



THE GYMNASIUM.

LIVERPOOL WORKING LADS.



THIS is an age of active and widespread Christian philanthropy. In the wide-read pages of the press, in the effectual appeals from ten thousand pulpits, irrespective of creeds and denominations, there are constantly increasing signs of one cardinal fact—the practical outcome in this nineteenth century of the sublime teaching of the Sermon on the Mount—that, surely as the darkness of the night, the kingdom of the poor is at hand. Not merely in the lifeless marble—the cold tablet on the walls of the sacred edifice—but in the endowment of the cot for the Children's Hospital, the gift of the lifeboat for the rescue of the perishing, is the dear memory of the loved and lost tenderly enshrined and perpetuated.

In the entrance-hall of the Gordon Working Lads' Institute, Stanley Road, Liverpool—the foundation-stone of which was laid on February 27th, 1886, and the building opened on December 11th of the same year—there is the following inscription:—

“This Institute has been erected by William Cliff,

merchant, of Liverpool, to the memory of his eldest son, William Frater Cliff, who departed this life 18th December, 1853, aged 11 years.

“Although so young, he felt deep sympathy for poor and neglected boys, and took the greatest interest in the Ragged Schools which were then being established for their benefit.

“The Institute is also intended to perpetuate the name and memory of Major-General Charles George Gordon, R.E., who devoted much of his time to the benefit of destitute lads at Gravesend, where he was stationed from 1865 to 1869, superintending the construction of the new defences of the Thames; and where he established a Boys' Home, and did other philanthropic work. He was killed at Khartoum, January 26th, 1885, aged fifty-two years, in his heroic but unsuccessful attempt to rescue the Egyptian garrison, which perished with him.

“This Institute, erected for the benefit of the Working Lads of Liverpool, is therefore a suitable monument of what was so noble in youth and manhood. It is the hope of the donor that the members of the Institute will use it in the spirit of these examples which it commemorates; that they will profit by the instruction and harmless recreation which it provides, and thereby form in youth such worthy habits as may help them to live happy and useful lives for the service of God and the good of their fellow-men.”

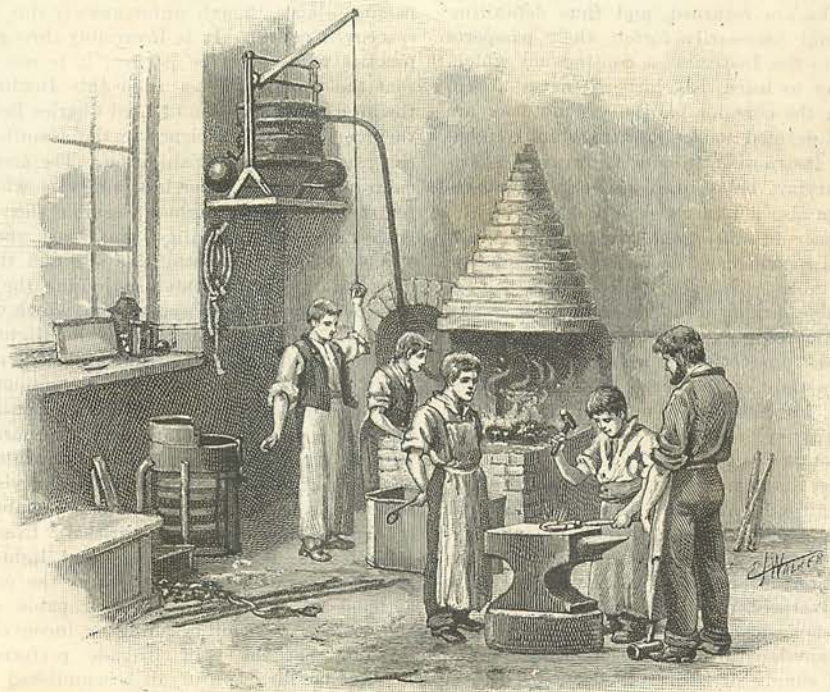
The good and self-sacrificing work carried on at

Gravesend by General Gordon had its counterpart in that of another military man, Captain Osborne, of the North Fort, Liverpool, who, at the time of Gordon's death, was engaged in evangelistic work among the poor and crowded population in the district of Miranda Road. Captain Osborne considered this great and mournful occasion a fitting opportunity to advance the claims of his special mission. Powerful appeals were made in the daily press, and a committee of leading gentlemen were got together, with the ultimate result of subscriptions being raised to the amount of nearly £3,000. It was at this stage that Mr. Cliff—already favourably known to the Northern metropolis as the munificent donor of the building and offices of the Liverpool Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; and also the palatial Home for Aged Mariners at Seacombe, Cheshire—came forward with his generous offer to erect the present structure at his own expense, on the single stipulation that the subscriptions already raised should be further augmented to £4,000, this sum to serve as an endowment fund, the income to be devoted to the expenses of carrying on the proposed work of the Institute.

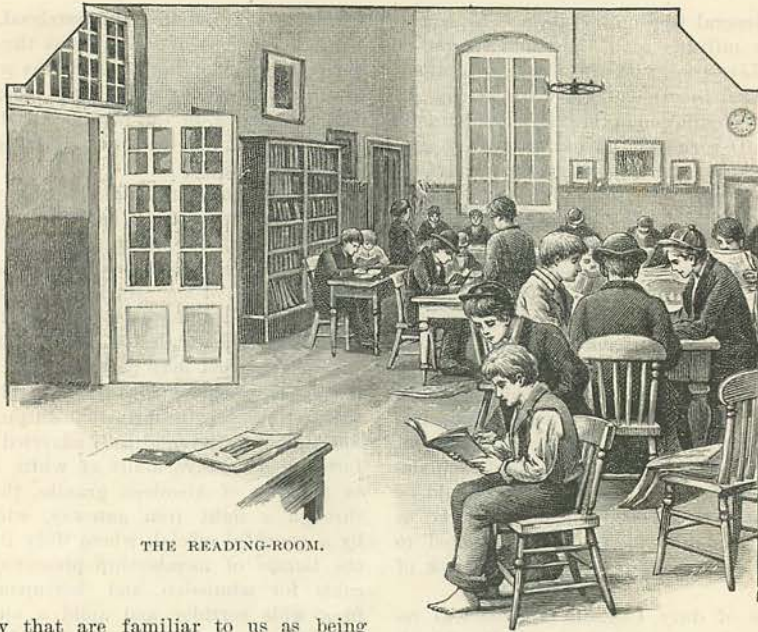
In the course of duty, Captain Osborne was removed, and the reins were taken up by Mr. Joseph Cunningham, a resident in Stanley Road, and the present Superintendent of the Institute, who, like his predecessor in the field, had been for many years engaged in endeavouring—in hired premises—to help forward and instruct the destitute and ignorant youth

of his own immediate neighbourhood. Mr. Cunningham's contingent of scholars was thus the nucleus of the great army of boys and youths who now nightly assemble in the corridors and rooms of the noble building, which, in the highest and best meaning of the expression, may be briefly described as a veritable Palace of Delight.

According to the third annual report, issued in May, 1888, no less than 3,000 lads have been admitted as members, with an average attendance of 300 per night; and a short description, derived from a personal visit, of the social, recreative, physical, and educational advantages provided by the Institute for these otherwise neglected waifs and strays of the Liverpool streets, may perhaps prove not uninteresting to the readers of *THE QUIVER*. First pausing in the vestibule of the principal entrance, to read the touching inscription already adverted to, which is set forth on a massive tablet of white marble, encased in a frame of Aberdeen granite, the visitor passes through a light iron gateway, which is guarded by a youthful official, whose duty it is to examine the tickets of membership presented by the applicants for admission, and thereupon finds himself in a wide corridor, and amid a number of bright and eager faces. At the south end of this corridor is the reading-room. This is a large and lofty apartment, with picture-hung walls, and brilliantly lighted. The ten or a dozen tables are strewn with the current papers, periodicals, and illustrated journals, among which it is satisfactory to notice the



THE BLACKSMITH'S SHOP.



THE READING-ROOM.

covers of many that are familiar to us as being among the best of their class.

There is always a goodly array of students assembled here, each table having its circle of absorbed readers. A well-fitted bookcase, situated by the doorway, is in the charge of two boys "on duty" as librarians, and volumes are issued to applicants on deposit of their tickets of membership. This plan is both simple and effective. The tickets remain with the librarians until the books are returned, and thus defaulting borrowers would necessarily forfeit their passports of admission to the Institute—a contingency which, it is gratifying to learn, has hitherto never arisen. Opening from the corridor on the ground floor are various rooms devoted to the debating clubs, ambulance classes, instruction in music, drawing, shorthand, wood-carving, brass repoussé work, plumbing, etc. There are also a joiner's shop and a smithy.

In the former of these the Superintendent exhibited several specimens of carpentry—stools, boxes, benches, and tables—made by the boys, and pointed with pardonable pride to a step-ladder, of really superior workmanship—strong, light, and graceful—the unassisted production of a lad of fifteen. In the smithy the glare of the forge, fanned into fierce flame by the huge bellows, revealed a scene of picturesque activity. Here a number of chains, staples, fire-tongs, coal-chisels, washers, rings, S-links, and other implements of the blacksmith's art, were shown, all of which had been manufactured by the pupils of this special branch of industry, who are trained three nights in the week under the voluntary tuition of an expert in the employ of a well-known Liverpool firm. The grimy countenance, honest and honourable as it may be, engendered by the toil at the anvil, naturally suggests the desirability of a plentiful supply of soap and water. There is a large and commodious lavatory, with a bath-room adjoining thereto, also on the ground floor. This is

extensively patronised. The aphorism, "Cleanliness is next to godliness," is certainly approved of in the Institute, judging from the unmistakable evidence of the faces of the numerous inmates.

The gymnasium—without doubt the most popular resort in the whole building—deserves more than a passing glance, though unfortunately this is all that space will permit. It is invariably thronged, and as practice tends to make perfect, it is not surprising that the young athletes from this Institute earned the high commendation of Lord Charles Beresford for their remarkable proficiency in the assault-at-arms at the recent Liverpool Exhibition. The area for muscular recreation, however, becoming somewhat confined for the crowds who nightly assemble there, Mr. Cliff, with customary liberality, gave last year another £1,000 to cover the cost of the site and the erection of a building (immediately adjoining the Institute) of a more commodious gymnasium, which was opened on the 27th of October last by the Right Hon. the Earl of Meath. Leaving this animated and joyous hurly-burly, with its conflicting attractions of dumb-bell performances, club-exercises, somersault-throwing, and marvellous evolutions on the horizontal and parallel bars, and passing once more into the comparative stillness of the corridor, the visitor, after ascending a handsome stone staircase, embellished by a beautiful picture in oils, entitled "Evening"—the gift of Mrs. P. H. Rathbone—and lighted by five stained-glass windows, next enters the concert-hall, a room of noble dimensions, capable of seating 800 persons without crushing or inconvenience. It is here that the Cliff Brigade perform military drill, under direction of an accomplished instructor. entertainments and concerts, in which the Gordon Minstrels—a band of lads formed by the personal

efforts of Mr. Cunningham—play a prominent part. are given in this hall, which on Saturday nights is often completely filled with pleased spectators, many of whom are the friends and parents of the youthful *artistes*. These are attractions that bid fair to out-
rival the contaminating influences of the streets, and to fill the boyish heart with a strong and manly purpose, and a laudable ambition to excel, even in the teeth of "low birth and iron fortune."

A sentence or two must conclude this paper. Sunday evening services, a savings-bank, and an employment agency; picnics, cricket, and rounders in the summer, weekly entertainments in the winter—all these advantages are procurable at the Gordon

Working Lads' Institute. And the charge for membership is *only one penny per week!* To such a noble and philanthropic enterprise, conducted on such unsectarian, broad, and Christian lines, we wish a hearty "God-speed." And for the encouragement of those who cheerfully and voluntarily give their leisure-time to the instruction of these destitute boys, opening for them the gates of knowledge, teaching them the principles of the higher life, may the words of the Saviour come with new and inspiring significance, "Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

RICHARD HOLLAND.

MISS HILARY'S SUITORS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A WILFUL YOUNG WOMAN," ETC. ETC.



CHAPTER XIX.

NOTHER winter, long and chill, another spring, coy with its sunshine, fitful with its showers, came and passed. Summer reigned once more, baking all the greenery out of the little garden at Park Villa, and making a midday oven of Hilary's small dormitory under the tiles; where in fresh, early morning, when the dusky sparrows woke her with their chirping, and at late cool night, when

asleep, she would be up there alone reading away her hours of wakefulness.

She was not ill, and to her own self she would never admit she was not fairly happy, but under outward calm was hidden perpetual unquiet, something that had to be stamped down by constant effort, that could only be lulled by work; and this medicine Hilary taught herself hungrily to seek rather than to shrink from, as she would have done in her days of *dolce far niente*.

There was plenty at hand—as there generally is in this world for those who want it. The district where Park Villa stood was new, running out into a network of poor habitations. Few of the better class so much as set a foot in these regions, and the rising generation thereabouts were becoming a Sabbath scourge to the neighbourhood. Help was asked of the St. Johns to aid in catching some of these lawless little savages, and teach them a better way to keep the first day of the week than by playing hop-scotch on the pavement and slanging every decent passer-by. Hilary had no five-pound notes, as once she would have carelessly given, to oil the wheels of this undertaking, so with a

good deal of alarm at her own presumption she gave herself instead, was "cheeked" and sworn at and lied to by her hopeful scholars, taught by roughest experience what degradation dwells in town slums, taught, too, as pity took her to some of her pale pupils' homes, what long-suffering and uncomplaining patience sometimes dwells there side by side with blackest vice, and went home often wondering, had Netley filth and sin in it like that? Then how little she knew of it, or might perhaps ever have known! "Ah!" quelling the pang of renunciation, "he whom Aunt Phil left it to was fitter than I to have it. What is, is best."

Then, just at the end of the winter, small Philippa fell ill with some long, dragging malady that left her ailing for weeks. Poor Mrs. St. John used to cry every day over the doctor's dissatisfied report, and hang weeping and very untidy over the child till she would be fretfully bidden to "keep away, please, mamma; you worry me so: let Hilary come." And the mother would retire to oranges and romances on her sofa down-stairs, while her step-daughter, growing skilful in an art she had never suspected herself of possessing, nursed Philippa with quiet step and cheerful voice, and grew willingly into being the slave of the invalid, who was exacting if not affectionate.

This state of things lasted till summer was at its height, and furnished Hilary with reasonable excuse for refusing Sylvia Dasent's repeated invitations to Mosswick; and, meanwhile, every hour that Philippa set her free, Hilary filled close with other occupations. Perhaps there was some pathetic hope in all this that she might make herself needful to her father's family, that they might want to keep her among them presently. At any rate, she never spared herself when she could be of use to one of them, and they all accepted her services without the slightest hesitation. Frances, the dunce, came daily to her step-sister to get her lessons stamped upon her stupid little brain now sharper Philippa was no longer by to shield her from bad marks. Will, a comical copy of his father, was for ever bringing her roughly scrawled-out plans