

and are contested with scarcely less zeal and enthusiasm. It is said that on one occasion a worthy paterfamilias journeyed to Cambridge during the May Term, to introduce the scion of his house to the venerable Master of the College which in former years he himself had graded. On arriving at the gate, he was surprised to find the porter's lodge in charge of one small urchin.

"Is the Master at home?" asked the parent. "No, sir," was the reply.

"Is the Tutor in his rooms?" "No, sir."

"Is the Dean at home?" "No, sir."

"Well, then, is the Bursar or any other of the Fellows in the College?" "No, sir," said the imperturbable child, "and the porter's gone out too; there's only me left."

"Goodness me! where have they gone?" exclaimed the bewildered old gentleman.

"All gone to the river, to see the races, sir," answered the boy.

Whether so great excitement is a usual occurrence even in the May week may perhaps be doubted, and it would certainly be abnormal on the occasion of a Long Vacation race, but the amusements of the period are nevertheless not without considerable interest. A few years since, an eccentric Don offered a series of prizes to the ancient dames who performed the duties of bed-makers at one of the Colleges. They were to be competed for in the largest of the Quads, and at the time appointed the greatest merriment was occasioned by the spectacle of several of the bed-makers, all of them well advanced in years, and normally of a grave demeanour, contending with zeal in foot-races round the gravelled walks. But this was an event which does not come into the ordinary curriculum of the Long.

Besides sports, the Long Vacation Debating Society

is an institution which is frequently productive of a good deal of amusement. In the ordinary College Debating Societies during the term, speeches are made only by those who wish to exercise their powers of oratory; but in the Long, the number of voluntary speakers is of course reduced, and it is frequently made obligatory for every member to speak in his turn, whatever may be the subject of debate. Maiden speeches are then accomplished, and though in some cases the compulsory commencement leads to performances of greater value, in others the confusion of ideas, and still more of language, is sometimes distressing, but more often amusing. At an Exeter Hall meeting a few years ago, considerable interruption was caused by an individual who persisted in moving an amendment which had been ruled out of order. The audience tried in vain to hawl him down; he was not to be quenched until the chairman, appreciating the situation, quietly said, "Gentlemen, if you will remain silent, and allow this person to hear his own voice, we shall have no further trouble." The advice was followed, and the amendment was heard of no more. The same trepidation not unfrequently overcomes a would-be orator in a College Debating Society, but as every one present has been, or may be the next minute, in a similar plight himself, the failure as well as the hilarity it causes are taken in equally good part.

Such, then, are the studies and amusements of the Long Vacation at Cambridge. It has been suggested, and forcibly urged, that it is advisable to form the Long Vacation into a fourth term. That is a question on which much may be said on both sides, but it is at any rate clear that a man who is disposed to employ his time to the best advantage, is not compelled to pass the four months of the Long in idleness.

A HOLIDAY VISIT TO OTFORD.



IN the beautiful valley of Holmsdale, about two miles from Sevenoaks, is one of the most ancient and picturesque villages in Kent. But its antiquity, and the beauty of its situation in the centre of a circle of hills which bound a delightful landscape, are not its only attractions, for

owing to the absence of convenient railway accommodation, it retains an unusual quaintness and rusticity.

Many of its inhabitants have never made a journey to London, although the metropolis is but twenty-two miles distant, while the few strangers who find their way into the village are chiefly artists who come upon it in their peregrinations, or natives who have emigrated to other places.

The village is called Otford. In olden times it was known as Otter Ford, Otteford, and Ottenford—the last two appellations frequently appearing in ancient documents; but the true etymology of the word is believed to be, "At the Ford," Otford probably being a favourite place for crossing the narrow winding stream of the Darenth upon which it is situated, in the days of the Saxons.

The first mention of Otford in history is in connection with the powerful and victorious Offa, King of Mercia. Offa was fond of warfare, and did not shrink from shedding blood; but his conscience always reproved his behaviour, and induced him to make munificent gifts to the Church by way of atone-

ment. He bestowed lands upon Hereford Cathedral, and founded the Abbey of St. Albans, with many other monasteries. Nevertheless, William of Malmesbury tells us, "rebellious against God, he endeavoured to remove the archiepiscopal see, formerly settled at Canterbury, to Lichfield; envying, forsooth, the men of Kent the dignity of the archbishopric." His hatred of the Kentish people was intense, and he took every opportunity of annoying them. At last he found an excuse for open war, and struck the death-blow to the Kingdom of Kent in a battle fought at Otford. The King of Kent was made prisoner, and some say he was carried by his conqueror to Mercia. This, however, is disputed; and there is also a difference as to which of the Kings of Kent Offa conquered, but he is most generally believed to be Edbrith, surnamed Pren. After his victory, Offa adopted his usual mode of penance for the blood he had shed. He granted Otford to the church of Canterbury as pasture—so it is expressed in the official document—for the bishop's hogs. Later on, in 1016, Otford was again the scene of a terrible conflict. Edmund, surnamed Ironside, passing the river Thames with his army, marched after Canute, the Danish king, through Surrey into Kent, and encountering the Danes at Otford made a great slaughter of them. The fields around bear evidence to the fury of the battle. Innumerable bones have been turned up by the plough; and when the turnpike road, which leads from Eynsford through Otford to Sevenoaks, was widened in 1767, many skeletons were found in the chalk cliffs on each side of it. Skeletons, with weapons lying near them, were also discovered when the cutting for a line of railway, belonging to the South-Eastern Company, was made in the neighbourhood.

The gift of Offa was the beginning of a connection between Otford and Canterbury, which continued until the Reformation. In the ninth century a powerful priest, who was a relation of Wilfred, Archbishop of Canterbury, got Otford into his possession; but the archbishop commanded him to restore it by will to its proper owners, the archbishop and monks of Canterbury, who lived together, and had all things in common.

There does not seem to have been any change in the ownership of Otford until after the Norman Conquest, when Lanfranc, an Italian archbishop, introduced different customs from those that had hitherto prevailed in England. He did not wish to live with the monks, and, consequently, there was a division of the property. Otford was apportioned to the archbishop; and in the survey of Domesday it is said that he held it "in demesne." It is described as being taxed at eight "sulings." Of arable land there appear to have been forty-two carucates—a carucate being as much as a team of horses could plough; a hundred and one "villeins" and eighteen "borderers" having forty-five carucates. It is also said that there were eight servants and six mills of seventy-two shillings, with fifty acres of meadow and wood for the pannage of a hundred and fifty hogs.

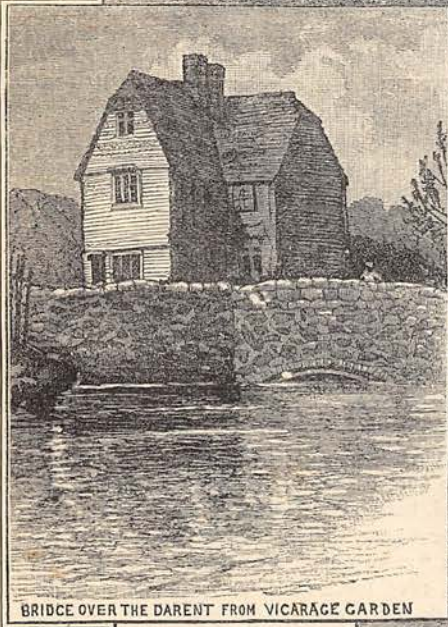
It is not known when the first house for the ac-

commodation of the archbishop was built in Otford, but it comes into prominence as a favourite residence of Thomas Becket in the twelfth century. Probably there was a manor-house erected before his time, but we cannot find any mention of it. When Becket was quite a young man, the Archbishop of Canterbury, finding he was "a youth of uncommon parts," and being captivated with his graceful and winning address, gave him the livings of St. Mary-le-Strand and Otteford in Kent. After his accession to the See of Canterbury, he seems to have recollected his first country living with some affection, for some records run as if the earliest archiepiscopal residence in Otford was built by him; and many traditions of the saint are yet to be found in the village. The place, it is said, was remarkable before his time for its want of water; but Thomas, like another Moses, struck his staff into the ground, and since that time Otford has been supplied with limpid streams, which may be seen rushing and sparkling in all directions. The place in which the staff was struck is still known as Becket's Well; but the peculiar construction of the enclosure which contains the water leaves little doubt as to its having been a Roman bath, which was possibly utilised by the popular saint. Pieces of Roman tile found in its proximity also seem to confirm this supposition. As the water of the well is believed to be of a medicinal quality, St. Thomas is said to have bathed in it for the benefit of his health; and in later times the Archbishops of Canterbury, when worn out with old age or sickness, used to retire to their manor of Otford for the same purpose. Other traditions relate how St. Thomas knelt one summer evening under the shade of a tree to perform his devotions, but was so disturbed by the singing of the nightingales that he gave them his archiepiscopal malediction, whereupon Philomel took flight, and has never since been heard in Otford. It is also said that the blacksmith mis-shod his mare, for which he received an anathema, and that no son of Tubal Cain since his day has had prosperity in the village. The force, however, of the saint's curses is beginning to be spent. The nightingale has resumed its song in Otford, and the present blacksmith is not only successful, but has been immortalised by Otto Weber in his painting of "The Casting of the Shoe."

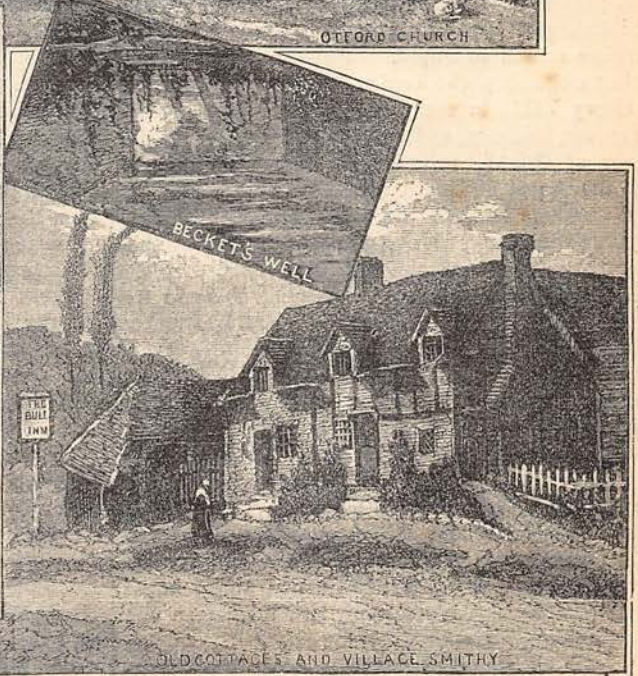
The archbishop's manor-house at Otford must have been a considerable place in Becket's time, although it is described as "mean" some centuries later. In evidence of this, Alanus relates that when Becket fell into disgrace with the king, the Bishops of London and Chichester came to him, declaring that if he would surrender up to the king his mansions at Otford and Wingham, he might have a chance of recovering the royal favour. That the Archbishops of Canterbury after Becket resided more or less at Otford is most certain. Archbishop Winchelsea entertained Edward I. here in great state. He died at Otford in 1313; and Simon Islip also spent his last days at Otford. The latter consecrated his nephew, William Whittesley, to the See of Rochester, in his private chapel at Otford.



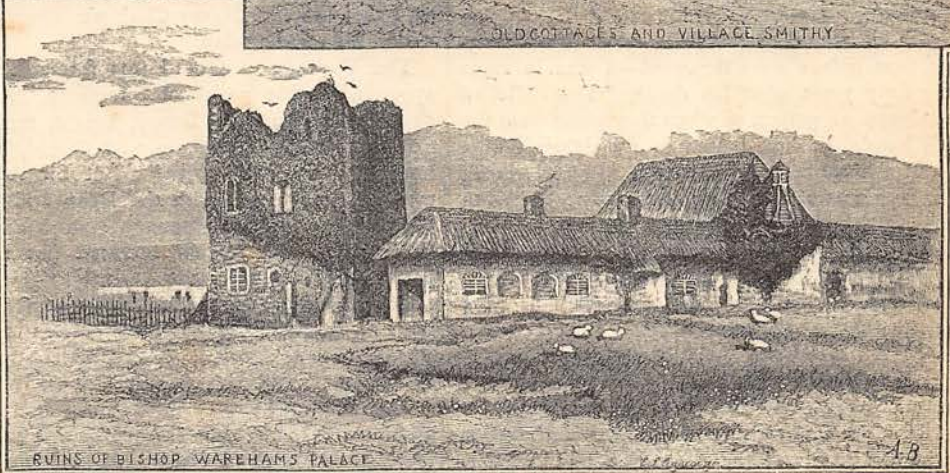
OTFORD CHURCH



BRIDGE OVER THE DARENT FROM VICARAGE GARDEN



OLD COTTAGES AND VILLAGE SMITHY



RUINS OF BISHOP WAREHAM'S PALACE

This same Whittesley came to be Archbishop of Canterbury; and he, too, is found at Otford in his old age, a confirmed invalid, when, in 1372, he consecrated Thomas de Arundel to the See of Ely, another bishop who, in his turn, became Archbishop of Canterbury. An old tomb-like structure in the chancel of Otford Church, without inscription, and with ornaments almost erased by time, is probably the resting-place of one of these prelates.

Archbishop Henry Deane, who was raised to the primacy in 1501, rebuilt the greater part of the manor-house; but his successor, Archbishop Warham, does not appear to have been satisfied with the house and its improvements, for he is said to have pulled it all down, except the walls of the hall and the chapel, to make room for a palace upon which he spent £33,000. This palace he intended to build at Canterbury, but the inhabitants disputed his right to the ground, and he therefore retired to Otford. Warham was probably the last archbishop who lived at Otford. Cranmer gave to Henry VIII., in exchange, whatever that means, the manor, landship, and seigniorship of Otford, and the manor of Otford Stuyens (*alias* Sergeants) Otford, with the chapel of Otford annexed to the parsonage of Shoreham; and all his other estates in Otford. Cranmer's secretary, Morice, remarks concerning this transaction: "My lord minded to have retained Knole unto himself, and said it was too small a house for his Majesty. 'Marry,' said the King, 'I had rather have it than this house'—meaning Otford—'for it standeth on better soil. This house standeth low, and is rheumatic, like unto Croydon, where I never could be without sickness; and as for Knole, it standeth on sound, perfect ground. If, therefore, I should make my abode here, as I mean to do now and then, I will live at Knole, and most of my house shall live at Otford.'" Morice adds, "By this means both these houses were delivered into the King's hands; and as for Otford, it is a notable, great, and ample house whose reparation yearly cost my lord more than one would think."

But the splendour of Archbishop Warham's magnificent new palace soon departed—it was in ruins scarcely forty years after his death. The chiselled stones, almost as perfect as when they came from the mason's hands, lie half buried in the débris of the court, and the carved oak has been ruthlessly taken away to form part of other buildings; some of it is to be found in the village inn, which possesses several Gothic chimney-pieces and elaborately-carved doors. There still stands, however, a tower which is relentlessly used as a smithy, and what appears to be a corridor, converted into cottages.

The Church of Otford is dedicated to St. Bartholomew; and before the Reformation it was famous for a miraculous image of that saint. The miracles performed by it are said to have affected the continuance of the human race and the proportion of the sexes. A cock was offered for a son, and a pullet for a daughter, and thus, as old Lambard says, the priest of Otford managed to purvey to himself all the poultry in the neighbourhood, the country women being as

stupid as the capons they brought. Henry VIII., coming one day to Otford, heard of this scandal, and ordered the superstitious image to be removed. The tower of the church is evidently older than Becket's time, but it was probably much improved by him. A fire is said to have partly destroyed the church in the reign of James I.; but it was restored in the succeeding reign, and the chief entrance was ornamented with an outer porch constructed of oak, which bears date 1637.

The oldest register begins at 1630, and on the fly-leaf it is written that marriages are prohibited from Advent Sunday until the 15th of January, from Septuagesima Sunday till the first Sunday after Easter, and from Rogation Sunday to Trinity Sunday. The handwriting seems to be that of an incumbent of Otford, whose name follows with the date, 1725.

Many of the entries in the registers are very curious. In an old book containing the assessments and parish accounts, we read that Goody Squibb got 2s. a week, and Goody Wright 1s. 6d., for acting as nurses. The former is also noticed as having been voted 1½d. for a new cap, and on another occasion 2½d. for mending the clerk's "britches." Thomas Hill, on his recovery from the small-pox, was voted 3d. for "a fool pott of beere;" and Thomas Norbury, the parson, has 1s. for churching "2 wimmin." In May, 1734, the same Thomas Norbury was paid out of the parish funds £1 15s. for "mariin Elezebeth Idels," and 11s. was added for the clerk's fees and other expenses. This was certainly an enormous sum for the work. The churchwardens also had their visitation expenses out of the parish funds. In the month of May, 1732, there is an entry for what was "laid out att the visitation." After lamb, veal, bacon, "2 hundreds ½ of Sparergrass," with "bred, butter, chese, greans, and dresing," come £1 11s. for "bear, wine, punch, and cards," and then 3s. 6d. for "more punch and bear." For the 7th of December, 1725, there is an entry of the marriage of Henry Clark and Sarah Thorp. A note in the register says that the said Henry Clark was ninety-nine years old on his wedding-day.

The Vicarage of Otford was formerly a chapelry appended to the parish of Shoreham. Edward VI. gave to Sir Anthony Denny, knight, the parsonage and advowson of Shoreham, with Otford, "to hold *in capite* by knight's service." But Sir Anthony immediately exchanged with the Dean and Chapter of Westminster for the advowson of Cheshunt, in Hertford; and since that time Otford has remained a possession of the Abbey.

There was a hospital for lepers at Otford in the reign of Henry II., and at a very early time there was a workhouse of a primitive kind, which provided food and shelter for all who were destitute.

The Rye, or Le Rye Manor, was formerly an important family residence in the parish; but it is now represented only by a few dilapidated barns. In the reign of King Edward III. four marks were appointed to be paid out of this tenement, which was held by the archbishop, to Adam Fleming, for celebrating divine service in the chapel of Apuldrefelde for the

good estate of the king In the time of Richard III., the Rye House estate was possessed by John Palmer, by one of whose descendants it was sold to Henry VIII. It has since passed through other hands, and is now the property of the chief landowner in the parish, Samuel Wreford, Esq., of Broughton House.

The Broughton Estate, from which Mr. Wreford's

house takes its name, was formerly the property of Sir George Harper, who conveyed it to King Henry VIII. in exchange for lands in Essex.

It was afterwards possessed by the Polhills, who have several family monuments in Otford Church, the chief being one with three finely-sculptured figures, recording that the deceased was a great-grandson of Oliver Cromwell.

H A R V E S T .



LAST night we saw the sunlight fall
Beyond the gate and old stone wall,
And brighten on the stooks of
wheat,
Ripe after days of brooding heat ;
And in the lane we lingered long,
Then homeward turned, a sleepy
throng.

Yet glad to hail the joyful day,
We rose while still the dawn was
grey,

And roused the house, a merry band,
The happiest children in the land ;
And all were dressed, and breakfast done,
Before the day had well begun.

The sun looked out, and quickly dried
The gleaming dew, and glorified

The broad array of clustered sheaves,
And pierced the lane's green roof of leaves,
And shone in strength, as one and all
Trooped to the gate and moss-grown wall.

And mother came, with Margery
Our eldest sister, pleased to see
The busy harvesters and hear
Our cries of triumph shrill and clear,
As heavy waggons loaded high
With rustling sheaves came rumbling by.

Late in the golden afternoon,
Yet long before the rising moon,
The last great waggon-load was piled,
And, lovely still, the sunlight smiled
Above the toilers resting there,
And those broad acres reaped and bare.

J. R. EASTWOOD.

CHECKMATED.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.
APARTMENTS TO LET.

WISH I was
a man !”

“A man,
my dear !”

“Yes ; I'd
soon find out
what Roger
Grey means.”

“R o g e r
Grey, my
dear ?”

“Y e s —
don't you see
what an im-
pression he
has made on
Cecilia ? I'm
sure if things
go on like this

her health will quite break down. Sometimes I think it would be better to ask Ned not to bring him down so often ; but then he may mean something by his attentions, and one doesn't wish to discourage him ;

it would certainly be a desirable match for the dear girl. I did hope when I arranged about her staying with his mother to see Dr. B—— that something would come of it.”

“By-the-by, did she see much of him then ?”

“No ; as it happened he was only able to dine at home one evening that week.”

“Well, Constantina, I must say I never saw anything specially marked in his way with Cecilia ; he's so very friendly with us all. And he's just the sort of man to show kindness to any one at all weak or ailing.”

“But why should he come so often ?”

“Why, you see, my dear, it must be a great pleasure to a man who's hard at work all the week in town to spend Sunday in the country ; and then he and Edward are so fond of each other, and I'm sure your brother couldn't have a better friend. I really think, my dear—though, of course, I have great reliance on your judgment—it would be better if Cissie dismissed this idea from her mind.”

Mrs. James did not venture to add that only the day before, her son had remarked that he was sure Cecilia's incessant novel-reading was at the bottom of all her lack-a-daisical complaints.

“It's too late for that, mother,” replied Miss Con-