

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

By W. R. SCOTT, First Sen. Mod., T.C.D., F.R.S.A. (Ireland).

With Illustrations by HERBERT RAILTON.¹



EACH of the three greater universities possesses distinctive characteristics which are impressed upon the intellects of their sons. Like all other societies where men are thrown together, the peculiarities of each are merged in the larger life of the whole body. Still it is scarcely possible for any one university to realise the ideal of a perfect education, and certain parts receive more attention than others, hence as a general rule the student bears the marks of this fashioning influence. Thus Oxford, "the Queen of Romance," is distinguished by a carefully cultivated sentiment, which is all her own. Trinity College, Dublin, stands at the opposite pole as the natural counterpart of Oxford. Sentiment is alien to the spirit of the place, which is nothing if not *practical*.

It seems as though the earlier directors of the education of the best youth of Ireland dreaded the love of variety and change which is generally supposed to stamp the national character, and from the first sternly set their faces against it. Thus through three eventful centuries Trinity College has remained true to the ideals of the founders. Firmly fixed, she has watched the intellectual growth of the country, herself but little changed, and leading men rather by the energy of individuals than by the general consent of the whole body. From the first the aim of both college and university was recognised as mainly practical. The ideal of education, if ideal there be, embraces besides mental culture the chief relations of every-day life, and this is as much a guiding influence now as it was three hundred years ago. Changes of thought or party have had but little effect upon this simple aim, which has led the society from infancy to maturity, in advance of the times in many matters, behind them in a few. The result of this fixity of purpose has been that the mistakes have been few, and if opportunities have been lost by over-caution they have been more than compensated by the certainty of a definite rallying-point for the intellect of Ireland.

The education given by books differs little from the curriculum of other seats of learning, but the larger education of the students is directed unconsciously in a definite direction. The gorgeous dreams of other universities dare not linger here, for a stern strength of humour fills the air that shivers all that is unreal. Life is the primary study. The springs of action are unveiled, and the foibles of individuals

¹ The drawings are from photographs by W. R. KENNAN, excepting the one of the Front Square, which is by W. LAWRENCE.

unsparingly anatomised. Elsewhere such a tendency would be hurtful, and hurtful especially to the young; for life would be left as a skeleton robbed of grace and beauty. But poetic idealism runs in the Irish blood, and natural poetry balances acquired criticism. Though the student of average ability soon learns to read the characters of men in a manner to delight the heart of Meredith, still there is insensibly a recoil, and every relation of life is played upon by the scintillation of a fairy fancy. On one side the faculty of humour has a tendency to paralyse effort, but upon the other it prevents the dissipation of energy. No one who has ever breathed the air that withers vain ideals and idle fancies can afterwards waste his time in dreams or join a cause in itself ignoble. Then the gift of bright wit is something indefinable, which yet plays an important part in the economy of education. Keen Irish wit and poetic fancy reconstruct the scheme of life which the sense of humour had destroyed



FRONT SQUARE WITH THE CAMPANILE.

—yet with a difference, for what survives the crucible must be pure gold indeed, and worth all the adornment of wit and poetry.

If this brief summary of Trinity College tendencies be accurate it may possibly explain a fact apparently anomalous. It is not extraordinary that Dublin should produce men celebrated amongst great Englishmen of the time, as governors, judges, ecclesiastics—in fact men of note in the practical field. But it is strange that she can also claim a roll of literary honours at least as long as that of any other university. Is it necessary to mention the names of Goldsmith, Burke, Congreve, Farquhar, Southern, Moore, Swift, Berkeley?

It is interesting to note that the same thought of practical utility runs through the architecture of the college buildings. Few can help contrasting the heavy Greek porticoes of Trinity with the ivy-clad colleges of Oxford. Yet even here the visitor will be surprised to find the natural Irish love of ornament and colour asserting itself. One of the latest additions, called “the Schools,” is one of the most ornamental public structures in the kingdom.

Just three hundred years ago the foundation stone of Trinity College, Dublin, was laid upon the site occupied by the ruins of the monastery of All Hallows. After the dissolution of such institutions in the reign of Henry VIII., these lands and buildings

had been granted to the citizens of Dublin as a reward for their loyalty. In December, 1591, Queen Elizabeth sanctioned the proposal to found "a college for learning, whereby knowledge and civility might be increased." The first buildings were of red brick, intermixed with wooden framework. They occupied the half of the present front square nearest the gate—or about one-sixth of the present area. Two sides of the early quadrangle contained students' chambers, and the remaining space was devoted to "the steeple," the chapel, the hall, library, and "Regent House"—or the old examination hall. Needless to say, none of these earlier buildings now remain. Such was the early college. The old orchards and meadow-lands of the monks soon became the "Fellows' gardens," whence could be seen the houses of the city clustering round the river, the Wicklow mountains on the south, and the harbour on the east.

Both college and town have grown, and the memory of the green fields is now



THE PARK.

preserved only by the inscription on the seal—"The College of the Holy and Undivided Trinity near Dublin." Instead of walking through the old paths of Hoggin Green, the visitor of to-day finds Trinity College in the centre of Dublin. Four of the chief streets bound the grounds, while the frontage is one side of the present "College Green." Some of the best buildings in Dublin now stand on either side, and the old Parliament House (now the offices of the Bank of Ireland) balances the massive face of Trinity.

The front of the college consists of a façade adorned with Corinthian pillars, the centre of which is pierced by an arched entrance. Immediately within the gateway on the left is a room known as "the porters' lodge." Here a body of officials keep watch and ward. At nine o'clock P.M. the gates are closed, and the names of students who enter later are carefully noted and brought before the notice of the "Junior Dean"—one of the Fellows who is entrusted with the maintenance of college discipline. If the number of "late returns" exceeds a specified scale according to the college standing of the student, he is warned, and sometimes fined. Many are the ingenious excuses urged in extenuation. Students, when before the Dean, seem to have relays of sick relatives, or friends bound for the Antipodes, whose vessels always sail after sunset, or colds which are treated homœopathically. Over the vestibule is the hall once used as the museum. When the collection grew beyond its compass, part of it was removed to the buildings connected with the medical school, and part to a new structure known as the engineering school. All that now remains at the gate are the weapons of South Sea Islanders which are hung upon the walls of the staircase leading from the vestibule to the hall above. This collection was made by Lieutenant

Patten during Captain Cook's voyages. The hall itself is used for lectures or smaller examinations during the day, and the various college societies meet there in the evenings. Upon every Wednesday during term-time, the famous Historical Society, though half the age of the college itself, continues its meetings, and as yet shows few signs of age. At one time it was one of the chief political influences in Ireland, and its members comprised most of the leading politicians of the time. It is not uncommon to see a member excused (or sometimes censured) for being absent from his place to attend to his duties in Parliament. Before this society Burke began to speak, and, like many others, he was reprov'd for his "exercises being ill-prepared." It is curious also to note that he received the thanks of the society for "the matter rather than the manner of his speech." During the existence of the Historical Society, it has passed through many strange vicissitudes. At one time it met in a room now used by the fellows over the entrance to the dining-hall. At another the society and the Board had many hot disputes which finally compelled the members to meet outside the college precincts. The tercentenary of Trinity College will, it is to be hoped, leave a permanent gain to the societies. For a scheme has been under their consideration for forming an extensive Union Building, where they can all meet, and at the same time retain their individuality and traditions. The present accommodation, consisting chiefly of rooms in the two houses upon each side of the gate, must be considered inadequate, when it is remembered that some of the societies number four or five hundred members, while the rooms were originally intended to form chambers for about half-a-dozen students.

The gateway leads directly into the front square, which is almost 200 yards long. Larger than most college quadrangles, its size must be acknowledged in keeping with the architecture. Had the space been contracted either in length or breadth, the massive Greek porticoes of the main buildings would have either dwarfed their surroundings or appeared disproportionately great. As it is the solid Greek pillars and porches enlivened by the bright green grass (so rarely seen out of Ireland) and the foliage of the trees, form a picture more classic than modern. It cannot be described as beautiful in the ordinary sense of the term; rather on the contrary one feels the calm of a great strength, and a peace that rests on the best thought of ages. Inside the heavy gateway the bustle of the street traffic dies away, and the outside world is left behind. A spirit of quiet seems to guard the place that ignores the changes of years,—alike indifferent to the tread of armies or the fever of modern life.

The present front square was once divided into two small quadrangles by a range of brick buildings running parallel with the college front. These have long since been removed, and in their place stands the "Campanile"—a bell-tower almost unique. Intrinsically beautiful, the Campanile is still more important as giving the eye a definite starting-point, which would otherwise become confused amongst long lines of symmetrical buildings.

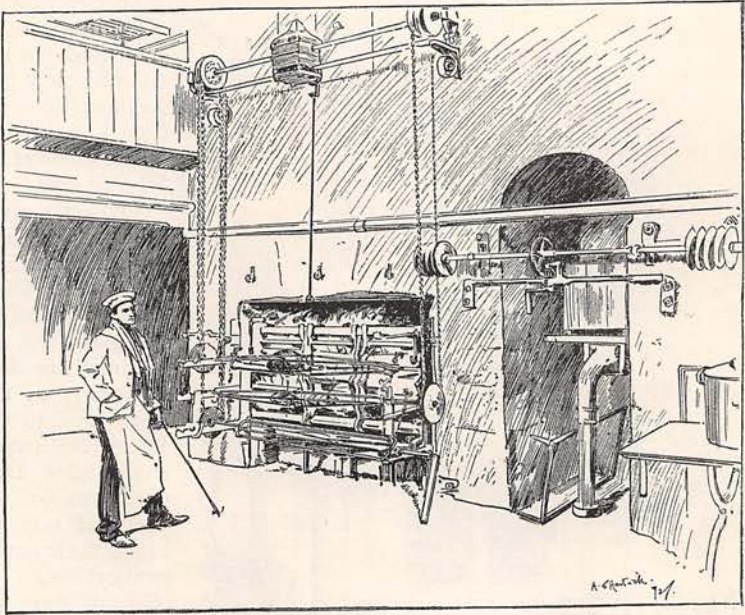
Near the Campanile are the chief buildings of the Front Square—the Dining-hall, the Chapel, the Examination-hall, and the Library.

The Dining-hall stands near the Campanile almost in a line with the houses containing students' rooms. In appearance it resembles the chapel and examination-hall, except that it is reached by a range of broad steps. The present "dining-hall" was built about the year 1761. Sixteen years before another hall had been built upon the same site, but owing to defective foundations it was taken down. The original dining-hall was described in 1734 as "a large and spacious room indeed, flagged under foot, but open in a manner at both ends, never aired by fire—in fact the coldest room in Europe." The front of the present hall contains one of the celebrated clocks which were once regularly kept a quarter of an hour behind the proper time. The reason is quaintly given in a history written as late as 1845. "In the pediment," says Mr. Taylor, "is placed the clock, which strikes the time a quarter of an hour later than the town clocks, on purpose that the pupils may have an opportunity of getting into college in good time to avoid fines, &c."¹

¹ The following appeared in *Kottabos*, vol. i. p. 267. "Herodotus in Dublin . . . 'Now a certain man of these Americans came to Dublin, and greatly admired the wonders that were in the University, but when he saw the clock, he mocked at the priests who were conducting him, and said in derision, "It seems to me calculating that you are by a quarter of an hour behind all other nations." Thus he spake (for in all things the Americans are beforehand, not least, but most of all others), and certain men reported it to the Provost; and they say that when the messenger reported what the American had said, the Provost leapt thrice from his throne, being terribly wroth at the affair. And he gave orders that those whose duty it was should compel the

Within the dining-hall building, next the door, there is a smaller hall or passage leading upwards to the fellows' common room, and downwards to the kitchen. It is practically unused, except at 9 o'clock P.M. When the clock strikes the gates are closed, and one of the porters walks from the gate to the dining-hall ringing a hand-bell. He is soon followed by the Junior Dean, while the students stand in cap and gown upon the steps. The roll is then called, and each student present answers, "Adsum," thus showing which men are inside and which outside. The hall itself is panelled half-way up the walls with rich dark oak. It is lit from two sides, while on the others are niches containing pictures of various benefactors of the college. In the main body of the hall are four lines of tables at which the students dine accord-

ing to their classes in college. At the top, and running at right angles to these, is the table reserved for the Fellows and fellow-commoners, to which "doctors and masters" have a traditional claim. A college dinner is something apart. A bell rings sharply at 6 P.M. in winter and at 6.30 in summer, and the students begin to stream in, putting on their "academic costume" as they run—or in other words gathering the shreds of their gowns around them. A scholar of the house mounts the pulpit and says grace, according to a prescribed Latin form. The grace is somewhat lengthy and sometimes the reciter may be nervous. If so, and there be few Fellows in the hall, he is greeted with ironical suggestions besides other general criticisms. On the other hand some scholars have an especial gift in rapidly manipulating the superlatives, and then they are often applauded. Some of the sporting freshmen even hold stop-watches and keep the records—or say they do. When the first grace is over, all is hurry and confusion. Each table has its attendants, who all rush bearing dishes, which are quickly ranged in their proper places, and then the buzz of conversation lulls, to rise again between the several courses.



THE KITCHEN. (DRAWN BY A. S. HARTRICK.)

Beneath the hall are the cellars, and on the same level the kitchen, which contains some strange old-fashioned instruments for cooking side by side with modern scientific inventions. The old roaster is still used. It consists of three circular racks for holding the joints, which are then placed before a fire kept upright by strong iron bars, and the apparatus is turned by chains running over wheels above.

Passing from the kitchen by the lower entrance, one is surprised to find a strange relic of the past. The angle in the chapel walls between the end of the chancel and the main portion of the building has been railed off and here some of the first fellows of the college have been buried. The mural tablets, with quaint eulogistic Latin inscriptions, may still be easily read by the curious. In the foreground is the remains of a marble effigy which bears the date of 1602. The hard slate of the base has withstood the influence of the weather, but the recumbent marble figure has suffered greatly. The rain-drops falling from above have eaten away the stone, and without the inscription to move on. And certain of the junior fellows, wishing to jest, sent for the police. But the Catechist made no light matter of it, and did not allow it to be put on, for he said that it devolved upon him to keep it back, and that for this reason he was called Catechist.¹

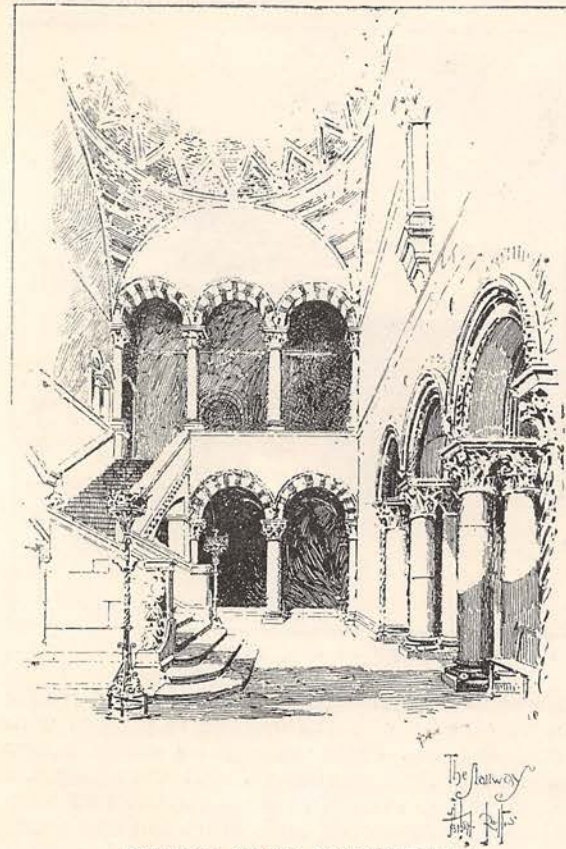
tion it would be difficult to determine the rank or profession of the dead. Near this tomb is the entrance of the vault running under the chapel, but only the portion under the outer entrance has been used for purposes of burial. Here rest many of the most distinguished sons of Trinity, from the earliest down to the year 1867.

The interior of the chapel, like the dining-hall, is wainscoted with dark oak to the height of about twelve feet, divided into large panels which are separated by handsome Ionic pilasters. Over these is a broad base from which the windows rise. The seats are set in four rows on each side, the one gradually rising above the other. The pulpit stands by itself, and is richly carved to match the oak-work on the walls. The services

are held at 9.45 A.M. and 5 P.M. upon Sundays and Saints' days, when the students wear surplices, and at 8.30 A.M. and 5 P.M. on week days, when the ordinary gowns are worn. Upon days of the first group the large college bell in the Campanile is rung, and on the rest a smaller bell in the Dining-hall.

Exactly opposite the chapel is a building of similar external appearance, known as the Examination-hall. After the Dining-hall, this is the college building best known to the students. A large proportion of the lectures are delivered here, and here too many of the students have faced the ordeal of their first examination. Upon Saturdays during term-time the Junior Dean meets with such members of the college as have violated any of the college rules, hears their excuses, and inflicts a fine proportionate to the guilt and volubility of the student.

The interior of the examination-hall is a marked contrast to the somewhat sombre dining-hall and chapel. The oak wainscoting is exchanged for a bright base of painted stone, from which the richly gilt pilasters, separating the niches on the walls, rise to the roof. These niches or panels, like those in the Dining-hall, are filled by portraits of



STAIRWAY OF THE NEW BUILDING.

distinguished members of the University. The place of honour has been given to Queen Elizabeth, the foundress, and the worth of her gifts to the infant college is testified by the presence of Ussher, Berkeley, Baldwin, Swift, and Edmund Burke. As the eye becomes used to the bright shades of the decorations it rests upon a marble monument supported upon a dark tomb. This is a handsome statue of the Provost Baldwin, whose portrait is one of those upon the walls. Baldwin is represented as resting upon his left arm, and holding in his hand the will by which he bequeathed his fortune to the University. A female figure emblematic of the college bends over him, and appears to mourn the loss of her benefactor. Slightly in the background an angel holds the palm-crown of victory in one hand, and with the other points upwards to heaven. In the gallery over the entrance there is an old organ which was taken from a Spanish ship, and which tradition attributes to the Armada.

The south side of the front square is completed by the library, which was opened in 1732. Up till last year the lower story was occupied by cloisters; which have recently been built in to give increased space for the books as well as a new and larger reading-room. The greater part of the building up stairs is arranged in the form of one long room with forty stalls upon each side, in which libraries pre-

sented by private individuals are still kept together and called after the donors. At the base of the pillars dividing the stalls are busts representing great men of the past or celebrated members of the University. Half-way between the roof and floor is a gallery where more recent works are kept. Besides the books there is a valuable collection of coins and autographs, the well-known Book of Kells, and the harp which is attributed to Brian Boromhe, who defeated the Danes at Clontarf in 1014.

Upon the north of the front square is a quadrangle of later date known as "Botany Bay." Possibly the name is intended to indicate a place of seclusion, if not quiet, for some of the more restive spirits amongst the younger members of the college. But the comparative isolation of "Botany Bay" is little regretted by its residents. At nightfall two watchmen lurk in the dark shadows, in the hope of extinguishing bonfires and other amateur illuminations.

Continuing the line of the front square is a third quadrangle known as the "Printing House Square"—so called from its being the site of the University Press, which is a building similar to the Chapel and Dining-hall, but smaller in its frontage. Before the present square was built this part of the college was part of the park, and it was here that one of the fellows, a Mr. Ford, was shot, in the closing years of the last century. The side next the park is partly occupied by a building already mentioned, known as The Schools, the New Building, or Engineering School, which differs largely in architecture from the rest of the college. It is essentially modern in form and represents the best Italian ornamentation. When Ruskin came to Ireland he often spent hours in admiring the symmetry of the structure and perfection of the carvings. The floral ornamentation was executed throughout by Irish stone-carvers and copied directly from Nature. The hall in the interior is crowned by a double dome of variegated brickwork, which is supported upon richly-tinted pillars of Irish marble. The various class-rooms open off this hall, and it is here that the engineering and divinity students attend their respective lectures. The Medical School with the Anatomical Museum is a separate range of large buildings, only recently completed, upon the other side of the park.

The open space between the Printing House Square and the boundary of the college grounds is known as the Park. About one-third of the area is thickly planted with trees and is familiarly called the Wilderness—owing to the fact that it is not used by any of the clubs. The remaining portion contains the grounds of the two football clubs, also those of the cricket and tennis clubs. Trinity is unfortunate when compared with Oxford and Cambridge in its river. The Liffey near the park is greatly encumbered by shipping and is altogether unsuited for racing purposes. Moreover, owing to the number of oarsmen in college it was found necessary, in "the best interests of rowing in Ireland," to form two college clubs, each of which holds different views upon the important subject of rowing form. Consequently it is quite impossible to secure a representative four or eight. Nevertheless, the performance of one of the college clubs (the Dublin University Boat Club) at Henley last year will be remembered by all lovers of rowing. The cricket club gallantly holds its own amongst the other Irish teams, but in contests with English elevens it has gained honour rather than victory. Even already the large number of past wearers of the "black and gold" are looking forward to the match which has been arranged with Cambridge and which is to form part of the approaching tercentenary celebrations in July. The football men have scarcely yet ceased to congratulate themselves upon their success in Rugby against both the English Universities—a record which had been also made in the summer by the tennis club. The Bicycle Club too has had a long and successful career, holding probably more records than any other college club of the kind in the world.