it to say then, an

apprenticeship at Eton did not tend to diminish them.

A few pages in this place to a description of Ankerwyke House, may not perhaps be uninteresting.

It was an ancient nunnery of vast extent, and approached from the high road by a noble avenue of cedars and yew trees, which imported to it that gloom, which mostly environed the houses attached to religious education. To us boys, an indescribable awe was excited in our minds, when traversing its long and *shadowy* chambers: and frequently, even in midday, have we dreaded to explore its upper chambers, where the refractory nuns were accustomed to be confined, and where the iron rings in the wall, recalled to the mind the harrowing punishments, which too often, in those days, were inflicted on the deluded inmates of monkish ignorance and barbarity. Not one of us younkers, would have volunteered to have ascended to the upper rooms after nightfall without a light on any ac-

count: this foolish dread originated, I imagine, in a scheme of the servants, who, to deter us boys from trespassing on their orgies in the servant's hall, used to give out that certain noises were heard at night: that chains rattled in the cellars; and that the ghosts of nuns, displaying their unearthly shapes, were then to be seen. At any rate the desired object was gained: the great hall, and the long and dreary passage from thence to the servant's hall, were not traversed except by compulsion or mandate from the governor, and then with fear and trembling. At any rate, with all this mixture of boyish fears, those days were the happiest; and though long gone by, and the place of them levelled to the ground, by a new proprietor, an Indian Nabob, whose estate adjoined, and who purchased the property when my granfather left it: and though this venerable fabric was destroyed with almost sacrilegious hand; and the only reason given for this spoliation was, that an interesting ruin might be visible from his own gew-gaw modern mansion.

I mentioned the great hall, of course it was the entrance to the house, and situated between the dining and drawing rooms, and was about forty feet long, with lofty stone windows, in several compartments of which, were some beautifully enriched specimens of painting: more particularly family arms, bishops and their croziers, and nuns praying to their ghostly fathers. It was often the scene of frolic to us, when a wet day would not allow us to have our sports externally: battledoor and shuttlcock, leap frog, in short any thing to while away the time, was enacted in the great hall. From my grandfather's high official situation, of which more anon, he was frequently in the habit of receiving many presents, such as Turtles, the finest Madeira, &c.

Upon one particular occasion, a merchant of Madeira, who, in the time of the war, had received great kindness from him, consigned to him a pipe of very particular Madeira, which, for the sake of convenience at the time of its arrival, was deposited in one corner of the hall:

no great ornament certainly, (although I wish I could bless my eyes with such a sight now), still there it was. Some few days after its arrival, a ball was given, but on what particular occasion, if any, I know not. But among the visitors I well recollect the hero of Acre Sir S. S., as well as the great vocalist of the day, the inimitable Dignum.

At the conclusion of the dancing, previous to supper, all went to that old English meal, with the exception of Sir S. and us young Etonians: we were so delighted with him, that like burrs we stuck to him. His object in staying away from the supper table was to have some fun, and sailor like, when all were seated in the supper-room, he recalled the fiddlers, and having sent for the cook, scullion, maids, and all spare hands hornpipes were introduced, and kept up merrily, until a move began to take place among the aristocratical part of the old nunnery's guests. While this display of the light fantastic toe, as well as heavy heel of the old cook, was going

forward in the drawing room, we were not idle in the hall; for having mounted the pipe of Madeira, we personified jolly young Bacchus to perfection. But in the midst of our fun, (for we were rolling this said pipe backwards and forwards, considering no doubt that we were as effectual to its improvement as a voyage to the East Indies and back), when what should greet our, certainly not longing, eyes, but the opening of the door, and my grandfather escorting Lady A., preceded by the butler, to the drawing room. If our hair could have been transformed to Porcupine's quills, the tranformation would not have been tedious. The pipe externally was a dead calm in an instant, whatever was the internal commotion. We saw sufficiently from the lighting up of the good old man's eye, that we were in the wrong box, and without waiting for any further explanation, we, like old foxes, stole away. In the morning, previous to my grandfather's appearance, he not being a very early riser, we obtained the

ear of Sir S. S., who willingly petitioned for us, and to our delight the storm blew over.

A few words respecting my most excellent and generous grandfather. For some service performed for Admiral Keppell, united to an intimacy with the minister, William Pitt, he had obtained the lucrative situation of Marshal of the High Court of Admiralty, a situation which in the time of war, produced upwards of fifteen thousand pounds per annum. As I had the good fortune to be his favourite grandson, I very frequently experienced the fruits of it. He it was that sent me to Eton, and was at the sole expense of my education.

Many of my schoolfellows may recollect, and at that time with no small feelings of envy, when his carriage, with two beautiful black horses, (and sometimes four), was drawn up at Barnes-pool Bridge, adjoining my Dames, on a Saturday to take me home to Ankerwyke: and when perhaps, on the Monday morning, driven by the groom in the chaise, with the old

long-tailed grey, I made my appearance previous to eight o'clock school, laden with a basket of fruit, and an accompanying present of sweetmeats from the aged housekeeper, with whom I always made it a rule to be on the best of terms. In short, on such good terms was I with the old lady, that as I advanced in school, I seldom found my trunk, on returning from the holidays, unoccupied with sundry bottles of wine—the discussion of which of an *after four*, was no disagreeable affair.

Attached to the old house, was a very large wood, tenanted by a noisy republic of rooks; not one of which would my grandfather, on any account whatever, permit to be destroyed. They seemed to be the presiding deities of the place. It was a source of much delight, in the stillness of a summer's evening, to observe this sable cloud, winging their airy flight from a distance, to the well-known *seats* of their ancestors, sated with their excursions on the farmer's corn-fields. Previous to retiring to roost, the sound was ab-

solutely deafening to the ears of any stranger; battle after battle was waged, some more fortunate, or earlier arrival at home, having posessed himself of some favorite branch, until at length as the Sun began to sink into the west, so did their ruffled tempers subside into a calm, though now and then interrupted by a solitary *caw*, indicating the too near neighbourhood of a brother rook.

In front of the house, was a most beautiful lawn, separated by a field from the majestic Thames, at the extremity of which, a tall flag staff was erected, on which the Jack of Great Britain waved, indicating to the neighbourhood, like that of his royal master at Windsor, that its owner was in *residence*, and which was always lowered on his departure for London.

CHAPTER II.

High in the midst, surrounded by his peers,
Magnus his ample front sublime uprears;
Placed on his chair of state, he seems a god,
While Sophs and Freshmen tremble at his nod:
As all around sit wrapt in speechless gloom,
His voice in thunders shakes the sounding dome;
Denouncing dire reproach to luckless fools.

Thoughts suggested by a College Examination.—BYRON.

It will not now perhaps be amiss in this place, nor void of interest to many who were participators in them, to relate a few of the pastimes, with which our vacant hours were employed, interlarded with some of the devices, which found their origin in the brains of Etonians.

Two and twenty years have now elapsed (truly I may say, *more fluentis aquæ*) since my resignation came: though it is more properly speaking, the resignation of a fellow of King's College, Cambridge; a day most anxiously looked for,

when the boy leaves his nursing mother, Eton, and puts on the *Toga virilis*, at Cambridge. Still many things are as fresh in my mind's eye as if acted but yesterday. The impression made on the youthful mind is seldom effaced by time or distance.

My Eton Reminiscences carry me back to the day of my initiation at my Dames, when having dried up my tears on leaving my kind patron, and after having been presented to the Head Master of the Lower School, Dr. Langford, I was entered as an Etonian. A new comer was soon found out, and as soon was I encompassed by a crowd of boys, supposing that on my *first* entrance I had *plenty* of cash; which, like a recruit's bounty money, soon found *plenty* of customers. One thought I might as well use it for his benefit, with old Mrs. Carter at the corner of the school yard, for *soc*:* another thought that old mother *Bo* had some excellent tarts. *Bo* being an abbreviation for Boring-

* An Eton phrase for eatables.

ton, who went by the inelegant name of *gravy eye*, solely from having an eye which was very watery. At any rate her tarts were very good, and held in great esteem; and she was not very importunate in dunning for her bills after the holidays, a very saving quality in an Eton shopkeeper.

In a short space of time, after having bled pretty freely, I recollect one of the upper boys at my Dames, asking me my name and surname. Having been previously instructed by some kind friend, I said, *Pudding and tame, ask my dame, she will tell you the same.* Which was immediately answered by him with a tremendous box on the ear. I was then highly honoured by the mandate, "Well Sir, you shall be my Fag: what are you staring at, you stupid ass? you will have to get my rolls and butter from Mother Coker's (a well-known name among all Etonians). You begin tomorrow morning mind Sir, and see that my clothes and shoes are properly cleaned in the morning."

I was well aware beforehand that to *kick* would be of no benefit, and therefore I submitted with a good grace: and from being of a tolerably active, and not sulky disposition, I soon met with kindness, and even indulgence from my *boy* master, he fagging others to save me.

Consider me now, on the morning of the next day, with my new books all fresh from the booksellers, (destined not long to remain so), with all the thoughts of home still lingering on my mind, making my *entree* into the Lower School, where, in awful grandeur, its superior ruler had just taken his seat. To me the vision of a cauliflower wig was almost, if not quite, a perfect novelty: in addition to the awful dignity of the wig and its wearer, the often-tried block near to the master's right hand, met my sight, greeting one whom, within a very few days, an acquaintanceship was to take place. In short, so very sudden was our intimacy to begin, that had it not been for the usual indulgence grant-

ed to those who incur the displeasure of the master, that very day would have seen me kneeling as a culprit. The case was this, and a hard case it was: as I was sitting at the end of a form, the boy next me said, "that fellow at the other end has been laughing at your red collar, send this piece of orange peel at his head." I not thinking much about it, and irate at the idea of a boy ridiculing my smart jacket, dismissed the orange missile, but with so bad an aim, that it went close to the awe-inspiring wig of the head master.

Upon being questioned who had done it, and after having been nudged by the prompter of the act to say, *I did it, Sir*, at the same time looking at me, as much as to say, (as well as to inform the master), *You did it*, I directly said, "I did it, Sir." Upon which I was ordered up for punishment. All necessary habiliments being removed, and kneeling on the block, while two boys stood behind it holding my arms and clothes, and grinning all the time, I awaited the

fatal stroke, when one of them said to me, "say it is your *first fault*," which I immediately did: the birch instantly fell from its upraised posture, and I as quickly returned to my place on the form; and as soon as school was over I challenged the boy to fight me for the trick he played upon me, and repairing to the playing fields, with my heart leaping all but out of my mouth, I set too with my antagonist; and although the challenger, in the very first round, from a most untoward blow in my mouth, I ran off, saying that I had gotten a very bad tooth ache. So much for the first day of entering school—so much for losing my *first fault*, through another's means—and so much for losing my first battle.

I was entered in the *Lower Greek*, which was then considered very high for my years, only eight, and consequently was under the particular superintendence of the head master. With all the solemn dignity attached to the cauliflower, it would frequently be the exciter of a

titter among those who viewed its variations: sometimes in the heat of explaining, or castigation, or some other cause, this identical wig would get displaced; and instead of the frontal point being directly on a parallel with that part of the human form, commonly called the nose, it would perhaps be paying its devoirs to one of the eyes, and then the effect was truly ludicrous. I trust my readers will pardon so many lines to the Cauliflower Wig, this being the reign of *Whiggyism.*

I was now become a regular Etonian, up to any thing. I recollect the first *liberty** I got, was from the present Head Master of the Lower School. As I made my *entree* in a blue jacket with a red collar, from some little whim of my grandfather, owing to its being the same as the Windsor uniform, I was christened, ***Black B. with a blue coat and a red cape.***

As to hunting small birds in the hedges with

* Permission from a sixth-form boy to be out of bounds without being obliged to shirk him.

leaded sticks, leaping the common ditch, giving a duck a slight poke on the head with a stone, making old Pocock, the farmer, at the corner of Cut-throat lane, sometimes minus a few eggs, amassing almost a little fortune by boss and marbles in the school yard, upper and lower fives, ringing or knocking at the Dames houses on our return from five o'clock school to our own Dames, taking advantage of a dark night of course for our rather hazardous freak; in all these, and many others, I had become *au fait*, a regular professor.

On one particular evening, I recollect being caught as completely, as if I had put my foot into a man-trap. Being at my old sport one very dark night, I placed my hand as usual, to have a knock and a run at old Mrs. H.'s, when lo! to my utter dismay, just as my hand was about to claim old acquaintanceship with the cold iron, I found myself pulled into the hall with no slight force, and from thence as quietly escorted to the parlour, for an optical scrutiny

by aid of candle; where I soon found, to my annoyance, that my captor or captoress, was the dame herself, a large powerful woman, and followed by her body guard, the cook and chamber-maid, to witness my capture as well as discomfiture. In this durance vile, I cannot compare myself, in any better simile, than to that of a shrimp in the claws of a lobster. After a severe lecture, admonitory of the future, a promise on my part never to do so again, (though with the full determination to take the first opportunity of having my revenge), and having propitiated the good old lady by going down on my *marrows*, I was released from my imprisonment. With all my spirit of revenge during the time of my incarceration, I never could screw up courage to knock at the door again, therefore I was as good as my word. I kept my promise.

The mention of Dames, recalls to my memory a little affair which was very annoying at the time to one of them, a Mrs. Y., who lived not

very far from the Christopher. She was what is termed a regular *pincher*, an *Elwesian* lady, and such not being relished by the boys who were under her care, they determined to *brozier* her, an Eton phrase for eating up every morsel of the dinner, and according to the language at Cambridge, preached a *Clerum*.* It was soon accomplished, and the old lady, finding that all her scanty store had vanished, was compelled to send for a supply of chops, to make up the deficiency. But that would not do: more was called for, and though often told, "Sir, you have not picked your bones clean," it would not do. The consequence was, that her patience was exhausted, and she laid a complaint before the head master, Dr. H., who, I presume, from a previous knowledge of her parsimonious character, only lectured the gormandising culprits, and omitted the punishment due to them from having fallen under the old lady's displeasure. This was the only instance in which I can re-

* A Latin Sermon previous to taking a Doctor's degree.

collect castigation not following on the heels of complaint.

They certainly were rare eaters, as a boy once construed in school, *Tempus edax rerum—time is a rare eater.** At any rate it is a very unjust thing to stint the boys in regard to plenty of wholesome food; as they are well paid for their sustenance, and in a few years are enabled, by prudence without parsimony, to amass a sufficiency to retire in comfort. In short, from the general respectability of the ladies who superintend the Boarding-houses at Eton, such a thing seldom occurs. I think I may state that Mrs. Y. was almost a solitary instance in that particular.

* This reminds me of an anecdote which occurred at the great School at Reading many years since. On the clock in the school room, the maker had placed, as a motto, *Tempus fugit.* An Indian nabob who had been educated there, but perhaps lost all his latin among the heats of India, in travelling through Reading on his return from abroad, had a desire to see the old school room. His desire having been gratified, he cast his eyes on the motto of the clock, and immediately exclaimed, "Ah! there is my old friend *Tom Fudgit.*" A specimen f his Latinity.

At my own Dames, the excellent Mrs. Hunters, we fared excellently well: on the Sunday our usual dinner was a boiled round of beef, roast chickens, and plum puddings, and I do not recollect that it was ever varied in any respect.

CHAPTER III.

Alas! regardless of their doom
The little victims play!
No sense have they of ills to come,
No care beyond to day.
Yet see how all around them wait,
The ministers of human fate,
And black misfortune's baleful train!
Ah! shew them where in ambush stand
To seize their prey, the murderous band!

Gray's Distant Prospect of Eton College.

WITHIN two or three years of my entrance at Eton, a most unfortunate and truly pitiable accident occurred to one of the lesser boys of the school, and which created a great sensation of sympathy among his schoolfellows, not merely from the agony which the poor little fellow endured, but from the general love which was entertained towards him, from his particularly amiable disposition.

His name was G., and if I can recollect aright, he was the son of the Russian Ambassador.

Living as Etonians do under the immediate wing of Royalty, they have always, as a body of youth, been attached to their King and the Constitution of the land; and of course being enemies to those who would endeavour to subvert and destroy the kingly power, they have always participated in the customary fun of the fifth of November, by shewing their abhorrence of popery, and all their knavish tricks, in burning Guy Fawkes's "effigy," and demonstrating their joy with as much noise, as squibs and crackers would produce.

Poor G., *inter tōt multos*, had filled his pockets with what proved to him the instruments of death, to enjoy the frolics of the evening, when Lord C., now the Marquis of S., in all the mirth and happiness then predominant, unfortunately squibbed, as it is called, poor G. Some of the fireworks, which were

in his pockets, immediately ignited, which communicating to the rest their deadly errand, exploded, and literally tore off a portion of the flesh from his bones. The poor fellow's screams were dreadful, and he died within a short time afterwards.

This sad affair threw a gloom over us for a long time: sports were almost forgotten: and more particularly when the day came for his burial, the awe of which was strongly augmented, by the solemnity with which the Funeral Service, (that most beautiful and sublime selection of prayers), was read by the Head Master. I think I may with truth aver, that among our whole body of upwards of five hundred boys, not a dry eye was to be seen.

To my dying day, I shall never forget the impression made on myself, when, with a trembling anticipation of the approaching procession, I heard the first words, " I am the resurrection and the life," and then, as by degrees the funeral procession wound up the church stairs,

and at length the sky-blue coffin broke upon my sight, I could scarcely command my feelings, so as not to have fainted. A schoolfellow, one with whom, but a few days before, I had played, was for ever removed, and nought but earth remained.

It was a long time before Lord C., who was the innocent cause of his death, recovered from the melancholy into which he was plunged by this untoward circumstance. Poor G.'s sorrowing parents (he was, I believe, an only son), immediately returned to Russia in consequence.

One of the favourite games among Etonians, is that of football,* a game which requires a great deal of activity and spirit, and is frequently the occasion of many a battle, from the violence with which it is played: and where an opportunity is too often taken, of wreaking a

* Made by old Stringnall, in my day, celebrated for being such a long-winded old fellow, in tightening the bladder of the football with his mouth, (by means of a piece of tobacco pipe), which was covered with leather.

spite on the shin of another, to whom you have no particular favour.

Once in my own case, I recollect, a boy, with whom I was *daggers drawn*, and somewhat my superior in age, was opposed to me in the game. I was going away with the ball in style towards the goal, a large tree, when I was opposed by this other boy, who determined, I suppose, to stop me in my career. He struck, as he pretended, at the ball, but most maliciously, as well as judiciously, gave me an exceedingly violent blow on the shin, which laid it open, and floored, or rather grassed, me; I was confined for upwards of a week at my Dames.

Whenever any disputes arise among the boys, *after four* is the time generally appointed for settling the question of supremacy. But a quarrel having originated between a Colleger and an Oppidan, much his superior in size and strength, it was so managed between the seconds, that the morning of a whole holiday should be selected, as giving more time for deciding the superiority of the antagonists.

It was well known, as had been previously proved, that the Colleger was *game*, and would not very soon call out "*I yield.*" It may perhaps be as well, in this place, to mention, that a kind of rivalry generally existed between Collegers and Oppidans. I can scarcely account for the feeling, but that such was the case in my time, was pretty certain: it is now, I believe and hope, subsiding.

Owing to Collegers having nothing else but roasted mutton for their dinner and supper, the Oppidans applied to them the name of Tug Muttons; but woe to him who dared to use that term, indicatory of reproach, if an upper Colleger heard him—he had no mercy shewn him. But to our combatants.

Bets to a large amount for boys' pockets, were made on the occasion. It was, in our little commonwealth, something like the battle of the Horatii and the Curatii, (only that our heroes were single on each side), it was to decide which were to be the superior. The two heroes,

(and they justified my term by their courage), *came into the arena* at six. All due preliminaries having been adjusted, they set to, and after continued hard fighting, they were just as forward as when they began. Such was their obstinacy, that neither would yield, though cruelly beaten. Nor was it until the Head Master, having been apprised of what was going forward, made his appearance, and with his potent authority separated the combatants. This battle was long remembered, and was of nearly three hour's duration. Battles are an every day occurrence. A mere look is sometimes construed into impertinence, and the demand made, whether such a one intended to be impertinent? If assented to, (though not in the first place thought of), but merely from a spirit of opposition, a battle takes place.

It is very seldom that any thing serious occurs, yet I observed a few years since, in the year 1825, the death of the Hon. F. Ashley Cooper, son of the Earl of Shaftsbury, after a pugilistic combat with his schoolfellow.

This is a thing of very rare occurrence, and considering the variety of dispositions, the great number of boys congregated together, we cannot be surprised at an accident happening, which it has, nevertheless, seldom fallen to the lot of Etonians to record. In short, if I recollect aright, this young nobleman's death was occasioned by his head falling on a stone in the school yard, the battle having taken place there, instead of the usual resort of combat, the *Playing Fields.*

I cannot consider the game of football as being at all gentlemanly. It is a game which the common people of Yorkshire are particularly partial to, the tips of their shoes being heavily shod with iron; and frequently death has been known to ensue from the severity of the blows inflicted thereby.

Another amusement, that of cricket, one of the most scientific and manly sports, is that in which Etonians are particularly adept: no club, no school, being able to say, with any degree of

justice, that they can conquer them. *That*, and *Rowing*, in the round of athletic amusements, *Eton all the world over*. A match which took place while I was there, caused a great deal of talk at the time in the sporting world, and raised the boy who was the principal actor in it, to almost that of an idol, among his *fellow-workmen*.

To prove and determine the evident superiority of Etonians above all other schools in the cricketing field, the Marylebone club, the great arbiter of the Bat, Ball, and Stumps, challenged our boys to a trial of skill.

The *Playing Fields*, on the news being proclaimed, that a match was to take place, became the scene of more than its wonted bustle and activity. The whole hive were on the *qui vive*, the sawnies, who would rather have been at their books, or taking some meditative strolls, were fagged to fetch the balls, stop behind, and various drudgeries not much to their amusement. As to losing a quarter of an hour to

drink tea *after six*, either the Oppidan at his Dames, or the Colleger at his rooms *up town*, no, the fags must make it and bring it in bottles on the ground.

The day of joy and hope, and a holiday of course selected for the occasion, all was visible delight: the sawnies even, and the bookworms, could not help taking some pleasure in the wished-for success of the day—and that day was a glorious one: it was one of the Almighty's most beautiful of the creation—it was a cricket day; one in which that noble game is enjoyed to perfection, when not a cloud obscures the sky.

The tents as usual were erected in the *Shooting Fields*, the wickets were pitched, and the Marylebone having gained the toss, went in first. At the second ball from my friend P. down went a wicket. The spirit which usually pervades the breasts of Etonians, (though longing to shout forth their joy at the downfall of their adversary), was pent up: it was only the silent

language of the eye, or the smile that decked their countenances. The gentlemen of the Marylebone club were our visitors, therefore no exultation during the progress of the game, would have been considered as correct, or fitting the characters of gentlemen. In short, the bales struck off by my friend P., flew into the air, aided by the scientific *stumping* of my poor friend Jack S., now gone to his last home.

The Marylebone were out. The number they scored were few. Our principal batsman, Sir Christopher W., went in first, and from a system of beautiful blocking, he not only wearied out the skill, and even tne patience of his adversaries, but he staid in to the very last: nor was he then out. Eton nearly doubled that of their adversaries in the first innings. One of the bowlers on the other side, somewhat annoyed at the incessant blocking of his excellent balls, could not help saying, though a little too loud for Sir Christopher's ear, " D—n the fellow, there is no getting him out." Upon which, with the

greatest mildness, he answered him, " You need not d—n me though, for you will not get me out a bit the sooner, I assure you ; and now, Sir, bowl on again, if you please."

After the refreshment of dinner, provided by our old friend Garraway, the respected landlord of the Christopher Inn, at Eton, the friendly strife was again renewed. Play was the word, and the Marylebone fetched up their lost notches and marked a most respectable score besides. At the conclusion of their innings, it was considered too late in the evening for Eton to go in, the match was therefore postponed until the following day.

Again our hero Sir Christopher began the innings, and continued it until a sufficiency of notches were gained to make us the conquerors of the first club in England, and that in a great measure, from the admirable batting of the young baronet. The scene is now as fresh to my memory, as when heated with the exercise of the game, and followed by the applause of

the remainder of the eleven, (the rest being in school), Sir C. made his appearance in the Upper School. For the time all construing ceased, and our Head Master greeted the modest Sir Christopher with language savouring of the greatest delight. He might have applied to him the words of Cicero to the conspirator Catiline, (though not in the language of reproach, but of admiration), *in te omnium convertuntur oculi:* the eyes of all were indeed upon him, but they were those of the highest pleasure.

Thus ended the long talked of match. I believe, in his own boyish days, our respected head master had played no indifferent part in the field of cricket; at any rate he used always to be much interested in its progress, and encouraged the practice of it, by having *absence* called in the Playing-fields during the summer, in order that the boys might not be taken away from their play, to answer to their names being called in the school yard.

Among those whom I recollect as being par-

tial to that manly game, and who was at the same Dames with me, is the present Lord S., of L. Court, in the county of Kent: a nobleman in whom nearly every virtue that can adorn the man, is truly conspicuous: who yearly indulges his friends, and the neighbouring gentry, with that amusement in his beautiful park, where the hospitality of an English nobleman presides over the whole—a nobleman liberal to the poor in his neighbourhood, and ever ready to relieve distress. Of his kindness, the author of these Reminiscences has received convincing proofs, and he hesitates not, with gratitude, here to make the acknowledgement. So much for Cricket.

CHAPTER IV.

My gay competitors, noble as I,
Raced for our pleasure in the pride of strength,
While the fair populace of crowding beauties,
Plebeian as patrician, cheered us on
With dazzling smiles, and wishes audible,
And waving 'kerchiefs, and applauding hands
Even to the goal.

Byron's Two Foscari.

I WILL now turn the attention of my readers to a different element for amusement. Water shall be my theme, for in it and on it, Etonians shine. Mostly speaking, they are excellent swimmers, and frequently display their skill in the art, by leaping, head foremost, from the top of Windsor Bridge, or according to an Eton phrase, *taking headers*. Sometimes also by swimming from the Upper Hope, through

Windsor Bridge, down to *Cotton's Hole*, a distance, I should think, little less, if any, than threemiles. *That* I have known repeatedly done.

As Fishers, they are excellent, particularly one of them, by name Tom H., with gut and hooks twisted round his hat; could I put words into the mouth of the *Cobler*,* or the Shallows, where Scaggers† abound, would sufficiently testify; those places being noted for trout, as well as sometimes salmon trout. *Fellow's Ayot* would also come in as a witness to what I assert, in respect to the number of barbel caught at its point by the boys.

On the broad bosom of the Thames, the oars of Eton have often gained the prize; and but a few weeks since, I with pleasure observed, that the gentlemen of Westminster School have again been compelled to yield the meed of hon-

* The Cobler is a stone projection in the Thames, below Windsor Bridge separating the main river from the locks.

† Scaggers, a small kind of trout, peculiar to the Thames.

our to their usually hitherto superior adversaries in the art of rowing.

The Fourth of June has been, for more than half a century, a day of joyful anticipation to the boys, it being the birth-day of our late beloved monarch, George III. For months previous, on every Saturday evening, it was the custom to practice in the several boats appointed to row to Surly Hall, on that day of festivity to a delighted nation.

At this spot a handsome supper was prepared for the boys under the shade of some fine trees; and which rural fete, was often honoured by the presence of some of the Royal Family, and a numerous assemblage of rank and fashion, delighted to observe the rapidity, with which the several viands made their exit. His Majesty used to grant the use of his Band, which was a most powerful auxiliary to the pleasures of the evening.

The alloted boats, with their envied crews neatly apparelled in fanciful dresses, proceeded

to this place, which is situated not far from Monkey Island, where, having partaken of the various viands, as before mentioned, again embarked on their return for Windsor Bridge, the principal goal of their exertions.

Among the dresses of the boats' crews, was one which excited the most general admiration. It belonged to the foremost ten-oared boat, and was in the costume of Turkish Galley Slaves; and what gave an additional charm, particularly in the eyes of the ladies, was, that they were all selected for their beauty—it was a most decided *hit.*

Had I the pen of a ready writer, I would endeavour to describe the emulation of the different rowers, the eager endeavour to pass the foremost boat, and snatch from her the honour of the distinguished superiority; but futile was the attempt: the boat containing the Ottoman crew, chained to their oars throughout the whole evening, kept its place as Admiral of the Fleet. Had I the pen of a ready writer, I would en-

deavour to depict the shores lined with spectators,

> The busy sounds, the bustle of the shore,
> The shout, the signal, and the dashing oar.

The royal cortege on the bridge, the delightful echoes of the various instruments, floating in harmonic cadences along the rapid waters; the rushing flight of the rockets, the innumerable fireworks displayed on *Piper's Ayot*, casting their resplendent glare on the stream of our favoured river; the deafening shouts of the populace, or the high-pitched voices of the crew of that boat, which had the misfortune to be *bumped*, (an Eton phrase for one boat being struck on the stern by the prow of the one succeeding it), and which generally terminated in challenges for mortal combat on the following Monday. And last of all this picture of happiness was heightened by the distant view of the turreted grandeur of Windsor's lofty castle, giving the *coup de grace* to the beauty of the scene.

These were indeed days of envied joys; days in which often originated the desire in the youthful bosom, that on a more stormy wave, (than that of Father Thames), where the fury of the battle raged, he might encounter the enemies of his country; and those wishes have been often realised, and with honour have they been crowned.

Among my schoolfellows was Horace N. (now alas! gone to his fathers), the nephew of him whom this land, grateful for his services, distinguished by the title of *Immortal*, from the noble, daring, and subsequent success of his deeds. Well do I recollect the morning, when, from information transmitted to the Head Master, poor N. was called up to him, and in a kind and delicate manner, was informed of the untoward event, by which he was deprived of his uncle at the celebrated battle of Trafalgar: and though the tears were visible in his eyes, still was there lurking in his countenance a smile of delight,

at the greatest victory ever gained by this country in her naval engagements.

These are Reminiscences, and I trust they will be received as such by my readers, for they are the words of truth. The aid of fiction is not here called in—every thing I relate, (with but one exception), I was an eye witness to, and often an active agent in their execution.

One of the many pleasures which we derived from our contiguity to the royal residence, was the frequent opportunity which we obtained of seeing our beloved Monarch, who was much attached to stag-hunting; and as one of the favourite places, where the swift-footed tenant of the Great Park was thrown off, was between Slough and Langley Broom, it mostly happened that he was taken through Eton: the appearance of the green covered cart about nine o'clock, was certain evidence that we should see the King previous to eleven: a conclusion in which we were never disappointed, while he

was in good health, and resident at the Castle.

Seated on Longwalk wall,* (where by the bye my name is cut out in glorious large letters nearly opposite the Church door), we awaited his approach. He was generally preceded by old Davis, the huntsman, with the Staghounds, nor was he long behind, escorted by his attendants, master of the hounds, and some of the neighbouring gentry: Sometimes he was also attended by that beloved daughter,† whose death he so deeply lamented.

Here with hat in hand we greeted his arrival: nor do I ever recollect any time when he did not stop, to ask various questions of those who had the good fortune to attract his attention—mostly some of the young nobility, with whose parents his Majesty was acquainted, and whom, if once introduced to him, his peculiarly retentive memory never allowed him to forget.

* A long wall in front of the School.

† The Princess Amelia.

"Well, well, my boy, when were you flogged last, Eh, Eh? Your master is very kind to you all, is not he? Have you had any rebellions lately, Eh, Eh? Naughty boys you know sometimes. Should not you like to have a holiday, if I hear a good character of you, Eh, Eh? Well, well, we will see about it—But be good boys. Who is to have the Montem this year?" "Such a one your Majesty." "Lucky fellow, lucky fellow."

This was a general topic of conversation during the day; and though one of such frequent occurrence, nay almost every week during the hunting season, still was it always attended with delight, and the anticipation of something good to follow from it.

It was amusing to hear the various remarks made by some of the boys who happened not to have been present at the time of the Royal Cavalcade passing, and who of course were anxious to have the reports of what had occurred. "Well, what did old George say? Did he say

that he would ask for a holiday for us? By Jove I hope that he will, for I want to ride Steven's new chesnut to Egham." "You be hanged," says another, "I want to go to Langley to see my Aunt, who has promised to give me Syllabubs, the first *after four*, that I can go." Another perhaps wanted to have Davis's Tandem to drive to Virginia water, a favourite excursion with the boys.

Such and the like expectations of holiday happiness, were as often anticipated and frequently realised, by the ride of England's Monarch, through the town of Eton.

I believe few of our Melton Mowbray men would have liked to have followed the Stag hounds, when his Majesty was with them: as he never rode fast, and of course it was the etiquette, that no one should ride before the King. When I was in the sixth form as the *walking Præpostor*, I frequently have had a gallop with them, and once I recollect being witness to a very fine sight—the stag at bay in a pond on

Datchet Common. He wounded three or four of the dogs, but was eventually secured without being materially hurt by the hounds. Among the stags selected for the royal sport, was one noble fellow, which was dignified by the name of the Hendon Deer, from his having been taken after a very severe run to Hendon in Middlesex. Whenever it was known that this deer was to be hunted, there was always a very large field. In short, he was as renowned in the field, as our noble *Arthur;* only that the one was as quick in flying away from his enemies, as the other was in pursuing them.

CHAPTER V.

The rude will scuffle through with ease enough,
Great Schools suit best the sturdy and the rough.
Couper's Tirocinium.

AFTER a servitude of nearly five years, as a Lower Oppidan, and during my apprenticeship having become a tolerably good proficient in the art of blacking shoes, cleaning knives, sharping a stray roll or two from another boy's room for my master's breakfast, I got into the Fifth Form, and at the same time was entered as a Colleger, which term, in other words, is a pensioner under King Henry the Sixth of blessed memory.* Now began a very different life to that which I had passed at my Dames, the excellent hearted Mrs. Hunter's.

* The Founder of Eton College, and King's College, Cambridge.

Many, many years have elapsed since the good old lady resigned her life to her Maker, but never, to the latest moment of my existence, will I forget the genuine maternal kindness which she displayed towards me, and other little boys, which were under her care. Many and oft is the time, when *Lower Boy** has been called, that she has locked me up in a cupboard in her parlour, to escape from the drudgery, and at the same time sad annoyance of the Fagging system.

Though I make this remark, I am not averse to the plan, nor join in the outcry which has been lately made against it at Winchester. If it is so bad and so demoralizing to the character of a gentleman's son, what, in the name of Heaven, is it to be compared with the treatment which a middy meets with in the cockpit, from his brother middies, as well as from the senior officers of the ship? His rations frequently

* The key-note of an upper boy when he wants a lower boy to fag for him.

prigged by a brother blue—cut down in the dead of the night in his hammock—often mast-headed for looking in a way that may be deemed impertinent, by some tyrannical first lieutenant—obliged to take his part in the regular duty of the ship, by night as well as by day; and many disagreeable inconveniences attached to the cockpit, which us landsmen know nought about: and yet, when they come to man's estate, are they at all the worse for their previous hardships, or less the gentlemen? For my own part, and I speak with some little experience, I think it is beneficial to a boy, for should he, in after life, experience the fickleness of fortune, he is able all the better to rough it.

Can any one say that, as a body, more gentlemanly characters exist than officers of the British navy, and I have had the pleasure of being intimately acquainted with them. The quarter deck of a man-of-war is no bad school even for politeness. Of course to my assertion there are exceptions, where some, from the na-

ture of the service, have a little spice of the *Trunnion* of old, and are more fitted to command a ship of war, than to enter the drawing-room—of this description I certainly know some. This fuss then about Fagging, I certainly consider to be something similar to the name of one of our old English comedies, *Much ado about nothing.*

I have here diverged a little from my entrance into College, which was the beginning of a new and different sort of life, to what is experienced at the Dames. There her watchful eye kept tolerably good order, but when once entered into Long Chamber, the captain is the arbiter of your happiness or otherwise: though the other *Sixth Form* boys, as well as the *Liberty* boys, (like lieutenants and middies in a ship), have great power over the *Lower* boys, yet make the captain your friend, nothing is to be feared.

A few words in this place respecting *Long Chamber.* From what I can now recollect, I should think that it was nearly one hundred and

eighty feet long, though I may not be quite correct in the length. On each side a range of old oaken bedsteads, (the tenants for centuries of this ancient dormitory), no sacking, and no curtains, and between every bedstead a high desk with a cupboard under for each boy—this desk contains all that they have, or need require.

The leaf of a book torn off, doubled, and a hole cut in the centre, forms the only candlestick which he has; should he wish to read in bed, the candle is removed from the above candlestick, and claims affinity with the back of the old bedstead by being stuck against it. Should the drowsy god overtake the boy in his nocturnal study in bed, and burn down to the wood, no harm will accrue, as all the old bedsteads will prove, being pretty well striped with charcoal, evidences of the incumbustible nature of the old oak, and he will not be long before he awakes from the unpleasant smell of the wood, or perhaps, what is more likely, by a

good tweak of the nose from his next neighbour.

A coarse cloth gown is the peculiar badge and external form of being a Colleger. Woe unto the boy that ever enters College with a bad temper; be it good or bad, it will at first be tried by all manner of ways, disagreeable to those who have not been accustomed to rough usage—by degrees it will wear off: and I, as having been one who saw some little of Long Chamber tricks, will have the ingenuousness to own, (excepting the period when I was in Carlton Chamber), that I never partook of more happiness, than when lying on my hard wooden bedstead, fatigued with various sports, perhaps from a little skirmishing with some Oppidans at hoops, a favourite and healthy sport in the autumn and winter season, in the school yard and cloisters; and in the exercise of which some pretty hard blows arise: and when opposed to each other, which is always the case, the Colleger, rather presumptuously, considers himself

equal to at least three Oppidans, something like John Bull's estimate of his opposite neighbour's fighting qualities.

It must be owned that the freaks of the upper boys are somewhat annoying. Many and many is the time, when writing at my desk, and my exercise all but prepared for the scrutiny of the head master on the following morning, that a bolster, shaken down hard to one end, and urged with a skilful hand, has sent my poor candlestick flying on to my bed, and given to my rug the benefit of its tallowy odour; and in addition to this, my ink bottle, at that moment also overthrown by the same irresistible weapon, making certain inroads of the river Niger over my luckless exercise, equally as uncertain of its source—or perhaps, should a boy be amusing himself after he is locked up at half-past eight, with a walk up and down chamber, *Nescio quid meditans nugarum, et totus in illis,* he finds his head come in contact with the old oaken floor, in a most sudden and unex-

pected manner. This is effected by one of the upper boys stealing from off one of the bedsteads on which he has been sitting, and the moment the other has passed on, he comes behind his victim, and with one fell swoop of the bolster on the heels, down he goes. As to complaining, that was out of the question—it was the chance of war.

But this was trifling when compared with others, which I have known some poor fellows to undergo, and what was very far from agreeable to the sense of feeling—that of being, in the middle of the night, awakened by finding a rope fastened to your great toe, and, having been assisted by some officious friend out of bed in the dark, and at the same time kept by him from falling, ran up, as the sailor would term it, the whole length of Long Chamber and back again, and then thrown on your bed, the noose whipped off, and then to sleep with what appetite you may. You afterwards perceive, when left to your meditations, that the rope has

been rather too fond of your toe, and a painful soreness follows your nocturnal wandering. That ordeal I had the good fortune to escape, though I was aware that I was booked for it.

If a whispering was heard, after all the lights were put out, it was then pretty certain that something was afloat; and as it was utterly impossible to know who was to suffer, the only way, supposing it was yourself, was to move quietly out of bed, put your rug up to the bolster as if you had not been there, and then creep under three or four bedsteads at a distance from your own, and there lie *perdu*, until *this tyranny be over past.*

Another species of fun (like the log to the frogs, fun on one side and death to the other), or kick-shin annoyance, was put into practice on your entrance to a particular part of the school, equally as agreeable to the tiroes, as Neptune's visit to those who had never before *crossed the line*—I mean what is termed being *put into play.*

I will explain it. Around one of the large fireplaces in Long Chamber, two bedsteads are placed close together on each side, and two at the end, making a tolerable sized square. The boy, who is *put into play*, is placed in one corner, next to the captain, a certain number of the *elite*, or head boys, being seated around on the bedsteads. At a given signal, the captain starts him with a kick of no slight nature, which generally sends him to the opposite side, from thence he makes a return, quite as expeditiously: backwards and forwards he goes, like a shuttlecock, with this difference, that the *one* is composed of cork and feathers and *no* feeling, and *he* is made of flesh and blood, being very sensitive.

After a reasonable, or to speak more correctly, an unreasonable time, when he has been pretty well bandied about, with some few bruises beginning to make their appearance, he is permitted to make his way through the hostile phalanx, and clear the bedsteads, leaving his place to be

taken by another, who has been a shivering spectator of number one's amusement: something in the style of a Portuguese execution of traitors, where each has to await the death of the other, and be the unwilling spectator of their sufferings.

This is denominated *Play*, though the next morning a certain stiffness generally accompanies his waking hours. But it is only once, soon over, soon forgotten; though previous to it often thought of with dread—and the worst of it all is, that unlike to a freshman's entrance to Neptune's dominions, (who can be appeased by a gallon of rum), here there is no remission: no bribery allowed: no outward semblance of a *Grampounder*—all are intent on giving him a benefit. Still with all these essentials necessary to your degree as a Colleger, I would prefer that life, had I the option as a boy, to that of the Oppidan: though both are agreeable, still there is more of life in the former.

CHAPTER VI.

Their wild excursions, and window-breaking feats,
Robbery of gardens, quarrels in the streets,
Their hair breadth 'scapes, and all *their* daring schemes,
Transport *them*, and are made *their* favourite themes.
Cowper's Tirocinium.

SOMEWHAT of a curious circumstance occurred in College, but in which I had no hand, nor in any degree participated in the sweets of it. A sow, very near her accouchement, had been observed by the boys feeding in *Western's Yard*, close to the dormitory; when a most mischievous thought occurred, that she might be made useful to some of the community—the thought was no sooner devised, than means as speedily used to put it in execution: a few choice spirits, ever active for any sport, were soon en-

listed, and the plan laid before them. One boy was directed to keep the animal, (without any apparent intention of so doing), feeding in a particular corner until dark.

The scheme succeeded admirably: by throwing one of their cloth gowns over the old lady's snout, to obscure her vision, as well as to confine her squeaking trumpet from giving too much tongue, immediately, by the exertions of four stout boys, and no easy matter either, she was landed on the top of a tower attached to Long Chamber: here she was regularly fed until some little piggy wiggies came to light; which, as soon as they were considered to be of sufficient age, dangled before the fire in *Chamber*, and afforded the captors delicious suppers, the pleasure of course enhanced by the potations which Johnny Bear* brought from the

* A well-known character in my day, paid weekly by a certain number of the boys, as a carrier of eatables and drinkables, after we were locked up at half-past eight; of course not allowed by the College; though well known, yet winked at by the authorities, *id est*, the Head Master.

Christopher Inn, and received through the bars of Lower Chamber window, the usual receiving room of all smuggled goods, it being on the ground floor, and adjoining the school yard.

As soon as the young fry had all paid the forfeit of their lives, for venturing to make their appearance within the precincts of the tower, (no court martial being requisite, but like spies, hanged without trial), the mamma was sent about her business to seek her old quarters, minus offspring; and I have little hesitation in saying, that had her swinish ladyship ventured again to have visited our royal domains, in the same *enceinte* condition, all circumstances allowing, the result would have been the same. Not only young pigs, but almost any other description of live stock would have stood a bad chance, more particularly when it is considered what was the College allowance for a number of hungry boys, not according, I believe, to the intention of King Henry.

A loin of mutton,* or a leg, was between eight boys, a shoulder also: and a neck between four: and when it is further considered, that all these joints, never boiled, (except by paying C. the cook for so doing), but constantly roasted almost to a chip, the dripping being his perquisite, and a good thing he made of it, for he took especial care to squeeze the most out of it for his own benefit; considering these things, together with the mutton being of the small South-Down breed, it may not be very wonderful, at any thing in the shape of eatables not coming amiss.

The above piggish trick, though savouring some little of the felonious, or forcible abduction, was no bad specimen of an Etonian trick: but another that was undertaken, was, I believe, an actual felony: the two actors in it being dead, I do not at all hesitate to relate it, their names

* These things are altered now through the inquiries of Mr. Brougham (now Lord Chancellor) into public charities, and a greater allowance given.

of course being, *sub nube*: in short, I do not know whether I might not have been termed an accessory to the fact: I am certain of this one thing, that it caused in me, no slight sensation of alarm.

About one o'clock in the morning, having previously been preparing my verses for the morrow, I had gone to a remote room, at the end of Long Chamber, called *Phorica*, the Greek word being Latinized. It had no glazed windows, iron bars taking the place of glass; a part of it was appointed for the reception of the logs to be burnt in Carter's Chamber, (to which I then belonged), when on a sudden, in tumbled some very large carp, tench, and I think eels: but I was so terrified at being saluted by the entrance of the scaly gentry, thinking that it was some satanic trick at that midnight hour, that without stopping to inquire into the cause of my alarm, I made a most precipitate retreat to bed.

The next morning I discovered it all: for

they were trophies not to be concealed, but were shewn with evident marks of exultation at their success, by the two boys above alluded to. It seems that in some of their daily walks, they had found out that there was a constant supply of fine fish, preserved in the well of one of the punts, in the pond situated in Mr. Botham's garden, at Salthill: and under the supposition that they might just as well be cooked in a plain homely way in *Long Chamber*, or at Mrs. Widmore's, as be served up with rich sauces by the landlord of the Windmill Inn, to his various guests, they determined on making the attempt.

After prayers at half-past eight, an iron bar, which had been sawn through immediately under the cross one, being removed, as well as the lead from the stone which received the bottom part of the bar, out sallied our adventurers, and made their descent by a rope-ladder down to the pump in *Western's Yard*, which was directly under the window—from thence their further progress was easy enough.

I can well recollect it being a very dark and tempestuous night, which aided their scheme materially: in short, every thing succeeded to their wishes, and they convoyed their prizes home, as above described, without any interruption.

These, and other acts of juvenile daring, if they had not ended in an excursion to Botany Bay, (detection taking place), would most certainly in a good flogging, often created that relish for adventures of a nobler kind, which was fully proved by the deeds of many who fought and bled on the continent—one of these marauders fell at the battle of Waterloo. Many gallant heroes of the Peninsular war were Etonians, the head and front of all the noble Wellington.

Among other instances of predatory excursions, one took place which was the cause of much conversation, even beyond the bounds of the school, for it made its way into the highest circles, shook the sides of our good *old George*,

and is often mentioned, with the greatest glee, by the uncle of the boy, who is a gentleman of immense property and political influence, and a scientific agriculturalist in the county of Norfolk. It was a feat well deserving of his uncle's praise.

It seems that the royal domain could not be preserved inviolate from invasion. To forage in an enemy's country is pardonable, but for a friend's territory to be poached upon, was almost too bad: the only excuse to be made is, that the temptation was too powerful to be resisted. The Little Park at Windsor abounded with hares; these had been often seen by the boys, and one, whose name began with C., was determined upon *nine parts of the law*, possession of one of these said hares. Having provided himself with a gun and boat, and another boy to take care of it, and having arrived pretty close to the place previously reconnoitred, C. made for the park wall, which is within a few

yards of the Thames, opposite to the *Oak Tree*, near the *Shooting Fields*.

Leaving his shipmate to look out for squalls in the shape of keepers, he mounted the wall, and a poor unfortunate pussey happening to be sitting most accommodatingly for a display of his skill, it is needless for me to add, that having been pretty well trained at home among the finest preserves in England, that she tumbled over: down he jumped to pick her up—at the same moment, a short-jacketed fellow, whom the report of the gun had roused from his lair, was observed making towards him with all possible despatch. Not a moment was to be lost; and, heedless of the vociferations of the keeper, he threw the hare over the wall, at the same time intimating to the other boy, that an enemy was in sight. He soon followed his victim, but lo! to his dismay, he saw his confederate pulling across as hard as he could, alarmed at the idea of being detained by the keeper, and leaving his comrade to make the best of his way as he

could: we cannot bestow much commendation on his poltroonery. What now was to be done by C.? Although it was a flood water at the time, and the stream very rapid, he did not give much hesitation upon the subject, but dismissing his gun to a cold bath, he at once jumped into the river, and with the hare in his mouth, by dint of great experience in swimming and a natural courage, he reached the other side in safety, with the trophy of his daring.

A short time subsequent to this, a boy, by some ill luck, after having killed a brace of pheasants, was nabbed by the head keeper, and conveyed to his house in the park, where he was kept in durance vile. Some little degree of animosity, it is supposed, was rankling within him, owing to the escape of the previous swimming marauder: at any rate there he was detained, and a message sent to the head master stating the cause of his detension—also a communication was made to no less a person than his most gracious majesty.

I believe *old George* was a little offended at first, but he soon recovered his usual kindness, and after ordering the boy to be detained all night, (as a memento not to offend again,) and be well fed, he was dismissed with a note to the head master, requesting that he should not be punished this time, it being his *first fault*.

A few pages back, I mentioned the *Oak Tree*—one of the fashionable places of resort for bathing to the boys; more particularly for the *Lingers*, alias Collegers. At that very spot a circumstance occurred which will always keep the remembrance of the *oak tree* in my mind, for I was as near finishing my career as an Etonian at that spot, and of being precluded from giving my *Reminiscences* to the public, as any one who would desire to go out of the world in a tolerably comfortable method.

On the river Thames, a species of flat-bottomed boat is used, called Punt, usually adapted for the purpose of fishing, having a well about

two thirds down the length of the boat, to preserve the fish alive, which may be taken, for an almost indefinite time, as a constant supply of fresh water runs through the well beforenamed.

Being particularly fond of boating, and no bad manager in punting, (which I have proved by punting up to the Weir, a most sharp and difficult stream as all Etonians know), which is performed by going to the head of the boat, and placing a pole in the water, retaining the hold of the pole, all the time you run down to the stem, and then again ascend to the head. On the occasion I am mentioning, in running up again to the head of the boat, either from my presumption of being a good punter, and thereby perfectly careless, or I know not what, but like the person who, in mixing his brandy and water, took a *drop* too much, I, from looking at some boys on the bank preparing for bathing, took a *step* too many, and over I went.

On the particular spot where I fell over was a sand bank, and between that and the land, deep water: there was just room enough for me to lie on my back, under this most unpleasant boat; and there I did lie, and no very comfortable birth I had of it—the water pouring into my mouth—the boat pressing me down and the thoughts of death coming upon me. Still I could distinctly hear the vehement exclamations of the boys, telling the one that was in the boat how to act, and push her off. At length, when all perception was nearly gone, and I was pretty well saturated with Father Thames, (though not acting the part of a father), I was extricated from my perilous situation, by the drifting of the boat from off me, and I never wish to be in the same situation again.

I understood that my face bore a most particular resemblance, in regard to colour, to my hat; and for a long time the *Oak Tree*, the scene of my disaster, haunted me every night

I could not efface it from my mind, but that the said punt was on my chest, which completely usurped the place of any common nightmare, which has the fashionable name of Indigestion.

CHAPTER VII.

Je n'ai jaimais rien vu de si mechant que ce mauvais vieillard ; et je pense ; sans correction, qu'il a le diable au corps.
L'Avare de Moliere.

AMONG those to whom the vicinity of Eton College was somewhat annoying, though a source of profit in other instances, was a man who rented the water near Windsor for a considerable distance, cognomine P., familiarly termed by us, old Johnny P. By the sale of eels, as well as other freshwater fish, he made a considerable sum, vast numbers of which were caught in eel-pots, certain long narrow baskets, which allowed the Fish to enter for the bait enclosed therein, but by a kind of internal *Chevaux de*

frize, entirely precluded them from making their exit.

These wicker pots were laid down in various parts of the river, with a reed fastened to each, which floating just on the top of the water, denoted where a pot lay at anchor. Of course in our peregrinations on the river, these reedy buoys did not escape our eyes, long experienced in the pursuit of such articles, and consequently, if any fish were in them, they were soon emptied into the boat.

It was always considered excellent sport to do old Johnny, who was a man of considerable wealth, and to whom the loss of a fish or two was nothing, (except in the light in which a miser would grudge the loss of the most trifling coin) he being the principal, and *scaly* purveyor, to the royal family, and the inhabitants of Eton and Windsor. It would sometimes happen that Johnny attended by his boy Fish, (a nickname I believe) would come upon us unawares from behind some Ayot, where like some Sallee

rover he had been watching for us in our marauding excursions, and then, it was a glorious piece of fun, to see our poor old fisherman in one of his tantarums.

He was a man of more than choleric disposition, and in the heat of his anger would belabour poor Fish's head with the oar, for not pulling faster on his side to overtake *those* rascally boys: poor weaksighted mortal he little knew, that this head slave of his was in the private pay of those rascally boys, and in the hurry to obey his masters orders, would most innocently of course, lose his oar, or *catch a crab;* in short, any thing to impede progress: and as the skiffs that were hired, belonged to Charley C., his inveterate rival, a man with a deficiency of one arm, of equally irritable temper with himself, between whom an incessant war of words was constantly waged; on that account therefore, poor Johnny could not pursue the marauders into the enemy's fort, so that they generally escaped with

their fishes, dropping perhaps one, as if by accident, for Charley, as hush money.

The cause of this animosity between these two river gods, arose I believe from some little jealousy on Mr. Johnny P.'s part. He had lived at Eton all his life, and had possessed the sole letting out of the boats for many years. It is certain that those boats were what we should now call, in these days of reform and march of intellect, little better than floating tubs.

Mr. Charles C., a speculating genius, whose apprenticeship had been passed at Lambeth, the fashionable place for building pleasure boats, came down from thence, bringing with him some beautiful skiffs, very light, and of course well adapted for speed. With this almost fairy flotilla, in comparison with what we had been accustomed to, Charley opposed old Johnny, and while all of the new pigmy navy, for many days bespoke beforehand, were constantly in commission, the veteran tubs were put on the peace establishment, and floated quietly at their moor-

ings, thereby causing a great diminution of revenue to the old government, and undoubtedly a source of grievous vexation to Johnny.

It required not much skill on the part of the rowers in these light skiffs, to leave Johnny and his man Fish, when pursued by them: and as every trifling thing is an annoyance to the man at enmity with another, the words, the *Fly*, or the *Swift* of Eton, Charles C., were displayed in brilliant gilt letters on the stern of the flying boat, to the irascible eyes of the old fisherman, who kept at a respectable distance in her wake, all the time fuming and swearing in no slight degree, to the great amusement of the boys, and to the increase of the existing animosity.

Nor can we be surpised at it, for should I moralize at all, I might say, how few are there of the sons of Adam, similarly situated, but would have been equally vexed. Of all the passions which agitate the human breast, jealousy is perhaps the most easily excited. Our irritable antique had for many years reigned

the undisputed sovereign of the Etonian navy, the Lord Yarborough of the yacht club of the present day. Could our immortal, our gallant, never-to-be-forgotten Nelson have witnessed, without some little irritation, a successful rival, snatching from him those laurels which his previous intrepidity had gained for him? would the placid smile have played on his dying countenance, after the ball of fate had struck him, had other words than those of joyful victory met his ear, when he crushed the fleets of Spain and France in the Bay of Trafalgar? I fear not; even though with the consciousness that every Englishman had done his duty. His valiant soul could not have endured, that other than the wooden walls of Old England should hold the mastery of the seas, and they *did* hold it: and may British hearts be ever found with a Nelson's spirit to man our hearts of oak—and may that element which has hitherto caused us to be the pride and envy of other nations, bear

them when mortal strife may arise on the spring-tide of victory.

But this is digressing somewhat from our two Eton rivals. Whilst the one was the cause of mirth to the boys, the other waxed a great favourite with them. Novelty perhaps is every thing, but so it was: he charged high, it is true, but still he was a long *Tick*. In addition to his trade of Waterman, he also established an excellent shop for the sale of guns, and I know it well to my cost. Having hired a gun of him on a holiday to do some execution among the blackbirds, &c. in the lanes near the *Brocas*. Just as I was sallying out of the yard of *Davis* the horse dealer, who should I *pop* upon—not upon blackbirds—but upon a most formidable enemy, in the shape of one of the Under Masters, who did me the favour to relieve me from carrying my gun home to its original quarters.* As the act of going out shooting, is considered a

* Like Smugglers' tubs always forfeited to the Captor.

very penal offence, and deservedly so, I fully expected to have atoned for my crime on the block: but as, being high in the School, that is, in the *Liberty*, it would have been considered very *Infra dig.* to have been flogged in that part of the school, therefore, with promises never again to take a gun in hand during my stay at Eton, (a promise I strictly kept) and by saying a certain portion of the Greek Andromache, which I think I shall never forget, I was pardoned.

One of my first essays, as a little boy, in shooting, was rather ridiculous. In the neighbourhood of Eton, there is a small bird, called a Butcherbird, it seems peculiar to that part of the country, something resembling a Bullfinch, its breast is very red: as I was walking with a friend, we saw what we considered to be a bird of that description, quietly seated in a bush, and so it was quietly seated, sure enough. It was my turn to fire: I pulled, and down it fell. When lo! The game was nothing more or less

than a piece of a brick-bat which had been lodged by some one in the said bush, to my no small annoyance, as well as to the jeers and fun of my friend.

Owing to the Thames being so contiguous to Eton, he sometimes pays the town a very unwelcome visit, though a source of glorious amusement to the boys. This generally takes place in the winter, when having been well supplied by tributary streams, after the breaking up of deep snows, or long continued rains, he comes rolling down, casting on each side of the low lands, a wide waste of waters, impoverishing (as I heard old Pocock the farmer once say) the arable lands, but enriching the pastures.

One particular flood I recollect of long continuance, and of great impetuosity, when fifteen-arch bridge was nearly all swept away, and the entrance to Eton from Slough was by going through the Shooting fields and the Playing fields, a work of some little danger. This was a time of excellent fun for the boys: no getting

to school, and the communication between the different houses was by boats and carts.

I shall not forget an excellent ducking which Harry M. and two other boys had in Eton Street. I was looking out of my window at Ingalton's at the time, when I observed these three boys coming in a cart which they had hired for a little bit of a spree, when just as they came abreast of my window, the water being near three feet deep there, down went the horse, and out went every one of them to salute old father Thames—of course there was not much chance of their receiving any serious injury: the water being very muddy at the time, their external appearance was none of the brightest: it created no small fun at the time among their schoolfellows, many of whom, like myself, witnessed their immersion, and they went by the appropriate appellation of the mud-lark trio.

I hope my readers will pardon me for relating, in this place, a curious circumstance which took place three years since at the wreck of the

Carn Brea Castle, at the back of the Isle of Wight, and which I witnessed, the mention of the mud-lark, reminding me of it. A farmer near Brooke, which is situated at the back of the Island, had sold to a higler a large quantity of geese; the purchaser took them across the Island to Ryde, where they were purchased by the steward of the Carn Brea Castle, a large East Indiaman, then lying at Spithead: on the following day she sailed on her voyage outward bound. As she passed the back of the Isle of Wight, the Captain, as is said, on purpose to give his passengers a nearer view of the lovely scenery of that fairy spot, approached too near the land: the ship in tacking missed stays, which, aided by a strong current, was wrecked on the rocks near Brooke; there was a very heavy sea at the time, and it was with great difficulty, and the strenuous exertions of the Preventive Service attached to Freshwater Gate, that the crew were saved. The live stock were all washed overboard, and as it was a flowing sea, they were

soon on shore. Just as I reached the wreck, the identical geese which had been shipped at Ryde, were unshipped at Brooke, and were in their old quarters again, settling their ruffled plumage, and removing the sand and dirt with which it was most woefully soiled.

The arrangements for bathing at Eton are very good: those boys who are not able to swim, are debarred from ablution except at particular places, where it is almost an utter impossibility, from the shallowness of the water, that an accident can passibly occur; because excellent swimmers, men appointed by the head master, such as Shampo Carter and others, are always on the spot to prevent any accident, and are regularly paid by the boys for that purpose.

It is somewhat surprising that more accidents do not occur at Eton on the water, the boys being generally so very fond of it, and especially of one very peculiar method of propelling a boat, which is by *darting*—a very dangerous

custom indeed. The only instances that I can recollect in my time, including a period of more than ten years, of death by drowning, were two, Lord W., and B., a very small mortality among so large a number of boys, when we take into consideration the immediate contiguity of the playgrounds to the river.

In my day, for swimming, fishing, shooting, or fighting, take him altogether, Shampo Carter was the man. I have very little hesitation in saying, that many of my readers will recollect the man, and can vouch for the truth of my assertions respecting him.

CHAPTER VIII.

Alas! the joys that fortune brings
Are trifling and decay;
And those who prize the paltry things,
More trifling still than they.

And what is friendship but a name,
A charm that lulls to sleep;
A shade that follows wealth or fame,
And leaves the wretch to weep.

GOLDSMITH.

THE expectation of the arrival of the holidays creates no little stir in our community. You will find some boys who have notched a stick, indicating so many days previous to breaking up, and from which one is cut off every day; others are to be observed fitting on their boots at Ingalton's, with which they intend to be *something* when they reach the paternal roof; others are to be seen bargaining for Tandems to drive

to Hyde Park Corner; while others, more humble, and certainly more judicious, are taking their places by Lillewhite's coaches, from which a general salute of pease, from pea-shooters, is received by the inhabitants of Colnbrook and Hounslow, their amunition being generally expended previous to their arrival at Brentford. This juvenile peppering, of course only alludes to the lower boys.

In the winter time, those boys that went by the six o'clock coaches, invariably put on their clean shirt the over night, to be in readiness for starting—no time in the morning. Even now I wish for my boyish days, (not as far as regards the clean shirt), were it only for the delightful anticipation of the holidays. Care and birch for a time dismissed—the joys of home—the meeting with parents and brethren—really it is a delight, and the more in after life we think of it: more particularly as in mine own case, when all those beloved relations (with one exception) are gone to the tomb, and I am left as

it were alone in the world, with the exception of my own immediate family: the joys of those former days, when wealth was at my command, now for ever fled, and poverty and its direful train the accompaniments of the present, are regretted with a bitterness truly its own.

And yet all this joy, which pervades the boys breast, is but the harbinger of sorrow. The holidays pass away *cito pede:* those dear friends on whose smiles we live, must be left: the pouches* are given, and with sorrowing hearts we say the miserable good bye: then comes the return by the same coaches that conveyed us to town. We put on the face of bravado, while inwardly there is a ravening wolf of sorrow: we chink the money in our pockets (not long to remain there) which our parents have given us, to dispel a little the misery of leaving home's comforts: soon too soon, does Slough meet our eyes, and the well known turn down to the left, where we catch sight of the ponderous telescopes

*An Eton name for presents.

of *Herschell*—soon is the fifteen-arch bridge past—then are we within the confines of the miserable dull town of Eton.

Our luggage arranged, and our poor solitary candle obtained from our Dames, we hie us to Long Chamber: a few candles glimmer in the darkness visible, many not having the heart to light their candles, but turn into bed to forget their sorrows—even the upper boys almost seem to have forgotten the well-used, and well-known word *lower boy*—in short the chamber appears a scene of desolation. But on the morrow, the usual scene of activity is on foot—mutual recognition takes place—home is almost forgotten, and Eton is the same. *Floreat Etona.* Though it is rather hard, and the justice of it has been often canvassed, why the Upper Oppidans should be allowed a greater indulgence in the length of their holidays than the Collegers—but so it is. The Upper Oppidans, on leaving school, are in the habit of making presents to the Head Master in money or plate, the Colleger

never: some might say, that there was a little policy in relaxation of duty for one species of boys: but that, I do not believe, was ever the origin of what at first sight may appear a piece of favouritism in behalf of the Oppidans.

In the pastrycooks shops of London it is a very common practice to have a pretty young woman behind the counter to induce the masculine gender to come in and talk to her, by which means, an increased sale of pastry generally is effected—some go to shew themselves off, and to be admired as they suppose; others to admire the fair shopkeeper, both tending to increase the exchequer of the Pastry Cook: the very same plan prevails in the *Cafe's* at Paris, where the most splendid woman is selected to preside: when I was at Paris, I recollect the most beautiful woman in France as was imagined presided at the *Cafe aux Mille Colonnes.*

In my time I recollect, my friend Garraway of the Christopher, without that aim I believe, had a very pretty young woman, his niece it

was said, as his Barmaid. It certainly was a most excellent speculation, if it had been intended as such. The upper boys, I mean Collegers, made it a point to go and have their glass of ale or brandy and water, until about two minutes before it struck the half hour, when we were locked up for the night, on purpose to talk nonsense with Pipylena, a nick name, from her having a pimple on her cheek. Among others I have little hesitation in saying, that I was not deficient, in putting in my spoke for a little flattery with Pipylena. But I am almost confident from the general correctness of her conduct, that she would never allow of the least liberty, Garraway or Mrs. G. being always present: though I once did snatch a kiss, and at the same time, was a receiver of a box on the ear from the young lady. She was certainly the promoter or promotress, (if such a word), of great profit to the landlord of the Christopher—she was like the Mary of Buttermere, the celebrated Pipylena of Eton. I would strongly re-

commend any one that visits Eton and stops at the Christopher, to order a broiled chicken and mushroom sauce—it is exquisitely cooked there: and for a bowl of *bishop*, Garraway is super-excellent.

Within about two years of my leaving Eton, I became *strong con*, as we term it, that is, very intimate indeed, with the son of a Baronet who is now in the *Tenth*. I will here relate a little story to shew what an alteration, sometimes takes place, from the boy leaving Eton, and his going into the world. With this boy, as I before remarked, I was very intimate. I was his superior in school, and I believe though the son of a Baronet, I might have considered myself, as far as expectations went, on an equality with him: nearly every whole or half holiday, we used to meet at the Christopher, and have our bowl of *bishop*, and were on the most friendly terms imaginable, he frequently breakfasting with me up Eton (as the term is) at my room, where I lodged at Ingalton's. It may be as well in this

place to say that the Upper Collegers are in the habit of hiring rooms in the town of Eton.

One of his favourite expressions, when perchance I remonstrated with him on the dissolute life he was living, was, "D—e B., a short life and a merry one." Still his life has been longer than might have been imagined. About four years since, I write this in eighteen hundred and thirty-one, I met the above friend at the noble mansion of his father-in-law, after an interim of seventeen years. It will not be amiss to say, though grating to my own feelings, that all my expectancies and monies received, had taken their departure, and I was then settled in a village in Hertfordshire, as the stipendary curate of one hundred pounds per annum, with a wife and seven children to keep, and a house to provide for, all out of the above sum. And *three* duties to perform on the Sunday.

It would be needless perhaps to say, that I anticipated the pleasure of seeing an old schoolfellow with no small degree of anxiety, one too

with whom I had been so intimate at school, considering the word Etonian, almost equal to Masonic. On entering the drawing-room, I saw my old friend, and with outstretched arm, immediately went up to him, with, "well G., I am glad to have this opportunity of again meeting with an old friend." "Ah! are you, well I am glad to see you, this is a pretty place, is it not?" "Yes." "What do you think; an old lady, last week, made me a present of three hundred deer to stock my park with, which has been lately left me, walled all the way round for miles, D—ed good, is not it?" Yes, thinks I to myself very good indeed, but the distribution of a few of these goods, would be better—at dinner I drank wine with him—I dined off silver—nothing further of *auld lang syne* occurred, and we parted like common acquaintances.

Foolishly perhaps I had looked forward to the pleasure of meeting him, with no slight emotion. I was disappointed. The Tenth do not recognise old schoolfellows—the Tenth do not

know old friends. Such was the conclusion of my friendly anticipations.

Let me now escort my readers to a very pleasant scene, supposing the Election Saturday to have arrived. For a week previous to it, *rug-riding* begins in Long Chamber. To illustrate the word *rug-riding*, let me say, that it is thus performed. Some lower boys rugs are tied up at one end, in which a bolster is placed, and to the other end of it a rope is affixed; an upper boy then takes his seat, and a certain number of other boys are fagged to run up and down Long Chamber, with as great speed as possible; this continuing for a week, it is scarcely possible to conceive the beautiful gloss which the old oak boards receive: the space between the bedsteads is also scrubbed with hard brushes, to correspond with the other.

On the Thursday previous, waggon loads of beech boughs, from the College woods, are brought, with which the whole of the chamber is decorated, from one end to the other. On the

Saturday morning, green rugs, with the College arms, are placed on every bedstead. Company is then admitted to view it, and really it is a very pleasing sight—a complete vista of foliage: and considering the moving scene between, the Captain's bed at the top of the chamber, surmounted by a handsome Flag, the boys in their gowns, and the fragrance of the boughs, render it almost a magical delusion—in short, it is a magical delusion, in comparison with the appearance which the dormitory exhibits, without the assistance of these extraordinary supplies.

At two o'clock the Provost of King's College, Cambridge, enters Western's Yard in his carriage and four, attended by the two Posers, a name given to the two gentlemen from Kings, whose turn it is to examine the candidates for Scholarships of that College. A speech is then made in latin, by the captain of the school, in the cloisters, (which fell to my lot previous to leaving for Cambridge,) to offer our congratulations to the Provost on his arrival at the col-

lege. In the evening the same water excursions to Surly Hall and back, and the exhibition of fire-works on Piper's Ayot take place.

On the Monday following, the sixth form boys recite their speeches before a generally very crowded audience of big wigs, most of them old Etonians, and a select company of fashionables, admitted by the Head Master. The big-wig gentry are not very scrupulous in making their remarks on the merits or demerits of the orators. But *ne importe* their quizzing, a privilege which antiquity may claim to itself with impunity. The gratification was, when the speaker caught the spy glass of *Magnus* full upon him, and the smile upon his countenance, expressing his entire approbation of his pupil's oratorical skill, a mutual recognition of delight.

This is the principal day of feasting, and verily, it is a day of feasting in good earnest, no shilly shally—it is a regular display of the odontical art. A large party of old Etonians are generally present, and as a matter of course invited

to dine in the College Hall. The beautiful old tapestry makes its annual visit to the top of the hall, the dais of the day, where the table is set out for the principal guests. *Puppy's Parlour* abounds with the old plate belonging to the College; the Butteries are a constant scene of passing and repassing in glorious confusion.

Among the regular visitors on that day, (well remembered by all Collegers), was a good old divine, who had an excellent nose for a turtle or an haunch of venison, and I believe always managed to obtain a *provoke*, having long lived in the neighbourhood, and being much respected as an old Etonian and a Kingsman. On one of these annual feast-days, a haunch of venison of course sent forth its savory odour at the head of the table, where the Provost sat in all the dignity of his high station. It was the custom for the Provost to cut off a certain number of slices, enough to fill the plate, which was handed round to each of the guests, to take as much as they pleased. On the present occasion, the plate

made its first and last supply of the present burden to the Rev. Dr. B., who with a smile of great satisfaction, so the story goes, (the occurrence making the Hall ring again with laughter), took the plate and its contents, at the same time, premising with, "You have helped me very bountifully, Mr. Provost, but I will endeavour to do what I can with it"—and it vanished.

Poor old man he is long since dead. He was a daily visitor at Eton. We had no occasion ever to inquire what o'clock it was, at the hour of two; for as sure as the clock would strike that hour, the old carriage, and equally old horses and coachman to boot, would pass by the long walk wall. It used to be so regular in its rotatory motions, that it at length acquired the name of the S. Waggon. His son was next to me in school, and Eton College, from their respect to the father, at his death, presented the son to the living which his father held—a kind tribute of respect to his memory, as well as of gratification to the son. Which son, by the bye,

was a most tremendously lazy fellow in school: and when it was sometimes remarked to him, that he would perhaps get flogged, if he did not get his lesson to construe, his usual remark was, "Oh! I shall trust to Providence," and Providence was very kind to him; for he generally escaped being called up to construe—much kinder to him, than to myself and my oldest schoolfellow. We went to school at Slough—I in petticoats: and we have continued next to each other in College to this day: and the only *trifling* difference between us now is, that he is a Senior Fellow of King's—plenty of dividends—no care for the morrow—no butcher's bills to pay—and I—*vice versa*.

In most scrapes we were united—the *duo juncta in uno*: flogged together twice a week, because we had made up our minds not to do our *Derivations* for one of the assistants, who regularly heard us twice a week: and who from some spite, or some other cause, regularly called us up, and as regularly put us in the *bill*,

which was sent to the Head Master. The good old man, Dr. H. observing that we, as regular as Monday and Friday came, long morning days, were sent up to him for punishment, divined that it was owing to some pique of the assistant, or that we were incorrigible, merely, just for forms sake, touched us with old Sly's manufacture, after his usual exclamation of, "*Ah! my old friends, par nobile fratrum.*" There never were two such unlucky dogs as we were; whenever either was asked for his derivations by this said assistant, now the head of one of the principal Colleges, (and that through the aid of my vote for him), in Cambridge, his usual answer was, "I have lost them, Sir." The truth was we had never found them, that is, had never done them: and I fear, such was our obstinacy, that we never would, if we had been flogged every day.

During my residence at Eton I received great kindness, and many little attentions, in the shape of Pie and Pudding, from the mother of my old

schoolfellow, a lady who lived at Eton, and whom I have lately heard, has paid the debt of nature. If intrinsic worth and Christian piety, will meet with its due reward in another world, which we doubt not, it will be hers.

CHAPTER IX.

How situations give a different cast
Of habit, inclination, temper, taste:
And he, that seemed our counterpart at first,
Soon shews the strong similitude reversed.
Young heads are giddy, and young hearts are warm,
And make mistakes for manhood to reform.
Boys are at best, but pretty buds unblown,
Whose scent and hues are rather guessed than known;
Each dreams that each is just what he appears,
But learns his error in maturer years,
When disposition, like a sail unfurled,
Shews all its rents and patches to the world.

Cowper's Tirocinium.

In my last chapter, I took somewhat of a leap from the hall of festivity, to which I will now again return. As the Fellows and their guests do ample justice to the good things of this world, so are we, the Collegers, on that day allowed to indulge somewhat more than usual. To each boy is allotted the half of a roasted chicken, a certain portion of ham and greens, besides some very good pastry. Happiness sits on the faces

of all, except those poor fellows of the sixth form, who, on that day, are called superannuated; that is, too old to be able to stay any longer in College, their age being above nineteen—and consequently, should no resignation come for them on that day, before the cloister clock has done striking *twelve* at noon, they lose their chance of becoming Scholars, and eventually Fellows of King's College, Cambridge.

The mighty operation of dinner being concluded—the strong audit ale having been discussed, by pledging Can to the memory of Henry the Sixth, *Non Nobis Domine* is then sung by the choristers and singing-men, and all take their departure, leaving the *reliquiæ Danaum* to the old grumbling alms-women. The Fellows and their guests to *Fellow's Chamber*, to their convivial vinal potations, and the boys to whatever mischief they can set afloat.

Election Monday has other pleasures for the Collegers than the bare dinner, for tarts and

strong beer find their way into the chamber in the evening.

I called the alms-women grumblers, and so they certainly are, but not without tolerable just cause. Every Colleger takes good care to have one, if not two, pockets in his gown, and as the supper hour in the hall, (six o'clock), is considered to be too gothic for this age of refinement, the cold breasts of mutton, which are allowed for supper, find their way into the said pockets, and from thence, by a natural gradation, into Long Chamber, where, with some herbs and a few turnips from a neighbouring field, a most excellent broth is made for supper at a more genteel and fitting time of night. And as the alms-women are to have only what is left, as far as mutton goes, they sometimes find a perfect *minus*; though they make up for it in broken bread and *swipes*, *too good* to be carried away.

On the Tuesday and Wednesday, the boys are examined previous to their entrance to Eton,

as well as others for their fitness for King's. This falls to the lot of the Posers, the examining Chaplains, rather terrific gentlemen in the eyes of the boys. The examination takes place in Election Chamber.

I recollect my first entrance into that awful room, when I thought there appeared a collection of red lions sitting round the table. It was a beautiful sunny afternoon, and the bright glare of the sun striking through an immense red curtain, let down at the large oriel window, completely dazzled those not accustomed to such an appearance, and imparted that vivid rubicundity to the persons seated therein.

The *Gentlemen*, (as the tradespeople had the impertinence to call the Oppidans), having gone home on the Monday, and the Collegers having to wait until the Thursday, all the shops are shut up, and now and then only a straggling Colleger to be seen.

On the Wednesday evening of our breaking up, about two years before I left, I can well

recollect the afright which some of the Fellows of Eton and its inhabitants were put into, by seeing the Long Chamber, apparently enveloped in flames, making their way out of the different windows therein. The truth of the matter was this. The boughs, which had been ranged all along chamber, by this time began to be somewhat arid, and in a fit state for burning. At that time I belonged to Upper Carter's Chamber. To confer upon it the name of a loft would be, I think, granting too high an honour to it. It certainly had stairs to it, instead of a ladder, the usual way of mounting a hay-loft—still, being separated from the noise of Long Chamber, it was usually considered to be an enviable place to get into.

Well, H. M., the author of that most entertaining work, *The Diary of an Invalid*, and who some time since died as Fiscal Advocate at Ceylon, proposed having a bonfire the last night—no sooner said than done.

By removing the bedsteads that were near to

the fire place, and putting them out of harm's way, or fire way, more room was made for an additional supply—the candle was applied, and verily it was a splendid sight. Very little danger could accrue from the conflagration, there being only bare walls, and old oaken floors that would not burn. In addition to the flames, the chamber had its quantum of dense smoke, not very agreeable to the eyes, or to that of breathing: the only thing to do, was to mount up to the windows that were free from the flames, and put their heads out to inhale the fresh air. Some went down to Lower Chamber, some took advantage of the windows on the stairs, others went to the scene of my nocturnal affright with the fish, and one poor fellow ventured to come up into Upper Carter's Chamber, where I was preparing to get into bed. This place was tolerably free from smoke. He directly came to me and said, "B. I wish you would allow me to sleep with you tonight, for I cannot stand that confounded smoke." To which request I immediately assented.

We had not been long in bed, he rather enjoying his situation, and I wishing him at la Diable, (for it was very hot weather at the time, and aided by the heat from Long Chamber), when who should open his study door, (there were four in this chamber), but the captain of it, and having heard us talk, demanded who were in that bed?

De tuo ipsius studio conjecturam ceperis.
CICERO.

I told him that such a one had asked me to permit him to sleep in my bed, for that he could not stand the smoke in Long Chamber. "Oh! (says he) I will try," and with a sounding slap on the left cheek, he bundled him down stairs to make the attempt with the somniferous god. It is more than probable that these pages will find their way into his hands, who is now a distinguished character in the law, and I think they will recall to his recollection the above fact.

Whenever the chimney of Carter's Chamber

became at all foul, we always used to set fire to it, and being very large, the roar it made when blazing was magnificent: very much to the annoyance of Dr. Davis, the late Provost, part of whose lodge was very approximate. Our fires there, were made with large beechen logs, supported on iron dogs, where we used to roast potatoes beautifully. One of these logs, every lower boy was compelled to saw up before he went to bed, with a saw that had no edge, and appeared as if it had been in the hands of the dentist frequently: this was one of the most severe things that a lower boy had to endure: for the thinnest logs were always chosen by the biggest boys, *vi et armis*, leaving the heaviest for the poor little fellows, that could scarcely lift them. I have frequently known them to dock themselves of part of their rolls for breakfast, to bribe another stronger boy, to saw up their portion for them.

In the very place where these logs were kept, I well recollect having earned the title of the

most experienced rat catcher in College, from the circumstance of having caught, with a jack-haltering wire,* an immense, perfectly grey, old rat, which was supposed to be the ghost of King Henry the Sixth; or at any rate, to have been in being from the very first foundation of the College. I was somewhat of an adept myself in jack haltering, which is performed by fastening a twisted wire with a noose in it, attached to a long ashen pole, and then gradually slipping it over the head of the fish; with a sudden jerk it tightens, and the said fish is secured. I had once caught a very large perch, a very difficult fish to catch by that means, owing to the peculiar formation of it, and had found another lying very quietly, close to Fellow's Ayot. Just as I was going to secure my prey, another boy came up, and with some little malice, threw a stone into the water, which of course disturbed my intended spoil,

* A favourite amusement along the ditches of Eton Common, where the jacks come from the Thames to deposit their spawn.

and I lost it. I was so enraged at the time, that I immediately laid the pole about his pate as hard as I could, and with tears in my eyes, from sheer anger, told him, if ever he did so again, I would serve him the same. He had been in the habit of bullying me, and I supposed it rather cowed him, for he never after annoyed me. He was then a commoner, but is now a noble lord, the son-in-law of a distinguished statesman, and does me the honour of subscribing to my *Reminiscences.*

In such a large seminary as Eton is, it is of course natural to suppose, that the dispositions and inclinations of the boys must be varied. One boy, a lower Colleger, had such a determined abhorrence of school, and I suppose *vice versa*, such a predilection for *dulce domum*, that he was constantly running away, and as constantly meeting with his deserts in the *Library* on his return attended by *Duckey.** Whenever

* An old College servant kept for the purpose of sweeping out the chambers.

Duckey was seen mounted on the Windsor coach for London, there was no occasion for surmise on the occasion; it was pretty certain that Master H. was off again—and no *retriever*, or old hound, ever came upon the scent better than the above messenger.

Another was particularly fond, as he used to run through *Simons's* yard to his Dames, of pulling the bungs out of the barrels and allowing the contents to take their departure. The swipes* were no great loss, it is certain. I well recollect old Smith, the brewer, catching this boy at one of these pranks, and hallooing after him, in his nasal twang, "I say, Master —, there you are knocking the bungs about again; I certainly will tell the Head Master, I will indeed, and have you well flogged." These admonitory reproofs passed unheeded—when his back was turned, out went a bung, and so on, to the sad annoyance of poor Smith.

* A name given to the *small* beer brewed for the use of the boys; but the election audit ale is super-excellent.

There was one boy, two or three years above me in school, who was one of the best shots in the kingdom; in short, I do not know whether he would not have gained the silver arrow at any archery meeting—but then, his shooting was with the long bow, and a terrible long bow it was. The various tales that he would relate, for our benefit, when sitting round Long Chamber fire, would have done credit to any Munchausen. Whenever he opened his mouth, prefatory to his simple *story*, the remark usually made was, "now for it—now for a crammer." He had, however, so perfected himself in the art of invention, that for truth to have been extracted from the well of his *ore rotundo*, would have been twice as difficult as his original system. He used always to swear that his father lighted his fires with bank notes—that was one to which he rigidly adhered: still they were very amusing, *ut impudentissime mentiretur*, and he was a great favourite among the boys. He had a very pretty nickname given him, which

all that knew him then, and know him now, would recognise him by, did I mention it; but as I do not intend to be personal in this little work to living characters, of course I omit it. At any rate he is now a good divine, an excellent fellow, and very intimate with one of the royal family, with whom he is in habits of the most familiar acquaintanceship: the *ars mentiendi*, that is, poetical allusions, of course being left at Eton in the last century.

I do not think that there was any one so much abhorred by the Collegers, and *that* from his strict fidelity to his duty, as Sly, (as he was termed, the Head Master's faithful servant), principal and only locker up and gaoler to the boys, birch collector, and rod distributor; and whom we designated sometimes by another name, by the mythological one of Cerberus. No bribe would ever do with him, to let any one out at night after we were locked up—*rejecit alto dona nocentium vultu*. What a hated sound it used to be, when he came to light the fires,

"Half-past seven, come get up," accompanied by a tolerable rough hawl of the shoulders. It was his place to call every boy in the morning previous to eight o'clock school, and I never recollect his once being behind his time.

CHAPTER X.

EVANS. Have a care of your entertainments; there is a friend o' mine come to town, tells me, there is three cozens-german that has cozened all the hosts of Reading, of Maidenhead, of Colnbrook, of horses and money.

Merry Wives of Windsor.

AMONG the various amusements which tend to checquer the life of an Etonian, and to render it, what it really is, an agreeable life, when put in comparison with what are termed private schools, is the *Montem*, as it is called, a gala day truly—a day which, fortunately for the pockets of the parents, happens only once in three years; *viz.* on Whit-Tuesday. This is the grandest day of all, a day of three year's speculation who will be the captain, when the revolution of the triennial cycle occurs.

For months previous, tailors and mantuamakers, hatters and shoemakers, and a whole host of tradesmen, even army clothiers, are put into requisition: long, long before my military coat (I was a Corporal) was finished, it was daily tried on at Reeves's; many and many an hour have I whiled away, in superintending the splendid dress, which I had ordered my two servants to wear, one of them, by the bye, now a Marquis, and will eventually be a Duke. Mammas and sisters are consulted upon the most engaging colour to be worn. Interest is made to procure situations for some of the little boys, generally sprigs of nobility, as servants to the Captain, or the Corporals, which situations, from the gay dress worn by them, are anxiously desired.

My first essay at Montem, was as one of the six servants of the Captain, who was intimately acquainted with my Grandfather: (and who made his intimacy turn to a good account at Ankerwyke House). He was, I recollect, a famous hand at making *Bumble*—a beverage

composed of *swipes* and brown sugar, which, after two day's bottling, was good stuff. I am positive, that no king strutted his brief hour on the stage with more pride, than did I on that day, equipped in a light infantry dress, with my blue silk sash edged with gold, silver buckles to my Spanish leather shoes, powdered hair, and a handsome ivory-handled dirk to my side. With which said dirk, many years afterwards, at a wine party in *Old Court*, Cambridge, or more correctly speaking at the conclusion of it, I was very near depriving the Bench of one of its greatest ornaments, in the shape of a newly made judge.

After some taunt, which displeased me, when in a state *(proh pudor)* of inebriation, I flew to my rooms, and seizing my dirk, went immediately after my equally inebriated aggressor, whom I overtook, going up one of the Towers of *Old Court:* I struck at him, and most fortunately for himself, as probably for my own neck, I missed him, and the blow fell on the stone

steps, which shattered the weapon to pieces. Of a certainty, not even inebriation, and the addition of a cayenne temper, could be any excuse for such an action. I need not say, that on the following morning, when reason, as well as daylight dawned, I was truly penitent. I then made a vow to myself, never to stay at a wine party after six o'clock; and that resolution I afterwards inviolably kept; and in a subsequent severe illness, the typhus fever, when death ravaged our ranks, I experienced the benefits of it.

But to the Montem again. Independent of the Captain, who pockets the collection of the day, and the Marshal with his truncheon of office, and the Ensign with his splendid flag, the two *Saltbearers*, who take their station on Windsor bridge, to collect the Salt,* from their Majesties and the Royal Family, are the principal objects of attention, their equipment being generally so very superb.

* Phrase for money.

The *Runners* are of an inferior grade to the *Saltbearers*, yet most elegantly attired in silk dresses, and whose office it is to go to different stations from Eton: some of them go perhaps to the distance of six or seven miles. Colnbrook and Maidenhead bridge, in my time, were always considered the two best *runs*, as being situated on the high road from London to Bath. The distant *Runners* always go in gigs, attended by a tolerably powerful man, to protect them from insult, which often occurs from those travelling on the road, and not aware of the custom, and no wonder, of the *Mos pro Lege*. The collection of the *Runners*, is finally given to the *Saltbearers*, who are the Chancellors of the Exchequer for the day, and they in their turn, present the proceeds to the Captain, the Receiver General.

Let us suppose the expected day arrived, and should it be ushered in with a cloudless sky, the joy is unbounded: a large assemblage of beauty and fashion, rustic as well as West End,

is expected, to see and be seen. It is a day of bustle and shew—according to the song, "a day of Jubilee cajolery, a day that ne'er was seen before, a day of fun and drollery."

The Ensign's flag is displayed at Long Chamber window; at eleven o'clock, George the third, used to appear with his family, and with a long continued roar of huzzas, was received by the boys, ever anxious to have their Monarch's smile of approbation: and from the entrance to the school-yard, conducted by the Head Master to his *Chambers*—from whence, after an elegant collation therein, the procession moves towards Salthill, the principal scene of the days display.

It it a gratifying sight to see upwards of five hundred of the sons of England's aristocracy, accompanied by their beloved king, and his suite, marching in due order to the all-inspiring sound of martial music, while on each side, the road is lined with spectators, during the whole of the march.

On their arrival at the Mount at Salthill, a small eminence from whence is derived the name of *Montem*, the Ensign becomes a most important personage, and the great lion of the shew. Here with the symbol of his office, the splendid silken flag, he performs a variety of manœuvres, each of which, from the great skill required to effect, and a previous long drilling in the perfection of that skill, necessarily attracts attention and applause, from the surrounding multitude. This being concluded, *Stocker** and his doggerel verses having been well laughed at, the boys then proceed to one of the best parts of the day's diversion, *viz.* a superb dinner provided at the principal Inns at Salthill, attended by the Assistants of the School, and the Dames, to preserve due order.

The joyous day, the *O festus dies puerorum*, is generally concluded with a promenade on the

* A noted character of Windsor, the poet-laureate of that day, the attendant of many Montems, drawn in a donkey cart fantastically dressed, and well known to all Etonians.

terrace at Windsor, at which our revered king, *old George*, used always to make it a point to attend. I believe in his successor's reign, from a love of retirement, that part of the ceremony was dispensed with, the terrace being closed; but I doubt not, that the high regard, which our present beloved monarch, William the Fourth, entertains towards the enjoyments of his subjects, that the same gratifying privileges, if not already, will be restored again.

Still although the public may admire the scene altogether as a shew, and as the cause of producing much gratification to the Etonians; and although the advocates for its continuance, will say, it is only *one* day, out of one thousand and ninety-five days, I must say, I think its principle is bad. It is nothing less, (and I go not on my own opinion alone), than a genteel begging, which has the sanction of time immemorial: and it is a pity that the present Head Master, should not have put a final stop to the

custom altogether: for it is the cause of a needless expence to many of the parents of the boys who can ill afford it, not willing to be outdone by others, in gratifying their sons in the pageant of that one day.

I before stated that it is a pleasing sight to see upwards of five hundred boys in their blue jackets white trousers, and white wands; and although the collection may, on an average, yield from eight hundred to one thousand pounds to the Captain, yet when the expences are deducted from it, a very small share finds its way to its original intention, that of producing a sufficient sum to pay for a young man's expences at Cambridge, during his Under-Graduateship. In short, I understand that at the last Montem, from the great expences lavished thereon, that the Captain was actually a loser by it. At its first institution it was annual, but it was found to be so burdensome a tax on the parental treasuries, that it was changed to once in three years.

Thus much for the Montem, which I again add would be better abolished. Perhaps the moral in the fable of the ox and the calf may be applicable to me, "chickens must not feed capons," or I might perhaps be told,

Non est *tuum* contra auctoritatem senatus dicere.
CICERO.

CHAPTER XI.

A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be to you.
Leviticus xxv. 11.

FROM our vicinage to Windsor, we were frequently in the habit of experiencing the royal kindness and condescension. During the time that I was at school, I was present, as one of the upper boys, (a certain number only, generally fifty, going at one time), at four of his majesty's fetes—where it was impossible to be otherwise than highly delighted, at the condescension of *farmer George*, (as he was always denominated, not only by ourselves, but by half the kingdom, from his predilection for agricultural pursuits),

to one and all. To every one a something was to be said, which was a sure source of gratification to his auditors. He was as a father to *all* his subjects: but in a more striking point of view, did that paternal kindness exhibit itself in Saint George's Hall, or at Frogmore, when entertaining us, whom he was always in the habit of calling *his* boys.

If, as we are told, cares, anxieties, and troubles, are the precious stones which encircle the kingly crown, they certainly never appeared in his entertainments to us. His words were those of joy and gladness, shedding their sweetness on those, *whom he delighted to honour.*

German plays were very great favourites with him, which were usually performed at the Queen's Palace at Windsor. A certain portion of these plays were enacted by clock-work: it was of course impossible to understand the manœuvreing; but I can well recollect this, that we were often in total darkness. This sometimes created rather an odd sort of feeling

among some of the tender-hearted ones, at what was to make its appearance; whether a ghost in *real earnest*, or only the notes of the *invisible girl* were to be distinguished.

In my younger days I have been at several Fetes: as well Royal as otherwise: the Horticultural Fetes, as well as *Holly Lodge*, have displayed their profusion and grandeur: in latter days I have witnessed the real pleasure on the faces of my own children and others at *Dome House* juvenile Fete, where its amiable and hospitable mistress reigned the dispenser of happiness, mirth and hilarity.

But of all the Fetes, to which I ever had the honour of being invited, and from which I experienced the greatest delight, was that given by our excellent old Queen—by her whose name will ever go down to posterity, as the mirror for future queens, a model of virtue to all succeeding ages. It was a Fete in which the whole nation participated—I mean that of the Jubilee—when our beloved sovereign had reigned over our land for fifty years. Through storm and

through sunshine, he had been our revered ruler: though at times, when the hand of God lay heavy upon him, and overwhelmed him with mental infirmity, and the vision of God's blessed light was taken from him—when the reins of government were placed in the hands of our late gracious monarch, as Regent of the land—still was he England's King.

It was a beautiful day in October, which witnessed the holiday of the Jubilee. Soon after daylight, the firing of the cannon, and huzzaing of the people, were to be heard in all directions. Windsor was crowded, not only by the high and mighty of the court, coming to pay their respects to royalty, but by the peasantry also, who came in flocks from the neighbouring villages, to partake of the festivities of *Bachelor's Acre*. This is a particular spot of ground, lying between Sheet Street and Peascod Street, almost in the centre of Windsor, and belonging, (by right of time immemorial, and service done to the state by the *Cœlibes* of former days,) to the Bachelors of Windsor of the

present time. This was the place assigned for the sports to take place. Bullocks roasted whole, and sheep by strings, like sausages surrounding a turkey, were among some of the substantials prepared for the multitude in the *Acre*. I have no occasion to remark that in this country, no feast ever goes off without a tolerable good potation—in this instance, be assured, that the old laudable custom was not omitted; but that *Ramsbottom's* hogsheads were very soon emptied of their contents in honour of the day.

As Etonians, we of course were not left out of the bill of fare, but participated in some of the fun going forward on that day. A whole holiday and additional commons fell to our share; but the best part of all were the evening entertainments, to which I before alluded, given by the Queen, and to which fifty of the head boys of the school were invited by royal mandate.

It was my good fortune to be the Captain of the school at that time, and as such, it was my

province to marshal my schoolfellows to the Queen's Lodge, at Frogmore. To this particular day, I often recur with pleasure; nay, I think I may add, with pride, as an era in my life, in which, I think I may with truth assert, that no other Etonian ever before had such a distinguished honour, and most probably never will. A king to reign fifty years, in these our days, is no common occurrence.*

It will perhaps be needless to remark on the difficulty which our little band experienced in its progress, marshalled by the author of these *Reminiscences*, through the crowded streets of Windsor. The mass of the populace, which absolutely covered the road the whole of the distance from Windsor to Frogmore, was so dense, that finding it almost an utter impossibility to reach the grounds in any reasonable time, to witness the festivities of the evening, I determined to solicit the aid of some of the Oxford

* In the Anglo-Saxon period of the history of England, we read of Cissa, the son of Ælla, from whom Chichester takes its name, reigning seventy-six years, and dying in the year 577, at the advanced age of 117.—*Dally's Chichester Guide.*

Blues, to act as our pioneers—this they immediately granted; and with their powerful heavy horses, soon cleared for us a passage to the desired goal.

To remark on the beauty of this evening scene, enlivened by the countless lamps, that, suspended from the branches of the trees, reflected themselves on the calm unruffled waters of the lakes—to tell of the various luxuries which the beautifully ornamented tents contained, and which were perhaps only in the power of royalty to command, and as on this singular occasion exerted to its utmost—to depict the exhilarating influence produced by the bands of music, Martial, Pandæan, and Tyrolese, stationed with great judgment, to aid and assist in this almost magic scene—to give an idea of the genuine delight, which as well warmed the hearts, as enlivened the countenances of Frogmore's guests, would be too great a task for me to perform.

Within a few weeks after this scene of joy, my *resignation* came from Cambridge, owing to the marriage of one of the Fellows of King's

College, thereby causing a vacancy in that body. A circumstance, which does not often occur, took place when my *resignation* arrived—there was no Provost of Eton at the time, the late Provost having died two days previous. I was therefore *ripped*,* according to the Eton phrase, by the Vice-Provost. I then bid adieu to the well-beloved as now well-remembered scenes and acquaintance of my boyhood; little imagining, when mounted on the coach for London, in all the unrestrained freedom of anticipated pleasure, casting a last look on the "distant spires and antique towers," that a day of adversity would ever arrive—that I should have to witness the deaths of parents and children—to endure the hard grasp of poverty in future life, I finally took my journey for *Alma Mater*, and was entered a Scholar of King's.

Thus end my *Reminiscences of Eton.* I have set down nought in malice: and should

* On leaving Eton for King's, the cloth gown then worn, is sown up in the front—the Provost then rips it up with a knife, and you are no longer an Eton boy.

they have availed to while away a passing hour and produce some few recollections of Eton, one out of *two* objects of the author will have been attained.

My little bark of life is daily speeding
Adown the stream, mid rocks and sands and eddies,
And gathering storms, and darkening clouds unheeding
Its quiet course, through winds and waves it steadies.
My love is with me, and my babes, whose kisses
Sweep sorrow's trace from off my brow, as fast
As gathering there; and hung upon the mast
Are harp and myrtle flowers, that shed their blessing
On the sweet air. Is darkness on my path?
There beams bright radiance from a star that hath
Its temple in heaven. As firm as youth
I urge my onward way.

Dr. Bowring's Poet. Trans.

[Since the first committal to paper of these pages, the mists which then obscured the Etonian's path, are now, by the reviving influence of old Eton friendship, beginning to clear away. A star of brightness is now arising, which he trusts "will lead to fortune."]

FINIS.

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