



ETON COLLEGE.

I.—HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE.

By H. C. MAXWELL LYTE, C.B.



ETON, the largest and the most celebrated of the public schools of England, ranks as the second in point of antiquity, Winchester alone being older. It was founded in 1440 by Henry VI. as a visible token of his dutiful affection towards Holy Church, and a lasting memorial of his assumption of the reins of government after a very long period of tutelage. John Langton, master of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, is said to have suggested to him the establishment of a secular college in that university, and there were at his court several more distinguished men who were glad to support any scheme for the advancement of learning, then much neglected in England. The young king himself must, however, be credited with the idea of emulating William of Wykeham, by founding colleges at Cambridge and Eton, which should be closely connected together, just as New College at Oxford was connected with the sister college at Winchester.

In selecting Eton as the site of one of his proposed colleges, the royal founder was influenced mainly by its proximity to his own birthplace and residence at Windsor, for the place, lying low and being liable to frequent floods, had few natural advantages. It did not even belong to him, either as King of England or as Duke of Lancaster, and in order to carry out his scheme he had to purchase the advowson of the parochial church, as well as many separate pieces of land in the immediate neighbourhood. After visiting Winchester College, which was to serve as his model, in July, 1440, he issued the formal Charter of Foundation on the 11th of October in that year. "The King's College of Our Lady of Eton beside Windsor" was thereby created a corporation capable of holding property in perpetuity, and consisting of a Provost, ten Fellows, four clerks, six choristers, a schoolmaster, twenty-five poor scholars, and a like number of poor infirm men. The scheme may thus be said to have combined the characteristics of a college of secular priests, an eleemosynary school for boys, and an almshouse. Before long the number of scholars was raised to seventy,



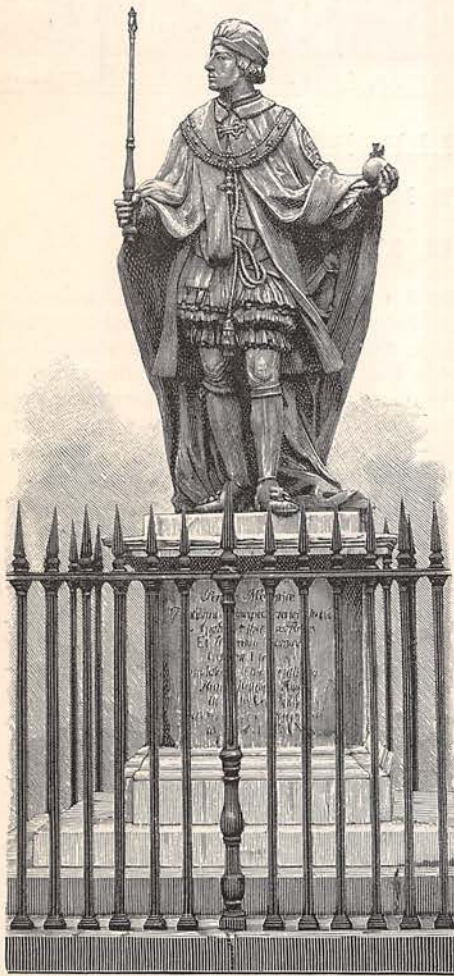
FRONT OF THE UPPER SCHOOL.

and an usher, or lower master, was appointed to assist the schoolmaster in their education. Ampler provision was also made for the services of the collegiate church, by the addition of ten chaplains, six clerks, and ten choristers, to the normal number previously appointed. It should, however, be remarked that the full complement of members was never attained even at the most prosperous period in the history of Eton.

The charter of foundation was followed by a series of charters of endowment, granting to the college lands, rents, and advowsons, in different parts of England,

mainly derived from the alien priories which had been suppressed and vested in the crown in the reign of Henry V. Secular immunities were obtained from the English parliament; indulgences and other ecclesiastical privileges were obtained, for a price, from the Pope. A code of statutes was also issued, which, nominally at least, continued in force from 1442 to 1872. During the long interval between these two dates, the college of Henry VI. maintained a continuous existence, although seriously threatened at times by political changes which affected the nation at large.

Henry VI. himself did not live to see the completion of his own design, and the very fact that Eton was a Lancastrian foundation sufficed to discredit it in the eyes of adherents of the House of York. Edward IV., disregarding a written promise of protection which he had given to the Provost and Fellows on the eve of his triumphal entry into London in February 1461, resolved to suppress the college, and actually obtained from the Pope a bull sanctioning its annexation to St. George's Chapel at Windsor. Many of the estates granted to Eton were taken away, never to be recovered, and movable goods, such as bells, tapestry and vestments, were transferred to Windsor. Nevertheless the college survived the crisis. The King was somehow propitiated, and induced to acknowledge that he had acted upon erroneous information, and a new Pope authorised the Archbishop of Canterbury to annul the recent bull of union if he should find just cause to do so. Some of the confiscated property was restored; the Provost and Fellows obtained the arrears of their salaries; and the regular election of scholars was resumed. Edward IV. himself visited



STATUE OF HENRY VI. BY BIRD.

Eton several times, and the college testified its gratitude for his favour by causing his arms to be engraved upon a new seal, substituted for one which bore a figure of the unfortunate founder, Henry VI. The loss of revenue, however, at this period, has often since been pleaded as an excuse for the consequent reduction in the number of Fellowships from ten to seven, and other similar infractions of the statutes.

Property, which is now far more valuable than that confiscated by Edward IV., was alienated in 1531, when by an exchange with Henry VIII. the college conveyed to him the site now occupied by St. James's Palace, together with a hundred and fifty-eight acres of land immediately adjacent, and some outlying fields at Knightsbridge, Chelsea and Fulham. A few years later, twenty acres at St. Pancras and St. Marylebone were sold to the Crown for 52*l.* Happily the college still retains about a hundred acres near Primrose Hill, which, like the rest, had formed part of the posses-

sions of the lepers' hospital of St. James in the fields of Westminster, granted to Eton by Henry VI.

In 1545, an Act of Parliament vesting in the Crown all chantries, free chapels, hospitals, and colleges, placed Eton at the mercy of Henry VIII., and his commissioners came early in the following year to make a report on the collegiate revenue, and a detailed inventory of the ornaments and plate. No further steps, however, seem to have been taken in the matter during his lifetime, and, although Eton was again threatened at the beginning of the next reign, it was eventually exempted by name



THE COLLEGE, FROM SHEEPS BRIDGE.

from the operation of the Act for the suppression of colleges, chantries and hospitals. In 1642, and again in 1649, it was specifically exempted from the operation of ordinances of the House of Commons for the seizure and sale of the property of ecclesiastical corporations, and it retained its ancient organisation almost unaltered for more than two centuries longer.

According to the original statutes, the Provost of Eton was to be a priest, and a graduate in Divinity or Canon Law, freely elected by the Fellows from among the members or the former members, of one of the two sister foundations of Henry VI. In point of fact, however, many of the Provosts have not had the statutory qualifications, and most of them have owed their appointment to the influence of the Crown.

Henry Sever, who was nominated the first Provost in 1440, was before long succeeded

by William Waynflete, who had been the first schoolmaster, and, although the latter left Eton as early as 1447, on his elevation to the important see of Winchester, he continued to take a fatherly interest in the welfare of the college, not only during the reign of Henry VI., but also during the troublous period that succeeded the accession of Edward IV. Himself the liberal founder of one of the largest colleges at Oxford, Waynflete ranks among the benefactors of Eton second only to Henry VI. Lupton's Tower, facing the school-yard, and Lupton's Chapel preserve the name of the sixth Provost, Roger Lupton. His successor, Robert Aldrich, afterwards Bishop of Carlisle, was the first Provost who had been educated at Eton and King's conformably to the statutes. Upon his resignation, the Fellows were commanded by Edward VI. to elect a man who was not connected with either of the colleges of Henry VI. and not even a priest. The King's nominee, Thomas Smith, who was soon afterwards knighted and appointed Secretary of State, caused much scandal by bringing a wife to live in a college intended for the clergy; and he eventually found it necessary to resign, in the stricter reign of Mary. Henry Cole, who succeeded him, was in his turn ejected upon the accession of Elizabeth, to make room for William Bill, a courtly divine who was at one and the same time Provost of Eton, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, Dean of Westminster, and Chief Almoner to the Queen. Richard Bruerne, the next Provost, resigned on the appointment of a royal commission of inquiry, and William Day, his successor, on promotion to the see of Winchester.

In 1596, Elizabeth gave orders for the election of Henry Savile, Warden of Merton College, Oxford, who, although a layman and an alien, proved an admirable Provost, and made the name of Eton famous among learned men throughout Europe by a noble edition of the works of St. John Chrysostom, printed at a press which he had established in the stable yard in the house now occupied by the head-master. Thomas Murray, who succeeded Sir Henry Savile, had no claim to promotion save that of having been tutor to the Prince of Wales. After his death, in 1622, the Provostship remained vacant for fifteen months, there being at least six candidates for the place, all laymen of at least knightly rank, more or less connected with the Court. By far the most illustrious of the number was the ex-Chancellor, Francis Bacon, Lord St. Albans, but the King's choice eventually fell upon Sir Henry Wotton, well known in his own day as an experienced diplomatist and a man of letters, and since immortalized as the subject of one of Isaac Walton's *Lives*. Wotton's successor, Richard Steward, a divine highly trusted by Charles I., was ejected by the Parliament in 1644, and replaced by a member of the dominant party, Francis Rous, who figures in political history as Speaker of the "Barebones Parliament," and a member of Cromwell's House of Lords, and in literary history as the author of a metrical translation of the Psalms which is still used in Scotland.

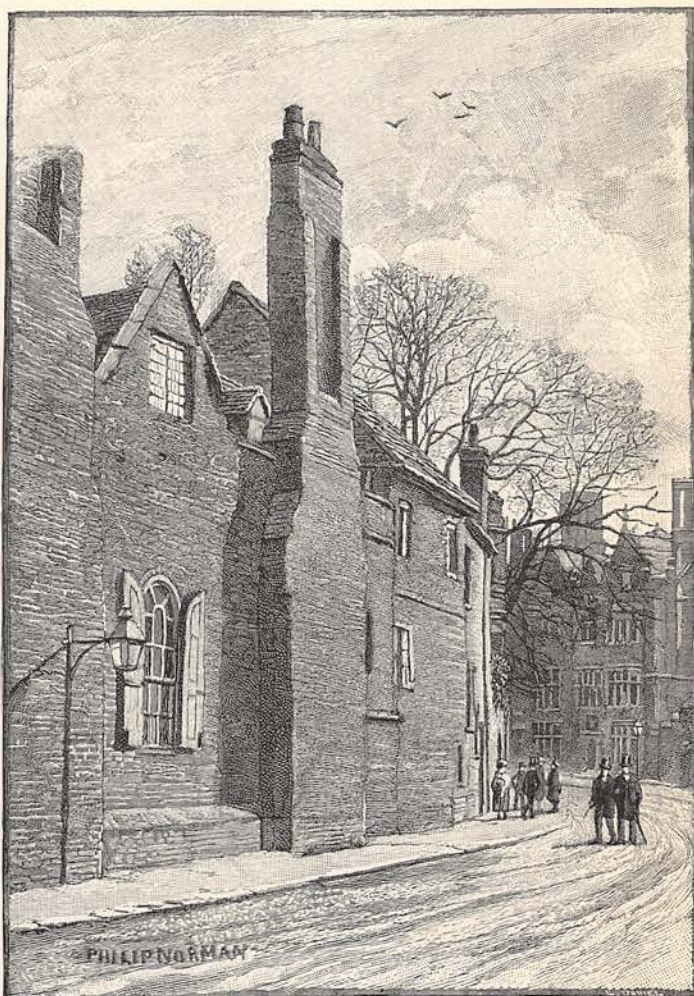
Rous was succeeded by an Independent minister named Nicholas Lockyer, who resigned quietly, in order to avoid expulsion, upon the Restoration of Charles II., by whom the Provostship was bestowed upon Nicholas Monk, brother of the celebrated General. Few of the subsequent Provosts have enjoyed any great reputation beyond the limits of their own domain, although Francis Hodgson is remembered as a friend of Lord Byron, and Edward Craven Hawtrej, his immediate successor, as a collector of books and a friend of literary men.

Next in rank and power after the Provost came the Fellows, whom he was bound to consult in all matters of importance. By the statutes of Henry VI., the Fellows were required to be secular priests, and graduates chosen from among the members or former members of Eton College or King's College. One of them was to be Vice-Provost, a second Precentor, a third Sacristan, and two others Bursars. All of them were to reside continually at Eton, to perform and attend certain services in the collegiate church, and to dine and sup together in the hall. They were not, however, directly charged with the education of the scholars. On the whole, the founder's directions as to the tenure of Fellowships have been obeyed more exactly than those as to the tenure of the Provostship. An important change in their position was, however, made in the reign of Edward VI., when they arrogated to themselves a right to marry, which was not enjoyed by the Fellows of King's, or indeed by the Fellows of other colleges at Oxford and Cambridge. And again, although they had solemnly sworn not to seek or accept any dispensation from the observance of the statutes, the Fellows of 1566 obtained from Queen Elizabeth license to hold a benefice apiece not exceeding a certain yearly value. This, of course, in its turn involved long periods

of non-residence at Eton. The old idea of collegiate life received its death-blow in 1646, when some of the Fellows discontinued the practice of dining and supping together at the high table in the hall, finding it pleasanter to receive the value of their "commons" in money, and take their meals in their private houses in the Cloisters. Soon after this, several of the Fellows were ejected by the Parliament on account of their adherence to the King, and their refusal to subscribe the "Engagement," the most eminent of the loyalist sufferers being the "ever-memorable" John Hales, one of the apostles of the latitudinarian party of the Church of England. The intruding Puritans were in their turn ejected at the Restoration, when the influence of the Crown became for a while paramount in the election of Fellows. In the eighteenth century, Fellowships came to be regarded as retiring pensions for those assistant-masters who had sufficient interest to obtain them. Each of the seven Fellows, moreover, usually held one of the ecclesiastical benefices of which the advowson was vested in the college. On the other hand, it should be noted, in justice to a corporation now practically defunct, that many of the Fellows have at different times and in various ways proved themselves notable benefactors to the College.

A royal commission, appointed in 1861, to inquire into the endowments, administration, and educational system of the nine public schools of England, paved the way for an Act of Parliament, which, seven years later, empowered certain persons to frame new constitutions. A Governing Body was accordingly created, consisting of the Provosts of Eton and King's, and nominees of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the Royal Society, the Lord Chief Justice, and the Eton masters, with four other members added by co-optation. "The King's College of Our Lady of Eton beside Windsor" has been suppressed, and the great school of Eton is now controlled by a code of statutes issued in 1872 by its new rulers. The Provostship, however, has been retained, under somewhat altered conditions, and the other ten members of the governing body are styled Fellows. Three Fellows elected under the old statutes still survive, but they will have no successors.

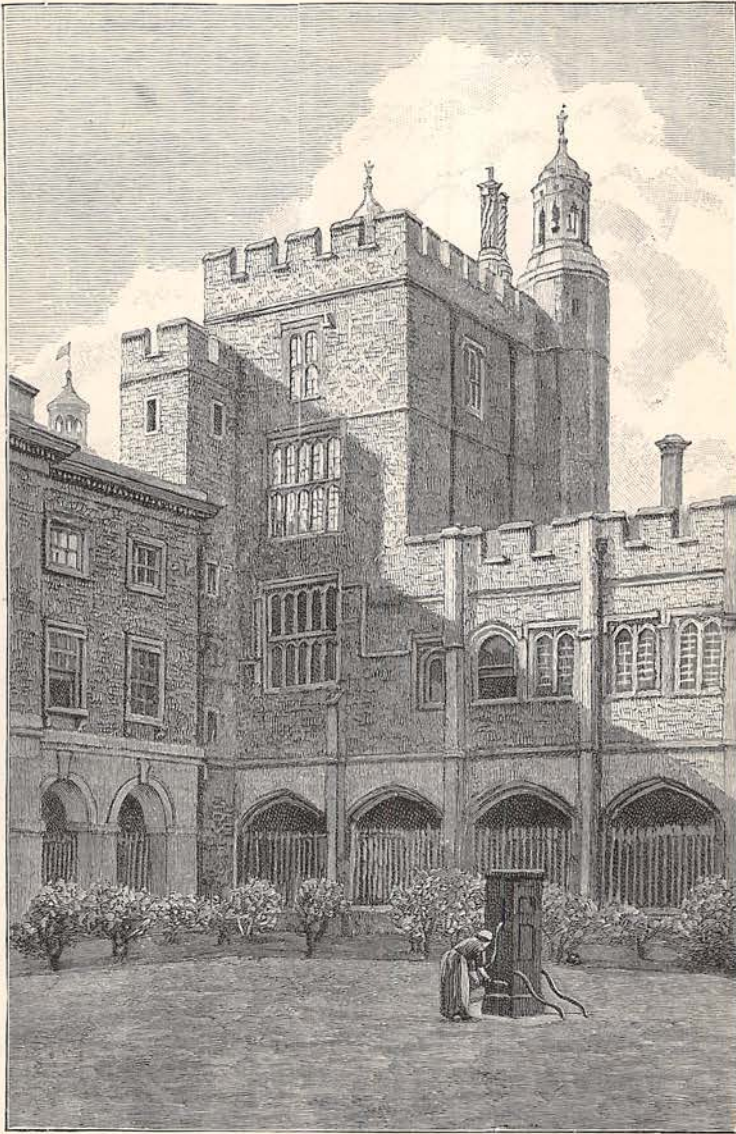
Nothing need be said here about the chaplains, the clerks, and the choristers, except that the old statutes concerning them have been persistently disregarded since the Reformation, and that the chaplains derive their singular appellation of "Conducts"



PART OF THE HEAD-MASTER'S HOUSE, FROM THE SLOUGH ROAD.

from the Latin adjective *conductitii*, which implies that they are hired to perform the services of the church.

A list of the head-masters of Eton gives the names of several who have afterwards become Provosts, six out of the last ten having been thus promoted to the more honourable but less lucrative position. Several others have become Provosts of the sister college at Cambridge. Among the remainder may be noticed William Horman,



LUPTON'S TOWER, FROM THE CLOISTERS.

the author of a schoolbook entitled *Vulgaria Puerorum*, which had a considerable sale in the time of Henry VIII., Richard Coxe, afterwards Dean of Christ Church and Bishop of Ely, and Nicholas Udall, the author of the earliest English comedy—*Ralph Roister Doister*—which seems to have been composed for representation by the scholars at Eton. To William Malim, who was head-master in 1561, is due a very curious and interesting account of the studies and customs of the school in the middle of the sixteenth century. By far the most famous head-master of recent times was John Keate, who ruled the school with extraordinary vigour from 1809 to 1834.

The younger boys constituting the Lower School have from an early period been subject to the usher, under-master, or lower-master. It is impossible to ascertain the date at which the head-master and the usher—the only teachers provided by the original statutes—first found it necessary to seek external help in the task of instructing the boys committed to their care. In 1718 there were as many as eight assistant-masters, none of whom were officially recognised by the college, their emoluments being derived principally from the parents and guardians of their respective pupils. Gradually the classical assistant-masters acquired considerable authority over the boys, delegated to them by the head-master and the usher, and a position much higher than that of the writing-masters or the teachers of French, drawing, dancing, and fencing, whose classes did not form part of the regular curriculum.

Education at Eton was, until a very recent period, confined almost exclusively to the ancient languages of Greece and Rome; Homer, Virgil, and Horace, being the authors most diligently studied, and special attention being devoted to the composition of Latin verses. Mathematics were not made compulsory until 1851, and the force of old associations continued so strong that the assistants in the mathematical school were not until many years later placed upon an equality with the other assistant-masters. French was made part of the regular work of the school by Dr. Balston about twenty-three years ago, and his successor introduced physical science. Now there are some fifty-two assistant-masters, of whom eleven are teachers of mathematics, five of physical science, four of French, and three of German. Boys destined for the army pursue studies somewhat different from those of their schoolfellows.

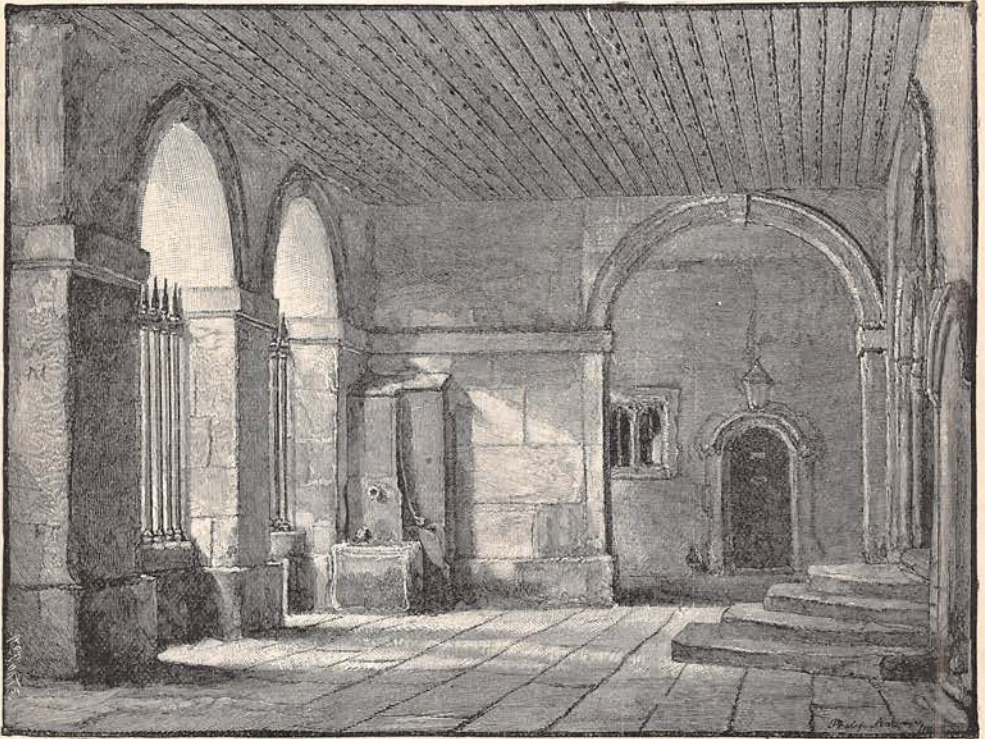
The seventy scholars who formed so important a part of the amended scheme of Henry VI. were required by him to be poor and needy, but of good character, and fairly instructed in Latin grammar and plain-song before admission. An election was to be held at Eton once a year, about the end of July, by the Provosts of Eton and King's and two other representatives of each college, who were at the same time to make choice of senior scholars of Eton to fill any places at King's actually vacant, or likely to become vacant, during the next twelvemonth. Any scholar of Eton who had not been elected to King's before attaining the age of eighteen was to be superannuated. Such in brief were the regulations observed from 1443 to 1872, except during the troublous periods from 1459 to 1465, and from 1642 to 1644. The benefits of a scholarship at Eton were professedly a free education, with free lodging, food, and raiment, and a fair chance of succession to a lucrative place at Cambridge. These scholarships were therefore in great request in the early part of the seventeenth century, and the electors were beset with the importunities of parents and patrons. In course of time, however, the interests of the scholars were sacrificed to those of the Provost, the Fellows, and the head-master, whose emoluments continued to increase while the boys committed to their care were badly fed, badly lodged, and compelled to pay for most of the necessaries of life. In the absence, moreover, of any proper supervision, there grew up an organised system of tyranny and bullying which rendered the existence of the younger scholars in college almost intolerable. Under these circumstances their number declined visibly, and in 1841 there were only two candidates for thirty-five vacancies on the foundation of Henry VI.

To Francis Hodgson, who was elected Provost in 1840, is primarily due the vast improvement in the condition of the scholars, or collegers, which was effected in the course of the next few years. Better food was provided for the hall; breakfast and tea were supplied at a very low charge; and servants were engaged to perform some of the duties previously imposed upon the younger boys. The domestic superintendence of the collegers was entrusted to an assistant-master, and a matron was appointed to attend to their wants. Long Chamber, a dormitory containing no less than fifty-two beds, notorious for its filth and discomfort, was considerably curtailed, and separate rooms were provided for forty-nine boys by the erection of a new wing with funds obtained by a public subscription. Before long, there were sixty candidates at electiontide for a few vacancies. The remaining portion of Long Chamber was divided into cubicles in 1861.

Since the reforms of the early part of the present reign, there has been a gradual but very marked change in the social position occupied by the collegers towards their schoolfellows. Various badges of inferiority, such as the obligation to wear thick black cloth gowns, even out of doors, have been removed, and the old animosity between collegers and "oppidans" has been appeased. The statutes of 1872 make no

mention of poverty among the necessary qualifications for a scholarship, and parents of independent means rejoice when their sons obtain places on the foundation at Eton. Admitted after a severe competitive examination, and specially encouraged in habits of industry, the seventy collegers generally win a large proportion of the prizes and other distinctions that are offered to Etonians, and maintain the high reputation of their old school in the class lists at Oxford and Cambridge. A certain number of places at King's are still reserved for scholars of Eton, but many of the latter now go to other colleges.

It is remarkable that Henry VI. made arrangements in the statutes not only for the maintenance and education of the seventy poor scholars belonging to the foundation, but also for the gratuitous instruction in grammar of other boys resorting to Eton from different parts of the realm, and paying for their own board and lodging. A limited number of *Commensales*, or commoners of an upper class, the sons of noblemen or gentlemen, were to be allowed to sleep within the college, and to sit at the



PUMP IN THE CLOISTERS.

second table with the chaplains, the usher, and the clerks, while others of a lower class were to sit with the scholars and the choristers, sleeping apparently in private houses in the town of Eton. In the course of the great Civil War, the *Commensales* of the upper class disappeared altogether, and the "oppidans," or *Commensales* of the lower class, ceased to take their meals in the hall. The total number of boys at Eton has fluctuated greatly from time to time according to the general prosperity of the country and the popularity of the head-master in power. In 1678 it was 202, and in 1718 it was 353. The collapse of the South Sea Scheme caused an immediate reduction of almost 50. Under Dr. Barnard, whom Horace Walpole calls "the Pitt of masters," the number rose in eleven years from about 300 to over 500; but after his time, in 1775, it was once more as low as 246. Between 1823 and 1833 it increased from 510 to 627; in 1834 it fell to 486, and in 1836 to 444, mainly in consequence of severe criticisms on the Eton system of education. Dr. Hawtrey was therefore justly proud when, in the twelfth year of his administration, the school list recorded the unprecedented number of 777 names. Although the next few years showed a considerable decline, 801 was reached in 1859, and 908 in 1871. The actual number now is verging upon 1,000.

Until recently, some of the boarding-houses were kept by assistant-masters, the remainder by "dominies" or "dames," who took no part in the work of education and had little or no disciplinary jurisdiction. The boys, therefore, who boarded in dames' houses had as their tutors assistant-masters residing elsewhere. Now, although there remains only one female dame, the teachers of mathematics, science and French, are for some purposes accounted dames. Every boy—collegers and oppidans alike—has a tutor, who is responsible for him throughout his career at Eton; he is successively taught by different masters as he rises from one division of the school to another. The head-master of Eton does not receive boarders into his house.

The sixth form has for a considerable period been limited to twenty, ten collegers and ten oppidans, but the arrangement and names of the other forms have been changed from time to time. At present, the fifth form comprises the first hundred, upper, middle, and lower divisions, and three army classes. Below it ranks the remove. The fourth form, which is divided into upper, middle, and lower, and the third form are subject to the lower-master. There is no longer a second form or a



HEAD-MASTER'S HOUSE AND COLLEGE BUILDINGS, FROM WESTON'S YARD.

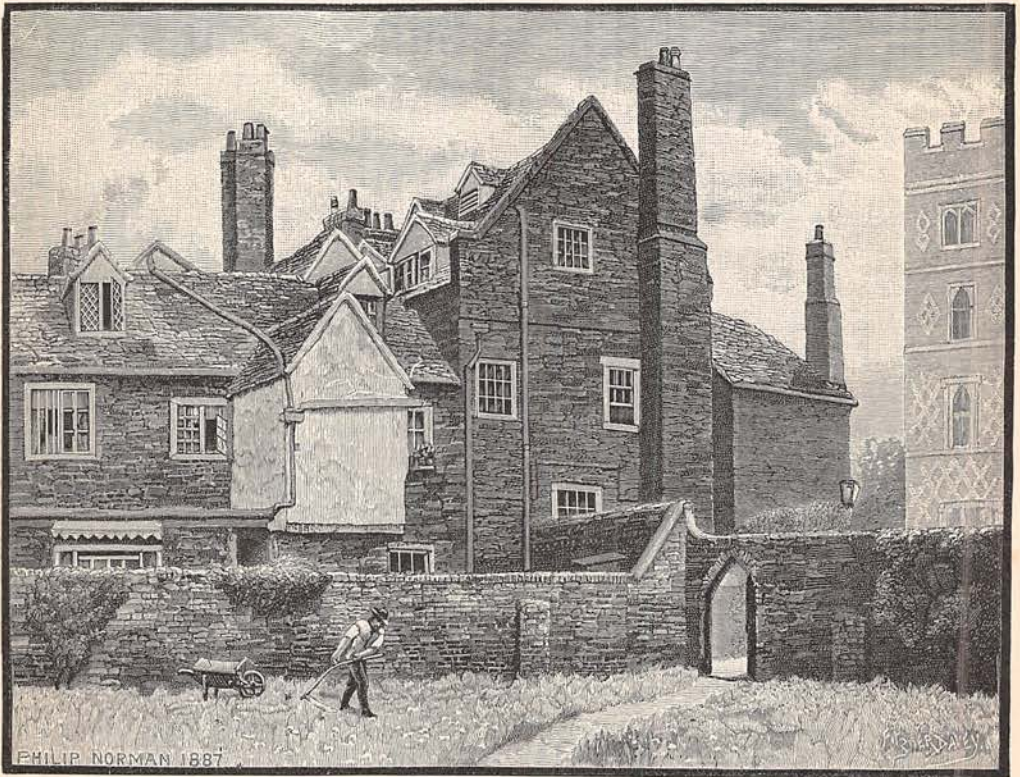
first. Certain unwritten but well-established rules regulate the right of fagging exercised by members of the sixth and fifth forms. These last have very little monitorial authority.

All the ancient buildings of Eton College lie on the eastern side of the high road from Windsor to Slough. The most conspicuous of them is the church, or chapel, which consists of a large choir and a short nave or "ante-chapel," built of grey stone in the late Gothic style generally termed Perpendicular. Mullioned windows, lofty and broad, alternate in the choir with massive buttresses terminating in pinnacles which rise high above the roof. Upon the original establishment of the college, the old parochial church of Eton was converted into a collegiate church, and accordingly somewhat altered within. From the first, however, the royal founder contemplated the erection of an edifice more suitable to the wants of a corporation of secular clergy and a large grammar-school. A formal document issued under the Great Seal of England in March, 1448, gives the dimensions of a church which was then in course of construction. Before long, however, the King resolved to enlarge the fabric so considerably as to necessitate the sacrifice of most of the work actually accomplished. This second design was in its turn laid aside in favour of another conceived in a more magnificent spirit. According to this last, the church of Eton was to comprise a choir 150 feet long by 40 feet broad, within the walls, and a nave 168 feet

long by 40 broad, with an aisle on either side 20 feet broad. The nave would thus have been equal in size to that of the cathedral church of Lincoln, while the aisles would have been broader than those of that church, or indeed of any other in the kingdom except York Minster. The whole edifice would have been much larger than King's College Chapel at Cambridge, with which it may most fitly be compared.

Henry VI. himself saw the new choir almost finished, but the Wars of the Roses caused a long interruption of the work. At last, in the reign of Edward IV., Bishop Waynflete, at his own expense, provided a wooden roof for the choir, and made the first bay of the projected nave into a vestibule, or "ante-chapel," somewhat similar to the corresponding portions of New College and All Souls' College at Oxford.

Since Waynflete's time the exterior has not been much altered, save by the addition of Lupton's Chapel between two buttresses on the north. The interior, on



OLD BOARDING-HOUSE IN WESTON'S YARD OCCUPIED BY MR. ARTHUR COCKSHOTT.

the other hand, has undergone many vicissitudes representing successive changes of national opinion in matters of religion and ecclesiastical art. It assumed its present general appearance about forty years ago, after a "restoration" which destroyed little except some unsuitable woodwork that had been placed there in 1699 and 1700. The stained glass of the great east window was the result of a subscription; other windows have been filled with better glass by private munificence. The choir contains only two sepulchral monuments, that of Provost Murray, a fine specimen of the Jacobean style, and that of Provost Hawtrey. In the ante-chapel there is a marble statue of Henry VI. by Bacon, a colossal effigy of Provost Goodall by Weeks, and a plain stone in memory of Sir Henry Wotton, with a remarkable inscription expressing his detestation of religious controversy. Etonian officers who fell in the Crimea are commemorated by a series of illuminated shields on the walls of the ante-chapel; a solid stone screen designed by the late Mr. Street is a memorial to those who lost their lives in the service of their country in the Zulu War, the Afghan War, and the Boer War.

Until 1868, all the boys were required to attend service in chapel at 11 and at 3 on

Sundays and holidays, and at 3 on half-holidays. Saturday was an inviolable half-holiday, and Tuesday and Thursday were usually half-holidays; but the normal arrangements were liable to be thrown out of gear by the occurrence of a Saint's Day, for not only was the day itself observed as a holiday, but its eve was accounted a half-holiday. Inasmuch, moreover, as some of the holidays were avowedly of secular origin, it is not surprising that service in chapel was regarded by many as a mere substitute for "absence," or roll-call. A reform of the Eton Calendar was effected in 1868, when a short daily service at 9.25 A.M. was substituted for the casual week-day services mentioned above. The chapel has long ceased to afford accommodation for the whole school, and the younger boys have had to worship elsewhere. In this connexion it may be noted that a mission at Hackney Wick is supported by a subscription raised at Eton.

Upon the north side of the ante-chapel, and almost parallel with it, is a building which was erected in 1689, to replace a very similar one that had been very insecurely



MR. A. COEKSHOTT'S HOUSE FROM THE GARDEN.

built a few years before. On the ground floor there are small rooms looking westward into the Long Walk, and an arcade along the school-yard, which lies on the east, and is approached by a gateway in the middle. Nearly the whole of the first floor is occupied by the upper school, which measures about 81 feet by 25. A great raised desk at the northern end is the official throne, or pulpit, of the head-master, and there are smaller desks for four assistant-masters, so that five classes could after a fashion be held there simultaneously. When Dr. Keate was in charge of the school, he sometimes had as many as one hundred and ninety big boys in his own division, and the uproar that prevailed, especially at the time of Windsor Fair and on the Fifth of November, may be more easily imagined than described. His successor, Dr. Hawtrey, abandoned the attempt to teach so large a number of boys, increased the staff of assistant-masters, and withdrew with a compact division to a smaller and quieter room.

Since the erection of a block of new schools in 1861, and their subsequent enlargement, the upper school has gradually fallen into disuse, and Etonians of the present day seldom enter it except at the time of "trials," or examinations, and other formal occasions. It is, however, thronged once a year—on the 4th of June, when some of the senior boys, attired in evening clothes, with silk stockings and knee-breeches, recite selected passages in prose and verse before a large audience of school-fellows and

visitors. Its walls are an interesting memorial of the past, for the oak panelling is covered with the names of old Etonians originally carved at will by the boys themselves when leaving school, but afterwards carved for them by a professional with regard to chronological arrangement. Above the panelling is a series of marble busts some set up during the present reign in commemoration of eminent Etonians. Statesmanship is represented by Sir Robert Walpole, Lord Chatham, Lord North, C. J. Fox, Lord Grenville, Lord Wellesley, and Lord Grey; seamanship by Lord Howe; law by Lord Camden and Lord Denman; divinity by Bishop Pearson and Henry Hammond; literature by Fielding, Gray, Porson, and Hallam. These, however, are but a few of the great men who have been educated at Eton.

Beyond the head-master's desk in the upper school is a smaller room, still called the library, although no longer stored with books. Here, in extreme cases, flogging is administered by the head-master, none of the assistants being empowered to inflict corporal punishment. The victim, kneeling on a wooden step, called the "block," is "held down" by two junior collegers, and a senior colleger hands to the head-master the necessary birch or birches. A former block was destroyed during a rebellion in 1783, and fragments of it were distributed as trophies among the boys concerned. Its successor was cleverly carried away by the late Lord Waterford and two other old Etonians in 1836, and it is now preserved at Curraghmore as a historical relic. Flogging was for many generations the normal punishment for almost all offences, great or small, for serious breaches of discipline and for mistakes in Latin construing. Many amusing stories—some of them true, more of them apocryphal—are told of Dr. Keate and the vigorous manner in which he wielded the birch, and it is remembered that he suppressed an attempted rebellion by successively flogging more than eighty boys in the middle of a summer night in 1832. Since his time, there has been a gradual decrease in the number of floggings administered by subsequent head-masters, and Dr. Warre seldom resorts to this form of punishment.

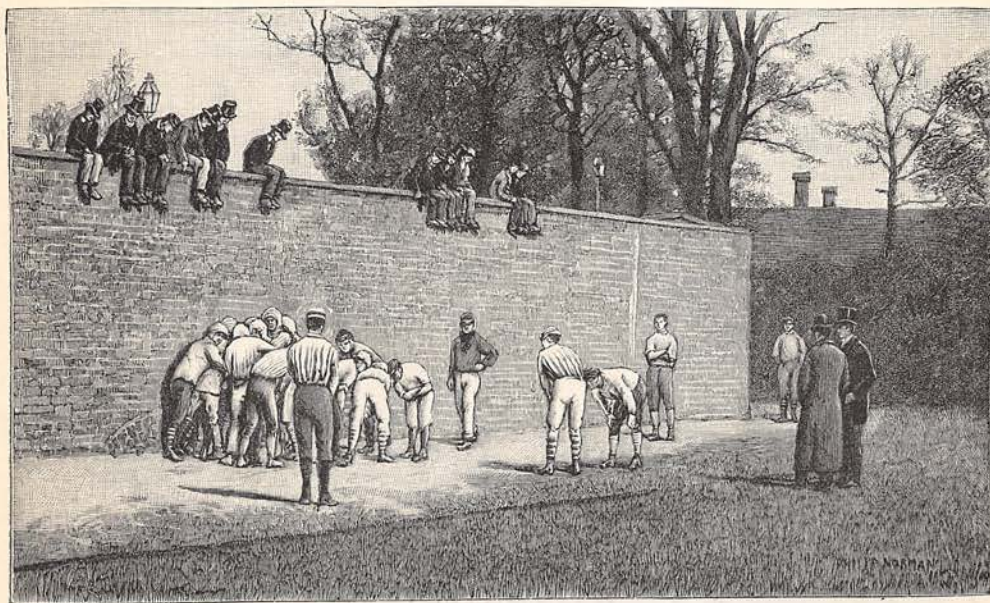
Lupton's Tower, in the middle of the school-yard, rises above a vaulted gateway which gives access to the Cloisters, some parts of which are the oldest buildings at Eton. The original appearance of this small quadrangle was, however, considerably changed by the erection, in 1759, of a handsome but incongruous library on the southern side in 1725, and by the addition, in 1759 of a new story to the northern and eastern sides, in order to provide better accommodation for the families of the Fellows. In the library, which is no longer reserved for the exclusive use of the Provost and Fellows, may be seen some rare books and valuable manuscripts. There is also a very fine collection of engraved British portraits collected to illustrate Granger's *Biographical History*. More interesting, locally, are the charters and other historical documents connected with the college and its possessions, which the late Provost, Dr. Goodford, placed in glass cases. Adjoining the library on the south, and approached from the Cloisters by a flight of steps, is the Hall, the walls of which were built by Henry VI. The oak panelling dates from the sixteenth century; the roof and the furniture were made in 1858, at the charge of Mr. Wilder, one of the Fellows, who still survives. Here the collegers dine and sup daily at 2 and 9 P.M. The high table is seldom used except on the 6th of December—the birthday of Henry VI., and the 4th of June—the birthday of George III. A small doorway in the corner leads to the Provost's Lodge, which has several other more important entrances. Scattered in the different reception rooms is a large and valuable collection of portraits of old Etonians, given by them or their parents as parting presents to successive head-masters, but since acquired by the college. Among the subjects are some of the most distinguished Englishmen of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, painted by the best artists of their time—Reynolds, Gainsborough, Romney, Hoppner, Beechey, Lawrence and others. There are also earlier portraits of Henry VI., Richard III., and Henry VII., and of a long line of Provosts, beginning with Sir Thomas Smith. In the election-hall, which was built for a library, there is a curious picture of Venice, presented by Sir Henry Wotton.

II.—ATHLETICS.

BY THE REV. SYDNEY R. JAMES.

In times past, perhaps even quite recently, the Eton system has been most roundly abused as a system which fosters athleticism in the many at the expense of mental culture. It is possible therefore that some people will be surprised to learn that, after all, for more than half the year there are at any given moment of playtime a large number of boys in the school for whom no outdoor occupation can be found. In the following article it will be the writer's object to show how far this want is supplied, not only for individuals with a natural aptitude for games, but for the undistinguished mass.

Let us follow the round of the school year, which may be taken as beginning in September, after the great annual exodus has occurred. At this time the leading boys are new to their work, and the destinies of the school are in a measure placed in fresh

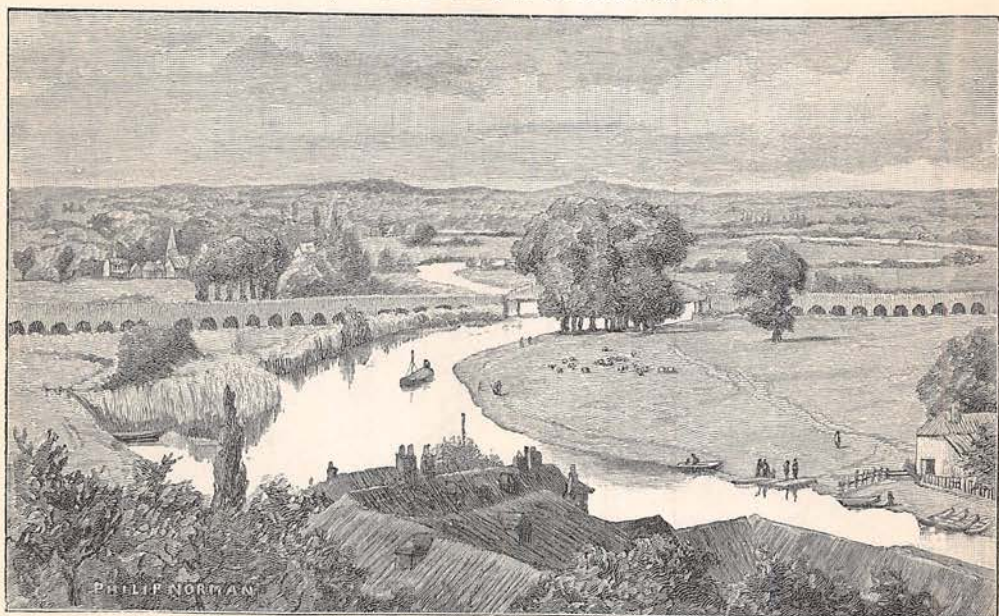


THE WALL GAME OF FOOTBALL.

hands. Football is practically the only game played during this, the Michaelmas schooltime; here and there you will find a racquet-player or a votary of fives who makes time for his favourite pursuit, but every one, except those debarred from the game for reasons of health, plays football more or less. In a correspondence which filled innumerable columns of the *Times* last autumn, the "new tyranny," as compulsory football was dubbed, found many enemies and many supporters. This is not the time or place for a discussion of the question, but it is no exaggeration to say that Eton masters, who are in this matter better qualified to judge than any one else, are unanimous in looking upon the system in vogue as a most valuable, indeed an indispensable institution. There are no hard-and-fast *school* rules on the subject; the number of times a week boys have to play varies in different houses, as do the penalties exacted for non-compliance with the house-rule, and the position in the school which a boy must attain before he is exempt from such compulsion. These matters are left entirely to the boys themselves. There are few indeed who do not look back with gratitude, either when they are still in the school, or after they have left, to a system which has compelled them as small boys to take a certain amount of wholesome open-air exercise even against their will. Many of those who have afterwards become enthusiastic and skilful players were unwilling enough to "go down" to play as lower

There are, as is well known, two games played at Eton—one at the “Wall,” the other in the “Field.” The first is only played by a very limited number of boys, for there is but one “Wall;” the game is of a mysterious and intricate nature, and the uninitiated spectator cannot as a rule even see how a point (called a “shy”) is obtained. Indeed, were it not for the time-honoured match between Collegers and Oppidans on St. Andrew’s Day, the game would probably become obsolete. As it is, however, the enthusiasm annually displayed, not only by present Etonians, but by old boys, shows little sign of diminution. It would seem at first sight that an eleven selected from nine hundred ought to beat an eleven selected from seventy; but the sides are placed on equal terms by the fact that Collegers learn the game both in its principles and in its finer points as soon as they come to Eton, whereas it is uncommon to find an Oppidan who has more than one or at the outside two years’ experience. So it frequently happens that skill wins against strength.

The “Field” game is played by everybody. The picked players meet twice a week in “Field” games, and about once a week there is a school match in which the school “Field” eleven contend against a team from outside—old Etonians, masters, old Etonians at the Universities, at Sandhurst, in the Guards, &c.



THE RIVER AND THE BROCAS, FROM THE TERRACE OF WINDSOR.

The rest of the school play in “house games.” Three or more houses unite and hire two or more fields, so that players may be sorted out roughly according to their size and skill, and the games may not be spoilt by the admixture of smart performers with the hopelessly incompetent; at any rate, not always.

Three times a week on whole school days Lower boys play together from 3 to 4 p.m. House games take place either “after 12” (*i.e.*, from 12.30 to 1.30) on any day, or “after 4” (*i.e.*, from 3 to 4) on half holidays.

The real interest of football at Eton centres in the competition for the House Challenge Cup, which begins in November, and is finished in the last week of the half. Even boys who belong to houses which have no chance of the cup have a stimulus to exertion in the fact that they may win their “house-colours”; for all the houses which enter for the cup, that is, something like twenty out of twenty-six, have “colours” of their own; and though these are not given to the whole eleven, except in the case of the two teams left in for the final tie, yet the longer a house survives in the competition the more “colours” are, as a rule, given. No one unacquainted with school life would believe how great an incentive anything like a “colour” is to a boy’s mind. This is in some ways ridiculous, but the fact remains.

The Eton “Field” game has, in the opinion of the writer, merits, as a game for

boys, superior to those of any other kind of football. In it speed and skilful dribbling and accurate kicking have their due success, but strength and dogged perseverance and pluck are not left out in the cold. A player of the clumsy, hardworking order is of the utmost value to his side. And further, the Eton game, unlike most other forms of football, is not hopelessly spoiled by the addition of two or three to the proper eleven-a-side: hence its value for "house games."

Enough of football. Let us pass on to the "Easter half," or "Fives half," as the boys call it. It is easy enough to find employment for all the school at football, but the fives-courts are limited in number, and though there are now fifty of them, only two hundred boys can play at a time, and two hundred is not a very large proportion out of nine hundred and eighty. There are nine "times" in a week for Fifth Form, and three for Lower boys exclusively, as at football. But the best players play every day, and sometimes twice a day, and there must be a number of boys left out in the cold altogether. What do they do? First, there are the Beagles, known otherwise as the Eton College Hunt. They go out thrice a week, but of course only a limited number of subscribers can be allowed to run with them; say one hundred and sixty. These then are provided for. Then there are paper chases, confined as a rule to Lower boys. A few play football for a while. Some practice for school or house sports. After March 1st the river is open to enthusiasts. Some find room in the racquet-courts. A certain number work in the carpenter's shop. But at any given moment there must always be a number unemployed; it must be so at any school, and it is so at Eton. The consoling feature in the case of Eton is that so many of the fives-courts belong to individual houses, that all boys who care for it are sure of a certain amount of fives regularly; but still the more skilful players get an undue advantage.

The events of the Easter half, besides the competitions in Racquets (to select representatives for the Public Schools' Challenge Cup) and Fives, are the School and House Sports and the Trial Eights. Of these no more need be said.

After the Easter holidays the boys come back, looking forward, for the most part, eagerly to the summer half. Into it are crowded many events—the Fourth of June, Henley, the Winchester match, and "Lord's," not to mention the House Cricket Cup, House Fours, and all the school aquatic contests except the Trial Eights, besides "Wimbledon." These are for the minority—the distinguished athletes. To them we will return presently. But what of the greater number—the undistinguished herd who, far from aspiring to represent the school with oar, bat, or rifle, unable perhaps even to hope for a "Lower boat colour" or a cap in Middle or Lower Club, yet for all that want some employment for their time and their muscles, and enjoy a game of cricket or a good pull up the river as much as the greatest "swell" in the place?

Here at least the "wet-bobs" are, in a way, better off than the rest. Any boy who can pay for a "lock-up" or a "chance" can go on the river when he pleases. Within certain limits he is his own master, and if he is ambitious he may always bring himself into notice by constantly going down to be coached, or by entering for Lower-boy or junior races. It must be remembered however that all cannot be "wet-bobs," at least at once. For before a boy goes on the river he has to "pass," *i.e.* to satisfy



HILLS & SAUNDERS, PHOTO.

FOURTH OF JUNE COSTUME—CAPTAIN OF THE BOATS.

a "passing" master or masters by ocular demonstration of his power and skill as a swimmer. The test is a severe but not an unfair one, and is intended to insure a boy's being able to reach the shore if upset, even when hampered by clothes, under any ordinary circumstances. A boy, then, who wishes to be a "wet-bob" must first "pass," and if he cannot swim already, he must learn to swim. In the earlier weeks of the summer half bathing is of course out of the question, so all the new boys who have come since the end of the previous summer half must "dry-bob" or do nothing for the best part of a month. This throws a great strain upon the resources of the playing fields, and it is to them that we must now turn. There are six separate grounds—Upper Club, Lower Club, Upper Sixpenny, Sixpenny, Jordan, and the new ground, well named Mesopotamia. On the ground called Upper Club, and occupied



HILLS & SAUNDERS, PHOTO.

FOURTH OF JUNE COSTUME—COXSWAIN OF ONE OF THE UPPER BOATS.

by the first school game, the second game, Middle Club, also finds its home. When cricket is in full swing the following games are going on:—1, Upper Club; 2, Middle Club; 3, Lower Club; 4, Upper Sixpenny; 5, Sixpenny. The first twenty-two or so in Upper Club, and the first eleven in each of the others named receive colours. 1, is picked from the whole school: 2, 3, and 4 from certain blocks of Fifth Form divisions: 5, from all Lower boys. Then come 6, Jordan; 7, second Middle Club (these two are practically second and third Middle Club); 8, 9, second and third Lower Club; 10, 11, second and third Upper Sixpenny; 12—16, various Sixpenny games. Any Fifth Form boys not picked up in regular games find their consolation in "Refuse" games, sometimes as many as three in number. It will thus be seen that as many as nineteen games may be going on at the same time; say there are twelve a-side in each (probably thirteen would be nearer the mark)—and four hundred and fifty odd may be playing. Besides these there are always some practising at nets. This enumeration however only applies to the earlier weeks of the summer, for as soon as bathing begins a number—especially of Lower boys—find their chief delight in the waters of Cuckoo Weir and Upper

Hope, and there is no longer the same pressure on the available space.

To return for a moment to the select of the select. Whereas ordinary, *i.e.* lower games are only played on Tuesday and Saturday "after four" and "after six," and on Thursdays "after twelve," and "after four," the chosen few who play in Upper Club have, in addition to these games, to attend practice every day once, and most of them come twice, so that they are not overburdened with leisure for other amusements. There are two professional bowlers constantly employed, and several of the masters give their help in coaching under the presiding care of that genius of Eton cricket, Mr. R. A. H. Mitchell, whose astonishing success in teaching the principles of the game is amply proved by the after-performances of a number of the greatest cricketers of the day. The point in which Eton cricket requires strengthening is in the lower games, where promising cricketers often acquire bad faults for want of being properly looked after; but the improved organization of recent years is likely

to bear fruit in this respect, and the general level of merit is certainly higher than it was, even if there are at the moment no "bright particular stars."

Of Eton rowing but little need be said. The style taught for so many years by the present Head-Master, Dr. Warre, has suffered no deterioration in the hands of his successor, the Rev. S. A. Donaldson, and the Head-Master himself still keeps a watchful eye upon the training of the Eton Eight for Henley. There the boys always make a gallant bid for victory even against opponents of vastly superior strength, and if they do not win outright, they are never very badly beaten.

In the races which take place amongst the boys themselves the greatest interest really attaches to the House Fours, though of course the various sculling and pulling races excite much individual emulation.

Such, then, is a rough review of a year's athletics at Eton, taken mainly as regards the occupation provided for the school at large rather than as regards the distinguished athletes, who would make their way to the front under any system. And from this point of view it would not be fair to omit the Rifle Corps, which provides an interest and an occupation for a very large number of boys, to some occasionally only, to some nearly all the year round. The corps forms a separate battalion—the 4th Volunteer Battalion Oxfordshire Light Infantry; it consists of something over 300 members. During the summer half there are battalion drills every Monday morning, and the annual inspection takes place just at the end of the summer half. At the beginning of the summer holidays a detachment goes into camp for a few days, and days of very complete enjoyment they are. In autumn and spring there are field-days—six in all as a rule—when practice is obtained in outpost work, skirmishing, attack and defence, &c., either with other school corps, or occasionally with regular troops, or between the two half-battalions. The greatest interest is taken in these operations by all ranks. All the year round shooting goes on at the range which is close at hand, and herein is provided a pursuit which has its attractions for some who do not care for ordinary games. The corps fills a large place in Eton life, if not, strictly speaking, Eton athletics, and any account of that life would be incomplete without some allusion to it.

Much more might be said on the whole subject, but the writer will be satisfied if he has succeeded in giving a tolerably comprehensive view of the everyday outdoor pursuits of an Eton boy in 1890.

III.—AS A SCHOOL.

BY THE HON. ALFRED LYTTELTON.

In the account which Mr. Lyte has given of the history of Eton in the past, he has in part answered the question from time to time put by friendly and hostile enquirers, "Why do you send your son to Eton?" For even if Eton had deteriorated and not advanced, men would support her from conservative instincts, from sympathy with her tradition, and from memory of her splendid past. There are others who would answer the question in the affirmative because they are satisfied that their son will be happy there. They remember the magnificent years they spent at Eton in their youth, the romance of the ancient buildings and nobly timbered fields, of the broad river crowned by the stately towers of Windsor; they dream of their then free and careless life, each day bringing some bright enterprise unmarred by doubts of expediency or "questionings of sense and outward things," and they gladly echo the words of a well-known Etonian, "In London life is endurable, at the University it was enjoyable, at Eton it was fascinating;" and so they save their money and determine that at least their eldest son shall have the chance of kindling for himself those sunny memories; perhaps they may ask him to work rather harder than they did themselves, but their object will be attained if he is as happy as they were.

But first let it be freely admitted that there is something to be said against any public school in favour of home education aided by day schools, and completed by University life. All public schools, even the greatest, have a tendency to exact from their members too much uniformity. Boys resent the "pain of new ideas" and

mistrust an original. Of such a one average school criticism is apt to say, "He is a very rum fellow," or "Oh, he is quite mad." Investigation proves that the object of these comments has a dash of the poet or the man of letters in him, or perhaps he has not conformed to the strict law of custom in the school, or to the minutiae of its comical fashions. Not having attained a prominent position he has had the effrontery to wear a "stick-up" collar or has carried an umbrella furled (unfurled would be permissible) down the main street.¹ Yet though these things may be said of opinion among the smaller boys at Eton, there exists in the higher parts of the school a tolerance and application of unusual tastes truly remarkable.

Mr. Arnold's famous "There are our young barbarians all at play," is singularly inapt to describe modern Eton, however appropriate it may have been to Oxford. The modern Etonian is in many ways marvellously civilized. He discusses politics and public affairs in the county council of the house debating society and in the parliament of "Pop," and welcomes elaborate papers on literary topics read before a literary society meeting weekly.² Once a year he does justice and credit to the teachings of a brilliant master of dramatic art. If perchance his applause of performances of Schumann and Brahms at the school concert is prescribed "not by Nature and her verities but by the century expecting every man to do his duty," his liking of pretty things is genuinely shown in the refined decoration of his tiny room, and the sense of his dignity marked by the faultless neatness and taste of his dress. Notwithstanding these things, if your son has genius, if he has rare tastes, if he is acutely sensitive, if he has the Shelley temperament, you may well think that sufficient experience and contact with his fellows may be gained for him in a good day school, and that until he goes to the University his "immortal part" may thrive best amid the associations and under the continuous influence of home life. As successful instances of this training two of the strongest and manliest of English statesmen may be mentioned—William Pitt the younger and Lord Hartington.

In the second place it should also be owned that Eton is rather expensive. The school charges are not indeed heavier, if so heavy, as those of some other of the great public schools, but there is an air of wealth and a large way of looking at things, absolutely inevitable in a place whither so many congregate who, having taken the trouble to be born, are relieved by circumstances from the necessity of further labour. In any community expenditure tends to follow the lead of the wealthiest, and among average young Englishmen it requires the glorious enterprise of imprudent marriage to induce an effective economy.

In the third place, few Etonians will deny that as compared, not with Harrow, Winchester, or Rugby, but with Clifton, Marlborough, Wellington, and Shrewsbury, the standard of general industry is not very high. It is indeed far higher than it used to be, perhaps as high as it can be, under the circumstances. For it is against the whole spirit and tradition of Eton for the authorities to be constantly watching and supervising the boys. The only way consistently with that tradition to exact hard work is by raising the standard of the examinations as high as possible, and by retiring the boys who fail to pass them. This I believe has been done, but it is obvious that examinations can never be adjusted so as to be beyond the capacity of an ordinary boy with hard work to pass. Clever boys are more likely to work than ordinary boys, for most do hardest what they can do best. But no school system can compel a clever boy to work. The standard must be adjusted for the mediocre. But these reasons, it will be said, apply to other public schools as well as to Eton. True, but the smaller public schools consist mainly of boys who have to make their way in the world; and at Eton no energy, no ambition, no enthusiasm, can be entirely an adequate substitute for that necessity which is not only the mother of invention, but is the parent of nine-tenths of the industry of the world. The most ordinary man can get work out of a youth who expects a portion of £150 per annum, but it needs an Arnold or a Jowett to make an eldest son extend his full powers. And it is the misfortune not the fault of Eton that she harbours many eldest sons.

We have seen then that in economy and in general industry Eton does not equal some of her competitors, but it may safely be said that she turns out many most brilliant scholars, as many in proportion to her numbers as almost any other school, and that

¹ These are real instances of public school fashions.

² Mr. Matthew Arnold once told me that the two best audiences in England were the Eton Literary Society and the Ipswich Working Men's Club.

the collegers (from whose ranks eldest sons are as a rule excluded) are intellectually the most distinguished body of boys in England. But it is not in scholarship that her peculiar and unique strength lies.

Mr. Ruskin once said that "Germans are born students, Italians are born artists, and Englishmen are born captains." I think that Eton plays a great part in giving this characteristic to Englishmen. Eton has a special faculty in producing men with the qualities of leadership. She breeds captains. Go to the Universities, and to Sandhurst, explore the army, the Church, the Civil Service, and the Houses of Parliament, read of enterprise in the Colonies and in India, and in a word ransack the world of action and you will find Etonians constantly in the very front. And, what is more notable, you will observe that frequently these men are not intellectually superior to those they lead. Indeed they are often inferior. But somehow they get to the top.

Within a year or two of his arrival at Eton a boy learns to rely on himself in all matters not connected with work. Even in his work far greater liberty is accorded to him than in most other schools, and after two years he may do a considerable portion of it very much in his own way. If he prefers assistance the best teaching in the world is at his service, if he wishes solitude he can remain unmolested provided that the results of it are satisfactory. In the organization of all games, in the conduct of the numerous debating societies, in the discipline administered by sixth form and by the captains of houses, the masters, unless invited to do so, very rarely interpose. Herein Eton differs widely from public schools lately established. I am told that in the latter the interference of the masters with games, debating societies, etc., etc., has to be constant; the boys have not the tradition of self-government, they cannot organize, they are continually appealing for assistance, they are incapable of standing alone.

At Eton the departure of every master, disastrous though it would be to the good fellowship promoted by their active participation in their pupils' amusements, would not dislocate a single game or silence a single debating society. The result of this autonomy is most striking. I have often visited Eton both in the summer and in the winter, and have observed the extraordinary change which has come over a boy in a good position between July and December. In July he has been timid and frivolous, in December he is resolute, self-reliant and impressed with a sense of responsibility. What has caused this transformation? My friend has been in a subordinate position in July, but most of the senior boys leave at the end of the month, and in September he will therefore have become one of the leaders of the school, and by December will have exercised the duties of command for three months. He will have led his eleven to victory in football, he will have helped to keep order in his house, he will have taken the chair in the debating society, the thousand problems involved in ruling others will have presented themselves to him in miniature, he must show tact and resolution, he must depend on himself, he must not be a master or anything like a master, but if his heart is in the right place he can do as much for the school as the best and strongest of them. Some of the authorities, recognising this, entrust much of the discipline in their houses to the care of the boy captain, and at any rate one celebrated instance of a community mainly self-governing has been seen by thousands of Etonians, presided over now and for many years past by a lady of unique tact, humour and sagacity, untiring in kindness, unerring in swift intuition of character. Such a conclusion to a boy's career at Eton has the greatest effect on his character. I do not think that he loses the elasticity and charm and freshness of boyhood, but certainly he gains many of the qualities of a man.

Space forbids enlargement on other topics which might otherwise be properly treated here. Much might be said of the reforms of the last twenty years, which have mitigated so greatly the antique classicism of former Etonian learning, and yet more of the tutorial system, which secures to every Eton boy permanent relations of a very close and confidential character with one master, selected at the outset of the boy's career, and who throughout his schooldays is to him really, and not nominally, *in loco parentis*. But I trust that enough has been said to convince candid inquirers that the passionate attachment which Etonians feel for their school is solidly founded and can be amply justified.